 Rotorua

Trip Notes: New Zealand

TRAVEL DOCUMENTS

A valid US passport with a minimum of three months beyond your date of return travel is required AND an NZ eTA (Electronic Travel Authority) is required to enter New Zealand.

PRIOR TO ARRIVAL

Travelers must apply for a NZeTA at a cost of NZD\$17 on their free app, or if completed online it will cost NZD\$23. At the same time you apply for your NZeTA, you must also pay an International Visitor Conservation and Tourism Levy (IVL). This cost is NZD\$100. Additional information can be found here:

<https://www.immigration.govt.nz/visas/new-zealand-electronic-travel-authority-nzeta/>

- Download the NZeta app for free from the [App Store \(Apple\)](#) or [Google Play store \(Android\)](#).
- In most cases, you will be notified of the result of your application immediately. Sometimes there will be a delay (of up to 12 hours).
- Passengers traveling to Australia and transiting in New Zealand will require an NZeTA in addition to an Australian ETA.

TIME DIFFERENCE

New Zealand is 19 hours ahead of Pacific Standard Time and 16 hours ahead of Eastern Standard Time.

CURRENCY

The official currency is the New Zealand Dollar (NZ\$).

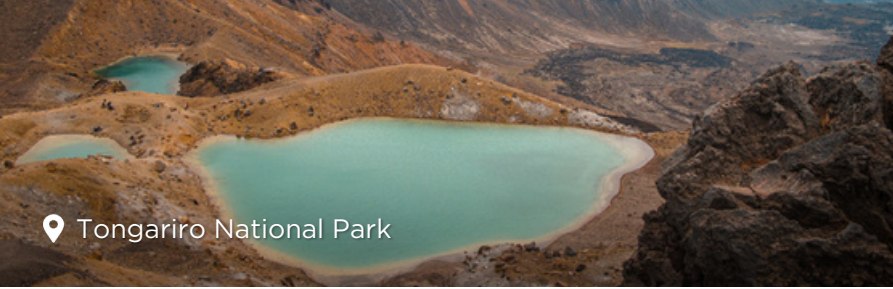
For current exchange rates, please visit www.xe-.com/ucc/.

LANGUAGE

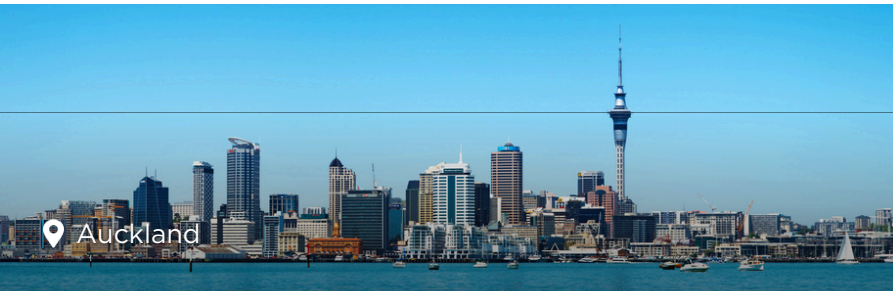
New Zealand has three official languages: English, Māori (Te Reo Māori), and New Zealand Sign Language (NZSL), with English serving as the de facto primary language for most public functions, while Māori and NZSL hold specific legal status for recognition and use in certain contexts, like court proceedings or official broadcasting, as established by acts in 1987 and 2006, respectively.

CREDIT CARDS

Major credit cards are widely accepted but expect fees to be imposed for use. Check with your bank prior to traveling as to which New Zealand banks allow ATM withdrawals for free. A credit card is required as a security deposit to check in to a hotel or rent a car. New Zealand does not restrict the amount of currency that you take in or out of the country. However, every person who carries more than NZ\$10,000 in cash is required to complete a Border Cash Report.



Tongariro National Park



Auckland



Maori Hongi

VACCINATIONS

No medication or vaccinations are required for entry to New Zealand.

POWER

For travel to New Zealand, you'll need a Type I plug adapter (three flat pins in a V-shape), as they use 230V/50Hz power, different from North America's 120V, so check your devices for dual-voltage (100-240V) ratings and bring a voltage converter for non-dual-voltage items like hair tools, otherwise, they could break. Most modern electronics (phones, laptops) are dual-voltage and only need the plug adapter, but high-wattage appliances like hair dryers or straighteners often require a separate voltage converter to work safely.

