



SUMMER



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discovery**
inspiring educational adventures

New Zealand & Fiji Summer Program

PACIFIC ISLAND HOPPING

www.pacificdiscovery.org

Overview

Adventure your way through New Zealand and Fiji's incredible natural environments and unique Polynesian cultures!

This program has just the right balance of adventure and environmental service in New Zealand, followed by laid-back island living in Fiji. In New Zealand, we'll go mountain biking in Rotorua, raft over the world's highest commercial waterfall, stay in a sacred Maori house, and connect deeply with nature during environmental service. We will work alongside park rangers, search for the elusive kiwi bird, plant native trees, get hands on with local ecology and wildlife and camp under brilliant starry night skies.

The Polynesian legacy is the development of seafaring and navigation skills and canoe technology that enabled them to voyage across the Pacific Ocean. We make the journey across the Pacific to Fiji, and immerse in authentic village life on Vatulele Island. We will spend our final days soaking up the sunshine by relaxing in mud pools on the Coral Coast.

Join us this summer for adrenaline-filled fun and immerse yourself in Polynesian customs and norms in two distinct Pacific Island Nations. Participants will receive a Certificate of Completed Service Hours for their valuable efforts and the memories made will last a lifetime.





Sample Itinerary

***This is a guide to what you can expect to do on program.
The order in which the activities occur might vary***

WEEK 1 | ORIENTATION & CONSERVATION VOLUNTEERING

Kia ora! Welcome to New Zealand! We touch down in Auckland, where our program instructors will meet and transfer us to our accommodation. The focus is on getting to know each other and being briefed on the exciting adventures to come!

From there we will head to Paihia, which is the epicenter of the jawdroppingly beautiful Bay of Islands. We'll discover this island paradise of golden, sandy beaches and charming small towns while we're here. It's also home to the Waitangi Treaty Grounds, the birthplace of New Zealand. Here, we'll learn how New Zealand's history was shaped, marvel at cultural Maori performances in the Maori Meeting House, discover the world's largest waka (canoe) and walk through native gardens with spectacular views of Paihia and the many islands.

Next it's on to stunning Tawharanui (pronounced Tar-far-anui) Regional Park for our first volunteer project. Road tripping in New Zealand is pure joy, and everything looks like a scene from *The Hobbit*. Our days in Tawharanui are spent working alongside park rangers and a local group of community volunteers doing track maintenance, marine debris clean ups, and searching for the elusive kiwi birds! Our nights are spent under the night stars camping out. There's a huge predator proof fence that curls around the park, keeping out invasive species. This sanctuary is a unique blend of conservation, recreation and sustainable environmental practices. This conservation project gives us an inspiring insight into New Zealand's world-class conservation efforts.



WEEK 2 | RAFTING IN ROTORUA & EXPERIENCING MAORI CULTURE

Heading back south past Auckland, we travel to the geothermal and cultural heartland of the country - Rotorua! You'll smell it before you see it... the distinctive egg smell is because of the ethereal volcanic vents, boiling hot mud pools and natural geysers all over this area. The ground is literally steaming! In Rotorua, we stay in a Marae, a traditional village meeting hall and spiritual home to the Maori.

Our days here are full of adventure and energy as we go mountain biking in the Redwoods and spend an afternoon rafting down the Kaituna River. The Kaituna River is Rotorua rafting's playground, and home to not just one, but three impressive waterfalls, including the highest rafted waterfall in the world – Tutea Falls, at 7m!

Next up is a visit to Wellington, New Zealand's vibrant capital city with great shopping and cafés. We'll visit Parliament to learn about New Zealand's political system (way more interesting than it sounds, we promise!), and gain insight into Maori culture through an intimate Maori educational experience at the interactive National Museum, Te Papa. We will soak up our final days in New Zealand together.

WEEK 3 | ISLAND LIFE IN FIJI!

Bula and welcome to Fiji! We'll be amazed by all the sights and smells of this Pacific Island Nation - and this is only the beginning! From Nadi, we boat out to another Pacific Island called Vatuele. There's something you should know about Fijians - they are hands down the most warm and friendly people we've ever come across! We will be taken in by the local community and participate in true island living with a community homestay. The sun always shines and people are happy living from the ocean and keeping family close. Our knowledge of Fijian culture will grow while we spend a day weaving traditional tapa cloths to take home and trying our hand at fishing.



