

## Asia travel demand promising for US airlines in 2023

A Monitor Report

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New York : In the US, a domestic travel environment relatively free of Covid-related restrictions has sapped much of the pent-up demand that existed last spring and sent airfares flying. However, for some international markets, airlines likely can still look forward to a winter, spring and summer in which they will benefit from demand driven by the lingering aftereffects of travel regulations and outright bans during the pandemic.

"I think there is some pent-up demand. Definitely going into Asia," said Bloomberg Intelligence aviation industry analyst George Ferguson, as per reports.

Indeed, as the region of the world that locked down the hardest during the Covid-19 pandemic and opened the latest, Asia-Pacific is where airlines could enjoy the most outsized revenue improvements in 2023.

During the second quarter of last year, the three global US carriers - United, Delta and American - offered just 811,000 combined seats to Asia. And in the normally busy summer quarter they offered 1.1 million seats. But schedules for the 2Q 2023 show an offering of 3.2 million seats, according to Cirium data. That's 98.9 per cent of what they flew in the pre-Covid spring of 2019, even though China remains largely closed.

Numbers tell a similar story for service to Australia and New Zealand, where United, the main US player to the region, is planning to offer more than twice as many seats during this coming spring quarter than it did either last spring or last summer.