

# The Fiji to Marshall Islands Compendium

A Compilation of Guidebook References and Cruising Reports

With Cruising Information on

Wallis, Futuna, Rotuma, Tuvalu (Funafuti), Kiribati (Tarawa)  
Nauru, Fanning, Christmas, and Manihiki Islands



*Tepuka Islet - Tuvalu*

*Peter Bennetts Lonely Planet Photographer © Copyright Lonely Planet Images 2011*

**IMPORTANT: USE ALL INFORMATION IN THIS DOCUMENT AT YOUR OWN RISK!!**

Rev 2024.2 – 20 November, 2024

We welcome updates/additions to this guide from those passing through!

Submit updates on anchorages, passages, yachtsmen & general services and activities.

It's easy to participate and will help other cruisers for years to come.

Email Soggy Paws at sherry –at- svsgogypaws –dot- com.

You can also contact us on Sailmail at WDD5182

The current home (and the most up to date) version of this document is found at

[www.svSoggyPaws.com/files](http://www.svSoggyPaws.com/files)

If you found it posted elsewhere, it might not be the most current version. Please check the above site for the most up to date copy, and remember...it will always be free!

## Revision Log

Many thanks to all who have contributed over the years!!

Rev	Date	Notes
2024.2	20-Nov-2024	Reorganization of the entire guide, lots of updates on Tuvalu, Kiribati, Wallis, Futuna, and Nauru by sv Sugar Shack. Full revamp of the weather section with updated URLs.
2024.1	18-June-2024	Updates on Wallis & Futuna from s/v Ariel
2023.2	05-August-2023	Update on Wallis from Lupina
2023.1	23-June-2023	Update on Tuvalu from Oh Joy II
2022.1	18-Sep-2022	Update on Wallis from Lucky Girl
2016.2	01-Nov-2016	Included comments from Moondance on their trip through Kiribati's eastern islands (Fanning, Christmas, Manihiki), on their way to Fiji from Hawaii
B.1	25-Jan-2016	Updates on Tarawa from Ariel IV
A.4a	20-Nov-2014	More from Radiance (Liberation Day at Butaritari)
A.4	18-Nov-2014	Updates from s/v Radiance
A.3	27-Oct-2013	Futuna run by Island Bound
A.2	10-Sep-2013	Minor corrections & editing. Comments from Streetcar about timing of the passage from Fiji
A.1	21-Mar-2013	Updated with more info from Westward II and Mr John VI
A.0	15-Mar-2013	Initial version, very rough.

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# 1 Introduction

We started creating compendiums as a way for s/v Soggy Paws and friends to organize notes and internet sources while we were in French Polynesia. Later, it became a way for us to pass on what we've learned to other cruisers for several other countries.

We have since created over 25 compendiums all the way across the Pacific and in to SE Asia. Including, Panama, Ecuador, French Polynesia, Cook / Samoa Islands, Tonga, Solomon's, Fiji, Micronesia, Marshall Islands, Hawaii, Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia, the Indian Ocean, and the Red Sea. Plus, we have received updates from cruisers since 2011 (please send us yours!).

If you haven't found our other 'Compendiums', they're free at [www.soggypaws.com/files](http://www.soggypaws.com/files). There are also links on that page to our satellite charts, track files, and anchorage waypoints in GPX format.

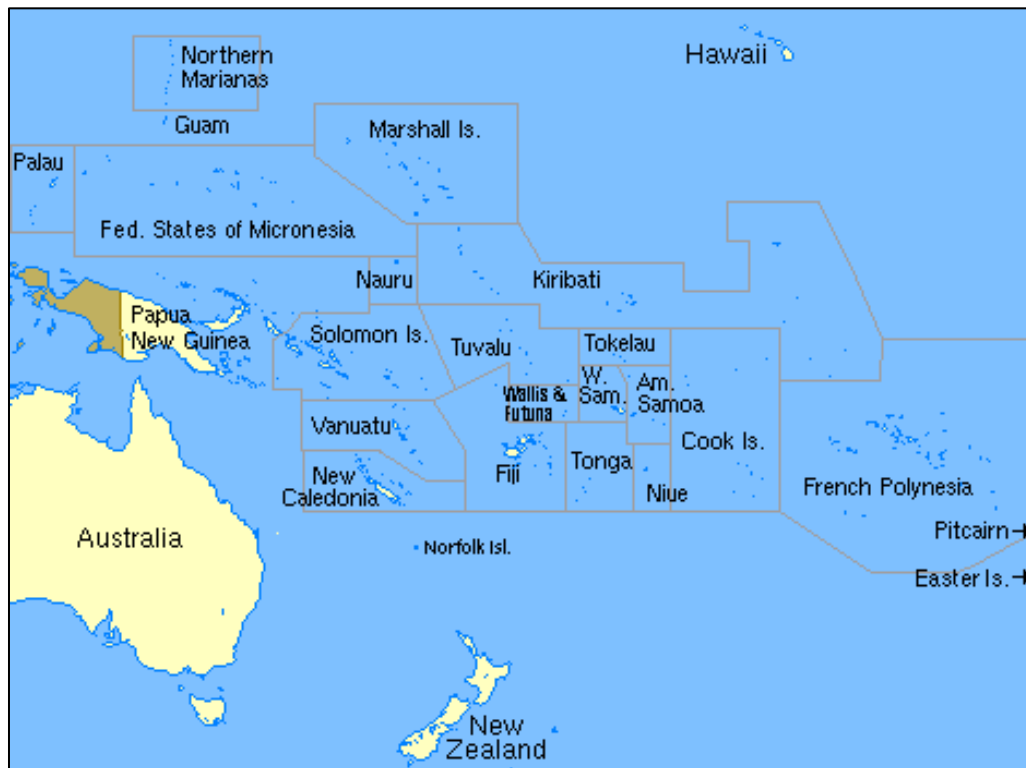
This is not intended to replace the guidebooks or charts, but to supplement out-of-date guides with recent cruiser first-hand reports, and fill in information on places that the guides don't cover.

This 'compendium' contains cruiser feedback from personal experiences, some website content, and information from our own experience. Source and date of information are noted.

## 1.1 Organization of the Guide

This guide is loosely organized from southeast to northwest - from Fiji to the Marshall Islands. Starting with Rotuma, Wallis & Futuna, Tuvalu, Kiribati, Nauru, Fanning Isl., Christmas Isl., and Manihiki Isl. This compendium does not include information on the Republic of Marshall Islands, as this country has its own Compendium.

Each country has its own information on passes, anchorages, formalities, and services.



## 1.2 Overview of the Area

### 1.3 Time Zone

The Time Zone in this region is +12 UTC. The same time zone as Fiji and it includes all of the islands on the way up to the Marshall Islands.

### 1.4 Weather

#### 1.4.1 General Weather Conditions

**Dec. 2015: Fiji to Tarawa:** Do not have any expectation for this trip, you will get what you get and can never tell from one day to the next and the Grib files we did not take the last days, what's the point? It was all the squalls that made it possible to sail and sometimes the wind was SE and the next one was NW, but the good thing we noticed that the windspeed never got over 20 knots in the squalls and we had full sails and made the most out of it!

The thing that was most frustrating was the confused seas, wind waves, swells, and other waves from four different directions that really slowed us down – both with sailing and the engine.

The current was not bad, perhaps 1 knot west going. – Ariel IV

**Aug. 2013:** I have been hearing from several boats in Fiji that they want to go north to Marshalls for cyclone season. But they are all saying that they need to leave in early September to get up there before the northerlies and north-easterlies set in.

I couldn't understand where they got this information from.

We went from Fiji to Marshalls and back between November and April 2012/13. As well as sailing the route at this particular time, we also did a lot of weather and climate research before leaving Fiji in order to make the best-informed decisions. I am definitely no expert but the situation is not as simple as Mr John's advice makes out (see his 2010 report below).

*Note: Streetcar has published a number of articles on Noonsite about this trip. – Streetcar*

**May 2013:** We transited this area over a two-week period, leaving Fiji in late April and arriving in Majuro in early May, with short stops at Funafuti and Tarawa. In general, the wind was light, except for a \*really windy\* period the last couple days on the leg from Tarawa to Majuro. Because we were on a schedule, we opted to press on in the light winds, vs waiting for steadier winds. We ended up motoring in zero wind for a total of 2-3 days to get where we wanted to go, mostly on the leg between Funafuti and Tarawa. – Soggy Paws

**Nov. 2010:** The Southeast Trade season extends from March to November. It is characterized by more or less steady trade winds blowing from ESE and little rainfall.

There is no actual doldrum period and no definite time of calms and squalls, although calms and cat's paws do occur quite often in June and July.

The average wind force during the day is about 12 knots, but occasionally a good fresh trade will blow up to 30 knots. After sunset the wind will fall to 3 to 6 knots, freshening again in the morning about 3 hours after sunrise.

Occasionally, a fresh breeze or squall will be experienced in the morning or evening.

The westerly season extends from November to March, or more precisely, westerlies very seldom occur before the beginning of November or after the end of March. It is not certain that a westerly will occur in any one year during these months, but there have been exceptional cases in which westerlies have lasted throughout the entire year.

In these exceptional cases, gales do not occur, winds are light, and the atmosphere is sultry. Such an unusual year might be encountered once in every decade.

There is some variation in the trades between the N and S Gilberts. In the N group, consisting of Apiang, the N part of Tarawa, Marakei, Butaritari Atoll (Makin Atoll), and Little Makin, the islands come under the influence of the Northeast Trades at certain times of the year.

Apparently, the border line of the trades is along this belt. In the S group the trades blow ESE, while in the N group from the E to just a little SE. In the westerly season, winds in the N group will blow ENE, with an occasional NE squall.

The **westerly gales** usually give 24 to 36 hours' notice of their approach. The first indication is a bank of high cirrus working up slowly from the W. This is followed by a coppery haze in the afternoon, and a swell from the W.

When these phenomena are observed it is fairly definite that a westerly gale will hit the island group within 36 hours.

The gale itself is heralded by a low bank of dark, nimbus clouds approaching on the W horizon, usually in the form of a horseshoe. The gale comes up fairly fast, and breaks with thunder, lightning, heavy rain, and a rush of wind. The gale may attain a rate of 50 miles per hour, and in localized instances in excess of 60 miles per hour. A very violent gale may last only 5 or 6 hours, but usually it is 3 days before the wind subsides.

The wind then starts chopping from the SW and NW. The sky breaks, the wind and swell subside, and within 24 hours normal conditions return.

The "line island" squall, which is also encountered in these waters, is not to be confused with the westerly gale. These squalls may occur in any season and generally strike toward sunset. Their approach is often heralded by a cloud banking up among the trade wind clouds to windward. This cloud then spreads and forms a dark horseshoe bend on the horizon. Heavy rain and a very strong gust of wind follows, with a force of about 50 mph at the heart of the squall. The squall may last for an hour, or perhaps an hour and a half, but it has no lasting effect and good weather soon follows.

The climate in the Gilbert Islands is warm to hot, and drier in the S part of the group than in the N. Except on calm days, which are somewhat oppressive, the heat is tempered by the trade winds. The nights are cool and pleasant. – Mr. John

#### **1.4.2 Weather Sources – With Onboard Email/SSB**

Besides the Winlink/Saildoc SSB or Sat Phone weather products described by Soggy Paws, there's not much out there that is available at sea these days without internet.

**Soggy Paws - 2012:** In our transit through this area, what we used most of the time for watching the weather were 3 files (via the free service Saildocs):

A spot forecast for the location we were in—every 6 hours for 10 days

send spot:17.2S,179.0W|10,3|PRMSL,WIND,WAVES,RAIN,LFTX

A 'local' GRIB file that gave a fairly detailed forecast for a reasonably small area for about 5 days, and included sea state information

send GFS:20S,15S,177W,177E|.5,.5|6,12..120|PRMSL,WIND,HTSGW,WVDIR,RAIN

A 'wide range' GRIB that watched conditions approaching well to the west and south of us. The area we request while in transit was 20N-20S,160E-170W on a 3x3 grid, for the next 10 days. This is about a 25K GRIB file. This provided a good long range forecast.

send GFS:20N,20S,160E,170W|3,3|0,12..240|PRMSL,WIND,RAIN

During times of tropical activity, we also found these sources useful for additional perspective

<https://www.metoc.navy.mil/jtwc/products/abpwweb.txt> This covers the western north pacific and the south pacific weather.

Nearing Majuro, this might be helpful:

<http://weather.noaa.gov/cgi-bin/fmtbltn.pl?file=forecasts/marine/coastal/pm/pmz181.txt>

send FZPN40.PHFO

send pmz181

The following sources of weather useful while away from internet in this area

### **New Zealand Weather Faxes - SW Pacific**

After decades of operation, MetService retired its Radiofax broadcast service on 1 July 2023.

The MetService isobaric mean sea level analysis and prognosis charts that were transmitted through Radiofax continue to be produced and are available on the MetService website

<https://www.metservice.com/maps-radar/surface-pressure/southwest-pacific>

also on a low bandwidth page:

<https://www.metservice.com/maps-radar/maps/southwest-pacific-low-bandwidth>

which is designed for users with more limited or paid data connections (such as via satellite) to minimize download size and cost.

You can get the Surface Analysis, for example, using this Saildocs request

send <https://www.metservice.com/mobile/swPacificCharts/analysis/latest>

and a 30 Hour Forecast:

send <https://www.metservice.com/mobile/swPacificCharts/prognosis-H30>

### **Hawaii Weather Faxes - Western Pacific**

UTC TIMES Product

Coverage Area

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0535/1735	CYCLONE DANGER AREA	EQ-40N, 80W-170E
0555/1755	STREAMLINE ANALYSIS	30S-30N, 110W-130E
0615/1815	SURFACE ANALYSIS	EQ-50N, 110W-130E
0635/1835	EAST PACIFIC IR SAT IMAGE	05S-55N, 110W-155E
0649/1849	SW PACIFIC IR SAT IMAGE	40S-05N, 130W-165E
0701/1901	24HR SURFACE FORECAST	30S-50N, 110W-130E
0714/1914	48HR SURFACE FORECAST	30S-50N, 110W-130E
0727/1927	72HR SURFACE FORECAST	30S-50N, 110W-130E
0740/1940	WIND/WAVE ANALYSIS	30S-30N, 110W-130E
0753/1953	24HR WIND/WAVE FORECAST	30S-30N, 110W-130E
0943/2143	TROPICAL GOES IR SAT IMAGE	05N-32N, EAST OF 130W
0954/2154	TROPICAL SURFACE ANALYSIS	20S-30N, EAST OF 145W
1008/2208	24HR TROPICAL WIND/WAVE FCST	20S-30N, EAST OF 145W
1042/2242	CYCLONE DANGER AREA	EQ-40N, 80W-170E
1102/2302	48HR WIND/WAVE FORECAST	30S-30N, 110W-130E
1115/2315	72HR WIND/WAVE FORECAST	30S-30N, 110W-130E
1128/2328	SEA SURFACE TEMPS	EQ-55N, 110W-160E
1141/2341	rebcast 24HR WIND/WAVE FCST	30S-30N, 110W-130E
1154/2354	STREAMLINE ANALYSIS	30S-30N, 110W-130E
1214/0014	SURFACE ANALYSIS	EQ-50N, 110W-130E
1234/0034	EAST PACIFIC IR SAT IMAGE	05S-55N, 110W-155E
1248/0048	SW PACIFIC IR SAT IMAGE	40S-05N, 130W-165E
1300/0100	SCHEDULE PART I	120/576
1320/0120	SCHEDULE PART II	120/576
1340/0140	SYMBOLS OR PRODUCT NOTICE BULLETIN	120/576
1400/0200	24HR TROP SURFACE FORECAST	20S-30N, EAST OF 145W



1410/0210	48HR TROP SURFACE FORECAST	20S-30N, EAST OF 145W
1420/0220	72HR TROP SURFACE FORECAST	20S-30N, EAST OF 145W
1430/0230	48/72HR TROPICAL WAVE/SWELL	20S-30N, EAST OF 145W
1440/0240	TROPICAL SEA STATE ANALYSIS	20S-30N, EAST OF 145W
1450/0250	rebroadcast 24HR WIND/WAVE FORECASTS	20S-30N, EAST OF 145W
1500/0300	48HR TROPICAL WIND/WAVE FORECAST	20S-30N, EAST OF 145W
1510/0310	72HR TROPICAL WIND/WAVE FORECAST	20S-30N, EAST OF 145W
1556/0356	TROPICAL SURFACE ANALYSIS	20S-30N, EAST OF 145W

Assigned frequencies 9982.5, 11090 and 16135 kHz

Select a carrier frequency 1.9 kHz below those listed when using a single sideband radio in the USB mode to receive these broadcasts.

### On the Web

The full Hawaii schedule is available as a text email via Saildocs or online at <https://www.weather.gov/media/marine/hfhi.txt>

The Streamline is available at this URL: <https://www.weather.gov/images/hfo/graphics/stream.gif>

A black and white satellite picture: <https://tgftp.nws.noaa.gov/fax/evpz11.jpg>

### Getting the Hawaii Faxes via Email using Saildocs

send <https://tgftp.nws.noaa.gov/fax/xxxx> where xxxx is one of the following files.

Example:

send <https://tgftp.nws.noaa.gov/fax/QYFA99.TIF> returns the Tropical Surface Analysis.

Capitalization MATTERS! Here are the rest of the likely products you might want in this area.

PJFB10.TIF - Pacific Wind/Wave Analysis 30S-30N, 110W-130E (Most Current)

PWFE11.TIF - 24HR Pacific Wind/Wave Forecast 30S-30N, 110W-130E (Most Current)

PJFI10.TIF - 48HR Pacific Wind/Wave Forecast 30S-30N, 110W-130E (Most Current)

PWFA11.TIF - Pacific Streamline Analysis 30S-30N, 110W-130E (Most Current)

QYFA99.TIF - Tropical Surface Analysis 40S-40N, 100W-120E (Most Current)

PBFA11.TIF - Significant Cloud Features 30S-50N, 110W-160E (Most Current)

PYFE11.TIF - 24HR Pacific Surface Forecast 30S-50N 110W-130E (Most Current)

PYFI11.TIF - 48HR Pacific Surface Forecast 30S-50N 110W-130E (Most Current)

Note: To get any of these via internet directly, prefix the product above with

If you have trouble viewing or downloading as TIF file, try changing the .TIF to .GIF

For a printable listing of current Pacific "Fax" products

<https://www.weather.gov/media/marine/hfhi.txt>

For an internet listing with links to all the products possible

<https://www.weather.gov/marine/hawaii>

### 1.4.3 Weather Sources – Voice

**Shellback Net** on 8161.0 khz USB at 2100 Zulu. This net covers cruisers heading west across Micronesia. – Works best North of the equator

The **Yokwe Net** operates out of Majuro, and covers cruisers in the Marshall Islands. It operates at 0745 Local time (+12 GMT), on 6.224 SSB. There is no daily weather forecast done, but if you need

it periodically, I'm sure someone will help out. Also, it is very helpful hearing the various stations report their current conditions.

**Gulf Harbor Radio: South of the Equator:** David Sapiane and Patricia on s/v Chameleon run Gulf Harbor Radio on at 1915 UTC on 8752 (alternate freq. 8779, and last alternate 8297). Check for latest times and frequencies here: <https://www.ghradio.co.nz/> They also do a Livestream, if you have onboard Internet.

#### **1.4.4 Weather Sources – Internet**

Soggy Paws has compiled a bunch of specific South Pacific weather links on their website. These are mainly for French Polynesia, westward to NZ, and northward to Hawaii. These are all the government office forecast products that I have found to be useful. (and a few non-govt sites)

##### **Fiji Met Service**

Home Page: <http://www.met.gov.fj/>

Morning Surface Map: [http://www.met.gov.fj/aifs\\_prods/0992.jpg](http://www.met.gov.fj/aifs_prods/0992.jpg)

Daily Forecast (land): [http://www.met.gov.fj/aifs\\_prods/10040.txt](http://www.met.gov.fj/aifs_prods/10040.txt)

##### **New Zealand Met**

Their “low bandwidth” page with current Surface Analysis and Surface Forecast Series (30, 48, 72H)

<https://www.metservice.com/maps-radar/maps/southwest-pacific-low-bandwidth>

These are great maps in small (PNG) format--about 16K per map. But not easily downloadable via email (appears to be no fixed product name for the graphics, unlike other offices' websites).

##### **NOAA Charts in Color from Hawaii**

Though these are highlighted in color (much easier reading), they are small files, only about 30K each.

Current Streamline and Streamline Loop:

<https://www.weather.gov/images/hfo/graphics/stream.gif>

<https://www.weather.gov/images/hfo/graphics/streamloop.gif>

<https://www.weather.gov/images/hfo/graphics/npac.gif>

24, 48, 72 Hr SFC Prog for Entire Pacific

<https://www.weather.gov/images/hfo/graphics/24hrsfcp prog.gif>

<https://www.weather.gov/images/hfo/graphics/48hrsfcp prog.gif>

<https://www.weather.gov/images/hfo/graphics/72hrsfcp prog.gif>

Full List of Hawaii Marine Weather Products:

<https://www.weather.gov/marine/hawaii>

##### **Satellite Pictures**

For a really nice still color Sat picture of the SW Pacific, use this link.

<https://www.ospo.noaa.gov/products/imagery/nohemi.html#set2-4>

For an animated Sat picture,

In the West Central Pacific area, click on the Loop link under “Enhanced Infrared”

##### **Bob McDavitt's Weekly Weathergram**

<http://weathergram.blogspot.com>

Mostly covers the South Pacific.

### **1.4.5 Tropical Weather (Dec-April)**

**2012:** We only experienced one tropical season in the SW Pacific. So we don't really know enough to know whether our experience is typical or not. But here's what we got.

The official tropical season runs 1 Dec - 30 Apr. But the height of the activity seems to be 15-Jan through 15-March. (However, Dec 15, 2012 Cyclone Evan went from Samoa to the west coast of Viti Levu and hit Viti Levu as a Category 5 storm).

From about Jan 15, the SPCZ descended on us, and lay right along a line from the Solomans down across Fiji and down to Tonga. The wind in Fiji was NW and cloudy/rainy for weeks on end. And a new tropical low spawned in the NW and came towards Fiji about once a week. Some of lows have been just squally, one or two turned into 'Named Storms' and got pretty violent. At least one popped up out of a blob of rain over Fiji and built into a cyclone between midnight and 6am (mostly affecting Tonga, not Fiji), and was on top of Neiafu by 7am--with no warning whatsoever. This was right as an MJO peak was passing over us. **So when Bob McDavitt starts talking about MJO's, pay attention.**

For updates on the current MJO: [www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/precip/CWlink/MJO/mjo.shtml](http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/precip/CWlink/MJO/mjo.shtml)

The main cyclone forecasting in our area is handled by Fiji. Fiji is not like the US National Weather Service. The frequency of bulletins is not very good, and they don't forecast much more than about 24 hours in the future.

If the tropical system drops below 25S, Fiji stops reporting on it, and Wellington, NZ, picks it up (but lackadaisically). We had one system that walked along 25S, and it seemed neither weather center wanted to take responsibility for it.

The US Joint Typhoon Warning Center will have a graphic and text forecast out for 120 hours if there is an active system: <https://www.metoc.navy.mil/jtwc/jtwc.html>

This is the text forecast for both the Western N Pac and the Western S Pac.

<https://www.metoc.navy.mil/jtwc/products/abpwweb.txt>

You can then request this from Saildocs by requesting: send (and the link)

This is the URL in that Sailmail weather product:

### **1.4.6 Understanding the South Pacific Weather Patterns**

Several really good sources of instructional material on South Pacific weather exist.

Bob McDavitt's "Mariner's Met Pack for the Southwest Pacific" ISBN 1-877197-08-04 published by Captain Teach Press, Auckland, NZ. Though Bob is located in NZ and his weather focus is mainly the western portion of the South Pacific, his instruction manual covers a lot of useful information for the South Pacific in general. It can now be downloaded as PDF files from

<https://about.metservice.com/our-company/learning-centre/mariners-met-pack/>

Jim Corenmans "Letters from the South Pacific" originally published in the late 1990's in Latitude 38 Magazine. Copies of this series of articles are floating around among boaters, and might be found on Latitude 38's website. Jim had a great article on understanding South Pacific weather that is still really helpful to newbies entering French Polynesia.

Download from here: <http://svsoggypaws.com/files/index.htm>

David Sapiane's Weather for the Yachtsman. I downloaded this document from the Pangolin site:

<https://www.ghradio.co.nz/weather.html>

It is an 11-page Word document dated June 2008, with a bunch of good information on terminology and understanding weather for the South Pacific.

The Hacking Family has a great circumnavigation website, and their South Pacific weather page is here:

[http://hackingfamily.com/Cruise\\_Info/Pacific/SPacific\\_Weather.htm](http://hackingfamily.com/Cruise_Info/Pacific/SPacific_Weather.htm)

### **1.4.7 Professional Weather Routing**

Various cruisers have used the following professional weather routers. It is best to reach out to each professional with your specific requirements and passage plans to see who would be the best fit for you, your boat, and your passage.

- John Martin, +64.27.242.1088 (tel and WhatsApp), [john@sailsouthpacific.com](mailto:john@sailsouthpacific.com)
- Bob McDavitt is a familiar name to those who have crossed the South Pacific. Though his specialty is the South Pacific, he might agree to do routing in the NW Pacific. See contact information on his website at [www.metbob.com/](http://www.metbob.com/). However, my recommendation would be to use a weather router familiar with the North Pacific.
- Rick Shema, [www.weatherguy.com](http://www.weatherguy.com), +1.866.882.9949, [rick@weatherguy.com](mailto:rick@weatherguy.com)
- Ken McKinley at [www.locusweather.com](http://www.locusweather.com) (Soggy Paws used him for Easter Island to French Polynesia)
- Bruce Buckley (may be retiring end of 2024), [brucetheweatherman@gmail.com](mailto:brucetheweatherman@gmail.com) (Cruisers used him from French Polynesia to Hawaii)
- Chris Parker, <https://www.mwxc.com/>, is a legend in the Caribbean, has recently done weather routing for boats crossing the Indian Ocean. Ask him if he'd route for you.

### **1.4.8 Tsunami Information**

The entire Pacific Basin is subject to tsunamis. Lately, four significant tsunamis, which have affected cruising locations, have happened: American Samoa and Tonga in 2009, South America, Galapagos & Panama in 2010, Hawaii & Mexico in 2011, Tonga in 2023.

The tsunamis originate in various locations, but the worst origination locations were Japan and Chile, however, many 'tremors' happen in these locations that do not cause widespread tsunamis.

The US Tsunami Warning Center website is located here: <https://www.tsunami.gov/> and also check <https://tsunami.ioc.unesco.org/en/pacific> (scroll down and bookmark the Japanese tsunami site)

If you have onboard email, it is a good idea to subscribe to tsunami warning emails while you are in the Pacific, which you can do on the above tsunami.gov website. It might be useful to first subscribe from your internet email for a little while, to understand what messages might be coming your way, and how often, before you chance clogging up your onboard email.

## **1.5 Communications**

### **1.5.1 VHF**

**General VHF Advice that applies to all areas:** Be aware that on high power, a good VHF will transmit 25 miles line of sight. So, if you are only doing within-anchorage communications, switch to low power. On the flip side, if you are trying to call across island, or to the next island, use high power, and turn your squelch down. Make sure you are aware which channels are automatic low power (ie 17, 67 on some radios), and stay away from the low-power channels for long distance calls.

Though widely spaced in channel number, channels 16, 18, and 68 are very close to each other in frequency. Most VHF antennas are 'tuned' for channel 16, so long distance communications will work best on 16, 18 or 68. Conversely, in a crowded anchorage, transmission on high power on channel 18 or 68 may 'bleed' over to channel 16 (and almost any other channel, if you're close enough). You don't need high power to talk to the boat next to you, so turn your radio to Low Power!!

Also be aware that some channels that Americans use frequently are 'duplex' channels in International mode. So, for example, you may have trouble communicating with a European boat, or an American boat whose radio is in International mode, on Channel 18. (see any VHF guide for the full list of international and US channels and frequencies, but any US channel designated 'a', like 18a, 22a, etc will cause trouble with VHF's in international mode).

Make sure you ask in each port what the local channels are--both so you know how to reach someone ashore and so you know not to use those channels for your off-channel conversations.

### 1.5.2 SSB Radio Nets

**Gulf Harbor Radio:** David Sapiane and Patricia on s/v Chameleon run Gulf Harbor Radio. On at 1915 UTC on 8752 SSB (alternate frequencies: 8779 and 8297)

The **Yokwe Net** operates out of Majuro, and covers cruisers in the Marshall Islands and surrounding areas. It operates daily at 0745 Local time (+12 GMT), on 6.224 USB. It often is short so be sure to tune in a minute or two before 0745. Purpose is for vessels underway coming to/from RMI and sailing between the outer islands. It is also used as a network between cruisers.

There is also the "**Shellback Net**" on 8161.0 khz USB at 2100 Zulu. This net covers cruisers heading west across Micronesia. *(Note, as of Feb 17, 2014, this net was moving to 2200Z, as the bulk of the net participants moved west toward Palau, which is 3 hours earlier than Majuro time).*

**Pacific Seafarer's Net.** If you're a ham, for longer passages. This is also a good frequency to have saved in case of emergency—the Hams on the PacSea net will move heaven and earth to help any boat with a true emergency—ham operator or not. Even when there is no net going on this frequency, there are often hams monitoring the frequency for emergency traffic.

The Pacsea net operates on 14,300 Khz USB at 0300 UTC. They start with a 'warmup session' at 0300, where you can call in and chat, and maybe hook up with someone who will make a phone call to the US for you. They start calling boats on roll call at 0330, and when they finish (30-60 minutes later), they call for boats getting ready to go on passage to get on the list for the next day's net.

