

## Arrival Information/Notes for Opuia, New Zealand

**\*All Points Rally.** Depending where you're coming from...usually Tonga, New Caledonia or Fiji, consider joining the All Points Rally, usually held the second or third week of November. It's free to join; no hassle. You only need participate to the limit you wish to and the activities held in Opuia are terrific: Shopping trips, Maori cultural events, vendor trade show, informational seminars, potlucks, dinners, \$\$\$\$ in prizes, local wine-tastings...most sponsored in full or part by the local Opuia vendors. You can sign up before you leave from your embarkation point or after you arrive. Contact [www.islandcruising.co.nz](http://www.islandcruising.co.nz)

**\*Advance Notice of Arrival.** New Zealand requires 48-hours advance notice of arrival. (Check on this as we're told it's changing to 72 hours at some point). You can do this before you leave your last port or en route. Most of the popular ports and marinas in the South Pacific have copies of the Port Opuia Guide or the Customs Entry Packs which include all the forms necessary for arrival. You can also contact [www.customs.govt.nz](http://www.customs.govt.nz) for Customs Fact Sheet 32 Arrival of Yachts and Small Craft in New Zealand. New Zealand has **NO** port charges for entry which makes it a rarity these days. All forms should be completed prior to arrival of NZ officials aboard.

**\*Customs Q-Dock.** Opuia has a huge free-standing linear Q-dock (approx 35S18.8 / 174E07.3) which can be approached day or night, though it is not particularly well-lit at night. Fly your "Q" flag once reaching NZ territorial waters (12 nautical miles). If you arrive after hours (regular hours usually 8am-5pm daily during season), just tie up along side the Q-dock and hail Customs on Channel 16 after 0800 in the morning to announce your arrival. If you've properly completed your Advance Notice, they'll be expecting you. Note that you can and should update your ETA information en route at [yachts@customs.govt.nz](mailto:yachts@customs.govt.nz). If you update en route, be sure to include all the pertinent boat information required and your anticipated time and port of arrival.

**\*Check-in procedure.** At check-in, all officials come to you on the boat:

**Customs** - The boat will be given an inspection, paperwork will be reviewed and you'll be given 6 months-1 year for temporary boat importation which includes your **TIE (Temporary Import Entry)**. Make sure you maintain your original copy of this for outward clearance. Make lots of copies to give to vendors, marinas, services as it allows you to be GST (15%) exempt. Big savings! This also works for importing boat-related gear/parts into New Zealand.

**Immigration** – Passport stamping formalities will probably be completed by the Customs officials. Other than UK & Australia residents, most of us receive 90 days initially which will need to be renewed if you're staying longer. Visit [www.immigration.govt.nz](http://www.immigration.govt.nz) for all required information and forms download. As of this writing, you do NOT need to send in your passport for a visitor permit extension and all formalities may be done via mail.

**BioSecurity** – The boat will be given another inspection, sometimes with dogs. All fresh produce, eggs, dairy, meat, seeds, etc. will be confiscated along with your trash, contents of your vacuum cleaner, etc. We found their requests to be reasonable and they didn't confiscate anything we hadn't anticipated.

These folks are serious about their jobs, but we found them to be polite, efficient and friendly.

**\*Radio Traffic. Only channels 6 and 8** are available for ship to ship traffic in New Zealand.

Channel 12 – Opuia Marina

Channel 14 – Opuia Customs

Channel 63 - Russell Radio

Channel 77 – Opuia Cruiser's Net (more info below)

**\*Port Opuia Guide** – If you don't have one or if you received one and didn't spend a lot of time looking at it, please do...it's a goldmine of information ! It provides all Arrival forms and formality requirements; chartlets for cruising the Bay of Islands and nearby areas; ads for all local vendors and services with contact information. Available in advance from most South Pacific marinas and major ports, from Customs on arrival, the Opuia Marina office and most other vendor offices in the area.

**\*Opuia Marina** – If you're heading into the marina or to a mooring, contact Opuia Marina on channel 12. In order to stay in the marina, you'll need proof of boat insurance (see “Insurance” below) and eventually an electrical WOF (warranty of fitness) if you wish to plug into power. Contact them in advance to reserve a berth or mooring [enquires@opuamarina.co.nz](mailto:enquires@opuamarina.co.nz) . For info visit [www.opuamarina.co.nz](http://www.opuamarina.co.nz).

**\*Boat Insurance** – It's easy and inexpensive to obtain 3<sup>rd</sup> party liability boat insurance. (~\$350 for 6 months). The Marina Shop for insurance is next to Marina Cafe. No survey is required. Full comprehensive insurance is also available for NZ waters at reasonable rates.

