

# NPCATRAVEL



The Travel Program of the National Parks Conservation Association

OCTOBER 10-17, 2024

## Fa'a Samoa

THE NATIONAL PARK OF AMERICAN SAMOA

### EXPERIENCE

TRADITIONAL CULTURAL  
PRACTICES OF SAMOA

### SEE

THE EXQUISITE BEAUTY OF A  
VIBRANT ECOSYSTEM

### LEARN

HOW NPCA SAFEGUARDS  
CULTURAL RESOURCES

*Ofu Island, American Samoa*



**PARK HIGHLIGHTS**

- **Paddle an outrigger canoe** in the crystal-clear, tropical waters of Pago Pago Harbor with a **local canoe club** and enjoy panoramic views of Rainmaker Mountain and the historic World War II landmarks of Breakers and Blunts Points
- **Journey with expert guides** through coastal areas and paths, secluded beaches, a littoral forest and archaeological sites on the **island of Ta'ū**
- **Spend two full days on Ofu Island** hiking its mountains, exploring its wildlife and plants, snorkeling among the more than **950 species of fish and 250 types of coral** and relaxing under a thick blanket of stars

**NPCA EXCLUSIVES**

- Take part in a **one-of-a-kind trip**, custom designed with NPCA's mission, work and partners at its heart
- Embark with a **local guide** on an exclusive **"insider's tour"** of Aunu'u Island, engaging with **residents of the local villages** and partaking in a traditional ava welcome ceremony
- Receive expert knowledge as you tour the state-of-the-art Tauese P.F. Sunia Ocean Center to learn about the **National Marine Sanctuary of American Samoa**
- Immerse yourself in the oldest culture of Polynesia, the Samoan culture, with a **local family** who will prepare a **traditional-style umu lunch** for you
- Travel through **one of the most remote national parks in the U.S.**, getting a **behind-the-scenes look** from **NPCA experts** at what challenges face the area and how NPCA remains vigilant in helping to preserve fa'asamoa



**FEATURED BIO: SARAH GAINES BARMEYER**

**Sarah Gaines Barmeyer** is deputy vice president for NPCA's Conservation Programs where she coordinates priority initiatives for water restoration, landscape conservation, wildlife and clean air. She oversees NPCA's water protection and restoration activities with a focus on Everglades restoration and manages America's Great Waters Coalition.

National Marine Sanctuary of American Samoa

# Fa'a Samoa

## The National Park of American Samoa

AVAILABLE DATES: October 10-17, 2024 | Min/Max: 8/10

**Length of Tour:** 8 days/7 nights

**NPCA Member Price:** \$5,925 per person double occupancy; \$6,465 single occupancy

**Estimated Additional Cost of Interisland Transportation:** \$450 per person\*

\*Please note that the estimated cost for interisland transportation is *not* included in the trip cost. While the tour operator will make the travel arrangements, each guest must pay this cost, which will be invoiced prior to departure.

**Deposit:** \$500 per person due at registration

**Arrive/Depart:** Pago Pago (by way of Honolulu, HI)

**Reservations:** Please contact NPCA's National Parks Experiences Program at **1.800.628.7275** or email [travel@npca.org](mailto:travel@npca.org).

**Activity Level:** Travelers should be prepared for full-day adventures of walking, standing and sitting in a humid environment. This tour includes activities which may require physical exertion like hiking, swimming, snorkeling, canoeing and walking long distances. Hikes during our journey range from 1-3 miles on rugged terrain and sandy beaches. There is significant elevation descent and gain on the Mt. Tumutumu hike reaching an elevation of 1,000 feet. Medical facilities are extremely limited on the islands of Tutuila and Ta'ū and nonexistent on Ofu. In the event of a medical emergency, it may take several hours or days to be transported off-island for treatment. Hikes, walks, vehicle transportation and boat rides may be on rough terrain/surf and take multiple hours. Any physical conditions requiring special attention, diet or treatment should be reported when booking to determine what accommodations can be made.

**Inclusions:** All outlined accommodations, meals as noted in the itinerary (B-breakfast, L-lunch, D-dinner) and non-alcoholic beverages (alcoholic beverages *will* be included for the welcome reception dinner and closing dinner), interisland transportation and luggage handling between Pago Pago/ Ta'ū /Ofu Islands (with payment of "Estimated Additional Cost of Internal Transportation" quoted above), standard gratuities, entry fees for activities listed in the itinerary. **NOTE:** Baggage restrictions will apply, especially in the Manu'a portion of the itinerary.

