

THE RAROTONGAN  
BEACH RESORT & LAGOONARIUM



AITUTAKI LAGOON  
PRIVATE ISLAND RESORT



SANCTUARY RAROTONGA  
ON THE BEACH

## Living and Working in the Cook Islands

The Cook Islands is a small, independent country whose government is based on the Westminster parliamentary democratic system. The Cook Islands is in “free association” with New Zealand there are very close ties with New Zealand. Politics plays a big part in Cook Islands life.

While only 12,000 Cook Islanders live in the Cook Islands, over 65,000 live in New Zealand and 30,000 in Australia. As such there are many and frequent relationships with New Zealand and Australia in terms of government, business, sporting, cultural and family relationships. New Zealanders and Australians will find many aspects of Cook Islands life familiar as will people from other Pacific Island countries.

As a small, isolated community the lifestyle tends to be easy going and relaxed. There is a low level of crime and therefore one is sensible to take reasonable precautions.

During the missionary period, the church was the central institution and, effectively, the government. With colonisation by first Great Britain and then New Zealand the central government became more and more powerful. Since independence in 1965, the role of the government has continued to grow and plays the central role in Cook Islands life.

The Cook Islands is a predominately Christian society. The main churches are the Cook Islands Christian Church (CICC), Catholic, Seventh Day Adventist, Jehovah’s Witness, Assembly of God, Apostolic, Latter-Day Saints (LDS) Church and a range of other local evangelical churches. There is also a small local Baha’i community on the island.

Cook Islanders are justifiably famous for their artistic endeavours particularly singing, drumming, dancing, and music. There is also a strong artistic and carving community.

### TIME DIFFERENCES

The Cook Islands is:

- 2 hours ahead and 1 day behind Fiji and New Zealand (subject to daylight savings)
- 4 hours ahead and 1 day behind Australia
- 6 hours ahead and 1 day behind the Philippines and Singapore
- 15 hours ahead and 1 day behind New Delhi, India
- 10 hours behind the United Kingdom on the same day subject to daylight savings
- 3 hours behind California, USA on the same day

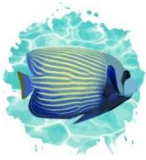
Useful websites are [www.timeanddate.com](http://www.timeanddate.com) and [www.worldtimeserver.com](http://www.worldtimeserver.com)

### WHAT IS EXPECTED OF ME?

You will need to come with an open mind. There are many things you need to become accustomed to, including the customs and culture of a small, largely Polynesian community. The right attitude will take you a long way in blending with the local community and enjoying the working and living environment Cook Islands has to offer.

Rarotonga is a small, beautiful island. Relocating to the Cook Islands will be a lifestyle change for many people. It is best to do as much research as you can, but it is vital to come with an open mind. Working on a tropical island is very different from visiting on holiday. While our visitors enjoy the laid-back, relaxed atmosphere of the Cook Islands, some expatriates may find the atmosphere frustrating from a work point of view.

The hustle and bustle of the city-life is left behind when you come to the Cook Islands, together with the usual luxuries.



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Rarotonga and the Cook Islands will bring you closer to nature; provide a safe and tranquil environment and plenty of outdoor living. However, the Cook Islands do not provide an escape from work pressures. There is no shortage of new and interesting work challenges. However, if you are open to challenges, taking a proactive approach and positive outlook on making and accepting work and lifestyle changes, you will enjoy your job, your colleagues, and your new island home.

## ACCOMMODATION

Housing is normally a unit style in concrete block construction with tile flooring. Very few have air-conditioning, and air-conditioned accommodation is much more expensive.

The cost of accommodation tends to be influenced by how close the dwelling is to the beach as there are hundreds of short-term rental holiday homes on the island. Basically, the closer to the beach the more expensive the rentals.

There is a wide variation in rental charges depending on many factors such as location, condition of the rental etc. Some property owners prefer short term holiday home rentals whereas other property owners prefer the security of a longer-term rental arrangement. Rentals are also influenced by the state of the economy, particularly the tourism sector in the Cook Islands.

