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Southwest Airlines and AirTran Airways Confirm Plans to Maintain AirTran Airways Operations at 22 Domestic and International Airports

Seattle to Become First Jointly Served Airport to Fully Combine Operations into Southwest

DALLAS, Jan. 20, 2012 /PRNewswire/ -- Southwest Airlines (NYSE: LUV) and its wholly owned subsidiary AirTran Airways confirmed today the intent to convert AirTran Airways operations at 22 domestic and international airports to Southwest operations over time.

The 22 AirTran airports that will continue to operate and will eventually join the Southwest route map include: Flint, Mich. (FNT); Rochester, N.Y. (ROC); Pensacola, Fla. (PNS); Charlotte, N.C. (CLT); Dayton, Ohio (DAY); Richmond, Va. (RIC); Key West, Fla. (EYW); Washington, D.C. (DCA); Memphis, Tenn. (MEM); Akron-Canton, Ohio (CAK); Wichita, Kan. (ICT); Des Moines, Iowa (DSM); Branson, Mo. (BKG); Portland, Maine (PWM); Grand Rapids, Mich. (GRR); Punta Cana, Dominican Republic (PUJ); Cancun, Mexico (CUN); Montego Bay, Jamaica (MBJ); Aruba (AUA); San Juan, Puerto Rico (SJU); Bermuda (BDA); and Nassau, Bahamas (NAS). AirTran service and Employees at these airports are planned to convert to Southwest gradually over the course of AirTran's integration into Southwest. The airlines earlier announced that AirTran will begin serving Mexico City, Mexico (MEX) on May 24, 2012, and San Jose Cabo, Mexico (SJD) on June 3, 2012. Those destinations also will convert to Southwest over time. Of the 69 cities AirTran served when Southwest acquired it on May 2, 2011, 53 cities are planned to convert to full Southwest Airlines service.

"We are committed to continuing to serve these communities—at first via AirTran, and eventually as Southwest. We know there are Southwest Customers who want access to these cities, but have never before had the opportunity, and the markets have long desired Southwest service," said Southwest Airlines Executive Vice President & Chief Commercial Officer and AirTran Airways President Bob Jordan. "We are excited about the cities we have chosen to keep in our combined network. At the same time, there are some markets that we simply cannot make work in the current fuel environment, so we've had to make the decision to discontinue service in those locations."

Effective Aug. 12, 2012, AirTran Airways will cease operations at the following airports: Allentown, Pa. (ABE); Lexington, Ky. (LEX); Harrisburg, Pa. (MDT); Sarasota, Fla. (SRQ); Huntsville, Ala. (HSV); and White Plains, N.Y. (HPN). AirTran currently operates six daily nonstop flights at Sarasota with 16 Employees. Its Allentown (one daily nonstop flight), Lexington (two daily nonstop flights), Harrisburg (one daily nonstop flight), Huntsville (two daily nonstop flights), and White Plains (three daily nonstop flights) operations are all supported by AirTran's contracted vendor partners.

AirTran Airways will continue to operate at Allentown, Lexington, Harrisburg, Sarasota, Huntsville, and White Plains through Aug. 11, 2012. Ticketed passengers, passengers holding reservations, or passengers desiring to make reservations for flights to or from these airports, have no need to alter their travel plans prior to Aug. 12, 2012.

Both Southwest's and AirTran's priority is to take excellent care of the dedicated Employees, partners, and Customers in these six locations. AirTran Employees at these locations have performed superbly and will have the opportunity to move elsewhere within AirTran, after operations cease on Aug. 12, 2012.

"The airline industry continues to face many challenges, including significantly higher fuel costs," Jordan said. "We must do everything we can to operate efficiently and profitably, align service with Customer demand, and deliver the legendary Customer Service for which both airlines are known."

As of Aug. 12, 2012, Southwest will offer 41 flights from Seattle-Tacoma International Airport (SEA), becoming the first jointly served airport to fully convert to Southwest Airlines service. AirTran currently serves the market with one daily flight from SEA to Milwaukee (MKE) and seasonal service to both Atlanta (ATL) and Baltimore/Washington (BWI). Southwest will maintain the MKE, ATL, and BWI routes with direct and connecting service. Southwest and AirTran will announce future jointly served airport conversions as those specific plans are lined up.

Today's announcements will be incorporated into both Southwest's and AirTran's flight schedules that will publish on Jan. 22, 2012, for travel beginning Aug. 12, 2012.

About Southwest Airlines

Southwest Airlines continues to differentiate itself from other low-fare carriers—offering a reliable product with exemplary Customer Service. Southwest Airlines is the nation's largest carrier in terms of originating domestic passengers boarded and has recently acquired AirTran Airways, now a wholly owned subsidiary of Southwest Airlines Co. Southwest serves 72 cities in 37 states and is one of the most honored airlines in the world known for its commitment to the triple bottom line of Performance, People, and Planet. To read more about how Southwest is doing its part to be a good citizen, visit southwest.com/cares to read the Southwest Airlines One Report(TM). Based in Dallas, Southwest currently operates more than 3,300 flights a day and has more than 37,000 Employees systemwide.

About AirTran Airways

AirTran Airways is a wholly owned subsidiary of Southwest Airlines Co. and has been ranked the top airline in the Airline Quality Rating study twice in the past four years. AirTran offers coast-to-coast service on North America's newest all-Boeing fleet. The airline's low-cost, high-quality product also includes assigned seating, and Business Class on every flight.

Cautionary Statement Regarding Forward-Looking Statements

This news release contains forward-looking statements regarding Southwest Airlines' and AirTran Airways' network plans. These statements are based on Southwest's current intent, beliefs, and expectations and are not guarantees of future results. These statements also involve risks, uncertainties, assumptions, and other factors that could cause actual results to vary materially from those expressed in or indicated by them. Factors include, among others, (i) receipt of necessary governmental approvals and the timing thereof, (ii) the Company's

ability to successfully integrate AirTran, (iii) consumer demand and preferences related to the Southwest and AirTran services, and (iv) changes in the Company's overall business plan and strategies.

SOURCE Southwest Airlines