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SAMOA

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THE SOUTH PACIFIC AWAITS YOU

Just five hours from Australia's east coast and across the glistening Pacific lies Samoa - the Treasured Islands of the South Pacific.

Consisting of 10 islands of which only four are inhabited, the Samoan people have been blessed on these islands with over 3000 years of stunning land and seascapes. Its crystal clear waters and lush rainforests encompass what is considered the heart of Polynesia that beats Fa'a Samoa - 'The Samoan way'.

Fa'a Samoa is a traditional way of life, where family is everything and unconditional love is woven through the cultural fabric. It's a guideline for every Samoan on how to lead their lives, celebrating and embracing traditional values, culture and visitors.

There are over 362 nu'u or villages in Samoa with a total of 18,000 matais (chiefs). Churches of various denominations feature in every village while meeting houses and open fale or homes, encircle the malae or village green. Fa'a Samoa's strong focus on welcoming visitors comes from the mutual respect shared between guests and locals alike. Most villages have an evening prayer curfew between 6-7pm.

Sunday is observed as a day of rest with families visiting church and enjoying Sunday lunch known as toonai. Even surfing is frowned upon on a Sunday!

This may seem old fashioned but after 3,000 years of practice, Samoans have shown it's good to slow down from time to time.

Samoans are also recognised as the happiest people on earth. Proud, friendly, warm and welcoming, Samoans live in harmony with nature, ensuring the environment remains pristine, unspoiled, safe and clean, creating a place where travelers can leave their busy, noisy modern lifestyles behind and experience 'true paradise' in Beautiful Samoa.

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THERE'S A PARADISE FOR EVERYONE



From relaxed adventure to the type that would raise the heartbeat, Samoa has great offerings for travelers of all types of fitness levels. Many activities are nature related involving Samoa's, pristine land and seascapes. The lagoons and reefs around the islands are home to some 900 species of fish and over 200 varieties of coral, so if snorkeling or diving is your passion, you will discover unique and colourful corals, fish and sea caves. Turtles are regular visitors to Samoa's warm waters and you can share an amazing experience by swimming with them on Savai'i and off Namua island. With its waters teeming with marine life, Samoa has gained international acclaim for its deep sea fishing, with an international tournament held annually.

Beyond the reefs are fantastic breaks and Samoa's un-crowded surf spots are the best-kept secret in the South Pacific region. For golfers, at the Royal Samoa Country Club hosts the annual Samoa Open. The course is located just outside of Apia overlooking the South Pacific ocean.

Much has been invested in the development of sport in Samoa and the facilities are considered one of the best in the South Pacific. Housing state of the art facilities for rugby, swimming, volleyball, cricket and weight lifting to name a few, the facilities are on par with other international sporting venues and are the perfect off season training or host destination for teams. If it's local sport you're after, join in a village Kirikiti or cricket game and see if you can handle the fast paced bowling and triangular shaped bats!

UPOLU

Upolu is the most populated of Samoa's two main islands and home to Faleolo International Airport (APW) and the harbour capital of Apia.

Must see sites that are within easy reach of Apia include Robert Louis Stevenson's Museum, the Samoa Cultural Village, Palolo Deep Marine Reserve, Piula Cave Pools and the Papase'ea Sliding Rocks.

Robert Louis Stevenson, known as 'Tusitala' (Samoan for 'teller of tales') spent his final years in Samoa where he wrote most of his books. His beautiful mansion Vailima has been converted into a museum and is open to the public.

Visitors can also visit his grave located at the top of Mt Vaea along a trail named by the locals as 'the road of the loving heart'.

For those more adventurous, head to the south side of the island where you will discover Lalomanu Beach, named one of the ten most beautiful beaches in the world and To Sua Ocean Trench, a 30 metre deep crater filled with sea water. The trench is surrounded by beautiful gardens and is a popular picnic spot.



SAVAI'I

The 'big island' of Savai'i is reached by an inter-island ferry which takes approximately an hour or a 10 minute charter flight which may be arranged upon request.

