

Beat: Travel

Westjet and Air Canada Adjust Service On Some Routes

Due To Grounded Aircraft

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USPA NEWS - Westjet and Air Canada are forced to adjust or cancel some service because of the continued ban on the use of the Boeing 737 Max 8 in Canadian airspace.

Following in the footsteps of the International Community, on March 13th, Marc Garneau the Transport Minister of Canada banned the Boeing 737 Max 8 planes from use in Canadian Airspace. At the time Westjet had 13 Max 8 aircraft and Air Canada had 24 Max 8 aircraft that were grounded. The ban followed the crash of Ethiopian Airlines Flight 302 on March 10th, 2019 and the Lion Air crash in October of 2018. Both fatal crashes involved the 737 Max 8 killing nearly 350 people. These two terrible tragedies certainly raise the safety integrity of this aircraft which definitely warrants investigation with the hope of avoiding such events in the future. It is not clear how long this ban will be in place, but some speculate August or beyond.

Westjet's Chief Operating Officer, Jeff Martin, posted the following statement to their website.

"Westjet has adjusted flight times on some routes or substituted larger aircraft with fewer flights, but it needed to suspend a small number of routes where no alternative aircraft were available.

Although the Max comprised over 1,000 monthly departures in our June schedules, by adjusting our aircraft lease returns and the planned installations of our premium seats, we have been able to cover more than 700 of the flight routes where the Max was originally scheduled, with other aircraft. I thank our WestJet teams for their dedication as they continue to work hard to get our guests to their destinations." Martin goes on to say "Westjet remains committed to the routes and will resume flights when it can."

Westjet advised of the following changes "Flights between Halifax and Paris have been suspended from June 3 through Aug. 2, and WestJet says guests will be rebooked either through Calgary, non-stop on its Boeing Dreamliner jets to Paris, or with one of its partner airlines through Toronto, Montreal or New York.

Flights between Edmonton and Ottawa, and Edmonton and Montreal, have also been suspended for most of June, and WestJet says guests will be rebooked through either Calgary or Toronto on WestJet-operated flights.

Service between Toronto and Kelowna, B.C., and Vancouver and Regina will also be suspended for much of June."

In a statement released this past week Air Canada said " Air Canada has made more changes to its summer schedule in an effort to deal with the groundings of the Boeing 737 Max airplanes and one casualty is direct flights between Calgary and London. Flights between Calgary and London slated to begin in June will be cancelled for this year." The statement goes on to say, "Air Canada has protected 96 percent of their planned flights since the fleet was grounded back in March but some cuts had to be made."

With the speculation that the ban on the Max 8 aircraft will last until at least the end of the summer Air Canada works to acquire additional equipment to offset the shortage.

Air Canada will be using two Airbus A330-200 that are being leased from Qatar Airways for service from Montreal to Paris. This service will start in mid June.

Air Canada Rouge will be using 6 Airbus A321 aircraft acquired from WOW which are now bankrupt.

Also, a Boeing 767-200 which will come from Omni Air International will provide service from Vancouver to Hawaii.

With the uncertainty of how long this ban on the Max 8 aircraft will last and impact on service those with existing reservations should consult their airline for up to date information.

Article online:

<https://www.uspa24.com/bericht-15307/westjet-and-air-canada-adjust-service-on-some-routes.html>

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Editorial program service of General News Agency:

United Press Association, Inc.
3651 Lindell Road, Suite D168
Las Vegas, NV 89103, USA
(702) 943.0321 Local
(702) 943.0233 Facsimile
info@unitedpressassociation.org
info@gna24.com
www.gna24.com