



Stuttford Van Lines Country Guide for

New Zealand



Country Guides: Courtesy of Overseas Moving Network International (OMNI)

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1 CONTACT ADDRESSES

Location: South Pacific.

Time: New Zealand: GMT + 12 (GMT + 13 from the first Sunday in October to the third Sunday in March). Chatham Island: GMT + 12.45 (GMT + 13.45 from the last Sunday in October to the last Sunday in March).

Tourism New Zealand in the UK

Level 7, New Zealand House, 80 Haymarket, London SW1Y 4TQ, UK Tel: (0906) 601 3601 (60p per minute; call centre) or (0906) 910 0100 (immigration). Website: www.newzealand.com (consumer information) or www.tourismnewzealand.com (trade information).

New Zealand Immigration Service in the UK

Mezzanine Floor, New Zealand House, 80 Haymarket, London SW1Y 4TE, UK Tel: (09069) 100 100 (visa information and immigration service; calls cost £1 per minute).

Opening hours: Mon-Fri 1000-1545. Website: www.immigration.govt.nz

New Zealand High Commission in the UK

2nd Floor, New Zealand House, 80 Haymarket, London SW1Y 4TQ, UK Tel: (020) 7930 8422. Website: www.nzembassy.com Opening hours: Mon-Fri 0900-1700.

Tourism New Zealand in the USA

501 Santa Monica Boulevard, Suite 300, Santa Monica, CA 90401, USA Tel: (310) 395 7480 or (866) 639 9325 (toll-free inside USA only). Website: www.newzealand.com or www.tourisminfo.govt.nz

New Zealand Embassy in the USA

37 Observatory Circle, NW, Washington, DC 20008, USATel: (202) 328 4800. Website: www.nzemb.org

2 OVERVIEW

Imagine a unique land of breathtaking scenery: craggy coastlines, sweeping golden beaches, verdant forests, snow-capped alpine mountains, gurgling volcanic pools, flashing fish-filled rivers and glacier-fed lakes, all beneath a brilliant blue sky. New Zealand is accessible, spread over three relatively small islands with modern and efficient transport, quiet roads, plenty of flights and two stunningly scenic rail journeys. Other pluses are friendly, English-speaking people, a low crime rate, and a trio of rich cultural influences – adventurous Polynesian navigators (Maori), pioneering European settlers who followed a thousand years later, and modern Pacific Rim immigrants. The plant and animal life are excellent offering opportunities to see the varied birdlife (including kiwis), seals, dolphins and whales. Enjoy the chance to explore two of the richest New-World wine regions on the planet, taste wonderful cuisine, stroll on moody beaches, tramp through the national parks or over alpine passes. Try bungee jumping, caving or whitewater rafting: you can ski or snowboard on world-class slopes, scuba dive in unique colour-



filled marine reserves, sail on exciting waters or play on tournament-class golf courses. If that is not your bag, immerse yourself in culture in the museums and galleries of New Zealand's main cities Auckland, Christchurch and the capital Wellington. New Zealand's time as an original, fully fledged tourist haven has come. Long-haul flights are fast-growing and the country's isolation, once a bane, is now a boon.

Anthony Mudd

3 GENERAL INFORMATION

Area: 270,534 sq km (104,454 sq miles).

Population: 4 million (statistics New Zealand, 2004).

Population Density: 14.8 per sq km.

Capital: Wellington. Population: 423,765 (2003). Auckland, with a population of 1.3 million (2005), is the largest urban area in the country.

GEOGRAPHY: New Zealand is 1930km (1200 miles) southeast of Australia and consists of two major islands, the North Island (116,031 sq km/44,800 sq miles) and the South Island (153,540 sq km/59,283 sq miles), which are separated by Cook Strait. Stewart Island (1750 sq km/676 sq miles) is located immediately south of the South Island, and the Chatham Islands lie 800km (500 miles) to the east of Christchurch. Going from north to south, temperatures decrease. Compared to its huge neighbour Australia, New Zealand's three islands make up a country that is relatively small (about 20 per cent more land mass than the British Isles). Two-thirds of the country is mountainous, a region of swift-flowing rivers, deep alpine lakes and dense subtropical forest. The country's largest city, Auckland, is situated on the peninsula that forms the northern part of the North Island. The southern part of the North Island is characterised by fertile coastal plains rising up to volcanic peaks. Around Rotorua, 240km (149 miles) south of Auckland, there is thermal activity in the form of geysers, pools of boiling mud, springs of hot mineral water, silica terraces, coloured craters and hissing fumaroles, which make Rotorua a world-famous tourist attraction. The South Island is larger, although only about one-third of the population lives there. The Southern Alps extend the whole length of the island, culminating in Mount Cook, the country's highest peak. In the same region are the Franz Josef and Fox glaciers. There are also four Associated Territories: The Cook Islands, about 3500km (2175 miles) northeast of New Zealand; Niue, 920km (570 miles) west of the Cook Islands (area 260 sq km/100 sq miles); Tokelau, three atolls about 960km (600 miles) northwest of Niue (area 12 sq km/4 sq miles), and the Ross Dependency, which consists of over 700,000 sq km (270,270 sq miles) of the Antarctic.

Note: Cook Islands and Niue have separate individual sections in the World Travel Guide.

Government: Constitutional monarchy since 1907. Head of State: HM Queen Elizabeth II since 1952, represented locally by Governor-General Dame Silvia Cartwright since 2001. Head of Government: Prime Minister Helen Clark since 1999. Recent history: Helen Clark became New Zealand's first woman Deputy Prime Minister in 1989 and Prime Minister in 1999. She was re-elected as Prime Minister for a third time in September 2005. Her Labour Party won 50 seats in Parliament and formed a coalition with the Progressive Party. Her government voted a number of controversial measures such as the decision to legalise prostitution. The government's opposition



to the invasion of Iraq in 2003 raised tensions with the US, one of the country's main trading partner.

Language: English is the common and everyday language, but other languages are also spoken, including Maori, which is New Zealand's second official language (spoken by the indigenous Maori people who constitute approximately 15 per cent of the population).

Religion: 60 per cent Christian: Anglican, Presbyterian, Roman Catholic and Methodist are all represented.

Electricity: 230 volts AC, 50Hz. Most hotels provide 110-volt AC sockets (rated at 20 watts) for electric razors only.

SOCIAL CONVENTIONS: Should a visitor be invited to a formal Maori occasion, the hongi (pressing of noses) is common. Casual dress is widely acceptable. New Zealanders are generally very relaxed and hospitable. Stiff formality is rarely appreciated and, after introductions, first names are generally used. Smoking is restricted where indicated.

Passport/Visa

	<i>Passport Required?</i>	<i>Visa Required?</i>	<i>Return Ticket Required?</i>
British	Yes	No	Yes
Australian	Yes	No	No
Canadian	Yes	No	Yes
USA	Yes	No	Yes
OtherEU	Yes	No	Yes
Japanese	Yes	No	Yes

PASSPORTS: Passport valid for at least three months beyond the intended period of stay required by all. Some governments are not recognised by New Zealand and citizens in doubt should check with the New Zealand Immigration Service (see Passport/Visa Information).

VISAS: Required by all except the following: (a) nationals of the EU and nationals of countries referred to in the chart above for stays of up to three months, except nationals of the UK who may stay for up to six months and nationals of Australia who may stay indefinitely; (b) nationals of Andorra, Argentina, Bahrain, Brazil, Brunei, Chile, Hong Kong (SAR), Iceland, Israel, Korea (Rep), Kuwait, Liechtenstein, Malaysia, Mexico, Monaco, Norway, Oman, Qatar, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, South Africa, Switzerland, United Arab Emirates, Uruguay and Vatican City for stays of up to three months; (c) transit passengers continuing their journey by the same or first connecting aircraft within 24 hours, providing they hold onward or return documentation and are not leaving the airport and are not transiting to or from a South Pacific Island or a national of the Kingdom of Nepal; (d) those in transit whose next or final destination is Australia and the traveller holds a current Australian visa.(e) nationals travelling on a UN laissez-passer for stays of up to three months.

Types of visa and cost: Visitor: £50. Transit: £55. Student: £80. Business visitors discussing or negotiating business arrangements and staying for up to three months can travel using a visitor visa.



Validity: Visitor Permit: nine months in any 18 month period. This can be extended by a further three months in certain circumstances. Visitors must then remain outside New Zealand for a period of time equal to that they spent inside New Zealand, before applying for another visa.

Application to: Consulate (or Consular section at Embassy or Immigration Service at High Commission); see Passport/Visa Information.

Application requirements: Visitor Permit/Transit Visa: (a) Completed application form. (b) One recent passport-size photo of each person named in the application. (c) Passport valid for three months beyond the date of departure. (d) Proof of sufficient funds for duration of stay, approximately NZ\$1000 per person per month, or NZ\$400 per person per month when accommodation has been paid for in advance (eg recent bank statements). (e) Onward or return ticket, or declaration by New Zealand sponsor that cost of travel back to home country will be met. (f) Fee (payable in cash or by bank/building society cheque, credit card accepted by some offices, money order or bank draft). Student: (a)-(f) and, (i) Confirmation of placement and payment of fees at an approved educational institution.

Note: Applicants must prove themselves to be in good health (ie not suffering from ill health that may become a burden to the New Zealand health services) and of good character (by providing a police certificate showing a good record. Those applying for a visa may also be asked to undergo an interview and/or a medical examination prior to travel, or by the Immigration Officer at port of entry.

Working days required: Two weeks, but this may vary depending on type of visa required and nationality of the applicant.

Temporary residence: Enquire at the nearest New Zealand High Commission or Immigration Service for details.

