



Kiribati

Where to stay & what to do



The Republic of Kiribati, located in the Central Pacific, comprises 33 low lying coral atolls stretching over an area 3220km from east to west, along the equator, half way between Australia and Hawaii. Kiritimati (Christmas Island) in the Line Islands is to the east, Banaba (Ocean Island) is furthestmost west, with the Phoenix and Gilbert Groups, including Kiribati in between.

The 16 atolls that comprise the main island group of Kiribati, straddle the equator north of New Zealand. The coral atolls are tiny peaks of undersea mountains that rise through the Pacific Ocean; and are protected from the surrounding ocean by reefs. Trade winds moderate a hot, mid tropical marine climate.



water world

Sea dominates life. The nearest island is over the horizon, and a major land mass a thousand miles of endless ocean away. The sound of the sea is inescapable in Kiribati. The surrounding ocean and lagoons teem with colourful sea life, providing food for the I-Kiribati.

The land barely rises 2-3 metres above the sea at its highest point and is threatened ecologically by changes in the world's climate. It is so narrow, both the ocean and lagoon can nearly always be seen. On land, coconut palms, breadfruit and pandanus cover most of the islands.

The I-Kiribati are a Micronesian people and the population of Kiribati is estimated at 100,000, of which, as many as 40,000 live on the capital island of Tarawa.

Many families continue to live in a traditional extended family environment and, in many places, traditional island culture is very much alive today with limited influence from the outside world. Many I-Kiribati still craft their own homes and canoes with natural materials found on the islands. Kiribati dance continues to be synonymous with their identity.



The main visitor centres of Kiribati are Tarawa in the Gilberts Group and Kiritimati in the Line Group. These islands offer different types of visitor experience with cultural activities prominent on Tarawa while nature based activities are the focus of Kiritimati.

Tarawa

Tarawa is the capital of Kiribati and as such is the most populated of the islands. It can be divided into 2 distinct areas.

South Tarawa, the most populated & developed area of Kiribati is characterised by hustle & bustle & is the commercial & government centre of the islands.

North Tarawa in contrast is sparsely populated & offers tranquillity. There is little commercial activity & most people live in a traditional village setting.



Kiritimati

Located in the Line Group, Kiritimati lies at the eastern extreme of Kiribati. As one of the largest coral atolls in the world it has a huge tidal lagoon with shallow waters, while the rest of the atoll lined with deserted beaches, comprises salt flats, coconut palms and low level bushes.

Kiritimati is sparsely populated with most people living in small villages in the north of the island. The rest of the island is given over to nature & remains relatively undisturbed.



Other islands

Many outer islands of the Gilbert chain remain sparsely populated & rarely visited. Recent events such as the longest total solar eclipse & the UK reality TV show, *'The Real Swiss Family Robinson'* have increased interest in these remote islands & some, such as Abemama, Butaritari & Abaiang are attracting more visitors. Traditional I-Kiribati life is prevalent here, with few organised activities. But it is possible to arrange an outer island experience.

Where to visit



Tabon te Keekee

Tabon te Keekee, a small family run property, offers you the chance to relax in tranquil Abatao, North Tarawa. Offering few luxuries it's an ideal location to rediscover the simple things in life. Stay in a traditional style bwia, whose simple style is basic but comfortable.

Tabon te Keekee offers idyllic swimming is perfectly located for you to leisurely discover North Tarawa. If you are more active you can hire a bicycle and explore the islets, but if all that is too much effort - lie back in one of our hammocks and relax, island style.



Otintaa'i Hotel

The Otintaa'i hotel is located on the edge of the lagoon in Bikenibeu, South Tarawa, just 10 minutes away from the airport. The government owned hotel is the largest hotel in Tarawa and offers 40 air conditioned rooms with private bathroom facilities.

The Otintaa'i houses a restaurant, bar / lounge room and a function and conference venue, and also offers 24 hours reception, WI-FI internet and laundry service. We can also arrange car hire, tours and activities also offer tours and accommodation on our private island escape of Biketawa.



Ouba Islet Resort

Ouba islet, located north of Tarawa is one of 30 islets that comprise Abaiang. Developed to be as sustainable as possible in its fragile environment, Ouba Islet Resort offers 4 traditional style bwia sleeping 4 people and 2 smaller structures sleeping 2 people, with a separate toilet and shower area. We specialise in fishing (deep sea and bone fishing) but surrounded by reefs and lagoons the snorkelling and swimming are also fantastic.

