

# Waitangi Day: A Celebration of New Zealand's History [B1]

Questa giornata è una festa annuale celebrata in Nuova Zelanda per commemorare la firma del trattato tra il popolo maori e la corona britannica nel 1840. Scopriamo come viene celebrata e cosa rappresenta oggi per il Paese.

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Waitangi Day is an annual public holiday celebrated in New Zealand / Aotearoa every 6 February. It commemorates the signing of the [Treaty](#) of Waitangi in 1840. Considered New Zealand's [founding document](#), the [Treaty](#) of Waitangi — Te Tiriti o Waitangi in te reo Māori (the Maori language) — was an agreement between Māori chiefs and representatives of the British Crown. It established the [framework](#) for a relationship between the government and Māori people and it continues to be a guide for the treatment of New Zealand's Māori population today.

## EARLY ARRIVALS

The first European [settlers](#) to arrive in New Zealand / Aotearoa were [sealers](#) and [whalers](#), followed by missionaries and merchants. The merchants traded natural resources, such as [flax](#) and [tinder](#), for guns, and clothing and other products with the local tribes. With the arrival of multiple immigrant [settlers](#), Māori chiefs [sought](#) to protect themselves by making alliances with the British.

## FIVE HUNDRED CHIEFS

The [Treaty](#) of Waitangi is named after the site where the agreement was made, in the Bay of Islands in the country's far north. The document was originally signed by forty-three Māori chiefs, with more than five hundred chiefs across New Zealand adding their signatures over an eight month period. The treaty was written in both English and Māori. However,

differences in its translation led to [misunderstandings](#) about the promises it made. This caused serious disagreements over its [terms](#).

## COLONIAL CULTURE

Well into the 20th century, Māori felt pressured to assimilate into the colonial culture while struggling to preserve their own traditions. Since the 1950s, Māori have taken a firmer [stance](#) to defend their rights. The first official commemoration of Waitangi Day took place in 1934 but it only became a public holiday in 1974. While for many it is a celebration, for Māori it can be a day of sadness or [outrage](#) at more than a century of colonial [plunder](#) and oppression. Today, many Māori use the day to [grieve](#) the loss of their land, language and culture. Increasingly, though, Waitangi Day also represents hope for greater understanding and unity.

## PRESENT AND FUTURE

Waitangi Day commemorates the past and the present, and looks forward to the future. It highlights [ongoing](#) efforts to honour Māori heritage, ensuring they [thrive](#) for generations to come. As New Zealand / Aotearoa grows as a diverse and inclusive society, Waitangi Day remains a powerful [reminder](#) of the nation's identity and the shared [commitment](#) to honouring its [founding document](#).

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# Glossary

- **founding document** = documento fondante
- **misunderstandings** = malintesi
- **plunder** = saccheggio
- **grieve** = piangere, lamentarsi
- **terms** = condizioni
- **reminder** = promemoria
- **commitment** = impegno
- **settlers** = coloni
- **flax** = lino
- **tinder** = esca
- **sought** = cercare
- **thrive** = prosperare
- **Treaty** = trattato
- **framework** = quadro
- **sealers** = cacciatori di foche
- **stance** = posizione
- **whalers** = balenieri
- **outrage** = indignazione
- **ongoing** = in corso