

Traveling between New Zealand and Canada

(info drafted as of early Jan 2021)

When contemplating any travel between New Zealand and Canada you will want to be certain that you are right up to date with all the requirements and rule changes that will be applicable on your travel date. The following is designed to provide you with some insight, guidance and advice on staying informed.

Rules are changing and flights are being canceled frequently around the world - do not be complacent and think Canada/US to NZ will not be hit.

IMPORTANT DISCLAIMER: The responsibility is **yours** and **yours alone** to ensure you do not have stale or inaccurate information. After all, it will be you that will be off to the airport to travel, not someone else, and you who won't want to be one of many unprepared, or surprised and sorely disappointed travelers, that get turned back before their journey even gets underway.

Don't just take someone's word for it, or ours, be vigilant and check, re-check and check again... and then check it all over again!!!

Links and acronym definitions will be provided to assist you in interpreting this write up of a journey to the South or North.

Entering New Zealand

Hotel Vouchers

- You must book an MIQ Hotel Voucher **BEFORE** booking your flight.
- Go to the MIQ portal to create your profile and then search for the dates. (links below)
- You will have 48 hours from reserving your spot in the system to enriching it with your confirmed flight details.
- You will not know where in NZ or at which hotel you will be spending your MIQ time until arrival. Upon touchdown the NZDF or Airport Police will board the plane and advise you of your destination. Don't ask anyone, don't guess, just be prepared. No matter where you end up you will be shipped back to Auckland without cost at the end of your ISO time.
 - You can choose to accept this transfer back to Auckland or make your own arrangements.
 - Side Note - Car rentals pricing have reportedly been through the roof recently. If this is your post ISO mode of transportation you may want to budget accordingly
- There is a link below that can give the curious an idea of what regions of NZ have the most availability but it's still a guess as they have a lot of necessary buffers in those

numbers and what you see may not actually be free.

- Generally if you arrive early in the morning, you are probably more likely to be shipped out of Auckland. If you arrive late at night, more likely to be in Auckland. Manage your expectations and be grateful to those that have to manage you when you arrive.
- Ensure you have selected the date that your ticket says you are arriving on, not the departure date. Do not assume if your flight was to land at 11:55 pm that you need to select the date after, you MUST select the date pertaining to your flights scheduled arrival
- Flight cancellations and changes, seek advice from MIQ. However note, that there are lots of helpful tips in how MIQ and Airlines and how you should handle any airline initiated flight changes or cancellations via the New Zealand Hotel Quarantine group. Do NOT rush to cancel your voucher until you know what can potentially be done, otherwise you may not get another voucher.
- Can't see a date you need on system?
 - Word on the street, NZQH FB group, is that you need to just refresh with a huge frequency and you should get lucky. Recently some gaps opened up with the sad situation that has unfolded for many of our fellow kiwis in the UK when they had their flights canceled to their transit countries
 - The Dates were not opening up more than a couple of months ahead, so they may be showing unavailable because they have not yet been released. It is important to note that if you book your flight before your voucher you may not get the voucher on the date you require. Many have been affected through missing out on the vouchers when that months dates were finally released.

Flight Bookings

- Congrats, you got a spot on the MIQ site for ISO and should now have your email confirmation. Time to get that flight you want.
- Should you use a Travel Agent?
 - Entirely up to you, our advice would be to consider the challenges if you are traveling via unrelated airlines and how you will be able to manage a complete rebooking or re-routing of your flights. Canada to NZ is probably the easier route, people in UK are having an incredibly difficult time as initially Singapore and Hong Kong simply cancelled their flights and they had no easy way to switch airlines and routes with money tied up in their first bookings. This is where some have been fortunate to have a great travel agent that has helped them along the way and saved the day for them.
 - Air NZ has free changes until the end of March 2021, this may be extended. If they cancel a flight booked with them they will redirect, but will they be able to easily coordinate and accommodate a connecting flight with for e.g Air Canada

or Westjet? The answer might well be yes, but you will want to be certain right?

- Whatever method you use to get your flights, make sure you have your MIQ Voucher date matching the flight arrival date and go back into the MIQ system to add all your flight details.

NOTE: Even the airlines do NOT know all the applicable changes at any given time. Consider the Air NZ call centre team as the end of the line of information who clearly do not have a crystal ball nor are involved in the decision making of what flights will be a go/no go in the future. For e.g. by all accounts YVR direct to AKL will be running as of 31st March and shows available for booking, its been showing available for months now – put your hand up if you think the demand will be there by then for that to be a reliable schedule? It may be, but make sure you know contingency plan and expectations are aligned.

