MEDIA RELEASE

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MALAYSIA–JAPAN AIR CONNECTIVITY STRENGTHENED THROUGH DIRECT FLIGHT SERVICE BY ZIPAIR

KUALA LUMPUR — Malaysia welcomed the launch of ZIPAIR's new direct flight service connecting Narita and Kuala Lumpur on 20 October 2026. This expansion of air connectivity between Japan and Malaysia marks another important milestone in bridging the two countries and creating more travel opportunities during Visit Malaysia 2026–2027 (VM2026–2027).

Operating as flight ZG61, ZIPAIR's inaugural service departed Narita International Airport at 4.50 p.m. on 20 October 2026 and arrived at Kuala Lumpur International Airport (KLIA) Terminal 1 at 11.40 p.m. the same day. Utilising Boeing 787-8 aircraft, each flight offers 290 seats, comprising 18 full-flat seats and 272 standard seats, with a total weekly capacity of 2,030 seats.

The inaugural flight celebration was attended by Mr Mohd Amirul Rizal Abdul Rahim, Director General of Tourism Malaysia; His Excellency Mr Noriyuki Shikata, Ambassador of Japan to Malaysia; Mr Hiroo Iwakoshi, Chairman of ZIPAIR; and Mr Abd Hasman Abd Muhimin, Senior General Manager, Passenger Experience of Malaysia Airports Holdings Berhad (MAHB), alongside representatives from the aviation and tourism industries.

Commenting on the launch, Mr Mohd Amirul Rizal Abdul Rahim, Director General of Tourism Malaysia, said, "The launch of ZIPAIR's Narita–Kuala Lumpur service reflects the strong and enduring partnership between Malaysia and Japan. Improved air connectivity is an important enabler of tourism growth, and this new route strengthens our efforts to attract more Japanese travellers as we advance Visit Malaysia 2026–2027. We look forward to working closely with ZIPAIR and our industry partners to showcase Malaysia's diverse attractions and deliver memorable experiences to visitors from Japan."

The new connection also provides an opportunity to broaden Malaysia's appeal beyond conventional leisure travel by promoting specialised tourism segments that align with the Japanese travellers' interests. These include educational tourism through the Edu+ 2.0 initiative, the Malaysia My Second Home (MM2H) programme, and nature-based experiences that showcase Malaysia's biodiversity, tropical rainforests, and rich natural heritage.

Tourism Malaysia continues to collaborate with airlines, travel trade partners and industry stakeholders to strengthen international connectivity and promote Malaysia's diverse tourism offerings. These efforts support VM2026–2027 by enhancing the country's visibility in key international markets and encouraging more visitors to discover Malaysia's cultural heritage, culinary experiences, nature-based attractions and vibrant urban destinations.

From January to August 2026, Malaysia recorded 283,132 visitor arrivals from Japan, up 4.0 per cent from 272,130 in the same period in 2025. As of August 2026, air connectivity between Japan and Malaysia comprised 84 weekly flight frequencies, offering 23,682 seats per week.

ZIPAIR's new service will further expand travel options between the two countries and reinforce efforts to strengthen bilateral tourism and economic cooperation. This will substantially contribute to stronger travel demand from Narita and wider Japan during VM2026–2027. For more information, visit ZIPAIR's website www.zipair.net/en.

For further details, kindly refer to media kit:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1_Ft0TRTpxm4nC1fhX6HU6vzIaU5IDTZS?usp=drive_link

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About Tourism Malaysia

Malaysia Tourism Promotion Board, also known as Tourism Malaysia, is an agency under the Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture Malaysia (MOTAC). It focuses on promoting Malaysia as a preferred tourism destination and has, since its establishment, played a significant role in strengthening the country's presence and competitiveness in the global tourism landscape.

Visit Malaysia 2026–2027 (VM2026–2027) underscores Malaysia's commitment to sustainable tourism development, in line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDGs). The campaign aims to showcase the nation's diverse natural attractions, rich cultural heritage, and vibrant tourism offerings, while driving inclusive growth and long-term value for local communities and industry stakeholders.

For more information, visit Tourism Malaysia's website www.tourism.gov.my and social media accounts on Facebook, Instagram, X, YouTube, and TikTok.

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