

media
information

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new zealand tourism

O Matou Whenua, O Matou Tangata, O Matou Taonga Our Land Our People Our Treasures

New Zealand has a rich history of promoting tourism. Tourism New Zealand is the world's oldest national tourism organisation, and celebrated its centenary in 2001. It was a wise investment the New Zealand Government made on February 1, 1901, when it launched the first government department devoted to tourism.

From a mere 5,000 international visitors then, more than 2.4 million overseas travelers now visit New Zealand each year and tourism is the country's largest earners of foreign exchange. International visitors contribute \$8.3 billion to New Zealand's economy every year and this figure is increasing annually.

Australia is New Zealand's largest tourism market, contributing more than 990,000 visitors each year. The European market is also important to New Zealand, especially the United Kingdom which provides over 260,000 visitors annually.

The United States of America is our third largest market, with just under 200,000 visitors in the last year.

Key markets such as Japan, South Korea, China, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Singapore collectively provide more than 345,000 visitors for New Zealand each year. Visitor arrival numbers from China, our fastest growing market, have increased by more than 33% over the last five years.

| ARRIVALS | YEAR ENDING APRIL 2009 |
|--------------------------|------------------------|
| Australia | 992,674 |
| Canada | 49,821 |
| China, PRC | 112,783 |
| Germany | 62,776 |
| Hong Kong (SAR) | 21,840 |
| India | 24,073 |
| Japan | 95,696 |
| Korea, Republic of | 68,035 |
| Malaysia | 18,939 |
| Netherlands | 24,982 |
| Northern Europe | 29,600 |
| Singapore | 29,086 |
| Taiwan | 17,727 |
| Thailand | 19,133 |
| United Kingdom | 263,903 |
| United States of America | 196,859 |
| Global Total | 2,405,628 |

**Results are for the 12 months year ending April 2009.*

Source: Statistics New Zealand

background information

New Zealand is located in the southern Pacific Ocean, approximately 1,600 kilometres south-east of Australia. New Zealand comprises two main islands (the North and South Islands) and many small islands. The combined total land area is 270,534 square kilometres. New Zealand experiences summer from December to February and winter from June to August. New Zealand is 1,600 kilometres long and 450 kilometres wide at its widest part. Covering an area of approximately 270,000 square kilometres, it is roughly the size of Japan, the British Isles or California.

Māori are the tangata whenua (people of the land) or indigenous people of Aotearoa and arrived in several migration 'waves' in New Zealand about 1,000 years ago. On a voyage of discovery, Dutch navigator Abel Tasman sailed up the West Coast of New Zealand in 1642, but did not stay long after his only attempt at landing on New Zealand shores was repelled by Māori. Europeans did not rediscover New Zealand until 1769, when the British naval captain James Cook and his crew became the first Europeans to lay claim to New Zealand.

Increased European settlement was causing concern for both Māori and law-abiding settlers in the ensuing years and it was not until 1840 that any formal agreement was signed by the Māori people of New Zealand and the European settlers. This agreement, formally known as the Treaty of Waitangi (named after the town where it was signed), is New Zealand's founding document. The signing of the Treaty between more than 500 Māori chiefs and representatives of the British Crown is commemorated annually on February 6 as New Zealand's national day - Waitangi Day.

New Zealand became a self-governing British colony in 1856, a Dominion in 1907, and fully independent in 1947. New Zealand is an independent state of the Commonwealth. The Governor General represents the Queen of England in New Zealand.

The democratic government operates under the Mixed Member Proportional (MMP) Parliamentary system of 120 seats. Māori New Zealanders may vote as part of the general electorate, or in one of the specially allocated Māori seats. In the 2008 election, seven seats were set aside for Māori.

While New Zealand's primary manufacturing industries are the food processing industry (meat and dairy) and the engineering sector, New Zealand has an increasingly strong competitive advantage in food processing technology, telecommunications, plastics, textiles, plantation forest products, electronics, climbing equipment and apparel. In recent years there has also been a far greater interest in the production of specialised lifestyle products such as yachts. These industries are reflected in the variety of companies listed on New Zealand's stock exchange, the NZX.

New Zealand's economy is heavily dependent on overseas trade. It is a member of the World Trade Organisation and the OECD. New Zealand is also a member of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), a regional organisation set up in 1989 and comprised of 21 member economies around the Pacific Rim. APEC's goal is to achieve free trade with no tariff barriers between its members. In 1983 New Zealand and Australia signed the Australia-New Zealand Closer Economic Relations Trade Agreement (CER), the most comprehensive trade agreement entered into by either country.

New Zealand is a member of the United Nations and is a party to approximately 2,500 international treaties. Many of these are multilateral environmental agreements such as the Antarctic Treaty of 1959, the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (1982) and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (1992). The Kyoto Protocol, part of this Convention, and of which New Zealand is a signatory to, introduces binding commitments for countries to limit greenhouse gas emissions.

people

One of the best things about New Zealand is its warm and friendly people. Fun in New Zealand is about friends, family and welcoming visitors.

New Zealand may be a small country but it's got a great attitude. Kiwis believe they can do anything and love a challenge to prove it. That 'can do' attitude has placed them at the top of many fields.

Guest houses, private hotels, bed and breakfasts and farm stays offer an opportunity to get to know New Zealanders on a personal level.

The classic Kiwi style country pub with a warm friendly atmosphere is also a great way to get to know the locals, particularly the pubs on the West Coast of the South Island.

Māori Culture

About 15% of New Zealand's population of just over 4 million are of Māori descent and are affiliated to a recognised tribe.

Māori trace their families back through their whakapapa (genealogy), to the waka (canoe) that their ancestors sailed across the vast Pacific Ocean.

Māori have a rich and dynamic culture, which captures their age old connection with the spiritual and natural worlds. Through their whakapapa they continue to identify with this connection by way of their mihi (greeting). They will name their maunga (mountain), their awa (river), their marae (meeting place), their waka, their iwi (tribe) and their tupuna (ancestors) within the mihi.

