



2018 WINNERS ARE ANNOUNCED!

Buyers and suppliers of onboard catering and services gathered at the Radisson Blu in Hamburg as the winners of the 2018 Onboard Hospitality Awards were announced.

In a hotly-contested process organised by *Onboard Hospitality* magazine, the 2018 award winners each received an impressive trophy celebrating their success in ten onboard categories, plus a Ones to Watch category which recognised products not yet onboard but actively targeting the onboard market.

Finalists were chosen by *Onboard Hospitality's* readers – the buyers and suppliers of onboard hospitality – through an online vote, and through assessment by a panel of industry experts which then went on to select the final winners.

The judges were asked to assess the products based on the following criteria: Innovation, First Impressions, Quality, Durability, Lifespan, Weight, Usefulness, Design, Functionality, Taste, Content, Adding to the Customer Experience.

Onboard Hospitality Editor, Julie Baxter, said: "These awards have become a compelling annual barometer of change for our industry. It is fascinating to see how the entries reflect trends in consumer expectations and operational changes. The standard of entries reflects the industry's ongoing commitment to enhancing the onboard experience and the evolution of the passenger journey. We are delighted to champion this year's winners and the exciting creations they have produced."

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Recognising that there is more to onboard catering than just great products, the awards also recognises industry personalities each year. The winner was En Route founder Alison Lessmann and, in her absence, was presented to Robin Padgett of dnata (En Route's parent company) by 2017 winner George Banks.

After eating a bad economy bread roll on a British Airways flight in 2002, Alison Lessmann founded En Route and, using her extensive contacts with European suppliers, made a success of her first £1.5 million contract before going on to many more.

The award-winning En Route team achieved phenomenal international reach under Alison's leadership, starting in Europe and moving on to cover the USA, Middle East and Australia. This global footprint, and the consistent quality delivered throughout – one product throughout 64 countries at one point – was Alison's biggest achievement, along with a trend-setting position in the industry, multiple awards for everything from design to entrepreneurship and a determined mantra: "nothing is impossible."

MENTORING NETWORK AWARD

New for this year was the presentation of two grants by the *Onboard Hospitality* Mentoring Network. All entrants into the awards were eligible to apply for these and the winners were:

Leadership recognition: CLIP

Break-through grant: Good4U

Winners and finalists were as followed...





BEST ONBOARD AMENITIES KIT

(Economy/ Low Cost Carrier)

WINNER: Air Astana – Kaelis

JUDGES SAID: We really liked this. Something thoughtful that you take away with you thinking, yes that was nice and it's useful - you carry on using it. If you arrived in economy and one of these was on your seat you'd be very happy.

HIGHLY COMMENDED: Garuda Indonesia – WESSCO

FINALIST: Aeroflot – AK Service

BEST ONBOARD AMENITIES KIT

(Premium Economy)

WINNER: China Airlines – FORMIA

JUDGES SAID: It's very rare to see a rigid amenity kit for premium economy. We liked this because it was unique in design and looked like a quality-made item. The fourth cabin offer is getting closer and closer to being a luxury product.

HIGHLY COMMENDED: Delta – BUZZ

**FINALISTS: Alitalia – Galileo Watermark,
Cathay Pacific – FORMIA**

BEST ONBOARD AMENITIES KIT

(Business)

WINNER: Qantas Curates – BUZZ

JUDGES SAID: Really good fun and links the airline with its home country by using local brands and promoting local art. You've got everything you need in there but they have also put some imagination into it. It's for an Australian airline and works with Australian creativity to give passengers something a little bit extra. This is imaginative and exciting.

HIGHLY COMMENDED: Air Astana – FORMIA

FINALISTS: Lufthansa – SPIRIANT; United Polaris – WESSCO/Linstol; HK Airlines – CLIP; TAP Air Portugal – Skysupply

BEST ONBOARD AMENITIES KIT

(First)

WINNER: Lufthansa – skysupply

JUDGES SAID: Really classy and substantial, with the feel of a lovely gift. It's got all the right things in it and is very well made. First class branding, first class craftsmanship and a really well-designed, clever way to give First passengers something they will really like as well as something they will keep and continue to use.