Passport/Visa Information: New Zealand Immigration Service in the UK Mezzanine Floor, New Zealand House, 80 Haymarket, London SW1Y 4TE, UK Tel: (09069) 100 100 (visa information and immigration service; calls cost £1 per minute). Opening hours: Mon-Fri 1000-1545. Website: www.immigration.govt.nz New Zealand High Commission in the UK Second Floor, New Zealand House, 80 Haymarket, London SW1Y 4TQ, UK Tel: (020) 7930 8422. Website: www.nzembassy.com Opening hours: Mon-Fri 0900-1700. New Zealand Embassy in the USA 37 Observatory Circle, NW, Washington, DC 20008, USA Tel: (202) 328 4800. Website: www.nzemb.org

4 MONEY

Currency: New Zealand Dollar (NZD; symbol: NZ\$) = 100 cents. Notes are in denominations of NZ\$100, 50, 20, 10 and 5. Coins are in denominations of NZ\$2 and 1, and 50, 20, 10 and 5 cents.

Currency exchange: Exchange facilities are widely available throughout New Zealand.

Credit & debit cards: American Express, Diners Club, MasterCard and Visa are widely accepted. Check with your credit or debit card company for details of merchant acceptability and other services that might be available.



Traveller's cheques: Can be exchanged at official rates at trading banks, large hotels and some shops. To avoid additional exchange rate charges, travellers are advised to take traveller's cheques in US Dollars, Pounds Sterling or Australian Dollars.

Currency restrictions: There are no restrictions on the import and export of foreign or local currency.

Exchange rate indicators

Date Dec '05 £1.00 = NZ\$2.45 \$1.00 = NZ\$1.42

Banking hours: Mon-Fri 0900-1630.

5 DUTY FREE

The following items may be imported into New Zealand by persons of 17 years of age and over without incurring customs duty: 200 cigarettes or 50 cigars or 250g tobacco or a mixture of all three weighing no more than 250g; 4.5l of wine or beer; 1.125l or 40oz of spirits or liqueurs; goods to a total value of NZ\$700.

Prohibited items: Because of the importance of agriculture and horticulture to the New Zealand economy, it is illegal to import most foodstuffs (meat, meat products, honey, fruit and dairy). Take care when importing wood products, such as golf clubs, shoes and items made from animal skin. For further information, contact the nearest Embassy, High Commission or Consulate. The import of the following items is also prohibited: firearms and weapons (unless a special permit is obtained from the New Zealand police); ivory in any form; tortoise or turtle shell jewellery and ornaments; medicines using musk, rhinoceros or tiger derivatives; carvings or anything made from whalebone or bone from any other marine animals; cat skins or coats and certain drugs (eg diuretics, depressants, stimulants, heart drugs, tranquillisers, sleeping pills) unless covered by a doctor's prescription.

6 PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

Below are listed Public Holidays for the January 2006-June 2007 period. Jan 1-3 2006 New Year. Feb 6 Waitangi Day. Apr 14-17 Easter. Apr 25 ANZAC Day. Jun 5 Queen's Birthday. Oct 23 Labour Day. Dec 25 Christmas Day. Dec 26 Boxing Day. Jan 1-2 2007 New Year. Feb 6 Waitangi Day. Apr 6-9 Easter. Apr 25 ANZAC Day. Jun 4 Queen's Birthday.

Note: Each region also observes its particular anniversary day as a holiday.

7 HEALTH

	Special Precautions	Certificate Required
Yellow Fever	No	No
Cholera	No	No



<i>Typhoid and Polio</i>	No	N/A
<i>Malaria</i>	No	N/A

Food & drink: Mains water is considered safe to drink. Milk is pasteurised and dairy products are safe for consumption. Local meat, poultry, seafood, fruit and vegetables are generally considered safe to eat.

Other risks: There are no snakes or dangerous wild animals in New Zealand. Sandflies are prevalent in Fiordland, but these can be effectively countered with insect repellent. The only poisonous creature is the very rare katipo spider.

Health care: Medical facilities, both public and private, are of a high standard. Telephone numbers for doctors and hospitals are listed at the front of the white pages of local telephone directories. Should visitors need drugs or pharmaceutical supplies outside normal shopping hours, they should refer to 'Urgent Pharmacies' in the local telephone directory for the location of the nearest pharmacy or check with their hotel. Many hotels have doctors on call. Long-staying visitors with a valid permit to stay for two or more years are entitled to health care services on the same basis as New Zealand citizens. There is a reciprocal health agreement with the UK, which entitles short-term British visitors to publicly funded health treatment. They will receive free treatment as a hospital inpatient, but must pay some charges for any services provided by outpatients and private doctors. Comprehensive medical insurance is strongly recommended before travelling to cover any additional charges. If you intend to participate in adventure activities, such as bungee jumping or white water rafting, you should ensure that your travel insurance covers these types of activities. You should check any exclusions, and that your policy covers you for the activities you want to undertake.

Travel - International

AIR: The national airline is Air New Zealand (NZ) (website: www.airnz.co.nz).

Approximate flight times: From Auckland to London is 25 hours, from Wellington is 29 hours and from Christchurch is 30 hours. From Auckland to Los Angeles is 12 hours, to New York is 20 hours, to Singapore is 10 hours 30 minutes, and to Sydney is three hours.

Main airports: Auckland (AKL) (website: www.auckland-airport.co.nz) is 22.5km (14 miles) south of the city (travel time 40 minutes). To/from the airport: Airbus runs an efficient service between the international terminal to the city centre. These operate from 0600 until the last flight and cost NZ\$15/single and NZ\$22/return (student and child discounted fares are available). Rideline operates from 0700-1800 and costs NZ\$4 (travel time approximately 60 minutes) from the city centre to the airport. Take buses 363, 364, 374 or 375. In addition to regular taxis, there is a shuttle taxi service which operates 24 hours; the fare is approximately NZ\$40 depending on the number of passengers. Heletranz has a helicopter service from Auckland's North Shore and city to the airport (travel time - 12 minutes). An inter-terminal bus operates 0600-2230 daily. Facilities: Duty-free shopping, banks/bureaux de change, post office, restaurants and cafes, car hire and baggage facilities/left luggage. There is a wide selection of hotels near the airport. Christchurch (CHC) (website: www.christchurch-airport.co.nz) is 10km (6 miles) northwest of the city (travel time 20 minutes). To/from the airport: Buses operate all day, every half hour (less regular at weekends) from the city centre to the airport at a cost of NZ\$7 (travel time - 40mins). A door-to-door shuttle service operates; it costs from NZ\$12. A journey into the city centre by taxi takes approximately 20 minutes and costs NZ\$25. Facilities: Currency exchange, ATM, mobile



phone rental and bank. Good hotels are within 10km (6 miles). Wellington (WLG) (website: www.wellington-airport.co.nz) is 8km (5 miles) southeast of the city (travel time 30 minutes). Stagecoach Flyer operates a bus service to the city centre every 30 minutes (fare NZ\$3-8). The shuttle service operates on demand (maximum 10 persons) and costs NZ\$12-14 accordingly. Taxis are available from outside the terminal. Facilities: Duty free, bar, restaurant, ATM and currency exchange. Queenstown International Airport (ZQN) (website: www.queenstownairport.co.nz). To/from the airport: A taxi into the town centre takes 10 minutes and costs approximately NZ\$18. Shuttle buses are available for NZ\$8 (a discount is available for more than one passenger) and the journey lasts 15 minutes. For NZ\$5, a bus takes passengers into town and will also pick-up from some hotels (travel time - 20 minutes). Facilities: Duty free, currency exchange and baggage storage.

Departure tax: Up to NZ\$25 (depending on airport) plus NZ\$5 security tax; children aged under 12 are exempt (except at Wellington where only passengers under two years of age are exempt and passengers aged two to 11 pay NZ\$10). Transit passengers are exempt for 24 hours.

SEA: Main ports: Auckland, Christchurch, Dunedin, Lyttelton, Opuha, Picton and Wellington. They are served by international shipping lines sailing from the USA and from Europe. A few cruise ships, such as P&O, Cunard and Princess Cruises, visit New Zealand, but there are no regular passenger ship services. For further details, contact Tourism New Zealand (see Top Things To Do).

Travel - Internal

AIR: Air New Zealand (NZ) and Qantas Airways operate domestic flights between the major airports (see Travel International section). Several smaller airlines, including Air Nelson, Eagle Air and Mount Cook Airlines, are wholly owned by Air New Zealand and have been grouped together as Air New Zealand Link. They serve many of the 27 other airports throughout the two islands.

SEA: The North and South Islands are linked by modern ferries operating between Wellington and Picton, carrying passengers and vehicles across Cook Strait. The Interislander (travel time three hours) and The Lynx (travel time - two hours 15 minutes) make several daily crossings with long-distance train connections from Wellington and Picton railway stations (website: <http://www.interislander.co.nz/>); Reservations on all ferry services are highly recommended, particularly for visitors taking their vehicles. Information can be obtained from Tourism New Zealand (see Top Things To Do) or via the Tranz Rail reservation line; see the Rail section for further details.

RAIL: Toll New Zealand (formerly Tranz Rail Ltd) operates a reliable rail service with many routes of great scenic attraction. Tranz Scenic operates eight scenic long-distance trains. The Overlander runs between Auckland and Wellington (daytime and overnight) with good views of forests, gorges and volcanic peaks. The Transcoastal runs between Christchurch and Picton along the east coast between the snow-capped Kaikoura Mountains and past the Kaikoura coast, which is famous for whale-watching. The TranzAlpine runs between Christchurch and Greymouth through spectacular landscapes of gorges and river valleys and across the snow-capped Southern Alps. There are buffet cars on all trains, but there are no sleeping cars on overnight services. All services are one-class travel only. For further information, contact Toll New Zealand (tel: (4) 498 3000; website: www.tollnz.co.nz); or Tranz Scenic (tel: (4) 495 0775 or (0800) 277 482 (toll free in New Zealand); website: www.tranzscenic.co.nz).



