



AIR CHINA TOUCHES DOWN IN AUCKLAND

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Air China has touched down in New Zealand for the first time with the arrival of flight CA783 in **Auckland** on Thursday evening.

The Airbus A330-200, B-5932, landed a little after 1830 local time on Thursday following its 12 and a half hour journey from Beijing. The reciprocal, CA784, took off at about 2020 bound for the Chinese capital.

Air China is operating a daily Beijing-Auckland service as part of an alliance with Air New Zealand, whose flights between Auckland and Shanghai with Boeing 787-9 Dreamliners are also part of the partnership. The two Star Alliance members codeshare on each other's services and offer onward destinations both in China and across New Zealand, Australia, South Pacific and South America.

"Air China provides us with access to a strong and well-established network and distribution channel in China," Air NZ chief executive Christopher Luxon said in a statement on Thursday.

"The alliance also allows us to tap into 11 codeshare destinations within China, giving our customers even more options to not only explore Beijing's world renowned tourist highlights such as the Great Wall, the Forbidden City and the maze of hutongs or to travel to destinations beyond the capital."

Air China chief executive Song Zhiyong said the airline was "committed to working with our Star Alliance partner to meet the growing demand from travellers in both markets and provide greater

benefits to them”.



Air China crew celebrate the arrival of the inaugural service to Auckland from Beijing. (Mike Millett)



Air NZ and Air China's alliance was approved by the NZ government in September. (Mike Millett)

11 DECEMBER 2015

SOURCE: AUSTRALIAN AVIATION

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