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On Your Flight Today – Season 1, Episode 7 – Pushing the boundaries of aircraft seating design

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Host: Corinne Streichert

Guest: Alejandro Nunez Vicente, Founder & CEO of Chaise Longue Economy Seat

[Introduction]: In this episode we are joined by Alejandro Nunez Vicente, creator, founder and CEO of the Chaise Longue economy airplane seat design. I invited Alejandro's on to the show to share his journey with us. What impresses most about this young man is his passion, determination and dedication to push the boundaries and shape the future of passenger experience for the next generation.

Intended to offer more choice in seating for the economy cabin, the development and subsequent controversy surrounding the Chaise Longue highlights the challenges of innovators designing products for the airline industry who challenge the status quo and disrupt established norms, making people uncomfortable and leading to resistance.

Designing airplane seats presents numerous challenges due to the unique environment and constraints of aircraft cabins. One of the primary challenges is maximizing space efficiency. This requires designers to balance the size and shape of seats with the space available, while also considering factors such as legroom, seat pitch and overall comfort which Alejandro is attempting to do in very creative ways.

Ultimately a careful balance between creativity, research, testing, passenger comfort, space efficiency, safety, and cost just to name a few is needed. Successful designers must be able to navigate these challenges while also staying up-to-date with the latest trends and technologies in the industry as it can take years to bring a product of this nature to market.

History offers us examples of other innovators who have gone on to prove everyone wrong in their respective industries and perhaps I wonder, if Alejandro Nunez Vicente will be a name associated with disrupting aircraft seating with an idea that sparked in his parents basement, started off as a University project, that has led him all the way to the global Aircraft Interiors Expo in Hamburg, Germany.

[Corinne]: Welcome, Alejandro. Thanks for joining us. How are you today?



[Alejandro]: Well, I'm very I'm very well starting on a Monday morning again. So a little bit tired from the weekend, but really, really, really ready to take off again.

[Corinne]: Fantastic. And you're joining us today from Madrid in Spain. That is your home town, is it not?

[Alejandro]: Yes, that's where my parents live and where I was born and raised. So, yeah, I guess it's my hometown, too.

[Corinne]: And I know this is a podcast and I can see you, but the audience won't. Is this where, is this the room where the idea of the chaise longue was born?

[Alejandro]: Yeah, this is the basement room right next to the garage. It's a little bit cold, but it's very good for concentrating and for being alone. So this is where all the ideas came out and then where the Chaise Longue was born as well.

[Corinne]: Firstly, before we get started, congratulations. I know you've picked up a few awards and most recently the Promising Aero Start Up Award.

[Alejandro]: Yeah, it feels good. It feels good. There has been a lot of effort and a lot of work behind chaise longue. It's not only the concept that you can see on the 3D and it's very rewarding to see that people appreciate the effort and also take into account that we are just starting as a start-up and that there are not many start-ups in the aviation industry. So it feels really good to see that some people already appreciate the effort and want to push us forward.

[Corinne]: Great achievements there, especially a start-up coming into an industry that is quite regulated and, you know, so, so much going on and that's fantastic. So I just want to spend some time talking about the chaise longue in your journey and research. So I guess to start from the beginning, can you give us some insights into the chaise longue? So we know it started in the basement of your parents home, but just kind of a high level of the journey to where you are now.

[Alejandro]: Well, it all started when I was at TU Delft University. I started working for the Flying V aircraft, the aircraft interior team for the Flying V aircraft. And there I was assigned by my tutor to create the economy class of the future. My tutor back then was Prof. Peter Vink from TU Delft University. And what he wanted me to do is to reimagine the economy class of the future. So that's when I started working with different concepts. And one of the ideas that came to my mind and that had been on my mind already a long time was putting one passenger a little bit higher than the other one. This came from me traveling a lot when I was at university because I of course, I'm Spanish and I live, I lived in Spain, but I used to go to university in the UK and the Netherlands



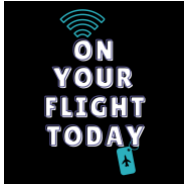
and luckily the planes were long haul planes. They were normally a twin aisle, you know, so wide bodies that were taking me to London or to Amsterdam. And there the space for my legs was still very tight. So I was thinking, why they don't just raise this passenger a little bit higher so that I can sit underneath it. So that's where the idea came from. And then I worked on it for six months at TU Delft, presented it to some experts from the aviation industry, and they told me and my tutor to keep going with the project. So that's when the Chaise Longue really started to take off. We put a lot of time into it. I guess it was one year and a half before anyone could see the concept, and now it has been more than two years already working on it full time.

[Corinne]: And I know you were at Aircraft Interiors Expo in Hamburg showing your seat. Unfortunately, we didn't get a chance to, to connect there. It was a crazy time. Those conferences usually are. Can I ask how was it received? You know, it was an opportunity for many airline people, particularly the experts in, you know, for seating at various airlines and manufacturers to sit in the seat on both levels. What was some of the feedback that you got at AIX?

