

Media | Release

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Christchurch Airport welcomes direct flights from Japan

The return of direct flights from Tokyo to Christchurch is being welcomed by Christchurch International Airport Limited (CIAL).

From next Monday, Air New Zealand will fly direct services into Christchurch from Japan three times a week. The airline had cut its direct Tokyo-Christchurch flights following the earthquakes earlier this year.

CIAL General Manager of Aeronautical Business Development Matthew Findlay says the flights illustrate the strong demand from Japanese travellers to visit the South Island.

"Christchurch Airport is the gateway to the South Island and travellers arriving here tell us they love flying in over the mountains they came to see," says Mr Findlay.

"Many international travellers book their trip to New Zealand with the expectation of seeing our stunning scenery – mountains and lakes. They get the promise of that as they fly in to Christchurch and know it's only a short drive from this city to see more of what they want."

Mr Findlay says Christchurch Airport is committed to the Japanese market.

"We've been involved in a number of joint venture marketing initiatives to ensure the return of these direct services. We will continue to work on increasing visitor numbers all year round," he says.

"With three direct services from Tokyo per week, we expect tourism numbers from Japan direct into the South Island to increase noticeably over the summer months."

Christchurch & Canterbury Tourism chief executive Tim Hunter says Air New Zealand's decision to reinstate regular direct flights is a sign confidence is returning in Canterbury as a destination and that the South Island remains a premier drawcard for Japanese visitors.

"It is a really positive development and will provide a big morale boost to our tourism operators. Japan has traditionally been a very important market for us, so it is vital to have the direct air link," Mr Hunter says.

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Christchurch International Airport – New Zealand’s Tourism Gateway

Christchurch International Airport welcomed nearly 6 million passengers in the past year, ranking as New Zealand’s second largest airport. The Airport occupies a unique position economically, as the South Island’s busiest and most strategic air connection to the world’s trade and tourism markets. In addition, the airport plays an important role as the South Island’s major domestic hub servicing all New Zealanders, enabling passengers to connect to a full spectrum of destinations throughout New Zealand. Christchurch International Airport is a major driver of the regional Canterbury economy, generating airport precinct related jobs for nearly 5000 people.

Christchurch International Airport is owned and operated by Christchurch International Airport Limited (CIAL). CIAL was established as a limited liability company in 1988, and ownership of CIAL is now shared by Christchurch City Holdings Limited with 75% and the New Zealand Government with 25%. The company’s vision is to be recognised as New Zealand’s leading tourist gateway.

Christchurch International Airport is a carbon neutral company and has received carboNZero certification from Landcare Research following a detailed measurement and analysis process. CIAL is the first airport company in the Southern Hemisphere to attain certified carbon neutral status and is the second carbon neutral certified airport company in the world.

Visit christchurchairport.co.nz for more information.