



## South Pacific Snow Bird Long Stay Holidays

Not everyone loves our Canadian winters, right? Some of us like to be Snow Birds and fly south for a break from the cold weather, shoveling snow and building snow men (we prefer shoveling sand and building sand castles, thank you very much!). Here are just a few great South Pacific Long Stay options to consider for your own, personal getaway, but we can custom-design a personalized escape just for you, to any destination you choose.



29 days/28 nights

### ITINERARY

Rarotonga, Cook Islands Long Stay





Imagine a month in your very own island paradise. The Cook Islands offers you what you have been looking for, whether its that romantic getaway, down time with your family or just an excuse to get away from it all. Here you can escape the rush and clutter of city life, choosing simply to relax or to purposefully explore the culture and varied natural environments.

Welcome to the secret of the Pacific. Breathe in the fresh pure air. Wade into the cool, calm, blue lagoons. Let the untouched charm of the beautiful Cook Islands capture your spirit and hold your heart.

The 15 islands of the Cooks lie halfway between New Zealand and Hawaii, scattered like fragrant frangipani petals floating across 2.2 million square kilometres of a seductive, sensual ocean. Boasting rare beauty, an idyllic climate, warm welcoming people with the widest white smiles and a pace of life unsurpassed for peace: the Cook Islands is Paradise.

The 32km circumference of Rarotonga is surrounded by a sparkling blue lagoon – the shimmer of technicoloured tropical fish caught in the sunlight adds a shot of colour. The fringe of pearly white sand is lined with swaying palms and a coral reef on which crashing waves call the intrepid fishermen to cast their lines.

Tradition and a cultural heritage are trademarks of the island. Music is a part of island life, and marks the daily routine in Rarotonga; from the chants and hymns heard in the churches, to the string bands with their combos of electronic and traditional ukuleles made from coconut shells.

Traditional arts and crafts of weaving, carving and painting are an integral part of a heritage which, though strictly modern in its currency today, contains all the mores of a cultural background which is nourished and nurtured with pride. With not a traffic light to be seen, getting around Rarotonga can be a casual meander on the island bus – which uniquely travels both clockwise and anticlockwise around the road that circles the island and obliging drivers will pick and drop at will. Or the plethora of scooters which are synonymous with the town – where wheels are weighted down by mamma or papa and sometimes more than one chubby toddler clinging on for dear life.

Whichever way you go – villages, beaches, paw paw patches, and fields of taro, mango, bananas and the health filled noni can be spotted either side – providing an instant study of island life. An extraordinary array of flora and fauna flourishes. From inland to the outreaches of the lagoon, water is paramount to this island style of life. Fishing, scuba diving, trawling, bone fishing, paddling, snorkelling, sailing, swimming or simply splashing in the sea are vital components of this island's lifestyle. All revealing that there is a lot more to the island of Rarotonga than simply a pretty place to escape.

### **Bay of Plenty, New Zealand Long Stay**



When 18th century explorer Captain James Cook sailed here he aptly named it the Bay of Plenty. One of New Zealand's most popular holiday destinations and a thriving port city, the Bay continues to offer its bounty of beaches, culture and lifestyle to visitors from near and far.

The region is blessed with a mild climate year-round. The vast harbour, islands and proximity to the open sea ensure that seafood is a local specialty. The region's legendary beaches allows swimming, surfing and kayaking year round and great coastal views are offered from the accommodations.

There are plenty of things to do in the Bay of Plenty. Choose from water adventures like white-water rafting, kayaking, parasailing and jet-boating. There's also skydiving, scenic flights, horse treks, cultural experiences, golf courses and a variety of gardens and museums to peruse. Whether you're after relaxation, beach life or a bit of indulgence, the Bay of Plenty has all the bases covered

Mount Maunganui has been well-regarded for years for its top beaches and coastal lifestyle. Many New Zealanders own holiday homes at "The Mount" as it is known. The beaches are numerous and safe for swimmers and surfers. The



top spot for swimming is Main Beach, which is located at the foot of the mighty Mauao (Mount Maunganui) and faces the Pacific Ocean. On the opposite side of Mauao is the harbour side Pilot Bay, which is a launching pad for boats and kayaks. It's also a shallow swimming spot ideal for families.

Mauao is the physical focal point of the coastal Bay of Plenty – a sacred place that dominates the landscape of the Tauranga area. Walking up and around Mauao is a must-do activity in the region. Across from the Main Beach is a number of cafés to enjoy a meal or coffee while taking in the ambience of the area. Maunganui Road in the downtown Mount Maunganui area is also popular for boutique shopping and offers top restaurants and cafés.

