

MEDIA RELEASE

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## **9 in 10 Australians plan to travel internationally in 2022, preparing for the longest and most extravagant holidays of their lives**

*An annual report from Luxury Escapes reveals the nation's outlook for the year ahead, the significant impact travel has on our mental health, intentions for spending and where to next*

**9 December, 2021 — MELBOURNE:** One of the world's fastest growing travel companies, Luxury Escapes, today released its annual report, *Travel Trends*, detailing the nation's views towards travel for 2022. Following a tumultuous 24 months with a positive outlook finally in sight, the findings uncover destinations in demand, why travel means so much more than just a holiday and how bookings are already breaking historic records across the board.

### **Australians optimistic about international travel**

There have been moments of hope throughout 2021 — hope that domestic and international travel might resume, restrictions would ease and life go back to normal, only for states to slam shut borders and plunge back into lockdown. However, optimism for travellers and the sector is finally here. The report, surveying over 1,200 respondents, revealed over 84% of Australians are optimistic about travel in 2022, with 76% confident that when it opens up — it will stay that way.

### **The impact travel has on our mental health**

For many, travel means so much more than just a trip to soak up the sun, and that will become even more prevalent in 2022. An overwhelming 90% of Australians say travel positively impacts their mental health, at a time when influences on our state of mind have never been more significant. Following two years of incredibly isolating times for much of the country, 72% of respondents say travel will be more important for general wellbeing than ever before.

### **Top international destinations for 2022**

Unsurprisingly, at the top of the list of international destinations to visit is Fiji, with Luxury Escapes having recorded a 488% increase in sales following the Bula Bubble announcement. New Zealand (13%), United Kingdom (7%), United States (7%) and Indonesia (6%) make up the top five after Fiji.

### **Spending set to increase**

Following a difficult two years for the tourism industry, positive news is on the horizon as many Australians plan to spend more on travel than ever before. 62% of the nation disclosed they were still saving for travel throughout the pandemic with one third (36%) of respondents planning to spend more on travel in 2022 than they did pre-pandemic. 55% are looking to treat themselves on their first international holiday with the most popular indulgences including room and flight upgrades, massages and fine dining.

### **The blend of travel and work**



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The findings also show Australians expect flexibility beyond working from home in 2022. 72% of respondents believe workplaces should offer more flexibility when it comes to travelling and working together, with over half (52%) saying they'd be more inclined to accept a job that allows them to 'work from anywhere'. As the desire and ability to travel enters a new dimension, Australians are looking to find ways to extend their adventures with 33% of respondents saying they plan to take a longer international trip than usual in 2022.

"There's no doubt travel is absolutely back. The US is open, South Pacific is opening, Asia is opening and Australians can't wait to experience travel again. We had the busiest month in Luxury Escapes' history with the announcement of Fiji Bubble and removal of quarantine in NSW and Victoria and are super excited about the next year and creating unforgettable experiences for millions of Luxury Escapes members around the world" explains Adam Schwab, Co-Founder and CEO Luxury Escapes.

Schwab continues; "The pandemic meant people around the world became insular, changing focus inwards. This meant for most of us, we didn't think about the impact border closures have had on so many people around the world. Our great friends and neighbors in Fiji, Thailand and Indonesia have been especially hard hit, so dependent on Australian tourism. We can't wait to travel again to see old friends and make a real difference to people's lives."

There haven't been many good things that came from the pandemic, but if there's one small silver lining, we now all appreciate travel in a completely different light. Not being able to see the world for two years has made us all appreciate just how important travel is."

The report includes expert commentary from global industry leaders, including Phillipa Harrison — Managing Director, Tourism Australia, Brent Hill — CEO, Tourism Fiji and Athan Didaskalou — Co-Founder, July, as well as insights from some of Luxury Escapes' most passionate and seasoned travellers.

You can access the full Travel Trends 2022 report [here](#).

