

Directory

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ACCOMMODATION

Across New Zealand, you can bed down at night in guesthouses that creak with history, facility-laden hotels, comfortably uniform motel units, beautifully situated campsites and hostels that range in character from clean-living and relaxed to tirelessly party-prone.

Accommodation listings in this guidebook are ordered by budget from cheapest to most expensive. We generally designate a place as budget accommodation if it charges up to \$65 per single or \$80 per double. Accommodation qualifies as midrange if it costs roughly \$80 to \$150 per double, while we've given the top-end tag to any double room costing over \$150. Price ranges generally increase by 20% to 25% in the nation's largest cities (Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch). Here you will find budget accommodation at up to \$100 per

double, midrange between \$100 and \$200, and top end rooms more than \$200.

If you're travelling during peak tourist seasons, book your bed well in advance. Accommodation is most in demand (and at its priciest) during the summer holidays from Christmas to late January; at Easter; and during winter in snowy resort towns like Queenstown. At other times, weekday rates may be cheaper than weekend rates (except in business-style hotels in larger cities, where the reverse applies), and you'll certainly discover that low-season rates abound. When they're not run off their feet, accommodation operators often offer walk-in rates that are significantly below advertised rates – ask late in the day. Also see the big-name global accommodation websites (www.wotif.com, www.lastminute.com, www.hotels.com etc) for last-minute deals.

Visitor information centres provide reams of local accommodation information, often in the form of folders detailing facilities and up-to-date prices; many can also make bookings on your behalf. Alternatively, flick through one of NZ's free, widely available accommodation directories, including the annual *New Zealand Accommodation Guide* published by the **Automobile Association** (AA; www.aatravel.co.nz), as well as the *Holiday Parks & Campgrounds* and *Motels, Motor Lodges & Apartments* directories produced by **Jasons** (www.jasonz.com).

B&Bs & Guesthouses

Bed and breakfast (B&B) accommodation in private homes is a growth industry in NZ, popping up in the middle of cities, in rural hamlets and on stretches of isolated coastline, with rooms on offer in everything from

BOOK YOUR STAY ONLINE

For more accommodation reviews and recommendations by Lonely Planet authors, check out the online booking service at lonelyplanet.com/hotels. You'll find the true, insider lowdown on the best places to stay. Reviews are thorough and independent. Best of all, you can book online.

PRACTICALITIES

- For weights and measures, NZ uses the metric system.
- Videos you buy or watch will be based on the PAL system – the same system used in Australia, the UK and most of Europe.
- Use a three-pin adaptor (the same as in Australia; different to British three-pin adaptors) to plug yourself into the electricity supply (230V AC, 50Hz).
- For news, leaf through Auckland's *New Zealand Herald*, Wellington's *Dominion Post* or Christchurch's *The Press* newspapers, or check out www.stuff.co.nz.
- Tune in to Radio National for current affairs and Concert FM for classical and jazz (see www.radionz.co.nz for frequencies). Kiwi FM (www.kiwifm.co.nz) plays 100% NZ music; Radio Hauraki (www.hauraki.co.nz) cranks out the classic rock (too much Split Enz is barely enough...).
- Watch one of the four national commercial TV stations (TV One, TV2, TVNZ 6 and Maori Television) or the subscriber-only Sky TV (www.skytv.co.nz).

suburban bungalows to stately manors owned by one family for generations.

Guesthouses are usually spartan, cheap, 'private' (unlicensed) hotels, mostly low-key places patronised by people who eschew the impersonal atmosphere of many motels. Some guesthouses are reasonable fancy and offer self-contained rooms.

Although breakfast is included at genuine B&Bs, it may or may not feature at guesthouses. Your morning meal may be 'continental' (cereal, toast, tea or coffee), 'hearty continental' (add yoghurt, fruit, home-baked bread or muffins), or a stomach-loading cooked meal including eggs, bacon and sausages. Some B&B hosts, especially in isolated locations or within the smaller towns where restaurants are limited, may cook dinner for guests and advertise dinner, bed and breakfast (DB&B) packages.

Tariffs are typically in the \$120 to \$180 (per double) bracket, though some places charge upwards of \$300 per double. Some hosts continue to be cheeky-as-a-Kea, charging hefty prices for what is, in essence, a bedroom in their home. Many upmarket B&Bs demand bookings and deposits at least a month in advance, and enforce strict and expensive cancellation policies – ie cancel within a week of your arrival date and you'll forfeit your deposit plus the balance of the room rate. Check conditions before you book.

The *B&B Directory of New Zealand* (www.bed-and-breakfast.co.nz) and *New Zealand Bed & Breakfast Book* (www.bnb.co.nz) are available online, and at bookshops and visitor information centres.

Camping & Campervan Parks

Campers and campervan drivers alike converge upon NZ's hugely popular 'holiday parks', slumbering peacefully in powered and unpowered sites, cheap bunk rooms (dorm rooms), cabins and self-contained units that are often called tourist flats. Well-equipped communal kitchens, dining areas and games and TV rooms often feature. In cities holiday parks are usually a fair way from the action, but in smaller towns they can be impressively central or near lakes, beaches, rivers and forests.

The nightly cost of holiday-park camping is usually between \$12 and \$16 per adult, with children charged half-price; powered sites are a couple of dollars more. Cabin/unit accommodation normally ranges from \$50 to \$100 per double. Unless noted otherwise, the prices we've listed for campsites, campervan sites, huts and cabins are for two people.

If you'll gladly swap facilities for wilder, less-developed locations such as national parks, head for one of the 250-plus, vehicle-accessible camping grounds managed by the **Department of Conservation** (DOC; www.doc.govt.nz). DOC also looks after hundreds of backcountry huts, most of which can only be reached on foot. For more information, see *Tramping* (p79).

Farmstays

Farmstays open the door on the agricultural side of NZ life, with visitors encouraged to get some dirt beneath their fingernails at orchards and dairy, sheep and cattle farms. Costs can vary widely, with B&B generally ranging from \$80 to \$120. Some farms have

separate cottages where you can fix your own food, while others offer low-cost, shared, backpacker-style accommodation.

Farm Helpers in NZ (FHINZ; www.fhinz.co.nz) produces a booklet (\$25) that lists around 190 farms throughout NZ providing lodging in exchange for four to six hours work per day. **Rural Holidays NZ** (☎ 03-355 6218; www.ruralholidays.co.nz) lists farmstays and homestays throughout the country on its website.

Hostels

NZ is packed to the rafters with backpacker hostels, ranging from small, homestay-style affairs with a handful of beds to refurbished hotels with scuffed façades and the towering modern structures you'll find in the big cities. Hostel bed prices listed throughout this book are the non-membership rates.

HOSTEL ORGANISATIONS

NZ's biggest hostel group is **Budget Backpacker Hostels** (BBH; ☎ 03-379 3014; www.bbh.co.nz), which has around 370 hostels on its books, including homestays and farmstays. Membership costs \$45, including a \$20 phonecard, and entitles you to stay at member hostels at a cost no greater than the rates advertised in the annual (free) *BBH Backpacker Accommodation* booklet. Non-members pay an extra \$2 to \$4 per night, though not all hostel owners charge the difference. Pick up a membership card from any member hostel, or have one sent overseas for \$50 (including postage; see the website for

details). BBH rates each hostel according to traveller feedback, using a percentage figure that supposedly tells you how good (or at least how popular) each hostel is.

NZ's **Youth Hostels Association** (YHA; ☎ 0800 278 299, 03-379 9970; www.yha.co.nz) has been around for 75 years and has hostels in 51 prime NZ locations. The YHA is part of the **Hostelling International** (HI; www.hihostels.com) network, also known as International Youth Hostel Federation (IYHF). If you're already an HI member in your own country, your membership entitles you to use NZ hostels. If you don't already have a membership card from home, you can buy one at major NZ YHA hostels for \$40 for 12 months, including a \$14 phonecard. Nightly charges are usually between \$20 and \$40 per person for members. Hostels also take non-YHA members at a cost of an extra \$3 per night.

YHA hostels provide reliable, basic accommodation for individuals, families and groups in dorms (bunk rooms, usually with four to six beds) and most also have a supply of single, twin and double rooms, sometimes with bathrooms. They have 24-hour access, cooking facilities, a communal area with a TV, laundry facilities and, in larger hostels, travel offices. There's often a maximum-stay period (usually five to seven days). NZ YHA hostels supply all bed linen so you don't need to bring a sleeping bag. The annual *YHA New Zealand Hostel & Discount Guide* booklet details all Kiwi hostels and member discounts (transport, activities

WWOOFING

If you don't mind getting your hands dirty, an economical way of travelling around NZ involves doing some voluntary work as a member of **Willing Workers on Organic Farms** (WWOOF; ☎ 03-544 9890; www.woof.co.nz; PO Box 1172, Nelson 7040). Membership of this popular, well-established international organisation (which has representatives in Africa, Asia, North America, Europe and Australia) scores you a book listing many hundreds of organic and permaculture farms, market gardens and other environmentally sound cottage industries across the country. Down on the farm, in exchange for a hard day's work, owners provide food, accommodation and some hands-on organic farming experience. Contact farm owners a week or two beforehand to arrange your stay, as you would for a hotel or hostel – don't turn up unannounced!

A two-year membership costs \$40 if you join within NZ (for one person, or two people travelling together); to have your book sent overseas costs \$45. You should be part of a Working Holiday Scheme (p706) when you visit NZ, as the immigration department considers wwoofers to be working.

One word of caution: it seems that some hostels have started employing travellers under the name of wwoofing, without requiring membership or providing any of the benefits (not to mention the lack of an organic farm). It's a vague kind of exploitation, and probably harmless, but it's a definite misnomer.

etc). Stuff their *Backpacker Map* in your pocket for on-the-road reference.

VIP Backpackers (www.vip.co.nz) represents around 70 NZ hostels, mainly in the cities and major tourist spots. VIP is an international organisation with a large network of hostels in nearby Fiji, Australia, southern Africa, Europe and America. For around \$38 you'll receive a 12-month membership entitling you to a \$1 discount on accommodation. You can join online (www.vipbackpackers.com), at VIP hostels or at larger agencies dealing in backpacker travel.

Nomads Backpackers (www.nomadsworld.com) has only a handful of franchisees throughout NZ in Auckland, Wellington and Rotorua. Membership costs A\$39 for 12 months and like VIP offers NZ\$1 off the cost of nightly accommodation. You can join at participating hostels, backpacker travel agencies or online.

Base Backpackers (www.basebackpackers.com) are a newish chain with eight hostels around NZ. Expect clean dorms, girls-only areas and party opportunities aplenty.

INDEPENDENT HOSTELS

NZ is an incubator for independent hostels, hatching them across both islands at an impressive rate. Owners try hard to differentiate their properties from their clubby competitors: some promote low-key ambience, lazy gardens, personable management and avoidance of noisy bus groups of backpackers while others bury you in extras such as free breakfasts, free DVDs, spa pools, use of bikes and kayaks, shuttle buses, theme nights and tour bookings. This is usually a successful formula, but with individuality comes risk: if possible, check out your accommodation before handing over the cash to ensure the atmosphere and facilities correspond with your expectations. If travelling with your family, note that a number of hostels designate themselves 'unsuitable for children'.

Independent backpacker establishments typically charge \$20 to \$28 for a dorm bed, \$38 to \$50 for a single and \$50 to \$70 for a twin or double room (usually with shared bathroom facilities). Some also have space for a few tents.

If you're a Kiwi travelling in your own country, be warned that some hostels only admit overseas travellers, typically inner-city places. If you encounter such discrimination, either

try another hostel or insist that you're a genuine traveller and not a bedless neighbour.

Hotels & Motels

The least expensive form of NZ hotel accommodation is the humble pub. As is often the case elsewhere, some of NZ's old pubs are full of character and local characters, while others are grotty, ramshackle places that are best avoided, especially by women travelling solo. If you're renting a room above a pub towards the end of the week, check whether there's a band cranking out the tunes that night – you could be in for some sleeplessness. In the cheapest pubs, singles/doubles might cost as little as \$30/50 (with a shared bathroom down the hall), though \$40/60 is more common.

At the other end of the hotel scale are five-star international chains, resort complexes and architecturally-splendorous boutique hotels, all of which charge a hefty premium for their mod cons, snappy service and/or historic opulence. We quote 'rack rates' (official advertised rates) for such places throughout this book, but discounts and special deals often mean you won't have to pay these.

NZ's towns have a glut of nondescript, low-rise motels and 'motor lodges', charging between \$80 and \$160 for double rooms. These tend to be squat structures congregating just outside CBDs, or skulking by highways on the edge of towns. Most are modernish (though décor is often mired in the '80s) and have similar facilities (tea- and coffee-making, fridge, TV) – prices vary with standard. Some Kiwis refer to the actual room as a 'motel', rather than the collective complex of rooms – so you might hear, 'Sorry, our motels are full tonight', as opposed to, 'Sorry, our motel is full tonight'.

Rental Accommodation

The basic Kiwi holiday home is called a 'bach' (short for 'bachelor' as they were often used by single men as hunting and fishing hide-outs); in Otago and Southland they're known as 'cribs'. These are simple self-contained cottages that can be rented in rural and coastal areas, often in isolated locations. They can be handy for longer stays in a region, although some are only available for one or two nights at a time. Prices are typically \$80 to \$130 per night, which isn't bad for a whole house or self-contained bungalow.

For more upmarket holiday houses, the current trend is to throw rusticity to the wind and erect luxurious cottages on beautiful nature-surrounded plots. Expect to pay anything from \$120 to \$400 a double.

A good website to help you find baches and holiday houses is www.holidayhomes.co.nz; for swanky self-contained apartments try www.newzealand-apartments.co.nz. If it's a longer stay you're thinking about, check out www.nzflats.co.nz.

ACTIVITIES

See the Active New Zealand chapter (p79) for more info on NZ's outdoor activity smorgasbord.

Aerial Sightseeing

Small planes and helicopters circle the skies on sightseeing trips (called 'flightseeing' by the locals) all over NZ, operating from local aerodromes. It's a great (but not particularly environmentally friendly) way to absorb the country's contrasting landscapes, soaring mountains and seldom viewed terrain deep within national parks. Some of the most photo-worthy trips take place over the Bay of Islands (p155), the Bay of Plenty (especially Whakaari Island; p341), Tongariro National Park (p306), Mt Taranaki (p245), Mt Cook (p571), the West Coast glaciers (p510) and Fiordland (from Te Anau; p646).

A far more sedate approach is to jump in a hot-air balloon. A float above Methven (p558) grants you spectacular views of the Southern Alps and contrasting Canterbury Plains, and there are also balloon trips from Queenstown, Auckland, Hamilton, Hastings and Masterton.

Fishing

Thanks to the introduction of trout, salmon, perch and char (amongst other species), NZ has become one of the world's great recreational fisheries. The central North Island's lakes and rivers are famous for trout fishing, especially around Lake Taupo – the town of Turangi is trout central. South Island rivers and lakes also fare well on the trout index, most notably the Mataura River (Southland) and Lake Brunner and the Arnold River (the West Coast). The rivers of Otago and Southland also have some of the best salmon fishing in the world.

In the warm North Island seas, surfcasting and boat fishing can land grey mullet, trevally, mao mao, porae, John Dory, snapper, gurnard, flounder, mackerel, hapuku (groper), tarakihi, moki and kahawai. Ninety Mile Beach (Northland) and the Hauraki Gulf beaches are good for surfcasting. The Bay of Islands, Whangaroa, Tutukaka near Whangarei (all in Northland), Whitianga in the Coromandel and Tuhua (Mayor Island) in the Bay of Plenty are big-time big-game fishing areas.

The South Island's colder waters, especially around the Marlborough Sound, are great for snapper, hake, hapuku, trumpeter, butterfish, ling, barracouta and blue cod. Kaikoura Peninsula offers good surfcasting. Catch and cook your own blue cod off Stewart Island; Kurow, in the Waitaki Valley, North Otago, is good for salmon and trout.

Hire fishing gear in towns like Taupo and Rotorua and at sports stores in larger towns. If you bring your own rods and tackle may have to be treated by NZ quarantine officials, especially if they're made with natural materials such as cane or feathers.

A fishing permit is required to fish in inland waters. Sold at sport shops, permits cover particular regions and are valid for a day, month or season. Consult visitor information centres or one of the DOC offices (p705) for details. Other fishy business is covered at www.fishing.net.nz, a huge website covering recreational fishing in NZ. If you're interested in guided fishing trips, see the **New Zealand Professional Fishing Guides Association** (www.nzpfga.com) website.

Golf

NZ has more golf courses per capita than any other country, and among over 400 courses there are some magnificently situated fairways and greens. In its 2007 rankings of the world's top 100 courses, *Golf Magazine* gave gongs to two NZ courses: Cape Kidnappers in Hawkes Bay (ranked 41st) and Kauri Cliffs in the Bay of Islands (ranked 63rd). Paraparaumu, near Wellington, has made it into such rankings in the past and is regarded as one of the country's best courses.

Other popular courses include Wairakei near Taupo; Clearwater, outside Christchurch; Terrace Downs, in the high country near Methven; and Millbrook, near Queenstown. The Hills course in Arrowtown proclaims itself 'Home to the NZ Golf Open'. The only

catch is that you can't play there – the millionaire owner is the only member!

The average green fee for an 18-hole course usually ranges from \$30 to \$50, though private resorts can charge a substantial amount more – at Cape Kidnappers you'll pay a hefty \$300 to \$400 for the privilege; Paraparaumu's green fees are a more manageable \$90.

