

REPORT: AIRLINES: MIDDLE EAST

What you need to know

December 2024

This report presents a roundup of what's been happening to airlines in the Middle East over the last month.

Major carriers

[Etihad Airways](#)

[13 destinations joining network in 2025](#)

As part of its rapid expansion plans, Etihad Airways has detailed ten destinations set to join its network from Abu Dhabi in 2025. It had previously revealed Al Alamein, Prague and Warsaw as new points on its network. The ten new destinations comprise: Algiers (four per week), Atlanta (four per week), Chiang Mai (four per week), Hanoi (daily), Hong Kong (five per week), Krabi (daily), Medan (three per week), Phnom Penh (five per week), Taipei (daily) and Tunis (three per week).

[Nairobi joins network](#)

Etihad Airways has launched a new four-times weekly service from Abu Dhabi to Nairobi, Kenya.

[Air Seychelles codeshare agreed](#)

Etihad Airways has agreed a codeshare arrangement with Air Seychelles. As a result, Air Seychelles will start [six-times-weekly](#) service from Mahe to Abu Dhabi from [May 24, 2025](#). These will complement Etihad's existing [twice-weekly](#) flights on the route. Its passengers will also gain access to Praslin and Mauritius on Air Seychelles' flights.

[Qatar Airways](#)

[Tie-up with Virgin Australia gets interim approval](#)

Australia's competition authority, the ACCC, has granted interim authorization to Qatar Airways and Virgin Australia, allowing them to start marketing new flights between Australia and Qatar. Qatar Airways will operate the flights under wetlease for Virgin Australia. Flights from Brisbane, Melbourne and Sydney to Doha will start in June 2025, with services from Perth following in November, subject to other approvals.

The ACCC is continuing to evaluate the two airlines' request for a five-year authorization.

[Toronto service starts](#)

Qatar Airways has launched a new [thrice-weekly](#) service from Doha to Toronto Pearson International airport. Toronto joins Montreal as the airline's second Canadian destination.

[Canberra service resuming](#)

In [December 2025](#), Qatar Airways will resume [daily](#) flights from Doha via Melbourne to Canberra, which had been suspended during the pandemic. Canberra will become the airline's sixth Australian destination.

Turkish Airlines

Sydney services launched

Turkish Airlines has launched a **four-times weekly** service from Istanbul to Sydney. The Airbus A350-900s deployed on the route currently stop *en route* in Kuala Lumpur, but non-stop services are planned.

Low-cost carriers

Air Arabia

Lebanese services resume

Air Arabia has reinstated service between Sharjah and Lebanese capital Beirut.

Flights start to Uzbekistan

Starting December 27, Air Arabia will launch weekly flights from Ras Al Khaimah to Tashkent, Uzbekistan. This marks the airline's eighth route from the emirate.

New Russian route

On **June 27, 2025**, Air Arabia will launch a new Russian service, starting **thrice-weekly** service from Sharjah to Sochi. It joins Kazan, Moscow, Samara, Ufa and Yekaterinburg as the sixth Russian city served.

Flydubai

Al Alamein to join network

Al Alamein will join Flydubai's network on **June 21, 2025**, when it starts **daily** flights from Dubai. Services to its third Egyptian destination will only operate until **September 7**, however.

Flynas

Madinah-Giza link opens

Saudi Arabian carrier Flynas started flights from Madinah to Giza's Sphinx International airport in Egypt on December 11. It's operating **three** weekly flights. Flynas already flies to Giza from Jeddah and Riyadh.

Other airlines

Air Astana

Etihad codeshare starts

Air Astana has started a new codeshare with Etihad Airways. It gives the UAR carrier's passengers access to 10 new destinations via Air Astana's gateways in Almaty and Astana, Kazakhstan. In turn, the Kazakh carrier's passengers can now connect over Abu Dhabi to Etihad destinations in Bahrain, India and Oman.

New Frankfurt service announced

Air Astana will launch a new **thrice-weekly** service from Almaty to Frankfurt on **June 1**, which will complement its existing services to the German city from Astana and Uralsk. It will compete with Lufthansa's **five** weekly flights on Almaty-Frankfurt.

Azerbaijan Airlines

Israeli flights reinstated

Azerbaijan Airlines (AZAL) has reinstated service between Baku and Tel Aviv, Israel. It's operating **daily** flights on the route.

El Al

Strong profit performance in Q3

Improvements in load factor and network mix, growth and streamlined finances helped El Al more than **double** its third quarter operating profit (EBITDAR) to \$360 million. Net profit more than **trebled** to \$187 million. El Al's revenue for the period grew by **44%** to \$1 billion.

Kuwait Airways

Fleet expansion begins

Kuwait Airways has received the first of an order for seven Airbus A330-900neo aircraft as part of a planned fleet expansion strategy.

Saudia

Co-operation expansion agreed with Air France-KLM

Saudia has signed an agreement to strengthen co-operation with Air France-KLM. The deal includes expanded codeshare arrangements and significant maintenance commitments.

Uzbekistan Airways

Codeshare starts with Malaysia Airlines

Uzbekistan Airways has entered into a codeshare agreement with Malaysia Airlines. The Malaysian carrier will add its code to Uzbekistan Airways' **twice-weekly** services between Tashkent and Kuala Lumpur. Uzbekistan Airways will in turn add its code to Malaysia Airlines' domestic services from Kuala Lumpur to points including Kota Kinabalu and Langkawi.

The information presented in this report represents the latest view as at December 20, 2024. We have carefully researched and checked the information contained. However, we do not guarantee or warrant the correctness, completeness or topicality of this article and do not accept any liability for any damage or loss as a result of the use of the information contained within this article.

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