



Press Release

Rome, 18 December 2009

ALITALIA AND ETIHAD SIGN MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Alitalia and Etihad Airways today exchanged a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that confirms the airlines' intention to operate a codeshare agreement from the start of the Northern Summer season in April 2010, subject to government approvals.

The agreement will mean Etihad customers around the world will be able to fly to two new Italian destinations, Rome and Naples. Alitalia customers will be able to fly directly from Italy to Abu Dhabi and will have greater and easier access to the airline's expanding network of more than 55 destinations.

Under the proposed deal, Etihad will place its two-letter 'EY' code on a number of services operated by Alitalia from Milan to Rome and Naples, and between selected European destinations and Rome, including Frankfurt, Geneva and Munich. In turn, Alitalia will place its 'AZ' code on Etihad's flights between Milan and the airline's Abu Dhabi home base, and onto Bahrain, Muscat, Cape Town, Johannesburg, Bangkok, Sydney and Melbourne.

Etihad currently operates five direct services to Milan (Malpensa) per week.

James Hogan, Etihad Airways' chief executive, said: "The ties between the UAE and Italy have never been stronger, and it is our objective to play a key role in the development of travel and tourism between the two regions.

"This proposed codeshare agreement means we can offer our customers access to two of Italy's most popular destinations, as well as give European travellers greater and much easier access to Etihad's own expanding international network.



“We are delighted to be working with the new Alitalia management team under Mr Sabelli. Their vision for repositioning Alitalia is one of the reasons we have reached this important agreement.”

Rocco Sabelli, Alitalia’s chief executive said: “The planned agreement with Etihad is an exciting development for Alitalia, as it is a further step in our strategy of connecting Italy to the most important destinations around the world, building on our strength in the Italian market.

“This agreement meets Alitalia’s plans for services to destinations in a very dynamic area, and it complements our strategy towards the Milan and northern Italy market.”

Etihad and Alitalia also intend to implement a reciprocal agreement to link their frequent flyer programmes. Under the proposed plan, members of both award-winning programmes will be able to earn and redeem miles when travelling on all Etihad and Alitalia flights.

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About Etihad Airways

Etihad Airways is the national airline of the United Arab Emirates based in the UAE’s capital, Abu Dhabi. The airline offers flights to more than 55 destinations in the Middle East, Europe, North America, Africa, Asia and Australia. For further details: Etihad Airways Corporate Communications: Tel: + 971 (0) 2 511 1032 / 1036 or visit www.etihadmediacentre.com

About Alitalia

Alitalia – Compagnia aerea Italiana – arises from the merger of the networks, fleets and operations of the two main Italian carriers, Alitalia and AirOne. Alitalia flies to 73 destinations worldwide - 25 in Italy and 48 in the rest of the world. The airline operates around 5,000 flights per week. For further details: Alitalia Corporate Communications: Tel: + 39 (0)6 6563 0817 or contact ufficio.stampa@alitalia.it