Skytrax World Airline Awards names Air Astana a winner seven years in a row



London, UK – Air Astana, the flag carrier of Kazakhstan, has been recognised for 4 Star service excellence, retaining the accolade of “Best Airline in Central Asia and India” in the Skytrax World Airline Awards for the seventh consecutive year. The prestigious awards ceremony took place at the Langham Hotel in Central London today.

The Skytrax World Airline Awards are recognised throughout the world as a valued benchmarking tool that is independent, impartial and global. The survey measures passenger satisfaction among business and leisure travellers, across all cabins (First Class, Business Class, Premium Economy Class and Economy class).

Over 19 million air travellers were surveyed about their experiences with airlines on the ground and in the air over a 10-month period. The survey measured passenger satisfaction across a wide range of performance indicators of airline front-line product and service, including check-in, boarding, on-board seat comfort, cabin cleanliness, food, beverages, in-flight entertainment and staff service. The survey covered over 200 airlines, from the largest international airlines to smaller domestic carriers.

“We are of course delighted and honored to be recognised once again. This award is particularly important and valued as it has been won based on the personal choice of our customers. I would like to offer them my sincerest thanks and look forward to welcoming them on board again soon. I would also like to recognise our team of dedicated employees who go the extra mile each and every day to provide consistently outstanding service to all our passengers. We will continue to work hard and strive for even higher standards.” said Peter Foster, President and CEO of Air Astana.



German youth forced to leave China considers studying in Taiwan

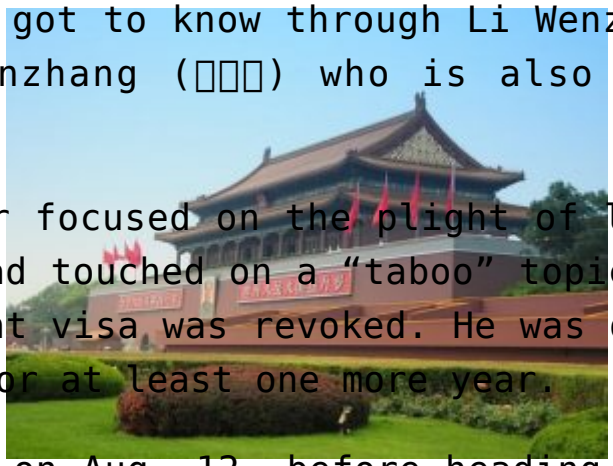
Image taken from Pixabay

Berlin, Aug. 13 (CNA) A German student whose paper on human rights lawyers in China got him into trouble with the Chinese authorities told German newspaper Die Welt he does not regret what he did and would consider becoming an exchange student in Taiwan.

David Missal, 24, a journalism student at Tsinghua University in Beijing, was forced to leave China by Aug. 12 after his student visa was revoked apparently because of a paper he wrote on human rights lawyers in China.

As to why his master's program report ran afoul of the Chinese authorities, Missal said he also shot a nine-minute documentary on dissident Qin Yongmin (□□□) who is in jail in Wuhan, central China.

Missal said he visited Qin with Lin Qilei (□□□), a human rights lawyer he got to know through Li Wenzu (□□□), wife of lawyer Wang Quanzhang (□□□) who is also currently being detained.



Because his paper focused on the plight of lawyers in China, Missal said he had touched on a "taboo" topic – which he said is why his student visa was revoked. He was originally set to stay in Beijing for at least one more year.

He told Die Welt on Aug. 12, before heading back to Germany, that as a journalism student, it is his duty to try to "cross

boundaries.” “I do not regret what I did,” he added.

Missal did say he felt sorry he may no longer be allowed to visit China, where he got to know a lot of brave people like the lawyers he met.

Following a German tradition of being a volunteer while at high school, Missal stayed in Nanjing for a year teaching German, an experience that inspired him to learn Chinese.

He now plans to finish his master’s program at Germany’s Freie Universitaet Berlin, while also considering becoming an exchange student in Taiwan.