The net control is usually in Hawaii, but there are always relay stations on both sides of the Pacific to help with weaker signals. Website: [www.pacseanet.blogspot.com](http://www.pacseanet.blogspot.com)

It is always a good idea to listen first when checking in on a structured net so that you get the rhythm of the net before calling in. You can call in for a radio check during the warmup period, or just after the formal net ends.

## 1.6 Cruising Information Sources

### 1.6.1 Local Websites

Here are some websites you should visit when you are looking for information on this area:

[Rotuma Tourism](#)

[Wallis & Futuna Tourism](#)

[Wallis & Futuna Tourism – 2<sup>nd</sup> site](#)

[Tuvalu Tourism](#)

[Kiribati Tourism Website](#)

### 1.6.2 Noonsite

[www.noonsite.com](http://www.noonsite.com)

The ultimate Cruising Planning Tool. Made possible by YOUR contributions. View 3 countries per month for free. For complete and total access membership is required at \$2.99/month. They also offer a premium service for \$6.99/month with more options.

### **1.6.3 Seven Seas Cruising Association**

[www.scca.org](http://www.scca.org)

The SSCA is a world-wide organization for cruisers whose primary function is to exchange information about cruising destinations. They have a monthly publication that is mostly letters from cruisers about the areas they are cruising. They also have a good website and a well-attended bulletin board. Membership is reasonable, and monthly publications are indexed, back issues are available electronically.

### **1.6.4 Ocean Cruising Club**

<http://oceancruisingclub.org>

The OCC is a world-wide organization for cruisers whose primary function is to exchange information about cruising destinations. They have a website and bi-annual publication that is mostly letters from cruisers about the areas they are cruising. Membership is reasonable, and the publication is available electronically. Indexed back issues are also available electronically.

### **1.6.5 Pacific Puddle Jump Yahoo Group**

[www.pacificpuddlejump.com](http://www.pacificpuddlejump.com)

This group is where the people gathering in South and Central America meet to share information about crossing the big puddle. A good source of information, but not very organized, and it can be full of bloat from people who ask the same questions without doing any research of their own.

You must be a member to read or post anything on this site, but if you are getting ready for a Pacific crossing, it is well worth a few minutes to sign up for Groups IO and then sign up for this group. Explore Files and Links pages, for great information.

### **1.6.6 Cruiser Reports**

We are indebted to the people and organizations that have documented their experiences and shared them with us. We can't do this alone. We rely on cruisers sharing updated information. So, please be sure to document and email us your notes at [sherry@svsoggypaws.com](mailto:sherry@svsoggypaws.com).

Every section is a mix of several sources. For most of the earlier sources, we have gleaned the information off the internet (cruiser's websites, blogs, and online forum postings) or out of a Seven Seas Cruising Association bulletin. For the sources reported below, much of the info came directly from cruising friends, helping to round out the information in our various Compendiums.

A few details about the boats are included, so you can assess what 'a foot under the keel' means, for example.

**sv Sugar Shack (2024):** Sv Sugar Shack is a 47' Catana catamaran: 15m long, 7.7m wide, 1.3m draft. Matt and Christine sailed from Turkey to the Caribbean, thru the Panama Canal and across the Pacific. sv Sugar Shack was instrumental in the reorganization and update of this guide, Marshall Islands, Vanuatu, Fiji, Tonga, and French Polynesia Compendiums in 2019-2024. Sugar Shack spent Sept.2024-April 2025 in the Marshall Islands. [www.svSugarShack.com](http://www.svSugarShack.com)

**Naked Lunch (2024)** Naked Lunch is a 46' custom steel sloop. 46' long, 3meter draft, 26 tons.

**Oh Joy II (2023):** Contributed by Captain Harry Pattison and First Mate Joy Archer, sailing aboard Oh Joy II, a 44' Mason monohull with a draft of 6.5 feet. Home port Bainbridge Island, Washington, USA.

**Ariel IV (2015):** Ariel IV made the trip from Fiji to Kiribati in late 2015. [www.arielfyra.se](http://www.arielfyra.se)

**Radiance (2013):** Travelled from Vanuatu to Kiribati. [www.sailblogs.com/member/thebigblue/](http://www.sailblogs.com/member/thebigblue/)

**Westward II (2012/2013):** Westward II left Fiji in late 2012, and made their way north to Majuro via Rotuma, Funafuti, Tarawa and Abiang.

**Soggy Paws (2013):** Soggy Paws left in Fiji in April 2013 and made the trip north rather quickly. Soggy Paws is a CSY 44, a 44' monohull with a 5.5' draft. <http://svsoggypaws.blogspot.com>

**Downtime (2012):** <http://downtimecat.blogspot.com>

**Java (2011):** Java is a catamaran owned by Evan with crew Donna. They have crisscrossed this area of the Pacific, stopping in out-of-the-way places. They did the route Samoa-Wallis-Fiji in 2011, and were kind enough to email us a report.

**Savannah (2011):** <http://savannahsails.blogspot.com/>

**Brick House (2010-2011):** Brick House is a Valiant 40. They left Fiji to head north in October 2010, and started back down from the Marshalls to Vanuatu via Kiribati in April 2011. In May, somewhere south of Tarawa, they were dismayed, and ended up limping back to Majuro to make repairs. [www.sailblogs.com/member/brickhouse/](http://www.sailblogs.com/member/brickhouse/)

**Mr John VI (2010-2011):** Mr. John IV is a Bristol 35.5 with a fairly shallow draft (for a monohull). He has a tendency to want to anchor in shallow water, so if you have boat with a draft over about 5'.

These comments came from a PDF file called Mr John's Guide to Kiribati and from Mr John's blog.

John and Paula Wolstenholme have conveniently left a trail of similar documents in their wake as they crossed the Pacific, which we have been gratefully plagiarizing since. The "Mr. John's Guides" provide informative, detailed information from a veteran cruiser.

A compendium of his own experience in 1987 and revisiting again in 2010/11, and shared experiences from other yachts. Useful guide with some sketch charts which are not included here.

**Learnativity (2010):** <http://learnativity.typepad.com/>

**Tackless II (2007):** Tackless II is a CSY 44 shoal draft, owned by Don and Gwen. They made a Customs Reset Run to Futuna from Savusavu.

## **1.7 Printed Sources**

We are consciously NOT duplicating any printed, copyrighted information here. It takes a lot of effort AND money to publish a cruising guide, and we firmly believe that if it is still in print, you should BUY it, not steal it (in electronic form).

### **1.7.1 The Pacific Crossing Guide – RCC Pilotage Foundation**

The Pacific Crossing Guide, published by the Royal Cruising Club Pilotage Foundation in association with the Ocean Cruising Club. Originally edited by Michael Pocock, and Revised by Ros Hogbin. The 4<sup>th</sup> edition can be purchased at [Bloomsbury Publishing](http://www.bloomsbury.com) and the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition on [Amazon](http://www.amazon.com).

### **1.7.2 Landfalls of Paradise – Earl Hinz**

Landfalls of Paradise, Earl Hinz, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, 1999, University of Hawaii Press. On [Amazon](http://www.amazon.com).

### **1.7.3 The Sex Lives of Cannibals**

Worth a read, if you plan to pass through Kiribati. From Amazon.com "*The Sex Lives of Cannibals tells the hilarious story of what happens when Troost discovers that Tarawa is not the island paradise he dreamed of. Falling into one amusing misadventure after another, Troost struggles through relentless, stifling heat, a variety of deadly bacteria, polluted seas, toxic fish—all in a country where the only music to be heard for miles around is "La Macarena." He and his stalwart girlfriend Sylvia spend the next two years battling incompetent government officials, alarmingly large critters, erratic electricity, and a paucity of food options (including the Great Beer Crisis); and contending with a bizarre cast of local characters, including "Half-Dead Fred" and the self-proclaimed Poet Laureate of Tarawa (a British drunkard who's never written a poem in his life).*" [Amazon Link to Kindle Edition](http://www.amazon.com)

## 2 Passage Reports

### 2.1 *Fiji to Rotuma*

**Sept. 2010:** Not a breath of wind so motored my way through the circuitous path through all the many coral heads on the west side of Malolo Island and out of its reef at the north end.

Once clear of Malolo the wind and seas started to build and an hour later I was sailing close hauled in about 18 knots of wind and had a wonderful ride straight north past the Yasawa Group. Made my way along the east side of Waya and turned NW to Porpoise Shoals where I there was enough of a pass to get outside the main reefs around Fiji. It was getting late so I added the motor to push up to about 7.5 knots to be sure we were clearing the pass and the shoals before the sun set.

Rotuma is literally due north so we are on a heading of 000 degrees. The wind has some north in it coming at about ENE to even NE at times so makes it a close-hauled sail and right on the limits of wind angle at about 50-60 degrees over the starboard bow. However, I put up the stay sail which is a relatively small sail that is hanked onto the inner forestay and adds both some more sail area as well as streamlining the wind flowing over the front of the jib on one side and the back of the main on the other. At least that's my theory and it seems to help with both speed and balance to the sail plan.

The wind and seas continued to build slowly all evening and I rolled in one reef just before 9pm to make things a bit more comfortable and because the wind is gusting up to 25+ knots at times.

It was a very fast sail all night long with speeds at time up over 7kts but probably averaging 5-6kts. Typically, the SPCZ and its larger cousin the ITCZ (Inter Tropical Convergence Zone) has very unsettled and squally weather within it along with lots of calms as the two weather patterns bump up against each other.

Day 2 – The wind has been up and down quite a bit and so too therefore have been the sails. I've also been going through quite a few squalls and rain cells.

We have settled back into a slow silent slide through the sea as the wind has dropped down to 5-10 knots from the east putting it right on our beam (side).

Day 3 - The last 24 hours of my passage to Rotuma were much faster than expected with the wind being much more than forecast and so I ended up with three reefs in both my main sail and jib as I reduced my sail area down to mere hankies to get my SOG below 4 knots so that I would arrive after first light and with the sun high enough in the sky for the visual navigation.

So, the scene is that I'm about 10nm south of Rotuma Island at about 5am. The wind has finally clocked around south to be coming from a bit more characteristic SSE to SE direction putting it just aft of my beam coming over the starboard quarter at about 100-120 degrees, the main and jib are rolled down to mere bandanas of their former selves and the sea has dropped down to about 1m swells, all making for a blissfully quiet and calm sail north.

Looking intently north, perhaps aided by a bit of imagination and knowing what lies ahead based on my charts, I can just start to make out the black jagged outline of Rotuma and several smaller surrounding islands against the ever-lightening sky. – Learnativity

### 2.2 *Savusavu, Fiji to Futuna, Tuvalu and Back*

This is a fairly common run for long-stayers in Fiji who need to get their boat or themselves out of Fiji due to Customs or Immigration regulations. A number of boats do this trip every year.

**Oct. 2013:** The weather window we had been waiting for never really appeared. We had hoped to have south winds which would allow us to sail the 236 miles but finally settled for little or no winds and a passage that promised to be mostly a motor sail. No wind and motoring is far better than winds on our nose and miles of beating into a rolling sea.

Thirty hours after leaving Savusavu we arrived at Futuna.



The whole trip so far had been dry and hot and that's what we got going back. Right up until I heard Bill say "Kat, come up on deck and look at this sky." It was nearly six pm and we had just clearing the Somosomo straight -the reefiest part of the six hundred plus mile passage. Ahead of us was a bank of black clouds that spread completely across the skyline. At the bottom of the line of ink black clouds was a strip of lighter color clouds that were rolling and boiling. The storm front was still many miles away but within moments the seas were up and Island Bound was rocking and rolling in short steep wind waves. By the time we got our dodger/bimini side and door pieces in place the rain drops were falling and suddenly we were in some of the worst seas we have ever sailed through. Luckily the winds were not too bad –an easy 25 knots with gusts up into the mid or even high thirties. The rain was fierce and the seas were like a washing machine. We were suddenly sailing into the night rolling and plunging and trying our best to stay dry.

In the end out of a sixty hour passage the last 12 were pretty uncomfortable. Not scary because the winds didn't get too bad but rough and wet and not much fun. It was too rough to really sleep or move about the boat so by the time we hove too outside of Savusavu to wait for sunrise we were both completely exhausted. Our concern as we sailed into this weather front had been for the reefs between us and Savusavu and the lack of anywhere safe to stop and wait out the weather.

As uncomfortable as the end of our passage, I was glad we had picked the weather window we had. Out here you can run but you just can't hide. – Island Bound

**Aug. 2007:** Going to Futuna. In some ways, it was a very good passage. We wanted as little wind as possible on our nose as we went eastward past Viani Bay, through the Somosomo straights, and northward out through the scattered garden of reefs and atolls that litter Fiji's northern reaches. The sky was crystal clear, and our friend Bill was treated to his first green flash at sunset.

As night closed in and we were motoring anyway, we made a dogleg to the east below Naelelevu atoll, to gain some easting should the trade winds ever return. I came up at 0130 to relieve Bill of his watch and round onto our final NNE leg to Futuna, there was enough wind to set the genoa. I thought we might just sail this way the rest of the 153 miles. It lasted barely an hour.

Clouds rolled in along with rain showers, and the wind went away. This cycle repeated itself most of the night, although we had some decent sailing and motor-sailing stints during the day Sunday.

Sunday night the sky got more seriously overcast, and although the wind picked up, it picked up to 20+ and backed in the NE, too close for old T2 to sail on course. So, on comes the engine yet again. Now, I know the sailors among are wondering why we don't tack our way upwind. Well, there's a reason this boat got her name. She just doesn't sail close enough to the wind to make much headway without an engine. We end up sailing back and forth pretty near the same stretch of water.

So, despite the wind blowing 15-20 all night, we had to motor, and the ride was pretty bouncy in the confused swell. At 15 miles out, we picked up the bright lighthouse from Futuna, which, no matter how many fancy electronics you have, is a reassuring moment, the there's nothing to match the silhouettes of your destination -- in this case the islands of Futuna and its neighbor Alofi – when it appears on the horizon with dawn and breaking clouds behind it.

**Back to Fiji:** After a roly night in Futuna, we were ready to leave Futuna Friday morning, even though it meant that we'd be arriving back into Fiji on the weekend, and so would be subject to their stiff overtime charges. Believe me, after two bad nights, the overtime fees sounded cheap!

Of course, first we had to get there. We had decent conditions starting out: sunny blue sky, puffy white clouds and a nice wind of about 18 knots sending us bounding over the waves at 6-7 knots.

The good news is the wind stayed just far enough to the east that we could actually sail. The bad news is that wind was so high – 25-30 sustained – that we could carry no more than staysail and triple-reefed main, and the big seas whipped up by the wind would intermittently stop and drop the boat into a trough. It was not pleasant sailing.

The next day we ventured a handkerchief of head sail and managed to pick up our speed again. Our goal for the day was to get to and through the maze of reefs scattered across the way to the Somosomo straights by passing directly between Vetaua Island and the west side of Nagelelevu Atoll. But of course, the wind unhelpfully veered just enough more south, that our course over ground got pushed to starboard complicating that plan. To get back east, we would have to tack.

Feeling rather chuffed (hard to beat Brit expression for feeling smugly pleased with oneself) by our successful contravention of the problem, we continued on, tacking twice to be able to enter the reef system where we wanted. We made our final turn southward just about sunset, and from there on the trip was a breeze.

We passed through the Somosomo straights around 4:30am in the calm of Taveuni's wind shadow, and by 9:30am, the wind filled back in off our quarter and we made the long run back to Savusavu in a nice broad reach. Back in Nakama Creek, we picked up the very same mooring we dropped nine days earlier, and the officials all came out and checked us back into the country without a hitch. We didn't escape the overtime charges, but, as we slept soundly for the first time in nine days, we all agreed it was money well spent. – Tackless II

### **2.3 Fiji to Funafuti, Tuvalu**

**2010:** We went direct to Funafuti. That wasn't bad but we arrived just too late to get anchored before dark and chose to hang off in the lee overnight. We put an anchor light on and let her drift, problem was the current was running and the wind came up fresh easterly during the night, so by morning we were almost eight miles off.....it was a tough beat back to the island and then, when we got there, I didn't like the look of the western pass as we would have the morning sun in our eyes AND I guessed the current would be running out strong with the fresh easterly wind driving it.....Even had we been able to motor through the pass against all that, we would then have been faced with a tough beat / motor all the way across the big lagoon. So, we tacked north keeping close up to the reef, went in through the northern pass and had a close reach down to the anchorage, where we arrived at noon.

The Northern and eastern passes are quite easy, even in poor lighting; we found our OpenCPN to be quite accurate throughout but not so accurate I'd recommend moving about in the night. – Mr. John

### **2.4 Rotuma to Tarawa, Kiribati**

**Late 2010:** This was much easier than our Vanuatu to Rotuma leg. Still the wind was mostly NE the whole time, so we sailed close-hauled the whole way.

We had planned a first stop in Funafuti, to visit and give us a little more easting, but we could not even lay Nanumea so there was no point in tacking just to get to Funafuti. Wind speed varied from >5 kts to 20 kts with higher gusts in rain showers. Sometimes the wind was too light so we had to motorsail.

Once again, we're trying to get to another island that we can't get to! (Funafuti) At least it's calmer and the seas are nicer. The wind has turned a little more in our favor in the last 12 hrs, so we can at least point at one of the islands that we want to go to.

The wind gracefully turned to the East for the last 150nm, which made for a glorious sail. The last few miles, we had a fun and fast sail in the calm waters protected by the lagoon of Tarawa. But once we entered the west side of the lagoon, we had the full fetch of the lagoon so we got a lively motorsail to Betio, the check in entrance port (formerly Gilbert Islands), now Kiribati. – Sloepmouche

**Sept. 2010:** Based on the weather forecasts and distances I left at noon on Saturday, this timing my best guess as to my ETA in Funafuti, which is about 290nm NNE of Rotuma, such that I'd be most likely to arrive during times when there is good overhead sunshine.

The wind was much lower than expected up through sunset so I had to do some motor sailing and used the opportunity to do some Easting as there is often opposing current and wind in this passage.

There were two lines of squalls in the early afternoon but they weren't too bad to push through and otherwise the wind was both very low and up and down a lot so it kept me busy with sail adjustments most of the day and early evening. The wind piped up over 10 knots so I was able to maintain at least 3 knots VMG with the main and the jib. These conditions lasted all night long and then at about 5am this morning the wind picked up and we were moving along at 5-6 knots and headed for the next set of squall lines that make up the SPCZ (South Pacific Convergence Zone).

Day 2: The wind picked up significantly and didn't stop for the rest of the run up to the entrance into Funafuti. Wind stayed steady between 18-23 knots and from the East which put it about 70-90 degrees over my starboard bow and our SOG averaged almost seven knots (good speed for us). Much faster than expected and so I arrived a day earlier than expected and we are now calmly anchored here inside the large lagoon around Funafuti. – Learnativity

## **2.5 Wallis to Funafuti, Tuvalu**

**Oct. 2008:** We left Wallis about 9:00 AM and motored down to and out the pass. It took over an hour. We were late for the slack water, but there was still not much current. When we went in last week, we had about 4 knots against us, which made traversing the pass a slow 1 knot ordeal. The wind was light but OK around 10 knots on the stern till we rounded the southern tip of the reef and turned NW.

The wind has been steady except for the occasional squall. We've had 7 or 8 in the last 36 hours! Some with gusts up to 35. But they don't last long.

We had some shoals to pass, about 60 miles out the water goes from 6000 feet deep to only 20 feet! We skirted them with 15 miles to spare then turned directly toward Tuvalu.

We are crossing the real International dateline this time. Although we already had to change the calendar and the clock, we are crossing the 180-degree line. Funafuti lies at 179 degrees East and we have only cruised in the West longitudes so far.

Arrival: Here safe and sound. We arrived last night after dark, and waited 10 miles off for the daylight to come into the lagoon. This morning we motor sailed up to the pass and then the 5 miles across the lagoon and anchored about 11:00. – Katie Lee

## **2.6 Funafuti, Tuvalu to Tarawa, Kiribati**

**Dec. 2015:** Do not have any expectation for this trip, you will get what you get and can never tell from one day to the other and the Grib files we did not take the last days, what's the point? It was all the squalls that made it possible to sail and sometimes the wind was SE and the next one was NW, but the good thing we noticed that the windspeed never got over 20 knots in the squalls and we had full sails and made the most out of it! The thing that was most frustrating was the confused sea, wind waves and swells and other waves from four different directions that really slowed us down with both sailing and with engine.

The current was not bad, perhaps 1 knot west bound.

When we approached first the Island Maiana some 20 miles south of Tarawa there was a flashing light every 2 sec witch is not on our charts. But the big light on south of Tarawa with a flash period of 18 sec was well seen 15 miles off. – Ariel V

**Nov. 2010:** It was rather a hasty departure, we'd planned to have a bit longer to recover from the last passage, however we'd seen all there was to see in Tuvalu and the weather window was going to close on us if we delayed until after the weekend.

I went and got 'Cleared Out' in the morning and we were underway by noon, reaching towards the northern pass.

We then had four days of 127 miles per day in near perfect conditions until the breeze started to lighten up, finally calling for twelve hours of motor-sailing before arrival. It had been mainly close-reaching conditions in 8 – 14 knots of breeze, blue sea and sky with puffy white trade wind clouds.

We just got the hook down off Betio as the sun dipped below the horizon. – Mr. John VI

**Sept. 2010:** After clearing the barrier reef surrounding Funafuti. I set up and hoisted the spinnaker but held off setting it free of its sock as there were two sets of squall and rain clouds menacing from the NE. So, I motor sailed for about two hours until we were well north of the squalls and then pulled up the sock and we were suddenly slithering silently through the sea at over six knots!

The wind was actually too far forward for a spinnaker but I kept it flying all the way up to about 70 degrees as the winds were still below 10 and our speed was just too good to miss. Had a wonderful sail for the next few hours and then about 4pm I spotted the next batch of squalls (I'm still making my way through the SPCZ or South Pacific Convergence Zone) and the telltale rising of the wind so down came the spinnaker and up with the jib. Worked out just like I knew what I was doing as by the time I got the jib flying the wind had picked up and our speed was just slightly slower than with the full spinnaker flying and we were doing about 5 knots.

Day 2 - There were some squalls approaching and so I took the spinnaker down and went back to the jib for the next few hours until they passed and then raised the spinnaker again.

Day 3 - Today I'm singing "What a difference a day makes" and it was an all-round "UP" day today aboard the good ship Learnativity. Wind is UP. Sails are UP. Seas are UP. Spirits are UP and we are UP, UP and away to Tarawa! I had to turn on the motor for a bit as the wind had shifted and dropped and I was passing close by a little island that I wanted to be sure to miss. Well, minutes later and with perfect timing of just as I was about to sit down for dinner, the wind started to pipe up from almost zero to about 5-8 knots and on my beam or behind and so enough to move us along at about 3-4 knots in wonderful sailing silence.

Even though I changed course after swinging around the west side of that little island the wind shifted as well to stay back of 90 degrees which makes for very fast, quiet and comfortable sailing and hasn't changed a bit in the last 24 hours. The seas are up a bit as I think there have been some big storms off to the East and South, so they are running up to 3m out of the ENE to ESE but are large enough and far enough apart that the ride is quite good and Learnativity just rolls a bit as they roll under her.

Day 4 - By mid-day the wind had dropped down below 5 knots and the equatorial current showed up running over 2.5 knots to the WSW which is quite strong. It isn't completely counter to my direction as I'm headed NNW but it did mean that I needed to steer a course almost straight north to counter the current and keep us moving towards Tarawa so that cut down our SOG even further and I needed to resort to motor sailing for a few hours.

Day 5 - I've had the spinnaker up almost all day and we've been making great speed around 7 knots.

And so the good ship Learnativity slides steadily northward and a little bit westward into the northern hemisphere. All this at just about the right time as Oct/Nov marks the transition between the monsoon/typhoon seasons and we need to be out of the south and into the north so we can continue to be in the right place at the right time to have good weather, winds, seas and fortune. – Learnativity

## ***2.7 Tuvalu to Majuro, Marshall Islands***

**May 2024:** Passage north from Funafuti, Tuvalu to Majuro, RMI

We decided to go directly to Majuro from Funafuti so we could keep as much easting in hand as possible, for the last 250 miles where there are usually strong NE trades, squalls and rough seas. We had a whole mixed bag - no wind, wind on the nose, squalls and 1 day where we even had the spinnaker up. Luckily no thunderstorms but we could see plenty in the distance behind us. The passage took 9 days. – Ari B

**Oct. 2011:** From Tuvalu to Majuro, we were bucking a 2-3 knot current. It never really seemed to let up for any amount of time. We had virtually no wind, and had we not had such a bad experience in Tarawa, we would have waited for a weather window. We motored the 2 of the 3 days. – Savannah

## **2.8 Tarawa, Kiribati to Majuro, Marshall Islands**

**Sept. 2010:** As forecast not much wind so soon had the main and the spinnaker up and was making a respectable 4-5kt in less than 10kts of wind that was coming almost direct from behind. The seas were also very flat and calm that you barely know the boat is moving.

The wind piped up a bit to run about 8-13 knots and so with the main and jib up we were soon back to a peaceful sail at about 3.5 as much as five knots so I was very happy.

Day 3 – The spinnaker has been flying all afternoon now and helping out a great deal as the wind has varied a lot today. Sometimes drops off to below 5 knots and has built up to as much as 16-17 (all numbers apparent wind). No gusts it just comes and goes slowly so hasn't been too difficult.

Weather continues to be excellent and consistent. Seas are up a bit with the swell as much as 1.5 meters at times so must have been a storm down south east of us. Makes for a bit more rolling compared to having been so flat the first two days but still a very nice ride.

Last Day - Had a slow and steady final day into Majuro with very light winds and calm seas. Did run into some strange and strong currents, up to 5 knots at one point and they were from all different directions over the last 3 days. No big problem just had to do a lot of heading changes to counter act the push of the current.

Skies remained the same, clear blue scattered with lots of small fluffy clouds in every direction.

About 15nm south of Majuro the wind finally died completely and didn't come back so I motored the last few hours as I made my way around the east side and over to the pass which is on the NW side of the atoll. I picked up a mooring ball just off the main commercial wharf at Uliga. – Learnativity

## **2.9 Butariti, Kiribati to Majuro, Marshall Islands**

**Late 2010:** With stops in Abaiang and Butariti our trip from Tarawa to Majuro was much easier but still close-hauled so do not give up any easting if you don't have to!

Nice day trip to Abaiang and just an overnigher to get to Butaritari.

From Butaritari, the angle of sail to Majuro is much better and we were almost beam reach. But keep in mind the westerly current that might force you to point 30 deg. more East. From the Eastern corner of Butaritari, it is 300nm to Majuro anchorage so about 3 days-2 night of sailing. – Sloepmouche

## **2.10 Majuro, Marshall Islands to Funafuti, Tuvalu**

**May 2024:** Passage south from Majuro, RMI to Funafuti, Tuvalu

It was difficult to find a weather window without squally, rough conditions. We took a window that showed the least rain accumulation for the first 3 days. We still encountered frequent 30kn+ squalls but I think that's just the norm for this section. It was a close reach for virtually the whole trip. We chose not to stop in Tarawa, Kiribati so that we could get as much easting in hand as possible to counter the strong westerly setting equatorial current south of Tarawa which was at times up to 2.5kn. Once we were south of Tarawa, we had very few squalls and no thunderstorms. The whole trip was either motoring, motorsailing or upwind sailing. – Ari B

## **2.11 Majuro, Marshall Islands to Tarawa, Kiribati**

**Early 2011:** It was a struggle to sail into the wind and the wind kept us from sailing directly into Tarawa. We had to sail south past Tarawa then take a left-hand tack and sail back to the north east to reach Tarawa.

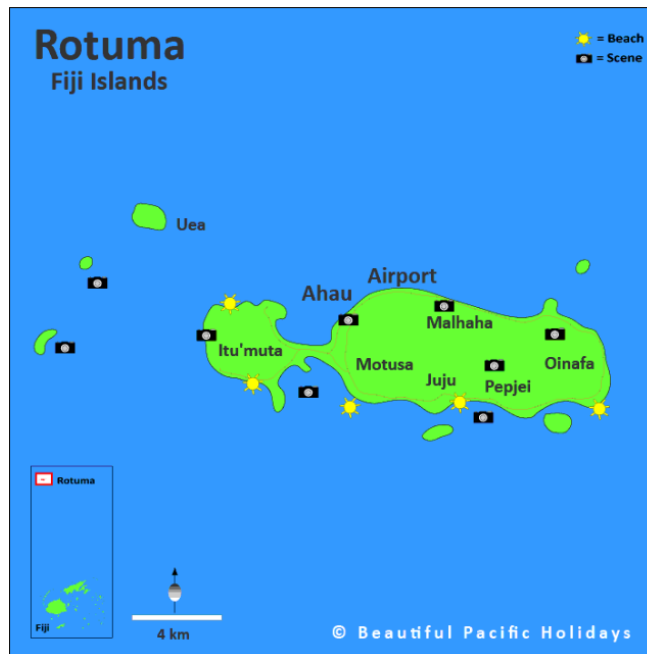
In four days, we arrived in Tarawa. In all it was an easy sail with fairly flat seas and it was nice to be going somewhere that we knew we liked. – Brick House

## 2.12 Samoa to Wallis

**Aug. 2023:** The passage from Samoa (Apia) to Wallis was fast but very rainy with heavy cross seas in the 3 meter range. To our surprise, the entry through the pass at slack water (the current indicator on Navionics was spot on) was easy. – sv Lupina

## 3 Rotuma

Rotuma Tourism information: [www.rotuma.net/os/Forum/Forum7.html](http://www.rotuma.net/os/Forum/Forum7.html)



### 3.1 Passes

**May 2011:** There are two small islands of rock just off to the north of this bay and our route arced around their verdant jungle covered surfaces making for a spectacular entrance. Made it safely through the narrow entrance to this little bay. – Learnativity

**April 2011:** The rough weather conditions to the north were sending some swell down and the anchorage was quite sloppy, we moved well in alongside the small jetty, probably further than most other yachts and we were rolling heavily.

