

# WELCOME TO NEW ZEALAND





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Intro

**Kia Ora!**

## *Welcome to New Zealand*

We're so excited to have you join us for our wedding celebration! To help you make the most of your time here, we've put together this travel guide to share some of our favorite spots in more detail and tips for exploring our home. Whether you're looking for adventure, relaxation, or a taste of Kiwi culture, we hope you can find some useful tips in here!



# Quick Facts about New Zealand

- **Location:** South Pacific Ocean, approximately 2,000 km southeast of Australia.
- **Population:** Approximately 5.2 million people.
- **Capital:** Wellington.
- **Largest City:** Auckland.
- **Languages:** English, Māori, and New Zealand Sign Language.
- **Currency:** New Zealand Dollar (NZD).
- **Time Zone:** New Zealand Standard Time (NZST) - UTC +12.
- **Driving:** Left-hand side of the road.
- **Main Islands:** North Island and South Island, with several smaller islands.
- **Climate:** Varies from subtropical in the north to temperate in the south, with distinct seasons.

# Destinations – North Island

## *Bay of Islands*

The Bay of Islands is a subtropical wonderland dotted with over 140 islands. It's a perfect spot for sailing, fishing, and exploring the marine life, including dolphins and whales. Visit historic Russell, once the capital of New Zealand, and explore the Waitangi Treaty Grounds, where the founding document of New Zealand was signed. Take a boat trip to the iconic Hole in the Rock at Piercy Island and enjoy some of the best seafood New Zealand has to offer.



## *Auckland & Waiheke Island*

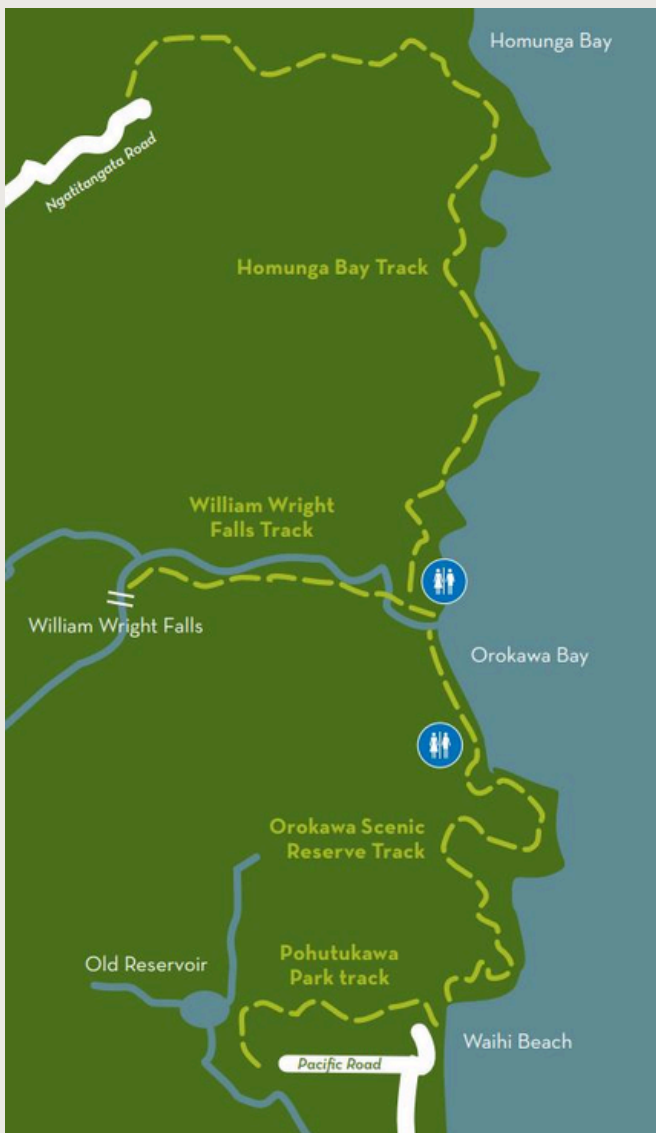
Auckland, known as the "City of Sails," is New Zealand's largest city and a vibrant hub of culture and adventure. Take a trip to the top of the Sky Tower for panoramic views or explore the waterfront areas of Viaduct Harbour and Wynyard Quarter. For a day trip, catch a ferry to Waiheke Island, renowned for its stunning beaches, scenic vineyards, and laid-back atmosphere. Enjoy a wine tour at some of the island's award-winning wineries and savor a meal with a view of the Hauraki Gulf.



