



VAVA'U 10-DAY CLASSIC

PRE-DEPARTURE INFORMATION

FRIENDLY ISLANDS KAYAK COMPANY LTD.
PO Box 142, Waitati 9069, Otago, NEW ZEALAND
Phone: +64 3 482 1202 Fax: +64 3 479 9944
Email: tours@fikco.com Website: <http://www.fikco.com>

ITINERARY OVERVIEW

Note: The following itinerary is a sample only and is subject to alterations and delays owing to weather, sea conditions or logistical considerations.

Day 1 Arrival. Orientation talk at *The Adventure Centre*, Toulā. Overnight at *Hilltop Hotel* or *Port Wine Guesthouse* or *Harbour View Resort* (subject to availability).

Days 2-9 Kayaking in the Vava'u Archipelago. Camping (Days 2-8).

Day 9 Farewell dinner. Overnight at *Hilltop Hotel* or *Port Wine Guesthouse* or *Harbour View Resort* (subject to availability).

Day 10 Trip concludes.

INTRODUCTION

Situated approximately 240 kilometres north of Tongatapu, the Vava'u Island Group is a smattering of 50-odd islands covering an area 23 by 25 kilometres most of which is protected by a semi-circular reef. Although the islands are separated by reefs or open water, they are not great distances apart. In his book, *The Happy Isles of Oceania: Paddling the Pacific*, author Paul Theroux describes sea kayaking in Vava'u thus: "It was a perfect area for paddling a kayak - perhaps the best in the Pacific. There was a surfy side and a safe side to each island - the lee shores usually had the beaches - all were secluded, all were lovely."

On our Tonga sea kayaking expeditions we strive for a healthy balance between relaxation and adventure. We generally paddle in the mornings leaving the afternoons free for snorkelling amidst colourful coral and inside legendary marine caves; exploring lush tropical bush; and, observing the traditional village lifestyle. The pace of life in Vava'u is slow and relaxed - much like it was a century ago. We spend our evenings on deserted beaches beneath swaying palm trees and the Southern Cross bathed by a warm South Pacific breeze.

AIR TRAVEL TO VAVA'U

The following is a summary of air services to and within Tonga. This is subject to change and should be confirmed by your local travel/booking agent. **NOTE: All flights to/from Vava'u require an inter-island flight from either Tongatapu or Ha'apai with Chathams Pacific.**

Air New Zealand: From Auckland to Tongatapu x 5 flights per week (Mon, Wed, Thurs, Fri, Sat)

From Los Angeles to Tongatapu (via Auckland) x 4 flights per week (Mon, Wed, Thurs, Sat)

Air Pacific: From Los Angeles to Tongatapu (via Nadi) x 2 flights per week (Tues, Sat)

From Nadi (or Suva) to Tongatapu x 4 flights per week (Mon, Tue, Fri, Sat)

Pacific Blue: From Auckland to Tongatapu x 2 flights per week (Tue, Thu)
From Sydney to Tongatapu x 2 flights per week (Tue, Thu)

Chathams Pacific: Between Tongatapu/Vava'u/Ha'apai (Mon-Sat).

Chathams Pacific have an online booking facility:

Website: <http://www.chathamspacific.com/>

Email: Reservations@ChathamsPacific.com

Phone: +676 28852 Fax: +676 28853

We recommend that you allow a minimum of 2 hours connection time between your international flights and Tongan interisland flights (Chathams Pacific).

SEA KAYAKING

The concept of sea kayaking is still new to many people who may have visions of paddling in small unstable kayaks typically used on river trips. In contrast, we use stable, seaworthy double kayaks (Necky Tofino) especially suited to novices and the ocean environment. No previous kayaking experience is required, but a moderate level of fitness is necessary. Non-swimmers are welcome since everyone is required to wear a life vest. The issuing of single kayaks (Necky Arluk III and Quality Kayaks Southern Aurora) is at the guides' discretion as this depends not only on the paddler's ability, but also on weather, sea conditions and group composition. There is usually at least one single kayak on tour, which may be shared amongst paddlers demonstrating solid support strokes.