[Alejandro]: Well, I would say that AIX has been the highlight of the year for the project. We had a lot of expectations from it and we also had a lot of people looking forward to seeing our concept there. So, we spent a lot of time working on the prototype that we then presented at the Aircraft Interiors Expo. And I can just tell you that it was a success. Of course, there are still some things to polish around the concept and around the prototype, but in order to make this happen, we only had two months, uh, before the AIX, to build the prototype to get everything ready and the feedback from the people and the experts that sat on it was great. The only concern, of course, was around certification. But we are working, this is work in progress basically. So we are working on it right now and we are going to solve it for sure in the next few months, I would say next few months.

[Corinne]: So I guess getting into the some of the specifics about the seat, I know there's a lot of information on the Internet for our listeners to, to look up know it's been well documented and written about. In terms of, you know, just for our understanding and for the listeners that, you know, maybe not so close to it. So it's a two level layout because I looked at, you know, what you have online and your 3D seat map is the innovation in the seat as well as the layout of the seat. I mean, where's the intellectual property here?

[Alejandro]: Okay. Basically, what we have defined is like one module that has two rows of seats at different heights. The first row is at normal seating height, so you would be sitting at the same height as you would do nowadays. And the second row is a little bit higher in order to give passengers that extra legroom and extra space for both the upper and the lower row. There is the intellectual property is around the way we have managed to put this structure together with the mechanisms and everything in order to



take up the same space that we take up nowadays with the economy class. So that means that we are able to maintain the passenger capacity, but we can increase the passenger comfort by quite a lot because we add almost one metre of legroom in the lower row and in the upper row, we add a 125 degree recline angle, which is twice the angle that you have nowadays for reclining in the current economic class. So that's the intellectual property lies around the whole seating concept. It's not just the structure and not just the seat. It's a combination of both.

[Corinne]: I did say some various kind of mockups and designs. I was also curious because it looked quite different to what I'd seen before, the actual seat itself, you know, irrespective of its position. So is there anything unique about that seat?

[Alejandro]: Well, we are trying to incorporate and add all the technology that has been developed in the last few years, because when you look into aircraft seats nowadays, they still look very much the same as they were 40 years ago. Probably the technology inside the in-flight entertainment screens and everything has changed and the foams for the seats. But if you look at it and you look at one seat from 20 years ago, you can barely tell the difference. You need to be an aircraft interiors expert in order to be able to say, Oh, this seat is 20 years old and this seat is brand new because otherwise, where's the difference? Less legroom, less padding, I don't know. So for us, what we are trying to do is incorporate new technologies that have been already developed for other sectors or business areas. For example, office chairs. They are much more comfortable than an aircraft seat and we spend the same amount of time sitting on our office chair than we do on, on the aircraft seat when we're flying. So why haven't they been able to compare these seats yet? That's one of the things that we are thinking of in the next few, next few steps of our development. And also we are thinking about changing the type of technology that we have nowadays in seats.

[Corinne]: Thank you for that insight. So, we've got the two levels, seat width and pitch. So, the top level, what, what are we looking at width and pitch wise?

[Alejandro]: Okay. The pitch remains the same. You have the same amount of legroom that you would have nowadays, but you have much more knee space. And when I say this is that normally when you are tall above one, 1m 80cm, you normally have your knees laying against the seat in front of you. And that for 30 minutes is all right. But when it gets up to an hour or more, your knees start hurting because of the contact with the seat in front of you. So we have tried to get rid of that, taking advantage again of the vertical height and your knees are not in contact with that surface anymore. Even for me that I'm 1m 90cm or 6 foot two, around 6 foot 2, I have almost ten centimeters in front of me, left of space before my knee touches the the wall in front of the surface in front of me. So we have generated a much larger knee space and leg space with the same seat pitch.



[Corinne]: I'm looking at my other screen at some of the designs and I'm just thinking, okay, well how did you get that extra knee room?

[Alejandro]: Without changing the pitch? Yeah, because the, the difference there. Well, the, the, the big change is when you compare the upper row with the lower row sitting right behind the pitch, there is a little bit smaller, but you don't notice that because you are literally sitting underneath the passenger on top. So you have much more legroom. So it looks like you're losing pitch, but you are not really because you have much more legroom underneath the passenger sitting on top of you.

[Corinne]: But and for the person on top, it's pretty standard with what economy that they have today?

[Alejandro]: Yeah, it is. But the only advantage is that you have 125 degree recline compared to the 110-115 that you have nowadays. So it's good 10 to 15 more degrees more of recline.

[Corinne]: The name Chaise Longue is really describing that lower level of seats because it is like a Chaise Longue, a traditional one of those long French chairs.

