



AIR FRANCE IS TRYING TO WOO YOUNG TRAVELERS WITH A DISCOUNT LOYALTY PROGRAM

News / Airlines



Air France will introduce loyalty cards offering 30 percent discounts on domestic routes to passengers aged 12 to 24 as it seeks to lure young travelers away from trains, long-distance buses, and low-cost carriers.

The cards will sell for 49 euros (\$56) and run for a year, Air France President Frederic Gagey said Friday at a Paris briefing. They'll be valid for bookings with Air France and regional arm Hop!, though not at discount unit Transavia.

Air France faces a crunch in the domestic travel market as EasyJet Plc and Ryanair Holdings Plc add flights and train services get quicker. While state rail operator SNCF has been offering youth discounts for decades, they're not yet widely available with airlines.

"There's a huge opportunity for us in targeting consumers who don't currently fly, both in terms of filling our planes and building loyalty at an early age," Lionel Guerin, who heads Hop!, said in an interview. The regional unit, formed via a merger of three domestic carriers, should be profitable by

2017, he said.

Air France will also offer a shuttle between Paris Orly and Montpellier, adding to its operations from the airport to Bordeaux, Marseille, Nice and Toulouse. The latter route is one of Europe's most frequently served, with 25 flights a day that take one hour — compared with five hours by train.

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