Accommodation prices on Rarotonga range from approximately:

- \$ 50 - \$100 NZD a week for a room in a shared house
- \$125 - \$200 NZD a week for a one-bedroom furnished house or flat
- \$300 - \$450 NZD for a two-bedroom + furnished house or flat.
- \$300 - \$500 NZD for a three-bedroom + furnished house or flat.

Rental costs do change, according to supply and demand, and standards of accommodation do vary greatly. You will need to do your own research. It is best to undertake your research when on the island during the first 10 days that you are provided accommodation at the resort.

You will be responsible for making your own accommodation arrangements, and there are several ways to locate housing: word of mouth or sharing with colleagues; the local newspaper has a classified section listing available rental accommodation; and there are several closed groups on Facebook:

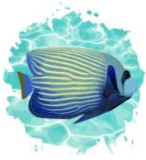
- **Cook Islands News** [www.cinews.co.ck](http://www.cinews.co.ck) **Ph: (+682) 22-999**
- **Cook Islands Herald** [bestread@ciherald.co.ck](mailto:bestread@ciherald.co.ck) **Ph: (+682) 29-460**
- **Cook Islands Long Term Rentals** <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1416049295383048/>
- **Rarotonga – community and beyond** [www.facebook.com/groups/298403713572105/?fref=nf](https://www.facebook.com/groups/298403713572105/?fref=nf)
- **Rarotonga Holiday Homes – short and long-term rentals** [www.facebook.com/groups/136633746714403/?fref=nf](https://www.facebook.com/groups/136633746714403/?fref=nf)
- **Jeff Tikitau Real Estate Cook Islands** <https://www.jefftikitaurealestate.com> **Ph: (+682) 53 658**

Once you have accepted a contract with us, we will assist you with being able to join these closed Facebook groups.

## TELECOMMUNICATIONS – VODAFONE COOK ISLANDS

The international dialling code for the Cook Islands is +682.

Vodafone Cook Islands is the only telecommunications company in the Cook Islands. Customer services are open 08.00am – 4.00pm at their offices located in the main township of Avarua. For further information on landline and broadband installation



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and mobile phone costs:

[www.vodafone.co.ck](http://www.vodafone.co.ck)

Ph: (+682) 29-680

You will need to buy a local sim card which will give you a local phone number, and the ability to buy data packages. Your phone will need to be unlocked and available to use other networks – please check this before you leave your country.

## FOOD AND SHOPPING

Staff meals are available during your shift priced below what is charged to guests.

There are two main supermarkets and several mini marts on Rarotonga. Most food is imported from New Zealand (by ship or airfreight) and therefore is like New Zealand with some items a little cheaper and some items a little more expensive.

The range is not as large as in New Zealand or Australia, but all the basic varieties of food are available.

There is however a variety of local fresh fruit, vegetables, fish, and meat. For the best fresh local produce visit the busy Punanga Nui market on a Saturday morning. Local grown produces sold at roadside stalls are cheaper than what you will find in the supermarkets. Alternatively, Wigmore's Superstore in Vaimaanga offers fresh produce, much of it from their own farm.

Shops are generally open from 8am till 4pm, Monday to Friday and 8am till 12 noon on Saturdays. Supermarkets are open 8am - 6pm Monday to Friday and 8am – 4pm Saturday. While the major shops are closed on Sundays, the village mini marts are generally open on Sunday as well as in the evening and early mornings. Shops do not have the same extensive variety that is found in main supermarkets.

There are now five 24-hour supermarkets which also sell petrol and diesel.

1. Oasis in Nikao near the airport
2. Super Brown in Tupapa
3. Super Brown in Nikao
4. Wigmores Super Store in Vaimaanga
5. TEM's in Muri

The availability of specialty foods for particular diets is very limited, but Wigmores Superstore in Vaimaanga which is also a 24-hour supermarket, has a small range of speciality items such as health foods Ph +(682) 20-206. If your diet consists of special requirements, you are advised to bring those foods with you.

