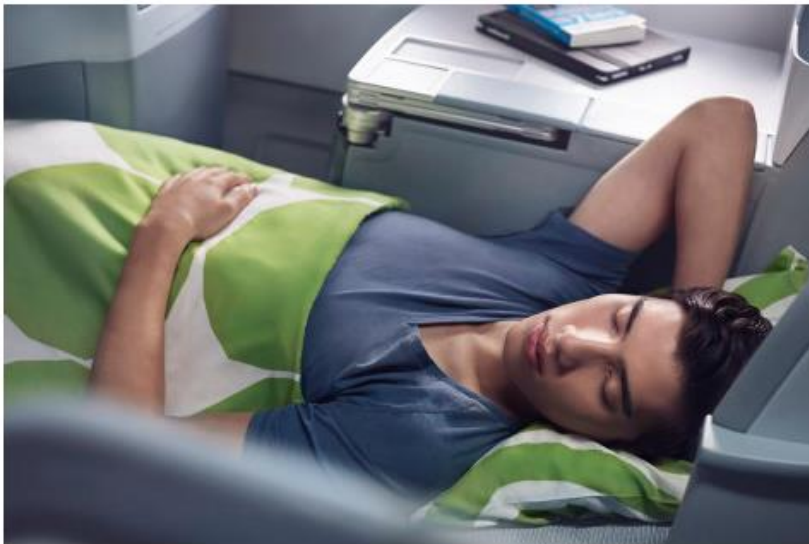


CLEAR SKIES AHEAD, SITTING COMFORTABLY, THE FLIGHT FANTASTIC

SIT BACK AND ENJOY FINNAIR'S COOL NEW BLUE

🕒 MARCH 13, 2014 👤 MARISA GARCIA 💬 LEAVE A COMMENT

From April 1, passengers travelling on Finnair from to Tokyo and New York are in for a treat.



A business man having a comfy snooze on Finnair's full-flat seat. Image Finnair.

While passengers will be sleeping comfortably, Finnair will be up working to keep up with an aggressive renewal schedule.



Finnair business woman fast asleep. Image Finnair.

The fleet renewal of Business Class will continue during the year on Finnair's routes, with installation of these new [Zodiac Seats UK Vantage](#) seats on flights to Beijing and Seoul from May 1.

Hanoi, Hong-Kong, Nagoya, Osaka and Shanghai will also be upgraded in June.

"We believe full-flat seats are the new quality standard for long distance business trips," says Finnair's Danish Sales Director Robert Öhnberg.



Finnair business woman comfortably reclined as she browses the IFE offerings onboard. Image Finnair.

"A trip with Finnair should be a promise of comfort and quality for our key business destinations. It will make us a strong alternative for business trips, especially trips between Europe and Asia." – Öhnberg.



Business man chillaxing on Finnair's new business class seat. He is not wearing his seat belt! Image Finnair.

In all, Finnair's new fleet renewal program is a 29 million euro investment. They will update their Airbus A330 and A340 aircraft.



Finnair business woman—slightly amused by her plot to take over the world. Image Finnair.

These seats are already installed on Finnair's four newest Airbus A330. By June there will only be three older aircraft left in the fleet, which will be replaced when the new generation of Airbus aircraft, the A350 XWB, which arrives in 2015.



A simple elegant meal onboard in Finnair's business class. Image Finnair.

Finnair also announced a renewal of their meal options last year, with their introduction of Signature Menus by top Finnish chefs Pekka Terävä, of Helsinki's Michelin-starred Restaurant Olo, and Tomi Björck with various award-winning restaurants in Helsinki, including Asia-inspired Farang and Gajin and the more Mediterranean Boulevard Social.

Business Class passengers will enjoy a selection of meat-based dishes and vegetarian options, inspired by the two chefs' signature styles. Terävä's menus are influenced by classic Nordic flavours, made with fresh local ingredients, infused with "the purity of Finnish nature." Menus created by Björck are inspired by the "passion of Asian cuisine," reflecting the best of Thai and Japanese food.