### **The Gold Coast, Queensland, Australia Long Stay**



The Gold Coast of Australia in Queensland dares you to try everything it offers. Mingle with dolphins and polar bears at world-class theme parks, dig your toes into fine white sand, ride sparkling waves, visit an island and explore the lush, subtropical hinterland.

Whatever pace or possibilities you want from a holiday destination, you will find them on Australia's Gold Coast. Enjoy



the warmth and sunshine of a subtropical climate, relax on endless golden beaches or explore the untouched beauty of ancient rain forests. The Southern Gold Coast is a region of contrasts that has been popular among Australian holiday-makers for almost 100 years. There are oceanfront apartments with breathtaking views, modern shopping precincts and quality restaurants plus major sporting clubs.

The town of Coolangatta sits near the Queensland-New South Wales border and is home to the Twin Towns Services Club and Seagulls Rugby League Club. These are among the largest sporting and entertainment venues in Australia featuring live shows, gaming machines, restaurants and world-class sporting facilities.

The region is also characterized by the slow and majestic Tweed River that winds its way through lush cane fields, farmlands and tropical fruit plantations as well as the towns and villages like Kingscliff, Cabarita Beach and Pottsville that are found dotted along the coastline.

In addition to magnificent surf beaches, attractions in this scenic part of the Gold Coast include Tropical Fruit World, Pioneer Plantation and Melaleuca Station, all offering an insight into the rich rural diversity and heritage of the Tweed Valley.

Situated at the foot of Mt. Warning is Murwillumbah, scene of the annual Tweed Valley Banana Festival and Tweed Festival of Performing Arts. Further north is one of the Gold Coast's most famous landmarks, Currumbin Sanctuary. Millions of visitors have enjoyed the spectacle of hand feeding thousands of wild lorikeets at the sanctuary and greeting some of Australia's most loved native animals.

### Central Coast, New South Wales, Australia Long Stay





Enjoy a winter break on the beach, a short journey from Sydney, Australia. Sunshine, swimming, dining and fresh air are some of the excellent ingredients included in this Snow Bird vacation package. Spend part of your winter in the sunshine at Ettalong Beach which is approximately 80 kilometres/50 miles north of Sydney. Situated on the Central Coast of New South Wales, it is an easy 90 minute drive to Sydney or a one and a quarter hour train journey from the nearest station at Woy Woy.

Ettalong Beach is a popular recreational area known for its nature parks and offers an array of attractions for the entire family. These include great beaches with safe swimming for children, lagoons, river cruises, deep sea fishing and golf. There are many dining opportunities. Ocean Beach Umina has more than 2 kilometres/1.2 miles of sandy beaches and an inland waterway that is great for younger children to splash around in.

Ferries and charter vessels run regular tours around the majestic Brisbane Water National Park, providing scenic, fishing and whale-watching experiences.

For a unique experience, you shouldn't miss the Ettalong Seaside Village Market every weekend where you can stroll through the stalls and explore the food, clothes and vintage goods on offer.

Opposite the beach is the Mantra Ettalong Beach Resort with 236 beautifully appointed studio, one and two bedroom suites offering the luxury of spa baths and ocean or inland views. The day spa, the Advanced Beauty Therapy & Spa offers an array of Signature Spa Escapes that are sure to leave you feeling refreshed, relaxed and rejuvenated.

### **Sunshine Coast, Australia Long Stay**





The Sunshine Coast is a many-flavoured region of beautiful beaches, shining waterways and restful mountains. It gives you room to breathe; its natural beauty is still largely unspoilt and carefully protected; and it offers you an unsurpassed choice of attractions and activities (or non-activities if you've a mind to just laze around). All this and some of the best dining, wining and shopping in Australia; the perfect place for a perfect long stay!

Just a short drive north of Brisbane is the town of Caloundra, the southern gateway to Australia's famed Sunshine Coast. Caloundra stretches across 1100 square kilometres from the mountains to the sea. A spectacular seaside resort town that revels in the Australian sun. With 5 excellent surf beaches, 2 calm water beaches, lovely parks and picnic spots, it is a haven for seaside activities such as swimming, sun-tanning, surfing, beachside BBQ's and long coastal walks.

Caloundra also boasts a unique 24 nautical mile-long estuary for boating, fishing and observing wild life. Restaurants abound in the town catering to all tastes from "fare-dinkum Aussie food such as meat pies and chips to tasty Thai, Mexican, Greek and, of course, seafood.

