



Happy September! I hope you've missed receiving Fabulous Fridays and are looking to start seeing them again. Catching up after being on vacay for over two weeks takes over two weeks to catch up. Just to let you know, next week we will have a list of all our group trips so be ready to pack your bags and join us.

Today we celebrate Bring Your Manners to Work Day; shouldn't you do that every day? National Blueberry Popsicle Day, National Doodle Day, National Food Bank Day, National Lazy Mom's Day, Wear Teal to Work Day, Pierce Your Ears Day, Spalding Baseball Day, V-J Day (formal signing of Japanese surrender) and World Coconut Day. Other holidays that include September 2 are Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over (Labor Day Weekend), International Enthusiasm Week, National Nutrition Week and National Sweet Corn Week (let's hear it for NJ).

The astrological sign for today is Virgo and September's birth flowers are the Aster (symbol of powerful love) and the Morning Glory (simple symbol of affection) and the birthstone is the sapphire (associated with royalty and romance).

Today's birthdays include Terry Bradshaw (b. 1948), American football player and sportscaster, Christa McAuliffe (b. 1948) American educator and astronaut who was one of the seven crew members killed in the Space Shuttle Challenger disaster (d.1986), Mark Harmon (b.1951) American actor, director and producer (Chicago Hope, NCIS) and Keanu Reeves (b. 1964) Lebanese-Canadian actor, director and musician (Speed, Point Break, Matrix, John Wick movies). Deaths include Ho Chi Minh in 1969 who was the 1st president of Vietnam (b. 1890), J.R.R. Tolkien, 1973, South African-English writer, poet and academic best known for The Hobbit and Lord of the Rings (b.1892) and in 2005, Bob Denver, American actor best known for portraying Maynard G. Krebs and Gilligan in TV series (b. 1935).

Weddings that took place today include (1922) Author Margaret Mitchell (gone With the Wind) marries Red Berrien Upshaw, (1978) Singer George Harrison (Beatles) marries Olivia Trinidad Arias and (1978) singer Gloria Fajardo marries musician and producer Emilio Estefan (Miami Sound Machine).

Today's date in history: (1789) U.S. Department of the Treasury is founded, (1901) V.P. of U.S. Theodore Roosevelt spoke the famous phrase "Speak softly and carry a big stick", (1963) CBS Evening News becomes the first half-hour weekend news broadcast in the U.S., (1998) all 229 people onboard are killed when Swissair Flight 111 crashes near Peggy's Cove, Nova Scotia.

Music had the Beatle's **Help** certified gold in 1965, Hootie and the Blowfish appeared on the David Letterman Show for the first time in 1994 and in 1996, at the age of 16, Debbie Gibson signs to Atlantic Records. Sports had Chris Evert and Jimmy Connors win their first matches at the U.S. Open in 1971 and the Belgian Grand Prix at Circuit de Spa-Francorchamps is won by German Ferrari driver Michael Schumacher in 2001.

...and we go on until next week.



## The Bihlmier's Summer Vacation

This July my family and I celebrated my BIG birthday in Europe. We started off in Venice, Italy for a few nights then sailed on Celebrity Cruise Lines, Constellation, out of Ravenna doing a 9-night Western Mediterranean Cruise. The service on Celebrity and food was top notch. We visited some amazing ports: Split, Croatia, Kotor, Montenegro, four ports in Italy, Provence, France and Barcelona, where we stayed an additional few nights. In the two weeks we explored, walked, ate some delicious food, and most important made some great family memories. Tara, John and Kenna.



## Canada, Greenland and Iceland—August 2022



Prior to disembarking in Reykjavik we visited Halifax, Nova Scotia and St. John's Newfoundland. A couple of additional sea days had us tender at Qaqortoq, Greenland (the maiden stop for the Celebrity Summit). I have to admit, before this cruise I had not known of any destination that started and ended with a "Q". Who knew?

The Captain had a great sense of humor when we were cruising near the icebergs he said "no worries as long as Kate and Leo were not on board".

The staff of the Summit was wonderful, and few hours at the Sky Lagoon was relaxing after an interesting visit to the Iceland Phallogical Museum.



# In New Orleans, Beignets Are a Must— Here's Where to Eat Them

*An integral part of New Orleans cuisine, beignets are demonstrative of the rich and storied history of the Crescent City.*

Traveling for food brings its own type of joy: Connecting to a community and culture through the fare that's defined towns and regions is a way to understand both a location's history and the possibility of its future. And in New Orleans, the hot, puffy, sugary beignet helps travelers do just that.

