



# AIR CANADA

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## **TAM Airlines joins Star Alliance**

Star Alliance network enhanced with more destinations and flights across Brazil and South America

SAO PAULO, Brazil, May 13 /CNW Telbec/ - TAM Airlines, the leading Brazilian carrier, today joined the Star Alliance network, thereby putting the world's longest serving airline alliance firmly back on the South American continent.

Air Canada, a founding member of Star Alliance, operates daily non-stop flights between Toronto and Sao Paulo, with connecting codeshare service to cities throughout Brazil operated by TAM Airlines. In addition, Aeroplan members now have the ability to earn status miles and redeem reward travel on TAM Airlines; and Air Canada Top Tier members have the ability to access Star Alliance Gold and Silver benefits, including lounge and priority services.

TAM Airlines offers more than 40 destinations in Brazil and 10 airports across South America. Over the past years, the airline has expanded its intercontinental network to cover a variety of destinations in the USA and Europe, many of these being Star Alliance hubs. All in all, the Star Alliance network now counts 27 member carriers, offering more than 21,050 daily flights to 1,167 destinations in 181 countries.

"Our integration into the world's leading global commercial aviation alliance will allow us to expand our services, offering our customers a smooth and integrated travel experience. There will always be a partner airline that will treat our customers as their own anywhere across the globe," said Libano Barroso, CEO of TAM Airlines. "Our brand is now global, and Star Alliance now has a strong presence in South America."

"With TAM Airlines we gain a carrier based in South America, an important aviation market and home to many growing economies. Combining TAM Airlines' network with that of our existing member carriers will allow Star Alliance to offer a very competitive product to, from and within this region," said Jaan Albrecht, CEO Star Alliance.

TAM Airlines' joining completes a process which originally began in 2006 with the first informal negotiations.

"An intense information and experience exchange process resulted from the first contact," explained Paulo Castello Branco, Vice President, Commercial and Planning, TAM Airlines. "After the official announcement of our acceptance as a future Star Alliance member in October of 2008, we started to align our operating processes, which involved our functional team at all levels, as well as those of all of our partner carriers. This was a great learning experience and a fundamental step towards our global expansion."

As a result, TAM Airlines has not only increased the Star Alliance network offer, but is now providing a wide range of customer benefits.

TAM's Fidelidade customers now collect and redeem points when travelling on all other Star Alliance member carriers. By the same token, participants in the other member carriers' Frequent Flyer Programmes (FFP) earn points every time they fly TAM Airlines and can redeem points on the TAM network. An added alliance benefit is that travel on any Star Alliance member carrier counts towards achieving status in the selected FFP. One of the Star Alliance Gold membership benefits is Lounge access; with TAM Airlines the number of designated Gold Lounges across the network has grown to over 990.

Corporate customers have long been a main target group of the Star Alliance network. Through TAM Airlines, our offer to the vast corporate market in Brazil - South America's largest economy - has gained in value. Christopher Korenke, Star Alliance Vice President Commercial: "With TAM Airlines we now have a very comprehensive product in the local market and have expanded our reach for those needing to travel to Brazil and South America. This is an important selling point when dealing with large corporate customers in Brazil."

Additionally, flights operated by TAM Airlines will be included in both Star Alliance Conventions Plus and Meetings Plus, enhancing the value proposition of these products. Convention and meeting organisers based in South America can use the enlarged Star Alliance network to contract their travel requirements. Furthermore, organisers based in other parts of the world can now rely on Star Alliance to provide delegate transport from many additional destinations in South America.

Leisure travellers as well will stand to benefit from TAM Airlines' membership in Star Alliance. The popular Round the World Fare now offers numerous new travel combinations throughout Brazil and South America, as well as more flights between Brazil and Europe, and Brazil and the USA. Moreover, TAM will be selling the North America and Europe Airpasses, allowing customers to

purchase "value-for-money" air travel on the Star Alliance network in these regions in combination with a long-haul ticket from Brazil.

About TAM Airlines:  
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TAM Airlines ([www.tamairlines.com.br](http://www.tamairlines.com.br)), a member of Star Alliance, leads the Brazilian domestic market since July 2003 and has ended the month of April with a 42.1% market share. The company flies to 43 destinations in Brazil. With the business agreements signed with regional companies, it goes to 82 different destinations in national territory. TAM's market share among Brazilian airlines that operate international flights was of 85.4% in April. International flights include direct flights to 18 destinations in the United States, Europe and South America: New York, Miami and Orlando (USA), Paris (France), London (England), Milan (Italy), Frankfurt (Germany), Madrid (Spain), Buenos Aires (Argentina), La Paz, Cochabamba and Santa Cruz de la Sierra (Bolivia), Santiago (Chile), Asuncion and Ciudad del Este (Paraguay), Montevideo (Uruguay), Caracas (Venezuela) and Lima (Peru). Furthermore it has codeshare agreements that allow sharing seats in flights with international companies, thus allowing passengers to travel to another 78 destinations in the USA, South America, Europe and Asia. TAM is a pioneer in the launching of an air company loyalty programme in Brazil. As of January 1st, 2010, the TAM Fidelidade programme started being managed by Multiplus Fidelidade, which currently has 6.9 million associates and has already distributed 10.6 million airplane tickets through point redemption.

About Star Alliance:  
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The Star Alliance network was established in 1997 as the first truly global airline alliance to offer worldwide reach, recognition and seamless service to the international traveller. Its acceptance by the market has been recognised by numerous awards, including the Air Transport World Market Leadership Award, Best Airline Alliance by both Business Traveller Magazine and Skytrax. The member airlines are: Adria Airways, Air Canada, Air China, Air New Zealand, ANA, Asiana Airlines, Austrian, Blue1, bmi, Brussels Airlines, Continental Airlines, Croatia Airlines, EGYPTAIR, LOT Polish Airlines, Lufthansa, Scandinavian Airlines, Shanghai Airlines, Singapore Airlines, South African Airways, Spanair, SWISS, TAM Airlines, TAP Portugal, Turkish Airlines, THAI, United and US Airways. Aegean Airlines and Air India have been announced as future members. Overall, the Star Alliance network offers more than 21,050 daily flights to 1,167 airports in 181 countries.

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