

emigrate²

Your Emigration Guide: **New Zealand**



Sponsored by Halo Financial

halo financial

Editor: David Fuller

www.emigrate2.co.uk

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2 EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION



When I first started writing about emigration back in 2002, New Zealand was in the midst of its largest surge in immigration since the immediate post Second World War years.

The country's sudden boom in popularity over a decade ago was put down to one factor and one factor only: The Lord of the Rings affect. Largely filmed on location in New Zealand, the country became as big a part of the movie franchise as any of the actors, placing NZ firmly in the global spotlight for the first time.

Suddenly, millions of people from all around the world became aware of just how beautiful New Zealand is. Tourists began visiting the country in droves, and as more holidaymakers entered the country, the more people decided they'd like to stay and live there.

Fast forward 13 years and New Zealand is now welcoming record levels of immigrants. While the country's idyllic scenery is still a draw – NZ's starring role in the Chronicles of Narnia films and, more recently, The Hobbit trilogy, have kept it in the spotlight – it's far from the country's only attraction, as you will see over the following pages.

The fact you are reading this very guide suggests that the idea of emigrating to New Zealand appeals to you, too. No matter what your own particular reason is for looking to explore the possibilities awaiting you on the other side of the world, hopefully this guide can give you some idea of what to expect from a life in the country.

Over the following pages you will find out more about what it's like to live down under. But, as we don't want you to just take our word for this, you can read British migrant Clare Cooney's account of how she has found her first ten months living in the land of the Long White Cloud.

Hopefully one day, it's something you'll be experiencing first-hand.

Good luck!

David Fuller
Editor

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New Zealand Dollar Research

GBP-NZD remains in a downtrend as the Pound is seen as a risk to investors who are worried about the outcome of the EU referendum in June. The polls remain neck and neck however, a recent YouGov poll showed little difference between the camps. Interestingly the threat of a collapse in the Pound is one of the major reasons why voters may be swung in favour staying in the EU – better the devil you know as they say.

Over in New Zealand, data has been mixed – the QV House Price Index showed prices dropping annually in March whilst the Global Dairy Trade auction saw prices increase slightly. The Reserve Bank of New Zealand made a surprise interest rate cut in early March (2.250%) which has contributed to the Kiwi Dollar remaining strong (more so due to the increase in risk appetite around the world). In terms of the technical, the Pound remains in a downtrend against the Kiwi Dollar – support comes in at 2.0550 which was tested earlier this month and resistance is at 2.10.

Whatever the outcome of the EU referendum and the GBP-NZD performance, Halo Financial is prepared to go the extra mile to ensure you get the best GBP-EUR rate for your money. Our currency experts will help you navigate through the foreign exchange process ensuring your money transfer happens as fast and as seamlessly as possible, so you can concentrate on enjoying your new life in New Zealand. With over 10 years' experience, we have helped thousands of customers emigrate and have been commended for our customer service with a 99% Gold Merchant Status rating on Feefo.com, the global feedback engine.

For Further Information

If you have an enquiry please call +44 (0) 20 7350 5474 or visit www.halofinancial.com for the latest up-to-date news on the currency markets and how you can get the best exchange rate.

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customer quote from **feefo** 

4 WHY NEW ZEALAND



Population:

4,570,038

Area:

268,021 km²

Population density:

16.8 people per km²

Capital:

Wellington

Largest city:

Auckland

Currency:

New Zealand Dollar

Average property price:

NZD514,232

(May 2015; source www.qv.co.nz)

Average annual salary:

NZD51,532

(June 2014; source www.stats.gov.uk) *

*Full-time earnings only

The majority of immigrants who choose to live in New Zealand undoubtedly do so to take advantage of the country's much feted lifestyle.

NZ has a well deserved reputation for offering its residents a slower-paced, more relaxed way of life – particularly when it comes to work. It's very much a country where the mantle 'working to live' is placed firmly above that of 'living to work'.

A major emphasis of Kiwi life is almost always placed on putting leisure time first. And when it comes to ways of spending this increased leisure time, the choices are endless. NZ likes to think of itself as something of an adventure playground – indeed, adrenaline fuelled activities such as bungee jumping and zorbing both originated in the country – while pursuits like kayaking, white-water rafting and hiking (or trekking as it is more commonly known in NZ) are all hugely popular.