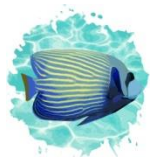
## BANKS

- **ANZ Bank** [www.anz.com/cookislands](http://www.anz.com/cookislands)
- **Bank of the South Pacific** [www.bsp.co.ck](http://www.bsp.co.ck) (formerly Westpac)
- **Bank of the Cook islands** [www.bci.co.ck](http://www.bci.co.ck)

Banks require a minimum deposit of NZD\$20 – NZD\$100, to open an account (dependant on which Bank you prefer) and two forms of identification.

You will be required to open a Cook Islands bank account so that your pay can be direct credited to your account, which we will assist you with.

## WESTERN UNION



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The Cook Islands has a Western Union office located in central Avarua, where you can send or receive money from families & friends etc. The office hours are from 8.30am to 4.30pm Monday to Friday and 8.30am to 12.30pm on Saturday.  
[www.westernunion.com](http://www.westernunion.com)

## WHAT TO BRING

The Cook Islands is a small and remote country. As such, while most basic goods are available, the range is more limited and the prices higher than would be normal in a large country.

**Electrical goods:** while some rental homes are fully furnished, many are not. While TVs will be cheaper in a larger country bringing one to the Cook Islands is rarely economic once freight and other costs are added in. Small electronic items such as iPod, games consoles, portable hard drives digital cameras and other high value, low volume items are best purchased in a large country. The standard voltage in the Cook Islands is 240 Volt and frequency is 50HzAC, which is compatible with New Zealand and Australia. Please note that this is different from the 110 Volt system common in the United States and other countries and if you are bringing appliances that use that system you will need to use an adaptor.

**Kitchen utensils:** most staff purchase their basic kitchen utensils in Rarotonga, but specialty items should be brought with you; and

**Bedding:** almost all rental accommodation provides basic beds and mattresses.

**Linen:** Some rental accommodations provide linen, but most do not. Linen is available for purchase on Rarotonga, or you can bring your own.

**Toiletries:** most of the basic types and international brands of toiletries are available as are three pharmacies on the island.

**Clothing and Footwear:** the local stores have a limited range of clothing available. You are best advised to take advantage of the wider ranges and better prices by purchasing clothing and footwear in a larger country.

## GETTING ESTABLISHED

You need to ensure that you have sufficient funds to get yourself established for the first few months after arrival in the Cook Islands to cover the expenses of organizing telephone accounts, accommodation bonds and pre-payments, transport etc. Please do not arrive without any money to meet these establishment costs.

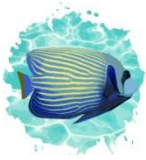
## FREIGHT

The following are the main freight forwarding companies in the Cook Islands.

- |   |  |                          |
|---|--|--------------------------|
| • <b>Raro Freight</b>                   | <a href="mailto:Eugene@rarofreight.co.ck">Eugene@rarofreight.co.ck</a>                   | <b>Ph: (+682) 23-361</b> |
| • <b>Air NZ Cargo</b>                   | <a href="mailto:rarotongatravelcentre@airnz.co.nz">rarotongatravelcentre@airnz.co.nz</a> | <b>Ph: (+682) 26-306</b> |
| • <b>Hawaii Pacific Maritime</b>        | <a href="mailto:agnes@hpm.co.ck">agnes@hpm.co.ck</a>                                     | <b>Ph: (+682) 27-185</b> |
| • <b>DHL</b>                            | <a href="mailto:Dhl1@oyster.net.ck">Dhl1@oyster.net.ck</a>                               | <b>Ph: (+682) 25-101</b> |
| • <b>Cook Islands General Transport</b> | <a href="mailto:movers@cigt.co.ck">movers@cigt.co.ck</a>                                 | <b>Ph: (+682) 24-446</b> |

## TRANSPORT

Many staff live within a short distance of the resort, and either walk to work, catch the local bus or arrive by car/motorcycle. Bus timetables are found at [www.busaboutraro.com](http://www.busaboutraro.com)



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Driving Cook Islanders drive on the left-hand side of the road and the maximum speed is 50km per hour. In residential areas the maximum speed limit is 30km per hour. There are further speed restrictions around schools during school hours which are clearly signposted. If you have a current driver's licence from your home country you can drive a car in the Cook Islands on that licence or you can apply for our local driver's licence, that requires you to undergo a theory and practical tests which can be done at National Police Headquarters in central Avarua at a cost NZD\$40.00.