(By Lin Yu-li and S.C. Chang)
Enditem/AW

In U.S. visit, Taiwan’s Tsai quotes Reagan’s remarks on freedom



Los Angeles, Aug. 13 (CNA) Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen (□□□) praised former U.S. President Ronald Reagan for standing up

for the values of democracy and freedom and voiced her appreciation for his support of Taiwan during a visit to the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library on Monday.

Tsai evoked Reagan in telling gathered Taiwanese media, “Anything can be negotiated except that our freedom and our future cannot be compromised.”

“I believe this is also how we Taiwanese feel now,” Tsai said, referring to current relations between Taiwan and China, which claims Taiwan as part of its territory.

The quote apparently goes back to something Reagan said after failing to agree with then Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev on arms reduction in Iceland in 1986: “I went to Reykjavik determined that everything was negotiable except two things: our freedom and our future.”

The library, situated in Simi Valley, California, some 64 kilometers northwest of downtown Los Angeles, is also the final resting place of Ronald Reagan, who served as president of the United States from 1981 to 1989, and his wife Nancy Reagan.

In January 1979, diplomatic relations between the Republic of China (Taiwan) and the U.S. were severed as Washington established diplomatic links with Beijing.

Although Reagan had never made good on his election promise to resume the ties during his eight-year tenure, he was friendly toward Taiwan.

In 1982, he approved the Six Assurances toward Taiwan, which include U.S. pledges on arms sales and assurances not to pressure Taiwan into negotiating with Beijing or to formally recognize Chinese sovereignty over Taiwan.

Tsai said the Six Assurances have been an important foundation of the U.S.’s Taiwan policy.

“For Taiwan-U.S. relations to be able to develop in a stable and solid manner over the past several decades, Reagan’s contributions during his tenure cannot be forgotten,” she said.

Tsai is the third president of Taiwan to have visited the library during an overseas trip, following Ma Ying-jeou (□□□) in 2014 and Lee Teng-hui (□□□) in 2001.

It was the first time, however, that Taiwan-based reporters traveling with a Taiwanese president were allowed to file stories from U.S. soil.

Before departing Los Angeles for Paraguay, Tsai thanked the U.S. for the arrangements it made for her U.S. stopover.

Tsai arrived in Los Angeles on Sunday for a transit stop en route to Paraguay and Belize, two of Taiwan’s 18 diplomatic allies.

(By Sophia Yeh, Tsao Yu-fan and Elizabeth Hsu)
Enditem/ls

Wizz Air reliera Charleroi avec Craiova



Wizz Air, la plus grande compagnie aérienne low-cost de l'Europe de l'Est et Centrale, vient d'annoncer 11 nouvelles routes. Une d'entre elles sera la liaison entre Brussels South Charleroi et Craiova dans le sud de la Roumanie. Cette route sera desservie deux fois par semaine (le mardi et le samedi) à partir du 15 décembre 2018. Wizz Air offre la possibilité de réserver un billet d'avion sur wizzair.com à partir de EUR 14,99. Craiova est la sixième destination roumaine que Wizz Air relie avec Charleroi.*

La compagnie aérienne low-cost annonce aujourd'hui également l'ouverture de 10 autres routes : Budapest-Doncaster Sheffield, Tirana-Dortmund, Vilnius-Lviv, Pristina-Mulhouse, Pristina-Dortmund, Pristina-Memmingen, Varsovie-Vienne, Gdansk-Kharkiv, Wroclaw-Kharkiv et Lviv-Bratislava. Incluant les routes annoncées aujourd'hui, WIZZ ajoutera cette année civile plus de 125 routes supplémentaires et 700 vols hebdomadaires extra à son réseau.

La compagnie aérienne low-cost annonçait antérieurement trois nouvelles destinations depuis Charleroi, notamment Sibiu, Iasi et Chisinau. Ce qui rend le total de routes WIZZ depuis Charleroi à 12.

