

British Airways announces direct flights between Santiago and London starting from 2017

- **The British carrier will begin flying to the country on the 3rd of January next year with a frequency of 4 flights a week. Following a joint effort, the airport's concession and the Tourism Undersecretary have defined a connectivity strategy to strengthen existing airlines and boosting the arrival of new carriers.**

Santiago, May 2016 – The number of seats on direct flights to Europe will increase by 19% following the arrival of the British carrier in the first month of 2017, with the launch of the route Santiago – London four times a week. London is now the fourth European gateway after Madrid, Paris and the recently opened route Santiago – Rome by Alitalia.

Alex Cruz, British Airways Chairman and CEO, says that “The Chilean economy has been steadily growing, with increasing trade links to Europe so this new direct route will respond to the need for travel between the two Capital cities to do business face-to-face. Chile is also of enormous appeal to leisure travellers, especially those looking for adventure, exploration and experiences, thanks to its outstanding and diverse natural beauty and attractions and its great food and wine.” The arrival of the British behemoth has been in the making since February this year when Nuevo Pudahuel's Commercial department, led by Stéphane Taysse, attended the Routes America conference in Puerto Rico and introduced Chile's market potential to British Airways executives.

This route will be operated by the state of the art Boeing 787-9, with 216 seats at full capacity, linking Santiago with Heathrow; the British hub welcomed nearly 75 million passengers in 2015. Heathrow is the main entryway for passengers travelling to Asia, the Middle East, Africa and Europe, important connections for travellers coming from Chile.

Nicolas Claude, Nuevo Pudahuel CEO, affirms that “the arrival of British Airways with a direct route to one of the main hubs in the European Union fills us with pride because now we can increase our capacity by almost 20%. A bigger offer in terms of direct connections for our passengers means both more comfort and a bigger incentive to travel.” Javiera Montes, Tourism Undersecretary, says that “in 2015 46.520 British tourists arrived in Chile, this represents a growth of 3.6% on last year. British Airways' announcement embodies our optimism about a future increase on British travellers during 2017.” With the arrival of British Airways, Nuevo Pudahuel defines one of the concession's main goals: to develop Santiago's connectivity with new services that meet and surpass both the market and passengers' expectations, contributing towards the country's touristic appeal.

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Nuevo Pudahuel, concession formed by Groupe ADP, VINCI Airports and Astaldi Concessioni, operates the International airport Arturo Merino Benítez; in 2015 the airport transported over 17 million passengers, this represents an increase of 7,2% with regards to 2014. Nuevo Pudahuel is building the new international terminal, with a surface area of 175 thousand square metres and an investment of 900 million dollars; this will increase capacity to a total of 30 million passengers annually.