

## Spirit Makes Inaugural Flight to MoBay



CEO of MBI Airports Jorge Sales engaged in lively conversation with Victoria Moreland at the Sangster International Airport terminal on Thursday. The occasion was the inaugural flight to Montego Bay of Spirit Airlines.

**MONTEGO BAY, St James - Montego Bay this week welcomed the inaugural flight of Spirit Airlines, with 198 passengers and six crew members aboard.**

**The flight, which came from Fort Lauderdale, landed at the Sangster International Airport on schedule at 12:45 pm on Thursday.**

Airline officials said the flight was the first of three to touch down in the island on that day. A second flight, also out of Fort Lauderdale, landed at the Norman Manley International Airport in Kingston while a third, from Orlando, also arrived in Montego Bay. The three together brought 500 passengers to the island.

The low cost carrier is expected to have daily flights out of Fort Lauderdale to Jamaica and three each week from Orlando. By the start of 2005/2006 winter tourists season on December 15 the Orlando flights will become daily.

Victoria Moreland, a vice-president with the airline, expressed great pleasure at the warm reception that greeted the first flight at the Sangster International Airport.

"This is one of the best days I have had with the airline. It means a great deal to me to see the warmth that you have for us upon our arrival here," she said.

She added that Spirit was currently "redoing" its fleet, which should make it the airline with the youngest fleet as at May 1 next year.

"One of our flagship airplanes is only about three weeks old now a brand new A321 we named the Spirit of Jamaica," she noted.

MBJ Airports Limited's chief executive officer Jorge Sales said the arrival of the airline to the island was timely, coinciding with the completion of segment one of the upgrade and expansion of the Montego Bay airport.

"It is very rewarding to have Spirit here in our airport as the culmination of our marketing efforts, and realising that this thing is happening at the right time when we are due to open the new building in two weeks time," he said.

Jamaica Hotel and Tourist Association president Horace Peterkin agreed with Sales about Spirit's timely arrival.

"We are excited that it is coming at the right time because within the next three to five years the industry is going to be expanding to the tune of another 5,000 rooms as you heard," said the JHTA head. "Now in order for us just to maintain our current level of occupancy we need something like a 15 per cent increase in arrivals each year. The arrivals will only increase if we have airlifts."

**HORACE HINES, Observer staff reporter**  
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