Te reo Māori is a living language spoken by about a quarter of the Māori population in New Zealand. Around half of those speakers are under 25. It is a Polynesian language (similar to other Pacific languages such as Hawaiian and Tahitian), which possesses a unique poetry and musicality. Māori is one of the two official languages in New Zealand.

nature

With a third of the country protected in parks and reserves, the wilderness is always close. As there are no dangerous animals it's easy to stop on the side of the road, take a gentle walk down a track and leave the crowds behind. Famous for its clean, green environment, New Zealand is a combination of beautiful landscapes; from vast mountain chains to grand volcanoes, sweeping coasts and deep fiords, lush rainforests, grassy plains, rich thermal areas and expansive beaches.

One of the more unique aspects of New Zealand's geography is the extensive geothermal activity. The North Island's central volcanic plateau is the best place to see geysers, boiling mud pools and steaming lake edges. Whakarewarewa is the traditional focal point for tourists and is also the sacred ground of the Ngati Wahiao and Tuhourangi hapu, or sub tribes.

On the West Coast of the South Island, remnants of the ice age cascade from the Southern Alps to valley floors in rainforest just 300 metres above sea level. This combination of ice and temperate rainforest is a unique feature of New Zealand's glacier country, and is an ecosystem found nowhere else in the world. The Franz Josef glacier in Westland National Park is New Zealand's steepest and fastest moving glacier.

Fiordland in South West New Zealand is one of only two places in the world where fiords can be seen. It is the work of 500 million years of constant sculpting by the elements.

Fiordland stretches over 1.2 million hectares (three million acres) and comprises hundreds of lakes, mountain peaks, deep fiords and rainforests. The jewel in Fiordland's crown is Milford Sound, described by Rudyard Kipling as the "eighth wonder of the world".

In New Zealand you can join a whale-watching expedition off the coast of Kaikoura or swim with dolphins. The wilderness of Stewart Island offers one of the best chances to spot New Zealand's national bird, the kiwi, in its natural habitat. Further north in Dunedin the world's rarest penguin - the yellow-eyed penguin - can be viewed in its natural habitat from trenches just inches away. The takahe population is down to just 221, but the birds can easily be seen on the island sanctuary of Tiritiri Matangi in Auckland's Hauraki Gulf.

New Zealand was the second country in the world to establish a national park (Tongariro) following in the footsteps of the United States (Yellowstone National Park). Today New Zealand has 14 national parks and one of the highest rates of protected areas in the world.

UNESCO World Heritage sites are places with cultural or national significance, as decreed by the World Heritage Committee. New Zealand currently has three World Heritage sites:

Te Wahipounamu (South West New Zealand), Tongariro National Park and the Sub Antarctic Islands.

nature cont.

Te Wahipounamu incorporates Fiordland, Westland, Mount Aspiring and Mount Cook national parks. Two-thirds of the area is covered with southern beech and podocarps, some of which are more than 800 years old. The kea, the only alpine parrot in the world, lives in the area as does the rare and endangered takahe, a large flightless bird. In 1993 Tongariro National Park, in the central North Island, became the first property to be inscribed on the World Heritage List under the revised cultural criteria describing cultural landscapes. The mountains at the heart of the park have cultural and religious significance for Māori and symbolise the spiritual links between the community and its environment. New Zealand's Sub Antarctic Islands are the Auckland, Snares, Campbell, Bounty and Antipodes Islands, situated south-east of New Zealand. The islands have huge numbers and varieties of wildlife, including birds, plants and invertebrates found nowhere else in the world.

Some of the country's flora and fauna are among the rarest in the world or are unique to New Zealand. The Hector's dolphin (the world's smallest marine dolphin) and the world's rarest sea lion, the Hooker's sea lion, are only found in New Zealand waters. The oldest living genus of reptile is the native New Zealand tuatara. Tuatara have a life expectancy of 300 years and it is estimated they can be traced back 190 million years to the Mesozoic era.

New Zealand is home to fierce-looking but harmless insects known as the weta. They look like a cross between crickets and grasshoppers, but are larger and usually brown. The biggest species of weta - weta punga, or the giant weta - is found on Little Barrier Island and grows to the size of a small bird. Many weta are protected, and are almost unchanged from their ancestors of 190 million years ago.

The rare, flightless kiwi, takahe and kakapo birds are unique to New Zealand. Like many native birds, the kiwi's survival in the wild is tenuous, with predators such as feral cats and stoats impacting dramatically on numbers. The Department of Conservation has implemented a kiwi recovery programme which should see bird numbers increase.

One of the biggest threats to native flora and fauna in New Zealand is the possum. They destroy native trees and other plants by eating shoots and leaves, compete with native birds for food and are responsible for killing many kiwi chicks. They also eat the eggs and young of other native birds. The possum population is estimated to be about 70 million despite intensive eradication programmes. It does have one redeeming feature - its luxuriant, mink-like fur. Production of possum fur products is rapidly becoming a lucrative industry. Numerous companies use the fur to produce luxurious bedspreads, jackets, socks and hats. Possum fur has featured in the designs of New Zealand fashion designers such as Karen Walker.

Walking through native rainforest in New Zealand is a unique experience. Above is a leafy, green canopy, at eye level a mass of ferns, tree ferns, vines and palms, and underfoot a carpet of delicate mosses and lichens. The tallest tree, known by its Māori name kahikatea, reaches 60 metres and is a type of conifer called a podocarp. But the most famous tree is the kauri, one of the largest found anywhere in the world. A specimen in the North Island's Waipoua forest has a girth of 13.7 metres, stands 51.2 metres tall and is estimated to be between 1,500 and 2,000 years old. The tree is easily accessible to visitors and is so revered it has its own name, Tane Mahuta (Lord of the forest).

The Māori approach to the environment is holistic: everything both animate and inanimate is inextricably connected and interrelated. Central to this is the Māori world-view built around a cosmology that links all parts of the earth and nature in a family. All are bound together by whakapapa (genealogy). At the heart of whakapapa is mauri. Mauri is the life force that exists in all things and binds the world together; it is the dynamic force that enlivens and regenerates the environment. Mauri can be degraded through physical harm (such as destruction or pollution) and through failure to observe appropriate rites and rituals. Over the centuries, Māori have developed a set of customs and lore to conserve, manage and protect the environment and in effect preserve mauri.

