

Travel



Happenings & Highlights

There's no denying that with higher gas prices and rising air costs, people are looking more than ever for the best travel deals! It also comes as no secret that the harder we work - the more we need to play!

Whether you're planning on visiting Florida from around-the-world, or around the corner, take advantage of some of the state's Hottest Travel Happenings!

TAMPA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

JetBlue Airways and Tampa International Airport have teamed up to provide the Tampa Bay community daily nonstop international service to Cancun, Mexico, beginning December 18 aboard an EMBRAER 190 aircraft.

SOUTHWEST FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

JetBlue will inaugurate daily nonstop service between Washington Dulles International Airport (IAD) and Southwest Florida International Airport on Dec. 18, 2008.

DELTA has ended service between Tallahassee and four Florida cities: Fort Lauderdale, Orlando, Miami and Tampa. The carrier dropped its regional service on the routes in October, according to the Tallahassee Democrat. "We've made a strategy change and opted to route passengers

through our hubs rather than offering point-to-point service," Delta spokeswoman Susan Elliott told The Miami Herald. She adds that rising fuel costs played a factor in Delta's decision.

Top Brazilian carrier **TAM** announced in September that it would begin nonstop service between Orlando and Sao Paulo, Brazil's largest city. The daily service would begin in November, though it must still be OK'd by Brazilian regulators. "Right now, with the challenges in aviation, this air service is just a monumental step," Vicki Jaramillo, Orlando International's marketing director, told the Orlando Sentinel. TAM marketing director Manoela Amaro Mugnaini said the company identified Orlando as a serious expansion candidate about six to eight months ago. "The carrier said it was drawn in by a warm reception from local officials -- and a lack of competition from rival airlines."

Okaloosa County Commissioners on Tuesday unanimously approved renaming the **OKALOOSA REGIONAL AIRPORT - NORTHWEST FLORIDA REGIONAL AIRPORT**. "Overall, with

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the rebranding of the airport I think we will open our doors to more traffic," said Greg Donovan, the county's airports director. "I think people nationally and even internationally, for that matter, will have a clearer understanding of what kind of services our airport provides." While the name change became official in September's vote, Donovan said it could be a year before all the signage, letterheads and other items with the airport's name and logo are updated. He expects the main signage to be updated by October.

The new name comes a little more than two weeks after **PENSACOLA REGIONAL AIRPORT** changed its name to Pensacola Gulf Coast Regional Airport in August. "We also want to embrace other counties," he added. "(The airport's focus area) doesn't stop at the county line. A lot of our customers come from Walton or Santa Rosa, Escambia or Bay counties." Northwest Florida Regional Airport's three-digit airport code will remain VPS with the name change.

ORLANDO SANFORD INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT (SFB) and Direct Air recently announced their new nonstop service beginning Saturday, November 22, 2008 to Worcester Regional Airport (ORH) in Worcester, Massachusetts. Service will operate three days per week on Thursday, Saturday and Sunday and will be staffed by Virgin America flight crews. "Direct Air has built a strong niche service in developing secondary airports," says Judy Tull, CEO of Direct Air. "We're confident that we can service from Orlando Sanford International Airport with our service featuring nonstop service, low fares and convenient departure times."

DIRECT AIR the discount airline will be restarting service from Charlotte County Airport in late November. The new air schedule includes flights from Charlotte County to Kalamazoo, Mich; Toledo, Ohio; and Allentown, Pa., in addition to Worcester, Mass.; Plattsburgh, N.Y.; and Niagara Falls, N.Y.

"I think it's fantastic," said Becky Bovell, director of the Charlotte County Visitor's Bureau. "The cities selected are some of our primary markets." Direct Air will fly each of its routes from Punta Gorda from a single flight to three times a week, depending on demand.

The low-cost airline, **ALLEGiant AIR, LLC**, announced new, nonstop jet service to St. Petersburg/Clearwater International Airport from Cedar Rapids beginning mid - November. The self-proclaimed "Official Airline for Sunshine" will launch the new scheduled service from Easter Iowa Airport

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with two flights weekly.

DID YOU KNOW? Port Canaveral's closest commercial airport is MELBOURNE INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, a modern, full service facility only 26 miles to the south. Delta Air Lines and Delta Connection offer nonstop jet service to Atlanta with daily connections to over 500 destinations in 94 countries.

The largest **CARNIVAL CRUISE LINES** ship ever constructed, the 3,646-passenger Carnival Dream, will usher in a new era of "Fun Ship" cruising when it debuts in September 2009, offering a host of innovations. Carnival Dream's many features will include The Piazza, a stunning indoor/outdoor cafe and live music venue; the most elaborate children's facilities at sea, including expansive play areas and a huge Carnival WaterWorks aqua park; "scenic whirlpools" that extend over the ship's beam; and a variety of new stateroom categories, including those specifically catering to families. Following its debut in Europe and a series of voyages from New York, Carnival Dream will launch year-round seven-day Caribbean service from Port Canaveral, Fla., Dec. 5, 2009.

PRINCESS CRUISES will add another 'gem' to its fleet in November 2008 with the debut of Ruby Princess. The ship will be a sister to the enthusiastically received Emerald Princess and Crown Princess, and will make its maiden sailing on November 15, 2008. The new vessel includes a dramatic piazza-style atrium featuring small-bite eateries and an ever-changing array of performing street entertainers. Passengers will also enjoy Princess' other signature dining venues, including Sabatini's, an Italian trattoria, and Crown Grill, a seafood and steak house, plus an adults-only retreat called The Sanctuary and the line's popular Movies Under the Stars poolside theater. Ruby Princess' inaugural season of seven-day Western Caribbean sailings from Fort Lauderdale will feature calls at Ocho Rios, Grand Cayman, Cozumel and the line's private beach call at Princess Cays in the Bahamas. The ship's first season will run through April 2009.

Flexibility ideally describes **DISCOVERY CRUISE LINES**. Sailing from Port Everglades in Fort Lauderdale to Grand Bahama Island, Discovery offers same day roundtrip cruises as well as cruise and stay vacation packages at a wide selection of hotels from budget to deluxe.

Once guests select their accommodation from the large online selection, and their nights of stay, they can begin planning their Bahamian getaway including snorkeling,

kayaking, fishing, diving, golf, eco-adventures, duty-free shopping, swimming with the Dolphins, and local straw market.

On board the Discovery Cruise, visitors can enjoy three buffet meals, cruise bingo, a video arcade, cruise shows, a disco and other live cruise entertainment. Gaming enthusiasts will want to try their luck at the Las Vegas-likes casino with a slew of slots, table games, poker, roulette, blackjack and more.

The cruise departs daily at 7:45 a.m. and returns each evening at 10 p.m. Call for ongoing specials and discounts, including cruise free on your birthday.

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