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**For more information:**

Lauren Hunt, Character + Distinction for Luxury Escapes: 0423 541 802

Lily Rayner, Character + Distinctions for Luxury Escapes: 0484 295 925

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**Key data:**

***Optimistic outlook***

- 84% of Australians are optimistic about international travel in 2022
- Over three quarters (76%) of Australians are optimistic that once international travel opens up, it will stay that way
- 9 in 10 respondents have booked, or plan to book, international travel in 2022



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### **Travel and wellbeing**

- 90% of Australians say travel positively impacts their mental health
- 72% of Australians think travel will be more important for general wellbeing than ever before
- 82% of Australians know someone who has missed out on a once-in-a-lifetime trip — like their gap year, retirement trip or honeymoon

### **Top destinations**

- At the top of Australia's list of international destinations is Fiji
  - Fiji (18%)
  - New Zealand (13%)
  - United Kingdom (7%)
  - USA (7%)
  - Indonesia (6%)
- Following the Bula Bubble announcement, Luxury Escapes saw Fiji sales increase by 488%

### **Travel saving and spending**

- Despite a financially challenging two years for Australians, 36% plan to spend more on travel next year than they did pre-pandemic
- 62% have still been saving for travel since COVID began
- Over half (55%) of Australians plan to treat themselves more on their first international trip than they usually would
- Australians plan to treat themselves in 2022 with the following indulgences while travelling:
  - Room upgrade 67%
  - Massages 51%
  - Flight upgrade 49%
  - Fancy restaurants 46%
  - Spa day or treatments 41%

### **Working from anywhere**

- 72% of Australians believe workplaces should offer more flexibility when it comes to travelling and working together
- Over half (52%) of respondents say they'd be more inclined to accept a job that allows them to 'work from anywhere'
- 33% of respondents saying they plan to take a longer international trip than usual in 2022

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### **Expert commentary:**

PHILLIPA HARRISON — MANAGING DIRECTOR, TOURISM AUSTRALIA:

*Tourism has without question faced its most difficult and challenging period on record. We have seen our tourism industry come to a complete standstill in response to the global pandemic and then only to restart against a backdrop of uncertainty about what the future holds. Fortunately, as more of the world becomes vaccinated against COVID-19, the opportunities for travel and tourism to restart and rebuild have grown immensely.*



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*Australians are incredibly resilient and known for their remarkable positivity in the face of adversity and this has been particularly evident. The tourism industry, which has been one of the hardest hit sectors, has really shown its strengths in this regard as it has adapted and navigated its way through the ongoing challenges and uncertainty. It is something that makes me especially proud to work in tourism.*

*Travel can play a really important role in people's wellbeing by offering the opportunity to refresh and reconnect, and to learn and grow through encountering new experiences, places and people. Australia is a place that really lends itself to travel for improved wellbeing with our abundance of world-class nature, modern friendly cities, relaxed outdoor lifestyle and our warm and welcoming people. As we move out of the pandemic people will really be craving the opportunity to reap the benefits travel brings to one's physical and mental wellbeing.*

**BRENT HILL — CEO, TOURISM FIJI:**

*Approximately 150,000 staff were directly employed in tourism before the pandemic, and only about 30,000 were still in their roles in 2021. 2021 had so many swings and roundabouts for the tourism industry – starts, false starts, bursts, dips – we had it all. It felt to me like the industry just did everything it could to stay afloat and I know for many just how exhausting that has been – the mental challenge of continuing to come up with solutions, to keep going for another week or month, with the promise of that long-awaited end in sight not too far off. I salute the tourism industry for doing what it has done and to have made it to this point.*

*The one thing that is so obvious now as we stand on the doorstep of finally re-opening again, is what wonderful people the Fijians are – not once have I encountered anything other than smiles and positivity. The clouds and storms are here, but they will pass and the sun will shine again – an attitude so strong, and what a wonderful attribute to have.*

*I believe Fiji is so loved by Australians because it's close and so convenient to get to, and its beaches, snorkelling, water quality, resorts, hinterland and tourism experiences are as good as anywhere in the world. Coupled with that amazing Fijian spirit – the bula spirit – which makes Fijians so hospitable, genuine and warm, it's easy to fall in love with Fiji. You can genuinely relax and enjoy your time, or you can do as much as you want – there really are so many options. I'm excited to see new developments as the visitor economy kicks back into gear, and to see the flow-on effect from tourism into our people in Fiji – what it will mean for our country, will be really special to see. Australians have spent a very long time, too long, only being able to explore their backyard. To now be able to once again experience different cultures, different foods, smells, tastes and experiences – that is just so exciting and tantalising. I can't wait for 2022.*

**ATHAN DIDASKALOU — CO-FOUNDER, JULY:**

*What travel means to me now is self-discovery. Travel bookings with experiences and human connections built-in. In a world where you can work anywhere, the desire to break up the 9-5 zoom-barrage is ever imminent. People crave more frequent moments of escape, with a change of perspective as well as location.*

*Travel now is less about seeing the world solo, but about doing new things together with others experiencing it for the first time too. A layer on top of the booking. This makes me feel hungry for togetherness. Opting into new places with new people will be what fuels travel bookings and experiences moving forward.*