In terms of international standards, accommodation in Kiribati is basic, catering for the simplest of needs. In smaller guesthouses & motels, particularly on North Tarawa & outer islands, air conditioning, private bathroom facilities, constant electricity & running water should not be expected as the norm. You may also be required to share facilities with the family with whom you stay.

others

Accommodation in the Gilbert Islands is concentrated on Tarawa, particularly on South Tarawa where there is a choice of hotels, motels and guesthouses with varying facilities and services.

There is a limited choice of accommodation on North Tarawa and the outer islands, with Butaritari, Abemama and Abaiang hosting the most visitors. If you wish to experience true Kiribati village life, homestay offers the chance to stay in traditional Kiribati bwia in family or village settings.



Accommodation - Gilbert Group

The Gilberts islands offer a range of activities for visitors. All activities are on a low scale tourism basis and are run by local people. Activities may be limited due to the time of year, availability of staff, tide sequence and scheduling of domestic air or boat services.

Tarawa is ideal to sit back and relax, enjoy the sun and the warm lagoon waters but if you do want to do something different and explore the islands what else is there to do?

north tarawa

Travel by boat to the North Tarawa Conservation area, an area looked after by local I-Kiribati to preserve the environment & culture for future generations.

Explore a variety of islets, discover places of historical significance, hear traditional stories; Visit traditional buildings, see fishing traps, watch traditional sailing canoes & explore the pristine marine waters.



This fascinating tour enables you to discover some of the traditional cultural practices of Kiribati that are still continued today.

Discover the amazing world of giant clams; experience a little of life in a traditional Kiribati village. See how garlands are made, how mats are woven & how toddy is cut among many other things.

cultural tour



World War II

One of World War II's bloodiest battles in the Pacific, between the Japanese & the Americans, the *Battle of Tarawa*, is explored on this tour.

See the Tarawa defences, visit important sites hear about the events that took place, visit memorials to the fallen

dance

The I-Kiribati are famous for their traditional dance, which, for many, is synonymous with identity.

Traditional dance can sometimes be enjoyed, either by request or during festivals.

explore

Hire a bicycle or walk and explore North Tarawa at your own leisurely pace. Wander through small villages, through shallow causeways, along the lagoon edge, explore the ocean side

Or if you want to go further afield why not spend some time on one of the more remote outer islands

Activities ~ Gilbert Group

Or if you want to get off the land and explore the surrounding marine world of the Gilberts or just do something a little different, there are various activities based on or in the waters of Kiribati, whether it is lagoon or ocean.

As with all other activities in Kiribati these are weather and tide dependent.....

Canoe experience

Kiribati sailing canoes are some of the fastest sailing canoes in the world. They are still used in everyday Kiribati life and can often be seen in local racing events.

This experience enables you to witness the expertise required to sail such a deceptively simple looking craft and discover first hand the thrill of racing across the turquoise waters of the lagoon in a traditional Kiribati canoe .



snorkelling

Snorkelling is possible in some areas of the islands though it is arranged on an adhoc basis. Butaritari and Na'a are good spots though access is sometimes difficult.



Whether you are already an expert game fisherman or want to try it for the first time, the game fishing opportunities in Kiribati are fantastic.

This game fishing charter collects you from your accommodation, and provides everything you need on board the boat, including deckhand, fishing gear, bait and lures and they also keep you well supplied with soft drinks and refreshments (BYO alcohol) throughout your day.

Either a half day (04:00 - 12:00 or full day 04:00 - 16:00) options are available. The early starts are certainly worth it!!!

Fish with I-Kiribati locals who know their fish and the expansive waters of Kiribati - it will be a fantastic adventure.

Game fishing with Kingfisher Fishing Charters

Activities ~ Gilbert Group



The Villages

The Villages, owned and operated by a community of the Kiribati Protestant Church is located in the village of Tabwakea. It is in an ideal location, right on the beach front, overlooking the lagoon., only a step away from fishing flats.

Accommodation is in 6 relatively new simple but comfortable bungalows. Each bungalow is twin share with air conditioning and private bathrooms. There is a maneaba used as a meeting area for gatherings in the evenings as well as a dining room and bar.

Captain Cook

The government owned Captain Cook Hotel is located 10 minutes from the airport and the village of Banana, 45 minutes from Ronton, the main commercial centre. This hotel is the largest on the island and offers the most facilities and services of all the properties on Kiritimati, including a bar and restaurant service.

The main hotel building overlooks the beach on the ocean side of the atoll and has 24 **simple but comfortable rooms** with air conditioning and private bathrooms. An additional 20 thatch roofed bungalows have private bathrooms and ocean views.



