LAUDA TO LAUNCH LAUDAMOTION WITH 14 AIRCRAFT

News / Airlines

Niki Lauda has announced plans to launch his new airline Laudamotion. Having been founded in 2004, the airline is due to commence operations on March 28 with 14 aircraft. The aircraft will come from the Niki subsidiary of AirBerlin which has had its assets sold off and dissolved.

This comes following the deal made in January by Mr Lauda to buy the aircraft, and beat British Airways' owner IAG offer previously. These aircraft will initially run under a contract given to the carrier by Condor, where flights to Spain, Italy and Greece will begin the carrier's network portfolio.

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“Laudamotion has signed a contract of carriage with Condor. The German vacation airline will not only market Laudamotion flights but also handle selected operational functions, such as acting as the control Press release centre and crew planning, for Laudamotion as a service provider,” says Niki Lauda, Managing Director of Laudamotion. Ralf Teckentrup, Managing Director of Condor and CCO of Thomas Cook Group Airlines, adds: “We are marketing the Laudamotion range to fill a gap in the European vacation flight market. Our customers will benefit from this by having a larger selection and low-priced starter offerings.”

Condor will market flights with the carrier for departures from Frankfurt and Dusseldorf, whilst Laudamotion will also have aircraft departing from Vienna. This means that the carrier will be beginning operations providing flights to two of Europe’s hottest origin hotspots for connections and beyond.

Lauda also released the full timetable for new services being started this year. They are as follows:

Austria:

Graz (4th June 2018)

- Innsbruck (3rd June 2018)
- Linz (1st June 2018)
- Salzburg (1st June 2018)
- Vienna (1st June 2018) – Will be a base.

Cyprus:

- Paphos (3rd June 2018)

Germany:

- Berlin (2nd June 2018)
- Cologne (1st June 2018)
- Düsseldorf (25th March 2018)
- Frankfurt (25th March 2018)
- Hannover (7th June 2018)
- Stuttgart (25th March 2018)

Greece:

- Chania (1st June 2018)
- Corfu (27th June 2018)
- Heraklion (24th June 2018)
- Kalamata (4th June 2018)
- Rhodes (24th June 2018)
- Santorini (2nd June 2018)

Italy:

- Brindisi (2nd June 2018)
- Lamezia (25th June 2018)
- Olbia (23rd June 2018)

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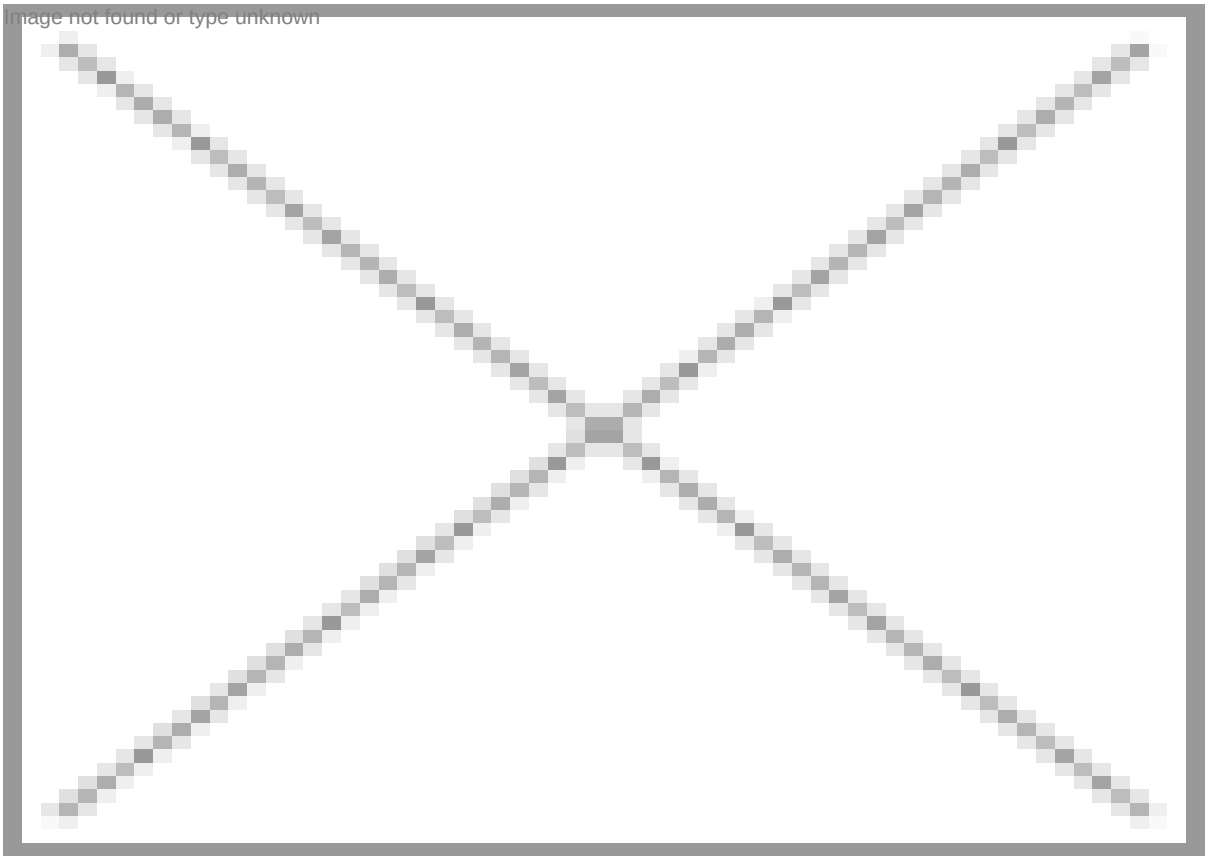
- Pisa (1st June 2018)

Spain:

- Fuerteventura (28th June 2018)
- Ibiza (28th April 2018)
- Lanzarote (26th June 2018)
- Malaga (27th April 2018)
- Palma de Mallorca (25th March 2018)

Switzerland:

- Basel (27th April 2018)
- Zurich (1st June 2018) – Will be a base.



With the airline wanting to expand this quickly into 2018, it shows how much Niki Lauda wants this airline to succeed, by going to the densely popular destinations and to offer them at cheaper fares. Condor will market flights with Laudamotion from Düsseldorf and Frankfurt to the Balearic Islands, the Canary Islands, Greece, and Italy. Fares to Spain start at just € 59.99, and Laudamotion will take travellers to Greece from € 79.99.

This could put IAG into a competitively priced situation, especially with the group wanting to launch an Austrian AOC using Vueling aircraft. With carriers such as Laudamotion coming into the mix, IAG may have to adapt their strategy to the current launch of services that Lauda will be doing over the next 6 months.

With the carrier also venturing into the Italian market as well, it will be interesting to see how Air Italy will put up the fight, especially with Mr Akbar Al Baker probably wanting to toughen it out against Lauda. Many could argue that Switzerland is a very interesting country to launch services

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into, but this could provide a market gap that potentially other carriers are not venturing into.

All-in-all, Lauda's speedy expansion plans show that he wants to catch up with the game and dominate certain areas of the European market as fast as he can before other carriers beat him to it.

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