For more information check out www.nzgol.f.org.nz.

Sailing

Surrounded by sea, NZ has a habit of producing some of the world's best mariners. There's also a good reason why Auckland is called the 'City of Sails'. If you're keen on yacht racing, try visiting the country's various sailing clubs and ask if you can help crew in local competitions. Otherwise, there are plenty of sailing operators who allow you to just laze around on deck or play a more hands-on role.

The Bay of Islands (and Whangaroa to the north), the southern lakes (Te Anau and Wakatipu) and the cities of Auckland and Nelson are good places to get some wind in your sails.

Go to www.yachtingnz.org.nz for more details.

BUSINESS HOURS

Most shops and businesses open their doors at 9am and close at 5.30pm Monday to Friday, and either 12.30pm or 5pm on Saturday. Late-night shopping (until 9pm) happens in the larger cities on Thursday and/or Friday nights; Sunday trading is the norm in most big towns and cities. Supermarkets are usually open from 8am until at least 7pm, often until 9pm or later in cities. Dairies (corner stores) and superettes (small supermarkets) close later than most shops.

Banks normally open from 9.30am to 4.30pm Monday to Friday (some city branches also open on Saturday mornings). Post offices are open 8.30am to 5pm Monday to Friday, with main branches also open 9.30am to 1pm Saturday; postal desks in newsagencies (Take Note, Paper Plus) often open later.

Restaurants typically take orders until at least 9pm but often serve food until 11pm or later on Friday and Saturday nights; the main restaurant strips in large cities keep longer hours throughout the week. Cafés sometimes open as early as 7am and close around 5pm, though café-bar hybrids push the envelope

well into the night. Pubs usually serve food from noon to 2pm and from 6pm to 8pm. Pubs and bars generally start pouring drinks at noon and stay open until late, particularly from Thursday to Saturday.

Don't count on many attractions being open on Christmas Day or Good Friday.

CHILDREN

For helpful general tips, see Lonely Planet's *Travel with Children*. All cities and most major towns have centrally located public rooms where mothers (and sometimes fathers) can go to nurse a baby or change a nappy (diaper); check with the local visitor information centre or city council, or ask a local – Kiwis are a friendly bunch!

Practicalities

Many motels and holiday parks have playgrounds, games and video equipment, and occasionally fenced swimming pools and trampolines. Cots, highchairs and baby baths aren't always easy to find at budget and mid-range accommodation, but top-end hotels are usually able to supply them and the plushest places have child-minding services. B&Bs are not usually amenable to families – many of these businesses promote themselves as grown-up getaways where peace and quiet are valued above all else. Hostels focussing on the young backpacker demographic don't welcome kids either, but there are plenty of other hostels (including YHA hostels) that do.

There are plenty of so-called family restaurants in NZ, where toddlers' highchairs are provided and kids can choose from their own menu. Pubs often serve kids' meals and most cafés and restaurants (with the exception of upmarket eateries) can handle the idea of child-sized portions.

For specialised childcare, look under 'babysitters' and 'child care centres' in the *Yellow Pages* directory or contact the local council.

Child concessions (and family rates) are often available for accommodation, tours, attraction entry fees and air, bus and train transport, with discounts as much as 50% off the adult rate. Do note, however, that the definition of 'child' can vary from under 12 to under 18 years; toddlers (under four years old) usually get free admission and transport.

NZ's medical services and facilities are world-class, with goods like formula and

disposable nappies widely available in urban centres. Many hire-car companies struggle with the concept of baby seats – double-check that the company you choose can supply the right size of seat for your child, and that the seat will be properly fitted.

Sights & Activities

Some regions produce free information booklets geared towards kids' sights and activities; one example is *Kidz Go!* (www.kidzgo.co.nz), which details child-friendly activities and restaurants in most South Island and a few North Island centres. Ask at local visitor information centres. Another handy site for families is www.kidspot.co.nz, covering Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, Dunedin, Queenstown and Nelson in detail. The folks behind this website produce the *Kids New Zealand Directory*, available online or from newsagents for \$7.50. Finally, www.kidsfriendlynz.com has extensive links to various facets of kiddy-culture.

CLIMATE CHARTS

NZ sits smack-bang in the Roaring Forties, which means it gets 'freshened' (some say blasted) by cool, damp winds blowing in from the Tasman Sea and is consistently slapped by the winds howling through Cook Strait.

On the South Island, the Southern Alps act as a barrier for these moisture-laden easterlies, creating a wet climate on the western side of the mountains (around 7500mm of rain annually!), and a dry climate on the eastern side (about 330mm). After dumping their moisture, the winds continue east, gathering heat and speed as they blow downhill and cross the Canterbury Plains; in summer this katabatic or föhn wind can be hot and fierce.

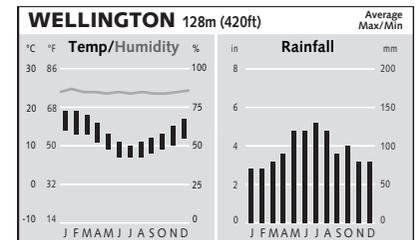
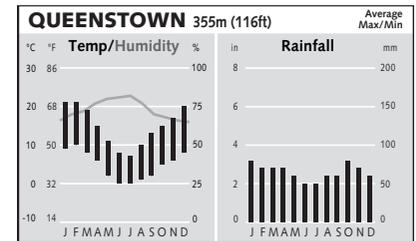
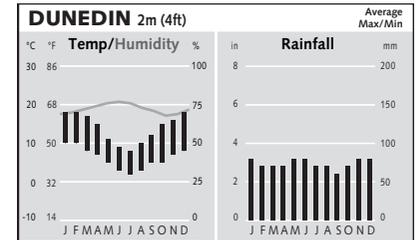
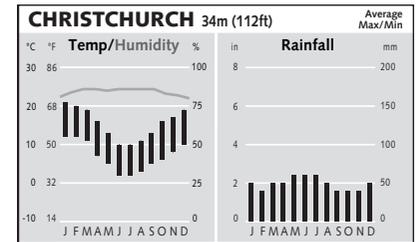
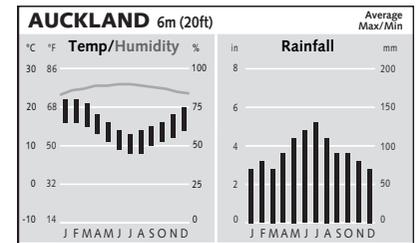
On the North Island, the western sides of the high volcanoes attract a lot more rain than eastern slopes, but the rain shadow isn't as pronounced as in the south – the barrier here isn't as formidable as the Alps. North Island rainfall averages around 1300mm annually.

See p19 for further seasonal instruction.

CUSTOMS

For the low-down what you can and can't bring into NZ, see the **New Zealand Customs Service** (www.customs.govt.nz) website.

When entering NZ you can bring most articles in free of duty provided customs is satisfied they're for personal use and that you'll be



taking them with you when you leave. There's a per person duty-free allowance of 1125mL of spirits or liqueur, 4.5L of wine or beer, 200 cigarettes (or 50 cigars or 250g of tobacco) and dutiable goods up to the value of \$700.

Customs officers are obviously fussy about drugs, so declare all medicines. Bio-security is another customs buzzword – authorities are serious about keeping out any diseases that may harm NZ's agricultural industry. Tramping gear such as boots and tents will be checked and may need to be cleaned before being allowed in; ditto golf clubs and bicycles. You must declare any plant or animal products (including anything made of wood), and food of any kind. You'll also come under greater scrutiny if you've arrived via Africa, southeast Asia or South America. Weapons and firearms are either prohibited or require a permit and safety testing.

DANGERS & ANNOYANCES

Though often reported in loud and salacious detail by headline-hungry broadsheets, violent crime is not common in NZ. Auckland is considered the 'crime capital' of the country, but it's very safe by most international city standards.

Theft, primarily from cars, is a *major* problem around NZ, and travellers are viewed as easy marks. Avoid leaving valuables in vehicles, no matter where it's parked; the worst places to tempt fate are tourist parking areas and the car parks at trailheads. If the crown jewels simply must be left behind, pack them out of sight in the boot (trunk) of the car – but carry your passport with you, just in case.

Don't underestimate the dangers posed by NZ's unpredictable, ever-changing climate, especially in high-altitude areas; see p79 for information.

NZ has thankfully been spared from the proliferation of venomous creatures found in neighbouring Australia (spiders, snakes, jellyfish etc). Sharks hang out in NZ waters, but are well fed by the abundant marine life and rarely nibble on humans; that said, attacks on humans do occasionally occur. Much greater hazards in the ocean, however, are the rips and undertows that plague some beaches and can quickly drag swimmers out to sea. Take notice of local warnings when swimming, surfing or diving.

The islands' roads are often made hazardous by speeding locals, wide-cornering camper-vans and traffic-ignorant sheep. Set yourself a reasonable itinerary instead of careening around the country at top speed and keep your eyes on the road no matter how photogenic the scenery may be.

In the annoyances category, NZ's sandflies are a royal p.i.t.a. (see the boxed text, below). Lather yourself with insect repellent in coastal areas.

DISCOUNT CARDS

The **International Student Travel Confederation** (ISTC; www.istc.org) is an international collective of specialist student travel organisations and the body behind the internationally recognised International Student Identity Card (ISIC). The card is issued to full-time students aged 12 years and over and provides red-hot discounts on accommodation, transport and admission to attractions. The ISTC also produces the International Youth Travel Card (IYTC), available to folks between 12 and 26 who are not full-time students, and gives equivalent benefits to the ISIC. A similar ISTC brainchild is the International Teacher Identity Card (ITIC), available to teaching professionals. All three cards are available

from student travel companies like **STA Travel** (www.statravel.co.nz) and cost NZ\$20 each.

Senior and disabled travellers who live overseas will find that the cards issued by their respective countries are not always 'officially' recognised in NZ but that many places still acknowledge such cards and grant concessions where applicable.

EMBASSIES & CONSULATES

Most principal diplomatic representations to NZ are in Wellington, with a few in Auckland. Embassies, consulates and high commissions include:

Australia (Map pp402-3; ☎ 04-473 6411; www.australia.org.nz; 72-76 Hobson St, Thorndon, Wellington)

Canada (Map pp402-3; ☎ 04-473 9577; www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/newzealand; L11, 125 The Terrace, Wellington)

Fiji (Map pp402-3; ☎ 04-473 5401; www.fiji.org.nz; 31 Pipitea St, Thorndon, Wellington)

France (Map p406; ☎ 04-384 2555; www.ambafrance-nz.org; 12th fl, 34-42 Manners St, Wellington)

Germany (Map pp402-3; ☎ 04-473 6063; www.wellington.diplo.de; 90-92 Hobson St, Thorndon, Wellington)

Ireland (Map pp104-5; ☎ 09-977 2252; www.ireland.co.nz; L7, Citigroup Bldg, 23 Customs St E, Auckland)

Japan (Map p406; ☎ 04-473 1540; www.nz.emb-japan.go.jp; L18 & L19, The Majestic Centre, 100 Willis St, Wellington)

Netherlands (Map pp402-3; ☎ 04-471 6390; www.netherlandsembassy.co.nz; L10, Investment House, cnr Featherston & Ballance Sts, Wellington)

UK (Map pp402-3; ☎ 04-924 2888; www.britain.org.nz; 44 Hill St, Thorndon, Wellington)

USA (Map pp402-3; ☎ 04-462 6000; <http://wellington.usembassy.gov>; 29 Fitzherbert Tce, Thorndon, Wellington)

It's important to know what your national embassy can and can't do to help you if you get into trouble. Generally speaking, embassies won't be much help in emergencies if the fix you're in is self-induced. While in NZ you're bound by NZ laws – your embassy will not be sympathetic if you end up in jail after committing a crime locally, even if such actions are legal in your own country.

In genuine emergencies you might get some assistance but only if other channels have been exhausted. For example, if you need to get home urgently, a free ticket is exceedingly unlikely – the embassy would expect you to have insurance. If you have all your money and documents stolen, your embassy may assist with getting a new passport, but a loan for onward travel is out of the question.

FESTIVALS & EVENTS

Want to plan your travels around the various food and wine, sporting or arts festivals staged throughout the country? Check out the **Tourism New Zealand** (www.newzealand.com/travel) website – click on Sights & Activities, then Events Calendar. See also www.nzlive.com and www.eventfinder.co.nz.

Details of NZ festivals and events are provided throughout destination chapters in this book. A handful of highlights:

Arts & Cultural Festivals

New Zealand International Arts Festival (www.nz-festival.nzpost.co.nz) Month-long biennial spectacular held in February/March every even-numbered year in Wellington. Theatre, dance, music and visual arts; international acts aplenty.

New Zealand International Comedy Festival (www.comedyfestival.co.nz) Three-week laugh-fest in May with venues across Auckland, Wellington and various regional centres.

Matariki (Maori New Year; www.taitokerau.co.nz/matariki.htm) Remembrance, education and tree planting; in June mainly around Auckland and Northland.

New Zealand International Film Festivals (www.enzedff.co.nz) After separate film festivals in Wellington, Auckland, Dunedin and Christchurch, a selection of flicks hits the road for screenings in regional towns from July to October.

World of Wearable Art Award Show (WOW; www.worldofwearableart.com) Bizarre (in the best possible way) two-week Wellington event in September featuring amazing garments.

Food & Wine Festivals

Harvest Hawkes Bay (www.harvesthawkesbay.co.nz) Indulgent wine and food celebration in February, with participating wineries around Napier and Hastings.

Marlborough Wine Festival (www.wine-marlborough-festival.co.nz) Features wine from over 50 Marlborough wineries, fine food and entertainment. Over-indulgence aplenty. Held in February.

Wildfoods Festival (www.wildfoods.co.nz) Eat some worms, hare testicles or crabs at Hokitika's comfort-zone-challenging food fest in March.

Auckland Wine & Food Festival (www.aucklandwineandfoodfestival.com) Auckland swills itself silly with the best of Kiwi food and drink in April.

Toast Martinborough (www.toastmartinborough.co.nz) Wine-willing Wellingtonians head to Martinborough for a day of indulgence in November.

Music Festivals

Rhythm & Vines (www.rhythmandvines.co.nz) Wine, music and song (all the good things) in sunny Gisborne on

SANDFLIES *Sir Ian McKellen*

As an unpaid but enthusiastic proselytiser on behalf of all things Kiwi, including the New Zealand tourist industry, I hesitate to mention the well-kept secret of sandflies. I first met them en masse at the glorious Milford Sound, where visitors (after the most beautiful drive in the world) are met, at least during the summer, by crowds of the little buggers. There are patent unctions that cope, and tobacco repels them too, but I would hope that travellers find them an insignificant pest compared with the glory of their habitat.

Oddly, when actually filming scenes for *Lord of the Rings*, I don't recall being bothered by sandflies at all. Honestly. Had there been, we would have set the Orcs on them.

Sir Ian McKellen is a UK-based actor who spent several years in NZ filming and has become something of an unofficial ambassador for NZ tourism.

New Year's Eve. Top DJs, hip-hop acts, bands and singer-songwriters.

Big Day Out (www.bigdayout.com) Much moshing at this international rock extravaganza in Auckland in January.

Splore (www.splore.net) Cutting-edge outdoor summer festival in February at Tapapakanga Regional Park. Contemporary live music, performance, visual arts and safe swimming!

WOMAD (World of Music Arts & Dance; www.womad.co.nz) Local and international arts performances at the Brooklands Bowl in New Plymouth in March.

National Jazz Festival (www.jazz.org.nz) Every Easter Tauranga hosts the longest-running jazz fest in the southern hemisphere.

Sporting Events

New Zealand International Sevens (NZI Sevens; www.sevens.co.nz) The world's top seven-a-side rugby teams crack heads in Wellington in February.

Auckland International Boat Show (www.aucklandinternationalboatshow.com) Auckland harbour blooms with sails and churns with outboard motors in March.

Goldrush Multisport Event (www.goldrush.co.nz) 375km of kayaking, cycling and running along old gold mining trails in Central Otago during March.

Wooden Cup St Bathans vs Becks (Otago towns with single-digit populations) in a September rugby rumble. Accommodation is booked out for miles!

New Zealand Cup & Show Week (www.nzcupandshow.co.nz) Have a flutter on the nags or inspect some prize bulls in Christchurch in November.

FOOD

The NZ foodie scene was once governed by strict adherence to the *Edmond's Cookery Book*, a slavish reflection of Anglo-Saxon stodge. But nowadays the country's stylish restaurants and hip cafés are adept at throwing together trad staples such as lamb, beef, venison, green-lipped mussels and other island-harvested meats, with a dash of Asian, European and pan-Pacific culinary innovation. The end result is often referred to as Pacific Rim, a term as broad in its definition as Mediterranean or Asian.

Eateries themselves are represented by everything from fry-'em-up fish-and-chip shops and pub bistros; to cafés drowned in faux-European, grungy or retro stylings; restaurant-bars with full à la carte service and late-night drinks; and fine-dining establishments where the linen is so crisp you're afraid to prop your elbows on it. The website www.dineout.co.nz is worth a look for diners' feedback on NZ restaurants. Perusing the menus on www.menus.co.nz will get your mouth

watering in time for your visit to Auckland or Wellington.

