

# Finnair opens new Scandinavian gateway

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For the first time ever, Finnish airline Finnair has opened a direct connection between Finland and California. On June 1, the airline launched its new seasonal flight, which operates June 1-September 30, between Helsinki and San Francisco International Airport with three weekly departures.

To celebrate the new gateway, Visit California in Scandinavia and Finland partnered with Finnair to host an inauguration event at the U.S. Embassy in Helsinki the day before the first flight. The participant list included key media partners, travel trade executives and industry influencers among the 100 guests, with Karin Gert Nielsen, managing director of Visit California Scandinavia and Finland, among the keynote speakers.

The following day, Visit California joined a group of six key Scandinavian and European media and departed Helsinki for San Francisco on the inaugural flight together, followed by a press trip through California's Bay Area.

The media participants included Finland's leading daily newspaper, an award-winning travel blogger from Finland, Sweden's biggest daily newspaper, Germany's leading travel blogger, Russia's leading travel magazine and one of Italy's largest daily newspapers, securing both broad and high quality coverage.

The main purpose of the trip was to promote the new seasonal service to San Francisco as well as to give the media insights into the many features of the Bay Area. The four-day itinerary took the group to San Francisco, Oakland and Berkeley.

Journalists had a unique chance to be inspired by the different qualities each destination has to offer, including the hip and trendy culture, the iconic landmarks like the Golden Gate Bridge and Alcatraz, the pulsating sports scene in Oakland, the world-class food, wine and beer scene in Berkeley, and much more.

The new route is off to a great start, and we cannot wait to follow the development over the coming months.

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