

WASHINGTON AVIATION SUMMARY

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The Kirstein & Young law firm specializes in representing U.S. and foreign airlines, airports, leasing companies, financial institutions and aviation-related companies before U.S. Government agencies, Congress, the courts and in commercial and financing matters.

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I. REGULATORY NEWS

1. DOT Revokes Restrictions Affecting Mexico-U.S. Flights.

The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) rescinded its 2025 restrictions on Mexican carriers' ability to initiate new flights to the United States from Mexico City's Benito Juárez and Felipe Ángeles airports, effective immediately, saying concerns about Mexico's non-compliance with the 2015 U.S.-Mexico Air Transport Agreement had been addressed.

2. Air Traffic Controllers Agree To 2.8% Pay Increase.

National Air Traffic Controllers Association (NATCA) agreed to a 2.8% pay increase, effective October 18 and retroactive to the beginning of the year. Per Congressional mandate, the increase is tied to measurable improvements in operational efficiency.

3. FAA Issues Certification for Boeing 737 MAX-10.

FAA issued certification for Boeing's 737 MAX-10. The amended type certificate confirms the aircraft complies with all applicable design and safety requirements. An updated Production Limitation Record authorizes aircraft production. Before granting approval, FAA required the MAX-10 to incorporate key improvements that address requirements in the Aircraft Certification, Safety, and Accountability Act and NTSB recommendations, including updates to the flight-control system with an enhanced angle of attack (airplane pitch) sensor. "We will continue to hold Boeing to the highest safety standards as the company begins production of the 737 MAX-10,"said FAA Administrator Bryan Bedford. . . . Separately, DOT Secretary Sean Duffy told reporters a different pace in aircraft certification is needed, or "we're going to lose. China is going to beat us. We're going to lose not because you don't have the innovation…private capital is not going to invest in innovation because it is going to take a decade for approvals."

4. Air France, KLM Fined For Codeshare Violations In Restricted Zones.

DOT issued fines against Air France ($105,000) and KLM ($320,000) for operating flights under Delta's designator code in airspace restricted by FAA. Air France operated more than 30 flights carrying the Delta code through FAA-prohibited airspace in the Baghdad Flight Information Region between April 2022 and November 2025. KLM operated more than 100 flights carrying the Delta code through the Baghdad region between January 2022 and May 2025. FAA prohibits flight operations by U.S. operators in foreign-managed airspace where conflict, militant activity or heightened tensions pose a safety risk to civil

aviation. Foreign airlines operating flights with a U.S. airline's code must abide by these prohibitions.

5. New Protocol For President's Helicopter Departures.

On August 4, Marine One, the President's helicopter, and an Envoy Air Embraer E-170 were involved in a loss of separation about two miles north of Washington National. There were no injuries and both flights continued to their destinations. However, the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), in a preliminary report, said the investigation revealed communication issues. Under a new protocol, the National Capital Region Coordination Center will notify the control tower before Marine One leaves the White House, in addition to current procedures requiring Marine One crews to notify controllers three minutes before departure.

6. NTSB Releases Preliminary Report On Fatal Miami Runway Overrun.

NTSB released a preliminary report of the September 6 fatal runway overrun of a Boeing 767-33A at Miami International. Events captured on the cockpit voice recorder during the final few minutes indicate excessive speed; pilots had not been advised of strong tailwinds by tower personnel. The 21 Air flight 7598, operating on behalf of Amazon.com Services, hit two ground passenger vehicles. The two crewmembers aboard the plane sustained minor injuries. Five people on the ground died and three sustained serious injuries. The airplane sustained substantial damage and a post-crash fire on the right wing. An engineered materials arresting system (EMAS) was not installed at the end of the runway.

7. CDC Requires Passenger Data To Protect Against Ebola.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) amended its October 22 order on October 28, requiring passengers and crew members boarding international flights into or connecting through the United States to sign an attestation that they have not been in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) during the preceding 21 days. The requirement applies to commercial, general aviation, cargo and private flights, with limited exemptions, to protect against Ebola disease caused by the Bundibugyo virus. Effective November 3 at 11:59 p.m. EST, airlines and other aircraft operators must confirm that covered persons have completed the attestation, retain copies for at least 42 days after departure, and provide them to the U.S. government upon request.

