



Friday, 26 March 2010

Christchurch drops departure tax

Passengers departing Christchurch Airport in New Zealand on or after 01 July will no longer be required to pay the NZ\$25 departure fee, as the result of the long-awaited transition to a Passenger Service Charge where the fee is included in airfare costs.

The change brings Christchurch in line with Auckland and other major international gateways. Passengers who buy tickets for travel after 01 July will have the PSC included in their ticket price, while for flights up to midnight on 30 Jun departing international passengers will still pay a departure fee after check-in - but if they're returning after 01 July they will only need to pay half of the fee. Exemptions to the PSC apply for infants, children under 12, government officials, diplomats, military personnel and transit passengers.



New Karratha flights

Qantas has announced new weekly non-stop services from both Sydney and Melbourne to Karratha. QF already operates direct services from Brisbane to Karratha, with the addition of the two other east coast capitals set to meet further demand from the mining and resource sector.



British Midland off to Berlin

British Midland has announced the debut of daily London Heathrow-Berlin Tegel flights from 28 Mar. The A319 service complements the existing thrice daily flights on the route from codeshare partner Lufthansa.

US fee gets closer

A US\$10 fee is likely to apply

for all Australian travellers to the USA under the Visa Waiver Program, after the US Senate last week passed the new Travel Promotion Act. The US\$10 fee will be collected once every two years in conjunction with the issuing of the Electronic System for Travel Authorization.



Qantas Increases Capacity to Japan

Qantas announced this week it would increase capacity to Japan from July 2010. The airline will deploy a two-class Boeing 747-400 aircraft on selected flights between Sydney and Tokyo Narita to meet increased demand and complement the Qantas Group's two brand strategy in the Japan market.



Emirates A380 to Beijing

Emirates have announced the debut of A380 flights between Dubai and Beijing from 01 August.

It's the first A380 operation to China, with Emirates also being the first carrier to operate the superjumbo to New Zealand, Thailand and Korea.

The 517-seat aircraft will be deployed on the current daily EK306 service which departs DXB at 0410, arriving in Beijing 1510.



Brindabella boost

Brindabella Airlines will next month commence a third daily Friday service on the Brisbane to Tamworth route.

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Jetstar

Jetstar to launch new inclusive fares

Jetstar is set to announce a new fare option for long-haul international flights which combines fares with a meal and drink package, amenities and in-flight entertainment. Known as JetPlus, the economy fares will be offered on A330 flights to Bali, Thailand, Honolulu and Japan. The fares will also allow fee free changes for names and date (although fare differences may apply) and JetPlus fares will not attract QF frequent flyer points.



Uluru and Virgin Blue

Virgin Blue this morning announced plans to launch flights to Ayers Rock direct from Sydney from Monday 02 August. Services will operate daily with capacity for 104 passengers.

The carrier said it had worked with the Ayers Rock airport authority to ensure infrastructure will be ready for the new flights, including upgrading existing check-in counters as well as building additional baggage belt facilities.

Terminal Western Australia OK

The Australian Government has given the green light for the construction of Perth Airport's \$136m 'Terminal WA' project. The new terminal will primarily be used for charter and intrastate services when it comes online in two years, easing pressure on the airport's Terminal 3.



Malaysian Airlines boosts Paris

Malaysia Airlines has announced two additional weekly frequencies between Kuala Lumpur and Paris, which will bring its flights on the route to a daily operation.

The move is effective 28 March, with flights departing Kuala Lumpur at 11.35pm and arriving in Paris at 6.40am each day.



Qantas offers Dubai transfers

Qantas has today announced an expansion of its codeshare arrangements with Etihad, to also include land transport between Abu Dhabi and Dubai. QF codeshare customers flying on Etihad services to Abu Dhabi would be able to transfer to Dubai by either limousine (for First and Business customers) or coach (economy).