The Caloundra experience does not end at the beach. Look further afield and you will find a hinterland of stunning diversity and beauty, a hinterland that offers something for everyone....from the sightseer to the thrill seeker. Within half an hour's drive of the beach, the landscape varies from tropical fruit plantations to lush rainforest. The Glass House Mountains provide an impressive centerpiece, standing like silent sentinels above the surrounding patchwork of fields and forests. Steeped in history, the mountains carry Aboriginal names but were collectively named by explorer Captain Cook in 1770. The Glass House Mountains Tourist Drive puts you almost within touching distance, while a drive to the top of the nearby Blackall Range provides a breathtaking panorama. The best vantage point is Mary Cairncross Park. Close by is Howells Knob, one of the highest spots on the Blackall Range, where you can appreciate the scenic grandeur of the Sunshine Coast. Further west lies the peaceful Conondale Valley, home of the Mary River headwaters and the Little Yabba Creek picnic area, where visitors can relax beside the sparkling waters to the sound of birdsong.

No visit to Caloundra City would be complete without a tour of the hinterland townships, each of which offers much to see and do. You can wile away the hours in the many arts and crafts shops, tuck into a Devonshire tea or purchase farm-fresh produce from a roadside stall....the choice is yours. There is also a host of more energetic pursuits to choose from including bushwalking, rock climbing and horse riding. The beauty and lifestyle of Caloundra's Hinterland has



enticed a host of talented chefs to present their art form in a diverse range of eating options – from ‘best restaurant’ standard to melt-in-the-mouth Devonshire teas in treetop settings. From coffee and patisseries, to ice cream and handmade sweets.

Long before the boutiques and potteries arrived, European settlers had found the rich volcanic soils perfect for farming and today there are dairy farms and macadamia, avocado, strawberry and pineapple plantations spread over a wide area of the range and lower slopes.

In the season, you can buy fresh produce straight from the farm gate. And Caloundra’s Hinterland hospitality offers so much more. Guided walks and tours. The impressive Maleny Scarecrow Carnival during September, arts and crafts markets, (Maleny on Sundays, Beerwah and Conondale on the first Saturday of each month), to name just a tiny few.

There are many nearby attractions and activities to peak your interest: The Australian Zoo, famous for the Crocodile Hunter, is only a complimentary shuttle bus ride away, cruising on the Pumicestone Passage, strolling the trails of Bribie Island, shopping at the Sunday Morning Caloundra Markets, fishing from the boardwalk, golfing at two local courses, watching the horses run at the Sunday Race Meetings, eating alfresco in a beachside café. Caloundra will not disappoint!

## Details

### Trip Code:

002026 - W20

### INCLUDED

- Transfers between airport and accommodation, return
- Accommodation for 27-28 nights in chosen location (option for shorter stays, to extend for longer stay or to combine two or more destinations)
- Self-catering apartment style accommodation
- Welcome grocery pack at some properties
- Services of a local assistance office in Sydney 24/7
- Discount coupon booklet

### NOT INCLUDED

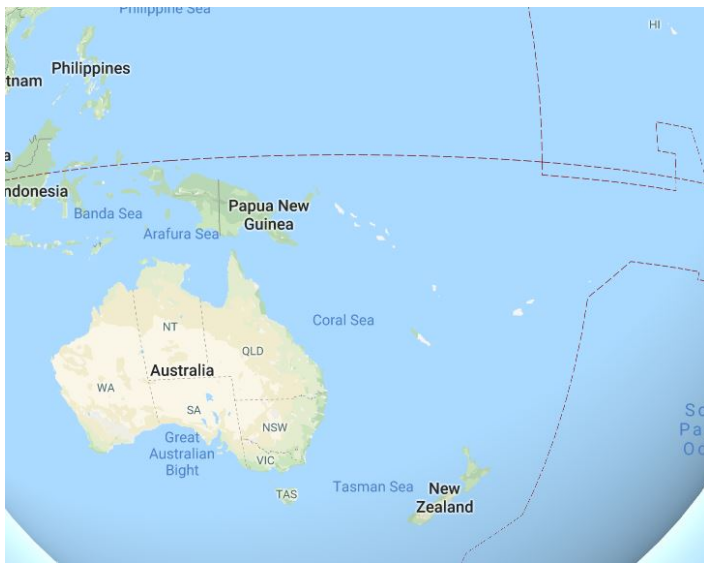
- Airfares to/from destination
- Meals and drinks
- Travel insurance
- Park fees
- Gratuities to hotel staff
- Passport and visa fees or vaccinations, if required
- Items of a personal nature

### TOUR NOTES

*Disclaimer: We do our utmost to ensure that information posted on our website is correct at the time of publication, however trip details are subject to change without notice by the suppliers and operators involved. We update the information as soon as possible when changes are advised to us, however, we cannot assume responsibility for such changes made by the suppliers and operators.*

### ROUTE MAP





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