

## Vava'u, Ha'apai, Tongatapu, Niu Cruising Guide

This guide has been put together to provide information for yachts and vessels prior and during their stay in Vava'u. I would like to thank the crew of SV Olwen (Dean and Trish), SV Cosmos (Sun and Charlie) SV Soggypaws, SV Bella Via and SV Passage for their assistance in checking and expanding this guide - if you have find information that is incorrect or missing please email me at [shoreassist@vavau.to](mailto:shoreassist@vavau.to) Malo Au'Pito (thank you very much).

The guide is now in it's thirteenth revision and expanded information is now available on Vava'u, Ha'apai, Niutoputapu and Tongatapu.

With one of the most sheltered harbours in the South Pacific Vava'u is home to a large number of charter yachts and with many sheltered coves and bays & 70 islands to visit it has a well deserved reputation for great Cruising grounds. Ha'apai is a more technical sailing area due to the sandy bottom, Tongatapu is used a lot as a staging area for weather windows down to New Zealand.

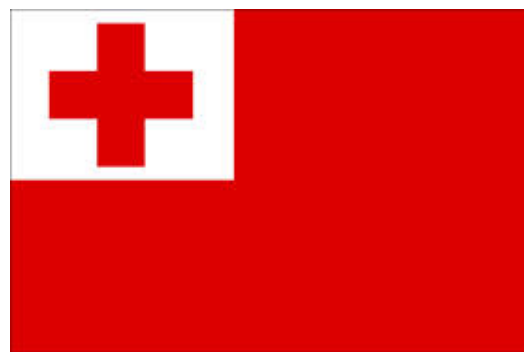
	Number of Yachts				
	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
<b>Tongatapu</b>	215	181	259		
<b>Vava'u</b>	444	416	551	460	450
<b>Ha'apai</b>	62	36	91		
<b>Niua's</b>	65	85	80		
<b>Total</b>	<b>786</b>	<b>718</b>	<b>981</b>		

\*Estimate



## Vava'u, Kingdom of Tonga, South Pacific

*GPS Coordinates of location: Lat: 18°41' 60 S Lon: 174°1' 60 W*



### *Description of geographic area covered:*

The **Vava'u Island group in the Kingdom of Tonga** is a spectacular tropical island paradise in the Pacific Ocean. It has a year-round climate suitable for swimming, snorkeling, diving and sailing. Some islands are ringed by white sand beaches while others have tropical forests, sea-level caves, and dramatic limestone cliffs with breathtaking vistas.

Remote and truly unspoiled, the waters around Vava'u are crystal clear with visibility exceeding 100 feet. Most of the islands are uninhabited, a few have villages, a few have very small unique resorts with exceptional food. There is abundant sea life with over 100 species of colorful tropical fish, giant clams, manta rays, sea turtles, spinner dolphins, and July-October the Humpback whales! Truly a paradise with the only Polynesian Monarchy this is a truly remarkable place to explore.

**Port officer's names:****PO contact information:**

Greg Just

Lisa Molloy

Email: [greg@vavau.to](mailto:greg@vavau.to)[lisamolloy@yahoo.com](mailto:lisamolloy@yahoo.com)

Phone: 71322 (café)

71322 (café)

Mobile: 8812347 or 7512347 8761942 or 7512870

VHF ch: 26/16

26/16

Address: Mt Talau Park

Mt Talau

Divemaster

Advanced Diver

IT Manager (nz)

Hospitality/Chef/Barista

Analyst IT/Fin/Proj

Photographer

Yachtie

Yachtie

Master Drycleaner (nz)

Website: [www.vavau.to/Tropicana](http://www.vavau.to/Tropicana)[www.tongamazing.com](http://www.tongamazing.com)

Best way to contact: Cellphone

**Services available from Port Officer:**

- Assistance with clearing in formalities
- Offshore assist via [offshoreassist@vavau.to](mailto:offshoreassist@vavau.to)
- Advanced Notice forms – Fiji/NZ/Australia
- Translation services – fluent in Italian, smattering of French and German.
- Courier package assistance/advice on request
- Snail Mail arrangements –please advise before sending Yacht in transit SY Yacht Name  
c/- Café Tropicana  
Fatafehi Rd  
Neiafu  
Vava'u  
Kingdom of Tonga +676 71322 [tropicana@vavau.to](mailto:tropicana@vavau.to)
- Charts for the Pacific
- Courtesy flags for the Pacific and Asia
- Free Recycling/Used Oil/Battery receiver
- Harbour wifi provider and free info, weather etc  
"Zenbu.net.nz – Tropicana" anchorages 1,2,3,4,5
- AIS receiver provider via [www.marinetraffic.com](http://www.marinetraffic.com)
- Laundry the only frontloading rain water and gas laundry in Tonga. Max 9kg per load
- Espresso Coffee/Café/Bread/all day breakfast/lunch/ Provisioning
- Ice cubes and 2kg solid ice blocks – rain water
- Drinking water – potable filtered rain water
- Fully licenced bar
- Rain water hot shower
- Retail Store – carvings/maps/soaps/postcards/ vanilla/coconut oil
- Free booking and information service
- Huge free book swap and reference library
- TV (5tb) and Movie (5000+) swaps
- Overnight computer update/download service
- Rentals – mountain bikes, kayaks, snorkel gear, tents
- Gas tanks refill service

**ALL Government departments will give receipts with the Tongan Crest on the top – anything else is NOT an official receipt, DO NOT encourage corruption!!!!**

**Customs**

Vava'u

Phone: +676 70053 +676 70928 VHF Ch: 26

GPS coordinates: 18°39'7.04"S 173°59'4.18"W

Halaevalu Wharf

Nuku'alofa

Phone: VHF Ch:

GPS coordinates:

Location

**Services available within walking distance:**

- Hardware : EM Jones, PTH and Pua Laundry –
- Laundry: Café Tropicana and Vava'u Laundry
- Supermarkets – China Fortune, Mele Mei langi, Neaifu Shopping Centre and various others,
- Produce and Fish down at the market on the waterfront
- Arts and Crafts market next to vegetable market on the waterfront
- Post Office
- Police and Fire Station

Ha'apai

Phone: VHF Ch:

GPS coordinates:

Location

Niutoputapu

Phone: VHF Ch:

GPS coordinates:

Location

Email: [inforev@revenue.gov.to](mailto:inforev@revenue.gov.to)

Hours 9am to 4.30pm, lunch 12.30am to 1.30pm M to F

Website: [www.revenue.gov.to](http://www.revenue.gov.to)

NO fees inward/outward

\$130 per hour Sat/Sun OVERTIME.

### ***Immigration - wharf***

Vava'u

Phone: +676 70629 +676 71443 VHF: None

GPS coordinates: 18°39'11.99"S 173°58'56.65"W

Tonga Development Bank – first floor

Nuku'alofa

Phone: VHF Ch:

GPS coordinates:

Location

Ha'apai

Phone: VHF Ch:

GPS coordinates:

Location

Niutoputapu

Phone: VHF Ch:

GPS coordinates:

Location

Email: [visatonga@gmail.com](mailto:visatonga@gmail.com)

Hours 9am to 4.30pm, lunch 12.30am to 1.30pm M to F

Website: [www.foi.to](http://www.foi.to)

\$69 per month Visa – DO NOT let it expire! \$1150 fine.

NO other fees inward/outward

\$70 per hour Sat/Sun OVERTIME.

### ***Ministry of health***

Vava'u

Phone: +676 70201 +676 70204 +676 758 4644 VHF Ch:

NONE

GPS coordinates: 18°38'45.06"S 173°59'3.01"W

Ngu Hospital, Talau

Nuku'alofa

Phone: VHF Ch:

GPS coordinates:

Location

Ha'apai

Phone: VHF Ch:

GPS coordinates:

Location

Niutoputapu

Phone: VHF Ch:

GPS coordinates:

- Historical – Pounu Park

Scenic – Mt Talau National Park

### ***Services available in area covered:***

- **Superyacht Agencies**

-Yachthelp VHF 26 Aquarium Café

-Superyacht Services Tonga

- **Slipways**

Fishing slipway for smaller monohulls

Pafilios slipway for multihulls

Sailing Safaris for monohulls

The Boatyard Vava'u (October 2015) Mono and multihulls

- **Water**

Town supply water available at Moorings/Aquarium/Megapode

Rain water from Café Tropicana

Rain water showers at Café Tropicana

- **Fuel**

Fuel available at Moorings or fuel stations.

Duty free at check-out wharf Min 200litres 70972. VHF 26 Pacific Fuels

- **Trades**

- Ashley the welder 7512408 – quotes first

- Trouble in Paradise; Mechanical, welding, electrical, refrigeration, fibreglass etc Phone Ian 7557899. VHF 26

-Seams to Me canvas and sail repairs phone Laurie 7558164 VHF 26

-Vavau Canvas Repairs VHF 26 behind Mango Café

- Rigging. See Mary at Poolside Cafe

### ***Local cruising guides and charts:***

- VHF Cruisers Net VHF Channel 26 8.30am each morning.

Emergency/priority traffic

Checkins

Arrivals and departures

Weather

Buy/sell/trade

Crew available/wanted

Local special events

Anything else

Adverts from local business

- Sailingbirds Guide to Vava'u/Ha'apai sold at Café Tropicana

- [www.vavau.to/marineguide](http://www.vavau.to/marineguide) free pdf for all of Tonga

- NZ822 / NZ82 / Fiji charts – sold at Café Tropicana and Megapode

## Location

Hours 9am to 4.30pm, lunch 12.30am to 1.30pm M to F  
Website: [www.health.gov.to](http://www.health.gov.to)  
\$100 Practique plus rubbish @ \$ per kg.  
NO other fees inward/outward  
\$100 per hour Sat/Sun OVERTIME.

## Marine and Ports

### Vava'u

Phone: +676 70100 +676 70657 VHF Ch: NONE  
GPS coordinates: 18°38'57.61"S 173°58'43.86"W  
Ministry of Infrastructure compound

### Nuku'alofa

Phone: VHF Ch:  
GPS coordinates:  
Location

### Ha'apai

Phone: VHF Ch:  
GPS coordinates:  
Location

### Niutoputapu

Phone: VHF Ch:  
GPS coordinates:  
Location

Hours 8.30am to 12pm, 1.30pm to 3pm M to F

Email: [akaufusi@foi.gov.to](mailto:akaufusi@foi.gov.to)

Website: [www.infrastructure.gov.to/marine-ports](http://www.infrastructure.gov.to/marine-ports)

No other fees inward/outward

Vava'u: Lights and bouys fee \$0.45 per gross tonne per month.