[Alejandro]: Exactly. Some people don't get it, but I see you got it straight away. The name of the concept is called Chaise Longue because of the reclining movement of the lower row, just like a Chaise Longue sofa. The seat pan slides forward and the backrest also goes forward with the seat pan to give you that recline as well.

[Corinne]: Okay, so it's named after that bottom row of seats, not so much because I've heard it referred to, you know, obviously double decker, two tier. So different names to describe the overall structure. But it's that extra legroom.

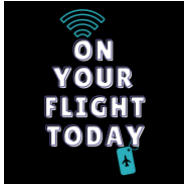
[Alejandro]: With our concept there two things happen. Some people love the upper row and some people love the lower row. So it's not really that you can say one is better than the other one. But for example, if you want to travel alone and you're working and you want a lot of space and you don't want anyone reclining in front of you, then you would sit on the upper row because you have that space and no one is going to be able to invade it. Otherwise, if you want to travel and sleep for the whole flight, then you would go probably to the lower row because you can fully recline your legs, fully extend your legs and almost recline fully. You, you go to 125 degrees, which is something that you are not available to do nowadays on the economy class. So, for me, the price tag is not the problem. I know airlines will have that challenge, but of course it's, it's a product differentiator and it will make airlines have frequent fliers more often. You know, if you can choose between these seats or current standard economy seats in another airline, you'll probably go for these ones.



[Corinne]: Yeah, and that's kind of what I was thinking because I would see that the Chaise Longue offering the ability to stretch your legs in an economy cabin would probably command some type of premium, you know, as opposed to not being able to stretch your legs. So, I was wondering if that's part of the value proposition that you're putting towards airlines, that, hey, you can differentiate your economy cabin even further with this and offer those that do want to get, you're not getting in a lie flat position obviously you've got to go to the front of the plane for that. But to be able to have a much more comfortable versus putting in sleepers in economy like we've seen an airline, you know, in the South Pacific, you know, they've got something coming out. So, this could be an alternative to that and they can kind of maximize some revenue there versus the top row where you don't have anyone encroaching upon you, which could probably be more for loyalty, recognition. You know, top tiers get upgraded to that.

[Alejandro]: Yeah. We don't want to say now that the Apollo is going to be more expensive than the lower row and or the other way around because we know that airlines will get into that part and they will try to put a price tag onto every type of seat or the the price difference that there will be. So we don't want to get involved with that. We just want to improve the passenger experience enough to make the airline consider making these seats better for their passengers, for their premium passengers or for the, for the passengers that, you know, fly a lot or that want to spend some points or miles on it. So, yeah, it will still be economy. We, we want to remain as an economy class seat because at the end of the day we are maintaining the passenger capacity. So why wouldn't it be called the economy? You still have the same seat pitch. You know, so what we're trying to do is improve the passenger comfort while maintaining the passenger capacity so that the airline has a win-win situation. They win. They generate different streams of revenue, as you were saying, so they can charge you more depending on how they want to do it. And then the passengers on the other side will be much more satisfied because they have the choice. Nowadays in economy, you only, have you only can choose your seat or the or the emergency row. Uh, for, for seating. With this you can actually choose three different types of seats within the economy class. And I think that's a big advance, uh, or, or advantage compared to what we have nowadays.

[Corinne]: And interesting how you still see it as economy. I mean, I guess for me, the ability to stretch your legs, that comfort can't put a price tag on that to be able to stretch your legs compared to what you know, we're doing these days. So that's what I see as potentially, oh, there could be some value here because, you know, for example, today you've got premium economy or economy, extra legroom, economy, some call economy plus those kinds of products where for a few extra inches you're paying a higher premium.



[Alejandro]: I don't want to unveil anything of the future, but I can just tell you we are just using an economy class configuration nowadays.

[Corinne]: This has been really fascinating. And I'm not, you know, I'm the first to admit I'm not a seat expert. It was never my area of expertise.

{Double chime sound}

[Corinne]: I wanted to ask about the research that you've done, different areas in the airlines. Have you done any research with any cabin crew and asked them, thinking specifically of the service model? So you're in an economy cabin, you're not getting the same level of service, and I know it varies across the world, but typically you won't get the same service that you get in premium economy business or first class. But from a service perspective, from a flight attendant, are there any concerns or challenges that flight attendants have expressed to you?

