

Maori Art

The Maori cultural heritage will surprise you

In your motorhome you can explore the ancestral lands of New Zealand and discover the cultural richness of the country through the Maori myths and legends. Maori culture is an integral part of New Zealand's identity. The Maori people have maintained and developed their art in the country and gradually worldwide. They now make up over 10% of the New Zealand population.

Maori culture includes many particular artistic fields. You can learn about **Maori traditions** from the locals who will be happy to share their history with you. In the Northland the Treaty of Waitangi was signed in 1840 and is an important step in understanding some of the issues that existed between the **Maori and Europeans** during colonization. This region, in the far north of the country, is characterized by Maori life centred around the ocean.

Maori tribal lifestyle has been maintained from generation to generation and is still present today in many traditions and customs. You can experience Maori dances and war songs, as well as art and other ancient techniques. Visit **Hokianga Harbour** ("the place of Kupe's great return") which is the ancient land of the great Ngapuhi Maori chiefs, and is still where 80% of the Maori population live. The harbor is a little touristy but it remains a very peaceful place, ideal for relaxing. The **Kauri Coast** is home to ancient, gigantic kauri trees and the **Waipoua Forest**. The heart of this forest was home to the Maori Te Roroa tribe for hundreds of years.

Maori arts and crafts are very popular and have become increasingly famous worldwide. **The sculptors' works** include beautiful, traditional wooden canoes, jewellery made of bone, shell and jade, and flutes and other traditional musical instruments. The **New Zealand galleries** (the **Eastern Southland Gallery** on the South Island, for example) are worth visiting to discover ancient and contemporary Maori art. The Moko facial tattoo is a surprising and fascinating Maori practice. These tattoos, made with soot rubbed into deep cuts in the skin, were social markers for warriors and other important people in the tribe.