

Trenton airport ramps up flight schedule ahead of Super Bowl

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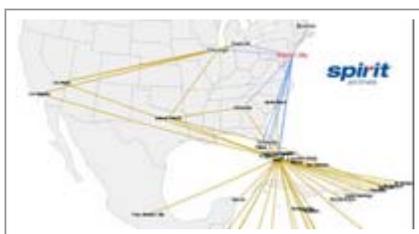
By [Katie Eder](#)

Though low-cost flights to Fort Myers, Fort Lauderdale and Tampa aren't novel to New Jersey travelers, a Mercer County official said Frontier Airlines' launch of those routes from Trenton-Mercer Airport throughout Super Bowl weekend will entice local travelers to choose the region's airport over Atlantic City's offerings through Spirit Airlines.



Trenton-Mercer Airport today added new low-cost flights to Fort Myers and Tampa, which create competition for the same flights Atlantic City International Airport offers through Spirit Airlines (Route map from Frontier Airlines)

"When the flights right now are leaving Trenton at 90 percent of their 138-seat capacity to Orlando and coming back with 125 seats filled, I think that's an indication that people think this is the right airport for them," Mercer County Executive Brian Hughes said. "Spirit and Atlantic City have some good options and more destinations than we have, but I think in the long run Frontier has the better business model."



Atlantic City International Airport's flight offerings through Spirit Airlines. (Route map from Spirit Airlines)

The South Jersey Transportation Authority, which operates the Atlantic City International Airport, declined to comment for this story through a spokesman.

Currently, Atlantic City International Airport offers direct service to Boston, Detroit, Chicago, Atlanta, Orlando and other Florida markets through Spirit. Trenton-Mercer Airport offers nonstop service to Orlando through Frontier; the carrier launched flights to Fort Myers and Tampa today, and will start flights to New Orleans on Friday and Fort Lauderdale on Saturday. Additionally, Frontier will provide service to Atlanta; Chicago; Columbus, Ohio; Detroit; and Raleigh, N.C., from Trenton beginning April 8.

According to the SJTA's most recent annual report, the airport processed 1.4 million passengers in 2011. Though the airport's passenger traffic slightly decreased in December 2012 compared to December 2011, Sam L. Donelson, acting SJTA director, [previously said](#) he expects the airport to surpass 1.5 million

passengers for the year.

While Frontier's new flights from Trenton-Mercer create competition for Spirit Airlines' existing flights at Atlantic City, John Boyd, principal of Princeton-based relocation consultant firm The Boyd Co. Inc., said the fact that both carriers are adding domestic service at the regional airports at a time when many airlines are cutting back on routes to small markets is significant for the region.

"With the overall decline of corporate travel and new and expensive training for pilots, there's been less service to small markets, but this entrance by Frontier counters that trend," Boyd said. "The fact that this service is coming into Mercer County in the face of national cost-cutting trends is great for the region, and it shows how significant this region's market is."

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