# Destinations – North Island

## *Waihi Beach (1 Hour from Mount Maunganui)*

Waihi Beach is one of our favorite spots—such a gorgeous stretch of white sand that's perfect for a chilled day by the ocean or a coastal walk. The vibe is super laid-back, and the surf is great if you're into that. We always stop at Flat White Café for coffee and the best beach views. If you're up for a walk, the trail to Orokawa Bay is stunning, and if you keep going, you'll end up at Homunga Bay with a beautiful waterfall—totally worth it!





# Destinations – North Island

## *Mount Maunganui*

Mount Maunganui, known as "The Mount," is where we live in the Bay of Plenty, featuring stunning beaches, vibrant surf culture, and the iconic Mount volcano.

### Things to Do:

- **Hike the Mount:** 30-45 minute hike (round trip) with breathtaking views from the top of the Mount.
- **Walk around the Mount:** A leisurely 3.5 km walk around the base of Mount offers beautiful ocean views.
- **Marine Parade Board Walk:** Marine Parade: A popular waterfront promenade perfect for walking, jogging, and enjoying the coastal scenery.
- **Main Beach:** Ideal for swimming, sunbathing, and surfing.
- **Pilot Bay:** Perfect for paddle boarding, kayaking, and relaxing strolls.
- **Leisure Island (Moturiki Island):** 10 minute walk out from the beach, Leisure Island offers great views of the mount.
- **Mount Hot Pools:** Warm saltwater pools with views of the Mount.
- **Papamoa Hills:** Scenic hikes with panoramic views of the Bay of Plenty.

### Favorite Places to Eat:

- Palace Burger: Gourmet burgers made with fresh ingredients.
- Tay Street Cafe: Beachside cafe with great coffee.
- Gather Café, Papamoa: Delicious coffee and wholesome meals.
- Master Kong: Asian fusion with a diverse menu.
- Satori Lounge - Sushi, Tauranga: Fancy sushi.
- Mount Sushi: Quick pick your own sushi.
- Eddies on Esplanade: Breakfast and brunch with a beachfront view.



### Discover More:

For additional information on things to do and see in the Bay of Plenty, visit the [Bay of Plenty NZ website](#) for additional local attractions, dining, and activities to help you make the most of your visit.



# Destinations – North Island

## *Rotorua*

Rotorua is renowned for its geothermal wonders and vibrant Māori culture, making it a must-visit destination on the North Island. The area is known for its bubbling mud pools, shooting geysers, and natural hot springs, creating a unique landscape.

- **Geothermal Wonders:** Start your exploration at Te Puia, home to the spectacular Pohutu Geyser, which erupts up to 30 meters high.
- **White Water Rafting:** One of the top experiences is white-water rafting at Okere Falls on the Kaituna River. This thrilling adventure takes you through scenic gorges and over waterfalls, including the Tutea Falls, which at 7 meters high, is the world's highest commercially rafted waterfall.
- **Relaxation and Rejuvenation:** After a day of adventure, unwind at the Polynesian Spa, which offers hot mineral bathing with stunning views over Lake Rotorua.
- **Skyline Rotorua:** For panoramic views over the city and lake, take the Skyline Gondola to the top of Mount Ngongotaha. While you're there, enjoy a thrilling ride on the Skyline Luge, which offers a fun downhill track with beautiful views.
- **Mountain Biking:** Rotorua is a world-class destination for mountain biking, with an extensive network of trails for all skill levels. Head to the Whakarewarewa Forest (also known as the Redwoods) to explore over 130 kilometers of tracks that weave through the towering redwoods and geothermal landscapes. From beginner-friendly rides to challenging downhill trails.





# Destinations - North Island

## *Coromandel Peninsula*

The Coromandel is a favorite summer destination known for its beautiful beaches, native forests, and quaint towns.

