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# Finnair has a new offering or two to entice Chicagoans to visit Finland

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Finnair is taking a cue from Icelandair, Iceland's flagship carrier which has recently relaunched service from Chicago. The Finnish flagship carrier is now offering free stopovers in Finland for passengers transiting to destinations beyond Helsinki on the carrier's seasonal service from Chicago's O'Hare International Airport beginning May 6 and continuing through Oct. 6. Finnair is increasing its seasonal frequency this year from three flights weekly to five per week between Chicago and Helsinki.

The free stopover in Helsinki mirrors a program Icelandair has had in place for years to help boost tourism to the island country in the North Atlantic. All Icelandair passengers traveling to Europe from the United States must change planes in Reykjavik. So the free stopover program was a logical way to get travelers to visit Iceland along with whatever their final destination might be.



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Finnair is introducing new intercontinental business class menus created by Finnish chef... more

JUHA-PEKKA LAAKIO OY

Now Finnair hopes the same sort of offer will boost Finland's tourism numbers. The stopover in Helsinki for Finnair passengers could be as short as 5 hours or as long as 5 days. Finnair is partnering with Primera Holidays to help stopover travelers organize tours in Helsinki or further afield in Finland.

Like LOT Polish Airlines, which flies the Boeing Dreamliner from Chicago to its principal hub in Warsaw, Poland, Finnair is hoping to establish its Helsinki hub as a major transit point for passengers traveling from the U.S. to other destinations in Europe or Asia.

Along with the new stopover program, Finnair also is introducing new signature menus in its premium business class cabin on international flights, including those from Chicago. Finnish chef Sasu Laukkonen, whose Chef and Sommelier restaurant has been awarded a Michelin star every year since 2014, is creating new menus for flights to the U.S. And Steven Liu, the culinary ambassador of Le Cordon Bleu in Greater China, is cooking up new menus for Finnair flights departing from Beijing and Shanghai.

For ice cream devotees, Finnair also is now serving Finnish organic ice cream by Jymy in business class on all intercontinental flights departing Helsinki.

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