Nuku'alofa: \$2.45 per gross tonne per month.

Ha'apai: Lights and bouys fee \$0.80 per gross tonne per month.

## Pacific Fuels - Petrol/Diesel

### Vava'u

Phone: 70972 or VHF26 after 9am.

Email: [kauvaka@pacificpetrole.com](mailto:kauvaka@pacificpetrole.com)

Website: [www.pacificpetrole.com](http://www.pacificpetrole.com)

GPS coordinates: at Wharf 18°39'6.97"S 173°59'9.03"W  
OFFICE Toulua fuel Bunker 18°40'36.58"S 173°59'8.61"W

### Nuku'alofa

Phone: VHF Ch:  
GPS coordinates:  
Location

### Ha'apai

Phone: VHF Ch:  
GPS coordinates:  
Location

### Niutoputapu

Phone: VHF Ch:  
GPS coordinates:  
Location

Minimum 24 hours notice. Cash Only. Duty free  
200litres Min but boats can share. Duty free generally

- [www.vavau.to/weather](http://www.vavau.to/weather) all the weather in one spot!

## VHF Channels

- 06 Backup channel for VHF Net
- 09 Beluga dive/Beluga moorings
- 10 The Ark
- 11 Te Pana Island
- 16 Hailing ONLY – Mayday/Pan Pan etc
- 26 Repeater channel – VHF Net and used for long range communication, please be considerate, if you are talking to vessels that are close to you. Be aware this channel is monitored by Customs, Police and Tourism!
- 69 Ikapuna/Tavake Fisheries
- 71 Game Fishing
- 72 Moorings calling
- 73 Moorings working
- 77 Mounu Island
- Please be considerate and discrete on all VHF channels, especially the above and move to a non-working channel as soon as practical...

08, 14, 17, 68 Common chat channels.

## Other useful information specific to this area:

- SPEED limit in the harbour 5 knot – and/or no WAKE. Be aware of wake for other yachts, swimmers, divers, fisherman turtles, whales!  
By order Marine and Ports Harbourmaster.
- Please walk on the pavement/sidewalk – NOT the road, this is a LEFT side driving country, the roads, drivers and cars are not very good
- Cover and clean any open wounds, flies carry staph bacteria.
- VERA Vava'u Emergency Rescue Association  
A group of expats that assist with any diving, marine or land based rescue. Also assist NZ Rescue Coordination Centre in Wellington and Tongan Police.  
VHF 26  
Baker 8615945  
Greg 8812347 / 7512347  
Lisa 8761942 / 7512870  
[www.vavau.to/vera](http://www.vavau.to/vera)
- VEPA Vava'u Environmental Protection Association. An environmental NGO based in Vava'u. Mangrove, education, turtle and other conservation. Located next to the Bookshop in the middle of town.  
[www.vavauenvironment.org](http://www.vavauenvironment.org)
- Vava'u Public Library The only public library in Tonga and a self funded NGO. English story reading Saturday mornings – volunteer... Membership \$5 a year
- Beware of Alofi a tall Tongan hawker – flag maker/bread/feasts etc. Rows a dinghy and rides a bike. Report any problems to the Police, or Ministry of Tourism. He does homemade flags from tshirt material, charges for everything he does and frequently exaggerates about services he offers.
- Whalewatching regulations 2013

1. Unless you are in a licenced whale watching or whale swimming vessel, you are not allowed to approach any whale closer than 300m

delivered after 10am to the wharf and AFTER customs have given clearance papers.

Hours 9am to 4.30pm M to F

#### **Homegas - Butane**

Vava'u

Phone: 70319 VHF: NONE

Email: NONE

GPS coordinates: 18°40'37.44"S 173°59'8.27"W

Toula fuel Bunker

Nuku'alofa

Phone: VHF Ch:

GPS coordinates:

Location

Ha'apai

Phone: VHF Ch:

GPS coordinates:

Location

Niuaotuputapu

Phone: VHF Ch:

GPS coordinates:

Location

Website: [www.homegas.to](http://www.homegas.to)

DOES not have all adaptors – NO CAMPINGAZ fittings!!

Taxi from town is \$5 each way. Or bring in to Café

Hours 9am to 4.30pm M to Sa

Vava'u Tropicana and add \$3 surcharge – generally next day.

**International check in** (first Tongan port – AT WHARF, unless bad weather)

Fly your Q flag, call Vava'u Customs on VHF 26 and wait for Customs, Health and Immigration (\$100 Practique FEE) to check you in. NO OTHER FEES, apart from overtime. Clear your cockpit of any cigarettes, alcohol, fishing lures and smaller items. We DO NOT encourage gifts to Government officials! Offer a sprite, coffee or juice...

Suitable casual attire to show respect please.

**International checkout;** (last Tongan port - AT WHARF, unless bad weather). Immigration Office, then Marine and Ports then Customs and duty free fuel afterwards. As in ALL countries, you must leave the harbour and make your way out of Tongan waters...

The ONLY FEE payable on exit is to Ports and Marine unless you check out on weekends or overtime!!!

DO NOT LOSE your Clearance/ZARPE documents! We have had several cases of people losing these, DO NOT forget to complete your Advanced Notice of Arrivals for Fiji, NZ, Australia etc... massive fines! Clear your cockpit of any cigarettes, alcohol, fishing lures and small expensive items.

We DO NOT encourage gifts to Government officials for doing their job. Offer a sprite, coffee or juice...

Suitable casual attire to show respect please.

**Domestic checkin** (not your first Tongan Port NOT AT WHARF)

Anchor, and at your convenience (within 2 days) visit

2. Swimming with whales is prohibited unless you are on a licenced vessel and in the water with a certified guide.

3. If a whale surfaces near you, you should change the course of your vessel, in a safe manner, and move 300m from the whales at no-wake speed.

4. kayaking with humpback whales is prohibited unless the kayak is launched from a licenced vessel.

5 No jet Skis are allowed within 2km of any whale.

First time offence is a fine of between \$1,000 and \$5,000 and/or imprisonment of up to 18 months

Repeat offence is a fine of between \$1,000 and \$10,000 and/or imprisonment of up to 3 years.

<http://www.tongawhalewatch.com/2013regulations.pdf>

<p>immigration (copy of the crew list is also required) for inward clearance papers from Boarding Officer at Customs. NO FEES, apart from overtime. CHECK your visa expiry DATES!</p> <p><b>Domestic checkout</b> (not your final Tongan port NOT AT WHARF) Marine and ports to pay lights and bouys FEE, then Boarding Officer at Customs for outward clearance – NO OTHER FEES, apart from overtime. CHECK your visa expiry DATES!</p>	
<p><b>Must See and do VAVA’U</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Sunday Tongan Feast at “Three Little Birds”,</b></li> <li>• <b>Walk up Mt Talau National Park; magnificent views</b></li> <li>• <b>Swallows and Mariners cave tour on Hakau Adventures</b></li> <li>• <b>Kava circle at Fire station or any village</b></li> <li>• <b>Sunday church service 10am for amazing singing</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Transport:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Jetsave Travel – car rentals.</li> <li>○ Mountain Bike and Kayak hire in Café Tropicana</li> <li>○ Real Tonga Domestic Airline 71115</li> <li>○ Airport transfers through Ana Tevunga Taxi opposite Tropicana</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Taxi Stand: Phone 70 009 8872525 7519622 VHF 26</p>

### **Emergencies**

Police 911 or 922 or 70234

Hospital 933 or 70201

Fire 999

Port Captain – Vava’u 70639

Vava'u Emergency Response Association (VERA) Cell +676 7512347 or +676 8812347 or VHF 16 VHF 26 (repeater station - range upto 40 nautical miles from Neiafu).

### **General – Vava’u**

Moorings are all privately owned in the harbour - DO NOT use a mooring without PRIOR approval to use it - you could be inconveniencing the owner.

The area directly opposite the small boat marina is a NON-Anchoring field, it is the safety area for ferries and container ships while at the wharf. DO NOT anchor here for own safety!!

The channel in the middle of the harbour is the passage for Gas and Fuel bunker ships. The very end of the Harbour is also a NON-Anchoring field, it is the safety area for the fueling container ships while unloading. DO NOT anchor here for your own safety!!

Moorings have been laid using NZ charitable funds at anchorages in 2009 - they are marked with a yellow or orange mooring ball and are located at anchorages 7 (x 4) anchorages 16 (x 3) - they are suitable for 50ft yachts and 20 tonnes maximum. A receipted fee of \$10 a night, to maintain and increase these moorings over time, must be made at VTA officer at the Cafe Tropicana, Aquarium Cafe.

Moorings are also now available at Mata Maka and Lape Island. \$10 per night – half the fee is going into a special fund to maintain and extend the moorings! Pay direct to the Island. NZ Aid and Canada Aid funds were used to construct these moorings...

Take care of the reefs - look before you drop your anchor! If a VTA mooring is available use it and pay the Fee - help us increase the moorings and rest easier! Please don't buy or remove shells from the sea - they are someone's home. Please also be careful steering through shallow reef systems - save your keel and prop by being cautious...

Check-in and Check-out must be done between the 4 regions in Tonga (Tongatapu, Ha’apai, Vava'u, and Niutopotapu). This is very easy to do but remember to do it – the fine is \$1,150!

**Speed limit inside the outer marker in the harbour is 5 knots and a WAKE Free Zone - even in a dinghy! Watch out for other boats, bouys, floating obstacles, HUMANS!! A number of incidents happen each year from ramming of boats by dinghys to cutting people off.**

## **Cruiser Weather Guide**

From May to September, southeast trade winds range from 15-25 knots. During the summer months, northeast winds of 10-20 knots are the norm.

