New Study Reveals the World's Best Locations for Seasonal Work Abroad

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A new global study from Remitly ranks 88 destinations to reveal the best locations for seasonal work

- Niseko, a ski resort in Japan, tops the global ranking as the world's best location for seasonal workers
- New Zealand takes eight of the global top 20, more than any other country in the study
- Central Otago in New Zealand is the best place worldwide for seasonal fruit-picking, while Dunedin leads for hospitality and nightlife

Cross border money transfer provider, Remitly, has revealed the best places in the world to work a season abroad in a new global study.

In the study, Remitly scores 88 well-known seasonal-work destinations across 21 countries and three categories of work: ski resorts, party towns and fruit-picking regions. Each destination is scored out of a possible 100 points across five factors that matter most to seasonal workers: cost of living, rent affordability compared with the local minimum wage, things to do, job demand and safety.

Niseko, a ski resort in Japan, is the best place in the world for seasonal work

Japan's Niseko takes the top spot with an overall score of 79.0 out of 100. The Hokkaido ski resort combines one of the highest safety scores in the study (92.9 out of 100) with comparatively affordable everyday living costs. Its four linked villages draw an international English-speaking crowd, making it an accessible first season for hospitality, ski-school and lift work.

Cortina d'Ampezzo in the Italian Dolomites is second with 73.1 and is the safest destination in the whole study (safety score of 94.1). Everyday costs are higher, however, and a month's rent in the city centre takes around 81 hours of work on the local minimum wage, though many seasonal roles include or subsidise accommodation.

Central Otago in New Zealand completes the top three with a score of 68.0, the highest-scoring agricultural destination in the study, where the stone-fruit and pinot noir region around Cromwell and Alexandra draws cherry and apricot pickers every summer.

New Zealand is the strongest-performing country with eight of the global top 20

New Zealand is by far the strongest-performing country in the study, taking eight of the global top 20 across all three categories of work. Central Otago leads the fruit-picking regions ahead of Nelson (7th) and Motueka (15th). Queenstown (4th) and Wanaka (6th) are the top ski destinations outside Japan and Italy, while Dunedin (5th) is the best place in the world for seasonal hospitality work, with Rotorua (14th) and Wellington (joint 20th) also in the top 20.

The country's horticulture and viticulture harvests bring in up to 20,7501 overseas workers a season under the Recognised Seasonal Employer scheme, with a further 32,4902 working-holiday visa holders in the country as of early 2025, many of them taking seasonal jobs to fund their stay.

Europe's ski resorts and summer party towns also rank highly

Austria's St Anton ranks 8th and has one of the best ratios of job demand to visitor numbers of any ski resort. France features twice with Val d'Isère (10th) and Courchevel (13th), and Switzerland's Zermatt (11th) makes the top 20 despite daily living costs close to four times Niseko's.

Greece's party strips take three places with Corfu's Kavos (9th), Crete's Malia (12th) and Rhodes' Faliraki (17th), joined by Spain's Benidorm (16th) and Malaga (joint 20th), as well as Portugal's Albufeira (18th). Canada's Whistler (19th) is the only North American destination in the top 20.

The world's top 20 locations for seasonal work

Rank	Location	Country	Category	Overall score (/100)
1	Niseko	Japan	Ski / Winter	79.0

2	Cortina d'Ampezzo	Italy	Ski / Winter	73.1
3	Central Otago	New Zealand	Agriculture	68.0
4	Queenstown	New Zealand	Ski / Winter	66.6
5	Dunedin	New Zealand	Hospitality / Party	66.3
6	Wanaka	New Zealand	Ski / Winter	64.1
7	Nelson	New Zealand	Agriculture	63.8
8	St Anton	Austria	Ski / Winter	63.6
9	Corfu (Kavos)	Greece	Hospitality / Party	63.2
10	Val d'Isère	France	Ski / Winter	62.5
11	Zermatt	Switzerland	Ski / Winter	62.0
12	Crete (Malia)	Greece	Hospitality / Party	61.4
13	Courchevel	France	Ski / Winter	60.9
14	Rotorua	New Zealand	Hospitality / Party	60.8
15	Motueka	New Zealand	Agriculture	59.9
16	Benidorm	Spain	Hospitality / Party	59.2
17	Rhodes (Faliraki)	Greece	Hospitality / Party	59.0
18	Albufeira / Algarve	Portugal	Hospitality / Party	58.8
19	Whistler	Canada	Ski / Winter	58.3
20=	Malaga	Spain	Hospitality / Party	58.0
20=	Wellington	New Zealand	Hospitality / Party	58.0

Kym Whitford, General Manager & Director, Remitly Asia Pacific, comments:

“New Zealand is a real draw for seasonal workers. Its ski, agriculture, and hospitality sectors offer globally competitive opportunities across the year. In our study they are globally ranked highly based on work opportunities, leisure activities, and high safety levels.

There is no single best destination in the world, as the right choice depends on the type of work and life someone is looking for. But whether people are seeking seasonal work to send money home to support their families, or looking for an adventurous working holiday, New Zealand is a strong contender.”

For more information and to see the full findings from the study, please visit:
https://www.remitly.com/nz/en/money-transfer/best-seasonal-work-locations

Notes to editors

Methodology

Remitly scored 88 seasonal-work destinations across 21 countries and three categories: ski resorts, party towns and fruit-picking regions. Destinations were chosen through desk research to cover a broad, recognisable spread of seasonal-work hotspots, rather than an exhaustive list. Each was scored on five metrics, indexed on a 0 to 100 scale and averaged for a final score out of 100:

Cost of living: a daily basket of an inexpensive meal, a 0.5L draught beer, a cappuccino and a litre of milk

Rent affordability: hours of work on the local minimum wage needed to cover a month's rent on a one-bedroom apartment. Many seasonal roles include or subsidise staff accommodation, so this is a measure of local market cost rather than what every seasonal worker pays

Things to do: sights, landmarks and attractions per 100,000 people

Job demand: monthly Google searches for seasonal-work terms over the past year, per 100,000 tourists

Safety: Numbeo's safety index for each location or its nearest city

Sources:

- Cost of living, rent and safety: Numbeo
- Activities/Things to do: TripAdvisor
- Population (used for per-capita figures): Worldometers and World Population Review
- Job-demand search volumes: Keywordtool.io (e.g. "fruit picking jobs central otago"), run in the local language where relevant
- Tourism figures (used in job demand calculation): national parks, regional tourist boards, national statistics offices and airport data
- Minimum wage (used in rent affordability): government labour departments and official statistics agencies, plus desk research

Where a specific location wasn't listed in a dataset, such as cost of living figures, the nearest town or city is used, and minimum wage is also taken at the most local level available. All data is accurate as of July 2026.

Citations:

1. Immigration New Zealand - Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) scheme
2. PICMI - Working Holiday Visa numbers for NZ

About Remitly

Remitly Global, Inc. (NASDAQ: RELY) (“Remitly”) (https://www.remitly.com/) is a trusted provider of digital financial services that transcend borders. With a global footprint spanning more than 175 countries, Remitly’s digitally native, cross-border payments app delights customers with a fast, reliable, and transparent money movement experience. Building on its strong foundation, Remitly is expanding its suite of products to further its vision and transform lives around the world.

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