HIGHLY COMMENDED: American Airlines – BUZZ

**FINALISTS: Singapore Airlines – FORMIA; JAL – WESSCO;
United Polaris – WESSCO/Linstol**

BEST ONBOARD KIDS' KIT

WINNER: Buzz – Singapore Airlines Kids Range featuring Disney's Star Wars, Pixar and Marvel

JUDGES SAID: Most kids are going to instantly recognise these brands and there is going to be some kind of attachment straight away. It's got a good mix of things in there that are going to keep kids engaged on the plane but also some really nice takeaway products. The cuddly soft toy is going to be your friend for life!

HIGHLY COMMENDED: Air Astana – AK-Service

**FINALISTS: Hawaiian Airlines – Galileo Watermark;
Icelandair – KidzInflight; Saudia Airlines – Buzz; Milk Jnr's – Marella Cruise**

TREND SETTER BUSINESS OF THE YEAR

WINNER: FORMIA

JUDGES SAID: We wanted to acknowledge FORMIA beyond the usual categories, for raising the bar in First class gifting with its high-end kits, toiletries and sleepware, presented and tailored as bespoke gifts rather than just functional onboard amenities. This trend is taking the amenity offer to a new level.





BEST ONBOARD BEVERAGE

WINNER: Hawaiian Airlines – On the Rocks Craft Cocktails

JUDGES SAID: The beverage category is really hard to innovate in, there are so many products around and there have been for years so it's very hard to come up with something new that the passenger is going to really enjoy. Having a pre-departure cocktail to get you in the mood is fantastic. There have been many pre-mixed cocktails before but what this airline has done is tried to make something that is relevant to their location.

HIGHLY COMMENDED: Gateretail – MiniBarBox Wine Collection and Gin & Tonic

FINALIST: Air New Zealand – Fine Wines of New Zealand

BEST ONBOARD CATERING INNOVATION

JOINT WINNER: Virgin Trains East Coast – RG

JUDGES SAID: This range offers simple, homely comfort food that people crave when they are travelling and promotes some good suppliers and artisan producers. Everything is tasty and moist and has good flavour. It's like a modern café that you get on the high street, onboard. Simplicity itself.

JOINT WINNER: Absolutely One gategroup

JUDGES SAID: Absolutely One has been following the Holy Grail of most airlines and airline caterers, to try and recreate the restaurant dining experience in the sky, in economy. This is a full tray of food as opposed lots of tiny little bits and it's decent quality, served in a very clever way. It maximizes the use of space, ticks a lot of boxes and just looks great.

FINALISTS: Schaer Gluten-free range – Oakfield Farms; The Barista Cup; SATS Soup On-the-Go

BEST ONBOARD SNACKS

(Premium Economy/Economy)

WINNER: Qantas Ovenable Noodle Box – Global-C

JUDGES SAID: This is a funky little box which fits really well into the airline trolley and the product inside was great. It smelt good and included bits you

could add in to funk it up and make it individual, plus the box itself looks stylish and has a lockable lid – so no splashing in turbulence!

HIGHLY COMMENDED: Snackbox To-Go – American Pancake Bites

FINALISTS: En Route – Tapas Box; En Route – Pastrami Ciabatta; Gategourmet – Bites we love; The Bake Factory – Vegetable Gratin Pie; Mr Lee's Noodles

BEST ONBOARD SNACKS

(First/Business)

WINNER: NibNibs – McGuire & Associates

JUDGES SAID: This stood out for lots of reasons: it has great packaging, the smell of the product was really good, and it's a nice little thing to nibble on. It tastes really good, is not too crumbly and its packaging is kind of cool and makes it stand out.

HIGHLY COMMENDED: Jymy 1917 Pine Organic Ice cream, Suomisen Maito

FINALIST: Italian Gelato – MV Food & Services

BEST ONBOARD SERVICE EQUIPMENT

(For Crew)

WINNER: Zodiac Cool Trolley – Zodiac Aerospace

JUDGES SAID: The functionality of this cart not only improves the quality and safety of the food itself, and the temperature of the catering, but it also allows airlines to upgrade their service, so it is multi-functional.

HIGHLY COMMENDED: ECRGo2 - ECR Retail Systems

FINALIST: Malton In-flight – Ministro Serving Flask





BEST ONBOARD SERVICE EQUIPMENT

(For Passenger)

WINNER: SAS Cube – deSter

JUDGES SAID: This is entirely different to what is currently flying – very new and innovative. It uses stylish, good design principles, very true to its Scandinavian roots, and seems good for the crew too. People love unwrapping presents and opening a box like this adds a little bit of excitement to the passenger experience.