CLIMATE

New Zealand is home to a temperate climate with high sunshine hours and moderate rainfall. Much of the country lies near the coast, which means mild temperatures. The average temperature decreases as you travel south; January and February are the warmest months with July being the coldest month of the year.

PHONES

To dial New Zealand from the US: 011 + 64 + number.
To dial the US from New Zealand: 0011 + 1 + number.

TIPPING

Tipping in New Zealand is not obligatory in restaurants and bars. However, tipping for good service or kindness is at the discretion of the visitor. Hotels and restaurants do not add service charges to their bills.

SAFETY & SECURITY

New Zealand is generally very safe and peaceful, ranking high globally for safety, but petty crime (theft) occurs, especially in cities, targeting unattended vehicles and valuables; natural disasters (earthquakes, floods) are a key risk, requiring preparedness, while standard precautions like locking belongings, avoiding walking alone at night in secluded areas, and being aware of surroundings are essential for travelers, with the emergency number 111 for police, fire, and ambulance.

SHOPPING

You'll find large department stores, arcades, malls, gift, and souvenir shops across New Zealand. Hours vary across the country but shops in tourist and city areas are generally open until 5.30PM. In cities shops are generally open on Sunday as well, while in smaller towns Sunday trading hours vary greatly from place to place.

When visiting New Zealand, buy authentic souvenirs like Mānuka honey, soft Merino wool products, iridescent paua shell jewelry, traditional pounamu (greenstone) carvings, local wines (especially Sauvignon Blanc), and Whittaker's chocolate. Don't forget Māori art, natural skincare, All Blacks gear, and local treats like Pineapple Lumps for a taste of Aotearoa.



📍 Mount Cook



📍 Koru



📍 Waipu Caves

SUGGESTED PACKING LIST

For New Zealand, pack layers for changeable weather: waterproof/windproof jacket, fleece, thermals (merino/synthetic), t-shirts, hiking pants, and comfortable walking/hiking shoes, plus essentials like strong sunscreen, insect repellent, a hat, sunglasses, a reusable water bottle, and a daypack, keeping in mind its strict biosecurity (clean gear is crucial).

ETIQUETTE

Many households don't wear shoes inside, so it is polite to ask whether your host would like you to take your shoes off before entering their home. Smoking is banned in public buildings, on public transport and in some outdoor public areas. When shopping, bartering is considered bad etiquette.

- Sites or objects that Māori regard as tapu (sacred) are not to be touched or interacted with.
- It is a cultural taboo to touch someone else's head without permission.
- Ask a Māori person's permission before photographing, filming or taping them.
- Remove shoes when entering a Maori Meeting House.

DRIVING

New Zealanders drive on the left-hand side of the road. The speed limit is usually 60km/hour (35mph) in built up areas and 100km/hour (60mph) on rural roads and freeways.

Seat belts must be worn and talking on a cellphone is an offence. Your driver's license needs to be in English with a photograph. If not, then an International Driver's License will be required.

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS 2026

- 1 January - **New Year's Day**
- 6 February - **Waitangi Day**
- 3 April - **Good Friday**
- 6 April - **Easter Monday**
- 25 April - **ANZAC Day (observed 27 April)**
- 1 June - **King's Birthday**
- 10 July - **Matariki**
- 26 October - **Labour Day**
- 25 December - **Christmas Day**
- 26 December - **Boxing Day (observed 28 December)**

OTHER USEFUL LINKS

[US State Department Travel Advisories](#)

[U.S. Embassy and Consulates in New Zealand](#)

[Smart Traveler Enrollment Program \(STEP\)](#)

[US Passports](#)

[International Travel Guidance](#)

This information is provided by Travel Answers as a guideline to the country you will be visiting. Further information is available to you at <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/International-Travel-Country-Information-Pages/NewZealand.html>.

While Travel Answers endeavors to provide current information, regulations and requirements can change without notice and we are not responsible for travelers whose trips are interrupted due to documentary or medical non-compliance.