

Turkey is closer, with new flights from Malpensa.

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Malpensa and Turkey are going to be closer thanks to Blu-Express, the low-cost brand from Blue Panorama. The new route was presented, this morning (Thursday) at SEA's Infocenter in Malpensa's Terminal 1, in the presence of David Crognaletti, the commercial director of Aviation SEA; the new route will connect Istanbul's new airport, Sabiha Gokcen, to Malpensa, with six return flights per week. The low-cost company will sell tickets for €69, including taxes, and will land in the Turkish airport situated on the Asian coast of the city. "There is great interest in this area, from both the business and leisure sectors. Italy is Turkey's third most important business partner; there is even a Fiat factory a few kilometres from the Sabiha Gokcen airport," Giancarlo Zeni, the CEO of Blue Panorama, pointed out. These are just two of the important factors that drove the Italian airline to travel to Turkey.

When it comes to tourism for pleasure, data show that there is great interest on the part of Italians in the cultural and natural beauty of Turkey, including Istanbul, which is also the 2010 European Capital of Culture, where at least 10 million people are expected to visit this year. "The ambitious goals of Turkey coincide perfectly with ours," said Zeni. "We are continuing the process that has led us to become the second largest Italian company in terms of long range flights." From Malpensa, the company flies out to Kenya, Egypt, Tanzania, Honduras, Mexico, Cuba and Jamaica. And SEA, the company that manages the airports of Malpensa and Linate, is pleased with the continued increase, after the fall caused by the withdrawal of Alitalia. "We continue to introduce new flights and the situation is moving again, thanks also to the improved times of the Malpensa Express, which has brought Malpensa Airport closer to the heart of Milan."

Moreover, Blu-Express have announced that they will be increasing the number of summer tourist flights to Lampedusa and Pantelleria; between 21 June and 5 September, there will be twice as many flights to these two destinations, and tickets will be available at a very convenient price of only €49. The expansion strategy was presented well by the commercial director of Blu-Express, George Michalopoulos. "The objective this year is to take at least 70,000 passengers to Istanbul in 2010," he said, "at very competitive prices, on routes where tickets normally cost three-figure sums."

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