

SAA, Etihad Airways sign codeshare agreement

PRETORIA: South African Airways (SAA) and Etihad Airways, the national airline of the United Arab Emirates, on Monday, 6 May 2013, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), allowing the two airlines to introduce a comprehensive range of codeshare and interline air services.



The MoU will see the national carrier placing its 'SA' code on 12 Etihad Airways destinations flying from the UAE national carrier's Abu Dhabi home-base. In return, Etihad Airways will place its 'EY' code on flights from Johannesburg to 10 SAA destinations across South Africa, Africa and South America.

This will enable seamless air travel connectivity between the destinations stipulated in the MoU.

Etihad Airways will place its code on SAA flights from Johannesburg to Cape Town; Durban; East London and Port Elizabeth, as well as to Livingston, Lusaka, Ndola, Harare, and Victoria Falls. Outside the African continent, Etihad Airways will place its code on South African Airways flights to Sao Paulo.

Secondary phases of the cooperation agreement will explore code sharing to more cities, closer synergies and efficiencies in the key commercial areas of procurement, ground handling and training.

"This extensive commercial agreement will enable SAA to access the vast majority of Etihad Airways global markets. We are pleased to build upon the commercial areas of the agreement which are fundamental to a modern airline partnership," said SAA Acting CEO, Nico Bezuidenhout.

The agreement also makes provision for passengers to earn and redeem miles through the airlines' frequent flyer programmes.

SAA acting chairperson Dudu Myeni said the partnership provides SAA customers with vital and seamless access to 12 key destinations in the Middle East and beyond, while it will also broaden SAA's network through alliances and strategic partnerships.

"This impressive, multi-layered, partnership will enable Etihad Airways and South African Airways to achieve significant

goals in several different global markets, as well as collaborate on a number of key commercial initiatives," said Etihad Airways' President and CEO, James Hogan.

Hogan said the airline was looking forward to extending its footprint in the "strategically critical African market".

Collectively, the two airline groups expect to carry more than 20 million passengers in 2013.

In April, the national carrier and Jet Airways, India's premier international airline, announced a codeshare agreement that will facilitate smooth air travel connectivity to several business centres in India and South Africa.

Under the agreement, South African Airways, the only airline with non-stop flights between Johannesburg and Mumbai, will codeshare on Jet Airways' operations between Mumbai and Delhi, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Chennai and Thiruvananthapuram.

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