

# China flight heads back to Beijing

The first plane from Beijing landed at 6.00am this morning and by around 8 o'clock it had taken off to return to China. This is begin hailed as a momentous day by Edinburgh Airport who are extremely pleased to have secured this route for the capital.



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Pictured Piper Conner Pratt

Edinburgh says hi to Hainan

A piper from the world famous Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo welcomed passengers from Beijing to Scotland before piping them off on departure.

Gordon Dewar, Chief Executive of Edinburgh Airport said: "This is a momentous day as we connect not only Edinburgh and Beijing for the first time, but Scotland and China too. It is a route which has immense opportunities for our countries, from tourism and business to culture, education and more.

"We know Edinburgh is second only to London for Chinese tourists and we are eager to welcome more people to our fantastic capital city, but it's also about connecting people from Scotland to Beijing and wider China thanks to Hainan's

hub network.

“Hainan is one of the world’s most prestigious airlines and we are proud to be working with them. This is something the city has worked towards for a number of years and we are delighted to see this day finally arrive.”



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Pictured Piper Conner Pratt with Hainan Air staff

Minister for Business, Innovation and Energy, Paul Wheelhouse, said: “Securing direct links between Scotland and China is one of our key priorities for route development. This new direct Beijing-Edinburgh route is an exciting first chapter in direct air connectivity between Scotland and China. It will enable China and Scotland to become closer in partnership and in travel time, building upon existing strong links for business and tourism. The Scottish Government and our agencies look forward to working with Hainan Airlines and Edinburgh Airport to make this route a great success.”

The Lord Provost of the City of Edinburgh, Frank Ross said: “This is the culmination of a lot of hard work by a number of organisations and it is fantastic for all of us to see the new

flight schedule up and running. As the only Scottish city with a direct flight to China, the new route will provide Edinburgh with substantial outreach to Asia for tourism, business travel and investment opportunities. This will be supported by many across the retail, hotel and restaurant sectors through the city's innovative 'China Ready' campaign and I'm sure it will also be welcomed by Edinburgh's many business travellers and holiday-makers."



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Malcolm Roughead, Chief Executive of VisitScotland, said:  
"This first direct service from China to Edinburgh represents a gear change for Scottish tourism and further cements Scotland's reputation as a world-class destination.

"As the Chinese market has grown over the years so too has the Scottish capital's popularity with Chinese visitors and it continues to be the top destination outside of London.

"Through our ongoing work with key Chinese tour operators we have seen visitor itineraries extending over the years. Bringing visitors from China directly into the heart of Scotland will create greater opportunities for tourism

businesses right across the country, as visitors stay longer and explore further.”

There are four weekly flights with Hainan Airlines Airbus A330-300. There is a short stopover in Dublin to link all three cities.

The flight operates on Tuesdays and Saturdays when it arrives from Beijing at 6 and leaves for Dublin at 8 to go to Beijing. On Thursdays and Sundays the flight arrives into Edinburgh from Dublin at 0910 and then leaves for Beijing at 1110.



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