[www.vavau.to/weather](http://www.vavau.to/weather) for all the weather in one place on Vava'u

[www.haapai.to/weather](http://www.haapai.to/weather) for all the weather in one place on Ha'apai

[www.tongatapu.to/weather](http://www.tongatapu.to/weather) for all the weather in one place on Tongatapu

Click for : **Tonga Meteorological Services** ([www.met.gov.to](http://www.met.gov.to) )

Click for : **7 Day weather forecasts for the South Pacific.** ([www.metvuw.com](http://www.metvuw.com) )

Click for : **General 3-7 Day Ocean Weather Forecasts.** ([www.metvuw.com](http://www.metvuw.com) )

## **Faka Tonga**

"The Tongan Way" as in all Pacific countries it will happen when it happens...

See also **Culture**

Christianity is huge in Tonga - a wonderful way to spend a Sunday is attend a church service, please dress respectfully and modestly so as not to offend. No noisy activities can be done on a Sunday (land or sea) or you may be visited by the Police - I kid you not. Dress standards in town are: shirts MUST be worn by males, females should be covered below the knee and shoulder.



### **Clearance check-in and check-out**

Advanced Notice Of Arrival (ANOA) is required but is not being enforced currently. You may email details (Name and flag of the vessel, Name of the captain and crew and passport details, ETA into Vava'u) of your arrival to [custvav@kalianetvav.to](mailto:custvav@kalianetvav.to) Call Vava'u Marine and Ports on VHF 26 and go alongside the main Customs' wharf at the northern end of Neiafu Harbour, hoist your Q flag when you enter Tongan Water (50 miles). The Customs and Port Captain's offices are situated here. Customs may wish to board the boat.

Boats are cleared (free) between 0830 and 1630 Monday to Friday. They are closed for lunch, usually 1230-1330. Lunchtime, after-hours, and Saturday check-ins are available by special arrangement and for a fee - \$80TOP after hours Monday to Friday, \$100 + \$20 per officer per HOUR on Weekend and Holidays. If arriving after hours or at weekends and you prefer to wait until normal office opening times, boats are allowed to stay at anchor, flying the Q flag, but may not go ashore until clearance is completed. Report to the Police station with passports and give a statement if you have to go ashore for food and supplies – give this to customs/immigration if requested. Reporting your arrival to the Police MAY be a bit difficult at times as it's not commonly done here yet.

For outward clearance, a visit must be made to the Ministry of Immigration upstairs at the only 2 story building on the main road in town.

Also, a Lights and Bouys fee of \$0.45TOP per gross tonne is payable at the Ministry of Transport office – 1km out of town on the way to Tina Bourkes (the American store). Tongatapu charges \$2.40TOP per gross tonne. Ha'apai is \$0.80TOP per gross tonne per month.

No other fees on outward clearance are charged unless you clear on a weekend. As always get a receipt of any fee you pay to officials to stop corruption. If in doubt call in at the Ministry of Tourism, Café Tropicana or Aquarium Café or for assistance.

### **Crewing positions**

A large number of yachts have crew flown in for the return trip to NZ or Fiji or just to cruise our wonderful Islands! There are several ways to bring crew in;

1. Crew member buys the most expensive fare (Air NZ have a fully refundable fare) online, comes into Tonga and then cancels the ticket and gets the money back, buy this through a website and cancel through the website – money should be back in your credit card in several days.
2. Complete **one way crew letter** and they come into Tonga on that. Must be stamped by Immigration and cost is \$28.

### **Customs**

Tel: 70053 or 70928, VHF Ch. 16 or 26. May inspect your boat. No general problem. Please remember NOT to sell stores from your boat!!

### **Immigration**

Tel: 71142. If phone not working, please visit Immigration Office personally.

A 30 day Visa is granted upon entry and a second visa for 6 months can be purchased, or \$69 TOP per 28 days, \$5 TOP if your under 18 years of age. A passport photo is also required for the first extension. DO NOT give your passport to immigration or anyone else(anywhere in the world in fact)! A 15 day visa can be purchased for \$45.

BEWARE: Keep your Visa up to date at ALL Times, if you do not YOU risk a \$1,150TOP fine and also have to pay backfees! This is now enforced here as in most countries around the world!!! You may get a visa for upto 6 months as a tourist.

Government departments close 7+ days before the end of the year and reopen a week into the new year – make sure your visas are up to date before the holiday break.



Your boat may stay in Tonga for up to 12 months without having to pay duty - you must then leave for another country, get an entry stamp and you may return for another 12 months etc... Your vessel has a permit to stay for an initial 4 months, then a further 4 months, and a final 4 months. DO NOT let this permit lapse either!!

If your leaving your boat in Tonga for the summer cyclone season find a suitable mooring company and arrange a care package that suits you, (ventilate the boat, start the engines, run generators, check batteries etc). All of the moorings providers do this as a service. You must appoint a Master for your vessel while your away though!

Use the template form provided at [appointed masters letter.pdf](#) And leave it at the Customs Shed, your appointed master's office and a copy with you when you leave the country, in case your asked when you exit.

### **Health – Vava’u**

Tel: 70053 or cell 7584644 the officers name is Pino (pronounced PENO) Practique Certificate issued. \$100TOP

### **Quarantine – Vava’u**

Tel: 70053 Inspection fee \$20TOP for under 25 metres/\$50TOP for over 25 metres. Rubbish is \$0.40 per kilo.

### **Fisheries Wharf free**

You may be charged \$20 if you tie up on the Fisheries wharf – sometimes you have to as the Customs dock is full. You will be issued a receipt.

Tropo LTD may be able to assist with arranging out of hours clearance or any problems you have with officials. Call on VHF Ch. 16 +676 8812347 or +676 7512347 or [greg@vavau.to](mailto:greg@vavau.to)

The local radio net, VHF Ch. 26, 0830, Mon-Sun, will help provide useful information, run by various local marine operators.

## **Moorings and anchoring**

### **Moorings – Vava’u**

Yachts can hire moorings on both sides of Neiafu Harbour.

Moorings are all privately owned in the harbour - DO NOT use a mooring without PRIOR approval to use it - you could be inconveniencing the owner.

Moorings have been laid using NZ charitable funds at anchorages in 2009 - they are marked with a yellow or orange mooring ball and are located at anchorages 7 (x 4) anchorages 16 (x 3) - they are suitable for 50ft yachts and 20 tonnes maximum. These moorings are not maintained and not being charged for at the moment. Normally \$10 per night though, was payable at Aquarium or Café Tropicana though.

Take care of the reefs - look before you drop your anchor! If a VTA mooring is available use it and pay the Fee - help us increase the moorings and rest easier!

Moorings rent for approx TOP\$15 per night in the harbour. Weekly or monthly rates can be arranged with mooring companies. Neiafu Harbour is very well protected & many insurance carriers will write riders.

- Aquarium Cafe (waterfront), Tel: +676 70493, VHF Ch. 16/26 [Aquarium.Cafe@yahoo.com](mailto: Aquarium.Cafe@yahoo.com)
- Beluga Diving, Tel: +676 70327, VHF Ch. 09 (yellow and white numbered buoys) [belugadivingvavau@hotmail.com](mailto:belugadivingvavau@hotmail.com)

In the outer anchorages, the moorings are also privately owned, please call them BEFORE picking up a mooring - they may be holding it for someone...

- Hunga (anchorage #13) belong to Ika Lahi (VHF 71);
- In Tapanā (anchorage #11) belong to The Ark Gallery (VHF 11) and Tapanā (VHF 10)

- Mounu (anchorage #41) belong to Mounu (VHF 77).
- Mata Maka VHF 26
- Lape Island VHF 26

### **Anchoring – Vava’u**

If you choose to anchor in the main harbour, please do so far enough away from any moorings. On the western-side there are some good anchor spots toward the north. On the eastern-side there is plenty of room more to the south. A no anchor area exists in front of the small boat marina. Anchorage space can be a problem close to town because of deep water, except where most moorings are located. Stay out of the shipping channel – Butane and Petrol tankers tend to have very loud horns! Take extreme care with reefs PRIOR to anchoring!

### **Duty Free Liquor – Vava’u**

Leiola Duty Free on the main road next to Café Tropicana - take in each crews passport within 24 hours of checking in and also after your passport has been stamped when you check out.

### **Dinghy Docks – Vava’u**

Dinghy docks are at  
 Aquarium,  
 Paradise (dangerous and slippery steps),  
 Mango/Moorings,  
 Manaia  
 Small Boat Marina below Bella Vista.

### **Rigs & Sails & Maintenance – Vava’u**

#### **Canvas and Sail repairs**

Seams to me VHF26

#### **Metalwork/Welding and Mechanical Engineering**

Professionally trained by a Master Dutch engineer.

Ashley on 7512408

#### **Hull & GRP Repair**

KW International - next to ANZ Bank in town

#### **Woodworking**

See also **Trades and Services**

### **Maps and Flags**

Tongan, all Pacific Island Flags, Melanesian and Indonesian Courtesy flags can be purchased at Café Tropicana. Marine maps (nz822, nz14060 and nz14605, Fiji2691) may also be purchased at Café Tropicana.

### **Diving**

Several operators are based in Vava’u – have a look at <http://www.vavau.to/activities1.html> as well as a link to a huge heavily detailed diving, kiteboarding and snorkeling guide for Vava’u

### **Surfing, Windsurfing and kiteboarding**

Courtesy of Keith Carlson from Talihau Beach <http://www.vavau.to/activities7.html> has a dtailed summary of the spots in vava’u

### **Book Swap and Library**

Café Tropicana and Aquarium Café have a completely free book swap. Vava'u Public Library has a small joining fee and you can borrow books as well.

### **Fuel**

Diesel and Petrol available from various stations on the road to the airport (approx 500m and 800m from the Police Station), but only two are on the water  
Pacific Fuel, Tel: +676 70972, VHF Ch. 26 (200 litres minimum).

Will deliver to the commercial wharf area. Otomohemohe Petrol station is now re-open and is located behind ANZ Bank just above the Small Dinghy Dock.

Please call Pacific Fuel in advance with the amount of fuel required, time, boat name and date of departure. Duty free fuel (MINIMUM 200 LITRES) can be purchased from Pacific Fuel the day you are leaving the country, you MUST be checked out with Customs and show proof. You will need to show proof from Customs that your checkout is complete – Customs will supply paperwork for Duty Free Fuel. The fuel truck can be pre-booked to come down to the Customs Wharf to coincide with when your boat is alongside. Duty free fuel is about 35% cheaper than at the pump!

