

Delta to operate non-stop flights to Cape Town, pending approval

Delta Airlines has submitted an application to the US Department of Transportation for a three times weekly service between Atlanta and Cape Town, with hopes to begin the Atlanta-Cape Town service on 18 November 2022. This application comes a week after United Airlines announced its decision to resume their direct flights between Cape Town and Newark/New York, starting on 05 June 2022, ahead of their initial schedule.



Source: Mguel Ángel Sanz via [Unsplash](#)

If approved, the standard round trip from Atlanta to Cape Town would be the airline's second destination in South Africa, after Johannesburg, which it already serves from Atlanta.

In addition, the airline is still seeking South African government approval for the triangle route, after failing to win the approval of the South African government in 2020 and 2021 when it tried to launch an Atlanta-Johannesburg-Cape Town-Atlanta triangle route.

Cape Town and the Western Cape welcomes the application and supports the airline's efforts to continues seeking approval for a triangular Atlanta-Johannesburg-Cape Town route that was previously rejected by South African regulators.

"We welcome the application made by Delta and hope that it is approved promptly. Clearly, there is a surge in demand for direct flights from the United States to Cape Town, and this is good for our tourism and hospitality sectors in the Western

Cape," comments Western Cape Minister of Finance and Economic Opportunities, David Maynier.

"However, we have not given up on Delta's application for a triangular route. That is why I have officially launched an Intergovernmental Dispute with the Minister of Transport, Fikile Mbalula. The Minister has not responded to the substantive issues I have raised, and this matter has now been escalated to the Minister of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs, Minister Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, to urgently secure a meeting to find a solution to the granting of co-terminalisation rights for Delta Airlines, between Atlanta, Johannesburg and Cape Town."

Growing key tourist markets

The City of Cape Town's Mayoral Committee Member for Economic Growth, Alderman James Vos, says: "The US is a key tourist market for Cape Town. The majority of US travellers to South Africa include the Mother City in their itineraries. And Delta has confirmed that their bid to fly directly to Cape Town is due to demand from customers. Should this application be denied like the previous one, it will severely impact Cape Town – and thus South Africa's – tourism industry."

"Over the past decade, the US has been the largest source of FDI by value into Western Cape - R19.68bn. The US remains a key tourism and export market for South Africa. For the first time, the US was the number one country for Western Cape exports in 2021.

"We are looking forward to welcoming Delta back to the Mother City, and we are confident that this non-stop flight will boost the province's efforts to grow leisure tourism and help increase trade between the Cape and the US. This will contribute to growing exports, and attracting investment," concludes Wrenelle Stander, official Air Access spokesperson and Wesgro CEO.

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