



HAVANA, DECEMBER 17, 2015
 OFFICIAL VOICE OF THE COMMUNIST
 PARTY OF CUBA CENTRAL COMMITTEE

UPDATED
 09:32:25

(<https://www.facebook.com/p...>)
 English (236/5047/10175)

Flights to Cuba increase

Just as the number of tourist arrivals to Cuba is increasing, so are flights to the island, a trend contributing to the country's goal of receiving over 3.5 million international visitors in 2015

Author: Cubadebate (/archivo?a=262) | internet@granma.cu (mailto:internet@granma.cu) november 3, 2015 17:11:57

Just as the number of tourist arrivals to Cuba is increasing, so are flights to the island, a trend contributing to the country's goal of receiving over 3.5 million international visitors in 2015.

54 foreign airlines currently connect the island's 10 international airports with 60 cities around the world.

Given that air travel is one of today's primary modes of transportation, many companies are expanding flights while others are including the island on their list of destinations.

Flights between Cuba and the rest of the world have seen noteworthy results this year, contributing to the development of the country's tourism industry, with a record three million international visitors to the island in 2014, a trend which experts predict will increase.

Cuba's Minister of Tourism, Manuel Marrero, has noted that renovation plans are being implemented throughout the Cuban aviation sector, above all in order to offer better quality of service.

He noted that three new airplanes were acquired in 2014 with plans to purchase other equipment this year, as well as the remodeling of several terminals.

These initiatives are aimed at improving passenger service facilities, while the cost of jet fuel has been adjusted to match competitive prices and as of May 1, 2015 the exit tax previously paid by passengers at the airport was eliminated and added to the price of tickets.

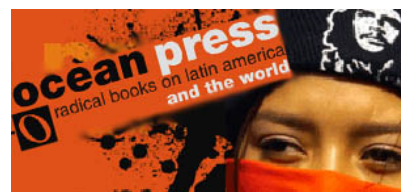
This situation therefore suggests an increase in flight connections and more tourists for 2016. This year saw the launch of new routes such as the return of Spanish airline Iberia, June 1, with five weekly flights.



Manuel Marrero, Cuban minister of Tourism, noted that the island's aviation sector is undergoing renovations in order to improve the quality of services. **Photo:** PERLAVISION



(<http://www.hotelnacionaldecuba.com/sp/home.asp>)



(<http://www.oceansur.com/>)

54 foreign airlines currently connect Cuba's 10 international airports with 60 cities around the world.
Photo: <http://www.region.com.ar>

Direct routes from Beijing, China to Havana with a stopover in Canada have also been launched; while the establishment of direct flights, operated by Brazilian airline Gol, to the Cuban capital are currently being negotiated.

Added to this are two weekly flights by Aerolíneas Argentinas and an increase in Blue Panorama's schedule, an Italian company which celebrated its 20th anniversary this year.

For its part, Italian airline Neos is implementing an important development program linked with Cuba.

This growing trend includes new flights from other Spanish companies, Air Berlin, Condor, Eurowind and charters from Canada and Venezuela.

Announcements of flight expansions have been frequent and a Ministry report published in mid-June this year reiterated that China and Germany are preparing new routes for the island's winter period (November 2015-April 2016).

The Beijing-Havana connection will be operated by Air China, offering three weekly flights, with a stopover in Montreal. This will be the first direct route between the Asian giant and the Caribbean, with the Cuban capital providing Chinese travelers with a link to the rest of Latin America.

Last year, more than 28,000 Chinese travelers arrived in Cuba, an increase of 27% as compared to figures for the previous year.

For its part, Condor, will expand flights between Munich and the eastern city of Holguín with an additional weekly departure. The German airline will also raise the number of weekly flights between Frankfurt and Havana to four, with an additional Munich-Varadero connection. In 2014, Germany was the second largest emissary market of visitors to Cuba, just behind Canada.

Another company with frequent routes to Cuba is Copa Airlines - with 20 years in service - connecting the island with 72 destinations across 29 countries in the region through its Hub of the Americas, located in Panama City.

Meanwhile, transport company Air France-KLM announced that they will be increasing flights to Cuba in October, in response to the island's growing tourist market. A statement by the airline also noted that beginning in October 2015, an additional Wednesday flight to Havana will feature on its timetable.

With this new schedule, the airline will now be offering 11 weekly flights during the 2015 winter period, which will see the arrival of more French and European visitors to the Cuban capital.

From Paris' Charles de Gaulle Airport, the company operates a fleet of Boeing 777-300 airplanes with a 468 seating capacity (14 in Business Class, 32 in Premium Economy and 422 in Economy). Air France has been present in Cuba for 17 years, and its flights have contributed to the development of the tourism industry on the archipelago.

However, it was perhaps Spanish airline Iberia which provided the most emblematic example of these flight increases, in June.

The carrier's President, Luis Gallegos, expressed his satisfaction given the recommencement of flights. On June 1, a 346 seat Airbus A340-600 style aircraft touched down in Terminal 3 of the José Martí International Airport, thus marking the reopening of the route.

Gallegos recalled that Iberia began flights to Cuba in 1949 and just over two years ago was obliged to cancel the route due to financial difficulties, despite not wanting to suspend flights given the route's emblematic significance.

Iberia is premiering its flights to Havana as a leading market competitor with five weekly departures, representing around 12,000 travelers a month.

