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Virgin Australia Newsroom

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- Virgin Australia, together with the Queensland Government and Cairns Airport, has announced a new year-round, daily Cairns-Tokyo (Haneda) service, adding over 2,000 seats per week from 28 June 2023.*
- To celebrate, Virgin Australia has dropped a massive ‘Hello Tokyo’ sale with tickets on sale from \$699 return, until midnight next Tuesday 20 December 2022 or until sold out.
- Flying direct to Tokyo’s Haneda Airport, the route will add over 30,000 additional inbound visitors into Cairns every year, delivering a major boost for the local tourism industry.
- Virgin Australia plans to operate the route using new Boeing 737-8 aircraft. The 737-8 aircraft type will reduce emissions by up to 15 percent per flight.**
- Virgin Australia has also announced it will strengthen its partnership with All Nippon Airways (ANA), with expanded codeshare services and reciprocal loyalty benefits to be implemented throughout 2023.

Wednesday 14 December: Virgin Australia has capped off a huge year, announcing a new international route with a daily return Cairns-Tokyo (Haneda) service taking off on 28 June 2023. The highly anticipated route, operating for the first time, is being launched in partnership with the Queensland Government and Cairns Airport through the Queensland Government’s

Attracting Aviation Investment Fund.

To celebrate the announcement, Virgin Australia today launched a 'Hello Tokyo' sale with return fares from as low as \$699 Economy Lite return, on sale until midnight 20 December 2022 or until sold out.^

Virgin Australia Group Chief Executive Officer, Jayne Hrdlicka said the announcement of Virgin Australia's new Cairns-Haneda service wraps up a huge year for the airline, which has significantly expanded its short-haul international network over the last year.

"I'm thrilled to announce the launch of our brand-new daily, year-round Cairns-Haneda service with VA77 taking off on 28 June next year. We're excited to offer our guests access directly into and out of Tokyo's Haneda Airport, on new fuel-efficient aircraft," she said.

"Virgin Australia is a proud Queensland company and we're delighted to add over 2,000 seats between these iconic destinations every week which means more value and choice for Australians wanting to travel to Japan. Importantly, it also means welcoming more Japanese tourists into the Sunshine State to enjoy our unrivalled natural wonders like the Great Barrier Reef and Whitsunday Islands.

"We know the Japanese market is hugely important to trade and tourism in Far North Queensland and the Sunshine State and our service will result in more international visitors arriving in Cairns every year, having a very positive impact on the State's economy."

Queensland Minister for Tourism, Stirling Hinchliffe said Virgin Australia's direct service from Haneda to Cairns was supported by Queensland's \$200 million Attracting Aviation Investment Fund, in partnership with the State's four international airports.

"Japan is an important part of our inbound international tourism recovery plan for iconic destinations like Cairns and Tropical North Queensland," he said.

"From World Heritage-listed rainforests to the Great Barrier Reef, we know Japanese travellers love Tropical North Queensland's great lifestyle and first-class visitor experiences.

"As one of our traditional top five nations for holiday arrivals, we're excited to welcome visitors from Japan back to the Queensland sunshine for the experience of a lifetime.

"Virgin Australia direct from Japan is terrific news for tourism operators, generating almost \$70 million for the Tropical North's visitor economy and supporting 680 good Queensland jobs."

Cairns Airport Chief Executive Officer, Richard Barker said Virgin Australia's direct flights from Haneda will significantly boost the number of Japanese tourists visiting Tropical North Queensland.

"Today's announcement is a huge development for our region's tourism industry and economy as we continue our post-COVID recovery. It is also further evidence that long-range, narrow body aircraft such as the 737-8 are game changers for our region, bringing destinations such as Japan closer with more cost-effective and fuel-efficient operations," he said.

Tourism Tropical North Queensland, Chief Executive Officer, Mark Olsen said the connection to Tokyo's Haneda Airport was the key to growing international travel to Cairns as it delivered connectivity and consistency through a trusted brand.

"Virgin Australia will fly daily from 28 June and is in partnership with ANA, the Japanese carrier that taps into national travel trends coming in and out of Japan through the airport that frequent Japanese travellers are used to travelling through," he said.

"Our tourism industry is very excited about this connection as are our Japanese trade partners who sell Cairns as the closest gateway to Australia with just one-hour time difference and summer all year round."

To further bolster flight access between Australia and Japan, Virgin Australia will strengthen its strategic partnership with All Nippon Airways (ANA), the largest airline in Japan and a trusted and long-standing Japanese carrier, creating greater value and choice for the airline's customers.

The partnership will not only see Virgin Australia and ANA provide members of the airline's Velocity and ANA Mileage Club frequent flyer programs reciprocal loyalty benefits throughout 2023 and beyond when travelling on each carrier, but greater codeshare flight access between the countries.

ANA EVP of Alliances & International Affairs, Mr. Junichiro Miyagawa said "As a strategic and significant partner to ANA, we are excited for Virgin Australia's inaugural flight to Haneda that enhances our commercial partnership. We are delighted to welcome passengers with the mutual goal of both airlines serving as the bridge between Australia and Japan with the highest levels of customer service and offering unique customer experiences in the two countries."

Consul-General Ono, Consulate-General of Japan in Brisbane was delighted to be in Cairns for the announcement of Virgin Australia's brand new Cairns, Tokyo (Haneda) service.

