



SWISS starts non-stop service to Beijing

SWISS inaugurated its new non-stop service to Beijing today with the 12:30 departure from Zurich Airport of the first eastbound LX 196 flight. The new route was formally opened by Swiss Federal Councillor and Minister of Transport Doris Leuthard, in a ceremony that was also attended by His Excellency Wu Ken, China's ambassador to Switzerland, SWISS Chairman of the Board Bruno Gehrig, SWISS CEO Harry Hohmeister and further invitees from the business and political worlds.

SWISS now offers non-stop service between Zurich and Beijing. The new route will be operated five to seven times a week using Airbus A340-300 equipment, which seats 219 passengers and also offers 18 tonnes of cargo capacity. The service will be daily from 31 May. Beijing is SWISS's third destination in China, joining Hong Kong and Shanghai.

"Our new route marks a major step for us," said SWISS CEO Harry Hohmeister on the occasion of the inaugural flight. "By adding Beijing to our network, we now serve the most important points in one of the world's fastest-growing markets. China is a highly attractive destination for both business and leisure travellers, and we now provide the best possible services to meet this travel demand."

The eastbound flight LX 196 leaves Zurich at 12:30 and arrives in Beijing at 05:15 the following morning. The westbound flight LX 197 departs from China's capital at 06:45 and lands in Zurich at 10:40 the same day (all times are as of the 2011/12 winter schedules).

"We warmly welcome this new non-stop service between Zurich and Beijing," added Swiss Minister of Transport Doris Leuthard. "Well-functioning air links are vital to good relations between Switzerland and China. Over 400,000 Chinese travellers visited Switzerland in summer 2011 alone, and trading volumes between our two countries increased 11.6 per cent last year to more than CHF 15 billion. I'm convinced that everyone will benefit from the new service," Councillor Leuthard continued. "SWISS, Zurich Airport, travellers, the economy and Switzerland and China as a whole."

Photo

From left to right: H.E. Wu Ken, China's ambassador to Switzerland, Swiss Federal Councillor Doris Leuthard, Bruno Gehrig, SWISS Chairmen of the Board and Harry Hohmeister, SWISS CEO

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