



AIR CANADA

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Air Canada launches Calgary-Tokyo non-stop service; Direct link with Asia offers convenient connecting flights throughout Asia

CALGARY, March 27 /CNW Telbec/ - Air Canada today inaugurated its first non-stop flight between Calgary and Tokyo, the only direct link between Alberta and Asia. Launch celebrations took place this morning at Calgary International Airport prior to the departure of flight AC009, with local dignitaries including Calgary Airport Authority Chair Douglas Mitchell, Calgary's Deputy Mayor Jim Stevenson, and Alberta Minister of Tourism, Parks and Recreation Cindy Ady among others in attendance. To mark the occasion, customers were entertained by Japanese drummers at check-in, while Geisha presented a customary Japanese tea ceremony. Air Canada President & CEO Calin Rovinescu and Calgary Airport Authority Vice President, Marketing Stephan Poirier each painted the eye of a traditional Japanese Daruma doll, symbolizing good luck for the new venture.

"Everyone at Air Canada, especially our Calgary employee team here are thrilled to launch our newest international route today between Calgary and Tokyo," said Mr. Rovinescu prior to boarding the inaugural flight on a trip to meet Canadian business leaders in Japan, Korea and China. "Air Canada is now giving Albertans travelling on business or leisure, as well as freight forwarders non-stop convenience to a major Asian gateway. In addition, our new service to Tokyo offers a multitude of connecting flights with our Star Alliance partners to key destinations throughout Asia including Hong Kong, Manila, Seoul, Beijing, Shanghai, Singapore, Bangkok, Taipei and several points across Japan. With the support of the Calgary business community, Tourism Alberta and our travel partners, this is the first step towards building a year-round, daily service.

"Air Canada has invested significantly in the Calgary market over the past year, strategically responding to strong demand. Air Canada's superior schedule, unparalleled choice of non-stop destinations, award-winning products and service and loyalty benefits through Aeroplan clearly make Air Canada the airline of choice for customers. With today's launch of new non-stop service to Tokyo, we have introduced six new routes serving Calgary over the past year, including daily non-stop flights to Portland OR and London ON, summer seasonal service to Whitehorse YT and winter seasonal non-stop flights to Maui and Honolulu last December," concluded Mr. Rovinescu.

"With the addition of Air Canada's new non-stop flight to Tokyo, business and leisure travellers in Alberta now have a direct link to Asia, through Alberta's premier international passenger and cargo gateway," said Stephan Poirier, Vice President and Chief Commercial Officer for The Calgary Airport Authority. "This much anticipated route makes Calgary one of only three cities in Canada with scheduled air service to both Asia and Europe. It represents a serious additional competitive advantage for our city and province solidifying Calgary's position as the best serviced city per capita in terms of air service in Canada."

In addition to offering efficient connections at Narita to points throughout Asia with Air Canada's Star Alliance partners, ANA, Asiana, THAI and United Airlines, Air Canada's Calgary-Japan flights are timed to offer convenient connections to and from communities across Alberta and Western Canada served by Air Canada.

Air Canada's Calgary-Tokyo flights operate on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays, departing Calgary at 12:45 p.m. and arriving in Narita the following day at 2:25 p.m. Flights depart Narita on Wednesdays, Fridays and Sundays at 4:00 p.m., arriving Calgary same day at 10:45 a.m.

Air Canada operates its Calgary-Tokyo flights with fully refurbished 211-seat Boeing 767-300 ER aircraft offering a choice of Economy Class and Executive First service featuring 24 lie-flat bed suites. Further details and a virtual tour of Air Canada's new cabin amenities including complimentary personal seatback entertainment at every seat throughout the aircraft are available at: <http://www.aircanada.com/en/travelinfo/onboard/cabincomfort.html>

Air Canada's new Calgary-Tokyo service complement the carrier's daily non-stop flights to Tokyo from both Vancouver and Toronto. This summer, the carrier offers up to 17 flights each week from Canada to Tokyo's Narita International Airport.

Air Canada provides scheduled and charter air transportation for passengers and cargo to more than 167 destinations on five continents. Canada's flag carrier is the 13th largest commercial airline in the world and serves 31 million customers annually. Air Canada is a founding member of Star Alliance, providing the world's most comprehensive air transportation network for Canadian domestic, transborder and international travel. As well, customers can collect Aeroplan miles for future rewards through Canada's leading loyalty program.

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