Vegetarian food – particularly in cities and towns with a resident foodie bourgeoisie – have become quite creative, a world apart from the salad or roasted vegetable mains that used to be the norm. Urban centres and tourist towns usually have at least one (often several) dedicated vegetarian cafés or restaurants, a number of them catering to vegans and those with other dietary requirements, such as coeliac-sufferers. The **New Zealand Vegetarian Society** (www.vegsoc.org.nz) website has a restaurant guide covering veg and veg-friendly options around the country.

On the contemporary coffee front, you'll be hard-pressed to find a NZ town of any size where you can't find a decent espresso. NZ microbrewed beers have also become mainstream – expect even the most redneck of pubs in the middle of nowhere to have some decent drops on tap.

Eating recommendations in this book are in budget order, from cheapest to most expensive, with city listings ordered by type, from restaurants to cafés to quick eats. Cafés are often the best value, with bang-up meals in casual surrounds for under \$20. Some city pubs label themselves 'gastropubs', offering classy restaurant-style fare, but most pubs serve standard bistro meals, usually under \$20. Midrange restaurants can charge as much as \$30 for a main meal, but don't be surprised to see mains priced from \$35 to \$45 at trendy top-end restaurants.

Smoking is banned in all restaurants, pubs and bars but many establishments have set up outdoor areas (often heated) for puffers. Tipping in restaurants and cafés is not expected.

For more info, see the Food & Drink chapter (p62).

GAY & LESBIAN TRAVELLERS

The G&L tourism industry in NZ isn't as high-profile as in neighbouring Australia but homosexual communities are prominent in the main cities of Auckland and Wellington, with myriad support organisations across both islands. NZ has relatively progressive laws protecting the rights of gays and lesbians; the legal minimum age for sex between consenting persons is 16. Generally speaking Kiwis are fairly relaxed and accepting about homosexuality, but that's not to say that homophobia doesn't exist.

There are loads of websites dedicated to gay and lesbian travellers. **Gay Tourism New Zealand** (www.gaytourismnewzealand.com) is a good starting point, with links to various sites. Other worthwhile queer websites include www.gaynz.com, www.gaynz.net.nz and www.lesbian.net.nz. For accommodation listings see www.gaystay.co.nz. Queenstown visitors should check out www.gayqueenstown.com.

Check out nationwide magazines like **express** (www.gayexpress.co.nz; \$3) every second Wednesday and **Out!** (www.out.co.nz; \$6) published every two months for the latest happenings, reviews and listings on the NZ gay scene.

The biggest excuse for a party is the huge **HERO Festival** (www.hero.org.nz), held every February in Auckland. **Out Takes** (www.outtakes.org.nz) is a G&L film festival staged in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch in June, while Queenstown stages the annual **Gay Ski Week** (www.gayskiweeknz.com) in August/September.

For more info, see Gay & Lesbian Auckland (p128), Gay & Lesbian Hamilton (p222) and Gay & Lesbian Wellington (p418).

HOLIDAYS

Public Holidays

NZ's main public holidays:

New Year	1 & 2 January
Waitangi Day	6 February
Easter	Good Friday & Easter Monday; March/April
Anzac Day	25 April
Queen's Birthday	1st Monday in June
Labour Day	4th Monday in October
Christmas Day	25 December
Boxing Day	26 December

In addition, each NZ province has its own anniversary-day holiday. The dates of these provincial holidays vary – when these holidays fall between Friday and Sunday, they're usually observed the following Monday; if they fall between Tuesday and Thursday, they're held on the preceding Monday – the great Kiwi tradition of the 'long weekend' continues.

Provincial anniversary holidays include:

Southland	17 January
Wellington	22 January
Auckland	29 January
Northland	29 January
Nelson	1 February
Otago	23 March
Taranaki	31 March
South Canterbury	25 September

Hawkes Bay	1 November
Marlborough	1 November
Chatham Islands	30 November
Westland	1 December
Canterbury	16 December

School Holidays

The Christmas holiday season, from mid-December to late January, is part of the summer school vacation. It's the time you'll most likely find transport and accommodation booked out, and long, grumpy queues at tourist attractions. There are three shorter school-holiday periods during the year: from mid- to late April, early to mid-July, and mid-September to early October. For exact dates see the **Ministry of Education** (www.minedu.govt.nz) website.

INSURANCE

A watertight travel insurance policy covering theft, loss and medical problems is essential; nothing will ruin your holiday more quickly than an accident or having your duty-free digital camera pilfered. Most policies offer lower and higher medical-expense options; the higher ones are chiefly for countries that have high medical costs, like the USA. There are plenty of policies to choose from – compare the fine print and shop around.

Some policies specifically exclude designated 'dangerous activities' such as scuba diving, parasailing, bungee jumping, white-water rafting, motorcycling, skiing and even bushwalking. If you plan on doing any of these things (a distinct possibility in NZ), make sure the policy you choose covers you fully.

You may prefer a policy that pays doctors or hospitals directly rather than you having to pay on the spot and claim later. If you have to claim later make sure you keep all documentation. Some policies ask you to call back (reverse charges) to a centre in your home country where an immediate assessment of your problem is made. Check that the policy covers ambulances and emergency medical evacuations by air.

It's worth mentioning that under NZ law, you cannot sue for personal injury (other than exemplary damages). Instead, the country's **Accident Compensation Corporation** (ACC; www.acc.co.nz) administers an accident compensation scheme that provides accident insurance for NZ residents and visitors to the country, regardless of fault.

While some people cry foul of this arrangement, others point to the hugely expensive litigation 'industries' in other countries and raise a cheer. However this scheme does not cancel out the necessity for your own comprehensive travel insurance policy, as it doesn't cover you for such things as loss of income or treatment in your home country or ongoing illness.

See also p722 for notes on medical insurance. For car insurance information see p718.

Worldwide cover for travellers from over 44 countries is available online at www.lonelyplanet.com/bookings/insurance.do.

INTERNET ACCESS

Getting online in NZ is easy in all but the most remote locales. If you don't already have one, it's worth setting up a travelling address with one of the many free email services (www.yahoo.com, www.hotmail.com, www.gmail.com etc).

For a list of useful NZ websites, see p21.

Internet Cafés

Internet cafés in the bigger urban centres or tourist areas are usually brimming with high-speed terminals. Obnoxious teens often swamp the machines in the after-school hours – time your visit anytime other than 4pm to 6pm! Facilities are a lot more haphazard in small, out-of-the-way towns, where a so-called internet café could turn out to be a single terminal in the corner of a video store.

Most hostels make an effort to hook you up, with internet access sometimes free for guests. Many public libraries have internet access too, but there can be a limited number of terminals and these are provided for research needs, not for travellers to check their email – head for an internet café first.

Internet access at cafés ranges anywhere from \$3 to \$8 per hour – the lowest rates can be found in cities where competition and traveller numbers generate dirt-cheap prices. There's often a minimum period of access, usually 10 or 15 minutes.

Wireless Access & Internet Service Providers

Increasingly, you'll be able to find wi-fi hotspots around the country, from hotel lobbies to pub beer gardens to hostel dining rooms. Usually you have to be a guest or customer to access the internet at these

locations – you'll be issued with a code, a wink and a secret handshake to enable you to get online. Sometimes it's free, sometimes there's a charge.

The country's main telecommunications company is **Telecom New Zealand** (www.telecom.co.nz), which has wireless hotspots around the country. If you have a wi-fi-enabled device, you can purchase a Telecom wireless prepaid card from participating hotspots. Alternatively, you can purchase a prepaid number from the login page and any wireless hotspot using your credit card. See the website for hotspot listings.

If you've brought your palmtop or notebook computer and want to get connected to a local internet service provider (ISP), there are plenty of options, though some limit their dial-up areas to major cities or particular regions. Major ISPs:

Clear.Net (☎ 0508 888 800; www.clear.net.nz)

Earthlight (☎ 03-479 0303; www.earthlight.co.nz) Has a page on its website detailing prepaid internet access for travellers to NZ.

Slingshot (☎ 0800 892 000; www.slingshot.co.nz)

Telecom Xtra (☎ 0800 003 040; www.xtra.co.nz/products)

If you're planning on plugging in, NZ uses British BT431A and RJ-11 telephone plugs, but neither are universal; local electronics shops should be able to help. You'll also need a plug adaptor – a universal AC adaptor will enable you to plug in without frying the innards of your machine. A lot of midrange accommodations and nearly all top-end hotels have wall sockets, but you'll be hit with expensive call charges. In most cheaper places you'll probably find that phones are hardwired into the wall.

Keep in mind that your PC-card modem may not work in NZ. The safest option is to buy a reputable 'global' modem before you leave home or buy a local PC-card modem once you get to NZ.

LEGAL MATTERS

Marijuana (aka 'New Zealand Green', 'electric puha' or 'dac') is widely indulged in but illegal, and anyone caught carrying this or other illicit drugs will have the book thrown at them. Even if the amount of drugs is small and the fine minimal, a conviction will still be recorded against you which may affect your visa status.

Always carry your licence when driving; for more info, see p716. Drink-driving is a serious offence and remains a significant problem in NZ despite widespread campaigns and severe penalties. The legal blood alcohol limit is 0.08% for drivers over 20, and 0.03% for those under 20.

If you are arrested it's your right to consult a lawyer before any formal questioning begins.

MAPS

Top-notch maps are widely available throughout NZ – from detailed street maps and atlases to topographic masterpieces.

The AA (p689) produces excellent city, town, regional, island and highway maps, available from their local offices; members of affiliated overseas automobile associations can obtain free maps and discounts on presentation of a membership card. The AA also produces a detailed *New Zealand Road Atlas*. Other reliable countrywide atlases, available from visitor information centres and bookshops, are published by Hema, KiwiMaps and Wises.

Land Information New Zealand (www.linz.govt.nz) publishes several exhaustive map series, including street, country and holiday maps, national and forest park maps, and topographical trampers' maps. Scan the larger bookshops, or try the nearest DOC office or visitor information centre for topo maps.

Online, log onto **AA SmartMap** (www.aamaps.co.nz) or the **Yellow Maps** (maps.yellowpages.co.nz) to pinpoint exact addresses in NZ cities and towns.

MONEY

The NZ dollar has gained considerable ground against other currencies in recent years (particularly against the US dollar), making NZ less of a bargain destination than it once was. See the Quick Reference section on the inside front cover for a list of exchange rates.

ATMs & Eftpos

Branches of the country's major banks, including the Bank of New Zealand, ANZ, Westpac and ASB, have 24-hour ATMs that accept cards from other banks and provide access to overseas accounts. You won't find ATMs everywhere, but they're widespread across both islands.

Many NZ businesses use electronic funds transfer at point of sale (Eftpos), a convenient

service that allows you to use your bank card (credit or debit) to pay directly for services or purchases, and often withdraw cash as well. Eftpos is available practically everywhere, even in places where it's a long way between banks. Just like an ATM, you need to know your personal identification number (PIN) to use it.

Bank Accounts

We've heard mixed reports on how easy it is for nonresidents to open a bank account in NZ. Some sources say it's as simple as flashing a few pieces of ID, providing a temporary postal address (or your permanent address) and then waiting a few days while your request is processed. Other sources say that many banks won't allow visitors to open an account with them unless they're planning to stay in NZ for at least six months, or unless the application is accompanied by some proof of employment. Bank websites are also rather vague on the services offered to short-term visitors. If you think you'll need to open an account, do your homework before you arrive in the country and be prepared to shop around to get the best deal.

Credit & Debit Cards

Perhaps the safest place to keep your NZ travelling money is inside a plastic card! The most flexible option is to carry both a credit and a debit card.

Credit cards (Visa, MasterCard etc) are widely accepted for everything from a hostel bed to a bungy jump. Credit cards are pretty much essential if you want to hire a car. They can also be used for over-the-counter cash advances at banks and from ATMs, depending on the card, but be aware that such transactions incur immediate interest. Charge cards such as Diners Club and Amex are not as widely accepted.

Apart from losing them, the obvious danger with credit cards is maxing out your limit and going home to a steaming pile of debt. A safer option is a debit card with which you can draw money directly from your home bank account using ATMs, banks or Eftpos machines. Any card connected to the international banking network (Cirrus, Maestro, Visa Plus and Eurocard) should work, provided you know your PIN. Fees for using your card at a foreign bank or ATM vary depending on your home bank; ask before

you leave. Companies such as Travelex offer debit cards (Travelex calls them Cash Passport cards) with set withdrawal fees and a balance you can top-up from your personal bank account whilst on the road – nice one!

Currency

NZ's currency is the NZ dollar, comprising 100 cents. There are 10c, 20c, 50c, \$1 and \$2 coins, and \$5, \$10, \$20, \$50 and \$100 notes. Prices are often still marked in single cents and then rounded to the nearest 10c when you hand over your money.

Unless otherwise noted, all prices quoted in this book are in NZ dollars. For an idea of the costs associated with travelling around the country, see p20.

There are no notable restrictions on importing or exporting travellers cheques. Though not prohibited, cash amounts equal to or in excess of the equivalent of NZ\$10,000 (in any currency) must be declared on arrival or departure – you'll need to fill out a Border Cash Report.

Moneychangers

Changing foreign currency or travellers cheques is usually no problem at banks throughout NZ or at licensed moneychangers such as Travelex (formerly Thomas Cook) in the major cities. Moneychangers can be found in all major tourist areas, cities and airports, and conveniently tend to stay open beyond normal business hours during the week (often until 9pm).

Taxes & Refunds

The Goods and Services Tax (GST) is a flat 12.5% tax on all domestic goods and services. Prices in this book include GST, but look out for any small print announcing that the price is GST-exclusive. There's no GST refund available when you leave NZ.

Tipping

Tipping is completely optional in NZ, and staff do not depend on tips for income – the total at the bottom of a restaurant bill is all you need to pay (note that sometimes there's an additional service charge). That said, it's totally acceptable to reward good service and the tip you leave depends entirely on your satisfaction – between 5% and 10% of the bill is the norm.

Traveller's Cheques

The ubiquity of debit- and credit-card access in NZ can make travellers cheques seem rather old-hat. Nevertheless, Amex, Travelex and other international brands of travellers cheques are easily exchanged. You need to present your passport for identification when cashing them. Fees per transaction for changing foreign-currency traveller's cheques vary from bank to bank, while Amex or Travelex perform the task commission-free if you use their cheques. Private moneychangers found in the larger cities are sometimes commission free but shop around for the best rates.

POST

The services offered by **New Zealand Post** (www.nzpost.co.nz) are reliable and reasonably inexpensive. Within NZ standard post costs 50c for standard letters and postcards, and \$1 for larger letters.

International destinations are divided into two zones: Australia and the South Pacific, and the rest of the world. Standard rates (express services also available):

Item	Aust & South Pacific	Rest of World
Postcard	\$1.50	\$1.50
Letter	\$1.50	\$2
Large Letter	\$2.50	\$3
Ex Large Letter	\$3.50	\$5
Approx Delivery (work days)	3-10	6-10

International parcel zones are the same as for letters; pricing depends on weight and whether you send the parcel 'economy' (three to five weeks), 'air' (one to two weeks) or 'express' (within a matter of days). To send parcels by 'air' is roughly 20% more expensive; by 'express' at least 50% more. Check out the incredibly precise calculator on the website.

Sending & Receiving Mail

Many NZ post offices are called 'PostShops' these days, as most have been removed from their traditional old buildings and set up in modern shop-style premises, but we still stubbornly refer to them as post offices throughout this guidebook. For standard post office opening hours, see p694. Stamps can usually also be purchased at supermarkets and bookshops.

You can have mail addressed to you care of 'Poste Restante, Main PostShop' in whichever town you require. Mail is usually held

for 30 days and you need to provide some form of identification (such as a passport) to collect it.

SHOPPING

NZ isn't one of those countries where it's necessary to buy a T-shirt to help you remember your visit; the spectacular landscapes are mementoes in themselves, to be plucked later from the depths of memory or the innards of your camera. But there are numerous locally crafted items you can purchase for their own unique qualities.

Clothing

The main cities of Auckland (p129), Wellington (p419) and Christchurch (p543) boast fashion-conscious boutiques ablaze with the sartorial flair of young and well-established NZ designers. Check out www.fashionz.co.nz for up-to-date information on the hottest designers and labels and where to find them. Keep an eye out for labels such as Zambesi, Kate Sylvester, Karen Walker, Trelise Cooper, Nom.D and Little Brother.

In Auckland head to places like Newmarket, Ponsonby Rd and High St; Wellington offers retro mix-and-match boutiques on Cuba St and high fashion along Lambton Quay. In Christchurch, pick up new duds on Colombo, High or Cashel Sts, then parade yourself along self-important Oxford Tce. To see just how far New Zealanders are prepared to push the boundaries of fashionable creativity, visit the amazing WearableArt & Classic Cars Museum (p464) in Nelson, or attend the namesake festival in Wellington (p411).

From the backs of NZ sheep come sheepskin products such as footwear (including the much-loved ugg boot) and beautiful woollen jumpers (jerseys or sweaters) made from hand-spun, hand-dyed wool. Other knitted knick-knacks include hats, gloves and scarves. Look for garments made from a lovely soft yarn that's a combination of merino wool and possum fur.

Long woollen Swannndri jackets, shirts and pullovers are so ridiculously practical, they're practically the national garment in country areas. Most common are the red-and-black or blue-and-black plaid ones; pick up 'Swannies' in outdoor-gear shops.