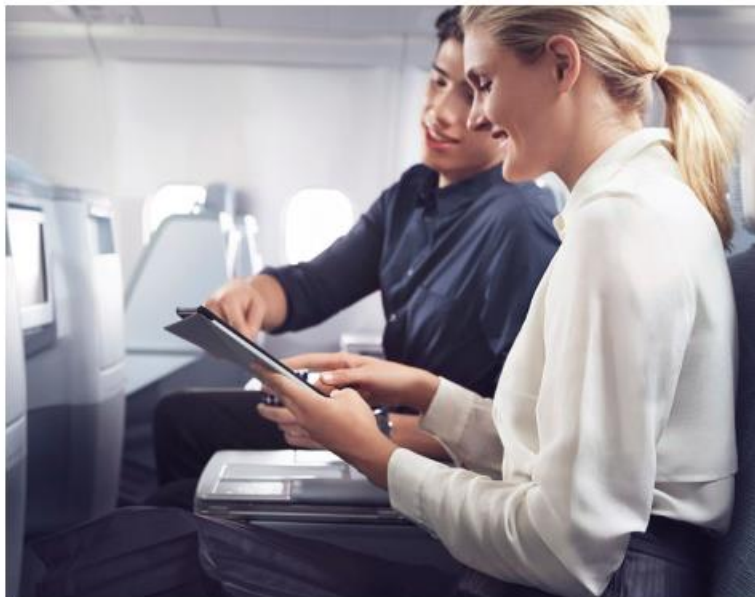
It all sounds tasty, and the tableware is signature Nordic design: appealing and understated.



Finnair business woman enjoys a little something sweet. Image Finnair

As she's enjoying her chocolate, this woman may also want to make the most of the inflight entertainment which Finnair upgraded in October, though their claim that passengers can now enjoy a choice of 72 movies and more than 150 TV shows, is not really as dramatic as other carriers' vast entertainment selections. Still, I suppose Finnair expects their passengers will be more interested in resting, sleeping and working (as well as having a nibble), and they've accommodated those passenger requirements.

If I could encapsulate the aesthetic of Nordic hospitality in a phrase it would be: "no more than you need and no less than you'd like." Finnair accomplishes that.



*Business passengers enjoy something together on a tablet device. Angry birds, perhaps?
Image Finnair.*

Those of us who keep an eye on these interiors developments may find that the Finnair Business interior is not one of the most dramatic, nor one of the most cutting-edge designs; but that is hardly the point.

They've focused on providing comfort and a pleasant environment for their passengers, and I believe they succeed in that. Of course, my personal tastes come into play here, and I like the light blue tones and incorporation of Chartreuse as a complementary colour. (Have you noticed that I like Chartreuse? And sky blue for that matter, though not so much this particular shade.)

Really, all our evaluations of these programs are extremely subjective. Each of us is influenced by a set of parameters which are entirely based on preferences for style and design.

That said, while Finnair's business class will not revolutionise our industry, its calm spacious environment will appeal to many, and improve the passenger experience just by providing a restful ambiance. It's not stuffy business either—no dark masculine tones. With more women entering the business class market, I may not be alone in thinking that this is a refreshing product.

One which would make me feel at home in the sky.

Finnair encapsulates their aims for the design with the phrase: "Sleep well!"

Yes, these are forward-facing seats; hardly the standard of luxury of some herringbone and nested seats in the market. While the Vantage seat boasts a 200 cm bed (long enough for even my rather tall husband to stretch out) and 58 cm breadth at the shoulders, the cushioning is not the thickest or plushiest. The blanket, with its large chartreuse dots on white, is not a duvet.

Still, I think I might manage to get a few hours kip.

The one major downside is that this seating does nothing for privacy. It doesn't push any envelopes at all, instead stays well rooted in design concepts of the past. It won't set any records or win any industry prizes. It won't gain the airline a five-star Skytrax rating.

But it may get good bookings all the same.


A key factor will be what moves SAS makes when they reveal the full details of their new interiors program. SAS are also focused on growth in Asian routes. (Who isn't?) They've promised to surprise me with that soon. Frankly, I can hardly wait.

Feature image of Business Class woman passenger and flight attendant being helpful with bag is also supplied by Finnair.

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