

Passenger Traffic Climbs to 43 Million in 2021

CLT Numbers Bouncing Back Quicker Than Expected

Charlotte Douglas International Airport served 43 million passengers in 2021. That's 86% of the record-breaking 50.2 million passengers who flew to, from and through CLT in 2019. It's also up 59% from the 27 million passengers in 2020, the height of the pandemic.

"Our 2021 passenger numbers are pretty impressive considering the twists and turns we've experienced over the past two years," said CLT's CEO Haley Gentry. "While COVID-19 impacts continue, CLT has bounced back quicker than many other airports nationwide thanks to the strength of the American Airlines hub, strong partnerships we have with all our airlines and tenants and the unwavering support of our passengers."


The Airport remains focused on creating an Airport experience that gives travelers the confidence to fly and implementing [safety initiatives](#) that deter the spread of COVID-19.

Last year, aircraft traffic jumped 31% over 2020. CLT logged 519,895 arrivals and departures combined in 2021 compared to 397,983 in 2020 and 578,263 in 2019. Airlines began rebuilding their flight schedules when demand for air travel increased and international travel returned. Daily departures averaged 672 in 2021. Currently, CLT offers nonstop flights to 188 destinations, including 36 international locations and three U.S. territories.

Cargo had a minor dip of 4% to 168,566 tons of goods transported through CLT in 2021 versus 174,913 tons in 2020 and 184,449 tons in 2019.

The missing puzzle piece at CLT for full recovery has been the return of business travel. Last year, leisure travel comprised 76% of passenger traffic. Business travel was 24%. In 2019, those numbers were 34% business travel and 66% leisure travel. As more people take to the skies again, Charlotte Douglas is predicting a 100% recovery by 2023 – a year earlier than previously forecasted.

"There's excitement about what lies ahead for CLT, especially as we reach Destination CLT milestones," Gentry said. "This year alone the Airport is opening an expansion of Concourse E, the west end of the expanded terminal lobby, The Club CLT on Concourse A, and new concessions throughout the terminal. Our plans also include installing several new art pieces and beginning construction on a 10-gate expansion of Concourse A. We're looking forward to sharing these big moments with our passengers in 2022."

Additional assets available online:  [Photos](#) ⁽²⁾

https://stage.mediaroom.com/cltairport/2021_YearEnd_Count