

Air Canada returns to T&T



An Air Canada Boeing 737 MAX 8, operating as AC984, is greeted at Piarco International with a water cannon salute as the airline resumes service to T&T. PHOTO BY BRENT PINHEIRO

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Air Canada is officially back in the T&T market, two years after suspending the Toronto–Port-of-Spain route indefinitely. AC984 touched down at Piarco International just after 1 am on Saturday with 156 passengers onboard.

Despite some light showers, the Boeing 737 MAX 8 was still welcomed with the traditional water cannon salute.

Air Canada will fly between Canada and T&T three times weekly—adding over 4,000 seats to the market monthly. Canada is this country’s second-largest source market, accounting for over 35,000 visitors annually (not including the pandemic years).

The aircraft’s arrival is the culmination of months of discussions with Air Canada. Airports Authority (AATT) general manager Hayden Newton told a small group of officials and speciallyinvited guests at Piarco International to welcome the airline that its return was a “strong vote of confidence in our twin island state”.

Air Canada is certainly a familiar brand in the T&T market, and according to Newton, it’s not the only one we may see at Piarco in the coming years.

In an exclusive interview with Guardian Media, Newton revealed that ultra-low-cost carrier Spirit Airlines has approached AATT about restarting operations in Trinidad—noteworthy because just a few weeks ago, ultra-lowcost carrier Frontier exited the market, citing forex challenges.

However, Newton believes lowcost carriers have a space in theT&T market.

He said: “The low-cost experiment works as long as it fits into some of the uniqueness of our market. And I think Spirit has understood that and they have come back to us, to talk to us about coming later in 2025 or 2026.”

According to Newton, Canadian low-cost carrier WestJet is also considering service to both Piarco International and ANR Robinson International in 2026. WestJet has operated between Canada and Port-of-Spain in the past.

Several other carriers have expressed interest in adding T&T to their route maps, but lack the Air Services Agreements required to operate scheduled flights.

T&T signed several Air Services Agreements with countries such as Nigeria and the United Arab Emirates over the past few years.

Several other agreements are expected to be signed in the coming months and years—among them Colombia and Dominican Republic.