

Samoana Beach Bungalows - Guest info and useful tips.

Talofa Lava!

Welcome to Sa'Moana Beach Bungalows located in Salamumu.

- 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 and soak in our paradise setting watching the waves roll in.
- We are a rustic beach retreat, open to the elements of the South Pacific Ocean so are not suitable for very young children. Our minimum age is 5 years and older. We do not offer babysitting services, kids club or children's swimming pool so some families with young children have not found us a suitable choice.
- We are great for outdoor loving, active families with older more independent kids who are confident to play in the water and on the beach. Please can you always watch out for your children. Kayaks and SUPs are available to take from the beach but please watch the tides / conditions before letting them go.
- We are no longer a 'surf resort' or surf camp although we have plenty of knowledge of the breaks around the island. The resort did used to provide surf tours, had a boat and surf guides but we moved away from this 3 years ago and became a more family hotel for adventure tourism. We more than welcome surfers to the resort but we recommend they pre-book their surf tours with Neil @ Manoa Surf Samoa. A car is also needed to get to his place @ Coconuts 45 mins away as taxis are expensive and he goes out at 6.30am and your taxi may not get you there in time. He goes out every day at least once and is an expert on the best breaks and current conditions to take you to the places that are pumping if you are looking for surf. Not for beginners though – bring your booties and maybe expect a broken board! Neil can be contacted on 7770007 – pre booking is advised.
- Samoa is pretty hot all year round and has the usual mozzies and insects found in the tropics (not many spiders though thankfully!). Best to wear sun protection and insect repellent if you need to and drink plenty of water. Filtered water is free from the bar and just ask for a new flask anytime you need some more.
- **As you have probably read - we do not have WIFI available at the resort and this is common throughout most of Samoa.** If you need to get on line or make calls – pick up a free Bluesky SIM at the airport or in Apia and top it up with a data package and some calling credit so you can make local calls / book cars / book restaurants etc. Most data roaming does not work in Samoa and is super expensive. If you haven't picked up your sim card at the airport we recommend you head to Apia and the Bluesky shop is located opposite ANZ near the clock tower. The guys there will have you online within minutes of purchasing the sim card. They do 4gb packages for \$45 WST and you get double data for 24 hours after purchase.

The resort phone is available to use at a charge of \$5WST per local call.

Emergency number if you need it is 911 and can be called from any phone for free.

- We are located in Salamumu. Taxi's can be arranged very easily with local taxi drivers .
- Prices for taxis Arranged through the local Village and a guide for prices are as follows:
 APIA – 1 WAY \$ 100 WST
 AIRPORT OR WHARF – 1 WAY \$100 WST
 THE GIANT CLAMS EACH WAY \$30 WST.
 RETURN TO PARADISE RESORT \$30 WST EACH WAY (very near Giant Clams so maybe do both in 1 day)
 RIVER WALK LOCATED IN LAFAGA BAY - \$50 WST EACH WAY
 TO-SUA TRENCH - \$200 RETURN (Togitogia Waterfall on the way – in National Park).
 LALOMANU BEACH \$150 WST 1 WAY. Taxis available at the Lalomanu Beach fale for the return but they may charge \$200 - \$250 WST for the return journey. Speak to the local taxi driver here to discuss if they can wait for you and do the return journey and the cost.
 CAVE POOLS / NORTH EAST COAST WATERFALLS- \$200 WST EACH WAY
 COCONUTS / MANOA TOURS / SURFING FROM BOAT \$100 EACH EAY
 FULL DAY TAXI AROUND THE ISLAND 7-8 HOURS \$500 WST

Entry fee's also apply to most places as they are located on privately owned land and tourism is their main source of income.

- 4x4 Car hire is HIGHLY recommended (actually viewed essential if you are staying here a few nights) 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 otherwise you may feel isolated. Here are 2 local companies based in Apia. We 100% recommend a 4 wheel drive for the roads here so you have a more relaxed holiday and can get around the island easily. Low sedan cars just don't cut it with the bumpy roads and can cause you a headache – they are cheaper but not good for these roads! Good 4 wheel drive SUV's are around \$150 - \$170 WST per day so well worth renting and much cheaper than taxi's and tours.

