

Aviation: new deal for Malaysia - Philippines routes

Malaysia's [Johor Baru airport](#) is set to enjoy a boom, and other airports will benefit as an additional 11,000 seats per week are added between Malaysia and Manila's two airports.

Two separate deals provide great news for Philippines expat workers: an additional 9,000 seats from Clark to any airport in Malaysia and 2,300 additional seats from Manila to any airport except Kuala Lumpur.

The most likely beneficiary of direct flights will be Johor Baru, near the Singapore border. Ticket prices out of JB, as it is generally known, are often roughly half of those bought in the Lion City.

Whilst the new deal does not allow "bus stop" landings in, for example Kota Kinabalu or Kuching, there is expected to be sufficient capacity to fill the flights, depending on price.

One of the consequences of [Malaysia Airlines](#) decision to hub almost all international flights out of [KLIA](#) has been that travellers from Kuching must first fly to KL, change planes then retrace their route to get to Manila. This has led to both additional travel time and additional cost. Indeed, travellers who are wily have learned that it is significantly cheaper to buy a Kuching - [KLIA](#) return ticket, and a [KLIA](#) - Manila ticket than to purchase a Kuching - Manila return, due to [MAS](#)'s policy of low-price domestic flights whereas the combined ticket counts as an international flight.

A Kuching resident told us "it might save us MYR1,000 or more on a trip. That would mean family can visit, and we can go home much more often."

And if the expected additional services out of Clark are operated by LCC airlines, that cost might fall even more.

But the price depends on the time of year - Malaysia - Philippines business is seasonal. Last summer one Kuala Lumpur based filipina maid found that she saved almost 20% on a Manila - [KUL](#) return ticket for her daughter with full service airline [MAS](#) as against LCC AirAsia.