[www.transport.gov.ck/corporate/licensing/drivers-licence/](http://www.transport.gov.ck/corporate/licensing/drivers-licence/)

Motorcycles can be hired or bought:

- Hired from local rental companies (ideal for short term)
- Purchased second hand from between \$750 and \$1800
- Purchased new from between \$3000 to \$4000 with local dealerships.

There are an extraordinary number of motorcycle accidents in the Cook Islands resulting in severe injury as well as fatalities. The rate of fatalities is around 15x that of New Zealand on a per capita basis. While many of these accidents are self-inflicted and alcohol related, a considerable number of people, including staff members, are involved in accidents where a drunk driver has hit them, or they have collided with an animal on the road. Staff are advised to carefully consider the risks of using motorcycles in the Cook Islands and if they do so to follow all road safety precautions, including wearing safety helmets.

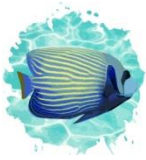
Any motorcyclist, or their passenger, caught driving without an approved safety helmet will be subject to a \$250 fine. All helmets must be strapped on and free from damage. A Police Officer may ask to inspect your helmet.

Cars can either be.

- Hired from local rental companies
- Purchased second hand
- Purchased new.

You may wish to wait until you are settled on the island before deciding as to whether to hire or buy a car and can easily hire a car or scooter in the interim. The following are the motor dealers on Rarotonga:

- |                             |   |                   |
|-----------------------------|---|-------------------|
| • <b>Pickering Motors</b>   | <a href="http://www.pickeringmotors.com">www.pickeringmotors.com</a>              | Ph: (+682) 29-882 |
| • <b>Motor Centre</b>       | <a href="http://www.motorcentre.co.ck">www.motorcentre.co.ck</a>                  | Ph: (+682) 22-055 |
| • <b>OTC</b>                | <a href="https://www.facebook.com/OTC-1993-Ltd">www.facebook.com/OTC-1993-Ltd</a> | Ph: (+682) 25 600 |
| • <b>Raro Cars</b>          | <a href="http://www.rarocars.com">www.rarocars.com</a>                            | Ph: (+682) 22-060 |
| • <b>Island Cars</b>        | <a href="http://www.islandcarhire.co.ck">www.islandcarhire.co.ck</a>              | Ph: (+682) 22-632 |
| • <b>Polynesian Rentals</b> | <a href="http://www.polynesianhire.co.ck">www.polynesianhire.co.ck</a>            | Ph: (+682) 20-895 |
| • <b>Rarotongan Rentals</b> | <a href="http://www.rarotongarentals.co.ck">www.rarotongarentals.co.ck</a>        | Ph: (+682) 22-326 |
| • <b>Avis Rentals</b>       | <a href="http://www.aviscookislands.com">www.aviscookislands.com</a>              | Ph: (+682) 22-833 |



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- Rarotonga – Buy Sell Swap

[www.facebook.com/groups/996140683861854/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/996140683861854/)

## WEATHER IN THE COOK ISLANDS

The Cook Islands is a tropical island nation. During the “summer” between November to April the temperatures range between the mid and high twenties. During the “winter” the temperatures range between the low and mid-twenties, however, during the night the temperature can drop below twenty. There is no “rainy” season as such although there is some more rain during the “winter”.

## ENTERTAINMENT

There are two local free to air television channels in the Cook Islands.

