



# New Zealand

*Founder member of the Commonwealth 1931 - visited by the Queen in 1982*



**New Zealand consists of North and South Islands and a number of off-shore islands in the western South Pacific**

Pop: (2013) 4,506,000      Capital: Wellington      Area: 270,500 sq km

New Zealand is a well watered, fertile and mountainous country where volcanic activity has helped shape the landscape. Rotorua on North Island is famous for its boiling mud pools and geysers. 75% of the country lies above 200m. South Island has 223 peaks above 2,300m and 360 glaciers. Many of the fast flowing rivers are harnessed for hydro-electricity providing over 90% of the country's power.

The flora includes many species unique to New Zealand and, despite its temperate maritime climate, ranges from subtropical rainforest to alpine. Many animals are also unique to New Zealand such as flightless birds like the kiwi and kakapo.

The economy is now more diverse and much less dependent on butter and lamb. Wine is an important export. For many, New Zealand is a dream holiday destination or an opportunity to visit relatives.

*Aoraki (Mount Cook), New Zealand's highest mountain at 3,724 m, is in the South Island's Southern Alps*