The two Way-points on the way in

12°29.233S / 177°07.202E

12°29.227S / 177°07.163E. Any further north and you will clunk the reef!!!!

Note: The ferry, when it comes, follows the same path indicated but once past the reef she swings to port, hard round to the north. Then she drops an anchor and backs down to the end of the dock and drops her ramp (it's a RoRo). If you anchor right off the dock you may have to move. – Mr. John IV

### 3.2 Anchorages

#### 3.2.1 Oinafa Bay

**Oct. 2024:** 12°29.239S / 177°07.242E anchorage is in 5-10m of sand. The public dock is located at 12°29.233S / 177°07.290E as reported on Navionics.

The anchorage can be very dangerous in NE to E wind/swell but evidently it is comfortable in E to SW. There is only room for a few boats and they would need to be close. – sv Sugar Shack

**Sept. 2011:** Oinafa Bay on the NE side of the island offers a sheltered anchorage close to the small wharf in 10-25'. However, there is a continuous swell making this anchorage uncomfortable.

The anchorage became very dangerous with big rollers so we decided to tie up to the dock with 2 anchors holding us off the dock. We ended up with the engine in gear as crazy outgoing current was creating havoc on the dock and it felt like a death trap. We left the next morning. – Sloepmouche

**May 2011:** We crept forward and over to the far east side near the small concrete dock. We set the anchor in 15' in and it instantly dug up to the hilt. We had crystal-clear turquoise water and the white coral sand looked like it was manicured to perfection with watery rakes. We played out about 75 feet of anchor chain before snubbing it up. – Learnativity

**Nov. 2010:** There is a new dock on the northeast end of the island near the village of Oinafa. Good anchorage in sand of the small harbor for several boats. Safe in most conditions except for any NW swell. You should be ready to put to sea if a northwest condition becomes apparent.

The anchorage is very dangerous in any kind of Northwest swell. – sv French Kiss

### **3.2.2 SE Corner**

**Sept. 2011:** 12°31.69S / 177°07.98E in 40-50' of water between coral formations. – Sloepmouche

### **3.2.3 SW Anchorage**

**April 2011:** The Southwest anchorage was recommended to us by the locals for when there are northerly conditions. We had a NE wind and a fairly big swell running whilst in the NE anchorage, thus we were rolling heavily at times.

We thought about moving around to the SW anchorage however others had warned that the southwest anchorage was very 'tight' and if the wind swung back to the SE (where it most often is) then we'd be in a right mess as the swell builds up very quickly. – Mr. John IV

## **3.3 Formalities**

Rotuma is an official port of entry for Fiji. All of Fiji formality protocols must be followed. Visit the following websites for pre-arrival notifications, forms, and procedures. It is best to verify the correct procedure prior to arrival.

- [Fijian Govt. Website](#)
- [Denarau Marina Info on Formalities](#)
- [Fiji Marinas](#)
- [Noonsite](#)

### **3.3.1 Notice of Pre-Arrival Requirements**

Fiji REQUIRES that all visiting yachts send the Advanced Notice of Arrival (Form C2-C) ([Download PDF File From Fiji Customs Website](#)) at least 48 hours prior to arrival (see recipients below). Please note that the minimum requirement is 48 hours, you can send your form a week or two before arrival.

Fiji officials PREFER that you receive approval to enter Fiji prior to leaving your current destination.

Be sure to complete every field on the C2-C Notice of Arrival Form. If a field is not applicable to you or your vessel, enter 'N/A'.

In addition to the C2-C form, you must send a copy of the vessel's registration, a photograph of the vessel, and the Captain's Passport Bio page.

Send all documents to the following agencies at least 48 hours in advance of your arrival:

- FRCS (Fiji Revenue & Customs Services): [yachtsreport@frcs.org.fj](mailto:yachtsreport@frcs.org.fj)

- Biosecurity: [cruiseshipreports@frcs.org.fj](mailto:cruiseshipreports@frcs.org.fj) and [yachtinfo@biosecurityfiji.com](mailto:yachtinfo@biosecurityfiji.com)
- Board of Health: [niko.nadolo@govnet.gov.fj](mailto:niko.nadolo@govnet.gov.fj)
- Immigration: [immigration@govnet.gov.fj](mailto:immigration@govnet.gov.fj)
- Include a contact at the marina where you will be staying (just in case they need to forward it to the officials on the day of your arrival)
  - Nawi Island - Savusavu - [grace@nawiisland.com](mailto:grace@nawiisland.com)
  - Copra Shed - Savusavu - [coprashed@connect.com.fj](mailto:coprashed@connect.com.fj)
  - Waitui Marina – Savusavu – [waituimarinafiji@gmail.com](mailto:waituimarinafiji@gmail.com)
  - Vuda Marina - [info@vudamarina.com.fj](mailto:info@vudamarina.com.fj)
  - Denarau Marina - [reservations@denaraumarina.com](mailto:reservations@denaraumarina.com)

Note: 24 hours prior to arrival, notify all officials (and the marina) that you are 24hours away from arrival. You may or may not receive a response to either email. I would copy yourself or ensure that you have proof of sending both emails.

It is not required to stay at a marina to complete your formalities. However, the marinas make the process much easier process and more efficient. The marinas Savusavu (Waitui, Copra Shed, Nawi); Port Denarau and Vuda Marina will arrange for transport of the officials to and from your yacht, will ensure that they have all of your documentation, and will assist with payments in some cases. It is a small fee to pay for a mooring ball and their services and well worth the money.

### 3.3.2 Clearance Process

**Oct. 2024:** Boats have reported not being able to perform formalities and were not given any reason why. So, it is best to get pre-approval prior to arriving for any type of clearance.

Be sure to schedule your departure date and time appointment with the officials during your check in as it can be difficult to reach them if you do not have a local SIM card. Otherwise you will be forced to go to the Government center to schedule your formalities (which is 9km away from the anchorage).

You will need to shuttle 3 officials (Customs, Immigration, Biosecurity) from the dock to and from your boat for both clearing in and out. – sv Sugar Shack

**Oct. 2024:** We have cleared out of Kiribati two times, each a different experience. The first time we went to Immigration first, then Port Authority (where you pay the fee), then to Customs. They are all in different places and it would be best to hire a taxi or rent a car.

The second time we called Tarawa Radio the day before we wanted to leave and asked them to arrange for the officials to come to the dock to clear us out at the boat. We called Tarawa Radio on the morning of (again) to confirm the meeting. We waited over 3 hours for them to come and we did not pay Port Authority. We were supposed to go to Port Authority after they left the boat and we did not (they did not tell us to go there and we did not know). Now we know we should have gone to Port Authority. It can take anywhere from 1-4 days for Port Authority officials to come out to the yacht.

My experience is to go with the first experience, rent a car/taxi and visit each official. – Y2K

**Sept. 2011:** We arrived on a Sunday and the officials insisted on clearing us in that day instead of waiting until Monday. So, we ended up paying the overtime fees. Fees in Fijian

- Health \$34
- Customs: \$0 / \$75 for overtime
- Immigration: \$0 / \$75 for overtime
- Biosecurity \$15 for trash disposal / \$54 for overtime

Provided by Sloepmouche

**April 2011: Clearing in to Fiji in Rotuma:** We arrived in Rotuma on Monday at 1100hrs. When the Customs, Health and Immigration authorities arrived on the jetty, they tooted to make their presence known and I went ashore to pick them up; this is always a tricky operation as most of the officials in the Pacific tend to be a little bigger than most of us yachties and our dinghy is very low in freeboard.



The swell didn't make anything any easier and I was more than happy when I delivered them ashore again without any of them getting wet.

Rotuma has only recently become a Clearance Port and the main reason for this change is to allow the Rotumans to export some of the fresh produce that they grow on the Island, they have a ready market in Tuvalu and even Kiribati.

The Officials were very welcoming and friendly so we were quickly cleared.

Whilst the Customs were aboard, we made arrangements to get our departure coastal clearance (heading to Lautoka) with the intention of a Thursday AM departure. We had no means of getting in touch with the officials other than somehow getting to the government station, so we were happy we made prearrangements for our departure. – Mr. John IV

**Sept. 2010:** Check in here in Rotuma could not have been easier or more enjoyable. I wasn't sure how this would work as there is no information available with this being such a new Port of Entry. Within about two hours of arriving I heard a horn honk as five people emerged from a small pickup truck over on the concrete dock and motioned for me to come pick them up. Officials: 2 ladies and 3 gentlemen, from the various Fiji departments of immigration, customs, health and agriculture.

Check out: The officials all came back late on Friday afternoon and I hosted them aboard once again while we completed the checking out of Fiji papers and my clearance to leave. These are all very critical to have for the next country, Tuvalu in my case. It took no time at all to complete. – Learnativity

### **3.4 General Services**

#### **3.4.1 Government Center**

**Oct. 2024:** The Government Center is located 9km from the anchorage. It is located on the opposite side of the island near the airport. You can walk or try to hitch hike. – sv Sugar Shack

#### **3.4.2 Post Office**

**Sept. 2011:** The Post Office is located at the Government center which is about 9km along the main road. You can find a SIM card here for \$6.00F. – Sloepmouche

#### **3.4.3 Provisions**

**Oct. 2024:** The supply ships only call on this port every few months. When they do arrive, they tie up to the small dock. – sv Sugar Shack

**April 2011:** There are a couple of stores near the Government station. – Mr. John IV

#### **3.4.4 Internet and Wifi**

**Sept. 2010:** The Post Office in Rotuma has an internet connection. – Learnativity

#### **3.4.5 Transportation**

**Oct. 2024:** For taxi rental contact Molly Brown at +686.730 01016, [mollybrown413@gmail.com](mailto:mollybrown413@gmail.com). She has a nice big vehicle. She will also give you a tour of WWII artifacts and can help you get around.

Car Hire: Kantaake Kiribati Tarawa Rent Car +686 730 60997 or cell +686 730 34851. – Y2K

### **3.5 Cruiser Reports**

**April 2011:** Two days sail to the north of Round Island Passage is Rotuma, a little jewel of an island which is now a 'Clearance Port' for Fiji.

The Island was short on fuel and supplies, the monthly ferry was due soon but until then, there would be little transportation on the move.

We had a go at walking to the Government Station, which is the closest thing they have here to a town. A couple of stores, a Post Office with internet on occasions.

Without knowing that you are going to have some form of transport, Rotuma is limited as a place to visit... True, you can walk and you can get lifts (sometimes)....

From the dock they say it's 9km to the Government Station, we walked quite some distance before we found the '9KM' sign but in the end, it didn't matter as it was just too far. Without knowing that you are going to have some form of transport, Rotuma is limited as a place to visit. – Mr. John IV

**2011:** This place is heaven...We anchored in crystal clear 'special' blue water at 0700, with no sign of civilization, in a beautiful bleached white super fine sandy bay beside a small outer island, coconut palms, black volcanic rocks... just incredible!

At 9am Customs, Immigration, Quarantine and Doctor all turned up from the other end of the mountain's volcanic island that is very spectacular. We were happy about that as Jane and I were about to go ashore and make the 3hr walk in the sun to visit them.

There is no anchorage by the village they are in...2000 people live here but we have only seen five people in the last two days.

We have been catching fish, making awesomely spectacular scuba dives, snorkeling and spear fishing, beachcombing, night time crayfish spotting, having barbies etc. all on a place that seems deserted. Very few people come here and they get one supply boat a month. – m/v Ice

**Nov. 2010:** It is a wonderful place to visit. No resorts, and they seem to want to keep it that way. The people are very friendly and local food can be purchased by asking. Rotuma is a garden island growing their own food with enough extra to export. I was told this is one of the reasons Fiji made Rotuma another clearance port.

The major problem I had was flies. Without landing ashore, the flies will find your boat. No one seems to know why Rotuma has this problem.

The roads and public transportation are poor or non-existent. The local bus was broken when I arrived. There wasn't any other public transportation, most people hitch rides with lucky locals. The sand/dirt roads were actually in rather good shape, I suspect there is not much local traffic to ruin them. I had no difficulty obtaining a ride but your experience may differ. – French Kiss

**Sept. 2010:** The choice to come to this rarely visited island and part of Fiji has proven to be very rewarding. The elders of the island only even agreed to allow strangers to come ashore a few years ago and only at the end of 2008 did the Fiji government grant Rotuma the status of an official Port of Entry that enables yachts to check in and out of here without having to go back to one of the other four PoE's within the main area of Fiji. According to the officials who so efficiently looked after our check formalities yesterday said I am lucky boat number seven to have ever visited and check in here!

After the beach though the coastline becomes very interesting being made of very black rocks which jut in and out and have very tiny little sand beaches between them 3-10 meters wide. The black rocks rise up as much as 3-5 meters above the water and many of them have holes through them forming arches. The swell was a bit much at many of these but we found one where we stayed for hours.

There is also a small island about 300m north of the wharf which you can see if you zoom in close in Google Earth or Bing and is semi connected to the main island by a large coral reef which the locals tell me they use to walk the goats over to the island at low tide. We went over at high tide so we could dinghy all the way ashore and explored the one beach and some of the surrounding jungle.

We caught the bus at the NE end of Rotuma that took us to the "Government Station" near the other end where the market, Post Office and schools are at.

With a population of only 1900 or so it was surprising that there would be a bus but we had a great ride in and back, about 8km or so I think, with all the locals who were similarly headed into "town" to go to the Post Office, which also has the island's only internet connections, pick up some fruit and

veggies that don't grow on the island like tomatoes and cucumbers. We did all the above as well and had a wonderful morning before catching the bus back to Oinafa Bay. – Learnativity

## 4 Wallis & Futuna

Wallis and Futuna Tourism Information:

- [www.wallis-et-futuna.wf/en](http://www.wallis-et-futuna.wf/en)
- <https://wallis-futuna.travel/en/25-a-voir-a-faire/infos-pratiques?layout=skazy9.3:avoiraffaire>
- [www.pacificbusinesspages.com/wallis-and-futuna/hardware-retail](http://www.pacificbusinesspages.com/wallis-and-futuna/hardware-retail)



Futuna (14°17'S; 178°10'W) is a small island of 51 steep square miles that, with Wallis Island (250km away to the NE), make up the French Overseas Territory of Wallis & Futuna. Linked together in modern times, the two islands have very different characters.

Wallis, a low-lying, volcanic island pocked by a number of lake-filled craters and surrounded by a lagoon, was historically influenced by repeated Tongan invasions.

Futuna, a steep-to island with no lagoon, was never conquered by Tonga, but instead became linked to Samoa.

The islands became associated with France initially through the efforts of Catholic missionaries, with France making it official in the late 1880s. The islands became an overseas territory July 29, 1961.

The French seem to be good custodians of their islands. They import an infrastructure of communications, medical, education and police services, staff it with Frenchmen, fund it French francs, import French foodstuffs to feed the staff, and then pretty much leave the cultures alone.

Small and off the usual cruising routes, Wallis and Futuna are not often visited by cruisers, although Futuna has become a popular destination for boats in Fiji who need to extend their time there with a

quick trip out to another country. Usually, those boats arrive, drop the anchor, clear in and out in one stop with the officials, and then weigh anchor and head back south.

#### **4.1 Social Customs**

Private beaches in front of houses belong to the house owner so it is customary to ask for permission before swimming and enjoying water and land activities.

Be aware of all heritage sites. Some sites have certain customs that must be respected; for example, it may be forbidden to wear a flower necklace.

During kava ceremony, it is forbidden to stand up and move around. The customary guards will immediately point out any faux pas.

Remove your hat and sunglasses in church and in the presence of any authority figure.

#### **4.2 Wallis (Port of Entry)**

##### **4.2.1 Passes**

**Sept. 2022:** The pass is narrow, but deep and short. We went in just after slack and saw eddies, with 2 knots against us. We came out about 3 hours after high tide, and it was much more challenging – 2 knots with us (so we were going 7+knots) with standing waves at the exit. The path from the pass to the town was fine to navigate – no bommies in the marked channel, all depths as indicated on the Navionics chart and everything was where it was supposed to be. – Lucky Girl

**Java - 2010: 13°23.60S / 176°13.16W.** Wallis was okay, an easy, well-marked entrance and good marked channel throughout. – Java

**Ukn Date:** Wallis C-map is spot on, but do get to the pass at slack water as the current can run up to 6knots with nasty overfalls. The channel is well marked and C-Map is pretty close. – Kanaloa 55

##### **4.2.2 Anchorages**

You are required to go to Mata'Utu (**13°17.227S / 176°10.104W**) first to complete your formalities. This is not a comfortable anchorage and lots of bommies are around.

The dinghy dock in Mata'Utu is at (**13°17.112S / 176°10.152W**). Be aware of low tide as your outboard may be grounded, use a stern anchor. Harbor walls are slippery at high tide.

**Gahi Bay (13°20.127S / 176°11.145W)** is supposed to be the “one” authorized and official anchorage.

**Fungalei (13°16.770S / 176°09.293W)** is a more sheltered anchorage than the wharf (especially in strong winds). Located between Ile Luaniva and Ile Fungalei.

**Faioa: 13°22.936S / 176°10.51W** south motu makes it close to the pass for departure.

**May 2024:** Mata'Utu. We anchored about 200m E of Quay in 8m. Dinghy tied to ramp on S side of quay. Customs shed right there, extremely friendly and happy to summon the Police aux Frontieres (PAF) to stamp passports. Very accommodating about timetable for departure. – SV Ariel

**Aug. 2023:** Mata'Utu. We anchored near the pier on the south side, but were later informed that this area is banned due to cables they recently placed there. Good place to anchor near the wharf is just in front of the pier on a shallow patch at 5-10m. You can land the dinghy just behind the south side of the pier – be aware of the tide, so give the lines room and consider using a stern anchor.

We moved to the anchorage between the 2 islands Ile Luaniva and Ile Fungalai, 0.9nm to the NE of the wharf. Well protected from waves in the trade wind directions. – sv Lupina

**Sept. 2022:** Mata'Utu. The anchorage right by the dock is not great – it's full of coral and, quite apart from not wanting to kill the coral, several people who anchored there got stuck on bommies.

There is a 6m area about 100m E of the quay that has good holding and no coral, which is good for checkin/checkout.

Afterwards, we anchored between the 2 islands (Ile Fungalei) near town, and dinghied the 1 mile into the dock. It's a wet ride (the waves around the jetty are huge – better to take the long way round).

The islands are lovely to explore (one had a couple of hammocks and a fire pit), but be warned about taking the dinghy – it's very shallow and when the tide goes out, it goes out a really long way – we had taken our dinghy all the way in at high tide and ended up having to carry it back to the water – not fun. The next time, we took an anchor and left the dinghy much further out on the sand bar, and waded in to shore.

**Faioa: 13°22.936S / 176°10.51W** We also anchored in the south, next to Isle Faioa– good holding in sand, lovely beaches and great snorkelling. – Lucky Girl

**2010: Ile Fungalei: 13°22.80S / 176°10.54W** in 7m sand and large coral heads off Isle Fuglei in 6m and dinghied the 1 mile across the lagoon to town.

The main anchorage off the town of Mata'Utu is not a good anchorage. Lock your dinghy to a rock on the jetty on the South side (they tend to "borrow" things on this island as borrowing is in their culture).

The anchorage at Gahi village is well-protected, room for about 6 boats in 6m mud. We only stayed one night, dinghied the 3 mi to check in with the Gendarmerie and then moved over to behind the large Isle Faioa towards the pass. – Java

**Ukn Date:** Anchor off the village of Gahi (pronounced Nahi). Expect it to be very roly and the tide goes out a long way. – Kanaloa 55

#### **4.2.3 Formalities**

Formalities are handled in Mata'Utu quayside. First you visit Customs (**13°17.091S / 176°10.164W**) then you go to the gendarmerie to complete Immigration. Both offices are accessed with an easy walk from the anchorage.

Gendarmerie generally want to see each crew member and their passport.

There are no clearance fees.

Both Customs and gendarmerie must be visited when clearing out, even if you're just going to another island in the group. On arrival at the next island, clearance procedures must be conducted again.

Sine this is a French province, you need the same documents on arrival that you would for entering France. Passports must be issued less than 10 years before and be valid for at least 3 months after the designated departure date.

French citizens only require an identity card and citizens from non-EU countries will require a passport.

Yachts visiting less than 30-days are often exempt from typical visa requirements.

#### **Contact Information:**

Brigade des Douanes au quai de Mata'Utu +681 72 29 58

Standard service des Douanes +681 72 14 00 [douanes.wallis@mail.wf](mailto:douanes.wallis@mail.wf)

Gendarmerie Nationale +681 72 09 00 or +681 72 01 51

#### **4.2.3.1 Customs**

Yachts may stay a maximum of 6 months in a 12-month period without paying duty. Customs office is located about 1 mile from the anchorage, **13°17.091S / 176°10.164W**.

All firearms and ammunition require authorization and must be reported. Contact DIRAG (Direction de la Reglementation et de l'Administration Generale, BP C5-9844, New Caledonia. +687.266300.

#### **4.2.3.2 Clearance Procedures**

Once you arrive, call Port Control on VHF 16.

**May 2024:** We were hailed by PAF who came to the dinghy ramp to stamp our passports. We explained that we were leaving the next day and had a clearance from Wallis for Fiji, so they said not to bother Customs who don't work Sundays. Incredibly friendly and welcoming people, the local children in showed us around and generally entertained us. A unique and lovely place. Wish we could have stayed an extra day or two. – Ariel

**Aug. 2023:** Customs office is located in the first building on the wharf (open Mo-Fr morning only).

The Gendarmerie (= immigration) came with a car to the pier, but their office is a 5-minute walk past the post office.

There is no port authority answering your VHF16 call. – sv Lupina

**Sept. 2022:** Immigration and customs are straightforward – no covid test needed, just call 'Michel' on Ch 16 when you arrive and he will arrange for the immigration officials to meet you at the dinghy dock, 7 days a week. The customs office is on the dock, and is open Mon-Fri, 0800-1200. They speak French – not much English, but we managed. – Lucky Girl

#### **4.2.4 Yachtsmen Services**

##### **4.2.4.1 Fuel (Diesel and Gasoline)**

**Sept. 2022:** Fuel is available in Mata Utu. We hitched with 6 jerry cans to the fuel station. – Lucky Girl

#### **4.2.5 General Services**

##### **4.2.5.1 Airlines**

AirCalin is the local airline. +681.72.00 00, +681.72 00 01, +681.72.24 73. [www.aircalin.com](http://www.aircalin.com), [direction.wallis@aircalin.nc](mailto:direction.wallis@aircalin.nc).

There are three flights a week to Wallis on Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays. Some flights stop in Nandi so you can fly Nandi to Wallis.

There are three inter-island flights between Wallis and Futuna a week. Flight time is one hour.

Twin Otter planes seating around 10 passengers are used for the inter-island flights. Seats cannot be booked online so you need to go to a local travel agency.

##### **4.2.5.2 Banks and ATMs**

The currency is the Pacific Franc (XPF) which is used in New Caledonia and French Polynesia.

The Bank of Wallis and Futuna (BWF) +681.72 2124 is a subsidiary of BNP Paribas New Caledonia. There is only one branch and it is located in Wallis outside of the Fenuarama shopping mall.

There are two ATMs. One outside the main branch in Fenuarama shopping mall in Mata'Utu and the other is outside Mata'Utu SPT post office in Place Sagato Soane. ATM Located at 13°16.898S / 176°11.191W

While credit cards are becoming more popular, many shops and stores do not have point-of-sale terminals.

##### **4.2.5.3 Boat Parts**

**Nov. 2024:** Technic Import. +681.72 06 53, [www.technicimport.com](http://www.technicimport.com). Hours: Mon-Fri: 0730-1630.

They sell Yamaha outboard parts and have a good selection of batteries and Interlux paints. Located 13°16.531S / 176°10.262W. – Kuaka

**July 2024:** Pactrade located at 13°16.972S / 176°10.632W. At first entry it looks like a fabric store, but tucked in the back you have access to car parts, fan belts, starter motors, oil filters. – Kekada II

#### **4.2.5.4 Hardware Store**

**Nov. 2024:** Batirama +681.72.24.23. Located at 13°16.878S / 176°11.222W, [facebook](#), Large hardware store with some marine supplies. You can buy a whole aluminum skiff. -- Kuaka

#### **4.2.5.5 Internet and Wifi**

The Services des Postes et Telecommunications (SPT) is located in Wallis. +681.72 08 00, +681.722100, or dial 14 (toll free). Located at Sagato Soane, Mata'Utu (13°17.024S / 176°10.418W). Hours: Mon-Thur: 0730-1430, Fri: 0730-1330.

SPT is the only place that sells SIM cards, and mobile/4G top up cards (but the markets also sell top up cards).

The Manuia network provides 4G mobile phone and internet access.

Only a handful of foreign mobile operators cover Wallis and Futuna (SaskTel, Digicel, Orange, CSL, Telecom, OPT, Vodafone, Sunrise, Tikophone, and TVL).

**May 2024:** Internet at Post Office, phone cards very pricey. – sv Ariel

**Aug. 2023:** SIM cards are available in the post office (extremely expensive! 5000XPF for the card and 3000XPF for 3GB data). But there is also a good working WiFi at the post office, which can be freely used (access code written on the wall in the office). – sv Lupina

#### **4.2.5.6 Medical**

SIA Hospital +681.72.07.00. By the RT1 main road, Mata'Utu (Hahake), Wallis

Healthcare if given free in Wallis and Futuna. There are 2 hospitals (Sia in Wallis and Kaleveleve in Futuna) and 3 clinics (Mua, Hahake, and Hihifo in Wallis).

Dial 15 to call emergency services.

#### **4.2.5.7 Post Office**

The Services des Postes et Telecommunications (SPT) is responsible for postage and mail processing. They also sell stamps and handle mail order processing. There are no mailboxes in Wallis and Futuna.

The main SPT +681.72 08 00, +681.722100, or dial 14 (toll free). Located at Sagato Soane, Mata'Utu (13°17.042S / 176°10.432W). Hours: Mon-Thur: 0730-1430, Fri: 0730-1330.

#### **4.2.5.8 Shops**

Fenuarama Shopping mall is the only shopping in the 2 islands. Located in Mata'Utu (Wallis). Most shops are open 0600-1200 and again 1500-1900The mall includes:

- Supermarket
- Banque de Wallis et Futuna (BWF) headquarters
- Aircalin (local airline) agency
- US Army Museum
- Hair salon
- Clothing stores
- Hardware store
- Jewelry shop.

**May 2024:** Hitching to supermarket was easy from Gahi. – sv Ariel

#### 4.2.5.9 Transportation

There is no public transportation service and no taxis. The way to get around is by rental car. Visit this tourism site for a full list of car rental companies: <https://wallis-futuna.travel/en/what-to-see-do/transport>

Auto Service Premium +681.72.02.27, [autoservice.wallis@gmail.com](mailto:autoservice.wallis@gmail.com)

Enzo Location +681.72.29.13, +681.82.84.69, [enzomorel922@gmail.com](mailto:enzomorel922@gmail.com)

#### 4.2.6 Provisions

The supermarket is located in Fenuarama Shopping Mall and there are several smaller shops around town. Hours: 0600-1200 and 1500-1900.

There is a bakery and a snack bar at the mall.

**June 2024: InterWallis Supermarket** +681.72.29.51, Hours: Mon-Sat: 0600-1900, Sun: 0600-1100. Located at 13°16.926S / 176°10.702W reasonably stocked supermarket, lots of frozen and canned goods. Fresh bread, but limited produce.

**SEM Supermarket** +681.72.17.73. Located at 13°16.879S / 176°11.176W. Hours: Mon-Sat: 0600-1230 & 1330-1900. Sun: 0600-1200. One of the better stocked supermarkets. Carrefour products, bakery (get there early as they sell out by 10am), wine, beer, chocolate, bio products, cheese.

**La Cave De Wallis** +681.72.22.53, [cave.de.wallis@mail.wf](mailto:cave.de.wallis@mail.wf), [Facebook](#), Located at 13°16.978S / 176°10.702W offers wine and liquor annexed to a hardware / home store – Tina of Ponce

**Aug. 2023:** Mini Mag located at 13°16.849S / 176°10.528W Small, but good selection and clean. Bread, meats, fish, fruit and vegetables, dairy. – Lupina

**Sept. 2022:** Provisioning is limited – there are two main shops in ‘town’ – well stocked with dry goods but very limited fresh produce - the only fruit available when we were there was apples, and the only veggies were carrots and potatoes. No eggs, limited cheese. – Lucky Girl

#### 4.2.7 Restaurants

**Nov. 2024: Malocino** +681.72.23.23, [taofi.noella@mail.wf](mailto:taofi.noella@mail.wf). Located at 13°16.681S / 176°10.8327W. Wonderful French restaurant. Shady, good food and good service. Local beers made on Wallis – Kuaka

**Nov. 2024: Snack Oceana** Located at 13°16.970S / 176°10.349W. Fast food type of eatery. Open during lunchtime and in the evenings. Closed Sundays – Lupina

**Angelus Garden** +681.72.10.31, [lautokofactory@gmail.com](mailto:lautokofactory@gmail.com), on [Facebook](#). Hours: Mon-Sat: 0900-1400 & 1800-2200. Serves fixed menu with daily special. This is also a great spot for an afternoon ice cream and pastries.