DO NOT sell or trade this fuel, you are breaking the law.... Do you want to lose your yacht?? This is one of the few countries that still do this in small volumes, don't wreck it for everyone to make a few dollars!

### **Water**

Town water is generally safe to drink but is hard and has a taste - you may wish to boil it.

Water tanks or jerry cans can be filled at either:

Aquarium Café (next to Beluga diving) VHF26 – supplies town supply for jerry can and boat tanks.

Megapode (Next to Aquarium) all supply town supply for jerry can and boat tanks.

Contact them first to make a reservation to come alongside. Be advised there may be additional fees for extended stays tied to the dock.

Café Tropicana (next to Leiola Duty Free) VHF 16 – supplies rain water in jerry cans \$0.50 per litre – if you have a large amount of tanks to fill we will lend you our vehicle for delivery.

### **LPG (gas)**

Butane gas is available in Vava'u. Bottles with Propane will be emptied for the Butane to be filled. Bottles can be refilled at Homegas in the village of Toula (at the head of the harbour). You can reach Homegas either by taxi or by dinghy (& short walk) as they have their own wharf - the steps are VERY steep though and sometimes the gate is locked so I recommend a taxi. A return taxi trip from Neiafu is approx. TOP\$8. A variety of international adaptors are available except Spanish. Very easy and prompt service! Will NOT fill tanks while fuel container ships are unloading for obvious reasons...

Or take them into Café Tropicana and pay a \$3 delivery/fill charge, call first please  
Homegas Ltd Tel +676 70319  
Opening Hours: Mon-Fri, 0900-1600

### **Rubbish Disposal**

Please feed the fish any organics, or call your favourite Café or Restaurant – most have a bucket for scraps that is given to staff for their pigs.

Plastic water bottles (with screw caps), Schweppes (Tonic, Ginger Ale, Soda Water), Wine Bottles (with screw caps) are used to store a variety of products (Nonu juice, Tapa Dyes,

Water, Coconut Oil, Seafood Mix,) reduce landfill and your rubbish cost and give them to your

- favourite fruit and vegetable or craft merchant down at the market
- or lots of Cafés and Restaurants also collect and donate to the above people.

You can recycle your aluminum, batteries and used oil at Café Tropicana - who use the proceeds from the recycling center to maintain the Mt Talau Reserve tracks and grounds. Call Tropicana first to make sure they're available to receive it. Or take them upto GIO below Hilltop Hotel.

Paid disposal of normal rubbish available at

- Aquarium Café
- Café Tropicana

a small fee per bag is required, please see the staff.

See also **Communications**

See also **Post Office**

See also **Mail/Courier**

See also **Internet**

### **VHF**

Within Vava'u most businesses, including bars and restaurants, have VHF radio and the majority monitor channel 26. Please refrain from swearing and using the following channels unless you are calling them:

06 Backup VHF NET channel

08 Tropo Ltd

09 Beluga Diving and whalewatch

10 The Ark gallery and anchorages

11 Te Pana Resort and anchorages

26 Marine and Ports repeater channel – keep conversation short. This channel is monitored by the following Government Departments – be warned!

Ministry of Transport

Immigration

Ministry of Health

Police

Customs/MAF

69 Ikapuna/Alatini

71 Sport Fishing Vessels

72 Moorings Calling

73 Moorings Working

77 Mounu Island

Common chat channels in Vava'u are 14, 17, 06, 68.

Channel 26 is "owned" by Marine and Ports and is a repeater channel so has a better range than channel 16 - please keep your conversations short on this channel especially if you are close to town.

As in all countries listening in on peoples conversations is illegal – if your bored, listen to the FM Radio, stop being nosy!

The Cruisers Net information exchange service operates each morning at 0830 Monday to Saturday. VHF Ch. 26 until 0900 and then it generally moves to VHF Ch. 06

### **VHF Net Sections**

Emergencies/Priority Traffic

Whose listening?

Weather

Hellos/Goodbyes  
Email/mail/fax received  
Crew wanted/available  
Lost and Found  
Buy/Sell/Trade/Free  
Local information and announcements  
Local Services Offered and required  
Public Events  
Anything about anything  
Adverts – will normally move to another channel depending on the day and time...

See also **Banks**

### **ICE**

- Café Tropicana, commercial ice makers using filtered rain water ONLY. All other suppliers use filtered town supply.

### **Laundry**

- Café Tropicana 2 x 9kg front loading commercial machines using rain water

- Vavau Laundry – next to Tonga Power, one block up the road MBF bank is on. Wash or wash/dry. Uses town water

### **Provisions**

There are various small supermarkets in Neiafu and a number of Café's do provisioning – including Café Tropicana.

Most shops close Saturdays at noon and are closed on Sundays, except the bakeries which are open from 1600-2000 on Sundays.

### **Vava'u (Utukalungalu) Market**

Open Mon-Fri 0800-1600. Saturday until 1230. On Friday the main market turns into a night market, open all night when fresh supplies are being brought in from the outer islands. Saturday is the biggest market day. Saturday night see's the market move to the main road outside supermarkets. Monday market normally opens late at 0900.

### **Fresh Fish**

Some locals sell fresh fish and crayfish. If down at the main wharf just listen out for a whistle sound - this means there is fresh fish for sale! Or the Fish Market Building occasionally. Alatini Fisheries do some imported items and fresh/frozen fish.

Fish range from \$5 to \$12 a kg dependent on species and weather

Lobster/crayfish range from \$12 to \$25 a kg dependent on weather and month

See also **Provisions**

See also **Transport & Travel**

See also **Car Hire**

If hiring a car, drivers require a Tongan license which is obtainable from the Police Station. Most of the roads are sealed but take care when travelling in outer areas as these roads are not sealed. A simple road map may be borrowed from Café Tropicana or bought from Ministry of Tourism office.

See also **Taxis** as in most countries that don't use metered cabs – agree a price prior to jumping in the cab

See also **Computer/Photo/Video**

See also **Mobile Telephone**

See also **Medical/Health**

### **The Friday RACE.**

Every Friday, from May to October the Yacht Club organise an afternoon yacht race, everyone is welcome. The course is around the Neiafu harbour. Skipper's meeting at

1600 at the yacht club. Prizes are awarded to all participating boats including vouchers for local services.

### **Swimming with Whales is ILLEGAL from a private yacht!**

Swimming with whales is illegal UNLESS with a licenced operator. Fines are becoming larger and your Visa may be cancelled or your Vessel could be detained. Don't harass whales: a collision at sea WILL ruin your entire day!

### **Don't attempt it from your private yacht – use an operator!**

### **Island Trading**

Trading with island villages is recommended (fish, fruit, coconut, vegetables etc) rather than donating goods and services. This may seem tough but it means that people do not become dependent on Aid and Charity from yachties – if the next yachtie doesn't give them anything they could also become angry etc.

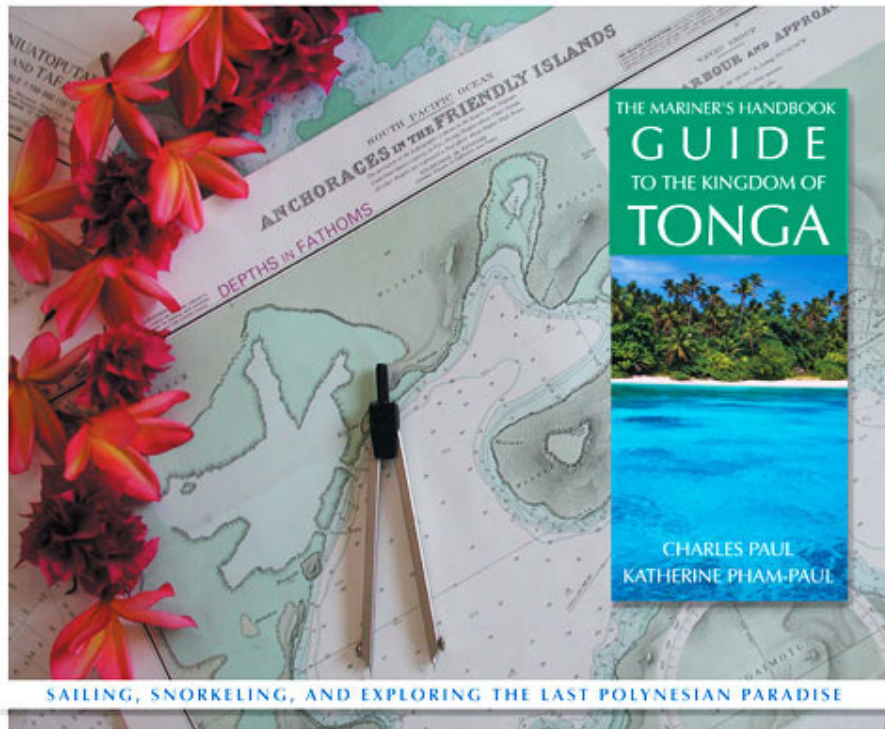
### **Anchorage Notes:**

The author would like to encourage cruisers to provide a brief summary of the anchorages in Vava'u, Haapai, Tongatapu and Eua to assist fellow yachties. Thanks to SV Passage [www.svpassage.com](http://www.svpassage.com) for permission to use their cruising notes.





You can also purchase the **Sailingbird Guide to Tonga**



which has extensive notes and pilot notes from Café Tropicana

- #1 Neiafu
- #2 Pangaimotu Courseway
- #3 Pangaimotu
- #4 Vaipua
- #5 Lotuma
- #6 Mala
- #7 Port Maurelle

Port Maurelle is the spot where the Spaniard, Maurelle, the first explorer to see Vava'u anchored his ship. It is a lovely and protected natural anchorage.

#### #7 Kapa

From this central location you can cruise to no less than forty recognised anchorages, many of them within two hours sailing of the base. Just out of Neiafu is the lovely island of Kapa with its Swallows Cave, similar to the Blue Grotto in Capri, and a spectacular sight. Kapa Island is only about 4 miles from Neiafu, but it is a world apart. Fangakima is on the western shore of Kapa Island, and it is well protected in all conditions except NW (we had southeasterlies). Fangakima is usually called by its English name –

Port Maurelle - named after the Spanish navigator who was the first European to visit Vava'u. Our first stop was Swallows Cave on the NW tip of the island. Swallows Cave is a multi-chamber cave accessible only from the water. However, the water just off the cave is 250' deep, so one must anchor elsewhere and go by dinghy. We were fortunate to be there in the late afternoon when the sinking sun lights up the multi-colored stalactites and the beautiful deep water and coral formations inside. There is also a dry cave accessible in one back corner, but we did not have shoes with us, so we could not explore. Although parts of the overhead contain the mud nests of the birds that live there, parts of the overhead are covered only by brush. At the turn of the 20th century, this cave was used to entertain important visitors, and entire feasts were lowered down in to the cave through the openings that are now brush-covered.

