

Virgin Atlantic to resume direct flights to Cape Town

Virgin Atlantic has announced the relaunch of its direct flight service from London Heathrow to Cape Town International Airport, set to resume three times a week from Wednesday, 17 December 2021.



Source: Pixabay via [Stockvault](#)

Following the removal of South Africa from the UK red list, Virgin initially announced that flights would only resume in January 2022, however, due to significant customer demand for the direct service from Heathrow to the Mother City, the airline has decided to commence sooner.

"We know there's pent up customer demand for travel to the UK and vice versa since our removal from the red list, and the reintroduction of the Cape Town route it will make it even easier for our customers to travel for business and leisure between South Africa and the United Kingdom," says Liezl Gericke, head of Africa, Middle East and India.

Air connectivity and economic growth

Minister of finance and economic opportunities in the Western Cape, David Maynier, said: "We welcome the ramp up in air connectivity, and look forward to seeing other airlines follow suit. The UK is a key investment, trade and tourism market for the province, and we are positive that the renewed connectivity will offer a much-welcomed

economic boost to the province across a multitude of sectors."

Air Access and Wesgro CEO spokesperson, Wrenelle Stander, commented: "The return of the London Heathrow to Cape Town route is welcome news for our region and a clear sign of confidence in Cape Town and the Western Cape. The UK has always been our largest and most consistent long haul market so the downstream potential for economic opportunity is exciting.

"Returning airlines also offer the added benefits of belly freight cargo, meaning that the impact will reach beyond tourism and impact positively into a variety of sectors. As travel restrictions continue to ease, many international carriers are following suit and we are optimistic that passenger numbers will begin the steady rise back to and beyond our past averages for 2019."

Cape Town is travel ready

Mayoral committee member: economic opportunities and asset management in the City of Cape Town, Alderman James Vos, added: "This is an indication of the demand for travel to Cape Town and shows that we can expect a busy visitor season.

"The Mother City is indeed destination-ready with Cape Town International Airport boasting a new electronic checking system that makes it easier to process passengers and hospitality businesses working hard to maintain Covid safety protocols. Next week, I will be launching our international campaigns in key source markets to make Cape Town a destination of choice. Cape Town is ready!"

"The team at Cape Town International Airport is very pleased that Virgin Atlantic is returning during this peak season and connecting us with a key destination, says Mark Maclean, Cape Town International Airport's acting general manager. "Our international passenger volumes continue to grow and new airlines offer travellers a wider range of travel options. We remain ready to welcome new and returning passengers to our airport and to our beautiful city, while we continue to focus on health protocol."

Flights from Cape Town are on sale. The airline is offering unlimited free date and flight changes for new bookings. Rebooking has also been extended for all customers until 30 April 2023, giving a broader window of time to reschedule plans if needed.

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