

# The Vanuatu Compendium

A Compilation of Guidebook References and Cruising Reports



**IMPORTANT:** USE ALL INFORMATION IN THIS DOCUMENT AT YOUR OWN RISK!!

Rev 2025.1 26 July, 2025

Keep the Vanuatu Compendium alive by being a contributor!

Submit updates on atolls, islands, anchorages, businesses, snorkel spots, etc...

It's easy to participate and will help other cruisers for years to come.

Email Soggy Paws at [sherry@svsoggypaws -dot- com](mailto:sherry@svsoggypaws.com).

You can also contact us on Sailmail at WDI5677

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## Revision Log

Many thanks to all who have contributed over the years!!

<b>Rev</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Notes:</b>
2025.1	26 July 2025	Where to get Vatu in Fiji before arriving in Vanuatu
2024.7	23 September 2024	Updates on Malekula, Nguna, Santo, The Banks and Gaua, by Yaminda, Trinity, JAMS, Sky Pond, Ariel, and Sugar Shack
2024.6	27 July 2024	Updates on Pentecost, Maewo, Ambrym, Maskelyne Islands, Awei, Efate, Santo, Aoba, Malekula, formalities, and more from Moana, Trinity, Yaminda, and Sugar Shack
2024.5	29 June 2024	Various updates throughout the compendium. Updates on Tanna, Anatom, Erromango, Efate, Ambrym, and Pentecost from Sugar Shack, Moana, and Trinity
2024.4	26 April 2024	Various updates from Eastern Stream on The Banks Islands, Maewo, Port Vila, Lolowai Bay, and Naone Waterfalls.
2024.3	12 April 2024	Various updates from Vanuatu WhatsApp and Facebook group.
2024.2	15 February 2024	Updates from Katoa 2 on several islands. Various updates from social media groups.
2024.1	2 January 2024	Reorganization of entire guide by Sugar Shack. Various updates from several sources (Vanuatu WhatsApp Group, Vanuatu Facebook Groups, and Yacht MIZ MAE's guide to Vanuatu by Nicola Rhind) listed "As reported to Sugar Shack." Numerous updates from cruisers on Complicite, Reflection, Dandelion, and Eastern Stream
2019.4	June 2019	Updates on clearing in at Aneityum, some weather and volcano info. Indigo II's anchorages coming from the north.
2019.3	May 27, 2019	Various updates from Sloepmouche (SSCA) during their 5-year stay
2019.2	April 13, 2019	Various updates
2019.1	Feb 21, 2019	Updates North through Vanuatu from Wandering Waterhorse, and Several Others
2018.001	Dec 15, 2018,	Bits from Verite's FB posts as they passed through Vanuatu in mid-2018. Field Trip blog posts from 2016 and 2017
A	July 4, 2010	Creation of Compendium by Soggy Paws

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# 1 Introduction

We started creating compendiums as a way for s/v Soggy Paws and friends to organize notes and internet sources while we were in French Polynesia. Later, it became a way for us to pass on what we've learned to other cruisers.

We have since created over 25 compendiums all the way across the Pacific and in to SE Asia. Including, Panama, Ecuador, French Polynesia, Cook / Samoa Islands, Tonga, Solomon's, Fiji, New Caledonia, Micronesia, Marshall Islands, Hawaii, Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia, the Indian Ocean, and the Red Sea. Plus, we have received updates from cruisers since 2011 (please send us yours!).

If you haven't found our other 'Compendiums', they're free at [www.soggypaws.com/files](http://www.soggypaws.com/files). There are also links on that page to our satellite charts, track files and anchorage waypoints in GPX format.

This is not intended to replace the guidebooks or charts, but to supplement out-of-date guides with recent cruiser first-hand reports, and fill in information on places that the guides don't cover.

This 'compendium' contains cruiser feedback from personal experiences, some website content, and information from our own experience. Source and date of information are noted.

## 1.1 Organization of the Guide

This guide is loosely organized south to north starting in Aneityum (Mystery Island) up to the Torres Islands.



## 1.2 Overview of Vanuatu

### 1.2.1 Time Zone

Vanuatu operates on Vanuatu Standard Time, which is +11 UTC (same as the Solomons).

### 1.2.2 Currency

Cash is highly recommended, but ATMs can be difficult to find. Credit cards are not widely accepted. The mid-market conversion rate as of July 2025:

VATU	USD	NZD
1000	\$8.43	\$14.02
10,000	\$84.32	\$140.15

Sola: The National Bank of Vanuatu, in Sola, will exchange currency if the bank notes are dated between 2013 and 2025. They will not accept foreign currency older than 2015.

**July 2025:** If sailing to Vanuatu from Fiji and departing from Port Denarau, you can obtain Vatu in person from No 1 Currency at the Nadi International Airport (departures level). No documentation required, other than your passport, and no advance notice required. Get 100,000 Vatu (or more) in just minutes. Easier than GCC Exchange or Lotus Foreign Exchange in Nadi town, who both insisted on impossible documentation requirements and many days advance notice required for them to either obtain Vatu or obtain permission for them to sell it to us. - SV Turtlebones

**June 2024:** You can obtain Vatu while in NZ from either [No1 Currency](#) or by [Travelex](#) in Whangarei.

No1 Currency, 0800.300.933, will deliver your currency anywhere in NZ. You do have to go through their website and it is much easier to make a transaction when you have a NZ bank account or NZ credit card.

Pacific Rally participants who only had international banking were having problems on the No1Currency website. I worked with Sayyed and he was fantastic. Sayyed: [snajmudheen@fexcopacific.com](mailto:snajmudheen@fexcopacific.com)

[TravelEx](#), Whangarei, 09.430.096, carries Vatu in limited amounts. It's best to call ahead 09.430.096, visit their [website](#), or stop by in person (located at 25 Rathbone Street, Whangarei). They are super nice and accommodating. They can usually get more Vatu within a few days. Hours: Mon-Fri: 0900-1630.

We travelled many of the islands and cash is king. We could use credit cards in Port Vila (Efate) and Luganville (Santo) but that is it. All of the formalities, festivals, tours, excursions require cash and they are expensive. For example, Formalities/transport: 16,800VT (boat), Volcano 11,000VT, Lenakel Trip 3000VT, Fanla Festival 25,000VT, Back to My Roots Festival 27,000VT, Blue Holes 1,000VT and these are per person.

But then, food, fruit, vegetables, and crafts are super reasonable and, in some cases, cheap. – Sugar Shack

#### 1.2.2.1 Traditional Economy

Naturally, traditional societies' economies are based on produce from the land and staple foods like yam, taro and manioc. And in places where there is plenty of water, taro is grown in complex terraces hand built from earth and rocks. Pigs are a mainstay of the economy not just as food but as a form of money and prestige.

### 1.2.3 Protocols for Visitors

When you arrive into a new bay, you should introduce yourself to the local village and ask permission to anchor, swim, snorkel/dive, fish in the bay, walk the beach, etc. Occasionally, there may be a tabu on the reef. If there is a tabu on the reef you will not be allowed to fish, dive, or swim. Villages own 200m out into the bay.

**Dress Code:** The dress code is very casual; shorts and tank tops are acceptable. Avoid bikinis when going to a village and no nudity is allowed when locals are around. However, note that some of the outer villages are still very conservative and may ask women to wear clothing to cover shoulders down to knees.

**Aug. 2024:** Three villages asked me to cover up, including one that loaned me a sarong. – Sugar Shack

**Swimming:** A tabu exists in Malekula which forbids men to swim under a boat or canoe with women or girls onboard. There is a substantial fine to the village chief.

**Trade:** Locals like to trade with visitors and are usually in need of line/rope and building materials (nails, screws, tools) for fruits and vegetables. Good items for trade: flour, sugar, salt, rice, fuel, school supplies, clothing, fishing supplies, reading glasses, building materials, tarps.

Do not trade alcohol or tobacco. Alcohol is banded in the remote islands.

**Gifts:** Gift giving in Vanuatu is not encouraged (trading is acceptable). In Vanuatu, men of higher status give more gifts of food, or money than those who rank below them. To give a gift to someone in the village has all kinds of associations attached to it – so as a guest, you should not give a gift to people. You could, once you research the village, give a gift to a school or clinic.

Trading is different and welcome as long as both parties feel the trade is equal. Items for trade: school supplies, line, fishing gear, snorkeling gear, kitchen supplies (pots, pans, utensils), clothing, toys, hats, sunglasses, prescription glasses. Not alcohol or tobacco.

#### **1.2.4 Tides**

**Aug. 2024:** Tides tables were all over the place and not very accurate. We usually use Navionics but this was often 2-3 hours off which can be critical when entering a shallow pass.

Here is a list of tide charts, but my suggestion is to eyeball your current area and see which tide chart matches best with what you are seeing.

- Tides Near Me, <https://tidesnear.me/> is a web page & app. Pretty accurate in and around Santo.
- My Tide Times is an app to download
- Just Tide, is an app to download
- Tide Guide, is an app to download
- Various other web page charts

Don't get caught off guard by an inaccurate tide chart. – Sugar Shack

#### **1.2.5 Safety & Thefts**

There have been a number of “incidents” in 2024.

- Port Vila, Yachting World Marina: damage and theft, boarded at night while owners slept. Dinghy on davits, took fuel tank and fuel pipe with pump while owners asleep.
- Mystery Island / Anatom: Theft and boarding at night while owners were asleep.
- Atchin: Boarding at night while owners were asleep
- Uliveo (Maskelynes): Multiple yachts harassed and ripped off by “Chief Jimmy”
- Ambae, Lolowai Bay boarding while owners were off the boat (2-teen boys)
- Ambrym: Multiple cruisers charged double for festivals by Chief Sekor

Crime is everywhere, just be vigilant and aware of your circumstances. Do not leave anything out, on the deck or in the cockpit. If you are unfortunate enough to have an incident, please report it to the police.

#### **1.2.6 Forbidden Anchorages and Zones**

The entire area surrounding Bokissa Island is a marine sanctuary and yachts are forbidden to anchor anywhere on the reef shelf within the 60km depth contour line.

#### **1.2.7 History and Customs**

The history of Vanuatu begins with the Lapita people. They sailed to the islands, about 3500 years ago in longboats, and are famous for their pottery. They brought pigs, chicken, yams and taro root on their boats.

They lived in small autonomous clans, separated by ravines, jungles, and sea. And they lived in the shadow of their ancestors who could be controlled by magic. It was important to get the ghosts to the good (your) side or they could be hostile and ready to haunt with disasters, famines, and military defeat. Even today many ni-Vans believe their ancestral spirits and demons populate the world. The ghosts of the recently dead are especially potent, and can also be potentially malicious even to their own family. Practice of magic can help and most adult men (magic is taboo for women) in the traditional parts of Vanuatu know some useful spells. These can be used for getting the ghosts to your side, or to produce good crops. For more special missions, like calming storms, healing the sick or controlling the volcanoes, a true magician is needed.

Vanuatu is also a country where the old beliefs still live by the side of the Christian church. Wherever we were and whoever we asked the ni-Vans always answered that the spirits still live by them.

When we were on Wala we were invited to a walk to the old, inner part of the island, where the ni-Vans lived before the missionaries influenced and changed their beliefs. This is where the spirits of the old powerful chiefs still are. Here are areas where you are not allowed to walk, the sacred planted Namele palm shows where the taboo is. And this is where Loren introduced us to his grandfather's grandfather.

Loren's grandfather's grandfather was once the chief of the village. When he reigned, the island was known for their fierce fighters. Other chiefs could sometimes ask for help from the men in Wala, it was politics that decided if and what side they would support. If they got in to fights, they always showed how many they had killed by bringing their penises back. Some of their victims were eaten by the men who had killed them. Women could be taken from the conquered and be given to men who wanted them as their wives, or slaves.

When Loren's ancestor died, he was buried by a Namele palm since he was the chief. Body down in a deep hole and his head above the ground. After seven days his head was taken off and taken to the sacred place where other chiefs in the family were buried before him. This is where Loren took us.

At a sacred place you must be quiet, Loren prayed and talked to him silently, he told him we would support with a pig and made a dance around the burial ground. His great great-grandfather gave permission for us to walk and to hear the history, but he also said that we must not talk to anyone on the island or in Vanuatu about it. Then we were introduced to the skull of his ancestor.

We walked by some Nakamal trees. Loren told us this is where the spirits stay. The spirits can be the same size as us, or they can be small as dwarfs. When there are people on the island the spirits climb up the trees where they can keep an eye on what is happening, they only walk the ground if the island is empty or at night.

The men in the early history earned their statues through grade-taking ceremonies, each grade closer to becoming a chief. The more grades a man had earned the more powerful his defense of black magic would be, and the more potent his spirit would be after death. One way to show a man's wealth in life was the number of his pigs. The tusks from the pigs provided currency (now they are a symbol on the flag), and the pigs were the 2<sup>nd</sup> most important in the family. But who was responsible for the pig's well-being and the man's statues? Their wives...who came as number three. Loren told, with a smile on his face, that thanks to Christ and church women have upgraded and are nowadays considered more important than the pigs. – Nordic Breeze (2016)

#### **1.2.7.1 Kava**

Kava is not just a food crop; it is a significant part of Vanuatu's kastom, usually drunk to seal an agreement between people after a long meeting. Kava is a derivative of the pepper tree family traditionally cut and chewed into a pulp, then spat into a bowl. The mushy pulp is squeezed and the resultant liquid drunk in. On some islands, both men and women may drink kava after a hard day's work. On Tanna however, it has become more ritualized as a 'men only' pastime and women dare not pass near nakamal's (men's houses) at the time kava is being drunk.

Kava is part of the Kastom culture and it is a privilege to participate in a kava ceremony. – Vanuatu Tourism

### 1.2.7.2 *Kastom, what is it?*

Kastom is a pidgin word (Bislama/English) used to refer to traditional culture, including religion, economics, art, and magic in Melanesia. It is passed down from generation to generation through teachings and stories (it is not written down).

It is a truly traditional lifestyle where tourism and the modern world have no part. There are many Kastom villages in Vanuatu and it is a tremendous blessing to be able to visit one to experience this pure way of living.

The use of the word is slightly different in the different countries and cultures of Melanesia. There are designated Kastom villages in Vanuatu which are open to tourists, dedicated to preserving Kastom.

The people of 'Vanuatu', a name which means 'Land Eternal', are largely Melanesian and the people are called Ni-Vanuatu (meaning 'of Vanuatu'). Recognized as one of the most culturally diverse country in the world, dances, ceremonies, status and systems of authority, artistic styles, animal and crop husbandry can vary from island to island, known as 'kastom'.

Kastom way of life: In cultures where language is unwritten, oral traditions of the kastom way of life, have been faithfully passed down from generation to generation. Throughout the middle and southern islands of Vanuatu, there existed the story of a great and powerful chief Roimata who united the warring and cannibalistic tribes of the area into a unified, and peaceful group of tribes, a first in ancient Vanuatu. That kastom way of life exists today called 'naflak'.

### 1.2.7.3 *Local Languages & Phrases*

Vanuatu boasts 113 distinct languages and innumerable dialects. However, the three main languages are Bislama, English, and French. Out of the those, Bislama is the most spoken in Vanuatu, followed by English, and lastly French.

Bislama is an English-based Melanesian pidgin that was developed in the 1870's-1880's.

ENGLISH	BISLAMA
Hello	Halo
How are you?	Olsem wanem?
What's your name?	Wanem nem blong yu?
My name is...	Nem blong mi...
Pleased to meet you	Gud mitim yu or Mi glad blong mitim yu
Good morning	Gudmorning
Good afternoon	Gud afternun
Good night	Gudnaet
Good bye	Tata or Ale tata or Baibai
See you later	Lukim yu
Cheers	Jis!
Yes	Yes or Si
No	No
Excuse me	Ekskious mi

How much is this?            Hamas long hemia

Thank you                      Tangyu or Tangkyu tumas

Understanding Bislama:

- nakamal / men's house or meeting ground
- namele leave / signs for taboo
- pig's tusk, red mat / signs of chiefly hood
- Nangol / land diver first step from child hood to become man
- Circumcision / During the time of circumcise it is taboo to go near the event
- Navenue leave / someone holding a navenue leave working through into the village on which she or he left long ago the message is to say that he / she belongs to the place / that village
- Bamboo leaf / when someone gives you a bamboo leaf it means you belong to the tribe
- Basket with a bush knife holding in hand / going to the garden
- A woman in a village with a tattoo sign or a broken front tooth / the girl is engaged
- Tattoos in the village/ symbol customary origin eg: spider, sharks, turtle, etc...
- Also, a coconut leaf or navele palm leaf across a beach / taboo sign
- Sand Drawing/ passing of messages and stories through kastom art on sand and song

### **1.2.8 Activities: Festivals, Land Diving**

#### **1.2.8.1 Land Diving (Naghol)**

Naghol / Land Diving is a ritual performed by the men of Southern Pentecost. The villages spend 5-6 weeks creating the towers which is reflective of the human body. Men will jump off these wooden towers which are 20-30 meters in height with two lianas vines wrapped around the ankles. Jumpers can reach speeds of around 45mph.

Land diving typically occurs annually with the yam harvest (May-July). A good dive helps ensure a bountiful yam harvest.

Villagers believe that land diving can enhance the health and strength of the divers. A successful dive can remove the illness and physical problems associated with the wet season. Land diving is also considered as an expression of masculinity as it demonstrates the boldness of a warrior.

It is a rite of passage for young boys. When a boy is ready to become a man, he will perform a land dive in the presence of his elders.

Naghol, is one of the most well-known Vanuatu traditions. Legend has it that the first jumper was a woman. She was trying to escape from her abusive husband, climbed a tree and jumped. He followed her, leapt and died, unaware that his wife had secured liana vines to her ankles. For some time, only women participated in the dive until the male elders decided that only men should dive to prove their bravery and courage.

This awe-inspiring ancient tradition, known as land diving, is the role model for the modern bungee jumping.

We were told that later in the season (June) the towers are reduced in size (shortened from the 30m to maybe 20-18m) due to the inability to find the long jumping vines. So, if you want to see the super-duper tall towers go early in the season. Although I will say seeing them jump from 20m is just as impressive!

Men are allowed to go see and climb the tower the day before the ceremony. However, women are only allowed near the tower on the day of the ceremony and they are not allowed to touch the tower or step on the area cleared for the jumpers to land. If a woman touches the tower, they have to tear the tower down for the season.

LOCATIONS:

**Londot Village** anchor in Wali Bay, Naghol is performed every Saturday between April and June. Go to the beach and look for the flag on the tree to show you the way to the village (2-minute walk). Book with the

spokesperson: Elleen Wano ([elleenwano66@gmail.com](mailto:elleenwano66@gmail.com)), phone +678.766.1274, +678.567.3932. Schedule your Naghol ahead of time with Elleen so she knows how many are participating in the ceremony.

They ask that you arrive no later than 1000 to participate in the full ceremony. The men have kava after the jump but if you want to organize a feast with the village just let Elleen know a few days in advance to arrange it. There is a custom dance during the Naghol ceremony.

Cost: Adults 12,000vt/adult/pp, Kids (12-16 years) 6,000vt/pp and kids under 12 are free (June 2024)

**Ratap village**, anchor at Homo Bay. Naghol is performed on Mondays and Fridays May through July. You will need transport to the village (15-minute drive or 1.5hr walk). The spokesperson is Bartholomew Garae [bartholomewgarae@gmail.com](mailto:bartholomewgarae@gmail.com) +678.730.8732 +678 731 0690 or Melsul Beta, Chief [melsulbetu@gmail.com](mailto:melsulbetu@gmail.com).

Cost: Adult 10,500vt/pp plus transport is 3,000vt for the truck (round trip) up to 10 people.

Bartholomew is open to negotiation on the transport. He originally charged 6,000vt for the truck then later agreed to 3000VT for the truck (that seats 10) round trip split between passengers.

### 1.2.8.2 Festivals

Vanuatu hosts a variety of festivals. Be sure to visit [Vanuatu Tourism](http://www.vanuatu.travel). The event calendar will have the descriptions of each festival. However, listed below are short descriptions.

Links to fun activities and festivals:

- Vanuatu Tourism website is a wealth of information: [www.vanuatu.travel/en/lokol/events-festivals](http://www.vanuatu.travel/en/lokol/events-festivals)
- [Lonwolwol Yacht Club](#) hosts many events between April – October.
- [Slow Food Festival](#), in Port Villa.
- [The Beach Bar](#) at Mele Bay in Efate hosts a fire show every Friday and a circus show on Sunday nights.