Canberra Airport \$350m upgrade

A Major Redevelopment Plan at Canberra Airport's

western concourse terminal has been given the go ahead. The \$350m upgrade will see a new 40,000sqm multi-level passenger terminal constructed in a move to cater for increased capacity. At the moment Canberra handles around 3 million passengers per year, but that figure is expected to rise to 6.3m by 2029. The terminal upgrade will deliver up to 22 additional check-in counters, up to six aerobridges and international processing facilities. It's anticipated to be completed in 2012.



50 new Starwoods

Starwood Hotels & Resorts has announced plans to open 50 new hotels in its Europe, Africa and Middle East division by 2012. Thirteen extra properties are scheduled to open this year, including the recent debut of the Sheraton Bratislava and other planned openings including Sheratons in Batumi, Georgia, Rhodes in

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Greece and Milan Maplena in Italy.



Sheraton unveils Australia's first TelePresence room

Starwood Hotels and Resorts unveiled Australia's first publicly available Cisco TelePresence meeting room at Sheraton on the Park. The Cisco TelePresence rooms are set to change the face of virtual conferencing for businesses across the world that do not have personal access to such facilities. Screens in the room, which face a stretch of table, are designed to show life-size and real-time images of participants on the other side of the world with voice-activated cameras. The two properties are the first in Starwood's global portfolio to feature this facility and are available to the public at a per hour rental rate.



Tiger Airways axes Alice Springs route

Tiger Airways is scrapping its Adelaide-Alice Springs service from 01 May, blaming a fall in passenger's numbers on the route.



Air Pacific Brisbane boost

Air Pacific has announced the addition of an extra flight between Brisbane and Nadi on selected Saturday evenings during June, July, September and October. The 737 flight will depart Nadi at 2040, arriving in Brisbane at 2255 and then heading back to Fiji at 2355, arriving at 0525 the next morning.



London Heathrow to Accra on Virgin Atlantic

Virgin Atlantic has announced the launch of services between London Heathrow- Accra, Ghana. Flights start up on 24 May with three services a week proposed to operate using an Airbus A340-300.



QF adjusts Hong Kong flights

Qantas is today promoting new operating times for its flights to Hong Kong from Perth, Brisbane and Sydney, significantly expanding connection options. The move will see flights from the three cities now connect with QF29 (ex Melbourne) between Hong Kong and London, providing an additional option to the UK.



Singapore Airlines A330 expansion

Singapore Airlines has announced new destinations for its new A330-300 aircraft, with the planes to operate to Abu Dhabi, Jeddah and Kuwait as well as Male from 28/29 Mar, and then in April to Fukuoka and Taipei.

The overnight services, which all arrive in Hong Kong around 6am, will also give better connections onto mainland China, including Beijing and Shanghai. The new schedules will come into effect on various dates next month, with the carrier promoting the recent refurbishment of the Hong Kong and Melbourne lounges and the economy and business class in-flight offerings.

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Chiang Mai boost

Bangkok Airways has announced an expansion of flights between Bangkok and Chiang Mai. The move is effective 28 March and will see the carrier's flights from Bangkok increase from 3 to 4 times per day, and from Chiang Mai from 2 to 3 daily.



Four new for Amercian Airlines

American Airlines will commence flights from Dallas to Augusta, Dallas to Fayetteville and Miami to Tulsa in June while from 02 July the carrier will commence a daily New York JFKAustin service.



Singapore-Nanjing

China Eastern Airlines will this month launch a new three times weekly service from Singapore to Nanjing and Qingdao. The triangular flights will operate using an A319 each Monday, Wednesday & Saturday.



Delta one stop to New York

Delta Air Lines has rearranged the numbering of its flights between Australia and the USA, and will offer a one-stop direct, same flight number service from New York to Sydney from 01 June. The service will operate under the existing DL16/17 flight number, and involves an aircraft change in Los Angeles from the 777-200 used across the Pacific to a 757.

Qantas currently operates a one stop 747-400 service between Sydney and New York, with the same aircraft continuing on from Los Angeles to JFK but unable to take on passengers in LAX due to restrictions in current bilateral agreements between Australia and the USA.



Malaysia First Kuala Lumpur move

Malaysia Airlines is allowing access to its First Class Golden Lounge at Kuala Lumpur International Airport for Gold members of its Enrich frequent flyer program - even if they are flying on business class tickets.



