Travel Daily First with the news



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Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today features nine pages of news, including a photo page from Entire Travel Group, our new Home Ex feature, and full pages from:

- Insight Vacations
- Viva Holidays
- Singapore Airlines

Explore!

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(10 spots) available



Small group adventures
Don't just travel, Explore!

Monday 17th Feb 2025

NZ returns to top spot

AFTER a long run as Australia's number one outbound travel market, Indonesia has been knocked off the perch by New Zealand, new ABS figures show.

In Dec last year, just over 118,000 Aussies made the trip across the ditch, pipping Indonesia, which saw around 117,000 arrivals for the month.

The numbers restore New Zealand to its historically dominant position as the number one nation in the Australian outbound sector, and moves the country closer to pre-pandemic volumes, which in Dec 2019 saw 123,500 Aussies visit its shores.

The market also improved on a month-by-month basis, increasing by 5,000 trips from the 113,000 taken by Aussies in Nov.

The encouraging numbers coincide with a new tourism campaign targeting Aussie travellers launched yesterday, with NZ PM Christopher Luxon



evoking Tourism Australia's slightly controversial marketing push in 2006 by declaring it is time to "get the bloody hell over here".

Find out how **()**

"My message to Australians is it's time to swap thongs for jandals, it's time to swap the Hunter Valley for the Hawke's Bay," Luxon added.

The NZ\$500,000 'Everyone Must Go' campaign will launch across a variety of Australian media from this week.

However, at home in New Zealand, the critique of the new marketing blitz has been far from friendly, with some MPs likening the slogan to a clearance sale.

The campaign is the latest bid to attract more tourists and digital nomads to New Zealand.

Aussies make up roughly 44% of int'l visitors to NZ each year. AB

ENDS

28 FEB

Viva to New York

TravelManagers

VIVA Holidays is highlighting its New York City packages, including a five-night 'Discover the Neighbourhoods of NYC' offering, which includes a 2.5hour Brooklyn Bridge and Dumbo neighbourhood tour.

Find out more on page nine.



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TIME IS RUNNING





Access to trade missions needed

INBOUND tour operators (ITOs) face significant barriers to accessing trade mission opportunities, leaving businesses unable to rebuild essential networks with wholesalers.

Outlined by the Australian Tourism Export Council (ATEC) in a Federal Budget submission this week, the body argued the inbound sector now requires more targeted govt support, particularly as the Reviving International Tourism Grant Program (RITG) has concluded.

"ITOs are unable to access Export Market Development Grants funding to offset the high costs of developing international distribution channels," ATEC said.

"Co-funded grants are needed to support their involvement in key developing market trade missions, enabling ITOs to rebuild vital distribution networks, reconnect with wholesalers, and reinvigorate international



visitation by reopening essential tourism supply chains."

The advocacy body added that trade missions facilitated by Tourism Australia are particularly difficult to access.

To remedy the situation, ATEC is calling for extra funding to be added to Tourism Australia's budget to compensate for rising costs, and expanded efforts to attract visitors from high-growth markets like India and S Korea.

Specifically, ATEC is advocating for funding for the marketing body to increase in line with inflation, in addition to an extra \$10 million annually for specific market programs over the next three years.

Attracting more Chinese group travel was also high on the list of priorities for ATEC, which wants to see the development of an Approved Destination Scheme (ADS) to specifically support trade missions, training, and programs tailored to evolving Chinese visitor preferences.

These include the development of more innovative itineraries, a China ADS visitor satisfaction app, and a greater emphasis on offering sustainability-focused experiences for Chinese tourists.

To achieve this, ATEC is seeking an extension of the RITG program to support inbound businesses, as well as matched funding grants to support trade missions, training development, and marketing.

The body estimated this will require around \$1.5 million of government funding over a threeyear period. *AB*





TAIWAN EVA AIR Travel Daily

Training Academy

Today's issue of *TD* is coming to you courtesy of Princess Cruises, which is this week hosting us on a trip to Sydney aboard *the Diamond Princess*.

IT'S the perfect day to go on a delightful cruise down to Sydney with the team at Princess, and we'll be departing sunny Brisbane International Cruise Terminal later this afternoon.

We are looking forward to spending time with our industry friends as part of a trade marketing famil, which will run for five days.