"It is wonderful to celebrate this important milestone for Virgin Australia, Cairns Airport, the Queensland Government, and importantly the local tourism industry and the Japanese community here. Cairns and Far North Queensland remain very popular with Japanese travellers and this route will pleasingly see the return of over 30,000 Japanese tourists every year into the region, providing a much-needed lift for the industry, and strengthening ties between Queensland and Japan," he said.

This announcement wraps up an extraordinary year for Virgin Australia which returned to profitability following completion of the first stage of the airline's transformation program and recently celebrated Velocity's 11-million member milestone. Since international borders re-opened 12 months ago, the airline has resumed flights to Bali, Fiji, and Queenstown, with Vanuatu, Samoa and Tokyo commencing in the first half of 2023. Today the airline also celebrates the first flight from Adelaide to Bali departing at 5:50pm local time, with plans to commence Australia's first ever Gold Coast to Bali service on 29 March 2023.

*Subject to regulatory approval.

ENDS

VNR [available here](#) [3] from 2pm AEST

Photos [available here](#) [4] from 2pm AEST

NOTES TO EDITOR

- The operation of Cairns–Haneda, Japan is subject to regulatory approval.
- Virgin Australia currently offers direct daily flights between Cairns and major capital cities including Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide and Perth.
- Cairns Airport plays an important role in Virgin Australia's business, facilitating travel into Far North Queensland, and is the seventh largest domestic port in the airline's network.
- Virgin Australia currently operates more than 150 services in and out of Cairns domestic airport every week. Demand in and out of Cairns has continued to go from strength to strength, with forward bookings exceeding 2019 levels.

Hello Tokyo return Economy fares on sale until midnight 20 December 2022:

- Cairns – Tokyo from \$699 (Lite fare)
- Cairns – Tokyo from \$819 (Choice fare)
- Brisbane – Cairns – Tokyo from \$749 (Lite fare)
- Sydney – Cairns – Tokyo from \$749 (Lite fare)
- Melbourne – Cairns – Tokyo from \$749 (Lite fare)
- Brisbane – Cairns – Tokyo from \$869 (Choice fare)
- Sydney – Cairns – Tokyo from \$869 (Choice fare)
- Melbourne – Cairns – Tokyo from \$869 (Choice fare)

Booking tickets:

- Guests booking tickets from Australia to Japan may book via virginaustralia.com or their preferred travel agent from 14 December 2022.
- Virgin Australia will be launching ticket sales from Japan to Australia in early 2023.

Flight details:

- Virgin Australia plans to commence its daily Cairns-Haneda 7 hours and 45 minute flight on 28 June 2023, subject to regulatory approvals, with return tickets from Cairns to Haneda on sale now via virginaustralia.com.
- Flight VA77 is scheduled to depart Cairns at 1.15pm local time and arrive at Haneda at 8.00pm local time.
- VA78 is scheduled to depart Haneda at 9.45pm local time and arrive in Cairns at 6.15am local time.
- Existing services will maximise connectivity for travel both to Tokyo and back to Australia with a focus on convenient connections for key markets including Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne.
- In addition to this, same-day connections to Adelaide and Perth returning from Tokyo will be available.
- There will be three choices of seating including:
 - Economy
 - Economy X (extra leg room Economy seating)
 - Business Class
 - Business Class will enjoy complimentary meals on board with a range of

Australian beers and wine available.

- Economy guests will enjoy our Buy Onboard Menu, with a selection of popular Australian and Japanese fresh and packaged food items available for purchase. We accept major credit cards on board (Cash and payments using mobile/watch devices, EFTPOS, Maestro or pre-paid travel cards are not accepted).
- Pillows, blankets and amenity kits will be available onboard for purchase. Amenity kits include an eye mask, ear plugs, drawstring bag and a pen.
- Our Business Class guests will also enjoy a complimentary pillow, blanket and amenity kit as well as toothbrush, toothpaste, socks and hand cream.
- All guests will enjoy complimentary tea, coffee, and water throughout the duration of the flight and a bottle of water upon boarding.
- Entertainment: Information on in-flight entertainment can be read here. We will provide a range of movies and television shows displayed with Japanese subtitles.
- In-flight Wi-Fi internet access will be available for the duration of the flight to message, browse the internet or watch your favourite streaming service. The service is complimentary to our Velocity Platinum, Beyond Lounge members and Business Class guests. Economy and Economy X guests will need to pay a small fee starting from AUD\$9.95 for a 30-minute pass to AUD\$24.95 for the full flight pass.
- Velocity Frequent Flyer members will earn Points and Status Credits, and Velocity Gold and Platinum members will enjoy additional benefits such as Priority Check-In, Priority Boarding, additional baggage allowance and Priority Baggage when travelling on the new services.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

** 15 per cent less than 737-800 aircraft.

^Fares are on sale from 12.01am Wednesday 14 December 2022 to 11.59pm Tuesday 20 December 2022 AEST, unless sold out prior. Travel periods (18 July 2023 - 13 September 2023 & 10 October 2023 - 10 November 2023) and conditions apply. \$699 price point based on a return Economy Lite fare from Cairns to Haneda booked at virginaustralia.com. Subject to availability. Payment surcharge may apply. Seat selection and checked baggage are not included in Economy Lite fares. Full T&Cs at www.virginaustralia.com ^[5]

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