



REGION SUMMARIES

NORTHLAND

Known as the birthplace of the nation, Northland is the picturesque and unspoiled northern - most stretch of New Zealand. The population of Northland is 148,500, is 3.7% of the total population, and is the 8th largest region in New Zealand. The climate is sub-tropical with temperatures ranging from 9-30 Celsius. Northland is the warmest area in New Zealand during the winter and provides a welcoming escape for Kiwis living in the more southern reaches of the country, and overseas visitors wanting a relaxing holiday. Industries in the Northland Region include marine engineering, forestry and wood processing, horticulture, aquaculture, the creative arts, and pastoral farming.

Regional highlights include the Twin Coast Discovery Highway, the Bay of Islands, the town of Russell, which was New Zealand's first capital city, the Waitangi Treaty Grounds, Kaitiaki, the Aupori Peninsula tour, 90 mile beach and Cape Reinga.

AUCKLAND

The Auckland region is in the far northwest corner of the North Island. Auckland is one of the two fastest growing areas in New Zealand. The population of the Auckland Region at 1,303,000 representing 32.4% of the total New Zealand population. The main centres include: Auckland City, Great Barrier Island, Pukekohe, Rangitoto and Waiheke Island. The Auckland region weather is sub-tropical, with temperatures ranging from 12-24 degrees Celsius in the summer, and 9 -15 degrees Celsius during the winter months.

Auckland City is located amongst eleven extinct volcanoes. Known as the city of sails, it is recognised for its waterfront area which includes fabulous shopping, sightseeing, restaurants and nightlife. The city's modern lifestyle can be experienced by strolling through the downtown Queen Street shopping area, visiting Waitemata Harbour, the Westhaven Marina and the Viaduct Basin. The University of Auckland, museums, galleries, theater, dance, music and nightlife in the central business district make Auckland City an enjoyable place for visitors and New Zealanders alike.

Auckland city is also a premier, world class business centre, attracting international business while also actively developing local commerce. The main industries in the Auckland region include finance and banking, education research and development, the water industry, tourism, and hospitality.

WAIKATO

The Waikato Region is in the west central are of the North Island, directly south of greater Auckland. The population of the Waikato Region is 383,000, being 9.5% of the population and is the fourth largest region in New Zealand. The main centres in the Waikato Region include Hamilton which is the most populated, Cambridge, Matamata, and Te Aroha. The climate is wet and temperate, with temperatures ranging from 20-25 degrees Celsius in the summer and 0-15 degrees Celsius during the winter months.

Industries in the Waikato Region include dairy farming, crop cultivation, a flourishing wine industry and adventure tourism. The thoroughbred racehorse and dairy cattle stud industries are also concentrated in this region and are central to the region's economic strength.

Attractions include the Waitomo Caves which are massive subterranean limestone caverns great for underground spelunking, the Hamilton Gardens, the Waikato Museum of Art and History, the University of Waikato and the popular Raglan surfing points.

BAY OF PLENTY

The Bay of Plenty Region is located in the north central area of the North Island. The population at 257,400, is 6.4% of the total population and is the fifth largest region in New Zealand. The main city Tauranga is a vibrant commercial centre with a busy international import/export port. Considered one of New Zealand's most attractive places to live, the city of Tauranga is expanding its commercial and residential sectors rapidly. A beautiful, temperate climate marked by abundant sunshine, with temperatures range from 22-25 degrees Celsius in the summer and 16-18 degrees Celsius during the winter months.

The main industries include medical and healthcare, environmental research, agricultural research, bio-engineering, the fruit orchard and wine industries and tourism. Major recreational attractions in the region include competitive boating, surfing, deep sea fishing and most other water sports, notably enjoyed in the Mount Manganui beach area.

TARANAKI

The Taranaki Region is the westernmost area of the North Island. Mount Taranaki (also called Mount Egmont) is the defining feature in the region, piercing the landscape's skyline from all directions. The population of the Taranaki Region is 105,000—a small fraction of New Zealand's total population of over 4,000,000 people. The climate is generally temperate and wet. Temperatures range from 12°C to 22°C in summer and 5°C to 15°C in winter.

The deep-water port city of New Plymouth is the largest municipality in the Taranaki Region, comprising over half the region's population. Major industries are: dairy, agribusiness, engineering, and marine and forest industries. It also has a burgeoning onshore-offshore fossil fuel production and exploration enterprise which has invigorated the economy of the region. The chief recreational attraction of the region is Egmont National Park, which offers climbing, skiing and tramping. In New Plymouth, the beautiful gardens, parks, and reserves make it an attractive urban center and a major draw to visitors from New Zealand and overseas.

WELLINGTON

Wellington, the capital city of New Zealand is located at the southern most tip of the North Island. The population of the Wellington Region is 460,000, which is 11% of the total population and the 11th largest region in New Zealand, with Wellington City having a population of 190,500. The weather in Wellington is known for its windiness due to its proximity to the Cook Strait. Sunny and mild weather is typical, marked by an occasional southerly storm. Temperatures range between 12-23 degrees Celsius in the summer and 5-17 degrees Celsius during the winter.