8. Final Plans Submitted For "Triumphal Arch" Near Reagan National.

The U.S. Department of the Interior submitted final site and building plans for a 250-foot-tall "Triumphal Arch" near Arlington National Cemetery and the

Reagan Washington National Airport flight path. National Capital Planning Commission is scheduled to review the plans at a November 5 hearing, with approval expected and construction to begin immediately thereafter. In September, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) provided a "Determination Of No Hazard To Air Navigation" finding for the arch, saying it should be lighted with an eternal flame at the top, and have searchlight projectors at the base that would illuminate the top third of the structure to make it more conspicuous to airmen. Military components earlier posted on social media by President Trump are not mentioned in the final plans. However, reports the Washington Post, the White House said that has not changed, and the Interior Department said the current design "is capable of accommodating national security functions—and more—highlighted in the President's Truth Social post."

II. AIRPORTS

1. United's Terminal B North Opens At Houston Bush.

United's Terminal B North Concourse at Bush Intercontinental has opened. The centerpiece of the airline's broader $2.6 billion Terminal B Transformation Program, the three-level, 765,000-sq-ft concourse has 22 mainline gates that accommodate larger aircraft. A 54,000-sq-ft United Club seats 800 people and is one of seven United club and lounge locations at the airport.

2. Salt Lake City Completes $5.1 Billion Project.

Salt Lake City International completed a $5.1 billion project that replaced three aging terminals with a central terminal and two concourses. The New SLC Redevelopment Program broke ground in July 2014 and opened in phases. Located five miles from downtown Salt Lake City, the airport has three runways, 94 gates and 101 concessions. The project was funded by user fees, car rental fees, passenger facility charges and airport revenue bonds.

3. New Hollywood Burbank Terminal Opens.

The new Hollywood Burbank terminal opened October 13, with an Alaska Airlines departure to Santa Rosa and a Southwest arrival from Las Vegas. The 14-gate, 355,000-sq-ft facility broke ground in January 2024 and was completed within a 46-month schedule, said designer Corgan, which worked in association with CannonDesign and Burns & McDonnell and in partnership with joint venture Holder-Pankow-TEC. The $1.3 billion terminal is 30 miles north of Los Angeles International. About 53% larger than the old complex, it was built on the opposite side of the airfield, so flights continued uninterrupted during construction. It retains outdoor boarding and deplaning directly from the tarmac, but baggage carousels, which had been outdoors, are now indoors. The new footprint enables operation of larger aircraft, said Southwest, which is the largest carrier at Burbank and was involved in the planning process.

4. FAA Approves JetBlue Purchase Of Spirit's LaGuardia Slots.

JetBlue won FAA approval to acquire 22 slots at New York LaGuardia from Spirit Airlines, which ceased operations in May. The $58.5 million purchase earlier won bankruptcy court approval, which prohibits JetBlue from leasing or trading the slots to another carrier until after April 2028.

5. BWI Marshall Completes Major Runway Rehabilitation Project.

Baltimore/Washington International Thurgood Marshall completed a full rehabilitation of its longest runway, which included milling and paving and installation of an LED lighting system. The $83.8 million project was paid for by

FAA's Infrastructure Grant program and the Maryland Transportation Trust Fund. BWI Marshall served 25 million passengers in 2025 and offers 300 daily nonstop departures to 90 domestic and international destinations.

6. UK's Birmingham Airport Proposes £2 Billion Investment.

Birmingham Airport announced a £2 billion draft Master Plan that identifies best use of existing runway capacity and improves passenger facilities and surface access. CEO Nick Barton said the proposed investment will bring capacity to nearly 30 million passengers. However, "for this growth to be deliverable, a stable taxation environment is fundamental to incentivize long term shareholder investment and returns," he told the government. "This appeal comes in the wake of English airports facing continued uncertainty around valuations, which have already seen the doubling of a business rates bill at the West Midlands airport." An eight-week public consultation is underway; a final report will be published in 2027.

