**United Airlines launch of Manila-SFO flights a boost to Philippines tourism**

MANILA, Philippines — American carrier United Airlines expects its launch of flights between Manila and San Francisco to contribute to the recovery of tourist arrivals from the US.

United Airlines regional sales director for Greater China, Korea and Southeast Asia Walter Dias said he anticipates higher visitor arrivals from the US with the launch of the new route.

United Airlines, one of the largest carriers in the world, will operate daily flights between Manila to San Francisco in California and vice versa starting Oct. 30, making it the only American operator to fly between the Philippines and the US.

“We have seen really strong demand in both directions when we added new flights (from the US) to Asia and the Pacific. We know that the Philippines will be no different,” Dias told reporters.

“Right now, what we are seeing is travel demand in the US is exploding. International traffic is growing fast and that is what prompted us to take a careful look at the different markets in the Asia-Pacific region,” he added.

United Airlines is working with local regulators, namely, the Civil Aeronautics Board and the Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines, for the launch of its newest route.

Flight UA190 will depart the Ninoy Aquino International Airport at 9:55 a.m. daily to arrive at the San Francisco International Airport at 6:20 a.m. on the same day.

On the other hand, Flight UA191 will fly out of San Francisco around midnight and will land in Manila at 6:50 a.m. two days later.

United Airlines will deploy a Boeing 777-300ER to serve the route, offering a total of 350 seats divided into 60 business class, 24 premium plus and 266 economy seats. Apart from Manila, the carrier will open new flights to Asia and the Pacific, particularly Australia, China, Hong Kong, Japan, New Zealand, Singapore, South Korea and Taiwan.

For 2023, the Philippines has received a total of 550,569 visitors from the US as of July 19. Prior to the pandemic, the US sent 1.06 million tourists to the Philippines in 2019, making it the third largest market behind South Korea and China.

Meanwhile, Dias said Filipinos can maximize the United Airlines flight to travel the Americas, as the airline flies to at least 70 locations in the US, Canada and Latin America from San Francisco.

Currently, United Airlines offers flights from Manila to Guam every day and Palau twice a week.

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