Then, of course, there is rugby union – seen by some (well, most Kiwis actually) as a national religion. When rugby season is in full flow, if New Zealanders aren't actually playing the sport, then you can be fairly certain they'll be watching it.

More serene pastimes exist too. As anyone who has watched Hollywood blockbusters such as The Lord of the Rings trilogy, The Hobbit or The Chronicles of Narnia will already know, New Zealand has many scenic delights: there are few better ways to spend a day than deciding to take a gentle stroll in the fantastic landscapes that abound no matter where in the country you choose to settle.

Yet for all its lifestyle benefits, a majority of immigrants in the country still need to work – quite often getting a visa will depend on it. Unless you have family already living in the country, then the NZ immigration system will almost certainly require you to have a job or a job offer in order to qualify for a visa, meaning that not everyone will find emigrating to NZ a straightforward process.

Over the following pages, we'll be looking at many aspects of living in NZ and we will introduce you to some of the key visas that will hopefully enable you to one day sample the lifestyle for yourself.

5 VISAS

There are many different types of New Zealand visas available for immigration purposes, but knowing which one is needed to emigrate can be a confusing process.

Here, courtesy of The Emigration Group (TEG), is a look at the country's most commonly used visas:

Skilled Migrant Category

New Zealand's Skilled Migrant Category offers applicants a permanent visa which allows a person to live and work anywhere in New Zealand. The Skilled Migration Programme is open to anyone with relevant experience who meets the pass mark for the migration points test.

You will need to register an Expression of Interest (EOI) with the NZ Government before completing your application. This EOI is based on a points test, and only applicants scoring at least 100 points can be considered.

In order to apply for a New Zealand Skilled visa you must meet the following criteria:

- You must be aged between 18 and 55 at the time you apply for the visa;
- You will need previous work experience in a nominated occupation – the occupation needs to be approved by Immigration New Zealand (INZ). (In some instances a job offer may also be required); and
- You will need to hold qualifications (either tertiary or trade) or have had an apprenticeship in the nominated occupation.

You can apply for a visa only once your EOI has been selected by INZ. Applications accumulating the higher points totals, or those which feature skills in an occupation deemed in high demand, will be selected first.

Work visas

New Zealand's work visas are available to those looking to work in New Zealand temporarily, perhaps with half an eye on becoming a permanent resident at a later date.

The country offers a wide range of different visa options depending on what you are looking for. Here are just some of the options that might be available to you:

Work to Residence

This visa is available to people who have exceptional talents within certain fields – approved by INZ – and have a job offer from an accredited New Zealand employer. After a period of employment they may become eligible to apply for permanent residency.

The visa allows you to work temporarily in New Zealand initially for up to 30 months, and in due course apply for residence from work. This is a non-points based system.

Essential Skills Work visa

If you have an offer of a job from a New Zealand employer, you may be eligible to apply for a temporary essential skills visa to enable you to take up that employment. This visa comes in the form of an endorsement in your passport that entitles you to undertake paid employment while you are in New Zealand. You must be of an acceptable standard of health and character, and satisfy an Immigration Officer that you genuinely intend a temporary stay in New Zealand to work. You may then apply for a temporary work visa either from the UK if you have an offer of employment or from within New Zealand if you get a job offer after arriving there.

Working Holiday visa

The young person's Working Holiday Scheme allows young adults to experience life in New Zealand whilst being able to take up employment during your stay.

To apply for this visa from the UK you will need:

- A British passport that's valid for at least three months after your planned date of departure;
- To be aged between 18 and 30;
- To prove the main purpose of your visit is to holiday, with work being a secondary intention.

"Here's a quick overview of the country's main visas"

Family visas

If you have family living as permanent residents in New Zealand, or are in a long-term relationship with a New Zealander, then one of the following visas could be your passport to a new life in the Land of the Long White Cloud.