III. SECURITY AND DATA PRIVACY

1. Union Takes A Stand for TSA Officers.

The American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) is disputing a decision by the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) to remove chairs at document check podiums at airports, requiring officers to stand to help reinforce professionalism, attentiveness, and active engagement. “There is no security study behind this,” said the union. “There is no data showing a seated officer misses a fake ID that a standing officer would catch. A boarding pass reads the same at any height.” AFGE has launched “Take a Stand,” a campaign asking the public to demand a return of the chairs.

2. Responsible Biometrics Travel Industry Coalition Formed.

The Responsible Biometrics Travel Industry Coalition was formed to ensure that proposed EU Digital Omnibus legislation supports voluntary and secure use of biometrics while protecting passenger choice and privacy. The proposal aims to simplify Europe’s digital rulebook, support innovation and strengthen competitiveness, and preserves high standards of data protection and cybersecurity. But it could place unintended restrictions on voluntary use of biometrics, said the coalition, which includes executives from Airports Council International (ACI) Europe, Amadeus, International Air Transport Association (IATA), IDEMIA Public Security and SITA.

3. EU Urged To Amend Entry/Exit System.

ACI Europe and Airlines for Europe (A4E) called for immediate operational and regulatory changes to the EU Entry/Exit System (EES), warning that excessive wait times at border control—up to five hours—continue to cause significant disruption for passengers, airports and airlines across the Schengen area, even six months into full rollout. They offered a plan that calls for eliminating double verification, optimizing biometric verification, preventing duplicate EES profiles, rethinking and upgrading the “Travel to Europe” app and web portal, accelerating and harmonizing Automated Border Control for third-country nationals, and restoring the ability to partially suspend the EES (no registration of biometrics) in case of excessive wait times as a permanent flexibility mechanism.

IV. ADVANCED AIR MOBILITY (AAM)

1. FAA Funds Drone Research to Support Safe Integration.

FAA awarded $12 million to 19 companies for drone research and testing projects, through the Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) Broad Agency Announcement (BAA) Program. Funding is for companies working with FAA-designated UAS Test Sites to evaluate technologies that support safe drone integration into the National Airspace System.

2. Archer Completes Electric Air Taxi Flights Over San Francisco Bay.

Archer completed a month-long Northern California leg of its 'No Roads' tour with piloted all-electric Midnight air taxi flights around the San Francisco Bay. The flight from Oakland International Airport to San Francisco's Marina District took about 10 minutes, a trip that can routinely take hour by car in traffic. During the multi-city journey, Midnight reached top speeds of 131 mph and flew over 200 miles across the region, flying into seven cities over a three-day period. Archer plans to fly Midnight across Los Angeles next, as part of its preparation to operate under the White House's electric vertical take-off and landing (eVTOL) Integration Pilot Program (eIPP). . . . Archer plans Midnight air taxi networks in Texas, connecting major airports in Houston, Dallas and Austin with business districts.

3. Signature UrbanV Alliance To Develop, Operate AAM Infrastructure.

Signature Aviation and UrbanV launched Signature UrbanV Alliance (SUVA), a U.S. joint venture that will develop an integrated Advanced Air Mobility network connecting airports with urban and regional destinations, starting from existing Signature terminal locations and expanding into dedicated vertiports and other purpose-built infrastructure as demand grows. SUVA will provide a common infrastructure platform for multiple aircraft manufacturers and operators, rather than serving a single aircraft type or operator. The company will work with airports, municipalities, real-estate owners, manufacturers, operators and infrastructure partners to identify priority locations, assess demand and develop the technical, regulatory and commercial frameworks required for deployment. SUVA also provides a dedicated platform through which Signature Aviation and UrbanV can coordinate their U.S. AAM infrastructure activities.

