

## Airlines say they will resume trans-Atlantic and nonstop California flights from RDU

Herald-Sun By Richard Stradling August 28, 2020

RALEIGH – In a show of optimism about the return of air travel, airlines are planning to restore nonstop flights to Europe and California from [Raleigh-Durham International Airport](#).

[American Airlines](#) plans to begin daily nonstops to London's Heathrow Airport sometime before Christmas, according to spokesman Brian Metham.

Meanwhile, [Delta Air Lines](#) has announced the resumption of nonstop flights to Paris in April, as [part of a broad restoration of flights](#) to Asia and Europe next year. The RDU Paris flights will operate five days a week: Tuesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, according to spokesman Drake Castañeda.

Delta also plans to resume nonstop service between RDU and Los Angeles International Airport on Oct. 1, operating five days a week: Monday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, Castañeda said.

That same day, United Airlines may begin offering two nonstop flights a day from RDU to San Francisco, [according to its website](#). A company spokeswoman said those dates are tentative, because the company is not setting its schedule until 30 days in advance.

The Los Angeles and San Francisco flights would be the first nonstops from RDU to California since the pandemic began last winter, though not the first to the West Coast. [Alaska Airlines](#) has maintained flights between RDU and its hub in Seattle.

Alaska has no plans to restart its nonstop service between RDU and San Francisco, the company said this week. And American has not made a decision about restoring its nonstop flights between RDU and Los Angeles, Metham said.

"We're still evaluating schedules for close-in travel and want to remain flexible to changes in customer demand," he wrote in an email.

Travelers are slowly taking to the skies again after the COVID-19 pandemic decimated the airline business in March and April. The Transportation Security Administration screened twice as many passengers departing RDU the week ending Aug. 10 as it did the entire month of April.

But less than 30% as many people are flying now as did this time last year, and airline schedules reflect that. Before the pandemic, airlines averaged more than 400 flights a day from RDU to 57 nonstop destinations, including 5 outside the country. This month, RDU has had about 79 daily departures to 29 nonstop destinations, all domestic.

American and Delta suspended their European flights from RDU in March, after the federal government began allowing U.S. citizens to return from Europe only through one of 11 major airports where they could be screened for coronavirus. The suspensions were extended because of low demand and continued restrictions on both sides of the Atlantic.

Those restrictions remain in place. People arriving in the United Kingdom from the United States must self-isolate for 14 days and may be contacted to verify compliance, according to the U.S. State Department. And France has barred all non-essential travel from the U.S., and those Americans who do travel to the country must present the results of a negative COVID-19 test carried out less than 72 hours before boarding their flight.

For the latest pandemic-related travel restrictions for countries around the world, go to [travel.state.gov/content/travel.html](https://travel.state.gov/content/travel.html) and click on "COVID-19 Travel Information."