Your guides cover boat handling basics; paddling strokes; use of the foot-controlled rudder; boat entries and exits; and rescue procedures in the protected

warm waters of the Port of Refuge. They also cover trip safety and carry a hand-held VHF radio and flares for emergency use. Sea kayaking is a very safe sport when conducted properly. The expedition always paddles as a group, but there is still ample opportunity for individuals to enjoy their personal space on land if so desired. Certain rules of sea kayaking must be agreed to and observed by all trip participants to ensure everyone's safety and enjoyment. We discuss these rules and why they are necessary as well as contingency plans. We do everything reasonable to minimize the risks of this outdoor pursuit to ensure your safety and expect you to do the same.

SAMPLE ITINERARY

Note: The following itinerary is a sample only and is subject to alterations and delays owing to weather, sea conditions or logistical considerations.

B = BREAKFAST L = LUNCH D = DINNER

Day 1: Arrival / Orientation. A driver is waiting at Lupepau'u Airport in Vava'u to escort you to your accommodation. Please ensure that you send us your full flight itinerary so we may arrange transport. Your guides present a 45-minute orientation talk commencing 4:00 pm. at *The Adventure Centre* in Toulavillage, 2.5 km southeast of Neiafu. It is important that all participants attend this informative talk.

Meals and beverages on own... Hilltop Hotel or Port Wine Guesthouse or Harbour View Resort (subject to availability)

Day 2: Day 1 of Kayaking. A safety briefing commences 9:00 a.m. at *The Adventure Centre* before departing for the first of six days of kayaking. Our journey begins in the Port of Refuge, reputedly the most protected and beautiful harbour in the Pacific. We paddle into renowned Swallows Cave, snorkel and picnic at Kapa Island, and finish off the day by skirting several islands on the western side of the island group. Tonight's camp is on uninhabited Vaka'eitu Island.

L, D... Vaka'eitu Island (Base Camp); Paddling Time: 3-4 hours

Day 3: Day 2 of Kayaking. Following a leisurely hot breakfast, there is an optional paddle to the village of Matamaka on nearby Nuapapu Island. At low tide, we snorkel the magnificent Coral Gardens, adjacent to our campsite, where colourful coral teeming with reef fish offer snorkellers endless hours of delight. A short hike before dinner to the island's

summit may be rewarded by a view of the setting sun and possibly humpback whales (June-November) in Pulepulekai channel!

B, L, D... Vaka'eitu Island (Base Camp); Paddling Time: 1-2 hours

Day 4: Day 3 of Kayaking. After breaking camp we paddle to Ovalau Island, reprovisioning with fresh water at either Lape village or Ovaka village en route. While paddling, we may be fortunate enough to sight turtles, dolphins and humpback whales, the latter of which migrate annually to Tonga's warm sheltered waters to breed and calve. Tonight's camp is a sandy beach facing the setting sun with possibly the best view in the Vava'u Group.

B, L, D... Ovalau Island; Paddling Time: 2-3 hours

Day 5: Day 4 of Kayaking. On today's paddle to 'Euakafa Island, our Tongan guide leads us through shallow, reef-strewn turquoise waters. This afternoon is free for snorkelling the exquisite reefs and combing the expansive beaches of uninhabited 'Euakafa Island, our base camp for the next two nights.

B, L, D ... 'Euakafa Island (Base Camp); Paddling Time: 2-3 hours

Day 6: Day 5 of Kayaking. In the cool hours of the morning, a guided walk to 'Euakafa's distinctive tabletop summit takes us to the site of a legendary royal tomb within the fortress of a Tu'i Tonga king. This afternoon offers the opportunity for fishing, snorkelling, a short paddle or just relaxing in tropical paradise!