[Alejandro]: Well, what I know is that we are getting rid of a big problem, which is the overhead cabin storage, especially in countries like America. There's a big problem with a flight and cabin crew being able to close these compartments because once on top of everything, they are very high. So they cannot sometimes they cannot reach it. And it's obviously very hard for them to also put luggage into it. If a, if an old lady or an old man is trying to put their luggage up there, normally it's the cabin crew who have to help them and sometimes even the cabin crew cannot do it. So, for once, we're getting rid of that problem. And on the other side, we're also increasing the seats, the seat capacity of the aircraft in a way, you know, because we are putting the same amount of economy class passengers, but airlines will put much more of these seats into their widebody aircraft. So we will probably not difficult to service, but we will make it a little bit different because, of course, you have passengers now on the lower row and on the upper row, and it's harder to serve those in the upper row, but it's still possible to do it because the height, like people see the concept and they think it's very high, but it's not above 1 meter 50cm of height, so you can still serve it below your shoulder, which is one of the main concerns of, of flight attendants when they ask us, how can we serve up their hot drinks, for example? Yes. Because it's still underneath the shoulder level. But that's something that we will further explore. And we are, we are working on that right now. Actually, we're doing more research. But in terms of general research, we carried out a lot before starting with this concept because as I told you, this project started as a university project in TU Delft, and one of the things Tu Delft is very proud of is all the research they carry before they bring out a design. So with my tutor, Prof. Peter Vink, I applied a lot of the research carried out by TU Delft and by other universities, and we tried to apply everything that was learned from those research and investigations carried out into this concept. So that's where the 125 recline comes from. Also, where, where the seating position comes from, the seat pan, the backrest angles, everything



comes from research. It's a concept fully based on research, and then it's defined into different heights. But yes, we carried out a lot of research more on the passenger side than on the service side. But of course, we know that we will have to carry out that research as well very soon in order to be able to tackle all the all the points of view. We are also thinking that we can, we can streamline this kind of service a little bit more. And I won't give you any hints because this is something that we are really working on and we, we are putting a lot of time into it, but we are thinking that the way of serving food nowadays is a little bit weird because they serve the food like you're in a restaurant, but you're really not in a restaurant. So why would they do that? It's much better to get a box with everything. Some airlines do this already, but the way they pass you the box is still a little bit odd because if you have someone eating or someone doing something, they are passing a box in front of your face. So, we are designing some kind of mechanism or device that will allow a cabin crew to serve meals much more easily and without any passenger touching the food.

[Corinne]: Okay. Yeah, because obviously, you know, with COVID and everything, we're all quite sensitive to the touch. There are quite a few airlines in the US and I've travelled on some internationally for shorter flights. You might get snack box options, so that works. But on a longer haul flight, if you're for example, as I told you, I'm from Sydney and you used to do Sydney - LA, which is like 14, 15 hours depending which direction. So you do kind of want a hot meal along the way, which I think would be hard and challenging in a box. So that's why I'm thinking that would probably one of the use cases to consider the actual service of that.

[Alejandro]: That's true. That's true. But we also see how they serve hot meals nowadays. And trust me, this year I've been traveling a lot and I've done some very long haul flights as well. And what I see is that it's not sustainable at all. Even if they say that they are using wooden forks and knives and they are trying to not use plastic, everything is paper. There's still a lot of waste there. And I think that could be solved in many ways with the technologies that we have nowadays in order to make everything 100% recyclable. So, it's a it's a new development that we are carrying out on the side of the concept that will be integrated to the concept afterwards, because we know, we know it's not sustainable. Like you can tell from all the all the material that they give you and all the waste that is created that then all that goes most, most of the time it goes to the bin. But there are many ways in which you can make that 100% recyclable.

[Corinne]: And would I be correct in saying so, you've got this seating concept for economy. You're not stopping there?

[Alejandro]: Yeah.

[Corinne]: Aside from obviously, I'm sure you're probably looking at other cabins somehow, but you're also looking at the, the service options, the other amenities within



that cabin and how it complements the seating environment that you have developed. Would that be kind of like would I be correct in saying that?

[Alejandro]: You would be correct in saying that, yes. And we also want to make people know that, yeah, we're coming. We're coming with a lot of concepts. So, get ready.

[Corinne]: Okay, great. So, some exciting news there. And you know, my imagination runs wild in this space, so it sounds like some exciting things to come from the Chaise Longue team. So, whenever there's something new and I know when we first connected, I'd seen there have been so much positive feedback. But then I've also read and, not so positive, some negative feedback as well. So, I know that whenever you're doing something new and innovative, there'll always be lovers and there'll always be haters, but we can learn from both of them. So, I guess...

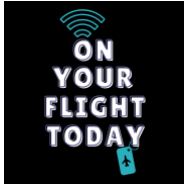
[Alejandro]: Yeah.

[Corinne]: For example, as I was researching, I saw CBS News in Minnesota, one of the states in North America. They had a segment on the Chaise Longue, I think it was just after AIX they ran a survey on their Facebook page for their viewers. They showed a picture of the Chaise Longue and they said, how do you feel about this? And people went on to their Facebook to comment. And at the end of the show, they revisited it. And the comments were like, "No, I'm claustrophobic", "I'm claustrophobic", "No, this wouldn't work".

[Alejandro]: I haven't seen that one. I haven't seen that one. I have been seeing quite a lot of articles and news coming out, but I didn't see this one. So right after this interview, I'm going to go and check it. But I guess I know where, where the what the results are going to be in that case.

