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AirAsia X to land in Auckland in March

Auckland Airport welcomes the announcement that AirAsia X will start a daily service between Kuala Lumpur and Auckland, by extending its existing Gold Coast service. The year-round service will commence in March 2016, using an A330-300 aircraft.

AirAsia X is a low cost airline based in Malaysia, with a network that covers South East Asia, North Asia, India, Australia and now New Zealand. Its key hubs are located in Kuala Lumpur, Singapore, Jakarta, Bali, Bangkok, Delhi, Bengaluru, Manila and Tokyo.

Norris Carter, Auckland Airport's general manager – aeronautical commercial, says, "AirAsia X previously flew into Christchurch in 2012 and we are delighted to welcome them back to New Zealand."

"Malaysia, India and Indonesia are AirAsia X's key markets. Over the last three years the numbers of annual international arrivals from these three tourism markets have increased by 10%, 21% and 11% respectively. We expect this new AirAsia X service between Kuala Lumpur and Auckland will further grow visitor numbers, especially for free independent travellers."

"The new service will also mean more affordable travel to Asia for Kiwis, and increased capacity to the Gold Coast."

"This new AirAsia X service is expected to add 275,000 seats between Kuala Lumpur and Auckland every year, boosting the New Zealand economy by an estimated \$176 million," says Mr Carter.

Benyamin Ismail, AirAsia X's chief executive officer, says, "New Zealand is a world class destination that has always had a special place in our heart. We are excited to be

back in this beautiful country to launch this service, allowing seamless connection for our guests from all over Asia to Auckland. Similarly, New Zealanders will now have more flight options to Gold Coast as well as access to all the exciting destinations across our extensive flight network in Asia through the Kuala Lumpur hub. We are confident that our highly competitive fares will attract many new guests from the region, creating higher travel demand and in turn boosting tourism traffic for all sectors. We would also like to thank Auckland Airport and other business partners for their support in making this route launch possible.”

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