- Cooks Islands Television - [www.citv.co.ck](http://www.citv.co.ck)
- Vaka TV - [www.facebook.com/VakaTv](https://www.facebook.com/VakaTv)

**PAY TV:** Moana TV is delivered using Vodafone internet broadband network (IPTV – internet provider television)  
[www.vodafone.co.ck](http://www.vodafone.co.ck)

**SKY TV:** The sole distributor of Fiji’s SKY Pacific television service. [www.skypacific.tv](http://www.skypacific.tv)

**EMPIRE CINEMA:** There is a local 3-screen cinema in the main town of Avarua which shows a variety of movies  
[www.empireraro.com](http://www.empireraro.com)

**NETFLIX:** It is not possible to register a Netflix account from the Cook Islands. However, you can access Netflix via an account in another country, so you are best to set up your account prior to arrival in the Cook Islands. Please note that internet charges are significantly higher in the Cook Islands than in most countries due to having only one telecommunications provider and being so distant from the rest of the world.

**AMAZON PRIME:** It is possible to register an Amazon Prime account from the Cook Islands for around \$6 per month.

**DVD RENTAL:** There are video/DVD rental shops providing a variety of movies for hire. However, many of these DVDs are pirated and of poor quality and so you may wish to bring your own DVDs. Many people use a portable hard drive with their favourite movies and TV shows.

## HEALTH / DENTAL

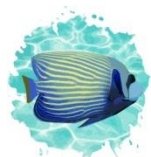
As a small remote country, there is a more limited range of medical services available than in a large country. The Rarotonga Hospital offers the full range of basic medical services that you would expect to find in a small community and can provide for most basic medical needs, but for major medical or surgical needs people would have to fly to New Zealand, Fiji, Australia, or your place of origin.

Medical fees apply at the government hospital or dental clinics.

Doctors who practice privately are:

- |                      |                   |
|----------------------|-------------------|
| • Dr Tereapii Uka    | Ph: (+682) 23-680 |
| • Dr. Tamarua Herman | Ph: (+682) 23-427 |
| • Dr. Teariki Noovao | Ph: (+682) 20-835 |





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There is a New Zealand qualified dentist in private practice:

- Philip Nicholas (BDS Otago)

Ph: (+682) 20-169

For more detailed information on the Cook Islands Health System please consult [www.health.gov.ck](http://www.health.gov.ck)

## SCHOOLS

Cook Islands schooling is based on the New Zealand curriculum and includes Cook Island Maori language lessons.

### GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

There are several Government schools around the island and access to these schools is generally readily available and more information for each school is found at [www.education.gov.ck](http://www.education.gov.ck)

#### PRIMARY SCHOOLS

|                        |  |   |                   |
|------------------------|--|---|-------------------|
| Arorangi School        | <a href="mailto:info@arorangi.edu.ck">info@arorangi.edu.ck</a> | <a href="https://www.facebook.com/groups/apiiarorangi">www.facebook.com/groups/apiiarorangi</a>   | Ph: (+682) 20-008 |
| Avarua School          | <a href="mailto:info@avarua.edu.ck">info@avarua.edu.ck</a>     | <a href="https://www.facebook.com/apiiavarua?fref=ts">www.facebook.com/apiiavarua?fref=ts</a>   | Ph: (+682) 27-320 |
| Rutaki School          | <a href="mailto:info@ruataki.edu.ck">info@ruataki.edu.ck</a>   | <a href="https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100007242139341&amp;fref=ts">www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100007242139341&amp;fref=ts</a> | Ph: (+682) 20-111 |
| Apii Nikao School      | <a href="mailto:info@nikao.edu.ck">info@nikao.edu.ck</a>       | <a href="https://www.facebook.com/ApiiNikao/?fref=ts">www.facebook.com/ApiiNikao/?fref=ts</a>   | Ph: (+682) 22-710 |
| Takitumu School        | <a href="mailto:info@takitumu.edu.ck">info@takitumu.edu.ck</a> | <a href="https://www.facebook.com/apii.takitumu.7?fref=ts">www.facebook.com/apii.takitumu.7?fref=ts</a>                                       | Ph: (+682) 23-340 |
| Blackrock<br>Preschool |  |   | Ph: (+682) 26-456 |

#### COLLEGES

|                    |  |   |                   |
|--------------------|--|---|-------------------|
| Titikaveka College | <a href="mailto:info#@titikaveka.co.ck">info#@titikaveka.co.ck</a> | <a href="https://www.facebook.com/umeia/?fref=ts">www.facebook.com/umeia/?fref=ts</a> | Ph: (+682) 23-820 |
| Tereora College    | <a href="mailto:info@tereora.co.ck">info@tereora.co.ck</a>         | <a href="http://www.tereora.edu.ck">www.tereora.edu.ck</a>                            | Ph: (+682) 23-819 |

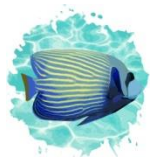
They range in size from 50 pupils to 500 pupils and there are small numbers of expatriate children at many of these schools.