WEEK 4 | RELAXING ON A FLOATING ISLAND & SNORKELING

In our last week in Fiji, we rejuvenated by relaxing in mud pools on the Coral Coast. This Coast is full of beautiful scenery of sugarcane fields, pine forests and amazing views of the South Pacific Ocean.

We end our stay in Fiji with a few days of rest and relaxation on Mana Island. We explore this beautiful small island by diving into picturesque water to take in the variety of sea life, walking up the hills for gorgeous sunsets, and taking in the last of Fijian beach time. We say 'vinaka' and goodbye to Fiji

**Each week there will be some designated free time so that you can catch up on email, do laundry, rest, and explore independently with others in the group.*

***Pacific Discovery reserves the right to alter and/or change the order of the itinerary, the focus of the projects, or the activities themselves due to dates, availability, and safety precautions.*



Program Highlights

- Mountain bike through The Redwoods in Rotorua
- Raft the Kaituna River
- Stay overnight in a traditional maori Marae
- Experience a powerful display of haka song and dance at a traditional Māori cultural performance
- Environmental project at Tawharanui Regional Park
- Snorkeling over spectacular coral reefs in Fiji
- Go on rafting and tubing adventures in Pacific Harbor on Viti Levu
- Learn about the culture while working alongside local communities
- Live like a local on Valuele Island in Fiji and get involved in local culture through fishing and making local crafts
- Certificate of Completed Service Hours





COUNTRY INFORMATION

With only 4.5 million people, and less than one thousand years of human settlement, New Zealand has a rich and dynamic culture which reflects the impact of Maori, European, Pacific Island and Asian influences. Kiwis (named after the fascinating and distinctive native bird) are friendly, welcoming and informal, but also fiercely proud of their national achievements – especially in rugby (the All Blacks) and sailing (the Americas Cup).

With a land mass similar in size to Colorado or Great Britain, New Zealand boasts vast open spaces, spectacular landscapes, rugged mountain ranges, spectacular geothermal areas, lush rainforest and beautiful beaches. Especially attractive for the traveller is the fact that these different landscapes (as well as many cultural features of interest) are in close proximity to each other, and most of them easily accessible. Whilst the rather changeable weather reflects New Zealand's position as an island in the Pacific Ocean, the climate is generally mild.

Fiji is an archipelago of more than 300 islands in the South Pacific Ocean, about 1,100 nautical miles (1,300 mi) northeast of New Zealand. The majority of Fiji's islands were formed through volcanic activity starting around 150 million years ago. Its people are mostly native Fijians, and Indo-Fijians (38%) - who are descendants of Indian contract labourers brought to the islands by the British in the 19th century. Fiji has one of the most developed economies in the Pacific Islands due to an abundance of forest, mineral, and fish resources. Its main sources of foreign exchange are tourism and sugar exports.

Throughout New Zealand and Fiji, English is spoken almost universally, public amenities and services are generally modern and of a good standard.



CLIMATE

June-July-August is winter in New Zealand. However, due to its temperate climate, you are likely to experience some moderately balmy days (in comparison say with the US Midwest winter). Please ensure you pack for winter weather (refer to gear list).

June/July temperature: day time average 50-60°F; night time average 30-40°F. Sunrise 7:00am; Sunset 5:00pm

Fiji has a tropical climate year-round. June-August is the dry season. Day time average 75-85°F; night time average 70-75°F. Ocean temperatures average 77-82°F



MEALS

Meals are fresh, tasty, healthy and varied. Special dietary requirements and vegetarians are catered for. Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner are included in the program cost. Food preparation responsibilities are shared by all students. It's fun, social and often a highlight.

Regular food to expect:

- Breakfast: cereals, porridge (oatmeal), toast, spreads, eggs, yogurt, fruit, tea and coffee
- Lunch: wraps, sandwiches, salads, dinner leftovers, fruit, mac and cheese, rice and protein or veg
- Dinner: BBQ meat, vegetables and salads, potato salad, pasta, chili, wraps, fish and chips, burgers, hot dogs, veggie burgers,, roasted potatoes, corn and bean salad, rice, curry, lots of fresh seafood in Fiji!!

Camping meals will be adjusted to the cooking equipment at hand whilst in Tawharanui National Park. We will use camping burners and cook inventive meals, learning backcountry cooking skills you can take onward through your life of adventure!

TRANSPORT

The itinerary has been designed to maximize comfort and safety whilst also giving you the opportunity to experience local transport and take part in daily life. We will be traveling by mini van and boat on this NZ Fiji Gap Summer program.





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