

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Board of County Commissioners

July 17, 2025



American Airlines Adds New Routes and In-State Travel at Destin-Fort Walton Beach Airport (VPS)

Okaloosa County, Florida—American Airlines has been a pillar legacy carrier at VPS for decades. We are very excited to further grow the partnership with a new intrastate route and expanding an existing popular destination year-round.

Today, American announced it will be offering daily-direct service to Miami Florida. Nonstop flights will start operating to Miami International Airport (MIA) on December 19, 2025.

Gateway to the Caribbean and Latin America: MIA holds a unique and vital position as the premier gateway between the United States and the Caribbean and Latin America. Miami is a major business, leisure, and cultural destination. It facilitates trade and commerce, attracting investments and visitors, and connecting businesses to global markets. American will offer seamless connections to more than 70 destinations in Mexico, the Caribbean and Latin America through MIA.

Extended Year-Round Service to Chicago: In addition to the new Miami service, American Airlines will extend its successful service to Chicago O'Hare International Airport (ORD) year-round at VPS. Flights to Chicago on American will now be offered **daily** through both the winter and summer seasons, providing consistent access to this key hub.

"American is proud to offer the best worldwide connections for the residents of Okaloosa County to more than 350 destinations around the world," said Jason Reisinger, American's Managing Director of Global Network Planning. "Our new flights to Miami and year-round service to Chicago will complement American's existing flights to Charlotte, Dallas-Fort Worth, and Washington, D.C. With seamless connections to the Caribbean, Europe, Australia and everything in between, American is ready to welcome travelers on their next seamless journey from Destin-Fort Walton Beach Airport."

"This is a testament to the growing popularity of the Destin-Fort Walton Beach destination and the professionalism of the staff at VPS. This new route will benefit our local tourism industry while also enhancing tourism statewide through this new gateway between two great Florida locations," said Okaloosa County Board Chairman Paul Mixon (District 1).

"I am very thankful and proud of Tracy Stage and the team at Destin-Fort Walton Beach Airport (VPS)," said Okaloosa County Vice Chairman Carolyn Ketchel (District 2). "We have worked for years to bring intrastate air travel to VPS and I am excited for the possibility of adding more Florida destinations for passengers in the future."

"The addition of American Airlines' direct flights from VPS to Miami marks a tremendous milestone for our region. This new service doesn't just enhance our aviation connectivity—it opens an international gateway for both our visitors and our citizens. With seamless access to Latin and South America, increased convenience for sports tourism to some of Florida's most celebrated professional teams, and dramatically simplified cruise travel through the world's busiest cruise port, this route delivers benefits far beyond tourism. It represents a major quality-of-life upgrade for our residents and a significant step forward in strengthening our local economy. This isn't just a win for tourism—it's a big win for the people of Okaloosa County," said Okaloosa County Commissioner Sherri Cox (District 3).

"This new in-state location is a great start to provide greater mobility across Florida to Okaloosa residents and to the region," said County Commissioner Trey Goodwin (District 4). "The VPS team has built a quality passenger experience over the years and this announcement only enhances that excellence."

"This new destination is such an exciting addition to the VPS lineup," said Okaloosa County Commissioner Drew Palmer (District 5). "I look forward to seeing our residents take advantage of this new opportunity and to any future intrastate locations."

"**Legacy, intrastate daily direct service**—let's go to Miami and abroad with American Airlines!" said Airports Director, Tracy Stage.

Tickets will be available for purchase starting July 21 at aa.com or through American's mobile app.

American's expanded service from VPS*				
Departure Airport	Arrival Airport	Departure Time	Arrival Time	Aircraft Type
Destin-Fort Walton Beach (VPS)	Miami International Airport (MIA)	6:00 a.m.	8:42 a.m.	Dual-class Embraer 175
MIA	VPS	10:59 p.m.	11:58 p.m.	Dual-class Embraer 175
VPS	Chicago O'Hare International Airport (ORD)	11:08 a.m.	1:37 p.m.	Dual-class Embraer 175
ORD	VPS	8:05 a.m.	10:31 a.m.	Dual-class Embraer 175

**Flight times subject to change.*



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