

CORPORATE TRAVEL UPDATES JUNE 2025



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Air India expands global network with four new interline partnerships

Air India has entered new interline partnerships with airBaltic, Bulgaria Air, Cyprus Airways, and Uzbekistan Airways, expanding its network to 16 destinations across Europe and Central Asia. The move enhances Air India's international footprint, improves access to India for foreign travellers, and reinforces the airline's transformation into a global aviation connector.



Air India Express launches direct flights between Bengaluru and Kathmandu

Air India Express commences direct flights between Bengaluru and Kathmandu on 1 June 2025, marking its entry into Nepal. Kathmandu becomes the airline's 55th destination, enhancing connectivity across South Asia. The move also enables one-stop connections to Nepal's capital from 20 Indian cities and two international hubs, strengthening regional travel and cultural ties.



IndiGo launches direct flights between Mumbai and Fujairah, expanding UAE network

IndiGo has launched daily direct flights connecting Mumbai and Fujairah, its fifth destination in the UAE, enhancing connectivity between India and the Middle East. The move supports tourism and trade, linking Mumbai to Fujairah's beaches, mountains, and cultural sites. The launch aligns with IndiGo's strategy to strengthen its international network, offering 280 weekly flights to the United Arab Emirates (UAE).



IndiGo to launch direct flights to 10 new international cities, including London and Athens



IndiGo is set to launch direct flights to 10 new international destinations this financial year, including London and Athens, expanding its global network from 40 to 50 destinations. The airline plans to launch over 100 new routes in FY25, connecting 40 international destinations and 20 Indian cities. Starting July 1 and 2, it will expand its global reach with new flights to Manchester and Amsterdam, aiming to cover 90% of India's population.

Akasa Air to spread its wings to Southeast Asia

Akasa Air, which has a 5% market share in India's domestic air traffic, is planning to ramp up expansion in this financial year after a year of slow growth. This will include the launch of flights to Southeast Asia, a top destination for outbound Indian travellers.



Air Canada enhances premium economy offerings for India-Canada routes

Air Canada has enhanced its Premium Economy Class offerings on flights between India and Canada, offering passengers enhanced comfort with larger seats, extra legroom, and a range of priority services. The new class aims to provide an upgraded travel experience for customers seeking more space and convenience without the cost of Business class.



Ethiopian Airlines to launch direct passenger service to Hyderabad

Ethiopian Airlines, Africa's largest airline, is set to begin a new thrice-weekly passenger service to Hyderabad, India, starting June 16, 2025. This new route aims to enhance connectivity between Africa and Asia, providing passengers with more travel options and strengthening trade and tourism links between the two regions.



TAP and Etihad agree to frequent flyer partnership



TAP Air Portugal and Etihad Airways have agreed on a frequent flyer partnership enabling members of the TAP Miles&Go and Etihad Guest loyalty programmes to earn and redeem their respective currency on either carrier. The partnership follows the codeshare deal struck between the two airlines in 2023 not long after Etihad introduced non-stop flights between Lisbon and its Abu Dhabi hub.

United redefines premium travel with new 787 Dreamliner interiors

United Airlines has introduced the United Elevated interior for its Boeing 787-9 fleet, featuring United Polaris Studio suites, enhanced premium seating, Ossetra caviar service, and the largest seatback screens in the U.S. The first upgraded aircraft will be delivered by the end of 2025, with flights launching in 2026. United plans to add 30 such aircraft by 2027, offering a reimagined premium experience.



Lufthansa opens revamped lounge at Munich Airport

Lufthansa has reopened its First Class Lounge at Munich Airport Terminal 2 following renovation works. The revamped space features a newly designed gastronomic area with an à la carte restaurant, bar and live cooking stations. Spanning close to 1,000 sqm, the lounge also includes “quiet retreats”, an entertainment area and a dedicated work zone equipped with printers and photocopiers.

The lounge is open daily from 5:00 am to 10:00 pm. Meanwhile, the carrier's new Allegris First Class product will be available on flights from Munich to Chicago, San Francisco, San Diego, Shanghai and Bengaluru throughout the summer season.



San Francisco airport anticipates strong summer travel with 16.2 mn passengers

The San Francisco International Airport (SFO) is preparing for a busy summer travel season, projecting 16.2 million passengers between Memorial Day and Labour Day. This marks a 4% increase over 2024 and reaches 93% of pre-pandemic levels. New restaurants, parking recommendations, a \$2.6 billion Terminal 3 West Modernization project, and live events are part of the preparations.



Introducing Zip Ahead – Air India launch of Paid priority services



ZipAhead, available for our economy class passengers, allows them to enjoy priority check-in and baggage handling to make their journey more comfortable. This service helps passengers save check-in and baggage collection time upon arrival, at nominal additional charges. This service will be available at the following domestic airports, Delhi, Mumbai, Hyderabad, Chennai, Bengaluru and Kolkata, for domestic travel only.

New guidelines to process Singapore visa – Mumbai & Delhi Jurisdiction

Personal verification is now mandatory for all Singapore visa applications. Applicants will be contacted via Video Call, Zoom Call, or Phone Call for this verification process by us as an Authorized Visa Agent for Singapore. Please inform your applicants about this new requirement and ensure that the contact number and email ID provided are accurate and belong to the applicant.



Visit Georgia simplifies travel for Indian passport holders

The Georgian National Tourism Administration (GNTA) has reinforced its commitment to welcoming Indian travellers by simplifying travel guidelines. Indian passport holders can visit Georgia visa-free with a valid US, UK, Schengen, or Japan visa. For others, a straightforward visa process is available, with clear instructions on required documents. GNTA urges Indian visitors to use official platforms for applications and ensure all documents are for a smooth experience.



New high-tech e-passports to boost security, and identification rolled out in key Indian cities

India has initiated the first phase of its next-generation e-passport program across 13 cities, integrating advanced RFID technology to bolster data security and prevent forgery. These e-passports, identifiable by a gold symbol, contain embedded chips for secure biometric and personal data storage. While enhancing security, the Ministry of External Affairs clarifies that existing passports remain valid until their expiration.



The REAL ID deadline is finally here – United States of America



Beginning May 7, 2025, US travellers aged 18 and older will need a REAL ID-compliant driver's license or another approved form of identification to board domestic flights. This requirement applies to all US passengers and is intended to strengthen national security. For domestic travel within the U.S., international students and tourists can continue to use their foreign passports as valid identification.



PHONE

022 - 67772300



EMAIL

rbt.newsletter@riya.travel



WEBSITE

www.riyabusinesstravel.com

