

Virgin Atlantic returns to Cape Town

Cape Town Air Access has announced the return of Virgin Atlantic back to Cape Town. The direct flight from London Heathrow to Cape Town will commence from October 2020.



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Liezl Gericke, head of Africa, Middle East and India, at Virgin Atlantic commented: "I am thrilled of the reintroduction of this popular route; it will make it even easier for our customers to travel for business and leisure between South Africa and the United Kingdom – as well as creating additional cargo capacity for the route. The daily service will not only enhance a vital link between Cape Town and the UK's capital, but it also provides seamless connections via Heathrow to Europe and North America."

Cape Town Air Access is a partnership between Wesgro, the City of Cape Town, the Western Cape Government, Airports Company of South Africa, Cape Town Tourism and South African Tourism, and is the focal point for international air route development in the Western Cape.

"A warm welcome back to Virgin Atlantic and its connection to London Heathrow. The UK is the top market for Cape Town and the Western Cape, in terms of both trade and travel, so this addition to the Cape Town air route network will only serve to strengthen business and tourism between the regions," said Tim Harris, CEO of Wesgro.

David Maynier, Western Cape Minister of Finance and Economic Opportunities said: "We welcome the announcement of the new route between London Heathrow to Cape Town so that more people can experience the best that Cape Town and the Western Cape have to offer. Once again Air Access has proved that expanding air connectivity can expand opportunity for people, and expanding opportunity for people, can give hope to people by creating jobs in the Western Cape."

Growing the aviation economy

Alderman James Vos, mayoral committee member for economic opportunities and asset management within the City of Cape Town, added: "The aviation economy is a key driver of growth through tourism and trade. I, therefore, welcome any increase in connections between South Africa and other destinations. What is really exciting is the opportunity to attract more business and leisure travellers to our beautiful city."

"To grow the aviation economy, the City provides funding to the Air Access initiative which is mandated to expand current flight routes and to secure new routes to boost tourism and trade. We will continue to build on these successes by working with industries and strategic partners to invest in projects and programmes that will drive demand and make business sense."

Deon Cloete, general manager of Cape Town International Airport, said: "This is a prime route and will no doubt be very popular, especially given the frequency of the connection. This connection will help to create a more competitive environment which will improve the value proposition for passengers from a pricing and product perspective - having choice is always good news!

"We look forward to welcoming Virgin Atlantic to Cape Town and will play our part in ensuring a smooth start-up at the airport. Well done to the Air Access team on these excellent results - we remain proud of this dynamic partnership!"

This increased air access will also make a significant impact on jobs and growth as 3 000 jobs are supported by each regularly scheduled long-haul flight, and for every 10% increase in passenger numbers, the regional economy grows by 2%.

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