4. Special Airworthiness Market Survey Certificate For eVTOL Ops.

FAA issued a first-of-its-kind Special Airworthiness Market Survey Certificate to BETA Technologies to conduct flight operations with its ALIA eVTOL A250. The certificate expands the geographic scope of BETA operations, allowing the aircraft to fly in more environments and gather more data. BETA completed the

first crewed eVTOL transition flight in 2024. “Operators can now experience the A250 firsthand and begin planning how it fits into their businesses, from connecting communities to moving people and goods at a lower cost,” said the company.

5. Blade’s Private Jet Seasonal Service Returns In November.

Joby Aviation unit Blade will resume private jet seasonal service with flights from Westchester County to Palm Beach and Miami-Opa Locka, from November 19 to May 2. The flights will be operated by Aero subsidiary USAC Airways 695 on a commercial jet retrofitted with 16 single seats. Blade’s helicopter passenger operations in the United States and Europe and its passenger terminal infrastructure and proprietary technologies “will enable a seamless transition from helicopters and fixed-wing aircraft to Joby’s electric air taxi, once certified, enabling lower cost air mobility that is both quiet and emission-free.”

6. Embraer’s Eve Targets eVTOL Certification In 2028.

Embraer-owned Eve Air Mobility is targeting certification of its Eve 100 electric vertical take-off and landing (eVTOL) aircraft in 2028. The company continues flight testing and certification work with aviation authorities. Eve reported approximately 2,700 aircraft in its order pipeline in 2026, primarily letters of intent, including 100 aircraft covered by binding agreements. The company is developing an aircraft designed to accommodate five occupants, including one pilot and four passengers, for short-distance urban and regional transportation.

V. TECHNOLOGY AND EQUIPMENT

1. IATA: Travelers Embrace Biometrics, AI; Entry Requirements A Barrier.

IATA's 2026 Global Passenger Survey (GPS) found that passengers are embracing biometric identification to reduce repeated document checks, and show strong interest in using digital passports for check-in and more personalized services at booking. However, they are concerned about data breaches (59%), information being shared with other organizations (49%), and a lack of clarity about how their personal information is handled (41%). Almost half of those surveyed have used artificial intelligence (AI) to plan travel, from finding flights and comparing fares to discovering their next destination. "It's important for airlines not only to ensure their offerings show up in AI, but also to develop convenient links to convert an AI conversation into a real booking," advised IATA, which also said governments need to simplify entry requirements, eliminate duplicate checks, and accelerate issuance and acceptance of secure digital travel credentials," as many travelers continue to face barriers from complex immigration and visa processes. "To make biometrics the norm for international travel, governments must agree a framework for issuing and accepting secure digital passports—or Digital Travel Credentials," said IATA. Study results are based on over 10,000 responses from more than 200 countries.

2. U.S. Travel Agency Air Ticket Sales Surpass $10 Billion In September.

U.S.-based travel agency air ticket sales totaled $10.2 billion in September 2026, up 18% from September 2025, according to Airlines Reporting Corporation (ARC). Passenger trips reached 25.7 million, up 2%; third-quarter 2026 sales totaled $29.7 billion, up 18%; and passenger trips for the quarter rose 3.5% to 77.4 million. Results are based on data from 9,863 U.S. retail and corporate travel agency locations and online travel agencies, and do not include sales of tickets purchased directly from airlines. Average ticket price (USD) is for a round-trip ticket settled through ARC for an itinerary that included only U.S. domestic travel.

3. Southwest Launches Search Plugin In ChatGPT.

Southwest said its first-of-its-kind U.S. airline plugin in ChatGPT marks the first step in a phased AI-powered booking approach. Developed with OpenAI and Amazon Web Services (AWS), it allows travelers to discover and shop for Southwest flights in ChatGPT.

VI. ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT

1. Fuel Bill For Global Airline Industry.

The global average jet fuel price for week ending October 9 was $190.18 per barrel, up +3.1% from prior month's average, and up +111.2% on prior year's average, according to the Jet Fuel Price Monitor, a joint IATA-Platts initiative.

