



News Release

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VIRGIN AMERICA LANDS AT O'HARE INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

Airline launches new daily service from ORD to LAX and SFO

CHICAGO - Virgin America today launched new service from Chicago O'Hare International Airport (ORD), with daily nonstop flights to both Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) and San Francisco International Airport (SFO).

Chicago Department of Aviation (CDA) Commissioner Rosemarie S. Andolino joined Virgin Group Founder Sir Richard Branson, Virgin America President and Chief Executive Officer David Cush, Chicago-based Groupon CFO, Rob Solomon, business and civic leaders and celebrity guests to welcome the airline's dual inaugural flights to Chicago O'Hare with a reception at Terminal 3, L Concourse, Gate L3.

"Virgin America's products and services will be a great fit for the City of Chicago and O'Hare International Airport as we continue to provide world-class service to travelers," said Andolino. "Forward-looking investments at O'Hare have attracted innovative young carriers like Virgin America to Chicago – and new entrant carriers create local jobs and bring more competition and services to the Chicago market. Virgin America's focus on the environmental efficiency of its fleet and facilities is also a great fit with the CDA's industry-leading sustainability efforts. New service like Virgin's is part of Mayor Rahm Emanuel's overall vision for spurring economic growth and job development in the city and region."

Virgin America was recently ranked as one of the greenest commercial airlines by Greenopia. Virgin America's focus on sustainability, including the efficiency of its fleet, green building design, recycling programs and many other initiatives, is a great fit with Chicago's strong commitment to the environment.

"We hope our flights will be a breath of fresh air for Chicago travelers and thank the City and ORD for their efforts to open up access to new competition," said Cush. "On Virgin America across every class of service, everyone has a great seat, friendly service, their own seatback entertainment and status – right out of the gate."

Virgin America is a low-fare airline that has created 2,000 jobs and welcomed more than 11 million guests since its 2007 launch. Virgin America has received major travel awards including "Best Domestic Airline" in both Condé Nast Traveler's Readers' Choice Awards and Travel + Leisure's World's Best Awards for the past three years. Virgin America will offer two daily flights from ORD to LAX and three daily flights from ORD to SFO.

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VIRGIN AMERICA LANDS /page two

With the addition of Virgin America to O'Hare, the Chicago market is now served by every domestic carrier in the U.S. except for one (Hawaiian Airlines).

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The Chicago Department of Aviation (CDA) is self-supporting, using no local or state tax dollars for operations or capital improvements at O'Hare and Midway International airports. Together, Chicago's airports generate more than \$45 billion in annual economic activity and create 540,000 jobs for the region. Please visit www.flychicago.com to learn more about the Chicago Department of Aviation.

The CDA continues to incorporate and expand sustainable initiatives for airport planning, operations and maintenance, and concessions and tenants in accordance with the CDA Sustainable Airport Manual (SAM) Version 2.0, released in November 2010. To view case studies, lessons learned and new technologies, and for more information on the SAM, please visit www.airportsgoinggreen.org.

The O'Hare Modernization Program (OMP) transforms O'Hare's airfield from an outdated system of intersecting runways into a modern parallel runway configuration. The program will reduce overall delays at the Airport by 79 percent, and bad weather delays by 95 percent. It will create 195,000 new jobs and \$18 billion in additional economic activity each year. Please visit www.oharemodernization.org to learn more about the OMP.

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Editor's Note – A high resolution photo is below.



Photo caption - Chicago Department of Aviation (CDA) Commissioner Rosemarie S. Andolino (left) joined Virgin Group Founder Sir Richard Branson to welcome the airline's dual inaugural flights to Chicago O'Hare with a reception at Terminal 3, L Concourse, Gate L3. Virgin America launched new service from Chicago O'Hare International Airport (ORD) on May 25, 2011, with daily nonstop flights to both Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) and San Francisco International Airport (SFO).

Photo courtesy Chicago Department of Aviation/kp