MIQ – to Pay or Not to Pay

- If you left New Zealand prior to 12th August and returning to NZ for longer than 90 days, you currently do not have to pay for your stay in MIQ.
- Check out the links for:
 - MIQ – Charges
 - MIQ – Fee Waiver Form – to be completed and emailed back.

COVID Testing

- Pre Travel
 - There is now pre testing required from all countries of origin. Within 72 hours of arrival. Some areas were initially unclear, should be clearer now, such as the age of kids needing a test etc. Fines will be issued for violators of the pre testing. (refer news article below)
- Refer to link provided below for MIQ - Pre departure COVID Testing
- Currently it states: (but note at time of writing (01/12 – Jan 12th) NewsHub just reported changes coming to make the ruling apply for all destinations)

If your Journey to New Zealand starts in a country which is not yet subject to new Zealand's pre-departure testing requirements, and then will be transiting through the US or the UK (and possibly other transit stops) before arrival in New Zealand.

- If you are going to be in a specified country (United Kingdom or United States) for longer than 96 hours during your journey, you will need to be tested before leaving that country.
- If you are transiting a specified country (United Kingdom or United States) and are there for less than 96 hours, you do not need to be tested. You also must check any pre-departure travel requirements imposed by other countries you will be travelling through on your way to New Zealand, as these

may be different from the New Zealand requirements.

- A test may be required by the airline or another country before you depart from your original destination.
- During MIQ/ISO
 - Your first day in NZ is considered Day 0. For some arrivals you will now be tested day 0 and not permitted out of your rooms until you return a negative test. (as we understand it)
 - Day 3 and Day 12 testing is still continuing – you are currently allowed to move around, within your MIQ Hotels rules, during this time.
 - They will text or personally deliver your results. If you return a positive test, please be calm and allow them to do their job of securing the facility and taking care of you and your family. You will likely be moved to somewhere like Jet Park that has been established as the location fully equipped to manage your health needs and protect from any transmission. By all accounts anyone at these facilities are treated extremely well, however you will be subjected to some different rules most likely.
 - If you land at Jet Park as just the generally lucky dip destination do not fear, you will not be under the same restrictions as those that are there with a positive test or who show symptoms.

Traveling with a non-kiwi partner

- They need a visa!
 - Currently these visas have been taking some time and the source of a great deal of stress for many who are often only receiving their approval to travel only a day or two before their scheduled departure.
 - The NZHQ FB is a good go to resource.
- Check out link below Partner of a New Zealander Visitor Visa – this may not be the right one for your circumstances, but will hopefully help you get started in digging up what does apply.

Travel Day – Get to the airport early!

- Check out the ‘What to pack’ before you close your bags up though!
- Allow a lot of extra time for check in – better safe than sorry.
 - While you will be hearing a lot about how the airports are empty, checking in could take you a lot longer than you might think.
 - Check-in staff have to make sure they are familiar with the rules and have diligently checked ever bell and whistle in a changing world – be

patient!

Examples are:

- Covid testing requirements for NZ and for any transit country
- NZ Rules - MIQ Voucher sighted and 100% accurate
- US Rules – visas if any applicable
- Other transit country
- Traveling on two passports? You need to have both, NZ and Canada recorded on the system.
 - In early Dec, and it is believed the process is still the same, it requires a Supervisor override before they can load them both into the system. Where oh where is the supervisor?? Yeah, well it could be a who knows, or you could get lucky and they are standing right there.
- Traveling on NZ Passport?
 - Make sure you have your US ESTA in place if transiting there and/or applicable visas for other transit countries.
- Traveling on Canadian or other?
 - Make sure you have all the necessary visas/paperwork you need to be permitted to enter NZ and transit countries

(personal experience of a board member was it took nearly 40 minutes to be checked in at Toronto and they were FIRST at the counter that morning)

What To Pack / Your MIQ Hotel Life Ahead

Your time in MIQ/ISO is pretty much going to be as good or as bad as you want to make it. Yes, there are horror stories of disgusting food, terrible cleanliness and room conditions and so on. But, there are some good tips in the NZQH FB group for how to handle that and sometimes, honestly, you may have to just suck it up and be grateful. Most hotels are fab and they have ironed out a lot of wrinkles, as we would expect over the last several months.

