



South Pacific Information

Travel documents

U.S. citizens traveling to Australia, New Zealand, the Cook Islands, and Fiji must have a passport that is valid for six months after their expected return date. Visitors to Australia and New Zealand must have a visa (ETA) to enter. Applications for the Australian entry visa can be completed online at eta.immi.gov.au or easyeta.com. To apply for the the New Zealand entry visa, go to <https://www.immigration.govt.nz/new-zealand-visas/apply-for-a-visa/about-visa/nzeta>, scroll to the bottom of the page, and click on the gray box titled *Request a NZeTA*.

Although visas are not required for U.S. citizens traveling to the Cook Islands or Fiji, be sure to check travel.state.gov to confirm passport validity requirements prior to your tour. Citizens of other countries should contact the appropriate embassies to find out what specific documentation is required for travel. For a list of embassies, please visit embassy.org.

Vaccinations and health precautions

For the most up-to-date information on vaccinations and other health requirements, we recommend checking cdc.gov or consulting your physician.

Tour Director and bus drivers

You will have the same Tour Director traveling with you throughout your tour. Depending on your scheduled activities, there will also be local guides. A different bus driver will be used in each country as they do not accompany groups on flight transfers. Groups traveling on the extension to Hawaii will have a separate Tour Director who will meet them at the airport in Honolulu.

Tipping

It's customary to tip your Tour Directors and bus drivers as a token of appreciation. We recommend:

- \$6–8 per person per day for the Tour Director
- \$3 per person per day for the bus driver
- \$2 per person per tour for each local guide

We encourage Group Leaders to collect all tip money from their travelers before departing for tour. To keep tips organized, we recommend using the envelopes from your Departure Kit—one for your Tour Director's tips and one for your bus driver's tips. For larger groups, feel free to divvy up the money between chaperones. It is preferable to tip in the local currency of your destination, especially for local guides. You can ask your travelers to convert their U.S. dollars before you collect tip money, or you can exchange the money yourself into local currency (either in the U.S. or when you arrive abroad). If you have any questions on tipping, please reach out to your Tour Consultant.

Currency

Travelers should use the Australian dollar in Australia, the New Zealand dollar in New Zealand and the Cook Islands, and the Fijian dollar or USD in Fiji. Be sure to remind your students not to purchase Fijian currency in the U.S. since it may be outdated. Visit xe.com for more currency information.

ATMs and banks are readily available throughout Australia and New Zealand. They are less common in Fiji, yet can typically be found at airports and hotels. Since the exchange rates at hotels are not ideal, ATMs are a traveler's best bet—they deliver the real-time currency exchange rate. Travelers should notify their banks of their travel plans to avoid service interruptions and inquire about charges when withdrawing money abroad. Travelers may be asked to enter a PIN when paying with either credit or debit cards. Please contact your card company in advance for more information.

Transportation

Your group will travel throughout each destination by modern, air-conditioned buses. Long transfers will be broken up with rest stops along the way. Tours in this region also incorporate internal flights. Your Tour Director will accompany your group on all flight transfers within Australia, New Zealand, the Cook Islands, and Fiji—but not to Hawaii.

Accommodations

Hotels on tour are generally large and modern, with conveniences expected at Western-style accommodations. Students under the age of 20 will share rooms with two or three other travelers of the same gender. These rooms will have either single or shared double beds (or a combination of the two). Students may share rooms with students in the tour group who are not from their own school. Adults typically share rooms with one other adult of the same gender, and may also room with adults in the tour group who are not from their school. Please note that travelers may not always have rooms next to each other (some may even be on different floors) and that hotels may be located outside of the city center.

Groups that visit the Sunshine Coast and/or Airlie Beach should be aware of occasional accommodations where there are five travelers for one bathroom and a bit more rustic. Each traveler will have their own bed, and these suites are an upgrade in terms of space and quality—all beachfront with easy access to pools at the resort center.

Please note the most common power outlets in Australia, New Zealand, the Cook Islands, and Fiji are type I with a standard voltage of 230V.

Phones and internet

Buying international phone cards in the South Pacific is easy, and your Tour Director will be happy to help you find a shop that sells them. If you plan to use your cell phone on tour, contact your wireless provider about the potential fees you may incur while calling, texting, or using data abroad. Wi-Fi is not available at all hotels in the South Pacific and when it is, there is often a fee.

