

3 May 2018

US non-stops resume from Budapest

The culmination of seven years hard work finally came to reality today at Budapest Airport, as the Hungarian gateway re-established direct flights to the US with LOT Polish Airlines. The carrier starts its year-around four times weekly 787-8 operation to New York JFK today, with a twice-weekly service to Chicago O'Hare set to commence later this week on 5 May. After a seven-year hiatus the return of US services is landmark moment for Hungary's capital city airport.

"This day has been a long time coming for everyone at Budapest Airport," says Jost Lammers, CEO, Budapest Airport. "Having a scheduled non-stop US service is one of those golden pieces in the jigsaw puzzle for any airport which has true global ambitions. And today, after seven years, we have delivered this missing piece in the Budapest Airport jigsaw with LOT Polish Airlines. This fantastic partner is establishing more and more regional frequency at Budapest which will ensure that these new long haul flights will be highly successful."

"Our decision to launch non-stop flights shows how much we believe in Hungary as one of the key markets in Central and Eastern Europe for LOT. We aim to win the hearts of passengers from Budapest and the surrounding cities with the best product on the market, which the non-stop flights definitely are. Currently, local passengers are forced to transfer mainly in Frankfurt, Paris, Amsterdam and London on their way to New York and Chicago, which makes their journey considerably longer. For LOT, it is also a completely new chapter in leveraging its operations. For the first time in its 89-year history, LOT is launching a connection to North America from outside Poland," said Rafał Milczarski, CEO, LOT Polish Airlines.

Formerly New York's largest unserved market in Europe, the Budapest route has sizeable potential, as data indicates around 110,000 passengers flew indirectly between the two cities last year. After New York, Chicago is the number two sought-after destination in US from the Hungarian capital city, with a market potential of more than 42,000 annual passengers between the two cities.

With the launch of the US flights having such importance to Budapest, it is not surprising that the airport had a large US-themed party to mark the first departure. Passengers and VIPs including Péter Szijjártó, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade, David Kostelancik, Chargé of US Embassy in Hungary and Jerzy Snopek, Polish Ambassador in Hungary, took part in the celebrations which included an impressive cake and traditional ribbon cutting to mark the significant occasion.



Photo caption: 'We did it our way' – seven years hard work come to reality at Budapest Airport as the Hungarian gateway re-established direct flights to the US with LOT Polish Airlines. Celebrating today's inaugural to New York JFK, Budapest Airport's CEO Jost Lammers stated: "Today we deliver the golden piece in the jigsaw puzzle for any airport with true global ambitions a non-stop US service." Cutting the cake were: H.E. David Kostelancik, Chargé d'Affaires, US Embassy in Hungary; H.E. Jerzy Snopek, Ambassador, Embassy of Poland in Budapest; Rafal Milczarski, CEO, LOT Polish Airlines; Péter Szijjártó, Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Trade; Jost Lammers, CEO, Budapest Airport.

Notes for Editors

- Budapest Airport Zrt. is the operator of Budapest Airport. It is owned by an international consortium of investors, led by the privately-owned German company AviAlliance, an independent airport manager holding a 55.438% stake, together with Caisse de dépôt et placement du Québec (21.228%), and Malton Investment Pte Ltd. (23.334%).
- Budapest Airport welcomed more than 13 million passengers in 2017, flying on the airport's services to 125 destinations across 45 countries.
- Monthly passenger traffic growth March 2018 has exceeded +17%.
- Budapest Airport's route development includes:
 - Already launched:
 - easyJet daily service to Berlin Tegel, 9 January 2018;
 - Wizz Air twice-weekly service to Stavanger, 15 March 2018;
 - Wizz Air four times weekly service to Athens, 25 March 2018;
 - Ryanair twice-weekly service to Santander, 26 March 2018;
 - Ryanair three times weekly service to Paphos, 27 March 2018;
 - LOT Polish Airlines six times weekly service to Krakow, 28 April 2018;
 - Wizz Air five times weekly service to Basel, 3 May 2018;
 - LOT Polish Airlines four times weekly service to New York JFK, 3 May 2018.
 - To launch:
 - LOT Polish Airlines twice-weekly service to Chicago O'Hare, starting 5 May 2018;
 - American Airlines daily service to Philadelphia, starting 5 May 2018;

- Ryanair twice-weekly service to Marseille, starting W18/19;
- Ryanair twice-weekly service to Amman, starting W18/19.

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