**\*Opuia** – Opuia is a tiny, little seaside port. It has lots of charm, services and vendors, but it is missing a few things.

**\*Transportion** to the closest town (Paihia) is lacking. A yachtie shuttle runs 3 times a week during season (Nov – May; \$7NZ/pp/return); otherwise plan to walk (7km each way), hitchhike, rent a car (available in Opuia) or buy a local car (quite inexpensive and you can resell at the end of the season.)

**\*Fuel** – Though diesel is available at the Opuia Fuel Dock, gasoline is not. It requires hauling jerry jugs to the gas stations in Opuia for dinghy fuel.

**\*Propane** – Sometimes this is a hassle because of the regulations governing propane tanks and tank fills in NZ. Many petrol stations refill propane tanks at the pump.

**\*Grocery Store** – The Opuia General Store offers some basics to get you by, but for a good shopping you need to go to Paihia (Countdown Supermarket) or Kerikeri (New World).

**\*Mail** – You can have mail sent to Opuia Marina and held for you (by boat name) for pick up at their office or to the Opuia General Store which is also the Opuia Post Office.

**\*Opuia Cruiser's Net** – Operates Mon-Fri 0800, Channel 77 from end of October through May. Cruisers take turns as Net Controller. Good source of local information on services, vendors, and social happenings. Weather and tides are provided daily.

**\*Weather/Tides.** Russell Radio (Channel 63) provides weather each morning at 0800 and 0930 or on request. The NZ Meteorological Service (Met Service) provides coastal weather reports and navigation warnings throughout the day announced in advance on channel 16. The Opuia/Bay of Islands area is BRETT. Met Service provides 24x7 weather on Channel 22. The tidal swing is generally significant at 2-3m. Tide table booklets for the area are usually available free at the Opuia Marina office and several vendors on the Opuia dockside.

**\*Opuia Cruising Club** – Maintains a dinghy dock and offers fresh water (donation appreciated) across from the Q dock, near the fuel dock. The club welcomes visitors, but check as to how often you may visit and any other requirements as these seem to be enforced differently each season. A temporary club membership (Nov-May) was \$40/boat in 2010 and included reciprocity with many other NZ boating/cruising clubs.

**\*Restaurants** – Only 3 in Opuia and not always open. Marina Cafe on dockside near the marina office offers breakfast/lunches/snacks most days, great coffees and are usually open late one night/week (Fridays?) with entertainment. There's a fish & chip shop open next to Opuia General Store with limited hours. The Opuia Cruising Club offers dinners/bar with a reasonable menu Weds thru Sundays: Thursdays are usually budget nights and Sundays are usually “roasts”.

**\*Laundry** – A laundromat with lots of washers and dryers is available at dockside near “F” dock and the Marina Cafe. \$4/wash; \$3/dry a/o 2011; you can get change at the marina office.

**\*Services available** – sailmakers, engine repair, mechanical repair, stainless welding/fabrication, riggers, haul-out, painting, carpentry, varnishing, fiberglass repair/fabrication, refrigeration, wind generators, watermakers, canvas work, boat lettering/sign work, insurance, chandleries (3), car rental. Just about anything you'll need. See the Port Opuia Guide for specifics and contact information.

**\*Communications -**

**Mobile (cell) phones** – There are three companies offering services: Telecom, Two Degrees and Viacom. Calls between mobiles and to land lines are expensive in NZ (up to 88 cents/min); texting is cheaper. Each company offers “pay as you go” type services with specials. Phone purchases are not available in Opuia. You'll need to go to Paihia or Kerikeri. We personally found that Two Degrees offered the best deal for us with 44 cent/min local calls, free texting to NZ phones and 22 cent/min overseas calls. Telecom seems to work in more areas than the others including Stewart Island (027 prefix only).

**Internet** – Several options available.

- Sign up for local wifi service at Opuia: Zenbu, Pacific WiFi...pay as you go by the MB and by the month. If you're staying in Opuia, this works out fine, but is expensive. If you're planning to go to other places in NZ, you'll have to buy a similar service each place you go.
- Buy a mobile modem which will work pretty much everywhere a mobile phone will work. We opted for a T-Stick (by Telecom). It's a pay-as-you-go option. Activate it, stick it into your USB port and you have internet access aboard the boat...pretty much wherever you are. Initial stick purchase - \$99NZ (includes \$20 internet), then top up as needed.

**\*Book Exchanges** – There are 3 places for exchanging books in Opuia: the laundromat, the Opuia Cruising Club and a great selection at the Opuia chandlery on the road to Ashby's Boatyard.