Parent visa

As the name of the category suggests, this stream is aimed at parents wishing to join their children in New Zealand. Applicants must express their interest in applying for New Zealand residence, and dependent on the requirements that they claim to meet, may subsequently be invited to apply. They must no longer have any dependent children, and one of their adult children must have been permanently resident in NZ for at least three years and be willing to sponsor them. Applicants are required to demonstrate either a guaranteed lifetime income, funds of their own, or the sponsor will be asked to demonstrate they meet a minimum income level. Applying for this visa can be an extremely long process.

Parent Retirement Category

If people who meet the criteria for the Parent Category want to have their application expedited then they may wish to apply through the Parent Retirement Category. However, you will need deep pockets. Applicants must be able to invest a minimum of NZD 1 million in New Zealand over four years and have an annual income of at least NZD 60,000 at the time they apply, and settlement funds of at least NZD 500,000.

Partner visas

The New Zealand Family Partner Visa is open to de-facto, civil partnerships and married couples who are in stable, committed and genuine relationships with a New Zealand citizen or permanent resident.

Applicants for this visa will need to be aged over 18, and be able to prove that they have been in a committed relationship with their qualifying New Zealander partner for at least two years prior to applying. Such commitment could be that they have lived together for a specified period of time, or include evidence of a joint financial status. Information supplied by The Emigration Group. Visit their website for more in-depth information on all these visas, or to take an assessment: <http://www.emigrationgroup.com/>

7 ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

Familiarise yourself with some of the key aspects of everyday life that you may face when living in New Zealand.

Education

Generally, children in NZ start school on their fifth birthday – or on the nearest school day after it. However, school does not become compulsory until the age of six.

The majority of children in NZ stay in education until they are 18, but your child can choose to leave school when they are 16 and with parental and/or school permission may even be allowed to finish their education at 15 if they have a full-time job lined up. Usually only children who are deemed to have found school a struggle throughout will be awarded permission to finish a year early.

The main qualification in NZ is called the National Educational Achievement Certificate (NEAC). There are three levels of NEAC: Level 1 (which is studied for in Year 11 – when your child is 16); Level 2 (Year 12); and Level 3 (Year 13). The award of any NEAC is dependent on your child earning enough credits in that particular academic year. Credits are awarded for completing courses and the standard of work they produce.

According to the most recent data released by the New Zealand Ministry of Education, 74 per cent of school leavers hold a NEAC Level 2 or above.

Healthcare

Publicly funded healthcare is available for all permanent residents of New Zealand – or for holders of work permits lasting more than two years. To gain access to public healthcare you simply need to register with a local GP.

Publicly funded healthcare, however, does not necessarily mean 'free'. While a number of healthcare service procedures in NZ do come without cost – including most hospital treatment, children's immunisations and healthcare during pregnancy and labour – things like prescription drugs, ambulance services and even visits to your GP incur costs (although fees for children under 6 are often waived).

You can save money on these procedures by joining a Primary Health Organisation – a government-funded body which is operated by the District Health Boards. These are free for all NZ residents to join.

If you are only a temporary resident of the country (i.e. your permit only allows you to live in the country for less than two years) then you will need to take out private health insurance.

Banking

The Kiwi banking system is dominated by four banks - Commonwealth Bank of Australia, Australia and New Zealand Banking Group (ANZ), Westpac, and National Australia Bank. This quartet accounts for nearly 90 per cent of the entire New Zealand banking sector.

Aside from these, there are fewer than 20 other banks operating in the country – both domestic and foreign owned.

Opening a New Zealand bank account can be done without too much hassle and the four largest banks enable you to do this before you even arrive to live in the country. Generally, you will need to apply to open an account online and once this is confirmed you will be able to start depositing money into the account immediately (be warned that some banks may charge you to transfer money from them into your new account).

To open an account once you arrive to live in the country – or to activate an account you have already set up – you will simply need to bring your passport and proof of address (and account details for existing accounts) into a local branch of your bank.

Banking in NZ is not free. The amount you will be charged will depend on the bank you use and the type of account you open.

Internet Access

The 2014 Internet Service Provider survey reveals that internet usage is high throughout New Zealand and that more Kiwis are currently using fast speed broadband than ever before.

The survey found that around 1.98 million households and business in NZ are fixed Internet subscribers, with the majority using broadband copper-line connections. However, 46,000 people were using the superfast fibre service compared to a year earlier. What's more, 3.7 million Internet-connected mobile phones were active in the three months to June 2014.