On the agenda today, we will meet our fellow passengers at the Skywalkers bar on deck 18 for some casual drinks as we sail away.





Monday 17th Feb 2025

SQ bumps up Brissy

SINGAPORE Airlines will increase its frequency between Brisbane and The Lion City to four daily flights from 16 Jun.

The move provides more onward connection options to major hubs such as London, Rome and Zurich - see **page 12**.





EARN A \$100 GIFT CARD

PER PASSENGER BOOKED BY 31 MAR

View Tours

Bhutan eyes Aussie GSA

THE national flag carrier of Bhutan is looking to strengthen its position in the Australian market by appointing a local GSA. Drukair - Royal Bhutan Airlines' parent company, Druk Holding and Investments Limited, has formally launched a request for proposals in Australia, seeking an agency with at least three years of experience representing a brand in air travel sales space.

The major priorities of the contract for the successful candidate will be taking responsibility for managing sales, executing marketing initiatives, and expanding the airline's footprint in the region.

Drukair currently operates a fleet of eight aircraft, serving three domestic and 11 international destinations, including key hubs in India, Thailand, Singapore, and the United Arab Emirates.

The initial contract will be

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Travel Daily

YEAR IN REVIEW

TAKE A LOOK BACK AT THE BIGGEST STORIES

FOR THE TRAVEL INDUSTRY IN 2024.

for three years, with specific requirements outlined in the proposal request needing to be addressed, including financial stability, market expertise, and strategic sales planning.

Based out of Paro International Airport, which is located about 50km west of the capital Thimphu, Drukair operates a fleet of A319s, A320neos, and ATR 42-600 aircraft, and was founded in 1981 to serve domestic and nearby Asian markets.

The most recent GSA contract was held by Walshe Group, which won the account in 2019 (*TD* 15 Nov 2019).

Proposals must be submitted by 28 Feb - apply **HERE**. *AB*

our USA expertise.

vlag

Now

The Big Tour Sale

INSIGHT Vacations is welcoming agents to The Big Tour Sale, which offers savings of up to \$3,000 per couple on select international tours.

Promotional prices apply to trips in Egypt, Sicily, and the UK, to name a few - see page **p10**.



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your leadership skills. Applications close 7 March 2025.





Travel Daily Learn more about Italy with Travel Daily Training Academy

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TALK about a great wedding venue - a couple aboard a recent Quark Expeditions sailing made some very cool and romantic photos indeed.

Eric and Jennifer Liu (**pictured**) had always dreamed of an Antarctic wedding, and it became a spectacular reality on a cruise to the icy waters of the White Continent, much to the awe of fellow passengers.

The loved-up couple said they chose Antarctica because it was the last continent they were yet to explore together.



Monday 17th Feb 2025

13% risk no cover on trips

Aussies buy in Fiji

THE Aroha Taveuni Beachfront Bures resort on Taveuni island in Fiji has been purchased by Australians Kathryn Wilkinson and Rod Kennedy (**pictured**).

"After packing up and selling everything back home in Australia, we took the leap into this new adventure - and what a ride it has been already," Wilkinson said on LinkedIn.

"Aroha has a rich history, and we feel incredibly grateful to be its new owners.

"Our goal is to build on everything that makes this place special - connection, adventure, and authenticity, while creating unforgettable experiences.



A NEW report from comparison website Mozo has found that 13% of Australians are deciding to travel overseas without taking out any form of insurance.

Of the cohort risking adverse travel-related outcomes, 8% said they were "not worried" about things going wrong on trips.

The research also showed 73% of Australians purchase travel insurance before heading overseas, however close to one in four are not buying a standalone policy, leaving themselves exposed to higher costs.

While close to half of travellers prefer to buy travel insurance directly, the second choice is being guided by demographics. Gen Z travellers were shown to prefer buying insurance from airlines, while Millennials (13%), Baby Boomers (19%) and Gen X (15%) preferenced credit cards. Trusted brand names led the

way as the most influential

purchasing factor, ahead of lower prices (28%), online research (26%), and the best cover (13%).

Of concern were the 56% of Aussies who admitted they only skim-read insurance policies. *AB*

Sabre clarifies call

MANY in the industry expressed disappointment at Sabre's decision to cease its TripCase app last week (*TD* 12 Feb), and the company has shed more light on its motivations today.

