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Virgin Australia announces flights from Melbourne to Hong Kong ^[2]



Virgin Australia today announced it will commence services between Melbourne and Hong Kong, expanding its international footprint into Greater China for the first time.

From 5 July 2017, Virgin Australia will operate five return services per week between the two cities, using dual aisle Airbus A330-200 aircraft. Virgin Australia's proposed alliance with HNA Aviation and Hong Kong Airlines will enable customers to connect through Hong Kong to 13 destinations in mainland China. It will also allow guests from Hainan Airlines, Hong Kong Airlines, Capital Airlines and Tianjin Airlines to connect onto Virgin Australia's expansive domestic and trans-Tasman network.

Today's announcement follows the ACCC's interim approval of Virgin Australia's proposed alliance with HNA Aviation, Hong Kong Airlines and HK Express. The Virgin Australia flights are on sale subject to obtaining final regulatory approval from the ACCC.

Virgin Australia's Airbus A330-200 fleet features the airline's award-winning Business Class suites, 'The Business', which was recently recognised as the world's best Business Class by Airline Ratings¹, as well as 255 economy seats in a 2-4-2 configuration.

Virgin Australia Group CEO John Borghetti said: "Virgin Australia's entry into Hong Kong and

Greater China is a key pillar of our international strategy, allowing us to tap into Australia's fastest growing and most valuable inbound travel market².

"Awarded the world's most liveable city for the past six years³, Melbourne is an international city in its own right and hosts some of Australia's biggest and most spectacular events. We look forward to showcasing this great city to inbound visitors from Hong Kong and beyond.

"The Virgin Australia livery flying to Hong Kong for the first time is an exciting development and with it brings the style and sophistication that is synonymous with our brand.

"Travellers to and from Hong Kong will be able to fly in the world's best business class and dine on a restaurant-in-the-sky experience designed by resident chef Luke Mangan. Coupled with service delivered by the world's best cabin crew⁴, we know guests travelling on this route from July will appreciate the effortless luxury that comes with Virgin Australia," Mr Borghetti said.

Velocity Frequent Flyer members will be able to earn Velocity Points and Status Credits on these flights, while details of reciprocal frequent flyer benefits and lounge access will be announced at a later date together with codeshare arrangements.

Flights are on sale from Wednesday 22 March at www.virginaustralia.com ^[3]

Virgin Australia Melbourne to Hong Kong Schedule

Route	Flight Number	Depart/Arrive	Days of the week
MEL-HKG	VA89	0035/0815	Tue, Thu, Sat
	VA87	1025/1805	Mon
	VA87	0940/1720	Wed
HKG-MEL	VA86	1950/0820 (+1)	Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu, Sat

Key Points

? Virgin Australia will operate Airbus A330-200 aircraft from Melbourne to Hong Kong from early July

? World's Best Business Class 2016 will fly to Hong Kong for the first time, operated by the World's Best Cabin Crew 2016

? Five return services per week on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday

? Velocity members will earn Velocity Points and Status Credits on these flights.

¹Virgin Australia was awarded Best Business Class 2016 by AirlineRatings.com for 'The Business'.

²According to Tourism Australia's Greater China Country Profile

³According to the Economist Intelligence Unit 2016

⁴Virgin Australia, Virgin Atlantic and Virgin America were awarded Best Cabin Crew 2016 by AirlineRatings.com

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