



"Once you fly private," says Joe Kurta, "you won't be getting back on a scheduled flight" any time soon

I Can my racehorse go on the jet?

No, but Joe gets other things Kurta with his private jet service. a lot of transported Even eleven cats from London to Lake Balaton BY YVES BELLINGHAUSEN

In a small ground-floor office in the centre of Budapest, Joe Kurta, 49 years old, a light Rhenish sits in front of two computer screens and clicks through the news that international pop stars, Bundesliga professionals him.and multi-billionaires have given have sent. pops on A WhatsApp message up . the his mobile phoneIt's of a Bundesliga team. He wants to fly from Düsseldorf to Spain on Monday and back two days later - and needs a jet to do so.coach

And that is exactly Joe Kurta's business. Anyone who often travels by private jet in Germany has probably saved . Kurta's mobile phone numberKurta is one of around a dozen professional private jet brokers in Germany. He does not own any himselfaircraft . He brokers them. Instead, searches for a free aircraft on a platform for .private jets

He negotiates discounts and ensures that the right canapés are served on board. His small company, Call a Jet, is like a taxi centre - only for aircraft.

Business is excellent. While normal air traffic in Germany still is , below pre-corona levelsprivate aviation has already reached pre-crisis levels in 2021. Since then, the industry has been new records. 100,000 private jets now every year. take off and land in Germany Only in the USA, Canada and Brazil are more registered.

"Corona was like a stimulus programme for us," says Kurta. At the time, many people no longer with 500 potentially infectious wanted to squeeze into a cramped aircraft fellow travellers. Most people therefore stayed at home. But those who couldafford it flew to private jetMallorca . in a "And once you fly privately,," "you won" says Kurta't be getting back on a scheduled flight ."any time soon

Kurta founded in Cologne and now employs seven peoplehis company 16 years ago , including freelancers who flights in Mexico sell . and EgyptThe head office is now in Bonn, while Kurta himself works his Budapest frombranch - parents grew up in Hungary. The the demand for entrepreneur explains that private jets is so high that it can hardly be met during the particularly popular summer months.

Kurta's phone rings. Itwho 's a property mogul has to Aviv . go to Tel next weekKurta warns him in advance: Because of the war, it's "unfortunately a bit more expensive" - more like 27,000 euros instead of the usual 20,000.

A successful coach calls to say he would like to from Speyer fly . to Sankt MoritzWould about 8,000 euros, Kurta estimates. "And please don't forget to let us know in good time how many skis you're bringing."

The assistant to the owner of a very large German internet platform asks if the Glo- bal Express, a jet with twelve seats on which the family back from their holiday in Thailandwants to fly to northern Germany , could please take off a little earlier. The housekeeper has to at still her connecting flight to Munich 1 pm. "Yes, let me put it this way: a lot is possible with that kind of money," says Kurta - the family patriarch is paying 315,000 euros for the flight to Phuket and back.

For normal earners, that sounds like an absurd amount of money. After all, you can get in economy class just there and back to Thailand for 1,000 euros - .and moreif you , you'll have to pay a lot absolutely must have champagne in the air

and a bed could also be used for around 10,000 euros to fly First Class.

Isn't it crazy to spend the price of a home on a flight to go on holiday? Well, you can't look at it that way, says Kurta. For someone who owns , 315,000 euros is not in relative terms. several billion euros a lot To put it bluntly, you could say it's about as as a bus ticket for normal people.expensive

Kurta arranges around 40 flights . per monthFor many of his customers, the private jet is the most efficient method of transport. if you spend two days However, in Kurta's office, can youalso get the impression that the private jet itself is the highlight of the journey some people.for

Someone who wants to has noticed that the plane that pick him up fly from Mallorca to Karlsruhe is supposed to is flying empty from Karlsruhe and would like to know whether a few friends of his fly with him in the morning and then directly with at middaytravel back to Karlsruhe him. Hans, Thorsten and Frank would also like to have this experience.

A rich Australian writes to Kurta on Whats App because he wants to fly spontaneously from London to Paris with his family tonight and maybe later back again - Kurta calls it flying ". 3,200 euros, "for a walkone way.