The 2024 Calendar of Events and Festivals:

#### April – July:

- Nagol (Land Diving) on Southern Pentecost:
  - Wali Bay: Elleen Wari +678.766.1274, +678.567.3932, [elleenwano66@gmail.com](mailto:elleenwano66@gmail.com). Cost 12,000vt/pp, walk to site
  - Homo Bay: Bartholomew [bartholomewgarae@gmail.com](mailto:bartholomewgarae@gmail.com), Melsul Beto +678.731.0690, [melsulbetu@gmail.com](mailto:melsulbetu@gmail.com). Cost 10,500vt/pp + 3,000vt for the truck (round trip)

#### June:

- **Regenerative Vanua** (early June) Ambrym at Craig Cove, Jessy Tamar +678.548.7330. Cost 8,000vt/pp
  - Sand drawing, bamboo flute demo, black magic, dancing, traditional roasting/baking
- **Regenerative Agritours & Food**, Gaiowo in N. Maewo (early June) Cost between 3000vt-5000vt/pp
  - Waterfall tour, cultural village, activities
- **Provincial Day: June 17** is Provincial day for all islands between Efate and Epi. It is a huge local celebration with bands, dancing, and activities.
- **Sand Drawing Festival**, N. Ambrym, Olal Village, (end of June). Chief Sekor \$678.560.7551. Cost 27,000vt/pp plus transportation (this is a nice event, but you can see the same things at other events for a lot less money)
  - Sand Drawing, dances, flute demonstration

#### July:

- **Fanla Festival** on North Ambrym, anchor at Ranon Bay (mid-July)
  - Amazing festival, ROM dance, sand drawing, black magic, carving, grade taking, singing
  - Freddy Roromal: +678.771.6316 or +678.511.6391. Cost: 12,000vt/pp with Freddy who lives at Fanla and gives the money straight to his chief. Highly recommend using Freddy over Chief Sekor. Freddy arranges for a guide to walk you from the Ranon beach to Fanla (45-min. walk)

- Chief Sekor, +678.560.7551, is the contact Vanuatu Tourism recommends but he charges twice as much as Freddy for the same event. He also wants you to anchor at Nabul and pay for his transport to Fanla. Cost: 25,000vt/pp
- **Ancestors Lifestyle Heritage**, W. Ambrym (Lonwolwol) (mid-July)
  - Contact: Jessy Temar +678.548.7330. Cost 6,000vt/pp
  - Traditional food roasting/baking, garden tour, lunch, music, dances, lake tour, sailor's night
- **Maskelyn Canoe Race**, Maskelyn Islands (mid-late July) 3-day event
  - Kalo Nathaniel, owner of Malog Bungalows +678.534.3687, +678.778.3524. Cost 9,000vt/pp
  - Annual event and cultural festival, Kastom dances, canoe-making, outrigger racing

#### August:

- **Slow Food & ROM Festival**, N. Ambrym, Fanla Village (early August).
  - Freddy Roromal: +678.771.6316 or +678.511.6391. Cost for just Slow Food Festival is 6,000vt/pp if you want to see ROM dance total cost is 14,000vt/pp. (ROM is optional)
  - ROM Dance, traditional baking & cooking, carvings, dancing
- **Lamap Cultural Festival**, S. Malekula (early August). Cost 5,000vt/pp
  - Revelino Andre +678.564.1013, [andrebatickealabel@gmail.com](mailto:andrebatickealabel@gmail.com), Joseph Sokso +678.521.2297
  - Sand drawing, snorkel, dugong tour, local skills display, music, dances
- **Volcano Eruption Exhibition**, W. Ambrym (Lonwolwol) (early August)
  - Contact: Jessy Temar +678.548.7330. Cost 6,000vt/pp
  - Traditional dancing, cooking, sand drawing, volcano exhibition, activities around the lake.
- **Nalawan Festival** on SW Malekula Island, (end of August) cost, 13,500VT
  - Contact: Damen Hopland +678 7785751 or +678 5371976. [dsimeon15@gmail.com](mailto:dsimeon15@gmail.com),
  - Dances, traditional activities and dishes, fire starting, sand drawing, carving, weaving
- **Back to my Roots** on North Ambrym Island Cost 27,000vt/pp
  - Chief Sekor, +678.560.7551, is the contact Vanuatu Tourism recommends but he charges twice as much as any other festival. Anchor at Nabul and pay for his transport. Or see another event with the same performances for half the price.
  - Dances, sand drawing, ROM dance, custom stories
- **Lolibul Jungle Cultural Event**, W. Ambrym (Lonwolwol) (early August)
  - Contact: Jessy Temar +678.548.7330. Cost 7,000vt/pp
  - ROM Dance, sand drawing, black magic, activities (kayak and canoe around the lake), lunch.
- **Cultural Exchange on Aneityum Island**, W. Ambrym (Lonwolwol) (early August)
  - Contact: Jessy Temar +678.548.7330. Cost 7,000vt/pp

#### September:

- **Hidden Treasures of Ambrym**, W. Ambrym (Lonwolwol)
  - Contact: Jessy Temar +678.548.7330. Cost 7,000vt/pp
- Vanuatu Made Market Day in Port Vila-Efate
- West Coast Arts Festival in Espiritu Santo
- Vanua Lava Arts Festival in Vanua Lava Banks

#### October:

- [Volcano Talefa Run](#) takes place on a different volcano each year

#### Other Festivals:

- Fest' Napuan Music Festival
- Fete De La Musique Music festival
- Rodeo and Rally Races
- [Pacific Trail Run](#)
- Mi Tumoro Vanuatu travel show happens in June in Luganville and Port Vila.

**Aug.e 2024:** There are so many amazing cultural events, festivals, dances, musical performances, hikes, and tourist attractions in Vanuatu. Different ones on different islands (as noted above). But you must be prepared to spend quite a lot of money to participate in these activities. Pricing has been a lot more than we are used to paying for local activities (especially when compared to French Polynesia, Fiji, Tonga, and New Zealand).

For example, the price per person to go to Mt. Yasur Volcano in Tanna is 3,000vt for transport and 8,000vt to go to the volcano (\$100 USD), round trip transport from Port Resolution to Lenakel in Tanna is 3,000vt (\$30 USD), Fanla Festival and Sand Drawing festivals both cost 25,000vt/pp (almost \$250USD) in Ambrym. We were charged 1,000vt to snorkel a reef, 1,000vt for a 30-minute tour to a waterfall, and 1,000vt to walk into a cave.

Then on the complete opposite side of the spectrum, the Vanuatuan's are very FRIENDLY AND SPONTANEOUSLY generous. We have been on numerous walks and have been handed fruit from the baskets the locals were carrying.

We found that Chief Sekor (in Olal, Ambrym) who is the chief the Vanuatu Tourism lists for several events, charges double the amount of money for his festivals (25,000vt/pp (\$250USD)) compared to other festivals 6,000vt (\$60USD) at Lonwolwol or 12,000vt (\$120USD) for the Naghol/land diving. If you go in a group 6+ people, then negotiate a lower rate.

I just wanted to set expectations for future visitors to Vanuatu. If you want to participate in activities, be prepared to pay a chunk of money for the privilege of doing so. – Sugar Shack

### **1.2.9 Sea Life: Dugongs, Fishing, and Sharks**

#### **1.2.9.1 Dugongs**

The Dugong, sea cow, is a protected marine mammal, cousin to the fresh water manatee, is largely dependent on sea grass. They are very nervous and skittish by nature. They frighten easily and will swim away if you approach them, swim too fast, splash, and make noise (even with your flippers).

There are very strict rules protecting the dugongs in Vanuatu. You must stay a minimum of 2m from them at all times. If you are lucky enough to encounter a mother and baby, you must stay a minimum of 5m from both of them and never, ever get between the mother and baby.

Never feed them as they only eat sea grass. Don't touch them (stay 2m away from them at all times). Don't swim towards them head on. Stay in one place and let them come to you. Here is a lovely video for you to watch <https://youtu.be/6yq45eagMZY>.

Dugongs have been spotted in Efate, Pentecost, Maewo, Maskelynes, and Santo. However, they are most prevalent in the Maskelyne Islands. The best time to see Dugongs is during high tide. They are typically located near sandy shelves that are somewhat close to grassy areas.

GUIDE: Call Marsel Nathaniel if you are looking for a guide in the Maskelyne islands. He prefers to be contacted in Facebook messenger but you can also try him at +678.505.7428 or you can try to reach him at his Family's [Malog Bungalows](#). He is located on Uliveo, Peskarus. You can dinghy to him on Uliveo and either take your dinghy or his boat. Or he can come pick you up at your anchorage.

Cost: 1500vt/pp if you use your dinghy or 4000vt/pp if he drives to the dugong spots. He will also pick you up and take you. We had him pick us up at Awei Island and take us around for 4500vt/pp. He is excellent and we spotted 2 dugongs at the 2<sup>nd</sup> spot and 10 dugongs at the 4<sup>th</sup> spot! He is a dugong lover.

Originally, we were going to take our dinghy, but I strongly suggest you take his boat so you do not have to tow your dinghy in the current. If he takes his boat, a driver will drop you off and pick you up at each spot. Much more convenient. – Sugar Shack

### 1.2.9.2 Fishing

Fishing in the lagoons and bays is prohibited unless you get prior approval from the chief.

**Ciguatera.** Download a comprehensive look at ciguatera ("[You Gonna Eat That Fish?](#)" Info about Ciguatera):

From Wikipedia: Ciguatera fish poisoning, also known simply as ciguatera, is a foodborne illness caused by eating reef fish whose flesh is contaminated with certain toxins. Ciguatera Fish Poisoning commonly occurs in tropical and subtropical areas, particularly in the Pacific Ocean, the Indian Ocean, and the Caribbean Sea.

Symptoms may include diarrhea, vomiting, numbness, itchiness, sensitivity to hot and cold, dizziness, and weakness. The onset of symptoms varies with the amount of toxin eaten from half an hour to up to two days. The diarrhea may last for up to four days.

Any reef fish can cause ciguatera poisoning, but these species: barracuda, grouper, red snapper, moray eel, amberjack, parrotfish, hogfish, sturgeon fish, kingfish, coral trout, and sea bass are most commonly affected

The toxins do not affect the taste, texture, or odor of the fish and cannot be destroyed by cooking, smoking, freezing, salting or any other method of food preparation. Outbreaks can occur seasonally or sporadically, particularly after storms. Not all fish of a given species or from a given area will be toxic.

**Preventive efforts include not eating reef fish**, not eating high-risk fish such as barracuda, and not eating fish liver, roe, or fish heads. Ciguatoxin has no taste or smell, and cannot be destroyed by conventional cooking. There is no specific treatment for ciguatera fish poisoning once it occurs. Mannitol, Gabapentin or amitriptyline may be used to treat some of the symptoms. Gastrointestinal decontamination with charcoal has also been used. Intravenous fluids may be necessary to control nausea and vomiting.

### 1.2.9.3 Sharks

Ask the village if it is safe to swim in their bay. Sharks are a serious problem and a danger to swimmers. Especially around Port Sandwich on Malekula. Swimming off black sand beaches should be avoided.

If you see a red float close to shore do not swim in the bay. The locals put bait on this float to catch sharks.

## 1.3 Weather

### 1.3.1 Volcano Alerts

There are active volcanos in Vanuatu. The best place to monitor volcanic activity and alerts is on the [Vanuatu Meteorology and Geohazards Department Facebook page](#).

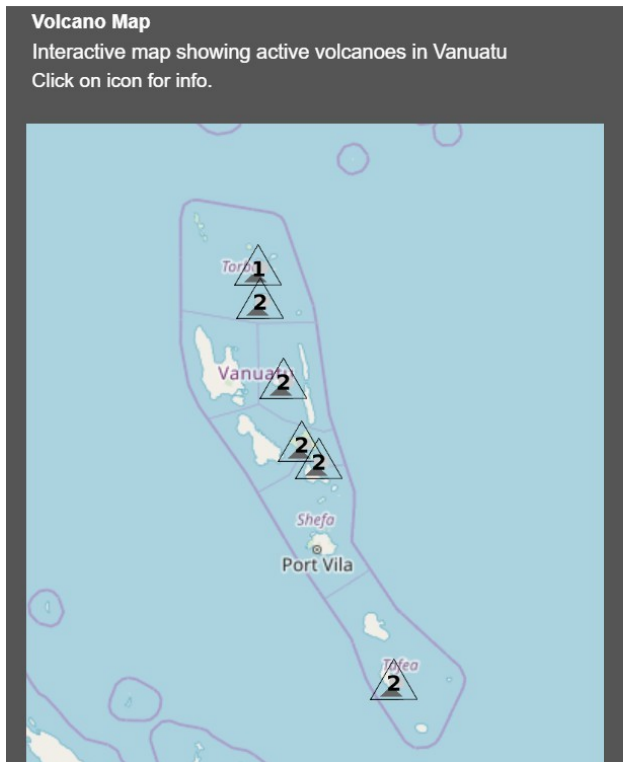
Vanuatu Meteorology & Geo-Hazards Department: +678.24.686, [www.vmgd.gov.vu](http://www.vmgd.gov.vu).

Vanuatu volcanic activity here: [www.vmgd.gov.vu/vmgd/index.php/geohazards/volcano/](http://www.vmgd.gov.vu/vmgd/index.php/geohazards/volcano/)

Here is an example of a volcano alert posted on that page:

AMBAAE VOLCANO ALERT BULLETIN No7 issued by the Vanuatu Meteorology and Geohazards Department on 25th July 2019 at 9:07 AM:


*Ambae volcano is continuing in the major unrest state. The Volcanic Alert Level remains at Level 2. Imminent eruption could occur in such major unrest state. The Danger Zone at the caldera remains at 2 km radius from the active vent. An additional Danger Zone is located within the area of flowing creeks during heavy rain.*



**Volcanic Alert Level Summary**

Table showing the latest **Volcanic Alert Level** **1** . The most active volcanoes are shown first. **Volcanic Alert Bulletins** **1** are issued whenever there is a significant change in volcanic activity in Vanuatu.

Vanuatu Volcanic Activity Summary	
Volcanoes	Current Alert Level
Benbow and Marum (Ambrym)	2
Mount Garek (Gaua)	2
Manaro Voui (Ambae)	2
Lopevi (Lopevi)	2
Yasur (Tanna)	2
Suretamatai (Vanua Lava)	1

 [Latest Volcanic Alert Bulletin](#)

### 1.3.2 General Weather Conditions

Vanuatu has a wonderful sub-tropical climate with loads of sunshine year-round. You can enjoy mild temperatures and clear blue skies for most of the year.

Summer is from November to March with average temperatures of 28°C. It can be hot, wet, and humid. These warmer months (December-April) will be the wettest with good rain in every month.

Winter is from April to September with average temperatures of 23°C and sea temperatures between 22-28°C. Southern Vanuatu sees less rain and less humidity.

The Vanuatu Meteorology and Geohazards Department publishes a monthly climate summary, which can be found here.

<https://www.vmgd.gov.vu/vmgd/index.php/climate/reports-and-summaries/vanuatu-climate-update>

### 1.3.3 Weather Sources - with Onboard Email / SSB

These files while watching the weather are useful (via the free service Saildocs). You send the request to saildocs at the address [query@saildocs.com](mailto:query@saildocs.com), with the coded request in the message body, and Saildocs will email you the response.

- Text forecasts (): send Met.10ne  
This returns the forecast from the Australian Met Office which covers the High Seas Forecast for North Eastern METAREA 10:  
NORTH EASTERN AREA: COAST AT 142E TO 0S142E TO 0S170E TO 25S170E TO COAST AT 25S
- A spot forecast for the location we were in—every 6 hours for 10 days  
send spot:07.1N,171.3E|10,6|PRMSL,WIND,WAVES,RAIN,LFTX
- A 'local' GRIB file that gave a fairly detailed forecast for a reasonably small area for about 5 days, and included sea state information  
send GFS:6N,10N,173E,165E|.5,.5|0,6..144|PRMSL,WIND,HTSGW,WVDIR,RAIN

- A 'wide range' GRIB that watched conditions approaching us. The area we request while in transit was a pretty wide area on a 3x3 grid, for the next 10 days. This is about a 25K GRIB file. This provided a decent long range forecast.

send GFS:0N,30N,160E,175W|3,3|0,12..240|PRMSL,WIND,RAIN

- During times of tropical activity, we also found these sources useful for additional perspective:

I couldn't find a subscription on Saildocs that included the tropical weather for the SW Pacific. We go to [www.tropicalstormrisk.com/](http://www.tropicalstormrisk.com/) and subscribe to their weather updates by email. As soon as something is brewing in the tropical SW Pacific, you will get an email from Tropical Storm Risk. – Soggy Paws

#### **1.3.4 Weather Sources – Voice**

A good voice source of weather for the Solomons and Vanuatu is the **Gulf Harbor Radio** SSB net, which is on 8752 kHz or 8779 kHz or 8297 kHz. (In that order, depending on interference). Broadcast is available at 0515 UTC / 17:15 NZST May 02 - 25 Nov.

Daily during passage making - otherwise weekdays only

David Sapiane (s/v Chameleon) is located in Gulf Harbor, NZ (or out cruising in the Western Pacific) and is easily receivable by boats in the western South Pacific islands, and enroute to/from NZ.

The latest info on Gulf Harbor Radio scheds and frequencies is available: [www.ghradio.co.nz](http://www.ghradio.co.nz).

The number of yachts with radios has diminished over the years so in 2022, Gulf Harbor Radio will be on air daily during passage making but will review their schedule at other times to accommodate their hobbies.

Contact GHR prior to going on passage, and see what they will be able to do for you. Make sure you have a working marine radio or a way to receive a text email. Contact: [www.ghradio.co.nz/contact.html](http://www.ghradio.co.nz/contact.html)

#### **1.3.5 Weather Sources - Internet**

Soggy Paws (and friends) have created a "[French Polynesia Weather Compendium](#)" for overall Pacific weather systems which is very useful for all cruisers. Additional resources:

**Color Satellite View of Entire SW Pacific:** <https://www.ospo.noaa.gov/products/imagery/sohemi.html>

**Bob McDavit's Weather Blog:** <https://metbob.wordpress.com/>

#### **New Zealand Met**

Current surface analysis: [www.metservice.com/maps-radar/surface-pressure/tasman-sea-new-zealand](http://www.metservice.com/maps-radar/surface-pressure/tasman-sea-new-zealand)

Surface Forecast Series (30, 48, 72H): [www.metservice.com/maps-radar/maps/southwest-pacific-low-bandwidth](http://www.metservice.com/maps-radar/maps/southwest-pacific-low-bandwidth)

These are great maps in small (PNG) format--about 16K per map. But not easily downloadable via email (appears to be no fixed product name for the graphics, unlike other offices' websites).

#### **1.3.6 Tropical Weather & Cruising During Cyclone Season**

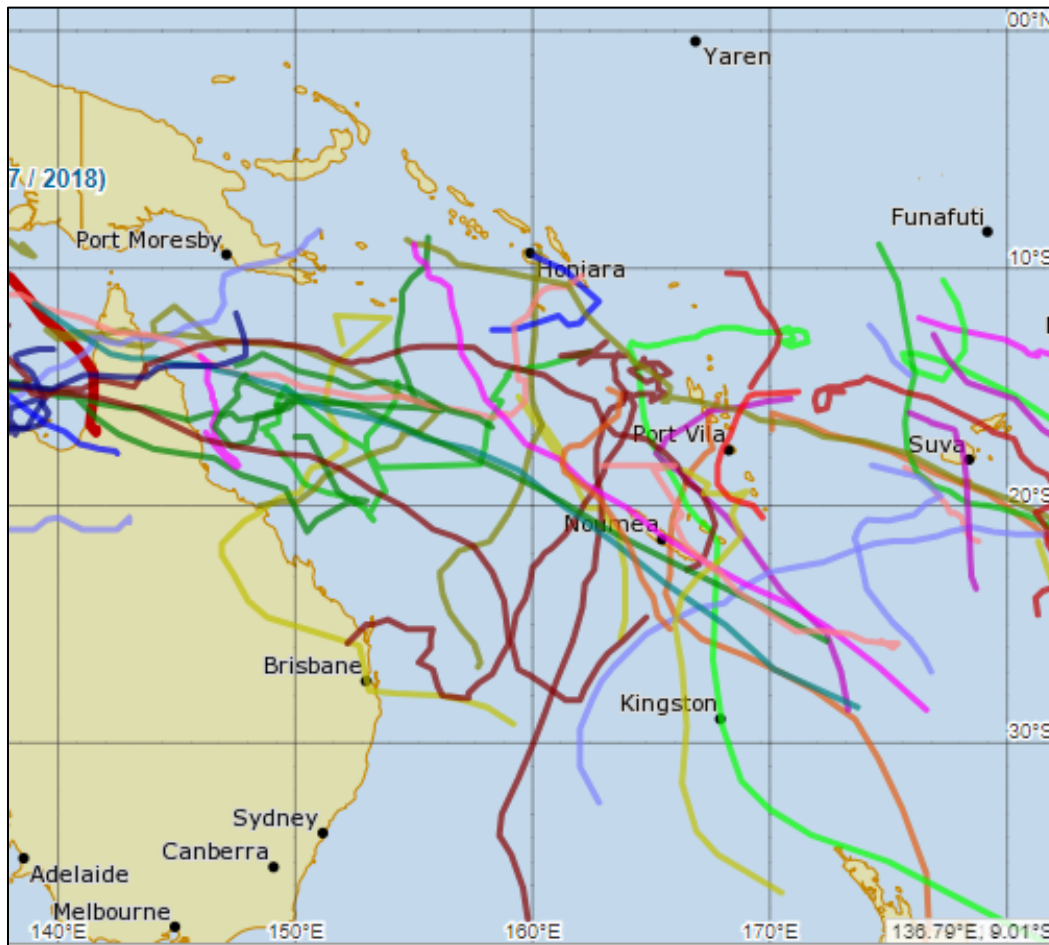
Vanuatu is covered by Australia's Met Service, with regard to tropical cyclone forecasting.

