IBERIA HAS ANNOUNCED PLANS FOR DIRECT FLIGHTS FROM MADRID TO BOTH TOKYO AND SHANGHAI

News / Airports / Routes

Luis Gallego, Iberia's Chairman and CEO, says: "We have always wanted to be a global airline. With these routes to Tokyo and Shanghai, we take a step in that direction, while we bring closer our country to two economical and touristic powers such as Japan and China".

Pending government approval, starting on 18 October, Iberia will operate three flights per week to Japan, on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Saturdays, for a total of some 90,000 seats per year. Tickets for these flights will go on sale today, with promotional launch fares starting at 612 Euros round trip from Spain.

These will be the only non-stop flights linking Japan with Spain, one of the most attractive touristic destinations for Japanese citizens, who fly to that country to experience its culture, gastronomy and artistic expressions such as flamenco. From January to September 2015, the number of Japanese tourists visiting Spain grew by 27% compared to the previous year.

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The new route will also make travel easier for a growing number of Spanish tourists who would like to visit Japan because of its culture, natural heritage and technology.

The airline has already started negotiations with Chinese authorities to operate the route. The launch date will be announced once negotiations have been finalised and permits, as well as slots, have been granted. Currently, there are no other non-stop flights between Spain and Shanghai, a financial global centre and the busiest container port in the world. The number of Chinese citizens visiting Spain is growing continuously. From January to September last year, it increased by 66% compared to 2014.

Shanghai is also a very important business destination, where many Spanish and international companies are already based. It is also a very attractive touristic destination, where modern skyscrapers and old colonial buildings coexist, and with a wide cultural and gastronomic offer.

On both routes Iberia will fly its latest aircraft, the twin-engine, wide-bodied Airbus A330-200, carrying up to 288 passengers, 19 in Business and 269 in Economy. The aircraft come factory-equipped with Iberia's newly designed long-haul cabins.

Iberia will offer good connections for incoming passengers from Asia to 29 additional Spanish destinations and 59 other European cities, as well as numerous destinations in Africa and the Americas.

The two new routes will be Iberia's first foothold in the Asian travel market. The airline is undergoing a transformation to reduce costs, improve productivity and efficiency, while simultaneously expanding its revenue base and changing its company culture. The measures taken allow the airline to start now its routes to Asia in a profitable and sustainable way.

19 JANUARY 2016

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