#### Ava

Adjacent to Nuku and Port Maurelle, Ava provides some amazing snorkelling and diving, particularly along the western shoreline. The mid afternoon sun highlights the natural colours of the coral and fish life, the depth dropping away to around 200 feet.

#### #8 Nuku

A tiny island with a cosy anchorage alongside an idyllic sands pit, Nuku is possibly the most photographed island in the Kingdom of Tonga. A perfect day stop for safe swimming and snorkelling for those beginners to gain their confidence. Nuku becomes a favourite with all who visit Vava'u.



#9 Luamoko  
#10 Lisa Beach  
#11 Tapanā  
#12 Tapanā South  
#14 Foeata  
#15 and #13 and Nuapapu, Hunga and Vaka'eitu

Hunga's huge lagoon, formed by the crater of an extinct volcano, can only be reached through a 100 foot wide pass. Here a traditional Tongan village shares the shoreline with the 'Island Style' Club Hunga Resort. Further along, on the western coast of N'uapapu is the fascinating Mariner's Cave, an underwater cavern which good swimmers will be able to visit. In Vaka'eitu you will find a safe overnight anchorage and nice snorkelling.

#16 Vaka'eitu is a popular anchorage because it provides good overnight anchorage. It also has a lot to offer during the days. The island is heavily forested, but there are a few paths over which you can see much of the island, cross to the outside shore, and climb up to the top of the island. There are sandy beaches along much of the shoreline, and coral reefs extend from shore both inside and outside. There is a coral reef about a mile offshore that rises within 15 feet of the surface, and there are sandy patches where you can drop your dinghy anchor. A nice circular reef at 35-45 feet of depth. Lots of corals and sponges, interesting and plentiful fish, and a few anemones with very large clown fish. This is not a location that is easy to find, so hopefully the masses won't discover it too soon, and maybe it will have a chance to remain this nice for future divers.

#17 Lape Lape is a small island in the middle of Nuapapu Island's bight. It has a very small anchorage on the NW side that provides protection from SE winds and swell. It provides wonderful isolation from the crowds that frequent many of the anchorages just a few miles closer to Neiafu.

## **Snorkelling and Dive Sites near Lape Island, Vava'u, Tonga**

### **Site Names and GPS Positions**

By Paul Major, s/v Bella Via

**The Corel Garden – 18° 42.798' S, 174° 06.160' W**

**The Coral Wonder – 18° 43.765' S, 174° 05.397' W**

**The Coral Canyons – 18° 43.342' S, 174° 06.305' W**

**Lua Tofua'a (Whale Reef) – 18° 43.983' S, 174° 05.067' W**

**The Corel Garden – 18° 42.798' S, 174° 06.160' W**

This is the reef that extends from the shores of Nuapapu to the north and Vaka Eitu to the south. It is the western side (seaward side) of this reef that is most interesting and colourful. The eastern side is shallow and not very interesting. The challenge is to get to the western side from the anchorages located at Lape Island and Vaka Eitu. One strategy is to dinghy to the northern tip of Vaka Eitu where there is a sandy beach for landing the dinghy. One must still walk or swim approximately 20 metres and through some surf, across the reef, depending on the state of the tide, to get to the western side of the reef. It is possible to cross the reef in a dinghy with the outboard motor fully down, 2 hours either side of high tide. When attempting this, one must time your crossing of the reef during a lull in the waves that usually break on the reef.

**The Coral Wonder – 18° 43.765' S, 174° 05.397' W**

This reef extends from the eastern edge of Vaka Eitu to Langito'o Island (aka Langitau Island). It is the southern side of this reef that is most interesting. This area is much easier to get to and is, in the opinion of many, as good a snorkel if not better than the Coral Garden. Access the area by dinghying around Langito'o from the anchorages at Vaka Eitu or Lape Island. Like the Coral Garden it is possible to cross this reef 2 hours either side of high tide with a dinghy outboard motor down. From Lape Island, cross the reef hugging close to Langito'o Island, then look to the southwest for a small bay in the coral. Use the narrow entrance to this bay in the reef to get through the breakers that occur across the reef when a

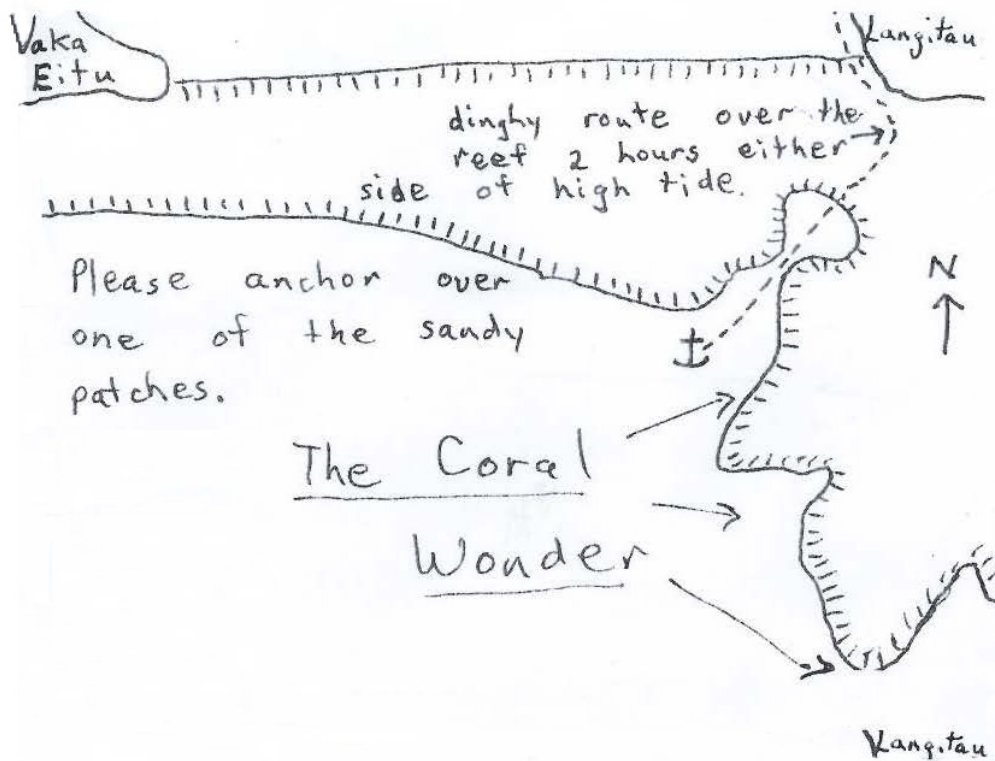
westerly swell is running. PLEASE take extreme caution to anchor in one of the bare locations so that none of the coral is damaged in this very small area. The best snorkelling in this area is to the south of the reef bay previously mentioned. This area features a few giant sheets of flat table top like coral, many varieties of soft coral, feather coral and “Spotty”, a large, “Many Spotted Sweetlip”. Spotty is a yellow fish with black polka-dots. He lives just around the southern point of the reef as you start to head east.

### **The Coral Canyons – 18° 43.342’ S, 174° 06.305’ W**

These coral formations extend the length of the shallow bight that forms the western shore of Vaka Eitu. From the steep rocky shoreline there are fingers of coral which extend from the shore to seaward then drop steeply from the surface to depths of 20 meters. The water is always clearer here than any of the other nearby snorkelling sites. The clear water, the canyons of coral and the steep drop off make for a panoramic view not to be missed. The steep coral face dropping to a depth of 20+ meters makes this a good SCUBA dive as well as a good snorkel site. Access this area by crossing the Coral Garden by dinghy up to 2 hours before high tide. Time your snorkel so that you can get back across the Coral Garden within 2 hours after high tide. This leaves a 4 hour window for the snorkel. The alternative is a long, often rough, dinghy ride all the way around the southern and eastern sides of Vaka Eitu and Langito’o Island (aka Langitau I.) to get back to the anchorages in Vaka Eitu or Lape Island.

### **Lua Tofua’a (Whale Reef) – 18° 43.983’ S, 174° 05.067’ W**

This “lua” (under water reef), located 0.2 nm SSE of Longito’o Island (aka Langitau I) is easily reached by dingy from the Lape or Vaka Eitu anchorages at any state of the tide. Anchor the dingy in approximately 3 to 8 metres of water on any of the bare spots located in the centre of the reef. The depth over the reef ranges from 2 to 8 metres, the depth around the reef ranges from 14 to 25 meters, making this another interesting Scuba dive site. This site offers a few large coral formations and the occasional big fish - amberjack, rock cod and maori wrasse have been seen here.



- #18 Fonua Lai
- #19 Sisia
- #20 katafanga
- #21 Taunga – day stop
- #22 Taunga – day stop
- #23 Ngau – day stop

#24 Ngau – day stop

#25 Makave – Old Harbour

#26 'Olo'ua

#27 Mafana

#28 Ofu The approach to Ofu Island is in deep water, and the anchorage is accessible without having to negotiate around coral heads. The slope of the anchorage is very steep, but it is otherwise quite user friendly. Ofu is a small island with a quaint looking village. The only buildings visible from the anchorage, other than dwellings, are the school and church. There is no electricity, and there are no vehicles. This island, although only a few miles from Neiafu, seems a world removed.