The best thing you can do is set a daily routine. Get up, shower, walk at set times, eat at set times, make a to do list for other things – sort out banking, IRD, housing, transport, call friends/family, write a journal/dairy, watch some movies, read books, jigsaws, rest. Just be easy on yourself.

Please keep in mind that the staff have been living the ISO life like many of us have for the same period of time, while the rest of NZ is not. They have been ostracized by friends and family which was just recently reported by the media – it's very sad. The mental health aspects can affect them as much as you so first and foremost be nice, smile with ya eyes, don't get cranky

and just count ya blessing that you will soon be free to roam.

But at the same time you do deserve to have a reasonable standard so if things aren't right investigate the right channels to make requests/inquiries to. I'm sure there will be ways and means for you to be smiling again, be polite, be persistent.

NZHQ FB group is really a huge help in so many ways. There are a number of posts under the tag of 'Things to bring + Do + Exercise Equipment'

Some things to consider from those we know who have traveled more recently. This is not exhaustive can vary drastically from hotel to hotel and so on depending on the suggestions given.

- General
 - By all accounts all hotels are providing SIM cards with free 14 days' worth of access – within limits. Can then top up as needed etc.
 - 95% of hotels will serve you in boxes with plastic cutlery. You may want to bring real cutlery and a plate/bowl.
 - Sharp knife could be useful, particularly if you want to cancel some meals in hotel and order from Countdown etc.
 - Amazon Firestick – could be a godsend, found to work pretty good even with some of the dodgy hotel internet that is utterly overloaded. Remember an angle HDMI connection too as the stick may need to go in the back of a tv on the wall.
 - Chromecast - may have varying success depending on the wifi to cast from a device
 - Bluetooth speaker
 - Plug converter for NZ power points (outlets)
 - They will NOT recycle anything! By all accounts it is treated as garbage for safety reasons. Nothing not even unopened cans or chippy packs or cutlery will be reused. You may not like this but you will have to accept it and move on as they have made decisions based on securing and protecting our fine nation.
 - Many have used the paper bags for crafts for kids and big kids (honestly the creative uses for these could be endless.)
 - Some take bags and containers out for use later in their NZ home.
 - You can get deliveries to most hotels, but DO NOT assume. Some hotels are more restricted than others. Some appliances will not be allowed in, such as rice cookers and anything that is a fire hazard. (candles, yes people have lit candles – heaven help)

- Countdown and Uber eats are generally ok.

- Hotel Food
 - Each hotel handles this differently, if you don't like something say so nicely and they may well accommodate your preferences. They all seem to handle allergies and intolerances well but will it be to your liking? Maybe not.
 - By all accounts you will not go hungry but you may tire of the high calorie heavy meals that are provided. Keep in mind they are room servicing an entire hotel of guests a pretty decent undertaking when they also need to accommodate special needs.
 - Many hotels will require your menu selections a week in advance some via Survey Monkey, some allow special notes. You can add things like low/no gluten, no dairy, no desserts, no fizzy drinks as general, and can even do a meal specific if you are lucky. Such as could I please have a green salad if possible.. etc..
 - Just ask and see what can be done if you have a need.
 - Say thank you! Write a note on the paper bag when you put it at the door for collection. Send a note to the hotel staff. Etc. they love it and some have a wall of notes and appreciations sent and say it fuels them to get through each day.

- Alcohol
 - No duty free on arrival at Auckland, so you may want an arrival tippie to kick you off, each hotel has different rules on whether you can get alcohol on site or not.
 - Most will allow a bottle wine per room per day, 4 beers or mixers per room per day. But be prepared some may not.
 - If you arrive with any alcohol visible it will most likely be carefully stored away from your yearning palate until your departure
 - If you order alcohol from Countdown, if seen and they do have to search your bags, it will also be stored for your departure

- Fitness equipment
 - Can bring ya own things if have room, note not all rooms are equal size and not all hotels will allow for use in outside areas.