2. Delta, Georgia To Accelerate SAF Growth.

The Georgia Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) Coalition was launched by Delta Air Lines, the Metro Atlanta Chamber, the Georgia Forestry Association and Georgia Farm Bureau to advance SAF production and drive economic investment across the state. Priorities include strengthening public-private partnerships, supporting research and commercialization, attracting investment, advancing policies that support industry growth and connecting Georgia's existing strengths to emerging opportunities.

3. Corporate Demand Could Support 1.9 Million Tonnes of SAF by 2030.

IATA, Airbus and Accenture released an SAF Environmental Attribute Certificate (EAc) Market study which estimates that corporate purchases could support between 1 million and 1.9 million tonnes of SAF by 2030, up from an estimated 323,000 in 2024. But global production in 2026 is expected to be just 2.4 million tonnes or 0.8% of total jet fuel use and SAF remains two to three times more expensive. "Every additional corporate purchase converts climate ambition into real market demand and helps distribute the cost of decarbonization more broadly," said IATA. "The next step is making participation easier, more accessible, and more credible for companies of all sizes.". . . The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) has joined the Supporting Alliance for CORSIA EEU Supply, a group of 80 stakeholders that address bottlenecks that limit the availability of Eligible Emissions Units (EEUs). Significant work remains to ensure sufficient supply by the 2027 compliance deadline for CORSIA [Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation].

4. EU Amends Market Stability Reserve of EU ETS.

The European Parliament and the Council "reached a provisional political agreement on a targeted amendment to strengthen the Market Stability Reserve (MSR) of the EU's Emissions Trading System (EU ETS)." The reserve will be able to retain up to 700 million allowances as a buffer to support future market stability and predictability, rather than the current 400 million. Introduced in 2019, the MSR contains price volatility by reducing auction volumes during

periods of supply surpluses and releasing allowances in periods of scarcity based on predefined rules.

5. Noise Impact Study of Amazon Drone Delivery Requested.

In letters to FAA Administrator Bryan Bedford and Amazon CEO Andy Jassy, Massachusetts lawmakers called for a site-specific Environmental Assessment (EA) of a proposed Amazon Prime Air drone hub near Boston. An independent resident survey, with more than 1,200 responses as of early October, found 92% of respondents opposed the proposed Westborough facility. Mass is one of 15 states currently suing FAA for its nationwide FONSI [Finding of No Significant Impact] under a streamlined regulatory process. “These concerns – applying the FONSI to a community different from those previously assessed by the FAA, significant local opposition, and the limited evaluation of hazardous material risks – warrant requiring Amazon to complete a site-specific EA, with a public comment period, before the FAA authorizes Prime Air operations in Massachusetts,” wrote Senators Edward Markey and Elizabeth Warren and Representatives Jim McGovern and Lori Trahan.

6. UK CAA Report On Managing Drone, eVTOL Noise.

A report from the UK Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) examines how noise from drones and eVTOL aircraft could be assessed and managed, as innovation develops. “Managing Noise from Emerging Aviation Technology” finds that, despite being quieter than conventional helicopters, these technologies may influence community experience because they operate more frequently and at lower altitudes. Established noise-management principles could be adapted, such as quieter aircraft design, proportionate noise assessment, appropriate route and operating procedures, transparent community engagement, accessible complaints arrangements and the systematic collection of operational and noise data. The report was developed to support UK Department for Transport work on a national noise policy for drones.

VII. U.S. CONGRESS

1. Modern Skies Act Introduced in Senate.

The Modern Skies Act was introduced in the Senate by Eric Schmitt (R-MO), who said the legislation would invest $30 billion "to modernize the digital architecture our air traffic control (ATC) system relies on, replace crumbling aviation infrastructure, and build world-class airports across the country." The bill is supported by nearly 60 industry organizations.