#29 Euaiki

#30 Kenutu

Kenutu is an idyllic lagoon for an overnight anchorage, with an attractive beach, excellent diving for experienced divers on the reef and a walk on the ocean side to visit the caverns and blowholes. While you are here, the Berlin Bar is a great stopover. Throughout the cruising area, you will find amazing diving and snorkelling, in crystal clear waters, with brilliantly coloured coral and reef fish. Navigating to Kenutu Island was a bit more intricate than coming through Fanua Tapu pass. There are no markers, and there are reefs and isolated coral heads everywhere. So we chose to do this mid-day with the sun high overhead. We first explored just offshore in the dinghy. We have never seen so many starfish. They are around 10" in diameter, and they are colored red, brown, and black. Near shore there is short grass, and lots of life is moving around within the grass. Onshore, we hiked down to the pass between Kenutu and Lolo Islands while the tide was low. We found good shelling and great tide pools. There were many sponges and countless sea slugs. There were also lots of sapphire blue starfish of about 6" diameter. We wanted to cross over the island to see the rugged east side. After a few dead ends, we found a foot path that crossed over, and what a view! The shoreline is extremely steep and rugged. Waves explode on the cliffs and spray flies in all directions. We hiked south along the ridge as far as we could, and found thick stands of pandanus and iron wood trees. We hiked through an area where the needles from the iron wood trees are so thick that they appear as a carpet covering its surroundings. A bit eerie but beautiful. We had read that there is an enormous cave with a fresh water pool on Umuna, and we went looking for it the following morning. Any foot path that might have once existed is gone, and we could not find it.

#31 Mananita

Mananita is surrounded by reefs - which provide some of the best snorkelling in the area. Careful navigation through the reefs will be rewarded by the discovery of perfect white, powdery beaches. A stroll inland will take you into a luxuriant natural temple filled with the brilliant green light provided by the large-leafed puko trees.

#32 Euakafa

'Eukafa is a high island in the southeastern part of Vava'u. It is not inhabited, but it offers many other attractions. There is a great reef for diving on the east side of the island. There is ample shallow sand nearby in which one can anchor. There is also a footpath from the beach up to the top of the mountain which provides spectacular views of the surrounding islands. Because Fangakima is so close to town, it is a popular anchorage, and it is often crowded. There were twelve boats there when we arrived, but the cove is large enough that we did not feel crowded. And it also the site of some interesting Tongan history/legend - [the story of Telea and his queen, Talafaiva](#). The tomb of Talafaiva is found along the trail leading up the island. Along the beach, there are obvious slabs of coral missing where they were taken for Talafaiva's tomb. The walls of the actual tomb appear about 8" thick. However, there is also a short vertical wall (about 8" high) surrounding the tomb, and that wall is said to enclose an area about the size of a football field. We were not able to explore its perimeter because of the thick brush, but we believe the "football field" estimate is probably accurate. The tomb is open and empty. Some say that Talafaiva was never buried in it. Others say that her body was stolen by Lepuha. Others say that her body was stolen by members of her family. No one knows. At the other end of the island is the site of Telea's house. Although the house and fence are gone, a few stones remain to mark the site. The fo'ui tree is gone too. This island has plenty to offer despite it being currently uninhabited

#33

Fua'amotu

#34 Lua Ui  
#35 Luchiapo  
#36 Fonua'one'one  
#37 Fangasito  
#38 Ovaka – day stop  
#39 Ovaka – day stop  
#40 Ovalau  
#41 Mounu

A delightful small island surrounded by a sandy beach, Mounu is the South Pacific island of your dreams. A new mini resort has been established on the western end of the island, call ahead on the VHF and make your reservation for a gourmet meal. Mounu makes a perfect add on to your sailing holiday, why not book in for a day or two after your charter.

#42 Mu'omu'a

## Ha'apai

The Ha'apai group is comprised of 62 islands. The islands include barrier reefs, shallow lagoons, coral shoals, and even active volcanoes, but most are small low-lying coral atolls. The size of the smallest island is less than 1 hectare, and even the largest island is less than 18 square miles. The total land mass of the Ha'apai group is less than 43 square miles, and those islands are spread over less than 4,000 square miles of ocean.

There are east-west passes between islands which somewhat separate islands in to groups. However, the Ha'apai islands are most obviously separated in to an east and west group. The eastern islands are a series of barrier islands running north-south, and the western islands are individual islands. However, the east-west passes between the barrier islands do define the 'soft' boundaries between the four groups of western islands. From north to south, the western islands are sometimes described as the northern group, Lulunga group, Nomuka group, and southern group.

Of the 62 islands in the Ha'apai group, only 17 are inhabited. On those 17 islands, there are approximately 8,000 people settled in 30 villages. As throughout Tonga, all but a few of the population are of Polynesian descent, and almost all are active members of a Christian church.

There is limited infrastructure in this island group. Only the four largest islands have electricity. The other islands are without electricity, running water, or telephones. And even the largest islands with electricity do not have television.

Income for these islanders is from agriculture and/or fishing. However, as in much of Tonga, the largest source of income is remittances from family members living abroad.

Much of the history of the Ha'apai parallels that of all of Tonga, but the Ha'apai also has a remarkable maritime history. The [maritime history of the Ha'apai](#) includes the well-known explorers Captains Tasman, Cook, and Bligh. It also includes the lesser known, but equally interesting, William Mariner. Recognition of these mariners is found throughout the Ha'apai group, especially in the administrative center of Pangai.

The village of Pangai is on the island of Lifuka - one of the barrier islands. Pangai is the administrative center of the Ha'apai group, so that is where we 'officially' began our visit to this island group.

Ha'ano Island – Ha'apai Ha'ano  
Island, about 8 miles north of Lifuka, was our first stop in the Ha'apai group. Although there are a few islands further north, they are also further west than we wanted to be. This was as far north as we could stop within the Ha'apai and stay near our intended course. After our daysail from Vava'u, we were happy to drop our anchor at Ha'ano before sunset. Ha'ano is inhabited, but we did not visit the village. In fact, we did not go ashore at all. Technically, we were not supposed to stop at any Ha'apai island before checking in on Lifuka. And even though we have heard that customs in Ha'apai are relatively easy going, we saw no need to test that. We had already somewhat stretched the rule, so we chose not to stretch it any further. From the anchorage we could enjoy the beautiful coast and Pukutola Point. From a distance, the point appears uninhabited,

but we had read about the fruit bats. We did take the dinghy to the shallows to see them. There are hundreds of bats! They make a squeaking sound somewhat like a mouse - a very big mouse. And, like all bats, they hang upside down. Some of the trees were full of bats, and many more were flying around. Cool. Some of the coral looked inviting, and we thought about going for a quick dive before heading to Lifuka to check in, but we decided against it. We see no need to push our luck as we are entering a new area. So, by mid-morning we had our anchor up and we were off to Lifuka to check in.

#### Lifuka – Ha'apai

Lifuka is the island on which Pangai, the administrative center of the Ha'apai group, is located. So all boats passing through Ha'apai need to check in and out with customs in Pangai on Lifuka. Pangai on Lifuka is in the far north of the Ha'apai group. We had been trying to plan an itinerary during which we could 'circumnavigate' the Ha'apai islands so that we could start and stop our travels in Pangai and check out from Pangai before heading south to Tongatapu. However, when we checked in, the customs agent was willing to give us our check out immediately negating our need to return to Pangai. This greatly simplified our plans, and it is reflective of the friendliness and helpfulness we experienced wherever we went on Lifuka. The village of Pangai is small with dirt roads and a unique charm. It is neat and clean, and its people are friendly. It has miniature versions of institutions one might expect only in larger villages - a museum, library, bookstore, and hospital. It also has a small grocery market, produce market, and even an ice cream shop. We hit them all except the hospital. Probably our greatest surprise was to find a DSL internet connection at the Tongan Communications building - this on an island where there are few telephones. Also on Lifuka is the Mariner's Cafe. This is a small cafe run by Trevor Gregory - an Aussie expat (NOW owned by Craig and Magda from South Africa). Trevor is a former cruiser who swallowed the hook here eight years ago. As a former cruiser, he is well attuned to the wants and needs of visiting cruisers. His cafe offers excellent - albeit a bit pricey - food and cold beer. We ate there a few times. It is an oasis. Lifuka also has a secure harbor in which visiting boats are welcome to anchor without charge. We prefer anchoring out, so we stayed outside of the harbor for a few nights. However, weather conditions began to deteriorate somewhat, so we moved inside. We stayed for a few nights until the weather calmed again, and it was a comfortable and secure place to be during bumpy weather.

#### Ha'afeva – Ha'apai

Ha'afeva was a nice surprise for us. We went there because it provides a relatively secure anchorage in a variety of conditions, so we thought we would explore and dive the surrounding islands with the confidence of knowing we could duck back in to Ha'afeva if conditions deteriorated. We knew that the island was inhabited (population 252), but we had not specifically planned to explore this island itself. But we did go ashore, and we are glad we did. We went ashore planning a quick walk-around, and it became a bit more. These are definitely the friendliest Tongans we have met yet! We had not been on the island half an hour when a young woman invited us to her home, and we made plans to return the following day. We stopped to talk with the nurse-midwife at the health center, and she, too, invited us to a feast the following day. We declined since we had already made plans, but within an hour on the island, our social calendar was full. The kids were great. Tongan kids love having their pictures taken like no other children we have seen anywhere. They have seen enough digital cameras that they know to ask to see the shot as soon as it is taken, and they don't ask for prints. But they are great hams. We met one very shy young boy, John, who seemed uncomfortable talking with us, but he didn't want us to leave either. When we said we were leaving, he climbed a coconut tree to get us drinking coconuts and maybe even to show off a bit. We also met two teenagers with whom we traded some t-shirts for some papaya, mango, yam, and bananas. They gave us so much that we had to return some to them so it would not get wasted. Our friends, Jim and Helen, on SV Gaia were also anchored here when we were, and we spent a very nice evening on their boat having drinks and dinner. We really enjoy spending time with them. We share many values, and it is great fun to share our thoughts and experiences as we go along. But Bud got a bee in his bonnet about heading south, and we left without doing much of what we had hoped to do. We did not visit Kayfour's home, and we did not explore/dive the surrounding islands. But at least we did have one great day among these most-friendly islanders.