Lors des sept premiers mois de 2018 Wizz Air transportait 470.000 passagers à destination et en provenance de la Belgique. Ce chiffre représente plus de 8% de croissance comparé avec la même période l'année dernière. Les activités de Wizz Air ont créé plus de 580 emplois locaux** dans le secteur de l'aviation, de transport, de l'hôtellerie et la restauration et de tourisme.



NOUVELLE ROUTE DE WIZZ AIR: BRUXELLES CHARLEROI – CRAIOVA

Route	Jours de vol	Date de départ	À partir de *
Bruxelles Charleroi – Craiova	mardi, samedi	15 décembre 2018	14,99 EUR

András Radó, Corporate Communications Manager de Wizz Air, déclara: « Nous sommes ravis d'ajouter Craiova comme nouvelle destination depuis Charleroi. WIZZ ne cesse de créer de nouvelles routes et notre réseau se développe de plus en plus. Nous offrons à nos clients des voyages à des tarifs très abordables. Parallèlement nous stimulons vigoureusement l'économie locale des régions desservies, car les plus de 125 nouvelles routes ajoutées à son réseau soutiennent le tourisme et renforcent les liens économiques entre les différentes régions. »

** Simple trajet, redevances aéroportuaires et suppléments non-optionnels.*
*** ACI affirme la création de 750 emplois pour un million de passagers transportés par an.*

A PROPOS DE WIZZ AIR
Wizz Air, la plus grande compagnie aérienne à bas prix d'Europe centrale et orientale, offre plus que 600 routes depuis 25 bases aériennes. Elle relie 141 destinations dans 44 pays. La flotte compte 104 Airbus du type A320 et A321. Wizz Air embauche plus de 4000 professionnels offrant un service supérieur. Durant les 12 derniers mois, Wizz Air a transporté plus de 31 millions passagers.

WIZZ offre actuellement des vols vers 12 destinations depuis Brussels South Charleroi Airport, à savoir : Bucarest, Budapest, Chisinau, Cluj-Napoca, Craiova, Iasi, Ljubljana, Sibiu, Skopje, Sofia, Timisoara et Varsovie.

Wizz Air est une société cotée à la Bourse de Londres sous le symbole WIZZ et fait partie des index FTSE 250 et FTSE All-Share. Wizz Air a remporté avec succès le IATA's (International Air Transport Association) Operational Safety Audit (IOSA), un standard international en matière de sécurité aérienne. Wizz Air a été nommée «European airline of 2017» par Aviation 100, une publication phare qui récompense chaque année les meilleurs acteurs de l'industrie aéronautique.

www.wizzair.com

Primera Air start met

rechtstreekse vluchten naar New York, Washington DC en Boston van op Brussels Airport

Brussels Airport verwelkomt in mei volgend jaar de nieuwe luchtvaartmaatschappij Primera Air. De maatschappij start in mei 2019 met rechtstreekse vluchten naar New York (EWR), en in juni 2019 met vluchten naar Boston (BOS) en Washington DC (IAD). De vluchten worden uitgevoerd met de nieuwe, hoogtechnologische Boeing 737 Max 9. Twee toestellen van Primera Air zullen Brussels Airport als basis hebben.

“We zijn verheugd met de komst van Primera Air die directe vluchten van Brussels Airport naar Noord-Amerika zal opstarten. Met hun low-fare aanbod bevestigt haar komst nogmaals dat onze luchthaven het breedste aanbod aan luchtvaartmaatschappijen biedt voor alle type passagiers. Een nieuwe route voor onze luchthaven is die naar Boston, waar heel wat pharmaceutische en biotech bedrijven gevestigd zijn, en ook een sleutelsector in ons land. We kijken er ook naar uit om de toegangspoort te zijn tot Europa en België voor heel wat meer Amerikaanse bezoekers”, zegt **Arnaud Feist**, CEO van Brussels Airport Company.airport is Boston, home to many pharmaceutical and biotech companies, and also a key industry in our country. We also look forward to being the gateway to Europe and Belgium for an increasing number of American visitors.”