Travel passes: Travelpass New Zealand offers a 2-in-1, 3-in-1 or 4-in-1 travel pass. The 2-in-1 pass offers unlimited coach travel and one ferry journey. The 3-in-1 pass offers unlimited coach travel, one ferry journey and one train journey. The 4-in-1 pass offers unlimited coach travel, one ferry journey, one train journey and one domestic flight. InterCity coaches, Tranz Scenic trains and Interislander ferry services across Cook Strait are available with the pass. It is issued for periods between five and 15 days, extra days cost NZ\$50 each. The pass can be bought outside New Zealand from any InterCity Coachlines office, Toll New Zealand travel centre or accredited travel agency. The Scenic Rail Pass is available for seven days or one month and includes a journey on the Interislander ferry. A seven-day pass costs NZ\$299, a one-month pass costs NZ\$499. For further information, contact Tourism New Zealand (see Top Things To Do). The Kiwi Experience is a coach transport network for backpackers and independent travellers.

ROAD: Traffic drives on the left. Coach: InterCity Coachlines (website: www.intercitycoach.co.nz) operates scheduled services throughout the country. Coach passes are available. Newmans Coach Lines (website: www.newmanscoach.co.nz) operates services in both islands. It is advisable to make reservations for seats. Bus: There are regional bus networks which serve most parts of the country and are on the whole friendly and cheaper than the larger companies. Taxi: There are metered taxis throughout the country. Car hire: Major international firms and local firms have offices at airports and most major cities and towns. It is recommended to hire vehicles from members of the New Zealand Vehicle Rental & Leasing Association. Regulations: The minimum age for driving a rented car is 21. The legal speed limit is 100kph (60mph) on the open road and 50kph (30mph) in built-up areas. Distances are indicated in kilometres. Both driver and passengers are legally required to wear seat belts at all times. For further information, contact The New Zealand Automobile Association (tel: (9) 966 8800 or (800) 500 222 (toll free in New Zealand); website: www.aa.co.nz). Documentation: All international driving licences are recognised by New Zealand. And, although not compulsory, an International Driving Permit is recommended. Motor insurance is not a legal requirement in New Zealand because New Zealand law has removed the right of accident victims to sue a third party in the event of an accident. For further information, contact Tourism New Zealand (see Top Things To Do).

URBAN: Good local bus services are provided in the main towns; there are also trolley buses in Wellington. Both Auckland and Wellington have zonal fares with pre-purchase tickets and day passes. Rideline (website: www.rideline.co.nz) houses all the bus, train and ferry information about travelling around Auckland. The Wellington Tourist Information (website: www.wellingtonnz.com) has information about getting around.

TRAVEL TIMES: FalseNote: *Plus ferry crossing of three hours. **Plus two hours 30 minutes by road.

8 ACCOMMODATION

MOTELS & HOTELS: New Zealand offers a wide range of top-class hotels, exclusive retreats, motels, moderately priced accommodation and guest houses. Rates on the whole are cheaper in rural areas, while every city and town also offers a choice of budget hotels and motels. Budget accommodation, often with self-catering facilities, is increasingly popular. Disabled travellers: Every new building and every major reconstruction is required by law to provide reasonable and adequate access for people with disabilities. The law specifies that every motel and hotel must provide a certain number of units with accessible facilities. New Zealand is recognised as a world



leader in providing accessibility for the disabled. Grading: Hotels are graded from 1 to 4 stars. Motels are graded on a separate scale of 1 to 5 stars.

GUEST-HOUSES & PRIVATE HOTELS: Usually located in restored, older buildings, guest houses and private hotels offer moderately priced accommodation, often with shared bathroom facilities, but with generally high standards. Country pubs: The cheapest type of accommodation and particularly popular on the west coast of the South Island. Farm and home stays: A number of established companies can arrange farm holidays, where visitors stay with a family as a guest, sharing bathroom facilities. Many farms are conveniently located for outdoor activities such as fishing, skiing and horse trekking. Prices usually include breakfast and dinner. Bed and breakfast: There is an eclectic mix of hosts and homes to stay in. Guests will have their own room and are served breakfast in the morning. Boutique accommodation: This type of accommodation is almost always in a historic or heritage building or landmark. They offer a high standard of amenities and individual flair and breakfast is often served to guests in the morning. Lodges: They are small, intimate establishments with up to 20 rooms offering breakfast and dinner.

CAMPING/CARAVANNING: There are many campsites throughout New Zealand, which is reputed to have some of the world's best camping grounds. Rates and facilities vary considerably. It is advisable to make advance reservations from December to Easter. Motorcamps, holiday parks, cabins and tourist flats: These are characteristic of New Zealand. Motorcamps and holiday parks provide sites for tents, caravans and campervans. Many also have cabins, self-contained motels and backpackers lodges. Some are powered, others are non-powered and there is usually access to a shared kitchen, bathroom, dining area, TV lounge and other amenities such as a swimming pool. Visitors are required to provide their own tents and equipment, which can be hired from a number of companies. Occupants are usually required to supply their own linen, blankets and cutlery. Cabins are ideal for budget travellers and contain only beds and rudimentary furniture (visitors need to bring their own bedding). Tourist flats are at the top end of the cabin scale and usually offer sheets and bedding as well as fully equipped kitchens. Full details can be obtained from Tourism New Zealand (see Top Things To Do).

HOLIDAY HOMES: Many New Zealanders have a family holiday home which they rent out to friends and others. The homes come in a variety of guises from tiny cottages to large homes. Hiring a holiday home is an ideal way to experience true 'kiwi' living.

YOUTH HOSTELS: The Youth Hostel Association runs 62 hostels throughout the country, and reservations can be made in advance from December to March.

BACKPACKER'S HOSTELS: There are over 350 Backpackers' hostels located all over the country. BBH also issues a Backpacker card costing NZ\$40, which entitles the holder to discounted transport within New Zealand as well as NZ\$20 of pre-paid telephone calls.

Accommodation Information: Motel Association of New Zealand PO Box 27-245, 79 Boulcott Street, Wellington, New Zealand Tel: (4) 499 6415. Website: www.nzmotels.co.nz Hospitality Association of New Zealand Level 2, Radio Network House, Corner Abel Smith and Taranaki Streets, PO Box 53, Wellington, New Zealand Tel: (4) 385 1369. Website: www.hanz.org.nz Boutique Lodgings Website: www.lodgings.co.nz Youth Hostel Association PO Box 436, Christchurch, New Zealand Tel: (3) 379 9970 or (0800) 278 299 (toll free in New Zealand) Website: www.yha.org.nz The Budget Backpacker Hostels (BBH) 99 Titiraupenga Street, Taupo, New Zealand Tel: (7) 377 1568. Website: www.backpack.co.nz.

Introduction



New Zealand is the world's best kept secret; it contains six of the seven climatic regions on the planet, boasts a series of unparalleled golden-sand beaches, protected marine parks to explore from on or beneath the surface, safe-but-active volcanic areas, pristine snow-capped Alps to ski and climb, prehistoric forests and unique flora and fauna. It does all this in one easily accessible package without thousands of miles to travel between each destination and it has an enviable reputation as one of the safest destinations in the world, lacking poisonous animals and boasting a low crime rate. It is a country where the only stress is that taken on willfully by the adventure-minded tourist (in the form of bungy jumping, parachuting, white-water rafting etc). You can walk for miles in New Zealand without seeing another soul, accompanied by rustling trees, running water and unusual bird song but perhaps the country's greatest asset is its warm, friendly and hospitable population. For informed and accurate tourist information, on all of the country's highlights, travellers should contact one of the local VICs (Visitor Information Centres) situated all over New Zealand.

North Island

AUCKLAND: Auckland is the country's largest urban and suburban area with a population of over 1.5 million. Even so, it is surrounded by varied and exquisite scenery with attractive harbours and beaches to the east and the rugged Waitakere Ranges, the thundering, undeveloped surf beaches and burgeoning vineyards to the west. Known as the 'City of Sails', with more boats per capita than any other city in the world, these days Auckland's reputation as a sailor's Mecca is cemented by repeated successful defences of the America's Cup. The city offers excellent shopping, galleries and museums; it has a university and provides a multicultural environment characterised by a blend of European, Asian and Polynesian cultures, particularly on the busy and atmospheric Karangahape Road. There is also the distinctive Sky Tower, a casino with a glorious circular, glass viewing gallery at its bulbous summit. The views of the city, its beaches and the mountains, the coast and sea beyond are stunning. It is also possible for the particularly brave tourist to abseil down the side of the building to the street, a drop of over 100m (328ft). An exploration of at least one of the stunning golden-sand islands of the Hauraki Gulf, accessible by ferries from Waitamata Harbour and also visible from the Sky Tower, is highly recommended. Most of the city centre is walkable but the outlying suburbs of Devonport, Herne Bay, Parnell and Ponsonby (with their attractive eateries and well-reputed fashion industry) are brought within easy reach by a reliable public bus network and taxi system.

