

The first flight connections to the United States and Asia

Helsinki Airport is located between the East and the West. Air passengers have appreciated the excellent geographical location for decades. Helsinki Airport has become a popular airport for long-distance traffic.

The first routes to New York City were flown from Helsinki Malmi Airport via Stockholm in 1947 on SAS and American Overseas Airlines. The new Helsinki Airport was opened in 1952. Four years later, the American airline Pan Am opened a route between Helsinki and New York City which included stop-overs. In April 1961, Pan Am established a direct jet service between New York City and Helsinki.

Kar-Air was the first Finnish airline to start chartered flights across the Atlantic in June 1961. The stop-overs took place in Oslo, Keflavik and Gander, Newfoundland.

A new terminal was opened in 1969. In the same year, Finnair started regular scheduled flights from Helsinki to New York City. The stop-overs took place in Copenhagen and Amsterdam.

The terminal was expanded in 1983, when Finnair opened its first direct flight connection to Japan. The decisive factor for opening the new route was that Finnair started using new DC-10-30ER aircraft. With the additional fuel tanks of the new planes, it was possible to fly to Asia directly over the North Pole. Helsinki was the only Western European capital with flights to Tokyo without a stop-over.

Today, Helsinki Airport has direct flights to almost 130 destinations around the world. Over the decades, the airport has developed into one of the best airports in the world in terms of services and fluidity.

Finavia in collaboration with Finnish Aviation Museum.
Photo: Finnair Corporation Archives / Finnish Aviation Museum.