Samoana Car Rentals – www.samoana.ws / sales@samoana.ws

AA Rent-a-car www.samoa.aarent-a-car.net

Both companies will deliver the car (for a fee) to the hotel or airport – they will also arrange your temporary driving license. Driving is much easier and smoother in a 4 wheel drive and with GPS – again that's where a data SIM comes in handy for Google Maps.

- We can arrange private guided tours if you would prefer – they start at \$120 wst per person (min 2 people) with a local village driver – this can be done when you are here. Otherwise we can show you the best spots on the map and you can make your own adventure in your hire car which we think is more fun from guest feedback – Tiki Touring is what Samoa is all about and there are so many places to stop and photograph, buy a coconut at the side of the road, watch a village volleyball game or take in the views.

Recommendations around the island are:

South & East Coast

To Sua trench – open every day (from 12pm Sunday) and a MUST do in Samoa – mind-blowingly beautiful and a great day out. \$20 WST each and worth every sene.

The Giant Clams – only 20 mins away in a lovely bay protected from the wind – amazing to see and you may spot some turtles hanging around too! \$10 WST each – payable at the blue fale to the local owners. Closed Sundays.

Waterfall chasing – lots of waterfalls on South Coast and up far cross island road – lots of spots for photos and getting wet. We can show you them all on the map.

River/waterfall hiking – a 6 hour guided hike over about 5km, 16 waterfalls, lots of jumping and fun at Lalotalie River Retreat. Pre booking essential – they have a website <http://www.lalotalie.ws/>. A must do for extreme hikers or thrill seekers run by Olsen and Jane and local tour guides – great cultural, active day out.

A volcanic crater hike at Lake Lanoto'o part of The National Park is a 2 hour up and 2 hours down walk of medium capability. See an amazing green lake at the top of the crater (only do-able/advisable if it hasn't been too rainy as it can get too muddy and dangerous). No charge for this walk if you go without a guide which many do.

Located at the far South East tip of Upolu is Lalomanu Beach. Perfect for chilling at some of the best views in Samoa. Colourful beach fale line the golden sandy beach there and option to take a boat ride to Turtle Island if you get there early enough.

As the beaches are very sandy with some waves, there are options for beginner surfers or body borders in the right conditions. Its easy to get a beer, soft drink or some food at the many friendly beach fale along the beach and some great beach vibes at sunset. A must do when you are here. Takes about an hour and 20 mins to drive there from the hotel.

Aiga Reef Resort and Seabreeze also located nearby for some fine dining in luxury resort settings.

North Coast

One of our favourite parts of Upolu due to the stunning scenery and its far less touristy!

The drive from Apia down the North Coast heading east is pretty amazing and some great views and a couple of little beaches with overhanging palm trees. Swim at the crystal clear waters of Piula Cave Pool and take waterfall swim and jumps at Sauniata Church grounds hidden 7km down a track nearby. 2 or 3 other waterfalls to check out nearby too – check the free map available at reception. All closed Sundays. Le' Uaina Resort is located nearby and welcomes day guests. Great sunset views and nice water for kayaking and a sundowner cocktail or two!

Maybe take a trip round the coast of Fagaloa Bay – some amazing scenery and a couple of lovely beaches. This is a very untouched part of Upolu, hiking, waterfalls and a few great beaches can be discovered – local land owners may ask you to pay to walk across their land or use the beach. There are no stores here so take water and food And don't expect to see many other tourists up this far North!

Tiavea Beach – a bit hard to find and a high car is essentials as road is very steep and very bumpy. The local village charge \$40 entry to the road and then an extra \$10 to park. 3 breaks here and good for beginners. Take plenty of water and food as completely deserted and no shops nearby. A hidden gem.