HIGHLY COMMENDED: Lufthansa Economy concept – SPIRIANT

FINALISTS: Alessi for Delta – BUZZ; Hong Kong Airlines – Clip

BEST FOR WELLBEING ONBOARD

WINNER: Uppy! The Genius Flyer

JUDGES SAID: As a frequent long haul flyer I know how important rehydration is onboard and this is a simple but effective idea. The combination of citrus and ginger is a more sophisticated flavour than other rehydration drinks currently on the market. It tastes refreshing, healthy and slightly exotic – which is a bonus for a travel product. Even the smell of it gives you a pick me up!

FINALIST: American Airlines Sleepsuit and Slippers – Casper, facilitated by WESSCO

BEST FOR SUSTAINABILITY

WINNER: Black Bagasse tray – WK Thomas

JUDGES SAID: This tray is made out of the remains of sugarcane and has a very simple, interlocking mechanism. It is completely disposable and looks good. It has a matt effect which works well onboard and for those who do notice environmental credentials, this would bring quite a benefit.

HIGHLY COMMENDED: E.Lite Bone Ceramics – deSter

FINALISTS: ANA Neal's Yard Business Amenity Kit – WESSCO; Media Box – Media Carrier

BEST FOR ONBOARD TEXTILES

(First/Business)

WINNER: American Airlines – Casper bedding, facilitated by WESSCO

JUDGES SAID: The whole range was well thought through, from an airline perspective as well as being a great branding collaboration. It's easy to stow and use for customers and crew. The partnership resonates because Casper is all about the quality of sleep. Aligning with them speaks volumes.

HIGHLY COMMENDED: Saudia Airlines First Class Porsche Lounge Wear – FORMIA

FINALISTS: Singapore Airlines First Class LALIQUÉ Loungewear – FORMIA; White Company Bedding for British Airways Business – Matrix; Qantas First Class Sheridan Bedding – Galileo Watermark

BEST FOR ONBOARD TEXTILES

(Premium Economy/Economy)

WINNER: WESSCO – Café Kit for Air Canada

JUDGES SAID: The bag is multi-functional and a great experience for the customer. It also connects really strongly with the Air Canada brand, taking the kit offer to another level. A really differentiated product.

HIGHLY COMMENDED: Intex – Icelandair Ribbed Blanket and Message Pillow

FINALIST: Sheridan x Qantas Baby Blanket – Galileo Watermark





BEST USE OF ONBOARD TECHNOLOGY

WINNER: BoardConnect Suite – Lufthansa Systems

JUDGES SAID: This product is a game changer - now and for the next ten years! Not only is it efficient, practical and versatile but the open API infrastructure means this is future-proof. It's built to advertising industry standards and has three levels of scalability, across long-haul, short-haul and regional flights.

HIGHLY COMMENDED: Gogo 2KU

FINALISTS: Level Pair and Pay – IAG/BlackSwan/Massive;
INPLAY – IdeaNova Technologies

ONES TO WATCH

- **Interlocking Box – Global-C**
- **PC Glassware and Bowls – RMT Global Partners**
- **Street Food Pastries – STR-EATS Food**
- **Single-Use 100% Cotton Table Linen – MYdrap**

The judges were excited to see the growing attention to environmental issues in the products entered in all categories but especially in the Ones to Watch category. Clearly, sustainability has become a hot topic and to give some recognition to those pioneering in this planet-friendly field two additional companies were recognised as:

FUTURE-SCOPING BUSINESS OF THE YEAR

JOINT WINNER: Galileo Watermark

JOINT WINNER: Matrix

JUDGING PANEL

We had 20 judges positioned worldwide who are all specialists in their fields:



George Banks, culinary expert

Former regional catering manager with Emirates and catering manager concept development for Emirates lounges. 33 years with British Caledonian Airways and British Airways. Author of *Gourmet and Glamour in the Sky* - covering a history of airline catering. Based in the UK.



Mike Crump, managing director, Honour Consulting

Mike was previously head of design management at British Airways for over 15 years and left in 2006 to become a partner of Honour Branding. Mike is now the founder and managing director of the aviation design and innovation consultancy offshoot - Honour Consulting. Mike continues to consult with several airlines but his most notable project was design management of the remarkable onboard product and experience for Etihad's A380, B787 and A350 aircraft. Based in London.



