TPA surpasses 20 million passengers in record year

Tampa International Airport closed Fiscal Year 2018 after logging 21,013,788 passengers - an all-time record for TPA and the Airport’s first time surpassing the 20 million mark. That represents a 9.3 percent increase over the previous year, exceeding growth rate rejections. TPA’s fiscal year runs from Oct. 1 through the end of September.

The milestone comes on the heels of United Airlines’ recent announcement that the carrier is increasing its Tampa-San Francisco service in June 2019 from once to twice daily, better serving the needs and schedules of the Tampa Bay area’s many business travelers who use the route. Lufthansa will also be increasing its service from five to six days weekly next summer, and at the end of the month TPA will launch Norwegian Airlines service to London, TPA’s first time having two airlines flying to the same European city.

Other factors adding to the growth include:

• An 83 percent increase in Frontier Airlines passengers after adding 13 new routes in the past year.

• Spirit Airlines added eight new nonstop routes, generating a 45.5 percent increase in Spirit passenger traffic.

• Icelandair’s Reykjavik service, which launched just before the start of Fiscal Year 2018 and recently increased from two weekly flights to four.

• TPA’s busiest spring break on record, in which the Airport’s largest carrier, Southwest Airlines, added more than a dozen additional departing flights each day during the six week period.

TPA’s new Ride-Along program helps people learn more about TIAPD.

Tampa Airport police invite you to ride along

The Tampa International Airport Police Department invites you to see what it’s like to be an officer on patrol at America’s Favorite Airport with the Citizen Ride-Along Program (open to all applicants 18 and older). The program is designed to educate citizens about police duties and allow them limited participation in the day-to-day activities. Interested members of the community, including students, may participate in this program by visiting TampaAirport.com.

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TPA employees support Metropolitan Ministries through Day of Caring event.

New event space now open
TPA debuted the new Main Terminal event space.

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For Jewel, “Everyone here has become my family.”

TPA BY THE NUMBERS

1,045,262
That’s how many passengers Frontier Airlines carried in Fiscal Year 2018. That figure represents a 67.7 percent increase over Fiscal Year 2017.
Sixteen years ago, Frontier Airlines came to Tampa International Airport with one route – a nonstop hop to Denver, Colorado. Now the airline serves 19 markets and more than 1 million passengers a year at TPA, making it the airport’s fastest growing airline.

That remarkable growth means they’ve outgrown their current home on Airside C, TPA’s busiest airside. Frontier will soon move to Airside E, allowing the airline to continue along its rapid growth trajectory. They’re scheduled to start operating from the new location on Nov. 14.

“We did a lot of analysis and determined Airside E had the most capacity. We had to make sure we put them on gates that make the most sense with the least disruption to other carriers that may otherwise use those gates,” said Adam Bouchard, Senior Manager of Terminal Operations and Security, who led the operations side of the move.

The need to relocate Frontier became apparent after the airline announced 11 new destinations in 2017 and another six in 2018.

“We gating was an issue, but not the only one,” said Beth Zurenko, TPA’s Vice President of Real Estate, who worked closely with the Operations team to coordinate the move.

“The security checkpoints also can’t accommodate the increased volume and still maintain the level of service that people expect from Tampa International. Last year, we added two new TSA lanes at Airside C during the busy spring break period. There’s just not the room to grow anymore there and function efficiently during peak periods.”

“We want this to be a seamless experience for the passengers.”
-Andrew LaGala, Real Estate Project Manager

One new screening checkpoint is being added at Airside E to accommodate the increase in passenger volume at that airside.

TPA’s Real Estate team stayed in close contact with all parties while arranging the move, including other carriers on Airside E, and have conducted weekly meetings with operations, TSA, maintenance and others to ensure a smooth transition.

“We want it to be a seamless experience for the passengers – one day it’s this and the next day it’s this,” said Andrew LaGala, Real Estate Project Manager. Going from Airside C to Airside E means moving Frontier from the red side to the blue side of the airport, a process that those involved in the project say is more complicated than on-boarding a new airline. Frontier’s ticket counter must be moved, and signs must be changed throughout the campus, from the George Bean Parkway to the curbsides to the airport interior.

Mack Sneed, maintenance superintendent, is coordinating the sign changes. The work began weeks ago, and will finish in the overnight hours of Nov. 13 when a team of eight will make the final transition.

