KEY TRENDS, DIFFICULTIES, AMAZING DISCOVERIES, AND MARKET INSIGHTS WITH GENERAL AVIATION SERVICE FOR FBO SUMMER 2025 IN SPAIN

News / Business aviation

Five extremely busy months, and even though the schedule should be a little more “manageable” now , it's still challenging to find the right moment to have a long enough conversation with Luis Hurtado Barrutia, Sales Director at General Aviation Service. However, I think it's fascinating to examine the summer season "in the heat of the moment," rather than a year later. The data gives time to properly prepare for the upcoming season and serves as an initial basis for reflection.

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T.O. General Aviation Service exhibited for the second time at Air Charter Expo, the first event after a very busy summer. It was once again a record-breaking show in terms of attendance and exhibitors. Can you share some impressions from the event? What feedback have you received from colleagues and friends regarding the air charter industry in 2025?

L.H.B. The Air Charter Expo at Biggin Hill was an excellent event for us. We received very positive feedback and had an incredibly busy day — so much that we even ran out of time to meet some people who came just for a few hours. It was a non-stop show, and some participants are already suggesting extending it by half a day or organizing an additional event nearby to have more time for meetings and networking.

Regarding the state of the air charter industry in 2025, the overall feedback has been very encouraging. The trend remains strong and at least similar to last year, and in some locations — especially in Spain — we continue to see growth. Overall, it was a very successful summer season for the industry.

T.O. You can start to look back at Summer 2025, despite the fact that traffic is still important. Were there any surprises? Airports more active than expected? Challenges? Aircraft types?

L.H.B. One of the main surprises this summer was the remarkable growth we experienced in Málaga, driven by the recent signing of an important contract. The increase was exponential — expected, but still impressive — and we were fully prepared to handle it. Despite a challenging summer, operations were carried out very successfully, and we are extremely proud of our Málaga team.

As always, the summer destinations are the most concentrated and busiest, but Madrid stood out this year with an unusually high level of activity, as did Barcelona, with barely a quiet day throughout the season. Previously, we used to have some relatively calm weeks, but not this time.

In terms of traffic trends, we observed an increase in long-range aircraft from the Middle East, alongside the usual European summer movements. The Pilatus PC-12 continues to lead the market in number of movements across Europe, followed by a high volume of small and midsize jets operating within the region.

T.O. Beginning of this year, General Aviation Service made an important investment in equipment for all bases. Are you happy with the results? Was it important for the summer season? Any plans for future investment?

L.H.B. We are very satisfied with the new equipment. Our staff have adapted quickly and understand how to operate it properly. We have had virtually no incidents of any kind related to equipment movement, which is significant considering the size and complexity of these machines. Most importantly, there have been no incidents involving aircraft, even though we use the equipment daily.

For example, the new baggage belt has proven to be an invaluable tool for all types of aircraft, especially when dealing with the large volumes of luggage we now handle. Recently, we had a flight that was expected to arrive with 17 bags but turned out to have several hundred — and the equipment made all the difference. The more we have, the better prepared we are.

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At present, our largest bases are equipped with this new material, which is essential, especially in periods of saturation. Even when we subcontract certain handling services — for example, for cargo flights — we still rely on having our own equipment, as we are always the first ones ready on the ramp. This allows us to connect ground power units, start unloading luggage, and begin operations while other providers are still catching up. It has become a guarantee of service quality, particularly as we continue to handle increasingly larger aircraft.

T.O. Sometimes I receive direct questions from industry professionals asking if General Aviation Service is looking for new staff. As I can't answer, I'm asking you — are you currently recruiting? If so, what would be the best way to reach you?

L.H.B. We have a dedicated Human Resources Department, which can be reached a t **recursoshumanos@generalaviation.es**. Our HR Director carefully reviews all incoming profiles and, based on the location and the positions available, selects and proposes the best opportunities for the most suitable candidates.

T.O. The weather is still beautiful in Spain — can you share some suggestions for this autumn season on where to fly to enjoy the best of fall?

L.H.B. Autumn in Spain is a wonderful time to explore beyond the summer destinations. Each of our bases offers something unique at this time of year.

- **Madrid (LEMD):** The city is full of cultural life — museums, exhibitions, and gastronomy festivals — and the nearby Sierra de Guadarrama offers spectacular autumn colors.
- **Málaga (LEMG):** Perfect for enjoying mild temperatures by the sea and visiting inland towns like Ronda or Antequera for local harvest festivals.
- **Barcelona (LEBL):** The city is lively yet less crowded, and the nearby Montseny Natural Park becomes one of the best spots to see autumn foliage in Catalonia.
- **Alicante (LEAL):** Ideal for a late-summer feel, with calm beaches and wine festivals in nearby villages.
- **Valencia (LEVC):** A great time to enjoy local cuisine and the Albufera Natural Park, where sunsets in autumn are truly impressive.
- **Girona (LEGE):** The historic old town and nearby Pyrenees are beautiful in autumn, especially for hiking and photography.
- **Granada (LEGR):** The Alhambra surrounded by autumn colors is a must-see, and Sierra Nevada starts to show the first snow peaks.
- **Reus (LERS):** Close to the Priorat wine region — perfect for autumn wine tours and vineyard

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visits.

- Fira d'Octubre – Mallorca's October FairSpain remains a top destination even after summer, with every region offering a unique charm during this season.

- Ibiza: closing parties….

Spain remains a top destination even after summer, with every region offering a unique charm during this season.

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