THE WACKIEST AIRPLANE THEMES FROM STAR WARS TO PANDAS

News / Airlines



Scrolling through the grievances of the 708 million passengers the TSA screened in airports last year is enough to make you wish teleportation was possible so you could bypass the entire hassle of being in an airport. From baggage fees, to change fees, to getting charged $8 for a blanket, the fun seems to have gone out of travel like the perfect container of Talenti Gelato melting unloved and uneaten.

Yet in this often uncomfortable series of obstacles in the quest to travel as glamorously as people did in the glory days of aviation, some airlines have infused a bit of The Funtastic World of Hanna Barbera's childlike joy into flying by tricking out their liveries like a 450-ton version of Pimp my Ride.

Going beyond the blandly corporate white boats, with the essential framework to be aeronautically sound, some airlines are giving passengers great eye-candy with a few distinct slathers of color and images. Some are goofy; some are awesome; some are incomprehensible; but whatever these airlines were thinking when decorating with multi-million dollar price tags, rubber-necking at 35,000 feet never sounded more appealing.

Air Nippon’s Star Wars Planes

In advance of the release of Star Wars: The Force Awakens, Air Nippon, the largest carrier in Japan and one of the world’s best airlines for customer service, announced their ANA Star Wars project. Three 787-9 Dreamliners were decked out in R2-D2, BB-8, and general Star Wars designs. You can attempt to fly like Hans Solo in ANA’s R2-D2 and Star Wars planes, which are

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out now, but you'll have to wait until spring 2016 to jump onboard BB-8.

Air France's Jon One Planes

In the land where art is ubiquitous, France's national carrier Air France delivered a Boeing 777 splashed with the joyous graffiti art of Jon One. The artwork represents the French flag, by symbolizing freedom, while re-enforcing 80 years of Air France's slogan: "Air France, France is in the Air."

Emirates' World Cup Planes

Harnessing the fanatical passions of global World Cup fans, Emirates placed the distinguishable signature of three time World Cup winner Pelé on a Boeing 777-300. Emblazed on the fuselage, as well, was the FIFA World Cup logo. Named "Pelé-ane," the plane flew from the Dubai to São Paulo, with perhaps the same single-minded determination which elevated Pelé to become arguably the best soccer player in the history of the sport.

Eva Air's Hello Kitty Planes

Taiwanese carrier EVA Air made the cutest move in aviation history when they chose to partner with Hello Kitty to create a 600 mph homage to the adorable cartoon feline. For those lucky enough to fly the Hello Kitty's Boeing 777-300 ER's from Houston to Taipei—the plane only can be flown on this route four times a day—everything from Hello Kitty pillows, to Hello Kitty seats, to Hello Kitty bento boxes, and even Hello Kitty toilet paper is available onboard. EVA Air also offers in-flight text messaging, roaming service options, and Wi-Fi so you can Instagram your Sanrio dreams while in the air.

FedEx's Panda Express

Considering the extensive diplomatic efforts necessary to take one of China's precious pandas out of the country has resulted in its own terminology—Panda Diplomacy—when Canada became a recipient of a pair of giant pandas in 2013, they wanted to get their precious cargo over to North America as soon as possible. FedEx-ed like an overnight package, Er Shun (female) and Da Mao (male) were sent first class via the mail carrier's "Panda Express." The sweet couple even had to be signed for upon receipt like any FedEx package—in this case, by the Canadian Prime Minister.

Qatar Airways' Futbol Barcelona Club Plane

Decking out the livery of a Boeing 777 in the sexy colors of the team's flag was an inspired move by Qatar Airways to inaugurate their first flight to Barcelona. Anyone who follows soccer knows how passionate FC Barcelona's fan base is and Qatar Airways was hoping to transfer some of that adoration to their company. While inside, Qatar Airways' famous service was as impeccable as ever, the aircraft's main body was equally lovely, in swirls of red and blue, colors which have been with this famous football club for more than a hundred years. As an added flourish, the Club emblem was draped across the tail-end of the Boeing 777.

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