

FMC Travel Club

A subsidiary of Federated Mountain Clubs of New Zealand (Inc.)
www.fmc.org.nz

Club Convenor : John Dobbs
Travel Smart Napier
Civic Court, Dickens Street 4140
P : 06 8352222 F : 06 8354211 E : john@tsnapier.co.nz

Samoa duo

***More than just tropical islands in the South Pacific,
go beyond to explore the rainforests, mountains and volcanoes across 5
varied islands, while encountering ancient and enduring
cultural traditions. Two countries in one trip!***

***23th May to 13th June 2015, 22 days ex Auckland
\$5695 per person, led by John Dobbs***

*Based on a minimum group of 7 participants and subject to currency fluctuations
Any payments by visa or mastercard adds 150 per person*

PRICE INCLUDES :

- *Flights ex Auckland to Apia Western Samoa and return, flights to Pago Pago American Samoa and domestic flights within American Samoa*
- *Accommodation – a mix of hotels, small resorts, beach fales and guesthouses (mostly twin share)*
- *Transport – a mix of local buses, local tours, bikes and walking/tramping*
- *Meals – all breakfasts, many lunches and dinners (B.L.D. in the daily itinerary)*
- *Experienced FMC trip leader throughout, payment to FMC*
- *Airport transfers, entry fees to sites, cultural events etc as shown in the daily itinerary*

PRICE DOES NOT INCLUDE :

- *Travel insurance*
- *Some additional meals*
- *Spending of a personal nature, such as internet, souvenirs, alcohol, tipping etc*

Trip Leader

John needs little introduction – he is the travel club organizer and tramps regularly with Napier Tramping Club. He has led many trips for the travel club and enjoys the fun and challenges of organizing and leading groups, rating these experiences as some of his most memorable. “ This trip to Samoa continues our forays into the South Pacific – short haul travel and a warmer environment during our winter is appealing. The two Samoa’s are quite different yet complementary and I’ve mixed up the activities for great variety. Cycling is a bit different, but the best way to explore Savaii. The tramping will be varied and not too tough, but the climate and heat are factors to consider. We should have a lot of fun! Come with a sense of adventure and throw out the timetable. Talofa Lava - welcome aboard this terrific trip”

Trip Organisation and Overview

***The first week is spent on the ‘big’ island of Savaii** – a lower population than the smaller island of Upolu and a more remote feel to it. Our cycling trip encompasses the island’s perimeter in an anti-clockwise direction. The riding though steady will be at a relaxed pace with plenty of stops. Roads are narrow, the pace is slow and the sudden appearance of chickens, piglets or excited village children can be expected. The bikes are ‘fit for the job’ with panniers, comfortable gel seats and all the extras, so you only need a small day pack as main luggage is transported to each accommodation. The van driver is a kind of ‘cultural ambassador’ so will be really valuable on many fronts. There will be lots of diversions and plenty of time to do tramps and walks, to explore natural features, swim and snorkel, and encounter the cultural and historic aspects of Savaii. ‘Outdoor Samoa’ is the bike outfitter and they have been organizing and managing bike tours here for years. Accommodations are mainly smaller fale style and very authentically Samoan.*

Returning to Upolu island on the ferry, we now head to the capital Apia, to base ourselves for the next phase.

Apia has around 40,000 people and is the ‘big smoke’. Small town sprawl of low, modern buildings are interspersed with smaller dilapidated structures. Banyan trees and a charming harbor help, but Apia is not a beachy destination. Samoan street life is interesting, there are markets and interesting local walks and the accommodation is more of a low end resort style centrally located with good facilities.

The majority of Upolu’s population live on or near the coast, like Savaii, and mainly in little town and villages. While the pace of life is faster than Savaii, it still pretty laid back. Here, we’ll team up with ‘Samoa on Foot’ a local operator that will enable us to access and enjoy 3 days doing some of the best of the walks, tramps and coastal caves around the island, including the national park, as day excursions.

We will also include some endemic entertainment around food and culture on Savaii and Upolu, including at least one Fia Fia night- a dance performance and feasting on local foods.

For the third part of the trip, we fly across the dateline to American Samoa.

