

Like mere sauvignon blanc grapes from which wine makers create delectable wines, this modest country is a surprise. In its parts—gorgeous vistas, clear waters and unassuming people—or sum, it's a wonder. Take this **Inside Scoop with your documents.**

travel: delighting in the spirit of adventure • a vacation from home to explore places that are not your home • knowing life is different, knowing this is a joy of travel • enjoying the journey, not just the destination • a privilege best used with patience, humour and curiosity • fun • coming home with great tales •

Wine Tours

Main wine regions include Hawkes Bay, Marlborough and Central Otago but why limit yourself? The Classic New Zealand Wine Train runs between the islands. New Zealand (and Australia) fuelled the world trend of screw caps replacing corks. Besides being easier to open, screw caps prevent cork taint.

Your Counsellor

Our knowledge and experience help turn dreams into first-rate vacations. Ask your counsellor about any details, including:

- advance seats & upgrades
- booking excursions ahead
- stopovers and travel times
- insurance coverage.

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Inside Scoop: New Zealand

Know before you go: travel isn't just your destination, it's also the journey

With it's compact land mass on two major islands, New Zealand offers the best of all worlds from the natural to urban sophistication. Given the travel time to get there, most visitors allow extra time to visit a few areas. Some helpful tips:

- Plan a transition day before and after—with a longer travel time than some destinations, and jet lag, you'll be rested.
- Be realistic: we know you want value for money in balancing choices and amenities but no matter what your budget, aim to relax and enjoy. Special requests are requests only; unless you've paid for an ocean suite, that's why upgrade fees apply
- Everyone in your group must have a valid passport, passport www.cic.gc.ca/english/passport/index.asp. Make separate photocopies of the ID pages or keep cell photos.
- The climate is temperate with moderately high rainfall and hours of sunshine. The far North Island has subtropical weather during summer. Inland alpine areas of the South Island can lower to -10°C (14°F) in winter. Most of the country is near a coast, so temperatures are generally mild: think layers.
- Telephone, internet and cell phone service is available almost anywhere but be aware of expensive roaming fees on your cell. In some rural areas, the internet can be slower than you might be used to.

The New Zealand Dollar (NZ) is in similar denominations as Canada with the penny (and 5 cent coin) rounded. Change funds at banks, airports and hotels. ATMs take major credit cards with chips. Inform your bank and credit card company of the dates you'll be away. The country's 15% GST is usually included in displayed prices and charged, except if a purchase you make is sent to you in Canada.

Looking for some unusual tours: ask your counsellor about booking tours of filming sites of **The Lord of the Rings**. After a massive earthquake that levelled Napier in 1931, the city had a total rebuild. With a **stunning collection of art deco buildings, it's a UNESCO World Heritage site**, www.napier.govt.nz. If you like watching sporting events, rugby is part of the national identity. **Trivia:** Approximately 260,000 residents identify as Polynesian, most living in Auckland. Since you're travelling all this way, how about a visit to the South Pacific?

Pack strategically

The world is overrun with black bags: put coloured tape or ribbon on your luggage to spot it quickly. Put your name outside and inside and remove old tags. In your carry-on, pack valuables such as jewellery, over-the-counter and prescription drugs in their original containers.

Items that long distance travellers pack in carry-on: pen/notebook, hand wipes, munchies (no fruit, meat or veg), a change of under-clothes and shirt. Pack most liquids/lotions/gels in checked bags (inside plastic bags)—due to carry-on restrictions, the maximum size is 100ml (3.4oz). All must fit in a clear/resealable plastic bag of no more than 1 litre (often at airport screening). Permitted in carry-on: laptops, cell phones, disposable razors, umbrellas, canes and nail clippers. You can't take on corkscrews (besides, New Zealand is home to the screw-top) and sports gear such as golf clubs, baseball bats and racquets. You may take baby formula, food or milk for a child under 2 years old (0-24 months).

Electrical service is 230–240 volts, AC 50Hz. A RJ45 type plug is needed to connect a laptop to a computer socket and an adaptor with a flat two or three-point power plug to connect to a power supply. Most hotels provide hair dryers. The Canadian Air Transport Security Authority controls security risks www.catsa.gc.ca/home. Also check with your airline for restricted items. All camping equipment and water sport gear (e.g. tent, footwear, fishing, dive suits) must be declared on your arrival.

We strongly recommend Maritime Travel cancellation/interruption and medical insurance. Being repatriated from long distances is costly. Above all, travel with a positive attitude—patience and a spirit of adventure will carry you through any experience!

Your Airline

Sign up online for the airline(s) email/text flight notifications as your flight could be delayed (the plane might be flying in). CATSA notes “Travellers should arrive at the airport earlier than usual, exercise patience and **contact their airline for further information on their flight(s).**” Airline staff are on duty some 3hrs prior: due to staffing and security, check-in closes 1hr before departure. If late, you’re not entitled to board (or a refund). Unless booked ahead, seats are first-come first-served. Many airlines have reciprocal “code-shares;” your ticket is for one airline, you travel on another’s plane. **Check-in and carry-on baggage:** check with your airline as size/weight restrictions vary. **Entry & Departure:** Canadians don’t need a visa but might be asked for proof of return or onward travel and evidence of sufficient funds to travel in the country.



