

## **Media Release | 19 May 2014**

# **Auckland Airport targeting to become top Chinese holiday market in Australasia**

**Auckland Airport has outlined an ambitious goal to become the number one gateway and destination in Australasia for Chinese holiday visitor arrivals.**

Charles Spillane, Auckland Airport's acting general manager aeronautical commercial, says Auckland currently is second in Australasia only to Sydney for Chinese holiday visitor arrivals. Auckland Airport has identified a number of actions to be number one.

"In 2013 Auckland welcomed 156,064 Chinese holiday arrivals. Only Sydney, which processed 169,298 Chinese holiday visitors over the same period, received more in Australasia." says Mr Spillane.

"When we look at total Chinese arrivals in New Zealand, we can see that 71 per cent of these are holiday visitors, compared to 49 per cent in Australia. We believe that this, coupled with the fact that over 90 per cent of Chinese visitors into New Zealand arrive through our airport, places Auckland in a strong position to surpass Sydney and become the number one gateway and destination in Australasia for Chinese holiday-makers."

“Our role as the hub airport for New Zealand also places us in a unique position to help the country to capitalise on the huge growth prospect that the Chinese holiday market represents,” says Mr Spillane.

“Over the last year, Auckland Airport has already implemented a number of programmes to attract more Chinese visitors to New Zealand. One of the key initiatives saw the beginning of a digital marketing strategy to increase the number of Chinese purchasing New Zealand holiday experiences. This included a partnership with China’s leading social media website Sina Weibo, and the creation of a number of digital platforms to showcase New Zealand as a premium holiday offering (such as luxury travel website [xindaohualv.com](http://xindaohualv.com) and independent travel focused website [Xinxilanlvcheng.com](http://Xinxilanlvcheng.com), both of which are fully translated).”

“We have focused on creating strong relationships with Chinese tourism wholesalers, such as Guangdong travel company, GZL International and have had an emphasis on building relationships with key New Zealand tourism suppliers. This has seen over 250 kiwi operators promoted through our digital platforms in China.”

“As well as this, we are driving a number of programmes at the airport to ensure that our Chinese visitors have the best first impression of New Zealand possible. These included training workshops to help staff at Auckland Airport deliver better experiences for Chinese visitors, as well as increased Chinese signage and the introduction of Mandarin speaking volunteers at the airport.”

“All of this has helped to provide an additional 76,000 seats directly into the fast growing Chinese market in 2014 when compared to 2013. The largest source of this growth is from China Southern Airlines with an increased capacity of 40 per cent. China Southern Airlines has ten flights per week to Guangzhou and has now announced double daily flights during the next peak season. Air New Zealand flies daily to Shanghai and Air New Zealand and Cathay Pacific codeshare double daily to Hong Kong year round and up to triple daily over the peak season.”

“We now want to continue to build on this impetus and reach toward our Ambition 2025 aspiration of 893,000 Chinese visitors to New Zealand by 2025 and also to accomplish our goal of seeing Auckland become the number one gateway and destination in Australasia for Chinese holiday arrivals.”

“In order to achieve this we have developed a number of actions that will help to further raise the profile of and increase the attractiveness of New Zealand as a high-value destination for Chinese travellers.”

“These actions include increased promotion of premium holiday activities throughout Auckland and New Zealand, harnessing the attractiveness of all of New Zealand as a destination. These promotions will specifically target high-value and independent Chinese travellers who are increasingly interested in luxury travel and provide the highest value opportunity for the New Zealand tourism industry and economy. We would love the whole industry to get in behind these initiatives to help fill the planes with Chinese holiday-makers.”

“We will also be working closely with Tourism New Zealand and other key industry partners to develop niche products tailored to attract the Chinese holiday market, with a focus on initiatives that will help deliver on the Tourism Industry Association’s Tourism 2025 ambition to improve seasonal passenger flows.”

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