

Thai AirAsia eyes full recovery in 2023, targets to serve 20m pax

A Monitor Report

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Bangkok : Thai AirAsia is set to close the year with 10 million guests flown, backed by the strong demand for domestic and international travel especially in the fourth quarter.

Maintaining its largest share of the domestic market, Thai AirAsia also experienced its highest post-Covid aircraft utilisation rate of 12 hours in November, 2022, while the average load factor for the year is predicted to be a high 81 per cent with an on-time performance of 90 per cent.

With the tourism and aviation sectors expected to fully recover in 2023, Thai AirAsia is prepared to return to near pre-Covid-19 operation after seeing a strong domestic market and a steadily improving international market, taking advantage of its greater staff numbers and large fleet of 53 aircraft.

While China has yet to open its skies, improvements have signaled a relaxation of restrictions by the first quarter of 2023.

On the occasion, Santisuk Klongchaiya, Chief Executive Officer of AirAsia Thailand, said, "We predict the tourism industry in 2023 will return to conditions prior to the Covid-19 pandemic in line with a Tourism Authority of Thailand's evaluation that 18-30 million tourists will visit Thailand next year. On the whole, we expect to carry a total of 20 million guests next year, double that of this year's 10 million and a huge jump from 2.9 million in 2021."

"Apart from the Chinese market, which is a major target, Thai AirAsia has altered its strategic plans to focus on stability and will no longer be dependent on any single market. In 2022, we received overwhelming response from the Indian, South Asian and ASEAN markets, and we are seeing similar success in the Japanese market with the Don Mueang-Fukuoka route. For 2023, we plan to add even more routes to high potential markets such as Nepal, Pakistan and other cities in India with the expectation of returning to no less than 90 per cent of our pre-COVID-19 capacity," added Santisuk.