**Bienvenue Snack Bar** +681.72.20.60, [aisake.senelosa67@gmail.com](mailto:aisake.senelosa67@gmail.com), Great views of the lagoon

**Case Creole VIP Bar** +681.72.00.73, +681.82.19.66, [talimuna@hotmail.com](mailto:talimuna@hotmail.com), tapas bar open Thurs-Sun 1700-0500

**Le Paradis** +681.72.06.66, [slogologofolau@yahoo.com](mailto:slogologofolau@yahoo.com). Fresh ingredients from local suppliers

**Pizzeria Lelei** +681.72.25.54, +681.82.64.76, [vaitootai.fetia1307@gmail.com](mailto:vaitootai.fetia1307@gmail.com)

Most restaurants are located in Hahake (in the island’s center), but there are a few in the north and south areas of the island. See this [website](#) for full listing.

All restaurants above as reported on No Foreign Land.

**June 2024: Beach Club** that offers buffet or a la carte at lunchtime. Last order at 1300. Located at 13°16.187S / 176°09.846W.

**Pizzeria** Located at 13°16.993S / 176°10.643W. – Tina of Ponce



**Aug. 2023: Restaurant Le Teone** Located at 13°16.861S / 176°10.254W. Nice atmosphere with a porch to the seaside. No signs on the street, you must look in the backyard to find it. Good dishes and fully licensed.

**Sept. 2022:** We only saw two restaurants, near the dock. One was closed the entire time we were there, the other (Snack Oceania) served good food, but only accepted cash (which is the same currency as in French Polynesia). – Lucky Girl

#### **4.2.8 Things to Do**

- US Occupation Museum houses collections from WWII in Wallis and the infrastructure and artifacts bearing witness to the period. Located in the Fenuarama Shopping mall, Mata'Utu.
- Utuleve and Atualevu ancient sites
- Lake Lalolao
- The Tongan Fortress

#### **4.2.9 Cruiser Reports**

**Sept. 2022:** Wallis is a hidden gem! We had never heard of it, but decided to stop on the recommendation of another boat who'd been there this year. I'm glad we did!

It's very beautiful (from the sea – we hardly explored by land) – lots of palm trees, dense jungle, turquoise lagoon, white beaches and good snorkelling

It's not crowded – there were only 5 boats there at the same time as us – compared to 50+ in Fakarava and hundreds in Tahiti, this was a welcome change.

The people are super friendly – they offered to translate for us in a restaurant when they could see we were having difficulties, and hitching is easy. – Lucky Girl

### **4.3 Futuna (Port of Entry)**

#### **4.3.1 Passes**

**2010:** The northern and eastern passes are quite easy, even in poor lighting, our OpenCPN to be quite accurate throughout but not so accurate I'd recommend moving about in the night. – Mr. John

**Aug. 2007:** We followed our CMap right into the Leava Harbor, which is a very narrow "V" through the reef into the shoreline. The island is quite steep, so the village of Leava hugs the shoreline, and the anchorage is made even smaller by several hundred feet of fringing reef. Brand new red and green (French system—red left returning) beacons marked the edges of the reef around the tiny harbor, and a tall commercial wharf for container deliveries juts from the starboard. The beacons are a most welcome addition as the harbor was quite difficult to make out in the morning haze. – Tackless II

#### **4.3.2 Anchorages**

Futuna has no lagoon, so anchorage and mooring areas are fairly limited. The most sheltered and convenient place to anchor is Leava Bay where you will be close to the quayside and shops.

**Ava Leava anchorage (14°17.733S / 178°09.652W)** small, pretty exposed harbor, space for a handful of boats to anchor.

**Dinghy Landing (14°17.555S / 178°09.564W)** boat ramp, place to possibly go ashore.

**Oct. 2013:** The anchorage there can be very roly and uncomfortable with a south swell and that was just what was predicted for the following day along with winds on our nose going back so our choices were clear, stay for several days in the roly anchorage or leave straight off. – Island Bound

**Aug. 2007:** We found it to be incredibly roly and we had two really bad nights. – Tackless II

### **4.3.3 Formalities**

Formalities are handled in Leava quayside. First you visit Customs then you go to the gendarmerie to complete Immigration. Both offices are accessed with an easy walk from the anchorage.

Gendarmerie generally want to see each crew member and their passport.

There are no clearance fees.

Both Customs and gendarmerie must be visited when clearing out.

Since this is a French province, you need the same documents on arrival that you would for entering France. Passports must be issued less than 10 years before and be valid for at least 3 months after the designated departure date.

French citizens only require an identity card and citizens from non-EU countries will require a passport.

Yachts visiting less than 30-days are often exempt from typical visa requirements.

#### **Contact Information:**

Brigade des Douanes au quai de Leava +681 72 32 42, [douanes.futuna@mail.wf](mailto:douanes.futuna@mail.wf)

Gendarmerie Nationale +681 72 32 17

#### **4.3.3.1 Customs**

Located on the wharf at 14°17.755S / 178°09.600W. Yachts may stay a maximum of six months in a twelve-month period without paying duty.

#### **4.3.3.2 Gendarmerie**

Gendarmerie are located near 14°17.787S / 178°09.524W. They handle Immigration formalities.

#### **4.3.3.3 Clearance Procedures**

Once you arrive, call Port Control on VHF 16.

**Oct. 2013:** It was a short walk to Customs and then on to the Gendarmerie (Immigration). Passports were stamped and papers filled out then right back to the boat for a quick lunch and in no time, we were raising the anchor and off on our way back to Fiji. – Island Bound

### **4.3.4 General Services**

#### **4.3.4.1 Airlines**

AirCalin is the local airline. +681.72.00.00, +681.72.00.01, +681.72.24.73. [www.aircalin.com](http://www.aircalin.com), [direction.wallis@aircalin.nc](mailto:direction.wallis@aircalin.nc).

There are three flights a week to Wallis on Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays. Some flights stop in Nandi so you can fly Nandi to Wallis.

There are three inter-island flights between Wallis and Futuna a week. Flight time is one hour.

Twin Otter planes seating around 10 passengers are used for the inter-island flights. Seats cannot be booked online so you need to go to a local travel agency.

#### **4.3.4.2 Banks and ATMs**

The currency is the Pacific Franc (XPF) which is used in New Caledonia and French Polynesia.

The Bank of Wallis and Futuna (BWF) is a subsidiary of BNP Paribas New Caledonia. The only branch is in Wallis.

There is one ATM located at the Futuna SPT branch in Faletoa, Leava (Sigave).

Credit cards are becoming more popular, many shops and stores do not have point-of-sale terminals.

#### 4.3.4.3 *Medical*

Kaleveleve Hospital +681.72.39.00. In Taoa (Kingdon of Alo).

Healthcare is given free in Wallis and Futuna. There are 2 hospitals (Sia in Wallis and Kaleveleve in Futuna) and 3 clinics (Mua, Hahake, and Hihifo in Wallis).

Dial 15 to call emergency services.

#### 4.3.4.4 *Post Office*

The Services des Postes et Telecommunications (SPT) is responsible for postage and mail processing. There are no mailboxes in Wallis and Futuna.

The main SPT +681.72.36.00, [www.spt.wf](http://www.spt.wf). Located at Lie-dit Faletoa, in Leava (Sigave) at (14°17.507S / 178°09.651W). Hours: Mon-Thur: 0730-1430, Fri: 0730-1330.

#### 4.3.4.5 *Transportation*

There is no public transportation service or taxis. The way to get around is by rental car. Tourism site for a full list of car rental companies: <https://wallis-futuna.travel/en/what-to-see-do/transport>

Corail Renting: +681.83 1277, [reservation@corailrenting.com](mailto:reservation@corailrenting.com), [www.corailrenting.com](http://www.corailrenting.com)

Fatuimoana Vahine Auto +691.83 57 46, [patelisefatu@gmail.com](mailto:patelisefatu@gmail.com).

#### 4.3.5 *Provisions*

**Oct. 2024:** Serf Magasin located on the main road (14°17.460S / 178°09.900W). Hours: Mon-Fri: 24hrs, Sat: 0700-1830, Sun: 0700-1200. – sv Sugar Shack

#### 4.3.6 *Restaurants*

Most restaurants are located in Hahake (in the island's center), but there are a few in the north and south areas of the island. See this [website](#) for full listing.

**Nov. 2024:** Bambou Bar +681.83.29.04, [fatuimoanabellona1@gmail.com](mailto:fatuimoanabellona1@gmail.com), fantastic fish restaurant, house special is tuna sashimi, stunning ocean views.

Fiafia +681.72.32.45, [hotel\\_fiafia@yahoo.fr](mailto:hotel_fiafia@yahoo.fr), fine cuisine in an authentic and elegant setting

Snack Non-Stop +681.82.96.68, [mmikaeletaukolo@gmail.com](mailto:mmikaeletaukolo@gmail.com), sandwiches, paninis, fried chicken. Located on the main road (14°29.130S / 178°16.160W)

Somalama Park hotel +681.72.31.20, +681.83.31.20, [somalama@gmail.com](mailto:somalama@gmail.com), charmingly rustic décor, panoramic views, delicious meals.

Reported by sv Sugar Shack

## 5 Tuvalu

Useful websites to help you enjoy Tuvalu.

- [www.tuvaluislands.com/](http://www.tuvaluislands.com/)
- [www.timelesstuvalu.com/](http://www.timelesstuvalu.com/)
- [www.lonelyplanet.com/tuvalu](http://www.lonelyplanet.com/tuvalu)
- [www.pacificbusinesspages.com/wallis-and-futuna/hardware-retail](http://www.pacificbusinesspages.com/wallis-and-futuna/hardware-retail)



## 5.1 Formalities

Visit Immigration, then Customs, Health, Biosecurity and back to Immigration. Immigration, Health and Biosecurity are located in the same 3-story white Government Building. Customs is located near the wharf (30-minute walk).

Tuvalu does not require advance notice of arrival. However, it is important that you do not stop at any island or atoll prior to arriving at Funafuti to do formalities (even if it is an emergency).

Anchor off the southern end of Vaiaku by the wharf. If you arrived on a Saturday or Sunday, drop anchor, stay onboard, wait until Monday when the officials are back at work. No clearance is possible from 1600 on Fridays to Monday 0800.

### 5.1.1 Immigration

Immigration is located in the large three-story white building in the government offices (08°31.468S / 179°11.676E), which you can see from the anchorage. Hours: Mon-Fri: 0900-1600. On the ground floor, off to the right. Fill out a form and get your passport stamped.

30-day visas are issued upon arrival under the guidelines that the visitor will not work or study. Visas are renewable for a maximum of another three months, if proof of sufficient funds can be shown.

Passports must be valid for 6 months from the date of arrival, proof of sufficient funds, proof of accommodation, and a return/onward ticket may be requested.

Visa extensions cost AUS\$30 for each month and proof of available funds of at least AUS\$2000 must be demonstrated (i.e. a bank statement) each time.

No charge for clearance during working hours for the first 30-day visa. Visa extensions are chargeable.

### **5.1.2 Customs**

**Oct. 2024:** Temporary Update: As of Oct. 2024, Customs are now operating in the same building as Immigration (super convenient). However, it seems like the plan is to move back to the main wharf so refer to the info below. – sv Horizon

Customs is located on the northern end of the atoll (down at the wharf) which is about a 30-minute walk (08°30.097S / 179°11.722E). Go up a few stairs, then knock on the 3<sup>rd</sup> door on the right of the north side of the building.

Do not go to the Customs office in the government building as they do not process yachts.

The customs office may handle all paperwork in their office or they may request to come see the boat in person. You will be responsible for transport them to and from the dock to your boat.

**Duty Free Fuel:** You can get a duty-free fuel certificate during checkout. Recommend you ask for it the day before because it can take a day to process at headquarters (government building) and you need to pick up paperwork from the government building. The duty-free fuel is at Pacific Energy next to the wharf.

You can rent a motorbike from the place on Tuvalu Road across from Halavai Market (08°31.128S / 179°11.941E) there is no sign but you will see a carport full of motorbikes. – sv Sugar Shack

### **5.1.3 Health**

**Nov. 2024:** After Customs clearance, return to the Government offices (Immigration) to pay your “Health fee”. On the ground floor but ask for office location as they move around. The cost should be AUD\$25. It is possible to pay this fee after you have checked in and had a chance to stop at the bank for local currency.

No charge for clearance during working hours. – sv Sugar Shack

### **5.1.4 Biosecurity**

**Nov. 2024:** After paying your health fee you will need to clear in with agriculture/biosecurity (Government Offices, near Immigration) on the ground floor. You simply complete the inspection form, return to immigration and you are done. – sv Sugar Shack

**Oct. 2024:** Per Biosecurity regulations we were asked to keep our rubbish on board. – sv Horizon

### **5.1.5 Inter-Island Permits**

Visit the Town Council (09°30.988S / 179°11.944E near the wharf to the left) to purchase a permit to cruise the outer atolls. Without this permit, the police may come looking for you.

Both Immigration and Customs must sign off on a permit AFTER they have received approval from the local atoll’s Chief. Some local Chiefs don’t necessarily want visitors.

Every atoll can set its own rules with regards to anchoring fees.

Yachts are required to return to Funafuti to clear out of Tuvalu, you can no longer visit other atolls before clearing in or after clearing out. – Noonsite

**Nov. 2024:** In the past, boats were able to write a letter to customs requesting permission to stop at other atolls prior to arrival and/or after departure. However, this process was severely abused and the officials no longer allow boats to visit outer atolls before or after formalities are completed in Funafuti. Not super convenient as it requires boats to back track to Funafuti. – sv Sugar Shack

### **5.1.6 Clearance Process**

**Sept. 2024:** First Government Building for Immigration, then on to Customs (dinghy or 35-minute walk), and then back to the Gov’t Building for Health and Biosecurity. – sv Sugar Shack

**May 2024:** Clearing In: Immigration, biosecurity and health is all done at the main government building. We were charged 50aud for health in November but nothing in May. We had to go to customs at the main harbour in Nov but in May there was someone at the government building who we gave our papers to but we asked them to give us a copy of them.

Clearing Out: Immigration first, then customs. You have to go to the main harbour for customs and in May they couldn't find our papers so it was good that we had a copy. – Ari B

**May 2023:** Clearing In: Tuvalu does not require advance notice of arrival. As of May 2023, there are no specific requirements for Covid vaccination or testing.

Upon arrival at Funafuti fly your quarantine flag. Some sources suggest radioing Funafuti Radio but we didn't do this since we arrived on a Sunday and everybody knows nothing happens on a Sunday. We left our dinghy at the small concrete wharf with a stern anchor.

First to **Immigration** in the government building, ground floor. Anybody can point you toward it.

After Immigration you must go to the **Customs** office that's "down at the wharf" which is at the northern end of the atoll. There is another Customs office in the government building but they do not process ships/boats. Only the Customs office "down at the wharf" processes ships. It's a very long walk from the government office, about 35-40 minutes. If you are stupendously lucky, as we were, the young woman in immigration who cleared you in will rally her coworker to join her in taking you to the Customs office on their motorbikes.

Alternatively, you can take your dinghy down to where the big shipping containers are and ask for the Customs office. Or rent motorbikes from the place on Tuvalu Road across from Halavai Market.

After Customs, back to the government building for **health** clearance. Here you'll need to pay a \$25 AUD fee, but it's ok to come back to pay it after you've cleared in and visited the bank.

After health, agriculture/biosecurity. Super quick form to fill out here, and once you've paid your health fee you're done.

**Clearing out:** First to Immigration in the government building. Then to the Customs office at the north end, on the wharf. The most time-consuming aspect of clearing out will be getting from the government building down to the Customs office at the wharf. We rented motorbikes for the day and did our clearing out as part of our motoring around. – Oh Joy II

### **5.1.7 Fees**

**Oct. 2024:** There are no fees for Immigration or Customs. Health is \$25 AUD, departure tax is \$30 AUD/pp, Visa Extension is \$30 AUS for 2<sup>nd</sup> month.

A Cruising Permit is \$50 AUD, snorkelling \$10 AUD/pp. Every atoll can set its own rules with regards to anchoring fees.

There are no ATMs anywhere in Tuvalu. There is one bank in Funafuti that can exchange currency. They decide the currency exchange rate.

There is some discrepancy over departure fees. Some boats cleared out without being charged any fees while others were charged up to \$195.00 AUD. – sv Sugar Shack

### **5.1.8 Social Customs**

**Restrictions:** Social customs: One should remove shoes before entering church, the maneapa (meeting house) or private homes.

The drinking of alcohol in public is not permitted.

Women should be covered from the neck to below the knees. – Noonsite

### **5.1.9 Cruiser Reports**

**Oct. 2013:** A quick in and out it would be. We had no French Polynesian francs and there is no ATM on the island so no onshore lunch or shopping. Plus, it was astonishingly hot even in the early morning. – Island Bound

**Aug. 2007:** We went to Futuna to reset our Immigration and boat status in Fiji. It sure seemed a shame to sail all this way and not give it a look-see. So, when we went ashore that first morning to go to customs, we decided to stay two days.

From the gendarmerie, we moved on to the money changer, the proprietor of a small store who sat behind a counter and happily changed "Mr. Bush's money" into Central Pacific francs. He had no use for either Kiwi or Fijian dollars.

Our first stop was a fine fale fono in our guide's own village. The fale fono in Futuna is where the men gather in the evening to drink kava and discuss community business. A beautiful oval structure in the Samoan style, this fale was built completely with traditional materials: an impressive latticework of beams secured with traditional sennit and topped by thick thatch with woven palm "blinds" lowerable for shade or protection from the wind. Inside were stacks of mats, several large tanoa (kava bowls) and the mortars used for pounding the roots.

Across the street is a magnificent church of cement painted to look like blocks. The church, with two side towers, an impressive wood carving of Mary and Jesus, huge wooden doors and stained-glass windows was built in just five months after an earthquake brought down the original in 1993.

From there we drove to an overlook of Alofi Island. Alofi is uninhabited but for one caretaker. It is essentially a retreat for Futunans who can go out for the day to maintain gardens or just play on the exquisite beach. There is a church there and some fales for general use, and it is a popular spot for visiting yachts to anchor when winds are out of the southeast.

On the north side of the island at Poi, the main sight to see is the multilayered tower of the Basilica of St. Pierre Chanel. Pierre Chanel was the first Catholic missionary to come to Futuna. Initially he and his colleagues were welcomed by the king, but as he gained converts the king began to feel his traditional power threatened, and sent a band of warriors to kill him. Chanel was the first missionary lost, and eventually became the patron saint of Oceania. The Basilica is huge and cool inside, lit by panes of colored glass. There must have been hundreds of pews, surely enough to seat the island's entire population! Off to the side is an unexpectedly modern chapel where the sacred Chanel relics are kept. This chapel, all angles of wood, is extraordinarily peaceful with the susurrations of the sea on the beach in the background. Oddly, in the center of the church grounds is the tomb of the man who had Chanel killed.

Our only other stop was to admire the lava rock formations on the northwest point.

We woke at four in the morning to the boat rolling in swells rolling straight into the harbor from the south. Once up, it was hard to go down again as the four boats in the tiny, narrow "V" of an anchorage were bucking and rolling in a horrid onslaught of 3-5' waves. Our little hidden paradise has become a bit of a trap. So, we made haste and left. – Tackless II

## **5.2 Funafuti Atoll (Port of Entry)**

### **5.2.1 Passes**

#### **5.2.1.1 West Pass**

The West pass is called the Te Ava Fuagea pass and is at 08°32.875S / 179°03.099E.

**May 2023:** West pass. We had swell running east to west and moderate easterly trades blowing 15-20kts as we approached and we were concerned this might make the pass a little tricky. But it was

completely calm and easy to get through. The pass is quite narrow but plenty deep and easy to navigate. We exited through the same passage with no trouble. – Oh Joy II

**Dec 2012:** We entered the lagoon via the Te Avo Fuagea passage (west pass) – it is narrow but has plenty of depth. – Westward II

**Dec. 2012:** Other boats used the West Pass and said it was easy, need good light. – Streetcar

**Nov. 2010:** I didn't like the look of the western pass as we would have the morning sun in our eyes AND I guessed the current would be running out strong with the fresh easterly wind driving it....Even had we been able to motor through the pass against all that, we would then have been faced with a tough beat / motor all the way across the big lagoon. – Mr. John VI

### **5.2.1.2 North Pass**

The North pass is called the Te Ava I Te Lap pass and is at 08°25.958S / 179°06.265E. This pass is much shallower and more likely more difficult in a northerly swell and/or wind. Some sources recommend against using this Northern pass.

**Dec. 2012:** We left via Te Avo I De Lape passage (northern pass) with no issues. – Westward II

**Dec. 2012:** We used North pass out. Easy, but much shallower and would definitely be trouble in north swell or big wind from N sector. Some sources recommend against this North pass. – Streetcar

**Nov. 2010:** The North & East passes are quite easy, even in poor lighting; we found our OpenCPN to be quite accurate throughout but not so accurate I'd recommend moving at night. – Mr. John VI

### **5.2.1.3 East Pass**

The East pass is called the Te Ava Pua Pua pass and is at 08°34.213S / 179°07.467E. This is a straightforward pass but treat with caution in strong SE winds. If you follow the ship channel into Fonfale you should avoid all shallow patches.

**Dec. 2012:** We used the Southeast pass. Very easy, although would need to be treated with caution in a strong SE wind. Follow charted lines for ship channel right into Fongafale, these seem to avoid all shallow patches. – Streetcar

**Nov. 2010:** The North & East passes are quite easy, even in poor lighting; we found our OpenCPN to be quite accurate throughout but not so accurate I'd recommend moving at night. – Mr. John

## **5.2.2 Anchorages**

### **5.2.2.1 Funafuti Anchorage**

**Oct. 2024: 08°31.455S / 179°11.318E** from this anchorage you can see the large white government building (Immigration, Health, and Biosecurity). You will need to dinghy about 1/5 mile to the commercial wharf where the custom office is located. The water is clear and the bottom is sandy.

**Dinghy Landing: 08°31.556S / 179°11.565E** leave your dinghy on the beach for a short walk to the government building.

Also **08°31.044S / 179°11.764E** leave dinghy at the sea wall at the small boat harbor and dock.

For Customs, you can leave your dinghy at **08°30.194S / 179°11.716E** – sv Sugar Shack

**May 2024: 08°31.5S / 179°11.29E** in 15m, sandy bottom. This is the main town anchorage. We left the dinghy on the beach when we went ashore. – Ari B

**May 2023:** We anchored off the government building (the tall white one – there's only one) in about 25' with excellent holding in sand. There's also a big pale blue roof in the same area. The white building is the government offices and the blue roof is a conference center.

This is considerable distance from shore but you don't want to get closer as the reef comes up fast.



As others noted this wouldn't be a great spot in strong winds from any direction except east. We had some strong squalls blow through with winds from NW and a day of 10-15 knot winds, also NW. The seas got a little bouncy but the holding is so good we weren't concerned. We've been in anchorages with significantly less reassuring elements, and being open to the north and the west in these moderate conditions was fine. – Oh Joy II

**Dinghy Landing:** Aim for the blue roof building when going to shore. There's a smaller blue roof nearer the water. This is where you'll find a concrete wharf with two sets of stairs leading down to the water. We left our dinghy here with a stern anchor to keep it off the concrete wall. – Oh Joy II

**Dec. 2012: 08°31.489S / 179°11.389E**, Vaiaku Anchorage. This is the anchorage near the Government Building. We found this to be a good anchorage with good holding. We did not have any westerly winds while there, however there would be little protection from this direction. The small jetty near the Government Building was good to leave dinghy when ashore. – Westward II

**Dec. 2012:** There are two anchorages off town: one straight off 3 story government building at South end of town, boats reported good holding and easy dinghy ride in; one about half way between there and new ship wharf North of town, very good holding but longer dinghy ride.

There is an all-tide small dinghy dock off Government building with good access to town (but use stern anchor). Also, a very good dinghy landing on S side of new ship wharf, next to police boat dock.

While we were there boats anchored in various locations inside the lagoon & outside the marine park and there was no problem with this, no charges were made or suggested. – Streetcar (Noonsite)

**Nov. 2010: 08°31.476S / 179°11.447E**, anchored off the south end of the runway. The anchorage was flat (15' sand bottom), there was a dinghy dock. The anchorage is good in anything Easterly but would be a worry in anything else; one has to bear in mind that they did have a Tropical Storm go through here in October a few years back! – Mr. John VI

#### **5.2.2.2 Funafala (Funafara) Anchorage (SE)**

**May 2024:** Beautiful anchorage in the SE corner. Anchored in approx. 8m, sandy bottom. Poor visibility snorkelling on the nearby bommies but we had mantas all around the boat. – Ari B

**Dec. 2023: 08°36.790S / 179°05.669E** in 12-15m deep sand with excellent holding. Very well sheltered from East to South East. – Y2K.

**Dec. 2012: 08°36.813S / 179°05.642E.** Good anchorage with a small friendly village ashore to visit.

Conservation Area - There is a conservation area in the south western side of the atoll. There is no fishing, and to anchor you need to get permission and pay a fee. The permit you obtain from the town council for \$50 per group. We couldn't get consistent information on where we could anchor, or how long the fee covered you for. We therefore did not proceed with a permit and did not visit this area of the atoll. – Westward II

#### **5.2.2.3 Fualifeke Anchorage (NW)**

**May 2024: 08°25.928S / 179°07.066E** in 10m, sandy bottom. There was an early cyclone passing west of Tuvalu so we sought shelter in the north west corner. It's a very pretty anchorage with 2 islands you can walk around and snorkelling in the north pass. Good protection from NW thru NE but unfortunately the 40kn squalls always came from the west and with passing cyclone (albeit 200 miles away), we experienced some swell that entered through the many gaps in the western reef. – Ari B

**Nov. 2023: 08°26.042S / 179°07.132E** in 45'. Lots of big sand patches among the coral. Not much wind protection but good wave protection from the North. The swell can wrap around and cause rolliness. – sv Calla Lilly.

### 5.2.3 Yachtsmen Services

#### 5.2.3.1 Cooking Gas (Propane and Butane)

**Oct. 2024:** Cooking gas tanks cannot be refilled here. However, steel gas bottle exchanges may be made in Funafuti. Try **MTL (MacKenzie Trading)** +688.20666, [Mackenzie\\_trading@yahoo.com](mailto:Mackenzie_trading@yahoo.com), groceries, hardware and outboards. Located (08°31.160S / 179°11.987E near the airport). Their sign says they have diesel, kerosene, petrol, and LPG. – sv Sugar Shack

#### 5.2.3.2 Fuel

**Oct. 2024:** Pacific Energy Office accepts cash only. Bring jerry cans by dinghy but dinghy landing can be challenging with the tides and swell. Pay at the fuel office and fill the cans across the street. Location: 08°30.084S / 179°11.711E.

They are very nice and helped carry our jerry cans to the shore. However, they overfill and are a bit sloppy (bring rags). Might be easier if you bring a funnel for small cannisters.

You might be able to talk them into giving you a ride to the main dock by customs if you ask nicely.

**Duty Free Fuel:** Ask Customs for a “Letter of Request for Duty Free Fuel”. It will come from the main Customs office. They will ask how much you want, just as an estimate, not a commitment. It is better to not specify diesel or gasoline and just say “fuel”. We saved 7% on our diesel. We paid AUD2.64/liter duty free for diesel and AUD2.4/liter duty free petrol. – sv Queen Jane

**Oct. 2024:** Pacific Energy will sell duty free fuel after checkout (see customs section). Located near Customs building (down at the wharf, not the government building).

Bring a funnel because the hose is very large and won't fit jerry cans. Cash only. No credit cards were being accepted and only AUD currency accepted. – sv Sugar Shack

**Nov. 2023:** MacKenzie Trading 08°31.152S / 179°12.014E across from the MTL store. – sv Calla Lilly

**May 2024:** Fuel can be purchased at the Pacific Energy just north of the main harbour where customs is located. We took the dinghy there. They filled our cannisters from a huge tank with a filter. – Ari B

**May 2023:** We've found it less stressful (if more work) to re-fuel with jerry cans than to try to take the big boat into a wharf we're unfamiliar with, and which generally has surprisingly few places to tie the boat up and no protection against a concrete wall. We understand there is a wharf here for re-fueling but we did not investigate or use it.

We took jerry cans ashore and walked about three blocks to a small blue shed (next to a larger green shop) and bought diesel at \$3.60 AUD per liter. They only had enough diesel for one run on our six jerry cans (we needed two runs), and they said they'd ordered another barrel to be delivered the next day. It didn't arrive the next day, and on the day after that we had to go elsewhere because we were leaving the next day and needed our fuel.

**MacKenzie Trading Limited:** In our explorations we'd found a fuel station that's kind of hidden, off the main road toward the ocean side near the big blue supermarket. It's called MacKenzie Trading Limited and they sell diesel at \$2.80 AUD/litre. This saved us about \$100 AUD and I wish we'd looked around a little more for our first full run. They are significantly further from the dinghy dock area but also provided us with a motorized cart and driver to deliver. We paid the two helpers \$5 AUD each for delivering us and helping carry the jerry cans down to the dinghy. They genuinely tried to refuse our money and were surprised by our offer, but we insisted.

All fuel stations that we saw appeared to sell both diesel and gas/petrol as well as a gas mix.

Fuel stations are NOT obvious here. The only signage you'll see will be a torn piece of cardboard on a shed wall with prices handwritten on it. There will also be a lot of official “No smoking” sort of signs. This is how you know fuel is sold there. There are no other signs. But ask people where to buy fuel and they'll be able to point the way. – Oh Joy II

### 5.2.3.3 *Trash & Recycling*

**Oct. 2024:** Trash for the entire atoll is located at 08°27.489S / 179°10.993E. You can access it either by dinghy or by scooter. If you go by dinghy, go at high tide as it is easier and there are lots of rusty iron pieces in the water. Be careful where you put your feet, wear shoes. There is no cost. – Y2K

### 5.2.3.4 *Water*

**Oct. 2024:** Water is scarce, as the islands rely on rainfall. – sv Sugar Shack

**Nov. 2010:** I got water, which I was warned to boil well if used for drinking (we just used it for showers and looking at the dregs in my jerry cans it was good that we never put it in our tanks!). – Mr. John VI

## 5.2.4 *General Services*

### 5.2.4.1 *Banks & ATMs*

**Sept. 2024:** Local currency is the AUD dollar and this is primarily a “cash only” location.

The local bank, The National Bank of Tuvalu (NBT) is located opposite the airport. Hours: Mon-Fri: 0900-1400. Located near the airport (08°31.467S / 179°11.730E).