#### Nomuka Iki – Ha'apai

Nomuka Iki is a small uninhabited island just off Nomuka Island. The larger Nomuka Island is inhabited, and somewhat like Ha'afeva, the area around the two islands provides safe anchorage in various conditions. So we stopped - planning to stay only one night - on our way south. Our winds and the seas were from the southeast. The wind



held our bow to the southeast, and a reef in front of the anchorage dampened the seas considerably. It was not a bad anchorage, even if a bit bumpy. But we felt secure. Nomuka Iki has plentiful papaya, coconut, and mango trees on its shore just off where we anchored, but we did not go harvest any. Also on this near shore is the remains of an old prison and the wreck of the Takuo. The Takuo was a fishing vessel that foundered on Hakaufisi reef during a storm, and some of the men on board were lost. The hull later washed ashore on Nomuka Iki where it remains as a reminder of how treacherous these reefs can be. Because we had planned to stay at Nomuka Iki only one night, we did not launch the dinghy. But we heard on the SSB radio that the anchorage at Kelelesia - our next planned anchorage - was full (that is only three boats in that tiny anchorage), so we stayed another night. We planned to leave at 5:00 am local time, so we still did not launch the dinghy. All we saw of Nomuka Iki was from our boat, and it was a beautiful island. Reportedly there is decent diving on the other side of the island, but it was too bumpy to go out there, so we passed by another opportunity...

Kelelesia - Ha'apai

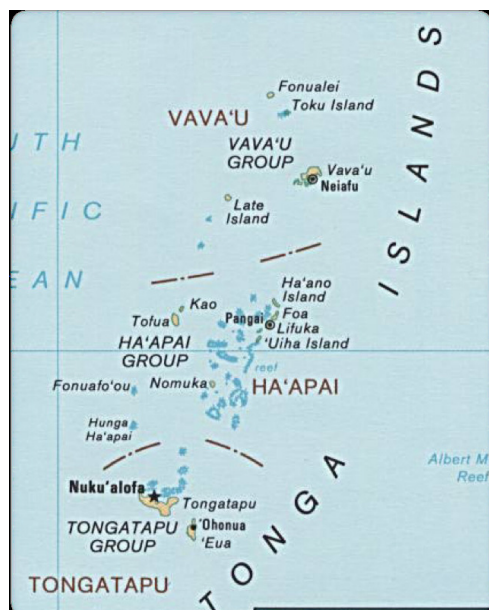
Kelelesia is the southernmost island in the Ha'apai group, and it is only 35 miles north of Nuku'alofa - the administrative center of the Tongatapu group. It is also a dramatically beautiful island. These combined characteristics make it an ideal stop between the Ha'apai and Tongatapu groups. However, this time of the season, there are many boats making the trek southward, and the tiny anchorage at Kelelesia cannot handle more than three boats - assuming they are good friends - at any one time. In addition to being very small, this anchorage is also very rocky. It is not the most comfortable anchorage we have found, but it is one of the more beautiful. Kelelesia is a privately owned island. It was a gift from the king to a Tongan family a few generations back. The owners do not live on the island year-round, but they graciously welcome boaters to anchor here year-round and roam about on shore at will. The first thing one notices about Kelelesia is its dramatic prominent bluffs. These are different from any others we have seen in Tonga. And the anchorage faces these bluffs - beautiful... Reportedly there is also good diving just outside the anchorage. We did a brief snorkel around the anchorage, but it was cold, and the visibility was not particularly good, so we didn't gear up to dive. We did, however, see about six large clown fish in anemones at only about fifteen feet below our keel. But since we were just 'passing through' on our way to Nuku'alofa, that was the extent of our diving here. And, just in case you are keeping a head count, fish slayer struck again. He caught three tunas on this brief leg from Nomuka Iki to Kelelesia. We kept two and threw one back, so we will eat well for a few more days.

*Tofua*

Ha'apai group GPS location /

19°42.43.11 South: 175°03.35.39 West

(From Google Earth)



### Price

1. One Day excursion on Tofua  
50 Pa'anga per person
2. One Day excursion+ overnight at the top  
and traditional Breakfast back down  
65 Pa'anga per person
3. For additional service, talk directly to Lofi

All payments in Pa'anga directly to Lofi, only in cash and exact amount.



- Tofua is located in the Ha'apai group, 80 kilometers west from Pangai.
- Tofua is 64 square kilometres and 515 meters high.
- Tofua doesn't have sandy beaches, but has volcanic reefs
- Tofua has an active volcano and a big fresh water Lake in its Caldera
- 60 % of the Island is covered by a dense tropical forest
- Tofua is untouched by Humans, the last inhabitant left about 20 years ago.
- Still, a few Tongans, like Lutolofi, come several months a Year to cultivate the Kava, a traditional Tongan Drink.
- In 1789, Captain Bligh and his crew sheltered on Tofua before embarking on their infamous "Mutiny of the Bounty" voyage from Tonga to Timor
- In 2008 a Swiss adventurer got close to Nature by surviving 10 months on Tofua with only a knife and a machete([www.xavierrosset.ch](http://www.xavierrosset.ch))

**Lutolofi** Lutolofi called Lofi, is 29 years old and has spent time on Tofua for more than 8 years Lofi grows kava, hunts wild pigs using his Dogs and goes fishing. He speaks English fluently and is a very friendly man. Lofi knows the Island and its history better than anyone. Lofi would love to share his knowledge and share traditional Tongan food With you in his shelter.

### **Lofi is the perfect Guide to discover this wonderful place.**

#### **Tips to remember**

- No possibility to contact Lofi before going there, there is no phone
- Some trees have been cut to help you to find it, you will also see a shelter near the reef.
- There are no official moorings. Anchor 150meters away from the reef the Ocean is around 20 meters deep. Use your dinghy to reach the Island.
- When you arrive near the place, use the horn of your boat and Lofi will come on the reef to give you all the additional info.
- Wear good hiking shoes Take sun cream, enough food and plenty of water. Rain Water is available on the Island.
- Plan for a full day on Tofua. You need at least 2 hours to walk to the crater of the Volcano and 45 minutes more to get down to the Lake.
- You might like to stay the night to sleep under the stars at the top of Tofua to see the red smoke of the Volcano Lofi can provide a 2 two man tents and a traditional breakfast.
- Lofi takes no responsibility in case of accidents or injury





### Tongatapu Malinoa

We didn't really plan on stopping at Malinoa. We had planned on sailing from the southernmost Ha'apai island - the beautiful Kelelesia - in to Nuku'alofa. But it was getting late in the day, and we decided to end a great day of sailing in a beautiful and isolated anchorage that we could have to ourselves. Malinoa was just right. Malinoa is just a dot on the chart about six miles north of the harbor in Nuku'alofa. It is very tiny - probably just a few acres - but what it lacks in size it makes up for in beauty. It is lightly wooded, and a sandy beach surrounds it. There are substantial coral reefs all around it, and there are plans to turn this island in to a protected marine preserve. We think that is a great idea if it will help preserve this island in this 'untouched' state. It took some effort to navigate our way in, but it was well worth the effort. We had to go in quite close to find a sandy patch in which to drop our anchor, and we ended up dropping in only 18 feet of sand. The crystal clear water revealed spectacular corals all over the bottom, but we did not get in (we were again pushing the envelope on being 'legal'). We were content to look at it through a few feet of clear water. We had a calm quiet night here before heading to the bright lights of the 'big city' (a relative term) of Nuku'alofa. Tongatapu

Tongatapu is the southernmost island group in Tonga. It is also the name of the island on which Nuku'alofa - the capital of Tonga - is located. So, in an effort to minimize the inevitable confusion this causes, we will refer to the island group as Tongatapu and the island itself as Nuku'alofa. We do this knowing full well that there is much more to the island than just its capital city. However, we visited only the capital on this island, so this seems a workable way to organize our experience.

Tongatapu - meaning "sacred south" - is the government and cultural center of Tonga. The Tongatapu group - approximately 160 square miles - comprises one third of the land mass of the Kingdom. Approximately two thirds of the Tongan population live on these islands in 60+ villages. Depending on the source, there are between 30 and 46 islands in the group (just how big does a rock have to be to be called an island?). Much of Tonga's early known history occurred in the Tongatapu group. Today, the capital of Tonga remains in Tongatapu. Nuku'alofa is the capital and center of Tonga. Here is where one finds government offices, historical landmarks, military installations, tourist attractions, and shopping. However, this is not a big city by western standards. There are cars and paved roads, but there are no stop lights or even stop signs. We did not go out to any of the tourist attractions, although many of them are reportedly quite interesting. There are blowholes on the south shore, many caves to explore, and tombs of ancient kings. There is also a Tongan National Center which displays artifacts of Tonga's history - including [tapa and weavings](#) - but we did not make it there. There is a small harbor - Fua Harbor - in which cruising boats are welcome to tie up stern-to, but we opted not to. The bottom is soft mud, and we didn't like the idea of caking our ground tackle in mud just before leaving on our week-long passage to New Zealand - stinky! Also, there are rats running around the harbor, and we try to discourage uninvited guests whenever possible. So we anchored outside the harbor while we checked in - a quick and easy process - then left town for a more remote anchorage. But we made a few trips to town, and we learned a bit about it and enjoyed our time there. Approximately 20,000 years ago, the Ha'apai volcano of Tofua - about 90 miles to the north - erupted, and it covered Nuku'alofa (as well as many other islands) with a thick layer of ash. This has developed in to a rich and fertile soil in which much grows. Consequently, Nuku'alofa grows a wealth of fruits and vegetables (they, too, have fruit

bats here). There is a wonderful produce market with more variety than we have seen in many months, and the prices were remarkably low. While shopping in Nuku'alofa we found a larger variety of products than we have seen since the Samoas. Shopping in most of Tonga has been extremely limited. We found excellent food at Friends Cafe, and there are a few ice cream shops (so Bud is a happy camper). Although there are a few bakeries, they produce the same boring bread we have found throughout Tonga. At least we can buy it for only 70 seniti here (the equivalent of about 39 cents in U.S. currency). We also found internet access through which we were able to take care of a few business-related chores. One of those chores was paying for our domain name and web hosting for another year. Heaven forbid that this literary jewel might be removed from cyberspace for lack of payment! Duty-free fuel is available inside Fuaa Harbor, but there are two substantial obstacles to clear. First, you must be inside the harbor, and, as already mentioned, we really didn't want to go in. Second, you can purchase it duty-free only after you have checked out, but you need to order it in advance, so you need to plan at least a few days ahead - sometimes difficult in these rapidly changing weather conditions. We calculated that we needed 120 liters, and although we would probably save close to \$100 pa'anga by buying duty-free, it just was not worth the hassle. We paid a bit more, but it was delivered to our boat while at anchor. Money well spent. Then we spent the rest of our time in Tongatapu waiting - waiting for a weather window to head south to New Zealand. Although we have become marginally competent at reading local weather charts, we are quite perplexed by the interactions between northbound polar air masses that mix with tropical and sub-tropical systems between here and New Zealand. So we ordered a voyage forecast from Bob McDavitt - New Zealand's weather guru. We will use the info we get from Bob to plan our departure. We have completed our few minor chores, so now we wait.

