



Press release

8 February 2019

## **Virgin Atlantic welcomes cargo potential of new Tel Aviv route**

Virgin Atlantic's new daily flights between London Heathrow and Tel Aviv will provide more import and export opportunities for customers in the UK, US and Israel seeking additional cargo capacity to support the country's buoyant economy.

The route, which commences on 25 September 2019, will offer a fast cargo service from Tel Aviv for goods such as high value precious stones, fresh produce, high-tech and electrical products, pharmaceutical and express shipments to prime markets in the UK and US, and offer more choice for companies exporting a wide range of cargoes to Israel. Virgin Atlantic's daily Airbus A330-300 flights will offer 20 tonnes of capacity on each service.

The airline's decision to extend its network to Israel will help meet growing demand for cargo capacity, with total volumes into Israel up by some 17% in 2018.

Shai Weiss, Virgin Atlantic CEO commented: "2019 marks the start of a new phase of growth for Virgin Atlantic as we work to achieve our ambition to become the most loved travel company. Tel Aviv represents a fantastic opportunity for us - Israel's economy is booming and as one of the world's leading tech hubs we're anticipating many business travellers and entrepreneurs flying between Tel Aviv and the UK. We also see a significant opportunity to increase competition in the US – Tel Aviv market, using the strength of our trans-Atlantic Joint Venture with Delta to offer customers from Tel Aviv a wide range of US destinations connecting through London Heathrow including New York and San Francisco. It also promises to be a strong route for cargo."

2018 saw particularly strong growth in shipments of pharmaceuticals, perishables and high-tech cargo to Tel Aviv, which rose 35%, 7% and 5% year-on-year respectively, according to market data.

"This is a really exciting new route for us and plays to our strengths in terms of quick connections to and from US and our proven expertise in carrying the major types of products moving in and out of Israel. We know customers will welcome not only the choice of more capacity but also the opportunity to benefit from our network reach and service levels. We expect cargo to make a significant contribution to the success of the route," added Dominic Kennedy, Managing Director of Virgin Atlantic Cargo.

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For further press information please contact the Jamie Roach on [jamie@jamierochepr.co.cuk](mailto:jamie@jamierochepr.co.cuk) or call 01344 631880/1/3.

**Key facts:**

**Service operates:** London Heathrow (LHR) – Tel Aviv Ben Gurion (TLV)

**Frequency:** Daily, year-round, starting 25 September 2019

**Flight time:** Four hours and 55 minutes

**Aircraft:** Airbus A330-300

**Initial launch flight times:** VS453 – departs LHR 13:30, arrives TLV 20:35

VS454 – departs TLV 07:15, arrives LHR 11:10

**From 27<sup>th</sup> October 2019** VS453 – departs LHR 16:00, arrives TLV 23:05

VS454 – departs TLV 06:05, arrives LHR 09:55

**Notes to editors:**

**About Virgin Atlantic**

Virgin Atlantic was founded by entrepreneur Sir Richard Branson 34 years ago with innovation and customer service at its core. Today Virgin Atlantic carries 5.5 million customers annually, and was recently named the UK's favourite long haul carrier by Skytrax, Best Transatlantic Airline at the British Travel Awards 2017 and one of the Top 5 Airlines in the World by Airline Ratings. Headquartered in London, Virgin Atlantic employs over 10,000 people worldwide and operates a fleet of 45 aircraft serving 24 destinations across four continents. Alongside joint venture partner Delta Air Lines they operate a leading transatlantic network - offering up to 38 flights per day between the UK and US with onward connections to over 200 US and international cities. In 2019 Virgin Atlantic will take delivery of their first Airbus A350-1000 aircraft - helping to transform the fleet into one of the quietest and most fuel efficient in the sky.

On May 15, 2018 Air France-KLM, Delta Air Lines and Virgin Atlantic Limited signed definitive agreements to combine the existing trans-Atlantic joint ventures. This transaction is in the process of regulatory clearance. Upon completion the airlines' expanded joint venture will become the preferred choice for customers travelling across the Atlantic offering the most comprehensive route network, convenient flight schedules, competitive fares and reciprocal frequent flyer benefits, including the ability to earn and redeem miles across all carriers. Customers will also benefit from the co-location of facilities at key hub airports to improve connectivity and access to each carrier's airport lounges for premium passengers.

For more information visit: [www.virginatlanticcargo.com](http://www.virginatlanticcargo.com)