

## Air France to resume direct flights to Riyadh

- A Monitor Desk Report

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Paris: The French national carrier is expanding its GCC operations ahead of the summer by launching non-stop flights between Riyadh and Paris.

Starting May 20, Air France will operate three weekly flights from Paris Charles de Gaulle Airport to Riyadh King Khalid International Airport.

Beginning in June, the frequency will increase to five flights per week, which will be maintained throughout the summer season, the airline said.

"This new service will significantly enhance connectivity between the two cities, offering passengers direct flights to Paris and access to over 190 destinations across the global network of Air France," it said.

The Riyadh-Paris route will be operated by the Airbus A350-900, offering 324 seats: 34 in Business, 24 in Premium, and 266 in Economy.

Stefan Gumuseli, General Manager, Air France – KLM India and the Middle East, said, “With a positive growth outlook, Saudi Arabia continues to be a key market for the Air France-KLM group. This new route and KLM’s existing services to Riyadh and Dammam highlight our commitment to expanding our presence in Saudi Arabia.”

Gumuseli said, “Riyadh and Paris are strategic hubs for both business and leisure travel, and we are happy to provide more travel options between these two cities and the world via our hub, Paris, Charles de Gaulle. Further, this development will strengthen the existing partnership between Air France and Saudia Airlines.”

With this launch, all three airlines of the Air France-KLM Group (Air France, KLM, and Transavia) will offer service to Saudi Arabia. Transavia France has been connecting Paris-Orly and Lyon to Jeddah since December 2024, while KLM links its Amsterdam-Schiphol hub to Riyadh and Dammam.

Global airlines, including Cathay Pacific, Air India Express, and Virgin Atlantic, are all bolstering their operations in Riyadh. Cathay resumed direct flights between Hong Kong and Riyadh on October 28 last year.

The Hong Kong carrier also operates an Airbus A350-900 aircraft on this route three times weekly. This relaunch follows a seven-year hiatus after the route’s cancellation in March 2017 due to insufficient demand.

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