

# Shanghai Hongqiao Airport resumes airline services on international routes



Passengers check in at Shanghai Hongqiao International Airport on March 26.



Passengers line up for boarding at Shanghai Hongqiao Airport on March 26. — Photos by Dong Jun

## Zhu Yuting

For Guo Meng, who departed for Hong Kong from Terminal 1 at Shanghai Hongqiao International Airport on March 26, it was a very special experience as he was the first to check in for an overseas flight since 2020 at the airport.

"I arrived early this morning, and I was very surprised and delighted when I found out that I'm the first checked-in passenger after the service resumed," he said.

Shanghai Hongqiao International Airport resumed airline services on international routes, as well as Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan routes on March 26.

Its international flight services have been closed since March 25, 2020. Since then, all international flights and those to Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan were moved to Pudong International Airport.

Guo works as an art collector, and this is his first business trip after China eased COVID-19 controls.

"I live in Qingpu District," he said, "It is really convenient for me to take flight from Hongqiao Airport, so Hongqiao is the first option for me if I need air travel."

The first flight was the one which Guo took, MU721, an Airbus-320 plane with about 200 seats, operated by China Eastern Airlines.

"The seating rate of this flight is about 80 percent," said Huang Xiaoyu, an official with China Eastern.

"We have fully prepared for the resumption."

He cited that QR code of digital declaration has been provided on each of the check-in desks at the airport to help smooth the exit processes.

Hongqiao Airport is expected to send 314 flights on

international, Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan routes, up 22 flights from 2019.

Among those, 56 will fly to Japan, 56 to South Korea, 78 to Hong Kong, 72 to Macau and 52 to Taipei, according to Tang Yichen, deputy general manager of Hongqiao Airport operation headquarters.

Some 11 airline companies — Shanghai Airlines, Air China, Japan Airlines, All Nippon Airways, Korean Air, Asiana Airlines, Cathay Pacific Airways, Hong Kong Airlines, Air Macau, China Airlines and EVA Air — will provide international flight services at Terminal One of the airport.

Along with the resumption of flight services, business shops in the airport also opened for passengers.

A total of 140 shops, including duty-free shops and gift stores, now are on normal operation, with some of them providing special discounts.

During the new flight season, the two airports in Shanghai are expected to handle 2,225 flights per day (1,449 at Pudong Airport and 776 at Hongqiao Airport), with the flight volume recovering to about 80 percent of the same period in 2019 (in which domestic flights resume to 118.5 percent; international, Hong Kong, Macau, and Taiwan flights resume to 62.4 percent).

Flights operated by 92 airline companies are able to reach a total of 42 countries now.

## Tips:

The local immigration inspection officials reminded that if passengers have problems or difficulties on immigration inspection procedures, they can talk to the immigration officers at the airport or call 12367 for help.