

Qatar Airways ups service to India

Qatar Airways, the Middle Eastern carrier, recently strengthened its commitment to India, via an increased number of weekly flights and the launch of daily services to the southern Indian IT city of Bengaluru (Bangalore).

Otherwise known as India's Silicon Valley due to its huge infrastructure in information technology, Bengaluru has helped put the country on the global IT map, with large international corporations setting up operations in and around the city.

Since the launch in February of daily non-stop flights between the airline's operational hub of Doha, capital of the State of Qatar, and Bengaluru, Qatar Airways reports the new service proving to be one of its most successful start-up routes.

11 Indian cities

Qatar Airways currently operates 74 flights a week spread across 11 Indian cities - in addition to Bengaluru, daily flights to Delhi, Mumbai, Hyderabad, Chennai, Cochin, Trivandrum, Kozhikode, Ahmedabad and Goa, with four services-a-week to Amritsar.

Speaking at a press conference in Bengaluru, Qatar Airways CEO, Akbar Al Baker, said the newest addition to the airline's Indian network further strengthened its presence in one of the world's most vibrant markets.

"I am delighted that Bengaluru has finally joined our international network. The route has performed exceptionally well and further demonstrates our commitment to give the travelling public greater choice," he said.

Strategic air link

"This new strategic air link fosters a stronger partnership between India and Qatar, and further provides excellent connectivity through our flights to rest of the world via Doha. India has grown rapidly into a dynamic market and we at Qatar Airways are extremely delighted to be part of the great success story of India Inc, working with the relevant authorities here to open up more air links to the world."

Added Al Baker: "In the last six months alone, we have stepped up capacity to India from 56 to 74 flights-a-week thanks to the introduction of services to Bengaluru, Goa and Amritsar. This represents a remarkable 30 percent increase in frequency to and from India.

"Our Doha - Goa flights increased to daily only last week and we plan to step up capacity on the Amritsar route to daily within the next few months. And we will continue to explore new strategic opportunities to expand our presence to even more cities across this wonderful country."

Heart of the software industry

Home to India's largest IT software industry, Bengaluru also has some of the country's most affluent colleges and research institutions with numerous public sector companies across the aerospace, telecommunications and defence industries.

Bengaluru has been at the heart of India's software industry for years, enabling it to capitalise on establishing commercial and social ties with cities around the world, including its US west coast IT centre counterpart, San Francisco.

Through code-share flights operated by partner carrier United Airlines, Qatar Airways provides convenient connections to many cities across the US, including San Francisco.

Flying from Bengaluru, passengers have a wide choice of destinations to travel to via Doha, including New York, Houston, Washington, London, Paris, Madrid, Stockholm, Johannesburg, Nairobi and Muscat.

First of several route launches

Bengaluru was the first of several route launches for 2010 during a year of aggressive expansion, which will see a further four destinations added to Qatar Airways' global network from Doha, together with capacity increases across Europe, Middle East, Africa and Asia Pacific.

Qatar Airways currently flies daily from Johannesburg and four times weekly from Cape Town to its hub in Doha. The carrier operates a modern fleet of 82 aircraft to 88 diverse business and leisure destinations across Europe, Middle East, Africa, Asia Pacific, South Asia and North America.

On the Doha - Bengaluru route, Qatar Airways operates an Airbus A320 in a two-class configuration of 12 seats in Business Class and 132 in Economy.

For more information on Bengaluru, go to www.qatarairways.com/bengaluru.

Schedules

The Doha - Bengaluru daily flight schedules (all times local) are:

Depart Doha International Airport
QR226 at 8.45pm, arrive Bengaluru at 3.35am.

Depart Bengaluru International Airport
QR227 at 4.35am, arrive Doha at 6.40am.

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