

New Zealand - closer than you think

[Christchurch International Airport](#) is a modern facility, well equipped for the daily arrival and departure of large groups of visitors. Christchurch is the gateway to some of the world's finest scenery, such as Mount Cook, Fiordland and the Southern Lakes. The airport is a stepping stone for a huge number of visitors and touring groups.



The Christchurch International airport is serviced by the major airlines of Air New Zealand, Singapore Airlines Qantas Airways, Korean Air, Freedom Air and Pacific Blue. These airlines have connecting flights with most international airlines, which makes traveling to Christchurch simple and efficient.

Travel Times To Christchurch

Sydney	3 hours 05 minutes
Melbourne	3 hours 35 minutes
Brisbane	3 hours 40 minutes
Singapore	10 hours 20 minutes
Narita	11 hours 20 minutes
Seoul	12 hours 45 minutes
Los Angeles	13 hours 45 minutes
Central Europe	30 hours approx

New Zealand's largest city, Auckland, is only a ninety minute flight from Christchurch. The Auckland International Airport is additionally serviced by Aerolineas Argentinas, Air Pacific, Emirates, Cathay Pacific, Singapore Airline, Thai Airways, Malaysia Airlines, China Airlines, Korean Air JAL, United and Garuda Indonesia.

Singapore, Emirates Qantas and Air New Zealand fly into Christchurch, while others enter via Auckland

Domestically, Air New Zealand, Qantas, Freedom Air, and Pacific Blue (from Nov 07) provide a comprehensive schedule of daily flights to and from Christchurch,

For more information about New Zealand, check out the official [Tourism New Zealand](http://www.tourism.govt.nz) website

Visitor Information



Population

New Zealand is an independent nation and a member of the British Commonwealth. It has a diverse multi-cultural population of 4 million people, the majority of whom are of British descent. New Zealand's indigenous Maori make up around 14 percent of the population.

Geographic Size

New Zealand is similar in geographic size to the State of Victoria in Australia, California in the U.S.A., Japan and Britain.

Language

English and Maori are the two official languages of New Zealand. English is the common language of New Zealanders. Translators are available for most languages.

Money

New Zealand has decimal currency based on dollar and cent denominations.

Banks - Trading banks and Bureaux de Change are open Monday-Friday 9.00am to 4.30pm except Tuesday when open 9.30am to 4.30pm. Banking facilities at international airports provide foreign exchange services for international arrivals and departures, including weekends (occasionally closed for late-night departures).

Credit Cards - The practice of payment by credit card is widely accepted throughout New Zealand. Those in common use include Visa, MasterCard, American Express and Diners Club.

Traveller's Cheques - Traveller's Cheques can be changed at trading banks, large city hotels and many other trading establishments.

Shopping

Visitors to Christchurch are able to shop within the central city, or in one of the many shopping malls. Normal shopping hours are 9.00 am to 5.30pm Monday-Friday with one late shopping night to 9.00pm (usually Thursday or Friday). Additionally many city and suburban shops and malls are open all day Saturday and Sunday with variations in opening and closing times. Corner stores, service stations (petrol/gas) and most souvenir shops are open 7 days.

Duty Free - Duty free stores are located at the airport and in the city centre.

Taxes

Goods and services in New Zealand are subject to 12.5% Goods and Services Tax (GST). The Goods and Services Tax cannot be claimed back by visitors.

Departure Tax - NZ\$22-NZ\$25 nationwide. A taxation clearance is not required of visitors on departure.

Important - Any income earned within New Zealand during a visit is liable to tax.

What to wear

New Zealand's relaxed lifestyle lends itself to an informal style of dress. Even in restaurants and nightclubs neat, casual clothes are acceptable.

Medical and Emergency Services

All emergency services can be contacted throughout New Zealand by dialling 111. New Zealand's medical and hospital services are both public and private. Please note - medical services are not free to visitors (except as a result of an accident). It is strongly recommended that visitors purchase health insurance.

Visitors requiring medical services, drugs or pharmaceutical supplies after normal shopping hours should check with the hotel/motel reception or the local telephone directory.

There are no snakes or dangerous wild animals in New Zealand. The only poisonous creature is the very rare katipo spider.

Driving Licences

Reciprocal driving rights exist between New Zealand and most countries. Most rental car companies will ask for an International Driver's License. The driver will need to be over 21 years of age.

Telephone/Communications

Local telephone calls from coin or card-operated public telephones cost 50c per call. Most hotels have facsimile facilities. Email and Internet facilities are also widely available.

Postal Service

Post Offices generally open from 8.30am to 5.00pm Monday to Friday with some late nights. A full national and international service is available.

Tipping

Employees in New Zealand do not depend on tips or gratuities as part of their income.

Electricity

Electricity throughout New Zealand is supplied at 230/240 volts, 50 hertz. Hotels and motels provide 110 volt 20 watt sockets for electric razors only. Most power sockets in use in New Zealand accept three-pin plugs or similar adaptors.

Water

All New Zealand cities and towns have excellent public water supplies; tap (faucet) water is fresh and safe to drink.

Time

New Zealand is close to the International Date Line and is 12 hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time. Daylight Saving Time - an advance of 1 hour per day - is observed from early October to late March.

Public Holidays

New Year's Day	1 January
New Year Holiday	2 January
Waitangi Day	6 February
Good Friday	Easter dates vary each year over March/April
Easter Monday	Easter dates vary each year over March/April
Anzac Day	25 April

Queen's Birthday	1st Monday in June
Labour Day	4th Monday in October NOTE THIS 28 /10/08
Show Day	Friday - 3 weeks after Labour Day (Christchurch only)
Christmas Day	25 December
Boxing Day	26 December