When contacted by **TD**, Sabre said: "We are strategically investing time, talent and capital into key areas that will advance this objective and, in turn, help our customers...book and service content from multiple sources.

"TripCase, though an appreciated product, isn't part of our strategic path, and rather than divest and see its quality degrade, we've opted to sunset it."

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Qantas ramps up regional

QANTAS has upgraded its regional South Adelaide services, introducing the larger QantasLink Q400 turboprop aircraft to Port Lincoln, Whyalla, Mount Gambier and Kangaroo Island.

The 50 return flights that Qantas operates per week between Adelaide and the regional cities are currently serviced by the older and smaller Q300 aircraft, which are being gradually retired from the airline's fleet.

Eurowings Holidays

GERMAN airline Eurowings has launched its own tour operator, Eurowings Holidays, which will take over the staff and tourism IT systems of well-known media and tourism entrepreneur Karlheinz Kogel in Baden-Baden.

Eurowings Holidays, which begins operations on 01 Apr, will offer tailor-made holiday packages bookable from a single source. The upgrade means regional South Australian travellers will benefit from more seats and improved reliability, with 74 seats per flight, up from 50 seats.

"These larger aircraft will bring more seats, a faster flight time and improved reliability for South Australia and reaffirms our commitment to the regions," said QantasLink CEO Rachel Yangoyan.

The carrier is also overhauling its beverage offering, with eight new regional wines to debut on board all QantasLink turboprop flights from mid-Mar, six of these being from South Australian wineries including Stonehaven, Pioneer Road and Angove.

"The overhaul of our wine offering across our turboprop network to showcase six South Australian wines to over 3.5 million customers a year is great for local tourism and will grow our support for the local economy," Yangoyan said. JM



FLY-IN SAFARIS

Our agent heroes

DIGITAL travel marketing

agency The Social Spider has

launched a free promotional

initiative for agents, allowing

them to portrav themselves as

superheroes to raise awareness

of the pivotal role advisors play

when it comes to booking travel.

campaign offers agents free use

of eye-catching, colourful digital

text that can be used online and

image tiles and accompanying

on social media to show how

and stress, and how they can

agents can save travellers time

come to the rescue when things

go wrong - find out more HERE.

The 'Travel agent to the rescue'

RSSC foodie tours

REGENT Seven Seas Cruises (RSSC) has unveiled 12 new Epicurean Explorer Tours, a collection of cuisine-focused shoreside excursions in destinations around the world including Asia, Europe, and Canada & New England.

Designed to appeal to foodies, the new experiences include foraging in Invergordon, Scotland, for ingredients to make the perfect Cullen Skink, and savouring premium Kobe beef prepared by a teppanyaki master chef in a restaurant overlooking Osaka Castle in Japan.

Limited to 18 guests per session, the Epicurean Explorer Tours are available to book for voyages on board Seven Seas Grandeur, Seven Seas Splendor and Seven Seas Explorer.

The tours range from \$207 to \$780 per guest, and are between three to seven hours in duration, with some including an on-board cooking class.



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Identify new business opportunities, develop and implement strategies to increase revenue, and build strong relationships with clients. The ideal candidate will have a proven track record of success in business development and a deep understanding of the industry.

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Two positions available assisting the relevant Product Team in developing competitive products that meet sales and profitability growth targets while providing best practice product administration and planning services.

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Two positions available supporting the relevant Product Team in developing competitive travel products that drive sales, profitability, and business growth. Your responsibilities will include ensuring best practices in product administration and planning while managing key product functions. This role is a 12-month fixed-term contract to cover parental leave.

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As a 'people person' and a critical thinker, you enjoy researching, responding and resolving complaints for all customer related issues while on tour and post-tour. You are engaging, empathetic and conciliatory. You are able to process complaints objectively and aim to reach a mutually suitable outcome for ATG and our customers. You are collaborative and enjoy working as part of a team.

GUEST RELATIONS CONSULTANT

Manage pre-tour bookings, working with travel agents and passengers to handle sales, flights, accommodation, transfers, and upsells. You thrive in a fast-paced environment while delivering exceptional service.