**ATM:** There is one ATM installed but it is not operational “yet”. The local bank can exchange money but it is expensive. You go to the Funafuti National Bank and trade currency. Go to the long counter and speak with the clerk who will then direct you to the cashier to exchange money.

The local bank also has a **MoneyGram** (which is the best way to exchange money). There is a Western Union at the airport but the hours were odd. – as reported to sv Sugar Shack

**May 2024:** Still no ATM. You can exchange currency upstairs in the bank. – Ari B

**May 2023:** Tuvalu is still a cash-only economy. There are no ATMs and no credit cards accepted anywhere. You go to the Funafuti National Bank and trade currency. We understand they can make money transfers there but we had US cash so just did it that way. They get make the exchange rate whatever they want because there is no other way for you to get AUD. We got \$1,002 AUD for \$740 US. So, \$1 AUD to \$0.74 US. The internet said the exchange rate should have been \$1 AUD for \$0.66 US. If you know you're coming here, we recommend getting AUD currency elsewhere so you arrive ready to spend. – Oh Joy II

### 5.2.4.2 *Boat Repairs*

**May 2023:** Nang Store has a bizarre supply of things like a small inverter, motorbike batteries, carburetors (not sure if for motorbike or outboard engine) and similar. – Oh Joy II

**Nov. 2008:** I got the windvane quadrant **welded** at the PWD (public works division). I thought I had one more grinding wheels for the bench grinder we bought in Hawaii. I made a deal with the welder to give it to him for the repair job, but I couldn't find it. I did find a couple of angle grinder disks and a wire brush wheel. He said it was 'exactly the right payment!' I think he was glad to get them. It is all back together and looks like it will work good again. – Katie Lee

### 5.2.4.3 *Hardware Stores*

**Oct. 2024:** There are a few stores that sell hardware:

**MTL (MacKenzie Trading)** +688.20666, [Mackenzie\\_trading@yahoo.com](mailto:Mackenzie_trading@yahoo.com), groceries, hardware and outboards. Located (08°31.160S / 179°11.987E near the airport).

**Ocean Hardware Pty** +688.20.338, +688.20.551, [ino@jyocean.tv](mailto:ino@jyocean.tv), <https://jyocean.tv>, located at 08°31.083S / 179°11.957E. Sells hardware and lumber supplies, carries a variety of indoor/outdoor sealants including silicone, and plumbing supplies.

**May 2023:** There's a hardware store on Tuvalu Road north of the government building. It's called Ocean Hardware and you'll find bolts, washers, outboard engines and similar items. It's across the street from the JY Ocean Trading Supermarket. – Oh Joy II

#### **5.2.4.4 Handicrafts**

**Nov. 2023:** Tuvalu Women's Handicraft Center located 08°31.470S / 179°11.692E. Local handicrafts and jewelry. They set up around the time the planes land and take off. Currently Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday mornings. – Calla Lilly.

#### **5.2.4.5 Internet & Wifi**

**Oct. 2024:** The Tuvalu Telecommunications Corporation (TCC) is the only internet provider in Tuvalu. The office is located behind the green Tuvalu Development Bank building across from the airport. The TCC office is at the end of the hall, past the Fiji Airways office.

Internet reception in Tuvalu is terrible and getting a connection is a true test in patience and perseverance.

TPL Internet Café Hours: Mon-Fri: 0800-2300, Sat: 1000-2300, Sun: 1300-2300. Located inside the Post Office. Enter the café through the door on the airfield side of the building. – sv Sugar Shack

**May 2023:** You can get SIM cards and buy a data plan in Tuvalu. The government funds the only telecom company in Tuvalu. It's a public agency, the Tuvalu Telecommunications Corporation (TCC). Apparently, the government has not allowed any other companies to come in with telecom services. However, they're seeing now how expensive the infrastructure is and apparently are partnering with a telecom company in the near future to get better coverage. We did not buy a local SIM or data plan since we have Starlink on board and felt we could manage without phones. – Oh Joy II

#### **5.2.4.6 Medical**

The Princess of Margaret Hospital in Funafuti with outpatient services. +688.20 480, [healthpromotion.tv@gmail.com](mailto:healthpromotion.tv@gmail.com), 50 beds, open 24hours. Location: 08°30.913S / 179°11.966E. A pharmacist, and a dentist are available.

#### **5.2.4.7 Post Office**

The Tuvalu Post Office (08°31.623S / 179°11.581E) sells Tuvaluan stamps which are collector items all over the world. Tuvalu is known for its postage stamp designs. The Post Office has a full display of hundreds of historical and contemporary Tuvaluan stamps that you can admire and purchase.

#### **5.2.4.8 Town Council**

Fongafale Town Council located 08°30.988S / 179°11.944E. This is where you arrange trips to and pay fees for Funafuti Conservation Area.

### **5.2.5 Provisioning**

**JY Ocean Trading:** +688 20338, +688 20551, [info@jyocean.tv](mailto:info@jyocean.tv), [www.jyocean.tv](http://www.jyocean.tv). Outer island service or order email: [oi@jyocean.tv](mailto:oi@jyocean.tv). Location: 08°31.091S / 179°11.964E. One of the largest grocery stores. Groceries, meats, produce, soft serve ice cream, Aussie style meat pies.

**MTL (MacKenzie Trading)** sells groceries, hardware and outboards. Located (08°31.160S / 179°11.987E near the airport). Found tinned butter and reasonably priced fruit.

**EFC** located at 08°31.142S / 179°11.952E sells a variety of food, mostly shelf stable foods and some home goods.

**Oct. 2024:** There are cooperative stores selling mostly imported food on all of the islands. Local produce may be purchased or traded including taro, bananas, coconuts, and papayas.

**Kaupule Bread** located near the wharf and Town Council (08°31.001S / 179°11.936E) offers local baked goods. Get there early as they often sell out. Hours: Mon-Fri: 0600-1230 & 1500-2000, Sat: 0600-1000 & 1700-2000.

**Veggie Market:** Every Tuesday and Saturday morning are market days (08°31.653S / 179°11.644E). Around 0600 you meet at the gate. A list is passed around where you add your name. You wait until bundles of veggies are prepared for take away. After your name is called you can choose one bundle and pay. The prices are per kilo and are listed on a white board in front of the cashier. (– Pico 2023)

**May 2024:** There are a number of supermarkets and small shops. All the usual stuff available except fresh fruit and vegetables which was limited and all imported. A lady in one of the liquor shops gave us a huge bunch of bananas and plantains for free though. – Ari B

**May 2023:** The best grocery store we found is called **JY Ocean Trading Supermarket**. From the dinghy landing it's on the main road (called Tuvalu Road) and north. It's not a short walk, but if you take it slow and stay in the shady spots you'll be there before you know it.

JY Ocean Trading Supermarket has a lot of freezer options for all kinds of meat and frozen vegetables. We also found fresh apples, carrots, pears, enormous cabbage and bok choy, onions and potatoes. They had some basics like powdered milk, flour, rice and a weirdly big selection of cereals like Choco-pops and Weet-a-bix.

There are a lot of smaller markets for groceries as well, but less well-stocked and none had fresh vegetables beyond onions and potatoes when we checked. For eggs, the atoll doesn't seem to have any chicken farmers (though we did see a handful of chickens in some yards). Eggs only come with the supply boat, once per month. Apparently, eggs disappear quickly once they come in. – Oh Joy II

**Dec. 2012:** There are a number of supermarkets and small stores, where you can purchase most food items. The challenge is fresh fruit and vegetables, as are mostly imported and look a bit tired by the time they hit the supermarket fruit and vegetable section.

There is a Korean garden that you can get fruit and vegetables from on a Friday morning. Need to be there early to get a good number. Then you purchase a pile of fruit and vegetables when your turn comes up. Everything was charged at \$3/kilo.

You may be able to purchase from the Korean gardens at other times, but we did not make further inquiries. – Westward II

### 5.2.6 Restaurants

**Dec. 2023:** Lag9on Hotel has a restaurant and bar. Location: 08°31.420S / 179°11.659E. – Blue Jay

**Nov. 2023:** **Sae's Pizza and Burger** offers take away services. Located 08°31.085S / 179°12.050E. Small pizza \$25AUD, large \$30AUD, made with ketchup and American cheese slices.

**Matagigali Bar** opens at night at 08°31.181S / 179°12.001E. Nice, big, clean, air-conditioned place to have a beer. The entrance is on the lagoon side of the building, even though the sign is on the runway side.

**Filmona Hotel Bar:** Nice spot to have a cool beer and watch the goings on the runway – sv Calla Lilly

**May 2023:** We had a pleasant lunch at the **Funafuti Lagoon Hotel** restaurant. Two items on the menu: Chicken in Oyster Sauce (\$18 AUD) and Stir-Fried Shrimp (\$21 AUD). Both served with what was once frozen vegetables and white rice. Delicious if expensive.

**Sue's Kitchen**, north from the dinghy dock on Fongafale Road, was also tasty. We had the day's special of Chicken Curry and it was delicious. \$12 AUD per plate. She also offers fish and chips, burger and chips, sandwiches, and roast chicken and chips. Hours: Mon-Sat: 1000-1900, Sun 0700-1900. [Suzanne.kofe@gmail.com](mailto:Suzanne.kofe@gmail.com), [www.sueskitchen.tv](http://www.sueskitchen.tv), (location: 08°31.247S / 179°11.771E)

Our other meal out was at **Halavai Restaurant** on Tuvalu Road. This is Chinese food. We had Chicken Chowmein and Chili Chicken. Both tasty. \$9 AUD per plate. Enormous servings. – Oh Joy II

### 5.2.7 Transportation

**Oct. 2024:** Motorbikes: rent a motorbike on Tuvalu Road across from Halavai Market (08°31.128S / 179°11.941E) there's no sign but you'll see a carport full of motorbikes. – sv Sugar Shack

**May 2023:** Motorbikes/mopeds are the way to get around in Funafuti. There are some cars but they're far outnumbered by mopeds. The people of Funafuti are careful, slow drivers and there seems to be a speed limit but we didn't see it posted anywhere.

Rent mopeds for \$20 AUD for 24 hours per bike from a shop on the main road across the street from the Halavai Market. You can ask at the Funafuti Lagoon Hotel (a half block from the dinghy landing) where to rent mopeds and they can describe it, if my instructions are unclear. – Oh Joy II

### 5.2.8 Activities

**Oct. 2024:** David's drill monument is reported to be around (08°30.99S / 179°12.036E or could be (08°30.931S / 179°12.045E). This is where Charles Darwin drilled through the coral in the atoll to test his theory about how coral atolls were formed. Google Maps has the location to the south of here. It is right in front of the school.

Motorbike Rental: rent a motorbike on Tuvalu Road across from Halavai Market (08°31.128S / 179°11.941E) there's no sign but you'll see a carport full of motorbikes. – sv Sugar Shack

**May 2024:** Fantastic snorkelling in the pass 2 miles ENE of the anchorage, south east of Falefatu island (SE past Funafara isl). We saw huge manta rays and then just as we were about to leave, dolphins arrived. We spent a good hour snorkelling with them...amazing. – Ari B

**Dec. 2012:** Visit the information centre on the second floor (northern side) of the Government Building. They don't have much information, but they have maps on the main sites and services are. There is a Philatelic Society that we found interesting. It is amazing the volume of stamps on display. We bought some to send back to stamp collecting friends at home.

Visit the airport when a plane is coming in. The place is humming. Fire Engines drive down the runway, sirens blaring to get people off, although the last-minute mopeds still zoom across. Nothing like a good game of chicken. – Westward II

**Nov. 2010:** Had a fun day exploring and experiencing Fongafale, the capital of Tuvalu. It isn't a very large town but it sure is a long one!

Fongafale sits in the crook of the long thing boomerang shaped Funafuti atoll which in parts is less than 100' wide so all the houses and buildings are spread on either side of the road that stretches along the length of the atoll.

The Americans built a large **airport** on this small but very strategically located island and plunked it down right in that same crook of the boomerang so it sits smack dab in the middle of town. Yesterday being Tuesday, it was "plane day" when the twice weekly (Tues/Thursday) Air Fiji flights come in and it is quite the social event with seemingly everyone on the island making the trek down to the airport for the event. All the crafts people, pretty much all ladies, had their wares on display consisting of mostly necklaces and other jewelry made of shells and a few carvings and cloth.

To picture this airport, you have to pretty much forget any other airport you've seen and instead imagine a drag strip with two long straight parallel ribbons of concrete that stretch about a mile or so with grass on either side and in between. No tower in sight and the airport "terminal" is a small open sided building sitting on the side of the runway at the north end.

Most of the time the runway area serves as a general purpose playground for the kids and living area for many others who use it to camp out on, but every **Tuesday** and **Wednesday**, about 10 minutes before the plane is due to land, the warning siren starts to rev up slowly, sounding just like the old WWII warning siren it is. It climbs up the spiral of volume and pitch like an old man climbing a big spiral staircase and finally reaches the top and holds for a minute or so before fading back down in

reverse. Everyone calmly makes their way off the runway area and then there is another two-minute warning siren and we all get up and watch as the plane touches down with that telltale screech of the stationary tires kissing the pavement for the first time and the telltale puff of smoke.

Later I took off in my dinghy and we went off cruising the **beach areas** north of town looking for a secluded spot. Unfortunately, we didn't find any as the atoll is so narrow that all there really is for the whole length of the islet is the road and a coral and rock beach on either side. Any spots that were wider were filled up with house. –Learnativity

### **5.2.8.1 Fishing, Diving, and Snorkeling**

**Dec. 2012:** The diving/snorkeling inside the lagoon was ordinary. On the couple of dives we did, the coral looked silted and washed-out – mainly stag-horn coral – with small fishes near the coral heads.

We did some drift dives through the Te Ava PuaPua Pass and Te Aa Mateiko Pass, both on the incoming and outgoing tide. The current was quite strong and you got a bit of speed up! We saw plenty of fishes, both big and small, and some large schools. We saw turtles and a few sharks – mainly reef shark, hump-head Maori wrasse, moray eels, and more. – Westward II

**Nov. 2010:** On the way back to Learnativity in my dinghy, I stopped at something I'd spotted on our way along the beach which was two white poles sticking out of the water at a rakish angle about 100m from shore. Sure, enough and it was the masts of a sunken ketch (sailboat with two masts) that had sunk. It was a bit eerie as I peered over the side of the dingy and stared at the whole sailboat silently resting on its side down there under about forty feet of clear blue/green water.

I tied the dinghy up to the top of the main mast, a rather odd feeling as well, and then put on my snorkeling gear and dived in to check out this wreck. I dove down quite a few times to look around the deck and hull of this forlorn boat resting on the wrong side of the surface and based on the growth I'd guess it had sunk only about a year ago or so. – Learnativity

### **5.2.9 Cruiser Reports**

**May 2024:** Fantastic snorkelling in the pass 2 miles ENE of the anchorage, south east of Falefatu island. We saw huge manta rays and then just as we were about to leave, dolphins arrived. We spent a good hour snorkelling with them...amazing. – Ari B

**May 2023:** There are 11,200 people on just 10 square miles of "land". For context, Disney World in Florida is 43 square miles. Tuvalu is a sovereign state within the Commonwealth. This means it's self-governing but still has ties to Britain as a constitutional monarchy. It hails King Charles III as its king.

English is the second language of the country and it's taught from the early grades of primary School. Then in secondary school (high school) "it's required to speak English in school." This is a significant difference from other small countries where English is taught in the schools. In Fiji for example, English language learning is required in primary school but happens after mastery of Fijian and sometimes Hindi.

There's something different about Tuvalu from the other small South Pacific countries we've visited. I had a chance to chat with a woman who spoke excellent English and works for the government. Her name is Fenua and she is happy to talk about her country. She works in the government offices as a director. Her team is in charge of monitoring fiscal responsibility for the 7 public programs administered by the Tuvaluan government. I could've talked to her all day.

#### **Why is there no ATM Machine?**

Tuvalu uses the Australian dollar for their currency. Fenua tells me credit cards are in the 10-year plan for Tuvalu. "You must think we're so old-fashioned." She says it's taken so long because the cost for credit card infrastructure is high and her country is poor. "The people here don't spend a lot of money so to put in an ATM or have merchant services would cost a lot and we wouldn't regain that expense for a very long time." This is so sensible.

I ask Fenua how much money the average Tuvaluan makes. She tells me a government worker at the base level, sweeping the floors, makes about \$10,000 AUD. “A director – and here I know she’s referring to herself because her eyes focus inward for a minute – makes at the top level about \$20,000 AUD.” I ask her how the other people on the island make money, those who aren’t lucky to have a government job. She says there’s fishing, and this means men leaving home to work on big fishing boats and sending money home to their families.

### **Why do Tuvaluans have such beautiful teeth?**

Their smiles are bright and white. Everywhere we’ve been, including New Zealand, dental care is poor. But here I notice right away that so many people have really good teeth. Of course, not everyone. I ask Fenua about this and she says she sees plenty of people with poor teeth but she didn’t let her son have “lollies” until just recently as his teeth are bigger and stronger. (When he smiles at me I see his two enormous adult front teeth.) We’ve only visited a couple of small grocery stores but I didn’t see big displays of candy (“lollies”) or soda as there is elsewhere. – Oh Joy II

**Dec. 2012:** Tuvalu is a group of nine atolls, formerly known as the Ellice Islands. The locals ferment ‘toddy’ in the coconut palms, and you will often be asked to join them for some. – Westward II

**Sept. 2010:** Tuvalu became an independent country on Oct. 1st, 1978 having formerly been part of the Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony administered by Great Britain. Tuvalu lies between 5 and 11d south latitude and longitude 176d E and the 180th meridian. It extends for a distance of 360 miles in a northwesterly-southeasterly direction and is composed of 9 islands with a total land area of 9 square miles spread across a quarter million square nautical miles of the Pacific Ocean.

Six of the islands are coral atolls and three are coral reef islands with a surrounding fringing reef. The tallest objects on the islands are coconut palms, which reach a height of 60-80 feet above sea level at the highest point and there is an estimated population of almost 12,000 in total. This is quite typical of many countries up in this area of the South Pacific.

Funafuti is the capital of Tuvalu, and is itself made up of thirty islets with a total land area of 625 acres on a reef surrounding a lagoon 13 miles long and 10 miles across at its widest point and a population of about 2700.

In WWII Funafuti became a major forward base for the USA forces until the Japanese invaders were driven from the Gilbert Islands to the north and as a result the present airstrip which dominates the town was a WWII airstrip that for reasons of expediency at the time was laid directly across the most fertile lands of the islet.

The island is very narrow being perched on the reef as it is so there is really just one road running down the length here and all the homes, businesses and schools are spread out along it. My initial impression is that it is one of those rather sad situations where it is too big to have the quaintness of a tropical village and yet too small to have the benefits and interests of a city. – Learnativity

## **5.3 Nukufetau (N of Funafuti)**

### **5.3.1 Pass**

**Dec. 2012:** We entered the lagoon through Teafua Pass. These are some waypoints for entry into the lagoon.

1 Outside 07°59.637S 178°19.324E

2 Middle 08°00.167S 178°19.922E

3 Inside 08°00.582S 178°20.450E

4 On the way to village 08°01.105S 178°20.327E

Provided by Westward II



### **5.3.2 Anchorage**

**April 2024:** 08°01.362S / 178°19.201E with sand bottom. Access to town, all tide access to shore via the dug channel.

**07°59.291S / 178°20.583E** Sand bottom with a few small bommies to avoid at anchor. We found this anchorage between two small islands with encircling reef. A little roll at high tide but generally flat. Delightful spot. – Quokka2

**Dec. 2012:** 08°01.296S / 178°19.3E by the main village so we could “check in” with the police station to give our customs letter.

We moved around a bit based on wind direction. We found we could get protection from all winds, but strong westerlies made it uncomfortable at high tide even in the best of spots. We anchored in several locations; waypoints are:

North East 07°58.572S / 178°25.550E in 16m

North West 07°56.208S / 178°22.659E in 8m

Mid-West 07°59.555S / 178°20.659E

Village 08°01.964S / 178°19.656E in 15m

Provided by – Westward II

### **5.3.3 Yachtsmen Services**

#### **5.3.3.1 Fuel (Diesel & Gasoline)**

**April 2024:** Located at: 08°01.539S / 178°18.878E. Fuel by jerry cans, Friendly family, owner speaks good English, Kerosene, unleaded, and zoom. – Quokka2

**Dec. 2012:** Fuel supplies were low on the island, and we did not need any. – Westward II

### **5.3.4 General Services**

#### **5.3.4.1 Banks & ATMs**

**Dec. 2012:** There is a bank where you can change money, but no ATM machine. – Westward II

#### **5.3.4.2 Internet & Wifi**

**Dec. 2012:** There is Internet at the government station at the telecom building. You can take your laptop and costs approximately \$5 for 49 minutes. – Westward II

#### **5.3.4.3 Island Council – Kaupule for Nukufetau**

**April 2024:** The Island Council is located at 08°01.723S / 178°18.941E. – Quokka2

### **5.3.5 Provisions**

**Dec. 2012:** There are several small shops with basic staple foods. The supply ship comes from Fiji, and this was delayed due to the recent cyclone Evan, so shelves very bare. – Westward II

### **5.3.6 Cruiser Reports**

**Dec. 2012:** This is 87nm from Funafuti; we did it as an overnight passage. We didn't connect as well with the local community here as we have in other places.

The water was much clearer in the NW corner, but had to pick your way through bommies to sandy patch on southern side of island. We had NE winds while here so was okay, except for small roll right at high tide. Also, this was a conservation area, so no fishing allowed.

We snorkeled and found some interesting bommies and channels. We got 'approached' by a school of 15 sharks while snorkeling in Deafatule passage. We retreated quickly.

We did not dive as would have had to go outside the reef and the seas were big. – Westward II

## **5.4 Nanumea**

Nanumea is about 245 NNW of Funafuti.

### **5.4.1 Pass:**

**Dec. 2012:** The entrance to Nanumea is a narrow channel, blasted through the reef. It is well marked and reported to have a depth of 2m at low tide (on lagoon side of channel) – on entry we had 3m on mid-tide. There is also quite a strong tidal flow through the channel to watch out for.

Outside channel: 05°40.380S/176°06.368E. Inside channel: 05°40.120S/176°06.552E. – Westward II

**Sept. 2012:** Pass is about 20m wide, blasted through reef in a straight line. Can be strong currents so go through near slack. Reported to be approx. 1.5 hours after high and low water.

"We arrived in Nanumea at low tide we had a current flowing out at 1 kt. We saw 6 ft depth on the lagoon side. We had more than 9 ft all the rest of way in the cut. The channel is very well marked, new steel post on each side lighten or reflective.

We left Nanumea at high tide and saw 2.7m on the lagoon side.

We lifted the rudder all the way and the keel about half way through the pass and didn't touch. Apparently, the Swiss boat came in yesterday several hours later and had three knots of current with them must have been quite frightening. – Streetcar (From Noonsite)

### **5.4.2 Anchorage**

**Dec. 2012: 05°40.256S / 176°07.081E.** This was nice and calm, protected from 3 sides by island and reef on the other. – Westward II

### **5.4.3 Yachtsmen Services**

#### **5.4.3.1 Fuel (Diesel and Gasoline)**

**Dec. 2012:** Petrol is available from some of the small stores. – Westward II

### **5.4.4 General Services**

#### **5.4.4.1 Bank & ATMs**

**Dec. 2012:** There is no ATM, however you can exchange money at the bank. – Westward II

#### **5.4.4.2 Internet & Wifi**

**Dec. 2012:** Internet is available in the telecom building, \$5 for 49 minutes, and can use your own laptop. – Westward II

### **5.4.5 Provisions**

**Dec. 2012:** There are a lot of small stores with basic supplies only. We found no restaurants, other than having a meal with local village people. – Westward II

### **5.4.6 Cruiser Reports**

**Dec. 2012:** We found the locals here welcoming and friendly. On arrival the police paddled out to us to ask for our letter from customs. We handed this over and were immediately welcomed.

For sightseeing, go to the church and climb the stairwell in the belfry tower – it has a great view. The church has beautiful lead-light windows.

Snorkeling inside was interesting and shallow. The water was extremely warm, only saw small fish. We went to southern end of lagoon. We snorkeled on the outside reef, but very sandy and sloping away. It was not that interesting so we did not go back for a dive. – Westward II

**Nov. 2011:** Nanumea (05°39'S / 176°08'E), Also part of Tuvalu and something you may want to look at on the way north, is the northern most atoll of the Tuvalu group, consists of a coral reef, with two principal islets, Lakina and Nanumea, about 0.5 mile within its W and SE extremities, respectively, with a lagoon between them.

There is a small boat channel, available to boats at HW, which leads W of the W arm of Nanumea into the lagoon.

It has been reported that a pier, 82m in length, extends from the village, and that two other piers exist in the lagoon. Reefs extend off the SE point of Nanumea!!!! – Mr. John VI

## 6 Kiribati

Kiribati consists of 3 Island groups: The Gilbert Islands, the Phoenix Islands, and the Line Islands. Information below on a few of the Gilbert Islands and a few of the Line Islands.

Note Kiribati is pronounced Kiri-bass.

Kiribati Useful web links:

[www.kiribatitourism.gov.ki/](http://www.kiribatitourism.gov.ki/)

<https://visitkiribati.travel/talk2us>

[www.visit-kiribati.com](http://www.visit-kiribati.com).

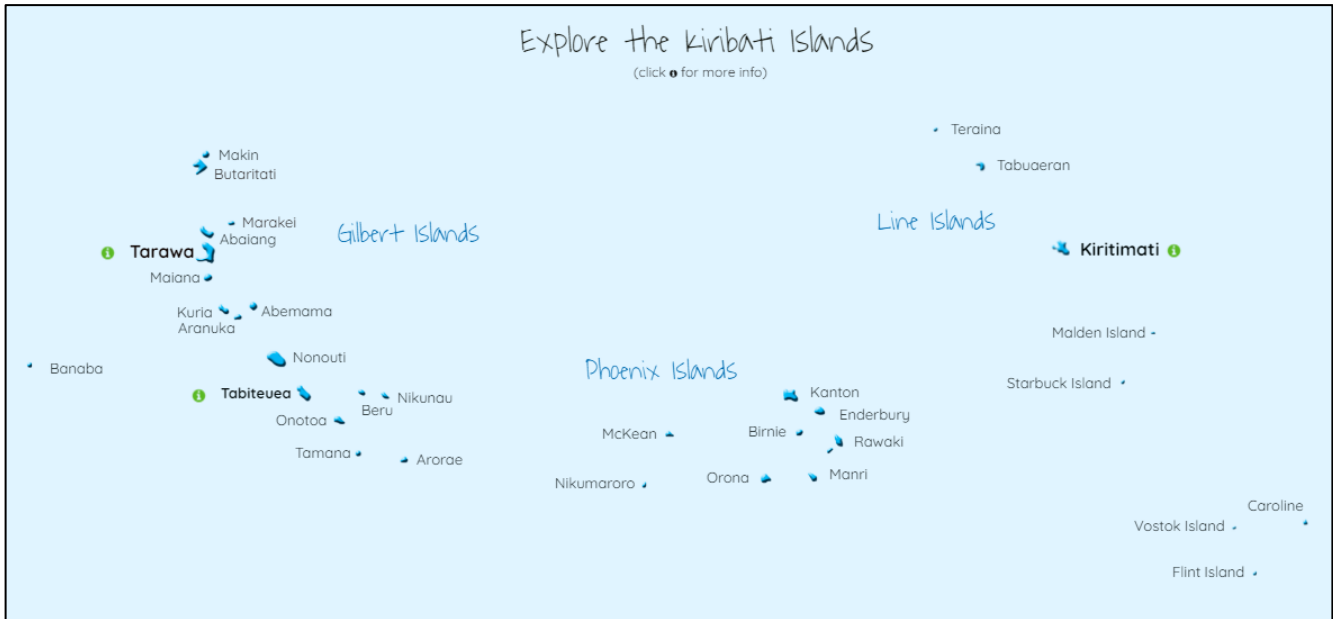


Figure 1 Map provided by [www.kiribatitourism.gov.ki](http://www.kiribatitourism.gov.ki).

### 6.1 Formalities

#### 6.1.1 Port of Entry

There are 2 ports of entry: Tarawa (Gilbert Islands) and Kiritimati “Christmas” Island (Line Islands). Tarawa Port Authority is located at **01°21.768N / 172°55.989E**. This is where you go to pay port dues (in 10/2024 it was \$30 per boat to anchor in Betio). Keep the receipt as you will need it for departure clearance. They also handle “anchoring assignments” and answer the VHF 06.

Yachts are NOT allowed to visit the outer islands prior to clearing in or after clearing out of Kiribati.

#### 6.1.2 Immigration

Ministry of Immigration and Foreign Affairs: [www.mfa.gov.ki/immigration](http://www.mfa.gov.ki/immigration) has all of the current immigration information on Kiribati. Immigration Division: +686.21342 and +686.750.21342, [sio@mfa.gov.ki](mailto:sio@mfa.gov.ki). Location at Bairiki **01°19.715N / 172°58.659E**. This is 3.5 miles (one way) from Betio and you will want to take the bus, hitchhike, or rent a car.