B, L, D ... 'Euakafa Island (Base Camp); Paddling Time: 1-2 hours (optional)

Day 7: Day 6 of Kayaking. This morning, we break camp and paddle to nearby 'Eue'iki Island (a.k.a. 'Treasure Island') for some wall snorkelling and exploring an immense cave with Tarzan-like vines cascading down through a hole in the cave ceiling. Following lunch, we cross a channel to Taunga Island. This evening, the villagers host an authentic Tongan feast consisting of roast suckling pork complemented by fresh root vegetables, octopus, reef fish, vegetarian dishes, and tropical fruits such as papaya in coconut milk, all steamed in an underground oven or 'umu. This gastronomic delight is followed by a traditional Tongan song and dance performance.

B, L, D ... Taunga Island; Paddling Time: 1-2 hours

Day 8: Day 7 of Kayaking. Today, we make our way to the eastern chain of islands and visit Ofu village before paddling around to Umuna Island, one

of three islands comprising a fringing reef that protects the Vava'u Group from the Pacific swells. The summit of the island's precipitous, windward side affords a spectacular view of waves crashing against the cliffs, a sharp contrast to the calm idyllic waterways inside the reef where we paddle.

B, L, D ... Umuna Island; Paddling Time: 3-4 hours

Day 9: Day 8 of Kayaking. On this final day of paddling, the journey westward takes us back to the Port of Refuge via Mala Island. Once the home of a cannibal demi-god who ate passing outrigger canoeists, Mala is now home to a friendly tourist Resort! From the beach we can snorkel to the entrancing Japanese Gardens before returning to *The Adventure Centre*. From here, we transfer by taxi to your accommodation property and hot showers! This evening, we dine at a fine restaurant in Neiafu.

B, L, D ... Hilltop Hotel or Port Wine Guest House or Harbour View Resort (subject to availability); Paddling Time: 2-3 hours

Day 10: Departure. The trip concludes today with transfers to Lupepau'u Airport and a warm farewell from your guides.

Meals and beverages on own

FITNESS AND EXPERIENCE

Whilst no experience is required for our sea kayak tours, a moderate level of physical fitness and a sense of adventure are important. A typical day entails two to three hours of paddling interspersed with rest stops. The guides endeavour to balance the group by pairing slower paddlers with stronger, more experienced paddlers. However, the slower paddlers always dictate the pace. Base camps offer the luxury of paddling empty kayaks or a lay day for exploring and relaxing. Paddling into a trade wind of 13-18 knots requires extra effort and can make the distance we travel feel longer. Those who engage in regular exercise such as walking, cycling or swimming tend to derive more enjoyment from their adventure. Physical conditioning exercises and camping experience are recommended.

KAYAK GUIDES

A minimum of one Tongan professional guide accompanies all of our trips. Depending on the group size, there is an additional guide (guide: guest ratio = 1:6). The guides are responsible for making safety decisions, coordinating logistics and activities, preparing meals as well as interpreting the natural and cultural features

of Vava'u. Our guides lend invaluable local knowledge and cultural flavour to the experience and also offer outdoor safety, first aid and risk management expertise.

CAMP ORGANISATION

On the first camping day (Day 2) the guides orient participants to the camp kitchen and protocol for erecting and breaking camp. The more assistance with camp duties rendered, the quicker meals are served and the earlier the group gets out on the water each day. We typically aim to be on the water by 9:30 a.m. in order to take advantage of the cool morning hours for paddling and to reach our camp by lunchtime.

On arrival at camp the guides require assistance erecting the overhead tarpaulin; hanging up life vests and spray skirts; unloading the kayaks; and hauling seawater for washing dishes and vegetables. Once these duties are completed, everyone is free to pitch their tents. Assistance with meal preparation and dish washing is not expected but always appreciated. Packing bags and tents prior to breakfast makes the job of breaking camp more efficient.

MEALS ON TOUR

We re-provision with fresh tropical produce and water at outer island villages. The water is untreated rainwater collected from rooves and stored in cement holding tanks. We have never encountered a problem on tour with water-borne diseases or infections.

