

# Cathay Pacific carries one million+ passengers in January, signalling healthy return at HKG



Cathay Pacific flew about 2,500 flights in January 2023

[Cathay Pacific](#) published its traffic figures for January 2023 today, showing positive signs as the airline continues to rebuild and restore connectivity at the [Hong Kong international aviation hub](#).

The figures revealed record-high increases with over one million passengers flown in January, a 4,000% increase as compared to the same month last year.

In a February 15 press release, Chief Customer and Commercial Officer Lavinia Lau said, “The new year got off to a positive start in January as Cathay Pacific carried more than one million passengers for the first time since the start of the pandemic. We carried on average more than 33,000 passengers per day, up from about 26,000 per day in December 2022, and operated at 18% more capacity than we did in December. We also continued to add more destinations in January, with our Phuket and Xi’an flights resuming.”

The South Asia, Middle East and Africa regions saw an increase of about 85,000% measured by revenue passenger kilometres.

The month’s revenue passenger kilometres (RPKs) increased over 3.8% year-on-year. Passenger load factor increased by about 46 percentage points to around 87%, while capacity, measured in available seat kilometres (ASKs), increased by over 1,700% year-on-year.

Lau said in the release, “With the return of quarantine-free travel between Hong Kong and the Chinese Mainland on 8 January, we saw increased demand for travel into the Chinese Mainland, both

from and through Hong Kong. We have been increasing our flights accordingly and by the end of the month, we were operating up to three return flights per day to Shanghai and 11 return flights per week to Beijing.

“Leisure travel demand over the Lunar New Year holiday was also strong, particularly from Hong Kong, with Japan, Bangkok and Singapore being the most popular destinations. Unfortunately, despite demand being high for Japan, we had to cancel some of our flights due to restrictions imposed by the Japanese authorities on the number of flights airlines are permitted to operate from Hong Kong.”

Lau continued, “Looking at February and beyond, we are working hard to increase our passenger flight capacity as much as possible over the coming months, especially in the lead-up to the Easter holiday. Demand for flights to and from the Chinese Mainland, both for point-to-point and connecting traffic via Hong Kong, is expected to grow and we are endeavoring to provide more options for our customers as quickly as feasible. We are on track to operate more than 100 return flights per week to 14 cities in the Chinese Mainland by the end of this month.

“Regarding cargo, demand will take some time to recover following the Lunar New Year holidays. We expect regional lanes to resume earlier than long-haul lanes, as is typical for this period.”