

# Finnair's first Airbus A350 flights now on sale

TODAY IN THE SKY



Ben Mutzabaugh, USA TODAY

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(Photo: Finnair)

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Finnair has begun selling tickets for its first passenger flights on its new Airbus A350 aircraft.

The A350, of course, is the world's newest aircraft to be rolled out by the world's major jetmakers. [Qatar Airways](#) became the first airline in the world to take

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Boeing Finnair

[delivery](#) of the aircraft last year, and [flew the first-ever A350 flight with paying passengers](#) in January.

Finnair will become [the first European airline to put the new jet into service](#). The carrier will begin flying the A350 on routes between its [Helsinki](#) hub and four cities in Asia: [Bangkok](#), [Beijing](#), [Shanghai](#) and [Singapore](#).

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Finnair says Shanghai will be served with daily A350 service starting Oct. 25. Beijing will follow with daily A350 flights beginning Nov. 21. To Bangkok, Finnair will begin mixing in A350 service with its existing A330 service starting Feb. 1. Similarly, Finnair will begin mixing the A350 into its existing Singapore service starting May 5.

Prior to those long-haul flights, however, Finnair will fly its A350 on "crew familiarization flights" throughout Europe during October. The first will come Oct. 5, when Finnair's A350 flies a round-trip between Helsinki and northern city of Rovaniemi in Finnish Lapland. Finnair has a full schedule on [a special A350-themed web page](#).

"We are thrilled to reach this important milestone as we gear up for a seamless transition to A350 operations," Finnair CEO Pekka Vauramo says about the launch of sales for its A350 flights.

"Our A350 investment program is the largest in the company's 92-year history and these aircraft will form the backbone of our long-haul operations for years to come while also playing an essential role in our sustainable, long-term profitability. I can truly speak for all employees when I say we cannot wait to welcome passengers on board," Vauramo adds.

For routes where Finnair operates the A350 with a mix of other aircraft, the carrier says:

"Customers can determine the planned aircraft type of their flight by clicking on the flight number during the online booking process at Finnair.com, or by consulting with their travel agent. Changes in aircraft type are possible for operational reasons."

Finnair will configure its A350s with 297 seats, including 46 in business class that will be arranged in a 1-2-1 layout with direct aisle access for each. Each seat converts to a full-flat bed and has a 16-inch touch-screen in-flight entertainment system in addition to AC and [USB power](#) outlets.



Seats in Finnair's main economy cabin will be arranged in a 3-3-3- layout. The Zodiac Z300 slim-line seats will have 31-inch seat pitch. At the front of its economy section, Finnair will offer 43 Economy Comfort seats that it says come with "comfier headrests, high-quality headphones and four extra inches of leg room." All of the coach seats on Finnair's A350s will have an 11-inch touch screen inflight entertainment system and USB power outlets.

All Finnair A350s will be equipped to offer Wi-Fi.

The A350 itself is the third all-new aircraft to be rolled out by either Airbus or Boeing during the past decade. It joins Airbus' superjumbo A380 – which debuted in 2007 – and Boeing's new-age 787 "Dreamliner," which made its first flight for an airline in 2011.

In part, the A350 is Airbus' answer to Boeing's Dreamliner. Like the Dreamliner, the new A350 is made partially from lightweight carbon composite fibers that improve fuel efficiency and enhance comfort for passengers by allowing for things like larger windows and more comfortable pressurization and humidity levels.

Also like the Dreamliner, Airbus promises the jet will allow airlines to begin flying routes between cities that previously could not profitably support nonstop service.

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Boeing's Dreamliner has delivered on that promise. United, for example, says its Dreamliners allowed it to add nonstop service between San Francisco and [Chengdu, China](#). And [British Airways](#) used its Dreamliner to connect London and Austin, [giving the Texas capital its first-ever regularly scheduled flight to Europe](#).

Both the A350 and 787 burn less fuel than other comparable widebody jets that fly long-haul routes. The A350 holds roughly 275 to 370 passengers, depending on the variant and how airlines choose to configure the aircraft.

Airbus has positioned its A350 will compete not only against Boeing's Dreamliner, but also against Boeing's popular 777 model.



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