

Information Sheet

Tonga



Tonga is about 775 kilometres south-east of Fiji, 320 kilometres north-east of Sydney and 1990 kilometres north-east of Auckland. It comprises some 170 islands (37 of which are inhabited) and covers some 425 kilometres from north to south.

The volcanic rises that have created not only the islands but the sea mounts, provide the perfect stepping off point for world class game fishing!

The tiny Kingdom of Tonga is a nation that has almost been forgotten by the modern world leaving Tonga as the last great unspoilt holiday destination of the South Pacific. This place is not a mass tourism destination, it is just Tonga – the only remaining Polynesian Kingdom in the world, the only nation in the Pacific never to be colonised.

CLIMATE: The weather is usually mild and warm, although nights can be cool. December to March is the wet season

GOVERNMENT: Tonga is a monarchy with His Majesty Kin Taufa'ahau Tupou IV as Head of State. Parliament consists of Ministers appointed by the King, representatives of noble families and representatives elected by the people. The capital is Nuku'alofa.

DRESS: It is illegal for any one to appear in public without a shirt. Brief shorts, bathing suits and bikinis are fine at the beach or poolside but frowned upon if worn in public. Casual attire is recommended for most occasions.

BUSINESS HOURS: Banks are normally open Monday to Friday 9am to 4pm and 8:30am to noon on Saturdays. Shops are usually open from 8am to 5pm Monday to Friday and till noon on Saturday.

FOOD: There are some tremendous restaurants in Tonga, a taste of traditional Tongan cuisine is available during hotel smorgasbords and feast nights. The Tongan National Centre has a feast on Tuesdays and Thursdays this is a must do for any visitor.

CUSTOMS & DUTY FREE: Two litres of liquor and two cartons of cigarettes are allowed duty free.

NIGHTLIFE: There are some lively bars in Nuku'alofa which go into the early hours of the morning; however on Saturdays all entertainment ends at midnight.

SUNDAYS: Tonga is devoutly Christian and Sunday activity to Sabbath observance laws. Shops are closed, most transport suspended and sport is not encouraged. Hotel restaurants do operate so that visitors can make excursions to offshore islands.

DEPARTURE TAX: There is a departure tax of \$T20 to be paid at the airport. The Tongan \$ is worth approximately 60 US cents.

SPORT & RECREATION: A Great variety of watersports are available including fishing, diving and sailing as well as many cultural experiences to be had. There are many places in the world where you can see blowholes, but in Tonga they go for miles – it's like the whole coastline is erupting. These are a definite must see!