To check on individual storms, dates, etc, visit: <http://www.bom.gov.au/cyclone/tropical-cyclone-knowledge-centre/history/tracks/>

Another good source for tropical weather tracking in Vanuatu is this one:

<http://www.tropicalstormrisk.com/>

Below is a capture from the Australian tropical weather page, showing cyclone tracks from 2016-2022.



### 1.3.7 Tsunami Information

The entire Pacific Basin is subject to tsunamis. Lately, four significant tsunamis, which have affected cruising locations, have happened: American Samoa and Tonga in 2009, South America, Galapagos & Panama in 2010, Hawaii & Mexico in 2011, Tonga in 2023.

The tsunamis originate in various locations, but the worst origination locations were Japan and Chile, however, many 'tremors' happen in these locations that do not cause widespread tsunamis.

The Pacific Tsunami Warning Center website is located here: [www.tsunami.gov/](http://www.tsunami.gov/) and also check [http://itic.ioc-unesco.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=category&layout=blog&id=1153&Itemid=1153](http://itic.ioc-unesco.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&layout=blog&id=1153&Itemid=1153)

If you have onboard email, it is a good idea to subscribe to tsunami warning emails while you are in the Pacific, which you can do on the above website. It might be useful to first subscribe from your internet email for a little while, to understand what messages might be coming your way, and how often, before you chance clogging up your onboard email.

## 1.4 Customs & Immigration

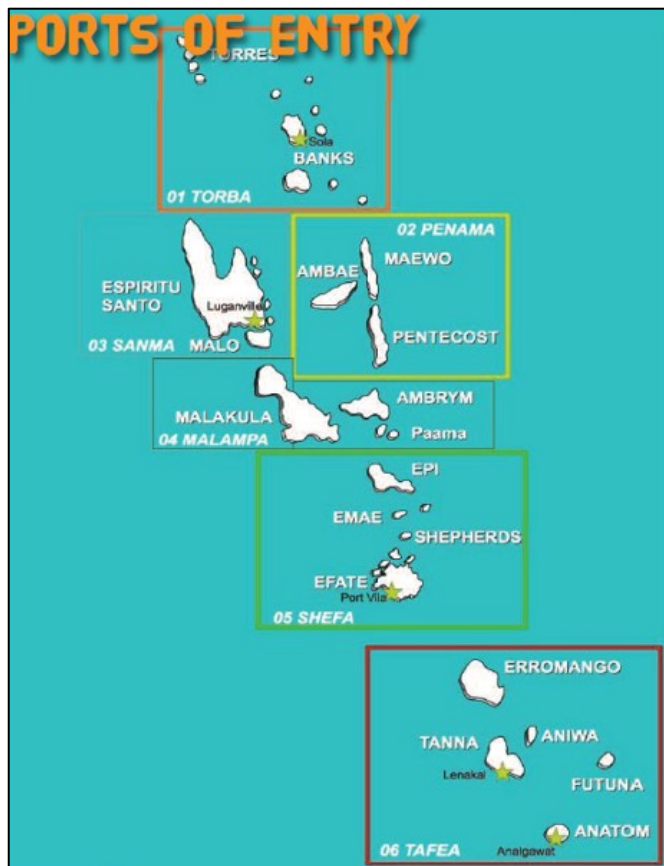
Best to double-check the respective government websites before you make landfall, to make sure you are aware of the latest government requirements.

- Vanuatu Customs Yachts & Small Crafts: <https://customsinlandrevenue.gov.vu/index.php/travellers/yacht-clearance>
- Immigration: [www.immigration.gov.vu](http://www.immigration.gov.vu) +678.22354, [visqueries@vanuatu.gov.vu](mailto:visqueries@vanuatu.gov.vu)
- Noonsite: <https://www.noonsite.com/place/vanuatu/view/clearance/#:~:text=lf%20a%20yacht%20wis hes%20to,fee%20charged%20for%20weekend%20clearance>

- Rocket Cruising Guides: <https://rocketcruisingguides.com/>
- Yachting World: [https://yachtingworld-vanuatu.com/clearance\\_yachting\\_cruising\\_world\\_vanuatu.html](https://yachtingworld-vanuatu.com/clearance_yachting_cruising_world_vanuatu.html)

### 1.4.1 Ports of Entry

- Vanua Lava Island: Port Sola
- Espiritu Santo Island: Port Luganville
- Efate Island: Port Vila
- Tanna Island: Port Lenakel
- \*\* Tanna Island: Port Resolution (only with Special Prior Arrangement)
- \*\* Mystery Island (Aneityum/Anatom) (only with Special Prior Arrangement)



Vanua Lava: **Port Sola**

Espiritu Santo: **Luganville**

Efate: **Port Vi**

Tanna: **Lenakel**

Tanna: **Port Resolution** (special prior permission)

Aneityum/Anatom: **Analgawat** (special prior permission)

#### PORT SOLA at Vanua Lava:

Port Sola has reopened as a Port of entry as of Oct. 2023. Hours: Mon-Fri: 0800-1200, 1300-1700. The official is available to issue a departure clearance certificate and all other departure clearance formalities.

However, they have limited resources at Sola and he suggested coming to Sola prepared with local currency and fuel as there are no fuel services and no services available to exchange currency.

Please note that credit cards are not accepted and clearance during non-operating hours will incur additional fees.

#### UNOFFICIAL PORTS:

The two ports listed below are not “official” ports of entry. However, you can request approval if you make special arrangements prior to arrival. They will not allow you to clear in without prior approval.

**Requesting approval:** email [CustomsBorder@vanuatu.gov.vu](mailto:CustomsBorder@vanuatu.gov.vu) to request special permission to enter Port Resolution in Tanna or Anlagawat in Aneityum. Include: your boat name, contact information, date and port you departed from, date and port of your arrival, reason why you are asking for special permission, and confirm whether or not it will coincide with the cruise ship arrival (for Aneityum only).

There will be an additional fee to cover the costs to bring the officials to these ports which must be accepted before permission is granted.

Once accepted, an official written letter of approval from Port Vila will be emailed to you prior to your arrival that you must present to the officials at check-in.

- Tanna Island: Port Resolution
  - In June 2024, the fee was 3,000 VT for Customs & Biosecurity roundtrip and Immigration was 3,000 VT for his round trip. It is split between all of the boats clearing in that day.
- Mystery Island (Aneityum/Anatom)
  - If you arrive when no cruise ship is in port, you will be responsible for flying all 3 officials in/out of Aneityum, covering their transportation, housing, and food while they are there for a week (flights are once a week). There are no fees incurred if a cruise ship is in port.
  - Cruise ship schedule: <https://cruisedig.com/ports/mystery-island-vanuatu>
  - Or here: [www.cruisetimetables.com/mystery-island-vanuatu-cruise-ship-schedule.html](http://www.cruisetimetables.com/mystery-island-vanuatu-cruise-ship-schedule.html)

#### **IMPORTANT:**

Vessels may not call at Mystery Island (Aneityum) or Port Resolution (Tanna) or any other place in Vanuatu, prior to entering one of the ports nominated above for customs clearance, unless prior written permission is granted by the Director of Customs & Inland Revenue.

The Master of vessels who visits these places prior to obtaining customs clearance, being issued with an “Inter-island Cruising Permit”, or obtaining written permission may be subject to fines and/or prosecution.

It is an offense to come ashore in Vanuatu unless having undergone customs clearance procedures on arrival.

**June 2024:** A solo sailor entered Port Resolution without prior approval and was fined 15,000VT. Please follow the very easy and clear procedures when entering the country for the first time. – Sugar Shack

#### **1.4.2 Clearance Procedure**

See individual Port of Entry locations for formalities specific to that port.

1. You must provide a minimum of 24 hours advance notice of arrival with the following information to Customs: [CustomsBorder@Vanuatu.gov.vu](mailto:CustomsBorder@Vanuatu.gov.vu).
  - the name of the vessel; and
  - the voyage (last 3 ports); and
  - the estimated date and time of arrival in Vanuatu; and
  - the appointed port or other place where the craft will land or berth; and
  - the name of the master or skipper of the vessel; and
  - the name and contact details of the person providing the information; and
  - the names of passengers on board; and
  - list of goods to be landed (if any)
  - Photo of your boat.

Submittal Forms can be found: <https://customsinlandrevenue.gov.vu/index.php/customs/forms-2>

Along with the above information, you must submit the following:

- Inward Report
- Vessel Arrival Declaration
- Maritime Declaration of Health
- Passenger Arrival Card (one per person)

- Inter-Island Cruising Permit Application
2. You need to print out all of the above forms and bring them with you at check in (they will take them).
  3. Fly the Yellow Quarantine Flag as soon as you enter Vanuatu waters (at least 200nm out)
  4. Call on VHF 16 (if entering at Port Vila and Lenakel) to arrange for clearance
  5. You'll need to visit Customs, Immigration, and Biosecurity authorities in the port of entry
    - a. Officials have the right to visit the yacht for inspection and will expect a dinghy ride to the boat

#### **1.4.2.1 Fees:**

June 2024 fees listed below during standard business hours at approved ports of entry:

- Customs: 5000vt.
- Immigration: 4800vt (extensions over 30-days 6000vt/pp)
- Biosecurity: 5000vt
- Transport Fees: 3000VT (when applicable)
- Port Fees: 7875vt for 30-days (and 100vt per day thereafter) Paid at Ports & Harbour Office

#### **1.4.2.2 Clearing in at Port of Analgawat, Aneityum**

After you receive special permission to clear into Aneityum, be sure to check the cruise ship schedule at [Cruise Time Tables](#) so you can time the official visit accordingly.

Officials may ask you to hold all rubbish onboard until you can properly dispose of it in Port Vila.

You will receive a cruising permit for the southern Vanuatu islands (Aneityum, Tanna, and Erromango) and will be required to go to Port Vila to turn it in (a sealed envelope) and get a new cruising permit for the middle islands (Efate to Santo). If you wish to continue cruising north of Santo, then you will need to stop in Luganville, Santo to get a new permit for the northern island.

#### **1.4.2.3 Official's Operating Hours**

All attempts will be made to board vessels arriving from overseas as soon as possible after their actual arrival. Outwards clearance may be obtained within 24 hours prior to the actual departure. Customs normal operating hours are listed below.

Monday-Friday: 0730-1200 and 1300-1630. Except Sola

Sola Operating Hours: Mon-Fri 0800-1200 & 1300-1700.

Any attendances by customs outside these hours for either arriving or departing vessels will be subject to overtime attendance fees. The charges for these are as follows:

Monday – Friday:

0600-0730 and 1630-1800                      VT1000 per hour per officer with a 3-hour minimum payable

1800-0600    VT1500 per hour per officer with a 3-hour minimum.

Saturdays, Sundays, and [Public Holidays](#): VT2000 per hour per officer with a 3-hour minimum.

#### **1.4.3 International Clearance**

All yachts leaving Vanuatu for a foreign port or place are required to obtain an outward clearance from Customs at the final port of departure (i.e. Lenakel, Port Vila, Luganville, or Sola).

Unless approved by the Director, a vessel having granted a certificate of clearance must depart for overseas within 24 hours of its issue and must not go to any other place in Vanuatu.

Vessel wishing to obtain a certificate of clearance at places other than Lenakel, Port Vila, Luganville, or Sola should obtain permission from Customs and Immigration in advance. If such a request is granted, vessel may be required to pay for the official(s) to travel.

Alternatively, certificate of clearance from undeclared places can be issued from the last declared port in Vanuatu, provided that a request is made via email or a note to Customs at least 24hrs prior to departure from the declared port. Once the approval is granted, the certificate of clearance will be issued with the ETD from the undeclared location. Port dues will be calculated and paid up to the ETD from Vanuatu.

Interactive Outward Reporting forms are available on the Customs website under Forms. To facilitate clearance, filled out forms can be emailed to the address provided on the form prior to departure.

A "Certificate of Clearance" issued by Immigration must also be obtained prior to departure.

#### **1.4.4 Customs**

The Customs website is +678.33010, <https://customsinlandrevenue.gov.vu/>, and email is [CustomsBorder@Vanuatu.gov.vu](mailto:CustomsBorder@Vanuatu.gov.vu). Operating hours Mon-Fri: 0800-1200 & 1300-1700.

**Port Vila Customs:** The Customs Seaport Border and Enforcement Office and Immigration Seaport Border Office are both located by the cruise ship wharf, about a 7-8-minute dinghy ride from the anchorage. Hours: Mon-Fri: 0800-1200 and 1300-1700. Officers are very friendly and helpful. Customs Agents: Kevin Joshua +678.775.8797 or Marcel Tokone +678.775.8581

Note: The Offices for Customs (Inland Revenue) and Immigration (passports) in town do not handle sea border clearances. So, use the offices near the wharf. It is a short dinghy ride.

**Luganville, Santo:** Customs office is located in the cruise ship terminal, next to the cargo dock (15°30.808S / 167°11.40E). From the street, there is a large white sign that says "Republic of Vanuatu" turn here. If you are downtown Luganville, facing the water, turn left and leave town. Just past the roundabout you will see a two-story building. Go upstairs to Customs first. They will then have you go to Port Office to pay your port fees (even if you are not clearing out of the country). Be sure to get a receipt!

Note: Do not go to the cruise ship customs as they cannot help yachties. The cruise ship location is in the same general area at (15°30.887S / 167°11.25E).

#### **SIMA Fees:**

Solomon Islands Government implemented new levies on ALL foreign vessels entering and staying in SI. You can find details at <https://www.sima.gov.sb/fees-charges-levies-new/>

These fees are all in US Dollars and are per meter, per week.

- Marine Levy for ALL foreign boats: \$37.36 USD per meter, per week the vessel is in SI
- Pollution Levy for ALL foreign boats: \$ 3.22 USD per meter, per week the vessel is in SI
- Maritime Development Levy, ALL foreign boats: \$ 3.22 USD per meter, per week the vessel is in SI

The SIMA representative stated that it does not matter if the boat is a recreational or commercial vessel. The new levies apply to ALL foreign vessels.

As you can imagine these fees can add up really fast. The cost ends up being \$43.80 USD per meter per week. So, you have a 14m vessel and you are looking at \$613.20 USD per week which is unprecedented!

**Aug. 2024:** It has been said that boats that check into ports other than Honiara, have not been asked to pay the above levies. Only boats clearing into Honiara have been asked to go pay the levies at the SIMA office. However, the SIMA office stated that they are just now rolling out these fees and not all of the outer officers are up to speed, but they will be soon.

If you want to contact SIMA to dispute these fees, contact [mrcc@solomon.com.sb](mailto:mrcc@solomon.com.sb) or +677.21609, +677.21535 ext 217.

I emailed with both Customs and SIMA about these fees and SIMA would not budge. 8 boats planning to head to Solomon Islands within 3 weeks have all changed their plans due to these fees, including Sugar Shack. It is such a shame. Hopefully they will come to their senses and realize that this should just be for commercial vessels and not recreational boats. – Sugar Shack

### **1.4.5 Immigration**

[www.immigration.gov.vu](http://www.immigration.gov.vu) and contact: +678.22354, [visqueries@vanuatu.gov.vu](mailto:visqueries@vanuatu.gov.vu)

Immigration Officers if you need specific assistance

Graziella Thavo [gthavo@vanuatu.gov.vu](mailto:gthavo@vanuatu.gov.vu)

Tokone Marcel [tmarcel@vanuatu.gov.vu](mailto:tmarcel@vanuatu.gov.vu)

Passports must have at least 6 months validity beyond your intended period of stay. All crew passports must be presented at check-in.

This visa has a duration of **30-120 days** and requires that you live on your boat and are prohibited from working in the country. An entry tax will have to be paid to formalize your entry into Vanuatu.

**Visa extensions are NOT being offered beyond the 120 days (as of 8/2024). If you want to stay beyond the 120 days you have to fly out and back. Once you leave, the clock stops on your 120 days. Once you return the clock starts over and you are granted another 120 days.**

**June 2024:** Immigration automatically gave us 120 days on our American Passports upon entry. – Sugar Shack

#### **1.4.5.1 Fees**

June 2024 fees listed below during standard business hours at approved ports of entry:

- 5,000VT for Customs
- 4,800VT for immigration
- 5,000VT for Biosecurity

Vanuatu will accept foreign currency (AUD, NZD, USD and Fiji \$) upon entry but will charge exchange rates above the bank and daily exchange rate fee.

If you wish to stay longer, you must submit your visa extension request at least 4 weeks in advance in any port of entry except Sola in Vanua Lava.

The maximum length of stay is 4 months, with the possibility of extending to one year on request and with payment.

If a crew member is to disembark in Vanuatu, the skipper, who is responsible for his crew, will have to present the return air ticket to his home country immediately.

### **1.4.6 Biosecurity**

#### **1.4.6.1 Allowance of Alcohol, Tobacco**

These allowances are being granted per person and applicable only for persons aged over 18 years;

- 250 cigarettes or 50 cigars, or 250 grams of tobacco
- 2 litres of wine, and
- 2 litres of spirits, and
- 9 litres of beer, and
- 250ml of eau de toilette and 100ml of perfume

#### **1.4.6.2 Prohibited Goods**

The laws of Vanuatu prohibit the importation of narcotics, obscene publications and materials (books, magazines, DVDs, computer stored images and videos, and video cassettes), and certain firearms such as automatic weapons. These have severe penalties for any breach of these prohibitions.

#### **1.4.6.3 Arms and Ammunition**

On arrival, all arms and ammunition must be declared and surrendered to Customs for safe keeping.

Customs may allow the firearms and ammunition to be stored onboard if they feel that they can be safely secured, under seal on the boat. In cases where no suitable secure sealing arrangements exist, the goods will be detained by Customs throughout the vessel stay in Vanuatu. At least 48 hours' notice of intended departure from the final port of clearance must be given in such cases.

#### **1.4.6.4 Quarantine**

Live animals, reptiles, birds of any description, fresh meat, fruit or vegetables imported by yachts must not be taken ashore. Additionally, some restriction on whether such goods will be permitted to remain on board after the arrival at a Customs port may be enforced by officers of Bio-security. No foreign garbage may be landed in Vanuatu without permission from Bio-security.

#### **1.4.6.5 Duty Free Fuel and Stores**

Duty-free goods may be shipped on board any vessel which has cleared outwards, or which is about to clear outward for a foreign port or place.

Duty free fuel may also be purchased at Yachting World, Port Vila on for the outwards leg of the voyage after customs clearance for overseas has been granted. Full details of the duty-free schemes available may be obtained from the nearest Customs office.

**June 2024:** If you clear out of Luganville, it is possible to do some duty-free shopping in the duty-free shop. You must bring your clearance paperwork and you will need a special form from customs. You will only be allowed to pick up your goods on the day of departure.

It was quite a process as we weren't anchored in town, but in Palekula (a much calmer bay and easy access to town). They do not drop off the duty-free shopping there. So, we had to take the big boat to Luganville, ask permission from the port captain to moor on the dock for 10-minutes to pick up our packages at the custom office. – Eastern Stream

#### **1.4.7 Inter-Island Cruising Permit**

Vessels wishing to visit multiple islands in Vanuatu must apply for an "inter-island cruising permit" which is valid for up to 6 months. A copy of the cruising permit is held by the master who absolves the vessel from reporting to customs until the next set of islands, or for application to extend the permit.

The permit will be in a sealed envelope, with stamps over the flap, so be sure to ask for a copy (which they will rarely give you).

It is recommended that you list "All Vanuatu Islands" under the section that asks you which islands you want to visit. This will give you freedom to move about as you please.

**Multiple Cruising Permits:** Officials issue cruising permits by region. If you travel between regions, you will need to stop in Customs to get an updated cruising permit.

