

## Greater Bay Airlines to expand to Vietnam

- A Monitor Desk Report

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Hong Kong-based Greater Bay Airlines (GBA) is expanding its international reach with its announcement to commence direct services to Ho Chi Minh City in Vietnam.

Taking off from July 18th twice a week, the new direct service will connect Hong Kong International Airport (HKG) and Ho Chi Minh City, Tan Son Nhat International Airport (SGN).

With a fleet of just three aircraft, the airline will serve the route with one of its three identical Boeing 737-8, all from ICBC Leasing.

Greater Bay will head toward Vietnam two times a week, on Tuesdays and Fridays, operating as below:

HB661, departing from Hong Kong at 19:00 and touching down in Ho Chi Minh City at 20:45, HB662 will return from Ho Chi Minh City at 21:45 before arriving in Hong Kong at 01:30 the following day.

These new flights to the largest city in Vietnam will complement the modest international network currently available with Greater Bay, including Bangkok, Taipei, Seoul, Tokyo, and Osaka.

## Almost a year since the first flight

The airline is approaching the first anniversary of its first flight, with the carrier taking to the skies on July 23rd last year, with its inaugural flight between Hong Kong and Bangkok Suvarnabhumi Airport (BKK). Since then, it has added the above list to its network and ordered 15 Boeing 737 MAX 9, with an expected delivery timeframe of 2024-2027.

Low-cost carrier Greater Bay Airlines has wasted no time since it commenced operations last summer by implementing impressive fleet growth plans.

Simple Flying reported that Greater Bay Airlines was eyeing a 15-aircraft order for Boeing's next-generation twin-engine narrowbody jetliner. Whispers at the time suggested that the carrier would order the MAX 9 variant with 200-seat configurations.

## Vietnam is a popular hotspot

As reported by the airline, post-pandemic, Vietnam has become a popular choice for travelers looking to escape Hong Kong. With a short flight time of just over two hours and all COVID-19 restrictions removed tourists can dive head-first into natural wonders, historical attractions, and unique Vietnamese cuisine.

## Stiff competition on the route

A look at the schedule for the week after Greater Bay commences the route to Ho Chi Minh, HB will face competition with four other flights that day, totaling five direct flights. Cathay Pacific (CX) will operate two flights, Vietnam Airlines (VN) with one and Vietjet Air (VJ) with one nonstop service.

Further competition ensues across the border from Hong Kong in neighboring Shenzhen, with China Southern (CZ) and Shenzhen Airlines (ZH) operating a direct service each.

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