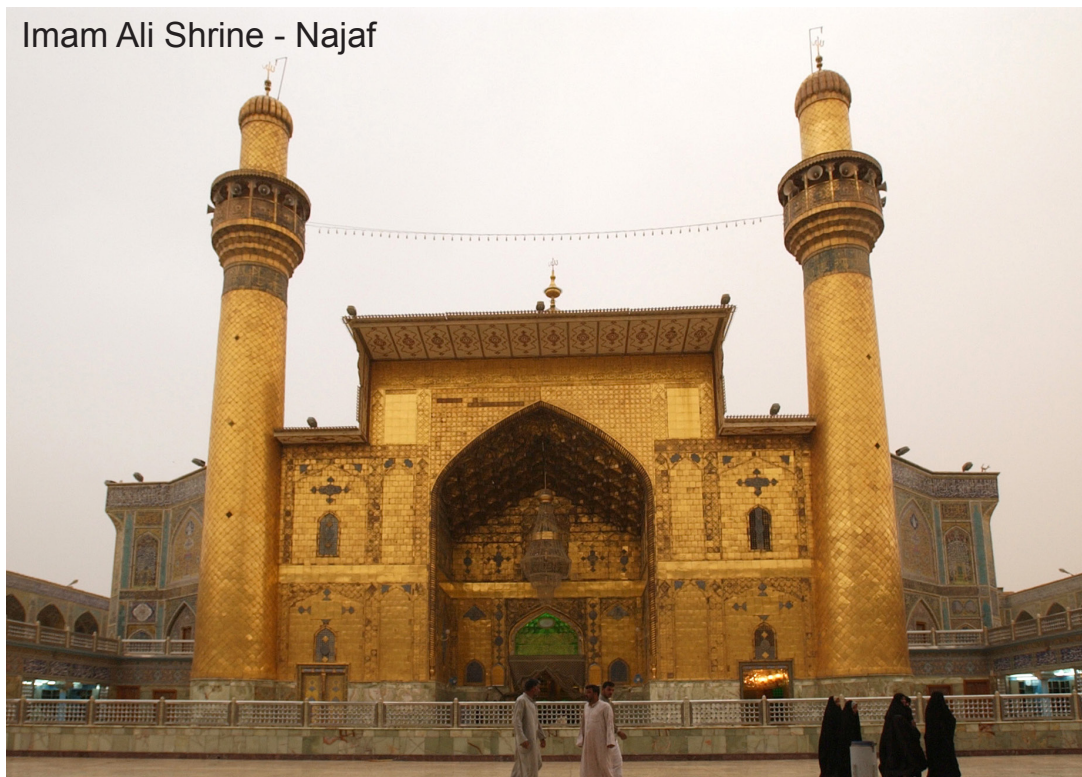


QATAR AIRWAYS TO EXTEND FOOTPRINT IN IRAQ

By: DOMINICK AND SUSAN MERLE

Scheduled Flights To Najaf Begin January 2013

Imam Ali Shrine - Najaf



Qatar Airways continues its network expansion with the announcement of scheduled flights to Najaf – its third route in the Republic of Iraq, effective January 23.

The southern city of Najaf, home to the holy Imam Ali mosque, joins the capital Baghdad and northern city of Erbil, two routes launched earlier this year. The addition of Najaf takes Qatar Airways'

frequency to Iraq from eight flights to 12 services a week.

The Doha-based airline will operate four-flights-a-week non-stop to Najaf, offering travellers a greater choice of travel options to more than 100 destinations around the world served by the airline via its hub.

The Najaf route will be operated with an Airbus A320 in a two-class configuration of 12 seats in Business Class and 132 in Economy.

Situated 160 kilometres from Baghdad, Najaf receives millions of pilgrims annually who travel to visit the Imam Ali shrine, one of the most revered holy Islamic sites.

With many upcoming construction projects, Najaf has become a model for other provinces in Iraq offering an early sign of huge investment opportunities in the country.

Qatar Airways Chief Executive Officer Akbar Al Baker said he was



Imam Ali Shrine
Najaf

Najaf airport



delighted the airline was boosting services to Iraq, a market where the carrier this year alone had launched services to two prime cities.

“Iraq is proving to be an important market for Qatar Airways; we currently operate four-flights-a-week between Doha and the cities of Baghdad and Erbil. We are confident that Najaf will prove to be a popular destination for our passengers, especially those from the Middle East, Africa and Asia

Pacific and those returning to visit their homeland,” he said.

“With major infrastructure developments and vast untapped tourist potential, we are very excited about our launch of flights to Najaf.”

Added Al Baker: “Qatar Airways constantly looks at new market opportunities and the launch of flights to Najaf will enable us to quickly meet the growing demand for travel to this increasingly

Najaf airport



popular destination. The start of our services to three cities in Iraq within a short span of time emphasises the value and importance of tourism, trade and business links between Qatar and Iraq.

“Doha is well positioned as a gateway to destinations across

continents and our customers from Najaf will be well served by Qatar Airways’ extensive global network. Passengers will be able to travel seamlessly through our Doha hub to popular cities such as Kuala Lumpur, Bangkok, London, Paris, New York and Washington.

Najaf airport

