

Talofa New Guest!

If you are receiving this email it means you have booked to stay at our beautiful place - Sa'Moana Beach Bungalows, located on the South Coast of Upolu, Samoa.

Here are a few tips and some info that will help you prepare for your trip. Please email any other questions you may have and we will get straight back to you – alison@samoanaresort.com. Our direct number is +6857672843.

We think you have made a great choice in picking our laid back, fun & friendly beach accommodation and we look forward to meeting you soon and showing you some wonderful Samoan hospitality!

Safe travels and thank-you for choosing Sa'Moana Beach Bungalows!

We look forward to meeting you soon, safe travels!

Patricia

Reception Manager

General Information, hints & tips

We are a family friendly hotel with a big emphasis on adventure tourism and providing the knowledge for you to experience all the great things Samoa has to offer. We are also great if you just want to chill out, read a book and switch off! We have a pool table in the bar which is always great fun too and our guests normally love to mingle at dinner, have a few drinks and make new friends. We think Samoa is all about making memories and enjoying everything the sleepy islands has to offer.

Please let us know your flight details so we know when to expect you. We will try to offer early check – in if available but if you're flight lands real early it may be wise to book the room from the night before so you can get straight in (otherwise will be between 12-2pm). Our reception closes at 8pm so please provide your flight arrival times so we can arrange an out of hours check in if necessary.

Samoa is pretty hot all year round and has the usual mosquito and insects found in the tropics (not too many spiders or snakes though thankfully!). Best to bring sun protection and insect repellent if you need to. You can buy it here but it's quite expensive. Also recommend you bring a hat and reef boots if you are going to explore our wonderful coastline and hidden beaches / waterfalls.

Getting online: There is no WIFI at the hotel or in 90% of Samoa! This is a great place to switch off and spend quality time with loved ones taking in the natural beauty of a wonderful destination located in the South Pacific. However, if you need to be on-line and you don't want to use data roaming, Wi-Fi is only available with a local SIM card and data package with Bluesky and can be purchased at the airport or in Apia only. Details below:-

On arrival into Samoa, there is a Bluesky office located as you come out of arrivals on the right. There is also a Digicel kiosk but they do not have coverage at our resort. They provide a free sim and do good data packages – plus you 1gb free when you buy one. Ask the guys there to load the sim and amend your settings so it works in your phone. They only take CASH here (2 banks located in arrivals for exchange – no ATM – this is located in Departures which is a 10 min walk) You can top up data/phone credit in loads of shops all over the island if you need to. FYI there are no ATM machines on the South Coast or near the resort – they are only at the airport and in Apia. There are 2 ATMS in arrivals and 3 currency exchanges.

Getting here - We are located in Salamumu, at the end of a 6km beach road off the main South Coast Road 29km from the airport. If you are arriving in the dark and driving here are the instructions below – there are very few signposts here on any roads, but as there are not many roads, getting around is fairly easy and GPS helps!

Turn left out of the airport on to the Main West Coast Road– after about 4km turn right on to Cross Island Road (after village of Fasito’otai – there is a YELLOW sign on the corner with all the hotels listed and the distance). Continue on this road for about 19km. You will pass a sign for Matareva Beach Fales on the right. We are the next place along that road. There is a sign on the right and you turn right straight after this. Follow the beach road for between 5 – 6 km and we are at the end of the road!

Please note this is a sandy village dirt road that is quite bumpy in areas. it takes approximately 15 to 20 minutes as it is a slow drive but worth the destination at the end!

Same directions from the wharf if you are coming from Savaii but the wharf is situated further passed the airport on same road.

If you are taxing a taxi the journey takes about 45 minutes (cash only).

Car hire is HIGHLY recommended. We are situated in a gorgeous hidden away piece of paradise, situated off the grid, in a little corner of Samoa. Some guests don’t want to leave our beach but if you want to make the most of your time here you need a car for at least part of your trip, even getting to the nearest shop requires transport so maybe stock up on snacks etc at one of the shops on the way from the airport.

