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BREAK UP A HOLIDAY BREAK: 10 INTERESTING STAYOVER OPTIONS

TRAVELLERS are “breaking up their holiday breaks” by staying over at the world’s holiday hotspots on the way to or from their primary destinations.

Flight Centre Limited global executive general manager of marketing Colin Bowman said growth in the number of airlines servicing Australia, coupled with the emergence of low cost and hybrid carriers, had opened up a variety of new holiday options for travellers.

Mr Bowman said Australians were capitalising on this growth by staying over at new cities on the way to or from their chosen destination and adding additional cities or countries to their holiday itineraries.

“As the range of airfare choices takes off, travellers are finding that the conventional flight path from A to B is not always the best or most interesting travel option,” he said.

“In some cases, flying direct to the destination may not be the cheapest flight either.

“Regardless of where you are going, chances are you will find a wide range of interesting and affordable flight options.

“Many of these options will not be obvious, so it pays to talk to an expert to explore the options that are available to suit your holiday plans and budget.

“For example, rather than stopping over briefly in a country on transit, you may like to break up your trip by staying over for a couple of days.

“Effectively, you can take a holiday break within a holiday break.”

To highlight some of the interesting alternatives that are now available, Flight Centre’s airfare experts have compiled a range of interesting “stayover” itineraries.

- 1) New York, via Hawaii

For most Australians, the journey to the Big Apple typically includes a flight via Los Angeles.

But an exciting new option will be available from June this year, when Hawaiian Airlines introduces direct services from Honolulu to New York's Kennedy (JFK) airport.

Australian travellers will be able to fly to Honolulu on Hawaiian's regular services from Sydney and then on New York, after soaking up the sun in one of the world's favourite holiday playgrounds.

2) New Zealand, with a South American flavour

Competition is intense on the Trans Tasman routes, which are now serviced by Qantas, Air New Zealand, Virgin Australia and a host of highly rated international airlines including Emirates, Aerolineas Argentina and Lan Chile.

In addition to flying to NZ, travellers taking off to Santiago with Lan can also stopover in Papeete and Easter Island.

3) London, via the Maldives

There are literally dozens of ways to fly to London.

If you're not in a hurry to touch down in the UK, Emirates offers one of the most interesting alternatives, which includes stops in Singapore, Colombo (Sri Lanka), Male and Dubai.

Male is, of course, the capital of the Maldives. Is there a better place to top up the tan on the way to the UK?

4) Paris, via Reunion

Similarly, if you're travelling to Paris and in need of some beach time, consider Air Tahiti Nui or Air Austral.

Air Tahiti offers flights from Sydney to Papeete and on to the French capital, while Air Austral flies via Reunion Island, the gateway to Mauritius and the Seychelles.

5) Rome, via Dubai

While many travellers still fly to Europe via Asia, Emirates' and Etihad's rapid growth in recent years has really put the Middle East on the stayover map for Australians.

Passengers taking off from Melbourne on Emirates can stayover in Dubai on the way to or from Rome and other European and UK destinations.

6) LA, via Fiji

The quickest way to get to Los Angeles is, of course, the direct route to Los Angeles International Airport.

But there's also a host of indirect options for travellers to consider.

Fijian carrier Air Pacific, which flies from several Australian cities, offers connections from Nadi to Los Angeles and other North American destinations, including Vancouver.

7) Bali and Phuket combined

These two holiday havens have long been favourites for Australian travellers.

But there's no need to choose between them, as it's now easy and affordable to visit both.

Flight Centre has created an airfare deal that includes a flight from Australia to Bali, via Singapore, on to Phuket and then home to Australia via Singapore.

8) Kenya, via Korea

Australian travellers taking off on an African safari will soon have a new flight option.

Korean Air, which offers flights from Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne, recently announced plans to launch non-stop services from Seoul Incheon to Nairobi from June 21.

Flights will leave Seoul on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays.

9) Las Vegas, via Hawaii

Travellers taking off to Las Vegas can really hit the jackpot when it comes to stopover options along the way.

In addition to taking the traditional route to LA with V Australia, Qantas and others, Aussie travellers can choose to get beached in Hawaii by flying Hawaiian Airlines and stopping over in Honolulu.

10) South Africa, via Adu Dhabi

If you're planning a trip to South Africa, there are literally dozens of flight paths to consider, in addition to the direct route from Australia.

Examples include flights with Etihad, via Abu Dhabi, and Air Mauritius, via Mauritius.

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