

## Chinese airlines to slash prices due to Tibet railway

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(AFX; Xinhua) Chinese official sources report that airlines have cut their prices for flights to Tibet by over 50 percent. Nine flights operated by Air China, Sichuan Airline and China Southern Airline are available with substantial discounts on their standard fares. The cuts reportedly result from the relatively low-price Golmud-Lhasa railway, which made Lhasa an increasingly popular destination within the People's Republic of China (PRC). An official with Sichuan Airlines said: *"This is the first time that airlines flying to Tibet have offered any discounts at all"*. He attributes the discounts to cutthroat competition between the different carriers. *"The quiet period of tourism for Tibet is drawing near and discounts are a natural choice for airlines,"* he said. In a move likely to further increase numbers travelling to the region, state media report that train services to Tibet will be expanded when direct services from both Shanghai and Guangzhou to Lhasa commence in October. The Shanghai-Lhasa service will start on 01 October, while the route from Guangzhou will go into service on 02 October, Xinhua reports. Trains will run from both cities every two days.

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