



## **W K Thomas - First Choice in Packaging**

First Choice is one of the UK's leading leisure airlines and part of TUI Travel PLC, a leading international travel company. Its fleet of 32 aircraft take over 6 million customers on 30,000 flights from 15 UK airports, and take passengers to around 60 destinations worldwide every year !

In addition, First Choice provides bespoke flights for prestigious clients such as Manchester United FC, and its freight business flies 6 million kg of cargo every year, from furniture to racing cars.

With airlines very much in the eco spotlight, the brief from LSG, caterer & service provider to First Choice, was to decrease packaging weight to achieve fuel savings and show significant environmental benefits. The packaging needed to be totally recyclable, and made from demonstrably renewable resources – but premium style, with no compromise on quality, and easy to process pre-flight and in-flight.

**W K Thomas** designed lightweight meal trays, meal boxes and hot drink cups to ensure the safe and effective delivery of onboard meal service components. All items had to fit the standard airline trolleys, work with both hot and cold food service, and support the First Choice corporate image. Once the construction, materials and size of the packaging were agreed, bespoke graphics were developed by the **W K Thomas in-house design department working closely with LSG and First Choice.**

The new packaging has achieved dramatic weight savings against the previous service (for example, changing from a 200g reusable tray to a 25g disposable tray,). Special ski and snack service trays enable space savings too, making more room to load other essential items.

Great flexibility was added to all main meal services by development of a “snap-in” box which can be separately packed with ambient food items, and then fitted into one section of the main meal tray – which is then topped up with the hot entree, for breakfast and all day meals. A further benefit of the new First Choice packaging is the ability to use special prints to refresh the service for special occasions - a Christmas print box was also designed to serve passengers meals and snacks with a seasonal feel!

*“We are delighted with the new packaging W K Thomas have produced for us and the passenger feedback has been that the packaging is colourful, high quality, recyclable yet still of premium standard”. “The disposable packaging is quick and easy to deliver for crew and did not need any extra cabin training” says Ian Cowie of First Choice Airlines*

Delivery on board, against a very sector specific brief, took less than 12 weeks from initial contact, a time scale made possible by the packaging expertise of W K Thomas and close liaison with LSG and First Choice.

**W K Thomas is a leading distributor of packaging, disposables and other non-food products to the airline, airline catering and HORECA sectors in the UK. Packaging – specially designed or off the shelf - is available by calling W K Thomas on 020 8391 2211 or visit [www.wkthomas.com](http://www.wkthomas.com) for further information.**

**Image 1** - new packaging designs for container which consists of a small box that can be pre-packed and fits into one section of the main meal tray. This is used for breakfast and all day meals – separate packaging delivers long-haul second service meals in premium, economy cabins and ski flights.



**Image 2** - A Christmas box was also designed to "make a difference at special times of the year providing passengers with a seasonal feel! Benefits of the new First Choice packaging designs are that the look can be changed and refreshed easily giving airlines the flexibility of changing the print for special occasions throughout the year.

