ETIHAD AIRWAYS' CAPTAIN HUDA AL MUSALLAMI BECOMES THE FIRST EMIRATI WOMAN TRAINING CAPTAIN IN THE UAE

News / Airlines, Maintenance / Trainings



Etihad Airways announce that Captain Huda Al Musallami has made national aviation history, becoming the first Emirati woman to qualify as a training captain in the UAE. Having broken new ground in the flight deck, she will now shape the pilots who follow her into it. The announcement coincides with Emirati Women's Day celebrations, standing as a powerful testament to female Emirati ambition. Captain Huda's milestone makes her the first Emirati woman entrusted with training and qualifying pilots to the highest standards of safety and professionalism.

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Her journey is built on more than two decades in the skies. Captain Huda joined the aviation industry in 2003 and Etihad Airways in 2014, rising from First Officer to Captain in 2023 before qualifying as a Type Rating Instructor in 2026. She holds a current type rating on the Boeing 787 and has accumulated more than 10,000 flying hours, having previously flown the Airbus A330, A340 and Boeing 777. She also holds a Bachelor's degree in Aviation Management and a Master's degree in Business Management and Information Systems.

Captain Huda Al Musallami commented: “Being the first means stepping forward before there is a path to follow. When there is no map, you learn to navigate with purpose, to turn challenges into strength, and to keep moving towards what once seemed beyond reach. That is the spirit the UAE has instilled in us: a nation that has never waited for the future, but has always had the courage to shape it. For me, being first was never about the title. It is about making sure I am not the last, and opening the way for more Emirati women to rise, excel and go even further.”

In the training environment, Captain Huda now prepares and qualifies the next generation of pilots, a role she describes as both a professional and a national duty. In the first months of her new role, she has trained pilots of different nationalities and experience levels, and with every pilot she trains, her own journey becomes a path for others to follow.

Dr. Nadia Bastaki, Chief People, Government and Corporate Affairs Officer of Etihad Airways, stated: "At Etihad, we give flight to Emirati ambition. Captain Huda's milestone is a powerful expression of what becomes possible when talent, determination and opportunity come together. By reaching a new height for Emirati women in aviation, she has widened the horizon for those who come after her. As a training captain, she now carries that standard forward, preparing the pilots who will define the industry's future. Her success reflects the UAE leadership's vision to empower Emirati women to pioneer and make their mark, and our commitment to advancing national talent to the highest levels of the industry worldwide."

Captain Huda's story is one of many taking flight at Etihad, which has long nurtured talents who have gone on to become pioneers in their fields of aviation. Emirati women today represent 75% of all UAE nationals in the airline’s workforce, contributing across the full breadth of the business, from the flight deck to the boardroom. Whether emerging talent beginning their journeys or senior leaders shaping the airline's future, their growing influence reflects Etihad's long-standing commitment to creating opportunities for Emirati women to lead, inspire and advance the UAE’s aviation ambitions.

As the UAE writes the next chapter of its aviation story, Etihad is investing in the Emirati women who will contribute to flying it, engineering it and leading it. Every milestone reached today becomes a runway for the next generation to go further, rise higher and land firsts of their own. In the UAE, a first is never a last. It is where the story begins.

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