NORTHLAND: The narrow, predominantly Maori stronghold of Northland, the 'Winterless North' pushes out 350km (217 miles) from Auckland and separates the Pacific Ocean from the Tasman Sea. It provides the sub-tropical element in the New Zealand equation and is famed for its palms, citrus fruit, avocados, bananas and myriad gorgeous, sandy unspoiled beaches. It also gives tourists the opportunity to begin to understand Maori culture, art and history. On the east coast, the beaches exist between straggling peninsulas and headlands, offering calm bays that are safe for swimming. Perhaps the most famous area is the Bay of Islands, intricately sculpted and renowned for excellent diving, boating/sailing and game fishing. The west coast offers enormous dune-backed black-sand beaches that are lashed almost constantly by Tasman breakers, rip tides and biting winds (there is no safe swimming here). The views are fantastic and, just inland, the forests of the Northland Forest Park, contain some of the world's oldest trees, including the famous kauri, many of which date back centuries. Cape Karikari, overlooking Doubtless Bay was one of the locations for films such as From Here to Eternity and The Piano, and offers access to wide, rugged, moody beaches surrounded by steep hills and cliffs, while Cape Reinga overlooks the spectacular meeting of the Pacific Ocean and Tasman Sea and the narrow extension of Ninety-mile Beach down the west coast back toward Auckland.



PACIFIC COAST HIGHWAY: A spectacular coastal road runs parallel with the intricate filigree of small inlets and beaches around the Coromandel Peninsula and the long sweeping bays of the east coast. The journey begins with the ferry from Auckland to Coromandel, where the road weaves along the side of the peninsula's tiny, sun-trap inlets before opening out on the long run down from Hot Water Beach towards Tauranga. The warm water bubbles from beneath the sands overlooking the surf providing a perfect spot from which to watch the tide come in at sunset from your own personally dug hot pool. The volcanic hills of the Coromandel Peninsula retain much of their original rainforest and the Coromandel Forest Park Reserve contains large numbers of giant kauri trees which are famous for their tall straight trunks. A popular holiday destination in the Bay of Plenty is Tauranga, with all the amenities of a major tourist city including all levels of accommodation and some wonderful restaurants. The climate here is essentially benign and the sandy beaches attract many visitors while inland there is an abundance of orchards, particularly citrus and kiwi fruit. In Poverty Bay lies the city of Gisborne, which sits adjacent to Hawke's Bay, a wine growing region of international renown. Around 70 wineries (ranging from large commercial estates to small boutiques) are open for free wine tasting. This area is best known for its red wines, particularly Pinot Noir. The reason for the wonderful wine is the high annual sunshine hours which benefit the grapes and visiting tourists to both Hastings and Napier. Napier was razed by an earthquake in 1931 and subsequently rebuilt in the art deco style of the time. Today it boasts one of the world's finest collections of lovingly preserved art deco buildings. Inland, between Hawke's Bay and the Bay of Plenty, is the UNESCO-listed Te Urewera National Park, the largest native forest on the North Island and home of the lovely Lake Waikaremoana, 585m (1919ft) above sea level, with its strenuous but rewarding (three to four day) circular trail.

CENTRAL NORTH ISLAND: The centre of the North Island is dominated by the geothermal city of Rotorua, the extraordinarily picturesque Lake Taupo and the UNESCO-listed Tongariro National Park. The park is a spectacular mountain area dominated by three peaks, Ngauruhoe, Tongariro and, the tallest, Mount Ruapehu 2797m (9177ft), still an active volcano, and a major ski resort. When Ruapehu erupted in 1996, many people took the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to ski the slopes of a live volcano. Lake Taupo presents the less adventurous with an opportunity to enjoy unrivalled brown-trout fishing and a serene expanse of water fed by glacial streams and rivers. Rotorua is a good base for exploring the geysers and the large thermal zone of the North Island. It is a lively city full of all the usual tourist prerequisites and has the distinctive sulphurous smell of the surrounding boiling-mud pools. Rotorua is also a major centre for accessible Maori culture there is an arts centre where young Maori learn the skills of traditional bone, wood and greenstone carving. There is also the opportunity to visit a Marae (a Maori meeting house usually forbidden to pakeha, foreigners) and enjoy a concert of traditional songs, the haka (a Maori challenge usually witnessed before All Black rugby matches) and a hangi (a delicious feast cooked in an earth oven).

THE WESTERN NORTH ISLAND: Another area dominated by Maori culture and history which along with Northland provides the best opportunity to pick up authentic souvenirs. This is an atmospheric area with black-sand beaches, rich farm land, natural kaarst limestone architecture, national parks and a spectacular extinct volcano, Taranaki. Perhaps one of the most magical areas is the famous water-sculptured limestone caves of Waitamo with their glow-worm grottoes. The caves can be explored by punt or by donning a wet-suit and heading underground with an inflated car tyre. This unique New Zealand activity is called 'cave rafting' and provides an opportunity to float through the caverns staring at unusual rock formations and ceilings packed with glow worms, that resemble a star-strewn night sky. Wanganui, on the west coast of the North Island, lies near the mouth of the Whanganui River, New Zealand's longest navigable waterway. Visitors can travel upriver by jetboat or paddle steamer and downriver by kayak or canoe. The UNESCO World Heritage Site Whanganui National Park is a green vision of unspoiled



native bush where there remains the 'Bridge to Nowhere', a relic of the failed attempt at settlement in the glorious wilderness. The Egmont National Park is also a UNESCO-listed World Heritage area, and provides an excellent though strenuous opportunity, even for the less adventurous, to climb a mountain (Taranaki) in a little over eight hours (return). Mount Taranaki, at the centre of the national park, is an extinct volcano standing majestically amidst flat areas of lush green dairy farmland. The city of New Plymouth (population 50,000) is well known for its parks and gardens and, in particular, its colourful display of rhododendrons and azaleas in the spring.

WELLINGTON: In the south of the North Island, Wellington, New Zealand's capital, occupies the flat area surrounding the harbour basin and climbs the surrounding steep hillsides overlooking the water. This makes it a compact metropolis with a thriving and lively heart. The city is a centre of culture, arts, restaurants, theatre, fashion and nightlife. Shopping facilities are excellent and hotels offer splendid views of the bay. Every two years, Wellington hosts the New Zealand International Festival of the Arts, the country's main cultural event including street theatre, comedy, music and film festivals, all going under the same umbrella. The spectacular Te Papa Museum of New Zealand, on the city's pretty waterfront, combines cultural and historical exhibitions with education, entertainment and leisure activities, including a virtual bungy jump. Wellington is also the departure point for ferries across Cook Strait to the South Island.

EXCURSIONS: Popular destinations for excursions from Wellington include the Wairarapa wine region, Cape Palliser (whose wild coastline provides a habitat for a large colony of seals) and Kapiti Island, home to a bird sanctuary free of introduced predators where weka, bellbird and tui, to name but a few, show little or no fear and provide photo opportunities of fantastic quality.

South Island

MARLBOROUGH SOUNDS: To the north of the South Island, the sheltered waterways of the lush and green region known as Marlborough Sounds attract numerous boating, kayaking, sailing and fishing enthusiasts. The Marlborough province is well known for its wine and food, with world-class, new-world wineries such as Cloudy Bay, Le Brun, Fromm, Highfield, Hunters and Montana to name but a few. The best wines from this area tend to be white, sharp Chardonnay and crisp Sauvignon Blanc. Nearby, Nelson is a sunny and busy small city on the coast, where visitors will find pretty gardens, spectacular beaches and a growing arts community. Besides being an interesting place for art and culture lovers, the city is a good starting point for excursions to the three national parks in the vicinity. The UNESCO-listed Abel Tasman National Park has a rocky coastline, long golden, crescent-shaped beaches, crystal clear water, a seal colony, an abundance of bird life and a fine coastal track the Abel Tasman Track (three to four days). Nelson Lakes National Park, also on the UNESCO World Heritage list, offers skiing and snowboarding during winter and fishing or sub-alpine walking tracks during the summer. The Kahurangi National Park, another UNESCO World Heritage area, has a selection of walking tracks that offer an extraordinary range of scenery from mountains and karst tablelands to dramatic black-sand beaches on the west coast. The most famous of these is the tough Heaphy Track (four days). The Kaikoura coast, further south, is a world-famous conservation area, sitting opposite a deep water trench full of marine life, and is renowned for boat rides at close quarters with various species of whale and the chance to swim with dolphins.

CHRISTCHURCH: To the south, on the edge of the flat patchwork quilt of the Canterbury Plains, lies the 'Garden City' of Christchurch, the South Island's largest community. The tree-lined River Avon meanders through the centre of the city, which with its public school, old university buildings (now a fantastic arts centre) and examples of Neo-Gothic architecture is reminiscent of an old English university town. The central square of the city is occupied by a cathedral which



provides a useful landmark for tourists either on foot or using the charming historic trams. About 500m (1640ft) from the square is the vast expanse of Hagley Park, on the borders of which are the Old Canterbury University/Arts Centre, the Canterbury Museum, the Robert McDougall Art Gallery, the botanical gardens and Christ's College. Just a short walk along the river is St Michael and All Angels Church; an unusually beautiful wooden Neo-Gothic building combining French and English styles and containing a mixture of Maori and Catholic elements. For excursions from Christchurch, the nearby Banks Peninsula provides a hilly alternative to the flat city, with a cable car, beaches, boat trips, pods of Hector's dolphins (unique to New Zealand) and a number of accessible walking tracks. Another alternative is to take a hot air balloon ride and from that vantage point look west across the broad flat plains to the Southern Alps, north to the Kaikoura Ranges and Cook Strait and south down the east coast as far as the historic white-stone city of Oamaru.