- Anatom/Aneityum, Tanna, and Erromango
  - If you sail beyond Erromango, you need to stop in Port Vila, Efate to get an updated permit.
- Islands between Efate and Santo (Pentecost, Maewo, Ambrym, Aoba, etc...)
  - If you sail NW of Santo, you need to stop in Luganville to get an updated permit.
- Islands NW of Santo (The Banks, Torres Islands, etc...)
  - You turn in your cruising permit when you check out

Once you give your sealed envelope to Customs, they will give you another Inter-Island Cruiser Permit application to complete and you turn that in on the day you want to leave. This new permit will be again sealed in a stamped envelope and given to you.

Note: You turn in your new Inter-Island application when you are ready to leave the region (they'll ask you to leave immediately). They request 24hours to do the permit, but usually they can do it same day

### **1.4.8 Yacht Length of Stay**

Visiting yachts entering Vanuatu under their own power on a voyage from a foreign port or place may enter and remain temporarily in Vanuatu without payment of duty for a period not exceeding 18 months in any period of 24 months save for reason of circumstance (including a change of residence) accepted by the Director of Customs.

Customs will issue an initial 6 months period. Vessels may seek permission to remain in Vanuatu for more than 6 months. The person responsible for such vessel is required see Customs prior to the lapse of the 6-month period to extend its stay in Vanuatu.

The subject vessel must be intended for personal use only. It shall not be used for any commercial purpose in Vanuatu and must not be sold, lent, hired, pledged or otherwise disposed of in Vanuatu.

#### **1.4.8.1 Yachts Liable to Pay Duty**

A yacht will become liable to duty if:

- a) it is disposed of in Vanuatu for financial consideration or not; or
- b) it is put to commercial use whilst in Vanuatu; or
- c) it remains in Vanuatu for a period or periods exceeding six (6) months in any period of two (2) years, unless an application is made to Customs for an extension as per paragraph above; or
- d) it is imported by a resident of Vanuatu or a person taking up residence in Vanuatu after the 6 months concession period of obtaining residency permit as outlined in section 2(3) of schedule 3 of the Import Duties (Amendment) Act.

### **1.4.9 Departure Formalities**

**July 2024:** Port Vila: The Customs Seaport Border and Enforcement Office and Immigration Seaport Border Office are both located by the cruise ship wharf. Hours: Mon-Fri: 0800-1200 and 1300-1700. Officers are very friendly and helpful. Customs Agents: Kevin Joshua +678.775.8797 or Marcel Tokone +678.775.8581

Note: The Offices for Customs (Inland Revenue) and Immigration (passports) in town do not handle sea border clearances. So, use the offices near the wharf.

Anatom/Mystery Island has NO departure formalities available, even when a cruise ship is in port. – Moana

#### **1.4.9.1 Port Fees Upon Departure**

**Aug. 2024:** We visited Customs in Luganville to get our updated Cruising Permit (so we could sail from Luganville, Santo to Sola, Vanua Lava) and they asked us to pay our port fees, even though we were not clearing out of the country. Luckily, I had enough money to cover it. We estimated our departure date and I paid up to that point.

7,000vt for the first month, then 100vt per day for every day thereafter. We were here for an additional 2 months (total of 3 months). The additional fee was 6,100vt plus we paid 7vt per ton (we are 11tons). Our total for a 3-month stay was 15,555vt. They provided a paid receipt which showed customs in Sola. – Sugar Shack

**July 2024:** The only cost is the checkout fee which is variable and dependent on the vessel's length of stay. Fees are payable at customs. We paid 8,000vt plus 110vt tax for our 2 months stay. – Moana

**July 2024:** Every vessel will be responsible for paying daily port fees upon their departure. So, if you plan to depart out of Sola be sure you have enough Vatu to cover your port fees as there are NO ATMs in Sola. Port fees for the first 30-days are 7,875VT and then it is 100VT per day after the first 30-days. – Sugar Shack

## 1.5 Navigating Around Coral

**May 2018:** Though we found both the CMAP (CM93 v2) and Garmin charts to be fairly accurate, your ability to explore coral-laced atolls is greatly enhanced by acquiring high-resolution satellite images.

### 1.5.1 KAPS and mbtiles (used by charting programs like OpenCPN)

There are a number of sources of satellite charting/imagery.

- [Migration's Charts](#) Pacific Mexico, French Poly, Pitcairn Island, Easter Island mbtiles 2020
- [Zen Again's Charts](#) Pacific Ocean, SE Asia, Crossing to S Africa, S Atlantic, Brazil
- [Soggy Paws' Charts](#) Pacific Ocean, SE Asia, Red Sea
- [Jacaranda's Charts](#) French Polynesia
- [Valhalla's Charts](#) SE Asia and Western Pacific
- [Ocelot's Charts](#) SE Asia, Western Pacific, and Indian Ocean

**Make Your Own:** You can make your own, look for the Sat2Chart program here: <http://gdayii.ca>

There is a Facebook Group called GE2Kap that provides support for Sat2Chart (formerly GE2KAP).

OpenCPN is a free fully functional navigation program, downloadable from <http://opencpn.org> It runs on Windows 7-11, many flavors of Linux and Raspberry Pi, and Apple Macs (but not iDevices).

### 1.5.2 Anchoring in Coral

Please remember, we are guests visiting this country, islands, and backyards of the lovely locals. We must take responsibility to protect the lagoons and bays.

Often lagoons are not clear and many times you are anchoring without knowing if there is coral on the bottom. The use of a fish finder can be helpful to locate clear spots on the bottom in murky situations. You can purchase a cheap one with the transducer stuck to the inside of the hull with silicon.

Each year, cruising boats get into trouble at anchor: They get trapped on lee shores after a shift in the wind direction and/or foul their anchor and/or chain in coral. The results are stressful maneuvers to get the anchor back up, bent bow rollers, and ruined or even ripped out windlass. Of course, the fragile coral structures get badly damaged with each of these messed up maneuvers as well.

It is **easy to avoid damage** to the coral and your boat if you:

- Anchor in conditions with **good visibility** (don't drop your anchor blindly)
- Try to find a **big, sandy spot** to drop your hook
- Anchor in **shallow** water...
  - ...where you can see the bottom clearly
  - ...usually fewer coral heads grow on sandy shelves, and
  - ...you only need a short chain.
- **Float the chain** so that the boat can swing around in shifting winds without getting the chain caught in coral heads
- Keep an eye on the **weather forecast** and move to a safe anchorage before the wind shifts

There are many ways to float your chain. Some people set their chain first, then pull back on it to ensure it is set properly. Once set, they will slowly pull up the chain to install the floats and then pull back again. Another way is listed below.

**Floating the chain is a simple procedure.** You just need:

- (3) or more medium-sized fenders or buoys
- (3) or more carabiners that fit into your chain

1. Drop the anchor in the middle of the biggest sandy spot you can find,
2. Pay out chain while reversing gently,
3. Look around at the surrounding coral heads and estimate your swinging radius,
4. Hook in the first fender/buoy before the chain could touch any of the coral heads,
5. Pay out some more chain and set the anchor gently pulling in reverse,
6. If the scope is still not sufficient, additional floats can be added followed by more chain.

**The general rule:**

The first float should be inserted at double the depth. If you drop the hook in 5 meters, put the first float on at 10 meters. Then add another float every 7-15 meters. If you have small floats/fenders, then add them every 7-10 meters. If you have a larger float/fender, then add them every 12-15 meters. The goal is to keep the chain off the surrounding coral heads. For more information, visit <https://www.pitufa.at/2017/05/anchoring-around-coral>.

If your chain does get wrapped...

If you are in a storm situation, it is critical to maintain some free chain. Boats have successfully weathered bad storm situations by going to a really long really strong snubber and/or letting out more chain as their chain gets wrapped (having a spare buoy rigged for this would make a lot of sense).

In some deep anchorages inside the lagoon, it can be difficult to see the bottom snorkeling, and therefore difficult to see what's going on when your chain seems stuck. It is USUALLY possible to unstuck your chain without diving on it—patience and calm weather are helpful. A snorkeler in the water can be helpful. But this is a time where having a dive tank can be a big help.

**Another very useful resource about Floating Your Chain can be found here:**

<https://www.jacarandajourney.com/floatingyourchain>

**1.6 Getting Visitors In and Out**

Efate: Port Vila is where the international airport is located and the easiest place to change crew. The airport is not far from the anchorage and you can catch a taxi or the bus.

Another option is Espiritu Santo: Luganville. There are regular flights and ferries between Port Vila and Luganville.

The Rocket Guide lists 29 smaller airports throughout Vanuatu; most smaller airports only serviced by Vanuatu Air. Be aware that the luggage allowance for these planes is only 10kg.

Between May and Aug. 2024, Vanuatu Air is bankrupt and has very limited flights. If you need to fly between the islands try a private airline service:

- Air Taxi which can be hired, +678.554.4206, [www.airtaxivanuatu.com](http://www.airtaxivanuatu.com)
- Unity Air, +678.24475, [www.unity-airlines.com/charters.html](http://www.unity-airlines.com/charters.html)

It is easiest if your crew purchases a round trip ticket with the ability to cancel one portion as opposed to having them fly in on a one-way ticket. However, if they cannot do that then be sure to visit the immigration site that clearly outlines the procedure for one-way ticket entries:

<https://immigration.gov.vu/index.php/border-control-unit/entry-departure-requirements>

A letter from the ship's captain including: (crew's personal details: name, nationality, passport bio page, arriving date, flight details), Captain's details (same as crew), ship details (arrival & departure date & port), along with boat registration. it would probably be helpful to include copies of the ship's clearance paperwork.

## 1.7 Yachtsmen Services – Overview

### 1.7.1 Cooking Gas (Propane & Butane)

You can get your cooking gas refilled at Port Vila, Efate, Port Resolution, Tanna, and Luganville, Santo. Most services will NOT fill fiberglass propane bottles so come prepared to gravity fill or purchase a new tank. See individual island sections for specific locations and contact information.

### 1.7.2 Fuel (Diesel & Gasoline)

Efate Island, Port Vila has the only fuel dock in Vanuatu at the [Yachting World](#) (Paray Bay). Hours: Mon-Fri: 0800-1600, Sat: 0800-1200. Yachting World only sells diesel and drinking water. However, you can buy oil, grease, and gasoline at the service station across the road.

Depth at the Yachting World Fuel dock is 2.3m depth alongside at the lowest tide and 4m at high tide. Yachts with masts exceeding 19m in height must enter the inner harbor via the southern channel. See Port Vila fuel for more details on the dock. The fuel dock is about 2 meters wide so plan your fenders accordingly.

Espiritu Santo Island: Luganville has diesel that can be purchased by jerry cans.

Sola does have fuel but it is for locals and they respectfully ask all yachts to refuel prior to arriving in Sola as there is always a shortage of fuel.

**DUTY FREE FUEL:** You can secure a special permit to purchase duty free diesel fuel (22% discount off the regular price) upon departure. This will greatly reduce the price of each liter of diesel fuel. This is only available at Yachting World.

Full price must be paid for gasoline at all times and locations.

It is unlikely that you will find fuel for sale outside of Port Vila (Efate) and Luganville (Santo). If you do locate fuel at a remote island it will be very expensive and the locals will be hesitant to sell it to you as it depletes their resources.

**Gasoline / Benzine:** You can refill jerry cans at Port Vila, Efate, Port Resolution, Tanna, and Luganville, Santo. Some taxi cabs will charge extra to transport jerry cans (due to potential spillage and smell).

### 1.7.3 Trash and Recycling

There is no trash disposal in the outer islands. Please bring your trash to either Efate or Santo to dispose of properly.

Vanuatu Municipality sells colored bags in the market. If you purchase these bags you can put your rubbish inside and leave them at designated trash stands on the street. However, you need the specific color bag for the island you are at.

Each island has a different color (yellow in Efate, red in Santo, orange in Tanna). Please respect their process and use the correct colored bag at each island.

#### Efate Island

**April 2024:** In the shops you can purchase special yellow garbage bags and leave them on the side of the road (where there are other yellow garbage bags (ask the locals if there are none on the road). It is an easy way to get rid of your garbage. – Eastern Stream

Port Vila at the Yachting World Fuel Doc offers trash disposal for free to yachts using their moorings. If you are not using their moorings, the fee is \$500VT per bag.

#### Santo Island

There is a rather large dump outside of Luganville. You can ask a taxi driver to take you to the dump to discard your rubbish. We brought 5 bags of trash and paid 1,000vt. They burn the rubbish and there is no recycling (except for Tusker bottles).

Beachfront Resort (300vt/bag) and Turtle Bay Resort (1,000vt/bag) will take your trash and dispose of it.

#### **1.7.4 Water**

Efate Island – Port Vila the Yachting World Fuel Doc offers water for free to yachts using their moorings. If you are not using their moorings, the fee is 1000VT for water

### **1.8 General Services – Overview**

#### **1.8.1 Banks & ATMs**

See section “[Currency](#)” for exchange rate.

There are not many banks or ATMs in Vanuatu. You can find banks/ATMs in Lenakel, Tanna, Port Vila, Efate, and Luganville, Santo. Most ATMs will have a small limit per day (40,000VT), so be sure to get enough cash to last you throughout your stay.

Credit cards are not widely accepted in the outer islands. You can use them at resorts and retailers in Port Vila and Luganville. Most merchants will add an additional 3-5% surcharge on credit card purchases.

**July 2025:** If sailing to Vanuatu from Fiji and departing from Port Denarau, you can obtain Vatu in person from No 1 Currency at the Nadi International Airport (departures level). No documentation required, other than your passport, and no advance notice required. Get 100,000 Vatu (or more) in just minutes. Easier than GCC Exchange or Lotus Foreign Exchange in Nadi town, who both insisted on impossible documentation requirements and many days advance notice required for them to either obtain Vatu or obtain permission for them to sell it to us. - SV Turtlebones

**April. 2024:** You can acquire Vatu in Nadi, Fiji at GCC Exchange. +679.932.7700, [gccfiji@gccexchange.com](mailto:gccfiji@gccexchange.com). Hours: Mon. 0900-1730, Tues-Fri: 0800-1730, Sat: 0800-1500. –Sugar Shack

**Vatu in NZ:** You can obtain Vatu in Whangarei at [TravelEx](#) or online from [No1Currency Exchange](#) (they also have an office in Auckland).

Bring more Vatu than you think you need. Formalities are 20,000VT, Volcano tour 11,000VT/pp, trip to Lenakel 3,000VT/pp, Land diving 12,000VT, festivals run 15,000-27,000/pp (as of 5/2024). – Sugar Shack

#### **1.8.2 Boat Parts and Repairs**

Efate Island: Port Vila has boat builders, marine shops, and other repair facilities.

**Yachting World Port Vila Boatyard** +678.23 417, +678.34.579, <https://port-vila-boatyard.business.site/> Hours: Sun-Fri: 0800-1700

Full service marine repair and hardstand storage center. Cyclone moorings, marine chandlery. Services: repair, cleaning, anti-fouling, glassing, joinery, welding. Sub-contractors: engine repairs

Best Marine Engineer is JT or John Turner available on: +678 7101766

**2018:** Getting work done: Port Vila offers good services for yachts. Port Vila Boatyard has haul out facilities, marine electricians and mechanics, and cyclone certified moorings. Many spare parts can be found in Port Vila and Luganville or can easily be ordered and flown in from Australia, NZ, or USA and brought in Duty and VAT free for visiting yachts. – Noonsite

**Jan. 2017:** Cruising the whole of Vanuatu, one can safely say there are more mechanical spare parts available in Luganville than Port Vila. – Bold Spirit

#### **1.8.3 Haul Out, Storage, Repair Facilities**

Efate Island: Port Vila has boat builders, marine shops and other repair facilities.

**Port Vila Boatyard** +678.23 417, +678.34.579, <https://port-vila-boatyard.business.site/> Hours: Sun-Fri: 0800-1700

Full service marine repair and hardstand storage center. Cyclone moorings, marine chandlery. Services: repair, cleaning, anti-fouling, glassing, joinery, welding. Sub-contractors: engine repairs

#### **1.8.4 Yachting World Marina**

Yachting World Vanuatu Facilities +678.23273, Hours: Mon-Fri: 0830-1600, Sat.: 0830-1200, (<https://yachtingworld-vanuatu.com/port-vila-marina-facilities.html>). Services offered to customs:

- Sea Wall Marina
- Swing Moorings
- Diesel Fuel Wharf
- Water
- Dinghy Dock
- Bar and Restaurant
- Laundry
- Yacht Mail
- Internet / Wifi
- Showers and bathrooms
- Serviced Apartments

#### **1.8.5 Medical & Health**

There are 5 public hospitals, 1 private hospital, and 27 health centers located across the islands.

The 2 main hospitals are in Port Vila, Efate and Luganville, Espiritu Santo. There is a medical center on Santo and Malekula.

If you go to the hospital be prepared to pay 11,000VT which they charge all tourists for a consultation.

The pharmacist will sell you prescription medications (antibiotics, etc...) but if there is a medication that you need that they do not carry, they will require you to see a doctor.

Keep in mind that resources are very limited and can be expensive. Immediate cash payments are required.

Protect yourself from mosquito bites as malaria and dengue fever are prevalent in Vanuatu.

Wash all vegetables prior to consuming.

Talk to the locals about which fish are safe to eat. Avoid all reef fish as there is a high risk of ciguatera.

##### **1.8.5.1 Malaria and Other Health Issues**

Malaria is still present in Vanuatu especially in the northern islands. It is also considered a high risk on Efate where locally transmitted cases have been reported in the capital of Port Vila. In 2022, Vanuatu declared an outbreak in four different islands across four different provinces.

Malaria is a serious problem in Vanuatu - and it is only one of several diseases you can get from mosquito bites. The further north you go, the worse the risk of malaria. There have been cases of malaria that originated in Efate and in Port Vila, but these probably came from carriers of the disease from more northerly islands.

Malaria is deadly and depending on when and where the symptoms start you can be in very big trouble very quickly. In addition to Malaria, mosquitoes in all the islands of Vanuatu can infect you with one of several varieties of blood virus commonly called dengue fever.

Of the two major mosquito borne diseases malaria is by far the most dangerous but dengue fever also kills people and is much more common - and therefore a greater risk. Dengue fever is carried by "domestic" mosquitos that thrive near villages. They bite during the day, but are more likely to attack during dusk & dawn.

We had a friend who took one of those prescription anti-malaria prophylactics for two weeks. She wound up in the hospital in Sydney with her face swollen to twice it's normal size and serious problems with her liver. These

drugs can have serious side effects and many of the drugs that used to be effective against malaria no longer work. Plus, none of them help with Dengue Fever. – Cruising-Vanuatu.com (Dec.2018)

### **1.8.5.2 Scratches and Infections**

**June 2024:** As with most Pacific Islands, tourists and cruisers need to be extra vigilant with new scratches and wounds. If you have an open wound, avoid the water/sea until the wound is healed. I went on a hike and had a simple scratch from a twig. I covered it with a water proof band aid for 3 days then removed it thinking I was healed. Unfortunately, it got wet when I got out of the dinghy and then got severely infected. I had to treat it with antibiotics and ended up staying out of the water for 3 weeks. Me smacking my head. – Sugar Shack

### **1.8.6 Provisions**

Port Vila, Efate Island is the best place to provision. There are several large supermarkets (Au Bon Marche), bakeries, wholesale markets, and butchers. I would say these markets are easily comparable to NZ markets! Au Bon Marche supermarket is a good value with a French influence and Australian products.

Luganville, Espiritu Santo Island has an LCM supermarket, butcher, fresh market, and bakery. But the selections are much smaller than Port Vila.

The outer islands can trade fresh fruit, vegetables, fish, and some of the islands will have small stores with basic supplies. But these supplies are for the locals so please resist buying their supplies.

### **1.8.7 Shipping Parts & Mail**

Post Office recommends that Visiting yachts have their mail delivered to Yachting World Marina. Prior to sending your package be sure to verify that Yachting World's process is the same, you can find details:

[https://yachtingworld-vanuatu.com/yacht\\_mail\\_port\\_vila\\_vanuatu.html](https://yachtingworld-vanuatu.com/yacht_mail_port_vila_vanuatu.html)

Contact customs and request your "TIN" (Temporary Import Number) which is required for duty free shipping.

There are two addresses: one is for mail and one is for parcels. Be sure to use the correct address for your shipment.

THE ADDRESS FOR **MAIL** IS:

Your Name  
(NAME OF YOUR YACHT) - Yacht in Transit  
C/O Yachting World  
PO Box 1507  
Port Vila  
Vanuatu

THE ADDRESS FOR **PACKAGES** IS:

Your Name  
(NAME OF YOUR YACHT) - Yacht in Transit  
C/O Yachting World  
Lini Hyway  
Port Vila  
Vanuatu

**Sept. 2024:** We visited DHL in Luganville (right at the fuel station) which is run by a subcontractor in Vanuatu fr8.vu (freight Vanuatu).