Although over two-thirds of download speeds are still only in the mid-range (8–24 megabits per second) category, the proportion of faster speed connections (24+ Mbps) has increased from 7 to 16 per cent (130,000 connections) since 2013.

The NZ government has stated that it hopes to be able to offer download speeds of 100 megabits per second to 75 per cent of New Zealand by the end of 2019.

8 REGIONAL ROUND-UP



Not sure where to settle? Here's a quick round-up of what NZ's most popular regions have to offer...

Auckland

New Zealand's most populous region, Auckland, is dominated by the city of the same name. Auckland is the most prosperous economically and the country's financial capital. The region also benefits from an oceanic climate, with warm, humid summers and mild, damp winters.

Waikato

Waikato is NZ's fourth-largest region – both in terms of population and land area. The region's main urban centre is Hamilton, one of the country's fastest-growing cities and an increasingly popular destination for students. With its wet temperate climate and many acres of pastoral land, Waikato's major industry has traditionally been agriculture – particularly dairy farming.

Bay of Plenty

The Bay of Plenty region is situated around an eponymously named body of water. In addition to boasting some stunning coastline, the inland reaches of the region lies within the Taupo Volcanic Zone; Rotorua is particularly famous for its geothermal activity. While the region has one of NZ's least developed economies, sun seekers may be attracted to its subtropical climate.

Wellington

Occupying the southern end of the North Island, the Wellington region is home to NZ's capital city – also called Wellington. The capital is renowned for its eclectic cultural scene and for being NZ's political centre. The region generally enjoys a temperate climate, although Wellington City is nicknamed the 'Windy City' for all too obvious reasons.

Nelson

Located in the geographic heart of NZ at the top of the South Island, Nelson vies with neighbouring Marlborough for the title of NZ's sunniest region. Extremely scenic, Nelson is surrounded by mountains on three sides and acts as the gateway to the picturesque Abel Tasman National Park. The Nelson economy is largely based on the horticulture, tourism and forestry industries.

Canterbury

Dominated by the vast expanses of the Canterbury Plains and the surrounding Southern Alps, Canterbury is NZ's largest region by area. Christchurch is the region's largest city and one of the most popular areas outside of Auckland for newcomers to settle in. Jobs are currently rife as the region rebuilds following a series of earthquakes which decimated parts of Christchurch and its surrounds in the early part of this decade.

Otago

One of New Zealand's most diverse regions, Otago is home to the adrenaline junkies' paradise of Queenstown and the rather more serene Otago peninsula – home to a vast array of marine and avian wildlife including penguins, seals and albatross. Unsurprisingly, tourism is big business in Otago. However, the region does suffer from one of the country's coolest climates.

9 NEW ZEALAND CULTURE

A brief look at some cultural aspects associated with New Zealand

History

The first Polynesian settlers of the land today known as New Zealand are not thought to have arrived in the country until around the 13th century, giving NZ one of the shortest human histories of any country. The first European to have set foot on NZ soil is widely assumed to be the Dutch explorer Abel Tasman, who landed in NZ in December 1642 before leaving around a month later. This visit was not classed as a success, with at least four of Tasman's crew killed by the Polynesian settlers. The next recorded encounter of a European in NZ did not occur until Captain James Cook landed there in October 1769, swiftly followed by French explorer Jean François Marie de Surville two months later. It was only when Europeans began arriving to colonise the country that the Polynesian tribes became collectively known as 'Maori' – meaning ordinary – to distinguish themselves from the Europeans. During the early part of the 19th Century more and more European settlers began to arrive in NZ and in 1832 James Busby was appointed the first Official Resident of NZ by the British government – the Brits had already colonised a large part of NZ during their colonisation of Australia some years earlier. However, possibly the most important date in NZ history is 6th February 1840, when representatives of the British crown and selected Maori chiefs signed the Treaty of Waitangi, which established a British rule over NZ while preserving Maori lands and giving Maori the same rights as Europeans. However, the treaty has long been the cause of much debate, as the two versions of the Treaty – one in Maori, one in English – differed wildly. In the years that followed, New Zealand became increasingly independent from its British rule, and while there is no set date of independence for New Zealand, it is now very much an independent nation.

