



Travel Information

Getting To Rarotonga

Air New Zealand operate daily flights out of Auckland and direct seasonal services out of Wellington and Christchurch. Jetstar and Virgin Australia also fly from Auckland to Rarotonga. Australians can fly direct from Sydney. Once there, you can fly to the other islands (Aitutaki, Atiu, Mitiaro, Mauke, Mangaia etc) with Air Rarotonga.

Customs/ Entry Requirements

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

Climate

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.

Language

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

Medical

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

Driving

A visitor may drive in Rarotonga 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.

Electricity

240V / 50Hz. Rarotonga has 3 pin power outlets similar to those in New Zealand & Australia.

Currency

The currency used is the New Zealand Dollar. This is supplemented by coins for local use. ANZ and Westpac Banks are located on Rarotonga, in downtown Avarua and open Monday - Friday 9.00 am - 3.00 pm. Westpac also has a branch at the Rarotonga Airport and it's open for all international flights. There's plenty of ATM's located around Rarotonga and a couple on Aitutaki.

Credit Cards

Mastercard & Visa are widely accepted on Rarotonga and Aitutaki usually with a \$20 minimum purchase. Some places may charge a small fee for using credit cards. A few popular eating establishments only accept cash, so it pays to check first.

Drinking Water

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.

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Getting Around

Getting around Rarotonga is as easy as hopping on board a bus travelling in either a clockwise or anti-clockwise direction. Or you can hire a rental car or jump on the back of a scooter like many of the locals do and enjoy the wind on your face as you cruise around the island enjoying both beauty and adventure on tap. It takes just 45 minutes to get around the whole island, so you'll never feel like you're stuck in the same spot.

Food

On Rarotonga there's over 100 cafes & restaurants to choose from, many on the waterfront or beachfront or in picturesque settings. They offer a range of cuisine from pub meals and bakery foods to local food & fine dining with a Polynesian twist. The cost of eating out is similar to New Zealand & Australia.

Clothing

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 to hear the singing) pack something smart.

Weddings

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.

Duty Free

There is no duty on personal effects. Each visitor may bring the following into Rarotonga; 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.

Whale Watching Season

During July through to October humpback whales can often be seen breaching & frolicking from the Rarotonga foreshore. The whales migrate from Antarctica to the warmer waters of the Cook Islands to mate, give birth & rest.

Markets

Te Punanga Nui Markets on Rarotonga is a Saturday morning weekly highlight for locals as much as tourists. There's something for everyone - everything from local fruits, vegetables, flowers, souvenirs & crafts as well as freshly baked pastries, tropical fruit smoothies, divine coffee & fresh waffles. There's also some local entertainment for you to enjoy !

Island Time

When you're in the islands, you're on Island Time. Things definitely move a little slower but it gives you more time to appreciate all that surrounds you. So make sure you chill out & enjoy all the benefits that Island Time offers !!