Keerthi Hapugasdeniya, chef, HappyK Solutions

Chef Happy is a high-profile, international celebrity chef whose company is one of the leading service providers to the airline industry. Founder and CEO of APOT.Asia. Based in Melbourne.



Nik Loukas, founder, Inflight Feed

Nik runs the highly-popular consumer airline food site inflightfeed.com and writes for consumer and industry media outlets on airline food trends. He also offers consultation services to airline catering companies. Based in Ireland.



Karen Robinson, supplements editor, The Sunday Times

Karen travels extensively to write about holiday destinations and overseas real estate worldwide for one of the UK's leading national newspapers. Based in London.



Andy Hoskins, editor, The Business Travel Magazine

Andy has nearly 15 years' experience in travel journalism, writing for both leisure and business publication aimed at professionals in those sectors. He specialises in hospitality and aviation.



Charlotte Ronholt, founder, Go Traveling

Charlotte is the owner and founder of this digital travel magazine, one of the most downloaded free travel magazines in Europe. She has worked in and written about the travel industry for more than 15 years. Based in Denmark.



Pat Riddell, editor, National Geographic Traveller (UK)

Pat has been editor of this leading travel magazine since it launched in 2010 and has overseen the brand's growth into digital platforms, events and awards. Based in London.



Ariane Van Mancius, Now New Next Food & Packaging Consultancy

Ariane has worked for Helios, deSter and Supplair (gategroup) and has dealt with more than 150+ airlines worldwide. Her passion lies in translating trends into concrete product offerings. Based in Amsterdam.



Markus Gilges, director business development, VT Miltope

Markus runs business and system development activities for VT Miltope in the EMEA region, providing hardware, software and cyber security solutions for optimised and cyber-secure wireless data infrastructures in and around aircraft.



Ms Trinh Diem Vy, chef & restaurateur

One of Vietnam's most recognised foodies, Chef Vy is impassioned by global flavours and runs two celebrated restaurants and a cooking school, famous both in Vietnam and abroad. Based in Hoi An.



Mike Pooley, md, Purpose-Made-Solutions

Mike spent over 19 years with gategroup and today advises on business/product development and strategic programmes on projects in the travel, hospitality, food and lifestyle sectors.



Keith Yates, chairman & ceo, YATES+Partners

An expert in design and service, with some 30 years of extraordinary involvement in service and product development for aviation, Keith has overseen extensive projects for many leading hotels and airlines. Based in Bangkok.



Lance Hayward, md, The Hayward Partnership

Lance is the founder of The Hayward Partnership, providing management consultancy and interim management services to the travel catering and retail sector. With over 30 years' of experience, his focus is helping small, medium and large organisations to succeed. Based in London.



**Lyn Hughes, editor-in-chief,
Wanderlust**

Founder of the UK's leading consumer travel magazine, Lyn received an Outstanding Contribution Award in the British Travel Press Awards and is ranked one of the 'Top 60 Most Influential Women in Travel in the Last 60 Years'. Based in the UK.



Simon Soni, onboard consultant

Simon has worked in the onboard industry for over 25 years at some of the world's leading airlines. Most recently he was vp catering at Qatar Airways for two years as they introduced the new QSuites and regained the Skytrax Airline of the Year Award 2017.



Marc Warde, md, Niche

A restaurateur and culinary consultant, Marc runs gluten-free restaurant group, Niche, in London and owns a special meals manufacturing business. He has worked in the onboard sector for many years, advising the likes of Alpha LSG.



Valentina Harris, chef and author

An award-winning author of over 40 books on Italian food and a well-known celebrity chef. Valentina works with eminent food experts, scientists and medics on a Food Values initiative which began in Vatican City. She is committed to supporting and mentoring professional women in the world of food, beverage and hospitality. Based in the UK.



Roy Moed, industry innovator

Roy was founder and head of Pourshins until its sale to gategroup in 2007. He was on the IFSA board for nine years and chairman of the Mercury Award Committee. He also received the IFSA Lifetime Achievement Award for services to the onboard services industry. Based in the UK.



**Sandra Pineau-Boddison, senior
consultant, Oliver Wyman**

Sandra has over 25 years of experience in the airline industry, with her most recent role as senior vp customers at United Airlines, responsible for the carrier's customer experience. Her passion is for empowering employees to take excellent care of customers.