We think a 4 wheel drive is essential (A Toyota FJ Cruiser is actually perfect for the roads here and not too pricey - there are quite a few here to rent and guests love them)

On island rentals include:

AA Rent-A-Car Samoa - they have a good selection www.samoa.aarent-a-car.net

Sa'Moana Rentals www.samoana.ws - good, reliable 4 wheel drives available.

Things to do and island activities:

Please be aware that most waterfalls, The Trench, sliding rocks, some hikes and beaches are on family and village land so a small entrance fee is payable to the land owners per person. This is usually the family / village main income source and it is not usually a lot for the experience and they only accept cash! Parking in Apia is free – some hawkers may ask you for money to park but it is not payable.

Tours We can arrange tours if you would prefer – they start at \$200 WST per person with a local guide Manu Percival (Rainforest Runaway Eco Adventures). Let us know what you want to do whilst here and we can try and pre-arrange some things with you. Otherwise we can show you the best spots on the map and you can make your own adventure in your hire car. Recommendations are To Sua trench, The Giant Clams, waterfall chasing, river/waterfall hiking, a volcanic crater hike, great beaches, snorkelling and we also have SUP boards, a motor-scooter and mountain bikes for hire at the resort. There are also cultural activities around the island and Fia Fia / Fire Show nights at most of the larger hotels (we can provide a list). We do not currently do a Fia Fia show but our staff are always keen to show you some of their local traditions and cultural activities (coconut husking, basket weaving etc).

Snorkeling in the front of the resort is really good - one of the best spots on the island. We highly recommend you bring snorkel gear. We sell sets here to buy but do not rent out sets. We do have fins here for guest use.

Kayaking and SUP boards are also available for guests to use free of charge.

Deep Sea Fishing is world class in Samoa and can be arranged through the following places:

Biggest operator is Troppo Fishing Adventures (based in Apia 50 mins from us) Email greg@troppofishing.com / +6857798666

Smaller boat that runs out of Sinalei Resort (30 mins from us) reservations@sinalei.ws / +68525191

Surfing is also world class in Samoa for intermediate to Advanced level. It is very weather dependent though and can be affected by the winds so is not guaranteed. Neil who is based at Coconuts resort can take you out on the boat every day for \$80 wst per person (this doesn't include transfer). Coconuts is based about 5 mins from the resort.

Neil can be contacted @ Manoa Tours www.manoatours.com +68570007

You can surf for free out the front of the resort – it can be great in the right conditions at high tide but it's on the reef and can be a bit messy if the wind isn't right and not for beginners. We don't have any boards to hire but we do sell leggings and wax.

Diving in Samoa is pretty untouched and lots yet to be discovered. There are 3 or 4 operators in Samoa. Here are 2 we have valuable feedback about. Contact them directly to pre-arrange a dive when you're here if that's your thing! We have some snorkel gear here for guest use. We always recommend guests bring their own if they can fit it in their luggage in-case we are busy and run out of gear.

Pure Ocean info@pure-ocean.com / +68545611 located at Sheraton , near airport.

Aqua Samoa – www.aquasamoa.com / +6857774744 - located at Yacht Club, Apia

Exploring - Samoa is a beautiful unique place – there is lots to see and do To Sua Trench, numerous waterfalls, The Giant Clams, hidden beaches and the colourful, cultural markets and museums of Apia.

If you have more than week in Upolu, maybe consider trying the larger island of Savaii, it's a little bigger than us but much quieter than here and less tourists / hotels etc. We recommend Savai'i Lagoon Resort or Le Lagoto on the North Coast or Amoa Resort near the Wharf. Savai'i has some great beaches, waterfalls and the famous blow holes. Walk on tickets can be purchased for the ferry at The Wharf. If you have a car you need to buy a ticket at least the day before from the Samoa Shipping Corp office in Apia – you can't just turn up and pay on the ferry with a car so best to plan ahead. They leave approx. every 2 hours from 8.00am until 2.00pm

Manono Island is also great for a night away on a small deserted island. There are a small number of villages and approx 3 beach fale accommodations available - very basic though and day trips are possible on the small ferries from the east coast of Upolu. There is no timetable for these small boats though and is for the more adventurous souls out there!

