

COOK ISLANDS

THINGS TO KNOW BEFORE YOU GO



Rarotonga's just under 4 hours flying time from Auckland. Air New Zealand operate almost daily services out of Auckland and direct seasonal services out of Wellington and Christchurch. The direct services out of Wellington and Christchurch are just over 4 ¾ hours flying time. Jetstar and Virgin Australia also fly from Auckland to Rarotonga. Once in Rarotonga, Air Rarotonga operate regular flights to the outer islands including Aitutaki, Atiu, Mangaia, Mauke and Mitiaro.



A visa is not required by New Zealand passport holders for stays up to 31 days. Visitors must have a return or onward ticket.



The currency used is the New Zealand dollar. This is supplemented by coins for local use. ANZ and Westpac banks are located in Rarotonga, in downtown Avarua and open 9.00 am - 3.00 pm, Monday-Friday. Westpac also has a branch in Aitutaki and has an exchange service available at Rarotonga Airport for all international flights. ATM's are conveniently located around Rarotonga and Aitutaki.



240V / 50Hz. The Cook Islands have 3 pin power outlets identical to that of New Zealand.



A tropical maritime climate exists with just 2 seasons - dry & wet. Temperatures though are fairly consistent throughout the year with maximum temperatures ranging from 25- 28° in the drier season, May through to November and 26-29 ° in the wet and humid season December through to April.



The local language is Cook Islands Maori. English is also widely spoken.



There are no special health problems and no poisonous animals or insects. There is a hospital in Rarotonga with New Zealand trained staff. There are smaller hospitals in Aitutaki and Atiu. The most common travellers complaint is coral scratches and attention to these is recommended.



A visitor may drive in the Cook Islands if they're in possession of a valid home country driving licence for the same class of vehicle. Driving is on the left side of the road. The speed limit is 40 kilometres per hour in the town & villages and 60 kilometres per hour outside the populated areas.



The dress code is definitely ' island style ' and flat shoes. However brief clothing suitable for the beach is not suitable for town or villages. A light sweater may come in handy for the cooler evenings during July and August. A local sarong to use as a wrap around is worth having close by. Also if you intend to go to a church service (highly recommended) pack something smart.



Water is safe to drink in Rarotonga, however it is advisable to boil it first. When travelling to outer islands, it is advisable to take bottled water or boil any required for drinking.



Visitors intending to get married on Rarotonga must provide the following personal documents : Original birth certificates, valid passports , decree absolute in English (divorce papers) if relevant, death certificate of deceased former spouse (if relevant). The marriage licence must be applied for in person to the Registrar of Marriages at least 3 working days prior to the marriage.



There is no duty on personal effects. Each visitor may bring the following into the Cook Islands : 299 cigarettes or 250 grams of tobacco or up to 50 cigars, 2 litres of spirits or wine, or 4.5 litres of beer. Goods in excess of \$250 are liable for duty.