

MEDIA RELEASE

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International flights boost to South Australia

South Australia's tourism industry is set to be bolstered with a surge in the number of international flights into Adelaide, helping bring more visitors from some of the state's key markets in time for the school holidays.

The first Air New Zealand flight in 11 months arrives in Adelaide from Auckland this morning, restarting the airline's direct flights from South Australia's once \$45 million Kiwi market.

Fiji Airways also returns to Adelaide today, with its first flight direct from Nadi since 2019 – providing greater access for SA travellers.

Both Air New Zealand and Fiji Airways also provide excellent connections to and from the United States.

Air New Zealand arrives at 10.55am and departs at 11.55am. Fiji Airways arrives at 11.20am and departs at 12.35pm.

It follows Qatar Airways increasing services from Doha to Adelaide and onto Auckland from three to five flights weekly from the start of this month.

Adelaide Airport is already forecasting its busiest day since the pandemic, with close to 30,000 passengers expected to pass through the terminal on Friday for the start of school holidays. It eclipses the 26,000 passengers who travelled through the airport on Easter Monday.

The number of weekly domestic airline seats has exceeded pre pandemic levels and will be further bolstered by Qantas' new seasonal route, connecting Adelaide and Albury from this Friday.

Adelaide Airport Managing Director, Brenton Cox, said it was great to see the return of Fiji Airways and Air New Zealand as people rediscovered the joy of exploring the world.

"We know there is significant pent-up demand for South Australians wanting to head overseas again as well as visitors coming to our State, and both Air New Zealand and Fiji Airways have recognised the strength of our market," Mr Cox said.

"In both cases, flights will arrive in Adelaide late morning and depart around lunchtime, so they are very family-friendly timeslots."

South Australian Tourism Commission chief executive Rodney Harrex said the recent growth in aviation signals strong travel demand and another step forward in the state's tourism recovery.

“With more flights and more airlines, it means more potential visitors from markets like New Zealand, North America and Europe as we work to recover the \$1.2 billion spent by international tourists in 2019,” said Mr Harrex.

“We’ve already seen the number of weekly domestic airline seats exceed pre pandemic levels, and with today’s first flights, we’re bringing international airline capacity to up around half of pre COVID levels.

“As we gear up for the school holiday break and have major events on like Illuminate Adelaide and the Tasting Australia Winter Series, it is sensational timing for tourism operators to reap the rewards of increased interstate and international visitation.”

Fiji Airways Managing Director & CEO, Andre Viljoen said: “Today is a special occasion, after three years we’re excited to say bula and welcome back to our friends and family from South Australia. The short five hour and 10 minute direct flight from Adelaide makes Fiji a popular choice and much more attractive option for Australians. The new Adelaide route allows us to provide further travel options for Australians to our beautiful home and beyond.”

Air New Zealand Chief Customer and Sales Officer, Leanne Geraghty said: “We’re thrilled to be restarting our Adelaide to Auckland direct services once again. With services running three to four times a week, we look forward to welcoming South Australians back into Aotearoa, and know New Zealanders will be excited to get back over to Adelaide to soak up all the beautiful city has to offer.”

Adelaide Airport has reinforced its message to travellers to arrive up to two hours before domestic flights and three hours for international flights for what will be an extremely busy period.

“Our security and customer care teams will be at full capacity to help facilitate customers from kerb to gate - we anticipate that check-in and security queues will be longer than people may have been previously used to,” Mr Cox said.

“We thank our customers in advance for their patience, understanding and kindness.”