**Exclusions:** Airfare to and from Pago Pago, Tutuila, luggage charges, excess baggage charges between islands, meals not included in the itinerary, alcoholic beverages, travel insurance, items of a purely personal nature and any items not listed in Inclusions.

**ACTIVITY LEVEL**

Moderate-Active



### Talofa! Welcome to the National Park of American Samoa, the only U.S. national park south of the equator.

On this tour, you have the rare opportunity to visit all of the islands that comprise this national park — Tutuila, Aunu'u and the Manu'a Islands. It is one of the most remote national parks and the only U.S. national park in which the federal government leases the land. Local villages own this land communally, and in 1993, village chiefs signed a 50-year lease with the National Park Service to help preserve and manage an area of rainforest, beach and coral reef on the islands. The park's resources are interwoven within the Samoan culture and the Park Service works very closely with local villages on conservation. Samoans honor the

natural environment as sacred, following the Samoan Way, or fa'asamoa — the customs, beliefs and traditions of their culture.

You will be spending time with the community and learning about the customs of the islands, while also visiting paleotropical rainforests and seeing flora and fauna found in no other national park. You'll also learn about the lesser-known Rose Atoll Marine National Monument. Find out why its protected species are thriving and the role NPCA plays in preserving this and other marine protected areas. During this unforgettable NPCA small group tour, you'll feel the warm welcome of Samoan culture as a guest in an immersive experience of community, culture and conservation.



Pago Pago, American Samoa

## ITINERARY

### DAY 1 OCTOBER 10: Pago Pago, Tutuila

1 Arrive in the late evening in Pago Pago on the main island of Tutuila. Your NPCA host and trip leader will meet you once you clear immigration and customs. When the group has gathered, we'll travel in private shuttles to our beachfront hotel, *Sadie's by the Sea*, and check in. Our NPCA host will provide an overview of NPCA's role and priorities in the region and the exciting sites we can expect to see throughout our carefully crafted NPCA small group adventure. [Sadie's by the Sea \(D\)](#)

### DAY 2 OCTOBER 11: Pago Pago, Tutuila

2 We'll start our first full day in American Samoa with a group breakfast, introductions, and an orientation to the islands and to fa'asamoa. The group will then head out together for the **National Park of American Samoa (NPAS) Visitor Center**, where we will get an overview of the park, which spans land and offshore areas on and around the islands of Tutuila, Ofu and Ta'u. A national park ranger will join the group as we head out to the **Pago Pago** section of the national park, which is located on the north side of Tutuila island between Fagasā Bay and Afono Bay and extends from

Mt. Alava and the Maunaloa Ridge to the offshore reefs. A picnic lunch will be provided to enjoy during our outing. On the way to the park, we will pass the villages whose chiefs signed the 50-year leases. We may also catch the first glimpse of the large fruit bats, some of which have the wingspan of an owl. Following the visit to the national park, the group will enjoy a tour of the state-of-the-art **Tauese P.F. Sunia Ocean Center** to learn about the **National Marine Sanctuary of American Samoa**, the largest and most remote of the U.S national marine sanctuaries. Formed by extinct volcanoes, its habitats are host to a bewildering variety of tropical fish, invertebrates and algae. This extraordinary marine national monument has faced unprecedented threats — threats which NPCA is actively addressing in order to preserve the sanctuary's natural and cultural resources. As we will experience firsthand, its unparalleled beauty is a legacy NPCA remains vigilant in protecting. The group will walk back to the hotel from the Ocean Center to prepare for a group dinner at a local restaurant. [Sadie's by the Sea \(B, L, D\)](#)

### DAY 3 OCTOBER 12: Aunu'u Island

3 After enjoying breakfast, we'll depart for our day excursion to **Aunu'u National Natural Landmark**. Aunu'u is a small volcanic island 1.2 miles southeast of Tutuila with a land area of 0.58 square miles and is home to Aunu'u Village. We will head out to Aunu'u in water taxis (small boats) with a local guide from Aunu'u who will take us on a special "insider's tour" to meet the residents of the village. Residents will share typical aspects of daily village life and Samoan practices and customs, including a traditional ava welcome ceremony. They will also share beautiful sites where we can spend some time swimming or snorkeling. Although the beauty of

these sites is unmistakable, residents of the village may also share their concerns about rising sea levels — a reality that NPCA is addressing in collaboration with local community partners. After **swimming or snorkeling**, an umu lunch will be served, prepared specially for the group by a local family. The umu is an above-ground earthen oven in which food is cooked on heated stones. Samoans typically prepare food in the umu on special occasions and for special guests. After lunch, we will depart on our water taxi and return to Tutuila. At the hotel, we can enjoy a bit of **free time** before gathering for dinner at the hotel restaurant. [Sadie's by the Sea \(B, L, D\)](#)



