

Chatham Island Tour 12-19 February 2009



Once again Heirlooms Photography is offering a 'once in a lifetime' opportunity, to explore the Chatham Islands. Our fully escorted tours offer travellers a chance to experience this unique and spectacular part of New Zealand.

Bill and Neroli have previously lived on the Islands and look forward to introducing you to this wonderful place and its people. Our groups are very small (maximum 8 people) and personalised to ensure that individual needs are met.



Attractions include historic homesteads and gardens, nature reserves, coastal/ lagoon areas, geological formations, and forest/ bush areas featuring rare and endangered flora and fauna.

Optional extras include (subject to interest) a scenic flight around the island and a days fishing from either shore or boat. A guided tour and lunch on Pitt Island is a popular choice for visitors.

Night clubbing is not available however the 'pub' is always welcoming to visitors and a great place to get to know the locals!

The Chatham Islands are approximately 400 nautical miles/600 km east of NZ, and time is 45 minutes ahead of NZ time. Take off your watch, go with the flow and enjoy the relaxed time keeping of island life. Leave behind your ghetto blaster and nail polish and experience the simple things in life.

Flight time from Auckland is approximately 2 hours, in a twin engined 40 seat Convair 580 aircraft.

Flights normally leave and return to Auckland on a Thursday. There are differing levels of accomodation available, from a hotel or motel to backpacker hostel. It would be ideal for everyone to stay together, but individual tastes and budgets can be accomodated.



Comments from the last tour:

'this is the best photographic tour I have been on'

'had an awesome trip thanks'

'flight to Pitt Island is the stand-out feature of the day'

'I want to tell you that I really enjoyed the trip to the Chathams with you all. Many thanks Bill and Neroli for your tireless hosting and organizing, you were magic!'

ATTRACTIONS

Eco-tourism

The main tourism attractions are based on the Islands' unique natural environment evolved over millions of years of geographical isolation. Formed from ancient Pacific volcanoes, the Chathams are home to many rare bird and plant species. Conservation programmes are progressively restoring the original forest cover and animal life including the natural habitats of the very rare Chatham Island black robin and taiko.



The wildlife of the Chathams is of particular interest because of the number and variety of birds found there. Once a major Pacific rookery, the Islands are home to 18 unique species as well as numerous ocean and coastal dwelling birds.



The Chathams provide spectacular and ever changing scenery. The often rugged Island landscape contains an astonishing array of volcanic peaks, original forest remnants, rolling farmland, numerous lakes, sandy beaches and rocky shores with the ever-present Pacific Ocean as a backdrop.

Most of the Chatham Islands is privately owned. Access to many areas is by permission of the owners. In addition, the Islands contain a number of sensitive and protected environmental areas.

History

The Chathams were the last major Pacific Islands to be settled by humans between 800 and 1000 years ago. The Islands are the ancestral home of the Moriori - Polynesian people who share similar roots to the New Zealand Maori but who developed a distinctive culture, including the practice of pacifism, in their undisturbed isolation.

European "discovery" and settlement began in 1791 with whaling and sealing. New Zealand Maori settlement soon followed. The Islands' recent history is as tempestuous as the surrounding bountiful sea which first attracted the new settlers.

The majority of key historic sites are accessible to the visitor and include:

- early Moriori settlement sites and middens
- rare examples of Moriori tree and rock carvings (dendroglyphs and petroglyphs)
- memorial to Tommy Solomon, the last full blood Moriori



- early European settlement by German missionaries and English pastoralists
- remnants of whaling and sealing stations
- sites of original Maori settlement.

People

The present people of the Chathams reflect the rich history and natural environment of these distinctive Pacific Islands. Fiercely independent, strongly bound by common bloodlines, the small Chatham Island community shares the old fashioned habits of personal care and hospitality towards visitors to their cherished shores.



Seafood/Fishing

The Chathams are renowned for fishing and seafood. Fishing and fish processing is an economic mainstay of the Islands. Visitors can enjoy a wide range of seafood and fresh water delicacies including lobster, paua, scallops, kina, groper, cod, flounder and eel. Fresh fish is a standard item on Island menus.

Waters for diving and swimming are exceptionally clear.

What's included

Flight Auckland - Chathams - Auckland
 Shared accommodation for 7 nights
 Rental vehicle hire
 Guides
 3 Meals per day
 Total cost \$2500 pp (based on 8 people, the cost for 6 or 7 people would be \$2600 or \$2700 respectively.)



Costs do not include optional extra activities (listed below), or snack food.

A deposit of \$1100 is required on confirmation of booking a place, and the remainder required one week prior to travel. The tour will depend on enough people booking by 31st May 2008, to ensure accommodation and flights are secured at the published price.

Optional extra costs:

- Fishing charter 1/2 day \$750, full day \$1500 for whole boat, up to 10 passengers.
- Scenic flight \$600 per hour up to 5 passengers.
- Pitt Island scenic by boat, full day \$3000 whole boat up to 10 passengers.
- Pitt Island for a day, by aircraft, cost \$250.

For booking or any questions contact:

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