

Cook Islands

Continent: Australia

Languages Spoken: English, Cook Islands Māori

Population: 17,500

Currency: New Zealand Dollar (NZD)

Area: 240

Main Landmarks:

- {'name': 'Avarua', 'writeup': 'The capital city located on Rarotonga, known for its vibrant markets and cultural sites.'}
- {'name': 'Te Rua Manga (The Needle)', 'writeup': 'A distinctive rock formation and popular hiking destination on Rarotonga.'}
- {'name': 'Muri Lagoon', 'writeup': 'A beautiful lagoon with clear waters, ideal for snorkeling and water activities.'}
- {'name': 'Aitutaki Lagoon', 'writeup': 'Famous for its stunning turquoise waters and coral reefs, a top tourist attraction.'}
- {'name': 'Titikaveka Beach', 'writeup': 'A scenic beach known for its white sand and calm waters.'}

Head of State / Government:

King Charles III (represented locally by the Queen's Representative)

Main Cultural Events:

- {'name': 'Te Maeva Nui', 'writeup': 'An annual festival celebrating Cook Islands' culture, independence, and traditions with dance, music, and crafts.'}
- {'name': 'Marae Day', 'writeup': 'A day dedicated to traditional ceremonies and community gatherings at sacred sites.'}

Food & Cuisine:

Cook Islands cuisine features seafood, tropical fruits, and root vegetables, with dishes like ika mata (raw fish marinated in coconut cream) and rukau (taro leaves cooked with coconut cream).

Brief History:

The Cook Islands were settled by Polynesians around the 6th century. Named after Captain James Cook, they became a British protectorate in the late 19th century and later a self-governing territory in free association with New Zealand since 1965.

Important People:

- Tom Davis - Former Prime Minister and medical doctor
- Henry Puna - Former Prime Minister
- Mark Brown - Current Prime Minister

Current Conflicts:

The Cook Islands currently have no significant internal or external conflicts.

Youtube Links:

- Discovering the Cook Islands: Paradise in the Pacific
- Cook Islands Travel Guide - Top Things to Do
- Culture and Traditions of the Cook Islands
- Aitutaki Lagoon - The Jewel of the Cook Islands
- Cook Islands Food Tour: Traditional Polynesian Cuisine