

Travelling by air began 100 years ago this week

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Last weekend was the 100th anniversary of the first scheduled international air service. On August 25th, 1919 a plane took off from Hounslow Heath, London, and landed around two hours later in Paris. The plane transported – according to British Airways – a journalist, newspapers, several brace of grouse, some jars of Devonshire cream and a consignment of leather.

However, that plane also delivered something much more important, a gift that the hotel industry would benefit from: a revolution in travel that would slowly but surely create unprecedented demand for more hotels in more places. International travel had truly begun!

Fast forward 100 years and only during July this year there were more than 6.5 million flights globally, and the record for the most amount of flights in 24 hours was broken, reaching 230,409.

Such massive amounts of flights create a massive amount of need for accommodation. This year, in some coastal cities in Spain hotels have reached 90% occupancy, with tourists coming from all around the world to enjoy the Spanish beaches – a great many of them on planes. To give you an idea of the scale, employment associated with tourism in Spain almost reached 3 million in June.

Looking back over the last 100 years of international tourism, perhaps one of the most significant changes recently is that nowadays many airlines don't just fly you to your destination, they also often act as travel agents or even tour operators to sell you a complete holiday package: flight, accommodation, transfer and more.

From the 700 or so commercial airlines existing in the world today, we estimate that around 120 are already offering accommodation sales – and this market is worth around 2 billion dollars in bookings annually for hotels.

Here at Hotelbeds we are currently providing accommodation for more than 40 airlines worldwide like easyJet, Ryanair, British Airways, Virgin, Finnair and Jet2 in Europe, Spirit, Air Canada, LATAM, Volaris and Azul in the Americas. More recently in Asia, we launched a partnership with Singapore Airlines to use our dynamic packaging platform for Singapore Airline holidays in around 20 of its key source markets.

With so much world to discover and places to visit, and more flights now than ever before, there's no doubt that hospitality industry will continue to grow as a result of this. Can you imagine what travelling will look like 100 years from now? Whatever the experience, one thing is for sure: you'll need a room.

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