There is also a fantastic waterfall hike at Lalotalie Ventures River Eco-Retreat (about 20 mins drive from us). It's an extreme day out, full of waterfall jumping, river hiking and fun with local guides with some great Samoan Legends to tell you as you climb and hike the river. It takes approx 5-6 hours and

costs \$120 WST per person. Worth every cent but not for the faint hearted. Pre booking essential +6857748759

Our Beach Bistro sitting times:

Breakfast is served 7.30 – 10.30am

Lunch is served 12.00pm – 4.00pm

Dinner is served from 6.00pm with last orders at approx. 8.30 / 9.00 pm depending on how busy we are – most guests head to bed around 9.30!

Happy Hour is 4.00 – 8.00pm daily and all day at the weekend.

Other places to eat and drink:

There are lots of nice places to eat here. We have a restaurant serving fresh, locally sourced ingredients, lots of freshly , caught tuna, wahoo and snapper lots of fresh local fruit and veggies and presented by our local chefs into family friendly favorites like burrito's, taco's, fish & chips, Our extensive burger menu rocks and includes some great options inc veggie, the veggie stack is yummy, sashimi, local oka, poke super fresh, and our signature dishes of tuna coconut bake and coconut crumb wahoo go down a treat. Let us know if you are gluten intolerant – choices for gluten free bread etc. are limited here but we can usually get some things (pasta, weetbix, some bread) but it is not always available so please let us have some notice.

We can also recommend some other places to try, (mostly in Apia), if you want to try something different (great woodfire pizza, a fab ice cream parlour, and some great cafe's alongside some local places). Please note there are no restaurants within walking distance of our resort. There are some other hotels/beach fale's located on the South Coast but all approx 30/40 min drive away. The main restaurants are all based in Town and are all recommended below. A Bluesky Data Sim is probably essential to navigate town with Google Maps! Apia is small but very hot and people do get lost!

Family friendly Pizzeria - Giordano's (Open from 3pm inc Sundays - closed Monday)

Fine Dining - Scalini's

Fab Ice Cream / suitable for gluten free / dairy free - Whipped Up Apia (near Robert Louis Stevenson museum)

Traditional Italian - Paddles on the Wharf - (opposite Edge Bar which is great for afternoon cocktails overlooking the marina)

Fresh fish and Chips straight off the boat - The Fish Market - (only \$6WST) and see the catches of the day on display.

Krush Cafe - Vegan / Veggie / Juices - next door to Touch of Samoa Massage. Great fresh food and amazing juices and enjoy a massage afterwards! Bali vibes!

Nourish Cafe - Gluten free NZ style cafe in town. Lots of choice and modern Samoan based dishes.

All Things Sweet - right in town, serving great coffee, lots of cakes and pastries all homemade and some lovely fresh sandwiches and salads - very reasonable prices.

Home Cafe - Quirky, bar and restaurant - full of antiques and collectable, vintage decorations.

Pacific Jewel Cafe - Lovely garden restaurant and gift shop.

Izzys Café – nice local meals that are not too expensive and always really fresh inc lobster!

Legends Taumeasina – US style smokehouse barbeque – great ribs and brisket.

Coconuts Resort - Fia Fia Friday - Free if you eat there on the night. Pre book.

Taumesina Bar and Restaurant (not Taumesina Resort but nearby). Great Island atmosphere, lovely views, nice menu, cold local draft beer and super friendly.

Nightlife in Samoa is quiet and relaxed - our bar has a pool table and a great deck for enjoying a family meal and a game of cards or pool after a long day in the sun but everyone is normally back in their bungalows around 9.30pm. There are bars in town that open later but again probably not passed midnight. Usually our guests are keen to get up early and make the most of the next day.

Church

Samoa is a Christian country with the majority of Samoans going to church throughout the week - there are a huge number of churches here. Some guests want to experience this tradition and we recommend going to the Sunday Morning Service that starts around 8.30 a.m. and last for 2 hours (with most of the service conducted in Samoan). The locals are Methodist, and their nearest church is located about 7 mins drive into the village from the resort.

We highly recommend you do a little research on this wonderful country to build up an idea of what you would like to do when you are with us and so you know a little of what to expect. Samoa is a beautiful island, full of Polynesian culture, lots of smiles and drop-dead scenery - we are sure you are going to LOVE it!