Travel Daily Coversations with women in travel Catch up on any missed episodes of SEASON TWO

Monday 17th Feb 2025

Contours marks 50

LATIN America tour specialist Contours Travel is marking 50 years of operation in 2025, with agents and travellers set to be the biggest winners.

The company is celebrating its golden anniversary with a variety of promotions and discounts to be released throughout the year.

Agents will also enjoy increased commissions, plus an opportunity to join an educational trip to Peru being planned for later this year.

Founded by Ted Dziadkiewicz and Graham Strachan in the early 1970s, the company will also mark its lineage through a series of memorabilia to be unveiled, including old brochures and photos on social media - for more details, **CLICK HERE** to sign up to Contours Travel's newsletter.



Nawurlandja Lookout,

ANZCRO gives away \$20k



ANZCRO recently handed out \$20,000 worth of holiday experiences to four lucky travel agents, as part of its mission to 'make selling New Zealand easy'. A key component of this initiative is ensuring that agents can experience the destination firsthand, helping them to sell and inspire their clients with personal recommendations.

The agency has also teamed up with key industry players, including Christchurch Airport, Tataki Auckland Unlimited, RotoruaNZ, and leading motorhome supplier THL, to raise awareness of New Zealand's top destinations and experiences.

Through these campaigns, five agents have won New Zealand experiences, including a sevenday trip to Christchurch and Queenstown with Emirates.

"As Aussie, Kiwi and South Pacific specialists, we are passionate about bringing these incredible destinations to life for our travel agent community," shared Amy Mace, Head of Marketing at ANZCRO.

"These incentives aren't just giveaways - they're opportunities for agents to gain firsthand knowledge and confidence in selling New Zealand. "We couldn't make them

happen without the generous

support of our incredible campaign partners and wonderful suppliers, who help turn these experiences into reality."

For more details on upcoming campaigns and promotions, **CLICK HERE**. *JM*

Pictured: RAA Travel's Tracey Robertson is presented with her prize by Kylie Wapp, National Account Manager at ANZCRO.

MEL all-time record

JANUARY 2025 was the busiest month for passenger movements in Melbourne Airport's history, the gateway announced today.

Across the month, the Victorian capital saw 3,393,977 travellers pass through, eclipsing the prior record of 3,322,940 in Dec 2019.

Melbourne also saw its highest number of international travellers ever, with 1,238,829 people passing through, including a record 671,135 arrivals.

The Australia Day long weekend and Australian Open Final also helped generate MEL's busiest day in five years, with 122,751 moving through on 24 Jan.

"It's incredible to think that in just three years, we've rebuilt international capacity from close to nothing, to the point where we are setting new records," said Melbourne Airport's Lorie Argus.

Skytrans' new A319

WET-LEASING passenger airline Skytrans has integrated a new Airbus A319 into its fleet as part of efforts to increase capacity.

The new aircraft comes amid projections of Australia's domestic air demands growing at approximately 2.6% per year.

These projections show overall pax numbers are expected to pass 237 million annually by 2050.

Skytrans Managing Director Gytis Gumuliauskas said the new aircraft is about redefining its operational capabilities and setting a new standard in the aviation services industry.

"Therefore, the introduction of the new type, narrow body aircraft represents a substantial advancement and the beginning of a new era," Gumuliauskas said.

> AATKings GET 4 to \$1,800 AIR CREDIT per couple on selected tours'

> > T&C's apply





Entire's 2025 Soirees: Simply Unforgettable

THEY might only be in their second year, but Entire Travel Group's annual Travel Showcase and Soirees are now established as major events on the Australian travel industry calendar. This year's gatherings brought together 900 travel advisors in Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane, who enjoyed quality time with more than 50 world-class exhibitors, a dozen of whom travel to Australia

Monday 17th Feb 2025

specifically for the three-city Showcases.

Sales & Marketing Director Greg McCallum said the fact that the travel advisors represented every major retail group in Australia is one of the reasons the invite-only events have resonated so strongly with the global array of exhibitors.

"For travel advisors, it's the unique structure of the events," said McCallum.

"Not only can advisors refresh their knowledge about destinations and products, they also enjoy great food and music with colleagues, and share in \$100,000 worth of travel prizes," he added.

