



Steph's Quick Budget Fact Sheet

Samoa

Quick Facts

- ✓ **Capital:** Apia
- ✓ **Language:** Samoan
- ✓ **Population:** ± 195,125
- ✓ **Sq km:** ± 2,842
- ✓ **Currency:** Tālā (SAT / WST)
- ✓ **Country code:** +685
- ✓ **Visa:** Not for tourism: 60 days
- ✓ **Emergency phone:** 995 (*police*), 999 (*ambulance*), 994 (*fire*)
- ✓ **Vaccinations:** Hep-A, Hep-B, Typhoid, Yellow Fever. Zika & Chikungunya risk!



History Recap Over 1 Drink

1300BC: Lapita people headed south from Taiwan to Papua NG and Fiji, Vanuatu & Samoa. 1722: Dutch Jacob Roggeveen first European to explore Samoa. 1830: London Missionary Society arrives. '99: Germany annexes Western Samoa, US takes over American Samoa, UK withdraws. 1914: NZ occupies Western Samoa during WWI, administers after war (League of Nations Mandate). '28: NZ shoots dead 11 members of Mau Passive Resistance Movement. '39-'45: US troops stationed in Western Samoa during WWII, no battles. '62: Western Samoa first pacific island to become independent. '90: Parliament reforms. Cyclone Ofa: 10,000 homeless. '97: Western Samoa name change to Samoa. '98: Government imposes restrictions on media freedom. '02: NZ prime minister apologizes for poor treatment Samoan citizens during colonial times. '04: Australia says it will give \$7m for training security forces. '07: Mau Sitisensi rights group fights for indigenous Samoans to be granted NZ citizenship. King Malietoa Tanumafili II dies, Samoa becomes republic, Efi head of state. '09: Driving on left introduced. Tsunamis caused by earthquake kill 200+. '11: Samoa "skips" a day at the end of the year to bring it in line with its main trade partners Aus+NZ. '12: Joins WTO. '13: Parliamentary quota system → women 10%+ seats (if less women elected, more seats created).

Travel Seasons

| | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Wet & Hot | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Cool & Dry | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Budget | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Altitude: 55m. Climate: Tropical Wet Climate (Af).

Bucket List For Free

- ☺ **Upolu:** Samoa Cultural Village (*free demonstration & tastings behind tourist info – Tue/Wed/Thu 10:30AM*), Piula Cave Pool, Papapapatai / Togitogiga / Sapoaga Fall, Fuipisia Fall, Baha'i Temple, Lalomanu / Lefaga / Salamumu Beach, Cathedral, Giant Clam Sanctuary, [Robert Louis Stevenson Museum](#).
- ☺ **Savai'i:** -
- ☺ **Both:** Beaches, surfing (*experienced*), snorkeling.

Worth The Extra \$€¥

- 👍 **Upolu:** To Sua Ocean Trench, Papase'ea Sliding Rocks, Palolo Deep Marine Reserve, EFKS Museum, [Samoa Museum](#).
- 👍 **Savai'i:** Alofaaga Blowholes, Afu Aau Fall, Mu Pagoa Fall, Falealupo Canopy Walk.
- 👍 **Both:** Scubadive / kayak (*with turtles*).
- 👍 **Other islands:** Manono, Apolima, Nu'utele, Nu'uuala, Fanuatapu, Namua, Tutuila, Nu'usafe'e, Nu'ulopa.

The Earth Becomes My Throne

Budget Bites

- ⌘ **Big supermarkets:** Farmer Joe's, Frankie's.
- ⌘ **Markets:** Every bigger bus station has a market. Aia Flea Market, Old Apia Market.
- ⌘ **Local food:** Taro (*smooth potato*), Taro Leaves / Palusami (*similar to spinach, in coconut cream*), Breadfruit (*crop with bread structure*), Oka L'a (*raw fish in lime and coconut milk*), Samoan Chicken (*brothy soup*), Panikeke (*deep-fried dough balls*), Sapasui (*chop suey*), Panipopo (*coconut bread roll*).
- ⌘ **Go vegan:** Being vegan is a bit of a challenge in Samoa, but not impossible. Supermarkets don't have typical vegan products, but fresh produce can be bought cheaply at the markets. There is a small selection of vegan/vegetarian-friendly restaurants: [Happy Cow - Samoa](#).

Festivals

- ⊗ Fire Knife Festival: May.
- ⊗ Tafesilafa'i Festival: July/Aug.
- ⊗ Teuila Festival: Sep.

Mama Said

- 💀 Samoan people are very friendly, but poverty and therefore theft is an issue. Use your common sense, don't show off valuables and be aware.
- 💀 In Samoa they drive on the left side of the road.
- 💀 Tap water isn't drinkable, and even when filtered or cooked has a very particular taste.
- 💀 Women travelling alone will be subject to lot of male attention and are asked rather often if they are married. 'Yes' is the best answer in any situation.
- 💀 Electricity is generally 240 volt with 3 prong angular plugs (like NZ/Aus), but can have strong bursts. Check before charging your phone, as mine got burned through and had to be entirely repaired.

Next?

- ➔ International destinations close by: There are direct flights to American Samoa, Fiji, Vanuatu, Tonga, Australia, New Zealand and the US.

Sleep Cheap

- ❖ Hotels and resorts are very expensive in Samoa (*book via [this Booking.com link](#) and receive a \$15 discount*), but cheaper private housing is available. I recommend [Asotas Le Property Host](#) for high-quality private housing for very competitive (*especially long-term*) rates.
- ❖ There are few campsites, but this would only be recommendable in the cooler dry season. Hostels aren't really a thing (*yet*) in Samoa.
- ❖ Go [Couchsurfing](#) or Housesitting. Also check [WorkAway](#).

Nights Best Spent

- ◆ Nightlife areas: Apia, hotels & resorts. Few are open after midnight.

Free-Riding?

- Samoa is bigger than you think, walking in between villages is far and way too hot.
- Cycling is possible, but can be demanding in the heat. Some hotels and [Outdoor Samoa](#) rent out bicycles.
- Bus travel is an experience. Locals get around cheaply by these colorful, slow vehicles. There are wooden benches, no windows and it's common to sit on each other's laps. Destinations (*villages*) are displayed up front and buses need to be hailed down at bus stops or along the way. You pay the driver when leaving the vehicle (*bring coins*). There are no schedules and it's a rather unreliable way to get around. These buses are the slowest but cheapest way to get from the airport to Apia.
- Samoa is pretty big and to efficiently get to places renting a vehicle is strongly recommended. There are many car rental companies. [Samoa Surf & Turf](#) (*located at Apia flea market*) rents cheap and high-quality bikes. Petrol is cheap.
- Taxi's aren't metered. Negotiate rate up front.
- There are several daily ferries in between the islands of Upolu and Savai'i (*Mulifana to Salelologa*), and some to Manono. It costs T12 1-way, a scooter T30 extra, a car T85 (*per 2018*). Once a week a ferry goes to American Samoa (Pago Pago) from Apia (Thurs), check schedules [here](#).
- Airport: Faleolo (APW) & Fagali'i (FGI).
- Hitch-hiking isn't recommended as a foreigner in Samoa. Especially not as a woman.