Primera Air is een low-fare Noord-Europese luchtvaartmaatschappij die vluchten uitvoert vanuit Europa

naar meer dan 70 bestemmingen over de Middellandse Zee, het Midden-Oosten, Azië, het Caribisch gebied en Noord-Amerika.

Dagelijkse vluchten naar New York (EWR) starten vanaf 9 mei 2019, de vluchten naar Boston (BOS) en Washington DC (IAD) beginnen vanaf 2 juni 2019. De vluchten worden uitgevoerd door een gloednieuw en hoogtechnologisch vliegtuig de Boeing 737 Max 9.

Anastasija Visnakova, Hoofd Marketing van Primera Air: “Onze missie is om van dure trans-Atlantische reizen geschiedenis te maken en we zijn blij om low-fare, langeafstandsvluchten naar Brussel te brengen. Het zal lokale reizigers de mogelijkheid bieden om op een betaalbare manier naar de VS en Canada te vliegen en meer Noord-Amerikaanse reizigers naar Brussel te halen. ”

Reizen met twee in stijl, dat is ‘Premium Mini’

Thalys lanceert een nieuwe formule voor trips met twee personen



Augustus 2018 – Nu de zomervakantie over de helft zit, begint

het stilaan tijd te worden om een volgende vakantie te plannen: een citytrip met vrienden in Düsseldorf, een romantische trip naar Parijs of een culturele ontdekking van Amsterdam met de tienerdochter of -zoon? Thalys lanceert haar nieuwe ‘Premium Mini’-formule, die een antwoord biedt op alle behoeften van reizen in het najaar.

Alle Premium-diensten aan verlaagde prijzen!
Met ‘Premium Mini’ opent Thalys de deuren van Premium voor alle vakantiegangers. Ze genieten van een korting (-30% ten opzichte van de normale instapprijs) en kunnen, met uitzondering van de flexibiliteit betreffende omruil- en terugbetalingsmogelijkheden, profiteren van alle Premium-diensten: een maaltijd geserveerd aan de zitplaats, een taxireservering, het comfort van een eerste klas zitplaats, internationale pers en gratis wifi.

“We hebben een dubbele doelstelling met ‘Premium Mini’: we willen zoveel mogelijk mensen het beste van Thalys laten ontdekken – ons Premium-aanbod – en tegelijkertijd blijven bouwen aan onze missie om de Europese mobiliteit verder te ontwikkelen. Door het meest correcte aanbod voor te stellen, waarin ieder iets vindt dat beantwoordt aan zijn of haar behoefte, zullen we meer reizigers toelaten om tussen onze bestemmingen te reizen”, verklaart Agnès Ogier, CEO van Thalys.

Voor reizigers die al geboekt hebben voor september: er zullen elke maand 2000 zitplaatsen worden aangeboden, zodat die reisverlangens het hele jaar door kunnen worden ingelost.

Technische details

Start verkoop: 7 augustus 2018 voor reizen vanaf dinsdag 4 september
Bestemming: alle bestemmingen (uitgezonderd binnenlandse of seizoensbestemmingen)
Prijs: vanaf €40/persoon (enkele reis België-Duitsland), in Premium; vaste prijs, afhankelijk van de beschikbaarheden
Distributie: beschikbaar via de verschillende Thalys-kanalen
Aantal personen: van 2 tot 6 personen
Reservatie : beschikbaar zodra de verkoop open is
Verkoopsvoorwaarden : tickets zonder omruil- of terugbetalingsmogelijkheid

Meer informatie : https://www.thalys.com/be/nl/aanbiedingen-en-tarieven/premium-mini

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Primera Air announces transatlantic flights



Primera Air announces the opening of 3 new departure points in Europe: London (Stansted, STN), Paris (Charles de Gaulle, CDG) and Birmingham (BHX) for starting flights to New York (EWR airport) and Boston Logan (BOS airport) in April 2018. Two more transatlantic routes from the new bases will be announced by the end of summer 2017.

