

First non-stop flight between Chicago and Berlin

visitBerlin and Berlin's hotels welcome airberlin's commitment

Berlin, 12 July 2012 airberlin starts new long distance flight from the USA: From 23 March 2013, the Berlin-based airline is to provide a non-stop connection three times a week between Chicago and the German capital, increasing to five flights a week from May. The move incorporates the third largest city in the U.S. - after New York and Los Angeles - into the airline's route network.

"Chicago is one of the oneworld Alliances's biggest hubs", commented Burkhard Kieker, managing director of *visitBerlin*. "Not only does this route provide a direct connection between Berlin and the Chicago metropolitan area, it also makes Berlin more accessible to travellers from Central and South America by giving them the opportunity to change in Chicago." Berlin's hotels, airberlin and *visitBerlin* are collaborating closely to ensure successful marketing of the new route."

visitBerlin expects the new flight connection to provide a particular boost to the city's congress industry. As home to the headquarters of 250 corporations - 28 of them Fortune 500 companies - and 1,500 foreign firms, Chicago is America's most important business city. Seven renowned universities also make Chicago a significant base for science and research.

The USA constitutes one of the most important markets for tourism and international congresses in Berlin. In the first five months of this year alone, around 100,000 visitors traveled to Berlin from the USA, approximately 10 percent more than in 2011.

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