[Corinne]: Yeah. And so I guess my question to you, there are a lot you know, there are skeptics in anything, anything new. And I think how are you handling, how are you addressing those concerns? Obviously, claustrophobia. There are some statistics that in Australia, 5 to 7% of people suffer from claustrophobia. It was estimated in America up to 12.5%, over 10% in the UK via their respective health services. Not that all these people that are claustrophobic happen to fly on an airplane and it will fly this one, but there is a general feeling about claustrophobia not having that space and also not being able to see the whole cabin, especially if you're sitting underneath on the lower deck. You can't see above, you can't see what's going on. So how are you addressing those critics? I mean, how are you kind of, you know, responding to the concerns and issues that they were raising?

[Alejandro]: Well, to be honest, I get their point. But as I say, you cannot judge a book by its cover, and you cannot not judge a seating concept or a, or a seat aircraft seat



from a picture. You know, and this is what the people is doing. They see a picture and they judge directly. Oh, it's claustrophobic. Well, come and try it. And maybe, maybe then you will be able to say if it's claustrophobic or not, because I cannot really tell if I'm claustrophobic sitting in an aircraft seat right now from a picture. I need to sit on it and then later I'll be able to judge. So, yeah, the first impression is always important, and I guess that some pictures out there are not the best ones to show or describe the concept. But to be honest, I'm not worried because most of the people, and I would say over 95% of the people that have sat in our prototype and our concept have enjoyed. Enjoyed the concept and they haven't had any comments about claustrophobia. Of course, we were talking about economy class seats. So the space there is still very tight. But if you compare it to the current economy class seats, it's less claustrophobic. And I'll tell you why. First of all, in the lower row, which is the, the main concern for all these people in the lower row, you have much more legroom and much more space, even visual space, because you don't have anyone sitting in front of you. So, no one will recline in front of you ever. So, they won't invade your personal space. The person sitting above may recline, but it's not within your vision. It's true that you are much more in a much more enclosed space because you have a structure in front of you. But that can be solved in many ways and we are exploring those as well. You can use lighting, you can use screens, you can use different types of designs or features that will decrease that claustrophobia. And then what I always say there will be a choice. You will be able to choose the upper row, the lower row or the or the outbound seats in the in the window seats, you know, the window rows, because our seat is meant to go in the central row of the aircraft for now. So, if you're claustrophobic and you really hate the Chaise Longue concept, you will always be able to go back to the current economy class seats that there are nowadays. But to be honest, it's much more claustrophobic in those seats than in our concept. So I'm not worried about that. Of course, I get the point of people seeing a picture and judging from it, because I also do that when I see a concept and maybe I don't like it at first. But yeah, I always go back to the to the phrase that you cannot judge a book by its cover and you cannot judge this project from one picture only. So it's good to make those polls. And I guess it's it gets a lot of media attention, which is what they are looking for. But I'm not really into that. We're here to improve the passengers, passenger experience. And to be honest, I'm not worried about the process. I'm more worried about the results. And I'm going to make sure no one feels claustrophobic in there, even if they have a very high claustrophobia. I'll make sure that, that doesn't happen in our seat.

[Corinne]: A lot of people do tend to judge, you know, in these days when you're purchasing an airline seat, you're doing it online using a product. There's software out there that you can really get in the seat and have a look. So there are other options for those that may feel claustrophobic. They can sit in the window and not have that. So having said that, do you feel that this seating arrangement could be more targeted to the younger generation? Like younger people would probably want to sit there as

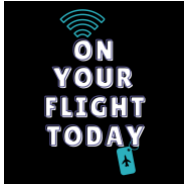


opposed to elderly people that need more assistance, that can't go up the stairs or can't get too low? Is that kind of what you're seeing, this product being more suited to?

[Alejandro]: Well, the product has different types of seating, the upper row and the lower row, and it also has different types of accessibilities. So, for the upper row, it's true you need to climb three steps. Some people cannot do it. I can tell you that my grandma, who is 87 years old, has done it, but still some people cannot climb those steps. So that's why we created this lower row with a seat pan that retracts into the structure so you can basically push your seat, pan into the structure and you have a free way or a corridor in your row of seats. Then you get into your seat and then you can pull that seat again out. So, we have made it much more accessible in the lower row and a little bit more complicated for the upper row. But your question about the younger generations, well, we are the new generations that will be flying in ten, 20, 30 years ahead. And what I can tell you is that we like to have choices. We don't like to, to just have one option and have to stick to that option the whole flight or with anything. If you look at smartphones, there are 20 different types of smartphones, laptops, the same whatever it is, we need choices. Now, before you used to have TV, one channel and you would watch that channel or that's it. Now you have Netflix, you have Amazon Prime, you have all these things that give you choices and we want choices. And that's one of the things that you can find out when you're looking at younger generations. We won't just adapt to what there is. We want more and we want it better and faster, I would say. So we are trying to provide that for younger generations. But at the end of the day, what we're trying to do is increase the comfort for younger generations, older generations, whatever it is, if they want to fly comfortably, they will choose the Chaise Longue for sure.