Local food

A wide range of international cuisine with strong Asian and Mediterranean influences can be found in both Australia and New Zealand. Fresh ingredients complement the traditional English preparation of meat and vegetables. Lots of fresh fruit and vegetables will be available in Fiji. A standard breakfast in Australia and New Zealand is usually served continental buffet-style. In some locations, hot breakfast will also be available. Lunches are not included and will typically cost \$10–15. A standard dinner in Australia and New Zealand includes a main course like fish and chips, burgers, pizzas, or pasta. The *hāngi* dinner in New Zealand consists of a traditional Māori cultural buffet with all courses. In Fiji, dinners are also served buffet-style. Tap water is safe to drink in Australia and New Zealand, but not always in Fiji, so travelers should bring reusable water bottles to take advantage of refilling stations available on the bus. Bottled water will cost \$2–3 USD for a liter in all countries.

Animal welfare

In 2018, EF signed a collaborative agreement with leading global animal welfare nonprofit World Animal Protection. Animal welfare is concerned with how an animal's living conditions can impact its physical, emotional, and behavioral health. We audit all activities and suppliers based on set criteria that assess the welfare of an animal, known as "The Five Freedoms." On our South Pacific tours, we do not support participation in activities such as koala-holding, interacting with dolphins, feeding wildlife, or any form of wildlife shows. We strive to only work with partners who support animal conservation, research, and rehabilitation. As a traveler, we ask that you please abide by these animal welfare guidelines and respect your Tour Director's on-tour recommendations.

Safety

Always inform your Tour Director if you need to break away from your group at any point. Store valuables in hotel safe deposit boxes and refrain from carrying large sums of money or wearing valuable jewelry. Please be sure to read EF's *Safety Handbook* before going on tour.

Weather

Travelers should be prepared for a wide range of climates. Keep in mind that the South Pacific experiences winter during our summer. Expect a chilly, cool and wet climate in New Zealand (40–55°F), and a warm, humid and a hot climate in many parts of Australia (65–75°F). Tours going to Hawaii, Fiji and the Cook Islands will experience tropical conditions with high humidity and temperatures around 80°F. Please check weather.com for your destinations and travel periods.

Packing

Pack appropriate clothing for both warm and cold weather. Avoid bulky jackets and opt for light layers instead. Comfortable walking shoes are best for sightseeing. Prioritize practicality and comfort first—we suggest bringing one nice outfit for special occasions. Hats, sunglasses, and sunscreen are essential for protection from the strong Australian sun.

Swimsuits and a beach towel are also a must in the summer, and warm clothing is required during the Australian winter months. In the event that your luggage is lost, please bring a warm change of clothes in your carry-on. Due to a large number of bus transfers, we suggest keeping baggage to a minimum. Don't overpack—you'll need room for all the gifts and souvenirs you'll want to buy. Keep in mind there will be some facilities to do laundry on several occasions along the tour.

Luggage

Please note that our travelers are limited to one checked bag and one carry-on bag per person due to storage limitations on motor coaches and other transfers, which may include internal flights.

Contact your airline(s) for baggage size and weight restrictions for your flights, which may include internal flights in addition to your round trip flights to and from tour. Please note that your included internal flights might have more restricted baggage limits (normally 30 kg max for international flights and 20–23 kg for internals).

Some airlines may impose additional charges if you choose to check any baggage or exceed baggage size and weight restrictions. Be advised that you are responsible for any baggage fees incurred on all flights.

Long-haul flights

The full journey from the U.S. to your hotel room in Australia, New Zealand, the Cook Islands, or Fiji can often take around 30 hours, including upwards of 20 hours of actual flight time. Keep time zones in mind. Essentially, you will leave on “Day 0” of your tour and will arrive on “Day 2.” One of these days is the time you spend traveling to the region, and the other is “lost” due to crossing the International Date Line. Think of it like flying into tomorrow. And then, you'll gain a day on the way back when you fly into yesterday. You might experience long layovers throughout certain legs of your journey.

Poor planning can make these long-haul flights less than agreeable, so here are some tips from seasoned long-haul travelers:

- Get your body prepared by exercising and stretching the day before you fly.
- Power up your devices.
- Stay calm. Airport security, boarding, and transit can be a little stressful, so once you are seated, enjoy the down time and relax. You've earned it.
- Hydrate, hydrate, hydrate!

What to pack for long flights and bus trips:

- Comfortable clothes, like a track suit and thick socks
- Healthy snacks
- External chargers/battery pack
- A reusable water bottle
- A pillow scarf or small blanket
- Headphones and eye mask for sleeping
- Reading material, downloaded podcasts, and information about your destination
- A freshen-up kit:
Wipes, toothbrush, comb, moisturizer, lip balm, etc.