70th Anniversary of British Airways at Vienna Airport: Celebrating 70 years of connecting Vienna to London

Vienna Airport and British Airways are celebrating a special anniversary. For the last 70 years, the British airline has been linking Vienna and London, making it one of the longest-standing international airline partners at Vienna Airport. The flight connection between the two European capital cities has been of major importance for business travel, tourism and Austria's international accessibility for decades. At present, British Airways operates up to four daily flights from Vienna to London Heathrow, offering customers numerous onward connections to destinations across its global network. However, the joint history of Vienna Airport and British Airways goes back even further. In 1946, the very first civilian aircraft landed in Schwechat, the location of Vienna Airport, eight years before the Vienna Airport operating company "Wiener Flughafenbetriebsgesellschaft" commenced operations. This aircraft was operated by British European Airways (BEA), a forerunner company of what is now British Airways.

"For years, London has been one of the most popular short-haul destinations departing from Vienna Airport. British Airways makes a major contribution in this regard, featuring up to four daily flights to London Heathrow and offering further global connecting flights. The successful development of this tradition-steeped flight connection is also the result of our good, longstanding partnership. We would like to sincerely congratulate British Airways on this 70th anniversary and look forward to further developing our cooperation and the flight offering together," explains Julian Jäger, Joint CEO and COO of Vienna Airport.

"We're incredibly proud to celebrate 70 years of flying to Vienna, a milestone that reflects our long-standing commitment to connecting Austria with the UK and beyond. Vienna has been an important part of our network for seven decades, and we look forward to welcoming customers on board for many more years to come," says Neil Chernoff, British Airways' Chief Planning and Strategy Officer.

The Vienna-London route: a flight connection with international significance

The history of the Vienna-London route goes back a long way. In 1946, eight years before Vienna Airport officially began operations, a Douglas DC-3 aircraft operated by British European Airways (BEA) already landed at the airport site, marking the airline's first civilian flight to Vienna. At the time "Wiener Flughafenbetriebsgesellschaft" commenced operations at the Vienna flight hub in 1954, BEA, a predecessor of what later became British Airways, ranked among the very first international airlines at the new airport. On October 7, 1956, the airline finally launched regular scheduled air service between London and Vienna. Today British Airways offers direct flights between Vienna and its home base at London Heathrow. The route is currently served up to four times per day and is of crucial importance for both business travellers and tourism. British Airways also offers numerous connecting flights to destinations around the globe via its London Heathrow hub.

About British Airways' flight network

As the UK's national flag carrier, British Airways serves more than 200 destinations across more than 65 countries, including routes with its partner airlines. The airline proudly offers customers flights to more destinations from London than any other carrier. British Airways customers have access to one of the world's most extensive flight networks, both domestically and internationally, offering flights to and from central airports at convenient times. It operates out of three major London airports: London

Heathrow, London Gatwick and London City. The British Airways route network continues to be reviewed and updated, with recent additions in 2026 including Colombo, Sri Lanka and Melbourne, Australia.

Vienna Airport – A success story dating back more than 70 years

Vienna Airport can look back at a remarkable success story. The newly founded Vienna Airport operating company "Wiener Flughafenbetriebsgesellschaft" was launched on 1 January 1954. In its first year of operations, Vienna Airport employed about 100 people and handled 53,786 passengers. In the meantime, it has evolved into one of the most important aviation hubs in Central Europe. Today Vienna Airport handles 30 million passengers annually, connects the Austrian capital with the world and is one of the most important economic drivers in the region with a workforce of approx. 23,000 employees.

Captions:

Vienna Airport 1: (from left to right) Florian Samsinger, Joint Sky Services; Gary Jones, VP Northern and Eastern Europe, British Airways; Guengoer Helvaci, Regional Manager Austria & Eastern Europe, British Airways; British Airways crew and Nikolaus Gretzmacher, Senior Vice President Operations of Vienna Airport
Vienna Airport 2: British Airways has been connecting Vienna with London for 70 years.
Credit: Vienna Airport

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