

on the town

with Adrienne Lem
12JUN12

Email Print

Connecting With Finnair

When a Canadian travels to Asia, a stopover in Helsinki, Finland may not be the 1st destination that comes to mind. However, Finnair is trying to change this perception by positioning itself as the most desirable connection option between Europe and Asia. This was the focus of Finnair's 2012 International Press Briefing, which took place last week at Helsinki's Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma. Although I didn't travel all the way to Asia, I did get to experience AY's service from YYZ to HEL.

The airline recently celebrated its inaugural flight to Chongqing, one of China's largest and fastest growing cities and AY's 11th destination in Asia. "Helsinki is the best transfer point geographically between Northern Europe and Northern Asia, with the greatest distance advantage," said Gregory Kaldahl, Finnair's Senior V.P. Resource Management. "We want to double our Asian traffic." During the summer season, AY will operate 77 weekly flights between HEL and its 11 Asian destinations.

According to IATA's Financial Forecast for 2012, the global outlook for the airline industry is cloudy and many companies are experiencing financial distress. By adapting to the ever-changing state of the business, Kaldahl says Finnair has remained successful and is striving to be the number one Nordic air carrier.

One of the ways in which Finnair has adapted to market changes is by acknowledging the growing importance of sustainability in aviation. "The best thing an airline can do for the environment is renew its fleet," said Kati Ihämäki, V.P. Sustainable Development. "Finnair's long haul fleet's average age is 3 years." In June 2011, the airline operated its first bio-fuel flight and has planned to reduce emissions by 24% per seat between the years of 2009 and 2017.

Finnair's YYZ-HEL summer service commenced in May running through 09SEP. The 1st piece of checked luggage was free; pax were handed a bottle of water upon boarding; pillows, blankets and headsets were supplied to everyone; wine and beer was complimentary with dinner and the flight crew onboard was attentive and friendly.

Business class seats are not offered on the aircraft that flies the YYZ route, but I strongly recommend paying the €45 it costs to spend 3 hr. in the Finnair Lounge. On top of the complimentary food, snacks, and beverages like wine and beer, passengers with lounge access can take advantage of the free wi-fi, a fantastic view of the tarmac and pristine showers - towels, shampoo and soap included! A shower after a long haul flight... Bliss...

These days, when everything in air travel comes at a price and service is not always at its finest, Finnair is exceeding passenger expectations and making long haul travel a pleasure.



Arriving in HEL



The Finnair team, Inka Ikonen; Joseph Knowles; Päivyt Tallqvist; Gregory Kaldahl; Kati Ihämäki; Arja Suominen; Paula Pesonen & Päivi Mäkelä



Mika Vehviläinen, Finnair's CEO



The Finnair Lounge in HEL

0 tweets

3

Like

[Previous On The Towns](#)

...join the discussion!

Name:

E-mail: (will not be published)

Comment:

5 2 4

Please Enter Numbers Only

Submit