



TRAVEL INTEL • AIR TRAVEL

16 Things You Didn't Know About the Jet Lag-Ending Airbus A350

Written by Paul Brady • April 19, 2016



Getty Images

You can fly in an Airbus A350 on five global airlines.

It isn't just the world's most advanced plane—the Airbus A350 is also setting a new standard for luxury in the sky.

For anyone who's wanted to visit the Far East or Australia but was scared off by the umpteen hours you'll spend in the air, there's hope: The revolutionary Boeing 787 and the [brand-new Airbus A350](#), which made its first flight from the United States this January, are shrinking the globe, flying nearly 9,000 miles without refueling and, most important to you and me, incorporating technological innovations that make passengers more comfortable (and perhaps healthier) than they've ever been on board. Cabins are quieter and more spacious than any in history. And with fresher air, higher humidity levels, and intelligent lighting, seven miles up feels a lot closer to normal life on earth.

If beating jet lag sounds like a pipe dream, trust me, it isn't. After a 12-hour overnight to Doha aboard one of Qatar Airways' A350s, I felt completely rested, ready to explore the city instead of surrendering to a day-killing nap in my hotel. When you can feel that refreshed after a flight, imagine where you can go: Helsinki for dinner, Saigon for a long weekend. In 2018, Singapore Airlines plans to fly ultra-long-haul A350s from its home base to L.A., New York, and an as-yet-unannounced third U.S. destination. Total time nonstop is [more than 18 hours](#). The magic? It just won't feel like it.

LUXURY A350 AMENITIES

Qatar Airways' A350s have 36 fully flat biz-class seats with enormous 17-inch video screens (featuring 60 movies) and ample storage space, including a handy cubby for a water bottle inside the armrest—a nice reminder to hydrate after you hit the mid-cabin champagne station that starts pouring once the plane reaches cruising altitude.

[Premium economy seats](#) on **Singapore Airlines'** A350s have about six extra inches of legroom, footrests, and business-class-style meals, for roughly 50 percent more than you'd pay for coach.

Oftentimes, cutting-edge aviation design is reserved for those up front, but many A350 benefits—fresher air, quiet operation—extend to all passengers. On **Finnair**, light-gray upholstery brightens an already airy cabin, and blankets in Marimekko's Kivet print add a pop of color. More important, the “extra-wide-body” cabin allows for nine-across, 18.1-inch-wide seats.

BY THE NUMBERS

\$308.1 Million The average list price for an A350-900. That's less than the double-decker A380-800 (\$432.6M) but nearly triple the average price of the smaller single-aisle Boeing 737 MAX 8 (\$110M).

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6,000 Feet A350 cabin pressure maxes out 2,000 feet lower than on most commercial planes, reducing fatigue and headaches.

16.7 Million The number of shades of light the plane's LED lamps can produce, including sunset tones, which help induce sleep.

8 Number of "temperature control zones," meaning no more frigid passenger cabins. The default setting is 71.6 degrees.

25 Percent The peak relative humidity, which helps [reduce dry skin and chapped lips](#), even on super-long flights.

3 Minutes Time it takes to refresh all the cabin air, which is cycled through HEPA filters that trap 99.95 percent of particles, like bacteria.

57 Decibels Typical ambient noise level in a cabin at cruising altitude, about equal to the volume of a normal conversation.

+50 percent More than half the plane is made from carbon-fiber-reinforced plastic, including much of the fuselage, tail, and wings. Less weight means A350s are more fuel efficient than older jets.

WHO'S FLYING IT NOW

- **Finnair:** 19 planes ordered, three flying.
- **LATAM Airlines Group:** 27 ordered, one flying.
- **Qatar Airways:** 80 ordered, seven flying.
- **Singapore Airlines:** 67 ordered, one flying.
- **Vietnam Airlines:** 10 ordered, four leased (and flying).