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The Laidback Lives of those in New Zealand

Abbie Bach
Linfield University

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Abbie Bach

New Zealand

April 23, 2023

The Laidback Lives of Those in New Zealand

Before my arrival to New Zealand, I had heard a few narratives about what life is like here. They all surrounded the same three ideas: the country is very picturesque, the residents are very nice, and life in general is very relaxed. It is no shock to me that the more time I spend in this country, the truer these statements become. In my experience so far, Kiwi's are humble, relaxed, and in general are a go with the flow type of people. This lifestyle isn't unbeknownst to locals here, as demonstrated by my interview with my friend on my club soccer team here. My teammate demonstrated that "the culture here is pretty chill and laid back. Everyone's pretty relaxed. It's called to poppy syndrome, if you're too confident and proud of what you've done, it's not seen too highly here." Life in New Zealand is very easy-going, and I hope to develop some of this ease and take it back to the U.S.

I believe part of this laid-back lifestyle stems from the geographical terrain of New Zealand. My friend said this is her favorite part of New Zealand, stating that "I love the beautiful scenery and just how safe it is - I enjoy being able to just walk anywhere. It's nice being by the ocean and the lakes. It's a small country so we can drive to the beach for the day or we can go to the lake or the mountain." NZ has such a diverse landscape, and it is all accessible within a few hours drive. This easy access to such beautiful landmarks is one of the things I have learned to most appreciate about New Zealand. I believe having such open access to nature coincides with their eased lifestyle; nature heals and has great benefits.

I've found that New Zealand is aware of this abundance of nature and intentionally recognizes the importance of landscapes, especially to Māori. Māori are the indigenous group of New Zealand, and the way in which Māori culture is so abundant in New Zealand is a key difference I've noticed in comparison to the U.S. From my perspective, New Zealand constantly implements Māori culture into everyday life, as a lot of students in my university tend to know many Māori words and about their culture. This is something I wish for the U.S. to implement – a deeper and widespread teaching and implementation of indigenous cultures within everyday life.