

Flight bookings booming for the Rio Olympics, but may slump post-games

With less than a month to go before the Olympic Games open, flight bookings to Rio are booming, according to ForwardKeys, which monitors future travel patterns by analyzing 14 million reservation transactions each day.

The peak arrival date for Olympic fans is August 4, the day before the opening ceremony, but a significant number of visitors will start to arrive earlier, from July 27.

When compared with the same dates last year, forward flight bookings are ahead 148% between July 27 to the Olympic closing day on August 21. Flight bookings for the Paralympics, which run from September 1-18, are up 23%.

In all, 14 countries account for 72% of advance flight bookings to Rio during the Olympic and Paralympic period, headed by the US with 18%, followed by Argentina with 13% and the UK and Germany each with 7%. The high volumes from the US may be helped by a relaxation of visa conditions for the duration of the Games, making it easier for American sports fans to travel to Rio.

Forward bookings show 24% of travelers are staying for 9-13 nights and 23% for 6-8 nights, between July 27 and September 18. For those visitors staying 22 or more nights, 70% will arrive before August 2.

Although air capacity to Rio from the US and Canada has tailed off in 2016, additional seats are scheduled for the Olympics from Miami, New York, Houston and Atlanta in the US, as well as Toronto in Canada.

There's also increased capacity for the Games from four European airports with direct connections to Rio – Frankfurt, Paris, Lisbon and London. Travel to Rio has been further boosted by the Emirates aircraft upgrade from Dubai as well as a new flight from Casablanca.

Total international air capacity to Rio for the Games is up 19% compared with the same period last year, with Latin America up 31%, Europe up 11% and the US and Canada up 9%.

While forward bookings for the Games are strong, the post-Olympic period looks gloomier, down 13% for the same weeks in

2015. The biggest falls are from the US and Canada at -50%, Europe -24% and Asia Pacific -14%.

The picture is brighter within Latin America with forward bookings up 24%, particularly from Argentina and Chile.

Olivier Jager, ForwardKeys Co-founder and CEO, said: "We can only speculate on the reason for a drop in post-Olympic bookings compared with the same weeks last year and it may be that health concerns over the Zika virus have been a factor."

Goslings Rums partners with MONARQ for LATAM and Caribbean

Goslings Rums has formed a regional partnership with the MONARQ Group.

MONARQ will represent Goslings in Latin America and the Caribbean for both duty free and domestic beginning July 1, 2016.

Goslings Brothers Ltd is Bermuda's oldest business house and a major exporter. Since 2004, Goslings Rums has been spearheading a major international expansion of the brand, which features four products: the flagship Goslings Bermuda Black Seal Rum, Goslings Gold Bermuda Rum (limited markets), the Goslings Family Reserve Old Rum, and, most recently, Goslings Gold Seal Rum.

Goslings also offers the Dark 'n Stormy ready-to-drink ginger beer cocktail in a can.

"Goslings is very excited, enthused and proud to partner with the MONARQ Group and we look forward to working closely together to continue to grow our unique brand of award-winning rums in these important Caribbean and Latin American markets," said Malcolm Gosling, President & CEO, Gosling-Castle Partners, Inc., and 7th generation Goslings family member.

Robert de Monchy, founder and CEO of MONARQ Group, added, "Both Goslings Rums and Goslings Stormy Ginger Beer are a great addition to our portfolio of leading premium independent beverage brands. This unique multiple award-winning authentic rum and ginger beer coincides perfectly well with our core competence of building premium spirits brands in Latin America and the Caribbean. We know the Gosling's brand for many years and are very much looking forward to start working together with the Goslings team and to over-achieve on our mutual expectations, taking the brand to the next level."

Actium to manage Americas business for select Emperador spirits brands

Miami-based Actium Group has announced that it will manage the Americas business for the portfolio of brands recently purchased by Emperador Inc. from Beam Suntory, which includes Fundador Brandy, Terry Centenario Brandy, Tres Cepas Brandy, and Harveys Sherry, including Bristol Cream.

Beginning June 1, Actium will manage these brands for Latin America (Domestic and Travel Retail), Caribbean (Domestic and Travel Retail) and U.S. Travel Retail.

"We are excited to incorporate in Actium's portfolio and represent for all Latin America, Caribbean and US Travel Retail the brands recently bought by Emperador, owners of Whyte & Mackay, from Beam Suntory. While some of the brands already have a considerable existing business in the region, we believe that there are clear opportunities to develop the portfolio further with additional focus given by Actium's team, who manages a premium yet selective list of brands, and fueled by the new ownership, for whom some of the acquired brands are strategic. Emperador's strength in the brandy category will surely be an asset towards the future development of Fundador and Terry Centenario, and the company's experience in brand development will also benefit Harveys, the #1 selling Sherry in the UK. Harveys also holds an exquisite range of quality wines, including the world's Sherry top seller Bristol Cream," says Daniel Bras, director of Actium's Beverage Division.

Philippine liquor company Emperador bought the four brands from Beam Suntory in 2015 for \$291 million.





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Lois Pasternak July 18, 2016



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