‘NORWEGIAN UK’ SET TO TAKE-OFF AS AIRLINE IS GRANTED UK AIR OPERATING LICENSE

News / Airlines

Norwegian, Europe’s third largest low-cost airline, has today been granted a **UK Operating License** opening up bilateral traffic rights to a series of potential new markets including Asia, South America and South Africa as the airline continues its huge growth in the UK.

Norwegian has grown to become the third-largest airline at Gatwick and also operates from Manchester, Birmingham, and Edinburgh. Over the last 12 months, Norwegian has flown 3.9 million UK passengers to 34 global destinations, including the UK’s only low-cost direct flights to America.

With new aircraft on order that will more than quadruple its current long-haul fleet, Norwegian is planning further expansion in key markets, particularly the UK. Norwegian has now obtained a UK Operating License following a detailed application process with the Civil Aviation Authority. The UK license will help Norwegian access bilateral traffic rights, opening the door to new UK routes to a series of potential new markets in the future including Asia, South America and South Africa.

Norwegian plans to begin operating under the new license as ‘Norwegian UK’ in the first quarter of

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2016 and will be located at Gatwick where the airline already has ten aircraft and more than 400 crew and pilots based. Norwegian's new routes and UK expansion plans are expected to help create several hundred jobs within Norwegian in the coming years, along with many more in the wider travel and tourism industry.

Norwegian CEO Bjorn Kjos said: "The British market continues to play a major role in Norwegian's growth. Securing a UK Operating License is great news and an important step to get a stronger foothold in the UK as we plan for further expansion, new routes and new jobs."

Managing Director of Norwegian UK, Asgeir Nyseth said: "With nearly 4 million passengers in the UK over the last 12 months, passengers are voting with their feet for the quality, affordable travel we offer. We are changing the face of low-cost travel by offering free on-board WiFi, state-of-the-art new aircraft and the UK's only direct low-cost flights to America. With the door now unlocked for new routes and further growth, we look forward to offering UK passengers a range of exciting new destinations in the future."

News of the UK Operating Licence follows a series of recent route launches as Norwegian continues its huge UK growth. Earlier this month Norwegian launched its 5th transatlantic route from Gatwick with the UK's only direct route to Puerto Rico offering passengers low-cost travel to the Caribbean for the first time. Also this month, two new routes were added at Birmingham Airport helping make Norwegian the fastest growing airline at Birmingham in 2015.

How Norwegian has grown in the UK:

April 2013: Norwegian establishes its first UK base at London Gatwick. More than 400 long-haul and short-haul crew and pilots are now based at the airport
July 2014: Norwegian introduces the UK's first low-cost, long-haul flights to the U.S. Flights from Gatwick to New York, Los Angeles, Orlando and Fort Lauderdale cost from £149
Summer 2015: Norwegian sees its busiest ever summer in the UK with over one million passengers between June and September and over 500 flights per week to and from UK airports
September 2015: in the 12 months from October 2014 to September 2015 a total of 3,931,803 passengers flew with Norwegian to and from UK airports
October 2015 – in Norwegian's third quarter results, the airline's strongest growth in terms of passenger numbers was at Gatwick. Norwegian also announced an order for 19 new Dreamliner aircraft, the single largest order in Europe which will help quadruple Norwegian's long-haul fleet
November 2015: Norwegian launches the UK's only direct route to Puerto Rico. The new route from Gatwick will offer UK passengers low-cost travel to the Caribbean for the first time
November 2015: Further expansion at Birmingham and Edinburgh Airports with new flights to the Canary Islands. At Birmingham in particular, Norwegian has launched 5 new routes in less than a year making it one of the airport's fastest growing airlines
First Quarter 2016: 'Norwegian UK' expected to begin operating from existing Gatwick base
May 2016: Boston will be added to Norwegian's low-cost long-haul network, becoming the fifth US destination served from the UK
2017: Norwegian will be the European launch customer of new generation Boeing 737 MAX8 aircraft making it possible to connect smaller cities in the UK with destinations in the U.S.

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