The concept of kaitiakitanga or guardianship embodies the duties and obligations Māori have to care for and observe the rituals appropriate to the area concerned. This could be a geographical area, an area of activity (such as the marae - or meeting place) or taonga (sacred things) such as te reo (language) or waiata (song). It is managed by people within the hapu (sub tribe) or iwi (tribe) - people who are trained and recognised for their skills and abilities.

culture

Wine

The wine industry in New Zealand has achieved remarkable success and a great international reputation in a relatively short time. The long growing season and cool maritime climate here make conditions ideal for grape growing, producing some distinctive, premium quality wines.

New Zealand's major grape growing areas are in the dry, sunny eastern regions, with the three main areas being Gisborne, Hawke's Bay and Marlborough. Other key wine regions are Auckland, Martinborough, Nelson, Waipara and Central Otago. These regions span the latitudes of 36 to 45 degrees and cover the length of 1,600 kilometres (1,000 miles). The northern hemisphere equivalent would run from Bordeaux (between the latitudes of 44 and 46 degrees) down to southern Spain. As a result of the grapes being grown in such a range of mini-climates and soil types, a diverse range of styles has developed.

Sauvignon blanc is New Zealand's most commonly planted grape, accounting for more than 50% of all New Zealand wine. According to Bob Campbell MW (Master of Wines), New Zealand has built a reputation for producing the world's best sauvignon blanc. New Zealand's unique style is more pungently fruity than any other wine from the grape variety.

Chardonnay is New Zealand's most widely grown variety, thriving in all of the major wine growing regions. Hawke's Bay, Gisborne and Marlborough are particularly well known for their chardonnay, although each region produces its own distinct style. Gisborne chardonnays for example, tend to be softer with ripe peach, melon and pineapple flavours. Hawke's Bay produces a more

concentrated wine with peach and grapefruit flavours. Marlborough, New Zealand's largest chardonnay producer tends to produce zesty wines with good acidity and strong white peach and citrus flavours.

New Zealand pinot noir is also gaining a strong international reputation. At the 2008 International Wine Challenge, New Zealand pinot noir was a clear winner, claiming the Pinot Noir Trophy for the third consecutive year as well as receiving six gold medals. Pinot noir relishes cool temperatures and low rainfall so performs particularly well in the Martinborough region and Central Otago. Bob Campbell believes pinot noir is one of the most exciting wine styles in New Zealand at present, in terms of growth both in reputation and sales. He defines it as very fruity, tending to be softer and more approachable than the wines of the benchmark, Burgandy. New Zealand also excels in a number of other varieties such as riesling and Bordeaux-style reds.

There is a growing awareness of wine tourism in New Zealand, and visitors are encouraged to explore and interact by following the Classic New Zealand Wine Trail. The main wine regions each host an annual wine and food festival, and most of New Zealand's wineries have tastings available. Many of the larger wineries run restaurants or cafés as part of their business, and offer both retail and online wine sales.

Tohu Wines is the first indigenous branded wine to be produced for the New Zealand export market. It is a wholly-owned Māori company that believes in the shared ancient traditions of spirituality and harmony with the land. Since 2009, all Tohu vineyards are certified by Sustainable Winegrowing New Zealand.

Cuisine

New Zealand's diverse range of climates allows the harvesting of an abundance of fresh produce. Some of the better known are kiwifruit, apples, a huge range of stone and berry fruit, kumara (sweet potato) and asparagus. But New Zealand producers are quick to meet the demands of local chefs and have recently been producing olives, walnuts, saffron, avocado oil, baby vegetables and unusual lettuces. New Zealand food is exported all over the world, especially to the Northern Hemisphere where opposing seasons mean we can provide out of season produce.

Being surrounded by ocean means New Zealand's seafood is fresh and plentiful. New Zealand favourites include Bluff oysters, green lipped mussels, crayfish (lobster), paua (abalone), whitebait and snapper. Seafood, or kaimoana as it is commonly referred to by Māori, is as important to Māori as the land. The sea is not only a major source of food, but has customary value as well. It is an important way of expressing generosity at tribal gatherings and as a status symbol in Māori culture, kaimoana rates highly.

New Zealand's meat and dairy products are renowned for their quality. Dairy products are one of New Zealand's largest exports. Beef, lamb, cervena (venison) and salmon are all commercially farmed. Organic food has become a significant industry, with many local supermarkets selling organic meats and vegetables.

New Zealanders are known for their desire to travel, so when chefs return home they bring with them ideas and skills honed overseas. This has produced a diverse restaurant scene that offers funky cafés, tea rooms, espresso bars with home roasted coffee and fine dining establishments.

According to New Zealand chef Peter Gordon, co-owner of The Providores and Tapa Room in London and dine in Auckland, New Zealand offers great food in smart surroundings with service that is both professional and friendly. He believes you can experience one of the most memorable meals of your life in a New Zealand restaurant. As Peter says, "a native paua cooked just so, drizzled with some lemon scented extra virgin olive oil and topped with a little mashed kumara (sweet potato) will make you feel good, both physically and emotionally."

According to Māori legend an abundant supply of food is considered a gift from the gods. Māori have traditionally cooked food in a ground oven, or hangi. The cooking of a hangi involves a lot of time, planning and skill. Rocks are heated in a fire and placed in an earth pit. The food is placed on top in steel baskets and covered with foil. The pit is then covered over with wet sugar or potato sacks, then earth. This ensures the heat is kept in and cooks the food slowly.

The traditional Māori palate has evolved over the years, though the essence of the use of food has not. Traditional Māori cooking flavours, including horopito and kawakawa plants, are being increasingly snapped up by upmarket restaurants in New Zealand. An example already in production is a combination of kawakawa, horopito, chilli and lime used to flavour mussels.

Charles Royal is a Māori chef reintroducing a tradition of cooking with indigenous herbs, spices and flavours.

Visitors to the New Zealand can experience a day out with Charles, learning about the sustainable harvesting of indigenous foods from the forest and then enjoying a meal prepared for them at the end of the tour.