Crafts

Fine NZ craft products can be purchased in most sizable towns. Few (if any) places in the

country are devoid of someone who's been inspired to hand-shape items for sale to passing visitors. In Christchurch the Arts Centre (p526) offers dozens of shops and galleries selling locally designed and crafted jewellery, ceramics, glassware and accessories. The Nelson region (p459) is another very crafty place, heavily populated by galleries and the occasional market. Ditto Devonport (p108), within striking distance of downtown Auckland and replete with galleries, and Arrowtown (p628), an artsy enclave near Queenstown.

Maori Arts

For some brilliant examples of Maori *whakairo rakau* (woodcarving), check out the efforts of artisans at Te Whakarewarewa cultural area (p326) in Rotorua, then browse the town's Maori craft shops; in some cases you may be able to buy directly from the artist. Carvers produce intricate forms like leaping dolphins, as well as highly detailed traditional Maori carvings. You'll pay a premium for high-quality work; avoid buying poor examples of the craft that lines the souvenir shops in Auckland.

Maori bone carvings are undergoing something of a renaissance around NZ. Maori artisans have always made bone carvings in the shape of humans and animals, but nowadays they cater to the tourist industry. Bone fish-hook pendants, carved in traditional Maori and modernised styles, are most common, worn on a leather string around the neck.

To confirm the authenticity of any Maori-made piece, see if it's accompanied by the trademark **toi iho** (www.toiho.com), a symbol created by a Maori arts board to identify the output of individual artists or groups of artists of Maori descent. There are also modified versions of the trademark, identifying items produced by groups of 'mainly Maori' artists and via 'co-productions' between Maori and non-Maori artists. Do note that not all Maori artists are registered with this scheme.

Paua

Abalone shell, called paua in NZ, is carved into some beautiful ornaments and jewellery and is often used as an inlay in Maori carvings. Lovers of kitsch and general tackiness will find that it's also incorporated into generic souvenirs, often in delightfully unattractive ways. Shells are used as ashtrays in places where paua is plentiful. Be aware that

it's illegal to take natural paua shells out of the country – only processed ornaments can be taken with you.

Pounamu

Maoris consider *pounamu* (greenstone, or jade or nephrite) to be a culturally invaluable raw material. It's found predominantly on the west coast of the South Island – Maoris called the island Te Wahi Pounamu (The Place of Greenstone) or Te Wai Pounamu (The Water of Greenstone).

You're unlikely to come across any *mere* (war clubs) in *pounamu* studios or souvenir shops, but you will find lots of stony green incarnations of Maori motifs. One of the most popular is the *hei tiki*, the name of which literally means 'hanging human form' – in Maori legend, Tiki was the first man created and *hei* is 'to hang'. They are tiny, stylised Maori figures, usually depicted with their tongue stuck out in warlike repose, worn on a leather string or chain around the neck. They've got great *mana* (power), but they also serve as fertility symbols. Other popular motifs are the *taniwha* (monster) and the *marakihau* (sea monster).

The best place to buy *pounamu* is Hokitika (p507), which is strewn with jade workshops and gift shops. Rotorua (p336) also has its fair share of *pounamu* crafts. To see impressive collections both ancient and modern, visit the Otago Museum (p581) in Dunedin, Te Papa museum (p405) in Wellington, Auckland Museum (p102), and Canterbury Museum (p531) in Christchurch.

Traditionally, *pounamu* is bought as a gift for another person, not for yourself. Ask a few questions to ensure you're buying from a local operator who crafts local stone, not an offshore company selling imported (usually Chinese or European) jade.

TELEPHONE

Telecom New Zealand (www.telecom.co.nz) is the country's key domestic player and also has a stake in the local mobile (cell) market. Another mobile network option is **Vodafone** (www.vodafone.co.nz).

Local & International Calls

INFORMATION & TOLL-FREE CALLS

Numbers starting with ☎ 0900 are usually recorded information services, charging upwards of \$1 per minute (more from

mobiles); these numbers cannot be dialled from payphones.

Toll-free numbers in NZ have the prefix ☎ 0800 or ☎ 0508 and can be called free of charge from anywhere in the country, though they may not be accessible from certain areas or from mobile phones. Telephone numbers beginning with ☎ 0508, ☎ 0800 or ☎ 0900 cannot be dialled from outside NZ.

INTERNATIONAL CALLS

Payphones allow international calls but the cost and international dialling code for calls will vary depending on which provider you're using. International calls from NZ are relatively inexpensive and subject to specials that reduce the rates even more, so it's worth shopping around – consult the *Yellow Pages* for a list of providers.

The toll-free Country Direct service connects callers in NZ with overseas operators to make reverse-charge (collect) or credit-card calls. Country Direct numbers and other details are listed in the front of telephone directories or are available from the NZ international operator. The access number varies, depending on the number of phone companies in the country you call, but is usually ☎ 000-9 (followed by the country code).

To make international calls from NZ you need to dial the international access code (☎ 00), the country code and the area code (without the initial 0). So for a London number you'd dial ☎ 00-44-20, then the number. Certain operators will have you dial a special code to access their service.

If dialling NZ from overseas, the country code is ☎ 64, followed by the appropriate area code minus the initial zero.

LOCAL CALLS

Local calls from private phones are free! Local calls from payphones cost 50c; both involve unlimited talk time. Calls to mobile phones attract higher rates and are timed.

LONG-DISTANCE CALLS & AREA CODES

NZ uses regional area codes for long-distance calls, which can be made from any payphone.

If you're making a local call (ie to someone else in the same town), you don't need to dial the area code. But if you're dialling within a region (even if it's to a nearby town) you do have to dial the area code, regardless of the

fact that the place you're calling has the same code as the place you're dialling from. All the numbers in this book are listed with their relevant area codes.

Mobile Phones

Local mobile phone numbers are preceded by the prefix ☎ 021, ☎ 025 or ☎ 027. Mobile phone coverage is good in cities and towns and most parts of the North Island but can be patchy away from urban centres on the South Island.

If you want to bring your own phone and use a prepaid service with a local SIM card, **Vodafone** (www.vodafone.co.nz) is a practical option. Any Vodafone shop (found in most major towns) will set you up with a SIM card and phone number (about \$35, including \$10 worth of calls); top-ups can be purchased at newsagencies, post offices and shops practically anywhere.

Alternatively, if you don't bring your own phone from home, you can rent one from **Vodafone Rental** (www.vodarent.co.nz) priced from \$6/25 per day/week, with pick-up and drop-off outlets at NZ's major airports. You can also rent a SIM card for \$2.50 per day (minimum charge \$10) or \$40 per month. You can arrange this in advance via the website.

Phoncards

NZ has a wide range of phoncards available, which can be bought at hostels, newsagencies and post offices for a fixed dollar value (usually \$5, \$10, \$20 and \$50). These can be used with any public or private phone by dialling a toll-free access number and then the PIN number on the card. It's worth shopping around – call rates vary from company to company.

TIME

Being close to the international date line, NZ is one of the first places in the world to start the new day (Pitt Island in the Chatham Islands sees the first sunrise each new year). NZ is 12 hours ahead of GMT/UTC and two hours ahead of Australian Eastern Standard Time.

In summer NZ observes daylight-saving time, where clocks are wound forward by one hour on the last Sunday in September; clocks are wound back on the first Sunday of the following April.

So (excluding the duration of daylight saving), when it's noon in NZ it's 10am in Sydney,

8am in Singapore, midnight in London and 5pm the previous day in San Francisco. The Chathams are 45 minutes ahead of NZ's main islands. For more on international timing, see the World Time Zones map (p754).

TOURIST INFORMATION

Even before the success of recent international marketing campaigns and the country's cult status as a pseudo-Middle-earth, NZ had a highly developed tourism infrastructure that busily generated mountains of brochures and booklets, plus information-packed Internet pages.

Local Tourist Offices

Almost every Kiwi city or town – whether it has any worthwhile attractions or not – seems to have a visitor information centre. The bigger centres stand united within the outstanding i-SITE network, which is affiliated with Tourism New Zealand (the official national tourism body), and have trained staff, abundant information on local activities and attractions, and free brochures and maps. Staff also act as travel agents, booking activities, transport and accommodation. Not to be outdone, staff at smaller centres are often overwhelmingly helpful.

Bear in mind that many information centres only promote accommodation and tour operators who are paying members of the local tourist association, while others are ironically hamstrung by the demands of local operators that they be represented equally. In other words, sometimes information centre staff aren't supposed to recommend one activity or accommodation provider over another, a curious situation that exists in highly competitive environments.

There is a network of DOC visitor centres to help you plan your recreation activities and make bookings. Visitor centres usually have displays and info on local lore, NZ's unique flora and fauna and biodiversity challenges. DOC visitor centres are found in national parks, major regional centres and in each of the major cities. It's important to check local weather conditions at the nearest visitor centre before you set out. Collect the DOC visitor centres brochure from the website or at visitor centres. Contact details for local visitor information centres or offices are listed under Information headings in relevant city and town sections.

Tourist Offices Abroad

Tourism New Zealand (☎ 04-917 5400; www.newzealand.com) has representatives in various countries around the world. A good place for pretrip research is the official website (emblazoned with the hugely successful 100% Pure New Zealand branding) which has information in several languages (including German and Japanese). Overseas offices include:

Australia (☎ 02-8220 9000; L24, 1 Alfred St, Sydney, NSW 2000)

UK & Europe (☎ 020-7930 1662; New Zealand House, 80 Haymarket, London SW1Y 4TQ)

USA & Canada (☎ 310-395-7480; 501 Santa Monica Blvd, Santa Monica, CA 90401)

TRAVELLERS WITH DISABILITIES

Kiwi accommodation generally caters fairly well for travellers with disabilities, with a significant number of hostels, hotels, motels and B&Bs equipped with wheelchair-accessible rooms. Many tourist attractions similarly provide wheelchair access, with wheelchairs often available at key attractions with advance notice.

Tour operators with accessible vehicles operate from most major centres. Key cities are also serviced by kneeling buses (buses that hydraulically stoop down to kerb level to allow easy access); taxi companies offer wheelchair-accessible vans. Large car-hire firms (Avis, Hertz etc) provide cars with hand controls at no extra charge; advance notice is required. Mobility parking permits are available from branches of **New Zealand CCS** (☎ 0800 227 200, 04-801 0854; www.ccs.nzl.org) in the main centres.

For good general information, see NZ's **disability information website** (www.weka.net.nz) and click on Living with a Disability then categories include Transport, Holiday Accommodation, and Travel and Tourism. The latter lists NZ tour operators catering specifically to travellers with disabilities.

Travellers with disabilities need not miss out on NZ's great outdoors. If you'd like to tackle a wilderness pathway, pick up a copy of *Accessible Walks* by Anna and Andrew Jameson (\$26) which offers first-hand descriptions of more than 100 South Island walks. It's available online at www.accessible-walks.co.nz. If cold-weather activity is more your thing, see the **Disabled Snowsports New Zealand** (www.disabledsnowsports.org.nz) website.

VISAS

Visa application forms are available from NZ diplomatic missions overseas, travel agents or through the **New Zealand Immigration Service** (NZIS; ☎ 0508 558 855, 09-914 4100; www.immigration.govt.nz). The NZIS has over a dozen offices overseas; consult the website.

Visitor's Visa

Citizens of Australia don't need a visa to visit NZ and can stay indefinitely (provided they have no criminal convictions). UK citizens don't need a visa either and can stay in the country for up to six months.

Citizens of another 56 countries that have visa-waiver agreements with NZ don't need a visa for stays of up to three months, provided they have an onward ticket, sufficient funds to support their stay (NZ\$1000 per month, or NZ\$400 per month if accommodation has been prepaid) and a passport valid for three months beyond the date of their planned departure from NZ. Nations in this group include Canada, France, Germany, Ireland, Japan, the Netherlands and the USA.

Citizens of other countries must obtain a visa before entering NZ. Visas come with three months' standard validity and cost NZ\$100 if processed in Australia or certain South Pacific countries (eg Samoa, Fiji), or NZ\$130 if processed elsewhere in the world.

VISA EXTENSIONS

Visitors' visas can be extended for stays of up to nine months within one 18-month period, or to a maximum of 12 months in the country. Applications are assessed on a case-by-case basis; visitors will need to meet criteria such as proof of ongoing financial self-support. Apply for extensions at any NZIS office (see the Office Finder on the website).

Work Visa & Working Holiday Scheme

It's illegal for foreign nationals to work in NZ on a visitor's visa, except for Australians who can legally gain work without a visa or permit. If you're visiting NZ to find work, or you already have an employment offer, you'll need to apply for a work visa, which translates into a work permit once you arrive and is valid for up to three years. You can apply for a work permit after you're in NZ, but it's validity will be backdated to when you entered the country. The fee for a work visa ranges from NZ\$180 to NZ\$280

depending on where it's processed and the type of application.

Eligible travellers who are only interested in short-term employment to supplement their travels can take part in one of NZ's working holiday schemes (WHS). Under these schemes citizens aged 18 to 30 years from 26 countries – including Canada, France, Germany, Ireland, Japan, Malaysia, the Netherlands, Scandinavian countries, the UK and the USA – can apply for a visa. For most nationalities the visa is valid for 12 months. It's only issued to those seeking a genuine working holiday, not permanent work, so you're not supposed to work for one employer for more than three months.

Most eligible nationals must apply for this visa from within their own country; residents of some countries can apply online. Applicants must have an onward ticket, a passport valid for at least three months from the date they will leave NZ and evidence of at least NZ\$4200 in accessible funds. The application fee is NZ\$120 regardless of where you apply, and isn't refunded if your application is declined.

The rules vary for different nationalities so make sure you read up on the specifics of your country's agreement with NZ at www.immigration.govt.nz/migrant/stream/work/workingholiday. See also below.

WOMEN TRAVELLERS

NZ is generally a very safe place for women travellers, although the usual sensible precautions apply. It's best to avoid walking alone late at night in any of the major cities and towns, and never hitchhike alone. If you're out on the town, always keep enough money aside for a taxi back to your accommodation. The same applies in rural towns where there may be a lot of unlit, semideserted streets between you and your bed. Lone women should also be wary of staying in basic pub accommodation unless it looks safe and well managed.

Sexual harassment is not a widely reported problem in NZ but of course it does happen.

See www.womentravel.co.nz for more information.

WORK

If you arrive in NZ on a visitor's visa you're not allowed to work for pay. If you're caught breaching this (or any other) visa condi-

tion, you could be booted back to where you came from.

If you have been approved for a WHS (see opposite), look into the possibilities for temporary employment. There's plenty of casual work around, mainly in agriculture (fruit picking, farming), hospitality or ski resorts. Office-based work in IT, banking, finance and telemarketing. Register with a local office-work agency to get started.

Seasonal fruit picking, pruning and harvesting is prime short-term work for visitors. 30,000 hectares of apples, kiwi fruit and other fruit and veg are harvested from summer to early autumn. As an optimist once said, 'The pay is bad, but the work is difficult'. Rates are around \$10 to \$15 an hour for physically taxing toil – turnover of workers is high. You're usually paid by how much you pick (per bin, bucket or kilogram). The picking season is from December to May. Prime picking locations include the Bay of Islands (Kerikeri and Paihia), rural Auckland, Tauranga, Gisborne and Hawkes Bay (Napier and Hastings) on the North Island; Nelson (Tapawera and Golden Bay), Marlborough (around Blenheim) and Central Otago (Alexandra and Roxburgh) on the South Island. Approach prospective employers directly; otherwise local hostels or holiday parks often help travellers to find work. Other agricultural work is available year-round.

Winter work at ski resorts and their service towns includes bartending, waiting, cleaning, ski tow operation and, if you're properly qualified, ski or snowboard instructing. Check resort websites (p87) for opportunities.

There are many possibilities for short-term work in NZ but finding something suitable will not always be easy. Hunt around for worthy opportunities – your wellbeing is the priority if you encounter unsatisfactory conditions or exploitative pay.

Information

Backpacker publications, hostel managers and other travellers are the best sources of info on local work possibilities.

Kiwi Careers (www.kiwicareers.govt.nz) lists opportunities in various fields (agriculture, creative, health, teaching, volunteer work and recruitment agencies), broken down into regions, while **Seek** (www.seek.co.nz) is one of the biggest NZ job-search networks with thousands of jobs listed.

Seasonal Work NZ (www.seasonalwork.co.nz) has a database of thousands of casual jobs. It gives the contact details of employers looking for workers, rates of pay and nearby accommodation. **Pick NZ** (www.picknz.co.nz) provides a similar service, focusing on seasonal horticultural work.

Base Backpackers (www.stayatbase.com/work) runs an employment service via its website, while the Notice Boards link on **Budget Backpacker Hostels** (BBH; www.bbh.co.nz/travellers) lists job vacancies in BBH hostels and a few other possibilities.

IRD Number

Travellers undertaking paid work in NZ must obtain an Inland Revenue Department (IRD) number. Download the application form from the **Inland Revenue Department** (www.ird.govt.nz) website – use the search function to find document no IR595. An IRD number normally takes eight to 10 working days to be issued.

Paying Tax

There is no escaping it! For the vast majority of travellers, any Kiwi dollars earned in NZ will be subject to income tax, deducted from payments by employers – a process called Pay As You Earn (PAYE). Standard NZ income tax rates are 19.5% for annual salaries up to \$38,000 (\$730 gross per week), then 33% up to \$60,000 and 39% for higher incomes. A NZ Accident Compensation Scheme levy (1.2%) will also be deducted from your pay packet.