Snacks and three meals per day are provided, beginning with lunch on Day 2 and ending with the farewell dinner on Day 9. Our fine food has an international theme so you are likely to find Thai, Indonesian, Italian, Mexican and Polynesian cuisine on the menu. The meals are predominantly vegetarian supplemented with fresh fish. We try to make extensive use of the delicious tropical fruits and vegetables and fresh seafood caught by our Tongan guides. We also try our best to please every palate. Please let us know well in advance of the tour of any food and/or drink allergies and/or dislikes.

At one of these villages we partake in an authentic *'umu* feast (feast baked in an underground oven) and share with the villagers their traditional song, dance, and customs. A multitude of chicken, roast pork, seafood and vegetarian dishes are served, but no one is offended if it isn't all eaten. We might be fortunate enough to participate in an impromptu kava ceremony, also permeated with Tongan culture, should the occasion present itself.

FOOD AND WATER

There are a wide selection of eateries in Nuku'alofa and Vava'u, some of which are excellent. In Nuku'alofa (Tongatapu), we recommend Black Pearl, Café Reef, Fakalato Restaurant, Fresh Juice Bar, Friends Café, Little Italy Pizzeria, Lunarossa, Seaview Restaurant, Taste of India, The Two Sisters and The Waterfront Café. In Neiafu (Vava'u); Aquarium, Dancing Rooster, Mango, Ovava, The Balcony and the Tongan Beach Resort.

The tap water in Tonga is treated well water with a high mineral content, giving it a metallic taste. While the tap water is potable, for people unaccustomed to the local water, it is advisable to drink rainwater or bottled water. Both are readily available on request at shops, restaurants and accommodation properties.

There are no waterfalls, rivers or lakes in Tonga and so, whilst on tour, we bathe and wash laundry in the sea using biodegradable saltwater shampoo or soap. Provided there is not a drought we fill solar shower bags with rainwater from cement tanks in the villages.

ACCOMMODATION

For details and images of package accommodation, please refer to our web site <http://www.fikco.com/tours-accommodation.html> Package accommodation is based on double occupancy. Single supplements apply to those who prefer a private fale/room or who cannot be paired with another single participant. Tents and mattresses are included for the camping portion of the tour. If you plan to extend your stay in Tonga please advise us of your accommodation requirements in advance and we will be happy to book on your behalf.

TONGA AND HER PEOPLE

Spread across 700,000 square kilometres of ocean, just west of the International Date Line and east of Fiji, the Kingdom of Tonga comprises four major island groups. From south to north these are Tongatapu, Ha'apai, Vava'u and the Niuas. A total of 171 mostly raised coral islands (fewer than 40 of them inhabited) cover a total land area of 747 square kilometres. The population of Tonga is estimated to be 110,000, with two thirds of that number living on the main island, Tongatapu. Tongan and English are the official languages, and Tonga boasts a 98.5% literacy rate.

Tonga is unique in that it is the only Polynesian country never to have been colonised as well as the only surviving monarchy in the Pacific. Vava'u and Ha'apai

cover approximately the same land area (119 and 110 square kilometres respectively), but the population of Vava'u (20,000) is approximately double that of Ha'apai (10,000). Vava'u is the water sports capital of the Kingdom while Ha'apai is known for its laid-back atmosphere, traditional way of life and history (this is where the Mutiny on the Bounty took place).

CULTURAL SENSITIVITY

Respect is extremely important within the Tongan culture. A clean, modest appearance signifies respect for you and for others. Visitors are not expected to be aware of Tongan codes of behaviour, but those who observe them are more likely to be accepted. Women are advised to dress conservatively (i.e. high necklines, covered shoulders, loose skirts, dresses or pants) in the villages. Low-cut tops, sheer and/or tight clothing should be avoided. Swimsuits are acceptable on the beach; covering up with a *lava-lava* (wrap-around cloth) is a polite gesture to approaching villagers. Men should wear long shorts in the daytime; long pants or a *lava-lava* at night time. Men are required *by law* to wear a shirt in public except when on the beach. Footwear is removed before entering a Tongan *fale* (home). It is advisable to maintain a low profile until outside village areas, especially on Sundays when physical activity, noise and fishing are prohibited.

ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

In an effort to preserve Tonga's natural environment, Friendly Islands Kayak Company strives to promote environmental sensitivity and to minimize impact on the marine and terrestrial environment. To this end, your guides impart the Company's Minimum Impact Guidelines with respect to waste disposal and conservation of reefs, marine life, flora and fauna during the orientation talk. We carry out all non-decomposable rubbish along with other people's rubbish. Snorkellers are briefed on correct use of their fins and the importance of not touching the fragile reefs.

We employ a variety of methods for disposing of human waste. On most islands the guides dig a pit toilet within 50-75 metres of camp. Given that our campsites are not used year 'round we consider this method to be the best compromise. We generally use the inter-tidal zone at night.

CLIMATE

The climate of Tonga is very pleasant, being slightly cooler and less humid than most tropical areas. From June to November temperatures range from 22° to 30°C the mean humidity hovers around 74%; and, the trade winds blow an average of 13-18 knots - often perfect weather for paddling and adventuring.

During the wetter summer months (December to May) the weather is hotter (25-32 degrees C), more humid and changeable with a slightly increased risk of tropical cyclones. However most cyclones either brush past Tonga leaving little or no damage or miss Tonga altogether

TIME AND COMMUNICATION

Tonga is 12 hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time. International phone calls may be placed from your accommodation property or from Tonga Telecommunications, from where phone cards may also be purchased. There are currently two mobile phone networks in Tonga: Digicel and Vodafone. You will need to confirm with your mobile phone provider whether you will be able to use your phone in Tonga.

Contact details for the accommodation properties are as follows:

Hilltop Hotel

Email: sunset@kalianetvav.to

Phone: +676 70209 or + 676 70838

Fax: +676 70209

Port Wine Guest House

Email: portwine_guesthouse@yahoo.com

Phone: +676 70-479

Harbour View Resort

Email: vavau.harbourview@gmail.com

Phone: +676 70687

EMERGENCY CONTACTS & DELAYS EN ROUTE

In the event that you are delayed en route or of an emergency, contact Friendly Islands Kayak Company in Vava'u, Kingdom of Tonga. Phone/Fax: 676 70 173 or mobile phone: +676 75 12262. Please give your name, trip name and revised arrival details.

If you experience delays or an emergency, and you cannot reach the above contact, leave a message at Friendly Islands Kayak Company's New Zealand office. Phone/Fax: +64 3 482 1202. Be prepared to leave your name, details of your trip, **a telephone number where you can be reached**, and all other pertinent information. We will forward your information to our team in Tonga and, if need be, will get back to you as soon as possible.

CURRENCY EXCHANGE

The unit of currency in Tonga is the Pa'anga (TOP\$). Check with your bank for a current exchange rate. The banks and larger accommodation properties accept travellers' cheques (USD\$). If you have not already exchanged your money by the time you arrive in Vava'u, you can do so at the ANZ Bank (ATM/Cashpoint available) or Bank of Tonga/Westpac in Neiafu on weekdays. Note that hotel and airport exchange rates are not as favourable as bank rates.

BUDGETTING

Consider bringing TOP\$40-\$100 in small denominations on the kayak tour for: purchasing handicrafts; placing on the oiled skins of the dancers and in the band kitty as a token of your appreciation (TOP\$1 and TOP\$2 notes). Budget TOP\$75-\$100 per day for meals (not including alcohol) and taxis in Nuku'alofa and Neiafu.

Note that most of the accommodation properties have credit card facilities. However, many other businesses accept cash (TOP\$) only.

PASSPORTS

Your passport must be valid for at least 6 months from the date of entry to Tonga. You must present an onward ticket on arrival in order to be granted a 30-day visitors visa.

