

Wednesday, July 29, 2009
BA reduces JNB services

BRITISH Airways has announced that it will further amend its winter 2009 schedule by reducing flights between London Heathrow and several destinations including Johannesburg.

BA spokesperson, Stephen Forbes, said in response to the current economic climate the airline was making some cancellations to its lata winter (SA summer) schedule. These will mainly affect the five additional services it began operating to Johannesburg in June.

“We continue to fly twice daily to Johannesburg, except on Christmas Day when we’ll operate one flight. Our Cape Town frequencies are unaffected. We will evaluate reintroducing the additional frequencies after March.”

The cancellations are:

- BA033/034 – between September 13 and October 6.
- BA033/034 – between October 25 and March 28 2010
- BA056/057 – December 25 to December 26

The commercial policy is:

Option 1

- Rebook on to an available flight to the same destination within a three-day period before or after the original flight.
- If the same booking class is not available, the next lowest class may be booked within the same cabin.
- This will be at no additional cost to the customer, and if required, the validity of the ticket may be extended.

Option 2

- Rebook on to a flight to the same destination at a later date in the same booking class and cabin.
- The flight must be re-booked and travel must take place within the validity of the original ticket purchased.
- This will be at no additional cost to the customer.

Option 3

- Refund the ticket purchased to the original form of payment.

The options stated in the Conditions of Carriage do not directly include the option to involuntarily reroute to an alternative destination. Should the customer wish to travel to an alternative destination, they should be offered a refund of their original ticket and asked to purchase a new ticket to the new destination. The customer will be required to pay the appropriate available fare to the new destination at the time of booking.

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Zanzibar airport taxes to be included in airfare

EFFECTIVE August 1, the U\$30 (R233) departure tax currently payable at Zanzibar airport will be collected by the various airlines and incorporated into the airfare.

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Plastic bags prohibited in Rwanda

AUTHORITIES in Rwanda have banned the use of plastic bags in an effort to combat pollution and littering in the country.

Travellers are prohibited from using or entering the country with any type of plastic bag, including duty free bags.

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SkyTeam lounge opened at London-Heathrow

SKYTEAM has opened a new co-branded lounge at London-Heathrow Terminal 4.

This lounge is the first to have been designed by nine alliance members and associate member airlines.

The lounge, situated opposite gate 10 of the terminal, is open every day from 05h30 am until the last departure in the evening.

The first level has a reception area, a customer service counter, baggage storage space, relaxation and work areas equipped with computers.

There are also video games, a wide choice of newspapers and magazines and free Wi-Fi access. A wine bar has a choice of fine French, Italian and Australian wines. Passengers can also choose from a selection of hot and cold dishes, inspired by the national cuisines of the SkyTeam airlines. A wellness centre offers showers, full-body massage chairs and an oxygen bar.

The second level is scheduled to open in November. Also in November, all SkyTeam airlines at Heathrow will operate from Terminal 4. Dedicated installations will include a premium check-in area, as well as common-use self-service kiosks and additional bag drop-off locations.

The second level of the lounge will include two VIP rooms – one with seating for 14 guests and another with space for four guests. These rooms will be available for first-class passengers and specially invited guests only. The second level will also include a quiet room for sleep or relaxation as well as a separate children's area with games and television.

Eligible passengers travelling through Terminal 4 at London Heathrow on Continental Airlines, Delta Air Lines, KLM and Kenya Airways operated flights can enjoy access to the first level of the co-branded SkyTeam lounge.

Other eligible passengers will gain access once additional SkyTeam member airlines begin operating from Terminal 4. Until then, eligible SkyTeam passengers can enjoy two airline lounges in Terminal 2 at Heathrow.

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QR expands to European capitals

QATAR Airways has announced a significant increase in the number of flights to key European cities.

Following the recent decision to add three flights on the Doha-Paris route bringing it to a double daily operation from October, Qatar Airways is adding capacity to Madrid, Athens and Stockholm. This represents an almost 40% increase in frequency across the four cities.

The current four times a week Madrid service will increase to daily, effective December 2. The Athens route, currently being served daily, will increase over a five-month period beginning in October, with an eventual increase to double-daily services from March 2010. The Stockholm service will be increased with an extra weekly service on Thursdays, beginning October 25.

Stockholm will see its first frequency increase since flights to the Swedish capital were launched in November 2007.

October 25 also marks the start of the northern winter schedules and the Paris route will see capacity rise from 11 to 14 flights a week offering passengers a double daily service.

According to the airline, each of the European cities offers passengers excellent connections via Doha to a wide network of business and leisure cities across the Middle East, Africa, South Asia and the Far East.

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Stellenbosch wine festival this weekend

The annual Stellenbosch Wine Festival will start at the Paul Roos Centre on Thursday, 30 July, and run until Sunday, 2 August. Hundreds of wines will be available for tasting and other activities will include concerts and other entertainment, with proceeds from many events going to various charities. A shuttle service will be provided for visitors. There will also be activities for children on Sunday.