El Al Israel Airlines Celebrates Delivery of its First Boeing 777

The first of three Boeing 777-200ERs (extended range) airplanes to enter the fleet of El Al Israel Airlines was unveiled yesterday in a ceremony at the Museum of Flight. Witnessing the event were Alan Mulally, president of Boeing Commercial Airplanes Group; David Hermesh, president of El Al Israel Airlines; and 200 invited guests.

The airline plans to fly the new twinjets on routes between Tel Aviv, Israel, and New York, London and Hong Kong. The 777 is ideally suited for such long-range, non-stop flights, and has an impressive schedule reliability rate of more than 99 percent - the best in its class.

"This is a very special night," Mulally said. "El Al and Boeing have been together for 45 years. It's a partnership that we are very proud of, and one that is being renewed tonight with this new 777 airplane."

Since its introduction in 1995, the 777 has won numerous accolades and praise for its new approach to passenger comfort, crew workload and reliability. In fact, recent independent passenger preference polls have found that three out of four passengers prefer the Boeing 777 for long-haul flights.

"This airplane will mark a new standard of comfort and service for El Al's passengers," said David Hermesh, president of El Al. "We will be offering the newest and most comfortable seats available today."

El Al's new 777s will feature expanded, upgraded first- and business-class sections, and the latest hi-tech entertainment systems. First class features six seats with full-flat recline and privacy dividers. Seats in first and business class will have individual nine-inch video monitors deployed from arm rests, and economy class will have individual seat back monitors. All will have a full range of selectable viewing content.

El Al's new 777-200ERs will be powered by Rolls-Royce Trent 895 engines. Richard Smallwood, senior vice president of Rolls-Royce, represented the engine maker at the delivery dinner and noted his company's 45-year relationship with El Al.

"When El Al was evaluating the engines to power their newly ordered Boeing 777s, one of the major factors under consideration was the performance and in-service support of their current RB211-powered 757 fleet," Smallwood said. "Our aim is to continue to earn the trust of El Al as we embark on this new phase of a valued relationship."

In addition to the delivery celebration, Boeing and El Al announced they are exploring opportunities to expand the region's aviation service capabilities. The two companies have been talking for several months on development of necessary infrastructure to meet the growing need for services in the region.

El Al operates an all Boeing fleet, which includes five Next Generation 737s, eight 757-200s, 10 747s and six 767-200s. The next two El Al 777-200ERs are scheduled for delivery in February and April.

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