

“Flying Palace”-with 150 million USD interiors

Air travel has become common, but not when it comes to flying that mile in ultimate luxury. A private buyer is reported to have placed an order with Airbus for acquiring A380 Flying palace. Work for its interiors have begun. *Edése Doret*, the interior designer talks to *Masooma Jariwala* on this exciting project of converting the world's largest passenger aircraft into a luxurious private jet.



A380-800 VVIP-Grand Dining Area.View Looking Forward (Main Deck) — Seating for 14 Guest with Credenza's on the left and right side each housing a 42 Inch pop-up flat panel monitor and a 70 inch flat panel monitor flush mounted into forward monument.

It is the world's biggest and probably the most expensive Jet. Termed as a 'Flying palace' the luxurious A380 converted from the world's biggest passenger aircraft is equipped with almost every comfort one would wish to experience in air.

Divided into three parts, a lower lobe, main deck and upper deck, there's a separate dining area for the crew and VVIP guests, communications room, master lavatory with shower and hot tub, bedrooms for VIPs and Guest are some of the features. In addition to the grand lounge it will have a 600-square-foot master suite, a Jacuzzi, a family dining

room, a game room and offices. The projected cost of the interiors alone cost around 150 million USD!!.

Thanks to the industry growth and the lifestyle changes that the rich prefer while traveling.

Edése Doret, a New York-based aircraft interior designer has been second time lucky to grab this unique opportunity of designing the interior of the 'flying palace' for a VIP guest.

For Doret, designing the interiors of the gigantic A380 has been an austere task. Despite into the business of aircraft interiors, "the big difference here was the 6,000 square feet of floor space

split between both decks, which meant it is equivalent to designing two A340-300 aircraft simultaneously. The size of the cabin has given us the opportunity to create a unique interior!!" said Doret.

Because of contractual obligation, Doret does not reveal the name of the VIP client but confirmed, "The A380-800 will be for Government use. We have been commissioned by our client for the interiors".

"This is actually our second A380 interior commission the first was for a Private individual from the Middle East. This was back in 2001 and the Aircraft was still designated as the A3XX. We



A380-800-Wet Bar-View looking inboard (Main Deck)

The Wet Bar is situated between the Grand Lounge (viewable on the left) and the Entry Area

were excited when we were awarded the contract and at the time no one had ever conceived of designing a private interior for such an aircraft. Unfortunately for us the Client backed out of the project and opted for a smaller (A340-300) Aircraft. We only created very preliminary layouts and basic renderings of the interior.” Doret informed.

“We were approached in early 2005 to design the interior of the A380. We felt very fortunate to get a second opportunity to design the cabin from this new customer.” He added.

Airbus David Velupillai, Product Marketing Manager told International Aerospace “Airbus have a couple of customers in the Middle East that are interested in acquiring an A380 Flying Palace, which is the ultimate in corporate jets.”

According to reports, the European

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jet builder Airbus is learnt to have signed a letter of intent with a Middle East buyer for its new A380s, which sells for about \$300 million-excluding the interior cost.

The dazzling interiors have lots of wooden floors, wood veneers, leather in various colours and nickel. Olive green and light beige are the predominant colours. There are 42 inch and 70 inch wall-mounted flat-screen televisions throughout, with live television, video on demand and Internet.

A true flying palace, Airbus’ 21st Century Flagship – the A380 – accommodates 120 passengers in luxury, with

intercontinental range claiming to give an unmatched comfort in an extraordinary environment. Commercial versions of this plane can be configured to seat as many as 853 passengers on two decks.

Past few years has not only seen an increasing demand for business jets, but also for interiors of the plane is given due importance for to attain comfort travel. When asked Doret how does he perceive the current and future interior design market of Business Jets, he said, “We have seen the industry grow over the past 4 years. It used to be that a Gulfstream was the mark of luxury for a private owner or corporation. Now these same owner and operators are looking to a BBJ or B757-200 which gives owners increased range flexibility and comfort. We see the growth due to security concerns and convenience.”

Doret has developed interiors for



*A380-800-Grand Lounge (Main Deck)-View Looking Forward into the Entry Area.
70 inch flat panel monitor flush mounted into forward monument which also contains
the VIPLavatory (accessible from the left hand side) and the Wet Bar (accessible from the right hand side).*

Embraer 135, Falcon 900B, Agusta A109E Power (4 Aircraft), Airbus A319CJ (2 Aircraft), A320CJ (2 Aircraft), A340-600, A380-800, Boeing 757-200 ER, Business Jet (5 Aircraft), BBJ2, 747-SP (2 Aircraft), 747-400, Lockheed L1011 (2 Aircraft) and McDonnell Douglas MD-11ER & MD87.

Starting from the bottom, the special features of the A380 interior includes, Lower Lobe:

Air force One Airstair to allow access to the aircraft from the tarmac, Crew Dining Area, Crew Galley, Crew Lavatory, Sleeping Quarters with accommodations for 8 on bunks, Communications Room, Spiral stairway which leads to the Main Deck. The Main Deck includes Entry Lounge, Grand Lounge, Dining Area with seating for 14, Main

Deck Galley and Staff Seating and the Upper Deck comprises of Stateroom, Master Lavatory with shower and Hot tub, Office/Library, VIP Bedroom with Private Lavatory, Guest Bedroom with Private Lavatory, Upper Deck Galley, Family Dining Area with seating for 8 and Oasis Lounge.

The Khaima Lounge (Oasis) is designed to simulate a desert environment in the aft section of the upper deck. The stairway in the background provides access to the main deck. The background comprises of the pressure dome with a desert theme mosaic containing fiber optics and mood lighting.

After the first client backing out of the project, has Doret or his client been affected by the delay in delivery of the A380 to which Doret replied, "The

delays were expected and they have not affected our work. Currently we are redesigning the upper deck and making minor modifications to the main deck."

On the expected delivery of the final project, Doret informed, "We are developing a massive architectural drawing package of the interior. This will be the basis of the BID package, which will be distributed to qualified facilities who will bid on the modification contract for the interior. At this time we have no expected completion date since there is no aircraft delivery schedule."

On the client's response to the design and scope for changes, Doret said, "The client is very happy with the design in its current state. However we do expect them to make changes as things progress." ●