Pangaimotu Island – Tongatapu

In the Tongan language, 'pangai' means royal, and 'motu' means island. So pangaimotu means 'royal island'. It is, indeed. The King of Tonga owns all the land throughout the kingdom other than a few small parcels that have been given away. However, the Queen is related to one of the principals in Pangaimotu Island Resort, and she has granted them permission to live and run a business on the island even though the King retains ownership of the land itself. Pangaimotu Island is just over one mile northeast of the harbor in Nuku'alofa, but it feels a world apart. It is a small palm-covered island with a sandy beach completely surrounding it. There is a secure, albeit deep, anchorage on the SW side of the island just in front of the Pangaimotu Island Resort. The 'resort' is a low-key bar and restaurant that also has four fales (beach houses) for rent. Although we did see the bar and restaurant a few times, we did not see inside the fales. The bar and restaurant served tasty fish and chips, and the beer was always cold. The resort also offers shuttle service to Nuku'alofa a few times each day for \$7 pa'anga round trip, and they will take one's bags of garbage for only \$1 pa'anga each. The couple that runs the resort, Earle and Ana, are very helpful. When Ana saw us shopping in town, she brought our bags back out to the resort with her so that we would not have to carry them with us as we went about town. And Earle arranged our fuel delivery for us for a very small service charge. They do not charge boats for anchoring off the island, and they welcome cruisers to their bar and restaurant. They cater to the cruisers, and consequently, the cruisers give them some bar and restaurant business. A nice arrangement for all. And this is where we chose to spend our final days in Tonga. We needed to do a few things to get ready for our passage to New Zealand, and this was a great place in which to work on those things. We needed to fuel the boat and clean the bottom - done. We needed to catch up on our rest and sleep - done. Then we waited for a weather window. If you have to hang around and wait, this was a great place to do it!

The Niuas

meaning

"rich in coconuts" – are three extinct volcanoes. They are remote islands located roughly mid-way between Western Samoa and Vava'u – about 160 nautical miles from each. Given their location and their relative isolation, they were a particularly appealing destination for us.

Niutoputapu is the only Niua that has anchorage for boats, and its anchorage is excellent. The island has been described as resembling a straw hat. It has a tall ridge (438 feet) in the center, and that ridge is surrounded by a broad area of lush vegetation and white sand beach.

Tafahi is 6 miles north of Niutoputapu. Tafahi is commonly called Volcano Island because of its conical shape. Its peak is over 1800 feet high, and it is often in the clouds. Tafahi has a small break in the reef through which small power boats can move, but they lack any harbor or

anchorage. Niuafu'ou is thoroughly uninviting to all boats regardless of size – small day craft to delivery ships. The island has a rocky shore and is surrounded by deep sea. It lacks any anchorage whatsoever. It is often called Tin Can Island because mail and supplies are often packed in metal tins and thrown from delivery ships. Swimmers retrieve the packages and take them ashore. While in the Niuaus, we spent all our time on Niuatoputapu except for one memorable day on Tafahi. The channel in to the anchorage is narrow, and there are breakers on both sides, but it is extremely well marked. There were two other boats in the spacious anchorage, so we had plenty of room to settle in. Checking in was a “different” experience, but we did get checked in. We got the boat put back together, we got ourselves cleaned up, and we slept briefly. We had both been looking forward to Tonga, and we were excited to finally be here.

Shortly after dark we heard an outboard engine approach us, and then we heard a woman's voice hailing us. This was how we met Sia. There were a few men holding their fishing boat off of ours, and Sia was sitting on the bow holding a large basket of fruit. She introduced herself and offered us fresh fruit. She gave us breadfruit, bananas, oranges, papaya, and limes. We asked what we could give her in return, and she said they needed some outboard oil. We went ashore at the wharf which is in the easternmost village of Falehau, and we walked through the village of Vaipoa to get to the government offices in the village of Hihifa. There are three villages on the island, and in less than an hour we had done a walk-through of each. Niuatoputapu is a relatively undeveloped island. The only electricity is from a few generators mostly to power water pumps that supply one water faucet to most houses. There is no indoor plumbing, and all water remains outside. Toilets are in outhouses, and very few houses have any bathing/showering facilities. Cooking is done outside over wood fires. Surprisingly, though, many residents have a telephone – a new luxury in recent years. Although we were originally taken by the physical beauty and quaint charm of Niuatoputapu, we soon found that its beauty and charm are dwarfed by the friendliness of its people. We made friends here that we will remember long after we sail over the horizon. A few days after arriving here, our first Sunday here, we went to an umu (underground oven) potluck for the boaters that Sia hosts every Sunday out on Haukatu'utu'u Island. This is a little island that is part of the reef surrounding the anchorage. Sia prepares the entrees and side dishes in an umu, and she asks the boaters to bring desserts – especially anything chocolate. The tradeoff is that the boaters get to enjoy good food and a local experience, and Sia and her family get to enjoy desserts that they would not have without the boaters. Brownies and chocolate cake are huge hits!

The water outside the anchorage was glassy calm, and they could see humpback whales all around them. They jumped in the water to snorkel, and they were right on top of a cow and calf – about ten feet away. The whales didn't stay around long, but it was an experience of a lifetime to see them up close like that. We both did a few dives with the Tackless twosome, and we heard whale songs throughout our dives. During one dive, they sounded so close that we were constantly looking around to see them, but we did not.

We also rode our bicycles around the island one day in a few hours time. There is one dirt road in various states of repair that encircles the island. There are a few (four or five?) side roads that branch off it, and we explored each of those. There is a fresh water spring in Hihifa that runs through a natural crevice to the ocean. Although we didn't get in it, it looks very inviting. We rode by the Royal Palace; however, it is not looking very 'royal' at present. There are pigs, chickens, and horses everywhere. The pigs and chickens run free, but most of the horses are lightly tethered. And there are mango trees. We have never seen so many mango trees, nor have we ever seen trees so loaded with fruit. We are just at the very beginning of mango season, so they are just ripening. There aren't many things tastier than a tree-ripened mango. But the highlight of our bike ride was going to the isolated south shore beach. Very beautiful.

Although we don't know why, there are about 20 vehicles on the island. We understand the hospital/health center having one to transport patients. And we understand the agriculture guys having a truck. But we cannot imagine why anyone would want to own a car here. Bicycles are much more practical. There was a steel sailboat wreck somewhere near offshore, and Niko knew about where it was. We have been out there a few times, and it is a very cool dive.

The hospital/health center does not even have running water 24 hours per day! We also met the nurse-midwife, and her working conditions are equally arduous. This is tough duty out here. A supply

ship comes to the island fairly predictably every three months. When we were still in Samoa, we heard that the island was out of gasoline and rice until the next ship arrived. We do not have any way to carry gasoline, but we easily loaded 80 pounds of rice on board and brought it to give to whoever needed it. The customs agent, Bessie, distributed it for us. The supply ship arrived about two weeks later, so hopefully our small contribution helped tide over those that had run out. And what an experience it was when the ship arrived!

Ship day was a very festive day here. Many of the islanders came out and spent the entire day at the wharf watching the ship unload its cargo. We watched it unload its 55-gallon drums of gasoline with disbelief and fear. The drums were on a deck about 30 feet above the water. Like on Tin Can Island, the boat's crew pushed the drums overboard. They fell 30 feet in to the water, and swimmers took them ashore. There were swimmers in the water when the drums were being thrown overboard, but fortunately no one was hit by a falling drum. Also, fortunately no two drums collided which could have caused leaks and/or sparks. A very dangerous way to unload fuel.

And then there was the feast... Anyone who has spent time in the South Pacific has heard about Tongan feasts, and we had the pleasure to attend one. But it was finally time to move on. What we will always remember about this island is the friendliness of its people. We have felt welcomed in to people's lives and homes here. After being here a few weeks, people seemed to make an effort to acquaint themselves with us. They were not looking for what they could get from us other than our time and friendship. We have shared time and friendship with the local population here, and we have made friends that we will always remember. This is a special place populated with truly special people. This is why we are cruising the south pacific.

If you wish to add to these anchorage notes (navigation, diving and snorkeling, village information, trails and historical information) please email me at [shoreassist@vavau.to](mailto:shoreassist@vavau.to)

### **Fiji Clearance Procedures**

A large number of yachts depart from Tonga for Fiji, here are the links you need to familiarize yourself with Fiji's Clearance procedures... A seven page document! A pic of the yacht and a pic of the Skipper (suggest you use your passport picture page)

**Advanced Notice of Arrival (ANOA) Form C2C**

**FAQ Clearance into Fiji - simple**

**Clearance inward procedures - detailed**

**Noonsite Clearance procedures - detailed**

### **New Zealand Clearance Procedures**

A large number of yachts depart for New Zealand from Tonga – NZ has a very efficient Customs and Immigration system and has a very strict quarantine service to protect the country from food hazards. Here is the information you need...

**Noonsite Country details**

**NZ Customs Yacht inward procedures - forms/stores etc**

### **Australian Clearance Procedures**

The following links are the most useful to look at to clear your Yacht into Australia.

**Noonsite Country details**

**Australian Customs**

**Australian Customs Fees**

**Australian Customs forms etc**

### **Hikes**

The view from the top of Mt. Talau is not to be missed. Great for gaining some top-down perspective! Hike to the top from the trail head takes about 5-10 minutes. Can be slippery when wet. Hand-rails on parts of the trail. Trail head is about a 15-20 minute walk up-hill from town.

The fresh-water caves in Toula present a view of the eastern islands & local kids can often be found swimming there. Toula village is about a 25-minute walk from town.

Euakafa Island has great photo-ops from the top, where you'll also find a tomb! Good snorkel reef as well.

Email [shoreassist@vavau.to](mailto:shoreassist@vavau.to) for anything not covered in this guide and we'll see if we can help. You can also contact any of the ICA Port Captains – who are here to help

## **Links**

**Seven Seas Cruising Association**  
**Island Cruising Association**