



The new Air France uniform

Christian Lacroix **AIR FRANCE**


Press release:

The New Air France Uniform designed by Christian Lacroix

5 April 2005 is a day that will go down in history for Air France. That is the day that 36,000 men and women at Air France will don the new Company uniform designed by Christian Lacroix.

After 17 years with no major changes, Air France decided in December 2002 to entrust a huge project to one of the greats in French fashion. His mission was to draw on his trademark elegance to translate the spirit of the French flag-carrier into a collection the Company's personnel would be proud to wear and one that would embody Air France's ambition in terms of customer service.

The result is here: some one hundred items of clothing and accessories for the 17 professional categories in contact with the clientele. The theme colour is navy blue, combining the carrier's identity, classic elegance and functional practicality.

« The choice of Christian Lacroix clearly demonstrates Air France's desire to return to its traditions of collaboration with a great fashion designer. This choice also proves the central importance of the Air France workforce in the Company's corporate strategy, and how much we care about pleasing our 42 million passengers each year, most of whom are international travellers, »

Jean-Cyril Spinetta

« Designing a uniform for Air France, France's roving ambassador, that is totally open to cultures the world over, is a wonderful opportunity. To some extent, Air France and high fashion belong to the same world, which has to reconcile traditions and technologies, and whose aim is to project and perpetuate the French style of gracious living, »

Christian Lacroix

April 2005

The new Air France uniform designed by Christian Lacroix

High fashion takes on the world of air transport: a timeless universe where tradition blends into dream

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1.1 The lines

1.2 Colours and prints

1.3 Fabrics

1.4 Details and accessories

The new
uniform from
every angle



'Christian Lacroix wanted to go beyond designing a uniform to create an entire wardrobe'

'It is also a break from tradition to have a complete collection created from start to finish by the same designer'

'a uniform that allies elegant Parisian chic with a touch of originality, a wardrobe that is both discreet and refined'

The new uniform from every angle...

The new uniform: its multiple facets

The Air France identity expressed in a hundred ways

Christian Lacroix wanted to go beyond designing a uniform to create an entire wardrobe: some one hundred individual items that can be combined in a multitude of ways, allowing each person to develop a distinctive wardrobe to suit his or her personality, morphology, culture and profession. This is essential because it is the men and women who wear the uniform who are in direct contact with Air France customers. For the first time in the history of the Company, men's and women's uniforms have been designed at the same time, creating a real homogeneity in style. It is also a break from tradition to have a complete collection created from start to finish by the same designer: gloves, pumps, bob hats, coats and dresses all come from Christian Lacroix, creating a coherence rarely found before.

Three basic tenets underlie the collection: the style had to express the identity of Air France, go beyond passing fashion and combine the functional with the pleasurable. The result is a uniform that allies elegant Parisian chic with a touch of originality, a wardrobe that is both discreet and refined.

Variations on the classic "Air France" colours enabled a clear visual identity while remaining in step with today's tastes. The basic colour remains dark navy blue, the colour

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'the colour of Air France for over 70 years, lending a sense of precision and professionalism'

of Air France for over 70 years, lending a sense of precision and professionalism. Blue-grey adds a touch of softness and femininity, and is perfectly in line with the Air France brand universe, so inextricably linked with the sky. Red appears as a highlight only, to express dynamic vitality. Print fabrics give the distinctive Christian Lacroix stamp to the collection. With these shades, Air France moves beyond the traditional "red, white and blue" codes that lent a certain formality to earlier uniforms.

The "Air France look" according to Christian Lacroix: cut, fabrics and details

'The challenge was to design a harmonious collection for 11,000 men and 25,000 women with great morphological differences of ages running from 20 to 60, working in temperate, hot and cold climates...'

1.1 The lines

The "uniform" is a circumscribed universe but this collection, with the multiple choices and combinations possible, offers great scope for personal expression. The challenge was to design a harmonious collection for 11,000 men and 25,000 women with great morphological differences (women's uniforms range from European size 32 to 48), of ages running from 20 to 60, working in temperate, hot and cold climates...

The styles are fitted; women's jackets are distinguished by an "Air France" epaulette with a Chinese-style upward fillip. These characteristic features of the new uniform accommodate all statures, creating a stylish silhouette that is graceful and harmonious. Visually underscoring the waist and shoulders in this way inspires confidence and conveys a sense of precision, seriousness and professionalism.

1.1 The lines, cont...

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The uniform lends a certain authority appropriate to the safety role required of air transport professionals.