2. Democrats Request Audit of FAA's AI-Based Air Traffic Software.

House Democrats asked the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to audit FAA's deployment of the AI-based SMART (Strategic Management of Airspace, Routes and Trajectories) and FMDS (Flow Management Data and Services) platforms, specifically, FAA's (1) safety risk management analysis of SMART and FMDS; (2) plans to test, evaluate and certify the platforms for operational use; (3) performance metrics used to determine the safety, effectiveness and reliability of SMART; and (4) deployment strategy, including coordination with key stakeholders. "[F]rontline aviation safety workforce apparently had little to no input into SMART's development and have received limited training and information during the current deployment process," said Ranking Member of the House Transportation Committee, Rick Larsen (D-WA), Ranking Member of the Aviation Subcommittee, André Carson, and Democratic members of the Committee. . . . In related news, a Congressional letter to DOT Secretary Sean Duffy and FAA Administrator Bryan Bedford lists concerns about the September 21 deployment of SMART at Reagan Washington National Airport, Washington Dulles and Baltimore/Washington International, and requests a pause in plans to expand the tool nationwide in 90 days, until questions about safety testing, implementation, and oversight are answered. "At a time when AI safety concerns are sky high, FAA has not provided sufficient transparency around its decision-making process prior to deployment, nor the functioning of SMART's underlying AI systems," wrote Don Beyer, April McClain Delaney, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Kweisi Mfume, Suhas Subramanyam, and Sarah Elfreth. They requested responses to: What evaluations were completed before deployment, how the system performs during severe weather or outages, and whether any safety review requirements were waived during the contracting process. What input FAA sought from airport authorities, air safety workers and airlines; what training personnel received; and how the tool should influence decision-making. How FAA will measure performance during the initial 90-day evaluation, what standards must be met before nationwide expansion, and who is responsible if a recommendation contributes to a safety incident.

3. 121 Lawmakers, Unions Call For Privacy Protections In Spirit Data Sale.

A group of 121 Members of Congress urged Spirit Airlines CEO Dave Davis and Google CEO Sundar Pichai to protect the privacy of former Spirit employees, in a letter responding to court findings that the proposed sale of Spirit's internal data to Google, for purposes of training artificial intelligence systems, would include about 100 million emails, 500 million Microsoft Teams messages, employee records, timecards records, payroll and tax information, and employment contracts. "Removing names, email addresses, and other direct identifiers does not necessarily make a dataset anonymous, particularly when modern AI systems can identify patterns across large datasets and connect seemingly unrelated pieces of information," says the letter, which was backed by union leaders. Google says it will not receive personally identifiable information and the data will undergo third-party scrubbing before transfer. "The National Institute of Standards and Technology has recognized that de-identified data can be re-identified in certain circumstances," says the letter, which calls for "no employee-related information to be transferred until protections are in place to ensure that workers' sensitive information cannot be identified, profiled, or misused." . . . In related news, a court-appointed consumer privacy official recommended the proposed $10 million bankruptcy sale of Spirit's data to Google be approved. The review did not address privacy risks to employees, and pilot and flight attendant unions have filed an objection in U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Southern District of New York.

VIII. BILATERAL AND STATE DEPARTMENT NEWS

1. State Department, FAA Advise Caution For Travel To Saudi Arabia.

The U.S. State Department updated a Travel Advisory for Saudi Arabia, and FAA issued a Notice to Airmen (NOTAM) urging caution as Iran and Iran-backed Houthi rebels launched missile and drone attacks into the Kingdom. Arab Air Carriers' Organization condemned "repeated terrorist attacks targeting civilian airports in the region, most recently the heinous attack on King Khalid International Airport in Riyadh, which claimed the lives of a number of innocent people and left hundreds injured." Limited airport operations resumed, though the threat of attacks continues.

2. IATA, Somalia Sign MoU On Safety.

IATA signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation of the Federal Government of Somalia to strengthen collaboration on aviation safety, a priority area under IATA's Focus Africa initiative. Under terms of the agreement, the Somali CAA will recognize the IATA Operational Safety Audit and the IATA Safety Audit for Ground Operations as acceptable means of compliance with national regulations, complementing its own safety oversight functions.