If you missed out this year, save the following dates for 2026: 03 Feb (Melbourne), 04 Feb (Sydney) and 05 Feb (Brisbane).



TEAM Vancouver: Geetha Harikrishnan, Pan Pacific Vancouver, with Destination Vancouver's Krista Alcazar, Megan Nelson and Dianna Schinella.



COOK Islands Tourism's Rachel Mackey, Crystal Kranz and Sarah-Elyss Ezekiela. Philippine Airlines CONGRATULATIONS

GREG McCallum, Entire Travel Group; Krystle Ramirez-Gastrock, Philippine Airlines; Jackie Thompson, TravelManagers; and Bryan Ang, Philippine Airlines.



LISA Tappin, Entire Travel Group and Laurent Wong, Aranui Cruises.





MORGAN Taylor, Elephant Hills and Sherly Handjojo, Tourism Thailand.



MINT Payment's Dejoey Ann and Alex Duchar.



SWITZERLAND Tourism's Sandra Babey and Sonia Holt.



AIR Canada's Janis McDonald.



homeex.com.au Monday 17 February 2025

Time to skill up

HOME

HOME AGENT VIRTUAL

EXPERIENCE

CONNECTED Travel Training Academy has unveiled workshops for 2025 - including an upcoming program that director Marissa Papas has described as "changing the game".

"This one has me so excited - it's literally been getting me out of bed extra early," she revealed to *Travel Daily*.

"I can't share all the details just yet, but trust me, it's something huge.

"It's set to make a major impact on the travel industry, especially in education."

Meanwhile, the Connect Program kicks off on 17 Mar, which will be run in two separate groups catering to different needs.

Connect to Business will be aimed at advisors looking to run their own operation.

"We know people are trying to dive in and start on their own...so we're here to make sure they start, launch and operate properly, holding credibility to our profession," explained Papas.

Connect to Employment is for those who are either new to the industry or are trying to break into it.

This program will also include a four-week mentorship, supporting new consultants with their first enquiries to take the pressure off business owners.

MAIN BEACH REVEALS SECRETS TO SUCCESS

MIKE and Mandy Dwyer, the husband-and-wife team behind Main Beach Travel, have revealed the secrets behind their 25-year-success: building tight-knit supplier relationships and investing in creating a dream team of successful agents that understand luxury clients.

"Early on, it was a lot of hard work," Mike told *Travel Daily.*

"We were desperate to make the business succeed so we did whatever we had to do, and that was the pattern for the first couple of years, 'til we built up a little bit of momentum."

The pair had previously been industry reps, so they understood the importance and benefits of working closely with supplier partners and within the first few years, Main Beach Travel joined



Virtuoso and CT Partners. Those relationships continue to "pay dividends", Mike said. "It was important to be in a good buying group with them so that we could offer top commission and the best suppliers for the home [agents] so they knew they didn't have to worry about it - we did it for them," Mandy added.

Mike and Mandy are both part of the Home Ex speaker program and will share with attendees their insights into being a successful home-based agent.

1000MTG snores

CTM'S content platform Sleep Space is rolling out to 1000 Mile Travel Group advisors and their clients.

Designed last year, the tool was created to make it easy for travel buyers to search for accommodation, taking the hassle out of sourcing RFPs, negotiation, contracting and accessing content.

Sleep Space is currently being rolled out across the globe as part of CTM's fiveyear strategic plan.

Your invitation to connect with suppliers

HOME-BASED agents are invited to connect with a range of suppliers from the comfort of their own home at *Travel Daily*'s new virtual event, Home Ex.

Royal Caribbean, CVFR, Expedia, Rail Europe and AmaWaterways are just a handful of some of the diverse brands taking part at Home Ex.

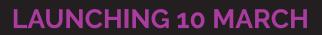
Agents will have the opportunity to visit suppliers' virtual trade booths and watch videos from each of them.



Home Ex goes live on 10 Mar and content will be available for six months.

Registration is free and open to the whole industry - to sign up, click **HERE.**





HOME AGENT VIRTUAL EXPERIENCE





Monday 17th Feb 2025

BROCHURES

Send your special deals to: brochures@traveldaily.com.au

THIS week's Brochures of the Week is brought to you by DriveAway.