[Corinne]: Yeah, it definitely does bring options into the cabin. And I guess really it's up to the airline now, their business model and if the economics make sense and they feel that they will be able to fill those seats and there is a demand for it, it sounds like it could be an option that they will pursue. And you touched on accessibility. That's something that is very close to my heart, not just physical accessibility, but also visual, hearing, people with disabilities. I mean, someone that requires assistance or that's traveling with a support animal like a guide dog would not be able to sit here. They'd be sitting on the window on the other seats?

[Alejandro]: Well, you could sit on the lower row. If you're carrying animals, you can sit on the lower row because as I'm telling you, the leg space is almost one meter in front of you. So, you can put even a big dog can be sitting down there. You won't be able to stretch your legs, maybe, but there will be much more space for the dog to sit with you in your compartment. And it will also be hiding from the other people because of course, it's in the leg space and the leg room. So it would be much quieter for the dog as well. And then current economy class cabin where he can see all the feet and everything. So there are things that we still need to consider. But I would say that for carrying animals



and we have tried this already; you can put your dog on the, the lower row. So, so on the lower row in front of your legs.

[Corinne]: Oh, okay. So, it would fit a guide dog that a blind person would use?

[Alejandro]: It would. It would. And even we are trying to improve the accessibility for wheelchairs. This is something that we haven't started working on yet. But as we have this structure and these modules and the seat pads can retract, we know that there's an option there for wheelchairs and we will explore that very soon. We have some good leads and we have made contact with some people that are working on this already and we will try to implement that into our concept as well for the bulkhead row. So, the first row of the Chaise Longue that will be against the bulkhead we're trying to create there or generate more opportunities there for accessibility.

[Corinne]: Yeah, there is a lot going on about that at the moment.

[Alejandro]: That's part of the continuous research that we carry out. So we are always aware of these new documents and these new surveys coming out. So we are very, very much looking forward to the results of those. And then we try to apply those straight away into our concept because as I'm telling you, we don't have a seat yet. We don't have something that is being manufactured. So, we can, we can make these little tweaks and changes that will make the seat adapt to these new regulations and to these new surveys to make them better, to, to improve the results.

[Corinne]: You do see this as a potential product for other modes of transport, potentially trains and buses. So you're not limiting yourself to aviation?

[Alejandro]: No, aviation is just the beginning. To be honest, it's where these projects started and to be honest, where I wanted to, to happen. Because at the end of the day, people appreciate much more good aircraft seat than a good train seat. And that's just because normally aircraft seats are not very good in terms of comfort for a long-haul flight. So for me, my target is to change how passengers fly in the aviation industry, but we don't limit it to that. And we know we have been approached already by the rail industry and by the, by the road industry buses. When I say road, it's not cars, it's buses, long distance buses and overnight buses. And we know that there's potential for this already in this, in these industries. And the certification regulation is much lower. I would say it's not as hard as in the aviation industry. So of course, we are always considering where's, what's the best way to start selling our product or putting it on service for passengers. So yeah, we are, we are also developing those strategies. We are much more advanced in the aviation concept and in the business model, but we will definitely look into rail and, and buses very soon.



[Corinne]: You pick the hardest industry to start in, but it's probably a good thing because if you can conquer that, everything else is a piece of cake.

[Alejandro]: That's, that's what I say. Some people think I'm crazy because I'm just trying to go with a very radical yeah, with radical innovation into the aviation industry. But to be honest, what I say is if I can certify this for 16 Gs and all the all the problems that there are on certification related issues that you have in the aviation industry, then making it for, for rail or for bus is going to be a piece of cake. So maybe the effort at the beginning is worth not making such an effort when we're developing the next few concepts.

[Corinne]: It's just been so great to be able to talk to you about this because, you know, you see the media, different media outlets cover it. And but to really understand the thought behind it, what you're doing, your vision sounds, really exciting. It's unfortunate. You know, and that's why I wanted to invite you on the show, because I feel that the stuff I've been reading in the newspapers on the press is kind of positioning it in a certain way. And I'm like, hang on a minute...there's got to be something here. And you've really helped to clarify that vision and that future. Just on that note, you know, coming into the aviation market and starting there is one of the hardest markets. Can you tell me if there's one thing that surprised you the most about this industry like you thought, 'Oh, my gosh, I never would have thought that about aviation', 'Oh, this is so hard or so easy', what surprised you?