Indulgence

Pampering yourself in New Zealand is easy. From international hotels to intimate and luxurious lodges to beach resorts and health spas, New Zealand offers some truly indulgent experiences.

New Zealand has 10 lodges listed by Small Luxury Hotels of the World, including Huka Lodge in Taupo, Blanket Bay Lodge in Queenstown, Grasmere Lodge in Christchurch, Mollies in Auckland and Wharekauhau Country Estate in the Wairarapa region. Many other boutique lodges offer quality accommodation throughout the country, often in remote locations. Spa treatments are increasingly being offered as part of the experience.

Thermal springs, resulting from New Zealand's location on the 'Pacific Rim of Fire' are found throughout the country. These were favourite areas for the location of Māori villages hundreds of years ago and became popular with Europeans who valued the healing properties of the mineral waters.

Famous for its geysers and boiling mud, Rotorua is New Zealand's best known spa town. Many hotels and motels in Rotorua have their own natural spas and at the Polynesian Spa you can choose from a range of temperatures and mineral compositions.

New Zealand's main spa resort in an alpine setting is Hanmer Springs, north of Christchurch. Hanmer offers thermal springs, spa treatments and a range of adventure and leisure activities.

Creativity

New Zealand's art and culture draw from a wide range of ethnic origins, producing an interesting blend of Māori, European, Asian and Pacific Island themes.

The New Zealand art scene reflects this mixture. Some of New Zealand's most valuable paintings are Māori portraits painted by Charles Goldie in the 19th century. Painter Colin McCahon, whose work features the use of words, Christian iconography and Māori language and myth, is considered by many to be New Zealand's greatest artist. A number of art galleries feature the work of these and other well known New Zealand artists such as Ralph Hotere, Grahame Sydney and Rita Angus.

Many New Zealand writers fuse Māori culture and legend into works written in English. Keri Hulme won the prestigious Booker Prize in 1985 for her groundbreaking novel 'The Bone People'. Others to combine the two worlds and create distinctly New Zealand literature include Patricia Grace, Witi Ihimaera and Hone Tuwhare. Alan Duff is best known for his book 'Once Were Warriors', which was made into a film directed by Lee Tamahori.

The local film industry continues to grow, following the success of Hollywood's most expensive production ever, Peter Jackson's 'The Lord of the Rings' trilogy filmed in New Zealand. The trilogy won a total of 17 Academy Awards.

The New Zealand landscape featured in the films has increased the country's international profile. Virtually all the sets have been dismantled and the locations returned to their original condition, but visitors can still

discover Middle-Earth thanks to Tolkien enthusiast Ian Brodie. His book 'The Lord of the Rings Location Guidebook' helps visitors to pinpoint filming locations, many of which are situated within national parks and conservation estates.

Hobbit fever is set to continue with the making of the much-awaited 'Lord of the Rings' prequel. Producer Peter Jackson and director Guillermo del Toro have announced that 'The Hobbit' will comprise two movies due in December 2011 and 2012, and will be shot using some of the same New Zealand locations used to make the trilogy.

'Whale Rider' (directed by Niki Caro and based on a book by Witi Ihimaera) stunned audiences at the 2002 Toronto International Film Festival and was honoured with the People's Choice award. The film portrays life in a small Māori community, and features a cultural performance by Mai Tawhiti, a kapa haka (performing arts) group. 'Whale Rider' was filmed on location in a small village near Gisborne in the Eastland region, which is the first place in the world to see the sunrise each day.

Actor Keisha Castle-Hughes had never starred in a movie before acting in 'Whale Rider' but she went on to become the youngest person ever nominated for an Academy Awards in the 'actress in a leading role' category.

Recent projects on the New Zealand movie scene include Peter Jackson's remake of the movie 'King Kong', which was released in December 2005. Kiwi-born Andrew Adamson, who earned acclaim for the animation movie 'Shrek', has since

directed 'The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe' (2005) and 'The Chronicles of Narnia: Prince Caspian' (2008), based on the Narnia book series by C.S. Lewis. Recognisable film locations include Woodhill Forest in Auckland, Cathedral Cove in the Coromandel, Flock Hill Station in Canterbury, and Elephant Rocks near Duntroun.

New Zealand music is also currently attracting global attention. Performers such as The Datsuns, Shihad, Brooke Fraser, Ladyhawke and Fat Freddy's Drop are all making waves on the international music scene. New Zealand comedy duo Flight of the Conchords - a cult favourite in the United States thanks to their HBO television show - was awarded a grammy for Best Comedy Album in 2008 for their EP 'The Distant Future'. Moana Maniapoto and her group The Tribe have established a strong reputation overseas for acoustic Māori music. New Zealand opera singers Dame Kiri Te Kanawa and Dame Malvina Major both have international careers, as does Neil Finn, the founder of pop group Crowded House. Teenage singer Hayley Westenra made history in 2003 when her album 'Pure' went to number one in the UK classical charts in its first week of sales, outselling albums by Luciano Pavarotti and Andrea Bocelli.

Designers from throughout New Zealand are establishing themselves in the premier ranks of the fashion world. Karen Walker, Zambesi, World and Nom-D have all been showcased at Australian Fashion Week and London Fashion Week. This success has helped Air New Zealand Fashion Week establish

culture cont.

itself on the international calendar in October. Local fabrics are utilised by New Zealand designers including Trelise Cooper, Kate Sylvester and Tanya Carlson. The merino wool and possum fur creations of the Untouched World label have become a success both here and overseas.

Located on the Wellington waterfront, New Zealand's national museum Te Papa Tongarewa (the translation means 'a repository of treasures') is a celebration of New Zealand's identity - the people, the culture and the environment. Playful, imaginative, interactive and bold, Te Papa is quintessentially Kiwi - high-tech and great fun.

Live theatre and dance have always flourished and local performances have a uniquely Kiwi flavour. Live music thrives in the main centres and local performers pride themselves on taking their art to all corners of the country.

Events

New Zealand is increasingly attracting international visitors to the diverse range of events it hosts each year, from art festivals to adventure races.