The local branch manager in Luganville is Claire Janso. She is very supportive and works closely with the office in Port Vila. All shipments go to Port Vila first, [fr.vu/DHL](https://fr.vu/DHL) works with customs there.

Claire's e-mail: [santo@fr8.vu](mailto:santo@fr8.vu) -phone: +678 5565675

Location of the office: <https://maps.app.goo.gl/E7WRK5VfVdRQhMW39>

We had 3 shipments which went through customs in less than 1 week. Fr8.vu made sure all 3 packages made it onto the next ferry and they were in Luganville office 36 hours later. DHL itself needed more than 1 month to get the parcels from Europe to Vanuatu, although it was sent with DHL express). – JAMS

**May 2024:** We talked to the local DHL office and they advised me to send my parcel to Yachting World, even if I want it to go somewhere else in Vanuatu. He advised that you address it to Yachting World as stated above and send via DHL. Then you email the DHL agent at [management@fr8.vu](mailto:management@fr8.vu) and alert them that you want your parcel to be redirected somewhere else after it clears customs. They will “catch” the package and will forward it interisland.

However, because Vanuatu airlines is not operating now, the parcel will go by ship which could take a while (as it is once per week and takes three days to get to Luganville (2 days transit and 1-day processing). Any other location is even more difficult. – Second Son

**Oct. 2023:** If you have to order a part from abroad and have it delivered to Vanuatu; you can ask for an import exemption at customs. You have to be a ship in transit. In Port Vila, we visited both customs and FedEx a few times to get all of the information and make arrangements.

First, write a letter explaining your situation (what you ordered, why you ordered it, why you didn't buy it in Vanuatu, and how urgent is it.). You will also need to provide a copy of your boat paperwork, and the receipt of what you ordered, with tracking number.

After the package arrives, your local agent (FedEx-DHL etc) will ask for the exemption for you. This is not done before hand.

In the end we got the exemption and only payed a handling fee of 1000 vatu to the shipping agent. With the exemption you do not pay import duties. It goes on Island time, but we got our package sent by express from China and it took two weeks.

Please verify shipping instructions on the exact procedure before ordering, as it can change. – Eastern Stream

### **1.8.8 Tourism Office**

Vanuatu Tourism has a wonderful website, <https://www.vanuatu.travel/> and they can be reached at +678.22.515 or +678.22685.

They have offices on several islands so be sure to stop in and visit them. Most Tourism offices will provide maps of the island and a schedule of events for the island and other islands.

### **1.8.9 Transportation**

Air Vanuatu, <https://www.airvanuatu.com/plan-and-book>, was struggling through bankruptcy (May-August 2024) and not flying very frequently, or at all.

There are private carriers including “Air Taxi” that can fly small groups (5-6 px) +678 554.4206 or 24420, <https://airtaxivanuatu.com> they also offer tours to Tanna to see Mt Yasur volcano and to Pentecost for Naghol Land diving.

Another airline is Unity Air, +678.24475, [www.unity-airlines.com/charters.html](http://www.unity-airlines.com/charters.html)

**June 2024:** We hired Air Taxi (<https://airtaxivanuatu.com/vanuatu-tours>) to pick us up from Port Vila Marina and fly us (2 people) to Pentecost for Naghol/Land Diving. We got a light lunch (sandwiches) and flew us over the Ambrym volcano. You pay at the airport (cash or credit card), 122,720VT plus 100VT each for airport tax and that covered the airport transfer, the flight, Naghol, light lunch). It was a wonderful experience. – Jamala

On Efate at Port Villa, the buses and taxis are pretty reliable.

**Buses:** There are two types of buses.

The “mini buses” have a red “B” in the license plate. You do not negotiate the price with the mini-bus, you just ask the driver if he is going where are you going and you pay VT150.

Regular bus, you must negotiate the price and ensure the driver is going to your location. There are no official bus stops. You just have to waive your hand at them. Half of them will stop.

**Taxis:** Will have a red “T” on the license plate and even though they will cost most money they will take you directly to where you want to go, will wait for you between stops and will help you with your packages.

**Ferry:** The Vanuatu Ferry ([www.facebook.com/VanuatuFerryLtd](https://www.facebook.com/VanuatuFerryLtd)) from, Luganville to Santo (one-way) cost 12,200 + 200 tax VT/pp. You cannot buy the tickets online or ahead of time. You can only purchase the ticket on the day of departure and there are usually long lines so get there early. The exact date/time of departure are only posted on their Facebook page.

The ferry stopped in Malekula for 4-hours where many people disembarked, got food and returned. There is seating and couches inside and seating on an outdoor deck. Most locals just put a mat on the floor. Nobody seemed to wear shoes inside.

There is a café with hot/cold drinks and sandwiches which was open during the entire trip. There is no AC inside the ferry so it does get warm. The trip was overnight.

**MV Big Sista Ferry:** MV Big Sista (Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/682480782366347>) which is a 33 meter passenger vessel operating between Port Vila and Luganville, Santo (stopping at Epi and Malekula). They leave Port Vila every Monday night and return every Thursday. Check their Facebook page for schedule and cancellations.

**MV Princess Marie:** +678.29873, +678.771.6121, +678.565.6689. MV Princess Marie stops at Ambrym (Craig’s Cove, Ranon and Nebul) and then it goes to Pentecost (Bay Homo, Waterfall Bay, Melsis, Bwatnapni, Namaram, Nambaranguit, Loltong, Abatuntora, and Loane) and it goes to Ambae (Boeboe, Lolowai, Lolopuepue, Waloriki, Nangire, Nduindui, Walaha, Redcliff, and Sako). – Sugar Shack

## **1.9 Communications**

### **1.9.1 Internet & Cell Phone Coverage**

The international dial code is +678.

#### **Starlink:**

Starlink has come to an agreement with the Vanuatu government is now allowed as of 21 Aug. 2024.

Prior to 21 Aug, many cruisers who had Starlink had received emails stating their connection would be cut off if they did not return to their originating country because Starlink was not approved for use in Vanuatu. However, service was not cut off, but it was slowed down.

#### **Local Carriers:**

There are two carriers in Vanuatu: Vodafone and Digicel. Much like other countries, one carrier works better than the other depending on your location and the time of day. If you require connectivity all the time, the suggestion is to purchase SIM cards from both carriers (they are cheap).

Tourists are given a free SIM card and 5gigs for 3 days upon entry (so be sure to ask either at the Tourism center and or at the Digicel/Vodafone center before purchasing one.)

**Vodafone:** Works well in Port Vila, but varies in the outer islands. SIM card costs about 100vt as a Visitor Pack with 10 data included. You have to purchase top up scratch off cards so be sure to purchase several as they are not readily available in the outer islands. Topping up can be tricky, best to have a local help you.

**Digicel:** Works well in Port Vila, but varies in the outer islands. SIM Card costs 500vt, call 122 to activate and you get 200mg data, 200 on-net minutes, 200 on-net SMS for 3 days. Digicel typically is less expensive in the long run and you can top up using an app or their website.

It is recommended to purchase both Vodafone (scratch off cards) and Digicel (app to top up) to receive continuous service throughout Vanuatu.

Interesting Link on both carriers on Rocket Guide: <https://cruising-vanuatu.com/mobile-internet-vanuatu.html>

**Aug.2024:** Vodafone and Digicel both offer data/cell plans. SIM cards are cheap so most people will get one from each provider. Digicel seems to have a bit better coverage, but it can be hit or miss depending on the island. For example, Vodafone does not work really well on Epi.

Vodafone rates (May 2024):

- 100GB for 90 days = 10,000VT
- 20GB for 25 days = 3,000VT
- 7GB for 25 days = 1,000VT
- 3.5GB for 7 days = 600VT
- 2.5GB for 3 days = 400VT

Digicel: We bought the 1,000vt plan that lasts for 30 days and provides 6gigs of data. I then purchased 200vt top up cards to add to my account so I could make and receive phone calls. Digicel seemed to work well for us from Anatom to the Banks Islands. We also bought enough top up cards to renew our monthly plan for 2 months. We used the top up cards and the Digicel app which was fairly easy.

To top plans: Vodafone is a scratch off card to top up. Digicel has an app and scratch off cards. Be sure to get a plan that has both data and phone/text. I made the mistake of getting a data only plan and ended up having to top up with a separate scratch off card to make calls. – Sugar Shack

### **1.9.2 VHF**

General VHF Advice that applies to all areas: Be aware that on high power, a good VHF will transmit 25 miles. So, if you are only doing within-anchorage communications, switch to low power. On the flip side, if you are trying to call across island, or to the next island, use high power, low squelch. Make sure you are aware which channels are automatic low power (i.e. 17), and stay away from the low-power channels for long distance conversations.

Though widely spaced in channel number, channels 16, 68, and 18 are very close to each other in frequency. Most VHF antennas are 'tuned' for channel 16, so long distance communications will work best on 18 or 68. Conversely, in a crowded anchorage, transmission on high power on channel 18 or 68 may 'bleed' over to 16 (and almost any other channel, if you're close enough). You don't need high power to talk to the boat next to you, so turn your radio to Low Power!

Be aware that some channels that Americans use frequently are 'duplex' channels in International mode. You may have trouble communicating with a European boat, or an American boat whose radio is in International mode, on Channel 18. (see any VHF guide for the full list of international and US channels and frequencies). Make sure you ask in each port what the local channels are--both so you know how to reach someone ashore and so you know not to use those channels for your off-channel conversations.

### **1.9.3 SSB Radio Nets**

**Vanuatu Cruisers Net: 8230mhz or 8188 at 0730 local time.** It is a voluntary net, so if it is not on, feel free to jump in and get it started.

The Vanuatu Net operates daily at 0830UTC, which is 7:30 a.m. local time in Vanuatu. Primary frequency is 8230 kHz USB and there is an alternate frequency of 8188 if needed for clearer communication. Coverage area is normally around Vanuatu but extends to New Caledonia, Solomons, and Fiji.

Check-ins are about Vanuatu but can come from any of the neighboring countries with propagation.

The purpose of the Vanuatu Net is to facilitate communication between cruisers and exchange information to get the most out of your adventure.

The Vanuatu Net is for cruisers and relies on someone starting the net at the start of May and others sharing the load through the season by volunteering to do a day or two a week. It is not difficult and we all use our radios anyway so please help out.

**Gulf Harbor Radio:** David Sapiane on s/v Chameleon (and his wife Patricia), run Gulf Harbor Radio. On at 1715 UTC on 8752 USB (alternate freq 8779 and last alternate freq 8297). They offer check-ins, weather, and news. They typically run the net between April-Nov. It is best to contact them prior to your journey to ensure they are up and running. [www.ghradio.co.nz/contact.html](http://www.ghradio.co.nz/contact.html)

**Pacific Seafarer's Net:** Time: 0300 UTC frequency 14,300 KHz, [pacseanet@gmail.com](mailto:pacseanet@gmail.com), If you're a ham, for longer passages, we always checked in with the Pacific Seafarer's Net. This is also a good frequency to have saved in case of emergency—the Hams on the PacSea net will move heaven and earth to help any boat with a true emergency—ham operator or not. Even when there is no net going on this frequency, there are often hams monitoring the frequency for emergency traffic.

They start with a 'warmup session' at 0300, where you can call in and chat, and maybe hook up with someone who will make a phone call to the US for you. The "Roll Call" (boats who have checked in regularly and indicated they are underway) starts at 0310 UTC, and when they finish (30-60 minutes later), they call for boats getting ready to go on passage to get on the Roll Call list for tomorrow's net.

It's always a good idea to listen up on a structured net for a day or so to get the rhythm of the net, before calling in. You can call in for a radio check during the warmup period, or just after the formal net ends. There are usually people on the net who will do a "phone patch" for you—just ask.

The net control is usually in Hawaii, but there are always relay stations on both sides of the Pacific to help with weaker signals.

**Northland Radio:** Northland Radio ZMH292 offers a tracking check in service for vessels underway (fee required). Northland Radio is located in the Bay of Islands, New Zealand. Peter recently installed a new large antenna and has been able to work boats throughout most of the South and Central Pacific and as far as Alaska from New Zealand. Learn more and contact Peter Mott [peter@northlandradio.nz](mailto:peter@northlandradio.nz). And [www.passageguardian.nz](http://www.passageguardian.nz).

**Emergency Frequencies:** 2182 4125 6215 8291 12290 16420

NZ Maritime Radio monitors all emergency frequencies 24/7 see below for working frequencies

tel. 0800 MARITIME, 0800 627 48463 [maritime@kordia.co.nz](mailto:maritime@kordia.co.nz)

tel . 0064 (0)4 9148333

RCC NZ tel 0064 (0) 4 577 8030 [rcc@maritimenz@govt.nz](mailto:rcc@maritimenz@govt.nz)

JRCC Honolulu Tel 001 808 535 3333 [JRCCHonolulu@uscg.mil](mailto:JRCCHonolulu@uscg.mil)

#### **NZ Maritime Radio SSB WEATHER**

UTC	UTC	FREQ	FREQ
0303*	1503*	6224	12356 *warnings only
0333*	1533*	8297	16531
0903	2103	6224	12356
1003	2203	8297	16531

NavArea XIV includes: Islands- Equator to 25S, 160E to 120W

Subtropic- 23S to 40S, Australian Coast to 120W

Pacific- 25S to 55S, 170W to 120W

NZ Wx Fax Frequencies

5807.0 9459.0 13550.0 16340.1, Subtract 1.9 for SSB RX

(and 3247.4 between 0945 and 1645UTC at the 16340 time)

#### **1.9.4 Real Time Tracking**

Passage Guardian, Peter Mott +64.21.279.4995, [www.passageguardian.nz](http://www.passageguardian.nz), [peter@passageguardian.nz](mailto:peter@passageguardian.nz)

The Passage Guardian offers free monitoring while you are under passage. It is a global (free of charge) safety service for recreational vessels conducting ocean passages. Peter Mott will track your vessel using Marine Traffic satellite AIS, with notifications, GMDSS Weather reports. If sailing single handed, alerts to traffic expected to cross your track overnight, and rescue coordination.

**June 2024:** We've used The Passage Guardian for the last 4 passages and have found him incredibly reliable, easy to work with and very professional. He has alerted us of a Chinese fishing fleet in our path and diverted us, helped us in extreme weather conditions, and has provided such immense peace of mind. – Sugar Shack

### **1.10 Cruising Information Sources**

We are indebted to the people and organizations below for documenting their experiences and sharing them with us. Every section is a mix of several sources.

A few details about the boats are included, where we know them, so you can assess what 'a foot under the keel' means, for example.

#### **1.10.1 Local Websites**

Vanuatu Tourism is [www.vanuatu.travel/en/](http://www.vanuatu.travel/en/)

Visit the "yachting" page on this website, here:

<https://www.vanuatu.travel/nz/component/search/?searchword=yachts&searchphrase=all&Itemid=246>

#### **1.10.2 Digital Guide & Apps**

**Rocket Guide to Vanuatu:** <https://cruising-vanuatu.com/index.html>

The **Rocket Guide to Vanuatu** is a digital, interactive nautical guide with detailed information on navigation, passages, weather, tides, ports, culture, hospitality, key points, and local foods. With over 170 surveyed anchorages, 160 personally verified GPS routes and up to date information.

Works on PC or MACs. Requires Windows XP or later, MAC OSX 10.7 or later. It works on windows tablets but not on Android or iPad tablets (yet).

Once you download, internet is not required. Subscription fee required.

**Sail South Pacific App** - [www.sailsouthpacific.com](http://www.sailsouthpacific.com)

All of the route and destination planning resources from Panama West across the Pacific, all in one easy to use iOS app for iPad.

Not available on the iPhone. Subscription fee required.

#### **1.10.3 Pacific Rally**

Island Cruising organizes an amazing rally across the pacific (from Australia to French Polynesia). You can join from just about anywhere (Panama, French Polynesia, Tonga, Fiji, New Caledonia, Minerva Reef, Vanuatu, Australia, New Zealand, Cook Islands). Rally members receive a comprehensive guide to cruising the Pacific, all check in/departure paperwork for the countries you are visiting, crew help, communication tools, tons of discounts, and a bountiful of events. Cruise with the group or do your own thing, come and go when you please. – [www.islandcruising.nz/our-rallies](http://www.islandcruising.nz/our-rallies).

**June 2024:** We have been a member of Island Cruising for several years and have had the pleasure of participating in (2) of their rallies. They provide an immense amount of required documentation, tons of communications and support, loads of fantastic discounts, and a wonderful community with fellow cruisers.

We have saved well over the small fee required to join the rally! I highly recommend sailors join if they plan on cruising in the Pacific. – Sugar Shack

#### **1.10.4 Noonsite**

[www.noonsite.com](http://www.noonsite.com)

The ultimate Cruising Planning Tool. Made possible by YOUR contributions. View 3 countries per month for free. For complete and total access membership is required at \$2.99/month. They also offer a premium service for \$6.99/month with more options.

#### **1.10.5 Seven Seas Cruising Association**

[www.sca.org](http://www.sca.org)

The SSCA is a world-wide organization for cruisers whose primary function is to exchange information about cruising destinations. They have a monthly publication that is mostly letters from cruisers about the areas they are cruising. They also have a good website and a well-attended bulletin board. Membership is reasonable, and the monthly publication and indexed back issues are available electronically.

#### **1.10.6 Pacific Puddle Jump Yahoo Group**

[www.pacificpuddlejump.com](http://www.pacificpuddlejump.com)

This group is where the people gathering in South and Central America meet to share information about crossing the big puddle. A good source of information, but not very organized, and it can be full of bloat from people who ask the same questions without doing any research of their own.

You must be a member to read or post anything on this site, but if you are getting ready for a Pacific crossing, it is well worth a few minutes to sign up for Groups IO and then sign up for this group. Explore Files and Links pages, for great information.

#### **1.10.7 Facebook Groups**

There are several Vanuatu Facebook groups:

- Cruising Vanuatu
- Sailing & Cruising in New Caledonia, Vanuatu & Beyond
- Sailing (Cruising) West Pacific: Tonga/Fiji/Vanuatu/NCal/Solomons/PNG
- Vanuatu Meteorology and Geo-hazards Department
- Tourism in Vanuatu

#### **1.10.8 WhatsApp Group**

There are a few WhatsApp groups where cruisers share valuable information and insights. If you join the Island Cruising Pacific Rally, you'll have access to one of the best WhatsApp groups in the Pacific!

#### **1.10.9 Ocean Cruising Club**

<http://oceancruisingclub.org>

The OCC is a world-wide organization for cruisers whose primary function is to exchange information about cruising destinations. They have a website and bi-annual publication that is mostly letters from cruisers about the areas they are cruising. Membership is reasonable, and the publication is available electronically. Indexed back issues are also available electronically.

### 1.10.10 Cruiser Reports

We are indebted to the people and organizations that have documented their experiences and shared them with us. We can't do this alone. We rely on cruisers sharing updated information. So, please be sure to document and email us your notes at [sherry@svsogypaws.com](mailto:sherry@svsogypaws.com).

Every section is a mix of several sources. For most of the earlier sources, we have gleaned the information off the internet (cruiser's websites, blogs, and online forum postings) or out of a Seven Seas Cruising Association bulletin. For the sources reported below, much of the info came directly from cruising friends, helping to round out the information in our various Compendiums.

A few details about the boats are included, so you can assess what 'a foot under the keel' means, for example.

**Sugar Shack (2024):** Sugar Shack is a 47' Catana catamaran: 15m long, 7.7m wide, 1.3m draft. Matt and Christine sailed from Turkey to the Caribbean, thru the Panama Canal and across the Pacific. They spent 4 months in Vanuatu in 2024. Sugar Shack was instrumental in the reorganization and update of the Vanuatu, Fiji, Tonga, and French Polynesia Compendiums in 2019-2024. [www.svSugarShack.com](http://www.svSugarShack.com)

**Moana (2024)** is a Lagoon 450, (14m long, 7.9m wide, 1.32m deep. Moana spent several months in Vanuatu before returning to Australia.

**Trinity (2024):** Is a Neel 47 (14.3m x 8.3m x 1.7m). Stephan and Kerstin bought her new in France in 2020, spent 15 months in the Azores, sailed through the Caribbean, crossed the Panama Canal, to New Zealand and spent several months in Vanuatu.

**Yaminda (2024):** John & Carolyn on a Seawind 1160 sailing catamaran (LOA 11.6m; Beam 6.5m, Draft 1.1m) left Southport, Australia bound for New Caledonia in May 2024 as part of the Pacific Rally 2024. We had to redivert due to unrest at Noumea so have been able to spend more time exploring the beauty of Vanuatu. We have travelled through the group from Tanna to The Banks Islands.