**DAY** **OCTOBER 13: Pago Pago, Tutuila**

**4** Sunday is a day of worship in Samoa. Our morning schedule is free, and you may choose to attend one of the many church services in town. Christian missionaries were very successful throughout Polynesia, and church is an important part of Samoan culture today. Attending church is a cultural experience and an excellent opportunity to hear wonderful Samoan singing. Services are available in Samoan and English and last approximately an hour. We'll enjoy lunch in the hotel restaurant, then join our trip leader to head out for a canoe excursion. We'll **paddle an outrigger canoe in Pago Pago Harbor** near the hotel with a local canoe club and enjoy panoramic views of **Rainmaker Mountain** and the historic **World War II landmarks of Breakers and Blunts Points**. The group will have dinner together at the hotel, and our trip leader will go over instructions for the three-day visit to the Manu'a districts of the national park, including the extremely remote islands of Ta'u and Ofu, both of which offer limited services. Due to the weight restrictions on the small aircraft for the flight, you will need to pack everything you will need in carry-on luggage. The remainder of your luggage will be kept at the hotel in Pago Pago. [Sadie's by the Sea \(B, L, D\)](#)

**DAY** **OCTOBER 14: Ta'u & Ofu, Manu'a Islands**

**5** We will be departing the hotel early this morning to catch the flight to our first stop — **Ta'u, the largest** of the Manu'a Islands. We will provide a boxed breakfast for you. Historically the island of Ta'u enjoys high status, not only because of its size and beauty, but also because of its connection to Tu'i Manu'a, the oldest chiefly title in the Samoan Islands and in all of Polynesia. The Ta'u portion of the national park covers the southeastern half of the island and approximately 5,400 acres (of which 1,000 acres are offshore), making it the largest contiguous area in the entire park. We will be visiting coastal areas and paths which are often overgrown. We'll have access to secluded beaches, a littoral forest and archaeological sites. During our journey through Ta'u, we'll delve deeper into NPCA's efforts to ensure national parks thrive for the next 100 years, a goal that prioritizes the protection of cultural sites and artifacts. Residents will prepare a delicious lunch for us before we depart on a 2-hour boat ride to Ofu. Upon our arrival on Ofu, the group will transfer to the Vaoto Lodge, located in the national park, and check in. We can spend time in the area and roam the sandy beach in front of the lodge before dinner. [Vaoto Lodge \(B, L, D\)](#)

**DAYS** **OCTOBER 15 - 16: Ofu, Manu'a Islands**

**6-7** We will be spending **two days on Ofu Island**. We'll hike its mountains, explore its wildlife and plants, swim and snorkel in a turquoise sea, get to know the beautiful coral reefs and enjoy American Samoa's loveliest beach. As there are less than 200 residents on this island, it is truly a "private paradise." Transportation on Ofu is limited so our group will walk or ride in local pickup trucks or vans around the island. In the evening, Ofu is a perfect spot for stargazing and viewing the Southern Cross and falling stars in the night sky of the Southern Hemisphere. [Vaoto Lodge \(B, L, D\)](#)

**DAY** **OCTOBER 17: Departure Day - Return to Pago Pago, Tutuila**

**8** Today, we will enjoy our last breakfast at Vaoto Lodge and check out. We will walk over to the Ofu airport, just a few steps away from the lodge and check-in for our flight back to Pago Pago. We will arrive in Pago Pago in time to drop off our luggage at Sadie's by the Sea before continuing on to a local restaurant for lunch. After lunch, we will take a historic walking tour of **Fagatogo** with a local guide. The village of Fagatogo has been the economic center of American Samoa since serving as the administrative headquarters of the U.S. naval base in Pago Pago from 1900 to 1951. It was for many decades the most Americanized village in the territory, and the only village with a paved road. Today, only 14 naval buildings remain, and in 1988 many of them were entered into the National Register of Historic Places to become part of the **U.S. Naval Station Tutuila Historic District** (in Pago Pago Harbor). During the tour, we'll learn why expanding protections for historic sites is a high priority for NPCA. The remainder of the day is free to check out the town on our own, enjoy the beach in front of the hotel or squeeze in a late hike. We'll check out of the hotel in the evening before a farewell dinner at the hotel. After dinner, we will transfer to **Pago Pago Airport** by private shuttle to catch the flight to Honolulu, Hawai'i. [Day use rooms at Sadie's by the Sea \(B, L, D\)](#)