Private jets have a devastating carbon footprint. They often fly short distances, on which they emit . a disproportionately high amount of CO₂Almost half of all private jet flights are shorter than 500 kilometres, roughly the distance as the crow fliesbetween Munich and Berlin . Mr Kurta, do you also compensation CO₂for your wealthy customers? Kurta looks sceptical and says after a brief hesitation: "I don't know if anyone ever asked for something like that." Private jet aviation is only for a few small per cent of responsible emissions in aviation. Which is true. CO₂ But the truth is that an even smaller percentage of all travellers private jets. Overall, a private jet emits around 14 times more per passenger CO₂than an airliner. As a result, private jets have become a symbol of climate change in recent years

Activists sprayed a machine on Sylt with orange paint.

At around the same time, the private jet also became the ultimate symbol on social mediaof power and success . Influencers such as Dan Bilzarian and Kylie Jenner show . off their PJs, as they are known on Instagram#Jetlife is trending. There are now studios in Los Angeles where influencers can pretendtheyare sitting . in a private jet against a backdropJust for the photo. If you show Kurta these pictures, he makes the windscreen wiper gesture in front of his face. He finds it "completely bonkers". His customers generally dont have a 'public Instagram account and, with the exception of the Bundesliga players, tend to be in the second half of their lives, he says.

Self-promoters or people with behavioural problems.

The Call a Jet website only shows pictures of a few prominent footballers - Antonio Rüdiger and Mesut Özil, for example. They advertise there as customers for the company (Rüdiger: "I trust Joe and his team completely"). And in Kurta's office, a shirt of his former national team colleague Sami Khedira hangs next to Özil's jersey.

Kurta came to the airline business . in a roundabout wayIn the noughties, he was still house music. After graduating from high school, he opened a record shop and then making music for himself. discovered YouTube videos show him on the Champs-Élysées. Even today, he still plays "Uplifting House Music" .all day long

playlist in his office. But then house music went out of fashion and Kurta found it difficult to earn money with it. A classmate told him about her job with a London-based private jet broker. Kurta saw an opportunity move into a more profitable industry without having to . leave the glamour worldSo he attended a private jet trade fair and founded without further adoa company . Kurta found his first customers by sticking of expensive cars . A former boxer get in touchhis business card under the windscreen at Cologne/Bonn airportwas one of the first to . He regularly flew through Europe . with his entourageThey would sometimes decide on the flight not to go to Paris but to to fly to , Londonsays Kurta.

He also brokered jets to Consul Weyer - a flashy businessman who sold and aristocratic titles. Kurta's grew over the yearsdiplomatic passports company , and today he can do without the eccentrics and semi-silkies. Last year

According to his own statement, he made "several million euros". He takes a commission of five to seven per cent .per booking

There are also private jet operators who own aircraft themselves and rent out. them However, it is not so easy to utilise a fleet in such a way that it can be operated profitably, says Kurta. That's why he prefers to rent the jets from airlines or the super-rich who don't need them at the moment. This means he is not limited to just a few types of aircraft, but can offer . everything from propeller aircraft to long-haul jetsAnd Kurtas can now also choose who he does not carry.

Someone calls and wants to return to Germany from a regional airport in Africa with "a few small gold bars" - he receives such an enquiry once a month, says Kurta. He then hangs up . immediatelySomeone asks which model of private jet he can take on his racehorse - Kurta explains kindly that this is unfortunately not permitted. Basically

However, pets are an important many customers reason for to fly . by private jetJust recently, an elderly lady an Embraer Legacy 600 for herself and her booked . These anecdotes cannot always be verified. But the prices Kurta quotes are by eleven cats from London to Lake Balatonconfirmedindustry experts. On his desk

The model of a Global Express stands on desk, and his a photo of Kurta and his wife . hangs on the wall next to the footballers' jerseysThey are grinning broadly in front of a Gulfstream - "the boss", as Kurta reverently calls . the aircraftElon also Musk flies a Gulfstream. While an ordinary commercial jet flies at an altitude of metres, a Gulfstream flies up to around 12,000 at , 15,000 metresKurta , enthusesin other words "above the weather", so that the well-heeled travellers while they sleep. are not woken up by annoying turbulence Up there, says the broker, you feel like the Lord God in heaven.



Susann,
Animal physiotherapist

My patients are only with liverwurst

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