- **Cathedral Cove:** This iconic beach, accessible by a scenic walking track or kayak, features a stunning natural rock arch and crystal-clear waters, making it a must-see for visitors.
- **Hot Water Beach:** Dig your own natural hot pool in the sand at low tide. The geothermal activity beneath the beach provides warm water perfect for a relaxing soak.
- **Whangamata:** A favorite spot for surfers, Whangamata is known for its long, sandy beach and great surf breaks. The town also offers vibrant local markets, cafes, and art galleries.
- **Port Jackson:** Located on the northern tip of the Coromandel, this spot is perfect for camping, with stunning coastal views, pristine beaches, and opportunities for hiking and fishing.
- **Opito Bay:** A beautiful, sheltered bay with golden sands and clear waters, ideal for swimming, snorkeling, and relaxing on the beach. It's a hidden gem away from the crowds, offering a tranquil escape, if you're in the area check out our favorite place for dinner - Luke's Kitchen.
- **Luke's Kitchen:** Located in Kuaotunu, Luke's Kitchen is a must-visit for dinner. This rustic, beachfront eatery is known for its wood-fired pizzas, fresh seafood, and live music, making it a perfect spot to enjoy a relaxed meal while watching the sunset.
- **Crayfish Bay Cliff Jumping:** Crayfish Bay offers exhilarating cliff jumping spots with spectacular ocean views and is only a short walk around from Opito Bay.
- **New Chums Beach:** A secluded, pristine beach accessible only by foot or boat, offering an untouched slice of paradise.



# Destinations – North Island

## *Raglan*

Raglan, a laid-back coastal town on New Zealand's west coast, is renowned for its stunning black sand beaches, world-class surf breaks, and great coffee. It's the perfect spot for a blend of adventure and relaxation.

- **Surfing:** Raglan is famous for its surf breaks, especially Manu Bay, known for one of the longest left-hand surf breaks in the world. Surf schools and rental shops cater to both beginners and seasoned surfers.
- **Beaches and Walks:** Enjoy swimming and sunbathing at Ngarunui Beach. For scenic coastal walks and stunning views, head to the Wainui Reserve. Don't miss the nearby Bridal Veil Falls, a beautiful 55-meter waterfall accessible via a short walk.
- **Dining:** Enjoy fresh, locally sourced meals at cafes like The Shack and seafood at The Wharf Kitchen & Bar. Raglan is also home to our favourite place to have a coffee, Raglan Roast.





# Destinations – North Island

## *Hawke's Bay*

Known for its vineyards, stunning coastline, and art deco architecture, Hawke's Bay is a haven for wine lovers and foodies. Visit the city of Napier to see its well-preserved art deco buildings, take a guided bike tour of the region's wineries, or explore the Cape Kidnappers Gannet Colony. Summer is an excellent time for enjoying fresh produce from local farmers' markets and dining al fresco at vineyard restaurants.



## *Wellington*

New Zealand's capital city, Wellington, is known for its creative arts scene, stunning harbor, and vibrant nightlife. Don't miss a visit to Te Papa, the national museum of New Zealand, and explore the historic Wellington Cable Car for panoramic views over the city. Take a stroll through the Wellington Botanic Garden and enjoy the bustling atmosphere of Cuba Street, famous for its eclectic mix of shops, cafes, and street performers.

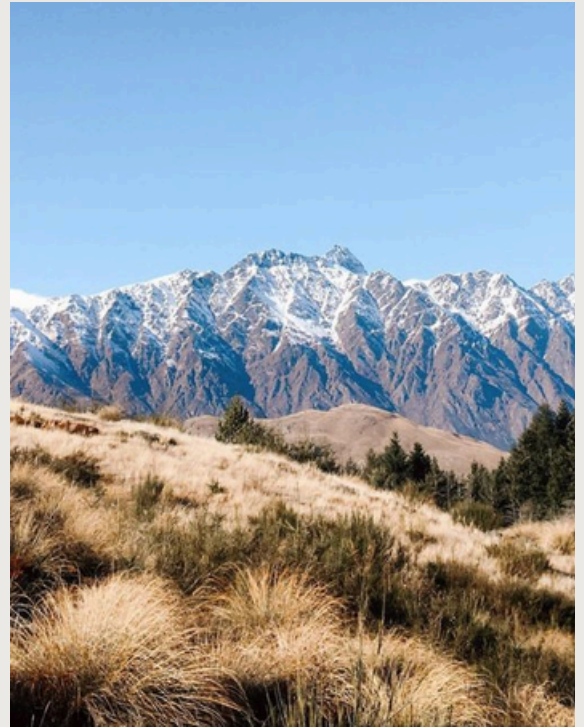


# Destinations – South Island

## Queenstown

Often referred to as the adventure capital of New Zealand, Queenstown is set against the dramatic backdrop of the Southern Alps and the crystal-clear waters of Lake Wakatipu. Whether you're into hiking, bungee jumping, jet boating, or simply enjoying the scenery, Queenstown has it all. For a more relaxed experience, take a cruise on the lake or visit the nearby Gibbston Valley for some wine tasting.