Flying into the main island of Tutuila, you will see the island has dramatic mountain scenery, yet it is only half the size of Upolu. The population is also far smaller at 55,000 in total, with most of those on Tutuila. The gorgeous harbor of Pago Pago the capital (5,500 people) is surrounded by towering peaks and sheer cliffs and often chokka with supply ships and yachts. This is one of the world’s most spectacular harbours.

We will be based at a very relaxed local inn close to the sea making an ideal location to visit the various parts of the island. The surrounding National Park of American Samoa has fine trails through the mountains and around coastal sections and we will visit villages and various sights of interest, allowing time for water based activities too and hope to include the local version of a fia fia night. We will rent appropriate vehicle(s) to get out and about.

Another short flight will take us to the very dramatic ‘twin’ islands of Ofu/Olusega. The expression ‘getting away from it all’ must have been invented to describe a trip out to these remote outposts of land, sand and reef. Barely populated and with a dramatic volcanic heritage of high, sharply defined cliffs- these islands are the stuff of tropical daydreams.

A small part of the national park is contained here, and our activities will include walks, sparkling beaches, beguiling snorkeling, serene lagoons and laidback village life. Here we will stay at a lodge across the beach and close to the little airstrip.

While everywhere in the Samoa’s you will come across friendly, relaxed people and many who will want to strike up a conversation with you. Hospitality is very important and an intrinsic part of the psyche.

Itinerary

Day 1. Sat 23rd May. Fly Auckland to Apia

This afternoon we depart Auckland, arriving into Apia in the evening. Overnight at the nearby Airport Lodge. Talofa Lava – welcome to Samoa!

Day 2. Sun 24th May. Travel to Savaii, begin cycling

*This morning we get outfitted with the bikes and take a ferry ride over to Savaii Island, an approx' 70 minute journey. Then it is an easy ride of 19 kms through villages following the east coast heading north. We overnight at Lauiula Beach Fales along a lovely stretch of safe coral sand beach on the outskirts of Lano Village. The reef is about 500 m away and the lagoon is suitable for swimming and snorkeling at all tides. **B.D.***

Day 3. Mon 25th May. Cycling

*Continuing our east coast trip northwards, we ride along mostly flat country for 35 kms to Manase at the northern tip of the island. Along the way there will be some interesting stops to check out the lava fields that come right down to the sea. The lava half buried five villages in 1905 and seeing some of the results will be amazing. We stay two nights at Vacations Beach Fales right on the golden sand shore. Again, there is good swimming and snorkeling here. **B.D.***

Day 4. Tue 26th May. Day off or tramping to Mt Matavanu

*Today you can have a day off or join with several local people who will take us on a tramp up to Mt Matavanu, the now extinct volcano responsible for the destructive lava flows you saw yesterday. We travel a little further west and then walk south up the flanks. The mountain's remote crater is a spectacular sight, an eerily silent pit cloaked in jungle and overseen by gliding swiftlets. A great opportunity to experience some of Savaii's wild interior. This will be a whole day outing with a picnic lunch carried. **B.L.D.***

Day 5. Wed 27th May. Cycling

*This is a big ride day, so start early. It is 40kms to Vaisala with a pretty big hill climb of 400m to test the legs. Start with a gentle meander through seaside villages then gradually inland and climbing through forest to avoid the lava cliffs. At the top of the climb, take a break for lunch at A'opo Village. Here there is a long lava cave to explore if you want a break from cycling. Downhill now to the coast, then along to Vaisala with its pretty beach good for a swim or snorkel at the end of the day, and the lovely old atmospheric Vaisala Hotel. **B.D.***

Day 6. Thu 28th May. Cycling

A gentle ride of only 20kms brings us to Falealupo Beach Fales on the western edge of the wild and beautiful Falealupo Peninsula. There are a number of interesting sights along the way, some of which are the result of two major cyclones that struck here in 1990 and 1991, destroying a village and leaving several eerie and enigmatic ruins. A canopy walkway allows you to scale a 225 year old banyan tree and a 24m long swing bridge, 9m above the forest floor. The whole Falealupo Peninsula figures prominently in local legend and many Samoans believe it to be the gateway to the underworld.

