

COOK ISLANDS

Love a LITTLE Paradise

VISITOR INFORMATION



Love a LITTLE PARADISE

COOKISLANDS.TRAVEL

Kia Oraha!

The Cook Islands; a modern Polynesia nation of 15 islands scattered across a vast swathe of the Pacific Ocean halfway between New Zealand and Hawaii. An oasis of freedom with crystal blue waters, white sandy beaches, warm weather all year round and authentic, friendly locals. Less than 30 minutes from your plane to any beach, its so easy to do as much or as little as you like in the Cook Islands. Come share our Kia Orana spirit and discover why everyone loves a little paradise.



HOW TO GET THERE

International airlines that service the Cook Islands are Air New Zealand, Virgin Australia, Jet Star and Air Tahiti. Air New Zealand and Virgin Australia have 6 and 5 flights respectively a week from Auckland and Air Tahiti operated by Air Rarotonga has 1 flight a week from Tahiti. Air New Zealand also operates direct flights out of Sydney and Los Angeles once a week. Jet Star has 3 flights from Australia via Auckland. There is no departure tax payable at the airport as this is included in your international tickets.



RAROTONGA

The beating heart of our little paradise will capture yours. As the hub of the Cook Islands, there's so much to see and do. Yet we remain unspoilt, with no traffic lights, no McDonalds and no building taller than a coconut tree. Epic jungle clad mountains cascading down to our sparkling lagoon aquatic playground. The laidback lifestyle of the warm colourful locals. The spectacular natural beauty of a beach all to yourself. Like one big resort, it's so easy to get everywhere. From the bright waterfront town of Avarua to the magic of Muri lagoon and beyond, there's something for everyone. The inland is perfect for trekking, 4x4 jungle safari tours or exploring by bike. The white sandy beaches surrounding the island are spectacular and beyond the reef is the deep ocean, perfect for diving or game fishing. There are over 52 restaurants and cafes scattered all over Rarotonga alone. Just 32 km around, explore an island where you can find treasure around every corner.

AITUTAKI

Aitutaki, home to approximately 1,800 people and the world's most beautiful lagoon, is only 220 km away, a 45 min flight from Rarotonga. Secluded and romantic, 15 motu (islets) are sprinkled across this huge turquoise, sunlit lagoon filled with brilliantly coloured tropical fish. Aitutaki is unrivalled in the Cook Islands for water activities. Take a day cruise on the lagoon or charter a boat for a secluded picnic on your own private motu. This destination is the top of any bucket list in the South Pacific.

SOUTHERN GROUP

A mix of coral atolls and volcanic islands - a good few of the nine Southern Group islands made up of Rarotonga, Aitutaki, Atiu, Managaia, Mitiaro, Mauke, Palmerston, Manuae and Takutea could be listed as "must see before I die". An idyllic climate, stunning varied scenery, warm-hearted people living an untouched way of life make them irresistible.

NORTHERN GROUP

Six of the beautiful Cook Islands lie to the north. Described as "the stuff that dreams are made of", their remote appeal and promise of true escape pulls at the hearts of explorers, adventurers, authors and artists. The Northern Group islands are made up of Pukapuka, Penryhn, Maniki, Rakahanga, Suvarrow, Nassau.

Market Day

Punanga Nui market colourful stalls open from 6am to 12pm every Saturday.

The vibrant market place offers a wide range of fresh local produce, stalls offering succulent food & treats, coconuts to quench your thirst, arts, jewellery, carvings, handicrafts, T-shirts, CDs and pareus, and bands or cultural groups often perform live.

This is such a social occasion in the Cook Islands, and you won't want to miss your opportunity for souvenir shopping as well.





Church

Cook Islands's beautiful white coral and limestone churches fill with the soaring songs of worship on Sunday.

Visitors are most welcome to attend Sunday services, but please observe appropriate modest attire of shirts and long trousers for men, and longer-length skirts or dresses for women, preferably with short or long sleeves.

The services start at 10am and finish at 11am.

A church donation will be much appreciated. At the conclusion of service you may well find yourself invited by the Pastor to enjoy island fruits and light refreshments in the nearby meeting hall with the congregation.



Simple fresh food

Love fresh food? We're not called the Cook Islands for nothing. Surrounded by the Pacific Ocean, local fishermen venture beyond the reef before sunrise, helping us earn a reputation for creating the best cuisine in the Pacific. Fresh seafood straight out of the ocean, prepared simply with delicious local ingredients from our nutrient rich volcanic island gardens. Whatever you feel like, the choice of eating options is vast and varied in our little nation. Visitors can easily dine in a different location for every meal of their stay.