Special Note: Queenstown is a favorite for its stunning views, hikes, and activities in all seasons. We love starting or ending our South Island trips here. make sure you stop by Patagonia for Bayley's favourite ice cream!



## *Wanaka*

A charming town set on the shores of Lake Wanaka, this is a quieter alternative to Queenstown. Wanaka offers stunning lakeside views, fantastic hiking opportunities, and plenty of outdoor activities. Don't miss a visit to the iconic "Wanaka Tree" or a hike up to Roy's Peak for breathtaking views over the lake and mountains. In the summer, enjoy kayaking, paddleboarding, or relaxing on the lakeshore.



# Destinations – South Island

## *Arrowtown*

A picturesque and historic town located just 20 minutes from Queenstown, Arrowtown offers a charming escape with its beautifully preserved 19th-century architecture and tree-lined streets. Once a gold mining town, Arrowtown retains its heritage charm, complete with old-style shops, quaint cottages, and a rich history.



## *Milford Sound*

Milford Sound, located within Fiordland National Park, is often referred to as the “Eighth Wonder of the World.” Take a scenic cruise through the fiord to witness towering cliffs, cascading waterfalls, and abundant wildlife, including dolphins, seals, and penguins. For those seeking more adventure, consider kayaking the waters of the Sound or embarking on a guided trek along the world-famous Milford Track.



# Destinations – South Island



## *Abel Tasman National Park*

Located at the top of the South Island, Abel Tasman is New Zealand's smallest national park but offers some of the most stunning coastal scenery. The park is renowned for its golden beaches, clear waters, and lush native bush. Spend your days kayaking, swimming, and hiking the Abel Tasman Coastal Track, one of New Zealand's Great Walks.

## *Kaikōura*

Kaikōura is a haven for marine life enthusiasts. This coastal town is famous for whale watching, where you can see sperm whales year-round and migrating humpback whales in winter. Spot fur seals lounging on the rocks, and enjoy fresh seafood, especially the town's famous crayfish.





# Destinations – South Island

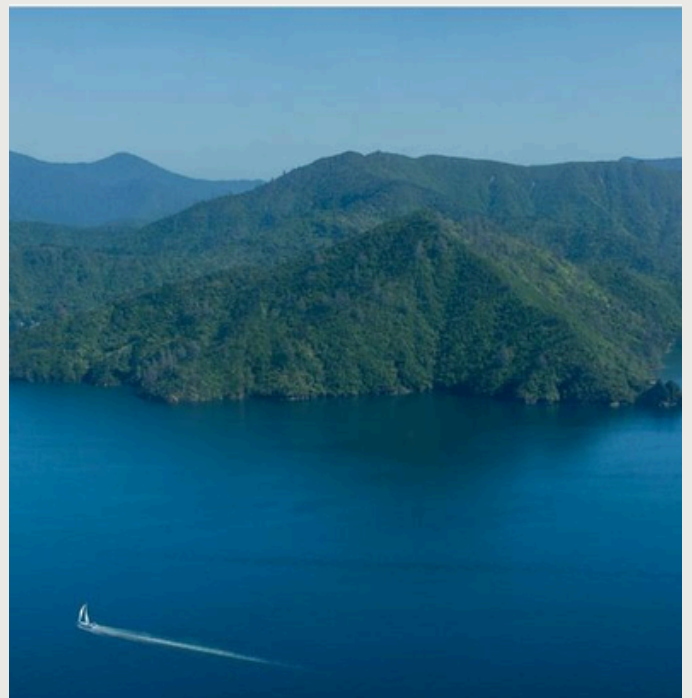


## *Tekapo*

Lake Tekapo is known for its stunning turquoise waters and the iconic Church of the Good Shepherd. Visit the nearby Mt. John Observatory for stargazing under some of the darkest skies in the world. Tekapo is also a gateway to several stunning hiking trails, including the Hooker Valley Track which is one of our favourites, and has easy access to views of glaciers, alpine streams, and Mount Cook, New Zealand’s highest peak.