### PRIVATE SCHOOLS

There are also several private schools available:

#### PRIMARY SCHOOLS

|                             |  |   |                   |
|-----------------------------|--|---|-------------------|
| St Joseph's School          | <a href="mailto:info@stjoseph.edu.ck">info@stjoseph.edu.ck</a> | <a href="http://www.nukutere.edu.ck/">http://www.nukutere.edu.ck/</a><br>Run by the Catholic Church, caters for children from pre-school to year 7.                                   | Ph: (+682) 26-111 |
| Te Uki Ou School            | <a href="mailto:info@teukiou.edu.ck">info@teukiou.edu.ck</a>   | <a href="http://www.teukiou.edu.ck/">http://www.teukiou.edu.ck/</a><br>A private, fee-paying school with a roll of around 200 students which follows the NZ school curriculum.        | Ph: (+682) 23-509 |
| Imanuela<br>Akademia School | <a href="mailto:info@imanuela.edu.ck">info@imanuela.edu.ck</a> | <a href="https://www.facebook.com/ImanuelaAkademia/?fref=ts">www.facebook.com/ImanuelaAkademia/?fref=ts</a><br>Utilizes a home-schooling system and run by the Assembly of God church | Ph: (+682) 23-668 |



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## CHURCH SECONDARY SCHOOLS

|                  |   |   |                   |
|------------------|---|---|-------------------|
| Nukutere College | <a href="http://www.nukutere.edu.ck/">http://www.nukutere.edu.ck/</a> | <a href="mailto:info@nukutere.edu.ck">info@nukutere.edu.ck</a><br>Run by the Catholic Church                    | Ph: (+682) 26-110 |
| Papaaroa College |   | <a href="mailto:principal@papaaroa.edu.ck">principal@papaaroa.edu.ck</a><br>Run by Seventh Day Adventist Church | Ph: (+682) 22-850 |

## SPORTS

Obviously with the beautiful waters around the Cook Islands, diving or learning to dive is a fantastic opportunity.

Most of the villages have sports grounds and clubs where you can join their sports teams. Some of the major sports played are Golf, Rugby, Rugby League, Soccer, Cricket, Volleyball, Touch Football, Sailing, Triathlons etc.

[www.cookislandssport.com](http://www.cookislandssport.com)

## CISNOC

The Cook Islands National Sports & Olympic Committee (CISNOC) was formed in 1987.

Their mission is to develop the Cook Islands people through more participation in competitive sporting events at higher levels, achieving regional and international status, achieving this through successful development programs and organizing more participation through competitive sporting events at a high level such as:

- Junior Competition
- Zone Games (MANEA, PURAPURA, TUMUTEVAROVARO)

National Championships

[http://websites.sportstg.com/assoc\\_page.cgi?assoc=3844&pID=2](http://websites.sportstg.com/assoc_page.cgi?assoc=3844&pID=2)

Ph: (+682) 24-095

## USEFUL SITES

[www.therarotongan.com](http://www.therarotongan.com)

[www.ck](http://www.ck)

[www.cook-islands.gov.ck](http://www.cook-islands.gov.ck)

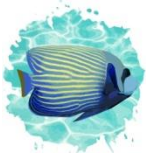
<https://awaywiththesteiners.com/moving-to-rarotonga-cook-islands-everything-you-need-to-know/#:~:text=To%20live%20and%20work%20in,Arriving%20at%20Rarotonga%20International%20Airport.>

<https://www.facebook.com/mfaicookislands/>

<http://www.mfai.gov.ck/>

<https://cookislands.travel/how-to-book/faq>





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