



ETHIOPIAN AIRLINES

Dreams Take Flight

Currently the largest and most profitable airline in Africa, the country's flag carrier has impressive growth plans as shared by YARED BERTA.

It was back on December 21, 1945 that Ethiopian Airlines came into existence. The end of World War II ushered in the opportunity to establish a national civilian airline as Emperor Haileseelase, dispatched a delegation to the founding conference of the United Nations to seek assistance from the United States.

Then Trans World Airlines (TWA) agreed to assist, provided that the airline came up with the money.

In an arrangement sealed in September of 1945, TWA agreed to provide technical management and operation services while business management was provided by a board of directors split between the Ethiopian government and TWA officials. The official charter, signed several months later in December, marked the beginning of Ethiopian Air Lines (EAL).

"As the largest and most profitable airline in Africa, Ethiopian Airlines has uniquely positioned itself to fill the gap in African aviation industry," says Regional Director Yared Berta.

Ethiopian Airlines is today a Pan-African airline serving the continent for the last 70 years. The airline has been connecting Africa together and closer to the world.

"As a truly indigenous African airline, we are more dedicated to serving the continent than any other carrier.

"Since the very beginning, Ethiopian Airlines has been developing self-sufficiency in terms of building necessary aviation skills, aircraft maintenance and operations, while Ethiopian aviation academy provides internationally recognized aviation training for our staff."

New Heights

Berta lists Ethiopian Airlines many strengths.



Yared Berta,
Ethiopian Airlines Regional Director
China, Mongolia, & North Korea.

"With more than 52 destinations in Africa, Ethiopian Airlines offers the most convenient and hassle free connectivity within the continent."

The company operates one of the youngest and most modern fleets to date. "We have recently retrofitted business class seats of all our B777 aircraft into 180 degree full flat seats, which enhance passenger comfort and style. Unique and African flavored Ethiopian hospitality features onboard all our flights.

"Our Addis Ababa hub provides very short connection time to our vast network of more than 91 international destinations within five continents. It is strategically located at the center of current economic super powers including Brazil, India, China, and the Philippines. We fly to all these countries.

"We have our sights set on achievable goals our whole airline is working toward," says Berta. Dubbed Vision 2525, this long-term growth strategy targets 10 billion USD in revenue, a billion in profit, reaching 120 international and 20 domestic destinations with 140 modern aircraft, 22 million passengers, 820,000 tons of cargo, and 17,000 employees under its wing.

Minor Turbulence

Like every business, EAL too faces its share of industry challenges.

"Oil price and handling change hikes in Africa where we have our largest network pose a challenge as oil prices have fallen in the rest of the world. Lack of trained aviation professionals in the African airline industry do not make it easier. Then we have the lack of level playing field and the unfair competitive pressure coming from Middle Eastern carriers.

"We also lack adequate, safe and modern airport and runway infrastructures in Africa, and of course, the delay in implementing the Yamoussoukro declaration for liberalizing Africa skies is still much awaited."

Hopes Still High

"On the positive side, we have more than a 9000-strong well-trained, dedicated and skilled workforce that works relentlessly to make the airline shine high in the sky. We have an exemplary management team and a supportive government that fully understand the strategic importance for social and economic development of a country. The airline is 100% government owned but is operated and run like any private business without government intervention," says Berta.

"We are delighted to learn that EAL has won this year's HKMVC Award and we look forward to keeping up these standards of quality service that the public has come to expect from us." ■

For additional information please visit www.ethiopianairlines.com



A STAR ALLIANCE MEMBER