If you visit NZ and work for a short time (eg on a working holiday scheme), you may qualify for a tax refund when you leave. Complete a Refund Application – People Leaving New Zealand (document no IR50) form and submit it with your tax return, along with proof of departure (eg air ticket copies) to the IRD. For more info see the IRD website, or contact the **Inland Revenue Non-Resident Centre** (☎ 03-467 7020; nonres@ird.govt.nz; Private Bag 1932, Dunedin).

Transport

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New Zealand's peaceably isolated location in a distant patch of the South Pacific is a major drawcard, but it also means that unless you travel from Australia, you have to contend with a long-haul flight to get there. As NZ is serviced by good airline and bus networks, travelling around the country is a much less taxing endeavour.

Flights, tours and rail tickets can be booked online at www.lonelyplanet.com/bookings.

GETTING THERE & AWAY

ENTERING THE COUNTRY

Disembarkation in NZ is generally a straightforward affair, with only the usual customs declarations to endure (see Customs, p695) and the uncool scramble to get to the lug-

THINGS CHANGE...

The information in this chapter is particularly vulnerable to change. Check directly with the airline or a travel agent to make sure you understand how a fare (and ticket you may buy) works and be aware of the security requirements for international travel. Shop carefully. The details given in this chapter should be regarded as pointers and are not a substitute for your own careful, up-to-date research.

gage carousel first. Recent global instability has resulted in increased security in NZ airports, in both domestic and international terminals, and you may find customs procedures more time-consuming. One procedure has the Orwellian title Advance Passenger Screening, a system whereby documents that used to be checked after you touched down in NZ (passport, visa etc) are now checked before you board your flight – make sure all your documentation is in order so your check-in is stress-free.

Passport

There are no restrictions when it comes to foreign citizens entering NZ. If you have a current passport and visa (or don't require one; see p706), you should be fine.

AIR

There's a number of competing airlines servicing NZ and a wide variety of fares to choose from if you're flying in from Asia, Europe or North America, though ultimately you'll still pay a lot for a flight unless you jet in from Australia. NZ's inordinate popularity and abundance of year-round activities mean that almost any time of year airports can be swarming with inbound tourists – if you want to fly at a particularly popular time of year (eg Christmas), book well in advance.

The high season for flights into NZ is during summer (December to February), with slightly less of a premium on fares over the shoulder months (October/November and March/April). The low season generally tallies with the winter months (June to August), though this is still a busy time for airlines ferrying ski bunnies and powder hounds.

Airports & Airlines

Seven NZ airports handle international flights, with Auckland receiving most traffic:

Auckland (AKL; ☎ 0800 247 767, 09-275 0789; www.auckland-airport.co.nz)

Christchurch (CHC; ☎ 03-358 5029; www.christchurch-airport.co.nz)

Dunedin (DUD; ☎ 03-486 2879; www.dnairport.co.nz)

Hamilton (HLZ; ☎ 07-848 9027; www.hamiltonairport.co.nz)

DEPARTURE TAX

An international departure tax of NZ\$25 applies when leaving NZ, payable by anyone aged 12 and over (NZ\$10 for children aged two to 11, free for those under two years of age). The tax is not included in the price of airline tickets, but must be paid separately at the airport before you board your flight. Pay via credit card or cash.

Palmerston North (PMR; ☎ 06-351 4415; www.pn.airport.co.nz)

Queenstown (ZQN; ☎ 03-450 9031; www.queens.townairport.co.nz)

Wellington (WLG; ☎ 04-385 5100; www.wellington-airport.co.nz)

AIRLINES FLYING TO & FROM NEW ZEALAND

NZ's own overseas carrier is Air New Zealand, which flies to runways across Europe, North America, eastern Asia and the Pacific. Airlines that connect NZ with international destinations include the following (note that 0800 and 0508 phone numbers mentioned here are for dialling from within NZ only):

Aerolineas Argentinas (airline code AR; ☎ 09-379 3675; www.aerolineas.com.ar; hub Buenos Aires Ezeiza International Airport)

Air New Zealand (airline code NZ; ☎ 0800 737 000; www.airnz.co.nz; hub Auckland International Airport)

Air Pacific (airline code FJ; ☎ 0800 800 178; www.airpacific.com; hub Nadi Airport, Fiji)

Cathay Pacific (airline code CX; ☎ 0800 800 454; www.cathaypacific.com; hub Hong Kong International Airport)

Emirates (airline code EK; ☎ 0508 364 728; www.emirates.com; hub Dubai International Airport)

Garuda Indonesia (airline code GA; ☎ 09-366 1855; www.garuda-indonesia.com; hub Soekarno-Hatta International Airport, Jakarta)

Jetstar (airline code JQ; ☎ 0800 800 995; www.jetstar.com; hub Melbourne International Airport)

Korean Air (airline code KE; ☎ 09-914 2000; www.koreanair.com; hub Incheon International Airport, Seoul)

Malaysia Airlines (airline code MH; ☎ 0800 777 747; www.malaysiaairlines.com; hub Kuala Lumpur International Airport)

OzJet (airline code OZ; ☎ 06-351 4415; www.ozjet.com.au; hub Melbourne International Airport)

Pacific Blue (airline code DJ; ☎ 0800 670 000; www.flypacificblue.com; hub Brisbane Airport)

Polynesian Blue (airline code DJ; ☎ 0800 670 000; www.polynesianblue.com; hub Brisbane Airport)

Qantas (airline code QF; ☎ 0800 808 767; www.qantas.com.au; hub Kingsford-Smith Airport, Sydney)

Royal Brunei Airlines (airline code BI; ☎ 09-302 1524; www.bruneiair.com; hub Bandar Seri Begawan Airport)

Singapore Airlines (airline code SQ; ☎ 09-303 2129; www.singaporeair.com; hub Changi International Airport)

Thai Airways International (airline code TG; ☎ 09-377 3886; www.thaiairways.com; hub Bangkok International Airport)

Tickets

Automated online ticket sales work well if you're doing a simple one-way or return trip on specified dates, but are no substitute for a travel agent with the lowdown on special deals, strategies for avoiding layovers and other useful advice.

INTERCONTINENTAL (RTW) TICKETS

If you're flying to NZ from the other side of the world, round-the-world (RTW) tickets can be real bargains. They're generally put together by the three biggest airline alliances, **Star Alliance** (www.staralliance.com), **Oneworld** (www.oneworldalliance.com) and **Skyteam** (www.skyteam.com), and give you a limited period (usually a year) in which to loop the planet. You can go anywhere the participating airlines go, as long as you stay within the prescribed kilometre extents or number of stops and don't backtrack when flying between continents. Backtracking is generally permitted within a single continent, though with certain restrictions; see the websites for details.

An alternative type of RTW ticket is one put together by a travel agent or RTW-specialist websites (see below). These are often more expensive than airline RTW fares but allow you to devise your own itinerary.

Bargain RTW tickets start from around UK£700 ex-UK, US\$1850 ex-USA.

CIRCLE PACIFIC TICKETS

A Circle Pacific ticket is similar to a RTW ticket but covers a more limited region, using a combination of airlines to connect Australia, NZ, North America and Asia, with stopover options in the Pacific islands. As with RTW tickets, there are restrictions on how many stopovers you can take.

ONLINE TICKET SITES

For online ticket bookings, including RTW fares, start with the following websites:

Air Brokers (www.airbrokers.com) This US company specialises in cheaper tickets. To fly LA–Samoa–Auckland–

Christchurch–Sydney–Bangkok–Hong Kong–LA costs around US\$2000 (excluding taxes).

Cheap Flights (www.cheapflights.com) Informative site with specials, airline information and flight searches from the USA and UK/Ireland.

Cheapest Flights (www.cheapestflights.co.uk) Cheap worldwide flights from the UK; get in early for the bargains.

Expedia (www.expedia.com) Microsoft's travel site; good for USA-related flights.

Flight Centre International (www.flightcentre.com) Respected operator handling direct flights, with sites for NZ, Australia, the UK, the USA, Canada and South Africa.

Flights.com (www.flights.com) International site for flights; cheap fares and an easy-to-search database.

Roundtheworldflights.com (www.roundtheworldflights.com) This excellent site allows you to build your own trip from the UK with up to six stops. A six-stop trip including Asia, Australia, NZ and the USA costs from UK£740 in the NZ winter.

STA Travel (www.statravel.com) Prominent in international student travel but you don't have to be a student; site linked to worldwide STA sites.

Travel Online (www.travelonline.co.nz) Good place to check worldwide flights from NZ.

Travel.com.au (www.travel.com.au) Good Australian site; look up fares and flights to/from the country.

Travelocity (www.travelocity.com) US site that allows you to search fares (in US dollars) from/to practically anywhere.

CLIMATE CHANGE & TRAVEL

Climate change is a serious threat to the ecosystems that humans rely upon, and air travel is the fastest-growing contributor to the problem. Lonely Planet regards travel, overall, as a global benefit, but believes we all have a responsibility to limit our personal impact on global warming.

Flying & Climate Change

Pretty much every form of motorised travel generates CO₂ (the main cause of human-induced climate change) but planes are far and away the worst offenders, not just because of the sheer distances they allow us to travel, but because they release greenhouse gases high into the atmosphere. The statistics are frightening: two people taking a return flight between Europe and the US will contribute as much to climate change as an average household's gas and electricity consumption over a whole year.

Carbon Offset Schemes

Climatecare.org and other websites use 'carbon calculators' that allow travellers to offset the level of greenhouse gases they are responsible for with financial contributions to sustainable travel schemes that reduce global warming – including projects in India, Honduras, Kazakhstan and Uganda.

Lonely Planet, together with Rough Guides and other concerned partners in the travel industry, support the carbon offset scheme run by climatecare.org. Lonely Planet offsets all of its staff and author travel.

For more information check out our website: www.lonelyplanet.com.

Asia

Most Asian countries offer fairly competitive air-fare deals, with Bangkok, Singapore and Hong Kong being the best places to shop around for discount tickets.

Common one-way fares to Auckland cost approximately US\$650 from Singapore, US\$850 from Kuala Lumpur, Bangkok and Hong Kong, and US\$775 from Tokyo. Going the other way, return fares from Auckland to Singapore cost around NZ\$1350, and around NZ\$1600 to Kuala Lumpur, Bangkok, Hong Kong and Tokyo, depending on the airline.

Hong Kong's travel market can be unpredictable, but excellent bargains are sometimes available. **Phoenix Services** (☎ 2722 7378) is recommended.

STA Travel (Bangkok ☎ 02-236 0262; www.statravel.co.th; Singapore ☎ 6737 7188; www.statravel.com.sg; Tokyo ☎ 03-5391 2922; www.statravel.co.jp) has offices in major Asian cities.

Australia

Air New Zealand and Qantas operate a network of flights linking key NZ cities with most major Australian gateway cities, while quite a few other international airlines include NZ and Australia on their Asia-Pacific routes.

Pacific Blue, a subsidiary of budget airline Virgin Blue, offers direct flights between

Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch and east-coast capitals, with connections on the domestic Virgin Blue network to many other Australian cities.

Qantas' budget subsidiary, Jetstar, flies between Christchurch and Sydney, Melbourne, Hobart, Brisbane, Cairns and the Gold Coast.

If you book early, shop around and have the gods smiling upon you, you may pay under AU\$200 for a one-way fare on a budget carrier from either Sydney or Melbourne to Auckland, Christchurch or Wellington. More common prices are from AU\$260 to AU\$300 one-way. You can fly into Auckland and out of Christchurch to save backtracking, but you may not get the cheapest fares with this itinerary.

From key NZ cities, you'll pay between NZ\$270 and NZ\$300 for a one-way ticket to an Australian east-coast city. There's usually not a significant difference in price between seasons, as this is a popular route year-round. The intense competition, however, inevitably results in some tasty discounting.

For some reasonably priced fares, try an Australian capital-city branch of **STA Travel** (☎ 134 782; www.statravel.com.au). Another good option, also with dozens of offices strewn around the country, is **Flight Centre** (☎ 133 133; www.flightcentre.com.au).

Canada

The air routes flown from Canada are similar to those from mainland USA, with most Toronto and Vancouver flights stopping in a US city such as Los Angeles or Honolulu before continuing to NZ. Air New Zealand has direct flights between Auckland and Vancouver year-round.

The air fares sold by Canadian discount air-ticket sellers (consolidators) tend to be about 10% higher than those sold in the USA. **Travel CUTS** (☎ 866 246 9762; www.travelcuts.com) is Canada's national student travel agency and has offices in all major cities.

Return fares from Vancouver to Auckland cost between C\$1600 and C\$1900 via the US west coast. From Toronto, fares cost around C\$2000. One-way fares from NZ start at around NZ\$1200 to Toronto and NZ\$1100 to Vancouver.

Continental Europe

Frankfurt and London are the major arrival and departure points for flights to and from NZ, both with extensive connections

to other European cities. From these two launching pads, most flights to NZ travel via one of the Asian capitals. Return air fares from NZ to key European hubs such as Paris and Frankfurt usually cost between NZ\$1800 and NZ\$2400.

A solid option in the Dutch travel industry is **Holland International** (☎ 0900-8858; www.hollandinternational.nl). From Amsterdam, return fares start at around €1700.

In Germany, good travel agencies include the Berlin branch of **STA Travel** (☎ 030-2859 8264; www.statravel.de). Return fares from Frankfurt start at around €1400.

In France, return fares from Paris start from €1200. Recommended companies:

Nouvelles Frontières (☎ 0825 000 825; www.nouvelles-frontieres.fr/nf)

Usit Connect Voyages (☎ 0825 082 525; www.usitconnections.fr)

Voyageurs du Monde (☎ 0892 235 656; www.vdm.com/vdm)

UK & Ireland

Depending on which airline you travel with from the UK, flights to NZ go via Asia or the USA. If you fly via Asia you can often make stopovers in countries such as India, Thailand, Singapore and Australia; in the other direction, stopover possibilities include New York, Los Angeles, Honolulu and sundry Pacific islands.

Discount air travel is big business in London. Advertisements for many travel agencies appear in the travel pages of the weekend broadsheet newspapers, in *Time Out*, in the *Evening Standard* and in the free magazine *TNT*.

Typical one-way/return fares from London to Auckland start at around £550/750; note that June, July and mid-December fares can go up by as much as 30%. From NZ you can expect to pay between NZ\$2500 and NZ\$3000 for return fares to London.

Popular agencies in the UK:

Flight Centre (☎ 0870 499 0040; www.flightcentre.co.uk)

STA Travel (☎ 0871 230 0040; www.statravel.co.uk)

Trailfinders (☎ 0845 058 5858; www.trailfinders.co.uk)

USA

Most flights between the North American mainland and NZ are to/from west-coast USA, with the bulk routed through Los Angeles but some going through San Francisco. Some airlines offer flights via various Pacific islands (Hawaii, Tahiti, Cook Islands).

San Francisco is the ticket consolidator capital of America, although some good deals can be found in Los Angeles, New York and other big cities. **STA Travel** (☎ 800 781 4040; www.statravel.com) has offices all over the USA.

Return tickets to NZ from the US west coast start around US\$1100/1300 in the NZ winter/summer; fares from the east coast start at US\$1700 in both seasons. Return fares from NZ to the US west coast are around NZ\$2000; to New York NZ\$2500.

SEA

It's possible (though by no means easy or safe) to make your way between NZ and Australia, and some smaller Pacific islands, by hitching rides or crewing on yachts. Try asking around at harbours, marinas, and yacht and sailing clubs. Popular yachting harbours in NZ include the Bay of Islands and Whangarei (both located in Northland), Auckland and Wellington. March and April are the best months to look for boats heading to Australia. From Fiji, October to November is a peak departure season as cyclones are starting to spin in that neck of the woods.

There are no passenger liners operating to/from NZ and finding a berth on a cargo ship (much less enjoying the experience) is no easy task.

GETTING AROUND

AIR

Those who have limited time to get between NZ's attractions can make the most of a widespread network of intra- and inter-island flights.

Airlines in New Zealand

The country's major domestic carrier, Air New Zealand, has an aerial network covering most of the country. Australia-based Qantas also flies between main urban areas.

Several small-scale regional operators provide essential transport services to the small outlying islands such as Great Barrier Island in the Hauraki Gulf, Stewart Island and the Chathams. Regional operators include the following:

Air Chathams (☎ 0508 247 248, 03-305 0209; www.airchathams.co.nz) Services to the remote Chatham Islands from Wellington, Christchurch and Auckland.

Air New Zealand (☎ 0800 737 000; www.airnz.co.nz) Offers flights between 25 domestic destinations, in conjunction with a couple of small affiliated airlines under the banner Air New Zealand Link.

Air West Coast (☎ 0800 247 937, 03-738 0524; www.airwestcoast.co.nz) Flies between Greymouth and Wellington (via Westport).

Air2there.com (☎ 0800 777 000, 04-904 5130; www.air2there.com) Connects destinations across Cook Strait, including Wanganui, Palmerston North, Wellington and Blenheim.

Capital Air (☎ 0800 588 885, 03-525 8725; www.capitalair.co.nz) Flies regularly between Wellington and Takaka in Golden Bay.

Great Barrier Airlines (☎ 0800 900 600, 09-275 9120; www.greatbarrierairlines.co.nz) Flies the skies between Great Barrier Island, Auckland, Whangarei and the Coromandel Peninsula.

Mountain Air (☎ 0800 222 123, 09-256 7025; www.mountainair.co.nz) Flies regularly between Auckland, Whangarei and Great Barrier Island.

Qantas (☎ 0800 808 767; www.qantas.co.nz) Joins the dots between key tourism centres like Auckland, Rotorua, Wellington, Christchurch and Queenstown.