DriveAway - The Italy Road Trip Planner Travellers can plan the road trip of their dreams with DriveAway's Italy Road Trip Planner. Designed to inspire adventure at every turn, the expertly crafted guide highlights the iconic destinations and experiences across La Dolce Vita. Whether clients are soaking in the serenity of the Amalfi Coast or immersed in the lively energy of Rome, there is an itinerary for every traveller. For example, the 'Historic Italian Amalfi Coast Adventure' is a

four-day road trip which takes in Pompeii, Sorrento, Positano, Amalfi, and Salerno. The 21-page brochure, which can be viewed online **HERE**, also includes tips for driving in Italy, as well as driving distances and frequently asked questions.



Viva Holidays - New South Wales & ACT 2025/26 Viva Holidays has released its 2025/26 New South Wales and Canberra brochure, packed with sightseeing tours and premium hotel options. Travellers will discover iconic stays and unforgettable experiences such as Opera Australia's show in Sydney, charming boutique coastal properties from Jervis Bay to Byron Bay, a wine tour and sunrise hot air balloon adventure in the Hunter Valley, stargazing in the Blue

Mountains, plus more to explore with the best Canberra has to offer. View the brochure online **HERE**.



NCL - International Cruising Guide 2025-27 The latest brochure from Norwegian Cruise Line (NCL) will inspire clients to embark on their next cruise adventure. Discover an extensive selection of immersive sailings between 2025 and 2027, including NCL's top-selling destinations: Europe, Hawaii, Asia and Alaska. Readers will also learn about how to get the best value with NCL's More at Sea offerings, as well as get the low-down on each of its ships and onboard entertainment.

The brochure is available to download **HERE**, while hard copies can be ordered from Coghlan (AU agents) and Travel Marketing (NZ agents).



DL Sydney cooks for a cause



DELTA Air Lines' Sydney team recently gave back to the community by partnering with Our Big Kitchen (OBK), a not-forprofit organisation that prepares and distributes more than 250,000 meals annually.

The team rolled up their sleeves for a day of team building and community service, which saw them design, cook, and package more than 100 meals, which will be given out to individuals experiencing food insecurity across Sydney.

Find out more about OBK's volunteer and team-building opportunities **HERE**. *JM*

A terminal fantasy

ON SAT morning, MSC Cruises' *MSC Fantasia* became the first ship to dock at the new MSC Barcelona Cruise Terminal.

The state-of-the-art terminal - which will be officially inaugurated in the coming months - will serve both MSC Cruises and Explora Journeys vessels.

Salter's IPO plans

SELECTED assets under control of prominent hotel investor Salter Brothers will be packaged together and prepared for listing as a hospitality vehicle on the Australian Securities Exchange, *The Australian* has reported.

Amid plans to raise \$185m via a convertible notes scheme (*TD* 09 Dec 2024), Salter Brothers is aiming to bundle hotel assets into a listing it hopes will sway investors away from underperforming assets such as office towers & shopping centres.

Salter Brothers currently owns more than 20 hotels in Australia, of which 12 are managed under Accor brands including Mercure, Novotel and Sofitel, plus IHG brands InterContinental, Voco, Kimpton and Crowne Plaza.

According to *The Australian*, any potential listing will gradually be fattened up with new hotels and geared as a luxury market offering which in turn would aim to push up room rates.

Travel Daily

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- ^o Complimentary WiFi
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FREQUENCY	DEP	ARR	FLIGHT	AIRCRAFT	FREQUENCY	DEP	ARR	FLIGHT	AIRCRAFT		
DAILY	09:20	15:25	SQ256	A350-900	DAILY	00:45	10:20	SQ255	A350-900		
DAILY	14:45	20:45	SQ236	A350-900	DAILY	07:10	16:45	SQ265	A350-900		
DAILY	18:10	00:10(+1)	SQ266	A350-900	DAILY	09:55	19:30	SQ245	A350-900		
DAILY	23:50	05:45(+1)	SQ246	A350-900	DAILY	21:30	06:55(+1)	SQ235	A350-900		

The additional services will operate on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from Brisbane to Singapore, commencing 16 June 2025. *Accurate as at 10 February 2025 and based on the following flight connections from Brisbane - SQ266/SQ306 to LHR, SQ266/SQ346 to ZRH and SQ266/SQ366 to FCO.

