





TONGA 2004

Imagine paddling your kayak in crystalline turquoise waters, a red-tailed tropicbird soaring in the clear blue skies overhead. Land on a white sand beach fringed with coconut palms, setting up camp in the dappled shade of a whispering ironwood tree. A hill-top hike through the tropical forest takes you to the forgotten tomb of a Tongan princess. Slip into the undersea world of the coral reefs, hanging weightless in the warm waters while scores of jewel-like fish surround you. As dusk falls, the southern constellations blaze in the heavens. Moonrise sends a shimmering avenue of rippling light over the Pacific, the only sounds the lapping of the waves and the sigh of palm fronds in the gentle breeze.

On our excursions in the Vava'u islands in the Kingdom of Tonga we blend the lure of the classic South Pacific paradise with the opportunity to experience a rich and traditional Polynesian culture. The Tonga trips are our most culturally-oriented tours; while we camp on deserted south seas islands, visits to island villages for supplies give us the occasion to see how Tongan villagers live and work. Entering an outer island village is to step back in time. Here the people live much as they have done for centuries, thriving on the bounty of land and sea. A local Tongan guide accom-

panies us on the tour. Our Tongan guides have opened many doors for us in the various outlying villages, including im prompt invitations to an 'umu feast and kava ceremony, Tongan drumming lessons, and a chance to see school children practicing a traditional war dance.

We make camp on several different islands, doing daytrips to neighbouring islands on layover days. The total distance covered if you wish to paddle every day can be around 50-60 nautical miles; this works out to two to four hours per day on average. We have two Pacific Rim Paddling Company guides plus our Tongan guide for every group of ten on a tour.

2004 DATES & PRICES

LODGE TRIP:	Nov. 11-19	\$1895 USD
CAMPING TRIP:	Nov. 18-29	\$1695 USD

Note: if Air New Zealand's schedule changes, our trip dates will have to change to reflect this. All trip prices are based on double occupancy.

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