

Delta Air Lines to offer year round flights to JFK



An inaugural flight is leaving New York's JFK airport later today bound direct for Edinburgh Airport where it will be welcomed tomorrow morning with the usual fanfare and water jets.

Delta Air Lines have flown from Edinburgh before, but this time they reckon they are better placed to offer business and leisure passengers a good onboard experience and many onward connections. There is a choice of around 60 onward connections throughout the US including San Francisco and Albuquerque. Visitors to Scotland from America numbered around 500,000 in 2014, making it the number one inbound tourism market. With 50 million Scottish diaspora of whom almost 20% are in the US, it is clear to the airline that we need such a link to New York and beyond.

The airline have fostered a relationship with Virgin Atlantic in the last couple of years, which they say now allows them to cover 99% of the one stop area between the UK and the US. They regard the new flight from Edinburgh as part of their continued expansion of the key UK market.

The Edinburgh Reporter spoke with Frank Jahangir, vice president of Sales for Europe, Middle East and Africa with Delta earlier today:

[The Edinburgh Reporter NEWS](#) from [Phyllis Stephen](#) on [Vimeo](#).

The service will fly year-round, with daily flights in summer leaving Edinburgh at 1.10pm and arriving in New York at 3.43pm local time, and five days in winter, at least to start with.

The 3,000 weekly seats will start from £410 in the main cabin of their 767-300 where even [Seat Guru](#) is hard pushed to find more than a few bad seats.

All passengers in all classes will have wifi and of course in-flight entertainment, which is perhaps less significant when you can stream the latest Netflix box set to your device.

The airline regard the New York route as a number one destination from Edinburgh customers. They have invested heavily in the airport there meaning that there should be a better welcome awaiting those of us without a US passport. Now as a result of Delta's investment the typical immigration process should take under 15 minutes rather than the hours it has certainly taken me on a number of occasions.

Frank Jahangir said: "We have made more progress in the last couple of years than we thought we would have. Delta is not like any other American carrier. Our motto is Keep Climbing and we certainly intend to do that. We have learned from our previous experiences in Edinburgh. Now we have all the pieces in place with ongoing connections. Everything for the customer is now in place and we are confident this is a good time to be back."

Delta Air Lines estimate that the new service should introduce a £23 million benefit to Scotland in the form of tourism spend, and the new service will also support Scottish business with their cargo opportunities too.

Delta's Edinburgh service will initially be operated using a 163-seat Boeing 757-200ER, with a larger 210-seat widebody Boeing 767-300ER during the summer months, effective June 9, 2016. From 6 September, the 757-200ER will operate on the route.

Minister for Transport and the Islands, Humza Yousaf added: "It's fantastic to see this new service get off the ground, highlighting the important cultural and historical

links between Scotland and the United States of America.

“Not only will this route bring real benefits for Scottish businesses, giving them greater access to the American markets, but it will also help boost our tourism industry by making it even easier for visitors to get a taste of the fantastic experiences Edinburgh and Scotland as a whole have to offer.

“I congratulate Edinburgh Airport and Delta on the launch of this new service and have no doubt it will prove popular with travellers on both sides of the Atlantic.”

Customers flying in Delta Comfort+, Delta’s premium economy service, benefit from up to four additional inches of legroom and 50 percent more recline than Main Cabin seats, as well as priority boarding.

Furthermore, Delta’s flights from Edinburgh feature fully flat-bed seats in the Delta One cabin, with Westin Heavenly Inflight Bedding from Westin Hotels & Resorts and TUMI amenity kits featuring products by MALIN + GOETZ.

Customers enjoy a range of regional dining options in the Delta One cabin produced using seasonal ingredients and paired with wines selected exclusively for Delta by Master Sommelier, Andrea Robinson.

Tickets for Delta’s New York service are available through Delta Air Lines on 0871 221 1222, www.delta.com or via travel agents. Flights are operated in conjunction with joint venture partner, Virgin Atlantic Airways.