Recognized as the official state doughnut of Louisiana, beignets are a deep-fried pastry made from *pâte à choux*, a type of pastry dough that originated during the 16th century from Italian, and eventually French culinary techniques. The deep-fried pastries can take on a number of forms around the world—think chestnut flour *fritelli* in Corsica and the holeless Berliner doughnut in Germany—but their most prominent iteration is the New Orleans version, which is commonly served as a breakfast item: piping hot with powdered sugar on top.

An integral part of New Orleans cuisine, beignets date back to the 18th century when they were brought to the New Orleans coast by French colonists and Acadians. Today, beignets have taken on a life of their own through their distinctive taste and various iterations. They are demonstrative of the rich and storied history of the Crescent City, and representative of what's possible with a little heart, creativity, and a few dashes of sugar.

## Café Du Monde

The icon. The moment. The real OG. Café Du Monde opened in 1862, and for more than 150 years, it's retained its global credibility through a sole item on its food menu: beignets.

Served hot, puffy, and smothered in snow-like powdered sugar, Café Du Monde's beignets have become popularized through literature, folklore, and movies, such as *The Princess and the Frog* and *Chef*. With locations around Louisiana (and at one point, even in Japan), the original location in the historic French Quarter remains its most popular. Overlooking architectural marvels and jazz street players, visitors from all over the world can catch a bit of the Mississippi River breeze while enjoying one of the city's oldest delights. Originally opened as a coffee stand, the café also serves other New Orleans favorites, including chicory coffee—which has a slightly chocolatey, nutty flavor—and coffee served “au lait,” with hot milk. Remaining true to its roots, recipes at the café have reportedly gone unchanged, meaning that guests can be assured that the delicious dining experience they enjoy was likely shared by many who came before them.

## Cafe Beignet

Cafe Beignet was opened on Royal Street in the 1990s by a group of close friends, and their idea has since grown into a local chain. It serves breakfast, sandwiches, local specialties like red beans and rice and the muffuletta, a New Orleans-style sandwich of a Sicilian sandwich loaf filled with layers of salami and ham, various cheeses, and an aromatic olive salad. Of course, it also serves the almighty beignet. Note that Cafe Beignet's pastries are more cakey than Café du Monde's beignets, showing that there's no one way to do a beignet.

## Loretta's Authentic Pralines

While most associate beignets with powdered sugar, New Orleanians know that there are many ways to enjoy this perfectly fried dough. As the first African American woman to own and operate a praline storefront in New Orleans, owner Lorretta Harrison takes this to heart: Loretta's Authentic Pralines serves nationally recognized pecan pralines, cookies, and other sweets, like its innovative beignets. Just a few of the varieties that keep patrons coming back? Breakfast beignets with sausage or bacon, egg, and cheese, peanut butter and jelly beignets, burger beignets, and praline beignets, which includes mouthfuls of fried beignet dough complimented with melted praline.



# Cayman Islands Will Drop All Remaining COVID-19 Protocols This Week

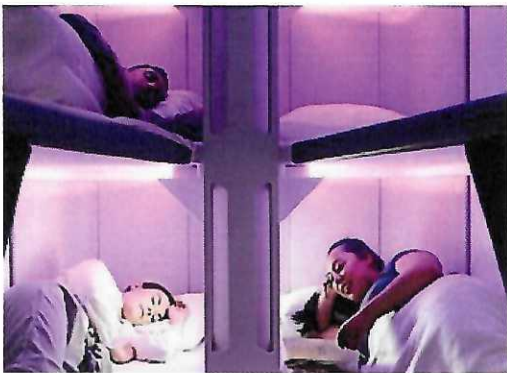
As of Wednesday, Aug. 24, travel to the Cayman Islands will officially be back to normal as the destination will drop all remaining COVID-19 travel restrictions.

The Cayman Islands announced on Friday that starting on Aug. 24, travelers will no longer have to use Travel Cayman to apply for a travel declaration, show proof of vaccination, or test negative for COVID-19 prior to departure.

Previously, The Cayman Islands had been requiring travelers to either be fully vaccinated, be a cruise traveler, or have “close ties to the country” in order to enter without a quarantine. The only people now required to be vaccinated will be those coming on a work permit.