Art festivals are held all over the country. The largest cultural event is the biennial International Arts Festival, held in Wellington in February. On alternative years, the International Arts Festival is held in Auckland. Both festivals incorporate classical music, jazz, pop, opera, traditional performances from around the world, and contemporary New Zealand artists, including Māori dance and modern ballet.

The Montana World of Wearable Art Awards (WOW) celebrates creativity and art where creators are limited only by their imaginations. The show is held in late September to early

October each year. WOW has become so popular that it has been extended to nine shows spread over two weeks.

Food and wine festivals are held around New Zealand from October to March (spring through to autumn).

The Hokitika Wildfoods Festival is held in March each year featuring arguably the wackiest selection of cuisine in the world. Seagull eggs, purple Māori potato, huhu grubs, mako shark, eel and titi (muttonbird) are just a few of the foods on offer.

Adventure races include The Southern Traverse, a gruelling three day non-stop adventure race held annually, the Coast to Coast, a one or two day event over 243 kilometres of South Island terrain, and the Taupo Ironman.

Garden and flower festivals take place around the country during spring, summer and early autumn. The Ellerslie Flower Show in Christchurch is the largest garden show in the Southern Hemisphere and takes place over five days in March.

The Te Matatini kapa haka festival is a biennial event attracting thousands of visitors to experience the power, beauty and grace of Māori's finest exponents of haka (dance).

Matariki (the Māori New Year) is celebrated in mid-winter each year during a month-long festival of events all over the country. Matariki refers to the star cluster Pleiades (or Mata Ariki – the eyes of God), which becomes visible in the eastern sky after the first new moon in June. Traditionally, Matariki was a time to give thanks as the natural world regenerated and another season began. The food stores were full and people

gathered to welcome the 'new year' planting season with ceremonial ritual, singing and feasting. In recent years, regions such as Hawke's Bay, Wellington, Auckland and Northland have developed Matariki festivals to celebrate their Māori heritage.

Sport

Sport is an integral part of New Zealand life. New Zealanders play it, watch it and support all those who wear the silver fern - the iconic symbol of the country's sporting representatives.

New Zealanders are passionate about rugby and avidly support the national team, the All Blacks. The country is also looking forward to hosting the Rugby World Cup in 2011.

New Zealand has produced dozens of world champions who have represented the country in a diverse range of sports from golf, rowing, discus and surf lifesaving to horse riding and sailing.

One high-profile New Zealand sports person is Mahe Drysdale, three-times World Champion single sculler and Olympic medalist. In 2010, New Zealand will host the 39th World Rowing Championships at Lake Karapiro.

New Zealanders don't just love their international sportspeople succeeding on the world stage - they keenly participate in the many sporting and recreational activities that are affordable and accessible to everyone. There are facilities nationwide for people wanting to enjoy sporting activities.

Mountain biking is one of New Zealand's fastest growing pastimes - largely due to

the number of native bush and coastal trails developed to take advantage of New Zealand's terrain. World-class mountain biking tracks - suitable for all levels of biker - have been created in a number of regions around the country.

New Zealand has a growing number of luxury golf resorts that boast championship courses up and down the country. Set on rolling coastal farmland near Matauri Bay, Northland, the golf course at Kauri Cliffs and the new course at Cape Kidnappers in Hawke's Bay have been rated by international media as two of the world's best. Other outstanding New Zealand golf resorts include Gulf Harbour Country Club near Auckland, the thermally active Wairakei Golf Course in Taupo and Millbrook Resort located near Queenstown. The Hills Golf Course also close to Queenstown, hosted the New Zealand Open golf tournament from 2007 to 2010. Terrace Downs and Clearwater Resort are two newer golf destinations located near the Southern Alps in the Canterbury region.

New Zealand pioneered the concept of adventure tourism in 1988 when AJ Hackett established the world's first commercial bungy jumping experience in Queenstown.

The Southern Lakes region is the Southern Hemisphere's premier skiing destination, offering a wide choice of world-class ski areas with everything from snowboarding to cross country and heliskiing. Queenstown has attractions for all seasons, including tandem parachuting, parapenting and paragliding, jetboating and whitewater rafting on the famous Shotover River, kayaking, waterskiing and four-wheel drive experiences.

adventure

Adventures can be found around the country - abseiling in the Bay of Islands, rafting on the world's highest commercially rafted waterfall in Rotorua, climbing Mt Cook (the country's highest mountain) or exploring White Island, New Zealand's only active marine volcano off the coast of Whakatane.

New Zealand boasts some of the most exhilarating caving, extreme skiing, surfing and windsurfing in the world. Zorbing, also invented in New Zealand, offers a surreal ride from hilltop to valley bottom inside a giant plastic ball.

Hiking

New Zealand has no shortage of walking and trekking opportunities including the nine 'Great Walks'. In New Zealand. Walks of up to a day's duration are found everywhere, even in city greenbelts, but the internationally acclaimed multi-day tracks are in more remote areas of the country. Most of New Zealand's premier walking tracks offer guided and fully catered options.

Routeburn Track can be completed as a three-day alpine trek or combined with the Greenstone Track in a six-day traverse through the World Heritage areas of Fiordland National Park and Mt Aspiring National Park. These award-winning treks pass through rainforest areas, lakes, waterfalls and high alpine pastures.

Hollyford Track is located in Fiordland National Park north of Milford Sound. A World Heritage wilderness area, Hollyford offers glimpses of rare New Zealand birds, seals and dolphins, as well as historical sites of early Māori and European settlement. The Hollyford travels through rainforests, past snow-capped mountains and rivers, to a wild West Coast beach.

Situated at the top of the South Island and drenched in sunlight, the Abel Tasman National Park offers spectacular ocean views, glittering beaches and clear turquoise waters. A diverse range of wildlife inhabits this area, including penguins, a seal colony at Tonga Island, and tui and bellbirds in the forest. One of the best ways to experience the Abel Tasman is to combine a kayak and walk option.

