



FIRST NON-STOP AIR SERVICE BETWEEN NEW ZEALAND AND CHICAGO TAKES FLIGHT

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Air New Zealand's inaugural flight NZ26 between Auckland and Chicago departed around 5pm 30.11.18. and is scheduled to land at Chicago's O'Hare International Airport around 1.00pm local time. With a flight time of approximately 15 hours northbound and just over 16 hours southbound, the flight is Air New Zealand's longest, taking over from Auckland-Houston which has a flight time of 13.5 hours.

Air New Zealand Chief Executive Officer Christopher Luxon, who is travelling on the inaugural service, says the airline's new Auckland-Chicago service means exciting new opportunities for travellers to explore the United States' third biggest city, along with more of the East Coast of the US and Canada.

"We're excited to offer our customers a direct link between New Zealand and Chicago. With our alliance partner United operating more flights out of its hub of O'Hare International Airport than any other airline, the new service to Chicago will provide customers with convenient one-stop codeshare connections to around 100 destinations across the US.

“New Zealand already welcomes around 340,000 visitors annually from the US and we anticipate this number will grow with the introduction of this new service. We expect the route will contribute around NZD\$70 million annually to our economy – and we know 50 percent of spending by US visitors is done outside the main centres,” says Mr Luxon.

Chicago is an exciting destination with a lot to offer from its fascinating history, world-class museums and stunning architecture to internationally-renowned jazz and blues scene, and famous dishes including the iconic deep dish pizza.

Air New Zealand’s direct Auckland-Chicago service, operated by its Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner aircraft, will depart Auckland on Wednesday, Friday and Sunday.

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