

Vava'u Islands, Tonga

A stunning South Pacific archipelago where humpback whales breach beside sailboats and sea caves glow in turquoise light. Neiafu is small, friendly, and utterly unlike anywhere else on a cruise itinerary.

Tender port (anchor in Port of Refuge)

Typical call: 7–9 hrs

Tongan Pa'anga (TOP); USD/AUD sometimes accepted

Tongan & English spoken

Whale season: July–October

MY DAY IN PORT

Ship/Date: _____ Arrive: _____ All aboard: _____

Excursion: _____ Notes: _____

GETTING ASHORE

Docking: Tender — ships anchor in Port of Refuge; 10–15 min tender to Halaevalu Wharf

Walk to center: Immediate — wharf lands in Neiafu town center

Best For: Whale watching, sea caves, snorkeling, sailing, Polynesian culture

Don't Miss: Swimming with humpback whales (Jul–Oct) or Swallows' Cave by boat

Getting around: **Taxi** TOP 40–90 / USD 5–40 · **Rideshare** not available

TOP THINGS TO DO

- Swim with Humpback Whales** — One of the world's few places where you can legally and ethically enter the water with humpback whales.
 - Swallows' Cave & Mariner's Cave** — Boat into Swallows' Cave, a vast sea cave filled with darting swiftlets and glowing blue water.
 - Island-Hopping & Snorkeling** — Charter a boat and hop between Vava'u's 50+ islands — stopping at Pangaimotu Beach, Hunga Lagoon, and Kapa Island.
- Kayaking the Archipelago** — Paddle through Vava'u's sheltered channels between limestone islands, entering sea caves at water level.
 - Neiafu Market & Kava Ceremony** — Wander 'Utukalongalu Market for local produce, woven mats, bark cloth, and tapa crafts.

BEST WALKS

- Neiafu Waterfront Stroll** 30–45 min | Flat | Free — From Halaevalu Wharf, walk the waterfront past the yacht club, craft stalls, and waterfront restaurants.
- Town Center to 'Ene'io Beach** 30 min drive or 1.5 hr walk | Easy | Free beach — Head south from town to 'Ene'io Beach — white coral sand with calm water for swimming and snorkeling on the adjacent reef.

WEATHER · DAYLIGHT · MONEY

CLIMATE (AVG °F · RAINY DAYS)

Mon	High	Low	Rain
Apr	84°	73°	2d
Jun	80°	70°	2d
Aug	79°	69°	2d
Sep	81°	71°	1d
Oct	81°	71°	1d

DAYLIGHT & MONEY

Apr 6:45AM–6:25PM · Jun 7:06AM–6:06PM · Aug 6:56AM–6:24PM · Sep 6:32AM–6:30PM · Oct 6:06AM–6:36PM

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KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

- Sundav = everything closed. Tonga's Sundav law is strict and enforced by legislation. No shops. markets. restaurants. or taxis