

Cathay Pacific doubles frequencies to China

- A Monitor Desk Report

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Dhaka: From January 8, Cathay Pacific doubled its schedule on flights between Hong Kong and 13 cities across China, including Beijing, Shanghai, and Guangzhou. 61 flights are being offered to and from Hong Kong, a sharp increase from the earlier 27 outbound and 50 inbound services operated by the airline.

Shanghai sees the most significant jump, scaling up from just two weekly outbound flights to 21. Ten weekly flights connect Hong Kong with Beijing and five with Guangzhou, while Xiamen benefits from four weekly services.

Cathay Pacific is further eyeing a further increase to 100 weekly flights to China by March 2023.

“The new year has welcomed us with positive developments. We have always had strong connections into the Chinese Mainland and are delighted to more than double our frequency,” said Anand Yedery, Regional Head of Marketing and Sales, South Asia, Middle East, and Africa (SAMEA), Cathay Pacific.

“With the Chinese Mainland lifting its quarantine and transit requirements, we anticipate the demand to travel further grow particularly with the upcoming Chinese New Year. The increase in operations will provide travellers, particularly from the business and trade segment with more options and accessibility to travel.”

The past several months have been a gradual, albeit slow, return to normality for the Hong Kong-based carrier. Travel restrictions on the SAR saw passenger levels at Hong Kong airport drop by 98 per cent, with Cathay Pacific similarly operating at just 2 per cent of its pre-pandemic capacity at the start of 2022.

Although Cathay Pacific is not anticipating a return to 2019’s figures levels until the end of 2024, a dramatic ramp-up in its schedule between October and December proved to be a big stepping stone for the airline in rebuilding its network.

The growing demand has seen the airline reintroduce its first class equipped Boeing 777’s on popular routes to London Heathrow, Paris Charles de Gaulle, and Tokyo Haneda, offering the premium service for the first time in nearly three years. The higher capacity flights to Paris will resume on January 18, with Tokyo planned for February 1.

Cathay Pacific almost doubled its network map to 51 destinations in October 2022, compared to just 29 in January 2022. As of January 2023, the airline offers flights to 60 destinations worldwide, hitting its end-of-year target. Though December’s figures have yet to be released, during November 2022, the airline was operating at 27 per cent of its pre-pandemic levels.

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