



PRESS RELEASE



NEW ZEALAND'S SUMMER OF CRICKET

The ICC Cricket World Cup comes to New Zealand 14th February 2015

New Zealand offers a wealth of events and festivities for cricket fans



For further information and images

With just two weeks to go until the opening matches of ICC Cricket World Cup 2015 – shared by New Zealand and Australia – the countdown to one of the world's biggest sporting events is now well underway. In New Zealand, ICC Cricket World Cup 2015 will play out in seven host centers, starting in Christchurch on 14th February, offering sports fans a chance to experience one of the most passionate sporting countries on earth.

Along with the Kiwi summer weather at its best, travelling fans will find that match venues are all within easy access of unique attractions and beautiful landscapes. Roll in a calendar of fun events to celebrate the occasion – a nationwide 'festival of cricket' – and there's going to be plenty for cricket fans to pack in. Here are some of the events and festivities taking place that visiting fans can enjoy.

PRE-CWC OPENING EVENT IN CHRISTCHURCH, SOUTH ISLAND

Even before the tournament officially begins, all eyes will be on Christchurch as the South Island city hosts a spectacular opening event on Thursday 12th February. The free opening event in Christchurch's North Hagley Park – the biggest party the city has seen in years – will be a celebration of host nation New Zealand's culture and passion for cricket, and will feature appearances by New Zealand cricket legends Sir Richard Hadlee, Stephen Fleming and current New Zealand cricket captain Brendon McCullum.

WITNESS CRICKET HISTORY IN NELSON, SOUTH ISLAND

At the top of the South Island – just across Cook Strait from Wellington – Nelson is renowned as one of the sunniest spots in New Zealand with a splendid necklace of gold-sand beaches,

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three national parks and a creative community that has been drawn to this beautiful slice of New Zealand. It also holds a significant place in the history of New Zealand cricket as the earliest known match was played here in 1844. On 14th February kids will have a ball at Tahuna Sportsground playing their own mini-version of the Cricket World Cup and learn about all the teams and cultures represented. 1st March is the day when Nelson's cricket and heritage will come together for Race Unity Day - an annual festival of cultural diversity that will be extended to welcome the cultures of all the international cricket teams competing in New Zealand and Australia.

COMBINE *THE HOBBIT* AND CRICKET AT HOBBITON, NORTH ISLAND

Hamilton, one of New Zealand's fastest growing urban centers, is set to host three Cricket World Cup matches between 15th February and 13th March. This is the region that has given New Zealand one of its most talked-about tourist attractions - Hobbiton Movie Set, created for *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit* trilogies, in the charming country town of Matamata and the only permanent movie set in the world. Hobbiton, which has played host to more than 800,000 visitors, will provide the serene green setting for an exclusive event on 9 March - a game of backyard cricket on the village green under the celebrated party tree. This once-in-a-lifetime experience will begin with a tour of 'The Shire' village set, followed by the informal evening match and - as it wouldn't be cricket without a few cold beverages afterwards - the after-match will be conducted at Hobbiton's own quirky 17th-century styled Green Dragon Inn.

CRICKET LEGENDS TO PLAY IN ART DECO EXHIBITION MATCH, NORTH ISLAND

On 25th February, Hawke's Bay Tourism will host a "Legends of Cricket Art Deco Match" to coincide with ICC Cricket World Cup 2015 celebrations in Hawke's Bay. Ian Botham, one of the legends of the game, will be among some of the all-time playing greats as well as some talented cricketers including Mark Greatbatch, Chris Harris and Dion Nash. The first match of its kind ever to take place in New Zealand, the teams will be made up of "New Zealand Vs the Rest of the World" with the match taking place at the Clifton County Cricket Club; an immaculate pitch set amongst the picturesque backdrop of Te Awanga Downs, a farm near Cape Kidnappers. The match will be a friendly 20/20 game, based on an Art Deco theme and style which will include players donning traditional 1930's cricket attire with a host of sideline activity celebrating the era which is synonymous with Napier City and Hawke's Bay heritage. The match has been scheduled to take place at the end of the annual Art Deco Weekend in Napier, allowing the revellers to enjoy extended celebrations and get into the swing of Cricket World Cup 2015.

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT:

More information:

www.media.newzealand.com/en/events/icc-cricket-world-cup-2015/

www.icc-cricket.com/cricket-world-cup

www.newzealand.com

About the ICC Cricket World Cup 2015:

ICC Cricket World Cup 2015 will be co-hosted by New Zealand and Australia, with 49 matches to be played between 14 February and 29 March. There are seven host cities in New Zealand: Auckland, Hamilton, Napier, Wellington, Nelson, Christchurch and Dunedin.

Fast Facts:

ICC Cricket World Cup 2015 will be hosted by Australia and New Zealand

14 teams: Afghanistan, Australia, Bangladesh, England, India, Ireland, New Zealand, Pakistan, Scotland, South Africa, Sri Lanka, United Arab Emirates, West Indies and Zimbabwe

14 Host Cities: Adelaide, Auckland, Brisbane, Canberra, Christchurch, Dunedin, Hamilton, Hobart, Napier, Nelson, Melbourne, Perth, Sydney, Wellington

42 pool matches – three in each host city

Every visiting team plays in both countries