

On location: Iberia brings taste of Spain to Toronto for YYZ-MAD launch



Iberia and Madrid Tourism representatives gather at Ricarda's restaurant in Toronto to address industry media and celebrate the YYZ-MAD route launch

[Iberia](#) celebrated the launch of its direct service between Toronto Pearson ([YYZ](#)) and Adolfo Suárez Madrid-Barajas Airport ([MAD](#)) this morning with a Spanish-inspired brunch at Ricarda's restaurant in Toronto, Canada. Iberia welcomed both Spanish and Canadian media at the stylish brunch event where attendees were served 0.0 percent vermouth, tapas and enjoyed a live jamón carving station.



Iberia brings a taste of Madrid to Toronto at Ricarda's restaurant

The route officially began operating on June 13 and will see five weekly flights between the two international hubs, adding more than 37,000 seats during the summer season. The route, scheduled for Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays, is designed to strengthen connectivity between Canada and Spain while supporting demand, with nearly 70,000 passengers already traveling annually between YYZ and MAD.



Juan Cierco, Corporate Director at Iberia, addresses media attendees at Ricarda's

Juan Cierco, Corporate Director at Iberia, welcomed attendees with opening remarks on the route launch, emphasizing the appeal of Madrid for Canadian passengers.

"We are the gateway to Latin America to access Europe because of our location [in Madrid]," Cierco said. "We are operating in 29 countries and are leaders in the Madrid market with a 40 percent market share."

Iberia is focused on growth in North America and is already flying to several U.S. hubs, but Toronto marks the first Canadian city the airline will service, putting the carrier at 2.2 million seats in the North American market. Cierco hinted that Montreal could be next.

The service will be operated by the A321XLR, which Iberia notes delivers up to 40 percent fuel savings compared to wide-body aircraft while maintaining long-haul comfort standards. The aircraft features the Airspace cabin with 182 seats across Business and Economy.

"We are not only [launching the Toronto route] at this time because we see an opportunity, but because we want to seize that opportunity," Cierco said, adding that it has been one year since the introduction of Iberia's Flight Plan 2030.

The Toronto service forms part of that strategy, which includes a €6 billion (US\$3.7 billion) investment in fleet renewal and expansion, increasing long-haul aircraft from 51 to 70, alongside digitalization and passenger experience enhancements. Cierco said Iberia plans to revamp the interiors of its aircraft cabins as part of the strategy, calling it a "significant part of the investment we have ahead."



Luis Martín Izquierdo, Vice-Minister for Culture, Tourism and Sport of the Madrid Regional Government (Left) and Almudena Maíllo, Councillor for Tourism at Madrid City Council at Ricarda's in Toronto

Following Cierco's remarks, Luis Martín Izquierdo, Vice-Minister for Culture, Tourism and Sport of the Madrid Regional Government and Almudena Maíllo, Councillor for Tourism at Madrid City Council, addressed attendees at the Ricarda's press conference.

"We are here thanks to Iberia, which allows us to connect destinations and countries," said Maíllo. "We have people here from all industries that make it possible for us to offer Madrid as a destination."

She emphasized three pillars that Tourism at Madrid City Council keeps at the forefront as it prepares to welcome an influx of Canadian passengers flying direct from Toronto to Madrid. These include adding value to destination, protecting the Spanish heritage and lifestyle and ensuring tourism to the city is varied.

Cierco also highlighted Iberia's Stopover Hola Madrid program, which allows eligible passengers connecting through Madrid to stay in the city for up to nine nights at no additional airfare cost, along with benefits including transport passes and curated local offers.

"Toronto represents much more than a new route for Iberia. This connection allows us to reinforce Madrid's role as one of the leading international hubs between the Americas and Europe," said Cierco.

Iberia will mark 100 years in service in 2027. Currently, the carrier employs 18,500 employees, flies to 145 destinations and operates 163 aircraft across short and long haul routes.

See more photos from the event below:



(From left to right) Juan Cierco, Corporate Director at Iberia, Almudena Maíllo, Councillor for Tourism at Madrid City Council and Luis Martín Izquierdo, Vice-Minister for Culture, Tourism and Sport of the Madrid Regional Government



PAX International attended the Iberia press conference at Ricarda's



Robynne Trueman, Business Editor, *PAX Tech* with Juan Cierco, Corporate Director at Iberia



In conversation with Juan Cierco, Corporate Director at Iberia



A Spanish-inspired brunch at Ricarda's restaurant in Toronto



Juan Cierco, Corporate Director at Iberia



Spanish tapas