

## Cairo-Jeddah: 2nd busiest air route in 2024

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London: The Cairo-Jeddah air route has been ranked as the second-busiest international flight corridor for 2024, with approximately 5.5 million available seats, according to a report by the Official Airline Guide (OAG), a global travel data provider.

The analysis revealed a 14pc increase in airline capacity on this route compared to 2023 and a 62pc rise compared to 2019.

This growth aligns with Saudi Arabia's broader efforts to expand its aviation sector, a key component of its Vision 2030 strategy.

These efforts include strengthening the country's airlines, logistics services, cargo infrastructure, and other support industries to boost tourism and make the Kingdom a global aviation hub.

The expansion also contributes to Saudi Arabia's target of attracting 150 million visitors annually by the end of the decade.

John Grant, chief analyst at OAG, attributed the rapid growth of the Cairo-Jeddah route to significant investments under Vision 2030, as well as longstanding ties between the two cities, which have historically seen high volumes of worker traffic and, more recently, increased business activity in consultancy and services.

He also noted that the easing of travel restrictions for entry into Saudi Arabia and the rise of low-cost carriers have contributed to the route's growth.

The report also highlights a 19.1 percent capacity gap between the second and first-place routes. Hong Kong-Taipei holds the title of the world's busiest international route in 2024, with 6.8 million available seats.

The Seoul Incheon-Tokyo Narita route ranks third with 5.4 million seats, just 58,818 seats behind Cairo-Jeddah, while Kuala Lumpur-Singapore Changi follows closely in fourth place with 5.4 million seats, only 28,293 behind third.

The Bangkok-Hong Kong route has made a significant leap into the Top 10 Busiest International Routes for 2024, ranking seventh with 4.2 million seats. This marks a 29 percent increase in capacity compared to 2023, although it still lags 13 percent behind the 2019 levels.

Asia dominates the top 10, with seven of the busiest routes located in the region. Other notable routes include New York JFK to London Heathrow and two Middle Eastern routes: Cairo-Jeddah and Dubai-Riyadh. The Jeddah-Riyadh route has also seen impressive growth, with capacity increasing by 10 percent in 2024 compared to the previous year.

These trends highlight the growing demand for air travel in and out of the Middle East, particularly in Saudi Arabia, which continues to make strides toward achieving its ambitious goals under Vision 2030.

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