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Scheme aims to benefit tourism

QUEENSLAND'S ailing tourism industry will receive a multimillion-dollar boost set to send hordes of holidaymakers towards sunnier climes this summer.

While frustration continues at the uncertainty surrounding when Queensland will reopen borders, the state government on Thursday will announce an \$8m tourism campaign offering discounted flights, hotels and other travel experiences in a fresh bid to ignite the industry's recovery from the coronavirus pandemic.

The campaign will take the state government's tourism spending during the pandemic past the \$1bn mark after a series of initiatives, including "Holiday Dollars" promotions, subsidies or grants for struggling businesses and partnerships with the federal government.

It is hoped the campaign will generate up to \$80m in economic spending for the tourism industry.

The Great Queensland Getaway will launch on Monday, with bookings valid from then until December 12 for airfares and January 23 for other experiences.

Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk said now was the time to book a Queensland holiday as attention turned to life beyond the pandemic.

"I've seen first-hand the significant impact the pandemic has had on tourism businesses right throughout the state," she said.

"We're working hard to find new ways to support tourism businesses to make it through these challenging times. This campaign will entice thousands of Queenslanders to get out and explore their own state. There's never been a better excuse to book a Queensland holiday."

Member for Cairns and Assistant Tourism Minister Michael Healy said the initiative would be widely welcomed in the Far North.

"Having visitors on the ground and enjoying our many Covid-safe tourism experiences keeps Far North Queenslanders in work and our cash registers ringing," Mr Healy said.

"While government assistance measures are greatly appreciated, tourism operators would much rather have visitors in town and be doing what they do best.

"Initiatives like the Great Queensland Getaway spread confidence across the region ahead of the Christmas holidays and that's critically important to the community.

"We saw that with Holiday Dollars and the economic return they generated for Cairns."

Virgin airlines, Greyhound buses, Accor hotels and hundreds of other businesses are involved in the campaign. The campaign will run for two weeks unless the thousands of deals are sold out sooner.

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