

"EPISODE TRANSCRIPT"

Each week, we give the world globe a spin, and see where we land. Then we take the kids of Australia on an audio excursion to visit that country and its people.

I'm Christie Kijurina, and today on Squiz the World we're visiting a country known as the land of the long white cloud, it's famous for its Rugby Team and a small flightless bird called the Kiwi. Can you guess where we're going?

Strap yourselves into the Squiz Kids Super Fast Supersonic Jetliner as we take off and take a squiz at Aotearoa/ New Zealand.

JUST THE FACTS

New Zealand, which is also called Aotearoa in the language of the indigenous Māori people, is an island country located about 2000 kilometres east of Australia in the Pacific region known as Oceania. There are two main islands that make up New Zealand, the North and of course the South Islands, as well as about 700 other smaller islands.

If you leave from Sydney and fly across the Tasman Sea, you'll be landing in the capital city, Wellington, in just over three hours. Most of the more than five million New Zealanders live on the North Island, where the most populous city, Auckland, is located. And while the South Island is larger, it's much less populated due to its forbidding landscape made up of stunning, rugged mountainous terrain and icy glaciers, some of which are more than 20,000 years old.

New Zealand sits right on top of the meeting of the Pacific and Australian tectonic plates, which makes it one of the most volcanic and earthquake-prone regions on Earth.

Because New Zealand was once a British colony, like Australia, our systems of government are pretty similar. Their head of state is King Charles, who is represented by a Governor General and there's also a Prime Minister, who is head of government.

The indigenous Māori people arrived in New Zealand more than 1000 years ago from their mythical Polynesian homeland of Hawaiki, and their history and traditions are a very important part of the culture of New Zealand today. This week, wayyy back in 1840 the Treaty of Waitangi was signed. It was an agreement between the British colonists and the Māori people setting out the terms of the British settlement. And in the New Zealand parliament today, there are still a set number of Māori seats, where Māori people can vote for own their representatives in government.

Whenever you travel, it's important to learn a few words in that country's language. It's a great way to show respect. So, let's....

LEARN THE LINGO

In Aotearoa / New Zealand, there are three official languages: English, New Zealand Sign Language and te roa Māori.

Sadly, due to discrimination, and lack of support, about 40 years ago it looked as if the Maori language might become extinct. But thankfully today, with lots of hard work, about 30 per cent of New Zealanders can speak more than just a few words of te roa Māori.

We're very lucky to have Squiz Kid Jonah here to teach us some Māori. Jonah's, going to say hi and tell us that his family come from New Zealand. Take it away!

audio Jonah part 1

Thanks so much, Jonah.

Audio Jonah part 2

See you later

If you know someone from New Zealand, you'll probably already know that they have some different names in English for everyday things that we use here in Australia. Thongs or flip flops are jandals, an esky or cooler is a chilly bin and your swimmers are your togs.

Now that we can communicate a little bit, it's....

TIME FOR SCHOOL

For kids in New Zealand, school is compulsory, meaning that you have to attend, from ages six to sixteen. Most schools are state schools which are paid for by the government, but there are also some independent schools where parents pay school fees.

Primary school goes from year one (which is like kindergarten or prep) all the way through to year eight. And high school starts in year nine and goes on until you get to year thirteen.

The subjects that are taught are very similar to what you'd be learning in school in Australia with the exception that in some schools, you can also learn Māori language and culture. In fact, there are a small number of schools where most of the lessons are in te roa Māori and the subjects focus in on Māori ways of living and learning. I'd love to go to one of those schools for a day!

And just like in Australia, during breaks, you'll see lots of kids out in the playground playing footy.

SPORT TIME

Without a doubt, the national sport of New Zealand is rugby! The country's national men's team are called the All Blacks and the women's team are the Black Ferns, and both are among the most dominant teams in international rugby.

But, did you know that New Zealand is world famous for another kind of sport? People travel to New Zealand from all around the world to participate in adventure sports like jet boating, zip lining, white water rafting and the one that first became a draw card for tourists - bungee jumping. If you haven't heard of it before it's where a stretchy cord is attached to you before you throw yourself off a bridge and the cord causes you to bounce back up just before you hit the water below. Not my idea of a good time. Would you do it?

And, if you still have energy after all that excitement, you could have a go at walking up Baldwin Street in Dunedin, which, according to the Guinness Book of World Records is the world's steepest street. And boy is it steep. There's no riding your bike up that one...although coming down would be amazing!

I'm starving after all that sport! I think it might be...

DINNER TIME

Somewhat, like Australia, Aotearoa/ New Zealand doesn't have just one national dish but one that they do claim, Pavlova, is hotly disputed by Australians as our own. Although we Aussies do like to claim some things Kiwi for ourselves... I see you, Neil Finn.

If you're a carnivore like me, you'll probably know that New Zealand is also famous for its lamb. The oft-stated statistic that there are more sheep than people in New Zealand is actually true, with the last count showing that there were about 25 million which is almost a five-to-one ratio of sheep to people. Unbaaalievable!

And it just wouldn't be right if I didn't at least give a mention to New Zealand's famous 'fish & chips'.

I've stuck a link to a simple Pavlova, a dessert made of meringue, whipped cream and fruit in your episode notes. Even if we can't agree on who invented it I'm pretty sure we can all agree on its deliciousness.

THE S'QUIZ

This is the part of the podcast where you get to test how well you've been listening.

Question 1. What name do the Māori people know New Zealand as? (Aotearoa)

Question 2. What is the national sport of New Zealand? (Rugby)

Question 3. Which country invented the pavlova? (I suspect the answer to that will depend on where you come from)

That's all we have time for today. Thanks for staying curious about the world, and joining me on this incredible trip to New Zealand.

Now get out there, and have a most excellent day. Over and out.