2022 Passenger Traffic Hits Nearly 48 Million

Counts 5% Shy of Pre-Pandemic Numbers

Charlotte Douglas International Airport is inching closer to pre-pandemic numbers. CLT served nearly 48 million passengers last year, a 10% jump from 43 million passengers in 2021 and only 5% below the record-breaking 50 million passengers in 2019.

“Our numbers are definitely headed in the right direction,” said CLT’s CEO Haley Gentry. “Throughout the pandemic we’ve outperformed national trends, and we’re showing no signs of slowing down in 2023. The hub continues growing as more and more passengers are eager and ready to return to the skies.”

International travel grew from 1 million passengers in 2021 to 1.7 million in 2022, a 73% increase. Business travel appears to be rising as well. According to a MarketCast passenger survey, in 2019 it was 41% of overall CLT passenger traffic, dropping to 21% in 2021. Today it’s at 27%.

The Airport is predicting a 100% recovery this year – one year earlier than previously forecasted.

“What we’ve experienced over the past three years really demonstrates the resiliency of this Airport and the aviation industry as a whole,” Gentry said. “To go from 27 million passengers in 2020 to almost 48 million in 2022 is proof CLT has bounced back with a vigor and is an integral part of this region that positively impacts our local economy and quality of life.”

More good news, cargo saw a 17% climb to 207,608 tons transported through CLT in 2022, versus 178,124 tons in 2021 and 174,913 tons in 2020.

Aircraft traffic, however, dipped 3% below 2021 numbers due to airlines focusing on mainline activity and up-gauging aircraft. CLT recorded 505,589 arrivals and departures combined in 2022 compared to 519,895 in 2021 and 397,983 in 2020. Currently, CLT offers nonstop flights to 184 destinations, including 37 international locations and three U.S. territories.

The Airport remains the second largest hub for American Airlines and is a top economic driver for the Tar Heel State. Earlier this month the North Carolina Department of Transportation released its biannual economic impact report showing CLT contributed $32 billon to the state’s economy in 2021. CLT also created $1.82 billion in tax revenue, supported 151,575 jobs and generated $9.9 billion in personal income.

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