Located at the northeastern tip of the South Island, the Queen Charlotte Track is full of contrasts; from lush subtropical rainforest to sheltered shorelines and skyline ridges, with unsurpassed views of the sunken river valleys. Water transport on this track allows flexibility and the option of walking with a light day pack.

Whirinaki Track is set within a 60,000 hectare native rainforest in the Central North Island, with five native tree species, some towering more than 65 metres. It is also home to a wide range of rare wildlife and bird species, some of which date back to the Jurassic era 200 million years ago. Professional Māori guided tours are available through the forest with detailed flora and fauna interpretation.

Stewart Island Track offers one of the best chances most people will ever have of seeing New Zealand's national bird, the kiwi, in its natural environment. Many centuries ago Māori came by canoe to Rakiura (Stewart Island) to harvest shellfish and mutton birds, traditions still carried out today by local iwi. Stewart Island is located south of the South Island. The Island is home to New Zealand's newest national park, Rakiura National Park, which covers about 85 percent of the island.

The Tuatapere Hump Ridge Track in the south-west corner of the South Island, links Te Wae Wae Bay on the southern coastline with New Zealand's deepest lake, Lake Hauroko. The Hump Ridge Track climbs above bush and provides views across the southern glacial lakes. Highlights include Blue Cliffs Beach (the start and end point), sandstone tors and a chance to see the highest remaining wooden viaduct in the world, the Edwin Burn viaduct. The Tuatapere Hump Ridge Track is a three-day hike covering 53 kilometres.

Often referred to as one of the finest walks in the world, Milford Track is a 55 kilometre encounter that boasts deep lakes, fiords, rainforest and canyons carved out of granite.

The Cape Brett lighthouse stands at the entrance to the Bay of Islands in Northland. The Cape Brett Track from Te Rawhiti (Oke Bay) to the lighthouse (and hut) takes approximately eight hours and covers about 20 kilometres of undulating ground. The track takes in panoramic views of the Bay of Islands, historical Pa sites, kauri forest, beaches and private coves. The seven distinctive peaks that mark the spine of the Cape Brett peninsula are said to represent the seven waka (canoes) on which Māori sailed in the migration from their mythical homeland of Hawaiiki. The Cape Brett Track is open year-round.

Fishing and Diving

Fresh water or salt - New Zealand is an angler's paradise, offering some of the most beautiful locations imaginable. The whole country is crisscrossed with rivers and lakes and the introduction of brown and rainbow trout in the latter part of the 19th century has created excellent fly-fishing opportunities.

New Zealand has 15,811 kilometres of coastline (longer than that of the mainland United States) which means there is almost unlimited potential for ocean fishing. It has been estimated that almost one in four New Zealanders participate in sea fishing. New Zealand was put on the map of big game salt-water fishing in the 1920s, following the visit of legendary American writer, Zane Grey.

New Zealand is also a diver's dream. Coastal waters team with colourful, fascinating sea life and the often exceptionally clear waters make for spectacular viewing, especially from February to June.

The clear waters of the marine reserve around the Poor Knights Islands (offshore from the port of Tutukaka in Northland) are considered one of the country's best diving spots. An amazing range of fish, including many tropical species, led the late Jacques Cousteau to rate the Poor Knights as one of the world's top ten diving locations.

north island regions.

Auckland & Northland

The relaxed, sunny lifestyle of Northland springs from its subtropical climate and the myriad of islands, bays and beaches around the extensive coastline. It is believed that the first Polynesian voyagers arrived in this region during the 11th century, but it wasn't until after the landing of the British sea voyager Captain Cook in 1769 that missionaries, whalers and traders arrived. The Treaty of Waitangi, the document that founded bicultural New Zealand, was signed in the Bay of Islands in 1840. Northland is rich in Māori history, and over 31 percent of its population is Māori. The Ngāpuhi tribe of the North is the largest iwi in the country with a population of 122,211 Māori according to the latest census. With the Tasman Sea buffeting the west coast and the South Pacific Ocean lapping the east coast, activities in this region are often water-related. Chartering a skippered yacht to explore the Hauraki Gulf or the Bay of Islands is a quick route to isolated beaches, bays and islands. You can also explore by hiring a runabout, kayaking, or taking a ferry. Snorkelling, surfing, big game fishing or dolphin-watching are experiences that are easily found along the region's touring route - the Twin Coast Discovery Highway.

Auckland is New Zealand's largest city with a population of over 1.3 million people. Its unusual geography and temperate climate has inspired a lifestyle that's regularly ranked in the world's top ten.



Auckland's layout makes it easy to jump quickly from one theme to another - within half an hour, you can be on an island in the Hauraki Gulf, trekking through native forest, sampling wines at a vineyard or walking along a wild, black sand surf beach. Urban attractions such as shopping, restaurants, bars and local theatre are part of the city's fabric.

Central North Island

Of all the regions in New Zealand, the Central North Island is perhaps the most diverse. It offers the volcanic plateau, high altitude ski fields, surf beaches, geothermal activity and wine regions. The Pacific Coast Highway is one of the region's two major touring routes. It follows the East Coast, featuring the beaches around the Coromandel Peninsula, Bay of Plenty and Eastland, on the way to Hawke's Bay, which is one of New Zealand's key wine regions.

The Thermal Explorer is the other major touring route. It leads you to or from Hawke's Bay across the volcanic plateau, where New Zealand's location on the 'Pacific Rim of Fire' is evident. You can experience natural hot spring spas, geothermal parks full of geysers and boiling mud pools and the site of New Zealand's largest volcanic eruption in living memory, Mount Tarawera. The city of Rotorua is the home of Te Arawa, one of the larger and more cohesive iwi (tribal) groupings. This accounts for the large number of Māori (36%) living in Rotorua and makes it one of the best places in New Zealand to learn about Māori culture.



Beneath the Waitomo area, the ground is a labyrinth of limestone passages and caves, which can either be explored on foot or on the water - an activity known as black water rafting. Further south, the Tongariro Crossing, considered New Zealand's best one day walk, is another type of adventure which features moonscape craters, lava formations and emerald-blue lakes.