Food

While New Zealand cuisine draws on recipes from all over the world – particularly Europe, Asia and the Pacific islands – the very best Kiwi cuisine is said to derive from local ingredients. Lamb, fresh seafood, sweet potatoes (kumara) and kiwi fruits are all regarded as having a distinctly NZ flavour. An outdoor culinary experience that all people living in NZ should experience is the traditional Maori hangi, whereby foods including kumara, pumpkin, chicken, pork, lamb, and seafood are cooked in an underground pit filled with hot stones. Barbecues are also hugely popular in the country throughout the summer months. Those with a sweet tooth are also well catered for. Kiwis claim that

Pavlova pudding was developed in the country (a claim hotly disputed by Aussies), while Hokey Pokey ice cream – vanilla ice cream consisting of lumps of honeycomb toffee – is extremely popular. The country is also becoming increasingly famous for its wines, particularly Sauvignon Blanc, Pinot Noir and Syrah, which have won awards at some of the world's biggest wine shows.

Sport

When it comes to sport in NZ, there is one game that dominates above all others: Rugby Union. This sport is regarded as something akin to a national religion in New Zealand, with the nation's international team, better known as the All Blacks, something of a national obsession. The haka, a traditional Maori dance performed by All Blacks players before all of their international matches, is arguably one of the most fearsome – and pleasing – sights to be witnessed at any sporting event in the world. Away from rugby union, other team sports including cricket, netball, rugby league and, increasingly, football are also fairly popular in NZ, while water sports, including rowing, surfing and sailing – particularly the America's Cup – are often much loved by Kiwis. In the winter, skiing and snowboarding become popular, especially on the mountainous South Island, while many New Zealanders have a close affinity with a whole host of extreme sports – bungee jumping and zorbing both originated in the country.

Literature

Due to the fact New Zealand has such a short human history, and that the Maori language wasn't recorded on paper until the arrival of Europeans, NZ does not have a long established literary history. It wasn't until 1815 that Thomas Kendall's A korao (korero) no New Zealand became the first book to be published in Maori, while the first book to be printed in NZ didn't happen until 1835 when William Colenso printed a Maori translation of the New Testament. The first New Zealand novels were largely pioneer memoirs which mixed fact and fiction – very few of which can still be found today – but as the 20th Century progressed Kiwi authors did start to receive some international acclaim. Perhaps the best known novel written by a New Zealand author is The Bone People by Keri Hulme, which won the Booker prize in 1984. Lynley Dodd is one of NZ's most successful authors having written the hugely popular Hairy Maclary children's series, while the all-time best-selling book in NZ is The Edmonds cookery book which has sold over 3 million copies since it was first published in 1908.

Politics

New Zealand's Government is formed from a democratically elected House of Representatives. The House consists of members of Parliament who are elected as the people's representatives for a term of up to three years. The usual number of members of Parliament is 120, but there are electoral circumstances when this could vary. Currently, members from eight different parties make up the current government – National, Labour, Green, NZ First, Maori Party, ACT New Zealand, Mana and United Future – while there is also one independent MP. Of these, the dominant parties are National, led by current Prime Minister John Key, and Labour – the country's oldest party. Since 1994, New Zealand has used Mixed Member Proportional Representation (MMP) as its electoral system, having replaced the previously used First Past the Post system. MMP allows the voter to cast two votes – one for a constituency representative and one for a party. The constituency representative vote determines the local representative for that electorate – whichever candidate gets the greatest number of votes in each electorate wins the seat. The party vote then determines the number of seats each party is entitled to in the House. Since this system was introduced, no party has achieved enough votes to form a majority government and has had to constantly rely on coalitions to do so. Citizens and permanent residents who are aged 18 years and over are required to enrol in order to be able to vote. Voting is not compulsory, but turnout is high by international standards. New Zealand is famous for being the first country to award women the right to vote in 1893.