VISAS

You do not need a visa prior to arrival if you are a citizen of one of the following countries:

Australia, Austria, Barbados, Belgium, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Canada, Cook Islands, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Estonia, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Finland, France, French Polynesia (New Caledonia, Tahiti, Wallis & Futuna) Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kiribati, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Malta, Marshall Islands, Monaco, Nauru, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niue, Norway, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Samoa, Seychelles, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, St Kitts & Nevis, St Lucia, St Vincent & the Grenadines, Sweden, Switzerland, The Bahamas, Turkey, Tuvalu, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States of America, Vanuatu.

All other nationalities require a visa prior to arrival; this can be obtained by contacting the Immigration Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Tonga visatonga@gmail.com. You may be able to extend your stay for up to six months if you are able to provide evidence of sufficient funds.

AIRPORT TAXES, EXCESS BAGGAGE FEES & SHUTTLES

These are your responsibility and are not included in the trip cost. Departure tax from Tongatapu is included in the cost of all air tickets.

The maximum baggage allowance for domestic flights is 20 kgs for passengers holding international tickets. Excess baggage will be subject to a surcharge and may have to travel on a different flight.

Both the domestic and international terminals at Fua'amotu Airport have unlocked covered waiting areas patrolled 24 hours a day by an on-site security guard. However, it is inadvisable to leave luggage unattended. The waiting areas can be breezy and cool particularly at night-time and so we recommend having a fleece and windbreaker handy (i.e. in your carry-on luggage).

Teta Tours operates a shuttle between the international and domestic terminals in Tongatapu for every inbound and outbound international flight (including those that arrive/depart at night or in the small hours of the morning). You may wish to obtain a few extra pa'anga to cover the shuttle fare.

TIPPING

Tipping is not customary in Tonga, but is not considered offensive either. In fact, the local people graciously accept tips. A guideline for tipping guides would be TOP\$30-\$40 per person per guide.

GIFTS

Tongans are exceptionally generous. In fact, gift giving is a central feature of their culture. If you wish, bring a few small gifts such as T-shirts, postcards, photos, lapel pins, hair ties, hats, watches, yoyos, washable tattoos, kites, lighters and pocket-sized games. Also, as educational resources are in short supply in the outer island schools, the children and teachers greatly appreciate receiving pens, pencils, stationary and primary level books.

SECURITY

Theft is uncommon in Tonga. However, in a culture where "what's mine is yours" and items are "borrowed" indefinitely, unattended personal belongings and valuables are at risk. We recommend you bring your passport and airline tickets in a dry bag on the kayak trip so that, in the unlikely event of evacuation, your guides can readily access these documents.

MEDICAL MATTERS

Medical Forms

Every trip participant must provide an accurately completed medical form.

Vaccinations

No statutory vaccinations are required for entry into Tonga. However, we require every participant to have a current tetanus vaccination and recommend vaccinations against hepatitis and typhoid

Dental

As Tonga's dental facilities are basic it is advisable to have a dental check-up before departure.

Dengue Fever

Dengue fever outbreaks can occur during the summer months (December-May) when the weather is hot and humid and when there is a high prevalence of mosquitoes. So long as our guests take sensible precautions the risk of exposure is minimal. Precautions to be taken include regularly applying insect repellent (containing DEET) and, where possible, avoiding sheltered areas where mosquitoes are more abundant than in windy areas. Other precautions include covering up as much as possible e.g. wearing long sleeved tops, socks, trousers etc.

Medication

Please advise us of any medication you are taking and any possible side effects. Bring an adequate supply of medication, as certain drugs are difficult to obtain in Tonga. Also consider giving half to your trip leader for safekeeping in case your supply gets lost or wet - swells or wind-waves may be encountered in the South Pacific. Most paddlers are not troubled by seasickness, but if this is of concern to you your doctor can recommend medication to help. Be sure to let us know if seasickness is a problem for you.

