



Rarotonga

INSIDER'S GUIDE



RAROTONGA

The beating heart
of our little paradise
will capture yours.





RAROTONGA

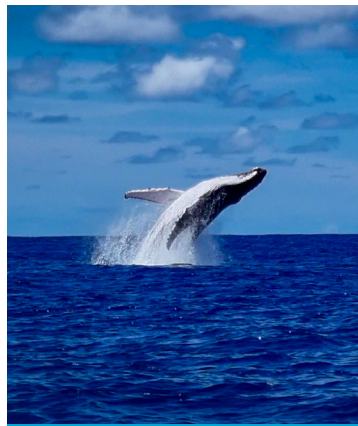
Like one big resort



Rarotonga, the main island of the Cook Islands, is easily accessible with direct flights - under 4 hours from Auckland, under 6 hours from Sydney or Brisbane*, around 9 hours from Honolulu, and 2 hours and 40-minutes from Papeete.

Our remarkable natural environment is yours to explore. Rarotonga itself is like one big resort, with lots to see, do and discover. And everything's made more beautiful through the warm embrace of the friendly locals who embody a laidback lifestyle and vibrant culture.

*Brisbane flights from 18 May 2026. Subject to Government and Regulatory approval.







LOVE OUR LITTLE PARADISE

Why Rarotonga?



ONE BIG RESORT

The hub of the Cook Islands, Rarotonga is like one big resort! Go right or left around the island and start your adventure, you're never too far from a beach, a tour, a local eatery or anything really. You can do as little or as much as you like in this little paradise.

THE ULTIMATE FAMILY DESTINATION

The perfect playground for kids, switch off the screens and recharge your family. Not only a destination for romantic couples, family togetherness is an important part of Cook Islands' culture and you'll all be welcomed warmly. There's so much to keep everyone entertained, from simple pleasures like crab racing on Muri Beach or snorkelling in the safety of the lagoon to jungle trekking across the island or enjoying spectacular cultural entertainment.

THE NEEDLE, HIKING AND BEYOND

Hiking to "The Needle" (Te Rua Manga) in Rarotonga is the most famous hike in the Cook Islands. As beautiful as it is spectacular, this half-day hike starts on the northern side of Rarotonga and takes you through the island jungle, up along the ridges to incredible views of the Pacific Ocean and Rarotonga. Choose to continue on the Cross Island Trek and you'll end up on the southern side of the island, where a dip in Papua Waterfall (Wigmores Waterfall) is a must.

GETTING AROUND IS SO EASY!

With so much to offer, you'll be excited to learn that getting around our beautiful island is as easy as hopping on board a bus travelling in either a clockwise or anti-clockwise direction. Hire a rental car or jump on the back of a scooter and enjoy the wind on your face as you cruise around our island enjoying both beauty and adventure on tap. It takes just 45 minutes to drive around the whole island, so you'll never feel like you're stuck in the same spot.



Things to do



1. ATTEND AN ISLAND NIGHT

Visiting the Cook Islands would not be complete without attending an 'Island Night' show. An energetic, colourful and entertaining show coupled with a buffet-style feast is what makes them so special.

2. LAGOON CRUISE

A fantastic day out exploring Rarotonga's beautiful lagoon by glass bottom boat. Enjoy snorkeling, fresh BBQ lunch, live entertainment, and an amazing coconut tree climbing show.

3. PUNANGA NUI MARKET

Where Avarua comes alive. Every Saturday morning, at this bustling market, you will get to chat with locals, sample local cuisine, sip organic coffee, shop for authentic souvenirs and enjoy free entertainment.

4. GO FOR A BUS RIDE

Riding the bus is super easy to do and you can't get lost. There are two buses that circle the island of Rarotonga; Clockwise and Anti-clockwise. The buses will stop anywhere along the main road. All you have to do is smile and wave them down.

5. SNORKELLING AT YOUR LEISURE

Stunning views continue below the crystal clear waters where marine life is abundant, colourful and diverse in the lagoon. The best snorkelling spots can be found on the western and southern sides of Rarotonga.

