

# WORLD'S LARGEST PASSENGER CRAFT MAKES FIRST TRIP



The Airbus A380, despite being around two years behind the schedule, has finally made its first commercial flight. The giant craft, with seats for 471 people was constructed in various parts of Europe. Its cabin was installed in Hamburg, Germany and its first assembly in the French city of Toulouse. Despite the delay in the launching of this immense project, those involved were delighted to see its completion recently in France. The delight was enhanced when the A380 completed its first trip from Singapore to Sydney.

Although this trip has been described as commercial, it is worth pointing out that all 471 places on board were auctioned on eBay for the benefit of charity. The whole procedure managed to raise \$1.25 million for various worthy causes.

The design of the airbus has not only raised a number of eyebrows, yet stirred up interest amongst the majority of travellers. The A380 has 60 business class seats on its upper deck and 399 economy class places which cover both decks. The layout of the craft prides itself on total privacy, as each suite is separated from the adjacent suite by sound-proof sliding doors. One passenger recently pointed out that it is the only aircraft he knows where his snoring will be tolerated by other passengers. Joking aside, the cabins are certain to be popular amongst those with children venturing on worldwide trips. Each suite was created by the French luxury yacht designer Jean-Jacques Coste and is equipped with a 23-inch TV screen, laptop facilities and luxury sleeping facilities.

The question of cost has certainly been a point of interest surrounding the airbus. The cost of tickets is currently around 25% more than of regular first-class flight tickets. As 18 more A380s are scheduled to be built over the next 4 years, this figure is expected to drop. Let's not forget the environmental benefits as this airbus burns far less fuel than other aircraft. The efficiency benefits have brought praise from many quarters.

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