SOUTHERN ALPS: From Christchurch, a single rail line and road lead to the Southern Alps, up over Arthur's Pass and down the other side to the wild west coast. This is the route of a breathtaking rail journey which can be completed, there and back, in one day on the Tranz Alpine Express. The tiny village of Arthur's Pass is a good starting point for climbing, canyoning and trekking trips to the UNESCO-listed Arthur's Pass National Park nearby. The Alps themselves, which can be accessed by five main roads from the east coast, are the spine of the South Island pushed up by plate movement in the earth's crust. They are larger than the similarly named mountain range in Europe and the spectacular scenery of snowy peaks and glaciers contains unique flora and fauna. The area is dominated by the mighty sagging-tent peak of Mount Cook (3754m/12,313ft), also known by the Maori name Aoraki (cloud piercer). Mount Cook National Park is a UNESCO World Heritage area and contains more than 20 peaks over 3000m (9840ft). Sliding down from one side of Mount Cook is the spectacular Tasman Glacier, one of the longest outside the Himalayas. All types of skiing and snowboarding are available along the Alps with many uncrowded ski fields, including heli-skiing, while around Mount Cook there are a number of stunning lone and guided walking and climbing trips of one to five days.

WEST COAST: At the foot of the Southern Alps' western slopes, the thin strip that is the West Coast is one of New Zealand's wildest untouched natural areas. The coast gets about 4m (13ft) of rain a year, and is a sparsely populated region with a dramatic mountain and native forest landscape, with pristine bush-fringed lakes, which provides a home to the Franz Josef and Fox glaciers. It is possible to take guided 'ice walks' on the glaciers or enjoy the myriad wilderness walking tracks that snake in and out of the forests, round the river valleys and gorges, and into the foothills of the Alps. It is also worth visiting the small communities of Greymouth and Hokitika where you can purchase carved greenstone, called pounamu by the Maori, who use it for decoration and to make weapons. This beautiful, green, hard nephrite jade carved in a traditional shape (each shape carries its own meaning and story) provides the perfect souvenir of a trip to the 'Land of the Long White Cloud'.

FIORDLAND: To the southwest of the South Island is Fiordland, listed by UNESCO as a World Heritage Area, which offers a huge range of walking tracks in the wilderness consisting of numerous lakes, mountains, native forest and a pristine coast. Many scenes from the blockbuster film trilogy *The Lord of the Rings* were filmed in different areas of Fiordland. Nestling beside Lake Wakatipu at the foot of the Remarkables Range, Queenstown is known as New Zealand's 'adventure capital' where tourists can bungy, paraglide, parachute and jet boat (in narrow gorges) until weak at the knees. There are also several world-class walking tracks running out from Glenorchy just along the lake shore, including the Caples, Greenstone Tracks and Routeburn (all four to five days). Only 100km (60 miles) or so away is Te Anau, on the shores of the gorgeous Lake Manapouri, where many more walking trails (from one to six days) wind into the bush, over the saddles and around the fjords, mountains and forests including the famous Milford



Walking Track (four to five days). From Te Anau travelling north, a beautiful scenic road leads to Milford Sound (wrongly named a sound when in fact it is a fjord). Tourist boats carry people out to the sea along the narrow, high-walled, glacially-scooped fjord where Fiordland crested penguins, seals and sometimes whales and dolphins take advantage of the abundance of fish due to the unusual conditions. In the fjord, a layer of freshwater, from the mountains, lays on top of the salt water from the ocean refracting light and creating a mini ecosystem teeming with marine life. For those interested in an even more deserted wilderness experience, there are kayak and boat trips into the adjoining Doubtful Sound.

SOUTHLAND: The green and fertile province of Southland at the bottom of the South Island is home to the cities of Invercargill and Dunedin (which is Gaelic for Edinburgh), both of which have strong Scottish roots and retain a distinctive Celtic flavour. In Dunedin, this is perhaps best reflected by the city's streets bearing the same names as those of Edinburgh, and the presence of Wilson's Whisky Distillery (reputedly the world's southernmost distillery) and the Emerson's and Speights breweries. Unlike Edinburgh, Dunedin also has the Otago Peninsula, a glorious natural thumb poking out into the Pacific, where it is possible to see rare yellow-eyed penguins (Maori name hoihoi, meaning noise maker), enormous yet graceful royal albatross, and basking on the rocks around the peninsula fur seals. Invercargill's Sub-Antarctic Audio Visual and Gallery is a wonderful museum containing, among other interesting exhibits, a number of live tuatara, New Zealand's very rare and prehistoric lizard, while nearby is Bluff, home of the famous 'Bluff oysters', a delicacy that should not be missed. Between Invercargill and Dunedin is the Catlins Forest Park, with its wild beaches, pods of Hector's Dolphins and the only mainland colony of Hooker sea lions.

STEWART ISLAND: Across the Foveaux Strait, New Zealand's third-largest island, Stewart Island, has few inhabitants and can be reached by plane (travel time 20 minutes), helicopter, or boat ride aboard a motor catamaran from Bluff. The island has various attractions, including a rare chance to see the endangered kiwi (New Zealand's national symbol) in the wild. The birds feed in the evenings around Mason's Beach, accessible by plane, or by water taxi to Patterson's Inlet, followed by a delightful four-hour walk. Another draw card is Ulva Island, a predator-free, offshore expanse of bush and beautiful beaches where curious native birds come down to the foreshore to watch tourists clambering off the water taxi.

9 SPORT & ACTIVITIES

New Zealand's wild coastlines and national parks (two-thirds of the country is mountainous and nearly a quarter is protected as some form of park) create perfect conditions for every kind of outdoor activity. Not surprisingly, some of the world's most cutting-edge adventure activities originated in New Zealand, while more traditional sports, such as sailing, rugby, cricket or golf, continue to be pursued with unwavering passion.

Adventure sports: The Awesome Foursome is an adrenaline trip that combines a helicopter flight, a bungee jump, high-speed jetboating and whitewater rafting all in one day. Bungee jumping was first commercialised by New Zealanders and the country remains the world's prime destination for the sport. Famous jump-off points include the Kawaru River Bridge, the Skippers Bridge, the Pipeline, the Ledge (near Queenstown), Taupo and Mangaweka (in the North Island), Hanmer Springs (in the South Island) and the Bungee Rocket (at New Brighton Pier). Rap jumping, which consists of abseiling headfirst down a cliff, is currently popular in Auckland, Bay of Islands, Queenstown and Wanaka. River sledging involves riding down a river holding in a polystyrene sled or boogie board and is possible in Queenstown (South Island) and on the



Rangitaiki River near Rotorua (North Island). Paragliding (also referred to as 'parapenting') is billed as the closest possible equivalent to flying and is a cross between parachuting and hang-gliding; beginner's courses are available near Queenstown and Wanaka, while experienced paragliders tend to head to Christchurch, the Daney Pass or Wanaka. Jetboating, another New Zealand invention, consists of high-speed boat trips in special power boats. It is available to people of all ages and popular on many of the country's best-known rivers. Surf rafting invites visitors to accompany experienced rafters through crashing waves while simultaneously being offered a commentary on the coastline nearby. Best locations are the Otago Peninsula (near Dunedin, South Island) and Piha Beach (near Auckland, North Island). Zorbing involves being strapped into an inflatable transparent plastic ball, which is then rolled down a grassy hill or onto a river. Queenstown is generally regarded as New Zealand's 'adventure capital'.

Watersports: New Zealand's coastline stretches for a total of roughly 16,000km (10,000 miles) and the conditions for swimming and diving are ideal. Many dive spots are easily accessible from the shore, particularly those in Northland (North Island). The Poor Knights Islands (near Whangarei) are particularly renowned among divers (Jacques Cousteau cited them as one of the world's top diving destinations). Many different types of diving are available, including kelp forests at Stewart Island (home to the huge Paua shellfish), black and red coral in the Fiordlands, and wreck-diving, notably at the Rainbow Warrior, the famous Greenpeace boat which was sunk off the Bay of Islands. Divers need to bring their diver's certification cards. Many dive stores offer equipment rental and support facilities. A detailed brochure with information on New Zealand's best dive sites can be obtained from New Zealand Underwater, PO Box 875, Auckland (tel: (9) 623 3252; website: www.nzunderwater.org.nz). The long coastlines also offer excellent opportunities for surfing, with some of the best breaks located at Mahia Peninsula (near Gisborne), Murawai, Palliser Bay (near Wellington), Piha and Raglan. Swimming with dolphins is possible in the Bay of Islands (north of Auckland), the Coromandel Peninsula, Kaikoura (South Island) and Whakatane; numbers are limited and advance booking is recommended. Whale watching is possible on the eastern coast of South Island all year round (with the greatest number of sightings in winter, from April to August). For further information and details of prices, contact Whale Watch (website: www.whalewatch.co.nz). Sailing and yachting are extremely popular and Auckland 'the city of sails' is one of the top locations. Charters with a skipper and crew can be hired to sail around the coast or as far as the Pacific Islands. Excursions to the remote maritime reserves in the Bay of Islands, Hauraki Gulf and Marlborough Sounds are also possible. Whitewater rafting trips ranging from a couple of hours to five days are available on many rivers, including the Wairora (near Tauranga), the Mohaka (in Hawke's Bay) and the Kaituna (near Rotorua), which also features the world's highest commercially rafted waterfall at 7m (23ft). Blackwater rafting trips through underground caves are also available. Windsurfing is particularly popular around Wellington, Taupo, Auckland and the Bay of Islands while kayaking is widely practised on rivers throughout the country.