West Coast

The Wharf is located on West coast for the boat to Savai'i – it takes 2 hours and leaves every 2 hours from 8am to 2pm. Pre buy tickets on line or at The Samoa Shipping company at the Wharf in Apia. You cannot just turn up with a car on the day and get on the ferry – pre booking essential with a car.

There is lots to do in Savai'i. Many guests stay over night or do a few days but it is possible to do a whirlwind tour in one day by taking the early ferry and then jumpin on the last ferry home. Long day but was worth it to many of our guests.

Walk on passengers can turn up on the day – plenty of taxis at the other side – taxi's around the island will likely be min of \$400 WST for the day maybe more.

Day trips from Upolu to the tiny Manono Island are also a bit of an adventure – arranged locally at the boat wharf near with local fisherman. Cultural, historical sights on Monono Island and 3 beach fale to chill for the day.

Sheraton Aggies Beach Resort – spend the day at this lovely beach resort, use their pool, swim up bar and spa and have a nice lunch and they have a good Fia Fia night on a Friday starts at 6.30pm. Day guests very welcome here. Great for an afternoon before boarding your late afternoon or evening flight as right next to the airport (5 mins).

- 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. The surf guide 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 a transfer – car hire is essential to get to Coconuts). Coconuts is based about 25 mins from the resort.

Neil can be contacted @ Mano Tours www.manoatours.com +6857770007

You can surf for free out the front of our place – its free and can be great but it's on 100% reef and can be a bit messy if the wind isn't right.

- 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 good 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

Aqua Samoa – www.aquasamoa.com / +6857774744

- Or simply just chill at the resort kayak, swim or SUP or experience our amazing reef for a snorkel. Take a walk 15 mins down the jungle track to Survivor Beach where Australian Survivor was filmed and spend the afternoon chilling at this calmer lagoon.

- We have a full restaurant serving fresh, mostly locally sourced ingredients and lots of freshly caught fish (tuna, Wahoo, Snapper, Masi Masi). 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). We try to run daily specials and come up with some great meals from our locally trained chefs which go down a treat normally with an Italian twist as Dan has Roman roots and we have found the Polynesian ingredients fuse well with Italian style meals.
- We can also recommend you head out and try other places, as a holiday is all about experiencing the whole destination and trying other food. There are a few places nearby like Matareva or Fia Fia Village that will charge you a day pass to use their beach fales and they also sell food and have nice beaches. **Most nearby hotels have a minimum spend policy per person (normally \$30 WST) and you cannot use all of their guest facilities.** Sinalei is for 12 years and older. Return to Paradise is the nearest hotel to us, you can use their beach but not the pool. There is also Coconuts and Saletoga, Seabreeze (adults only).

Places in Apia:

Nourish Café for really good local organic food with gluten free options – closes at 3pm and Sundays.

Pacific Jewel Café has a lovely garden terrace and quality gift shop– closes 3pm and Sundays.

Milan's café is based right in town and serves a great breakfast and lunch close 3pm and Sundays.

Krush Café is great for juices and Vegan / Veggie meals – great salads and burrito bowls. It's also next to a great massage place 'A Touch of Samoa'.

Home Café is not far from Krush. A quirky bar / café full of antiques and collectables. Serves great coffee and cold beers. Sometimes they have live bands on through the week. Fave place for Expat community.

Further up Cross Island Road – opposite Manumea Hotel is Whipped Apia – selling gelato and sorbets gluten and dairy free options available and some great local flavours – coconut, cocoa, turmeric, Papaya etc.

Further up the hill again near Bahia Temple is Rainforest Café (ask the owner about the secret waterfall hike they have here) and also nearby Tiapapata Art gallery and Café – lovely, serene surroundings, nice menu and good coffee – aswell as some local art.

Giordano's serves the best pizza in town – open from 3pm inc Sundays. Closes Mondays. Near Apia on Cross Island Road.

