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Norwegian celebrates anniversary of low-cost flights to America and announces new route to Boston

Norwegian celebrated the first anniversary of its ground-breaking low-cost, long-haul flights between the UK and America today – by announcing a new route to Boston and confirming that summer 2015 is set to be a record breaker for the airline.

In July 2014 Norwegian became the first airline to offer low cost flights from the UK to New York, Los Angeles and Fort Lauderdale from as little as £179. Since then over 200,000 passengers have travelled on the routes, with Norwegian consistently achieving load factors in excess of 90 per cent.

Thanks to increased demand for the routes, Norwegian will introduce a daily connection between London Gatwick and New York (JFK) from October and new routes to Puerto Rico from November 2015 and Boston from May 2016. The new Massachusetts route will be Gatwick's only direct service to Boston and will go on sale later this year.

Norwegian – which is now the third largest operator at Gatwick – is also preparing for its busiest ever summer in the UK with over one million passengers expected to jet off with the airline between July and September. The low-cost carrier has over 500 flights per week to and from UK airports during the peak summer, with services connecting London Gatwick, Birmingham, Manchester and Edinburgh with 34 destinations around the world.

Bjorn Kjos, Chief Executive of Norwegian, said: *"This is an exciting time for Norwegian as we celebrate our first successful year of low-cost, long-haul flights and prepare for our busiest ever summer in the UK. Over 200,000 passengers have now chosen to fly transatlantic with Norwegian, and with additional Dreamliners set to be based at Gatwick next year we can add further exciting destinations such as Boston.*

"Our continued growth in the UK demonstrates the need for quality, affordable travel. Our free inflight Wi-Fi on flights within Europe, fleet of brand new Boeing 787 Dreamliners on transatlantic routes and affordable fares give us a competitive advantage. Norwegian is fast becoming a household name for UK travellers and we look forward to welcoming a record breaking one million customers aboard Europe's youngest fleet this summer."

Gatwick Airport CEO Stewart Wingate said: *"It has been a fantastic 12 months for Norwegian and Gatwick, with the launch of ground-breaking low cost long-haul routes to America, more flights added and now another exciting new USA destination announced.*

"Passengers are voting with their feet and the success of Norwegian's transatlantic routes shows which way the industry is moving, with new generation aircraft fuelling the low cost long-haul revolution. Aviation is changing fast and we must deliver new airport capacity that best serves these future trends.

"Having daily flights to the Big Apple at a small price will be great news for passengers and with new routes to Boston and Puerto Rico planned, and more state-of-the-art Dreamliners set to be based at Gatwick we look forward to working with Norwegian on their busiest year yet."

Norwegian currently has nine aircraft based at London Gatwick, including two Boeing 787 Dreamliners. These technologically advanced aircraft are the key to operating long-haul, low-cost flights as they use 20% less fuel per passenger compared to similar sized aircraft. The airline was named the 'World's best low cost, long haul airline' by Skytrax last month.

How Norwegian Air 'took off' in the UK:

June 2003: Norwegian launches its first UK route – Oslo to London Stansted

April 2007: Norwegian launches its first Scottish route, with flights between Oslo and Edinburgh✕

October 2007: Norwegian introduces its first flight from London Gatwick (to Stavanger)

2011: Norwegian becomes the first airline in Europe to offer free Wi-Fi

January 2012: Norwegian completes the largest aircraft deal in European history, with an order for 222 aircraft including new generation Boeing 737 MAX8 and Airbus A320 Neo

April 2013: Norwegian establishes its first UK base at London Gatwick

July 2014: Norwegian introduces UK's first low-cost, long-haul flights to Los Angeles, New York and Fort Lauderdale

September 2014: Eighth Boeing 737 added to London Gatwick, expanding the short-haul network to 29 destinations

March 2015: Norwegian begins operating flights between Birmingham and the Spanish cities of Madrid and Malaga

November 2015: Norwegian to launch the UK's only direct flight to San Juan, Puerto Rico. Opening up low-cost, Caribbean breaks for the first time

November 2015: Norwegian to expand at Birmingham and Edinburgh Airports with flights to the Canary Islands

2017: Norwegian will become the first European airline to take delivery of new generation Boeing 737 MAX8 aircraft making it possible to connect smaller cities in the UK and Europe with exciting destinations in the U.S.

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Norwegian Air Shuttle ASA, commercially branded "Norwegian", is a low-cost airline listed on the Oslo Stock Exchange. Norwegian is the world's seventh largest low-cost airline. The company reported its highest ever passenger figures in a single year with almost 24 million passengers in 2014. Norwegian has a route portfolio that stretches across Europe into North Africa and the Middle East, as well as long-haul flights to the US and Southeast Asia. The company has over 400 routes to more than 130 destinations and employs approximately 5,500 people. The company has several hundred undelivered aircraft on firm order.

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