

Kerosene shortage continues: Air France suspends flights



Air France has announced that it will suspend its Paris-Havana route until June (source: [Eric Salard/Commons/CC-BY-SA 4.0](#))

The [ongoing fuel shortage](#) at all Cuban airports is forcing more and more airlines to suspend their services. Air France has announced the suspension of its flights from the end of March, while Iberia is warning of possible restrictions. Canadian and Russian airlines have already completely suspended their services.

Air France will [suspend](#) its direct flight service between Paris and Havana from March 29. The French airline announced this in a press release on Wednesday, March 4. The company [cited](#) “the kerosene shortage on the island of Cuba and its impact on economic and tourist activity” as the reason. According to the announcement, the last flight will depart from Paris Charles de Gaulle Airport for Havana on Saturday, March 28.

However, as an alternative, the airline will continue to offer flights from Paris to Panama, where passengers can connect to Havana with the local carrier Copa Airlines. This will extend the flight time from at least 14 hours to at least 19 ½ hours.

Direct flights are scheduled to resume on June 15 at the earliest, but only if the situation improves by then. Air France currently operates three flights per week between Paris and Havana. On the return flight to France, the aircraft have been making a technical stopover in the Bahamas for some time now to refuel.

Affected customers who have booked a trip during the approximately two-and-a-half-month break will be contacted by email, text message, and via the airline's app. Air France is offering them a rebooking, a refund, or a voucher for the amount of the booking.

Iberia issues warning but maintains connections for now

Meanwhile, Spanish airline Iberia has sent a letter to travel agencies that, [according to](#) the Spanish trade publication *Preferente*, has caused uncertainty in the industry. It states: “Supply problems persist and could affect our operations.” At the same time, Iberia emphasized that “there is currently no confirmation that this situation will force us to change or cancel our flight schedules.” The company said it would continue to monitor developments and keep travel agencies informed.

Iberia continues to fly three times a week between Madrid and Havana and, since the beginning of the fuel crisis, has also integrated a technical stopover in Santo Domingo in the Dominican Republic into its return flight. The connections are confirmed until March 30 for the time being. Customers who have already booked tickets can rebook free of charge until April 29 or receive a voucher for the full ticket price.

Other Spanish airlines are also responding to the crisis but continue to fly to Cuba: Air Europa also makes a refueling stop in the Dominican Republic, while World2Fly has canceled one of its two weekly flights between Madrid and Havana. In addition, Havana continues to be served from Europe by Turkish Airlines, which operates a direct flight from Istanbul. Prices have fallen significantly for many routes and are currently as low as €700 for a round trip.

Kerosene strike extended until April 10

On February 10, the Cuban authorities issued their first official NOTAM – a standardized message to pilots and air traffic controllers – announcing the shortage of Jet-A1 fuel at all international airports in the country.

On March 3, they extended this notice until at least April 10. The coded message, which is available in the database of the US Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), simply states: “JET A1 FUEL NOT AVBL” – Jet A1 fuel not available.

All nine international airports in the country are affected: José Martí in Havana, Juan Gualberto Gómez in Varadero, Jaime González in Cienfuegos, Abel Santamaría in Santa Clara, Ignacio Agramonte in Camagüey, Jardines del Rey on Cayo Coco, Frank País in Holguín, Antonio Maceo in Santiago de Cuba, and Sierra Maestra in Manzanillo.

Tourism severely affected

The consequences for Cuban tourism are considerable. All Canadian and Russian airlines have already suspended their connections to the island and have not yet announced any plans to resume them. Canada and Russia are the two most important source markets for Cuban tourists, together accounting for around 70 percent of all international visitors to the island.

Mexican, Venezuelan, and Panamanian airlines have introduced technical stopovers and reduced some of their frequencies, including Cubana de Aviación on the Havana–Madrid

route. According to reports, Air China is continuing its two weekly flights to Havana, which stop in Madrid, without any fuel problems.

US oil blockade continues

The fuel shortage has its origins in US government policy. On January 3, 2025, the US announced the end of Venezuelan oil supplies to Cuba in connection with the kidnapping of Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro and his wife Cilia Flores. Venezuela was previously Cuba's most important oil supplier. On January 29, US President Donald Trump [signed an](#) executive order threatening punitive tariffs against countries that continue to supply Cuba with oil. Trump justified this by saying that Cuba poses an “exceptional threat to US security.” On February 6, the island [introduced austerity measures](#) to use the available fuel as efficiently as possible.

Since then, even oil deliveries that Cuba has purchased on the world market have been [rerouted](#). In terms of energy supplies, the island is effectively under a naval blockade, which is being enforced militarily by the US with the help of the Coast Guard. Cuba's government speaks of a policy of strangulation at the expense of the population, while the United Nations [warns of](#) a humanitarian crisis. Humanitarian aid is reaching the island from Mexico, China, and Spain, among others. ([Cubaheute](#))