Language

There are three official languages in New Zealand: English, Maori and New Zealand Sign Language. English is by far and away the most widely spoken and is commonly used in all walks of everyday life. While some phrases and words may be slightly different to their UK meanings and will take some getting used to – for example, a 'dairy' is a newsagents and a 'judder bar' is a speed hump – many migrants say

it is not long before you find yourself speaking like a Kiwi. Maori is spoken as a first language by an estimated 70,000 people, while over 161,000 claim to be able to converse in the language. New Zealand Sign language was formally designated as an 'official language' in 2006 – making NZ the first country to do this. This means that sign language is now legal for use and access in legal proceedings including in court and access to government services. Due to the large number of immigrants who call the country home, you will doubtless hear many other languages spoken in NZ. According to 2006 Census figures, Samoan, French and Hindi are the most commonly spoken languages after English and Maori.

Lifestyle

One of the main things that draws immigrants the world over to New Zealand is the country's renowned rural, laid-back lifestyle. Kiwis value their leisure time highly, and while there is certainly a hard work ethos in the country, the majority of Kiwi adhere closer to the mantra of working to live, rather than the other way around. However, while you may often hear immigrants who already live in NZ waxing lyrical about the country's slow and relaxed pace of life others like nothing more than to throw themselves off bridges attached to nothing more than elasticated string or roll down the sides of mountains in human-sized hamster balls. NZ is the original adrenaline junkies' playground, with all manner of extreme sports available to try in the country, from bungee jumping and zorbing to white water rafting and mountain biking. As anyone who has seen the Lord of the Rings or Narnia films will no doubt already be aware, New Zealand is also a jaw-droppingly beautiful country, and it is all too easy to lose a weekend simply by exploring the many scenic delights that will be on offer close to where you live. But whatever you do, before moving to NZ, make sure you brush up on your rugby union knowledge – New Zealanders may be a warm and friendly bunch on the whole, but a failure to engage in rugby chat could leave you sidelined at times.

11 AVERAGE TEMPERATURES



	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
Auckland	20	20	18	16	13	12	11	11	12	14	16	17
Napier	19	19	17	14	12	10	9	10	12	14	15	18
Hamilton	18	19	17	12	12	9	9	10	11	13	15	17
Wellington	16	17	15	12	10	8	7	8	9	11	13	14
Nelson	17	17	15	13	10	8	7	8	11	11	14	16
Christchurch	17	16	15	12	9	6	6	7	9	11	13	15
Dunedin	14	14	12	11	8	6	5	6	8	10	11	13
Invercargill	14	14	13	10	8	6	5	7	9	10	11	13

(Temperatures are in °C. Jan-Dec)
Source: www.weatherbase.com



12 KEY FINANCIAL INFORMATION



In New Zealand, everyone pays income tax, no matter what they earn – high earners benefit from a particularly generous rate compared to those in other countries. All figures below show rates for those being paid through the PAYE system

- Those earning up to NZD 14,000 will pay an income tax rate of 11.95 per cent.
- Those earning between NZD 14,001 and NZD 48,000 pay an income tax rate of 18.95 per cent.
- Those earning between NZD 48,001 and NZD 70,000 pay an income tax rate of 31.45 per cent.
- Those earning more than NZD 70,001 pay an income tax rate of 34.25 per cent.

Those who fail to notify the tax office of their earnings will pay 46.45 per cent income tax, no matter what they earn. (Figures correct as of 2014-2015 - www.ird.govt.nzd)

Cost of living rankings

Two New Zealand cities feature in Mercer's annual cost of living index, which ranks 207 cities worldwide in order of most expensive by measuring the comparative cost of over 200 items in each location. These items include transport, food, clothing, household goods, the cost of housing and entertainment.

This is how the NZ cities ranked in 2015 (the figures in brackets are where they were placed a year earlier):

Auckland - 61st (58th)

Wellington - 83rd (79th)

Pensions

If a UK pension member transfers their UK pension funds to a New Zealand scheme, they may be able to take 100 per cent of their accrued funds as a lump sum, tax free, upon retirement in New Zealand. Should a UK pension member leave their pension benefits in the UK until retirement and take benefits from the UK pension whilst a New Zealand resident, the member could be assessed for tax on those benefits, by the New Zealand Inland Revenue, when the member is deemed to be in receipt of those benefits. An important point to consider is, although New Zealand Superannuation schemes pay benefits tax free in retirement, the growth and accumulation on the funds, within the New Zealand scheme, can be subject to tax. However, the tax treatment of pension benefits is not the only factor on deciding whether to transfer.