'Blue-grey evokes the sky and is particularly appropriate here as it flatters all skin tones and hair colours'

1.2 Colours and prints

Navy blue remains the basic colour, because it is indissociable from the history of Air France but also because it lends a sense of authority which is indispensable in a uniform. Blue-grey evokes the sky and is particularly appropriate here as it flatters all skin tones and hair colours. Red appears only in touches (gloves, belt) on basic uniforms. Because it is highly visible, it is also the colour chosen for the accessories worn by hostesses in airport lounges, making them easily identifiable in the crowded visual universe of the airport.

For men, the elegant, classic shirt is once again white.

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‘Christian Lacroix has designed an original print for female staff, inspired by the seahorse "uncurled" and accompanied by a lacy motif, typical of both his label and of a couture brand’

Because true elegance resides in details, a print was especially created for linings: all outdoor clothing, meaning all items that can be worn unbuttoned, like coats and jackets, have a "Jacquard" lining featuring the winged seahorse that has symbolized Air France for 70 years, coupled with the new Air France logo. Moreover, Christian Lacroix has designed an original print for female staff, inspired by the seahorse "uncurled" and accompanied by a lacy motif, typical of both his label and of a couture brand. Lace is a constant in all Christian Lacroix creations, lending a note of lightness and femininity. The same print is used for scarves and bandannas, in white against blue-grey or white on red, edged by the handwritten initials of Christian Lacroix alongside an "Air France" border. The same motif is found in navy blue tone-on-tone on stewardesses' purses and on belt pouches.



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1.3 Fabrics

To ensure long-lasting wear and good condition, Air France has chosen a yarn-dyed fabric that avoids all risk of differences in shade due to successive colour baths. This will make it possible to replace just one part of a suit, for example, such as the trousers or skirt which show wear more quickly. The use of the same colours and fabrics also reinforces the visual homogeneity of the Air France crews and staff.

Great attention to the choice of materials used is essential for long wear. In this case, it was important for the uniform to continue to look impeccable even after 12 hours in flight. For this reason, the fabrics are virtually wrinkle-proof. They are nonetheless noble, natural materials. Knits are wool and acrylic blends, for easy upkeep. Coats are 100% combed wool that feels soft and hangs well, much like cashmere. Shirts and blouses worn next to the skin are 100% cotton.

Shoes are full grain calfskin; they have leather soles and are lined with naturally tanned leather, to ensure comfort, lasting wear and elegance.

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1.4 Details and accessories

Style and chic are also in tiny details. Top stitched seams, a distinctive touch on the new uniform, underscore the lines of all tailored garments: on the front of the wrap-around skirt, on the tabs of jackets and fitted coats, on the fabric belt for the dress. Similarly, overstitching is found on all heavy items and accessories by Christian Lacroix, becoming a signature for the uniform: gloves, gold and silver buckles on leather belts, knit scarves and tie clips, for example. Inside pockets are decorated with red piping and the lining of the purse is red, as well, for easier visibility. The collection is absolutely complete, including even maternity wear, to dress staff from head to toe for every phase of their professional life.

‘Top stitched seams, a distinctive touch on the new uniform, underscore the lines of all tailored garments’



2.

- 2.1 Grounded in the past to invent a future
- 2.2 Christian Lacroix: a unanimous choice
- 2.3 When creation rhymes with observation
- 2.4 The uniform takes shape
- 2.5 Air France personnel discover the new uniform...
- 2.6 ... and the new badges

From atelier to
aircraft: the story
behind the creation
of the new
Air France uniform



From atelier to aircraft: the story behind the creation of the Air France uniform

The uniform as a component of corporate strategy

The uniform: an image-maker

A uniform is far more than simply clothing worn at work, it conveys a corporate image. It has symbolic value both for the people who wear it and for the Air France's passengers who identify it immediately.

The uniform worn up to 5 April was the result of successive company mergers. The "frégate" shirtwaist dress designed by Madame Carven was introduced in 1987. Over the years, the uniform, created for different companies and by different designers, had lost its distinctive identity.

In addition to its unifying function, however, the uniform structures the relationship between Air France and its customers, the central focus of the Company's corporate strategy. The personnel who wear the uniform are the vectors of this relationship as they are in direct contact with the clientele. To demonstrate its marketing ambitions, Air France decided to invest fully in this new creation.