IX. EUROPE AND AFRICA

1. Delta Adds Iceland Service.

Delta added nonstop service from Boston to Reykjavík to its 2027 transatlantic season. The daily Boeing 757-200 flights will operate from April 12 through October 30. New nonstop service has also been announced for Detroit to Athens, Boston to Venice and Austin to Paris.

2. Southwest, LOT Polish Airlines Begin Interline Partnership.

Southwest Airlines and LOT Polish Airlines launched an interline partnership. From its global hub at Warsaw Chopin Airport, LOT connects Central and Eastern Europe with destinations worldwide, including Boeing 787 Dreamliner service to North America, India, Japan and South Korea. LOT and Southwest both serve Los Angeles, Miami and San Francisco. Southwest said LOT is its eleventh named airline partner in a growing portfolio.

3. St. Louis Joins Icelandair's Route Network.

Icelandair will operate service to St. Louis three to four times a week from May 14 through October 24. An expanded partnership with Southwest, the largest carrier in St. Louis, will offer connections from destinations across North America via St. Louis to Iceland and onward to Icelandair destinations in Europe.

4. Air France Adds Nashville, San Diego Nonstops.

Air France will add two new U.S. routes during the summer 2027 season. Three weekly Airbus A350-900 nonstops will operate from Paris Charles de Gaulle to San Diego from May 3, and to Nashville from May 14. Air France will be the only airline to serve Nashville from continental Europe. San Diego is also served by KLM.

5. Lufthansa To Acquire 44.9% Stake In TAP.

Portugal accepted Lufthansa’s bid for a 44.9% stake in TAP Air Portugal; completion of the €1.025 billion transaction is subject to approval by authorities. The only other bidder was Air France-KLM. “With the intended initial acquisition of a minority stake, Lufthansa Group is pursuing a clear strategic agenda: to support TAP Air Portugal’s growth while preserving its national identity and to sustainably strengthen Portugal’s connectivity, particularly with North and Latin America,” said Lufthansa Group Chairman and CEO Carsten Spohr. TAP and Lufthansa are Star Alliance partners. . . . Lufthansa Group is adding 10 long-haul routes and frequency increases for the Summer 2027 schedule, including new Boeing 787-9 nonstops from Frankfurt to Columbus, Ohio, and Munich to

Phoenix. Austrian will fly to New York Kennedy and Newark, Washington, Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles and Montreal.

6. <u>British Airways Unveils World's Largest Business-Class Cabin.</u>

British Airways unveiled First, Club World (business), World Traveller Plus (premium economy) and World Traveller (economy) cabins on its first retrofitted A380 aircraft, set to fly in coming months. The “world’s largest business class cabin,” with 106 seats, spans the entire upper deck. Part of an ongoing multi-million-pound investment to enhance the onboard experience, the airline's “Travel Refreshed” initiative includes new seats and updated designs across all cabins, and upgrading the lounge network at London Heathrow.

X. ASIA/PACIFIC AND MIDDLE EAST

1. Alaska Adds Japan Service.

Alaska Airlines will begin new year-round, nonstop service to Osaka from Seattle on May 14, 2027, and to Papeete, Tahiti, on June 11, 2027, subject to government approval. The weekly flights will operate on Hawaiian Airlines' Airbus A330. . . . Alaska will offer daily Boeing 737 MAX-8 nonstops from Anchorage to Tokyo Narita from May 13 to September 7. The airline will also offer three weekly winter flights on the route from January 2028, subject to government approval.

2. Emirates To Deploy Airbus A350 To Orlando.

Emirates is deploying the Airbus A350 on scheduled services for the first time in the U.S. on November 1, with the start of daily service to Orlando. The aircraft replaces the Boeing 777, which has been operating on the route since it launched in 2015. It features three cabin classes with 32 Business Class, 28 Premium Economy and 238 Economy Class seats.