Providing flights between emblematic destinations on each coast of the Atlantic has always been an important stake in air travel. While traditional carriers have covered these routes with wide-body aircraft for decades, a new generation of airlines wants to change this paradigm.

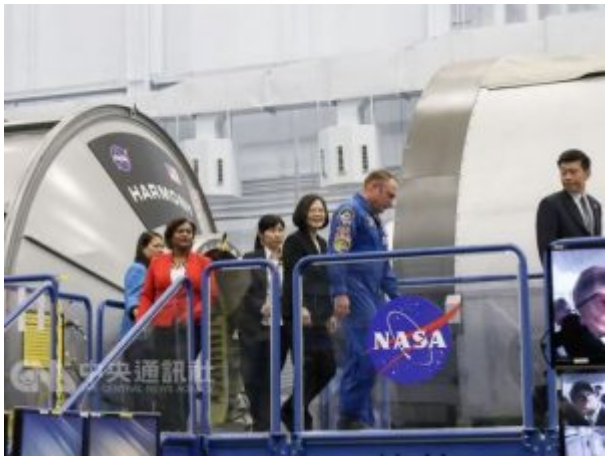
Building their groundbreaking strategies on the efficiency of new-generation aircraft, these airlines offer transatlantic flights at prices previously unseen. This innovative approach not only enables travelers to discover new destinations on the other shore of the Ocean but can also prove lucrative to seasoned leisure and business travelers.

A new competitor – Primera Air – is aiming to make a quick and firm move to become an indispensable name in the transatlantic flight market. This airline will not only operate transatlantic flights but link the main airports of major cities such as Paris, London, Birmingham, New York and Boston. Primera Air will commence daily flights to New York and 4 weekly flights to Boston from the three European cities with a fleet of brand-new Airbus321NEOs airliners as early as in spring 2018, while working on more routes for the near future.

According to President and Chairman of Primera Air Andri M. Ingolfsson, these direct flights will provide “a product and service concept merging low fares and high quality”. This new transatlantic player will focus on very competitive low fares while providing its passengers sought-after onboard services such as Wi-Fi access and the option to charge their devices.

The evolution of transatlantic air travel market in 2018 will be exciting to follow as Primera Air’s vision and concept will surely bring new inspiration to travelers on both sides of the Atlantic.

Over 54 percent think Tsai's overseas visit beneficial: poll



President Tsai Ing-wen (□□□, third right) visits the U.S. National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) space center in Houston, Texas / CNA file photo

Taipei, Aug. 23 (CNA) Over 54 percent of the respondents to a survey conducted by the ruling Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) felt President Tsai Ing-wen's (□□□) recent visit to Taiwan's allies Paraguay and Belize as well as the United States was beneficial, according to the DPP on Thursday.
The poll was conducted during Tsai's nine-day state visit to Paraguay and Belize, with stopovers in the United States, said DPP Deputy Secretary-General Hsu Chia-ching (□□□) at a press conference held on Thursday.

The poll showed that 54.2 percent of the respondents felt Tsai's Aug. 12-20 visit was beneficial to Taiwan's relationship with the diplomatic allies as well as the U.S., while 36.8 percent felt it did not help.

Tsai's trip showed that she had consolidated Taiwan's foreign relations, which led the public to feel a certain level of satisfaction, Hsu said.

He added that under China's suppression of Taiwan, it was commendable that Tsai maintained such a degree of recognition.

Up to 46.9 percent of the respondents expressed support for Tsai while 46.7 percent did not, the poll also showed.

Despite relatively strong support, a slightly lower percentage of respondents – 43.4 percent – approved of Tsai's performance, while 48.7 percent expressed they were dissatisfied with her, according to the poll.

The survey was conducted between Aug. 16-18 among citizens over 20 years of age with the right of vote, collecting 1,098 valid samples. It has a confidence level of 95 percent, with a margin of error of plus or minus 3 percentage points.