Wintersports: New Zealand offers good skiing and snowboarding, with ideal conditions from June to October. Resorts tend to be less crowded than European ones. On the North Island, the best ski regions are Whakapapa and Turoa (both located on Mount Ruapehu). Other good ski slopes can be found in the Southern Lakes region (particularly Queenstown and Wanaka) and Mount Hutt (where the season is from late May to early November). Heli-skiing trips are available in Mount Hutt, Queenstown and Wanaka, while cross-country skiing is possible on a 26km- (16 mile-) trail through the Pisa range near Wanaka. Glacier skiing and glacier walking can be enjoyed at the Fox, Franz Josef and Tasman glaciers in the Southern Alps.

Mountaineering: New Zealand has some of the highest peaks in the southern hemisphere. Climbers are advised to hire a commercial guide or contact a local alpine club before setting out.



Caving: The Waitomo Caves, whose 'Lost World' cave can be abseiled into through shafts of sunlight, are the most visited. Other ways to explore the country's many underground caves is through cave rafting or tubing, where participants are kitted out with a wetsuit and helmet (complete with light) and then float through the cave system on custom-made tyres.

Golf: New Zealand has over 400 golf courses. Green fees are relatively low compared to other countries. Most clubs welcome visitors, but it is best to telephone in advance, particularly at weekends. For further information, contact the New Zealand Golf Association, PO Box 11842, Wellington (tel: (4) 385 4330; website: www.nzgolf.org.nz).

Walking: A variety of walks for all ages and levels of fitness is available. Many of the country's footpaths pass through national parks or protected forest areas. Trails are categorised according to four different types: paths (easy, suitable for all ages and fitness levels, including wheelchair users), walking tracks (easy), tramping tracks (more demanding, requiring good fitness) and routes (very challenging and for experienced hikers only). The Department of Conservation (DOC) has singled out eight different walks which are generally the best known and most popular, including the Abel Tasman Coastal Track (New Zealand's most widely used recreational track), the Lake Waikaremoana Track (in Te Urewara National Park), the Milford Track (the country's most famous track in World-Heritage-listed Fiordland Park) and the Rakiura Track (a remote walk on Stewart Island to New Zealand's southernmost parts). These tracks generally take from one to several days, with accommodation provided en route, either in the form of basic camping and huts or comfortable lodges. A network of remote tramping tracks also exists, but walkers attempting these should be well prepared and able to read maps and use a compass. In most cases, a Great Walks Pass must be obtained from the Department of Conservation, which has local offices throughout the country. For further information, contact the Department of Conservation in Wellington (tel: (4) 471 0726; fax: (4) 471 1082; website: www.doc.govt.nz).

Fishing: Brown and rainbow trout are particularly popular. Salmon fishing is best in the Rakaia, Rangitata, Waimakariri and Waitaki rivers on the East Coast (the season lasts from mid-December to late April). Permits are only required for trout and salmon fishing and there is a special Tourist Licence (available only from the Tourism Rotorua Information Office) which allows holders to fish anywhere in the country for a one-month period. For further information, contact the New Zealand Professional Fishing Guides Association, PO Box 213, Gisborne (tel: (6) 867 7874; website: www.nzpfga.com).

Wildlife: As New Zealand was separated from other land masses some 100 million years ago, many plant and animal species are unique to the country. This is particularly true in the case of birds, which attract birdwatching enthusiasts from all over the world. Owing to the lack of predators, many of the country's birds never fully developed wings and, hence, live on the ground. The best-known native bird is the kiwi, also the country's unofficial national symbol. Others include the kea and weka, as well as the endangered kakapo, the world's largest parrot. The emu, originally from Australia, is also found here; New Zealand's own native equivalent, the moa, is now extinct. New Zealand is also home to the world's largest insect, the weta (a mouse-sized cricket), and the tuatara (a reptile whose lineage stretches back to the dinosaurs). Famous locations for birdwatching include Taiaroa Head (near Dunedin), known for colonies of royal albatrosses and Stewart Island, where kiwis can be observed at night. Cape Kidnappers in Hawkes Bay is the only gannet colony in the world, and is well worth a visit at low tide when it is possible to walk along the beach or take a tractor ride.

Other: Rugby, netball and cricket are the national sports. Other sports particular to New Zealand include lawn bowls, a popular sport played from September to April with greens in most towns, and sheep dog trials. Throughout the year, a number of triathlon races and endurance events are



held. Bicycles can be hired easily; special tours offer lifts up to volcano tops (notably at Mount Ruapehu, the Otago Peninsula and the Remarkables Range). Cycle helmets are compulsory and most buses and trains allow bicycles on board. Horse treks are available for half a day, a full day or longer. Trekking groups can be taken along the beach, on farms and into forests.

Entertainment

Food & Drink: New Zealand has a reputation as a leading producer of meat and dairy produce with lamb, beef and pork on most menus. Venison is also widely available. Locally produced vegetables, such as kumara (a natural sweet potato), are good. There is also a wide range of fish available, including snapper, grouper and John Dory. Seasonal delicacies such as whitebait, oysters, crayfish, scallops and game birds are recommended. New Zealand is also establishing a reputation for French-type cheeses: Bleu de Bresse, Brie, Camembert and Montagne Bleu. National specialities: Kumara (native sweet potato) in Auckland. Feijoa (local fruit) and Golden fleshed Zespri Gold kiwi fruit from the Bay of Plenty. Battered fish and chips from Gisbourne. Pavlova (a large roundcake with a meringue base topped with cream and fruit) from Taranaki. Salmon and mussels from Marlborough Yams, seaweed and crayfish from Canterbury. Whitebait from the West Coast. Koura (freshwater crayfish) from Central Otago. Bluff Oysters and muttonbird from Southland. Things to know: Many picnic areas with barbecue facilities are provided at roadside sites. Restaurants are usually informal except for very exclusive ones. Waiter service is normal, but self-service and fast-food chains are also available. Some restaurants invite the customer to 'BYO' (bring your own liquor). National drinks: New Zealand boasts world-class domestic wines and beers, some of which have won international awards. A wide range of domestic and imported wines, spirits and beers is available from hotel bars, 'liquor stores' and wine shops. Merlot (Auckland and Wairarapa), Chardonnay (Bay of Plenty, Gisbourne, Wairarapa and Canterbury), Pinot Gris and Noir (Auckland, Wairarapa, Marlborough and Central Otago), Sauvignon Blanc (Marlborough and Wairarapa). New Zealand draught beer and lager. Things to know: Bars have counter service and public bars are very informal. Lounge bars and 'house bars' (for hotel guests only) are sometimes more formal and occasionally have table service. The minimum drinking age in a bar is 18. There is some variation in licensing hours in major cities and some hotel bars open Sunday, providing a meal is eaten. In most hotels and taverns, licensing hours are 1100-2300 except Sunday. Tipping: Service charges and taxes are not added to hotel or restaurant bills. Tips are not expected.

Nightlife: New Zealand has an active and varied entertainment industry. Theatres offer good entertainment ranging from drama, comedy and musicals to pop concerts and shows. Concert tickets can be booked online (website: www.ticketek.com). In large cities, there are often professional performers or guest artists from overseas. Visitors should check 'What's On' in local papers. There are also cinemas and a small selection of nightclubs in larger cities.

Shopping: Special purchases include distinctive jewellery made from New Zealand greenstone (a kind of jade) and from the beautiful translucent paua shell. Maori arts and crafts are reflected in a number of items such as the carved greenstone tiki (a unique Maori charm) and intricate woodcarvings often inlaid with paua shell. Other items of note include woollen goods, travel rugs, lambswool rugs, leather and skin products. Shopping hours: All shops and businesses are open Mon-Sat 0900-1700, as a minimum; there are local variations but many stores and most malls are also open Sun 1000-1300. In resorts, most shops are also open in the evenings.

Business



GDP: US\$99.69 billion (2005).Main imports: Machinery and equipment, vehicles and aircraft, petroleum, electronics, textiles and plastics. Main exports: Dairy, meat, wood and wood products, fish and machinery.Main Trading Partners: Australia, China, Germany, Japan, UK and the USA.

Economy: New Zealand is primarily thought of as an agricultural country and, although the sector employs less than 10 per cent of the workforce and contributes just eight per cent of GDP, it accounts for 40 per cent of the country's export income, primarily from wool, meat and dairy, and woods products. Barley, wheat, maize and fruit are the main crops. There is also a sizeable fishing industry. Energy-related natural resources, principally coal but also natural gas, have been heavily developed. There are also deposits of iron, gold and silica. From the late 1970s, a new generation of industrial enterprises centred on these natural resources was established to replace the declining traditional industries. Between the mid-1980s and mid-1990s, New Zealand underwent one of the most radical economic transformations of any Western industrialised country, with wholesale privatisation, the abolition of subsidies, tariff barriers and corporate regulations, and the dismantling of many welfare systems (although spending has risen sharply of late as the government tackles the pensions crisis afflicting the developed world). The reforms have also meant that New Zealand is much more dependent on foreign trade. Recent economic performance has seen annual growth grow slightly to 3.5 per cent in 2004, mainly due to a fall in agricultural exports. Inflation was 1.8 per cent in 2004. Unemployment has hovered around the five per cent mark for several years, although much of it is concentrated in particular areas where it remains a major problem. Australia is New Zealand's largest trading partner, and the two governments have recently established a completely free trading regime between them. Japan, the USA and the UK are the other major trading partners. New Zealand is a member of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, the international forum for the world's main industrialised economies), the South Pacific Forum (which aims to promote economic co-operation in the region) and the recently established Asian-Pacific Economic Co-operation (APEC) forum.

