

# Philippine Airlines boosts flights to Canada, US

PHILIPPINE Airlines said last March 11 it will increase flights to the United States, Canada and domestic tourist spots during the country's peak summer travel period despite the global financial crisis.

The airline said it will add one weekly flight each to Los Angeles and San Francisco in the United States, increasing its weekly flights to Los Angeles to 10 and to San Francisco to eight.

It said the extra flights, which will utilize an Airbus A340-300, will operate to Los Angeles every Friday from April 10 to June 19 while another A340-300 jet will serve San Francisco every Sunday from April 12 to June 21.

PAL also said it will also fly daily direct to Vancouver starting March 23 to service a "sizeable Filipino migrant community" in Canada as well as business and leisure travellers. It will also utilize Airbus A340-300 jets that seat 264 passengers. It currently operates five flights every week to Vancouver, with onward flights



to Las Vegas.

Meanwhile, the carrier's budget service—turbo-prop PAL Express—will add one daily flight starting March 20 between Manila and Caticlan, in the central Philippines. This will increase to 11 PAL's daily flights to the gateway to the resort island of Boracay.

PAL Express also will operate a second daily flight to Busuanga island, which hosts some exclusive beach resorts southwest of Manila.

It will also add two weekly flights to central Cebu city and

southern Cagayan de Oro city and increase its regular jet services to Cebu, Cagayan de Oro and six other cities in the central and southern Philippines.

In November, the airline reported that an unprecedented surge in fuel prices left it with a loss of \$113.8 million during the fiscal first-half—April-September. As a result, the company's total comprehensive income of \$45.8 million in April-June 2008 was "more than erased" by the fuel price-increases in the following quarter. (Philstar.com)

# NAIA's terminal 3 capacity upped to 32M passengers a year



WITH the opening of Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA) Terminal 3 to commercial operations, the country's main gateway increased its terminal capacity to 32 million passengers a year, the Manila International Airport Authority (MIAA) said.

According to MIAA General Manager Alfonso Cusi, they are committed to become a globally competitive organization for providing airport facilities and services consistent with international standards, expressed continuing progress and milestones gained in 2008.

"The newly opened terminal is now operational, catering to domestic flights to most local destinations and international flights to Asian countries," he said.

Cusi added the agency has also plans for terminal expansion focusing on capacity building efforts to better handle the increasing passenger traffic and is projected for the next five to 10 years.

"We believe that the increase in passenger traffic is due to the aggressive marketing and promotional ad efforts of domestic airlines and also to the opening of NAIA terminal 3, as we are able to accommodate more passengers because of the added space the new facility provides," Cusi said.

Aside from the opening of NAIA 3, the MIAA has also embarked on modest but useful improvements aimed at maintaining the prestige of NAIA being the main gateway of the country.

Cusi said the improvements of terminal 1 Arrival Lobby and other renovations to give it more updated look and make it more functional to address the

changing operational needs of the gateway.

"Despite limited space for expansion, it has been steadily improved as a facility that is both friendly and useful to its passengers and stakeholders well. This is obviously a provided concern for the NAIA in its continuing effort to be at par with other international airports worldwide," Cusi explained.

To further manifest, MIAA serious efforts to make the NAIA terminals safe, as metered taxis were introduced for passenger's safety and convenience and also free shuttle services from and to all three NAIA terminals have also been put into place.

A new security equipment have also been acquired, and other facility upgrades been made and more judicious housekeeping is being practiced.

"We promise to share decades of expertise of the MIAA/NAIA personnel in international and domestic airport management and we can only be too glad and willing to extend help for the building of the Panglao and Caticlan airports," he said.

Cusi added it also boosts passenger traffic within the country which is pursuant to objectives and thrust of the national leadership and will be good for the tourism sectors. ■

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