Taranaki & River Regions

Mount Taranaki is ever-present in this region - a huge, dramatic volcanic cone with a snowy top. One version of Māori history recalls how Mount Taranaki once lived in the centre of New Zealand's North Island with other mountain gods: Tongariro, Ruapehu and Ngauruhoe. Nearby stood the lovely maid Pihanga with her cloak of deep green bush, and all the mountain gods were in love with her.

What had been a long, peaceful existence for the mountain gods was disturbed when Taranaki could no longer keep his feelings in control and dared to make advances to Pihanga.

A mighty conflict between Tongariro and Taranaki ensued, which shook the foundations of the earth. The mountains belched forth their anger and darkness clouded the sky.

When peace finally came to the land, Tongariro, considerably lowered in height, stood close by Pihanga's side. Taranaki, wild with grief and anger, tore himself from his roots with a mighty wrench and left his homeland. Weeping, he plunged recklessly towards the setting sun, gouging out the

Wanganui River as he went and, upon reaching the ocean, turned north. While he slumbered overnight, the Pouakai Ranges thrust out a spur and trapped Taranaki in the place he now rests.

The Egmont National Park encompasses the mountain and the land around it. Hiking is the thing to do here. Rainforest covers the foothills of the mountain, but the landscape changes the higher you go. It moves from tall rimu and kamahi trees at lower altitudes through to dense sub-alpine shrubs, then an alpine herb field with plants unique to the park.

The forest on Mount Taranaki's middle slopes is sometimes known as 'Goblin Forest' because of the gnarled shape of the trees and the thick swathes of trailing moss.

The climate of Taranaki and the River Region makes this area a paradise for extravagant flowering plants such as rhododendrons, azaleas, old-fashioned roses and lavender plantations. Many private gardens are available for public viewing year-round. Around 50 gardens are open to the public during the Taranaki Rhododendron Festival, held during the peak blooming period in late October/early November.

Wairarapa & Wellington

The capital of New Zealand, Wellington is also a cultural centre. It is home to the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra and national treasures such as the original Treaty of Waitangi and Katherine Mansfield's birthplace. The city is compact and interesting, set between



south island regions.

a scenic harbour and bush clad hills. Martinborough, a short drive from Wellington, is a popular wine growing area - specialties include pinot noir and riesling.

Nelson & Marlborough

Across the Cook Strait is the Marlborough region - one of New Zealand's largest wine-growing regions. While sauvignon blanc is considered the region's specialty, Marlborough's methode traditionnelle and chardonnay wines are also well known. The Marlborough Sounds is another key attraction, featuring spectacular scenery where bush and mountains rise straight from the sea. The Sounds can be explored by boat or by foot - the 67 kilometre Queen Charlotte Track offers excellent views as it passes through coastal forest, around coves and inlets and along ridges.

The Nelson region is known for its year-round sunshine, golden beaches, national parks, boutique wineries, micro breweries and a large creative community of working artists. With locally grown produce, freshly caught seafood, historical streetscapes and waterfront restaurants it is easy to see why many New Zealanders are relocating to Nelson to enjoy the lifestyle it offers.

From Nelson it's easy to access any of three national parks - Abel Tasman National Park, the Nelson Lakes National Park and Kahurangi, New Zealand's second-largest national park, comprising 450,000 hectares of mostly upland wilderness, with magnificent three to four-day hiking trails. Sea-kayaking safaris are an excellent way to explore this region.



West Coast & Canterbury

The South Island region, the largest of the six regions, comprises most of the South Island.

The West Coast is the narrow strip of land between the South Island's Southern Alps and the Tasman Sea. It is memorable for its backdrop of mountain peaks, the Fox and Franz Josef glaciers, limestone landscapes, lakes and rivers, lush rainforest and a magnificent, wild coastline. The West Coast contains the largest area of protected land of any region in New Zealand and provides access to five of New Zealand's 14 national parks. The southern west coast is part of the larger South West New Zealand area designated by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site for its recognition as a 'special place' in the world.

The Canterbury region includes a large central portion of the east coast of the South Island, centred around the city of Christchurch. One of the highlights of the region is the Alpine Pacific Triangle, a touring route which links the alpine and thermal village of Hanmer Springs, the wine valley of Waipara and Kaikoura. Kaikoura, (which translated from Māori means 'a place for eating crayfish') is where the Southern Alps meet the coast. Fur seals, dusky and Hector's dolphins can be seen from the land, and a few kilometres further out, giant sperm whales (the third largest whale in the world) can be seen year-round. The Whale Watch organisation in Kaikoura offers tours and is renowned as an ecotourism operator.



Southland & Otago

New Zealand's southern-most region, Southland, is home to the fishing port of Bluff and its key attraction, the famous Bluff oyster. From Bluff, visitors can catch a ferry to New Zealand's third island, Stewart Island - a haven for native bird life and one of the only places in New Zealand where you can readily see kiwi in their natural habitat. Approximately 85% of Stewart Island comprises New Zealand's newest national park - Rakiura National Park, which opened in 2002.

New Zealand's first university city, Dunedin, is memorable for its historical architecture. It is regarded to be one of the best preserved Victorian and Edwardian cities in the Southern Hemisphere. The city is also renowned for its proximity to wildlife. Within a short drive from the city, visitors can see the hoiho, or yellow-eyed penguin (the world's rarest), the world's only mainland breeding colony of the royal albatross and rare New Zealand sea lions.

The Southern Lakes Region

The Southern Lakes region is characterised by adventure, luxury living, snow sports and scenery. As one of the most dramatic and beautiful parts of New Zealand, Fiordland is another part of the World Heritage Site of South West New Zealand and is often called the sightseeing and walking capital of the world. You can explore Fiordland National Park by foot, sea kayak, boat, or from the air. The park covers 1.2 million hectares and showcases

dramatic wilderness on a grand scale. Famous walking tracks in the area include the Routeburn, the Milford, the Greenstone, the Hollyford, the Kepler and the Rees-Dart.