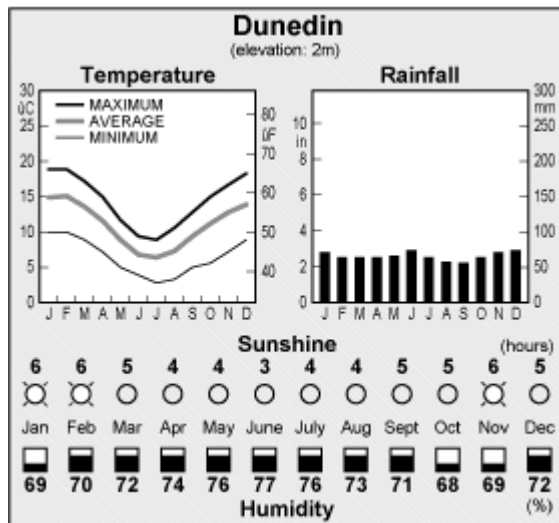
Business Etiquette: Businesswear is generally conservative and both sexes tend toward tailored suits. Appointments are necessary and punctuality is appreciated. Calling cards are usually exchanged. The business approach is fairly conservative and visitors should avoid the period from Christmas to the end of January. The best months for business visits are February to April and October to November. Office hours: Mon-Fri 0900-1700.

Conferences/Conventions: The largest centres are in Auckland, Christchurch and Wellington. Many hotels also have facilities. There are over 20 regional convention bureaux in New Zealand, most of which are members of NZ Convention Association (Inc).

Commercial Information: Wellington Chamber of Commerce and IndustryPO Box 1590, Level 9, 109 Featherston Street, Wellington, New Zealand Tel: (4) 914 6500.Website: www.wgtn-chamber.co.nzNZ Convention Association (Inc)PO Box 331-202, Suite 3, Level 1, 15 Huron Street, Takapuna, Auckland, New Zealand Tel: (9) 486 4128.Website: www.conventionsnz.com. The organisation is also known as Conventions and Incentives New Zealand.



10 CLIMATE



Subtropical in the North and temperate in the South. The North has no extremes of heat or cold but winter can be quite cool in the South, with snow in the mountains. The eastern areas often experience drought conditions in summer; the West, particularly in the South Island, has more rain.

Required clothing: Lightweight cottons and linens are worn in the North Island most of the year and in summer in the South Island. Mediumweights are worn during winter in the South Island. Rainwear is advisable throughout the year, and essential if visiting the South Island's rainforest areas.

11 HISTORY AND GOVERNMENT

History: New Zealand was first settled at least 1000 years ago by the Polynesian Maori, a well ordered tribal society led by hereditary chiefs and a powerful priesthood. The first European arrival was Dutchman Abel Tasman in 1642, although it was not until the voyages of Captain James Cook, in 1769 and 1779, that the islands were charted and explored. British settlers began to emigrate after British sovereignty was established in 1840; Wellington was founded soon afterwards. New Zealand was granted internal self-government in 1852. The later years of the century saw a rapid growth in investment, communications and agricultural production. In 1893, New Zealand became the first country in the world to extend the vote to women. In 1907, New Zealand became a Dominion and its forces took part in both World Wars. The country is a member of the Commonwealth and also several other international organisations, including ANZUS, the Five Power Defence Agreement and the South Pacific Forum. Membership of Western alliances were suspended, however, when Labour Prime Minister David Lange, elected in 1984, declared New Zealand nuclear free and prevented US and British vessels that might be nuclear powered or carrying nuclear weapons from entering New Zealand's ports. While these policies put the small country on the international stage, Lange's government was engaged in radical economic reform at home. Lange eventually resigned at the beginning of August 1989, to be replaced by one of his Cabinet members, Geoffrey Palmer. Palmer himself resigned in early September 1990, just weeks before the scheduled general election at the end of October 1990.



This was won by the opposition National Party, which had been out of office for a decade. The new Government quickly reversed the Labour government's policy on visiting warships but continued to express strong opposition to French nuclear tests in the South Pacific politically essential after the Rainbow Warrior affair, in which French military personnel bombed the Greenpeace vessel of the same name, killing one person. The tests ended in 1995 and New Zealand resumed diplomatic relations with France in 1997. Following a sharp recession in the early 1990s, the economy had recovered sufficiently by October 1993 for the National Party to be returned to office with a narrow majority. The party held on in October 1996 the first poll held under the country's new electoral system (see below) but only with the support of New Zealand First (NZF), a newly-formed party with a nationalist agenda. Jim Bolger continued as Prime Minister, with NZF's Winston Peters as his deputy and treasurer. Peters was of Maori descent, and the 1996 election was notable for the increase in the number of Maori MPs from six to 15: this came close to giving the Maori people a representation proportional to their presence in the community as a whole. Relations between the Maori and the mostly British-descended majority of the population are still sensitive in a number of respects. Bolger was supplanted in November 1997 by one of his cabinet ministers, Jenny Shipley, who subsequently became New Zealand's first woman Prime Minister. Shipley faced the electorate two years later, with another woman, academic Helen Clark, leading the Labour Party. A closely fought campaign was eventually won by Labour, although, lacking an overall majority, Labour relied on the support of the small left-wing environmentalist Alliance Party to sustain the government. The result was all but repeated at the most recent poll, held in July 2002, although Labour is now reliant on the two representatives of the Progressive Coalition to maintain its hold on power. Shipley has since been replaced by Don Brash as opposition leader. In the general election held in September 2005, Prime Minister Helen Clark's party won 50 seats in Parliament - well short of a majority and just two seats ahead of the opposition National Party. Ms Clark remains Prime Minister, but now needs to negotiate with smaller parties to form a minority government.

Government: Legislative power is held by the unicameral 120-seat House of Representatives, which is elected for a three-year term. A system of mixed member proportional representation was introduced at the election of October 1996, when the legislature increased from 99 to 120 seats. As in the UK, the leader of the largest party in the House normally becomes Prime Minister and holds executive power at the head of an executive council (cabinet). The British monarch is the Head of State, represented by the governor-general.

Travel Advice

If you are visiting remote areas, travellers should ensure that their journey details are made known to local authorities or friends/relatives before setting out. New Zealand weather can be treacherous, especially in winter. Most visits to New Zealand are trouble-free but you should be aware of the global risk of indiscriminate international terrorist attacks, which could be against civilian targets, including places frequented by foreigners. This advice is based on information provided by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in the UK. It is correct at time of publishing. As the situation can change rapidly, visitors are advised to contact the following organisations for **the latest travel advice:** British Foreign and Commonwealth Office Tel: (0845) 850 2829. Website: www.fco.gov.uk US Department of State Website: <http://travel.state.gov/travel>

Top Things To See

In Auckland, enjoy fantastic views of the city, its beaches, the coast, and the mountains from the distinctive Sky Tower, a casino with a glorious circular, glass viewing gallery at its bulbous summit. It is also possible for the particularly brave tourist to abseil down the side of the building to the street, a drop of over 100m (328ft). In Rotorua's arts centre, see how young Maori learn



the skills of traditional bone, wood and greenstone carving. There is also the opportunity to visit a Marae (a Maori meeting house usually forbidden to pakeha, foreigners) and enjoy a concert of traditional songs, the haka (a Maori challenge usually witnessed before All Black rugby matches) and a hangi (a delicious feast cooked in an earth oven). In Napier, immerse yourself in art deco. The city was razed by an earthquake in 1931 and subsequently rebuilt in the art deco style of the time. Today, it boasts one of the world's finest collections of lovingly preserved art deco buildings. To the south, on the edge of the flat patchwork quilt of the Canterbury Plains, lies the 'Garden City' of Christchurch, whose Neo-Gothic architecture is reminiscent of an old English university town. About 500m (1640ft) from the square is the vast expanse of Hagley Park, on the borders of which are the Old Canterbury University/Arts Centre, the Canterbury Museum, the Robert McDougall Art Gallery, the botanical gardens and Christ's College. Just a short walk along the river, discover St Michael and All Angels Church, an unusually beautiful wooden Neo-Gothic building combining French and English styles and containing a mixture of Maori and Catholic elements. **Discover New Zealand's wildlife:** As New Zealand was separated from other land masses some 100 million years ago, many plant and animal species are unique to the country. This is particularly true in the case of birds, which attract birdwatching enthusiasts from all over the world. Owing to the lack of predators, many of the country's birds never fully developed wings and, hence, live on the ground. The best-known native bird is the kiwi, also the country's unofficial national symbol. Others include the kea and weka, as well as the endangered kakapo, the world's largest parrot. Famous locations for birdwatching include Taiaroa Head (near Dunedin), known for colonies of royal albatrosses and Stewart Island, where kiwis can be observed at night. Cape Kidnappers in Hawkes Bay is the only gannet colony in the world, and is well worth a visit at low tide when it is possible to walk along the beach or take a tractor ride. In Dunedin, in the Otago Peninsula, a glorious natural thumb poking out into the Pacific, see rare yellow-eyed penguins (Maori name hoihoi, meaning noise maker), enormous yet graceful royal albatross, and basking on the rocks around the peninsula fur seals. See Wellington's star attraction, the spectacular Te Papa Museum of New Zealand, on the city's pretty waterfront. The museum combines cultural and historical exhibitions with education, entertainment (website: www.tepapa.govt.nz). In the forests of the Northland Forest Park, see some of the world's oldest trees, including the famous kauri, many of which date back centuries.

