



Nonstop in 11 Hours to the “City of Pandas”: Chengdu Launches Direct Flights to Brussels

Descrizione

COMUNICATO STAMPA “CONTENUTO PROMOZIONALE”

CHENGDU, CHINA “

Media OutReach Newswire

“ 26 March 2026 “ Air China launched a direct passenger flight from Chengdu to Brussels, the capital of Belgium, with service starting March 26. This marks Chengdu’s 12th regular direct passenger route to Europe. The inaugural flight recorded a load factor of 95%, with the return leg reaching 85%, underscoring strong market demand.

According to Air China’s Southwest Branch, the Chengdu (Tianfu International Airport)-Brussels route offers three round trips per week on the Airbus A330-300, with flights scheduled on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays. Previously, Chengdu had already opened a dedicated all-cargo route to Brussels. The launch of the passenger service now establishes a dual-track system for both passenger and freight transport.

Before the route’s launch, travelers from Chengdu to Brussels typically required a transfer, with the whole journey taking more than 17 hours. The new direct service cuts travel time to under 11 hours, creating a faster and more convenient aerial corridor for economic and trade cooperation, cultural exchange, and people-to-people connectivity between China and Belgium.

This route also represents Chengdu’s first newly launched intercontinental passenger service of the year. To date, the city operates 19 intercontinental passenger routes, including 12 connecting major European cities such as Frankfurt, London, Paris, and Brussels, with nearly 40 weekly flights. Chengdu’s regular international and regional direct routes have now clocked up 85, markedly

boosting its global connectivity.

The ever-expanding international flight network has further stimulated inbound tourism. In 2025, Chengdu received 2.38 million inbound tourists, a year-on-year increase of 44.3%, signaling a strong recovery of the inbound tourism market. During the recent 2026 Spring Festival, the city welcomed 77,000 inbound tourists, up 47.2% year on year, with a growing number of international travelers choosing Chengdu as their top destination for experiencing China.

As noted by The Times in its feature on 12 of the Best Places to Visit in China: “Home of the Chengdu Research Base of Giant Panda Breeding, this city has become a popular stop on many China tours. Foodies will relish their visit—it’s one of the original UNESCO cities of gastronomy, so you’ll find the best of Sichuan cuisine here. Highlights include spicy hotpot, mapo tofu, and the myriad street foods you’ll find outside Chengdu’s many temples. It’s also the departure point for tours to the national parks of Jiuzhai Valley and Huanglong, and the autonomous regions around Sichuan.”

To enhance the travel experience of international passengers, Chengdu has introduced a package of measures covering tax refunds upon payment, language services, smart navigation, and promotional incentives, all aimed at improving convenience and adding to the appeal of inbound tourism. Policies such as instant tax refunds, direct payments via overseas e-wallets, and over 600 tax refund stores have largely facilitated travel for international tourists.

In 2025, Chengdu had more than 6,000 taxi drivers trained in English, and the scenic area Xiling Snow Mountain rolled out an international booking platform supporting real-time translation in 24 languages and transactions in 29 currencies, with multilingual AI translation screens installed across major tourist attractions and transportation hubs in Chengdu.

Meanwhile, Jinli Street—once named by CNN as one of the world’s most beautiful streets—officially introduced the “Open Chengdu” cultural tourism base on February 6. The base features a professional English-language service team, more than 300 bilingual signs, and over 10 bilingual self-service ticketing machines supporting multiple ID types. Across more than 50 locations in Jinli, from museum gift shops to street vendors, international credit cards such as VISA are widely accepted.

In addition, Chengdu Eastern New Area, where Chengdu Tianfu International Airport is located, offers international transit passengers subsidies of up to 400 yuan per person, including 200 for hotel stays, 100 for consumption vouchers, and 100 for railway tickets.

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Responsabilit  editoriale di Immediapress

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Categoria

1. Comunicati

Tag

1. ImmediaPress

Data di creazione

Marzo 26, 2026

Autore

redazione

default watermark