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Norwegian launches Scotland's cheapest flights to the USA

- *Airline today launches Scotland's first direct low-cost transatlantic flights*
- *Edinburgh becomes Norwegian's second UK base to support Scottish expansion*
- *Airport chairman and Scottish Government Minister to join inaugural celebrations*

Low-cost airline Norwegian will begin its transatlantic expansion from Edinburgh Airport today with the first of three new routes to the US east

coast taking-off.

Norwegian, Europe's third largest low-cost carrier, first began operations at Edinburgh Airport in 2009 and has since flown more than 1.3 million passengers to Scandinavia and Europe. Earlier this year, the carrier announced brand-new transatlantic flights from Scotland to smaller airports on the US east coast which launched at some truly groundbreaking fares. Flights are still available from £138 at www.norwegian.com/uk.

Today, Norwegian's inaugural flight to the USA will depart from Edinburgh Airport at 5:15pm, commencing its daily service to Stewart International Airport in New York. This week, Norwegian will also launch its first services to Providence, Rhode Island on Friday (16 June) and the UK's only direct service to Hartford, Connecticut in the heart of New England on Saturday (17 June). All three destinations offer good access into the New York City, Boston and New England areas.

To support the new transatlantic routes, Norwegian has now officially opened a new pilot and cabin crew base at Edinburgh Airport, creating more than 130 jobs to contribute to the Scottish economy. The new Edinburgh base joins London Gatwick to become Norwegian's second UK base as the carrier continues its rapid growth in Britain.

Minister for International Development and Europe, Alasdair Allan and Sir John Elvidge, Edinburgh Airport's Chairman, will join Norwegian CEO Bjorn Kjos to mark the airline's transatlantic expansion and continued growth at Edinburgh Airport. Norwegian's passengers will be treated to a USA themed gate area with a specially designed cake, New York style bagels and American style snacks and refreshments before boarding the aircraft.

Norwegian Chief Executive Officer, Bjorn Kjos said: *"I'm very pleased to mark this major milestone which gives passengers in Edinburgh and Scotland the opportunity to travel to the USA at truly affordable fares.*

"Consumers have responded positively to our affordable fares on both sides of the Atlantic which is stimulating increased tourism and business travel to and from Scotland.

"Not only is Norwegian transforming transatlantic travel by connecting smaller

cities in huge catchment areas but we're also unlocking affordable direct high quality travel to a new market of travellers.

“As such, Edinburgh is important to our future UK growth and it will allow us to create more Scottish jobs at Norwegian which in turn benefits the workforce of Scotland’s tourism industry.”

Minister for International Development and Europe, Alasdair Allan said: *“It’s fantastic to see these new flights get off the ground today, helping us build on Scotland’s strong business and cultural bonds with the United States of America.*

“These low-cost, long-haul services will open up more international markets for Scottish businesses and help support our tourism industry by giving visitors even more options when it comes to getting a taste of the fantastic experiences on offer in Edinburgh and Scotland as a whole.

“This new partnership will also see planes based in Edinburgh, creating jobs at the airport and helping the local economy. This investment is a huge vote of confidence in Scotland’s aviation sector.

“These are exciting times for Edinburgh Airport and Norwegian. We wish them every success and look forward to helping them build on this partnership in the future.”

Chairman, Edinburgh Airport, Sir John Elvidge said: *“We are delighted to welcome the launch of these pioneering services by Norwegian to North America. Like Norwegian, we are committed to providing our passengers with choice and the partnership is delivering just these.*

“The new routes give Scots far more options when wanting to travel to the United States. Equally, we’re looking forward to welcoming the great many American tourists who will use these routes to visit Scotland.”

Chief Executive of VisitScotland, Malcolm Roughead said: *“Scotland is more connected than ever before through transport and digital channels, giving it a louder voice within key markets. The United States is our biggest international market, and last year we saw an 18 per cent increase in the number of visitors from North America along with a 40 per cent increase in spend.*

“Not only is it exciting to see Norwegian add direct flights between three new destinations in the US and Edinburgh, but these low-cost transatlantic fares also come at a time when the exchange rate is already making Scotland a very appealing destination and this will undoubtedly generate a great deal more interest among US travellers.”

Norwegian’s new transatlantic flights are Scotland’s first direct low-cost services to the USA. The airline will serve smaller airport on the US east coast, which carry significantly lower landing charges, allowing the airline to offer some truly affordable fares that will allow as many people as possible to fly.

Norwegian customers flying from Edinburgh who are members of its free-to-join loyalty programme, Norwegian Reward, can earn and spend CashPoints and receive rewards after every sixth flight which can reduce the cost of all Norwegian flights.

Modern 737 aircraft will service these routes offering passengers a single cabin with a sky interior until Norwegian receives the brand-new Boeing 737 MAX aircraft which lands in Norwegian’s fleet this summer.

- **ENDS**

Notes to editors

- Fares are per person based on lowest one-way fare including taxes and charges

Flight schedule

Edinburgh – 14 transatlantic flights per week from £138 one way:

- Stewart Intl (New York) – daily flights. Depart Edinburgh 17:15, arrive Stewart 20:00
- Providence (greater Boston) – x4 weekly flights (Mon, Wed, Fri, Sun). Depart Edinburgh 17:30, arrive Providence 20:10
- Bradley Intl (New England/Connecticut) – x3 weekly flights

(Tues, Thurs, Sat). Depart Edinburgh 17:40, arrive Bradley 20:20

Norwegian at Edinburgh Airport – facts and figures:

- Norwegian started flying from Edinburgh in 2009 and now serves **6 European destinations:** Copenhagen, Oslo, Stockholm, Barcelona, Tenerife, Malaga and **3 US destinations:** Stewart (New York), Providence (greater Boston), Bradley (New England/Connecticut)
- Since 2009, Norwegian have now flown **over 1.3 million passengers** to and from Edinburgh
- **2016 was Norwegian's busiest ever year at Edinburgh** with over 275,000 passengers
- Over the last 12 months (June 2016 - May 2017) Norwegian has flown **287,000 passengers** to and from Edinburgh Airport

Norwegian in the UK:

- Norwegian carries **5.2 million UK passengers each year** from London Gatwick, Edinburgh, Birmingham and Manchester Airports to **50 destinations worldwide**
- Norwegian is the **third largest airline at London Gatwick**, with 4.6 million yearly passengers, and with more than 800 UK-based pilots and cabin crew
- In 2014, Norwegian introduced the **UK's first low-cost, long haul flights to the U.S.** - the airline now flies to 7 U.S destinations with fares from just £139 one way
- Norwegian is the only airline to offer **free inflight WiFi** on UK flights to more than 30 European destinations
- The airline has one of the **youngest aircraft fleets in the world** with an average age of 3.6 years, including next-generation Boeing 787 Dreamliners and Boeing 737-800s
- Norwegian has been **voted 'Europe's best low-cost carrier' by passengers** for four consecutive years at SkyTrax World Airline

Awards from 2013-2016, along with being awarded the **'World's best low-cost long-haul airline'** in both 2015 and 2016

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