



# Easter Island (Rapa Nui)

032

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## Why Go?

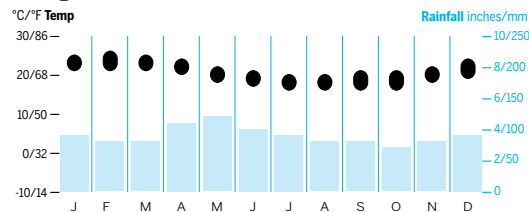
Few areas in the world possess a more mystical pull than this tiny speck of land, one of the most isolated places on Earth. Here, it's hard to feel connected to Chile, over 3700km to the east, let alone the wider world. Endowed with the most logic-defying statues in the world – the strikingly familiar *moai* – Easter Island (Rapa Nui to its native Polynesian inhabitants) emanates a magnetic, mysterious vibe.

But Easter Island is much more than an open-air museum. Diving, snorkeling and surfing are fabulous. On land, there's no better ecofriendly way to experience the island's savage beauty than on foot, from a bike saddle or on horseback. But if all you want to do is recharge the batteries, a couple of superb expanses of white sand beckon.

Although Easter Island is world famous and visitors are on the increase, everything remains small and personable – it's all about eco-travel.

## When to Go

### Hanga Roa



**Jan–Mar** Peak season. Highest prices and scarce hotels around February's Tapati Rapa Nui festival.

**Jul–Aug** Chilly weather, not ideal for beaches but a good time for hiking and horseback riding.

**Apr–Jun & Oct–Dec** The shoulder season is not a bad time to visit; the climate is fairly temperate.

# HANGA ROA

POP 6700

Hanga Roa is the island's sole town. Upbeat it ain't, but with most sights almost on its doorstep and nearly all the island's hotels, restaurants, shops and services lying within its boundaries, it's the obvious place to anchor oneself. It features a picturesque fish-

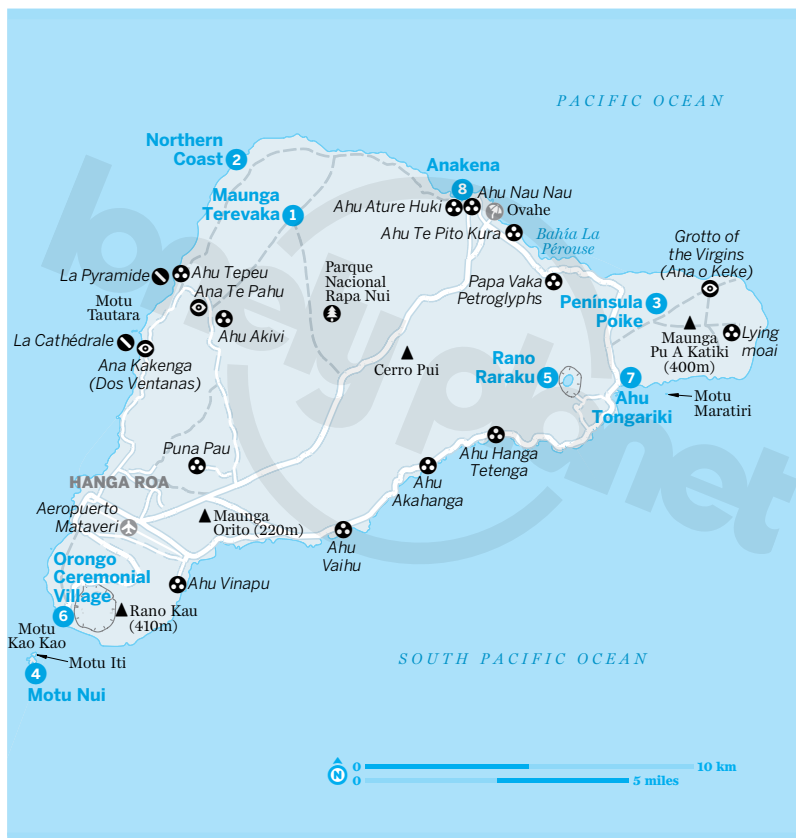
ing harbor, a couple of modest beaches and surf spots, and a few archaeological sites.

## Sights

### Museo Antropológico Sebastián Englert

MUSEUM

(☎032-255-1020; [www.museorapanui.cl](http://www.museorapanui.cl); Tahai s/n; admission CH\$1000; ☎9:30am-5:30pm Tue-Fri, to 12.30pm Sat & Sun) This well-organized



## Easter Island (Rapa Nui) Highlights

**1** Clip-clop on the flanks of the extinct volcano **Maunga Terevaka** (p406).

**2** Hike along the ruggedly beautiful **northern coast** (p400).

**3** Seek solace on the mysterious **Península Poike** (p407).

**4** Ogle the stunning limpid blue waters of **Motu Nui** (p399) on a snorkeling or diving trip.

**5** Take a lesson in archaeology at **Rano Raraku** (p407), the 'nursery' of the *moai*.

**6** Ponder the island's mysterious past at **Orongo**

**ceremonial village** (p406), perched on the edge of Rano Kau.

**7** Watch the sun rise at the row of enigmatic statues at **Ahu Tongariki** (p407).

**8** Take a snooze under the swaying palms at **Anakena** (p407).