“We’ll go back and double and triple check to make sure everything’s right,” Mack said.

Frontier’s TPA team is excited about the move and thinks it will be beneficial from both a customer service and operational point of view.

“I think it’s a win-win for everybody,” said Britt Hinkle, Frontier’s station manager at TPA. “We’ll have more space for our operations and more space for our customers.” Frontier will notify passengers in advance of the move by sending out notices and emails. Likewise, Tampa International Airport will post the announcement internally as well as through social media.
TPA gets another international bump with new service

Two new carriers providing UK and Canada service combined with increased Lufthansa service to Frankfurt are expected to add more numbers to TPA’s already rapid international passenger growth.

With excited departing passengers waiting at the gate, Tampa International Airport’s first Norwegian Airlines Dreamliner made its landing at TPA the night of Halloween, making for a special treat to fans of the red-nosed livery. The Airline, which will now fly nonstop from Tampa to London Gatwick, is known for its “long haul comfort” and low fares. The milestone marks the first time TPA has launched a second airline service option to the same European city.

The addition of Norwegian – as well as recent celebrations of Swoop Airlines service to Ontario and Lufthansa’s increased and enhanced service – continue the eight-year trend in international growth at TPA. Since 2010, TPA has increased its international service by 147 percent and more than 10 percent from Fiscal Year 17 to FY18.

On October 27, TPA celebrated its inaugural flight to Hamilton, Ontario, on Swoop Airlines – an ultra-low cost carrier owned by WestJet. The big pink livery sailed under an ARFF water arch while passengers enjoyed cake and giveaways gate-side for the inaugural flight. Swoop will fly three times weekly and service will continue year-round.

The day after Swoop’s first flight, planespotters gathered to capture a new sight at TPA. Mainline Lufthansa replaced its Cityline carrier which served TPA since the airline began service in September 2015. The Mainline Lufthansa offers more business class seating, and of course, the classic “Lufthansa” livery rather than the previous “Star Alliance” livery. The airline is also adding a sixth weekly flight this summer – speaking volumes to our international passenger growth.

With Swoop and Norwegian joining our team of international carriers, TPA now has 14 carriers that serve international routes along with 19 international destinations. These new carriers combined with Lufthansa’s increased summer service directly demonstrate TPA’s rapid international growth which we expect to continue growing in the coming months.

Sun Country expands service

Carriers at Tampa International Airport continue to expand their domestic networks at a rapid pace. Since late September, Sun Country Airlines has added four new flights from Tampa International Airport, helping deepen TPA’s connectivity throughout the country. On Sept. 29, Sun Country added service to Madison – a new connection to Wisconsin’s capital and home of the University of Wisconsin. On Oct. 5, the airline added a new connection to DFW. Just this month, Sun Country has brought in new connections to St. Louis and Nashville.

TPA has enjoyed a strong run of new domestic and international service, including new routes to Nashville, Dallas-Fort Worth, Madison, Wisc. and St. Louis, Missouri.
TPA’s main runway, 1L/19R reopens after construction

A nearly one month long project to make safety enhancements to TPA’s west runway, 1L/19R has concluded and airfield operations have returned to normal. The work was to make FAA-required safety enhancements, which TPA does every five years, and involved the closure of the taxiway that intersects the east-west runway. The runway also required painting and the replacement of a number of pavement runway lights.

The conveyor system is scheduled to be completed by mid-December.

Remote bag moves forward

One of the success stories of our new Rental Car Center is the Remote Bag Check service, operated by Bags, Inc. Since opening in February, more than 200,000 bags have been checked right at the Rental Car Center, offering travelers the convenience and ease of being able to drop off their luggage before boarding the SkyConnect and moving throughout the airport as they prepare to board their flights.

Up until now, those bags have been handled and loaded up manually, requiring Bags employees to cart the bags between levels in the Rental Car Center. Now, the system is getting an efficiency upgrade with a new $2 million Remote Bag Check conveyor system that is currently being installed. The system will deliver the bags seamlessly from the bag drop area to the Level 3 bag room, where the bags are eventually picked up and loaded onto vans to take to the Main Terminal’s in-line baggage system.

Bolts Business Alliance at TPA

On October 26, TPA hosted the Bolts Business Alliance in the new event space, located on Level 3 of the Main Terminal between Airsides E and F. The guest list ranged from leaders from the Tampa Bay Lightning, TPA executives and community business leaders.