**Sky Pond (2024):** Sky Pond is 11.6m x 6.5m x 1.1m sailing catamaran built by Seawind. We left Mexico in 2022 visiting FP, Society islands, and arrived in Fiji before the cyclone season. We explored Fiji until arriving in Vanuatu August of 2024 and will make our way north before departing late September for Brisbane, Australia.

**Ariel (2024)** Ariel is a UK flagged Lagoon 400 (39' x 23' x 4'). In 2024, she sailed from the Marquesas to Thailand via Wallis and Futuna, Fiji, Vanuatu, and PNG heading to Indonesia.

**Aliena (2024):** Aliena is an Oyster 595 with centerboard. She's 18.10m long, 5.35m wide and 1.95/4.20m draft.

**Masim's (2024):** Fr. SV Masim's, Amel Mango 15.25m x 4.27m x 2m. Magali and Eric left France in 2016. After 3 years in the Caribbean and the birth of Marin in Martinique in 2017, we continued to the Pacific via Panama. We spent 3 years in French Polynesia, 6-months in Fiji and 2 years in New Zealand. We went to Stewart Island two summers in a row and once to Fiordland. We enjoyed several months in Vanuatu before continuing west.

**Archer (2024):** Archer is an Outremer 51 (15.5m x 7.5m x 1.1m). We are a Canadian family of 4 having sailed 50% of the year for the last 2.5 years in the South West Pacific including Fiji, Tonga, New Zealand and Vanuatu.

**Eastern Stream (2023):** (15m x 4m x 2m). Jaap and Minke left the Netherlands in 2016 on their steel ketch. From Panama they sailed to Chile, Easter Island and Pitcairn. The last few years they cruised the Pacific. They love to explore the more remote places and anchorages. They spent two seasons in Vanuatu.

**Dandelion (2023):** Dandelion is a Leopard 47, 14.3m long, 7.4m wide, 1.35m draft. John and Bev on Dandelion, having travelled from Mozambique crossed the Atlantic, Caribbean, through Panama, crossed the Pacific, Marquesas, Fiji, on to NZ, then to Vanuatu. They spent several months in Vanuatu and it is one of their favorite places, besides Cuba and Columbia.

**Katoa 2 (2024):** It is 14.5m x 7.3m with a draft of 1.2m. Katoa 2 is a Ron Given Voyager, built by Bob Huntington, (owner/operator) at home in a large shed and launched in 2019. Ron and Judith have sailed around the North Island of NZ, the Marlborough and Pelorus Sounds, Abel Tasman, Fiji, Minerva Reef, Tonga, and Vanuatu. Currently the boat is in Australia.

**The Answer (2024):** 50 foot Dufour Sloop owned by Anthony Berglas, from Australia.

**Eagle's Wings (2014-2019):** Eagle's Wings is a 60 ft Sundeer (monohull). They are avid divers and have been making the annual trip from NZ to Fiji, Vanuatu, and New Caledonia every year. Most of the info posted attributed to Eagle's Wings comes from their YIT posts. <https://www.yit.nz/yacht/eagleswings>

**Field Trip (2017-2018):** <http://svfieldtrip.blogspot.com/search/label/Vanuatu>

**Wandering Waterhorse (2018):** <http://wanderingwaterhorse.com/uncategorized/vanuatu-to-the-solomon-islands/>

**Alba (2015):** Alba is a Halberg-Rassey 42F with a 6 foot draft. <http://thehowarths.net/alba-chronicles>

**Sloepmouche (May 2006 – Nov 2010):** Sloepmouche is a 46' Norman Cross trimaran - 5' draft. Most of the info on Vanuatu from Sloepmouche was taken from a series of articles from the Seven Seas Cruising Association Bulletins (ssca.org). [www.tropicalsailinglife.com](http://www.tropicalsailinglife.com). They are typical low-budget, off the grid sailing adventurers, slowly working their way around the world. They have a ton of videos of their cruising adventures on their website.

## 2 Passage Reports

### 2.1 Sailing to / from Vanuatu

#### 2.1.1 From / to Australia

**May 2019:** Gold Coast to Port Vila in 8.5 days, 7 days in total sailing and a rest stop of 1 1/2 day.

Confused seas in combination with wave heights of 3-4 m stopped us from taking full advantage of THOR's capacity for speed during the crossing from the Gold Coast, and despite slowing down we were whacked a fair bit, making it difficult to rest or sleep when not on watch.

Our passage onwards to Port Vila on the other hand was terrific. First motor 'sailing' (wind on the nose) to the Havannah passage - out of the reef. After that we had a fabulous sail to Port Vila, 300 nm in 30 hours. Max boat speed was 21.2 kts and max true wind speed was 28.6 kts. True wind speed was very consistent SE 17-22kts for the most part. On the final approach to Port Vila, we had to drop the sail in about 19 kts as the land to the South was not providing much shelter before the entrance.

We found the Quarantine buoy and two other sailing boats, anchored at 1830h in 7m of water, anchored easily and then drew a collective breath of relief. – Thor

#### 2.1.2 From / To New Zealand

**May 2024: Marsden Cove, NZ to Port Resolution, Tanna:** Overall, the passage was 6.5 days. The first 2.5 days were wonderful sailing conditions with moderate winds 12-15 kts from the SE. The sea state was bigger than we would normally like at 2-3m but they came in long intervals so did not cause much of a fuss.

Mid-way we hit a blue hole (which was originally predicted to be a green/yellow) which dropped our moving average considerably. We tried to fly our 125m<sup>2</sup> and 175m<sup>2</sup> parasails but there was not enough wind to keep them full so we motored on. The last 150nm we flew a reefed jib to maintain a 5kt average so we could arrive during the daytime at Port Resolution.

We could have easily made it in 5.5 days put up more sail in the last 100nm. But alas we chose comfort and a daylight arrival over speed. We did end up dodging several squalls but the full moon kept us lit during the night so they were easy to spot and bear away. All in all, not a bad passage. – Sugar Shack

**Nov. 2016: Port Vila to Marsden Cove:** We left early morning and slowly made our way SE. We had quite a variety of conditions as we left Port Vila but things settled down once we got away from the island. We headed for a waypoint to the SE above 22S where we hung out before continuing on to NZ. Conditions were beautiful.

Day 2: A day with lots of sun, no waves, no wind. We went through some large areas of brown particulate matter for most of the day and are not sure if that is due to volcanic activity. It didn't look like pumice.

Day 3: Sunny skies today but big cloud banks developed during the day. Many squalls overnight, some with heavy rain. Mix of motor sailing and sailing. Moving slowly to SE. Slight swell started to appear today and expect that to continue to build.

Day 4: Low clouds developed during the day to the west, but then receded later in the day. Wind held all day and had very nice sailing under double reefed main and staysail. We're moving gradually to the ESE to get a better angle to NZ. No squalls today and wind has been very steady.

Day 5: Continued to sail to the ESE with triple reefed main for most of the day as the seas and wind built (most we saw was 25 knots of wind). No squalls, though. Made the turn back to the SW this evening as the wind shifted to the SSE. Shook out a reef and are sailing slowly under double reefed main. We are curving a gradual arc toward NZ as the winds back around to the SE and E. We're sailing slowly to avoid pounding into the big seas and because we're steering toward Tasmania, rather than New Zealand (the winds are still too southerly).

Day 6: Winds have backed around over the past 12 hours allowing us to make a better course to NZ. We had good wind all day and are able to make good progress as the seas come down. Winds have continued to hold.

Day 7: The seas subsided and the winds backed nicely and we were able to sail with full hoist and jib during the day. The wind died off early Sunday evening and clocked around so we were heading off toward Tasmania again. We'd also been contending with a .75-1.25 knot adverse current for most of the day, so we fired up the motor to head more south Easterly to get out of the current.

Day 8: We have been making good progress for the last 24 hours as the winds came up and backed. We've even had a favorable current at times. The waves built again and they created rough conditions earlier in the evening. The waves are now more well-formed.

Day 9: Had a wonderful day of sailing until about mid-day yesterday when we lost the wind and had to turn on the engine. What an unusually calm final approach to NZ. We decided to continue on to Marsden Cove.

Day 10: We are zeroing in on Marsden and expect to arrive at the mouth of the river around dawn. We had a beautiful, placid motor down the coast. A super end to a challenging, but excellent passage.

Day 11: We arrived at Marsden early this morning. This passage was unique in that we never had the wind on the beam or aft of the beam the entire trip. – Eagle's Wings

### **2.1.3 From / to Fiji to**

**Sept. 2016:** Left Vuda Point, Fiji early afternoon time for Port Resolution. Benign trip out to the pass but then winds picked up to 25-30 (gusting higher) after we got through the pass. At least they were behind us. Sailed with triple reef main only until this morning when we shook out one reef. Conditions have lightened up this morning with winds 20-25 and seas not so big. Nice and sunny! Very pleasant temps.

Day 2: Winds built again to 25-30 with 3-meter seas. The wind backed more overnight and is diminishing. The seas are also subsiding. No traffic at all since leaving Fiji waters.

Day 3: Had a nice day of sailing yesterday to Port Resolution. Wind and waves lightened as we got close to Tanna. Could see volcano in the night vision scope 30 miles out with awesome bursts of light. Volcano spewing out large plumes. We got the anchor down about 9am. Anchorage very protected but roly. – Eagle's Wings

**Sept. 2012:** We left Denarau at just the right time. Reestablished our lost sea legs as we sailed 7-8kt in 20kt wind and 1-2m swells from the South and confused seas. We took several big waves into the cockpit - time for foul weather gear. Sunday was a beam reach and smooth sailing downwind. Monday, we motored half the day with current against us then the wind kicked in to 20kt and we sailed 8-9kt (!!) beam reach with 2 reefs and small jib blasting us through the water in -2mt seas late Monday through our arrival Tuesday. There was plenty of water over the bow and a little in the cockpit and 2-2.5kt current against us. We made up for the slowness and arrived in Anatom at 2pm Tuesday. – Chesapeake

## **2.2 Passages within Vanuatu**

### **2.2.1 Port Vila to Santo**

**Sept. 2016:** We had many squalls as we were leaving Port Vila. 1-1.5 knots adverse current for most of the trip, so the trip was slow going. Had some stretches of nice sailing in benign seas. Motor sailing now with wind dead downwind.

Day 2: Arrived Espiritu Santo this afternoon. Had some unexpected nice wind starting mid-morning. We are in a beautiful spot off Aese Island. – Eagle's Wings

### **2.2.2 Aneityum to /from Tanna**

**June 2024: Tanna to Aneityum:** We anticipated a really light wind day with a possible motor for more than 4 of the 8 hours. But we really wanted to visit Mystery Island so we decided to go despite the lack of wind.

We left the anchorage around 0730 with 1.5-2m seas and 1kt of current against us. We had to motor the first hour, but we were able to sail with full sails the entire day, it was beautiful. COG 162, wind speed 10-11kts N of E (60-70 degrees). It turned out to be an absolutely lovely sailing day with blue skies, comfortable, long interval waves, and a light breeze. 8 hours later we were enjoying the Aneityum anchorage. – Sugar Shack

**Sept. 2011: Aneityum to Tanna:** The passage should be a Trade Wind Reach and with a good current pushing you along. From Anelghowhat anchorage into the Port Resolution anchorage is 49 miles.

We left at 0600hrs and were happily at anchor by 1400hrs, departing from NW Bay would cut another hour off that so there seems little point in doing an overnight.....Those that do seem to spend their early morning hours trying to slow down however they can be treated to some nice displays from the Tanna Volcano.

We were surprised by the extent of the wind shadow in the lee of Aneityum. We had to go ten miles downwind to find clear air. This is a good introduction to all the islands in this group where the mountainous nature and geography of the islands in relation to the pervading wind conditions, can cause some very unexpected wind directions quite some way offshore. – Mr. John

### **2.2.3 Tanna to /from Efate**

**June 2024: Tanna to Efate:** We left Tanna at 0600 and arrived Efate (Port Vila) at dawn the next day. Weather was predicted to be on the beam with 1-1.5m seas and rather pleasant. However, it was super choppy seas 2-2.5m on the beam and wind coming in on a close reach forcing us to pinch to make the course. It was a really crappy passage for me. – Sugar Shack

**Sept. 2016:** Underway to Port Vila and getting close. We hove to for a few hours this morning to time our arrival when we are both up. We had a few squalls on the trip. Wind has been all over the map strength-wise from 10 to 32 to knots. Seas were a bit confused, but not too large (1-2 meters). – Eagle's Wings

### **2.2.4 Efate to Pentecost**

**June 2024:** We really wanted to see the Naghol (land diving) so we headed to Pentecost for the 2<sup>nd</sup> to last ceremony. We left Port Vila and headed to the North side of Moso island. It was a short, but pleasant beam reach sail to a beautiful anchorage on the North side of Moso, but it had horrible holding and lots of bommies. Don't anchor here.

The next morning, we got up at 0400, put up full sails, and with wind on the beam we sailed between the southern tip of Epi and Tongoa. There is a strong current through here, we saw 2kts and had shifty winds. We took down our main sails and prepped our 175m<sup>2</sup> parasail for the run up to Pentecost. We flew this sail for several hours before the winds shifted again and forced us back to our main working sails where we did wing on wing for a few hours. Then a storm came and sucked our wind away, so we ended up motoring the last 1.5 hours to arrive at Homo Bay, Pentecost around 1700. – Sugar Shack

### **2.2.5 Maewo to Santa Maria (Gaua)**

**Sept. 2024:** We left from Leleveia Bay on Maewo at 0600 heading to Santa Maria. We were on a course of 314T and had 15-18kts of SE and 2-3m seas coming from E. The seas were pretty big with an occasional 3.5m pushing us along. We averaged 6.6kts with the jib alone which was pretty darn good and arrived at 1400. It was a beautiful sunny day and a fairly decent passage. – Sugar Shack

## **3 Mystery Island**

Southernmost island just off Aneityum Island

Nobody lives on Mystery Island and it is considered Tabu to do so. Locals come by boat when the cruise ship is in Aneityum Island.

Mystery Island got its name when it was used as an airstrip by Allies during WWII. The island's tiny size and remote location prevented the Japanese from figuring out where the planes were coming from so it was called the Mystery Island.

There are no formalities here, but you can try to obtain prior approval to clear in to Aneityum when the cruise ship is in port. The cruise ship schedule can be found here <https://cruisedig.com/ports/mystery-island-vanuatu>.

Mystery island is a pristine marine ecosystem that has been a marine protected area for over a decade. You will discover some of the healthiest marine life in the archipelago.

### **3.1 Cruiser Reports**

**June 2024:** The area around Mystery Island is a marine conservation area and no fishing is allowed. You can anchor near the long dock close to shore.

When the cruise ship is in (see link above) there are loads of activities for the cruise ship guests, but the locals will usually extend them to the cruisers as well.

You can rent clear kayaks and SUPs, go on a glass bottom boat tour, snorkeling and fishing trips, hair braiding, massages, food and beverage booths and lots and lots of local wares and crafts.

Some of the cruise ship guests also visit Anelghowhat Bay to see the local village as well.

There is a lovely walking trail around the entire island and the cruise ship area is fun to explore. – Sugar Shack

## **4 Aneityum (Anatom)**

### **4.1 Anelghowhat Bay**

Southern end of the island. Facing Mystery Island. This anchorage provides very good protection from all winds and waves except those from the southwest.

Be sure to give the reef a wide berth (beyond **20°15.300S / 169°45.100E**)! Best to enter from the west side. Some southerly swells break along the reef.

The Cruise ship tenders have an area marked by buoys that they use for their guests. Do not block it.

#### **4.1.1 Anchorage**

**June 2024:** **20°14.326S / 169°46.769E** in 10m of water with good holding.

The large mooring on Navionics is not there anymore.

Dinghy to shore toward the red marker and take that to starboard, then keep the "stick" to starboard, but not too close, then go straight to shore (toward yellow boats and or the blue house).

Shipping channel: There is a designated “shipping channel” for the supply ship which is marked with (1) red and (1) green buoy. Even though the supply ship only comes once per month, the day is always uncertain so they ask that nobody anchors in the way of the shipping channel. It is the only area that has a clear path to the beach and is clearly indicated on Navionics. This is also the channel used by the cruise ship. – Sugar Shack

**Sept. 2012: 20°14.195S / 169°46.583E.** This is a large calm anchorage open to SW wind but protected from swells by a reef, it is very calm. The sandy bottom has good holding and the entry is very wide. – Chesapeake.

**Sept. 2011: 20°14.277S / 169°46.730E.** The best anchorage is in the center of the bay. You can find protection here in everything but westerly blow. We tried to anchor near **20°14.396S / 169°46.752E** but the SW swell bounced off the reef causing a roly anchorage.

**20°14.858S / 169°46.4W** - Do not anchor here when the cruise ship is in port as their tenders use this area. This is an ok anchorage in a fresh southerly wind. – Mr. John

#### 4.1.2 Formalities

**NOTE:** There are no departure clearances or allowances from Aneityum (even when there is a cruise ship in port, you cannot clear out from here).

Clearance at this port requires special prior permission. If you time your arrival with a cruise ship you will not have to pay to fly the officials in. Here is the cruise ship schedule: <https://cruisedig.com/ports/mystery-island-vanuatu>.

If you receive prior approval and you arrive when there is no cruise ship you will be charged fees to transport and house the officials during their stay.

From the Customs website: *Master of all yachts entering Vanuatu from a foreign port or place must first report to the Customs, Quarantine and Immigration authorities at either the port of Lenakel or Port Vila or Luganville or Sola.*

*Vessels may not call at Mystery Island (Aneityum) or Port Resolution (Tanna) or any other place in Vanuatu, prior to entering one of the ports nominated above for customs clearance, unless prior written permission is granted by the Director of Customs & Inland Revenue. The Master of vessels who visit these places prior to obtaining customs clearance, being issued with an “Inter-island Cruising Permit”, or obtaining written permission may be subject to fines and/or prosecution.*

**Official’s Building:** Ph: +678 711.7010. Hours: Mon-Fri: 0900-1200, 1300-1600. From the anchorage, take your dinghy to the beach in front of the school building. Then walk to the left. The official building is located about 5-10 minutes down the road in a gray building with a yellow trim roof and a sign that reads “Mystery Island Tourism Holding Ltd”. Same building as National Bank.

**May 2024:** Originally, we wanted to clear in at Mystery Island, but trying to time our arrival (based on weather for a 6-8-day passage) with the cruise ship arrival proved to be too much. So, we asked Customs for and received approval to clear in at Port Resolution, Tanna. On day 4 of our passage, we realized that we could arrive the day before the cruise ship so we asked Customs for special permission to do formalities at Aneityum.

Customs responded quickly, gave us permission, but then a few minutes later revoked it. What??? Well, evidently there are strong winds predicted for the day of the cruise ship’s arrival so they are cancelling the port for them, which means the officials would not be going there, which means we could not clear in. Bummer.

In the end we passed by Mystery Island on our way to Tanna in the middle of the night. – Sugar Shack

**April 2019:** We had no problem clearing in in Aneityum. Helpful, quick replies from Vanuatu officials. We did check cruise ship schedules and coordinated our arrival there. We got Vatu in Fiji before we sailed. – Amarulla

**July 2017:** I pre-filled out the PDF forms for customs online. My email was answered within 30 mins but many other yachties did not receive a reply. The man I corresponded with was Walter Oli. [woli@vanuatu.gov.vu](mailto:woli@vanuatu.gov.vu)

The customs, immigration and quarantine officials flew in to nearby Mystery Island to clear in a cruising ship and cleared us in as well.

The bank has plenty of money and didn't balk at us handing them AUD \$800.

They asked what food I had onboard and told them I had a few fresh vegetables and would eat them onboard that night also that I had a little cryo vacuum packed meat from Aus. He was happy with that.

Total cost for clearing in was 14, 800 vatu. We did not get the extension, which we must get in Pt. Vila. When we arrived in Pt. Vila we paid 6000VT each person for the inter-island cruising permit. – Sea Nymph

#### **4.1.3 Yachtsmen Services**

##### **4.1.3.1 Cooking Gas (Propane and Butane)**

**June 2024:** The Keamu co-operative shop open Mon-Fri: 0700-1700 (which is for locals only) had a gas bottle exchange, but they were not open when we went by so we cannot confirm if they can refill bottles or exchange foreign bottles. But if you are desperate you could buy a bottle and do a gas transfer and then return the bottle. – Sugar Shack

##### **4.1.3.2 Fuel (Diesel and Gasoline)**

**June 2024:** They have a container with loads of drums that they call their fuel station. You can probably ask the chief if you need small quantities of fuel.

When we visited the cruise ship and the supply ship had not been here in months. So be aware that their supplies are very limited and probably not available for cruisers. – Sugar Shack

#### **4.1.4 General Services**

##### **4.1.4.1 Bank & ATMs**

The National Bank of Vanuatu has an office here. Hours: Mon-Thurs: 0900-1530, Fri: 0900-1600. Location: from anchorage, bring dinghy to beach (in front of school), go left and it will be in the same building as the Tourism office and the officials on the right side of the building. Grey building with yellow roof. There is a sign that reads "Mystery Island Tourism Holding Ltd.