Accommodation is concentrated in the north of the island between the airport & Ronton (London), with some of the properties in local villages.

Most of the properties organise fishing trips & have their own transport & guides. Some either run their own tours or can organize tours to birdwatching site or other culturally based activities.

See our fishing Kiritimati guide for more information on fishing in Kiritimati. Alternatively some properties allow us to customise a fishing trip for you.

others

Other properties are located in Ronton, Main Camp, Tabwakea and Terawanibakoa. These properties, (motels or guesthouses) are small in size and the accommodation is **simple but comfortable**. The rooms are often twin and few properties have private bathroom facilities, facilities being shared with other guests. Most of these properties are small family run enterprises.

All properties provide meals from their own kitchens but the menu choice is often limited and is largely based on fish and seafood.



Kiritimati has a limited range of activities available on the atoll but what there is, is of an outstanding quality, largely focussed on the natural environment, particularly the ocean and lagoon. Kiritimati is world renowned for its fishing but if you want something different during your stay, what else can you do? Customising your trip to Kiritimati allows you to combine a number of activitiesdiving, fishing, birdwatching, surfing, relaxing.... the choice is yours.

fishing

Kiribati is world renowned as a destination for bone fishing, due to its endless white coral flats and abundance of sites to cast from. With seas teeming with fish, especially bonefish, clear water & an ideal climate, fishing in Kiritimati is always richly rewarded.

Offshore fishing for giant trevally, wahoo, sailfish & others is also possible.



Explore the underwater world of Kiribati with Dive Kiribati. Whether you want to learn to dive or are already certified, Kiritimati offers exciting opportunities to dive in uncrowded, undiscovered waters.

The standard of equipment and qualifications of the dive operators on Kiritimati has not yet been ascertained. Diving can be arranged but it is entirely at your own risk.

diving & snorkelling



lagoon tour

Whether you want to float in tranquillity, discover the numerous islets, marvel at the thousands of seabirds, snorkel the lagoon waters or try your luck with a fishing line – the choice is yours on this lagoon tour by boat. The perfect opportunity to do as little or as much as you like.

surfing

Surfing in Kiritimati and Fanning Island is becoming increasingly renowned. It is remote but worth the effort of getting there.

Kiritimati is relatively easily accessible but accessing Fanning Island can require substantial amounts of time and flexibility.

birdwatching

Protected nesting areas cover large parts of Kiritimati making it a haven for colonies of migratory seabirds. This tour takes you to view several of the 18 species, including terns, petrels, boobies & tropic birds. Experience graceful acrobatics, exuberant displays, raucous calls !

Activities ~ Kiritimati

Tobaraoi Travel has put together 3 different packages to enable first time visitors to make the most of their time in Kiribati. The packages offers the opportunity to sample different activities in the various locations. Some days have planned activity, others are left up to the visitor to decide how they want to spend their time.

All packages include return airfare, all accommodation (7 nights in Kiribati unless otherwise stated), including in transit if required, 3 meals a day, all transfers and all activities as listed.

Discover Tarawa

a cultural experience

explore the tranquility of North Tarawa ... discover the unique Kiribati culture ... experience the bustle of South Tarawa ... view relics of the Pacific's fiercest WWII battle ... marvel at the beauty of the clam world ...



- traditional dance show
- cultural & clam tour
- WWII history tour
- North Tarawa Conservation area tour
- bike hire for 6 days
- car hire for one day

\$ 3209

Discover Kiriritimati

an active experience

discover the lagoon by boat marvel at huge seabird colonies dive the underwater world explore the island at your own leisure by car kayak the hidden areas of the lagoon...



- lagoon tour
- bird watching tour
- diving (intro or 2 dives)
- kayak hire
- one additional day of activity incl. fishing (charge applies)

This package is currently unavailable.

Explore Kiribati

an adventurous experience

discover the unique Kiribati culture ... explore the tranquility of North Tarawa ... view relics of the Pacific's fiercest WWII battle ... relax on Biike Islet ... immerse yourself in Kiribati culture



- 8 nights in Tarawa, 4 nights in Abemama
- domestic flights
- traditional dance show
- Tours as per Discover Tarawa package
- bike and car hire
- Boat trip to Biike Islet

Accommodation in Kiribati for 12 nights

\$3799

Prices in AUD, based on 2 people, twin share. Conditions apply. Prices and subject to change— correct at time of print.

Packages to Kiribati