## *Picton*

A charming port town located at the top of the South Island, Picton is the gateway to the stunning Marlborough Sounds. From here, you can explore the winding waterways of the sounds by boat, kayak, or on foot. Picton is also the starting point of the Queen Charlotte Track, a popular multi-day hike that offers stunning coastal views and forest scene



# Mountain Biking

**General North Island Cycle Tips & Recommendations-** If you're planning a cycling trip in the North Island, these tips cover everything from weather considerations to safety guidelines and recommended gear.

- More info: [General North Island Cycle Tips & Recommendations](#)

**North Island Cycle Tour** (includes Timber Trail)- This tour combines various iconic trails, including the Timber Trail, and offers a fantastic way to explore the North Island's diverse landscapes and cultural landmarks.

- More info: [North Island Cycle Tour \(includes Timber Trail\)](#)

**Timber Trail-** This 85 km trail takes riders through the Pureora Forest Park, with stunning suspension bridges and ancient forest views. It's suitable for both day trips and multi-day adventures.

- More info: [Timber Trail](#)

**Supervolcanic Trails – Taupō Trails-** These trails offer a range of riding experiences around Lake Taupō, just two hours from Mount Maunganui. The trails showcase volcanic landscapes, forests, and scenic views of the lake.

- More info: [Supervolcanic Trails - Taupo trails \(2 hours from Mount\)](#)

**Hauraki Rail Trail** - Ideal for easy rides, the Hauraki Rail Trail is a scenic route that runs through the Coromandel, offering beautiful views of farmland, gorges, and historic sites. It's perfect for families or those looking for a more relaxed cycling experience.

- More info: [Easy rides on the Hauraki Rail Trail | The Coromandel | The Coromandel](#)

**Blue and Green Lake Loops Rotorua-** This scenic trail takes riders around Rotorua's stunning Blue and Green Lakes, offering a mix of native bush, lake views, and volcanic landscapes. It's a popular spot for both locals and visitors looking for a memorable mountain biking experience.

- More info: [Loops in Rotorua](#)



# Walks & Hikes

## *Top Day Walks in New Zealand*

For those with less time or who prefer shorter day walks and hikes, New Zealand offers an array of incredible day walks. Here are some of the top day walks that we know and love:



### **ROY'S PEAK**

WANAKA

Duration: 5-6 hours, 16 km



### **CATHEDRAL COVE**

COROMANDEL PENINSULA

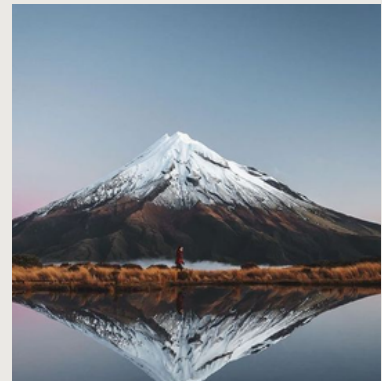
Duration: 1.5 hours, 3 km return



### **HOOKER VALLEY TRACK**

AORAKI/MOUNT COOK  
NATIONAL PARK

Duration: 3-4 hours, 10 km



### **MOUNT TARANAKI SUMMIT TRACK**

(EGMONT NATIONAL PARK)

Duration: 8-10 hours, 12.6 km  
return

# Walks & Hikes

## *Great Walks of New Zealand*

New Zealand is home to some of the world's most breathtaking landscapes, and there's no better way to experience this than by embarking on one of the country's Great Walks. These multi-day hiking trails offer stunning scenery, ranging from lush rainforests and pristine lakes to rugged coastlines and alpine vistas. Here's a brief overview of some of the most iconic Great Walks:



### **MILFORD TRACK**

FIORDLAND NATIONAL PARK

Duration: 4 days, 53.5 km



### **TONGARIRO NORTHERN CIRCUIT**

TONGARIRO NATIONAL PARK

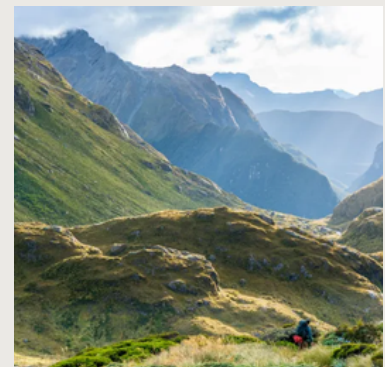
Duration: 3-4 days, 43.1 km



### **ABEL TASMAN COAST TRACK**

ABEL TASMAN NATIONAL PARK

Duration: 3-5 days, 60 km



### **ROUTE BURN TRACK**

FIORDLAND AND MT ASPIRING  
NATIONAL PARKS

Duration: 2-4 days, 32 km



# Speak Like a Local

## *KIWI SLANG*

New Zealanders, often referred to as Kiwis, have their own unique slang and expressions that add color and personality to everyday conversations. Here's a handy guide to help you understand and perhaps even use some of these terms during your visit:

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- **Kia ora:** A common Māori greeting that means "hello" or "good health." It's used throughout New Zealand by both Māori and non-Māori.
- **Sweet as:** A versatile phrase meaning "cool," "great," or "no problem." Example: "How was the hike?" "Sweet as!"
- **Chur:** Another way to say "thanks" or "cheers." It can also mean "good" or "awesome."
- **Mate:** Similar to "bro," it's used to address friends or acquaintances in a friendly manner.
- **Eh:** Pronounced "ay," this is often added to the end of sentences for emphasis or to seek agreement, similar to "right?" or "isn't it?"
- **Togs:** Swimsuit or bathing suit. Example: "Don't forget your togs for the beach!"
- **Jandals:** Flip-flops or sandals.
- **Bach** (pronounced 'batch'): A holiday home or beach house, often used for family getaways.
- **Suss:** To figure out or sort out something. Example: "I'll suss it out for you."
- **Heaps:** Means "a lot" or "many." Example: "There were heaps of people at the festival."
- **She'll be right:** A reassuring phrase meaning everything will be okay or it's not a big deal.

# Speak Like a Local

## *KIWI SLANG CONTINUED*

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- **Dairy:** A small convenience store or corner shop.
- **Kiwi:** Refers to New Zealanders, the flightless bird native to New Zealand, or the kiwi fruit (but usually context makes it clear!).
- **Keen:** Eager or interested in something. Example: "I'm keen to go hiking this weekend."
- **No worries:** A way of saying "you're welcome" or "don't worry about it."
- **Yarn:** A chat or casual conversation. Example: "We had a good yarn at the café."
- **Chocka:** Full, packed, or crowded. Example: "The bus was chocka this morning."
- **Choice:** Another way to say something is good or excellent. Example: "That new café is choice!"
- **Brew:** Can refer to a beer, or simply a cup of tea or coffee. Example: "Let's grab a brew."
- **Give it a nudge:** To give something a try or attempt.

### Local Names for Fruits and Vegetables

- **Kumara:** The Māori word for sweet potato.
- **Capsicum:** What many other countries call a "bell pepper."
- **Pawpaw:** Another term for papaya.
- **Feijoa:** A unique fruit found commonly in New Zealand with a sweet, tangy flavour.
- **Courgette:** Known as zucchini in other parts of the world.
- **Beetroot:** Known as just beet in other countries.
- **Silverbeet:** The New Zealand term for Swiss chard.
- **Kiwifruit:** Known as just a kiwi.



Tips

# Travel Tips for a New Zealand Summer



## WEATHER AND CLOTHING

New Zealand's summer runs from December to February, with temperatures ranging from 20-30°C (68-86°F). Pack light, breathable clothing, swimwear, sun hats, and plenty of sunscreen. A light jacket and jumper is advisable for cooler evenings or breezy coastal areas.

## DRIVING

If you plan on renting a car, remember that New Zealanders drive on the left-hand side of the road. Many of the country's scenic routes include narrow, winding roads, so drive carefully and enjoy the journey. Road trips are one of the best ways to explore the stunning landscapes.

## EMERGENCY

Emergency Line: Dial 111 for police, fire, or medical emergencies.

## STAYING CONNECTED

Wi-Fi is widely available in cities, but it may be limited in rural or remote areas. Consider purchasing a local SIM card for your phone to stay connected throughout your travels to avoid roaming charges. You can buy a SIM for about \$2 from the supermarket.

## CURRENCY AND LOCAL CUSTOMS

Credit and debit cards are widely accepted in New Zealand, but it's a good idea to carry some cash, especially in smaller towns or rural areas. ATMs are readily available in most urban centers.

Note! Tipping is not customary in New Zealand.

## BIOSECURITY

New Zealand has strict biosecurity laws to protect its unique ecosystems. Avoid bringing in fresh produce, honey, or other plant/animal products. Declare any hiking or camping equipment at customs, as they may need to be cleaned.

We hope you enjoy  
New Zealand!

*Love, Michaela & Bayley*

