

Tonga

Continent: Australia

Languages Spoken: Tongan, English

Population: 105,695

Currency: Tongan paʻanga (TOP)

Area: 747

Main Landmarks:

- {'name': 'Haʻamonga ʻa Maui', 'writeup': 'An ancient trilithon stone structure believed to be a royal gateway built in the 13th century.'}
- {'name': 'Royal Palace', 'writeup': 'The official residence of the King of Tonga, located in the capital, Nukuʻalofa.'}
- {'name': 'Mapu a Vaea Blowholes', 'writeup': 'Natural blowholes on Tongatapu island where seawater shoots through lava tubes.'}

Head of State / Government:

King Tupou VI

Main Cultural Events:

- {'name': 'Heiva Festival', 'writeup': 'An annual cultural festival featuring traditional dance, music, and sports celebrating Tongan heritage.'}
- {'name': 'Tonga National Day', 'writeup': "Celebrated on November 4th, marking Tonga's independence from British protection in 1970."}

Food & Cuisine:

Tongan cuisine centers on root crops like taro and cassava, seafood, and tropical fruits, often cooked in an underground oven called an 'umu'. Popular dishes include 'ota ika' (raw fish in coconut milk) and lu pulu (taro leaves with coconut cream and meat).

Brief History:

Tonga is the only Pacific nation never fully colonized, maintaining its monarchy since the 10th century. It became a British protected state in 1900 and gained full sovereignty in 1970.

Important People:

- King Tupou VI - current monarch
- Queen Salote Tupou III - influential 20th-century queen
- Akilisi Pōhiva - former Prime Minister and pro-democracy advocate

Current Conflicts:

Tonga is generally peaceful with no significant internal or external conflicts reported as of 2024.

Youtube Links:

- Discover Tonga: The Friendly Islands

- Tonga Travel Guide - Top Things to Do

- The History and Culture of Tonga

- Tongan Food and Traditions Explained

- Exploring Tonga's Natural Wonders