6. WATCH A SUNSET

Nothing beats a striking sunset, as the sky erupts in a masterpiece of gold, orange, purple and pink perfection. End the day at one of our many beach bars that make for wonderful places to watch the sunset while you sip on a tropical cocktail.

7. HIKE ACROSS THE ISLAND

The Cross Island Trek on Rarotonga is true to its name as it does cross the entire island! It's recommended that you begin the trail in the North and head South through Rarotonga's mountainous interior. It is recommended to take a guided tour to learn about Rarotonga's flora and fauna.

8. SELF GUIDED TOUR

Our easy-to-navigate main road around the island allows you to explore Rarotonga independently. Look out for our information boards of historic significance scattered around the island to learn more about the significance of each site.

9. MURI NIGHT MARKET

The Muri Night Market is a great way to curate your own dinner from the various food trucks, stalls and stands all while mixing and mingling with visitors and locals alike.

10. MARORO TUNUTUNU & LOCAL CUISINE

Experience the ultimate local cuisine, Maroro Tunutunu (BBQ flying fish), found at the Punanga Nui Market and at road side stalls, while immersing yourself amongst the locals.





Fast Facts



POPULATION

Rarotonga 10,890 (2021 census)

DOMESTIC AIR TRAVEL

Domestic flights are operated by Air Rarotonga with daily flights to Aitutaki and scheduled flights to Atiu, Mangaia, Mauke, Mitiaro, Manihiki, Tongareva and Pukapuka. For domestic flight schedule please visit www.airraro.com

CURRENCY & BANKING

Currency in Rarotonga is the New Zealand dollar, supplemented by Cook Islands' notes and coins. ANZ, BSP, and BCI banks are open from Monday to Friday, 9am to 3pm in downtown Avarua. Most hotels and stores offer EFTPOS. ATMs are conveniently located around Rarotonga, there is a Western Union office in Avarua that offers money exchange and transfers.

ELECTRICITY

Electricity voltage is 240 AC/50 cycle, the same three pin plugs as used in New Zealand and Australia. Some hotels have provisions for 110 volt AC electric razors.

MEDICAL & DENTAL

There is a well equipped hospital and dental clinics situated in Rarotonga.

CHURCHES

Sunday is considered a day of rest and worship. There are several denominations on Rarotonga: Seventh Day Adventist, Apostolic Church, Catholic Church, Cook Islands Christian Church and Latter Day Saints.

WEATHER

The Cook Islands enjoys a pleasant warm and sunny climate all year round. The drier months are from April to November with an average temperature of 26°C. November to March marks the warmer season, with slightly higher humidity and occasional rainfall between December and March when the temperature ranges between 22°C (min) and 30°C (max).

DRIVING

Driving is on the left-hand side of the road. Overseas full drivers licenses are accepted for car rentals. If a visitor wants to ride a scooter or motorbike in Rarotonga and is not licensed to do so at home, they will need to obtain a Cook Islands Drivers License at the Police Headquarters in Avarua. Helmets are compulsory.

VODAFONE

Traveller SIM cards can be purchased from Vodafone (our telecommunications provider) and come pre loaded with calls, text and mobile data. Most smart phones will work with a local sim however check with your provider in your country before travelling to Rarotonga.

TELECOM & WI-FI

Internet on the island is readily available with over 150+ WiFi hotspots (visit: www.vodafone.co.ck). Most accommodations offer WiFi hotspots, some even providing this free of charge to their guests.

LIKE ONE BIG RESORT

Rarotonga



Cook Islands Tourism

Main road, Avarua
(Between Banana Court & ANZ Bank).
Opening Hours: Mon-Fri 8am-4pm,
Sat 10am-1pm
P: +682 29435
E: visit@cookislands.travel

Discover More at:

www.CookIslands.travel/Rarotonga



Take a 360° virtual tour on
visit.CookIslands.travel

