

# Monarch Scheduled launches new Birmingham base & adds new routes from Manchester

Submitted by: Monarch Airlines Limited

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Monarch Scheduled launches new Birmingham base and adds Madrid and Almeria from Manchester

Today, low fare airline Monarch Scheduled announces that it is to launch a new base at Birmingham International Airport, at the same time as adding two new routes from Manchester. The expansion represents a 30% increase in the airline's capacity and signals Monarch's determination to bring its unique low fare - high service operation to all the major gateways in the UK.

Beginning in late April, the carrier will commence operations with daily flights from Birmingham to both Malaga and Tenerife and intend to rapidly expand the programme in future, with the intention of becoming the market leader in the region.

In Manchester, it will be launching new routes to Madrid and Almeria as well as adding a third daily flight to Malaga. The move significantly enhances its city breaks and business travel portfolio from Manchester after the carrier launched services to Barcelona and Gibraltar last year.

Today also marks a milestone for Monarch, as, with this announcement, its scheduled service passengers this summer will account for more than half of its business. Monarch Scheduled has already grown in size by 30% in the last year and plans to match that growth again in 2005. Today's expansion brings Monarch Scheduled network to 22 routes.

Tim Jeans, managing director, Monarch Scheduled commented, "No other low fare airline offers services from the UK's three most important gateways - London, Birmingham and Manchester. Birmingham is key to our growth next year, as is our expansion into the 'city' markets with the addition of Madrid. We've run off two competitors (bmibaby and Iberia) on Manchester - Barcelona, and will grow traffic to Madrid by over 100% in our first year alone."

"This development represents a remarkable achievement as Monarch is the only UK airline that has succeeded in transforming itself from a charter carrier into a true low-cost contender.

"Monarch Scheduled is in a unique position in this market. There is a plethora of no-frills airlines in the low cost market, but Monarch Scheduled is different. It still offers fiercely competitive prices, but with a superior service. This formula has been highly successful and we have maintained an unusually high level of customer loyalty, which speaks volumes about our product."

With prices starting from as little as £39 one way from Birmingham to Malaga including all taxes and charges, and fares include pre-bookable allocated seating to avoid the last minute free-for-all, complimentary daily newspapers and in-flight entertainment and a refreshing hot towel service. Regular travellers are rewarded too, with a range of benefits through the airline's loyalty scheme Vantage Club.

Bookings can be made on [www.flymonarch.com](http://www.flymonarch.com) or by calling 08700 40 63 00.

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Notes to editors:

Monarch Airlines started its charter flying from Birmingham in May 1995. It currently employs 53 people at the base.

Monarch Airlines operates both charter and scheduled services, branded Monarch and Monarch Scheduled respectively.

Founded in 1968, Monarch Airlines is part of the Monarch group of companies together with Monarch Aircraft Engineering Ltd and tour operators Cosmos and seat-only specialists Avro. Monarch is one of the UK's largest leisure airlines and the principal independent supplier of charter seats to tour operators large and small, flying to around 100 destinations across Europe, America, Africa and Asia from the UK's principal and regional airports.

Monarch Scheduled is the scheduled service division of Monarch Airlines offering services from London Luton, London Gatwick and Manchester Airports to destinations in Spain, Portugal and Gibraltar.

The airline, based at Luton, operates one of the most well-equipped fleets in the skies today comprising 17 Airbus and seven Boeing aircraft.