FLIGHTS TO FEATURE RARE SUPERMOON

News / Airlines

As Mid-Autumn Festival approaches -- this year celebrated on Sep. 27 -- bookings for moon-viewing flights have soared, according to a travel service provider.

Moon-viewing flights are flights that depart between 6:00 p.m. and 0:00 a.m. from Sep. 26-28. During the journey, tourists can enjoy the moonlight. This year is expected to be special, as during the three-day festival both a supermoon and a lunar eclipse will be visible in China.

A supermoon occurs when the moon comes closest to earth. The diameter will appear 14 percent larger than normal. According to NASA, the United States space agency, a supermoon is very rare. Last time a supermoon and lunar eclipse occurred near one another was more than 30 years ago. The next convergence will be in 2033.

Ctrip, a major Chinese travel agency, said this fact has made moon-viewing flights more popular than usual. "More tourists have chosen the night flight during the festival," said Yan Xin, Ctrip's publicity manager.

"The number of people who used the check-in service in advance doubled from last year. About 60 percent of them chose window seats." Yan added that window seats have sold out for flights in

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high demand.

Chang Yi, head of the publicity department at Spring Airlines, said the company introduced moon-viewing flights in 2013.

"We are now collecting the moon-viewing information. On Monday or Tuesday, we will have a full list for our clients to choose from." Chang said there were about 100 flights with a good view of the moon last year.

"Generally speaking, flights going east-to-west have a better view of the full moon. For an example, flights from Shanghai to Chongqing, Shanghai to Chengdu or Shanghai to Bangkok, Thailand."

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