Furthermore, as merger has succeeded merger, with identities, styles and experiences meeting and fusing, Air France has been profoundly transformed. It has risen to the forefront among the leaders in air transport; it was only natural to express this metamorphosis through its corporate uniform. In 2001, Air France made the decision to change

'Air France has been profoundly transformed. It has risen to the forefront among the leaders in air transport; it was only natural to express this metamorphosis through its corporate uniform.'

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'The premise from the outset was that the uniform had to symbolize French elegance, in the great tradition of collaboration between Air France and the greats in the world of haute couture, while showing an openness to other world cultures'

its uniform to accompany and spotlight the change in its status. A four-person team was formed to work full-time on the ambitious project which, in a tenuous economic environment, was confined to a stable budget, i.e. some 20 million euros.

The premise from the outset was that the uniform had to symbolize French elegance, in the great tradition of collaboration between Air France and the greats in the world of haute couture, while showing an openness to other world cultures. While the Company is a living emblem of French style and tradition, it is also global in scope, with a clientele base that is 55% international travellers.

In search of harmony... a close-up on Christian Lacroix

2.1 Grounded in the past to invent a future

'This blend of history and modernity, French elegance and openness to the world, is perfectly interpreted in the new Christian Lacroix uniform'

Throughout its history, Air France has called on the creative greats of France, not only in the world of design to define its use of space, but also for its uniforms, with Dior and Balenciaga. The challenge has been to reflect the history of the Company while projecting it into the modern world, expressing its essential brand values, reconciling creativity and tradition, weaving the story of its workforce into the fabric of the future, honouring the passage of time. Only a great fashion designer could take up this challenge.

This blend of history and modernity, French elegance and openness to the world, is perfectly interpreted in the new Christian Lacroix uniform.

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" Christian Lacroix was chosen because he is a logical step in the history of Air France which, over the years, has joined forces several times with great French designers. Developing a new vision of the "French touch", this creator has succeeded in finding the balance between an expression of corporate identity and the freedom to express oneself, between elegance and modernity," said Jean-Cyril Spinetta, Chairman and CEO of Air France...

For Christian Lacroix, "Air France is an airline which is changing fast, so it was necessary to establish its corporate identity and very special individuality and personality. I found the project of designing a uniform made to last very exciting, as was the idea of combining haute couture and customer service, fashion and timelessness, the past and the future."

'the unique allure of the Air France man and woman in a style, a vision, a range of colours'

2.2 Christian Lacroix : the unanimous choice

In June 2002, Air France began to consult various designers. The objective for September 2002 was to present the unique allure of the Air France man and woman in a style, a vision, a range of colours. The proposals were presented anonymously, so as not to influence the decision, and took the form of sketches and drawings accompanied by a suggested colour palette.

To ensure a judicious choice, Air France formed a steering committee composed of 15 Vice Presidents with three working groups constituted by a consulting firm. The first was composed of staff wearing uniforms, the second of frequent customers of the Company and the third, of experts who, due to their professions, were easily able to project themselves 5 to 10 years into the future.

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The Christian Lacroix project for a timeless collection, a "look" that combined discreet elegance with details that gave the uniform a distinctive personality, was unanimously selected in December 2002.



'In the process, they had the opportunity to learn much directly from the staff, collecting information also about the needs and expectations of each one and trying to understand the constraints put upon them by the work they do, their rhythms of standing and sitting and obviously, climatic conditions'

2.3 When creation rhymes with observation

Immediately, Christian Lacroix began, piece by piece, to design the wardrobe. The first thing he asked was to discover first-hand the universe of the men and women of Air France who wear a uniform in their daily work.

To go behind the scenes at Air France and observe in person as many professions and people as possible, Christian Lacroix and his teams visited Orly and the Paris-Charles de Gaulle hub to acquaint themselves with the work of ground staff, and accompanied crews on both domestic and long-haul flights. In the process, they had the opportunity to learn much directly from the staff, collecting information also about the needs and expectations of each one and trying to understand the constraints put upon them by the work they do, their rhythms of standing and sitting and obviously, climatic conditions.

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'From his observations in the field, Christian Lacroix began to develop original concepts'

'Their objective was, in a very short time, to create a complete range of 46 prototypes'

2.3 When creation rhymes with observation, cont...

From his observations in the field, Christian Lacroix began to develop original concepts, like the multi-pocket jacket for ramp staff that enables them easily to move around with their working gear. The cut of the clothes was also defined during this phase, with "bottom" garments - skirts and trousers - designed with a somewhat low waist to give ease of movement while remaining elegant; waists can be adjusted without elastic, reconciling comfort and elegance.

