

Houston, You Have An Option! Southwest Airlines Begins Daily International Service To Six Destinations From Houston (Hobby)

Newly internationalized terminal complex at William P. Hobby Airport adds new concourse with five gates and new Customs and Border Protection facility begins receiving travelers

Carrier inaugurates nonstop service from Houston to airports in Mexico, Costa Rica, and Belize City, Belize, Southwest's newest and 96th city served

October 15, 2015

DALLAS, Oct. 15, 2015 /PRNewswire/ -- Employees of [Southwest Airlines](#) (NYSE: LUV) launched a new international chapter today in a 45-year history of serving Houston by joining with Houston Airport System and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, to open a new five-gate concourse, Federal Inspection Station for Customs and Border Protection, new concessions for travelers, and begin daily international service for travelers using Houston's William P. Hobby Airport. Southwest's new nonstop daily service to a total eight international destinations by November charts a new horizon for Houstonians who value world-renowned Customer Service and low fares offered through [Southwest.com](#).

At a morning news conference that began just as Southwest Flight 305 to Cancun departed from one of five gates in the airport's new west concourse, Southwest's local Employees and Company Leadership joined many Houstonians who played a role in bringing international service back to William P. Hobby Airport.

"Our roots run deepest in Houston, one of our original Southwest cities, where our friendly People offer reliable service at low fares and help make Southwest the airline that now flies more travelers in the U.S. every day than any other carrier¹," said [Gary Kelly](#), Chairman, President and CEO. "It's a fitting place to firmly plant our investment to connect Houstonians and millions of Southwest Customers who will pass through this facility to what's important in their lives across a growing list of international service options."

"Houston's already strong connection to the Americas — both culturally and economically — just got even stronger," said [Mayor Annise D. Parker](#). "Houston has a well-earned reputation as a great place to do business, but it also features world-class amenities and an amazing quality of life. This partnership with Southwest will help provide limitless opportunities for businesses, residents, and tourists from the Americas to experience all of that."

In 2012, the Houston City Council overwhelmingly approved Southwest Airlines' proposal to expand service across borders from William P. Hobby Airport by building the new international concourse and Federal Inspection Station, thus "freeing Hobby" from domestic-only capability and a historically monopolized market long-burdened by high international airfares. Southwest broke ground on the new facility on Sept. 30, 2013, and two years later has completed the \$156 million project both on time and under budget. Southwest worked diligently throughout the construction to give opportunity to Small Business Enterprise and Minority and Women-owned Business Enterprise (SBE / MWBE), and has exceeded City of Houston SBE / MWBE requirements.

"CBP is proud to have worked with Southwest Airlines and the City of Houston to bring international air service to Houston Hobby Airport after a 46-year hiatus," said [Commissioner R. Gil Kerlikowske](#). "CBP is strongly committed to promoting travel and tourism to the United States by improving the international arrivals experience and the opening of this new international terminal, along with our [Trusted Traveler Programs](#) and [Automated Passport Control](#) are important steps to enhancing travelers' arrival experience."

International-themed festivities at the airport throughout the day included a chance for travelers in the terminal to win prizes provided by [Southwest Vacations](#). Ceremony surrounded departures to the new destinations, including **Belize City, Belize**, Southwest's 96th and newest city served.

Through William P. Hobby Airport, Southwest Airlines today began operating twice daily nonstop service to and from **Cancun** as well as once daily nonstop options between Houston and **Mexico City, Puerto Vallarta**, and **San Jose del Cabo/Los Cabos**, a total of four cities in Mexico. Nonstop service linking Costa Rica to Houston also began today with a daily flight to and from the nation's capital, **San Jose**, with additional new service to **Liberia** in Costa Rica's Guanacaste province, Southwest's 97th city served, scheduled to begin daily operation Nov. 1, 2015, subject to foreign government approval. That same day, Southwest is scheduled to begin daily nonstop service between **Montego Bay, Jamaica**, and Houston Hobby.

In addition, seasonal service on Saturdays connects Houston nonstop with **San Juan, Puerto Rico**, and **Oranjestad, Aruba**, making a total of ten nonstop routes across Latin America and the Caribbean available to Southwest Customers using Hobby Airport. All the new flights are available for purchase at [Southwest.com](#).

¹ As measured by the Department of Transportation O&D Survey for the twelve months ended March 31, 2015 based on originating passengers boarded.

ABOUT SOUTHWEST AIRLINES CO.

In its 45th year of service, Dallas-based Southwest Airlines (NYSE: LUV) continues to differentiate itself from other air carriers with exemplary Customer Service delivered by more than 47,000 Employees to more than 100 million Customers annually. Southwest operates more than 3,600 flights a day, serving 96 destinations across the United States and seven additional countries. Subject to foreign government approval, service to Liberia, Costa Rica, is scheduled to begin Nov. 1, 2015.

Based on the U.S. Department of Transportation's most recent data, Southwest Airlines is the nation's largest carrier in terms of originating domestic passengers boarded. The Company operates the largest fleet of Boeing aircraft in the world, the majority of which are equipped with satellite-based WiFi providing gate-to-gate connectivity while over the United States. That connectivity enables Customers to use their personal devices to access streaming music provided by Apple Music or to view video on-demand movies and television shows, as well as nearly 20 channels of free, live TV compliments of our valued Partners. Southwest created [Transfarency™](#), a philosophy which treats Customers honestly and fairly, and in which low fares actually stay low. Southwest is the only major U.S. airline to offer bags fly free® to everyone (first and second checked pieces of luggage, size and weight limits apply, some airlines may allow free checked bags on select routes or for qualified circumstances), and there are no change fees, though fare differences might apply. In 2014, the airline proudly unveiled a bold new look: *Heart*. The new aircraft livery, airport experience, and logo, showcase the dedication of Southwest Employees to connect Customers with what's important in their lives.

From its first flights on June 18, 1971, Southwest Airlines launched an era of unprecedented affordability in air travel described by the U.S. Department of Transportation as "The Southwest Effect," a lowering of fares and increase in passenger traffic whenever the carrier enters new markets. With 42 consecutive years of profitability, Southwest is one of the most honored airlines in the world, known for a triple bottom line approach that contributes to the carrier's performance and productivity, the importance of its People and the communities they serve, and an overall commitment to efficiency and the planet. The 2014 Southwest Airlines One Report™ can be found at [SouthwestOneReport.com](#).

Book Southwest Airlines' low fares online at [Southwest.com](#) or by phone at 800-I-FLY-SWA.

About the Houston Airport System:

Houston Airports served more than 53 million passengers in 2014. Houston's three airports — George Bush Intercontinental Airport (IAH), William P. Hobby (HOU) and Ellington Airport (EFD) — contribute more than \$27.5 billion to the regional economy. IAH and HOU collectively provide nonstop flights to nearly 200 destinations worldwide. For more information, visit [fly2houston.com](#). Get social with Houston Airports by following us on Twitter @IAH and @HobbyAirport.

About U.S. Customs and Border Protection:

U.S. Customs and Border Protection is the unified border agency within the Department of Homeland Security charged with the management, control and protection of our nation's borders at and between the official ports of entry. CBP is charged with keeping terrorists and terrorist weapons out of the country while enforcing hundreds of U.S. laws.

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