

## What you need to know: Airline operations: Northeast Asia

September 4, 2020

As demand declines and governments around the world restrict travel, airlines are adjusting their operations, and, in some cases, suspending all services.

This report summarizes what airlines in Northeast Asia are doing and planning.

### Chinese airlines

To ensure international flights continue to operate without promoting the spread of COVID-19, the Civil Aviation Authority of China (CAAC) is limiting each airline to one route per country. At the moment, Chinese airlines may operate only one weekly return service per route, with a maximum passenger load factor of 75%.

#### Air China

Until April 30, Air China operated the following schedule of international flights:

- Asia: Beijing-Delhi, Islamabad, Karachi, Phnom Penh, Seoul and Yangon; Shanghai-Bangkok, Singapore and Tokyo; and Chengdu-Kathmandu
- Europe: Beijing-Athens, Copenhagen, Madrid, Minsk, Moscow, Paris, Stockholm, Vienna and Warsaw; Shanghai-Frankfurt and London
- Middle East: Beijing-Dubai
- North America: Beijing-Los Angeles and Vancouver

#### China Eastern

China Eastern expects to restore most (94%) of its domestic network by the end of July. Daily domestic flights have increased from 200 in February to 2,000 in mid-July.

During August, China Eastern and its Shanghai Airlines subsidiary plan to operate 22 international flights per week, with 18 destinations served weekly from Shanghai:

- Europe – Amsterdam, Frankfurt, London, Paris
- North America – New York JFK, Toronto
- Northeast Asia – Seoul, Tokyo
- South Asia – Colombo, Delhi
- Southeast Asia – Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur, Manila, Phnom Penh, Singapore, Yangon
- Southwest Pacific – Auckland, Sydney

The remaining flights comprise weekly services from Hangzhou to Sydney and from Xi'an to Tokyo Narita, and twice-weekly flights between Kunming and Vientiane in Laos.

## Other major airlines

Airline	Action and plans
ANA	Continues to scale back domestic and international services, but maintaining service in many markets
Asiana	International services suspended or reduced for April and May. Flights to 11 Chinese destinations, Southeast Asia and U.S. resuming in May
Cathay Pacific	Capacity cut by 97% in April and May. During June/July, rebuilding network to 28 destinations, but still operating less than 10% of capacity
Japan Air Lines	Most international services suspended. Rebuilding international and domestic services during June and July
Korean Air	Most international services grounded until May 31. Service being restored to a number of international markets during June

### ANA

Over the period from March 29 until April 24, All Nippon Airways (ANA) made changes to its international schedule affecting 3,943 flights across 71 different routes ranging from service suspensions to frequency reductions.<sup>1</sup> The airline maintained daily services to many international destinations, but it continued to adjust its schedule.

By July, ANA had scaled back its international network to just 16 destinations.

- **Asia/Oceania** – Tokyo-Hanoi (2 per week), Hong Kong (1), Jakarta (4), Kuala Lumpur (6), Manila (3), Shanghai (1), Singapore (6), Sydney (6). Tokyo-Qingdao launching August 1
- **Europe** – Frankfurt (5), London (3)
- **North America** – Chicago (7), Los Angeles (7), Mexico City (10), New York (4), San Francisco (3), Vancouver (3). Tokyo-San Jose launching August 1

### Domestic

ANA also continued to adjust its domestic schedules. It announced frequency reductions on its services from Tokyo Narita to Osaka Itami, Nagoya, Sapporo, Fukuoka and Sendai and from Sapporo to Aomori and Hiroshima. Most reductions remained in place until the end of June.

### Asiana Airlines

After the European Union decided to block the entry of foreign travelers for 30 days, Asiana suspended most European routes during April. Its Seoul-Frankfurt service was suspended for a shorter period, running from April 1 until April 16.<sup>2</sup> This service resumed on April 17, operating during May at three flights per week.

<sup>1</sup> [ANA](#), March 31, 2020

<sup>2</sup> [Korea Herald](#), March 20, 2020

For the July-August period, Asiana will serve the following destinations:<sup>3</sup>

<u>Region</u>	<u>Destinations served</u>
Central Asia	Almaty, Tashkent
Southeast Asia	Bangkok, Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City, Jakarta, Manila, Phnom Penh, Singapore
Oceania	Saipan, Sydney
Northeast Asia	Changchun, Hong Kong, Nanjing, Osaka, Taipei, Tokyo
Europe	Frankfurt, Istanbul, London, Paris
U.S.	Los Angeles, New York JFK, San Francisco, Seattle

### Cathay Pacific

Cathay Pacific and Cathay Dragon reduced capacity by 97% across their passenger networks in April and May because of the severe drop in demand. This was mainly in response to the impact of multiple government travel restrictions imposed around the world.