2.4 The uniform takes shape

The house of Christian Lacroix dedicated a complete team to the project; for 6 months they developed prototypes for the collection. Their objective was, in a very short time, to create a complete range of 46 prototypes.

At the beginning of April 2003, the first prototypes were presented, with priority given to the basic items like jackets, skirts, trousers, dresses and blouses. All items were tried on by teams of Air France staff of various origins (some were based, for example, in Moscow or Guadeloupe) and were also examined by specialists such as "industrial medicine and safety" experts.

In May 2003, the real "as worn" tests were carried out. 80 staff members from all sectors of the Company tested the new uniforms for one month under real conditions. Their objective: to choose jackets and trousers, select fabrics or change certain details. Loops originally planned for the dress were eliminated, for example, because they hampered the stewardesses' movements, which meant changing the original two-part dress pattern with its belted waist.

Next came the production phase. Air Frances sought suppliers who could guarantee optimum quality while

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strictly controlling their costs. The scope of the mammoth project is clear from a few startling figures: 1 million metres of fabric ordered and more than 16 manufacturers mobilized. In all, over 650,000 items were produced. The fabric, on which the quality and lasting wear of the uniform depended, was produced in French factories, as were the badges and most leather accessories. The uniform was part of an industrial logic which also, however, implied drawing on foreign suppliers, essentially in Europe.

2.5 The Air France personnel discover the new uniform...

Once the collection was finished, the second phase was launched: each of the 36,000 agents had to choose his or her wardrobe and try all items on in order to receive everything in time for the launch date on 5 April 2005 throughout the world.

Because it was a new uniform, it seemed indispensable to present it to the staff who would wear it, giving them a chance to touch it and see it close up and, above all, to try it on. For three months, from February to May 2004, measurements were taken worldwide: some sixty tailors were mobilized to collect the measurements of 31,000 people. Trips to the French provinces and abroad (New York, Papeete, Dakar, Mexico City) were organized with the reference collection. This was not a traditional ready-to-wear collection, since alterations were pre-industrialized with, for women's trousers for example, four types of configurations. These adjustments were necessary to avoid an excessive number of alterations on receipt of the uniforms. Having tried on the uniform, agents recorded their orders electronically. The preferred items: the jacket, approved by 80% of the men, and the dress which, all colours taken

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'The preferred items: the jacket, approved by 80% of the men, and the dress which, all colours taken together, was a great favourite of the women'

together, was a great favourite of the women. Once orders were placed, production was launched beginning in April 2004. Garments were made and sent to the home of the recipient. Deliveries began in September 2004, with distant stations being given priority, and were scheduled through March 2005. After that, if necessary, staff can exchange or have alterations made to their uniforms, going through the Company's uniforms department.



Eric & Céline Travers / Instantis - t.

'The uniform indicates one's belonging to a company, while the badge specifies the role and responsibilities of each within the company'

2.6 ... and the new badges

Air France took advantage of the change in uniform to ask its brand image consultants to change its personnel's badges. The uniform indicates one's belonging to a company, while the badge specifies the role and responsibilities of each within the company.

The new badges had to identify the Air France brand in the SkyTeam Alliance and the responsibilities on the ground or in the aircraft of the wearer. The language is universal: the wings symbolize those who fly, with the Air France logo in the centre for those with a commercial role (flight attendants). The badge is accompanied by a SkyTeam stud pin, the size of a button. The insignia worn by ground staff is lighter than in the past, with a symbol of a globe.

3.

A daily reality for 36,000 people

3.1.1 Who wears it?

3.1.2 How are uniforms replaced?

3.1.3 How is the uniform worn?

3.1.4 Upkeep

3.1.5 What becomes of the old uniform?

Key figures and dates

3.2.1 The new uniform

3.2.2 The Air France uniform
through 70 years of history

3.2.3 Air France

3.2.4 Christian Lacroix

The story and the realities of the Air France uniform

3 |

The story and the realities of the Air France uniform

A daily reality for 36,000 people

3.1.1 Who wears it?

All Air France personnel in direct contact with the clientele wear the uniform. This includes cabin crew (male and female flight attendants), cockpit crew (pilot, copilot and flight engineer), and commercial agents in the airport or in Air France ticket offices. Ramp staff supervisors also wear the uniform.

