

June 30th, 2016

Air Astana launches a new Almaty-Tehran service



Air Astana, the award winning carrier of Kazakhstan, launches a new non-stop flight from Almaty to Tehran, the capital of the Islamic Republic of Iran, effective June 30, 2016. Flights will operate three times a week (Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays) and will be served by an Embraer 190. The cabin will feature nine Business Class seats and 88 Economy Class seats.

The new service will offer added ease of travel and will enhance business and cultural links between the two countries. According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) of The Republic Kazakhstan, the approximate value in trade between the two countries in 2015 was \$US 1 billion. In addition, in Kazakhstan there are a number of Kazakh-Iranian joint enterprises as well as cultural and scientific ties between the countries which we anticipate will benefit from the new service.

Air Astana's direct flights between Almaty and Tehran will also boost tourism between the two countries. Iran is one of the oldest civilizations in the world and boasts numerous well-preserved historical landmarks, a rich culture, outstanding architectural monuments, magnificent natural landscapes, rich cuisine and fine objects of national art. These attractions will undoubtedly draw many tourists from Kazakhstan. Moreover, Kazakhstan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs is currently in negotiations to enable Kazakh citizens to potentially obtain an Iranian visa on arrival in the country.

"I trust that our Iranian guests will enjoy the history and culture of Kazakhstan. Beyond that Almaty has a lot more to offer with premium ski resorts, year around cultural events, a wide variety of shopping malls and fine dining – all at surprisingly great value for money. All these are accessible with a flight that is just three and a half hours away from Tehran. The new service connecting Kazakhstan with Iran will provide convenient connections to Air Astana's CIS and Asian network, in particular to the cities of Beijing and Urumqi," says Ibrahim Canliel, senior vice-president, Sales and Marketing, Air Astana.

The duration of the flight between Almaty and Tehran is just 3 hours 30 minutes. Tickets can be purchased at Air Astana ticketing offices, by calling Call Centre: +7 (727) 2444477 or at www.airastana.com.

Air Astana currently operates a network of over 60 international and domestic routes from hubs in Almaty and Astana with a fleet of 30 aircraft including three Boeing 767-300ER, five Boeing 757-200, thirteen Airbus A320 family aircraft and nine Embraer E-190. Air Astana became the first carrier from Russia, the Commonwealth of Independent States (the CIS) and Eastern Europe to be awarded the prestigious 4-Star rating by Skytrax. Air Astana is a joint venture between Kazakhstan's national wealth fund, Samruk Kazyna, and BAE Systems, with respective shares of 51% and 49%.