



QATAR AIRWAYS WINS TTG AIRLINE OF THE YEAR 2009 AWARD

Carrier Scoops Top Honours At Prestigious UK Travel Trade Gala Dinner



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TORONTO – Qatar Airways has earned further industry acclaim after being named *Airline of the Year 2009* at the prestigious TTG Awards in the UK.

The annual event, celebrating the best and finest in the UK travel industry, was a glittering black tie ceremony, held at London’s Grosvenor House on Park Lane.

Qatar Airways beat stiff competition from airlines worldwide to walk away with the coveted title from readers of TTG, a weekly UK-based travel trade magazine.

Qatar Airways Chief Executive Officer Akbar Al Baker said the Doha-based airline was honoured to receive the award, the latest in a string of accolades.

“We have once again demonstrated that we can outshine our competitors and what better way to be recognised than by our key travel trade partners who help influence customers’ choice as to which airline to fly with,” he said.

“To be named Airline of the Year is a magnificent achievement and I would like to extend my thanks to our UK team and the UK travel trade for working closely together to build a stronger partnership.”

“We have worked very hard to build our presence globally since the airline was launched just over 10 years ago. For such a young airline, this award from the UK travel trade is a tremendous feat.”

Qatar Airways’ UK country manager Rachel Finn received the award from co-hosts TTG Editor Lucy Huxley and Austin Healey, international rugby and *Strictly Come Dancing* TV star, in front of a high profile audience of 1,000 members of the travel industry.

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Said Finn: “We are very proud to have won this prestigious award. Our UK sales team has been working incredibly hard to develop and strengthen Qatar Airways’ relationship with the trade – and it is wonderful to have received such recognition.”

TTG Editor Lucy Huxley added: “These awards are regarded as a universal benchmark of quality within the travel industry. Qatar Airways demonstrated that it has an innovative and robust business model, which is expanding and thriving despite the economic downturn.

“We had a record number of entries this year, so it’s a great achievement to win. The awards are decided by a combination of travel agents’ votes and panels of industry experts to make sure we pick the most deserving winners.”

Judges faced a tough decision in the *Airline of the Year* category, but Qatar Airways finally triumphed because of the transformation of its trade relations over the past 12 months, its excellent onboard product and ever-expanding global network, added Huxley.

Competitor airlines were praised for excellent product and customer service. The judges, however, decided to reward the fresh approach to the trade brought in by Qatar Airways’ new-look UK sales team. This included making online offers available to travel agents; establishing new partnerships with tour operators; initiating a series of trade roadshows and familiarisation trips; and the launch of a new online training programme for agents.

Judges also felt that the carrier’s solid financial base gave customers reassurance during a turbulent time for the airline industry and there was unanimous praise for Qatar Airways’ excellence in customer service.

Qatar Airways currently operates six daily flights between the UK – four-a-day from London Heathrow and daily from both London Gatwick and Manchester – and its Doha hub.

The airline operates a modern fleet of 69 aircraft to 82 key business and leisure destinations across Europe, Middle East, Africa, South Asia, Far East and North America. The carrier has outstanding orders for more than 220 aircraft worth over US\$40 billion.

Over the next few months, Qatar Airways will expand its global operations with the launch of 6 new routes – Amritsar (October 11) and Goa (October 25) in India; Melbourne (December 6) followed soon after by Sydney marking the airline’s entry into the Australian market subject to government approval; and two other cities in Europe

Notes to Editors:

Ranked Five Star for service and excellence by Skytrax, the independent aviation industry monitoring agency also voted Qatar Airways’ cabin crew Best in the Middle East for the seventh year running in 2009 and Best Airline in the Middle East for the fourth consecutive year. Qatar Airways’ Economy Class has been voted Best in the World in the annual Skytrax passenger survey, in which more than 16 million travellers were polled. For more information, log onto www.qatarairways.com

Qatar Airways will operate a fleet of more than 110 aircraft by 2013 – almost double the existing size. Qatar Airways has ordered 80 Airbus A350s, 24 Airbus A320 Family aircraft, 60 Boeing 787s and 32 Boeing 777s, with deliveries of the latter having started in November 2007. The airline is one of the customers of the twin-deck Airbus A380 ‘super jumbos’ with five on order and scheduled for delivery from 2012, by which time the New Doha International Airport is scheduled to open. For more information, visit www.ndiaproject.com

FOR QATAR AIRWAYS CORPORATE IMAGES VISIT THE FOLLOWING WEBSITE:

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FTP URL: <ftp://ftp.qatarairways.com.qa>

User Name: [qrcomms](#)

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