

First direct flight from China to Scotland arrives today

The very first Hainan Airlines flight from Beijing, China arrives in Edinburgh this morning.

This is the inaugural direct flight from China and is the result of many years of work on the Edinburgh-China Air Link Project. Marketing Edinburgh, Edinburgh Airport and the City of Edinburgh Council have all worked together to bring this route to Edinburgh, and city representatives will board the China-bound flight later today.



Cathay Pacific 747-8f air to air

This is viewed as one of the most valuable tourism markets worldwide already contributing £26.5 million to Edinburgh's economy before the flights. Now it is envisaged that the capital will reap the benefits of the new tourists and business passengers, with hotels, shops, restaurants and

attractions ready to welcome new trade.

Independent jeweller Laings on George Street signed up as the lead sponsor for the project and the Edinburgh Hotels Association also back the development.

The impact is expected to manifest itself in different ways, but mainly as a major marketing opportunity for the capital. Edinburgh will feature in in-flight magazines, travel products and on billboards. Chinese visitors are expected to share their experiences of Edinburgh and its attractions on social media, but also by telling their friends when they return home.

There is now no need to route through London to get to China and any produce which is brought to Scotland will have an extra few days shelf life, and it is expected that the duration and cost of business trips could reduce.

Students are also expected to consider Edinburgh as their preferred place to study, while business travellers are expected to consider Edinburgh as their next business destination.



Lord Provost of the City of Edinburgh The Rt Hon Frank Ross

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.”

Fiona Hunter, Edinburgh-China Air-link Project Manager said:

“Securing a global flight connection on this scale is hugely encouraging of the Capital’s position as an outstanding place to visit, live, work, study and invest.

“The flight path is the result of many years of hard work and is really just the start of the opportunity for Edinburgh. Based on our research we expect to see the number of flights increase quite significantly over the next few years, bringing with it even more investment and economic influence.”

Jonathan Payne, Managing Director of Laings said: “When we first heard about the Edinburgh China Airlink Project we knew how important this would be for the tourism industry here in Edinburgh and had no hesitation about getting involved. The Chinese market is hugely influential and we can’t wait to build a connection with the new visitors the direct flight brings.”

Gordon Robertson, Director of Communications at Edinburgh Airport and Chairman of Marketing Edinburgh, said: “Having direct connectivity to China will deliver a massive tourism boost for the city and country’s economy and we’re delighted to welcome the first flight to the capital today. This really is testament to the support and backing of our campaign and we’re thrilled the work has paid off.”

For further information on the Edinburgh-China Airport Link Project visit www.edinburgh.org.