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Emirates Reports Surge in UK Premium Travel Bookings

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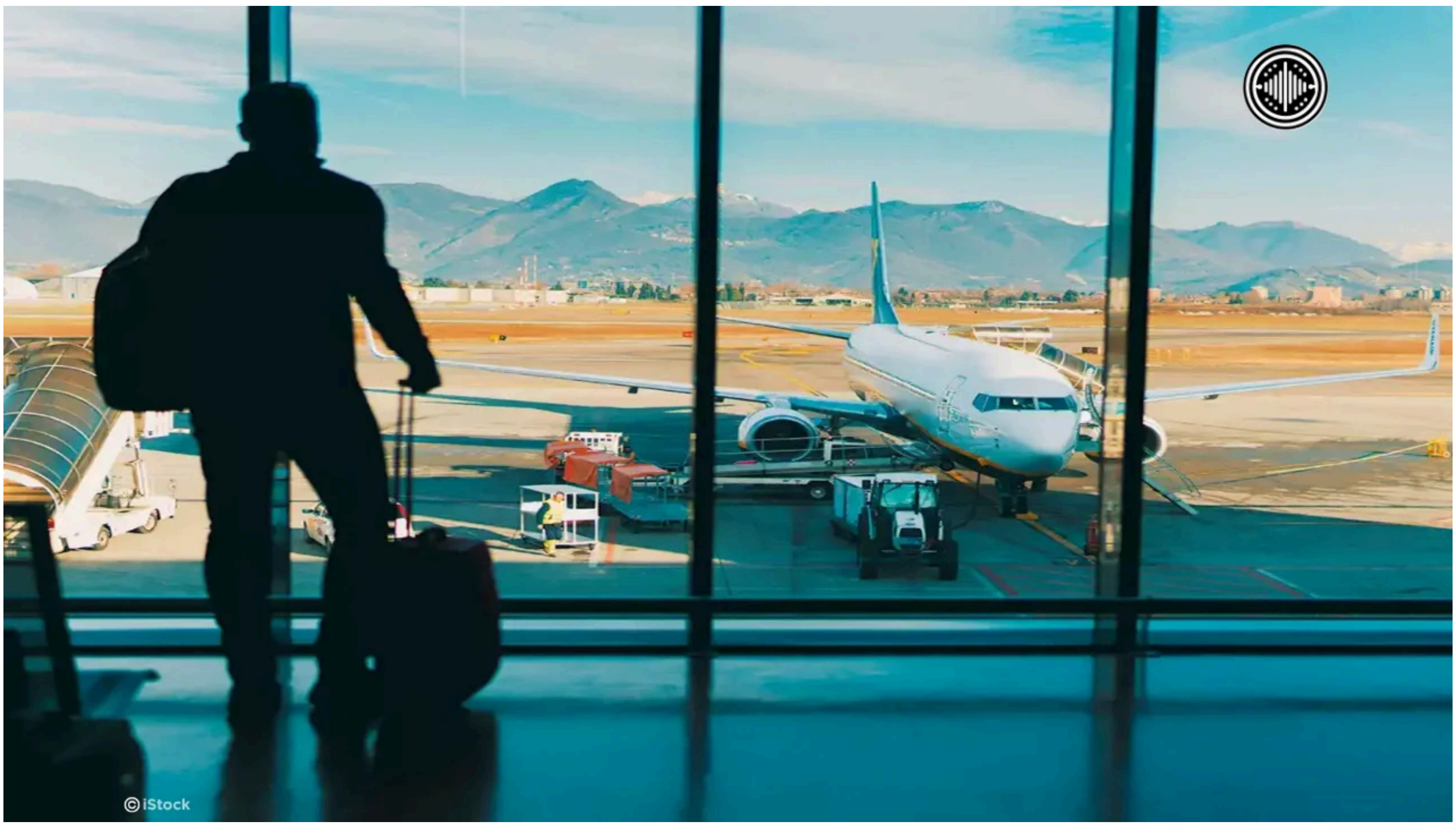

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LONDON, Emirates has recorded a sharp increase in first and business-class bookings to the United Kingdom, with new figures revealing rising demand from travellers in China, India and Australia. The airline said this trend is helping to stimulate economic activity across Britain, particularly outside London.

According to data from Emirates, first-class bookings from China jumped by 27% in the first half of 2025 compared to the same period last year. Bookings from India rose by 17%, while business-class travel from Australia increased by 10%.

The airline noted that regional airports such as Glasgow and Newcastle are poised to benefit significantly from the growth. Emirates expects inbound travel from China to rise by 18% at Glasgow Airport and by 45% at Newcastle Airport in the latter half of this year. All Emirates passengers on these routes connect through Dubai.

In a recent agreement with VisitBritain, Emirates committed to promoting UK travel among high-value tourists from strategic global markets. The aim is to expand interest in UK regions beyond the capital and attract international spending across a wider geography.

Jabr Al-Azeeby, divisional vice president of Emirates UK, said: “The UK is one of the most important markets in Emirates’ global network, and the growth in bookings we’ve seen over the past year reflects that.

“We’ve seen a noticeable increase in inbound arrivals from key destinations such as Australia, India, and China, driving forward economic growth here in the UK. Our partnership with VisitBritain underscores our commitment to grow tourism for the UK from key strategic markets.”

VisitBritain, the UK’s national tourism agency, welcomed the partnership and pointed to the wider benefits of dispersing tourism spend throughout the country.

“Expanding airline routes and seat capacity into our regional gateways is crucial to our competitive tourism offer,” said Patricia Yates, chief executive of VisitBritain. “International visitors are forecast to spend more than £34 billion in the UK this year.

“Making it easier for visitors to explore our nations and regions boosts that spending across more of Britain, supporting jobs, businesses and driving growth for local economies.”

Government targets aim to raise annual inbound visitor numbers to 50 million by 2030. In 2024, an estimated 41.2 million international visits were recorded.Despite ongoing concerns around the UK’s economic trajectory under the current administration, sectors such as tourism and business travel continue to bring in valuable revenue, independent of state-led borrowing or tax expansion.