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FROM	Matthew Butt Investor Relations Manager	DATE	12 December 2014
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SUBJECT	Air New Zealand to fly direct to Argentina		

Air New Zealand has today announced it will launch direct flights between Auckland and Buenos Aires, Argentina - the airline's first ever scheduled service to South America.

An Air New Zealand Boeing 777-200 aircraft will operate three return services a week on the route all year round.

Air New Zealand Chief Executive Officer Christopher Luxon says the new destination, the airline's 28th international port, opens up an exciting new world for travellers from both New Zealand and Australia.

"South America was once the domain of the intrepid explorer, but the direct service to Buenos Aires, with a flight time of around 12 hours, means a quick and action packed getaway is now a reality.

"Buenos Aires is the most popular tourist city in South America and is a perfect stepping stone for those who then want to explore the country, or continent, further."

"We've been very clear about our aspirations for growth in the Pacific Rim. Our flights to Singapore commence next month and this new route to Buenos Aires further strengthens our network in the Pacific Rim. Argentina is an exciting new destination for New Zealanders, and with seamless connectivity one-stop through Auckland it will provide a fantastic opportunity for Australians as well."

The service will also enable Argentineans to travel directly to New Zealand and then on to Australia on Air New Zealand's extensive trans-Tasman network, or to Singapore and South East Asia.

Air New Zealand will enter into a code share agreement with Aerolíneas Argentinas, subject to obtaining regulatory approvals, which will see Aerolíneas Argentinas' code returning to the South Pacific market on the new route and on key connecting Trans-Tasman services, and Air New Zealand will code share on Aerolíneas Argentinas' services to Brazil.

"We are particularly excited that Aerolíneas Argentinas has agreed to support the service with code share, which we expect to help further stimulate tourism to New Zealand from this rugby loving nation," says Mr Luxon.

Tourism New Zealand Chief Executive Kevin Bowler says the announcement is welcome news, at a time when the organisation has made a commitment to significantly invest in the Latin American market including the establishment of an office in South America, one year ago this month.

“We’ve made some great progress in laying the foundations, but our success in attracting more South American visitors to New Zealand relies heavily on air linkages and we look forward to working in a partnership with Air New Zealand in the coming months to build in-bound demand for the new service.”

The new Buenos Aires service was announced today at an Argentinian themed breakfast at Air New Zealand’s Auckland headquarters.

Flights will commence in December 2015, with tickets on sale in March, subject to obtaining necessary approvals.

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