While capacity remains substantially reduced, Cathay Pacific slowly reinstated its schedule during June and July. After operating just 3% of normal capacity in May, this increased to 4% in June. During July, Cathay Pacific and Cathay Dragon planned to operate 9% of capacity.<sup>4</sup>

By the end of July, the two airlines had rebuilt their networks to include the following destinations:

- China – Beijing, Chengdu, Shanghai, Xiamen
- Asia – Bangkok, Ho Chi Minh City, Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur, Manila, Singapore, Taipei, Tokyo
- Southwest Pacific – Melbourne, Sydney
- Europe – Amsterdam, Frankfurt, London
- Americas – Los Angeles, New York (JFK), San Francisco, Toronto, Vancouver

### JAL

Japan Airlines (JAL) has suspended most international services. During July, the airline will operate flights to the following destinations:<sup>5</sup>

- North America – Boston, Chicago, Dallas, Los Angeles, New York, San Diego, San Francisco, Seattle, Vancouver
- Europe – Frankfurt, Helsinki, London, Paris
- Southeast and South Asia – Bangkok, Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City, Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur, Manila
- East Asia – Dalian, Hong Kong, Kaohsiung, Taipei
- Pacific – Melbourne, Sydney

JAL has also made adjustments to its domestic schedule. It reduced flying by at least 72% until June 14. For the second half of June, JAL operated slightly under half of its usual domestic network, reducing the number of daily flights it has suspended from 613 to 461.<sup>6</sup> With demand expected to recover to 50% of its pre-pandemic levels during July, for the second half of the month JAL will operate 66% of its normal domestic schedule.

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<sup>3</sup> [Asiana](#), 10 June, 2020

<sup>4</sup> [Cathay Pacific](#), June 12, 2020

<sup>5</sup> [JAL](#), June 10, 2020

<sup>6</sup> [Business Travel News](#), June 10, 2020

## Korean Air

More than 90% of Korean Air’s aircraft are now grounded. The airline has scaled back its domestic operation, flying a reduced schedule on six routes only: Seoul Gimpo to Busan, Jeju and Ulsan, and from Jeju to Busan, Cheongju, Daegu and Gwangju. Most other domestic routes are suspended until May 17, while flights from Seoul Incheon to Busan and Daegu are grounded until the end of May.<sup>7</sup>

Korean Air also suspended most international routes until April 30. In mid-April, it extended these suspensions until May 31, and added North American destinations Honolulu, Vancouver and Washington D.C. to the list of suspended routes.

Korean Air delayed plans for the May resumption of some flights to China: Beijing (4 per week), Guangzhou (4 pw), Mudanjiang (3 pw), Qingdao (4 pw), Shanghai (4 pw) and Yanji (4 pw). It also intended to increase frequency on its single ongoing Chinese route to Shenyang from weekly to four times weekly.

<u>Region</u>	<u>Suspended until May 31</u>	<u>Operating</u>
Americas	Dallas, Honolulu, Las Vegas, Toronto, Vancouver, Washington D.C.	Atlanta (4 per week), Chicago (3 pw), Los Angeles (daily), New York JFK (daily), San Francisco (3 pw)
Europe	Amsterdam, Barcelona, Budapest, Frankfurt, Madrid, Milan, Prague, Rome, Vienna, Zagreb, Zurich	London (2 pw), Paris (2 pw)
Middle East	Dubai, Istanbul, Tel Aviv	
Northeast Asia	Aomori, Changsha, Dalian, Fukuoka, Hangzhou, Hefei, Hong Kong, Jinan, Kagoshima, Komatsu, Kunming, Nanjing, Nagoya, Niigata, Okayama, Okinawa, Osaka, Tianjin, Sapporo, Shenzhen, Taipei, Weihai, Wuhan, Xi’an, Xiamen, Zhangjiajie, Zhengzhou	Beijing (4 pw), Guangzhou (4 pw), Mudanjiang, Qingdao, Shanghai (4 pw), Shenyang (4 pw), Tokyo (daily), Ulanbaatar, Yanji
Russia and CIS	Irkutsk, Moscow, St. Petersburg, Tashkent, Vladivostok	
South Asia	Delhi, Colombo, Kathmandu, Male, Mumbai	
Southeast Asia	Cebu, Chiang Mai, Clark, Da Lat, Da Nang, Denpasar, Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City, Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur <sup>a</sup> , Nha Trang, Phuket, Singapore, Yangon <sup>a</sup> ,	Bangkok (daily), Manila (daily), Phnom Penh (2 pw)
Southwest Pacific	Auckland, Brisbane, Guam, Sydney	