Guests enjoyed breakfast catered by TPA Hospitality Partners, presentations from Steve Griggs and Joe Lopano and the event concluded with tours of the AOC, airfield, public art and SkyConnect.

The Bolts Business Alliance was the first group to use TPA’s brand new Main Terminal event space. The space received rave reviews.
Shoe shine stations shine on in TPA's new Main Terminal

An airport is one of the few places you can still find a shoe shine station staffed by a man or woman ready to spruce up your footwear.

A good, old-fashioned shoe shine prolongs the life of your shoes and sends you into that important meeting or interview with a nice, shiny, good-as-new pair of Oxfords or boots.

Since 1994, Tampa International Airport has kept travelers looking spiffy with its Shoe Shine Kiosk, located in the Main Terminal. As a part of the Airport’s concessions redevelopment program, it recently installed a new kiosk with a style matching that of our Main Terminal's modern look. Services begin at $7 for a basic shoe shine and replacement shoe laces are available for $3. Stop by near the Main Terminal food court to get shining – and bring cash!

Long Term Parking is growing and new signage is coming

Crews began changing out some 6,700 signs on Nov. 1. To assist our guests, signage describing the change is located throughout each level of the garage, including all stairwells and elevators.

Adding two new bottom floors means that each existing floor of the Long Term Garage increases by two levels.

- Level 1 becomes Level 3
- Level 2 becomes Level 4
- Level 3 becomes Level 5
- Level 4 becomes Level 6
- Level 5 becomes Level 7
- Level 6 – the top floor – becomes Level 8

The signage changes will begin on Level 8 and crews will work their way down. All new signage will be installed by Nov. 16 – in advance of the busy Thanksgiving travel season.

The addition of two new floors means the Airport will reclaim some 2,178 parking spaces in TPA’s Long Term Garage – TPA’s most in demand garage.

If you are using the Long Term Garage in the coming weeks, pay close attention to signage as Tampa International Airport prepares to open the bottom two floors for use as public parking.

The addition of the first two floors, which previously housed rental car operations, means the garage is converting from a facility with six levels of parking to an eight-level garage and the new numbering system will reflect that.

The change increases capacity of Long Term Parking and adds 2,178 premium parking spots at the Airport. Located just a short walkway from the Main Terminal, the Long Term Garage is consistently the busiest and most popular parking option at the Airport. For more information, please message the Airport at Communications@TampaAirport.com.
“I always tell my officers, ‘We work for the passengers and will keep them safe during their travels by giving them first-class security and excellent customer service,’” Jewel said. “We’ll put officers out there to walk the line, talk to the passengers, engage with them. Treat them like you would want to be treated when you fly.”

For Jewel, this means keeping every Airside A airline Station Manager on speed dial in her cell phone. Often when a passenger is in danger of missing a flight – or already missed it – she’ll call the airline directly to get information or help, putting the traveler at ease.

Recently, a mother and son were traveling without the son’s ID, prompting a more in-depth screening from the TSA, but the two seemed unusually distressed. Jewel could not understand why both mother and son were angry. She later found out the two passengers had spent days without their clothing and belongings after their airline lost their luggage upon arrival. It was eventually found, but on departure back home, the airline charged them a baggage fee due to their luggage being overweight.

Jewel immediately made a call. The airline’s manager quickly arrived at the checkpoint, apologized to the mother and son for their experience and inconvenience caused. He also refunded the bag fee that was charged and gave both passengers an upgrade. The passengers left the Airside happier than when they came.

“I always tell officers not from our airport, you have to come to Tampa Airport to see how it’s done,’” Jewel said. Jewel is part of a team that often travel around the country to help TSA when it needs supervisors or extra officers in other airports. When Pope Francis came to the United States, Jewel was one of a select few officers assigned to the Pope Francis detail in Washington DC and Philadelphia.

She loves Tampa International Airport and takes pride in working for TSA on Airside A. She treats her officers and the stakeholders as if they were her family.

In her 10 years since joining the TSA in Tampa, Jewel has seen a positive shift in the agency’s overall culture, which is also reflected in its traveler-friendly TSA Cares program and social media outreach. She loves Kirk Skinner, the acting Federal Security Director for the region and credits Manager Steve Brown for transforming the culture of the Airside. They are, she said, “truly a blessing for this airport.”

