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## Chapter 35: New Zealand: a diverse array of geotourism resources



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### Abstract

New Zealand is a geotourist's paradise and rivals Iceland for its range of diverse landforms and geological attractions. Central to both countries is their living geology with active volcanoes, frequent earthquakes and geothermal regions shaking the earth and showcasing the 'processes' of geology which 'form' or shape the land. The two main islands are the North Island (42% of NZ's land area) and the South Island (56%). Both islands have a large number of geotourism attractions. These include geothermal areas, caves, geysers, active volcanoes, natural springs, blowholes, unusual rock formations, glaciers, fiords. Geotourism is an emerging multi-million dollar industry in New Zealand and once this vision has been captured, and the risks mitigated, then no doubt a host of geotourism activities will be marketed and geoparks established so that New Zealand can capitalize on its unique geological base to foster sustainable tourism development.

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While New Zealand covers a relatively small proportion of this continental fragment, it hosts a varied array of ecosystems which have been moulded by the crushing forces of the colliding tectonic plates below. New Zealand residents and visitors have a veritable natural playground on their doorstep. From the sub-tropical rainforests of the far north to the alpine ranges and vast glacial lakes in the south, there's an eco-adventure waiting at almost every turn. With so much on offer, I've narrowed down some of my favorite ecotourism destinations in New Zealand, each offering a unique insight into Geotourism spans a range of visitor interests, from the specialist geotourist to the more general visitor. As well as supporting geoconservation outcomes, it provides economic, cultural, relational and social benefits for both visitors and host communities. Geotourism studies could also benefit from integration of existing theory, conceptual analysis and practice from broader heritage and nature-based tourism and closer collaboration with relevant social sciences. Adhering to sound geoethical practice is an essential part of geotourism, which can also play a role in the promotion of geoethics among the public and professionals. New Zealand, island country in the South Pacific Ocean, the southwesternmost part of Polynesia. The country comprises two main islands—the North and South islands—and a number of small islands, some of them hundreds of miles from the main group. The capital city is Wellington and the largest urban area Auckland. New Zealand also has a unique array of vegetation and animal life, much of which developed during the country's prolonged isolation. It is the sole home, for example, of the long-beaked, flightless kiwi, the ubiquitous nickname for New Zealanders. Waikato River, Hamilton, New Zealand.