*Accommodations and activities are subject to change at any time due to unforeseen circumstances or circumstances beyond NPCA's control.*



Ofu Island, American Samoa

**Travel Insurance:** To protect yourself from the loss of deposit and cancellation fees, you are encouraged to purchase travel insurance. If you need assistance, NPCA recommends contacting Travel Insurance Services through USI Affinity at 1-800-937-1387 or at <http://my.travelinsure.com/npca>; email confirmation packets will include additional details.

**Traveler Responsibility:** Travelers are responsible for choosing an NPCA trip consistent with their ability, fitness and overall health. All travelers are required to complete and return their NPCA waiver of liability, personal information form, flight form, and accept Pacific Islands Institute's Terms and Conditions before being allowed to participate in a trip. Travelers also are responsible for reading and understanding all pre-departure materials and bringing appropriate clothing and gear.

**Trip Cancellation Policy:** Cancellation notice must be submitted to Pacific Islands Institute in writing and is effective upon date of receipt.

121+ days prior to departure	120-91 days prior	June 12, 2024	90-0 days prior
Deposit is 100% refundable minus a \$250 processing fee	25% of trip cost is refunded	Final payment is due	No refund

### COVID-19 SAFETY PROTOCOLS

Each of our travel partners have developed robust safety protocols to protect the health of our guests, staff and the communities we visit. Please contact us for details.



# Why Travel with NPCA?

Our goal is to offer premium itineraries in educational travel in the places we know best: America's national parks.

For over 100 years, NPCA has worked to protect places of unparalleled natural wonder, historical significance and cultural value. Now we want you to experience them firsthand. Our curated itineraries offer more than just sightseeing. With NPCA, you'll delve into the cultural and natural history of each destination, guided by passionate experts who bring these stories to life. We believe that true appreciation for our parks goes hand in hand with awareness of the conservation efforts being made to protect them. Engage with park rangers, NPCA partners and local communities as they share their invaluable insights and discuss the challenges and triumphs of safeguarding these natural treasures. Leave with a deeper understanding of the critical role we all play in the future of our parks.

## ACCESS NPCA STAFF EXPERTISE

Embark on extraordinary adventures led by our team of knowledgeable staff who represent a wide range of backgrounds. With expertise spanning environmental conservation, cultural heritage, wildlife biology and more, our staff brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to each journey. Delve into engaging discussions and gain unique insights into the issues that shape our parks, including land preservation, climate change and Indigenous perspectives. Together, we'll explore the multifaceted aspects of these remarkable landscapes.

## TRAVEL WITH PURPOSE

When you choose to travel with NPCA, you're not just embarking on an incredible journey – you're making a meaningful impact. Our commitment to conservation runs deep, and we are proud to share that a portion of every trip's fees directly supports NPCA's vital work. Your choice to travel with us helps protect and strengthen the National Park System for generations to come.

## ENJOY PERSONALIZED AND INTIMATE EXPERIENCES

Escape the crowds and embrace the beauty of small-group travel, where personal connections and tailored experiences take center stage. Our trips offer a more intimate setting, allowing you to forge meaningful connections with fellow travelers who share your passion for adventure and conservation.

## CONNECT WITH NPCA PARTNERS AND LOCAL EXPERTS

Collaborate with key NPCA partners and local experts who are deeply connected to the destinations we visit. Engage in dialogue with scientists, community leaders and Tribal members who are at the forefront of conservation and preservation efforts. Their firsthand accounts and valuable perspectives will deepen your understanding of the challenges and successes in protecting our national parks.

## TRAVEL RESPONSIBLY

Embrace the spirit of responsible travel as you embark on a journey that leaves a positive footprint on the planet. At NPCA, we prioritize partnering with responsible tour operators who share our commitment to sustainability and conservation. With their expertise and dedication, we ensure that every step of your trip aligns with our shared values.

National Marine Sanctuary of American Samoa

NPCA is the only independent, nonpartisan organization dedicated to advocacy on behalf of the National Park System. Over 70% of our funding comes from donations from individuals like you. NPCA trips are an exclusive NPCA member benefit. One traveler per group must be an NPCA member to participate in an NPCA trip. An annual membership starts at \$15 per person. Please make dues payable to NPCA by check or credit card at [npca.org](https://npca.org)