3. Southwest, Etihad Announce Loyalty Partnership.

Etihad and Southwest will offer reciprocal loyalty program benefits from Spring 2027, allowing members to earn and redeem across their networks. Southwest's network spans the United States, Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean. Etihad operates direct flights to Atlanta, Boston, Charlotte, Chicago, New York City and Washington, and to Toronto and Calgary. Etihad Guest Miles can be redeemed for flights, cabin upgrades, worldwide hotel stays and holidays, and products through the Etihad Guest Reward Shop.

4. Air New Zealand To Debut Economy Lie-Flat Sleep Pods.

Air New Zealand will debut the world's first lie-flat sleep pods for Economy and Premium Economy customers on select ultra long-haul flights between New York and Auckland in December. Skynest™ features six lie-flat pods arranged in a bunk-style layout on the Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner. Two four-hour sessions are available per flight, from $495 per session. Skynest was recognized by Condé Nast Traveller as a Bright Idea in Travel for 2026.

XI. AMERICAS

1. Alaska Seeks To Join American's Atlantic, Pacific Joint Businesses.

American and Alaska Airlines are planning to seek regulatory approval for Alaska to join American's Atlantic and Pacific Joint Businesses. The Atlantic Joint Business includes American, British Airways, Iberia, Finnair, Aer Lingus and LEVEL. The Pacific Joint Business includes American and Japan Airlines.

2. United, Air Canada Renew Transborder Joint Business Agreement.

Air Canada and United agreed to renew and expand their Transborder Joint Business Agreement, which supports more than 1,200 connecting itineraries, subject to regulatory approvals. For summer 2027, Air Canada will launch service from Toronto to Louisville, Montréal to Indianapolis, and Edmonton to Newark. United will launch seasonal service to St. John's from Newark and will add new service from Denver to Ottawa and Québec City. Air Canada will also increase capacity between Edmonton and San Francisco by deploying the larger Airbus A220 on the route.

3. American To Acquire 8% Stake In Azul.

Brazil's Administrative Council for Economic Defense (CADE) approved American Airlines' bid to obtain an 8% share in Azul, which exited Chapter 11 early this year. Azul said the $100 million investment "represents a milestone in the company's capitalization process and reinforces the confidence of strategic partners." Abra Group, shareholder of Gol and Avianca, appealed an initial CADE approval and an ensuing review resulted in new safeguards to competition. United has also acquired an 8% share in Azul for $100 million.

4. Southwest Announces Largest Summer Schedule.

Southwest's Summer 2027 schedule includes new weekend service from Austin to Costa Rica, Nassau and Dominican Republic. Seasonal service from Nashville includes Nassau and Turks and Caicos Islands. The airline said 4,498 scheduled trips on peak days are the most it has ever offered in its summer schedule. . . .Southwest is expanding its Rapid Rewards program in January, and in Spring 2027 members will be able to earn and redeem points for travel through new international loyalty partnerships. . . . Southwest will introduce its Icon Lounge in late 2027, in partnership with Chase, to airports including Austin, Baltimore, Honolulu and Nashville.

5. JetBlue Expands To Four Destinations In Colombia.

JetBlue added daily nonstops from Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International to Barranquilla and Cali in Colombia, joining Cartagena and Medellín. . . .

BlueFirst, JetBlue's new domestic first class, is now booking for travel to begin on December 8 between Boston and Fort Lauderdale, followed by select flights between Fort Lauderdale and New York LaGuardia. The offering features seats with five inches of recline and up to seven inches of additional legroom compared with JetBlue's Main seats, dedicated overhead bin space, priority check-in and baggage benefits, and expedited security access.

6. Delta Adds Iceland Service.

See Section IX, item 1.

7. Southwest, LOT Polish Airlines Begin Interline Partnership.

See Section IX, item 2.

8. St. Louis Joins Icelandair's Route Network.

See Section IX, item 3.

9. Air France Adds Nashville, San Diego Nonstops.

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11. Emirates To Deploy Airbus A350 To Orlando.

See Section X, item 2.

12. Southwest, Etihad Announce Loyalty Partnership.

See Section X, item 3.