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Genuine surprise as BA ditches its caterers for the best in the business

12 SEPTEMBER 2018 BY ROB

33 COMMENTS

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It is fair to say that the HFP view so far on the promises of major improvements in Club World business class is sceptical.

It has, after all, taken a year to roll out a new blanket across the network. BA couldn't even get that right, as the original batch was apparently the same colour as the aircraft carpets and had to be scrapped as a trip hazard

Yesterday, however, came some very interesting news.

British Airways is ditching its current caterers. This means goodbye to Gate Gourmet and DHL at Heathrow and Alpha at Gatwick, although Gate Gourmet will continue to provide inbound catering on some routes.



Here is the shocker. **The Heathrow contract has been given to DO&CO.** If you've never heard of DO&CO, they are effectively the Mercedes / BMW of the airport catering world. They are responsible for catering on Austrian Airlines which is the best regarded long-haul European airline for business class food.

DO&CO was already providing the catering on the New York JFK and Chicago routes but did not have the capacity at Heathrow to do more. **This new contract launches in 2020** and presumably runs long enough to justify DO&CO investing in new facilities. In reality they may end up buying the current Gate Gourmet operation.

When British Airways originally launched its upgraded Club World catering proposition – [you may remember Anika's lengthy article on the press launch](#) which involved a specially chartered aircraft – the food they presented to the media was DO&CO.

There was an implication that DO&CO was taking over the entire operation. It came as a bit of a shock, a few months later, to realise that – on routes apart from JFK and Chicago – the new Club World catering was generally the same old Gate Gourmet stuff on fancier plates.

Of course DO&CO can only work with the money that British Airways is prepared to spend, but it would be odd to bring in a high-end caterer and then not give them the money they need to do a proper job.

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Over at Gatwick, catering is being taken over by Newrest. Newrest currently supplies catering at London City for CityFlyer and inbound from Santiago, Lima, San Jose, Accra, Lagos, Cape Town and Johannesburg.

As usual, the proof of the Club World pudding will be in the eating, but this is positive news.

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Genghis says:

12 September 2018 at 05:51

Interesting. Flew BA to Chicago a few months ago and thought the food was very good. Didn't realise it was separate catering from most other ex-LHR flights.

[Reply](#)



Steve-B says:

12 September 2018 at 07:05

Agreed, good experience on my trip to ORD last month as well.

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James Henson says:

12 September 2018 at 07:25

Sounds better than my last flight on the A380 to Miami. The food was average to say the least.

[Reply](#)



Nicky says:

12 September 2018 at 11:17

I flew Club on Monday, food dreadful, ended up having an economy main course. Crew the worst I have ever experienced: disappeared into galley after food eventually served in dribs and drabs. A bit too much gossiping and not enough service. Service I would expect in economy but not Club. Even PE seemed to be treated better. No drinks offered at all until afternoon tea rolled out 30 minutes before landing: this was on a day flight. Would like to add I will go elsewhere but as a leisure traveller and collector of Avios, travelling business on another airline would be out of my price range. Complaint to BA on my return, that's a promise. Really disappointed.

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trickster says:

12 September 2018 at 14:14

Why should you expect that service in economy – nobody on the plane should expect bad service.

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