To get to immigration, take a bus to Bauriki, across the causeway and get off in front of the town square. With the ANZ/bank on your left, walk down the road on your right, towards the water tower. You’ll walk past some vendors and across from the water tower you will see a few government offices. Immigration is the first one.

Passports must be valid for at least six months after arrival.

**Nov. 2024:** This is the place where you apply to visit the outer islands and the place where you check out of Kiribati. See section 6.1.7 for more information on Inter-Island Permits. – sv Horizon

#### **6.1.2.1 Visa Requirements:**

Visas are not required for US, Canada, Australia, NZ, and many EU countries. View the list of countries who are exempt from visa requirements in Kiribati:

[www.mfa.gov.ki/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/VISA-EXEMPTION-ORDER-2023-1.pdf](http://www.mfa.gov.ki/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/VISA-EXEMPTION-ORDER-2023-1.pdf).

For those not requiring a visa, a 30-day stay is granted to visitors on arrival. This may be extended by up to 4 months by application to Immigration.

If your home country is not on the approved list you will be required to get a visitor's visa by completing the Kiribati Immigration Visitor's Visa application which can be downloaded at:

[www.mfa.gov.ki/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Visitor-Visa-FINAL.pdf](http://www.mfa.gov.ki/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Visitor-Visa-FINAL.pdf).

Noonsite recommends that those visitors who require a tourist visa should contact the Kiribati Tourism office prior to arrival. Their contact information is +686.751.25998, [info@kiribatitourism.gov.ki](mailto:info@kiribatitourism.gov.ki) or visit <https://visitkiribati.travel/talk2us>.

**Feb 2013:** We obtained a 3month extension from immigration for \$60 each. The fee was the same for 1 month and you could get up to 3 months. – Westward II

#### **6.1.3 Customs**

Customs is located close to the dinghy landing area in Betio (01°21.530N / 172°55.784E). +686.751.26531. Hours: Mon-Fri: 0800-1630.

For all formalities you must call Customs on VHF 16 to schedule clearances. It is not permitted to go ashore before you have an appointment.

You may try to reach Ivan with Biosecurity at [jnineinei@gmail.com](mailto:jnineinei@gmail.com). He might help arrange parties.

Officials will visit the yacht upon arrival and issue the cruising permit during the clearance process.

Prior to clearing out, you must pay the port fees at the KPA Office (Port Authority office) and be sure to obtain a receipt. You will need to present the receipt to Customs who will issue the departure clearance.

##### **6.1.3.1 Prohibited Items**

- Narcotics or other illegal drugs (but not medicines)
- Firearms including flick knives and imitation firearms. These must be declared on arrival and will be stored by Customs until departure.
- Artifacts over 30-years old (traditional swords, tools, ornaments)
- Local handicrafts including some straw products and shells

#### **6.1.4 Port Authority**

Port Authority is located on the dock in Betio. (01°21.786N / 172°56.018E). +686.751.26972. Hours: Mon-Fri: 0830-1645.

This is where you pay your anchorage fees at departure. Save your receipt as you will need to provide it to Customs. Approximate fee ranges from \$30-\$50AUD/month you are anchored in Betio.

#### **6.1.5 Clearance Process**

**Oct. 2024:** If you arrive between working hours (Mon-Fri: 0800-1230 and 1330-1615) call Tarawa Radio on VHF 16 as soon as you enter the lagoon to give the officials time to prepare for arrival. If you arrive after hours, call and ask to clear in during office hours.

The marine Guard keeps 24hr watch on 500, 2182, and 6215 MHz.

Once you are anchored, you will need to pick up the officials and deliver them to your boat.

After you are done with these officials, you will need to take the bus (or hitch hike) to Biariki Island to complete the formalities with the Immigration department.

You are not allowed to visit any other islands before clearing in or after clearing out. Otherwise, the officials will require you to return to Tarawa to clear out properly.

It is recommended to schedule a date and time for departure clearance to avoid having to hunt down officials. – as reported to sv Sugar Shack

**Dec. 2015:** Call Tarawa radio on VHF 16 when you get inside the pass and they will ask for your boat information. They will arrange a boarding party for you. If you arrive on the weekend you just ask if they can come on Monday to do the clearance. We do not know what the overtime fees are even though we checked in on a Sunday. We did not have to pay anything, but they had four other boats to check in that day so perhaps they did not bother.

Be prepared to go inside the harbor with your dingy to pick up the boarding party, they are four people. So, if you have a small dingy, they may ask you to make several trips and they may like to have a life vest (immigration lady).

You pick them up in the very end of the harbor in the left corner you see some steps going down in front of the blue house. The "party" are nice people and no problems, customs and bio security wanted to look down below, they just opened some doors and looked random, just to have done it.

You get 30 days visa on arrival, you can then pay, AUD\$60, valid 4 month to stay longer. – Ariel IV

**Feb 2013:** On the way into port we called Tarawa Radio on channel 16 to give them our ETA. On arrival they arranged a boarding party to come to our boat. We went to pick them up from the fishing wharf, and only quarantine was there.

Immigration arrived an hour later, and we got a stamp in our passport for 1 month. He had his stamp with him, but other boats had to later go to the immigration office to get their passports stamps.

The next morning, we got police and customs on board. All wanted a crew list and details of the yacht.

We received no paperwork, and there was no charge. – Westward II

**2013:** Radio Procedures: On entering Kiribati waters, contact the following on VHF 16 Port Betio Tarawa "Tarawa Radio" – Tango 3 Charlie

Clearance: On arrival boarding party officials (Customs, Health, Immigration, Police and Quarantine) will board the vessel. Clearance involves processing of crew and passengers, intercepting dangerous goods, collecting any revenues applicable and issuing or withholding clearance.

Boarding Party Requirements - The Master is required to produce the following documents:

- Clearance from last port (Zarpe)
- Crew List and passengers
- Crew declarations
- Arms and ammunition – (may be secured on board or temporarily seized and held by police until departure.)
- Yacht particulars.

The above information was provided in the Kiribati Cruiser's Guide

#### **6.1.6 Fees**

Clearance is free if done M-F during normal working hours (8:15am to 4:15pm).

After hours on weekdays, the cost is \$5 per customs officer per hour. Weekends the cost is \$10 per customs officer per hour.

Visa extension can cost \$60AUD per month per visa.

**Port Dues** are approximately \$50AUD per month payable upon departure to the KPA Office (Port Authority) and save the receipt and present it to Customs who will issue the departure clearance.

**Port Dockage Fees** to get fuel at the port dock in Kiritimati “Christmas” Island, the cost is \$60AUD (wharf usage fee).

### **6.1.7 Inter-Island Permits**

If you wish to visit the outer islands you will need to write a letter to the Principal Immigration Officer requesting permission. State the time period of your visit, the reason for your visit, boat and crew details, and submit at least 3 days prior to your departure. You will also need to get approval from Customs.

Once approved, both Immigration and customs will provide you with a letter of introduction to give to the local police upon arrival. You’ll be required to show the permit letter and crew passports as well.

Permission to visit the outer island is granted for a fixed period, usually no more than two weeks.

Visiting the outer islands is only allowed once you are cleared in and before you clear out.

**Note:** If you prepare the letter prior to clearing into the country you can ask Customs and Immigration to sign off on it while you are clearing in (this will save you a long trip to Biariki).

**Nov. 2024:** Letter seeking permission to visit Abaiang Island:

Sailing Vessel [Boat Name], currently in Tarawa, Kiribati is asking permission to visit the island of [atoll name] before coming back to Tarawa for clearing out of the country.

We cleared into the country on [Date, Year] and are intending to sail to [atoll name] on [Day, Date, Year]. Our intension is to stay in [atoll name] for approximately [#] days. But asking permission for [#] days to accommodate for weather.

[Boat Name] is a [xx] meter sailing boat. [country] registered.

We are [#] people onboard ([country] citizens). [name], Captain and [name], Crew

We do not plan for anybody else onboard during our time in Kiribati.

Enclosed are our copies of our Passports, our ship registration, and a photo of our boat.

The above letter secured our permission to visit Abaiang. – sv Horizon

**Dec. 2015:** We suggest that you give a letter asking permission to visit whatever outer island you want to see while in Kiribati and give to immigration and customs when you clear in. This will save you one day of going to Bairiki where Immigration is located.

We have spoken to several people about the issue of clearing out and then have a permission to visit some islands on the way north but that is not going to happen, they have to change the law first. We told them that both Fiji and Tuvalu made exceptions but No, not here. The manager of tourism has several times put this on the agenda in parliament but without any luck. – Ariel IV

**Jan. 2013:** In order to visit Butartari, it was necessary to obtain permission from **both** Immigration and Customs in Tarawa (the same applies for all the outer islands).

We submitted a written request to Immigration & then Customs (in person). They each provided us with a letter of introduction to give to the local police on arrival in Butaritari. This stated the length of time we were permitted to stay, and boat/crew details.

We were directed to hand the letters to local police in Butaritari immediately on arrival. The police in Butaritari were expecting us and waiting for us to report in with them. They wanted to see permit letters and passports.

Permission to visit one of the outer islands is granted for a fixed period, usually less than 2 weeks. – Streetcar (From Noonsite)

**Ukwn Date:** a boat named s/v Atlantis stopped in Butaritari on their way south from Majuro, without first clearing in to Tarawa. They were arrested on arrival in Butaritari. They claimed, when arrested, that they had engine overheating problems, which wasn't the case. This was eventually resolved, but caused problems for cruisers following in their wake. Read the entire story behind this event [www.noonsite.com/Members/doina/R2008-04-18-1](http://www.noonsite.com/Members/doina/R2008-04-18-1) – Noonsite

### **6.1.8 Departure Process**

**Oct. 2024:** You can only clear out of one of the two approved ports of entry: Tarawa (Gilbert Islands) or Kiritimati “Christmas” Island (Line Islands). Once you have cleared out you are not allowed to stop or visit any islands or atolls within Kiribati waters.

It is recommended to schedule a date and time for departure clearance to avoid having to hunt down officials.

Process: Visit Immigration (in Bairiki), then pay the port dues at the KPA Office (Port Authority), save the receipt and present it to Customs who will issue the departure clearance.

**Dec. 2015:** You start with the Immigration in Bairiki and then the Custom in Betio. – Ariel IV

**Feb 2013:** Betio in Tarawa is the outward clearance port. We caught the bus to immigration at Bairiki, and then to customs at Betio, to clear out. There were no problems and no charges.

However, we have heard of yachts being charged from \$0 to \$50 for outwards clearance, so appears to be quite random. – Westward II

## **6.2 Customs and Language**

Kiribati law forbids nudity and revealing swimming suits.

Direct eye contact is uncommon and it is inappropriate to look directly at one of higher status.

Touching of heads is considered extremely intimate, and the top of the head is a taboo area. Similarly, do not raise your hands/arms above another person's head.

Dress Code: Women should wear a lavalava (sarong) and top that covers the shoulders when around locals, especially when walking through the village, going to church or attending a mwaneaba (meeting or social hall event).

Te Mwaneaba is a communal traditional meeting hours or social hall which remains the most important institutional symbol and foundation of social and community life in Kiribati. It is important to follow the customs when invited to an event here:

- It is considered respectful to stop when walking through the mwaneaba and amongst people sitting down. Use the word “Matauninga” which means “excuse me”
- Your host will designate a sitting area. Sit with your legs crossed or tucked underneath you. Avoid rude gestures like turning your back, sitting with your feet pointed toward someone.

**Oct. 2010:** As with many of the countries out here in the South Pacific, Kiribati is a group of islands which are very small in size individually and yet spread out over a huge area of literally millions of square miles of ocean. Yet each country and often each island within them are very different in so many ways and makes for endless fascination and varied experiences for me.

The native language in Kiribati is somewhat similar from what I can understand to the languages in Hawaii, Polynesia and other spots I've been. It has far fewer letters in the alphabet, thirteen I think in total and some uniqueness in pronunciation. For example, there is no S in the alphabet but they



pronounce the TI combination as an S so the country is spelled Kiribati but pronounced “Kiribass”. Similarly, the town I was anchored off was Betio but pronounced “Besso”.

Also, the people don't refer to themselves as Kiribatian but rather as I-Kiribati. Physical traits wise they have dark olive skin similar to India but typically a huskier build. Culturally they were very different than Fiji in that they are very communal and have very strong community traits.

For example, many of the people on Tarawa come from the many outer islands of Kiribati and they stay in large buildings that I found everyone on my travels all over the island. These look a little bit like a church at first from a distance in that they have very tall steep roofs, usually made from corrugated steel if they are more recent construction as most were and some with the more traditional roof of woven palm leaves. There is only one floor, always made of smooth concrete and all there are no walls inside or out, just posts to hold up the large roof above. Each island or clan has their own building or several of them in many cases and everyone lives, eat. – Learnativity

### **6.3 Tarawa (Port of Entry)**

#### **6.3.1 Pass**

**Dec. 2015:** We made landfall around midnight and so we were slowly making our way to the pass we saw a big, 180 meter cargo ship leaving the harbour and we followed him on the AIS all the way out and he was right on track on Navionics charts and Google maps, but on Open CPN we were surprised he took a northern course and went over shallow waters, we followed our Navionics charts.

We also had the radar on and all the buoys where visible 4-5 miles away.

Buoy No 1 was unlit, broken! But the rest of the lights were working ok.

Coming in the big, wide pass the Open CPN did show us like 100 meters to the north. If you do not have Navionics just follow the Buoys and lights, they are close and very easy to see the next.

Buoy No 5 came perhaps 20meter before but no problem. Navionics charts had a 1,3 meter just SW of buoy No 5 but that should be 11,3 meters instead!

Buoy No 6 and also the next buoy to port has been changed to red and that makes more sense, red port and green lights starboard!

Buoy No 10 and then you are in the anchorage and when we came all the big working lights in the harbor was on and we saw every boat and mooring buoys.

We did have full moon yes, but we also did have clouds and some rain coming in and it made no difference, all was very well marked.

The harbor has also been rebuilt, there is a long, perhaps 300-meter container ship going out north of the old pier, there is an orange light at the end of the pier. – Ariel IV

**2013:** The following are the way points for Tarawa Atoll channel. The waypoints are a guide and caution is advised:

01°25.100N / 172°54.345E outside the channel

01°24.744N / 172°55.152E North of flat rusted can with a short stake on top inside the channel

01°23.448N / 172°55.857E Can with a tall stake inside channel, take to port. Next is a buoy with a green post on top with an up arrow, pass north off starboard

01°21.646N / 172°56.268E Red nun, take to port. You will see 2 more rusted cans in a line toward the wharf, pass to port

01°21.934N / 172°55.823E Off one of the cans above

The above information provided by the Kiribati Cruiser's Guide

**Nov. 2010:** The reef at the SW of Tarawa extends well offshore but, for yachts, does not shelve steeply so once you get down to thirty feet, just follow the contour around and follow it north till you see the fairway buoy.

The unlighted buoy is easy to spot in calm conditions, less so when it's blowing but not a bad radar target. Here are the waypoints we used:

1. 01°25.001N / 172°54.172E
2. 01°24.369N / 172°55.898E
3. 01°23.794N / 172°56.213E
4. 01°23.468N / 172°56.369E
5. 01°23.026N / 172°56.272E
6. 01°22.387N / 172°56.133E
7. 01°21.873N / 172°55.779E

The above provided by Mr. John VI

### **6.3.2 Anchorages**

**Oct. 2024: 01°22.065N / 172°55.771E.** The pass has a big wide entrance that is well marked and charted. You can feel comfortable entering in the dark. Follow the recommended route and anchor to the west of the jetty. Busy anchorage with lots of fishing boats near the pier. Minimal wind protection but swell protection from the West and South.

**01°21.241N / 172°57.272E** we also anchored here. – Serendipity

**Oct. 2024: 01°20.168N / 172°58.548E** in 4-6m deep tide dependent. Large area with sand. Convenient anchorage close to dinghy landing and immigration.

Dinghy Landing: **01°19.911N / 172°58.490E.** Beach your dinghy beside the ramp. Beware of the tide, the protecting piers disappear at high tide and if it is windy it might be a bad place to go ashore. Bring a dinghy anchor.

Nippon Causeway Beach is another place to land the dinghy (anchor and tie to a tree on shore). Easy landing and easy walk to Immigration or to the center of the island. – sv Horizon

**Oct. 2024: Dinghy Landings:** 01°21.804N / 172°55.928E This is the best place to land the dinghy. There are two yellow ladders and metal rings where you can lock your dinghy. The kids play on the dock and will most likely take liberties with your dinghy so be sure to lock it.

Beach landing near cafes. 01°20.930N / 172°56.963E.

Betio Interior Dinghy Tie-up: 01°21.554N / 172°55.860E. If there is room you can tie your dinghy near the steps. Kids will play on your dinghy here too.

Bairiki Harbor 01°19.911N / 172°58.490E beach your dinghy beside the ramp. However, be aware of the tide as the protecting piers disappear at high tide and if it is windy it might be a bad place to get ashore. Bring your dinghy anchor to use as a stern anchor.

Parliament Pier 01°21.057N / 173°02.265E. Stairs on the lagoon side and bollards to tie to. – as reported to sv Sugar Shack

**Feb 2013:** We found the best spots to be outside the parliament building or at Bikenibeu.

Betio: **01°21.970N / 172°55.802E.** This anchorage was not comfortable or well protected and is among the fishing fleet. It is necessary to stop here to clear in, but we left as soon as we were able to.

Parliament Anchorage: **01°21.400N / 173°02.021E** depth 4-5 m. It is nice and calm if winds SE to N, otherwise gets a little choppy. Need to be careful of shallows and sand bars when navigating to anchorage. We were able to use the parliament jetty for dinghy access – there is a channel through that can be accessed even at low tide, so a convenient anchorage for getting ashore.

Bikenibeu: **01°22.292N / 173°06.950E** depth 8m. There is a channel ashore that is accessible even at low tide although need to be careful where you leave your dinghy so don't get left high and dry. We usually anchored in the deeper pond where the locals anchor their boats. – Westward II

**Nov. 2012:** **1°21.915N / 172°55.791E** in 25 feet of water. – Downtime

**Nov. 2010:** Anchoring outside the harbour is fine in good weather but when the trade winds blow, even from the SE, the swell curves around and under the outer jetty causing uncomfortable pitching. Being a small boat, we were forced to sleep in the saloon as we were almost shipping water over the bow. It does go down somewhat at night but it's still uncomfortable.

During the day we left our dinghy near the steps in the SE corner and used a stern anchor to keep it clear; the steps are well used by the locals so don't block them. – Mr. John VI

### **6.3.3 Formalities**

See section 6.1 Formalities for entry and departure information in Kiribati. This includes locations for customs, immigration, and port authority.

### **6.3.4 Yachtsmen Services**

#### **6.3.4.1 Cooking Gas (Propane & Butane)**

**Oct. 2024:** Kiribati Oil Company (KOIL) [www.koil.com.ki](http://www.koil.com.ki), [tiiroa@koil.net.ki](mailto:tiiroa@koil.net.ki), [Facebook page](#). Hours: Mon-Fri: 0900-1715, Sat: 0900-1200. Located: 01°21.546N / 172°55.913E. You can refill your bottles here for \$19AUD for a 4.5L bottle. They do not fill blue camping gaz. – as reported to sv Sugar Shack

**Dec. 2015: Propane:** There is a filling station cross the road from the Gas station, also easy access from the dingy and left corner of the harbor. – Ariel IV

#### **6.3.4.2 Fuel (Diesel & Gasoline)**

**Oct. 2024:** Betio Gas Station +686.730.03048. Open 24hrs. Located (01°21.533N / 172°55.881E) sells both diesel and gasoline. A short walk from the SE corner of the wharf basin.

Banria Gas Station Tarawa (SE corner at 01°21.938N / 173°05.938E) has diesel, gasoline and premix. – as reported to sv Sugar Shack

**Dec. 2015:** Diesel: With jerry cans easy, you go to the same stairs you picked the "boarding party" up and just across the road is the gas station, 1.53 dollars per liter. If you are a couple of boats you do it together and could even be fun!

We do not recommend to go in with your boat, it looks shallow, sandbars at the entrance and we see rats and cockroaches everywhere. – Ariel IV

#### **6.3.4.3 Water**

**Oct. 2024:** It is not advised to drink the water sourced locally without boiling it first. Many islands will catch rain water and may share their supply, but it too should be boiled first. – sv Sugar Shack

**Dec. 2015:** You do not want to drink any of the water here!! If somebody offers you tea in a house be polite and ask for a coconut water instead. If you do not have watermaker, collecting rainwater is the best option here, it rains nearly every day or night. – Ariel IV

**2013:** Water can be in short supply, however is generally available. Drinking water should be boiled. 18 Litre water bottles of pure drinking water can be purchased at the Tarawa Motors in Antenon on Teoraereke (Tarawa). For enquiries contact – Tel: 21451, Fax: 21451. Delivery services also available – Kiribati Cruiser's Guide

**Feb. 2013:** There was not much rain while we were here and we didn't like to run our water maker in the lagoon, so we enquired about water at the wharf.

The fish factory sells good quality desalinated water to fishing boats for \$8/tonne. If you need any contact the General Manager Mr. Lee to make arrangements.

Then contact Port Control (VHF 06) to arrange to tie up to the wharf. Explain you are getting water, as only one watering point. You can also organize delivery of bulk diesel if required. – Westward II

### **6.3.5 General Services**

#### **6.3.5.1 Airlines**

Kiribati has three International gateways: Tarawa, Kiritimati and Kanton Islands (private flights only).

Fiji Airways flies non-stop from Nadi to Tarawa. [www.fijiairways.com](http://www.fijiairways.com)

Nauru Airlines has flights from Nadi and Nassau. [www.ourairline.com.au](http://www.ourairline.com.au)

#### **6.3.5.2 Bank and ATMs**

**Oct. 2024:** ANZ Bank is the only bank in Kiribati. There is a branch and ATM located in Bairiki (01°19.801N / 172°58.712E) right from the dinghy dock, ½ mile down the road. +686.21095. Hours: Mon-Fri: 0900-1500.

ATM in Betio is located at Moel Trading (01°21.454N / 172°55.754E) to the left of the main entrance and will let you withdraw up to \$500AUD at a time

ATM at Bairiki (01°19.801N / 172°58.712E), withdraw up to \$500 AUD at a time.

ATMs can be found at both branches as well as ANZ in Bairiki, and Bikenibeu (Tarawa).

Western Union has branches located in Betio, Bairiki, Abarao and Nawerewere (S. Tarawa).

Credit cards are not widely accepted so it is best to come with AUD. – sv Sugar Shack

#### **6.3.5.3 Boat Repairs**

**Oct. 2024:** Tarawa has mechanical, electrical and engineering shops that may be available to assist with basic boat repairs. –sv Sugar Shack

#### **6.3.5.4 Internet and Wifi**

**Oct. 2024:** The ATH (Amalgamated Telecom Holdings) Office, in Bairiki or Betio, offers internet 4G. Pricing is approximately \$50AUD for 6GB for 30 days. This service works in Tarawa and Abaiang atoll. – sv Sugar Shack

**Dec. 2015: Internet:** The best we found is on "George Hotel", it is one block up from the harbor, pass the gas station, cross the main road and go up 100 meters and then it is to the left, nice bar and restaurant and you buy a voucher for 2 Aus-dollars per hour and it is almost ok as long as there is not to many people. The food is also good and nice staff. – Ariel IV

**Feb. 2013:** We anchored near the airport at Tarawa. It is the best anchorage we've been in so far. We have internet here on the boat--Not great internet, but some.

There are a few internet cafes around. We found the most convenient internet at Bikenibeu. Here you get vouchers from TSKL for \$1.80 per hour. With a booster you can then log on from the anchorage.

Alternatively sit at TSKL (Telecom Services Kiribati Limited) to use the internet – there is aircon.

The Chatterbox café also has internet, but \$5 for ½ hour. – Westward II

#### **6.3.5.5 Laundry**

**2013:** Laundry can be done at Mary's motel / Betio Apartments or by arrangement. Ask at the tourism office for more information. Mary's Hotel +686.7502.2227 Hours: Mon-Sun: 0700-2200, [www.marysmotelat Tarawa.com](http://www.marysmotelat Tarawa.com). – Kiribati Cruiser's Guide

**Feb. 2013:** We found most places charge per item for washing, making it very expensive. Mary's Motel in Bairiki charge \$10 per load (very big loads). – Westward II

#### **6.3.5.6 Medical**

The Tunbgaru Central Hospital (TCH) +686.731.40050, +686.740.28100. Open 24 hours. <https://daisi.com.au/tungaru-central-hospital-tch>, Located in Tungaru (south Tarawa) 01°21.771N / 172°08.335E. The Director of Health Services is Dr. Tekeua Uraim [dr\\_kabtun@yahoo.com.au](mailto:dr_kabtun@yahoo.com.au).

TCH has 120 beds and is Japanese funded. They offer emergency care, general medical, surgical, obstetrics and gynecology, pediatrics, mental health, laboratory, medical imaging, pharmacy and physiotherapy services. In addition, there is a dentist at the hospital and it is first come first serve.

The Temakin Clinic is located in Betio.

Aneieta Pharmacy and Medical Clinic is located in Bairiki.

#### **6.3.5.7 Shipping & DHL**

DHL Hours: Mon-Fri: 0800-1630, Located on lagoon Drive (near Chatterbox Café) in Bikenibeu.

#### **6.3.5.8 Tourist Office**

Tourist Office +686.25573, +686.26003, [info@kiribatitourism.gov.ki](mailto:info@kiribatitourism.gov.ki), [www.kiribatitourism.gov.ki](http://www.kiribatitourism.gov.ki). They offer some good island maps. From the dinghy area, go to the second street on the left and turn, the tourist office will be on the right.

#### **6.3.5.9 Transportation**

**Nov. 2024:** Bus stop at 01°21.459N / 172°55.975E near food stalls. Bus stops can be vague and unmarked usually with a crowd of people standing around. However, the one by the food stalls is easy to find. The buses are vans – you pay when you get off \$1 AU. Always ask if this is the van for the area you are going. Multiple routes on this narrow island. People squeeze in. – Queen Jane

**Dec. 2015:** There are hundreds of mini-busses going around Betio, little bigger mini-busses going to Bairiki and further for 80 cents. Fag one down and enjoy an overcrowded buss experience! – Ariel IV

**Feb. 2013:** Car Hire: For \$50 per day, you can hire a car from the Utirerei Motel (phone 22530) at Ambo Village. There is no paperwork, they just give you keys and off you go. – Westward II

**Oct 2011:** I can't say we mastered the bus system, but it can't be that complicated. They're not buses, they're actually mini vans. Someone drives while another person takes your money. In general, I think the blue buses went across the causeways. The Betio bus (sign in the front says Betio) would take you to the edge of the causeway and then turn around and go back through town. Rides within Betio were 60 cents/adult and 20 cents/child. If you went across the causeway to the next town over it was 80 cents/adult and still 20 cents/child. – Savannah

**Nov. 2010:** We did manage to arrange a hire car for the Saturday morning and this we did through the tourist office a short distance from the dock.

The tourist office gave us all the information they had and a list of up-coming events so the next morning we were all ready to see the island, the car was \$60AUS.

The car was waiting for us when we went ashore and it all went smoothly except that there was suddenly mention of a deposit, which was a significant amount, which we didn't have; after a bit of negotiation the deposit was forgotten and we just paid for the car in advance. – Mr. John VI

#### **6.3.6 Provisions**

**Oct. 2024:** We have not visited these markets (yet), but this is what we found online (NFL, Google):

**Betio: Moel Trading** is a fairly large supermarket. Located at 01°21.460N / 172°55.751E. Hours: Mon-Sat: 0800-1900. [Facebook page](#). Meat, dairy, fish available.

There are a few smaller grocery stores around Betio, including one at 01°21.278N / 172°56.267E.

**Bairiki: Wishing Star Bairiki Super Mall** Hours: Mon-Sat: 0800-1800. Located at 01°19.779N / 172°58.675E. The sell bread, dairy, meats & some produce. This market is bigger than those in Betio.

**Bikenibeu: iMart** +686.720.29733, Hours: Mon-Sun: 0700-2000

Basic supplies (canned goods and some local fruits) can be found on most islands. – sv Sugar Shack

**Dec. 2015:** Not very much fresh produce here (not even local fresh produce).

The biggest shop in Betio is Moel and when the supply ship came in they had carrots and some cabbage, apples and oranges -expensive!

The same white fluffy bread here as in Tuvalu. – Ariel IV

**Feb 2013:** There are plenty of supermarkets and small stores. If you shop around you can get most things. It depends on when the last supply ship was in as to what is available.

Fresh fruit and vegetables are a lot more difficult, as are dairy products. Some local produce is available if you hunt around. – Westward II

**2013:** There is a relatively good assortment of canned goods and fish is freely available.

Imported fruit and vegetables are in limited supply - however local fruits and vegetables - bananas, watermelon, pumpkin, cabbage, cucumber, coconuts and breadfruit are readily available and a lot are available on Butaritari and South Tarawa. – Kiribati Cruiser's Guide

### 6.3.7 Restaurants

**Oct. 2024:** A few places to eat found online, not visited yet.

**Barry's Kitchen and Cake Shop** (known simply as "Bakery")+686.730.17788, +686. 730.18590. Located at 01°21.401N / 172°55.669E on [Facebook](#). Sells tasty baked goods and pizza. There is no sign outside, just wooden doors.

**Horizon Café Beachside** bar and restaurant, [Facebook page](#). Location: 01°20.931N / 172°56.948E. Burgers, fish and chips.

**Aggie's Cakes and Snacks** located in Eita. +686.730.04872, +686.730.59326, [aggiesnacks@gmail.com](mailto:aggiesnacks@gmail.com), [Facebook page](#). Hours: Mon-Sat: 0700-2300.