The fluctuations in the exchange rate would affect the potential transfer value of a UK pension, therefore a pension member should take advice on how and when to lock in on an acceptable rate, in order to obtain the highest transfer value possible in their circumstances.

13 PROPERTY

Market overview

A quick glance at the New Zealand national property price trends over the past few years paints a picture of rapid growth, leading numerous property analysts to warn that the country is in the midst of an unsustainable property bubble. However, closer analysis of this data reveals that on the whole the price rises are confined largely to the country's most populous city, Auckland, with Christchurch also seeing fairly strong growth. Elsewhere in the country, property price growth has either remained flat or increased at a sustainable level, meaning bargains are still to be had.

National average house price:

NZD 514,232 (approximately £233,349)

Major city with lowest average price:

Invercargill – NZD 208,458 (approx: £90,540)

Major city with highest average price:

Auckland – NZD 828,502 (approx: £359,848)

Price Source: Quotable Value New Zealand (May 2015)

Basic mortgage facts

Max 70% loan to value

Max term 30 years

NZD 100,000 minimum loan

Rates from 5.3%

Eligibility criteria for mortgages are quite good, and you can still generally borrow up to 70 per cent of the value of a property and the minimum loan is NZD 100,000. Rates currently start at 5.3 per cent. Banks in New Zealand tend only to lend up to a level where the property can be serviced by New Zealand-based income, but will make exceptions for high income earners working in strong industries in developed countries. Income earned overseas will be reduced by 20 per cent for exchange rate fluctuations.

(Information supplied by Conti Financial Services:
(www.mortgagesoverseas.com)



Location: Rodney District, Auckland

Number of bedrooms: Three

Features: Just 80 metres from beach, two bathrooms, land size of 514 m², double garage

Price: NZD879,000

Website: www.harcourts.co.nz



Location: Lower Hutt, Wellington

Number of bedrooms: Three

Features: Open-plan living areas, 100m² of living space, located close to local primary and pre-schools

Price: NZD330,000

Website: www.redcoats.co.nz



Location: Burwood, Christchurch

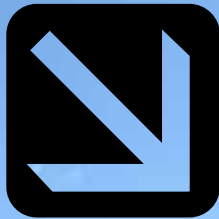
Number of bedrooms: Four

Features: Recently renovated, two bathrooms, double garage, 210 m² of living space set on 776 m² of land

Price: NZD479,000

Website: www.cowdy.co.nz

14 CASE STUDY - CLARE COONEY



Name

**Clare Cooney and
Andy Hoyle**

Originally from

Manchester

Moved to:

**Auckland, New
Zealand**

When

September 2014

Visa used

**Work-to-Residence
visa**

Fed up with the UK's grey skies and cold climate, Clare Cooney and her partner Andy Hoyle decided to do what many of us have dreamed of, but never actually got round to doing; they moved abroad.

When I speak to Clare in July 2015, and herself and Andy have been living in New Zealand for ten months. However, it soon becomes clear that NZ wasn't actually their first choice of emigration destination.

"Originally we had planned to move to Barcelona as we have both spent a lot of time there and love the city," admits Clare. "But as we tried to find work there and looked at the cost of living it became clear that the financial situation in Barcelona would not allow us to have anywhere near the lifestyle we had in the UK.

"Having made the decision that Barcelona wasn't going to happen, we sat down over a glass of wine one night and just started to google where there were jobs in Andy's field. He works in IT. Immediately we found a few jobs in Auckland and on a whim he applied for them."

However, if Clare and Andy didn't really expect that much to happen following this rather speculative attempt at starting the emigration process, they were wrong.

"Over the next few weeks, he had three Skype interviews and within four months of him randomly applying for a job on the other side of the world we were getting on a plane," Clare continues. "Neither of us had been or even thought of visiting New Zealand before," she adds.

Thanks to his job offer being with an Immigration New Zealand accredited employer, Andy was able to secure a 30-month work visa without too much hassle, and Clare's partner visa also allowed her to seek work as well; she ultimately landed a job in sales and marketing just five weeks after arriving in the country.