The city is the site for the New Zealand Government. Primary industries and employers in Wellington include government, finance and banking, information technology, services, tourism, and the cultural arts.

Considered the cultural centre of the country, Wellington is home to some of the country's best known musicians, film-makers, writers, architects and artists. Te Papa Tongarewa Museum is located on the waterfront showcasing numerous permanent collections, as well as notable exhibitions from abroad. The bi-ennial International Arts Festival in the heart of the city showcases local talent as well as hosting international acts. Wellington is known for its magnificent harbour and a vibrant waterfront which includes restaurants, a lively nightlife, shopping and museums.

HAWKE'S BAY

Hawkes Bay is located on the far eastern coast of the North Island. The population of the Hawkes Bay Region is 148,000, is 3.7% of the total population and is the ninth largest region in New Zealand. Napier is the largest city in this region and recognised world-over as an architectural monument to the Art Deco period, due to it being re-built after the 1931 earthquake. A sunny and warm Mediterranean climate, temperatures range from 10-27 degrees Celsius in the summer and 3-15 degrees Celsius during the winter months.

Industries in this region include orcharding for export, food processing and manufacturing, the wine industry, tourism and agribusiness. Hawkes Bay region is known for having an outstanding food and wine reputation, and one of the premiere wine growing industries in the country celebrated at the annual Harvest Hawke's Bay festival in February of each year. Other attractions in the region include The National Aquarium of New Zealand, Cape Kidnappers Gannet Reserve, wine tours, galleries, adventure outdoor tourism and art deco tours in the city of Napier.

CENTRAL PLATEAU

The Central Plateau Region is in the center of the North Island and includes the two districts of Ruapehu and Lake Taupo. A distinctive and scenic region, the Central Plateau is the pre-eminent volcanic area in the country—the source of Rotorua's geothermal activity.

Ruapehu District includes Mount Ruapehu (an active volcano with eight glaciers), the Raurimu Spiral railway, Tongariro National Park (the first national park established in the country), and a protected World Heritage site. The most popular tourist villages for the Ruapehu District are National Park, Ohakune, and Whakapapa. The population of the district is 13,500.

The other district in the Central Plateau is Lake Taupo, a popular holiday destination for sports and motor-sports, cycling, tourism, and trout fishing. Taupo is the largest city in the district.

The dominant industries in the region include: forestry production and research, earthquake and volcanic research, hydrothermal generation of electricity, and tourism. The climate is continental, with very hot summers, and cool winters. Temperatures range between 12°C and 25°C in summer, and 3°C and 14°C in winter.

NELSON

The Nelson region is at the north end of the South Island and includes vast urban and rural areas. This region includes the city centres of Nelson and Richmond, west to Abel Tasman National Park and Golden Bay, and south to the Nelson Lakes and Kahurangi National Parks near the towns of St Arnaud and Murchison. The population of the Nelson Region is 43,000, being 3.2% of the total population and is the 14th largest region in New Zealand.

Nelson is known for its beautiful warm micro-climate having the most sunshine hours of anywhere in New Zealand. The average temperatures in the summer are 13-24 degrees Celsius and range from 4-13 degrees Celsius in the winter. Nelson is surrounded by mountains and frequented by visitors for its stunning national parks bordering Abel Tasman Bay and inland to the alpine lakes. Nelson region is best known for the Abel Tasman National Park, one of the great nine walks in New Zealand.

Industries in Nelson are primarily the arts, forestry, horticulture, fisheries, ecotourism and adventure tourism. Increasingly, the information technology and engineering technology sectors are gaining prominence in the local economy. Nelson celebrates the arts with annual local and international music, art and craft festivals which are not to be missed.

MARLBOROUGH

The Marlborough Region is located in the northeast tip of the South Island. The population of the Marlborough Region is 43,000, representing 1% of the total population and is the 15th largest region in New Zealand. Blenheim is the largest city in this region with a population of 29,000 and is the centre of the region's wine making district. The climate is predominantly dry and sunny contributing to the success of the wine industry, particularly with sauvignon blanc varieties. The wide, flat Wairau Valley is optimal for the production of these highly regarded sauvignon blancs, considered some of the best in the country and internationally. The summer temperature ranges between 12-24 Celsius, and the winter temperature 2-13 Celsius.

Walking, cycling, tramping, dining and vineyard visits combine to make this area a delightful stopover while touring New Zealand's South Island.

Picton is the well known and picturesque port city in the Queen Margaret Sound. The Interisland ferry arrives and departs from Picton and Wellington through the Cook Strait, and is the most popular and beautifully scenic way to navigate between the two main islands. Kaikoura, a coastal city is a popular stop on the north to south coastal driving route. Main attractions and industries in the Kaikoura area include whale watching, eco-tourism, commercial fishing, agribusiness and the University of Canterbury marine biological station.

