

LOUIS ARMSTRONG
NEW ORLEANS
INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

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August 2014

Airport report

New Air Service Arrives at MSY

By Iftikhar Ahmad
Director of Aviation

August will be a busy month for new air service at Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport. On August 1, 2014, Spirit Airlines, one of our low cost carriers that entered our market with daily service to Dallas, will begin a daily non-stop flight from the Greater New Orleans Market to Ft. Lauderdale with their all-Airbus fleet. This new service will give our passengers another option for travel to this Florida destination. For those wishing to travel from New Orleans with timely connections to Central America, Spirit is setting their arrival schedule in Ft. Lauderdale to correspond with their Central America departures to San Pedro Sula and other parts of the region from the Florida airport. The daily non-stop flight to Ft. Lauderdale will depart New Orleans at 8:14 p.m. and arrive in Ft. Lauderdale at 10:58 p.m. In addition, Spirit will introduce new scheduled service from New Orleans to Houston on the same day for a special ultra-low fare. The low fares to both cities are from \$52.09 during mid-week travel. The Houston flight will depart New Orleans at 10:12 a.m. and arrive at Houston Bush airport at 11:25 a.m.

Also in August, our largest low cost carrier, Southwest Airlines, will begin two daily flights to Washington, D.C.'s Regan National Airport (DCA) beginning August 10, 2014. The new twice daily service will depart New Orleans at 7:40 a.m. and 2:55 p.m. and arrive in Washington at 11:05 a.m. and 6:25 p.m. respectively. The return flights will leave our nation's capital at 9 a.m. and 6:05 p.m., arriving in New Orleans at 12:05 p.m. and 7:45 p.m. While the Airport currently has service to DCA offered by US Airways, the new Southwest service will provide competition in the DCA market and give our community an increased level of service to those traveling for business or pleasure to Washington D.C. with a special \$99 fare for non-stop service. Southwest has also scheduled limited direct service to San Antonio for the 2014 Thanksgiving holiday season. Southwest will fly non-stop to San Antonio from New Orleans for four days aboard their 143 seat Boeing 737-700 aircraft. The dates for airline travel to the famous Texas destination are Tuesday, Nov. 25, Wednesday, Nov. 26, Sunday, Nov.30 and Monday, Dec. 1, 2014.

This month, Armstrong International Airport is scheduled to welcome the iconic airline PEOPLEExpress (pronounced People Express) to the New Orleans Market. This airline was first launched in April 1981 operating Boeing 737s from Newark, New Jersey to a number of U.S. destinations with a simplified fare structure much like Spirit Airlines uses today. At its start-up, all seats on PEOPLEExpress routes were offered at the same price except for slightly-lower "off-peak" fares. All seats were in economy class, except for "Premium Class" on later overseas flights, paid in cash aboard the aircraft early in the flight. As part of their no-frills plan, passengers were permitted to bring one carry-on bag for free and each

checked bag cost \$3.00. PEOPLEExpress was the first United States airline to charge a fee for each checked bag. The airline also charged customers wanting food or beverages. Due to financial issues, PEOPLEExpress ceased to exist as a carrier on February 1, 1987, when their operations were merged into the operations of Continental Airlines (now United Airlines), under a joint marketing and sales agreement.

After an extended hiatus, the revived airline resumed operations on June 30, 2014 offering service from Newport News, Virginia (its new home base) to Boston, Newark and Pittsburgh. By the end of August, New Orleans will be one of four new direct destinations to be added to the PEOPLEExpress air service line-up. They will begin providing flight service from New Orleans to Newport News on Thursday, August 28, 2014. The non-stop flight will take place 3 times a week departing Newport News at 5:45 p.m. and arriving in New Orleans at 7:15 p.m. It is scheduled to depart New Orleans at 8 p.m. and arrive at the Newport News/Williamsburg International Airport at 11:30 p.m. Flight operations aboard their Boeing 737-400 aircraft with its 150 seats (including 12 in first class) will take place with North Las Vegas-based Vision Airlines that features PEOPLEExpress branding. True to its no-frills beginnings, PEOPLEExpress will once again operate a low cost, a la carte service model which allows the passengers to create a customized travel product that reflects their wishes and budget. They can choose to fly at an ultra-low price with minimal frills, or opt to purchase the "extras" to make their trip more enjoyable, such as priority boarding, pre-assigned seating, or an upgrade to one of the Living Large™ seats, which offers more personal space. To learn more, go to their website www.flypex.com.

At this time, Armstrong International has 13 airlines serving our market with over 41 non-stop destinations including 3 international non-stops – Toronto, Canada, Cancun, Mexico and Montego Bay, Jamaica. This has been an exciting summer at our airport for introducing new air service and new carriers to the New Orleans market. From our new non-stop to Seattle, aboard Alaska Airlines that began in June to our newest flights this month, the New Orleans Aviation Board is pleased to provide our community with air service options aboard a choice of traditional, major and low cost carriers. ✈



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