*Regardless, Falealupo is a beautiful isolated beach on the western edge of the world (before the Samoan government moved the dateline further east of the country), where the sunsets across the coral sands are memorable and the swimming in the small lagoon is refreshing. **B.D.***

Day 7. Fri 29th May. Cycling

*Today we 'turn the corner' and head south along the west coast of Savaii on a 40kms ride to Satuiatua Beach Fales. The ride begins with a moderate hill and undulates from then on and beside beaches through numerous villages. Stop at a feature called 'lovers leap' to admire the view. The accommodation is built on the sand under giant banyan trees. When the tide is right there is wonderful snorkeling amongst dense schools of fish. The spacious deck with bar is a great place to relax too. The owners can also offer an interesting plantation tour to attend a tapa making session to see mulberry bark turned into cloth. **B.D.***

Day 8. Sat 30th May. Cycling

This is the last biking day and longer too at 55kms, but the ride is mostly flat and there is lots to see along the way. A must see is the short diversion to the impressive Alofaaga Blowholes on the southwest corner of Savaii. Locals often demonstrate the power of the blowholes by tossing coconuts at just the right moment to send it flying up to 60m in the air! There are other attractions near the route, but you will probably have had enough by the time we arrive at our two night stop at Lusias Lagoon Chalets, only 1km from Salealogo the main town on Savaii.

*Lusias is a superb place to stay, spread over a small, bushy slice of land around a lovely little cove sometimes visited by sea turtles. The fresh seafood and home baked desserts here are excellent! **B.D.***

Day 9. Sun 31st May. Day off, optional local tour

After all the biking, you can have a day off if preferred! Chill on the pier with your favourite tipple, visit the local markets or take the kayaks and explore the nearby bays.

*Alternatively, come on the local tour that includes must see sights, exploration and walks, all with well regarded local people. This will include the spectacular Afu Aau Falls for a refreshing swim, the Pulemelei Mound (a pyramidal and enigmatic structure, believed to be Polynesias's largest ancient structure) along with the Tafua Savaii Crater. **B.D.***

Day 10. Mon 1st June. Return to Upolu Island, transfer to Apia

*Depart Savaii on a morning return ferry trip back to Upolu Island and transfer to Apia, Samoa's capital city. Here we base ourselves for five nights at the excellent and centrally located Amanaki Hotel. The rest of the day is yours at leisure. **B.D.***

Day 11. Tue 2nd June. Free day in Apia

*Apia has interesting markets, nearby beaches and a range of good cafes and restaurants. There are also some interesting and historic sights. Join me on a peninsula walk from the accommodation that will include many of these and perhaps an enjoyable drink or meal at the Apia Yacht Club on the way back. **B.***

Day 12. Wed 3rd June to Day 14. Fri 5th June.

*Over these three days, we will do day trips from Apia to go tramping, visit significant caves, coastal walks and so on. We team up with 'Samoa on Foot' – a local Apia operator specializing in these activities using their transport and local leader etc. We will likely have a picnic lunch or be able to stop off enroute for lunch and just need a day pack. While we cover a reasonable part of the island overall, driving distances are not great. We will also include a visit to Robert Louis Stevenson's house, museum and gravesite – a captivating 'must do' on any trip to Samoa. **B. each day***

Day 15. Sat 6th June. Fly to Pago Pago, American Samoa, arriving the day before!

*Welcome to another country! The drop dead gorgeous and dramatic setting of Tutuila Island continues as we settle in to the accommodation in Pago Pago and set out to explore. **B. each day***

Day 16. Sun 7th June to Day 20. 11th June

A full and varied programme of walks, tramps, sightseeing and experiencing the culture of American Samoa. Our time here will include three nights in the remote and gorgeous twin islands of Ofu/Olusega. The exact schedule of activities and the dates and timings for Ofu/Olusega are determined by local conditions and the flight schedules (subject to change) and not determined at the time this dossier was completed.

Day 21. Fri 12th June. Fly Pago Pago via Apia to Auckland

Departing American Samoa, we return to Upolu and Western Samoa's international airport. Here we will have a transit awaiting onward connections to Auckland.

Day 22. Sat 13th June. Arrive Auckland

The trip concludes on arrival back into Auckland.

Pre-trip information

Having established the numbers to run the trip, a pre-trip newsletter with further details around the itinerary, a gear list, accommodations list and more details will be provided.