Medical Supplies

Although your guides will be carrying a comprehensive first aid kit, all tour participants are encouraged to bring a basic personal first aid kit to include the following items: :

- Medication (including pain relief & preventative drugs such as a mild anti-nausea drug)
- Antiseptic swabs and cream
- Anti-histamine cream (for insect bites)
- Antibiotic cream or powder (powder is best in the humid tropical climate)
- Fabric plasters (more waterproof than plastic plasters)
- Lip sunscreen
- General sunscreen (water resistant at least SPF15)
- Insect repellent

Hospitals

Vaiola Hospital in Tongatapu and Prince Wellington Ngu Hospital in Neiafu, Vava'u, are experienced with cuts, fractures, and tropical disorders. However, for most other conditions it is advisable to seek diagnosis and treatment in your own country.

PHOTOGRAPHY

Photographic opportunities abound in Tonga! Tongan people are very photogenic and enjoy having their photo taken (except when they are eating). Asking their permission first is a polite gesture. A zoom lens is handy especially for photographing whales. However, bear in mind that the humidity and salt water can damage camera lenses and electronics. For this reason, some prefer to leave their expensive camera at home and bring an inexpensive disposable or waterproof camera instead. If you do decide to bring an expensive camera, store it in a dry bag or waterproof case with silicon packs **and insure your camera.**

GEAR AND CLOTHING

As we are self-sufficient (i.e. we carry all food and equipment with us in the kayaks) it is important to keep gear to a minimum. Large dry bags, duffel bags and backpacks cannot be accommodated in the hatches. Please bring no more than two large (20L) dry bags; one for clothing, the other for miscellaneous items and optional sleeping bag; plus one small (10L) dry bag for items you need to access in the cockpit (e.g. wallet, documents, sun screen etc.) A mesh bag containing your snorkelling gear is additional to the above items. Nylon stuff sacks lined with heavy-duty rubbish bags are a more affordable option if you do not already have dry bags. However, a dry bag for the cockpit is essential. Camera and optical equipment should be waterproofed and insured.

We provide tents and mattresses. Lightweight cotton or quick-dry clothing is recommended for Tonga's warm tropical climate. Long-sleeved shirts with a collar offer good sun protection. *Lava-lavas* (2 metre wrap-around cloth) may be purchased in Tonga. It is a good idea to bring along two *lava-lavas*, one for wearing over shorts or a swimsuit when entering villages and a clean one for other occasions.

Biodegradable salt-water shampoo is available for purchase from Friendly Islands Kayak Company. Sleeping bags, blankets or sheets are not available. If you have any questions about clothing or equipment, consult your local canoe or outdoor equipment retailer or contact us. Any excess baggage can be left at our base.

PERSONAL EQUIPMENT LIST

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Passport <input type="checkbox"/> Travellers' cheques, small notes (pa'anga) <input type="checkbox"/> Basic first aid kit <input type="checkbox"/> Toiletries <input type="checkbox"/> Toilet paper (preferably unbleached) <input type="checkbox"/> Biodegradable salt water shampoo/soap <input type="checkbox"/> Sun screen (SPF30+) <input type="checkbox"/> Lip screen (SPF30+) <input type="checkbox"/> Insect repellent <input type="checkbox"/> Sun hat (stiff brimmed) with chin strap <input type="checkbox"/> Sunglasses (preferably polarized) with neck strap <input type="checkbox"/> Pack towel (viscose or polyester / polyamide) <input type="checkbox"/> Drink bottle (1-2 litres) <input type="checkbox"/> Cotton-lycra swimsuit, sports bra & briefs <input type="checkbox"/> Lightweight rain jacket with hood <input type="checkbox"/> Lightweight fleece jacket (i.e. Polartec 100) <input type="checkbox"/> Cotton/quick-dry T-shirts (long & short sleeved) <input type="checkbox"/> Quick dry shorts & pants <input type="checkbox"/> Calf-length skirt/dress <input type="checkbox"/> Lava-lava (can be purchased in Tonga) <input type="checkbox"/> Cotton socks & underwear (for duration of trip as no laundry facilities available on kayak tour) <input type="checkbox"/> Cotton bandanna, hankie <input type="checkbox"/> Sturdy sandals <input type="checkbox"/> Sleeping bag liner, and/or: <input type="checkbox"/> Summer weight sleeping bag/compact quilt or blanket (June-Sept) <input type="checkbox"/> Snorkelling gear (prescription lenses for mask) & mesh carry bag | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Up to 3 (2x 20L and 1x 10L) Nylon stuff sacks or dry bags for clothes & small items <input type="checkbox"/> Heavy-duty rubbish bags (for lining stuff sacks) <input type="checkbox"/> Waist pack <input type="checkbox"/> Ziploc bags (medium & large) <input type="checkbox"/> Flashlight/headlamp, spare batteries, lighter <p>Optional Items</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Binoculars</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Hand sanitizer, handy wipes</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Talcum powder and/or Vaseline (for preventing chafing)</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Camera, film, spare batteries</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Favourite snacks, drink crystals</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Fishing lures & hand line</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Pocket knife, sewing/repair kit</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Reading & writing materials</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Half wetsuit 3mm (June-Sept)</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Cycling gloves (without fingers)</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Reef shoes or old running shoes (for intertidal walks)</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Rubber sandals/thongs</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Clothes line & pegs</i> |
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PACKAGE COMPONENTS

