

Aviation and Photography: Views from the top of the world

Who says that the passion of aviation can't go further than becoming a pilot and flying an airplane? Aurélien Guittet is a pilot captain for Luxair Luxembourg Airlines but his passion for aviation goes further than just flying. He is also passionate about photography and shares his exclusive views from the cockpit with the rest of the world.

Text Joe Weimerskirch
Photos Aurélien Guittet

THE CHALLENGE OF BEING A PILOT

Captain Guittet trained at the renowned Sabena Flight Academy in Brussels and at the Sabena Airline Training Center in Arizona before being hired by Luxair in 2002 and being promoted as captain in 2009.

But his passion about flying already started as a child. Mr Guittet writes in his online blog that aviation has always been a passion for him. He started to build model airplanes when he was a kid and did his glider licence when he was only fifteen years old.

Captain Guittet also remembers his first commercial flight as a pilot. "My first commercial flight was in 2002 at Luxair on the Fokker 50. I flew from Luxembourg to Berlin. Of course that was a special moment. Flying for the first time with over 50 passengers behind you is a strange feeling, but you also feel that you have achieved something special."

Since then Mr Guittet flew various types of planes at Luxair, including the Boeing 737 as co-pilot and until today the Bombardier Q400 as captain.

Since Aurélien Guittet started his career in 2002, the job of being a pilot has changed. He says: "We have more and more safety, like the traffic avoidance system or the ground proximity warning system. If you see a cockpit from 15 years ago, it was like clock instruments. Now it's more like a big GPS screen so it's easier to figure out where you are and it is a bit less demanding. There is a lot of automatism." However pilots need to be focussed during the whole flight and be



Beautiful fields and trees before approaching the airport of Madrid.



More beautiful views captured by Captain Guittet are available on his online platforms:

- mycockpitview.com
- Facebook / Mycockpitview
- Instagram / Mycockpitview

Overflying the alps.

ready to face any unusual situation.

The daily routine of a pilot at Luxair is slightly different compared to other airlines. "At Luxair it is a bit special because we have only short haul flights. So basically you are home every day. Most of the time we do 4 flights a day except if the flights are a bit longer, then we only do 2 flights a day", Mr Guittet says.

VIEWS FROM ABOVE THE CLOUDS

Being a pilot means having a lot of responsibility, but it can also be a dream job. Captain Guittet says: "Some people of course find it annoying because not everybody is made to be a pilot. For me it is a passion and I love flying. What I like most about flying is to enjoy the view. Even when it is raining on the ground,

you can see the sun shining above the clouds."

As he realised that aviation is interesting for a lot of people, Mr Guittet decided to share his exclusive views from above the clouds on his website, Facebook and Instagram.

"The pictures I can take are only the top of the iceberg"

He says: "I always enjoyed photography and of course my job gives me a lot of opportunities to take photos. I do as much as I can but it is not always easy because my primary task is to fly an airplane.

Captain Guittet is only allowed to take pictures when there is no conflict with safety and not during critical situations.

"I only take pictures when time and safety permits and for the pictures that are taken closer to the ground I fix the camera somewhere in the cockpit and program it to take a picture every two to five seconds. It is also sometimes a bit frustrating because I see a beautiful landscape but I'm too busy to fly the airplane and I don't have time to grab my camera. The pictures I can take are only the top of the iceberg of the sceneries we see."

Pilots at Luxair face changing schedules and destinations every month as the airline flies to over 60 destinations. These variations make pilots face new challenges on every flight, as the weather, colleagues and landscapes constantly change.

Due to this variation of changing conditions, Captain Guittet has a great opportunity to get a high variation of pictures he can share with his followers.

Among all the destinations, Captain Guittet prefers approaching Nice as it is one of the most beautiful landscapes, but he also likes approaching London City. Mr Guittet wrote on his website: "The approach runway 09 at London City is one of the most amazing we have on the Luxair network. Overflying that city, and turning final around the Shard and the tower bridge at 2000 feet is just surreal."

Overflying London at 2000 feet and circling around the Shard and Tower Bridge.