(By Lu Hsin-hui and William Yen)
Enditem/cs

Budapest Airport's new route march continues with Marseille



Securing its first new route of the year, Budapest Airport has confirmed the addition of Ryanair's twice-weekly service to Marseille in W18/19. The launch of a connection to the Hungarian gateway's seventh French airport further establishes the Irish ultra-low-cost carrier's (ULCC) development at Budapest, as the link becomes

the airline’s 34th destination to be offered from the airport.

Seeing an attractive gap in the market, Ryanair faces no direct competition on the airport pair and joins Budapest’s existing connections to Bordeaux, Nice, Lyon and Paris. With the addition of the ULCC’s link to France’s second largest city, the airport will offer close to 40 weekly flights, over 6,500 weekly seats, to the Western European country in W18/19.

“Not only is this our first route announcement of the year, but our new link to Marseille is also Ryanair’s – Europe’s largest airline – first new route statement of 2018 as well,” states Kam Jandu, CCO, Budapest Airport. “A top priority for us is to be able to offer our passengers an ever expanding selection of great places to visit. To announce our seventh brand new destination for 2018 already is just the beginning of us ensuring we continue to deliver a combination of attractive routes and good services,” adds Jandu.

Offering more than 2.3 million seats last year from the capital city airport, Ryanair recorded a 23% growth at Budapest in 2017, the addition of its new flights in W18/19 securing the ULCC’s place as the airport’s second largest carrier.

AIR EUROPA ajoute Sao Paulo à

son réseau des destinations en Dreamliner !



Dès le 25 Mars prochain, AIR EUROPA, division aérienne du groupe Globalia, opérera un vol quotidien vers Sao Paulo en Boeing 787-800.

Le Dreamliner est un avion particulièrement conçu pour le long-courrier, offrant un confort maximum dans une atmosphère exceptionnelle et feutrée, tout en réduisant de 40 minutes le temps de vol sur cette ligne.

En incorporant Sao Paulo parmi les destinations desservies en Dreamliner, AIR EUROPA renforce encore sa présence au Brésil où la compagnie privée espagnole opère aussi vers Salvador de Bahia et, depuis décembre dernier, vers Recife.

Sao Paulo s'ajoute ainsi à Miami, Bogota, Saint-Domingue, Buenos Aires, La Havane, Lima et Tel Aviv, toutes des destinations qu'AIR EUROPA opère avec ses Boeing 787-800, un type d'avion qui a transporté l'année dernière plus d'un million de passagers pour la compagnie espagnole.



www.aireuropa.com

Air Europa propose de très bonnes connexions au départ de Bruxelles, Amsterdam, Frankfort et Paris à des tarifs très concurrentiels en classe économique et en classe business. Spécialiste des vols intérieurs espagnols et des vols intercontinentaux vers l'Amérique latine, Air Europa est également membre de Skyteam. Les passagers peuvent ainsi bénéficier des avantages du programme de fidélisation SUMA d'Air Europa.

Iberia presents its Most Advanced Aircraft in the Market, New Destinations, and Growth of 8% in 2018



- *The long-haul Airbus A350s Iberia will receive in June consume some 30% less fuel.*

- *Hi-speed Wi-Fi, an improved in-flight entertainment system, higher ceilings, more space for hand luggage, and an advanced air circulation system are some of the improvements passengers will notice.*

- *Business Class touch screens are larger, seats are wider, and there is additional space for storing personal items.*

- *For its short- and medium-haul fleet, Iberia will receive new Airbus A320neo's, equipped with quieter engines and consuming 15% lower fuel.*

- *This year Iberia will launch is non-stop flights from Madrid to*

San Francisco and to Managua, while Iberia Express is adding Mikonos and Palermo to its newtwork.

- *Once again, Iberia and Iberia Express were the world's most punctual carriers in their categories in 2017.*

Iberia presented its new developments for this year at the annual FITUR travel trade fair in Madrid, including its first **Airbus A350/900, the most modern commercial airliner in the market today**, which will join the fleet in June

Iberia will become **the first airline** to fly this **improved version of the A350/900**, featuring enhanced aerodynamics and structure and reinforced landing gear.

