



# Airport Check-in: Seattle-Beijing trips begin; Aloft in Montreal

June 9, 2008

By Roger Yu, USA TODAY

The Seattle-Tacoma area, which has a large Asian population, finally has non-stop flight service to China.

Starting Monday, Hainan Airlines begins flying to Beijing four times a week from Seattle-Tacoma International: Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays. It's the first U.S. city for Hainan, which is China's fourth-largest carrier and the largest non-government-owned airline.

"It's very important to the state of Washington. China is (its) No. 1 trade partner," says Hainan's North America general manager Joel Chusid, citing local companies with a heavy presence in China, including Starbucks, Microsoft and Boeing. "There's a lot of Asian influence in Seattle."

SeaTac's discussions with Hainan began about four years ago. But the service launch date was delayed in part to the airline's desire to operate the route using Boeing's 787 Dreamliner, Chusid says.

With Boeing's delay in delivering the new jet, Hainan chose to fly with Airbus A330s for now. Hainan's business class will feature lie-flat seats with 74-inch pitch.

Hainan hopes to expand to other North American cities, and has filed paperwork with Chinese officials to launch service to Boston, Chicago, Newark and Toronto.

But the airline has not yet begun the process for the necessary approval from U.S. and Canadian regulators, Chusid says.



Starwood  
The Aloft hotel at Montreal Trudeau International.

## MONTREAL

### Hotel will be part of a 70-property chain

Aloft, a new midscale hotel brand launched by Starwood Hotels in 2005, opened its first property last week, choosing Montreal-Trudeau International as its inaugural site.

Aloft will be similar in style but generally cheaper than the W Hotel, which is also owned by Starwood. Rooms feature 9-foot ceilings in a loft-style design. The hotel also offers free Wi-Fi and a panel in each room that allows guests to connect multiple electronic gadgets and link them to a flat-panel TV.

Located at the entrance to the airport, the hotel will run free shuttle service to the terminals. Its lobby kiosks will also allow passengers to print boarding passes for several airlines.

Aloft plans to open about 70 hotels by the end of 2009.

## **INDIANAPOLIS**

### **Northwest passengers get new way to check in**

Northwest has introduced electronic boarding passes to customers traveling on non-stop domestic flights from Indianapolis International.

Those checking in at the carrier's website can elect to receive an e-mail with a bar code containing flight information to their cellphones or other handheld mobile devices. The bar code is scanned at gates, allowing passengers to bypass the process of printing the boarding pass at home or using a check-in kiosk at the airport.

Northwest, which is working with the Transportation Security Administration, plans to expand the service to other cities. Continental runs a similar program at other airports.

## **SAN DIEGO**

### **It'll cost more to park at airport after Oct. 1**

Airport officials in San Diego have voted to approve higher parking rates at Lindbergh Field, effective Oct. 1.

Lindbergh's on-airport lots within walking distance of the terminal now charge \$1 for the first hour. The rate will rise to \$3 in October and to \$4.50 in 2010.

Long-term rates in the on-airport lots will also increase from \$18 for the first a day (\$24 for each day after) to \$24 (\$26 for each day after) in October. The two economy lots closest to the airport will raise their daily rates from \$12 to \$16.

## **DALLAS**

### **Terminal B gets a new restaurant option**

Passengers at Dallas/Fort Worth have a new food-to-go option. Z Market, a convenience store/deli, recently opened its first airport location at DFW's Terminal B.

The menu, which includes sandwiches, salads and sushi, was created by Tim Love, a Fort Worth-based chef known for innovative Southwestern cuisine. Love also won the Food Network's Iron Chef competition.

*Every Monday, we report on the latest news in airports across the USA. See something noteworthy in your travels? E-mail your suggestions to [ryu@usatoday.com](mailto:ryu@usatoday.com).*