Soundsair (☎ 0800 505 005; www.soundsair.co.nz) Hops across Cook Strait between Wellington and Picton up to 16 times per day; also flies between Wellington and Kaikoura, Blenheim and Nelson.

Stewart Island Flights (☎ 03-218 9129; www.stewartislandflights.com) Flies between Invercargill and Stewart Island.

Air Passes

With discounting being the norm these days, and a number of budget airlines now serving the trans-Tasman route as well as the Pacific islands, the value of air passes isn't as red-hot as in the past.

Air New Zealand offers the **South Pacific Airpass** (☎ 1800 262 1234; www.airnewzealand.com), valid for selected journeys within NZ, and between NZ, Australia and a number of Pacific islands. The pass is only available to non-residents of these countries, and must be issued outside NZ. Passes are issued in conjunction with an international ticket (with any airline) and are valid for the life of that ticket.

The pass involves purchasing coupons for domestic flights (one-way from NZ\$120 to NZ\$408, depending on distance), or flights to/from major Australian cities or Pacific islands including Fiji, New Caledonia and Tonga, and as far afield as the Cook Islands and Samoa (one-way from NZ\$400 to NZ\$834).

BICYCLE

Touring cyclists proliferate in NZ, particularly over summer – the roads and trails run thick with fluoro-clad creatures with aerodynamic heads. The country is popular with cyclists because it's clean, green and relatively uncrowded, and has lots of cheap accommodation (including camping) and easily accessible freshwater. The roads are generally in good nick, and the climate generally not too hot or too cold (except on the South Island's rain-soaked West Coast). The many hills make for hard going at times, but there are expansive flats and lows to accompany the highs. Bikes and cycling gear (to rent or buy) are readily available in the main centres, as are bicycle repair shops.

The choice of itineraries is limited only by your imagination. Cycling some of the coastline will be a highlight, but inland routes have their share of devotees. One increasingly popular expedition is to follow an upgraded path along an old railway line into the former gold-mining heartland of Otago – for details, see the boxed text, p596.

By law all cyclists must wear an approved safety helmet (or risk a fine); it's also good to have reflective gear for cycling at night or on dull days. Cyclists who use public transport will find that major bus lines and trains only take bicycles on a 'space available' basis (meaning bikes may not be allowed on) and charge up to \$10. Some of the smaller shuttle bus companies, on the other hand, make sure they have storage space for bikes, which they carry for a surcharge.

If importing your own bike or transporting it by plane within NZ, check with the relevant airline for costs and the degree of dismantling and packing required.

Hire

Rates offered by most outfits for renting road or mountain bikes – not including the discounted fees or freebies offered by accommodation places to their guests – are anywhere from \$10 to \$20 per hour and \$30 to \$45 per day.

Purchase

Bicycles can be readily bought in NZ's larger cities, but prices for newer models are high. For a decent hybrid bike or rigid mountain bike you'll pay anywhere from \$700 to \$1600, though you can get a cheap one for around \$400 to \$500 – however, then you still need to get panniers, a helmet and other essential

touring gear, and the cost quickly climbs. Arguably you're better off buying a used bike (assuming you can't bring your own over), but finding something that's in good enough shape for a long road trip isn't always as easy as it sounds. Other options include the post-Christmas sales and midyear stocktakes, when newish cycles can be heavily discounted.

BOAT

NZ may be an island nation but there's virtually no long-distance water transport around the country. Obvious exceptions include the boat services between Auckland and various islands in the Hauraki Gulf (see p133), the inter-island ferries that chug across Cook Strait between Wellington and Picton (see p420 and p438), and the passenger ferry that negotiates the width of Foveaux Strait between Bluff and the town of Oban on Stewart Island (see p682).

BUS

Bus travel in NZ is relatively easy and well organised, with services transporting you to the far reaches of both islands (including the start/end of various walking tracks), but it can be expensive, tedious and time-consuming. The bus 'terminals' in smaller places usually comprise a parking spot outside a prominent local business.

The dominant bus company is **InterCity** (☎ in Auckland 09-623 1503, in Wellington 04-385 0520, in Christchurch 03-365 1113, in Dunedin 03-471 7143; www.intercity.co.nz), which also has an extra-comfort travel and sightseeing arm called **Newmans Coach Lines** (www.newmanscoach.co.nz). InterCity can drive you to just about anywhere on the North and South Islands, from Invercargill and Milford Sound in the south to Paihia and Kaitiāia in the north.

Smaller regional operators running key routes or covering a lot of ground on the North Island include:

Alpine Scenic Tours (☎ 07-378 7412; www.alpine.scenicours.co.nz) Has services around Taupo and into Tongariro National Park, plus the ski fields around Mt Ruapehu and Mt Tongariro.

Bay Xpress (☎ 0800 422 997; www.bayxpress.co.nz) Connects Wellington with Hastings and Napier via Palmerston North.

Dalroy Express (☎ 0508 465 622; www.dalroytours.co.nz) Operates a daily service between Auckland and Hawera via New Plymouth and Hamilton.

Go Kiwi Shuttles (☎ 0800 446 549, 07-866 0336; www.go-kiwi.co.nz) Links places like Auckland, Rotorua and Hamilton with various towns across the Coromandel Peninsula.

Kiwi Traveller (☎ 0800 500 100, 04-384 7031; www.kiwitraveller.co.nz) Runs between Wellington, Otaki, National Park, Taupo and Rotorua.

Magic Travellers Network (☎ 09-358 5600; www.magicbus.co.nz) Has a useful collection of passes available, covering both islands or each individually.

Naked Bus (☎ 0900 625 33; www.nakedbus.com) Low-cost routes across the North (and South) Island, from Auckland to Wellington and most places in between.

Waitomo Wanderer (☎ 0508 926 337, 03-437 0753; www.waitomotours.co.nz) Does a loop from Rotorua to Waitomo.

White Star City to City (☎ 06-758 3338; www.whitestarbus.co.nz) Shuttles between Wellington, Palmerston North, Wanganui and New Plymouth.

South Island shuttle-bus companies:

Abel Tasman Coachlines (☎ 03-548 0285; www.abeltasmantravel.co.nz) Traverses the tarmac between Nelson, Motueka, Golden Bay, and Kahurangi and Abel Tasman National Parks.

Atomic Shuttles (☎ 03-349 0697; www.atomictravel.co.nz) Has services throughout the South Island, including to Christchurch, Dunedin, Invercargill, Picton, Nelson, Greymouth/Hokitika, Te Anau and Queenstown/Wanaka.

Coast to Coast (☎ 0800 800 847; www.coast2coast.co.nz) Travels from Christchurch to Hokitika/Greymouth via Arthur's Pass.

Cook Connection (☎ 0800 266 526; www.cookconnect.co.nz) Triangulates between Mt Cook, Twizel and Lake Tekapo.

East West Coaches (☎ 03-789 6251; eastwest@orcon.co.nz) Offers a service between Christchurch and Westport, running via the Hamner Springs turn-off, Maruia Springs and Reefton.

Hanmer Connection (☎ 0800 242 663; www.atnsz.com) Provides services between Hanmer Springs and Christchurch, and three weekly services between Hanmer and Kaikoura.

Knightrider (☎ 03-342 8055; www.knightrider.co.nz) Runs a nocturnal service from Christchurch to Invercargill via Dunedin. David Hasselhoff nowhere to be seen...

Naked Bus (☎ 0900 625 33; www.nakedbus.com) Low-cost routes across the South (and North) Island, from Nelson to Invercargill and most places in between.

Scenic Shuttle (☎ 0800 277 483, 03-437 0753; www.scenicshuttle.co.nz) Drives between Te Anau and Invercargill via Manapouri.

Southern Link KBus (☎ 0508 458 835, 03-358 8355; www.southernlinkkbus.co.nz) Roams across most of the South Island, taking in Christchurch, Nelson, Picton, Greymouth, Queenstown and Dunedin, among others.

Topline Tours (☎ 03-249 8059; www.toplinetours.co.nz) Connects Te Anau and Queenstown.

Tracknet (☎ 0800 483 262, 03-249 7777; www.tracknet.net) Daily track transport (Milford, Routeburn,

Hollyford, Kepler etc) between Queenstown, Te Anau, Milford Sound, Invercargill, Fiordland and the West Coast.
Wanaka Connexions (☎ 0800 244 844, 03-443 9122; www.wanakaconnexions.co.nz) Links Wanaka, Queenstown, Christchurch, Invercargill and Dunedin.

InterCity Bus Passes

InterCity (☎ 09-623 1503 (☎ in Auckland 09-623 1503, in Wellington 04-385 0520, in Christchurch 03-365 1113, in Dunedin 03-471 7143; www.intercity.co.nz) offers bus passes, covering either the whole country, or the North and South Islands separately. If you're covering a lot of ground, passes can be cheaper than paying as you go, but they lock you into using InterCity buses (rather than, say, the convenient shuttle buses that cover much of the country). There's a 15% discount for YHA and VIP members; there may be an additional reservation charge (\$3 per sector, depending on the agent).

NATIONWIDE PASSES

InterCity's pan-NZ 'multitransport' **Travelpass** (☎ 0800 339 966; www.travelpass.co.nz) combines bus travel with a ferry crossing, plus train travel if desired. Passes are purchased for 'days' of travel, and are valid for a year.

Travelpass 2-in-One InterCity bus travel, plus one Inter-islander ferry crossing (Wellington–Picton or vice versa); the pass costs \$399/619/871 for five/10/15 travel days.

Travelpass 3-in-One As above for bus and ferry, plus one train journey (choose from the *TranzAlpine*, *Tranz-Coastal* or *Overlander*); the pass costs \$504/757/931 for five/10/15 travel days.

The appropriately named **Flexi-Pass** (☎ 0800 222 146; www.flexipass.co.nz) is valid for one year and allows you to travel pretty much anywhere (and in any direction) on the InterCity network; you can get on and off wherever you like and can change bookings up to two hours before departure without penalty. The pass is purchased in five-hour blocks of travel time, from a minimum of 15 hours (\$164) up to a maximum of 60 hours (\$585) – the average cost of each block becomes cheaper the more hours you buy. You can top up the pass if you need more time.

More structured dual-island InterCity passes:

Pathfinder (adult/child \$565/379) From Auckland to Christchurch or vice versa, including along the South Island's West Coast and to Milford Sound.

Trail Blazer (adult/child \$585/392) Describing a loop that starts/finishes at Auckland, via a South Island circuit.

Total New Zealand Experience (adult/child \$729/488) The kitchen sink of coach passes.

NORTH ISLAND PASSES

There are four InterCity North Island passes:

Bay of Islands Pass (adult/child \$105/70) From Auckland to Kerikeri and back.

Top Half Pass (adult/child \$145/97) Rotorua, Hamilton, Auckland, Whangarei and Kerikeri.

North Island Value Pass (adult/child \$156/105) Auckland to Wellington via the Central Plateau and Taupo.

Pacific Coast Hwy Pass (adult/child \$209/140) Auckland to Wellington via the Coromandel Peninsula and the East Coast.

SOUTH ISLAND PASSES

InterCity South Island passes:

West Coast Passport (adult/child \$169/113) Picton to Queenstown via the West Coast; also available ex-Nelson (\$145/97) and ex-Greymouth (\$125/84).

Milford Bound Adventurer (adult/child \$235/157)

Christchurch to Queenstown plus Milford Sound and Mt Cook.

Southern Discovery (adult/child \$355/238) Christchurch to Greymouth via Queenstown, Milford Sound and the West Coast.

Seat Classes

There are no allocated economy or luxury classes on NZ buses; smoking is a no-no.

Reservations

Over summer, school holidays and public holidays, book well ahead on more popular routes. At other times you should have few problems accessing your preferred service, but if your long-term travel plans rely on catching a particular bus, book at least a day or two ahead just to be safe.

InterCity fares vary widely depending on availability and how the tickets are booked (online or via an agent). The best prices are generally available online, booked a few weeks in advance.

CAR & MOTORCYCLE

The best way to explore NZ in depth is to have your own transport, which allows you to create your own leisurely, flexible itinerary. Good-value car- and campervan-hire rates are not hard to track down; alternatively, consider buying your own set of wheels.

Automobile Association (AA)

NZ's **Automobile Association** (AA; ☎ 24hr road service 0800 500 222; www.aa.co.nz) provides emergency breakdown services, excellent touring maps and detailed guides to accommodation (from holiday parks to motels and B&Bs).

Members of foreign automobile associations should bring their membership cards – many of these bodies have reciprocal agreements with NZ's AA.

Driving Licence

International visitors to NZ can use their home country's driving licence – if your licence isn't in English, it's a good idea to carry a certified translation with you. Alternatively, use an International Driving Permit (IDP), which will usually be issued on the spot (valid for 12 months) by your home country's automobile association.

Fuel

Fuel is available from service stations with the well-known international brand names. LPG (gas) is not always stocked by rural suppliers; if you're on gas it's safer to have dual fuel capability. Prices vary from place to place, but basically petrol (gasoline) isn't pumped cheaply in NZ, with per-litre costs averaging around \$1.50. More remote destinations may charge a small fortune to fill your tank and you're better off getting fuel before you reach them – places in this category include Milford Sound (fill up at Te Anau) and Mt Cook (buy fuel at Twizel or Lake Tekapo).

Hire**CAMPERVAN**

Check your rear-view mirror on any far-flung NZ road and you'll likely see a shiny white campervan (aka mobile home, motor home, RV) packed with liberated travellers, mountain bikes and portable barbecues cruising along behind you.

Campervanning around NZ is big business. It's flexible and affordable, and you can leave the trampled tourist trails behind and crank up the AC/DC as loud as hell! Most towns of any size have a camping ground or campervan park with powered sites for around \$30 per night, or you can seek out a remote beach/mountain/valley and dream in isolation.

You can hire campervans from assorted companies, prices varying with time of year, how big you want your home-on-wheels to be, and length of rental. Major operators:

Britz (☎ 0800 831 900, 09-275 9090; www.britz.co.nz)

Kea Campers (☎ 0800 520 052, 09-441 7833; www.keacampers.com/newzealand)

Maui (☎ 0800 651 080, 09-275 3013; www.maui.co.nz)

BACKPACKER VAN RENTALS

There are several budget players in the campervan industry, offering slick deals and funky, well-kitted-out vehicles to attract young, independent travellers (the kind who would shun the larger, more traditional box-on-wheels). All companies offer living, sleeping and cooking equipment, 24-hour roadside assistance, and maps and travel tips. Rates are competitive (from \$29 per day May to September; from \$70 per day December to February). Check out the following:

- **Backpacker Sleeper Vans** (☎ 0800 325 939, 03-359 4731; www.sleepervans.co.nz) Low-cost family-run business.
- **Escape Rentals** (☎ 0800 216 171; www.escaperentals.co.nz) 'The freedom to sleep around' – loud, original artwork on van exteriors, pitched squarely at young travellers after something different. DVDs, TVs and outdoor barbecues available for rent.
- **Jucy** (☎ 0800 399 736, 09-374 4360; www.jucy.co.nz) The flashpacker's vehicle of choice.
- **Spaceships** (☎ 0800 772 237, 09-309 8777; www.spaceships.tv) The customised 'Swiss Army Knife of campervans', with extras including DVD and CD players, roof racks and solar showers.
- **Wicked Campers** (☎ 0800 246 870; www.wickedcampers.co.nz) Spray-painted vans bedecked with everything/everyone from Mr Spock to Sly Stone.

A small van for two people typically has a mini-kitchen and fold-out dining table, the latter transforming into a double bed when dinner is done 'n' dusted. Larger 'superior' two-berth vans include shower and toilet. Four- to six-berth campervans are the size of trucks (and similarly sluggish) and, besides the extra space, usually contain a toilet and shower.

Over summer, rates offered by the main rental firms for two-/four-/six-berth vans are around \$200/300/340 per day, dropping to as low as \$60/100/120 in winter; industry infighting often sees even lower rates.

CAR

Competition between car-rental companies in NZ is torrid – rates tend to be variable and lots of special deals come and go (we've heard of discounted rates as low as \$19 per day, so shop around). Car rental is most competitive in Auckland, Christchurch, Wellington and Picton. The main thing to remember when assessing your options is distance – if you want to travel far, you need unlimited kilometres. Some (but not all) companies require drivers to be at least 21 years old – ask around.

Sizable multinational companies, with offices or agents in most major cities, towns and larger airports:

Avis (☎ 0800 655 111, 09-526 2800; www.avis.co.nz)

Budget (☎ 0800 283 438, 09-529 7784; www.budget.co.nz)

Europcar (☎ 0800 800 115, 03-357 0920; www.europcar.co.nz)

Hertz (☎ 0800 654 321, 03-520 3044; www.hertz.co.nz)

Thrifty (☎ 0800 737 070, 03-359 2720; www.thrifty.co.nz)

Local rental firms and firms with limited locations also dapple the *Yellow Pages* – see the regional chapters in this guide. These are almost always cheaper than the big boys – sometimes half the price – but the cheap rates may come with serious restrictions, vehicles are often older, and with less formality sometimes comes less protective legal structure for renters.

