

MANCHESTER AIRPORT SECURES FLIGHTS TO ADDIS ABABA WITH ETHIOPIAN AIRLINES IMPROVING CONNECTIVITY FOR 400,000 PEOPLE

- Flights start 1st December and will operate 4 times per week
 - 787 aircraft in operation with 2 class configuration
 - 400,000 people set to benefit from the route
 - Multi SKYTRAX award winning airline
 - Fares from £499

Manchester Airport has secured a landmark route into the heart of Africa, underlining its pivotal role in connecting the North to the world's most important markets.

Ethiopian Airlines today confirmed it will operate a four-times-a-week service to Addis Ababa, the East African nation's capital.

The route will unlock connections to more than 58 countries across the African continent.

Ethiopian, which flies to more destinations in Africa than any other carrier, will operate the ultramodern B-787 on the route with business and economy classes.

It will serve as a key trade route for Northern businesses, opening up fresh export opportunities and delivering cost and journey time savings to those already operating there.

The service will start on December 1, initially transiting via Brussels. It will leave Manchester at 19:00, arriving at Addis Ababa Bole International Airport at 06:00, providing significant onward connectivity options from the African hub. On the return it departs Addis Ababa at 00:45 and arrives in Manchester at 06:55.

Manchester Airport CEO Andrew Cowan said:

"The introduction of this route underlines the critical role Manchester Airport plays in connecting the people and businesses of the North to the world's most important markets.

"While we have served a number of African holiday destinations for many years, this service will provide vital connectivity to one of the continent's most important hub airports.

"That will unlock dozens more destinations across Africa through Ethiopian Airlines' unrivalled network, meaning the North will be better connected to this part of the world than ever before."

Ethiopian Airlines CEO, Tewolde Gebremariam said:

“We are elated to start services to Manchester, our second destination in the UK next to London Heathrow which we have been serving since 1973. As the leading African carrier with the widest network in the continent, passengers from Manchester will enjoy convenient and seamless connectivity options to 58 African destinations operated with cutting-edge fleet like the B-787 and A350 which offer our passengers unparalleled comfort on-board our flights, along with our African flavoured Ethiopian hospitality.”

“The socio-economic implication of the new flight is immense. With vast investment and trade potentials between Africa and the UK, the upcoming flight holds the promise of boosting trade, investment and tourism with ample business opportunities for investors and business people from both regions.”

Alex Marshall, Group Marketing and Compliance Director, Clarke Energy (Liverpool) & Northern Powerhouse Export Champion, said:

“With our extensive operations across Africa, we are pleased to learn about this new flight to Addis Ababa from Manchester Airport, giving us extensive new route options across the continent.

“The route has the potential to be a massive benefit to our business through journey time savings and the excellent onward connectivity Ethiopian Airlines will provide.”

Sheona Southern, Managing Director of Marketing Manchester, said:

“The new route connecting Manchester with Addis Ababa is a great success for Greater Manchester and for the wider North of England. This opens up Greater Manchester to visitors, businesses investors and students from a new continent

“Greater Manchester’s growth strategy has internationalisation at its heart, and Manchester has set a clear target to become a top global city by 2035. If we’re to achieve this aim, it’s vital that we continue to increase our connections with major international hubs, increasing the opportunities for global networks to choose Manchester as a place to visit, meet, invest and study in.

“In this respect, this new route with Ethiopian Airlines is a huge step forward.”

Ethiopia is Africa’s second largest country by population, with its hub airport perfectly placed to provide onward connectivity, particularly to sub-Saharan countries.

The new route is set to benefit 400,000 people in Manchester Airport's extensive catchment area, who currently travel to Addis Ababa and other key cities across Africa via other means. The new service has therefore been heralded by Northern businesses and organisations, with the route saving travel time and unlocking vital economic, trade and investment opportunities.

Ethiopian Airlines was founded in 1945 and from its hub in Addis Ababa has connections to 58 cities across Africa, and a further 67 international routes across Europe, Asia and the Americas. The multi award-winning airline offers passengers an excellent on-board service including meals, beverage and inflight entertainment.

Business class passengers are served a variety of dishes including Ethiopian cuisine along with a selection of appetizers and beverages. A rich inflight entertainment which comprises of wide ranging audio and video contents as well as games is also available for passengers to enjoy while flying. In economy, passengers are treated to different meals and beverages along with inflight entertainment package.

The new route is testament to Manchester Airport's position as the second hub in the UK, the global gateway for the North. It has introduced a wealth of key long-haul routes in recent years including – Beijing, Houston, San Francisco, Singapore, Muscat, Boston and Los Angeles.

Ethiopian is a multi-award winning airline. On November 8, 2017, SKYTRAX, the most prestigious international air transport standards and quality rating organization, has certified Ethiopian as Four Star Airline. SKYTRAX has also awarded Ethiopian as SKYTRAX World Airline Award for Best Airline Staff in Africa, two times, and earlier in 2017 Ethiopian has received SKYTRAX World Airline Award for Best Airline in Africa. The Airline was recently awarded "The Best Business Class in Africa and Indian Ocean" title by TripAdvisor, one of the largest and most reputed global travel sites.

Return economy fares start from £499 with business class at £1,999.

For more information see: www.ethiopianairlines.com / www.manchesterairport.co.uk

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Notes to editors:

Manchester Airport:

- Manchester Airport is a global gateway and the largest airport outside London with over 220 destinations served by 70 airlines.
- Manchester's long-haul catchment area places around 22 million people and 60% of all UK businesses within a two-hour drive time – it extends north through the Lake District into Scotland; east across Yorkshire and the North East; south to Birmingham and the Midlands; and west into Merseyside and Wales.
- MAG serves more than 58 million passengers and handles almost half a million tonnes of air freight every year through its ownership and operation of the airports of London Stansted, Manchester and East Midlands.

Ethiopian Airlines:

- Ethiopian Airlines (Ethiopian) is the fastest growing Airline in Africa. In its seventy plus years of operation, Ethiopian has become one of the continent's leading carriers, unrivalled in efficiency and operational success.
- Ethiopian commands the lion's share of the pan-African passenger and cargo network operating the youngest and most modern fleet to more than 110 international passenger and cargo destinations across five continents. Ethiopian fleet includes ultra-modern and environmentally friendly aircraft such as Airbus A350, Boeing 787-8, Boeing 787-9, Boeing 777-300ER, Boeing 777-200LR, Boeing 777-200 Freighter, Bombardier Q-400 double cabin with an average fleet age of five years. In fact, Ethiopian is the first airline in Africa to own and operate these aircraft.
- Ethiopian is currently implementing a 15-year strategic plan called Vision 2025 that will see it become the leading aviation group in Africa with eight business centres: Ethiopian Regional Services; Ethiopian International Services; Ethiopian Cargo & Logistics Services; Ethiopian MRO Services; Ethiopian Aviation Academy; Ethiopian In-flight Catering; Ethiopian Ground Services and Ethiopian Airports Services. Ethiopian is a multi-award winning airline registering an average growth of 25% in the past seven years.