During June, Korean Air will expand international operations to 146 flights per week across 32 routes, compared to 55 flights per week on 13 routes in May.<sup>8</sup>

Korean Air will increase existing service to Shenyang and restore services to Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Mudanjiang, Qingdao, and Yanji in China, as well as to Taipei and Ulaanbaatar. In Southeast Asia, it will restore some service to Kuala Lumpur, Yangon, Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City and Singapore, as well as increasing service to Phnom Penh.

Korean Air will also increase weekly frequencies to London and Paris and restore some services to Amsterdam and Frankfurt.

<sup>7</sup> [Korean Air](#), April 14, 2020

<sup>8</sup> [Business Travel News](#), May 13, 2020

In North America, Korean will restart flights to Washington D.C., Seattle, Vancouver and Toronto, while increasing flights to Atlanta and Chicago. It will maintain seven weekly flights each to Los Angeles and New York.

Service to the Oceania region will remain suspended during June.

### Low-cost carriers

Airline	Action and plans
AirAsia Japan	All operations suspended until June 30
HK Express	Resumption of service delayed to August 2
Jetstar Japan	Now operating 23 domestic routes, but international flying suspended until August
Peach	All domestic routes reopened on June 19

#### AirAsia Japan suspends operations until end of June

AirAsia Japan halted all flights on April 9. On May 19, the airline announced plans to extend the suspension of all operations from May 31 until June 30. It has not responded to the government's subsequent lifting of the state of emergency on May 25.

#### HK Express delays flight resumption

Cathay Pacific-owned low-cost carrier HK Express has delayed the resumption of flights from July 11 until August 2. The Hong Kong-based airline attributed its decision to continued travel restrictions around Asia Pacific. HK Express has suspended all flights since March 23.

#### Jetstar Japan restarts domestic flights

During July, Jetstar Japan will operate 23 domestic routes:<sup>9</sup>

- Tokyo Narita – Kagoshima, Kochi, Kumamoto, Miyazaki, Nagasaki, Naha (Okinawa), Oita, Osaka Kansai, Shimojishima Kuko, Shonai, Takamatsu
- Osaka Kansai – Fukuoka, Kumamoto, Naha, Sapporo, Shimojishima Kuko, Tokyo Narita
- Nagoya – Fukuoka, Kagoshima, Naha, Sapporo

Jetstar's limited international operation remains suspended until the beginning of August, when it plans to reinstate flights to Manila from Tokyo Narita, Osaka Kansai and Nagoya, and from Tokyo to Shanghai and Taipei. Service from Tokyo to Hong Kong will resume on September 1.<sup>10</sup>

#### Peach resumes domestic service

ANA-owned low-cost carrier Peach resumed limited domestic flying on June 1. By June 19, it had resumed service on all 22 domestic routes.<sup>11</sup> It intends to fully restore its schedule by July 22, and it may increase flights on some routes after August 1.

<sup>9</sup> [Jetstar Japan](#), June 29, 2020

<sup>10</sup> [Jetstar Japan](#), July 2, 2020

<sup>11</sup> [Peach](#), June 19, 2020

#### Note

The COVID-19 situation is rapidly evolving, and the situation is changing on almost an hourly basis. The information presented in this report represents the latest view as at September 4, 2020. We have carefully researched and checked the information contained. However, we do not guarantee or warrant the correctness, completeness or topicality of this article and do not accept any liability for any damage or loss as a result of the use of the information contained within this article.

Do you have questions or comments regarding this report? Please email [mike.eggleton@bcdtravel.co.uk](mailto:mike.eggleton@bcdtravel.co.uk) to share your thoughts.