

# New All-inclusive Airport Lounge Opens at MMIA

By Chinedu Eze

An idle space with obsolete kitchen equipment that had gathered dust for the past 18 years was suddenly transformed into an exquisite lounge with private rest room, sophisticated baths and a restaurant with dynamic recipe for local and continental cuisines. That is the Gabfol Lounge located at the Murtala Muhammed International Airport, Lagos.

The simple aesthetics of the furniture, the IT system

deployed, and the state-of-art of other equipment, are bewildering and leaves one familiar with the old facility in a daze about how the old restaurant earmarked and planned by Strabag, which built the airport metamorphosed to such epitome of artistic beauty.

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That was the creative work of Carmela Augustino, an Italian architect who flew from Rome to design the lounge.

During a media tour of the facility last weekend, the Group General Manager, Gabfol Lounge, Mr. John Ng, said it was built to prove that

Nigeria could own a VIP lounge comparable to those seen in modern airports in advanced countries.

In beauty and modernity, the lounge is actually incompatible with the old infrastructure that hosts it, the international terminal of the nation's busiest airport.

The lounge has 620 square

metre of total usable space with multi facilities including full bar and restaurant that boasts of freshly made food and great cocktails.

It also contains spa—foot spa, neck and shoulder spa, aroma therapy spa, shower facilities for both male and female.

It has compartments, which includes VIP lounge area with comfortable lounge chairs and high sofas and large projection screen. There is also the discussion area with cubicled private discussion areas. There is wireless broadband Internet wifi connected ordering system with complete automation.

"We have access controlled with CCTV monitoring system and we are in partnership with South African Airlines and Star Alliance. SAA's Boabab Premium Lounge is part of the Gabfol Lounge and we offer 5-star service," John Ng told journalists.

He added: "Starting from accessing the lounge doors to the systems of ordering meals and drinks, everything about the lounge has been automated.

Security is our concern, and this is why we have CCTV camera everywhere. We want to bring a little change".

He said that the lounge is membership based and therefore exclusive and could host about 120 people, which is the maximum.

"We have brought a fresh vibrant change to this institution—to infuse a new service standard into Nigeria managed by an international team. We are looking forward to franchising the system to apply in other locations and we are planning to start designer boutique and other services within the lounge," John Ng added.

He said that all the doors are automated and the ordering system is wireless through the ipod, whereby a guest keys in his request and is accessed by the reception, the kitchen and bar immediately.

John Ng added that the staff that work at the lounge are well trained and knowledgeable to provide the distinctive service the Lounge offers to its guests.

He disclosed that the lounge already has 400 members and more are on the line to join.



• A glimpse of the new lounge

## Arik Aircraft Back from C-check, Repairs

Arik Air, Nigeria's largest commercial airline has announced the arrival of two of its four aircraft that went on mandatory C-check and

structural repairs in Southend, London and Malta respectively.

The airline's Boeing 737-700 NG with registration number 5N-MJD which had a lightning strike on June 28, and was sent