They do not always exchange currency. If you are clearing in here you have to come prepared with Vatu (local currency) as they may not do a currency exchange and they do not take credit cards.

**Aug. 2024:** We asked the bank if they did currency exchanges and they said they would, if and when they have enough money, which they don't often have. They suggested yachties come prepared with vatu. – Sugar Shack

**Sept. 2019:** The bank has plenty of money and didn't balk at us handing them AUD \$800. – Sea Nymph

**Sept. 2012:** Banking services are available. If you have not already obtained Vanuatu currency (Vatu), try to get enough of it here to cover the cost of the volcano trip at Tanna Island and everything else you might need before reaching Port Vila. – Yolo

##### **4.1.4.2 Police Station**

**June 2024:** The police station is located 20°13.934S / 169°46.77E (to the left of the school where you leave the dinghy). – Sugar Shack

##### **4.1.4.3 Tourism Office**

**June 2024:** The Tourism office, +678.711.7010 is in the same building as the "officials" and the bank. From the beach, go left and it is about 10-minute walk. Grey building with yellow roof. There is a sign that reads "Mystery Island Tourism Holding Ltd.

Carol was working in the office when we visited and she was lovely. She can organize the all-day hike to the waterfall. – Moana

#### **4.1.5 Provisions**

**June 2024: Miko Store** Hours: Sun-Fri: 0700-1800 (closed Saturday). Ph: +678.779.6269, +678.539.2634. Location, 20°13.913S / 169°46.70E left of the anchorage in an orange building. Actually, this was a pretty well stocked little store with a nice selection of pasta, canned goods, powdered milk. No fresh produce.

There is a Keamu co-operative shop open Mon-Fri: 0700-1700 but only for the locals and by appointment only.

There is a small Wholesale and Retail shop called KN & Sons further west on the beach after you cross the river. But it was closed each time we passed by.

There is supposedly another little store in the center of the village, according to the locals, but we did not find it. On Navionics it shows a place called Esther's Shop but it has since closed too.

We heard word of a fresh market but they never seemed to materialize while we were here. They did sell oranges across from the lumber store on Friday. – Sugar Shack

#### **4.1.6 Activities**

**June 2024:** When the cruise ship is in there are lots of activities on Mystery Island for the cruise ship guests but the locals will extend them to cruisers as well. See Mystery Island above for details.

**Waterfall Hike:** We love to walk/hike and explore by ourselves. But this particular hike you absolutely need Elisha, the guide as most of the path is hidden. Our guide said that we were only the 2<sup>nd</sup> group to go to the waterfall since Covid so it is very overgrown. This is an all-day hike: 4-4.5 hours up to the waterfall and 3-3.5 hours down. You will cross the river many times, scramble over wet rocks and traverse a tiny muddy trail (it is always muddy as you are walking through the trees). But the waterfall is worth it, cool, clear, and refreshing.

Go to the Tourism Office (same building as formalities and the bank) and ask for Carol. She is Elisha's mom and can contact Elisha for you to schedule the tour. Or you can walk up the logging road (there is only one main logging road), go to the very last village and ask for Elisha (his village is 30-45 minutes from the beach). It is really best to pre-schedule the tour as he is a very busy running a lumber mill, vanilla farm, and full garden. The cost is 2,000 VT per person and it is well worth it. He is full of information, will feed you a light meal of crawdads (prawns) freshly caught from the river, and will delight you with stories.

**Snorkeling:** We found several moorings that had pretty good snorkeling:

- 20°14.752S / 169°45.85. Buoy to tie dinghy. Lots of wonderful fish at this spot
- 20°14.731S / 169°45.94. Buoy to tie dinghy. Decent spot, but not as many fish as the first spot
- 20°14.650S / 169°46.500. Buoy to tie dinghy. This had (5) turtles just hanging out

Aneityum is known to be a playground for nature lovers. Lots of bird watching, forest walks, waterfalls, floral walks, and mountain top views. – Sugar Shack

#### **4.1.7 Safety – Theft**

**July 2024:** We were robbed at night whilst anchored behind Mystery island at Aneityum.

We realized the next morning when we found our main anchor snubber had been cut and the hook had been cut off/taken from the secondary snubber left on deck.

Also missing a fishing gaff and the outboard kill switch from the dinghy lifted on the davits.

Unfortunately, the police were not there when we went to report it so we spoke to the tourism office and various villagers we had met during our stay there. We had to leave the next day due to weather.

An unfortunate and probably isolated instance of petty theft, but a word of caution to the sailing community to take usual precautions. – Garufo

#### **4.1.8 Cruiser Reports**

**June 2024:** This is an absolutely gorgeous anchorage, calm, quiet and peaceful (so different from the roly Port Resolution anchorage we just came from). There are great walks, fun snorkeling and the lovely hike. So, well worth the stop to visit Aneityum! – Sugar Shack

**July 2017:** There are no fresh vegies available. You can occasionally buy fish from a fisherman who drags a gill net around the lagoon each day. And there is a fish co-op that is open island time.

Mystery island is about 500 meters away. We went over when the cruise ship was in and it is the total opposite to Aneityum. It is purely commercial for the cruise ships. No one actually lives there. 95% of the items they sell is from Indo and china.

The people on Aneityum are friendly, honest and totally delightful...we have been to scores of islands in our travels and found the people here to be our favorite. They won't take money for anything and I was offered paw paw and pamplemousse and a basket so later returned with a lovely book for the young woman who said she liked to read. – Sea Nymph

#### **4.2 Anamnet Bay**

On the Eastern side of Anatom island

##### **4.2.1 Anchorage**

**July 2019: 20°08.017S / 169°49.619E.** Moved to the north side of the island yesterday and anchored in Anamnet Bay. Very beautiful and peaceful. – Eagle's Wings

##### **4.2.2 Cruiser Report**

**July 2019:** Hope to dive on the nearby reefs today. Noke, the chief's son, paddled out to us in his dugout outrigger. He returned later in the afternoon with loads of fruit, a pumpkin, bok choy, and an unusual vegetable called a snake bean. The bean is almost a meter long! – Eagle's Wings

#### **4.3 Itchepthay Bay**

On the north tip of Anatom Island

##### **4.3.1 Anchorage**

**2012: 20°08.572S / 169°46.608E.** Anchorage is sand 8-10m. Exposed to wind and swell from West-North-East. Anchor in the center of the bay. Great for an early morning start to Port Resolution. – Yolo

**2011: 20°08.52S / 169°46.62E.** This is a nice quiet spot and you are unlikely to be disturbed; the holding is good and you can pick your depth in sand / mud. – Mr. John

##### **4.3.2 Cruiser Report**

**2011:** When headed North out of Anelghowhat you can break up the passage to Tanna by calling at Itchepthav Bay, located up on the NW coast of Aneityum. The only drawback is the bullets of wind that drop down into the anchorage, especially when the trade winds are developed.

Whilst it only takes seven miles off the distance to Tanna, it does mean you can get around Inmat Reef in good visibility.....This reef is nearly always breaking. – Mr. John

# 5 Tanna Island

## 5.1 Port Resolution

### 5.1.1 Pass

**May 2024:** We arrived in really horrible conditions after being at sea for 6.5 days (coming from NZ). We had winds howling at 25-30kt from the SE and 3.5m seas from the S. We were running charts on several sources (iPad, Computer, B&G, Garmen, and PC) and utilizing the Rocket Guide (which is very useful).

Once we turned around Yewao point, giving it a wide berth, the wind calmed down to 18-20kt and the seas calmed to 2m (thank goodness). The pass is a little more than .1m wide and shallows up pretty quickly. We stuck to the middle of the channel until we arrived at the anchorage. – Sugar Shack

**Sept. 2011:** When arriving in Port Resolution be aware that the early Rocket Guide had an incorrect waypoint so best check everything and know where you are.

The C-map that I was using was almost in a different ocean; best be careful with all electronic devices; this is another reason for not rolling up here in the dark or early morning hours!

Route: Port Resolution inwards from south

- 19°30.879S / 169°30.897E
- 19°31.011S / 169°29.956E
- 19°31.322S / 169°29.805E
- 19°31.565S / 169°29.777E

Provided by Mr. John

### 5.1.2 Anchorage

**June 2024:** 19 °31.503S / 169°29.731E in 5m of mud, good holding. It was just barely daybreak and we were tired so we dropped the hook further back than we would have preferred to anchor. But it calmed down nicely after our crazy conditions as we entered the pass. There are 4 other boats here and plenty of room for more. This spot is pretty close to the entrance of the channel and a bit rolyly.

19 °31.712S / 169°29.663E in 3m of mud. We decided to move from the first spot because it was a little rolyly. It took us a few times to stick the hook, but once she stuck it held well. Still a very, very, rolyly anchorage.

Dinghy Dock: 19 °31.576 / 169°29.97E land your dinghy here. There are 3 trails: the Yacht club (far left trail), village and school (center and far right). Werry, the Yacht Club Manager, strongly urges cruisers to park their dinghy close to the yacht club to prevent “unfortunate incidences.” But this could just be part of the disagreement between he and the villages along the beach.

The anchorage has good holding and a reputation for being rolyly. A stern anchor helps. The anchorage is not good during a strong east to north winds. – Sugar Shack

**June 2024:** This bay was the most rolyly bay we have been in since we left the UK. – Jamala

**2014:** 19 °31.530S / 169°29.764E. Anchored in 4-8m black sand. Exposed to SE to N winds and swell. Anchor as far to the south in the bay as possible but watch out for the small reef. – Reflection

**Sept. 2012:** 19°31.532S / 169°29.702E. This anchorage is very rolyly as swells wrap around the corner so we put out a stern anchor, bay is open to the NE. Black sand bottom, easy anchoring, good holding. There is a reef and bommies as you approach shore, but didn't see anything in the middle of the anchorage. – Chesapeake

**Sept. 2011:** 19 °31.565S / 169°29.745E in 16' of water with good holding. In retrospect we could have moved a little further ESE to 'tuck in' a little more but as you move into the shallower water there are more scattered coral heads and 'coral junk' on the bottom. It is however worth it to move in as far as you dare as the swell wraps around the headland and this anchorage can be quite uncomfortable. – Mr. John

### 5.1.2.1 Formalities

In order to clear in at Port Resolution you will need to receive prior written approval. You may email [customsborder@vanuatu.gov.vu](mailto:customsborder@vanuatu.gov.vu) to inquire about necessary documents and arrangements that need to be made. You will receive an email confirmation of your approval and then you will receive an official letter "Approval to Call into an Undeclared Place in Vanuatu" from Port Vila. You must receive this letter prior to arrival.

Other helpful officials: Ruth: [rladam@vanuatu.gov.vu](mailto:rladam@vanuatu.gov.vu); Paul: [pwnalau@vanuatu.gov.vu](mailto:pwnalau@vanuatu.gov.vu); Brian George +678 735 4854, and [ituan@vanuatu.gov.vu](mailto:ituan@vanuatu.gov.vu).

Once you arrive, put up your Q flag, drop the hook and contact the Yacht club on VHF 16. Customs or the Yacht Club will call out on VHF 16 when the officials arrive (the officials come from Lenakel).

There is no ATM in Port Resolution so you will need to have Vatu prior to arriving. Some officials have accepted foreign currency, but they use their own exchange rate.

Officials will drive over from Lenakel and you will be responsible for this extra service. They usually show up at the Yacht Club between 0900-1000 and depart by lunch.

Several boats prefer clearing in Port Resolution over Lenakel because the anchorage is much better.

Everyone needs to stay on the boat until either the Yacht Club or Customs has called you on VHF 16 and instructs you to come to shore. Typically, they prefer only the captain to come ashore for clearance.

**June 2024:** We submitted our Inward Report a week in advance and requested special permission to clear in at Port Resolution. We were approved first by email and the later received an official letter ("Approval to Call into an Undeclared Place in Vanuatu") granting the special permission to clear in at Port Resolution. We were told to notify them 24-48 hours out of the date/time of arrival. Upon arrival we hoisted the yellow Q flag, hailed the Yacht club on VHF 16 and awaited word from the officials.

We unfortunately arrived on a public holiday and were told we would have to pay double the fees. However, they ended up allowing us to stay on the boat and clear in on the next day.

Customs, Biosecurity, and Immigration came and cleared us in.

Customs took all of our forms (except the Passenger Cards) and put them in a sealed envelope. This included our original NZ exit documents. We were told to go to Port Villa Customs to get our Inter-Island Cruising Permit and to turn over this sealed and stamped envelope.

We had no paperwork (no exit paperwork from NZ and no entry paperwork for Vanuatu). All we had were 2 receipts showing we paid the officials and a stamped/sealed envelope. Very weird.

We paid 5000vt to Customs and 5,000VT to BioSecurity and they both provided a receipt. Immigration cost 4,800VT and he said he would email a receipt and never did. We also paid Customs an additional 1000VT to cover fuel to come over to Port Resolution. (Original cost 3000vt, but we had 3 boats who all split this cost).

Our passports were stamped for 4 months in Vanuatu. – Sugar Shack

**June 2024:** During our passage to Port Vila our weather turned wild with high winds for the last two days. So, we emailed the officials to ask if we could clear in at Port Resolution. The day we were scheduled to arrive we received an email with the approval. By the time we arrived the officials had already left for the day so we had to wait until the next day to clear in. They called us on VHF to do the paperwork at the yacht club. It was a simple process, fill in the forms for customs, immigration and health. Pay your money. 5000 VUV each. There was a petrol fee for them coming to Port Resolution (3000 VUV) split between us and another boat. We paid in NZD so we could keep our VUV. – Jamala

### **5.1.3 Yachtsmen Services**

#### **5.1.3.1 Trash and Recycling**

**May 2024:** The Yacht Club will accept rubbish for 1,000VT standard bag and 2,000VT large bag. Please see Werry or Stanley at the Yacht Club. – Sugar Shack

### **5.1.4 General Services**

#### **5.1.4.1 Banks & ATMs**

**July 2025:** If sailing to Vanuatu from Fiji and departing from Port Denarau, you can obtain Vatu in person from No 1 Currency at the Nadi International Airport (departures level). No documentation required, other than your passport, and no advance notice required. Get 100,000 Vatu (or more) in just minutes. Easier than GCC Exchange or Lotus Foreign Exchange in Nadi town, who both insisted on impossible documentation requirements and many days advance notice required for them to either obtain Vatu or obtain permission for them to sell it to us. - SV Turtlebones

**May 2024:** There are no banks or ATM's in Port Resolution. If you plan to clear in here you must obtain Vatu prior to arrival (you will need at least 20,000 VT for formalities). After you clear in, you can take a taxi or tour (ask Werry or Stanley at the Yacht Club to organize) to Lenakel where there is an ATM.

**Vatu in Fiji:** GCC Exchange in Nadi, Fiji has Vatu and will exchange Fijian, US, or Euro for Vatu. +679.932.7700, [gccfiji@gccexchange.com](mailto:gccfiji@gccexchange.com).

**Vatu in NZ:** You can obtain Vatu in Whangarei at [TravelEx](#) or online from [No1Currency Exchange](#) (they also have an office in Auckland).

Get more Vatu than you think you need. Formalities are 20,000VT, Volcano tour 11,000VT/pp, trip to Lenakel 3,000VT/pp, Festivals 10,000-27,000VT/pp (as of 5/2024). – Sugar Shack

**Sept. 2014:** There are NO ATMs that will work with foreign cards. Full stop. None. If coming from Fiji, go to the airport with your passport, and, most important, your customs paperwork -- and you can exchange whatever dollars you might have for Vanuatu Vatu. Clearing in at port resolution will cost 10,000vt (\$100.00). Bring lots more V\$ with you as everything will cost money. Going up the volcano, visiting custom villages, etc., all require vatu. And every penny spent is worth it! – Segue

#### **5.1.4.2 Communications**

**May 2024:** There is no place to purchase local SIM cards in Port Resolution. But you can hire a taxi or car to take you to Lenakel where you can purchase both Vodafone and Digicel SIM cards and top up.

Remember to bring your passport as you will be asked to show it when purchasing SIM cards. – Sugar Shack

#### **5.1.4.3 Transportation**

**May 2024:** The Yacht Club can arrange for a taxi, but you can also contact John, the taxi driver direct at +678.767.3936.

The Yacht Club goes to Lenakel on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. You need to make prior arrangements with Werry or Stanley at the Yacht Club. The cost is 3,000VT per person for the round trip. It takes 2 hours each way and it is a very exhausting journey on bumpy roads in tight quarters. They depart the Yacht club at 0700 and return around 1400-1500.

The Yacht Club can also arrange volcano tours, 3000VT for the transportation and 8,000VT for the park fee per person. Volcano Trip leaves the Yacht Club at 1430 and return around 1900.

See our write up under Lenakel Transportation for our experience.

To Lenakel, be sure to ask your driver to drive you by the volcano in one direction. It is a much better adventure and experience than going around the bottom of the island. – Sugar Shack

### 5.1.5 Restaurants

**June 2024:** We enjoyed two delicious meals here. The first was at White Beach Restaurant where Chef Carlos prepared a vegetable filled omelet with roasted pumpkin, sweet potatoes and banana for 1,000vt/pp. They also run a couple of bungalows. Both are located right on the beautiful, white sandy beach.

The next meal was at Chez Lea where she offered a similar meal and price. Delightful. – Yaminda

**May 2024:** Restaurant Chez Lea offers local cuisine most nights. You need to make a reservation before lunch on the day you wish to have dinner. She is located right behind the large football field, an easy walk from the Yacht Club. There is no menu, it is whatever she has to serve, but it is lovely. 1,000VT / per person.

On the other side of the island, a little further walk, you will find White Beach Restaurant and resort +678.734.2917, again you need to call ahead to schedule dinner. – Sugar Shack

### 5.1.6 Yacht Club

The Port Resolution / Nipikinamu Yacht Club (aka The Port Resolution Yacht Club) accepts donations at <https://portresolutionyachtclub.com>.

The Port Resolution Yacht Club (also known as Nipikinamu Yacht Club) is a great stop as they are very helpful. Register your vessel with Werry Narua at [wnarua@gmail.com](mailto:wনারুা@gmail.com). He is up the path to the top in a concrete house. They will help you arrange officials and a volcano tour. +678.769.1375, +678.68791, +678.544.8741. Stanley can also be reached on VHF 16.

### 5.1.7 Activities

**May 2024:** We really enjoyed our time in Port Resolution (despite the very rolly bay). We went into Lenakel twice, experienced the awesome Mt. Yasur volcano, visited the world's largest banyan tree, the rare Baha'i House of Worship and the John Frum village in between our many hikes/walks around the island.

Volcano Trip leaves the Yacht Club at 1430 and return around 1900. Cost is 3,000VT for the transport and 8000VT for the entrance fee. If you go to the Volcano multiple times withing a 4-5-month period you will get a discount (2<sup>nd</sup> time is 4000, 3<sup>rd</sup> time is 2000 and 4<sup>th</sup> time is free). You will need to save your receipts (ask Werry or Stanley for a receipt). Sign up with Yacht Club

Mt. Yasur Volcano is a must see while you are in Vanuatu! Organize a trip with the Yacht Club on a day when there is little cloud coverage (check predict wind) and make sure the winds are from the East (or any direction other than westerlies). See notes below as they are still applicable today.

You leave the Yacht Club at 1430 and it is a 45-minute drive to the volcano. You sign in, take a safety briefing, use the bathroom here, then get back in the truck to go to the parking area (15 minutes). Then you climb a bunch of stairs and witness the beauty. Around 1800 they will usher you back in the truck for the drive back.

Dinghy to the base of the cliff on the N side of the bay to see hot water churning and boiling up from the rocks, and a small hot water cascade steaming into the sea. You can swim close and chose your temp for a hot soak!

**Cooking Lessons and Coconut Oil Creation:** At a nearby village that you can access from the black sand beach, walk up to the road, enter thru the path with the sticks making an arch. Ask for Jocelyn who is a highly respected woman on Tanna. She organizes women's projects to help educate them and helps them learn trades to earn money.

Jocelyn can organize wonderful lessons on how to prepare local cuisine, how to make coconut oil, and provides massages. She can be reached on WhatsApp or local +678.765.10700 or [namakajocelyn23@gmail.com](mailto:namakajocelyn23@gmail.com).

Jocelyn can also arrange tours of the island to the world's largest banyan tree, the famous Baha'i Temple, and John Frum village where they will perform their one of a kind song and dance for you.

The [World's Largest Banyan Tree](#) is about 15 minutes from Lenakel. You will need an experienced local who knows how to get there. The fee is 2,000 VT per person and a guide will take you down to the valley where you can see the tree up close and personal. Tour is 45 minutes. Ask for Samuel the guide.