A perfect meal can be fish and chips on the beach, street hawker dishes at the night market or fine restaurant dining and there are many colourful cafés serving light meals and your fix of great coffee.



A person is lying in a white hammock strung between two palm trees on a sandy beach. The background shows the ocean and a clear sky. The scene is bright and sunny, with shadows cast on the sand.

Climate

It's always a good time to visit, the Cook Islands enjoy a pleasant warm and sunny climate all year round. June to August are slightly cooler months, November to March marks the warmer season, with occasional tropical showers. The drier months, from April to November, have an average of about 26°C. The warmer, more humid and damp season runs from December to March, the temperature ranging between 22°C (min) and 30°C (max).

	Max °C (Celcius)	Min °C (Celcius)	Sunshine hours
Jan	29.8	22.9	179
Feb	31.1	23.1	171
Mar	28.9	22.6	181
Apr	28.2	22.0	174
May	26.6	20.4	162
Jun	25.6	19.3	169
Jul	25.2	18.6	177
Aug	24.9	18.4	182
Sep	25.3	19.1	177
Oct	26.0	20.0	185
Nov	27.1	21.0	178
Dec	27.8	21.9	181

FAST FACTS...

POPULATION

Cook Islands (2011 Census):
17,794 Rarotonga (Capital):
13,095

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

A valid passport with 6 months validity is required, 31 days visa is issued on arrival. This can be extended on request. New Zealand citizens are eligible for a 90 day stay on arrival.

CURRENCY & BANKING

The Cook Islands unit of currency is the New Zealand dollar, supplemented by local Cook Islands' notes and coins. ANZ, BSP, and BCI Banks in downtown Avarua are open Mon-Fri from 9am - 3pm. ANZ extends its closing time on Friday's to 4pm. BSP in Avarua is also open from 9 - 12 Noon on Saturdays. ATM's are conveniently located around Rarotonga and Aitutaki and EFTPOS is available at most hotels and stores. Western Union has an office in Avarua offering money exchange and transfers. For the other islands, you will need to get cash before you arrive on the island as there is no access to EFTPOS and only some businesses accept credit cards.

DOMESTIC AIR TRAVEL

Domestic flights are operated by

Air Rarotonga with daily flights to Aitutaki and scheduled flights to Atiu, Mangaia, Mauke, Mitiaro, Manihiki, Penryhn and Pukapuka. For domestic flight schedule please visit www.airraro.com.

DRESS CODE

While the Cook Islands is informal and the dress is casual, it is recommended that very brief attire such as bikinis not be worn in shopping areas or public areas outside of the beach and resorts, as it may cause offence in some places.

DRIVING is on the left-hand side of the road. Cars and motor scooters can be rented. International visitors (over 16) can now drive in the Cook Islands for up to six months using their full overseas license. If a visitor wants to ride a scooter or motorbike in the Cook Islands and is not licensed to do so at home, he or she will still have to obtain a Cook Islands Driving License at the Police Headquarters in Avarua. All tourists must wear helmets.

TIPPING is not customary in the Cook Islands.

MEDICAL & DENTAL

SERVICES are available and there is a well equipped hospital situated on Rarotonga and a small hospital

in Aitutaki. There are no poisonous animals or insects in the Cook Islands.

ELECTRICITY

Electricity voltage is 240 AC/50 cycle, the same three pin plugs as used in New Zealand and Australia. Some hotels have provisions for 110 volt AC electric razors.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

There is a 24 hour Telecom service where you can buy a sim card and credit to get a local phone number. Most smart phones will work with a local sim however check with your provider in your country before travelling to the Cook Islands. Internet on the island is readily available, and most resorts have a wifi hotspot, and some have internet in room that you can purchase. There are internet cafe's around the island too.

WATER

Water on Rarotonga is from catchment in the hills and we recommend visitors boil water for drinking. Some properties have treated water. Bottled water is available from the local shops for those who wish to purchase.

Love a LITTLE PARADISE

COOKISLANDS.TRAVEL



VISITOR CENTRE

At the centre of everything! Advice on accommodation, tours, restaurants, activities, entertainment and outer islands travel.

Head office: Main Road, Avarua (Between the Banana Court & ANZ Bank)

PO Box 14, Rarotonga, Cook Islands P: (682) 29 435 | F: (682) 21 435

E: tourism@cookislands.gov.ck W: www.cookislands.travel

Office Hours: Mon - Fri 8am - 4pm | Sat 10 am - 1:30pm