CANTERBURY

Canterbury Region is located on the central east coast of the South Island and is one of the two fastest growing regions in New Zealand. The Canterbury region includes Christchurch, Hanmer Springs, Ashburton, Timaru, Lake Tekapo, Twizel, Geraldine, Methven and Darfield. The population of the Canterbury Region is 522,000, representing 13% of the total population and is the second largest region in size in New Zealand. Canterbury is known for its vast flat plains that begin at the base of the Southern Alps and extend to the eastern seaboard creating a rich and fertile centre for a thriving agribusiness industry and a world class wine culture. Christchurch is the largest and most populated city on the South Island and the foremost centre for commerce in the region. Key industries include: agribusiness, manufacturing, whole sale trade, property and business services, construction, tourism and education. The University of Canterbury in Christchurch and Lincoln University in Lincoln are the region's leading education and research institutions, each providing world class education.

The climate is mild-temperate with temperatures that range between 12-22 degrees Celsius in the summer, and 2-12 degrees Celsius during the winter. A temperate, pleasant climate mixed with the thrill of Canterbury Crusaders Rugby, skiing, snowboarding, surfing, tramping and outdoor adventure, each contribute to making Canterbury an appealing location for families and all that have a love for the beauty of the outdoors.

Other attractions in this region include: Arthur's Pass National Park, a day trip to Akaroa on Banks Peninsula, and the many museums, gardens, parks, galleries and restaurants throughout Canterbury's largest city Christchurch.

OTAGO

The Otago Region is located in the south central area of the South Island. The main centres in the region include Dunedin which is the most populated, Queenstown, Wanaka, and Oamaru. The population of the Otago Region is 194,000, representing 4.8% of the total population and is the seventh largest region in size in New Zealand. Otago offers a distinctive lifestyle and a stunning physical landscape to take pleasure in all year round. The majestic Southern Alps dominate the physical countryside inland.

The continental climate of the Otago region is the coldest and driest in the country. The summers are hot and dry, and the winters cold and very snowy. Temperatures range between 10-30 degrees Celsius in the summer and 6-15 degrees Celsius in the winter. The unique continental climatic extremes together with mineral rich soil has made the region a foremost location for wine cultivation, especially the pinot noir varietal for which it is recognised internationally.

The main industries in the region include education, research and medical-healthcare centred at the University of Otago. The school of medicine has contributed to establishing the primary medical community in the country. Other industries include fabricated metals engineering, tourism and ecotourism, adventure sports, horticulture and a world class wine culture.

The overwhelming splendor of the Otago Region can be enjoyed in more than a few ways. Wildlife tours and water sports, the University of Otago in Dunedin, Wanaka and Queenstown for its skiing, snow boarding, tramping and vineyard touring. Extreme adventure sports including bungee jumping, cycling and world class tramping can all be enjoyed throughout the region all year round.

WEST COAST

The sparsely-populated West Coast Region of the South Island borders the Tasman Sea. It is made up of three districts: Buller, Grey, and Westland. It is the region with the fewest residents, with a population is 31,400. The climate on the West Coast is notable for its high rainfall. Temperatures range between 12°C and 25°C in summer, and 5°C and 15°C in winter.

The cities of Westport, Hokitika, and Greymouth are the urban centers of the region. They were initially established around thriving coal, gold, greenstone, and mineral mining industries. The West Coast is known for the Punakaiki Rocks and Blowholes north of Greymouth, and glacier country south of Hokitika, towards Haast. The West Coast is a distinct microclimate due to its proximity to the Alps and the sea. Heavy rainfall on the unique geology of the area has created a wild and exotic environment that can be experienced through some of the many hikes and outdoor adventure tours. Main industries in the region include: mining, fisheries, forestry, tourism and agribusiness.

SOUTHLAND

The Southland region is located at the southern most reaches of New Zealand including Stewart Island. Southland is known for its abundant green native forests, glacial lakes, wild surf-pounded beaches, and open air vistas. The largest city in the region is Invercargill, the commercial hub for Southland and one of the centres for agribusiness on the South Island. The population of the Southland region is 91,000, representing 2.3 % of the total population. The climate is considered severe by New Zealand standards as the region receives abundant rainfall and frosts, with cold winters and warm, temperate summers. Temperatures range from 9-19 degrees Celsius during the summer and 4-14 degrees Celsius during the winter months.

A region showing great industry and economic growth potential, industries represented in Southland include science and research, energy, manufacturing, agribusiness, dairy farming, fishing, forestry and tourism. Southland, one of New Zealand's foremost tourist destinations, has been popularised by the coastal Catlins region known for its wildlife excursions, beaches and historic sites. Other attractions include the city of Bluff known for its oysters, the Ulva Island Open Sanctuary, the Southland Museum of Art, the Tuatapere Hump Ridge track and Rakiura National Park on Stewart Island. Trout fishing, tramping, camping and surfing can all be enjoyed in this pristine part of the country.