**Ocean Family Seafood Restaurant** in Bairiki. +686.730.33374, [reservicemgr@kiritimatifish.com](mailto:reservicemgr@kiritimatifish.com), [Facebook page](#). Hours: Mon-Sun: 1100-1400 & 1800-2100. Location: 01°19.777N / 172°58.669E. Nice Chinese restaurant with a strong air conditioner and good food.

**Luba Café** very friendly service, clean restaurant/café. Located 01°21.535N / 172°55.918E.

**Chatterbox Café** Hours: +686.7300.9585, [chatterbox@tobaraoi.com](mailto:chatterbox@tobaraoi.com), [Facebook Page](#). Mon-Sun: 0700-1630. Located in Bikenibeu. – sv Sugar Shack

**Feb 2013:** There are a number of restaurants and cafés. Chatterbox Café: For a proper coffee, treat yourself. Inside are a lot of local crafts, DHL, and a travel agent.

We enjoyed Aboy's in Betio and Bikenibeu Chinese for freshly cooked, tasty, Chinese style food, at a good price. Don't get too excited by the culinary delights of this country. Only very basic – Westward II

### 6.3.8 Activities

**Oct. 2024:** There are several tourism sites dedicated to Kiribati. Kiribati Tourism +686.751.25998, +686.25573, [info@kiribatitourism.gov.ki](mailto:info@kiribatitourism.gov.ki) or visit <https://visitkiribati.travel/talk2us> and [www.kiribatitourism.gov.ki](http://www.kiribatitourism.gov.ki).

Visit the many WWII relics spread across the country. [Read for more information](#).

Te Umanibong Museum and Cultural Center,+686.752.28283, [info@internalaffairs.gov.ki](mailto:info@internalaffairs.gov.ki), <https://daisi.com.au/tungaru-central-hospital-tch>, Hours: Mon-Fri: 0900-1600. Located in Bikenibeu

located at 01°21.937N / 1730°7.247E. Nice small museum with exhibits of historical crafts and culture.  
– sv Sugar Shack

**Oct. 2024:** Molly Island Tour offers a guided tour of the island by mini bus or car. +686. 7300 1016 (tel & WhatsApp) – Serendipity

**Dec. 2015:** Start with going to the "Kiribati National Tourism Office" at the Ministry of Communications, Transport and Tourism Development in Betio. It is at the crossroad one block up from the harbor and the gas station to your left in the crossroad, ask if they can print out the very helpful and nice "Kiribati, Tarawa & Outer Gilbert Islands, Travel Guide 2015" Lots of information and maps! – Ariel IV

**Mar 2013:** Our friends on Westward II reported being disappointed in the diving in Kiribati. Basically, the diving inside the lagoon wasn't very good because the visibility is not so good. And it is difficult on a sailboat to get to places outside the lagoon.

Are you up for underwater sightseeing? - Available any weekends or weekdays prior booking 48hrs ahead. The expedition will be guided by a PADI accredited Dive Master Mr James Smith where the underwater sightseeing will cover the following sites choices WWII landing aircraft wreck at Betio lagoon side at 7- 8m depth, MV Toata wreck at Bikeman islet at 9m depth, MV Mataraoi wreck at Betio ocean side at 10m depth and also reef dive for 15 to 25 meters depth.

The package includes 2dives, dive guide, boat hire, boatman, bowman, fuel, dive tanks, weight belts (leads) and refreshment.

Price: AUD\$160 if only one interested, AUD\$140 for two interested, and AUD120 for 3 or more interested and for an extra supplementary dive or 3rd dive is AUD60.

Note: divers are encouraged to bring their own BCD, Regulator, mask, snorkel and pair of fins. However, he can provide the above equipment's for AUD\$20.00 each as a hire charged. For more information please contact James Smith [jameswillie.smith2@gmail.com](mailto:jameswillie.smith2@gmail.com), +686.96545. – Soggy Paws

**Feb 2013:** The water in the lagoon is murky, not good visibility and shallow, so didn't dive or snorkel here. It is difficult to get to the outside reef, and there are only a few breaks in the reef (and not near the good anchorages).

The tourist information office has pamphlets. Located in Betio near Post Office & Philatelic Society.

We hired a car for a day and had a good look around, visiting the war wrecks, armaments, and memorials. – Westward II

**Nov. 2010:** We rented a car. To be honest, there wasn't an awful lot to see, but we managed to pad out the day enough that we didn't get back till late afternoon.

We drove right out to the airport and a little beyond, until we could go no further; then had a picnic lunch whilst some pilot went round and round doing 'circuits and bumps'.

The eastern end of the atoll was a good deal more scenic and considerably less over-crowded than the Betio end where they were shoulder to shoulder in little more than a ghetto.

We stopped and had a look at the **Parliament Building**, which was very nice but we were informed that it was rarely used; there was a nice little dock and a dredged-out basin in front of this area however there was no real channel to the deeper water.

Next door to the Parliament, the Taiwanese had built an **Aquatic Centre**, which was closed on the Saturday but security let us in anyway and we got a little bit of a tour. They were breeding 'Milkfish'

They did have an aquarium of small tanks containing some of the local reef fish and this was very interesting; we got a few good pictures and moved on to the War Relics. – Mr. John VI

### **6.3.9 Theft & Security Issues**

**March 2024:** SV Quokka2 reported a robbery while they were asleep onboard. Anchored at Betio about 700m from shore, the boat was boarded from the sugar scoops. Unfortunately, it was a hot

evening so the boat was open. A chilly bin, computer, wallet, and dive gear were stolen and later recovered by the police. – sv Quokka2 via Noonsite

**Dec. 2015:** It is hard to say if there is a problem still as long is nothing happens.

Make sure you have good anchor lights, lots of fast boats go by at night!

We lock our boat always when we go ashore. The dingy matter is the problem, we leave the dingy in the far-right corner of the harbor inside all the badges and locked to the last badge, it's been ok so long, but we have not yet left it at evenings and night?

The water in the harbor is very, very dirty still children play and swim there! Look in your dingy for cockroaches and even perhaps rats because there is a lot and big ones! – Ariel IV

**Oct. 2011:** Prior to arriving, we had not heard of any theft in Tarawa. When we arrived, there were two other boats there. Both, when left in the anchorage to go ashore, were boarded and broken into. The first yacht had left a spare key where it was found. The thieves didn't take too much of value and the second yacht had their cockpit deck boxes broken into (by actually breaking the locks). The repair to the boxes would be more than the replacement of the things they took.

Since there were three boats in the anchorage including ours, we locked everything inside, including snorkeling gear, deck chairs, etc. and hid our electronics (in hindsight, not very well) and locked our door with a fairly large padlock. We're a metal boat with a pretty sturdy door and felt secure. The day the other boats went to the dock, we were broken into as well.

This time they broke our lock (brought a tool with them to do this and left it...they had intent), stole 2 laptop computers, an iPad, a pricey pair of binoculars and a scuba mask.

After talking to a police officer and waiting on an investigator, Andy finally suggested that he write something down for them. They felt this was a good idea and while he was doing it, asked him if he had any suspects (this would be a question asked more than once). No one checked into anything.

After three boats being broken into in one week, no one even came out to the boat.

We finally offered two of the guys on a float \$100 each if they could get our stuff back. One was an older guy and seemed somewhat interested. In the end, we left within a few days and nothing was ever found. The funny thing is, they didn't take the chargers to anything.

*We heard later that Savannah eventually had their stuff returned--after they arrived in Majuro. – Savannah*

**Nov. 2010:** Whilst we were there, another cruiser had his engine stolen off his dinghy.... this is unusual, but if you want to leave your dinghy tied to the dock it's best to leave it near the watchman on the west shore and maybe make an arrangement that he watch over it. – Mr. John VI

## **6.4 Onotoa Atoll**

South of Tarawa

### **6.4.1 Passes**

**Oct. 2024:** Navionics has the pass at around 01°48.731S / 175°29.664E.– sv Sugar Shack

**Nov. 2010:** We did not stop here, but this is the result of my research. There are two boat channels leading through the reef. The N channel is S of Temuah Island (01°47'S.,175°29'E.) and leads to the jetty on the W side of Tanyah Island, which is the northern most island, where there is a coral rock jetty with enough water to lay afloat at all states of tide (if you have a draft of less than 6 feet). It has been reported that the N channel is hazardous.

Looking at the Admiralty Chart, the north channel seems not so bad to me and I'd certainly be up to give that one a go. – Mr. John VI



## **6.4.2 Anchorages**

**Oct. 2024:** **01°49.042S / 175°30.421E** in 11-16m as listed on Navionics. It is super shallow and there are lots of bommies to enter into the lagoon.

Navionics shows a jetty 01°48.886S / 175°32.859E that is close to the main village. – sv Sugar Shack

**Nov. 2010:** We did not stop in Onotoa, but here is the result of my research. You would have to real shallow in draft to get in here and you'd have to rely on the tide. You could probably find a place to anchor off but it would be roly at best. – Mr. John VI

## **6.4.3 Cruiser Reports:**

**Nov. 2010:** This island lies about 31 miles SE of Tabiteuea. At low tide, it is possible to walk all the way around the islands in the lagoon. – Mr. John VI

## **6.5 Nikanau (Nikumanu)**

South of Tarawa

### **6.5.1 Anchorage**

**Oct. 2024:** **01°20.178S / 176°26.072E** is listed as an anchorage on Navionics. Depth looks to be between 11-20m. A partially submerged shipwreck (01°20.553S / 176°26.226E) – sv Sugar Shack

**Nov. 2008:** At 5:30 I got up and we were only 3 miles from the marked anchorage. We motored up and finally found a place to anchor. Only 2 miles offshore the water is 16400 feet deep! I don't have that kind of anchor chain length!

We got the anchor down in 45' of water, just off the reef (there's s no lagoon here). – Kaite Lee

### **6.5.2 Cruiser Reports**

**Nov. 2008:** We decided to stop in Nikunau and visit the relatives of our friends from Fanning Island. According to Kiribati rules, we were supposed to have gone to Tarawa and checked into the country before visiting any other island here. It seems that immigration didn't think visiting relatives was a good enough reason to break the rules, even though the policeman in Nikanau gave us clearance.

Just after we dropped the hook, a skiff came up with 3 folks in it. One had a police uniform. I asked permission to stay. Then they asked for my clearance papers which we did not have. After some negotiations they allowed us to stay but then things turned bad.

They took our passports and had us write out a statement and sign it. We have been waiting since Tuesday for the results. Our "case" is with the "principle investigator" and still pending a decision. We have gone back 3 times and they keep saying come back later. Now they will contact us next week.

We met the head of immigration in Christmas Island last year when we checked in there and she remembers us. Trinda is getting an ulcer worrying that we'll be put in jail.

We eventually got our passports back but our written request to stop at Abiang and Butaritari was denied. – Katie Lee

## **6.6 Tabiteuea**

South of Tarawa

### **6.6.1 Passes**

**Oct. 2024:** Navionics shows a West pass (which is SW on the atoll) starting 01°29.432S / 176°50.404E that leads to two anchorages. One near Buarki island. – sv Sugar Shack

**Nov. 2010:** We did not visit here, but this is from my research. There is a lagoon of sorts at the southern end and a passage into it marked by occasional stakes. It is said to be deep enough for 8 feet of draft.

This is the West Pass and it starts at a position with the north end of Buariki (01°28'S / 175°04'E.), bearing 254 degrees at 13.5 miles. It's another tortuous trip through coral heads and 'Local Knowledge' is advised.

Avoid in this area the Nautilus Shoal (01°34'S / 174°55'E.) and a nasty rock, awash at LW, called The Breaker (+/-01°29S / 174°51E). There are other shoals around this rock, close E and SE

Another 'BOAT' passage which lies 2 miles W of Umai Ataei (01°33S / 175°00E.), the southernmost islet and it starts with the islet bearing 085° and proceeds in an easterly direction.

Eanikai (01°10S / 174°43E.), the N island of the atoll, has several mission stations and villages. A beacon, 18m high, and a flagstaff are useful landmarks on the island.

Shoal water and breakers were sighted by a ship (1966) at a position about 12 miles S of Tabiteuea. THAT may be worth looking out for if you go S from here to Onoto. – Mr. John VI

### **6.6.2 Anchorage**

**May 2011:** There are no detailed charts to show this. You are in 15 feet of water, 2 miles out from shore, with coral heads everywhere - some breaking into white foam, some not. It's a good thing we came in with perfect light overhead to see everything. We slowly sailed around the heads, and the shallows, and found some deep water- about 30 feet, surrounded by very shallow reefs in the "Peacock Anchorage". They would provide some nice protection and nice snorkeling for our stay here. – Brick House

**Nov. 2010: 01°12.7S / 174°43.9E.** In 2011 the yacht 'Auspice' (draft a little over 6 feet) reported anchorage off Tabiteuea. Apparently, the water starts to shoal almost 15 miles to the east and runs down to 2 feet about 2 miles offshore. He threaded his way in "through a minefield of coral heads"!

Soon after arrival two uniformed police came out to check for the permit etc.

Peacock Anchorage, sounds great on the Admiralty Chart but means little to yachts, it's just an area way offshore where a ship may anchor with depths of 10 to 22mtrs. – Mr. John VI

### **6.6.3 Cruiser Reports**

**May 2011:** After a lot of pleading with Customs in Tarawa, we finally got permission to stop in Tabiteuea on our way out of Kiribati--without having to go back to Tarawa. (see the beginning of the Visiting Outer Islands section for info on obtaining permission).

The children are very shy here...needing encouragement to even wave back at you. The adults are all very friendly, but not as engaging as other islands. I had the sense that they all knew we were guests of Tabukirake and Newi, and this is not an island where things are shared freely between families.

Another interesting thing, observed in the islands is the concept of fines for bad behavior. If you misbehave, the village council immediately decides on a fine you must pay.. Rarely is this money. More often it is something that the council needs - such as a pig for an upcoming botaki, or some bags of sugar or rice. You cannot argue it or there is great shame upon you and your family coupled with further consequences. Fines are assigned and carried out the same day as the behavior happens. This is the judicial system. There is no appeal, no court date a year in the future.

We were definitely spectacles here. Everywhere that we went, we could hear children shouting excitedly with the word "I-Matang" in their sentences. They wanted to see us, to touch us, to stare at my blue eyes. Adults came out to shake our hands, even if they couldn't speak a word of English. The policeman told us that we were the first legal boat (hence were the first to stay for longer than 24 hours), for many many years. We think the last legal boat was in 2008. – Brick House

**Nov. 2010:** We did not stop here, but here is the result of my research. This island lies about 24 miles SE of Nonouti and could be done as a day-sail if you cover the ground fast enough. The sun would be rising behind you as you leave and setting behind you as you arrive.

Watch however, as some nasty over-falls and tide rips have been reported N and NW of Tabiteuea and they may appear as surf from a distance!

Tabiteuea is actually a chain of islands and reef some 32 miles long and there are several places you can get inshore for anchoring and shelter but none of them are 'easy'! – Mr. John VI

## **6.7 Nonouti**

South of Tarawa (0°40S / 174°27E)

### **6.7.1 Pass**

**Oct. 2024: 00°42.199S / 174°16.447E** is the approximate entrance to the Archer Pass. It is a long channel that zig zags around lots of coral bommies. Enter with caution. – sv Sugar Shack

**Nov. 2010:** We did not go here, but here's the info I gathered. Seldom visited by yachts due to its long and tortuous entrance.

The (semi) marked passage leads from Archer Entrance to an anchorage off the Government Wharf. They claim that vessels of 150ft in length and 13' draft can make the passage; however, that would require 'extensive' local knowledge (and a small miracle!).

Archer entrance is located about 9 miles south of the northern tip of the island and you should stay 2 miles off to the west all the way down due to the extensive reef system

Offshore, along the western coast, currents may run up to 2 kts either N or S parallel to the coast.

There is not a lot to see until you get close in and any of the landmarks that show up are most likely different from what is on the Admiralty Chart.

This passage certainly requires the sun overhead and a good lookout at all times. If the wind is fresh it could take you almost four hours to get in so best not to leave it too late; however, there are many places on the way in that you could just anchor until there was enough light to proceed.

At the Southern end of the lagoon passage **may** be found in which is a little shorter and a little easier for a small yacht (see Google Earth).

Mr John has some GE chartlets and a suggested route in his guide. – Mr. John VI

### **6.7.2 Anchorage**

**Oct. 2024: 00°41.235S / 174°25.573E** in 7-10m according to Navionics This is near Matang island. They also list another anchorage near the Archer pass entrance **00°42.161S / 174°16.433E** but this looks to be in 20m depth. –sv Sugar Shack

**Nov. 2010:** We did not go here, but here's the info I gathered. There is no real lagoon as such so protection from anything westerly is limited, there are plenty of reefs however and this dampens any seas / swells from that direction. – Mr. John VI

## **6.8 Kuria**

South of Tarawa

### **6.8.1 Anchorage**

**May 2011: 00°13.466N / 173°24.147E** in 30' of turquoise water. Not the smooth anchorage of an enclosed lagoon, for this island is a crescent shaped coral island. The open deep ocean lay to our stern and the fringing reefs off our bow. Kuria is not a well charted island and the only book that has any information at all about it says the anchorage is 70 feet deep.

Going ashore can be done only at high tide for the extensive reefs and sand flats extend a mile from shore. – Brick House

### **6.8.2 Formalities**

**May 2011:** We had gotten permission to visit Kuria thankfully. It had been a long night of navigating so we quickly slipped in to a deep sleep. At 5pm, we heard a shout and a clunk on our boat and woke with a start. I opened my eyes and looked up at the companionway and a man was staring down at me. I yelled to wake Patrick, and told him that there was a man onboard. It didn't register for a couple of seconds and I yelled up to the man - "we are sleeping". He yelled down that he was the police and needed to see our papers.

Patrick snapped to attention and started to pull his shorts on. I went to find some decent clothing. After we showed our cruising permit and offered a cold drink, the policeman was very friendly, and we had a nice conversation. He had even come with a bag of bananas for us. I don't think he clambered onboard to be forceful or authoritative...I think that he had just no idea about boat etiquette. We were the first yacht to arrive in a year.

### **6.8.3 Cruiser Reports**

**May 2011:** Being the only tourists to walk the central dirt road in over a year, we were often asked to sit and drink coconuts with friendly villagers. One grandfatherly gentleman told us he had moved his family to this island 9 years ago when he was forced to leave the island nation of Nauru. He had worked for the phosphate mining company on that island. The phosphate was all mined, the local bank made terrible investments with the islander's money and the good times ended. With the disappearance of their savings, they moved to their relative's land on Kuria.

Along the road we eventually reached the bouia of the policeman. The bouia is the traditional, open air, raised platform with a thatched roof which is their daytime living room in Kiribati. A "house" for a family consists of the big bouia, and a smaller bouia for sleeping. Mosquito netting can be dropped from the rafters to encircle someone sleeping on the floor. A pandanus mat is all the cushioning they use. The Kiakia is where food is stored and prepared. Here, there are enclosures to keep the chickens and pigs and dogs from the food. Some families living rooms, and even their sleeping quarters are instead maneabas, which are ground level huts. These are then used for sleeping and entertaining. The floors of course are covered with plaited pandanus mats.

Kiribati tradition dictates that a green coconut is opened for a guest, or some sweet toddy is served, and the guest drinks it first. We didn't notice till after many visits on many islands, that the hosts never drank with us...they waited until we were done, or gone. We enjoyed some sweet toddy with the policeman and his family and chatted for a while. For two years he had attended middle school in New Zealand while staying with some distant relatives. His spoken English was very good.

Kuria was the tidiest island we went to in Kiribati. I had a banana peel with me when I went ashore one day and I could not find a comfortable place to throw it until we left the main village! There were no piles of coconut branches, no barrels, no trash anywhere at all. Kuria is also the widest piece of land in Kiribati and hence has the coolest temperatures. We were never overheated walking around or

riding the motorcycle on Kuria like we were on other atolls. It was very breezy and because they kept everything so well groomed, it was very open to the breezes no matter what direction they blew.

The children were very shy, almost as if their parents had warned them not to talk to strangers. It was rare for a child to approach us or engage us in any way. Mostly they ran away. Some cried like they had just seen a ghost as we are a lot paler than most people they have seen! – Brick House

## **6.9 Arunuka**

South of Tarawa

### **6.9.1 Pass**

**Oct. 2024:** **00°09.047N / 173°35.158E** is shown to be a pass on Navionics but not much information here and it looks like you have to squeeze between two reefs on either side. – sv Sugar Shack

### **6.9.2 Anchorage**

**Oct. 2024:** Navionics has no depths or information on this lagoon. Enter with extreme care or anchor outside the pass. – sv Sugar Shack

**Nov. 2010:** We didn't stop here, but I was told in Majuro that you could get inside the Arunuka Lagoon. Google Earth seems to support this.

If you try this, you'll be a pioneer! However, beware; there is a vicious current and a few obstructions in the Pass on the way in. It would be best to anchor off the pass, which is anyway the best yacht anchorage on the island and take the dinghy for a good look-see at low water. – Mr. John VI

## **6.10 Abemama**

South of Tarawa

### **6.10.1 Pass**

**Oct. 2024:** There are two passes into the lagoon. The west pass seems much wider and deeper. The pass entrance way points:

**00°25.502N / 173°47.169E** is the west pass entrance and the Navionics recommended track. Looks plenty deep but might consider high tide if you have a deep draft.

**00°20.917N / 173°50.073E** is the south pass and Navionics indicates strong current at the entrance. But the pass looks like it is plenty deep until you get to Henson Rocks at **00°21.747N / 173°51.148E**.

As always, use best judgement. – sv Sugar Shack

**Nov. 2013:** **Nov. 2013:** We arrived at the western pass near the end of the flood. A 2-knot inflowing current made for some choppy standing waves in the pass, but visibility was good enough to avoid the shallow spots.

Using our eyes and Google Earth, our track ended up slightly south of the waypoints given by Mr. John. The red barrel noted on the chart (approx **0°25.35N / 173°49.58E**) does not exist. Also, the OpenCPN chart appears skewed north about .3 mi from the Google Earth image. Otherwise, the pass was no problem. – Radiance

**May 2011:** The sun was high so we could see our way in through the coral. The wind was blowing 20-25, and the current in the pass was strong against us, so the engine was at high RPM and the genoa was pulling. Brick House made its way at 2 knots. – Brick house

**Nov. 2010:** Means "Land of the Bright Moon"; that's what it's shaped like also and gives perhaps the most all-round protection of any of the Kiribati Islands. Here is a SUGGESTED set of waypoints for entry via the NW Pass

1. **00°25.804N / 173°46.507E** Outside

2. 00°25.194N / 173°48.302E
3. 00°25.198N / 173°49.496E
4. 00°24.740N / 173°54.316E
5. 00°24.520N / 173°54.851E

There is a **strong** west going current between Tarawa and Abemama. (A friend of mine got swept sideways onto the reef of Maiana one a dark night in 1988; how he got his boat across the island and back in the water on the other side was a feat of seamanship beyond most of today's cruisers). WATCH OUT FOR THE CURRENT. – Mr. John VI

### **6.10.2 Anchorage**

**Nov. 2013: 00°23.9719N / 173°54.7126E** 20' of sand. This anchorage is in front of a large red & white radio antenna next to the government station and police station (between Binonano and Kariatebke motus). The locals played really loud music which could be heard at this anchorage, so we moved.

Second anchorage: **00°27.2933N / 173°51.9158E**. A little further north.

Third anchorage **00°19.1261N / 173°54.4044E** (snorkeling) SW tip near Kenna Island.

Fourth anchorage **00°20.7751N / 173°55.7490E** to visit a famous WWII battle site. In the SE tip near Maonkit and Tenanga (there is a ruined jetter). – Radiance

**May 2011: 00°27.310N / 173°51.931E**. Once inside the atoll we were able to fall off a bit and pick up speed. By 2pm, following the center of 3 magenta lines, we anchored in 12 feet of water just outside of a village called **Kauma**. – Brick House

### **6.10.3 General Services**

#### **6.10.3.1 Internet & Wifi**

**Nov. 2013:** Surprisingly, this anchorage has wireless internet ("angel tern") and you can buy a 1-week subscription for \$10AU at the office in the government building. Then the IT guy will set you up with a login and password. The signal was strong enough to reach our boat at anchor. – Radiance

### **6.10.4 Cruiser Reports**

**Nov. 2013:** North of the causeway, is a wrecked WWII F4-U Corsair Fighter plane which is cool.

We could not find Robert Louis Stevenson's house and many of the old WWII bunkers have people living in them.

Abemama appears to be relatively affluent and the I-Kiribati did not have any interest whatsoever in interacting with us. In fact, some would actually turn and walk the other way to avoid interaction. This was quite off-putting at first as we'd just come from Vanuatu and Vanikoro where villagers were exceedingly friendly and hungry for interaction.

Kava is now being imported from Fiji and has largely taken the place of beer and sour toddy. It appears to be the latest fad and locals stay up literally all-night drinking kava. The Maniaba blasts loud overdriven techno music 24/7 and you will hear it all night from your boat.

By dinghy, we explored some other WWII wreckage (00°28.6068N / 173°51.3091E) and went ashore there. The kids were friendly, smiling and fun, but the adults ignored us.

Since the water in the lagoon is quite murky, we sailed south and anchored at 00°19.1261N / 173°54.4044E to do some snorkeling. This was a beautiful spot and our favorite on the island. The water is crystal clear and we snorkeled near the reef in shallow water and once outside where there is a much better array of reef fish. It was tricky getting beyond the breakers with the dinghy and the surge made it a bit uncomfortable. You could not do this in unsettled weather.

We moved the boat north to 00°20.7751N / 173°55.7490E to visit a famous WWII battle site.

Info gleaned From US Military VAC RCN Overlays: "On the afternoon of Nov 21st 1943, American submarine USS Nautilus landed a force of 78 Marine Amphibious Reconnaissance Scouts to seize the island. A strong west sweeping current caused the amphibious division to miss their proposed landing beach, landing instead on the last of the southern islets before moving up the southeastern side of the atoll. Later that same afternoon US Marines had first contact with the Japanese Defense Position (approx. 00°20.94N / 173°56.60E). The battle continued for several days and on the morning of 25 Nov., a native reported to the Marines that the remaining Japanese had committed suicide."

We dinghied to the site through a mangrove-lined slough, passing villages and huts and even motored through the causeway to the other side of the atoll which was very beautiful. This was a pretty interesting excursion and there are remains of Japanese bunkers near the causeway. – Radiance

**May 2011:** In the morning, timing the tide to float over the extensive sandy flats, we launched the dinghy to go to shore and make some new friends. Almost immediately we met a man by the name of George who greeted us enthusiastically. We sat with George and talked about why he moved his family from Papua New Guinea to Kiribati 9 years ago...his wife is Kiribati.

This is an extremely remote island. There is no central electricity or water, yet the 7th Day Adventist school has a satellite dish and computers and internet. We were able to use the computers at the school one day for internet.

This island for sure has been, besides Tarawa, the most technologically advanced atoll so far. The people seem to be much more affluent for the most part here, with little stores to help them make a living, and lots of copra production. We are constantly impressed by how industrious and busy these people stay throughout the day. They do their share of sleeping during the hottest part of the day, but they always seem to be working on something to advance themselves and their families. George's wife Mary works as a teacher on the far end of the island, and seems to always be at work, as does Georgina, the daughter.

They are movers and shakers here, to say the least. And they have good family values and morals. And although not all of them can afford to provide higher education for their children, even the poorest children will tell you that education is important. – Brick House

## **6.11 Maiana**

South of Tarawa

### **6.11.1 Pass**

**Nov. 2010:** There is a small boat passage, which dries 0.3m, and leads through the reef near the N extremity of the atoll to the island of Tebikerei (01°00N / 173°01E), on which there is a village. The passage is marked by "perches" standing in piles of stones which are covered at high water. A shoal, with a depth of 3.7m, lies about 0.5mile WNW of the entrance to this boat passage.

Another passage used by the local ferry boats to Tarawa has reported depths of 1.8 to 5.5m and lies about 7 miles SW of the N extremity of the island. This passage is/was marked by perches, and goes up to the government station on the SE side of the lagoon where there is a small jetty and some conspicuous buildings. – Mr. John VI

### **6.11.2 Anchorage**

**Nov. 2010:** **Nov. 2010:** Very few people take yachts to Maiana...and there's a reason for that.....unless you have very shallow draft, you'll have to anchor way off and it's rolly with a long distance to shore.

There are many dangers in the lagoon, which is shallow and has not been surveyed. Lots of Coral Heads all over.

If you use the ferry boat pass, you may want to try to anchor off the entrance until the Ferry comes over from Tarawa...then follow it..... A lot of the beacons are missing!

WATCH OUT...the shoal on the SW of the island goes a long way out; seas break on it even in moderate conditions! – Mr. John VI

## **6.12 Abaiang**

North of Tarawa

### **6.12.1 Pass**

**Oct. 2024:** The pass is very large without any danger. Following the route on Navionics (40° T entering) the depth is always over 5m in high tide. The water is crystal clear and it seems that you can touch the bottom every coral head. – Y2K

**Oct. 2024: 01°45.040N / 172 58.260E** is the entrance to the Bingham Channel is the recommended channel on Navionics. – sv Sugar Shack

**2013:** Careful conning with proper sun light is advised. The following way points are provided – but must be stressed these are a guide and caution should be advised. The lagoon can be traversed with proper sunlight and careful conning.

01°44.90N / E172 57.92 Outside the channel

01°45.30N / E172 58.26 Entrance to channel

01°45.78N / E172 58.75 Just past midpoint in channel

01°45.90N / E172 58.85 Edge of Lagoon on inside

Waypoints below were taken in the Abaiang Channel and Lagoon on November 30, 2008. MaxSea was spot on at this date. There are no markers in the Channel or Lagoon. – Kiribati Cruiser's Guide

**Nov. 2010:** The Bingham Channel is not a big problem and as you generally leave Tarawa in the morning (having got your permit the day before), you will be off the channel in the early afternoon with the sun overhead and behind.