The flights are operated using Airbus A330 planes which all include new seats in Business and Economy class. The flight timetable provides connections with more than 90 European destinations, benefiting tourism and business exchanges.

EXPANDING FLIGHTS EVERY YEAR

The expansion of these flights and those to come are contributing to the sustainable development of the Cuban tourism industry and represent a significant boost for the country's economy, considering the importance of air travel for the Caribbean, a region composed primarily of island nations.

Added to this list are low cost airlines, such as Mexican firm Interjet which launched two new routes between Mexico and Cuba from October 15, benefiting both nations' tourism industries.

Director of the company's corporate relations department, Gabriela Jiménez and commercial director Javier Porrogás both emphasized the importance of the new routes, noting that two connections: Varadero-Mexico, and Havana-Monterrey have been in operation since the aforementioned date.

Interjet currently offers 24 weekly flights from the Cuban capital to Mexico as well as 14 to Havana-Cancun.

Varadero is the island's number one beach resort, located 140 kilometers east of Havana, and is one of the top two tourist destinations on the island, alongside the capital itself.

The two officials highlighted that these new schedules will strengthen tourist exchanges between their countries, as well as contribute to the promotional work of the ProMéxico Commercial Consultancy. Interjet, a 100% Mexican venture founded 10 years ago – affiliated with the Alemán Group – flies to 47 destinations, 38 in Mexico and nine international including, Havana, Bogota, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Houston, Las Vegas, Miami, New York and San Antonio.

The company has a fleet of 55 airplanes (39 Airbus A320 and 16 Superjet 100s), is the only airline that offers passengers a 50 kilograms luggage allowance, has separate male and female toilets and offers discounted rates for adults over the age of 65, they noted. Mexico is currently among Cuba's top 10 visitor emissary markets.

Some of the airlines which fly to Cuba include: Aerocaribbean, Aeroflot, Aerovaradero, Air Canada, Air Caraibes, Air Europa, Air France, Aeromexico, Bahamasair, Blue Panorama, Cayman Airways, Commercial take off S.A, Conviasa, Copa Airlines, Cubana de Aviación, Elca S.A., Iberia, Interjet, Lan Chile, Martinair, Taag, Taca, Tame and Virgin Atlantic.

Furthermore, since December 17, 2014 and with the reestablishment of diplomatic relations between the United States and Cuba as of July 20, 2015, U.S. airlines have expressed their eagerness to fly to the island.

Such is the case of American Airlines and United Airlines, which both announced that they are ready to launch direct flights to Cuba.

In a statement, President and Director General of American Airlines, Doug Parker, stated that the reopening of U.S. and Cuban embassies in Havana and Washington, respectively, constitutes an important step toward the construction of new commercial ties and the reestablishment of regular flights between the U.S. and Cuba. (Cubadebate/caribbeannewsdigital.com)

SHARE

(http://www.cubadebate.com/ingles/2015-11-03/flights-to-cuba-increase)
 (http://www.cubadebate.com/ingles/2015-11-03/flights-to-cuba-increase)
 u=http://www.cubadebate.com/ingles/2015-11-03/flights-to-cuba-increase)
 11- 11- 03/flights-to-cuba-increase)

HOME (/) CUBA (/CUBA) WORLD (/MUNDO) SPORTS (/DEPORTES) CULTURE (/CULTURA) TOURISM (/TOURISM) WHO WE ARE (/QUIENES-SOMOS)

PRESS DIRECTORY:

PUBLICATIONS ONLINE

Juventud Rebelde (http://www.juventudrebelde.cu) | Trabajadores (http://www.trabajadores.cu) | Cubadebate (http://www.cubadebate.cu/) | AIN (http://www.ain.cu) | Prensa Latina (http://prensa-latina.cu/) | Opciones (http://www.opciones.cu/) | CubaSi (http://cubasi.cu/) | Cubahora (http://www.cubahora.cu/) | Cubaperiodistas (http://www.cubaperiodistas.cu/)

MAGAZINES

Bohemia (http://www.bohemia.cu/) | Cuba Socialista (http://www.cubasocialista.cu/) | Mujeres (http://www.mujeres.co.cu/) | Tricontinental (http://www.tricontinental.cu/) | La Jiribilla (http://www.lajiribilla.cu/) | Alma Mater (http://www.almamater.cu/) | Caimán Barbudo (http://www.caimanbarbudo.cu/) | Juventud Técnica (http://www.juventudtecnica.cu/) | Pionero (http://www.pionero.cu/)

TV & RADIO

TV Cubana (http://www.tvcubana.icrt.cu/) | Radio Cubana (http://www.radiocubana.cu/) | Radio Habana Cuba (http://www.radiohc.cu/) | Radio Progreso (http://www.radioprogreso.cu/) | Radio Rebelde (http://www.radiorebelde.cu/) | Radio Reloj (http://www.radioreloj.cu/) | Radio Taino (http://www.radiotaino.cu/) | Radio Musical Nacional (http://www.cmbfradio.cu/)

LINKS

Partido Comunista de Cuba (http://www.pcc.cu/) | Sitio oficial del Gobierno de la República de Cuba (http://www.cubagob.cu/) | Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores (http://www.cubaminrex.cu/) | Aduana (http://www.aduana.co.cu/)



OFFICIAL VOICE OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF CUBA CENTRAL COMMITTEE

