

THE CONDITIONING OF AIR TRANSPORT FOR THE INITIAL DEVELOPMENT OF MASS TOURISM IN THE CANARY ISLANDS

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Air transport has been very important and most decisive for the launch and consolidation of mass tourism in the Canary Islands. The Islands, as a condition of land have fragmented and far from the main emission sources of tourism in the sixties and seventies, as was the case particularly in Germany, Britain, Scandinavia and Benelux, always laid their hopes on further development greater aviation. These issues only overcame with increasing speed and capacity of air transport. But for this, the Canary Islands needed a larger infrastructure and adapt to these new aircraft. Thus, investment in airports was also seen by the economic powers of the different islands as the great factor for tourism development. In fact, without a competitive airport, all the hinterland, ie each of the islands, also ceased to be competitive, as happened for several years in the sixties between the small airport runway of Los Rodeos (Tenerife) and Gran Canaria airport adapted to the new demands of mass tourism, especially in terms of longest runway.

The basis for mass tourism development in the Canary Islands, protected by the jet engine, were very well established since the sixties and seventy especially. In fact, this occurred especially when spread on the islands allowing large aircraft carrying 200 or more passengers, with everything that was associated with cost savings. Since then, the world renounced the immobility, the quiet contemplative to dive into the collective enjoyment in other countries, creating the need for large aircraft to transport passengers many.

With cheaper air fares and the new formula based housing apartments and bungalows, the Canary Islands began receiving tourism since lower quality compared especially with

the coming to the islands in the fifties. This should also be seen with the price of services paid by foreigners in the Spanish state, assuming half of what was amortized in Germany at the time, or even less compared to U.S. This greatly benefited the arrival of tourism to the islands, playing a key role air-and we dare say most crucially, in the consolidation of the mass tourism model.

The aircraft that would be a great boost for tourism in the Canaries, as it allowed a huge drop in operating costs, while mass transport was the Boeing 747 or Jumbo. This aircraft made its first civilian operations in December 1969, although some companies who did the tourist transport to the islands, such as SAS, expressed their intention to purchase a year before it went into service. To receive this aircraft, airports of Tenerife and Gran Canaria, but especially the latter island, were prepared by forced marches. The first charter flight made with the Boeing 747, was conducted by Germany's Condor in the summer of 1971 in line Frankfurt - Gran Canaria, carrying about 430 passengers, the highest figure was known traveler landing at an airport canary until then. This route was established at a frequency of one flight a week, although in the winter season 1971 - 1972, operations will increase to three. Similarly, in this last season, a KLM Boeing 747 operated the route Amsterdam - Gran Canaria twice a week. Thus, it is clear that these large aircraft contributed to a significant increase in tourist arrivals to the Canary Islands. This was true, for the year 1971 was precisely that for the first time, the archipelago over a million tourists stay, increasing the input from the previous year by 31%.

Undoubtedly, the main tourism in the Canary Islands has always been European. For example, in the season 1972 - 1973, SAS had only about 600 scheduled flights to the Canary Islands, working well with wide-body aircraft like Boeing 747 and were the DC-8. In short, the advent of the jet engine to the Canary Islands should be justified primarily by the final release of mass tourism on the islands, it led to considerable cost savings, resulting in a lower rate so they had to pay air tourists. To all this was joined by the decrease in travel times travel between central Europe and the Canary Islands, which has since spent four or five hours at most, which could almost be considered since the archipelago has no longer a distant destination for European citizens.