Affordable, independent operators with national networks:

Ace Rental Cars (☎ 0800 502 277, 09-303 3112; www.acerentalcars.co.nz)

Apex Rentals (☎ 0800 939 597, 03-379 6897; www.apexrentals.co.nz)

Ezy Rentals (☎ 0800 399 736, 09-374 4360; www.ezy.co.nz)

Omega Rental Cars (☎ 0800 525 210, 09-377 5573; www.omegarentalcars.com)

Pegasus Rental Cars (☎ 0800 803 580, 03-548 2852; www.rentalcars.co.nz)

The big firms sometimes offer one-way rentals (eg collect a car in Auckland, leave it in Christchurch), but there are a variety of restrictions, and a one-way drop-off fee may apply. However, for rentals of a month or more, fees are often waived between Auckland and Wellington or Christchurch. On the other hand, an operator in Christchurch may need to get a vehicle back to Auckland and will offer an amazing one-way deal (Budget and Thrifty sometimes list relocation specials on their websites, under 'Deals' and 'Hot Deals' respectively).

Health

Dr David Millar

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New Zealand is one of the healthiest countries in the world in which to travel. The risk of diseases such as malaria and typhoid are unheard of, and thanks to NZ's quarantine standards, even some animal diseases such as rabies have yet to be recorded. The absence of poisonous snakes or other dangerous animals makes this a very safe region to get off the beaten track and out into the beautiful countryside.

BEFORE YOU GO

Since most vaccines don't produce immunity until at least two weeks after they're given, visit a physician four to eight weeks before departure. Ask your doctor for an International Certificate of Vaccination (or 'the yellow booklet'), which will list all the vaccinations you've received. This is mandatory for countries that require proof of yellow fever vaccination upon entry, but it's a good idea to carry it wherever you travel.

Bring medications in their original, clearly labelled containers. A signed and dated letter from your physician describing your medical conditions and medications, including generic names, is also a good idea. If carrying syringes or needles, be sure to have a physician's letter documenting their medical necessity.

INSURANCE

If your current health insurance doesn't cover you for medical expenses incurred overseas, you should think about getting extra

insurance – check out www.lonelyplanet.com for more information. Find out in advance if your insurance plan will make payments directly to providers or reimburse you at a later date for overseas health expenditures. (In many countries doctors expect payment in cash.)

RECOMMENDED VACCINATIONS

NZ has no vaccination requirements for any traveller. The World Health Organization recommends that all travellers should be covered for diphtheria, tetanus, measles, mumps, rubella, chickenpox and polio, as well as hepatitis B, regardless of their destination. Planning to travel abroad is an ideal time to ensure that all routine vaccination cover is complete. The consequences of these diseases can be severe and while NZ has high levels of childhood vaccination coverage, outbreaks of these diseases do occur.

MEDICAL CHECKLIST

- acetaminophen/paracetamol (Tylenol/Panadol) or aspirin
- adhesive or paper tape
- antibacterial ointment (eg Bactroban) for cuts and abrasions
- antibiotics
- antidiarrhoeal drugs (eg loperamide)
- antihistamines for hay fever and allergic reactions
- anti-inflammatory drugs (eg ibuprofen)
- bandages, gauze, gauze rolls
- DEET-containing insect repellent for the skin
- iodine tablets or water filter for water purification
- oral rehydration salts
- permethrin-containing insect spray for clothing, tents and bed nets
- pocketknife
- scissors, safety pins, tweezers
- steroid cream or cortisone for poison ivy and other allergic rashes
- sun block
- thermometer

INTERNET RESOURCES

You'll find that there's a wealth of travel health advice available on the internet. For further information on health, **Lonely Planet** (www.lonelyplanet.com) is a good place to start. The **World Health Organization** (www.who.int/ith/) publishes an excellent book called *International Travel and Health*, which is revised annually and is available online at no cost. Another good website of general interest is **MD Travel Health** (www.mdtravelhealth.com), which provides complete travel health recommendations for every country and is updated daily.

IN TRANSIT

DEEP VEIN THROMBOSIS (DVT)

Blood clots may form in the legs during plane flights, chiefly because of a prolonged period of immobility. The longer the flight, the greater the risk. The chief symptom of Deep Vein Thrombosis (DVT) is swelling or pain of the foot, ankle or calf, usually – but not always – on just one side. When a blood clot travels to the lungs, it may result in chest pain and difficulty breathing. Travellers with any of these symptoms should seek medical attention immediately.

To prevent the development of DVT on long flights, you should walk about the cabin, perform compressions of the leg muscles (ie flex the leg muscles while sitting), drink plenty of fluids and avoid alcohol and tobacco.

JET LAG & MOTION SICKNESS

Jet lag is common when crossing more than five time zones, resulting in insomnia, fatigue, malaise and/or nausea. To avoid the effects of jet lag, try drinking plenty of nonalcoholic fluids and eating light meals. Upon arrival at your destination, get exposure to natural sunlight and readjust your schedule (for meals, sleep etc) as soon as possible.

Antihistamines such as dimenhydrinate (Dramamine) and meclizine (Antivert, Bonine) are usually the preferred choice for treating motion sickness. Their main side effect is drowsiness. A herbal alternative is ginger, which works like a charm for some people.

IN NEW ZEALAND

AVAILABILITY & COST OF HEALTH CARE

Health insurance is essential for all travellers. While health care in NZ is of a high standard and not overly expensive by international standards, considerable costs can be built up and repatriation can be extremely expensive. See opposite for insurance information.

Health Care in New Zealand

NZ does not have a government-funded system of public hospitals. All travellers are, however, covered for medical care resulting from accidents that occur while in NZ (eg motor vehicle accidents, adventure activity accidents) by the Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC). Costs incurred by treatment of a medical illness that occurs while in NZ will only be covered by travel insurance. For more details see www.moh.govt.nz and www.acc.co.nz.

NZ has excellent specialised public health facilities for women and children in the major centres. No specific health concerns exist for women but greater care for children is recommended to avoid environmental hazards such as heat, sunburn, cold and marine hazards.

The 24-hour, free-call **Healthline** (☎ 0800 611 116) offers health advice throughout NZ.

Self-care in New Zealand

In NZ it is possible to find yourself in a remote location where, in the event of a serious accident or illness, there may well be a significant delay in emergency services getting to you. This is usually the result of weather and rugged terrain, particularly on the South Island. Therefore, an increased level of self-reliance and preparation is essential. Consider taking a wilderness first-aid course (such as the one from the Wilderness Medicine Institute). In addition, you should carry a comprehensive first-aid kit that is appropriate for the activities planned. To be really safe, ensure that you have adequate means of communication – NZ has extensive mobile-phone coverage, but additional radio communication equipment is important for remote areas, and can usually be hired from Department of Conservation visitor centres in popular tramping areas.

Pharmaceutical Supplies

Over-the-counter medications are widely available in NZ through private chemists. These include painkillers, antihistamines for allergies, and skin care products.

Some medications that are available over the counter in other countries are only available by a prescription obtained from a general practitioner. These include the oral contraceptive pill, most medications for asthma and all antibiotics. If you take a medication on a regular basis, bring an adequate supply and ensure you have details of the generic name, as brand names differ between countries. The majority of medications in use outside of the region are available.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES

Amoebic Meningitis

There is a small risk of developing amoebic meningitis as a result of bathing or swimming in geothermal pools in NZ – mostly in regions such as Rotorua and Taupo. In such pools, keeping the head above water to prevent movement of the organism up the nasal passage reduces the risk (which is pretty low to start with). Symptoms usually start three to seven days after swimming in a geothermal pool and early symptoms of this serious disease include headache, fever and vomiting. Urgent medical care is essential to differentiate the disease from other causes of meningitis and for appropriate treatment.

Giardiasis

The giardia parasite is widespread in the waterways of NZ. Drinking untreated water from streams and lakes is not recommended. Using water filters and boiling or treating water with iodine are effective ways of preventing the disease. Symptoms consist of intermittent bad-smelling diarrhoea, abdominal bloating and wind. Effective treatment is available (tinidazole or metronidazole).

Hepatitis C

This disease is a growing problem among intravenous drug users. Blood-transfusion services fully screen all blood before use.

HIV

The country's HIV rates have stabilised after major media campaigns, and levels are similar to other Western countries. Clean needles and syringes are widely available.

Meningococcal Disease

This occurs worldwide and is a risk with prolonged dormitory-style accommodation. A vaccine exists for some types of the disease (meningococcal A, C, Y and W).

Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs)

In NZ STDs (including gonorrhoea, chlamydia and herpes) occur at rates similar to most Western countries. The most common symptoms are pain on passing urine and a discharge. Infection can be present without symptoms, so seek medical screening after any unprotected sex with a new partner. Sexual health clinics are run as part of major hospitals.

TRAVELLER'S DIARRHOEA

If you develop diarrhoea, be sure to drink plenty of fluids, preferably an oral rehydration solution containing lots of salt and sugar. A few loose stools don't require treatment but if you start having more than four or five stools a day, you should start taking an antibiotic (usually a quinolone drug) and an antidiarrhoeal agent (such as loperamide). If diarrhoea is bloody, persists for more than 72 hours and/or is accompanied by fever, shaking chills or severe abdominal pain you should seek medical attention.

ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS

Hypothermia

This is a significant risk, especially during the winter months or year-round in the mountains of the North Island and all of the South Island. Mountain ranges and/or strong winds produce a high chill factor which can result in hypothermia, even in moderately cool temperatures. Early signs include the inability to perform fine movements (such as doing up buttons), shivering and a bad case of the 'umbles' (fumbles, mumbles, grumbles, stumbles). The key elements of treatment are changing the environment to one where heat loss is minimised, changing out of any wet clothing, adding dry clothes with wind- and water-proof layers, adding insulation and providing fuel (water and carbohydrate) to allow shivering to build the internal temperature. In severe hypothermia, shivering actually stops; this is a medical emergency requiring rapid evacuation in addition to the above measures.

Spider Bites

NZ has two poisonous spiders, the native katipo (not very poisonous and uncommon to the point of being endangered) and the introduced (thanks, Australia) white-tailed spider (also uncommon). White-tailed spider bites have been known to cause ulcers that are very difficult to heal. Clean the wound thoroughly and seek medical assistance if an ulcer develops.

Surf Beaches & Drowning

NZ has exceptional surf beaches, particularly on the western, southern and eastern coasts. The power of the surf can fluctuate as a result of the varying slope of the seabed at many beaches. Check with local surf life-saving organisations before entering the surf and be aware of your own limitations and expertise.

Ultraviolet Light Exposure

NZ has one of the highest rates of skin cancer in the world, so you should monitor UV exposure closely. UV exposure is greatest between 10am and 4pm – avoid skin exposure during

these times. Always use SPF30+ sunscreen, making sure you apply it 30 minutes before exposure and that you reapply regularly to minimise sun damage.

Water

Tap water is universally safe in NZ. Increasing numbers of streams, rivers and lakes, however, are being contaminated by bugs that cause diarrhoea, making water purification when tramping essential. The simplest way of purifying water is to boil it thoroughly. You should also consider purchasing a water filter. It's very important when buying a filter to read the specifications so that you know exactly what it removes from the water and what it doesn't. Simple filtering will not remove all dangerous organisms, so if you cannot boil water it should be treated chemically. Chlorine tablets will kill many pathogens, but not parasites such as giardia or amoebic cysts. Iodine is more effective in purifying water. Follow the directions carefully and remember that too much iodine can be harmful.

Language

New Zealand has two official languages: English and Maori. English is the language you'll usually hear spoken, but Maori, long on the decline, is making a comeback. You can use English to speak to anyone in NZ – all Maori people speak English. There are some occasions, though, when knowing a little Maori is useful, such as when visiting a *marae*, where often only Maori is spoken. Maori is also useful to know since many places in NZ have Maori names.

KIWI ENGLISH

Like the people of other countries in the world who speak English, New Zealanders have a unique way of speaking the language. The flattening (some would call it slaughtering) of vowels is the most distinctive feature of Kiwi pronunciation. The NZ treatment of 'fish and chips' – 'fush and chups' – is an endless source of delight for Australians. In the North Island sentences often have 'eh!' attached to the end. In the far south a rolled 'r' is practised widely, a holdover from that region's Scottish heritage – it's especially noticeable in Southland. See the Glossary on p729 for an explanation of Kiwi English words and phrases.

A Personal Kiwi-Yankee Dictionary by Louis S Leland Jr is an often hilarious book of translations and explains some of the quirks that distinguish Kiwi and American ways of speaking English. Yanks will love it.

MAORI

The Maori have a vividly chronicled history, recorded in songs and chants which dramatically recall the migration to NZ from Polynesian Hawaiki and other important events. Early missionaries were the first to record the language in a written form, and achieved this with only 15 letters of the English alphabet.

Maori is closely related to other Polynesian languages (including Hawaiian, Tahitian and Cook Islands Maori). In fact, NZ Maori and Hawaiian have the same degree of lexical similarity as Spanish and French,

even though over 7000km separates Honolulu and Auckland.

The Maori language was never dead – it was always used in Maori ceremonies – but over time familiarity with it was definitely on the decline. Fortunately, recent years have seen a revival of interest in it, and this forms an integral part of the renaissance of Maoritanga (Maori culture). Many Maori people who had heard the language spoken on the *marae* for years but had not used it in their day-to-day lives are now studying it and speaking it fluently. Maori is now taught in schools throughout NZ, some TV programs and news reports are broadcast in it and many English place names are being renamed in Maori. Even government departments have been rechristened with Maori names: for example the Inland Revenue Department is also known as Te Tari Taake (the last word is actually *take*, which means 'levy', but the department has chosen to stress the long 'a' by spelling it 'aa').

In many places, Maori people have come together to provide instruction in their language and culture to young children; the idea is for them to grow up speaking both Maori and English, and to develop a familiarity with Maori tradition. It's a matter of some pride to have fluency in the language. On some *marae* only Maori can be spoken, which encourages everyone to speak it and emphasises the distinct Maori character of the sacred sites.

Pronunciation

Maori is a fluid, poetic language and surprisingly easy to pronounce once you remember to split each word (some can be amazingly long) into separate syllables.

Most consonants in Maori – **h, k, m, n, p, t** and **w** – are pronounced much the same as in English. The Maori **r** is a flapped sound (not rolled) with the tongue near the front of the mouth. It's closer to the English 'l' in pronunciation.

The two combinations of consonants **ng** and **wh** require special attention. The **ng** is

MAORI GEOGRAPHICAL TERMS

The following words form part of many place names in NZ:

<i>a</i> – of	<i>pouri</i> – sad, dark, gloomy
<i>ana</i> – cave	<i>puke</i> – hill
<i>ara</i> – way, path, road	<i>puna</i> – spring, hole, fountain
<i>awa</i> – river or valley	<i>rangi</i> – sky, heavens
<i>heke</i> – descend	<i>raro</i> – north
<i>hiku</i> – end, tail	<i>rei</i> – cherished possession
<i>hine</i> – girl, daughter	<i>roa</i> – long
<i>ika</i> – fish	<i>roto</i> – lake
<i>iti</i> – small	<i>rua</i> – hole in the ground; two
<i>kahurangi</i> – treasured possession; special greenstone	<i>runga</i> – above
<i>kai</i> – food	<i>tahuna</i> – beach, sandbank
<i>kainga</i> – village	<i>tane</i> – man
<i>kaka</i> – parrot	<i>tangata</i> – people
<i>kare</i> – rippling	<i>tapu</i> – sacred, forbidden, taboo
<i>kati</i> – shut or close	<i>tata</i> – close to; dash against; twin islands
<i>koura</i> – crayfish	<i>tawaha</i> – entrance, opening
<i>makariri</i> – cold	<i>tawahi</i> – the other side (of a river or lake)
<i>manga</i> – stream or tributary	<i>te</i> – the (singular)
<i>manu</i> – bird	<i>tonga</i> – south
<i>maunga</i> – mountain	<i>ure</i> – male genitals
<i>moana</i> – sea or lake	<i>uru</i> – west
<i>moko</i> – tattoo	<i>wahine</i> – woman
<i>motu</i> – island	<i>wai</i> – water
<i>mutu</i> – finished, ended, over	<i>waingaro</i> – lost; waters that disappear in certain seasons
<i>nga</i> – the (plural)	<i>waha</i> – broken
<i>noa</i> – ordinary; not <i>tapu</i>	<i>waka</i> – canoe
<i>nui</i> – big, great	<i>wera</i> – burnt or warm; floating
<i>nuku</i> – distance	<i>wero</i> – challenge
<i>o</i> – of, place of ...	<i>whaka...</i> – to act as ...
<i>one</i> – beach, sand or mud	<i>whanau</i> – extended family
<i>pa</i> – fortified village	<i>whanga</i> – harbour, bay or inlet
<i>papa</i> – flat land, broad slab	<i>whare</i> – house
<i>pipi</i> – shellfish	<i>whenua</i> – land or country
<i>pohatu</i> – stone	<i>whiti</i> – east
<i>poto</i> – short	

Knowledge of just a few such words can help you make sense of many Maori place names. For example: Waikaremoana is the Sea (*moana*) of Rippling (*kare*) Waters (*wai*); Rotorua means the Second (*rua*) Lake (*roto*); and Taumatawhakatangihaangakoauauotamateaturipukakapikimaungahoronukupokaiwhenuakitanatahu means... well, perhaps you'd better read The Longest Place Name in the World in the East Coast chapter (p396) for that translation. Some easier place names composed of words in this list:

Aramoana – Sea (<i>moana</i>) Path (<i>ara</i>)	Te Puke – The (<i>te</i>) Hill (<i>puke</i>)
Awaroa – Long (<i>roa</i>) River (<i>awa</i>)	Urewera – Burnt (<i>wera</i>) Penis (<i>ure</i>)
Kaitangata – Eat (<i>kai</i>) People (<i>tangata</i>)	Waimakariri – Cold (<i>makariri</i>) Water (<i>wai</i>)
Maunganui – Great (<i>nui</i>) Mountain (<i>maunga</i>)	Wainui – Great (<i>nui</i>) Waters (<i>wai</i>)
Opouri – Place of (<i>o</i>) Sadness (<i>pouri</i>)	Whakatane – To Act (<i>whaka</i>) as a Man (<i>tane</i>)
Te Araroa – The (<i>te</i>) Long (<i>roa</i>) Path (<i>ara</i>)	Whangarei – Cherished (<i>rei</i>) Harbour (<i>whanga</i>)

(Note that the adjective comes after the noun in Maori constructions. Thus 'cold water' is *wai makariri* not *makariri wai*.)

pronounced as in the English words 'singing' or 'running', and can be used at the beginning of words as well as at the end. To practise, just say 'ing' over and over, isolate the 'ng' part of it and then practise using it at the beginning of a word rather than at the end.