[Alejandro]: Well, to be honest, thank you for your words. First of all, yeah, it's been very hard to combat the media because, of course, they always try to put the dark side of things, you know? But we are trying to look at the bright side and we are trying to make it look like an improvement for passengers rather than a seat that will cramp and put more people into the airplane, which is what the media is trying to do sometimes. Some other articles are very good. But what I noticed when I came into the aviation industry is that it's a very conservative industry. Of course, people take innovation in a very hard way. Sometimes they give, they give a lot of constructive feedback, but most of the times they don't believe in radical innovation. You know, aviation has been an industry. If you look at the outside of the aircraft 120 years ago, they were making the first few planes made out of wood. And what is it called? Fabric, right? And now we have all these supersonic aircraft, the double decker aircraft, the 747, the A380, all these new technologies outside the aircraft. But then if you look into the, into the interior of the airplane, it hasn't changed that much. It was much better before actually in the golden age of flying. If you look at the 1950s, 70s, 80s.

[Corinne]: I have to say, I have to say it depends who you fly too, and where you sit on the plane. I've been fortunate some of the research I've done, I mean, I don't know how much flying you've done. There are certain regions in the world that you will find



experiences like none... you couldn't possibly begin to imagine in the premium cabin. But it is rare.

[Alejandro]: Yeah. So so when we talk about aviation and how good it is today, we just have to look back and see that of course, only wealthier people were able to fly because the service was, was on a different level. Now we try to put more passengers into the airplane to make it more efficient and to, to, of course, make more revenue out of it. But what I see is that people is very lenient to not like innovation or they don't like change that much. They like what, what we have nowadays and maybe little changes are fine. But when you bring a concept like mine, everyone is like, 'Ah, forget it, that's not going to happen'. Well, what we have done now, the first time we presented it, most of the people didn't believe in it. Now we have some people starting to believe in it. And actually as we go forward, we are getting much more attention and traction in the aviation industry. And as you can see, we have many sponsors. Most of them are related to the aviation industry. And what I can tell you is that next year we will have even more because a lot of companies now are realizing like, 'okay, wait, if this really happens, maybe it's good to be on board since the beginning', you know, or rather than criticize it and then when it happens, say like, 'oh, well, we were wrong'. So yeah, in the beginning it was very harsh. But now we are getting much more people and many experts trying to help us because they think that there's a way with this. So yeah, I'm very grateful. It was hard, but we are now on our way to conquer the aviation industry. Finally.

[Corinne]: Fantastic.

{Double Chime sound}

[Corinne]: Over to travel experiences, you know, because we're all in this business, because we love it one way, shape or form. Just wanted to ask you some questions, and an opportunity to share experiences that you've had. So I guess my first question, what is your favorite aircraft type?

[Alejandro]: I have two favourite aircraft types, and those are the A350 and the 777. The 777. I really like the 777 because of the space.

[Corinne]: So as you know, I'm all into inflight Internet connectivity, I'm curious and if you can share with us, do you frequently purchase inflight Wi-Fi when you travel? Have you purchased it and how was your experience?

[Alejandro]: I have never done it, so I cannot tell you about the experience. I've tried some of the free Wi-Fi that they announce, but it never works in my opinion. So yeah, I cannot even access them. The messaging services like WhatsApp, for example. So I don't have a very good experience with it. And to be honest, sometimes now when they



say that there is, I don't even try to log in because I just find it tedious. Most of the times you need to register, you need to do a thousand things and sometimes it doesn't even work. So, for me, it's not worth trying it. So, in my experience, it's not very good yet.

[Corinne]: You know, a lot of the airlines are now offering a free messaging product, so where you can just text for free. So, you're saying you haven't had any luck with that either?

[Alejandro]: No, it doesn't really work.

[Corinne]: Has that been in the USA or in Europe?

[Alejandro]: In Europe, mostly.

[Corinne]: Good to know. Thank you for sharing that. So I guess in terms of favorite entertainment on board, seeing as it doesn't seem like you're, you're a fan of the seatback IFE, but have you ever watched one and do you like to watch videos or listen to music? Any kind of genre like comedy? Drama?

[Alejandro]: But yeah, I used to use it quite a lot even before when I was traveling, for example, doing to university. I didn't have my tablet, so I just plugged my earphones there and I would watch films most of the time, or I would, I would be working, watching something, trying to listen to something. So yeah, I normally watch horror films. I really find it funny. Yeah, I find it funny to watch it there because you're in a very safe environment. You know, the aircraft took off and no one is inside going to kill you.

[Corinne]: You're at home. There's no monsters under your bed or anything.

[Alejandro]: Exactly. And then and then its like the flight experience. And then you leave the airplane and the film stays behind and all the horror things that you have seen there also like a lot comedy and stand up comedy. So if there's some stand up comedy, I'll just put it on.

[Corinne]: You obviously travel a lot and you experience a lot of onboard experiences. We know you fly mainly within the economy cabins domestically and internationally and throughout Europe, on the continent. Has there been a recent, I mean, this is an opportunity to give a pat on the back to an airline. Has there been one experience that you've had that surprised you, that thought, 'Wow, that was really good' and do you want to share that with us and who the airline was?

