

📍 One Foot Island

Trip Notes: Cook Islands

TRAVEL DOCUMENTS

A valid US passport with a minimum of six months beyond your date of return travel is required. No visa is required for stays up to 31 days.

PRIOR TO ARRIVAL

Guests traveling to the Cook Islands via [Australia](#) or [New Zealand](#) will need to apply for the applicable ETA.

TIME DIFFERENCE

The Cook Islands is 2 hours behind Pacific Standard Time and 5 hours behind Eastern Standard Time.

CURRENCY

The official Cook Islands unit of currency is the New Zealand Dollar (NZD). For current exchange rates, please visit www.xe.com.

CREDIT CARDS

Visa and Mastercard are widely accepted but expect fees to be imposed for use. ATM machines are located around the islands of Rarotonga and Aitutaki.

LANGUAGE

The Cook Islands have two official languages, English and Cook Islands Māori (Te Reo Kuki Airani), with most people speaking both, but there are distinct indigenous languages like Pukapukan, making English and Cook Islands Māori the main ones. Cook Islands Māori, also called Rarotongan, is Polynesian, related to NZ Māori and Tahitian, and has various dialects, while Pukapukan is related to Samoan.

VACCINATIONS

There are no mandatory vaccination requirements for entry into the Cook Islands, but standard routine vaccines (MMR, Tdap, Varicella, Polio, Flu, COVID-19) are strongly recommended, along with vaccines for Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B, and Typhoid, depending on your travel style, with Rabies suggested for longer stays or animal contact. Always check with your healthcare provider for personalized advice before your trip.

POWER

The Cook Islands use Type I power outlets (three flat pins, like Australia/NZ) with a standard voltage of 240V and 50Hz frequency, so you'll need a Type I plug adapter; if your devices are from North America (110-120V), you might also need a voltage converter unless they are dual-voltage (100-240V).



📍 Motu Taakoka, Rarotonga



📍 Tekopua Island, Aitutaki



📍 Rarotonga

TIPPING

Tipping is not customary in the Cook Islands and therefore not expected. It is left at your discretion for exemplary service.

CLIMATE

The Cook Islands enjoy a pleasant warm and sunny climate all year round. The drier months are from April to November with an average temperature of 78°F. November to March marks the warmer season, with slightly higher humidity and occasional rainfall between December and March when the temperature ranges between 71°F (min) and 36°F (max). However, don't be put off by rainfall in our summer months as it's typically brief morning or afternoon tropical showers. Overall, the shoulder months of April, May, September, and October are a great time to visit as the weather in these months is usually the perfect balance of warm temperatures and dry skies.

PHONES

To dial the Cook Islands from the US: 011 + 682 + number.

To dial the US from the Cook Islands: 00+ 1 + number.

SAFETY & SECURITY

The Cook Islands are generally safe for tourists, known for friendly locals, but visitors should guard against petty theft, especially valuables left unattended, and be cautious of natural hazards like cyclones (Nov-Apr) and tsunamis, knowing local evacuation plans and having travel insurance. Stay vigilant with belongings, use reef-safe sunscreen, respect local culture, avoid walking alone at night, and be aware of strict drunk driving laws.

SHOPPING

Shops are generally open from 9:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. Monday to Friday, except on Saturdays when many close at noon; only hotel shops are open on Sunday.

Black Pearls, pareus (sarongs), T-shirts, ukuleles, tivaivai (local quilts) and carvings are popular purchases for visitors to the Cook Islands. A 15% Value Added Tax(VAT) applies to purchase in shops, stores and boutiques.

SUGGESTED PACKING LIST

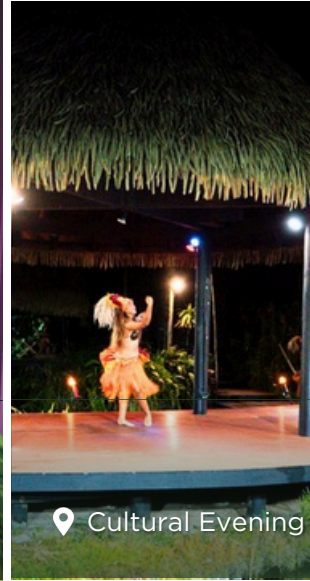
For the Cook Islands, pack light tropical clothes, swimwear, sun protection (hat, reef-safe sunscreen), insect repellent, water/walking shoes, and essentials like your passport, documents, basic first-aid/medication, and a light jacket for evenings, plus reef shoes and snorkeling gear for underwater fun. Remember your camera, power bank, and any specific toiletries or comfort items like an eye mask for the flight.

ETIQUETTE

Cook Islands etiquette emphasizes respect for elders, modesty (especially in towns and churches), and a relaxed pace ("island time"), requiring visitors to greet locals warmly ("Kia Orana"), dress appropriately (cover swimwear away from the beach, dress up for church), remove shoes at homes, and be mindful of sacred areas like those under "Ra'ui" (no touching marine life). Showing genuine interest and using "Meitaki" (thank you) goes a long way.



📍 Ladies of Rarotonga c.David Kirkland



📍 Cultural Evening



📍 Snorkeling Rarotonga

NATIONAL EMERGENCY NUMBERS

The emergency number for the police is tel. 999; for an ambulance or the hospital, tel. 998; for fire, tel. 996. The non-emergency police number is tel. 22-499.

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS 2026

- 1 January - **New Year's Day**
- 3 April - **Good Friday**
- 6 April - **Easter Monday**
- 25 April - **ANZAC Day**
- 1 May - **Labour Day**
- 1 June - **Sovereign's Birthday**
- 3 July - **Ui Ariki Day**
- 4 August - **Constitution Day**
- 26 October - **Gospel Day**
- 11 November - **Armistice Day**
- 25 December - **Christmas Day**
- 26 December - **Boxing Day (observed 28 December)**

OTHER USEFUL LINKS

- [US State Department Travel Advisories](#)
- [U.S. Embassy and Consulates in the Cook Islands](#)
- [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program \(STEP\)](#)
- [US Passports](#)
- [International Travel Guidance](#)

This information is provided by Travel Answers as a guideline to the country you will be visiting. Further information is available to you at <https://cookislands.travel/entry>

While Travel Answers endeavors to provide current information, regulations and requirements can change without notice and we are not responsible for travelers whose trips are interrupted due to documentary or medical non-compliance.