- Rental bikes are available in some regions – again check first with hotel/NZDF before you have someone rock up with stuff. Availability is not guaranteed and you will need to have enough room in your room.
 - Mr Rental and Auckland Treadmill Rental are good resources (Auckland Treadmills have spin bikes)
- MIQ With Kids
 - NZHQ FB check that out loads of great advice for games, crafts etc that you can bring or order when here for kids to do. That's the best spot to go for advice here.
- **WARNING**
 - DO NOT EVER infiltrate someone elses bubble while in ISO. It might be easier to do than you think, when you don't think. Autopilot behaviours may kick in and voila you may not be feeling so happy with yourself after for your kind act. So...
 - be it a kids ball comes your way, someone drops something, someone's hat blows away outside, or you want to hand something to someone that is not staff. Just don't do it, don't help, don't touch, don't do it! You run the risk of being grouped in their bubble, or them in yours, and one or the other of you may find yourselves having an extended stay on the govt.

It has happened so don't make it you. Even if it is handing things to staff, check first!

Entering Canada

More info to follow, at this time a pre departure test is required into Canada and they are still operating under the Self Isolating model. Expect this to change though.

Some resources are listed below.

Resources

To New Zealand

BE SURE that these links and info are still current.

MIQ – General Information

<https://www.miq.govt.nz/travel-to-new-zealand/secure-your-place-in-managed-isolation/>

MIQ – Voucher Portal

<https://allocation.miq.govt.nz/portal/>

MIQ – Charges

<https://www.miq.govt.nz/being-in-managed-isolation/charges-for-managed-isolation/>

MIQ – Fee Waiver Form

<https://www.miq.govt.nz/assets/MIQ-documents/fee-and-waiver-form.pdf>

MIQ – Regional Hotel Room Availability

<https://www.mbie.govt.nz/business-and-employment/economic-development/covid-19-data-resources/managed-isolation-and-quarantine-data/>

Unite Against COVID - Travel and Border (General)

<https://covid19.govt.nz/travel-and-the-border/>

MIQ - Pre departure COVID Testing

(Unite Against COVID site)

<https://covid19.govt.nz/travel-and-the-border/travel-to-new-zealand/pre-departure-testing-for-arrivals-into-new-zealand/>

Rules and Fines for pre testing – News article Jan 19th 2021

https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/covid-19-coronavirus-government-extends-pre-departure-tests-to-more-travellers/HWRVBKWOXJBMTQIYQNAS62YZOU/?fbclid=IwAR2KlIRvwcJFwseeL8bGI6Ts9fHWMUSvCdNH-2iMqjFqp_OxaCKT3CoL8Eg

Partner of a New Zealander Visitor Visa

<https://www.immigration.govt.nz/new-zealand-visas/apply-for-a-visa/criteria/partners-of-new-zealand-citizens-or-residence-class-visa-holders-visitor-visa?nationality=nationality-CAN&country=residence-CAN>

Recent news

<https://www.newshub.co.nz/home/new-zealand/2020/12/coronavirus-zero-new-cases-of-covid-19-at-miq-facilities-air-nz-case-investigation-continues.html>

To Canada

BE SURE that these links and info are still current

Canadian Govt Travel Advice – lots of links within this site search them all.

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/latest-travel-health-advice.html>

Pre departure testing process within NZ

<https://covid19.govt.nz/travel-and-the-border/leaving-new-zealand/#pre-departure-covid-19-test>

Travel Advisory link

https://travel.gc.ca/destinations/new-zealand?fbclid=IwAR1MPkW1NKvr65kti3LglTdScD5ZlpJ0i7IDzvjNo_qYi4HXgFrsQKE9A4

Mandatory Quarantine Fact Sheet - currently in place.

<https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/phac-aspc/documents/services/publications/diseases-conditions/coronavirus/covid-19-travellers-without-symptoms-returning-canada/covid-19-travellers-without-symptoms-returning-canada-eng.pdf>

ArriveCAN Information

Use ArriveCAN to provide mandatory travel information on and after your entry into Canada. It only takes minutes to help keep Canadians safe.

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/coronavirus-disease-covid-19/arrivecan.html>

Definitions

MIQ – Managed Isolation Quarantine – generally refers to the MIQ site or MIQ rules for New Zealand only

ISO – Isolation

NZHQ FB – New Zealand Hotel Quarantine Facebook Group

An absolutely fantastic resource to keep up with travelers, also to stay sane while in ISO. As well as seeing a lot of current information - which should purely prompt you to verify it's implications on your and not believe as the gospel, there are some jolly funny kiwis in the group sharing their pre, live and post ISO experiences – you could be one of them :D

KRT FB – Kiwis Returning Home Facebook Group

Run by a kiwi travel agent. Last update was they were a bit overloaded in terms of taking on clients to make reservations for but is another fab resources