

Press Release**Air Samarkand operates the first flight between Samarkand-Tel Aviv**

- *Announces route expansion with second daily service from July to meet demand*

Samarkand, Uzbekistan - 05.05.2025: Fast developing Uzbek carrier Air Samarkand has operated its latest international scheduled service, to the Israeli capital of Tel Aviv, and already announced a doubling of weekly capacity from July, to meet surging customer demand.

The new weekly service operated for a first time yesterday (Sunday) with a modern Air Samarkand Airbus A330 aircraft and will continue every Sunday. The first flight departed from Samarkand in Uzbekistan on schedule at 06:00 am and arrived in Tel Aviv five and a half hours later, at 09:25 am local time. The return service departed from Tel Aviv at 11:20 am, arriving back in the historic city of Samarkand at 18:40 pm local time.

Passengers on these inaugural services were treated to a traditional welcome at both airports and were also presented with special gifts and treats.

Given high levels of passenger demand, Air Samarkand used the inaugural service to announce a doubling of route capacity starting from July, with a second return to be operated on every Thursday. Services will be operated by Airbus 330 (with 313 seats) or Airbus A321 (194 seats) aircraft according to load factors.

"The opening of regular flights to Tel Aviv represents an important step in the development of ties between Uzbekistan and Israel," said Zafar Butayev, CEO of Air Samarkand. "We are seeing steady interest in this route from tourist, pilgrim and business travellers, and are delighted to confirm a second service starting from July. This will meet growing demand for a convenient and competitive direct service that links our two culturally rich cities and represents another important step forward in the expansion of the Air Samarkand route network," he said.

These latest developments coincide with recent initiatives to strengthen the cooperation between Uzbekistan and Israel across trade, migration, and other social and economic spheres.

Located on the Mediterranean Sea coast, Tel Aviv is known for its picturesque beaches, modern architecture and rich cultural life. Tel Aviv serves as a gateway to Israel's holy sites, including Jerusalem, Bethlehem, and Nazareth, making it an attractive destination for believers of various faiths. In addition, the city offers a variety of opportunities for shopping, gastronomic discoveries and participation in cultural events.

For travellers from Israel, the new flight provides convenient access to Samarkand, the historical centre of the Great Silk Road and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The growing economy of Uzbekistan is also of significant interest to Israeli investors and businesses, with the launch of services delivering a huge boost to direct business travel.

Tel Aviv is the latest part of Air Samarkand's strategy to expand its international route network. In 2025, the airline plans to increase the frequency of services to key destinations and add new international city destinations. It continues to develop its fleet by investing in modern aircraft and improving customer service to strengthen its position in the Central Asian market.

In 2024 Air Samarkand began its first scheduled services in March to the Turkish capital of Istanbul, and subsequently opened destinations to Abu Dhabi and Al Ain in the UAE, the religious Saudi cities of Jeddah and Medina, the tourism hot-spots of Nha Trang and Phú Quốc in Vietnam, and Sharm el-Sheikh in Egypt from both Samarkand and Tashkent.

In addition, Air Samarkand provides a domestic shuttle service linking Samarkand to Tashkent, to support domestic workers and leisure travelers wanting to fly between the two cities.

Air Samarkand has also operated charter flights to the cities of Batumi, Delhi, Dhaka, Dubai, Islamabad, Tbilisi and other cities. The most popular destination was Jeddah, with Air Samarkand operating flights from five cities in Uzbekistan (departing from Samarkand, Bukhara, Fergana, Namangan and Termez), while services to Egypt, Vietnam and Turkey have also been in high demand.

Samarkand is a cultural gem of Central Asia and an important transit hub on the historic Silk Road, which is now taking on a new meaning and understanding as visitor numbers soar. The city of Samarkand is actively modernizing, offering international tourists a unique combination of historical sights and modern infrastructure, with Air Samarkand committed to supporting the development of tourism in city and the wider region.

Tickets and package tours with Air Samarkand can be purchased through EasyBooking's network of agencies, on the website <http://www.easybooking.uz> and via <https://airsamarkand.com/> while Asia Travel Israel (www.asiatravel.co.il), one of the leading tour operators in Israel and in operation since 1999, is acting as its official representative in the country.

Official representative of AIR SAMARKAND airline in Israel:

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Notes to Editors**About Air Samarkand**

Based at Samarkand International Airport, Air Samarkand was founded to support a major tourism and commercial drive for the historic city of Samarkand. The airline's primary goal is to provide residents of Samarkand and neighboring regions with the opportunity to travel directly to in-demand destinations, while also enabling overseas visitors to explore Samarkand without the need for intermediate stops elsewhere.

The airline's fleet of modern, safe, reliable and fuel-efficient aircraft includes the Airbus A330, A321, and A321neo models.

Samarkand International Airport is itself part of a large-scale investment that combines the city's ancient heritage with modern infrastructure and facilities. Alongside the new airport facilities, a significant investment has gone into a multi-faceted Silk Road Samarkand tourist complex in the city – the first international tourism resort in Central Asia embracing four and five-star hotels.

Located in eastern Uzbekistan, Samarkand is one of the oldest cities in Asia, with its origins said to date back to the seventh or eighth millennium BC. Situated on the famed Silk Road, Samarkand is in the heart of the country's ancient and medieval tourist attractions, along with Bukhara, Khiva, Shakhrisabz, and the Zaamin National Park. Many of these areas have historic monuments or areas of outstanding significance and value, which have protected status on the UNESCO World Heritage List.

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