Your trip includes the following services:

- Return airport transfers between Lupepau'u Airport (Vava'u) and package accommodation. A transfer surcharge applies for Mystic Sands or Tongan Beach Resort upgrades;
- Transfers between accommodation and activities;
- Two nights' accommodation (based on double occupancy) at *Hilltop Hotel or Port Wine Guesthouse or Harbour View Resort* (subject to availability). Optional upgrade to Mystic Sands or Tongan Beach Resort (subject to availability);
- A 45-minute orientation talk;
- Use of quality double and single fibreglass sea kayaks and accessories;
- Camping equipment including tents and mattresses;
- A 8-day kayak tour of the outer islands with professional guides (guide: guest ratio = 1:6);
- Snacks and 3 meals a day on the kayaking portion of the tour;
- A traditional 'umu feast with Polynesian singing and dancing in an island village, and;
- A farewell dinner at a local restaurant.

NON-INCLUSIVE SERVICES

The following services are not included in your trip package:

- International/Domestic Airfares
- Visa and passport fees
- Personal travel insurance
- Airport departure taxes
- Excess baggage charges
- Airport transfers that are not included in the above itinerary
- Accommodations that are not included in the above itinerary
- Single supplement fee
- Beverages and meals that are not included in the above itinerary
- Clothing, liquor, laundry, postage, medical expenses and any other expenses of a personal nature
- Expenses incurred as a result of delays due to inclement weather, delays of scheduled aircraft, logistical delays, and resultant changes to the itinerary
- Emergency evacuation charges
- Gratuities to guides

ITINERARY CHANGES AND/OR DELAYS

It is possible that route or itinerary changes and/or delays may become necessary for reasons of safety or enhancing the quality of the trip. These changes and/or delays could be due to inclement weather, acts of God, delayed transport, political or cultural considerations, government restrictions, participants' limitations, or any other cause. If our return from the kayak trip is delayed, Friendly Islands Kayak Company will continue to provide all camping and food needs in the outer islands. However, any additional expenses incurred by a trip participant such as meals, accommodation, prepaid airline tickets, fees for visas, etc. in connection with changes and/or delays to a route or itinerary shall be borne by the trip participant. If possible, ensure some degree of flexibility in your travel plans. A sense of adventure and tolerance for the unexpected are essential attributes when visiting developing nations such as Tonga where "Tonga Time" is synonymous with delays and waiting.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

Personal travel insurance is not included in the trip cost and is a pre-requisite for trip participation. We recommend you purchase a policy that includes airfare, trip cancellation (in particular cancellation owing to severe weather), and medical coverage.

READING REFERENCES

For a comprehensive reference list of recommended publications on the Kingdom of Tonga please visit our Web site: <http://www.fikco.com>

FINAL NOTE

There will undoubtedly be further communiqués from us in the months to come as the trip departure date draws closer. In the meantime, please do not hesitate to let us know your concerns, questions and plans.