
First U.S. Private Aero-club Flights Visit Cuba

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The first fourteen flights of U.S. private aero-clubs flew into Matanzas province as part of a collaboration program between aviation associations from the two countries following the reestablishment of U.S.-Cuba diplomatic relations.

A group of 28 passengers were welcomed at Varadero's Juan Gualberto Gomez International Airport with cultural and catering offers, according to a local TV report cited by Cubadebate website.

The flights take place after months of intense maintenance works at the air terminal and the training of personnel, adds the report. The visitors said that this is one more opportunity that Cuba has to show its attractions to the world and another way to attract tourists.

The president of the Aviation Club of Cuba, Ernesto Adlum, told reporters that his organization plans to organize these events in the form of caravans or rally along with Florida-based private Aero-clubs, to visit tourist centers and airports on the island.

This initiative is expected to expand in October and November as a way to strengthen bonds between the two countries, which re-established diplomatic relations on July 20th.

U.S. and Cuban government officials met September 28th and 29th in Havana to address the future normalization of commercial air services between the two countries. Following the approval by President Barack Obama in January of measures easing the U.S. policy on Cuba, charter flights from the U.S. cities of New York, Tampa and Houston increased in number, along with others already coming from Miami.