To date, the couple are adjusting well to life in the land of the Long White Cloud. "I love where we live on the North Shore," enthuses Clare. "We are situated five minutes from Takapuna beach which is beautiful.

"The weather is also great. People have this idea that the weather in New Zealand is the same as in the UK but up here in Auckland that's simply not true at all."

The country's active approach to life is also something that has struck a chord for Clare. "New Zealand is very sports and fitness orientated." Of course, this isn't to say that life in Auckland has all been plain sailing for the couple. "We do both miss our friends and family a lot," states Clare.

"Christmas in the sun was also weird. Although it was good in some ways, I did miss the wintery Christmas back in the UK, you know, mince pies, mulled wine etcetera. Quite honestly, though, I don't miss much else."

Part of the couple's success in settling so quickly into Kiwi life can certainly be put down to the can-do attitude they clearly possess. It's something that Clare thinks can certainly make a big difference for others hoping to one day follow in their footsteps.

"We made a pact to accept every invitation that came our way, even though it meant socialising with people we hardly knew and making a lot of small talk/forced conversation," she explains. "Be prepared if you go as a couple for it to test your relationship to its limits. You are in an intense situation and relying solely on each other so it can get pretty intense and you may argue more than usual. For us, we got through it and are happier than ever."

"Several times I have to pinch myself to remember that I live here now," enthuses Clare. "It's not a two-week holiday and then back to normality."

15 FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Some other things you'll need to think about before making the big move...



Currency

The exchange rate that you secure for transferring large sums, such as the proceeds from the sale of your property, will have a huge bearing on your spending power once you arrive in New Zealand. You should start thinking about exchanging your currency for NZ Dollars soon after you start on the long road to emigration. Forget moving money through high street banks, though; the best exchange rates are available through currency exchange specialists. These companies can arrange 'forward contracts', allowing you to secure a good rate of exchange up to two years in advance. Such an arrangement can mean peace of mind as you know your nest egg is protected from any devaluation of the pound. You may find yourself obsessing over getting the best possible exchange rate for your pounds, but rest assured this is actually quite normal; after all, it is an important exchange. If this is the case speak to a foreign exchange (FX) specialist as they watch the money markets constantly and you can instruct them to watch for the sort of rate you are after.

Visit: www.halofinancial.com

Removals

Arranging for removals firms to visit your home and offer you quotes for shipping your belongings should not be left to the last minute. By taking this step early you can be sure of a competitive deal and ensure you select the firm you feel most confident entrusting your treasured belongings with. When making your selection it is important to check your preferred removal company holds the international movers' quality standards marque – FAIM (FIDI Accredited International Mover). New Zealand has specific rules on what you can and can't take with you (or what will incur hefty custom costs). A good removal company will be able to advise you on what's worth shipping and what isn't.

Visit: www.pssremovals.com

Pet removals

If you want to take your furry, feathered or even scaled family members with you, then you will need to find out the rules regarding the transportation of pets to your destination country. New Zealand has a significant yet vulnerable agricultural industry and there are strict rules on moving animals there. Dogs, cats and horses are generally the only pets allowed into both countries – and even then some breeds may be forbidden. However, it's always worth checking with a pet transportation specialist first as they will be able to advise you of all the rules and regulations.

Visit: www.transfuranimals.com

Skill shortages in New Zealand

As with many countries, New Zealand has a particular demand for workers with a certain skill set. In recent times, engineering workers and healthcare workers have been in particular demand nationwide as can be seen from glancing at the Long Term Skills Shortage List (LTSSL). The LTSSL is a list of occupations of which there is a sustained and ongoing skill shortage across New Zealand. Updated annually, if you have skills in an occupation included on this list then you could be granted a work visa for up to 30 months. When you have worked in NZ in an occupation on the LTSSL for two years you can apply for residence. For more localised skill shortages – each New Zealand region will have its own individual need of workers – or occupations of which there has been no long-term shortage, there is the Immediate Skills Shortage List (ISSL). People with skills in occupations on this list qualify only for a temporary work visa, and there is no direct route to residency applied to such occupations.

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