

AUSTRALIA TO OPEN BORDERS BY THE END OF THE YEAR



Australia's borders have been closed for about 19 months now, and still the country can't get the coronavirus under control. Most recently, the case numbers skyrocketed in June - the seven-day incidence is currently about 48. Australia's Zero Covid Strategy failed. The government cited the Delta variant as the reason. Now a new plan was announced, and it contains good news for all

Australia fans as the country plans to open borders.

Australia is on track to reopen its borders by Christmas. "I sympathize with Australians who have been denied the opportunity to travel overseas this year," Tourism Minister Dan Tehan said at a press briefing in late September. **But for international tourism to restart, he said, some groundwork must be done.**

80 Percent Vaccination Rate Needed

A condition for opening the borders is that the national vaccination rate exceeds the 80 percent mark. As of the beginning of the October about 42 percent of Australians were fully vaccinated, and about 63 percent have received a first dose of the vaccine so far.

To ensure the mark is cracked as quickly as possible, the tourism board launched the "It's Our Best Shot for Travel" campaign back in August. "We need to reclaim our old way of life so we can visit friends and relatives, return to work, take our kids back to school, we can travel domestically and internationally again and welcome the world back. To enjoy all that Australia has to offer," said Phillipa Harrison, managing director of Tourism Australia.

Inbound Travelers Must Be Fully Vaccinated

Overseas tourists will also have to be fully vaccinated to enter Australia. The red continent will **first test the so-called vaccination passports with some countries, including Singapore, Japan and the United States.**

The aviation industry has already prepared for the coming opening. Qantas, the country's national carrier, recently announced its plans to slowly resume international flights as early as in October.

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