

Emirates hopes to restore full schedule to SA by May

By [Ngobile Dlodla](#)

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Emirates airline is hoping to resume all of its 49 flights per week to South Africa by May next year, an executive said on Tuesday, as demand for international travel recovers with the easing of Covid-related curbs.



An Emirates passenger plane comes in to land at London Heathrow airport, Britain, May 21, 2020. REUTERS/Toby Melville/File Photo

The airline in September announced additional flights, with three daily flights to and from Johannesburg from March 2023, twice daily services to Cape Town from February 2023 and two more flights to Durban, making it a daily operation from December 2022.

"The reintroduction of the new flights between Dubai and the Emirates' three gateways in South Africa will enhance our schedule to 42 weekly services versus the 49 flights we had weekly pre-pandemic," Emirates senior vice president-commercial operations Africa, Badr Abbas told reporters in Johannesburg.

"We are hopeful by May 2023 we will be able to bring back all 49 flights subject to market demand and our operational capability."

Outbound market performance

Performance so far this year in the market from an outbound perspective has exceeded Emirates' expectations and is in line with the current capacity that the airline is operating in and out of South Africa.

He noted healthy flows in and out of Europe, Middle East and the Indian sub-continent, as well as growing traffic to US destinations.

The consumer segments have pretty much returned to pre-pandemic patterns, with the bulk of the traffic being leisure and people visiting family and friends, he said.

"Corporate is slower in getting back, however, with the need to conduct business in person, as well as international conferences getting back into gear, we believe we'll be seeing that segment rebuild very soon," Abbas added.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Reporting by Nqobile Dladla; editing by Jason Neely.

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