We had the sun in our eyes at Abaiang all the way in to the anchorage and I swear I went over just about every reef in the lagoon. But we didn't see less than 8' under the keel (I draw 4').

We went up to Abaiang using the Guide put out by the Kiribati Tourist Office but I didn't stick to it, I went left of track thinking the Admiralty might be right for a change...

Wrong move. When we came out, I was horrified to see that our inward track seemed to go over, or very near, some very shallow stuff. So, the guide may be OK.

However, if I was going back, I'd take my preferred route as below; it's simple and keeps you away from all the dangers that can actually rip off your keel.

1. 01°45.224N / 172°58.194E

2. 01°46.158N / 172°58.891E

3. 01°45.546N / 173°00.339E

There were some patches on the way down and one is shown on the chart, however I feel confident that there was nothing the average yacht could hit .... You should of course watch the depth sounder on the way down--the good news here being that the shallow patches don't seem to come up abruptly (like the Tuamotu's) and most of them seem to be hard sand rather than coral. – Mr. John VI

### **6.12.2 Anchorages**

**Oct. 2024: 01°49.014N / 173°00.911E** in 4.8m in low tide, good holding in sand and in front of the main village. Very good anchorage.

Dinghy Landing: 01°49.242N / 173°01.187E, if the tide is high and you won't be long ashore, then leave the dinghy on the beach. However, at low tide it is best to anchor the dinghy 500m from the beach. The bottom is super soft which makes it hard to move the dinghy with wheels.



This place gets crowded when the passenger ship is in port as the smaller boats wait in the area to pickup/drop off passengers. – Y2K

**Oct. 2024: 01°56.538N / 172°54.897E** in 4m of water with great holding. North Borotium island (in the very north of Abaiang.) Great anchorage with very good protection from North to East. Quiet anchorage, nice place to go visit the smaller islands. Protection from NW, N, NE, E. – Y2K

**Feb. 2013: 01°51.96N / 172°52.96E**, west side of atoll (between Manna and Anariki motus) we anchored here over night but was very roly and a lee shore when the wind picked up. – Westward II

**2013: 01°49.10N / 173°00.80E** Anchorage off radio tower where town council and Police Office are located. – Kiribati Cruiser's Guide

**Nov. 2010:** Abaiang Offers good protection and even were it to blow from the west, you could find shelter in the SW corner. The main thing for us was the absence of swell, something we'd found annoying at times in many other Pacific Island groups. We anchored in several spots:

**01°44.450N / 173°01.810E.** 10' with a sandy mud that sucked the anchor in and wouldn't let go. Southern tip off of Tebanga. This was our favorite anchorage; it was most protected from the ESE but was good for winds from S to NE.

There were a couple of days when it blew so hard, we didn't fancy going ashore, still it seemed a safe anchorage. Very relaxing!

Although anchored some ways offshore (a normal event throughout Kiribati due to the extent of the internal reef shelf) the Palm Trees ashore do take away a lot of the breeze (hence we were surprised to find so much wind outside when we eventually left!).

**01°48.858N / 173°01.080E.** However, when the wind blows fresh from S of SE it causes a small sea to run right up the shore of most of the island and there is little protection from it N of the Government Station at Taburao.

**01°55.011N / 172°56.564E.** Up near the north/east side we found a little shelter at Tebunginaro where there was a pretty little village ashore and a hook of land to anchor behind; still some swell got around the point with the south easterlies honking but you could probably move in a little closer than we did.

**01°52.368N / 172°58.959E.** Off Koinawa where the conspicuous church makes a good landmark. It is however a pretty village (mission) with some interesting (big) Manaba.

The people were also most hospitable. – Mr. John VI

### **6.12.3 Formalities – Inter-Island Permit**

**Oct. 2024: 01°49.213N / 173°01.253E** this is the location of the Tebero Police Station. This is where you need to go to show your letter from immigration and your passport. They will keep the letter (so best to make a copy before you give it to them). They are very nice and informal. They will grant you two weeks but if you need to stay longer, just talk to them. – Y2K

### **6.12.4 Provisions**

**Oct. 2024: 01°49.200N / 173°01.924E** Tebero Grocery store is a very basic grocery store with a few cans, few soft drinks, few beers, no frozen. – Y2K

### **6.12.5 Cruiser Reports**

**Oct. 2024:** We highly recommend a visit to Abaiang. It is only a few miles north of Tarawa and it is gorgeous and way better than Tarawa itself. In Abaiang, 01°48.291S / 173°01.970E (near the airport) there is a nice couple Lisa and Nick, with the house on the beach who loves sailors. He is Swiss and she is from Abaiang. They can help with local culture, organize and show you how to cook, host dinners with local food. – Y2K

**Feb. 2013:** There is very little available here. We were able to buy some local fruit – bananas, coconuts and breadfruit and fish was offered also.

We hired motorbikes to explore the main island, ask at the council building, and get a guide. The quarantine officer, Kaboua, was our guide. The bike cost \$15 for 6hrs, plus \$10 tip for the guide \$10.

We were taken to the place of the ancestors to give them a gift and receive their blessing. This was on the Main Island and also Ribona Island and worth the effort.

We did not dive at Abaiang atoll as inside was shallow and outside was a long dinghy ride from the closest anchorage. Snorkeling was average inside. – Westward II

**May 2011:** Abiang was a restful place to spend 10 days with good anchorages everywhere. Abiang appeared to be poorer and more traditional than Butaritari, if that's possible. No one seemed to even have a generator, so light at night was limited to kerosene lanterns or a glass jar of kerosene with a wick suspended in it by a wire. When the sun went down, it seemed the only artificial lights in Abiang were on our 2 sailboats. Very dark, except some early night fires where piles of palm branches were being burned. Rather than leaving the vegetation to deteriorate into soil, throughout the Pacific it is tradition to burn the potential compost to the bare sand or coral ground. That is tradition which cannot be changed by anyone's logical explanation. – Brick House

**Nov. 2010:** If you don't go anywhere else, at least go to Abaiang which lies only five / six hours sail to the north; most of which is an easy reach in flat water. – Mr. John VI

Getting ashore two hours either side of low water is really not possible and you have to time your day around the tides.

Here, you are at the southern end of Tanimaiaki Village. The last 'house' on the beach side of the road belonged to Teaoka & Banrenga with their family. They were very good hosts to us and spoke good English so we enjoyed the communication.

Going ashore we could walk north, past the little medical clinic, to the village where there is a school and where we met Esta, one of the local teachers. In this direction we were always greeting and being greeted, heavily into socializing as everyone wanted to talk to us.

Walking south, there was very little until the next village a couple of kilometers away, thus we could step out and get exercise (which we badly needed) without interruption.

## **6.13 Butaritari**

North of Tarawa

### **6.13.1 Pass**

**Oct. 2024:** Navionics shows two passes to Butaritari. A north and a south pass. Pass entrances:

South Pass: 03°06.123N / 172°44.699E

North Channel: 03°10.633N / 172°42.638E

Navionics shows the South pass with markers, but not sure they are actually there. – sv Sugar Shack

**2013:** The south channel is wide with a minimum depth of 60' but the pass can be choppy with a strong current. There is no mark on Ramanaba. The only mark is inside the pass and it indicates it is safe to head southeast towards the Radio Tower / Kings Pier. There are many shoals on this track.

03°05.78N / 172°44.00E Deep water, approach to pass

03°06.04N / 172°44.47E Channel Entrance, passing "Ramanaba" to the North. 110 feet of water. "Ramanaba" was not visible on our approach.

03°06.20N / 172°44.80E In Pass, shoal to Port. 120 feet of water

03°06.63N / 172°45.38E In Pass, shoal to Port. 70 feet of water.

03°06.95N / 172°45.82E Buoy at end of Channel. Steel "house" shaped can with short stake. Turn to South East and head to radio tower.

Good light and careful conning are advised from Buoy to the anchorage in the area of the radio tower.

If conditions are good with proper light and visibility you can see the Buoy from the deep-water approach. It is a straight shot in on a course of 40° magnetic (not all compasses are created equal).

The Betio wharf is "L" shaped and constructed of sandbags, is overgrown with a small dilapidated shack towards its end. It blends very well with shore.

As of December 2008, there was a flashing light on the South West Point of Butaritari. 4 seconds, white, visible at 12 miles. – Kiribati Cruiser's Guide

**Dec. 2012:** We entered the atoll through South Channel Pass. This pass is deep and easy. There is currently one red buoy on a shoal in the middle of the pass on the lagoon side.

CM93 charts seem to be reasonably accurate without need for correction. We also used Google Earth charts which we had previously set up. There are some uncharted bommies and shallow areas, particularly in the eastern part of the lagoon. – Streetcar (from Noonsite)

### **6.13.2 Anchorage**

**Oct. 2024: 03°04.296N / 172°46.698E** is the closest anchorage to the Butaritari village based on Navionics. There are shipwrecks in this area so proceed with caution. – sv Sugar Shack

**2013:** The anchorage is in 20' or less of water in the area of the wharf. – Kiribati Cruiser's Guide

**Dec. 2012:** The anchorage off the wharf in the southeast corner (Butaritari island) can be rough when the prevailing wind is east or north of east. This is not a great anchorage but gives access to the main village with police station. The old wharf provides a good dinghy landing.

The best anchorages we found are at the eastern end of the lagoon. There is good holding in places off Natata Islands, but still plenty of coral to wrap around.

When the wind goes south of east the anchorage off Kuma village provides an interesting change of location - holding seems to be good here as well.

Some protection from temporary westerly and north westerly winds can be found in the very north east corner. This may not work in stronger and more sustained westerlies.

There have also been reports from boats anchoring in the very northwest corner of the atoll. We did not explore this area. – Streetcar (from Noonsite)

**Dec. 2010:** The beacons did all seem to be there around the anchorage area off Butaritari Village and as we eventually closed on this area, we gained some shelter.

The anchor went down in 10' of water over a sand bottom a little way off the Kings Wharf and we were overwhelmed by the sudden peace and serenity; most of all the boat was still and this was the first time the motion had stopped since leaving Funafuti. – Mr. John VI

### **6.13.3 Cruiser Reports**

**Nov. 2013:** Today was a special day for the island: a day to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the Kiribati liberation from Japanese occupation during WWII.

In the morning we piled into the back of a covered flatbed truck with about 20 other villagers and slowly made our way to the village of Ukiangang at the southwestern end of Butaritari atoll. We stopped many times to pick up people along the way and after about half an hour, arrived in the bustling village. As we made our way to the school grounds, the road was lined with young children - all wearing Kelly green- and-white school uniforms, and each adorned with a freshly woven coconut palm leaf hat that oddly resembled a military helmet.

When our truck came to a stop, we were swarmed by a hundred smiling kids, some toting homemade toy rifles and pop-guns. They were shouting "I-Matang! I-Matang!" - the Kiribati phrase for white man.

Being ushered to our front row seats, we had become the de facto American Representatives for this day of commemoration. As over a hundred children lined up in their respective primary school grades they enclosed the perimeter of an open weedy soccer field. The drum major began to beat and a contingent of police officers marched to the center of the field to open the ceremony.

The crowd was addressed by high ranking local chiefs and the events of November 20th, 1943 were explained. This was the day that American troops and air support overtook the Japanese stronghold on the island - in what became known as the Battle of Makin. There were many brave Americans and I-Kiribati that gave their lives in this effort. Despite most of the I-Kiribati people being hidden in caves.

We were seated next to a war memorial that commemorated the loss of those lives. Each school group marched with proud banners around the perimeter of the field, and then paraded in front of all the dignitaries, stopping for a unique salute at the memorial before moving to the center of the field. The kids were serious, proud and disciplined beyond any grade school presentation I have seen. After the last group had taken the center, the Kiribati flag was raised and we all stood while the Kiribati National Anthem was sung with great harmony. Next, they raised the American flag on a flagstaff adjacent and then to my surprise, whole of the student body sang the American National Anthem - The Star-Spangled Banner.

Tears welled in our eyes. It is so difficult to imagine that a tiny group of children in a tiny village on a tiny atoll in the middle of the vast Pacific Ocean would pay such an honorable tribute - a tribute to America. While the people here celebrate this special day as an important part of their history, the events that took place in the South Pacific are all but forgotten in the US.

On this sliver of land in the middle of nowhere, children still swim quite literally among the wreckage of WWII carnage. Japanese flying boats rest on the lagoon shores, bullet riddled fuselage still remain beneath the coconut trees in people's backyards. American fighter plane wings are used for tables and pig pens, and Japanese artillery shell casings still lie on the ground. Including a US escort carrier torpedoed by a Japanese submarine, there were 763 Americans that gave their lives at the Battle of Makin - a number that exceeded the entire Japanese Garrison here. With the Japanese and I-Kiribati losses, it was a bloody battle by any measure.

It was a somber moment as each classroom continued the ceremony by placing a wreath of flowers on the memorial. But it was 2 preschoolers that brought tears as they laid their wreath atop the others.

After the ceremony, we were escorted back to the maniaba and seated front and center, and then treated to traditional dance performances, song and a huge feast. Many speeches were given and the words "America," "Alaska," and "I-Matang" were uttered many times with glances in our direction and nods of respect. We were treated as distinguished guests of honor and as such, the first to be served food. Lolo and I were humbled beyond words, but that was not the end.

After the feast, there were more traditional dance performances and then it was time for us to dance... Lolo was approached first by the unimane (chief elder) of the village and joined him for a dance in the center of the maniaba while some 200 onlookers cheered them on. The custom in Kiribati is to dance in as silly (and provocative) manner as possible. Lolo is a great dancer anyway and the cheers roared as she mimicked her distinguished partner's moves on the floor. In comparison to the other women, Lolo looked like a pixie flitting around the room.

Then it happened, as I knew it would. I was approached by a woman with very different proportions than Lolo, and egged-on to join her on the floor. It was just the two couples now and I was mortified enough to be part of the spectacle for the entire crowd when the woman suddenly lurched toward me, and threw her arms around my neck. The crowd went wild. There was not much I could do as she kissed my cheek but pray for the song to end - when she launched her next attack - a full body hug - with some blatant pelvic grinding. While I diverted some of the momentum to one side, she circled

around my back and jumped on - piggy-back style. The crowd roared with laughter as I tried to pretend I was somewhere else.

Luckily there was only one other such dance before rounds of speeches brought things under control. I was asked to say something, but as I knew it would have to be translated, kept it short. I told them we were honored to attend the ceremony and humbled by the commemoration and singing of the American National Anthem. I mentioned how we had sailed some 15,000 nautical miles to be here and that several years ago we had met Hal, an Alaskan man that had served here during WWII. I thanked them for the beautiful dance performances and delicious feast.

We were told by several important people that our presence was greatly appreciated. While the people of Makin Island clearly commemorate this day for their own reasons, it seems fitting that there should be someone from the USA in attendance. Last year, no one from America came. – Radiance

**Dec. 2012:** We have just spent 3 weeks in Butaritari, one of the most northern islands of Kiribati.

- Although Butaritari has air access to Tarawa it has very few facilities and is very quiet.
- There is no mobile 'phone coverage. There is at least one public telephone in the main village.
- The islands are lush and fruit and vegetables are grown locally. There are a handful of very small stores, in which it is possible to buy some canned provisions and sometimes flour.
- The lagoon has fewer obstructions and has clearer water than Tarawa or Abaiang.
- While we were there the climate felt very different to Tarawa with more variability in wind direction and more rain. Winds often came from various directions (including west and north) around large areas of convection that moved past the atoll. These temporary winds were sometimes strong and made lee shores uncomfortable, but never untenable. It often took several hours for the gradient wind direction and strength to return.
- The village of Kuma has one small shop. Some fruit and veg is available although this may not always be surplus to the needs of the village.
- Where the lagoon's fringing reefs are wide there seem to be good protection from ocean swells, even at high tides. At low tides it is possible to walk considerable distances, exploring the exposed reefs and islands. – Streetcar (from Noonsite)

**Dec. 2010:** It is a fairly slow overnight sail to get to Butaritari from Tarawa. There are some over-falls to the north of Abaiang and the current can set strongly to the west between them.

DON'T leave Tarawa too early as you don't want to arrive until midday, so as to get the sun behind and above for the entry. As usual, most of the marks / beacons on the chart are missing so don't expect to see any stakes until you get close to the anchorage.

Both Tarawa and Butaritari were not charted well, there was an error between the charts and the GPS (WGS84) positions of about 0.3' and there were many shallow areas not appearing on the chart.

In most cases the water is fairly clear and dangers are readily apparent in good visibility.

Butaritari is the most northern island in the main Kiribati group, it is closest to the ITCZ and gets more rain; thus it is the most productive of the islands when it comes to growing things. Only problem with that, are the locals, having plenty enough for their own needs, are somewhat reluctant to put a lot of time and effort into producing for others.....

We went ashore on the Kings Wharf (which is not much of a wharf) and walked along it towards the village; just before reaching the village is an old Japanese Flying boat which has made many a good photo over its lifespan, I took twenty three years earlier when I passed this way as a single-hander.

The village was notably much cleaner than Tarawa and most of the islanders had planted shrubs around their properties to delineate borders, it was quite well done and far from the squalor of Betio. The people were very friendly, everyone greeted us as we walked along the road, there were big smiles and many stopped to chat a little, as English is their second language.

On the way back to the boats we were tracked down by the local 'sheriff' who rode up on his big, white bicycle. No horse I'm afraid! He wanted us to produce some paperwork at the Police Station in the morning and this I would have already done had I recognized the Police Station when I first walked past it. We attended to that the next morning and he was most happy just to see our letter of introduction from the Customs in Tarawa. We got a tour of the Jail and were surprised to find some gaps in the bars that most adults could squeeze through but where would they escape to?

The school at the village on the southwest tip of the island (Ukiangang) was also the home of the Memorial to the fallen US marines (and other service personnel) that gave their lives in the reclamation of the island from the Japanese during WWII and the 20th of November was their remembrance day so we went along to see the commemoration that we'd heard was taking place.

They were very much in step and it was a first-rate event which ended up with them assembled in front of the memorial; there was a presentation of wreaths which were laid on and around the memorial as the US flag flew atop the rather crooked flagstaff, taught in the trade wind breeze. I was personally surprised and had one of those gut pumping moments when the whole group launched into a rendition of The Star-Spangled Banner with hands over hearts.....it was a really moving experience and I was touched deep down with the sincerity of these islanders.

It occurred to me that back in America close on 100% on school children wouldn't know where Butaritari was or care what took place here, but the Islanders are still grateful for their American saviours and speak glowingly about them. They Remember.

At the end of the event the children did a little re-enactment of the American Landings using Pop Guns and running around shooting at each other, they seemed to die very convincingly but in a little bit of Paradise that has seen so much death, maybe the act of dying comes easier!

We all adjourned to the local Maneaba for a late lunch and the locals all waited for us to eat before feeding themselves, there was heaps of food to say the least and it was all very well presented. This was followed by dancing, speeches and more dancing.....

This is one of those 'last bits of Paradise' and is one of our fondest memories of the Pacific Islands.

Striking features included the tidy and neat way they maintained the village, the lack of rubbish, the high standard of English spoken by the children and their hospitality to visitors. – Mr. John VI

## **6.14 Fanning "Tabuaerean" Island (Line Islands)**

### **6.14.1 Pass**

**Sept. 2013:** There is a short pass into the lagoon. There can be a strong ebb and flood current and the standing waves can be a problem. The period of time that the waves prevented entry into the lagoon seemed to be very short. We arrived a couple of hours before slack and the waves were up pretty good. We circled around and were about to anchor outside of the lagoon, and the waves had subsided enough that we decided to head in. We entered about 45 minutes after we had first arrived. Waypoints for the pass, courtesy of Anton and Vesna from s/v Mala:

03°51.364N / 159°21.954W

03°51.499N / 159°21.827W

03°51.596N / 159°21.707W

Provided by – Moondance

### **6.14.2 Anchorage**

**Sept. 2013:** Because of the ebb and flow of the lagoon, expect to turn 360° 2x day. The anchorage off the main village is all sand with good holding and a short dinghy ride to shore. – Moondance

### **6.14.3 Formalities**

**Sept. 2013:** It was after 5 when we dropped anchor, so we thought it would be the next day before we checked in. A small aluminum boat soon approached and informed us that they were customs and immigration. We didn't have any fenders down, a big mistake. Although the skipper of the boat tried to keep them off Moondance, they banged a couple of times. A couple of scratches.

The fees seem to be a moving target (all in US\$). We paid \$30 immigration, \$20 Anchoring, and \$20 transportation since we didn't go ashore and pick them up. The official that took our \$20 transport fee tried to give it to the skipper of the aluminum boat, but he wouldn't take it. We didn't get it back though. Talking with other boats, the fees always total about \$70, you just pay for different things. One boat had to pay an additional \$50 for a rat inspection. – Moondance

### **6.14.4 General Services**

#### **6.14.4.1 Internet and Wifi**

**Sept. 2013:** They recently got internet access with several computers' setup in one of the offices in the L shaped building with all of the government offices. They charged \$5 per hour. – Moondance

#### **6.14.4.2 Provisions**

**Sept. 2013:** The supply boats that come in haven't had a regular schedule, so the shelves were pretty empty at the 2 small markets. Both the Kwai (from HI) and the Moa Moa (govt. freighter) arrived while we were there. It had been 3 months since the Moa Moa had been there and 2 months since the Kwai. The supplies they have on the island are needed by the local population, so don't plan on doing any provisioning. The local fishermen will also sell you some of their catch. – Moondance

#### **6.14.4.3 Cruiser Reports**

**Sept. 2013:** Fanning Island is a day ahead of Hawaii now. They changed a couple of years ago to be on the same time as Tarawa (the Kiribati capital).

Bruno, a French ex-cruiser, owns a guest house, along with his wife Tabata, on the island and offers assistance to the cruisers.

In a lot of the information about Fanning, they suggest bringing in supplies for the schools and locals. We had brought a lot of donated items, but when we mentioned this to Bruno, he indicated that the customs officials wouldn't appreciate us bringing things in duty free. We ended up giving the items to his wife, Tabata, and she took them to her church. Tyrone is another local that can be helpful. He is the shipping agent for the Kwai, but he wasn't on the island while we were there. – Moondance

## **6.15 Christmas “Kiritimati” Island (Port of Entry, Line Islands)**

### **6.15.1 Anchorage**

**Oct. 2013:** We anchored just north of the pier in sand. There were two other cruisers, Hoo Roo and Wind Castle, anchored just north of the pass into the lagoon off of the village of New London. We moved the next day to shorten the dinghy ride through the pass into town. Both anchorages had good holding, sand north of the pier and rock / coral off of New London. You anchor in the lee of the island and it is protected except in South, West, and North winds.

There were 3 large ships anchored off the island being loaded by smaller fishing boats. The crews we met were from South America. The Kwai and Moa Moa use the area near the large pier while they are unloading cargo. When the large ships are anchored, they have their deck lights on all night. Even if you could get into the lagoon, it wouldn't be an ideal anchorage due to the fetch across the huge lagoon. We were comfortable anchored in the lee of the island for 2 weeks in June.

**Dinghy Landing:** If you anchor near the pier, there is a nice dinghy dock at the foot of the stairs for you to use. You then walk to the main road and hitchhike into town. If you anchor in the southern anchorage, dinghy around the point through the pass into the lagoon (it is a long dinghy ride). There is a red marker at the pass you want to leave to port entering the lagoon (give it a wide berth). Head straight to the radio tower, then take a left turn to a small beach. There is an older panga style boat that will be on your right as you approach the beach.

There is also an area in front of the Ikari House accommodations you can land at (check with them first though). Easily spotted from the water due to the small mushroom shaped tree. – Moondance

### **6.15.2 Formalities**

**Sept. 2013:** Everything here is done using Australian \$, so the first stop is the ANZ ATM which is next to the government offices. We met the immigration official at her office. We were checking in with the crew of Evergreen, and she split the overtime fee between us. The total cost was \$62AUD for immigration. Customs didn't charge us anything for overtime when we checked in with them. We had to pay \$50AUD to the port authority for anchoring and \$50AUD for a rat inspection (nobody inspected the boat). – Moondance

### **6.15.3 Yacht Services**

#### **6.15.3.1 Cooking Gas (Propane & Butane)**

**Oct. 2024:** LPG is available on island. – sv Sugar Shack

#### **6.15.3.2 Fuel (Diesel and Gasoline)**

**Oct. 2024:** Diesel and gasoline can be obtained by jerry cans. – sv Sugar Shack

### **6.15.4 General Services**

#### **6.15.4.1 Banks and ATMs**

**Oct. 2024:** Kiritimati island as an ATM at Ronton.

Visa and Mastercard are the only accepted credit cards and even they are rarely used. There are no credit card services in the outer islands. – sv Sugar Shack

#### **6.15.4.2 Internet and Wifi**

**Sept. 2024:** The best internet was through the government communications facility, near the radio mast past the Ikari House. You can get it in the anchorage if you have a booster antenna. For 1 week of service, it was \$35AUD.

There is also an internet cafe at the head of the pier by the port authority. You can also purchase internet time at Dijon (sp), a large warehouse near the Ikari House. You can only use it at the Ikari House and they didn't seem to want us around when they had clients. – Moondance

### **6.15.5 Provisions**

**Sept. 2013:** There are lots of small stores in town to provision from. Things a little expensive, .90AUD per egg. Fresh bread is available at a lot of the markets, \$4AUD for 2 loaves. The best store we found for most things was Punja. It is located past the pier going away from town. They gave us a ride back to the pier with our purchases. We went out to the big box store near the Captain Cook Resort. It had a lot of electronics and things besides food. No one seems to sell papayas, but are happy to give them to you. We like that! – Moondance



### **6.15.6 Cruiser Reports**

**Moondance – Oct. 2013:** We arrived at Christmas Island late on a Friday. We called 'Radio Christmas' on the VHF as we approached, but no answer. The locals were all very friendly and we easily got a ride around the island. – Moondance

## **7 Nauru**

Nauru gained its independence in 1968. It accepts aid from Australia in exchange for hosting the controversial offshore Australian immigration detention facility (prison).

Because of this detention facility, it is strongly advised that cruisers do NOT visit Nauru unless absolutely necessary. The locals don't seem to welcome outsiders either.

Phosphate mining used to be the main export, but that is slowly dwindling.

### **7.1 Anchorages**

There is no anchorage, only an exposed open area in the lee of the island which is very deep for anchoring. There are some large buoys for large ships that Port Authority may allow a yacht to use in an emergency situation (you must receive permission from Port Authority to use these moorings). However, be aware that there is a surge and space may not be available.

There is a small boat basin with a depth of 2m which, if there is space, and not too much surge, may be preferable. The basin is not suitable for use in bad weather or for boats with deeper drafts.

The coastline is surrounded by reef.

**Oct. 2024:** The charts are very wrong so be sure to use satellite images and your eyeballs when approaching the pass and in the lagoon.

There is no reef directly in front of the harbor entrance. When we arrived, there were two tugboats moored so we drove in without a worry. It is very deep everywhere. Directly from the harbor is 60-80 meters deep with dolphins swimming in front.

We were instructed to tie to one of the large shipping buoys. It was extremely rolly and you always have to watch the wind to make sure it does not blow you into the buoy. The anchorage is over 100 meters deep. – Naked Lunch

### **7.2 Customs and Immigration**

It is absolutely essential that all cruisers wishing to visit Nauru receive prior approval and permission. Be aware that permission may not be granted. Contact the Nauru Maritime and Port Authority (NMPA) before arriving. [contact@nauruport.com](mailto:contact@nauruport.com) and [www.nauruport.com/contact](http://www.nauruport.com/contact).

If you receive approval, contact the Port Captain on VHF 16 as you enter and they will advise you on the best procedure. If a large ship's mooring is available, he may advise you to use. It.

Entry formalities are handled onshore.

#### **7.2.1 Immigrations**

An email request for a visa application must be sent prior to arrival in order to enter Nauru. Send all requests to the Director of Immigration: Mr. Rajeev Keerthiyil: [rajeevnauruimmgration@gmail.com](mailto:rajeevnauruimmgration@gmail.com).

You can also try Michael Nye, NMPA at [mdnye@outlook.com](mailto:mdnye@outlook.com) +674.537.3090

For general information: [darlenenauruimmi@gmail.com](mailto:darlenenauruimmi@gmail.com).

Cruisers may be given up to 30-days on their visa. The reported charge is AU\$100.

### **7.2.2 Formality Cruiser Reports**

**Oct. 2024:** We contacted Port Authority upon entry and they told us where to go to tie up to one of the large moorings. We followed their instructions and they guided us to one of the large buoys to tie up. Then 7 officials came on to the boat. They were very strict.

It did not appear that the officials knew what they were doing as they don't check a lot of cruisers into the country. I had crew that flew into Nauru. They were on the island for a few days and received their visas while they waited for us.

It took several days and lots of fighting for the officials to work out our clearance. – Naked Lunch

### **7.3 Yachtsmen Services**

#### **7.3.1 Fuel (Diesel and Gasoline)**

**Oct. 2024:** It has been reported that fuel services can be provided in emergency situations. Prices are at island prices. – as reported to sv Sugar Shack

### **7.4 Cruiser Reports**

The main village is Aiwo. The harbor entrance is located at 00°31.43S / 166°54.31E. The locals are not overly receptive to visiting yachts.

Limited provisions and fuel can be obtained, at island prices.

**Oct. 2024:** My crew was able to walk around the island (they flew into the island and received their visas while they waited for us). There are lots of old rusty cars and huge construction machines everywhere. The dogs are wild and you risk of being attacked (carry a stick or rock). There is no water, everything is distilled. – Naked Lunch