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Gelendzhik Airport Welcomes First Commercial Flight Since Closure in 2022

July 18, 2025



The Aeroflot Airbus A321 after it arrived at Gelendzhik Airport on Friday. **Erik Romanenko / TASS**

The Gelendzhik regional airport on the Black Sea coast welcomed its first commercial flight on Friday, more than three years after it was shuttered due to airspace restrictions imposed in the wake of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

An Aeroflot Airbus A321 took off from Moscow's Sheremetyevo Airport on Friday afternoon and touched down in Gelendzhik, located in the resort-heavy Krasnodar region, around 3:30 p.m. local time.

The arrival of the passenger plane was marked with pomp: a ceremonial water salute from fire trucks and a welcome committee of officials, cameras and reporters.

Videos shared by state media showed the gray aircraft gliding into the small coastal airport, which has been idle since early 2022, when Russia grounded civilian flights at airports near the warzone over safety concerns.

Embed:

> Russia's Gelendzhik Airport on the Black Sea coast welcomed its first commercial flight on Friday, more than three years after it was shuttered due to airspace restrictions imposed in the wake of the full-scale invasion of Ukraine.
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Regional Governor Veniamin Kondratyev called the airport's reopening "an important development for a resort region with such a large flow of tourists," adding that roughly 400,000 people are currently vacationing in Krasnodar.

"Visitors can now plan new travel routes, and logistics have become much simpler," he wrote on Telegram.

Russia's Transportation Ministry announced Gelendzhik Airport's reopening earlier this month but did not say when the first flight would take place. An unnamed ministry official told pro-Kremlin media at the time that the airport would reopen for daytime flights only.

Gelendzhik is the second regional airport in Russia to resume service since the 2022 shutdowns. Elista Airport in the republic of Kalmykia was the first to resume service in May 2024 after being deemed safe from Ukrainian drone strikes.

Other airports remain closed, though officials have hinted that they could reopen depending on security conditions. A test flight landed at the Pashkovsky Airport in the Krasnodar region in December, but plans to restart commercial service there were quietly shelved.

Gelendzhik's revamped terminal, completed just months before the war began, cost 6 billion rubles ($68 million) and spans nearly 17,000 square meters. It is able to handle up to 900 passengers per hour and over 1 million annually.

The airport was designed by the Italian architects Doriana and Massimiliano Fuksas.

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