[Alejandro]: Yeah, definitely. Definitely. I tried flights from Amsterdam to Dubai with, Turkish Airlines. And I must admit that I was shocked with the quality of the food, the quality of the service and even the in-flight entertainment. And yeah, I think that was the



highlight of the year in terms of flights. My Turkish airline flight to Dubai, the aircraft was A777 as well. So, I really enjoyed it. And yeah, it was just an amazing experience for the economy class, to be honest. I had done a one week before, I had done also another economy class flight in long haul, and it was terrible. And then I went into the Turkish Airlines airplane and it was a complete different experience, as if I had upgraded to a premium cabin or something and I was just at the back of the plane, you know. So, yeah, that was a big highlight. And yeah, I would like to thank Turkish Airlines for that service. I, I hope they can maintain it because it's amazing.

[Corinne]: Wow. Congratulations to the folks at Turkish. Interesting. I have flown them. I've flown them in their business class. And obviously the food, it was fantastic. Completely different experience. But yeah.

[Alejandro]: Above everything, the food was the best thing that I can highlight of that flight. It was great!

[Corinne]: Yeah, the club is amazing too. Apparently, they've got pizza ovens and everything. Yeah, I was told about, when I flew them, I didn't have time to stop by. I was transiting. But I hear they do wish.

[Alejandro]: I wish I had, I had the time, but I didn't you know, I didn't have the status to go in there yet. So, I hope in the next few flights that I do, I can, I can go and visit it because I'm sure if the food in the airplane is that good, then the food in the in the club and the lounge has to be even better.

[Corinne]: Yeah. I've had friends who've been in it. But, you know, even though you're not flying within the business cabin, I don't know if you can buy a ticket to get in, that would be something to look at or maybe our friends at Turkish might show you around, but I hear it's absolutely magnificent. I haven't experienced it, but I've heard a lot of positive stuff about it. But again, congratulations to the folks at Turkish Airlines. Sounds like they're doing really great things in economy.

[Alejandro]: Yeah, and long haul. Long haul especially. I don't know about their short haul, but the long haul is amazing.

{Double Chime Sound}

[Corinne]: So Madrid, Spain, we've got a lot of people from all around the world listening in. And I would like to know, being a local, I'm assuming born and raised in Madrid, Spain, what should any visitor to your home city do in terms of, what would be one of the major sightseeing attractions and what kind of food would you suggest that they try?

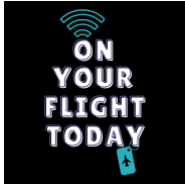
[Alejandro]: Well, to be honest, I would suggest anyone that comes to Madrid that they



have to spend a couple of days traveling around Spain because Madrid is not the only nice place in Spain. There are a lot of places and the food and everything changes so much from the north to the south. Recommend visiting the museums like the Prado Museum is probably one of the most well-known museums around the world because of all the all the different pieces of art. But then just walking around the city, try to come in spring or in autumn when the weather is not very hot because it gets quite hot in summer and just try to walk around the city, stop at a bar, grab a beer, then go for a walk, have a coffee. You will enjoy the Spanish gastronomy much more doing that than just trying to go to the best restaurant. Madrid is a city of contrasts, and you have different parts and I guess that there's something to explore in every different neighborhood of the city.

[Corinne]: Alejandro, you know, thank you so much for sharing the insights on the chaise longue, where you're at, your journey, your vision. We know there's some exciting things coming up. You know, wish you all the best and guess, you know, just to be what has really kind of impressed me about you, and I know we've only corresponded via email and notes, is your passion and your energy and your determination to succeed. Honestly, that is a fantastic quality to have because I think having that you can overcome anything in this industry. I was always challenging 'Why do we do it this way? Why can't we do it this way? Are the rules the government?' Well, the laws have to change. It has to change. Let's do it. And I think it's fantastic that you're taking that approach, coming in with fresh perspectives, and you are building the future that you will live in. And I think at such a young age with such incredible achievements, I think congratulations to you on all the success you've had, and wish you every success for the future. But and keep that passion. And there's like I said, there's always skeptics along the way, but they're the ones that give you the best feedback to help you improve your product.

[Alejandro]: What I'm trying to do is push the boundaries at the end of the day, bringing innovation, try to bring innovation, and then some of it will go through, some of it will not. But at the end of the day, what makes us change is innovation, you know, and what makes us better as a society is innovation. So, I always like to end with a phrase, a quote that, as you said, is creating the future. And the thing is that the best way to predict the future is to create it. And it's like that. So for me, I know there's a lot of people complaining about their trips, about their experience, but not many people is willing to change it or to try to change it. So I'm going to be doing that and I'm going to do that in favour of the passengers, but also trying to benefit the airlines at the same time, because I understand that some things don't work if you don't have the approval of both sides. So definitely that's my goal, to improve the passenger experience while making the airlines earn more and achieve their sustainability goals. So thank you for that.



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