Located on the shores of Lake Wakatipu and overlooked by the Remarkables Range, Queenstown is one of New Zealand's most popular holiday destinations, featuring action such as skiing and snowboarding, jetboating, bungee jumping and white water rafting. Queenstown and its surrounds also offer more relaxing activities such as golf, wine tasting in the many boutique wineries, and exploring the historical gold-mining townships of Central Otago. The region is also becoming famous for its restaurants, wineries, five-star resorts, and remote luxury lodges.

Wanaka is a scenic drive away from Queenstown over one of the highest road passes in the Southern Hemisphere - the Crown Range. Wanaka is located on the southern shores of Lake Wanaka. Considered the region's second resort town after Queenstown, Wanaka offers spectacular views of Mount Aspiring National Park. The township offers a combination of outdoor adventure and indoor luxury - the lake, mountains and year-round events calendar is balanced by comfortable places to stay, restaurants and nearby vineyards.



general information

Highest point

Mount Cook (3,754 metres or 12,313 feet)

Deepest lake

Lake Hauroko (462 metres or 1,515 feet)

Largest lake

Lake Taupo (606 square kilometres or 234 square miles)

Longest river

Waikato River (425 kilometres or 264 miles long)

Largest glacier

Tasman Glacier (29 kilometres or 18 miles long)

Deepest cave

Nettlebed, Mount Arthur
(889 metres or 2,916 feet)

Source: Statistics New Zealand

Offices and Businesses

Offices and businesses are open Monday to Friday 8am - 5.30pm.

Trading Banks

Trading banks mostly open Monday to Friday 9am - 4.30pm, while money machines (known as Automatic Transaction Machines) are available 24 hours.

Shopping

Shops are usually open Monday to Friday 9am - 5pm, with late nights Thursday or Friday to 9pm, and weekends usually 10am - 4pm. Convenience stores, known as dairies, are usually open 7am - 8pm seven days a week. Service stations (petrol stations) are open 24 hours in most major centres.

Post Office

Post offices are open Monday to Friday 9am - 5pm, and some are open from 9am - 12noon on Saturdays.

Goods and Services Tax

GST (Goods and Services Tax) of 12.5% is applied to the cost of all goods and services and is generally included in all prices.

Currency

Currency is the New Zealand dollar. One dollar is equal to 100 cents.

Tipping and Service Charges

Gratuities are not expected, but if a visitor wishes to leave a tip in gratitude for outstanding service, this is acceptable. Service charges are not added to hotel or restaurant accounts.

Emergency Services

In emergencies, dial 111 to call for police, fire or ambulance services. DO NOT DIAL 911.

Electricity Supply

New Zealand's AC electricity supply operates at 230/240 volts (50 hertz), the same as Australia. Most hotels and motels also provide 110 volt, 20 watt, and AC sockets for electric razors. An adaptor is necessary to operate all other electrical equipment.

Water Supply

Tap (faucet) water in New Zealand is fresh, treated and safe to drink. City water is both chlorinated and fluoridated.

Smoke-free Law in New Zealand

The Smoke-free Environments Amendment Act 2003 requires that schools and early childhood centres, licensed premises (bars, restaurants, cafes, sports clubs, casinos), and workplaces are smoke-free.

Transport

Road cycling is a popular way to get around and the South Island is one of the best road cycling locations in the world, providing a mix of populated areas and long stretches of scenery. The best time for road cycling is generally February to April. Motorcycle touring is becoming a popular alternative. Campervans are another well-used means of transport, offering the advantage of combining accommodation and transport. More traditional public transportation is also available - various companies offer public bus services and coach tours. Ferry services link the three main islands as well as many of the smaller islands. New Zealand's rail network serves much of the country and many routes are sight seeing experiences in their own right. New Zealand is well served by air transport, with all cities, major towns and resorts linked to the national network. The main domestic airlines are Air New Zealand and Qantas, with commuter airlines linking the smaller towns.

Road Safety

New Zealanders drive on the left-hand side of the road.

Interesting Facts

- New Zealand was the first country in the world to have a government ministry for tourism, and Tourism New Zealand celebrated its centenary in 2001. The Department of Tourist and Health Resorts was established in Rotorua in 1901 to develop tourism
- New Zealand was the first country to give women the vote (1893)
- New Zealand is the first country in the world to see each new day
- A New Zealander, the late Sir Edmund Hillary, was the first person to climb Mount Everest (with Sherpa Tenzing Norgay in 1950)
- It was in fact a New Zealander, Richard William Pearse, who took the world's first flight - nearly two years before the Wright Brothers in the United States. On 31 March 1902 Pearse managed to fly his homemade aircraft 91 metres in a field near Timaru
- William Hamilton, a Canterbury farmer, developed the propellerless jetboat in 1953 based on the principle of water jet propulsion. Hamilton went on to invent the hay-lift, an advanced air compressor, an advanced air conditioner, a machine to smooth ice on skating ponds, the water sprinkler and also contributed to the improvements of hydropower
- Baron Ernest Rutherford, a New Zealander, was the first person in the world to split the atom (in 1919). Before that, Rutherford also succeeded in transmitting and detecting 'wireless waves' a year before Marconi, but left this work to research radioactivity and the structure of the atom at Trinity College in Cambridge, England. Rutherford was awarded the Nobel Prize for his work
- There are more golf courses in New Zealand per capita than any other country in the world (more than 400 golf courses for 4 million people)

- Auckland reputedly has more boats per head of population than any other city in the world
- The old Government Building in Wellington is the largest wooden structure in the Southern Hemisphere (8,200 square metres)
- Curio Bay in Southland is one of the most extensive and least disturbed examples of a petrified forest in the world (the forest is approximately 180 million years old)
- The vineyards of Central Otago, New Zealand, are the southern-most vineyards in the world (45° South)
- Tongariro National Park was the second national park to be established in the world (Yellowstone National Park in the United States was the first)
- Frying Pan Lake near Rotorua, is the world's largest hot water spring reaching a temperature of 200°C at its deepest point
- Waikoropupu Springs, located near Nelson, are reputedly the clearest freshwater springs in the world with an outflow of approximately 2,160 million litres of water every 24 hours
- New Zealand is home to the world's only flightless parrot, the kakapo, as well as the only alpine parrot in the world, the kea