

Qatar airways increases flights to Syria

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Doha: Qatar Airways plans to increase flight frequency to Syria, responding to growing travel demand as the country emerges from over a decade of civil war.

The state-owned airline will add a second daily flight to Damascus in June, Chief Commercial Officer Thierry Antinori announced.

Qatar Airways currently operates the route with an Airbus A330 wide-body jet, maintaining a 90pc occupancy rate, he added.

Qatar Airways was one of the first international carriers to resume flights to the Syrian capital in January after the fall of Bashar Al-Assad's regime. Most airlines stopped flying to Damascus at the start of the last decade after demonstrations escalated into a full civil war.

The carrier was also of the first to relaunch flights to Beirut after a cease fire was reached between Israel and Lebanon in November.

"Beirut reopening is good for Africa business and Brazil, because you have some Lebanese community in Ivory Coast, in West Africa, in Brazil, so as a global connector with diaspora all around the world, it's positive," Antinori said.

On Tuesday, Qatar Airways announced a third daily flight from Doha to Berlin to meet growing demand on a route that the airline dominates amid the absence of regional rival Emirates.

Qatar Airways now flies to five destinations in Germany, including Hamburg, which the airline started flights to last year.

Antinori said that other destinations in Europe's largest economy may also be under consideration in the future, including Stuttgart, which is a key industrial hub in Germany and the home to Mercedes-Benz Group AG and Porsche AG.

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