



FIRST QANTAS A380 IS BACK IN AUSTRALIA - 593 DAYS AFTER

News / Airlines



A familiar and hard-to-miss sight is back to Australian skies with one of Qantas' iconic A380 aircraft 593 days after it departed Australian shores. Hudson Fysh, named after one of Qantas' founders, touched down at Sydney Airport around 3.00pm more than 19 hours after it departed Dresden, Germany. The aircraft recently underwent scheduled maintenance for a new landing gear, after spending the best part of two years in storage during the COVID-19 pandemic.



Its early return comes as the airline gears up for the first two of the superjumbos to return to service in April 2022, following strong demand for international travel, particularly on key routes to Los Angeles and London. Qantas has taken close to half a million domestic bookings in the past two weeks, compared with around 20,000 in a two-week period in August.

Jetstar's recent international sale saw 75,000 seats sold in 72 hours. Demand for seats on Qantas' London to Sydney service has been extremely strong, with Aussies reuniting with family and friends in time for Christmas and more flights added as a result.

Originally expected to remain in long term storage in the Californian desert until the end of 2023, Qantas has since announced that five A380s with upgraded cabins would return ahead of schedule with two to operate flights to Los Angeles from April 2022 and three to operate flights to London from November 2022.



The airline is now working to further accelerate the return of the A380s, with superjumbo flights to London brought forward to July 2022. In addition, a sixth aircraft will arrive before the end of calendar year 2022, with the remaining four A380s expected to return to service by early 2024.

Hudson Fysh will undergo additional maintenance checks in Australia before taking to the skies again in coming weeks as part of crew training.

Qantas Chief Pilot Captain Richard Tobiano said it was a terrific day, not just for Qantas crew but also passengers who love flying onboard the national carrier's flagship aircraft.

“The A380 is a fantastic aircraft and we are very excited to welcome it home today. The early return is symbolic of how quickly demand for international travel has bounced back and this aircraft will play a key role in preparing our crew to return to A380 flying operations in the new year.



“Many of our crew have found other jobs during the pandemic doing everything from working in vaccination hubs and hospital wards to driving buses and tractors, and painting houses.

“Over the next few months, pilots will undergo an extensive retraining period including simulator sessions, training flights and classroom courses to prepare for take-off.”

While it wasn't flying during the pandemic, the aircraft was cared for by Qantas engineers who carried out regular inspections before it flew to Dresden earlier this year.

Six of Qantas' A380s have had an interior redesign featuring new premium upper deck with new supper club style lounge and brand-new seats across the Business Class and Premium Economy cabins, as well as a main deck refresh including new carpet and curtains. The remaining aircraft will be refitted before they return to service.

The 485-seat A380 is the only aircraft in the Qantas fleet that offers a First Class cabin, popular with Frequent Flyers for its comfortable suites with fully lay flat beds, premium Neil Perry multi-course dining experience, award winning Australian wine cellar and Martin Grant designed First Class PJs.



09 NOVEMBER 2021

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