



LUFTHANSA LAUNCHES ITS NEW FLIGHT TO SILICON VALLEY

News / Airports / Routes



- From 1 July, Lufthansa flies nonstop from Frankfurt to San José, providing a wider coverage of the Bay Area for travellers
- Passengers test digital innovations on board the LH488

Passengers from the Middle East and North Africa can now plan to see family and friends in the Bay Area with the additional service that Lufthansa is now offering to California's famed Silicon Valley. The Airbus A340-300 with flight number LH488 takes off at 10:53 local time from Frankfurt towards the west. San José is located in the heart of Silicon Valley, famous worldwide for start-ups and high-tech industry; numerous major car manufacturers operate their research laboratories here.

"We are pleased to offer our passengers a new and exciting destination to explore or to be with family and friends. The West Coast is popular amongst many of our customers, including San José. With our new flight to San José, we strengthen our network to the US bringing to 22 our total destinations. But what makes this flight more special is that we are bridging innovation like never

before,” said Karsten Zang, Lufthansa’s Senior Director Gulf, I.R. Iran, Afghanistan & Pakistan. From the Middle East, the flight has a one-stop connection in Frankfurt and onwards to San José.

At its maiden flight on July 1, Lufthansa installed a so-called FlyingLab for the first time, in which passengers were able to test new ideas surrounding products and services. The motto of the outbound flight is Virtual Reality, an area in which Lufthansa is the airline industry leader with its 360-degree content. On the flight to California, travellers experienced the latest digital equipment by partner Samsung, such as the virtual reality goggles Samsung Gear VR or the tablet Samsung Galaxy Tab S2. Thus, passengers were able to dive into 360-degree videos during the twelve-hour flight and experience powerful image content. On the return flight, with the motto “Wellbeing on night flights”, guests tested the Neuroon, among other things: this sleep mask with artificial intelligence is designed to help the wearer change to a different sleep pattern – interesting for frequent flyers with jetlag, for example. All booked passengers were able to register to test the products free-of-charge at lh.com/flyinglab.

Independent of the destination, Lufthansa will retain the concept of the FlyingLab and will make the latest internal as well as external developments available to its customers, and is collecting feedback – on digital innovations and services to product components. Customers will thus be able to familiarize themselves with the latest technologies and products, and to test them live.

“The aim of the FlyingLab is to try out new things quickly and easily,” says Dr Reinhold Huber, Vice President Passenger Experience Design & Ancillaries, Deutsche Lufthansa AG. “If we find an exciting product, we can thus discover quickly if it appeals to the target group. Lengthy tests can be counterproductive.”

Speed is of particular importance in a digital world. “In the first FlyingLab, we are evaluating a live conference,” says Dr Torsten Wingenter, Head of Digital Innovations. “We are making use of the same disruptive thinking that start-ups use: to quickly test a prototype and then to decide promptly whether to introduce the idea or to discard it.” Lufthansa is broadcasting four talks on board via the devices of the travellers through live streaming. The speakers will present topics on digital trends:

- Lufthansa, Dr Torsten Wingenter: “The Future of Travel: From Virtual Reality to the Flying Lab”
- Mercedes Benz, Natanael Sijanta: “Digital Experiences at Mercedes Benz”
- Instagram, Heiko Hebig: “Innovation on Instagram – A Growing Community from Zero to 500 Million”
- Visit San José, Kyle Schatzel: “San José – The Gateway to Silicon Valley and Monterey Bay”

Every guest can follow these contributions via their own smartphone, laptop or tablet. To do so, passengers connect via an on-board network, which broadcasts the talks. Lufthansa Systems has developed a flexible solution for this on the basis of their experience with BoardConnect in cooperation with Lufthansa Technik and Media Event Services, whereby the image and the presentation of the speakers is transmitted on a split screen: guests can use Wi-Fi to connect to the transmission via wireless access points (hotspots). Dr Torsten Wingenter: “We were able to implement the prototype for a live stream of an inflight conference to the guests’ end devices within a very short space of time. Such a system might also be viable on short-haul flights, in particular for internet streaming, for everyone who can’t be on the flight themselves. We will make a decision on whether to pursue this idea during the course of the year, on the basis of our experiences with the first FlyingLab and the status of currently available technology.”

But passengers will not only fall under the spell of Silicon Valley during the flight. For the first time, guests are invited to a total of five events organized by Lufthansa itself. Be it the Tech Museum in San José, whale watching in Monterey, or any unforgettable events, Lufthansa will celebrate its

latest destination together with its guests.

During their stay in California, passengers will also be able to test a very special service. With the travel concierge service “Mission Control”, a product of the Lufthansa Innovation Hub, guests can receive interesting tips and recommendations all about San José. They will be offered support for flight re-bookings or directions to their event – easily via Facebook Messenger.

Lufthansa is offering this connection throughout the year five times a week, and guests can choose between Business, Premium Economy and Economy Class.

11 JULY 2016

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