The section covering American Samoa in particular is tentative at the time this dossier was compiled (July 2014). Part of this is due to the some uncertainty over internal flight schedules, this far ahead.

Any specific enquireys are welcomed by John Dobbs, any time.

Booking Conditions : FMC Travel Club and Travel Smart Napier

1. *The FMC Travel Club (FMC) offers this small group trip in conjunction with Travel Smart Napier (TSN). All travel arrangements are made with TSN. Participants agree to all terms and conditions by signing the Registration Form.*
2. *FMC and TSN are not responsible or liable for any injury, damage, loss, accident, delay or irregularity which may arise from weather, defect in any vehicle, vessel or aircraft, or through the acts or default of any person or company engaged in carrying out any of the arrangements of the trip.*
3. *We reserve the right to cancel the trip if minimum numbers don't eventuate. In such an event, all monies paid will be fully refunded. We also reserve the right to make any modifications that may be essential, or to offer a modified trip to a smaller number of people.*
4. *The trip includes a payment to FMC.*
5. ***Registrations are accepted in good faith on a first comers basis on receipt of the Registration Form and the deposit is \$1500 per person. This is to cover the cost of flights and begin land arrangements. Registrations close by 31st December 2014 (or earlier if the trip fills earlier) and final balance is due by 28th February 2015. All payments may be made by cash, cheque, EFTPOS, internet banking, visa or mastercard to the offices of TSN. All or any payments by visa or mastercard adds \$150 to the final trip price. Our preferred method of payment is internet banking. Please use : 010685 0151601 00 at ANZ Napier. Heerlen Ltd T/A Travel Smart Napier (with a covering email). Cheques should be payable to Travel Smart Napier.***
6. *Arrangements are made in other currencies, so subject to fluctuations. Events beyond our control such as currency fluctuations or any unforeseen additional costs may affect the overall trip price. We cannot guarantee the price until such times as full payment has been received. Upon full payment, the trip price is guaranteed.*
7. ***Cancellations. If you need to cancel your registration for any reason, you must advise TSN in writing as soon as possible. An email is OK, a phone call alone is not. Travel insurance will cover you for unforeseen circumstances but will not cover you for changing your mind after committing to the trip. Cancellation fees apply as follows :***
 - ***Cancellations received from 1st to 28th February 2015 incur a fee of \$1500.***
 - ***Cancellations received from 1st March 2015 onwards incur a fee of 100% of trip costs.***
 - ***If you find a suitable replacement person, the above cancellation fees MAY be waived.***
8. *Travel insurance is mandatory. We recommend QBE Travel Insurance and a brochure/application by email or post is available any time, just ask. You will receive a special FMC discount on the premium. Details of any travel insurance other than QBE must be provided before departure.*

Registration Form for Samoa Duo 2015

Complete and send to John Dobbs at TSN with a passport copy. **Registrations close by 31st December 2014 (or earlier of the trip fills earlier). So your earliest commitment is appreciated. All or any payments by visa or mastercard adds \$150 to the final trip price. Our preferred payment method is internet banking into : 010685 0151601 00 at ANZ Napier.**

Your full name(s) as per passport(s) and please underline or highlight your preferred first name(s).....

.....
.....

Mailing address.....

Day phone.....Night phone.....Mobile.....

Email.....Date(s) of birth.....

Specify any dietary requirements, allergies or medical conditions.....

.....

Tramping club affiliation (if any).....

Please detail your recent tramping experiences.....

.....

.....

.....

Contact person in NZ for any emergencies : name, address, contact phone numbers, email and the relationship to you. In the event of any emergency, this is the sole person you are authorizing us to liaise with

.....

.....

I/We have read the full trip dossier and I / We enclose the per person deposit of \$1500. I / We agree to pay the remainder of trip costs by due date, as advised by invoice. I / We understand that the final trip price is subject to minimum numbers and other cost impacts as detailed under the Booking Conditions section; therefore the final trip price cannot be guaranteed until such times as full payment has been made.

.....signed and dated by each person registering

Send to : John Dobbs, FMC Travel Club Convenor

Travel Smart Napier.

Civic Court, Dickens Street, Napier 4140. P : 06 8352222 F : 06 8354211 E : john@tsnapier.co.nz