Get Packing Checklist and General Planning & Packing Tips

at www.maritimetravel.ca/inside-scoops

- ☐ Your sense of adventure & humour!

Coming Home

The Canada Border Services Agency sets limits on what you can bring home, www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca/travel-voyage/bgb-rmf-eng.html. For more 7 or more days, you can bring, \$800 worth of goods with you and/or follow later, Amounts must be noted in CAD. **Tips:** Those envelopes in hotels for writing letters? Take 2: in one tuck in receipts for costs there, receipts for items coming home in the other, put a rounded-up amount on the outside so you know what’s spent (handy at customs). Also see Maritime Travel’s Inside Scoop: Returning to Canada. Don’t buy or accept anything suspect or that may be taken from you at customs: drugs, plants, meat/animal products or endangered species parts.

 **Websites and emails in blue are hyperlinked; just click!**

Canadians: Emergency? The High Commission in Wellington (64 4) 473 9577, a Consulate in Auckland (64 9) 309 3690. Or contact Global Affairs (collect if needed) 613-996-8885. sos@international.gc.ca, www.canadainternational.gc.ca/new_zealand-nouvelle_zelande/index.aspx.

When There

If you love plants, birds, animals and sealife you’ll love everything about the country and its celebration of natural history. It’s the perfect place to slow down to explore, whale watching and swimming with dolphins two highly recommended activities. With approximately 4 million people—population of the Greater Toronto Area—over a land mass roughly that of Japan, you’ll have that rare combination of sites and experiences per square mile. The islands are slightly different and offer unique experiences. Getting around is easy—connections are good whether rail, ferries (and water taxis to smaller areas), motorhome or car, taking a bus/coach tour or by air.

It’s a great country for driving and certain routes are standouts such as North Island’s **Taupo-Bay of Islands-Auckland** tour or **South Island’s Christchurch-Hanmer Springs**. If you plan to drive, take your valid Canadian drivers licence and insurance. And remember, drive on the left hand side of the road. Some 20% of the country is covered by 14 national parks and forests. Parks also offer hiking (called “a tramp” here), mountain biking, skiing/snowboarding, kayaking and trout fishing. With 34 marine reserves that are underwater wonderlands, go snorkelling or take a boat cruise. Unusual (to Canadians) animal and bird species abound. With flowers, you’ll see an overload of beauty. With 27 regions and some 1,600 kilometres to explore, you’re not far from something to delight you. Coming from Australia? Consider cruising over; up until the 1960s a boat was the only way to get to New Zealand.

The North Island

The largest city in the country, **Auckland**, is home to approximately 1.3 million people and the main cruise ship hub amid 50 harbour islands. There’s spectacular scenery from its narrow city strip of land such as two mountain ranges and dozens of volcanoes including **Mount Eden** (last erupting some 15,000 years ago). Feeling brave? Do a sky walk or jump off the **Sky Tower**, visit penguins and sharks in an underwater encounter site and dine along the waterfront. Getting around the city is easy by local bus; perhaps take a ferry to nearby islands. **Wellington** is at the bottom edge of the island (Lonely Planet’s “coolest little capital in the world,” 2011). With its inner city beach, food and cultural mass it also has active outdoor adventures as well as a gorgeous **City to Sea** walk and a cable car ride for great city views.

The South Island

One of the most remote pristine areas is southwest of **Queenstown** in **Fiordland**—this is the place for an unforgettable boutique lodge stay. Learn home cooking skills through the specialties of the **Ki Tao** school or **Queenstown Resort College**. In **Wanaka** and **Cromwell**, life is slow and relaxed with fine foods and first class lodging. **Moeraki** (Coastal Otago), has huge spherical boulders scattered along the beach and coming out of cliffs. According to Maori legend, the boulders are gourds washed ashore from a canoe when it was wrecked upon landfall hundreds of years ago. Boulders are calcite concretions formed some 65 million years ago; crystallization of calcium and carbonates in a pearl-like process that took perhaps four million years, soft mudstone raising the boulders from the seabed 15 million years ago through the waves, wind and rain. www.newzealand.com/int/feature/moeraki-boulders.

Food: You might guess that seafood is featured in many meals; that and world-famous lamb are musts to try, as is barbeque. Māori meals, especially in **Rotorua**, are baked in a traditional earth oven. Try Tip Top ice cream’s Hokey Pokey flavour.

Tip: New Zealand uses Daylight Saving Time: generally it’s a partial day ahead—to avoid 3am calls see www.timeanddate.com/worldclock/converter.html. Just enter your time (midnight in Halifax?) and where you’re going (Auckland) = 3pm (Coordinated Universal Time UTC, formerly Greenwich Mean Time GMT). See www.newzealand.com. Also see Maritime Travel’s Inside Scoop: Australia.

Our 24/7 Emergency Service

We constantly survey airlines, local tour companies and hotels to ensure they meet our customer service standards, so don’t let a problem ruin your holiday. Nearly all issues can be handled quickly on site—first seek help from the venue’s local staff. Otherwise, call our Emergency Travel Service at **1-888-551-1181**. Deposits are non-refundable and non-transferrable. Schedule changes can occur and airlines and tour operators have the right to change flight and/or tour times, alter, combine services or substitute accommodations. Your counsellor will work with you to ensure you receive information as soon as possible and ensure satisfaction. See your brochure and ticket terms and conditions.

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