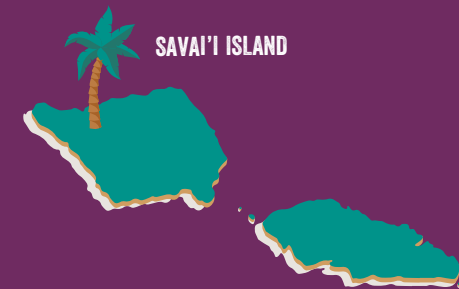
Savai'i is less populated than Upolu and is known for its gentle and traditional way of life, pristine scenery and key archaeological sites.

On Savai'i, you will discover the alien-like landscape of Saleaula Lava Fields and the Virgin's Grave, the stunning Afu Aau Waterfall and the spectacular Alofaaga Blowholes.

A well-paved road encircles the island making it easy to explore and access these sites.

Overcome your fear of heights at the Falealupo Rainforest Canopy Walk. Climb the banyan tree and cross the suspension bridge for a great view of the rainforest and coastline.

Through the rainforest is Cape Mulinu'u, one of the first places in the world to see the sunset.



SAMOAN HISTORY

In 1899 after years of civil war, the Samoan islands were divided; with the Germans taking control of the islands to the west (now Samoa) and the Americans taking the islands to the east (now called American Samoa). After the outbreak of WW1, New Zealand took administrative control of Samoa from the Germans on behalf of the United Nations from 1914 up to independence day on 1 January 1962.

SAMOAN RELIGION

Christianity has been one of the few western influences that has been accepted and integrated into Fa'a Samoa. John Williams from the London Missionary Society arrived in Savai'i in 1830 to spread Christianity. Today the motto on Samoa's crest reads Fa'avae I Le Atua Samoa (Samoa is founded on God) and is proudly displayed regardless of the denomination.

GETTING THERE

Virgin Samoa, Air New Zealand and Fiji Airways operate international flights from Australia, New Zealand, Fiji and Hawaii into Samoa. Polynesian Airlines and Talofa Airways fly multiple times daily from American Samoa.

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ACCOMMODATION

From deluxe resorts with luxurious spa treatments; family resorts with kids clubs, standard and motel style properties, Samoa has something for every budget. For a truly unique Samoan experience, why not stay in a Fale?

Located on the beach right on the waterfront, open beach Fales are cost effective and the best way to experience Samoa like a local. Why sleep under 5 stars when you can sleep under a billion?

Getting around is easy when you can rent a car, hop on a colourful island bus or take a taxi.

FOOD OF THE ISLANDS



In Samoa, food is a social event that brings family and friends together. Fresh seafood, tropical fruits and vegetables picked from the plantations are staple delicacies on the Samoan menu which also include Palusami (young taro leaves baked in coconut cream) and Oka (raw fish in coconut cream).

Hotels and resorts offer traditional Samoan food, usually at their Fiafia Nights that also display authentic Samoan entertainment and spectacular singing and dancing. The colourful markets in Apia is one of the best places to sample local fare.



TALK LIKE A LOCAL

English is widely spoken however it's useful to know a few Samoan words:

Hello - Talofa

Please - Fa'amolemole

Thank you - Fa'afetai

Goodbye - Tofa

FAST FACTS

BANKS

Most of the ATM machines are located in and around Apia. On the island of Savai'i there are ATMs at Salelologa and Manase. There are also banks at the airport and major hotels offer money exchange facilities.

CLIMATE

The air temperature averages 30 degrees all year round and the ocean is a warm 25 degrees. The dry season runs from may to October while the wet season is from November to April.

CURRENCY

The Samoa decimal currency is based on the tala (dollar) and sene (cent). All major currencies are exchangeable in Samoa for tala and credit cards are widely accepted in major hotels, restaurants and stores.

ELECTRICITY

240V/ac 50 cycles, but can be converted to 100 volts in most hotels. Powerpoints can accept three pronged plugs as used in Australia and NZ.

ENTRY

Visitors to Samoa are not required to obtain an entry permit for stays of less than 60 days. You must have a return or onward ticket and your passport must be valid for 6 months or more at the time of entry into Samoa.



Beautiful WELCOMES AWAIT YOU

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