Lufthansa to Moldova

Lufthansa has announced its first ever service to Moldova,

with daily CRJ900 flights from Munich to Chisinau effective 22 Apr. From 01 Jul the flights will operate using an Airbus A319.



United Airlines boosts capacity to the U.S

United Airlines will introduce an additional nonstop service from Sydney to Los Angeles in December 2010 and January next year. From December 1 until January 9, the carrier will double its capacity on the Sydney - Los Angeles route with two daily services. Between January 10 and January 31, United will offer a second daily flight from Sydney to Los Angeles on Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays and from Los Angeles to Sydney on Mondays, Thursdays and Saturdays. United will also continue to offer its daily nonstop service between Sydney and San Francisco.

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CORPORATE TRAVEL NEWS



Crown Metropol now opening April 6

Crown Metropol, Crown's new 658-room hotel, has announced they will be opening ahead of schedule on April 6.

Australia's newest hotel will attract international leisure guests as well as cater for global convention and conference delegates. The architecturally striking design includes a stunning futuristic podium entry, a sky bar and terrace on level 28, the hotel's highest floor, access to extensive meeting rooms and a retail precinct showcasing brands previously unavailable in Australia.



QantasLink expands Queensland Services

QantasLink will increase Mackay-Brisbane services by

eight each week, and increase Rockhampton-Brisbane services by six services each week. Additionally there will be increased services to Bundaberg, Emerald and Gladstone. The new schedule is effective from 06 April and is due to the airline's 20th 74-seat Bombardier Q400 entering service.



Qantas network changes

Qantas has made the following adjustments across their international network which will come into effect from 05 July 2010:

- * Sydney – Auckland: commencement of A330-200 operations on the Tasman
- * Auckland – Los Angeles: returns to a daily flight utilising the A330-200
- LAXJFK – moves from a daily 4 class B747-400 flight to 5 days per week utilising the 2 class A330 – 200
- * Los Angeles – Brisbane: QF16 will now operate on

Wednesday and no longer on Monday

Customers can still fly five days per week from Sydney to New York with Qantas and daily on codeshare flights with American Airlines.

A detailed re-accommodation plan has been developed and all affected customers will be advised about any changes to their travel.

Please contact your Voyager Travel Consultant if you require further advice.



Emirates opens Birmingham lounge

Emirates have opened another regional airport lounge, doubling its presence in the UK within only 6 months. The new luxury lounge is located at Birmingham International Airport and is the first dedicated lounge to be offered by a long-haul airline.

Emirates offer a twice-daily service from Dubai to Birmingham with all First Class and Business Class passengers, plus Gold Skywards members, travelling on Emirates' can now make use of the 7,000 square foot facility. It is situated opposite the airline's departure gate (number 54) in the new international pier in Terminal 1.



Alliance Airlines to open Cairns base

Alliance Airlines has announced that it will open a full operations base in Cairns from 3 May, 2010. The Brisbane-based carrier would increase its Cairns flights from the current five departures per week to 10, and would actively explore further growth opportunities.

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Japan Airlines and Jetstar expand codeshare agreement

Japan Airlines announced yesterday it would expand its codeshare agreement with low cost carrier Jetstar Airways on the Kansai, Osaka-Cairns route. From 1 April this year, JAL will codeshare on once-daily flights between Kansai and Cairns operated by Jetstar on Monday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday. Fares issued by JAL for JQ-operated codeshare flights will be for economy class only, inclusive of meals and soft drinks.



Qantas Premium Economy and Flexible Economy Class Ticketing

Time Limits – Fares Sold in Australia

With effect from 30TH March 2010, the majority of bookings made using published, nett and corporate private fares in international Premium Economy and Flexible Economy class will have the following Ticketing Time Limits:

- *If the booking is made 8 days, or more than 8 days, before departure, payment and ticketing will need to be completed no later than 5 days before departure.
- * If the booking is made within 8 days of departure, payment and ticketing will need to be completed within 3 days of the booking being made, or before departure, whichever occurs earlier.

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