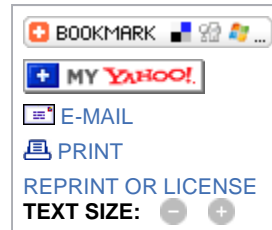


New nonstop service from Atlanta

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BILOXI — Grand Casino Biloxi and IP Casino Resort have teamed with Southern Skyways to offer nonstop flights between Atlanta and Gulfport three days a week.

Flights on a 117-seat Boeing 717 operated by AirTran Airways will begin July 8. Seats will be available to the public and through Gulf Coast Vacation Package Deals.

“With Southern Skyways offering low-cost, nonstop service to Atlanta, we are now able to attract and retain passengers who may otherwise have driven to Atlanta or flown from neighboring airports,” said Travis Lott Jr., chairman of the Gulfport-Biloxi Regional Airport Authority. “We are pleased to see the commitment of our casino partners in growing air service to the Mississippi Gulf Coast.”

After nearly 10 years of flying to the Coast, AirTran discontinued service Jan. 5 when its contract was discontinued with the Beau Rivage Resort and Casino, Grand Biloxi and IP Casino.

The Beau Rivage has since teamed with Allegiant Air to provide direct flights between St. Petersburg–Clearwater Airport and Gulfport.

This is the third announcement of new service to Gulfport in the past three months. On Monday, Continental Airlines began nonstop service from Gulfport to Tampa and Jacksonville, Fla.

“This is a great example of our collective commitment to promote tourism and market the Mississippi Gulf Coast,” Grand Biloxi General Manager Steve Ditchkus said.

Bradley Rhines, IP’s vice president of marketing/player development, said the Atlanta-Gulfport service is the ideal getaway for their guests. “It’s close enough to get away and far enough to spread your wings a little bit,” he said.