Iberia's new Airbus A350/900s also incorporate **the latest cockpit technology**, integrating all systems with the operating infrastructure, and more advanced transfer of information from the aircraft.

They are powered by Rolls Royce Trent XWB-84 engines, which allow higher speeds and **fuel consumption some 30% lower than the A340-600**

More Comfort



Passengers will also notice that the A350/900 is **the world's quietest aircraft, with panoramic windows, wider aisles, and higher ceilings** for a greater sense of spaciousness. The **new air intake and circulation system** ensures a level of **humidity of up to 16%.**

The new aircraft also features **high-speed Wi-Fi**, and **more sensitive HD touch display screens** for easier use of the in-flight entertainment system.

The Airbus A350/900's **Business Class** seats are wider: 58 cm instead of 52.5cm, and display screens are 18". **Footrests are**

also wider. with side protectors, and there is **more space for storing belongings.**

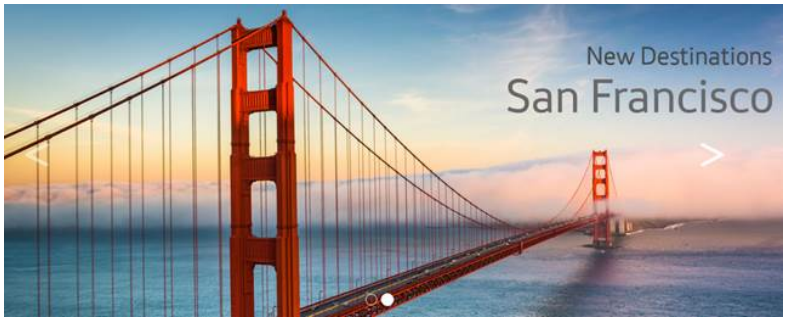
The **first Iberia's long-haul flight** operated by its new A350-900 will be **New York in August 2018.**

A320neo –Quieter and More Efficient



For its short- and medium-haul network, Iberia will be taking delivery this year of its first two **Airbus A320neo** planes, whose new engines make them quieter and 15% more fuel-efficient than the previous generation of Airbus A320s. More slender seat backs add an inch to passenger space.

In 2018, to San Francisco and Managua



The new year will also see Iberia launch non-stop flights from Madrid to San Francisco and to Managua.

San Francisco fights will be seasonal, starting on 25 April and ending on 28 September, with departures on Mondays, Wednesday, and Fridays. Flights to**Managua** will operate on the same week days, and will begin on 1 October.

beria also expects to see substantial growth in traffic on several of its long-haul routes –to Japan, Argentina, Colombia, Chile, Puerto Rico, and Brazil– as well as shorter routes –France, Italy, Portugal, etc.– for which it is adding 8% to overall seat supply over the 2017 total. Meanwhile, the

low-cost carrier Iberia Express is launching new services to Mikonos and Palermo.



Iberia and Iberia Express were world's most punctual carriers in their respective categories in 2017, according to FlightStats, an achievement that reflects the commitment of all employees to outshine all other airlines with their dedication and efficiency.

About Iberia: Iberia is the leading carrier on routes between Europe and Latin America and it flies to **130 destinations in 48 countries** in Europe, the Americas, Africa, Middle East and Asia. Together with its subsidiary Iberia Express and its franchise partner Iberia Regional/Air Nostrum, it operates about 600 flights each day with a fleet of some 135 aircraft. It offers easy and convenient connections at its hub in T4 in Madrid-Barajas airport.**Iberia was the world's most punctual airline in 2016 and 2017**, according to Flightstats. The airline has recently been awarded the 4th star of Skytrax. The airline is a member of the **one**world alliance that operates more than 14,000 daily flights to some 1,000 destinations in more than 150 countries. For more information, please visithttp://grupo.iberia.es