

A Pisa nonsense – Ryanair's Edinburgh to Tuscany flights frustration

RYANAIR's jinxed Monday flight from Edinburgh to Pisa continues to suffer from delays and other issues.

Last week the Irish airline was trumpeting its 15 year long presence at Edinburgh Airport, highlighting that it has 11 aircraft based in the Scottish capital and that it had flown 33 million passengers to and from Edinburgh.

Head of Communications, Jade Kirwan, boasted that Ryanair was the largest operator at Edinburgh with 33% of the market share and supported 3,800 local jobs.

But there was a stony silence from the airline's press office when quizzed about continuing issues on the Monday evening flight to the Tuscan hotspot and its late night return flight to Edinburgh.



Not so much a runaway success – Ryanair’s Monday flights Edinburgh – Pisa. PHOTO Scott Douglas

The flight on 26 June from Pisa was in the air for around 40 minutes when it was diverted to Bergamo near Milan for a “medical emergency”. Passengers were billeted in local hotels overnight and told to return to Bergamo for a Tuesday noon flight – but that too was delayed by up to three hours.

Passenger Donnie McVey, of Cambuslang, near Glasgow, said: “It was a nightmare journey home and the further delay to Bergamo was the icing on the cake. The person with the medical emergency was in the queue to board from Bergamo, eating a pizza.

“Ryanair gave us a € 4 voucher to spend at the airport – but all you can buy for that is a bottle of water.”



Piazza dei Miracoli – which is what Ryanair need on their Edinburgh to Pisa route – PHOTO Stephen Rafferty

The following week – Monday 3 July – the scheduled 10.25pm flight from Pisa to Edinburgh was delayed by three hours with one passenger, Scott Douglas, arriving back at his Edinburgh home at 5am the next day, while on the Saturday 1 July flight, passengers were informed after arriving at Pisa that no luggage had been put on the aircraft.

Earlier, The Edinburgh Reporter told how hundreds of passengers travelling on the Monday 12 June flight were stranded and had to scramble to find late-night accommodation when Edinburgh-Pisa-Edinburgh flights were cancelled, allegedly because of “thunderstorms at Edinburgh Airport”.

Eyewitness passengers on the ground at Edinburgh confirmed there no weather issues on the evening of Monday 12 June. One elderly couple had travelled from their Dumfries home by taxi and had to order another taxi to take them home, while

passenger Ruth McGivern of Cumbernauld, said: “Customer service was non-existent, they pretty much didn’t give a damn and there was no hint of an apology from anyone about the cancellation. I know storms were forecast down south but there was certainly no heavy rain or thunder in Edinburgh.”

Meanwhile in Pisa, passengers were left in the lurch and had to find hotel accommodation, including one woman and her exhausted 60-year-old mother who had recently finished treatment for cancer.



Time stands still when trying to get answers from Ryanair’s press office – Pic by Stephen Rafferty

The 33-year-old executive, who asked not to be named, said: “It was very stressful and Ryanair ruined a short break which was to celebrate my mother completing a bruising round of chemo and radiotherapy. There were a number of elderly people at Pisa Airport who were clearly distressed on learning of the cancelled flight and I have no idea how they coped with making alternative arrangements at such a late hour.”

The previous Monday – 5 June – the same 10.25pm flight from Pisa to Edinburgh was approximately three hours late arriving in the Scottish capital, with passengers given no explanation for the delay, while on Monday 19 June the outgoing flight from Edinburgh to Pisa arrived 1 hour 19 minutes late, and the return flight to Scotland was more than one hour late touching down.

The Edinburgh Reporter supplied details of all flight delays and cancellations to Ryanair but the airline has failed to respond.