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Finnair Rolls Out Upgrades as 90th Birthday Nears

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Upgrades to in-flight entertainment, lounge service and fully-flat beds to business class cabins are underway in honor of Finnair's 90th Anniversary

As it approaches its 90th birthday on November 1, Finnair is in the midst of several upgrades to enhance the customer experience. Many of the upgrades are currently in progress or have already been completed including a significant expansion to in-flight entertainment on all long-haul flights, an upgraded range of complimentary wines, beer and spirits in the Helsinki airport lounge and the continued retrofitting of fully-flat beds to the Business Class cabin.

Finnair has nearly doubled its range of in-flight entertainment options on all long-haul flights, with a choice of 72 movies and more than 150 TV shows now available on demand included in both Economy and Business Class seat tickets.

On Finnair's new Airbus A321s with Sharklets, which are mostly operated on medium-haul and leisure routes, passengers now have access to Samsung Tab 3 tablet computers, available to rent at a cost of EUR 10. The tablets come pre-programmed with dozens of hours of video, music, games and newspapers.

"Tablet computing clearly has the potential to revolutionize inflight entertainment, as tablet systems are much lighter and easier to keep up to date from an operational point of view, while also offering the customer a much richer and more interactive entertainment experience," says Jouni Oksanen, Finnair's Director of Customer Entertainment. "If tablet-based entertainment proves to be successful on these new aircraft, we will of course continue to evaluate the possibility of implementation across the fleet."

Lounge in style

Meanwhile, Business Class passengers, Finnair Plus top-tier loyalty card holders and other customers entitled to lounge access at Helsinki Airport are now offered an upgraded range of complimentary wines, beer and spirits in both Finnair Lounges at Helsinki Airport. Additionally, at the non-Schengen Finnair Lounge next to Gate 36, a more exclusive list of premium champagnes and liquors are also available for a charge. Joseph Perrier Cuvée Royale Brut Champagne is free for Finnair Plus Platinum members and other Emerald-level oneworld frequent flyer cardholders.

Work has also started on building a new Premium Lounge directly adjacent to the award-winning Finnair Lounge in the non-Schengen area of Helsinki Airport. The Premium Lounge, designed by Helsinki-based dSign Vertti Kivi & Co, will be open in spring 2014 and complement the original Finnair Lounge, which routinely ranks in lists of the world's top airline lounges. The new lounge will be available to Finnair Plus Platinum and Gold members and their guests only, as well as frequent flyer cardholders with equivalent status at a fellow oneworld airline. All customers may enjoy completely new private shower suites and a Finnish sauna. An exclusive Finnair Tax-Free Shop will also be opened next to the lounges, serving all non-Schengen passengers.

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"We are eagerly looking forward to opening an additional lounge for our most frequent and loyal customers to keep up with burgeoning demand for our world-class lounge facilities," says Markku Remes, Finnair's Manager of Lounge and VIP Services. "The expanded lounge will offer passengers calm, refreshment and relaxation while also showcasing Finland as an international hub of art and design surrounded by the freshness of nature."

On board in the cabin, the Marimekko for Finnair collection of pillows, blankets, headrest covers, napkins and tableware is now standard in all Finnair aircraft, both long haul and short haul. Last month, Finnair also announced new Signature Meals in Business Class created by top Finnish chefs Tomi Björck and Pekka Terävä. Currently, Finnair is retrofitting an additional eight long-haul aircraft to provide seats that convert to fully-flat beds in Business Class, for optimum comfort in long-haul travel. After the retrofit is complete in September 2014, all but three of Finnair long-haul aircraft will be outfitted with the full-flat seats; the remaining aircraft are set to be retired from the fleet with the arrival of Airbus A350s in 2015.

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