



KLM DEBUTS THE 787-9 DREAMLINER IN ITS SAN FRANCISCO ROUTE

News / Airports / Routes



In the April 2016 issue of *Airways*, Andreas Spaeth wrote about Dutch carrier KLM's (Koninklijke Luchtvaart Maatschappij or Royal Dutch Airlines) introduction of the Boeing 787-9 into its fleet. Initial destinations served by the new aircraft included Abu Dhabi, Muscat, Rio de Janeiro, Osaka, Delhi, Hangzhou, Xiamen and Chengdu. And on May 4, San Francisco (SFO) was added to the growing list of KLM 787 destinations as the airline introduced flights 609/610 to its Amsterdam Schiphol Airport (AMS) hub. KLM held a brief ribbon cutting ceremony before the passengers boarded flight 610 for the inaugural flight bound for Amsterdam from San Francisco.

"We are excited to inaugurate KLM's first North American Dreamliner in San Francisco to support growing West Coast demand for the company's exceptional in-flight service," remarked Eric Caron, General Manager, Air France-KLM USA. "The KLM Boeing 787 Dreamliner reflects the company's ongoing commitment to using great design to optimize comfort in faster, more fuel-efficient planes. Combined with KLM's leading customer service, the latest cabins offer a new standard of comfort in air travel for passengers in every class."

The twice-weekly 787 flights supplement KLM's daily 747-400 service from SFO to the Netherlands. On Wednesdays and Sundays, flight 609 departs AMS at 12:40 local time, arriving SFO at 14:45. The return service leaves SFO at 16:45 and arrives AMS the following day at 12:15.

As part of the inaugural celebration, KLM gave media a tour of aircraft PH-BHD to show off the new World Business Class, Economy Comfort and Economy class cabins designed by renowned Dutch Designer Hella Jongerius.

World Business Class features modern full-flat seats that are designed for privacy and convenience, with each seat having direct aisle access and a 16-inch screen for inflight entertainment (IFE). There is also the option of a dual-screen experience, which allows passengers to game or chat using the handset while watching a film. The IFE system provides access to more than 150 films and 200 TV programs in 12 languages, including a large number of local films.

The seats in Economy Class recline 40% more than previous models. Seats feature an 11-inch IFE screen and all passengers have access to a power socket where they can recharge their mobile equipment. KLM's Boeing 787-9 is fitted with onboard Wi-Fi, marking the launch of KLM Wi-Fi, which was tested in earlier trials. It will now be possible to use the internet, email and other online services onboard using laptops, tablets and mobile phones.

The airline also provided aspects of the 787 that were not intuitively obvious from an aircraft tour. For example, KLM points out that the 787 is 20% more fuel efficient because of its new engines, lightweight composite structure and aerodynamic efficiency, allowing the aircraft to fly further, faster, cleaner, quieter and more efficiently than comparable airplanes.

The 787 is pressurized at a lower altitude than other aircraft, ensuring passengers arrive more rested at their destinations. And while the media was unable to sample the much-touted new inflight cuisine, KLM thoughtfully provided cupcakes to all passengers and visitors in the gate area. After the festivities at the gate, the passengers boarded the aircraft. After a brief wait behind a departing Emirates A380, PH-BHD taxied to Runway 1R for a speedy departure for Amsterdam.

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