The Cayman Islands, compared with some of its Caribbean neighbors, has been slower to lift restrictions, and Premier Wayne Panton, who spoke on Friday, recognized that but said that the Islands had opted for caution in order to save lives.

The CDC still recommends that all travelers going to the Cayman Islands remain up to date with COVID-19 vaccines and follow all requirements and recommendations in the Cayman Islands.



## Air New Zealand Is Launching Lie-Flat Pods in Economy Called the SkyNest

Air New Zealand will offer lie-flat sleep pods for travelers flying in the economy cabin, starting in 2024. Called the [SkyNest](#), the six lie-flat sleep pods can be booked for four hours at a time. They will be available on the airline's Boeing 787-9 Dreamliners, and are part of a new cabin experience that also includes a front row called Business Premier Luxe.

## Celebrity Cruises Unveils New Protocols Paving Way for All to Return to Sailing

Celebrity Cruises, like sister line Royal Caribbean International, announced new protocols for guests sailing from U.S. and European ports by dropping vaccination requirements and simplifying testing guidelines, making cruising more accessible and easier for travelers. Beginning Sept. 5, 2022, all guests, regardless of vaccination status, departing on most sailings from the U.S. and Europe can now cruise as long as they meet local testing requirements to board. Celebrity will also now accept any commercially available test, including unsupervised self-tests, in many destinations.

New pre-boarding testing requirements for the U.S. and Europe include: 1) Fully vaccinated guests no longer need to test to board sailings from the U.S. that are nine nights or less (excluding sailings that visit Canada and Bermuda); 2) A negative test result from a simple, unsupervised and self-administered test will be accepted for all sailings (excluding sailings that visit Australia, Bermuda, Canada, Greece or New Zealand); 3) Children under 5 years of age sailing from the U.S. and guests under 12 years of age sailing from Europe do not need to test prior to boarding.

While Celebrity Cruises has dropped vaccination requirements, sailings to and from ports in Canada, Australia and New Zealand require all guests ages 12 and up to be fully vaccinated to sail in keeping with country requirements. Galapagos cruises require guests ages 3 and older to be vaccinated. For all sailings, detailed boarding information by country of embarkation is available on the Country Travel Requirements page of Celebrity [www.HealthyAtSea.com](http://www.HealthyAtSea.com) portal.







# New DOT Proposal Would Give Travelers Better Protection for Delayed or Canceled Flights

The stress put on the travel ecosystem, and travelers, since the spring is spurring moves to give consumers a little more protection when their plans are impacted.

On Wednesday, the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) proposed a new rule that would make it easier for travelers to be compensated for when a flight is canceled or heavily delayed. The DOT said the proposal was inspired by a “flood” of consumer complaints over mistreatment from airlines since early 2020.

“When Americans buy an airline ticket, they should get to their destination safely, reliably, and affordably,” said U.S. Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg. “This new proposed rule would protect the rights of travelers and help ensure they get the timely refunds they deserve from the airlines.”

Currently, the rule is that travelers can get some kind of compensation if there is a “significant delay” in their plans. However, the DOT has never specifically defined what a “significant delay” means. Instead, it determined whether a passenger was able to get a refund on a case-by-case basis, which led to inconsistency among carriers when it came to issuing refunds.

The proposal on Wednesday would finally define the rule—the DOT wants to define it as a departure or arrival time that’s off by at least three hours for a domestic flight or six hours for an international flight.

Travelers who experience those kinds of delays, changes to their departure or arrival airport, changes that increase the number of connections on a flight, or changes to the type of aircraft flown that downgrades the travel experience, would be offered refunds or compensation under the new DOT proposal.

Wednesday’s proposal would go a step further and would codify “cancellation” as a “flight that was published in a carrier’s Computer Reservation System at the time of the ticket sale but was not operated by the carrier.”

The DOT also wants airlines to provide flight credits or vouchers that are “valid indefinitely” when passengers have to change plans for “certain pandemic-related reasons, such as government-mandated bans on travel, closed borders, or passengers advised not to travel to protect their health.” That was a major pain point for so many consumers during the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The DOT said that the proposal was made, in part because of the “flood of air travel service complaints from consumers with non-refundable tickets who did not travel because airlines canceled or significantly changed their flights or because the consumers decided not to fly for pandemic-related reasons such as health concerns.”

The next step for the DOT is an Aviation Consumer Protection Advisory Committee meeting scheduled on Aug. 22.