

# *American Airlines to Fly Nonstop from Los Angeles to Havana*

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Fort Worth, August 19 (RHC)-- American Airlines and Cuba Travel Services plan to operate the first charter flights between Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) and Jose Marti International Airport (HAV) in Havana later this year, the Associated Press reported on Tuesday.

The carrier saw an opportunity since travel restrictions to the island nation were eased to provide travelers a nonstop service connecting the West Coast to Cuba.

American Airlines said Tuesday that the flights from Los Angeles International Airport will run on Saturdays starting December 12th. They will be sold by Cuba Travel Services.

U.S. citizens still must meet certain requirements for travel to Cuba, such as visiting family. Trips that are strictly for tourism are not yet legal.

Travelers can discover colorful Cuba and enjoy an atmosphere filled with salsa music, unique architecture and genuine people. Whether traveling for business, education or exploration, charter services offer flights to five cities in Cuba.

American Airlines has operated charters to Cuba since 1991 and now flies there about 20 times a week from Miami and Tampa, Florida. Along with Havana, the airline flies into Camaguey, Cienfuegos, Holguin

and Santa Clara.

"American is the premier carrier in Los Angeles and throughout the Caribbean, and this new charter flight shows how we continue to expand our reach by offering new routes and services our customers want," said Art Torno, American's senior vice president – International and Cargo. "We stand ready to offer scheduled service as soon as the United States and Cuba allow commercial flights."

"We are excited to expand our partnership with American to include flights from Los Angeles to Havana," said Michael Zuccato, General Manager at Cuba Travel Services. "We will continue to deliver a high quality travel experience and opening up new West Coast access to Cuba will bring a convenient, affordable option to authorized travelers."

The Wall Street Journal reported on Tuesday that the Obama administration is working on a deal with Cuba that would allow airlines to establish regular flights between the countries by year-end.

That would weaken the travel ban on Americans wishing to travel to Cuba, skirting the issue in Congress.

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