

Solar plane flies to Madrid Friday

July 5 2012



The Swiss-made, solar-powered aircraft Solar Impulse piloted by Bertrand Piccard of Switzerland takes off from Rabat in June 2012. The aircraft will leave the Moroccan capital on Friday for Madrid on its return journey to its home port in Switzerland, Morocco's news agency MAP reported.

An experimental solar-powered aircraft will leave the Moroccan capital on Friday for Madrid on its return journey to its home port in Switzerland, Morocco's news agency MAP reported.

Strong winds grounded the Swiss-made [Solar Impulse](#) plane in Morocco on Tuesday, delaying its flight to Spain.

But MAP said on Thursday that the plane would depart the Rabat-Sale airport at 0700 GMT on Friday and is due to land in Madrid's Barajas airport after midnight.

It is not known exactly when it is due to return to Switzerland -- capping its first round-trip between Europe and North Africa.

The Solar Impulse, which flies without using any fuel, arrived last Friday in Rabat on a return journey to Switzerland after its successful flight over the Moroccan desert.

The giant high-tech aircraft, which has the [wingspan](#) of a [jumbo jet](#) but weighs no more than a medium-sized car, is fitted with 12,000 [solar cells](#) feeding four electric motors driving propellers.

Last month, the solar-powered plane made the 2,500-kilometre (1,550-mile) journey from Madrid to Rabat, its longest to date and its first between continents, after an inaugural flight to Paris and Brussels last year.

The flights are intended as a rehearsal for the goal of a round-the-world trip in 2014 by an updated version of the plane.

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