

Marketing partnership agreement with Qatar Airways will raise Wales' profile globally

The Qatar Airways service is Cardiff Airport's first route into the Middle East, with 150 onward connections from Doha. Links to and from Australia, New Zealand, China, India and Japan will be the most significant markets for Wales' tourism and business priorities.

The two year agreement will see extensive activity in key markets to raise the awareness of routes into Cardiff Airport. This will include consumer marketing activity and travel trade engagement in the key markets of Australia, China, India and Japan.

The announcement comes as Visit Wales, Qatar Airways and Cardiff Airport are on a travel trade mission in Australia and New Zealand to raise awareness of the new routes and what Wales has to offer visitors from Australia. During the past week, the team have met with more than 300 travel trade representatives in Sydney, Adelaide, Melbourne, Perth and Auckland including appointments with influential travel trade representatives such as Flight Centre, Helloworld and Tempo Holidays.

The focus has been on promoting our world-class products, activities, events and experiences during Year of the Sea 2018 – as well as The Wales Way – the new family of three national scenic touring routes which cross the country's most epic landscapes as a way of showcasing Wales' fascinating history, coastlines and attractions – and give overseas visitors the confidence and information to explore more of Wales.

Tourism Minister, Lord Elis-Thomas, said:

"It's extremely good news that we've been able to work with Qatar Airways on this significant marketing partnership agreement. The new route provides an unprecedented opportunity to enhance global tourism and trade links and showcase Wales internationally. The majority of international visitors to Wales visit as part of a UK-wide tour. This new route into Cardiff provides an additional UK entry point from Asia-Pacific markets.

"Our joint marketing agreement with Qatar Airways means that this is the first time for Wales to have an active consumer campaign in these markets and more activity will follow at key booking times over the next year. This will increase Wales' visibility in these markets both with consumers and with the travel trade and we look forward to developing and maintaining relationships as we work to increase awareness of Wales and what we have to offer – and welcoming more international visitors to Wales."

Economy Secretary, Ken Secretary said:

“The launch of direct flights between Doha and Cardiff later this year offers huge opportunities for us to grow our economic links, not only with Qatar but also with a host of other significant markets including Australia, New Zealand, China, India and Japan.

“We know that Wales is a great place to live, visit and do business, but as we all work to negotiate the challenges and opportunities of Brexit , it is more important than ever that this message is being heard loud and clear across the globe. I welcome this Marketing Partnership Agreement which is one of many ways in which we are working to increase Wales’ visibility and grow our share of overseas markets.”

Qatar Airways Group Chief Executive, His Excellency Mr. Akbar Al Baker said;

“We are very excited to commence direct flights between Cardiff and Doha from 1st May this year, opening Wales to a global network of over 150 destinations. Cardiff offers not only a unique gateway directly into the heart of Wales but also expands our footprint in the UK offering visitors an even greater choice of destinations when planning their trip. We look forward to working with the Welsh Government to showcase all that Wales has to offer to our overseas passengers.”

Roger Lewis, Chairman of Cardiff Airport said,

“The opportunities that this new route offers Wales are going to be transformational for both business and passengers.

“Cardiff Airport is immensely proud to serve the people of Wales.”