The **wh** also has a unique pronunciation in Maori – generally as a soft English 'f'. This pronunciation is used in many place names in NZ, such as Whakatane, Whangaroa and Whakapapa (all pronounced as if they begin with a soft 'f'). There is some local variation, however: in the region around the Whanganui River, for example, the **wh** is pronounced as in the English words 'when' and 'why'.

When learning to speak Maori the correct pronunciation of the vowels is very important. The examples below are only a rough guideline – to really get it right you'll have to listen carefully to someone who knows how to pronounce the language correctly. Each vowel has both a long and a short sound with long vowels often denoted in text by a macron (a line over the letter) or a double vowel. We have not indicated long/short vowel forms in this book.

VOWELS

a	as in 'large', with no 'r' sound
e	as in 'get'
i	as in 'marine'
o	as in 'pork'
u	as the 'oo' in 'moon'

DIPHTHONGS

ae, ai	as the 'y' in 'sky'
ao, au	as the 'ow' in 'how'
ea	as in 'bear'
ei	as in 'vein'
eo	as 'eh-oh'
eu	as 'eh-oo'
ia	as in the name 'Ian'
ie	as the 'ye' in 'yet'
io	as the 'ye o' in 'ye old'
iu	as the 'ue' in 'cue'
oa	as in 'roar'
oe	as in 'toe'
oi	as in 'toil'
ou	as the 'ow' in 'sow'
ua	as the 'ewe' in 'fewer'

Each syllable ends in a vowel and there is never more than one vowel in a syllable. There are no silent letters.

There are many Maori phrasebooks, grammar books and Maori–English dictionaries if you want to take a closer look at the language. Learning a few basic greetings is an excellent thing to do, especially if you plan to go onto a *marae*, where you'll be greeted in Maori.

The *Collins Maori Phrase Book* by Patricia Tauroa is an ideal book for starting to speak the language, with sections on every-day conversation and using the language in a cultural context (such as on a *marae*). Lonely Planet's *South Pacific Phrasebook* has a section on the Maori language and several other Pacific languages (Tongan, Samoan, Cook Island Maori) that you may hear spoken around Wellington or South Auckland.

Other English–Maori dictionaries include the *English–Maori–English Dictionary* by Bruce Biggs, and the *Reed Dictionary of Modern Maori* by PM Ryan, which is one of the most authoritative.

Greetings & Small Talk

Maori greetings are finding increased popularity; don't be surprised if you're greeted with *Kia ora*. Try these:

<i>Haere mai!</i>	Welcome!
<i>Kia ora.</i>	Hello/Good luck/ Good health.
<i>Tena koe.</i>	Hello. (to one person)
<i>Tena korua.</i>	Hello. (to two people)
<i>Tena koutou.</i>	Hello. (to three or more people)
<i>E noho ra.</i>	Goodbye. (to person staying)
<i>Haere ra.</i>	Goodbye. (to person going)

<i>Kei te pehea koe?</i>	How are you? (to one person)
<i>Kei te pehea korua?</i>	How are you? (to two people)
<i>Kei te pehea koutou?</i>	How are you? (to three or more)
<i>Kei te pai.</i>	Very well, thanks/That's fine.

Glossary

This glossary is a list of abbreviations, 'Kiwi English', Maori and slang terms and phrases you may come across in New Zealand. Also see the Maori Geographical Terms boxed text (p727) in the Language chapter for Maori words that pop up again and again in NZ place names.

AA – New Zealand's Automobile Association, which provides road information and roadside assistance
across the ditch – referring to Australia, across the Tasman Sea

afghan – popular homemade chocolate biscuit (origin of recipe unknown, but unlikely to be Afghanistan)

All Blacks – NZ's revered national rugby union team (the name comes from 'All Backs', which is what the press called the NZ rugby team on an early visit to England); this moniker has started a trend for many national sporting teams to be similarly nicknamed (including the Tall Blacks for the basketball team, the Black Caps for the cricket team and, briefly before being dropped, the Black Cocks for the badminton team!)

ANZAC – Australia and New Zealand Army Corps

Aoraki – Maori name for Mt Cook, meaning 'Cloud Piercer'

Aotearoa – Maori name for NZ, most often translated as 'Land of the Long White Cloud'

ariki – chief

atua – spirits or gods

awa – river

B&B – 'bed and breakfast' accommodation

bach – holiday home, usually a wooden cottage (pronounced 'batch'); see also *crib*

backpackers – independent travellers to NZ, often (but not always) travelling the country on a budget; the term also refers to hostels, the accommodation catering to these travellers

Barrier, the – local name for Great Barrier Island in the Hauraki Gulf

BBH – Budget Backpacker Hostels; a popular hostelry affiliation

Beehive – Parliament House in Wellington, so-called because of its distinctive shape

black-water rafting – rafting or tubing underground in a cave or *tomo*

blo-karting – sand sailing

bogan – see Westie

boozer – public bar

bro – literally 'brother'; usually meaning mate, as in 'just off to see the bros'

BYO – 'bring your own' (usually applies to alcohol at a restaurant or café)

BYOW – 'bring your own wine', implying you can't bring beer or any other alcoholic beverages

cervena – farmed deer

chardy – Chardonnay

chillie bin – cooler; esky; large insulated box for keeping food and drink cold

choice/chur – fantastic; great

ciggies – cigarettes

crib – the name for a *bach* in Otago and Southland

cuzzie, cuz – cousin; relative or mate, most often used by Maori to refer to fellow Maori; see also *bro*

cuzzie bro – an emphasised version of both *cuzzie* and *bro*

dairy – small corner store that sells milk, bread, newspapers, ice cream and pretty much everything else

daggy – uncool; from the dags that hang off sheep's bottoms

DB&B – 'dinner, bed and breakfast' accommodation

DOC – Department of Conservation (or *Te Papa Atawhai*); government department which administers national parks and thus all tracks and huts

domain – open grassed area in a town or city, often the focus of civic amenities such as gardens, picnic areas and bowling clubs (and sometimes camping grounds)

Dorkland – derogatory reference to the big city
dropkick – a certain method of kicking a rugby ball; a personal insult

eh – roughly translates as 'don't you agree?' and is commonly added to the end of many *Kiwi* sentences, usually followed by *bro* (as in '*Choice jandals, eh bro?*')

farmstay – accommodation on a *Kiwi* farm where you're encouraged to join in the typical day-to-day activities

football – rugby, either union or league; occasionally soccer

freezing works – slaughterhouse or abattoir for sheep and/or cattle

Godzone – New Zealand (from Richard Seddon who referred to NZ as 'God's own country')

good as gold, good as – very good; no problem

Great Walks – a set of nine popular tramping tracks within NZ

greenstone – jade; *pounamu*

gumboots – rubber boots or Wellingtons; originated from diggers on the gum-fields

haka – any dance, but usually refers to the traditional challenge; war dance
hakari – feast
handle – beer glass with a handle
hangi – oven made by digging a hole and steaming food in baskets over embers in the hole; a feast of Maori food
hapu – subtribe or smaller tribal grouping
hard case – hilarious, unusual or strong-willed character
Hawaiki – Polynesian homeland from where the Maori tribes migrated by canoe (probably Ra'iatea in the Society Islands); also a name for the Afterworld
hei tiki – carved, stylised human figure worn around the neck representing the first human and supposed to bring good luck; also called a *tiki*
hiko – march, walk, sometimes a protest march or pilgrimage
hoa – friend; usually pronounced 'e hoā'
hokey pokey – delicious variety of vanilla ice cream with butterscotch chips
hoki – type of fish common in fish and chip shops
homestay – accommodation in a family house where you're treated as one of the family
hongi – Maori greeting; the pressing of noses and sharing of life breath
hui – gathering; meeting

Interislander – large ferries crossing Cook Strait between Wellington and Picton
i-SITE – information centre
'Is it what!' – strong affirmation or agreement; 'Yes isn't it!'
Islander – Pacific Islander; see also *'Nesian, PI* and *Poly iwi* – large tribal grouping with common lineage back to the original migration from *Hawaiki*; people; tribe

Jafa – Just Another Fucking Aucklander
jandals – a contraction of Japanese sandals; flip-flops; thongs; usually rubber footwear
jersey – jumper, usually woollen; the shirt worn by rugby players
jiff – short measurement of time (as in 'I'll be back in a jiff'); see also *two ticks*
judder bars – bumps in the road to make you drive slowly; speed humps

K Rd – Karangahape Rd in Auckland
ka kite (ano) – see you again; goodbye
ka pai – good; excellent
kai – food; almost any word with *kai* in it has a connection with food
kainga – village; pre-European unfortified Maori village
kapa haka – Traditional Maori group singing and dancing
karakia – prayer, incantation
kaumatua – highly respected members of a tribe; the people you would ask for permission to enter a *marae*

kauri – native pine
kina – sea urchins, a Maori delicacy
Kiwi – A New Zealander; an adjective to mean anything relating to NZ
kiwi – the flightless, nocturnal brown bird with a long beak that is the national symbol
kiwiana – the collective term for anything uniquely connected to NZ life and culture, especially from years gone by, and likely to bring on waves of nostalgia in any expat *Kiwi* (examples include the *Buzzy Bee*, *hokey pokey*, *jandals* and the *pavlova*)
kiwi fruit – small, succulent fruit with fuzzy brown skin and juicy green flesh; a Chinese gooseberry; never called a *kiwi*
koha – donation
kohanga reo – schools where Maori language and culture are at the forefront of the education process; also called language nest schools
korero – to talk
kumara – Polynesian sweet potato, a Maori staple food
kunekune – type of wild pig introduced by Chinese gold diggers in the 19th century
Kupe – early Polynesian navigator from *Hawaiki*, credited with the discovery of the islands that are now NZ

L&P – Lemon & Paeroa; lemon-flavoured fizzy drink
laters – 'see you later'
league – rugby league football
lounge bar – more upmarket bar than a public bar; called a 'ladies' bar' in some countries

Mainlander – self-referential term for South Islander
mana – spiritual quality of a person or object; prestige; authority of a chief or priest
manaia – traditional carving design; literally means 'bird-headed man'
'Mandel, the – the Coromandel Peninsula
manuhiri – visitor; guest
Maori – indigenous people of NZ
Maoritanga – Maori culture
marae – literally refers to the sacred ground in front of the Maori meeting house, more commonly used to refer to the entire complex of buildings
marakihau – sea monster
Maui – a figure in Maori (Polynesian) mythology
maunga – mountain
mauri – life force/principle
mere – a *patu* made of *greenstone*
metal/metalled road – gravel (unsealed) road
MMP – Mixed Member Proportional; the electoral system used in NZ and Germany; a form of proportional voting
moa – large, extinct flightless bird
moe – sleep
moko – tattoo; usually refers to facial tattoos
Moriōri – isolated Polynesian group, inhabitants of the Chatham Islands

motorway – freeway or expressway
marnis – something or someone shameful
munter – see *Westie*

naiad – rigid-hull inflatable boat (used for dolphin swimming, whale-watching etc)
'Naki, the – Taranaki
'Nesian – Pacific Islander; see also *Islander, PI* and *Poly nga* – the (plural); see also *te ngai/ngati* – literally, 'the people of' or 'the descendants of'; tribe (on the South Island it's pronounced 'kai')
NZ – the universal term for New Zealand; pronounced 'enzed'

OE – Overseas Experience; a working holiday abroad, traditionally to the UK (the young *Kiwi's* near-mandatory 'tour of duty')

pa – fortified Maori village, usually on a hill top
Pacific Rim – term used to describe modern NZ cuisine; cuisine with an innovative use of local produce, especially seafood, with imported styles
Pakeha – Maori for a white or European person
pakihi – unproductive and often swampy land on the South Island's west coast; pronounced 'par-kee'
papa – large blue-grey mudstones; the word comes from the Maori for Earth Mother
parapenting – paragliding
Pasifika – Pacific Island culture
patch – gang logo worn on clothing
patu – flat war club made of wood, bone or greenstone
paua – abalone; tough shellfish pounded, minced, then made into patties (fritters), which are available in almost every NZ fish and chip shop; the beautiful, iridescent *paua* shell is often used in decoration and jewellery
pavlova – meringue cake, usually topped with cream and *kiwi fruit*; the quintessential *Kiwi* dessert
PI – Pacific Islander; see also *Islander, Poly* and *'Nesian pig islander* – derogatory term used by a person from one island for someone from the other island
pillocking – 'surfing' across mud flats on a rubbish-bin lid
pipi – common edible bivalve
piss – urine; urinate; alcohol, as in 'get on the piss'
poi – ball of woven flax
poi dance – women's formation dance that involves singing and manipulating a *poi*
polly – politician
Poly – Pacific Islander; see also *Islander, PI* and *'Nesian pou* – wooden post, sometimes carved
ponga – the *silver fern*; called a bungy (pronounced 'bungee', with a soft 'g', in parts of the South Island)
pounamu – Maori name for *greenstone*
powhiri – traditional Maori welcome onto a *marae*

quad bikes – four-wheel farm bikes

Rakiura – literally 'Land of Glowing Skies'; Maori name for Stewart Island, which is important in Maori mythology as the anchor of *Mau'i's* canoe
rap jump – face-down abseil
'rattle your dags' – move quickly; from the dags which hang off sheep's bottoms
raupo – bulrush
Remuera tractor – 4WD, after wealthy suburbanites pointlessly driving them
Rheiny – affectionate term for Rheineck beer
rigger – a refillable half-gallon plastic bottle for holding draught beer
rip – dangerously strong current running away from the shore at a beach
Roaring Forties – the ocean between 40° and 50° south, known for very strong winds
Rotovegas – derogatory term relating to the touristy aspects of Rotorua
rumble – see *scrap*

sav – sauvignon blanc
scrap – a fight
section – small block of land
silver fern – the symbol worn by the *All Blacks* and other national sportsfolk on their jerseys, representative of the underside of a *ponga* leaf; the national netball team are called the Silver Ferns
Steinie – affectionate term for Steinlager beer
superette – grocery store or small supermarket
sweet, sweet as – all-purpose term like *choice*: fantastic, great

taiaha – spear
tall poppy syndrome – NZ tradition of diminishing successful people, as in 'tall poppies get their heads chopped off'
Tamaki Makaurau – Maori name for Auckland
tane – man
tangata – people
tangata whenua – people of the land; local people
taniwha – awe-inspiring water spirit
taonga – something of great value; a treasure
tapu – a strong force in Maori life, with numerous meanings; in its simplest form it means sacred, forbidden, taboo
tatts – tattoos, often of a gang nature; as opposed to *moko*
tauihu – canoe prow
te – the (singular); see also *nga*
Te Kooti – East Coast Maori prophet and rebellion leader
Te Papa – literally 'our place', the national museum in Wellington
Te Papa Atawhai – Maori name for *DOC*
te reo – literally 'the language'; the Maori language
tiki – short for *hei tiki*
tiki tour – scenic tour; roundabout way
toheroa – large clam

tohunga – priest; wizard; general expert

toi toi – tall native grass

tomo – hole; entrance to a cave

tramp – bush walk; trek; hike

tua tua – type of shellfish

tuatara – prehistoric reptile dating back to the age of dinosaurs

tui – native parson bird

tukutuku – Maori wall panels in *marae* and churches

tuna – eel

two ticks – short measurement of time (as in ‘I’ll be there in *two ticks*’); see also *jiff*

umu – earth oven

urupa – burial site

varsity – university

wahine – woman

wai – water

waiata – song

Waikikamukau – mythical NZ town, far from anywhere (and pronounced along the lines of ‘Why-kick-a-moo-cow’)

wairua – spirit

Waitangi – short way of referring to the Treaty of Waitangi

waka – canoe

Warriors – NZ’s popular rugby league club, affiliated with Australia’s NRL

Watties – the NZ food and canning giant; NZ’s answer to Heinz (until Heinz took over the company)

Wellywood – Wellington, because of its thriving film industry

Westie – from West Auckland; rough-edged fellow, probably wearing a black tee-shirt, drinking beer and listening to AC/DC; see also *bogan*, *munter*

whakairo rakau – Maori woodcarving

whakapapa – genealogy

whanau – family

whare – house

wharepuni – sleeping house

whare runanga – meeting house

whare whakairo – carved meeting house

whenua – land

whitebait – tiny translucent fish that is scooped up in nets and eaten whole (head, eyes and all!) or made into patties

wopwops – remote; ‘out in the *wopwops*’ is out in the middle of nowhere

zorbing – rolling down a hill inside an inflatable plastic ball

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