

Weather & Destination Specific Information

Fields & Flavors of Australia & New Zealand

For any questions or concerns about your upcoming tour not addressed here, please call 1-800-826-2266

WEATHER & DESTINATION SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Time Zones: Continental Australia can be divided into three time zones, Eastern Standard Time, Central Standard Time, and Western Standard Time. EST (Sydney) is 15 hours* ahead of Central Time. New Zealand has a single universal time zone which is 17* hours ahead of Central Time.

*During daylight savings time (summertime) from October – March, clocks are advanced one hour.

Weather: Average High/Low

City	March
Sydney, AU	76° F/63° F
Cairns, AU	87° F/72° F
Christchurch, NZ	66° F/48° F
Queenstown, NZ	66° F/45° F
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Seasons: New Zealand and Australian seasons are the opposite of the Northern Hemisphere's:

Spring: September – November
Summer: December – February
Autumn: March – May
Winter: June – August

Climate: You can relatively divide Australia into two climate zones. Northern Queensland, the Northern Territory, and the northern regions of Western Australia, approximately 40% of the continent, can be designated as the Tropical Zone. The remaining areas of the country lie in the Temperate Zone. In the Tropical Zone there are two seasons and in the Temperate Zone, four seasons. New Zealand's climate is complicated and varies from warm subtropical in the far north to cool temperate climates in the far south. South Island has extensive snowfall during winter and temperatures can dip to a mean daily minimum of 30 degrees.

Language: English is the written and spoken language of Australia & New Zealand with an expression or two that can confuse even the English. Do not hesitate to ask questions; people are friendly and approachable.

Currency: The unit of currency in Australia is the Australian dollar and New Zealand uses the New Zealand dollar. Currency exchange rates are subject to change on a daily basis. A helpful web site for referencing current rates is www.oanda.com.

Visa: Visitors of all nationalities (except Australian & New Zealand passport holders) must obtain a visa prior to arrival in Australia and New Zealand. Instructions on applying for electronic visas will be sent to you in advance.

Electrical Current: The electric current in the countries you will be visiting is 220 volts, 50 cycles. Electric outlets and plugs are different from those in North America. An adapter is required to plug your device into an electrical socket. However, a voltage converter is only required if your device is not compatible with 220 volts. Check the voltage of any device that you are thinking of bringing. If the tag on your device lists 110-220 volts, then you will not need a converter. Adapters and converters are available at luggage, department, and electronics stores.

International Driver/Guides and Gratuities: Holiday Vacations has arranged for International Driver/Guides to provide commentary on customs, traditions, language difference and history. Your Driver/Guides can also suggest attractions, restaurants, and shops. Recommended gratuity for your Driver/Guide in Australia is \$2.00 Australian dollars per person per day and \$3.00 New Zealand dollars per person per day for your Driver/Guide in New Zealand.

Comfort on International Flights: Hydration is key. Flying is dehydrating so drink plenty of water or other non-alcoholic, non-caffeinated beverages. Wear comfortable layers since the cabins can sometimes be chilly. Wearing compression socks helps blood circulation in legs, ankles, and feet. Eye masks, neck pillows, and earplugs may also help you get more rest.

Bringing Food into Australia & New Zealand: Border control has strict rules on what you can bring into Australia and New Zealand. The majority of restricted or prohibited items are those which pose a biosecurity risk to the country's fragile and

unique environments. For this reason, it's best to be mindful about what you pack in your luggage and know what you need to declare when you arrive. To be on the safe side declare any food you have in your checked luggage or carry-on. Failure to declare a risk item or falsely declaring an item will likely incur an instant fine. Foods you may not bring include, but are not limited to, fruits and vegetables, raw nuts, and seeds, fresh meat or fish, honey, or bee products, eggs, and dairy products.

Food: Australian health and food regulations are second to none in application. In the larger cities you can find restaurants with cuisines imported from the world over. Food is fresh and abundant. Markets and supermarkets are packed with both local and imported foods. Fruit and vegetables, tropic or temperate, are fresh and plentiful.

Hotel dining rooms and restaurants reflect New Zealand's reputation as a leading producer of meat and dairy produce. New Zealand lamb is probably the best known, but you will find excellent beef and pork dishes on most menus – and one thing you can be certain of are the generous portions. Locally produced vegetables are plentiful and good – try kumara, a native sweet potato. The kiwifruit is probably the best known of New Zealand's range of fruit. Its brilliant green slices enhance the appearance of many a dessert. We recommend Pavlova, the country's traditional dessert, a special type of fluffy meringue.

Both countries feature a wide range of seafood – snapper, barramundi, grouper, and John Dory are just a few of the delicious varieties. Seasonal delicacies such as whitebait, oysters, crayfish, scallops, and game birds are recommended. In addition to restaurants offering Australian and New Zealand specialties, a wide variety of ethnic restaurants can be found. Visitors will find no shortage of tearooms or “take away” restaurants for quick meals.

Tippling at Restaurants: Employed persons in New Zealand do not depend upon tips or gratuities for their income. Service charges are not added to hotel or restaurant bills. In Australia, a 10% tip is an acceptable gratuity.

Optional Activities: While on your tour, you will have some leisure time and an opportunity to enjoy optional activities. Some of these optional activities may include:

- Hot Air Ballooning
- Scuba & Helmet Diving
- Bungy Jumping
- Theatrical performances

Water: All tap water is safe to drink. The hot and cold-water faucets may be the opposite of North America and hot water can be extremely hot.

Souvenirs: The following is a list of items travelers often like to bring home:

- New Zealand greenstone (jade)
- New Zealand paua shell used in making jewelry
- Maori wooden or bone carvings
- Woolen goods and sheepskins
- Australian opals ranging from milky white to fiery red and blue in color
- Aboriginal art and boomerangs
- Australian folk music
- Outback clothing
- Destination DVD's – There are two major DVD formats worldwide, NTSC and PAL. NTSC is used in the U.S. Be sure to ask when in doubt.

Stores and shops are usually open 8:30 am – 5:30 pm Monday to Friday and often on Saturday. In some areas, late night shopping occurs on Thursday or Friday. Many shops, except for small neighborhood groceries and dairies (milk bars), are closed on Sunday.

Clothing Size Conversion Chart:

S-M-L	USA	New Zealand & Australia
S	2	6
S	4	8
M	6	10
M	8	12
L	10	14
L	12	16
XL/1X	14	18

1X/2X	16	20
2X	18	22
3X	20	24

Departure Tax: All visitors are required to pay a departure tax before departing Australia and New Zealand. This airport tax is included in your Holiday Vacations tour cost.