

Thai Airways adding A321neos to its fleet from mid-2025

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Bangkok : Thai Airways will take five Airbus A321neos on lease from the second-half of 2025, and is in the final stages of securing another five examples.

The A321neos - the Bangkok-based carrier's first new narrowbodies in about 10 years - will be deployed on domestic and regional flights, said the airline's CEO Chai Eamsiri.

He made the announcement at the IATA annual general meeting in Istanbul held on June 4-6.

"We would love to have it by next year, but as you know [the aircraft manufacturers] cannot deliver as their order books are filling up," added Chai.

Thai has also secured 11 A350s on lease, two of which have been delivered to the airline, he further added. The remaining nine will arrive by the first quarter of 2024, which will provide the airline a "significant boost" to its capacity, especially on long-haul flights to Europe.

The airline already has a fleet of 12 in-service A350-900s, according to reports. These primarily operate to Australia and Europe - two regions that have traditionally been strongholds for the airline.

Chai acknowledged that "overall recovery has come quicker" than forecast, and so has brought back a number of older aircraft it owns - Boeing 777s and A330s - to meet a spike in travel demand.

Still, he stressed the "majority of the Thai Airways fleet are new-generation aircraft", and that the older jets will be retired.

Chai said the airline has plans for cabin retrofits in an effort to modernise its products, but also mentioned Thai is "more focused" on meeting rising travel demand.