Tourist Information: Tourism New Zealand in the UK Level 7, New Zealand House, 80 Haymarket, London SW1Y 4TQ, UK Tel: (0906) 601 3601 (60p per minute; call centre) or (0906) 910 0100 (immigration). Website: www.newzealand.com (consumer information) or www.tourismnewzealand.com (trade information). Tourism New Zealand in the USA 501 Santa Monica Boulevard, Suite 300, Santa Monica, CA 90401, USA Tel: (310) 395 7480 or (866) 639 9325 (toll-free inside USA only). Website: www.newzealand.com or www.tourisminfo.govt.nz

Top Things To Do

Have a go at some of the world's most cutting-edge adventure activities. Bungee jumping was first commercialised by New Zealanders and the country remains the world's prime destination for the sport. Famous jump-off points include the Kawarau River Bridge, the Skippers Bridge, the Pipeline, the Ledge (near Queenstown), Taupo and Mangaweka (in the North Island), Hanmer Springs (in the South Island) and the Bungee Rocket (at New Brighton Pier). Choose rap jumping, which consists of abseiling headfirst down a cliff, and is currently popular in Auckland, Bay of Islands, Queenstown, also known as New Zealand's 'adventure capital', and Wanaka. Go river sledging which involves riding down a river holding in a polystyrene sled or boogie board in Queenstown (South Island) and on the Rangitaiki River near Rotorua (North Island). Test your paragliding skills (also referred to as 'parapenting'); beginner's courses are available near Queenstown and Wanaka, while experienced paragliders tend to head to Christchurch, the Daney Pass or Wanaka. Queensland is also good to experiment zorbing, which involves being strapped



into an inflatable transparent plastic ball, which is then rolled down a grassy hill or onto a river. Opt for jetboating, another New Zealand invention, which consists of high-speed boat trips in special power boats. It is available to people of all ages and popular on many of the country's best-known rivers. Surf rafting invites visitors to accompany experienced rafters through crashing waves while simultaneously being offered a commentary on the coastline nearby. Best locations are the Otago Peninsula (near Dunedin, South Island) and Piha Beach (near Auckland, North Island). New Zealand's coastline stretches for a total of roughly 16,000km (10,000 miles) and the conditions for swimming, diving and windsurfing are ideal. Many dive spots are easily accessible from the shore, particularly those in Northland (North Island). The Poor Knights Islands (near Whangarei) are particularly renowned among divers (Jacques Cousteau cited them as one of the world's top diving destinations). Many different types of diving are available, including kelp forests at Stewart Island (home to the huge Paua shellfish), black and red coral in the Fiordlands, and wreck-diving, notably at the Rainbow Warrior, the famous Greenpeace boat which was sunk off the Bay of Islands. A detailed brochure with information on New Zealand's best dive sites can be obtained from New Zealand **Underwater, PO Box 875, Auckland (tel: (9) 623 3252; website: www.nzunderwater.org.nz)**. Go surfing on New Zealand's long coastlines, with some of the best breaks located at Mahia Peninsula (near Gisborne), Murawai, Palliser Bay (near Wellington), Piha and Raglan. Go swimming with dolphins in the Bay of Islands (north of Auckland), the Coromandel Peninsula, Kaikoura (South Island) and Whakatane. Whale watching is possible on the eastern coast of South Island all year round (with the greatest number of sightings in winter, from April to August). For further information and details of prices, contact Whale Watch (website: www.whalewatch.co.nz). Go sailing and yachting in Auckland 'the city of sails'. Excursions to the remote maritime reserves in the Bay of Islands, Hauraki Gulf and Marlborough Sounds are also possible. Seek the thrill of whitewater rafting. Trips ranging from a couple of hours to five days are available on many rivers, including the Wairora (near Tauranga), the Mohaka (in Hawke's Bay) and the Kaituna (near Rotorua), which also features the world's highest commercially rafted waterfall at 7m (23ft). Blackwater rafting trips through underground caves are also available. New Zealand offers good skiing, snowboarding and mountaineering, with ideal conditions from June to October. On the North Island, the best ski regions are Whakapapa and Turoa (both located on Mount Ruapehu). Other good ski slopes can be found in the Southern Lakes region (particularly Queenstown and Wanaka) and Mount Hutt. Glacier skiing and glacier walking can be enjoyed at the Fox, Franz Josef and Tasman glaciers in the Southern Alps. Go caving: The Waitomo Caves, whose 'Lost World' cave can be abseiled into through shafts of sunlight, are the most visited. Other ways to explore the country's many underground caves is through cave rafting or tubing, where participants are kitted out with a wetsuit and helmet (complete with light) and then float through the cave system on custom-made tyres. Go fishing: Brown and rainbow trout are particularly popular. Salmon fishing is best in the Rakaia, Rangitata, Waimakariri and Waitaki rivers on the East Coast (the season lasts from mid-December to late April). Permits are only required for trout and salmon fishing and there is a special Tourist Licence (available only from the Tourism Rotorua Information Office) which allows holders to fish anywhere in the country for a one-month period. For further information, contact the New Zealand Professional Fishing Guides Association, PO Box 16, Motu, Gisborne (tel: (6) 863 5822; website: www.nzpfga.com). Walk through beautiful national parks or protected forest areas. The Department of Conservation (DOC) has singled out eight different walks which are generally the best known and most popular, including the Abel Tasman Coastal Track (New Zealand's most widely used recreational track), the Lake Waikaremoana Track (in Te Urewera National Park), the Milford Track (the country's most famous track in World-Heritage-listed Fiordland Park) and the Rakiura Track (a remote walk on Stewart Island to New Zealand's southernmost parts). These tracks generally take from one to several days, with accommodation provided en route, either in the form of basic camping and huts or comfortable lodges. For further information, contact the Department of Conservation in Wellington (tel: (4) 471 0726; website: www.doc.govt.nz). Visit the wine growing region of Hawke's Bay. Around 70 wineries



(ranging from large commercial estates to small boutiques) are open for free wine tasting. This area is best known for its red wines, particularly Pinot Noir. The Marlborough province also has world-class, new-world wineries such as Cloudy Bay, Le Brun, Fromm, Highfield, Hunters and Montana. The best wines from this area tend to be white, sharp Chardonnay and crisp Sauvignon Blanc. In Dunedin (which is Gaelic for Edinburgh), visit the Wilson's Whisky Distillery, reputedly the world's southernmost distillery. Dunedin and Invercargill located in the green and fertile province of Southland at the bottom of the South Island (both of which have strong Scottish roots and retain a distinctive Celtic flavour. The Emmerson's and Speights breweries are also located in Dunedin. In Wellington, attend the New Zealand International Festival of the Arts, the country's main cultural event including street theatre, comedy, music and film festivals.

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Overview II

New Zealand was first settled at least 1000 years ago by the Polynesian Maori, a well ordered tribal society led by hereditary chiefs and a powerful priesthood. The first European arrival was Dutchman Abel Tasman in 1642, although it was not until the voyages of Captain James Cook, in 1769 and 1779, that the islands were charted and explored. The Treaty of Waitangi (1840) signed between representatives of the British Crown and Maori chiefs formed the basis of the British annexation of New Zealand. However, conflicting land claims gave rise to the 'New Zealand Wars', an issue which has remained controversial until today. New Zealand was granted internal self-government in 1852. The later years of the century saw a rapid growth in investment, communications and agricultural production. In 1893, New Zealand became the first country in the world to extend the vote to women. Today, New Zealand is a unique land of breathtaking scenery and tourism is on the rise. Visited are drawn by the country's craggy coastlines, sweeping golden beaches, verdant forests, snow-capped alpine mountains, gurgling volcanic pools, flashing fish-filled rivers and glacier-fed lakes, all beneath a brilliant blue sky. New Zealand is spread over three relatively small islands with modern and efficient transport, quiet roads, plenty of flights and two stunningly scenic rail journeys. Other pluses are friendly, English-speaking people, a low crime rate, and a trio of rich cultural influences – adventurous Polynesian navigators (Maori), pioneering European settlers who followed a thousand years later, and modern Pacific Rim immigrants. The plant and animal life are also excellent offering opportunities to see the varied birdlife (including kiwis), seals, dolphins and whales. Enjoy the chance to explore two of the richest New-World wine regions on the planet, taste wonderful cuisine, stroll on moody beaches, tramp through the national parks or over alpine passes. The county is also perfect for every kind of outdoor activity and not surprisingly, some of the world's most cutting-edge adventure activities originated in New Zealand. Try bungee jumping, caving or whitewater rafting. If that is not your bag, immerse yourself in culture in the museums and galleries of New Zealand's main cities – Auckland, Christchurch and the capital Wellington. New Zealand's time as an original, fully fledged tourist haven has come and the country's isolation, once a bane, is now a boon.

Communications

Telephone: IDD is available. Country code: 64. Most public phones take cards purchased from bookstalls; some also accept credit cards, but very few still accept coins.



Mobile telephone: Roaming agreements exist with most international mobile phone companies. Coverage is good.

Internet: There are Internet cafes in cities and smaller town central business districts. Travellers may access the Internet at many hotels and youth hostels.

Post: Post offices are open Mon-Fri 0900-1700. Airmail to Western Europe takes four to five days and to the USA three to 10 days.

MEDIA: New Zealand's media scene is very liberal. The broadcasting sector was deregulated in 1988. Press: The English-language daily newspapers with the highest circulation include the New Zealand Herald (website: www.nzherald.co.nz), the Dominion Post, Otago Daily Times, and The Press. Radio: Public broadcaster Radio New Zealand runs three networks: National Radio, Concert FM and The AM Network. Radio New Zealand International, Niu Mai is maori-owned and Radio Works' stations include Radio Pacific. Television: State-owned Television New Zealand (TVNZ) operates TV1 and TV2. TV3 and Prime TV are private networks. Sky TV is a pay-TV operator. Maori Television is public.