

- HIGHLIGHTS
- ITINERARIES
- LOCAL EXPERTS
- + PULL-OUT MAP

# Discover New Zealand

Experience the best of New Zealand



# Discover New Zealand

Contents



Throughout this book, we use these icons to highlight special recommendations:



## The Best...

Lists for everything from bars to wildlife – to make sure you don't miss out



## Don't Miss

A must-see – don't go home until you've been there

### Local Knowledge

Local experts reveal their top picks and secret highlights



## Detour

Special places a little off the beaten track



## If you like...

Lesser-known alternatives to world-famous attractions

These icons help you quickly identify reviews in the text and on the map:



Sights



Eating



Drinking



Sleeping



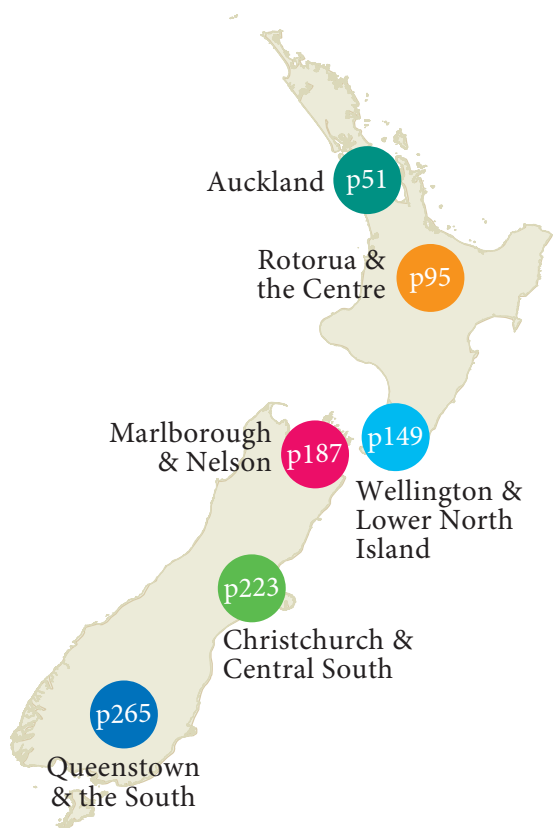
Information

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# This Is New Zealand

You probably already know how ludicrously photogenic New Zealand is. You may also know that adventure sports rule here (bungy jumping, skiing, skydiving, white-water rafting etc). Then there's NZ's antinuclear stance, its rich Maori culture, its passion for rugby, its abundant sheep...

But one pleasant surprise is the Kiwi culinary scene. Local chefs plunge into Pacific Rim cookbooks for inspiration, organic farmers markets are everywhere, and Maori faves such as paua (abalone) and kina (sea urchin) make regular menu appearances. Thirsty? Locally made sauvignon blanc has been collecting trophies for decades now, and the country's booming craft-beer scene also deserves your attention. And caffeine cravers can rest assured: coffee culture is firmly entrenched.

Indeed, the nation is well fed and watered, but NZ has had a few setbacks lately. The Christchurch earthquakes, the Greymouth mine disaster and the grounding of the MV *Rena* in the Bay of Plenty have caused a lot of heartache. But shining through the gloom are the All Blacks, NZ's deified rugby team, who won the World Cup on home soil in 2011. Don't expect locals to stop talking about it any time soon...

Of course, the All Blacks could never have become world-beaters without their awesome Maori players. This is just one example of how Maori culture impresses itself on contemporary Kiwi life. Across NZ you can join in a *hangi* (Maori feast), visit a *marae* (meeting house) or catch a cultural performance, usually involving a blood-curdling *haka* (war dance).

Also for your consideration is the fact that NZ is a remarkably easy place to visit. On-the-road frustrations are rare: buses and trains are punctual, roads are in good nick, ATMs proliferate, pickpockets are practically nonexistent and the food is unlikely to send you running for the nearest public toilets. This decent nation is a place where you can relax and enjoy (rather than endure) your holiday.

“  
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remarkably  
easy place  
to visit  
”

Thermal lake at Wai-o-Tapu Thermal Wonderland (p109)

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