

United Airlines starts early on summer 2023 plans for Europe

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A United Airlines jetliner taxis for take off from Denver International Airport, Thursday, May 26, 2022, in Denver. Planes from the U.S. to Europe were packed this summer, and United Airlines figures the same thing will happen next year. United announced Wednesday, Oct. 12, that it will again increase its peak summer schedule across the Atlantic. Credit: AP Photo/David Zalubowski, File

Buoyed by full planes across the Atlantic this summer, United Airlines is planning another increase in its summer service from the United States to Europe next year.

United said Wednesday that it will resume seasonal flights from Newark, New Jersey, to Stockholm, which it dropped in 2019, and launch new summer service from Newark to Malaga, Spain. However, the airline will drop Bergen, Norway—one of nine routes it added this summer—after disappointing results.

In all, the airline expects to increase passenger-carrying capacity across the Atlantic next summer by up to 30% over pre-pandemic 2019. That increase includes United's previously announced plan to resume flying to Dubai in the United Arab Emirates, a destination it abandoned in 2016.

United and other airlines have been forced to cancel some flights this year because of limits imposed by airports in London and Amsterdam, which are struggling with staffing shortages. Patrick Quayle, the airline's senior vice president of network planning, said that after talking with airport officials, United is confident it can operate the planned 2023 European schedule.

United, American Airlines and Delta Air Lines were boosted this summer by strong demand and high fares on flights to Europe, as Americans took advantage of fewer pandemic-related travel restrictions. Those international trips likely figured in American's move Tuesday to raise its forecast of third-quarter revenue, although the airline did not break out results by region.

Asia and the South Pacific have been slower to come back, although United has gradually added flights to Australia and other destinations. China, however, remains largely closed off to foreigners, with cities still imposing [new lockdowns](#) based on the smallest numbers of COVID-19 cases, and Japan just ended border restrictions that had been in place for more than two years.

Quayle said United "will just follow the government process" when

China reopens, and will phase in the resumption of flights to Japan. With those "notable exceptions," he said, "everything else across the Pacific is going to be running full-steam this winter."

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