For a special dinner try Paddles on Main Beach Road which serves authentic Italian food cooked by Italians and opens from 5pm (closed Mondays – pre booking essential). Great fun atmosphere. Perfect at sunset with views across the harbour.

Fine dining experience Scalini's is great and they now have a deli called The Pickled Lam next door open in the day and serves great Italian deli delights great for a picnic.

Roko's serves great quality Samoan food – on Cross Island Road not far from Scalinis. Great if you fancy a large NZ steak and not too expensive.

There are tons of places that sell traditional Samoan Food in town , **Island Grill** opposite the big fruit and craft market in the centre of town sells great local fresh seafood and the best lobster we have had in Samoa . Amanaki Hotel and Seafood Gourmet served reasonable priced local meals also. Freshly caught fish and chip fryer kiosk can be found at the fish market for about \$6 WST and local mixed juices for \$2 WST in the markets also. There are many roadside BBQ's aswell around the island scattered through the villages selling bbq chicken, sausages, curries taro and cooked banana - Costs about \$10 WST per tray and is basic local Samoan food and portions normally quite large! FYI chicken is not local and has been imported likely from the U.S so definitely not organic meat!

Our tip if you have an afternoon or evening flight is to head to Sheraton Aggies Beach Resort next to the airport. Have lunch and use their facilities – they have a great pool and also a spa. Perfect relaxing last day before you head home. Check in for flights is 90 mins before so you don't have to hang around the airport for 3 hours before your flight.

BARS –

Travellers Point – Sports bar/hotel showing most major games / fights / sports events. Also has live bands Fri / Sat night. Kids welcome and you can also use their pool during the day.

Edge bar at the Wharf is great for sunset cocktails (near Paddles).

Taumeasina Restaurant & Bar (not the 5 star hotel but located nearby) – great Polynesian Tiki bar overlooking Taumeasina Bay – nice vibes.

Taumeasina Island Resort – Happy Hour every day from 5pm – very resort.

Tanoa Hotel – near the markets and bus station – cold draft Taula. You can also get lunch and use their pool. Daily cocktail specials.

Supermarkets in town selling Western brands include Lucky Foodtown, Farmer Joes, Myna's Mini mart & Bakery and Lynns Supermarket. Can often pick up gluten free options at these places.

- Samoa is a Christian country with the majority of Samoans going to church throughout the week but always on a Sunday morning especially. 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). It is located about 7 mins drive in the village. Lots of places are closed on Sundays – shops, waterfalls, beaches. Check with us or the info above to see what is open on Sunday. To Sua Trench is open from 12 and Giordano's Pizzeria from 3pm – they're our main recommendations for a Sunday if you are venturing out of the hotel!
- Culture. Samoa is a very traditional place so there is local culture everywhere you look. As you pass through villages you may see locals walking to church for evening service dressed all in white, gathering for a village meeting, prepping for their Sunday To ónai (traditional family Sunday lunch after church) or having a game of volleyball or rugby. Many larger resorts hold Island Nights that include Samoan dancing and a fire-show. We can let you know the dates of the shows and locations. Mostly held Tuesday – Sat and start between 6.30 – 7.30pm and include a Samoan Uma buffet (roasted whole pig) and other local delicacies.

All of our great staff are from the local village and can share their experiences with you or maybe teach you some basic Samoan words as they like to chat to guests and are super friendly. It is also possible to arrange a visit to the local primary school in the village and many guests take donations of school books, pens, sports equipment.

- There is a free Cultural show held every Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday at the Samoa Tourism Fale in Apia (near the Clock Tower) that starts at 10am until 2.00pm and includes dancing, traditional tattooing and other Samoan activities like basket weaving.
- Also check out the arts and crafts on sale in the 2 main markets in town and at various street vendors.
- We highly recommend you plan your days out and don't try and squeeze too much in to one day as it can be very hot and tiring. Drink plenty of water, wear sun protection and mozzie spray and take loads of photos and be prepared for some great fun and lots of smiles along the way.