3.1.2 How are uniforms replaced?

All personnel have a wardrobe, known as an "allocation", corresponding to their profession. Actually, this allocation is a budget to be managed over the years. In the first year, certain items are mandatory: belt, pair of shoes, an outdoor garment (coat or raincoat), summer and mid-season clothing for women and, generally speaking for men, two jackets and two pairs of trousers. Each item has a point value and the order cannot exceed a certain ceiling.

Each year, those who wear uniforms can replace some items depending on the number of points remaining to them.

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3.1.3 How is the uniform worn?

All personnel wearing uniforms receive a little manual which is an invaluable reference, called the "Guidelines for Staff Uniforms", covering all aspects of clothes and grooming. For example, belts are always mandatory, for women and for men: worn on a skirt or trousers, this accessory adds the finishing touch to the overall silhouette, defining clean, graceful lines.

In addition to rules concerning clothing, there are others on hair and makeup to ensure that Air France staff are well groomed at all times: women's hair styles must be neat, classic and always impeccable. Accessories must be discreet and in navy blue only. Makeup is required but must not be overdone. Discreet, classic, elegant jewellery is permitted in limited amounts. Nails must be cared for and polished.

Men must be close-shaven; beards and moustaches must be short and well groomed. Hair is natural and always cut short.

3.1.4 Upkeep

Most items are machine- or hand-washable. However, Air France assumes the expense of some upkeep of clothing by distributing cleaning vouchers or cleaning allowances.

3.1.5 What becomes of the old uniform?

For security reasons, all old uniforms will be turned in and destroyed. Similarly, because uniforms are the property of Air France, they must be turned in when staff retire or resign.

3.

Key figures and dates

3.2.1 The new uniform

- 36,000 staff members including 25,000 women and 11,000 men
- 31,000 meetings to take measurements
- 100 items designed by Christian Lacroix
- 650,000 items manufactured
- 1 million metres of fabric ordered
- 11,000 parkas ordered

3.2.2 The Air France uniform through 70 years of history

- 1946 : Georgette Renal for Air France
- 1951 : Georgette de Trèze for Air France
- 1962 : Marc Bohan at Christian Dior for Air France
- 1964 : Nina Ricci for UTA
- 1968 : Pierre Cardin for UTA
- 1969 : Cristobal Balenciaga for Air France
- 1971 : Jacques Esterel for Air Inter
- 1973 : André Courrèges for UTA
- 1976 : Jean Patou for the Air France Concorde
- 1976 : Maison Rodier for Air France
- 1978 : Carven, Nina Ricci and Grès for Air France
- 1979 : Hermès for UTA
- 1985 : Nina Ricci for the Air France Concorde
- 1986 : Christian Dior for UTA
- 1987 : Georges Rech for Air France
- 1987 : Nina Ricci, Carven and Louis Féraud for Air France
- 2005 : Christian Lacroix for Air France

3.

'Third-ranking carrier worldwide'

'leading European airline'

'43.7 million passengers'

'84 countries'

'189 destinations'

'369 aircraft'

'1,800 flights every day'

3.2.3 Air France

Third-ranking carrier worldwide in terms of international passengers transported (source IATA), and leading European airline in terms of traffic (source AEA), Air France transported 43.7 million passengers in 2003-2004 (including 42 million on Air France-operated flights) in 84 countries, serving a total of 189 destinations.

With a fleet of 369 aircraft in service on 31 March 2004, of which 117 are operated by regional carriers, the Air France Group offers some 1,800 flights every day.

Air France is a member of SkyTeam, the airline alliance that groups Aeromexico, Alitalia, CSA Czech Airlines, Continental, Delta Air Lines, KLM, Korean Air and Northwest.

The new Air France-KLM Group created in May 2004 is now the world's leading air transport group, with annual turnover of 19.2 billion euros, and number three worldwide in terms of revenue passenger kilometres.

The Air France-KLM Group offers its 66.3 million customers a global network of 225 destinations in 130 countries.

3.

'60 boutiques'

'1,000 sales points'

3.2.4 Christian Lacroix

Founded in 1987, Christian Lacroix's company comprises 60 boutiques or stands in its own name and sells its products in over 1,000 sales points all over the world. Today its haute couture is internationally renowned for its creativity, for which the inspiration comes from the blending of cultures.

Apart from its women's ready-to-wear range, the Christian Lacroix brand includes jewellery, leatherware, scarves and ties, shoes, lingerie, children's clothes, wedding dresses and even tableware and perfume. He launched a range of men's ready-to-wear garments in 2004.