Jewel was born in Guyana, South America and later moved with her family to New York, where she became a U.S. citizen at age 15. She graduated with her Bachelor’s Degree from the New York Institute of Technology, got married, then worked while she raised two daughters. She worked for several years with Tower Air, which is how she got interested in the aviation industry.

After her parents moved to Florida more than a two decades ago, Jewel her husband and two children moved to Florida as well to be close to them. She took a job with the Department of Homeland Security’s Transportation Security Administration and quickly fell in love with TPA.

Five years ago, Jewel was diagnosed with a life threatening illness. She continued working light duty, mostly doing clerical work, for a year as she underwent chemotherapy and radiation treatments.

“Everyone here has become my family.”

She told very few people but her immediate supervisors that knew were extremely caring and protective toward her. Due to her platinum colored hair, she is lovingly called the “silver fox” by her officers on Airside A. “Everyone here has become my family,” she said.

Jewel loves spending time with her husband Donald and daughters Brittany and Lauren, of whom she’s extremely proud.

At the end of a long shift after screening thousands of passengers, Jewel drives all the way to her Sugarmill Woods home in Homosassa, “with the birds and the bears and one eagle that loves to hang out on my roof” she said. Her favorite feeling is to go home to the soothing stillness of her neighborhood.

“I like the quiet,” she said.
Some of TPA’s finest went up to the Panhandle to aid victim’s of Hurricane Michael. Pictured here: Don Snipes, Joe Berres and Roger Picard from ARFF.

Airport Police Sergeant EJ Diaz and Officer Billy Richards also travelled up to the Panhandle to lend a helping hand. They returned on Oct. 25.

Tampa International Airport helped out with this year’s Day of Caring on Oct. 12, organizing volunteer T-shirts and storage and also helping select clothing for onboarding families at Metropolitan Ministries. Day of Caring participants included: Audra Cona, Carly Williams, Ilana Goldenberg, Melissa Solberg, Carol Marino and Jackie Smith.

Assistant General Counsel Michael Kamprath and Senior Manager of Airport Concessions Nina Mahoney attend Visit Tampa Bay’s 33rd annual meeting on Nov. 1.

Megan Jaufmann, Tonya Haigler (pictured), Chris Altizer and AOC Manger Luis Renza were deployed for two weeks. They assisted the Panama City Police Department with answering emergency and non-emergency calls.
In the News

TPA, a leader on regional transit issues, hosted the 2018 Business of Transportation forum.

From the Tampa Bay Business Journal, Oct. 5:
Tampa International Airport hosted the 2018 Business Of Transportation forum on Oct. 25. the gathering of nearly 200 people were on hand to discuss the issues and opportunities facing Tampa Bay's diverse transportation industry.

From the Tampa Bay Business Journal, Oct 31:
Tampa International Airport welcomed the inaugural flight of Norwegian Air on Oct. 31. Read more about the new flight, including fare information from the airline, in the Tampa Bay Business Journal at www.bizjournals.com/tampabay.

WHAT THEY’RE SAYING...

ON TWITTER

I’m so glad to be back home! Do we even know how spoiled we are with the best airport ever @FlyTPA !? Until next time Kansas City, MO #AECT18
@nikiwats23, Oct. 26

@FlyTPA thanks for one of the smoothest check-ins I have ever had in an airport! Great staff!!
@GustonThomas, Oct. 26

Made it from my bed to the gate in an hour this morning. Gotta love the efficiency here @FlyTPA
@sba1er1418, Oct. 26

ON FACEBOOK

Nice clean facility. We didn’t have any problems getting thru the airport and our rental car. Friendly people and luggage retrieval. We were very pleased.
Bill Frost, Oct. 23

Love TPA... !!! LOVE the new train to rental and economy lot... Signs everywhere and always smiling employees to direct people as needed... Its one of a kind... Super clean and modern... !!!
Leslie A. Morris, Oct. 19

VIA EMAIL

My girlfriend and I visited the British Airways desk today to ensure that our granny has the appropriate arrangements for our up coming departure flight. I want to take the time to recognize the efforts that Karen took to ensure the best possible customer experience. She went above and beyond to ensure that we would have the best flight possible.
David Wade, Oct. 27

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