[Tanna's Baha'i House of Worship](#) is about 15-20 minutes away from Lenakel and is truly a breathtaking experience. It is serene and beautiful. There is no fee to walk the grounds or to visit the beautiful building. All are welcome. A wonderful experience.

[John Frum village](#) is a truly unique experience. The village is located in Sulfur Bay a short taxi ride from Port Resolution. It is a village that believes in that John Frum, an American WWII serviceman, will save them by delivering cargo full of houses, clothes, food, and transport. They perform a one-of-a-kind song and dance on Friday's and can offer food and drinks with 48-hour notice. Organize thru Jocelyn, Werry, or Stanley.

Jocelyn organized an all-day tour for us where we went to Lenakel, stopped by the Banyan Tree, visited the Baha'i Worship Temple, and visited the John Frum Village. It was fantastic.

Lanapai Village, is the last village behind the black sand beach and is run by Donovan Naven. He offers nature walks around the island and to the volcano. You can organize a walk with him. Contact him on Facebook Rayson Naven. The only issue is he does not follow the rules of the Volcano park so be careful. – Sugar Shack

**Sept. 2016:** Went up to volcano on Monday and it was amazing to see the volcano spewing out giant billows of blue, gray, white, and black plumes. Lots of fiery rock shooting up like fireworks. The guides wouldn't let anyone to the rim, as they were concerned about safety (volcano quite active that day). They do allow you to the rim if the activity is lower. They make a decision about which areas to open at 3 pm each day. Port Resolution beautiful, but quite rolly. Very friendly local fishermen came out to visit in dugout canoes. Wonderful bananas and papaya. – Eagle's Wings

**Sept. 2012:** Viewing the Yasur Volcano on the island of Tanna is one of the spectacular highlights of the South Pacific. Don't pass this opportunity by, under any circumstance.

The truck ride takes about 45 minutes to get to the volcano. You can walk to the volcano. However, the hike will take you 2.5 to 3.0 hours one way. Walking back from the volcano would be a big challenge for most yachties since the road and trails are rough and there are no lights to guide you in the dark.

1. Visit the volcano on a clear weather day when the wind is NOT blowing from a western direction. On cloudy days, rainy days, or western wind days you will have a very difficult time viewing the volcano.
2. Make sure you take bug repellent, flash light, good footwear, and clothes to stay warm and dry. The walk from the parking lot to the rim of the volcano is about one hundred meters long on a concrete path. It gets very cool at the rim of the volcano after the sun sets.
3. You should see the volcano in both daylight and at night time, giving you different perspectives.
4. The volcano is shaped like a figure 8. It has two calderas with a low wall of rock between them. The southernmost caldera is near the parking lot and is the most active.

Other Vanuatu islands have active volcanoes. They require very, very long hard hikes, have higher fees, and the volcanoes are often hidden from view by clouds and rain. Do Yasur on Tanna Island. – Yolo

### **5.1.8 Cruiser Reports**

**Dec. 2016:** Port Resolution is known as the anchorage to pull into when you want to take the Mt. Yasur volcano tour. Stanley at the Yacht Club is happy to help organize your volcano tour, but make sure to leave some time to visit the villagers, watch them weaving, browse the handicraft stall, and have a coffee at the café. That's when you'll be greeted with the warm friendliness that is the true glow of Tanna.

It was quite a sight to see two women sitting on the floor in the handiwork shop, sewing curtains for the school with a fancy old-fashioned manual sewing machine from China! We giggled together at how life is so similar everywhere in the world in so many ways, enjoying the connection we could share. – Field Trip

**2006:** This area is beautiful, and a fitting introduction to the unique islands of Vanuatu. The principal village, Irepow, is almost entirely traditional thatched huts constructed of natural materials paneled with different weaves of bamboo or rush. The paths are lined with tropical flowers and trees like a botanical garden. There's

a cute thatched “restaurant”, where you can have a meal prepared by Lea, who makes some of the best food of local ingredients. – Sloepmouche

## **5.2 Shark’s Bay**

South of Port Resolution

### **5.2.1 Cruiser Report**

**2006:** A place we had never heard or read about that’s very unique is Shark’s Bay. From about June thru about March every year, this tiny rock-strewn bay plays host to dozens of sharks that wallow around in the shallows and even come up on to the beach with the waves. We, unfortunately, were there in May, too early.

The Waiwai family, who own the land, are guardians of the bay, and they will tell you the legends their ancestors had about the sharks, the sacred shark stones, and the tabu (taboo) beach. The newest thing at Shark’s bay, is the Tree House bungalow built about 50ft high in a giant spreading banyan tree.

We scrambled up the “staircase” to the really cute bungalow and saw the smoke bellowing from Mt Yasur, and from another window, Mt Melon. Even without the sharks, the sea views are breathtaking. – Sloepmouche

## **5.3 Lenakel**

West side of Tanna island

### **5.3.1 Anchorage**

It has been reported that this is not a good anchorage as it is exposed to lots of weather and the holding is not very good. The new concrete dock can be dangerous to your vessel so use it with caution and lots of fenders. A strong surge comes through the anchorage so be sure to time it wisely.

**May 2024:** The dinghy dock is in an area with a strong surge and sometimes a surf. You leave the dinghy off a concrete dock so be aware that your dinghy chaps could be chaffed. – Sugar Shack

**2014: 19°32.054S / 169°15.945E** Anchored in 6-16m broken coral. Exposed South thru West to North winds and swell. Be careful of the reef on the southern tip of the anchorage. Don’t be tempted to tie up to the concrete wharf as there is constant swell. – Reflection

**Sept. 2012:** This anchorage is considered a poor overnight anchorage by most sailors and it is exposed to north, south and western weather. – Yolo

### **5.3.2 General Services**

#### **5.3.2.1 Banks & ATMs**

**May 2024:** There are several banks and ATMs in Lenakel. National Bank of Vanuatu has several ATMs (Isangel, Lenakel, Market House) and two bank branches (Lenakel and Whitesands). +678 22.201.

Western Union located north of the market. Hours: Mon-Fri: 0730-1630, Sat: 0730-1200. They will change large bills for small bills for a fee (smaller fee than BSP) and there is usually no line.

No.1 Currency can exchange foreign currency for Vatu. They are located in the same office as Western Union

The BSP Bank / ATM which is located on the street behind the fresh market will change large bills for small bills for a fee of 2300VT. Hours: Mon-Thur: 0900-1530, Fri: 0900-1600. – Sugar Shack

#### **5.3.2.2 Formalities**

**May 2024:** Ask your taxi driver to take you to Customs, Immigration, and Bio Security. Be sure to stop at the bank beforehand and get at least 20,000VT just for formalities. – Sugar Shack

**2014: 19°31.90S / 169°16.01E** Immigration office is a couple hundred meters north of the market following the road, walk in the gate to the fish market and you will see the building. – Reflection

### **5.3.2.3 Transportation**

**May 2024:** A trip to Port Resolution from Lenakel is 3,000vt per person and takes 2-2.5 hours. – Sugar Shack

### **5.3.2.4 Wifi / Internet**

**May 2024:** Both Vodafone and Digicel have offices in the center of town near the fresh market. You can also purchase top up cards for both providers at most of the grocery stores.

Vodafone charged 200VT for the SIM card and I bought a 7GB 25 day top up for 1000VT.

Digicel charged 200VT for the SIM card and I also bought a 6GB 30 day top up for 1200VT.

Be sure to get the Data, Phone/Text plan if you want to make calls. I misunderstood the lady and got only a data package which forced me to buy more top up cards to make calls. —Sugar Shack

### **5.3.2.5 Visitor Center**

**May 2024:** The visitor center is located in the blue building across the street from the fresh market. They are super helpful and very welcoming. Stop in to say “hello.” Maree can be reached 730.8241, 503.5229, [mkiel@vanuatu.travel](mailto:mkiel@vanuatu.travel). Her door is often closed because they run AC so knock and walk in. – Sugar Shack

### **5.3.3 Provisions**

**May 2024:** In the center of town is the large fresh market. The big days are Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. There are several other smaller fresh markets around the large market (one block either way).

There are dozens of small grocery/Chinese stores that offer eggs, fresh bread, can goods, etc...They all offer a variety of goods so if you don't find what you are looking for go to another store.

WARNING: The eggs in Lenakel are not always fresh and we found more than 50% were bad. This reported by several cruisers and our experience.

**Butcher:** Tahatar Butchery +678.710.0649, +678.777.2120 blue building on side street north of fresh market. There is also another butcher, no sign across the street on the corner.

**Bread rolls and French Bread:** many of the Chinese stores sell bread rolls and French baguettes. Sometimes you have to go to the markets on the street parallel to the fresh market (north) but you'll find them and they are wonderful!

**Liquor Store** is located north of the fresh market. If your back is to the market, the ocean in front of you, turn right and it will be on your left-hand side. It is an unmarked white building just 300m from the market. It is super expensive so you must really want something to buy it here. – Sugar Shack

### **5.3.4 Restaurants**

**May 2024:** There's a little restaurant behind the large fresh market (near the barber shop) that offers a nice variety of foods and beverages. Prices 500-800VT. Hours: 1000-1630 Mon-Sat, Sun. 1000-1430.

There is another restaurant called Dino's Restaurant and Catering. We did not find them as tasty as the one behind the market. +678.768.6507. Hours: Mon-Fri: 0800-1900, Sat: 0800-Midday. – Sugar Shack

### **5.3.5 Activities**

**May 2024:** Jocelyn from Port Resolution, organized an all-day tour for a group of us where we took a taxi from Port Resolution to Lenakel, the Banyan Tree, The Baha'i House of Worship, and the John Frum village. Cost was 24,000 VT as it was from 7a-7p but well worth it and split between 4 of us.

The [World's Largest Banyan Tree](#) is located about 15 minutes outside of Lenakel. You will need a taxi driver and a guide. Be sure to ask for Samuel as your guide as he was terrific. The fee is 2000 VT per person. You walk down into the valley down a small dirt path before you arrive at the most majestic banyan tree you've ever seen. She is 200 meters wide, 80 meters tall and rumored to be over 300 years old. Tour is 45 minutes.

[Tanna Baha'i House of Worship](#), located 15-20 minutes from Lenakel, is the only temple in Vanuatu and was recently opened in 2022. +678.22419. It is truly one of the most beautiful and peaceful places you will find on the island. It is open to everyone, of all religions. A local guide is required. Free. – Sugar Shack

Volcano Tour to Mt Yasur. Easier to get to from Port Resolution, but if you are in Lenakel, try these tour operators:

- Isso +678 544.8751 (recommended by Tom Pole) from Black Sand Beach.
- Kalti +678.767.5841 [kaltigeorge90@gmail.com](mailto:kaltigeorge90@gmail.com)

Visit the Tourism office to ask about other fun activities as well. – Sugar Shack

### **5.3.6 Cruiser Reports**

**May 2024:** We took a taxi from Port Resolution where 5 people were in the truck cab and another 12 people riding in the back (which is an open-air seating on a piece of wood). It is a very long, bumpy ride (2 hours each way). We left at 0700, arrived around 0900 and left Lenakel at 1300 and got back to the Yacht Club around 1600. It sucked all of our energy. But it was an adventure and we were able to get more Vatu, SIM cards, and fresh produce.

Be sure to ask your driver to drive you, at least one way, by the volcano. It is truly amazing to see and a wonderful experience. You drive across the lava, and over a river. It is such a better experience than going around the bottom of the island.

Tafea Creative Industry & Cultural Market is located one block up from the fresh market in a bright blue building. There are some lovely crafts here. – Sugar Shack

## **5.4 Evergreen Resort Bay**

West side of Tanna island

### **5.4.1 Pass**

**2006:** The safest way to enter the bay is to stay well off shore until just in front of the White Grass Resort, easily recognized by the bright pink bougainvillea flowers, and large thatched buildings on the white colored heights.

Approach waypoint (19°26.406S / 169°12.979E).

Proceed to waypoint (19°26.485 S / 169°13.217E)

This will bring you mid-way between the shore reef and an isolated blind breaker reef marked by two hard red fishing buoys. From there proceed to the new yacht moorings, each with 3 yellow foam floats, at approx. 19°26.589S / 169°13.27E. – Sloepmouche

### **5.4.2 Anchorage**

**2006:** Since the bay is pretty small, we built 2 strong moorings for them. The small bay is protected by reef systems extending from the north and south points, and by some shallow reefs, which almost enclose the bay. There is still some swell that gets in, but a lot less than Lenakel. Swelly in strong S winds, good in SE, great in E (even in very strong trades), pretty good in NE.

The moorings are complimentary for patrons. Please check the mooring to ascertain it is well maintained and safe for your vessel! They hope to add another mooring in the future if the response is good. The bay is otherwise deep for anchoring, 60-70 ft. Dinghy landing can be tricky with the tidal difference and the uneven hard shore that dries, but they are hoping to make a dinghy channel up to the high tide line. – Sloepmouche

### **5.4.3 Activities**

**2006:** There's a waterfall/surfing beach tour, cultural tours of South Tanna, and one of the more unique tours, a boat trip up north to the Blue Cave pool, and a very interesting land cavern. This was our favorite. The

shoreline all the way up is very scenic, and geologically intriguing. The Blue Cave pool is accessed by swimming to the rock wall, duck diving a mere half meter (or just swimming in at low tide), into a gigantic dome-shaped cavern with a small round opening in the top where you see the green forest overhead, beams of sunlight streaming down striking the water's surface, and aqua blue water below you illuminated, like a lighted swimming pool, shimmering bright blue from the sun shining through the water from the outside. Magic! The land cave appears as a giant black hole in the white cliffs from a mile off. From the beach, you see it is an immense open cavern cut deep into the hillside, beautiful with the contrasting colors of light and dark, green vegetation and barren cliffs, bright flowers and somber shadows. You must do this on a sunny day for the best effect. Even with strong trade winds blowing, the shoreline is protected and the cave pool entrance was calm. There is interesting snorkeling and scuba diving (if you have your own gear) right in front of Evergreen along the drop-off of the shore reef system, or on the towering formations that create the isolated shallow reefs a few hundred meters from shore. – Sloepmouche

#### **5.4.4 Cruiser Report**

**2006:** While in Lenakel, we met Iaken, Chairman of the Tanna Tourism Association, and Merian (Maryann), also an active member. There is a small bay that they felt might be a good anchorage for yachts in front of Tanna Evergreen Bungalows, +678.558.8847, which they run in partnership. They were keen for us to come with the boat to give our opinion, as they would like to welcome yachts to the resort for drinks, meals, easy transport into Lenakel, and tours to attractions on this side of the island. We were interested too, thinking that this could be a good alternative to Lenakel Wharf area, which has a bad reputation as an anchorage.

Merian and Sam, the active managers, are very gracious and welcoming.

The resort has good basic facilities, good home-cooked meals, beer, and hard liquor bar. White Grass Resort ([www.whitegrasstanna.com](http://www.whitegrasstanna.com)), a short walk away, has a fancier restaurant and bar, more upscale landscaping, a small pool, and putting greens. – Sloepmouche

### **5.5 Black Sands / Lonalomo**

Located on the north west side of Tanna

#### **5.5.1 Anchorage:**

**2006:** Locals told us that when the winds are too rough for boats coming to Lenakel wharf, local boats go up to Black Sand beach, on the northwest side, where it's calmer. The approach is hazard free, and except for the rock in the middle close to the beach, which is easily seen since waves break on it, the area is all pure black sand bottom until just before the beach. We anchored fairly far out in about 35ft, south of the rock, and saw later we could have gone in closer, as the depth stays over 20ft quite close to the beach. There is still the ubiquitous swell, but not bad for a multi-hull. Apart from the scenery and the good holding, there is not much to do, and only a very primitive road with almost no traffic. – Sloepmouche

#### **5.5.2 General Services**

**Sept. 2023:** You will find the following here:

- Market small, general
- Bank
- Vodafone
- Fresh veg and fruit market near the wharf
- Butcher

### 5.5.3 Cruiser Report

**Sept. 2023:** There is a village close by that offers kava ceremonies (they chew, then spit) and a lovely beach. You can also dinghy 3-4km up the coast to a cave, enter at low tide (look for the ladder on the rocks and posts in the water). There is a buoy to tie the dinghy to.

You can take a volcano tour with Iso +678.767.5841 or you can ask Kalti George +678.767.5841, [kaltigeorge90@gmail.com](mailto:kaltigeorge90@gmail.com). – As reported to Sugar Shack

## 6 Aniwa

This small island is located north of Erromango and east of Tana Island.

### 6.1 Anchorage

**2009:** The anchorage indicated is 50ft or deeper, the bottom mostly hard rubble; any sand patches are tiny and superficial. Since the weather was flat calm, we anchored on a dead coral plateau area, also hard rubble, but only 10-20 ft deep, put out minimal chain, since the anchor and first part of the chain would catch in the rubble and hold, then buoyed the rest to keep it from sinking and tangling on the bottom.

Landing the dingy is not easy anywhere along the coast from the anchorage to the lagoon entrance, as it is jagged rock with barrier reefs and rock. We did find a way to get on the beach nearest to the anchorage. We took the dinghy into the lagoon at high tide, where you can get over the barrier reef anywhere where it wasn't breaking. There is a small dinghy pass on the north side of the entrance for lower tides. – Sloepmouche

### 6.2 Cruiser Report

**2009:** The lagoon is very shallow inside; we thought we saw a local rowing to us in his dugout, but closer, saw he was walking across! Not much of interest in the lagoon waters. The man walking was Miak (Mike), the manager of the lagoon area, who told us that anyone doing any activity in the lagoon area were supposed to pay 1000 vatu/person. Money only, no gifts or barter. If this fee was not paid, there was a fine, or if refused, they would "come take things from the boat". What a nice welcome...such a contrast to Port Resolution.

Why?? Because this is a Cruise Ship stop, and the ship pays the fee for its passengers. We agree that they should, since they impact resources, make money from using these resources, and they should pay the villagers to build facilities and groom the beaches. But because of this, the fee is imposed on everyone.

We elected not to go back to the boat to get money to pay the fee. From what we could see, there was nothing special about the area. The water clarity on the outside was great, 70-80ft, but the snorkeling was just so-so from the anchorage to the lagoon entrance. – Sloepmouche

## 7 Erromango Island

### 7.1 Dillon's Bay (west side)

Locals sometimes refer to Dillon's Bay as "William's Bay". This is the largest of the villages on the island.

#### 7.1.1 Anchorage

**June 2024: 18°49.267S / 169°00.714E.** Excellent holding in black sand. Calm anchorage, not roilly. However, there are many gusts up to 30kts from the river valley. It is a big anchorage for lots of boats. – Trinity

**2014: 18°49.06S / 169°00.72E.** Anchored in 6-16m sand. Exposed South thru West to NW. There is plenty of room to anchor in sand in any depth you wish and access the village is via the river mouth. – Reflection

**Sept. 2012: 18°49.271S / 169°00.696E.** Anchor north of the river off the big beach. Wind protection from N to S, exposed to the W. 10m depth. The wind funnels through V of the land. Very calm but windy. – Chesapeake

**2010:** The anchorage has constant swell, more or less exaggerated depending on wind and swell outside. There can be accelerated gusts sweeping down the river valley.

The calmest place to anchor is on the south corner of the rocky beach, it's all black sand, and at least 20' deep close to the beach. Those that anchored farther out and in front of the river rolled more. – Sloepmouche

### **7.1.2 Activities**

**June 2024:** David is running the local Yacht Club and he makes best efforts to visit all arriving sailing boats. He offers a village tour for 500 Vatu/pp, cave visit with human skulls for 1,000 Vatu/pp, Simple local dinner 1,000 Vatu/pp. – Trinity

**Sept. 2014:** We stopped in Dillon's Bay on the west side of Erromango. David, our local village guide took us on a hike to some nearby skull caves. We scrambled over rocks, crossed a stream and through the forest on a steep ascent for fifteen minutes to reach the cave.

In the first cave, handprints are painted all around the cave, with human remains at the end of one of the passages. We saw skulls of two chiefs and their wives. David told us one of the chiefs was his mother's grandfather. The area around the cave is a special family place where they often come on Sunday afternoons to relax and barbecue around a firepit. – Sophie

**2010:** Joseph told us about a **waterfall**, less than 2 hr walk over flat ground, some shallow river crossings, passed gardens and wild fruit trees with stops to sample, passed clear deep pools, and only the last 10 mins climbing up a small gorge to the fall and large pool. Joseph is a good storyteller who remembers a lot of history and legend. For the very adventurous, climbing to the top of the fall, there are more pools and falls.

Joe, the chief's son, guided us, in our dinghy, to some burial caves up the coast about a mile and a half. After some incantations to ask the spirits' permission, we entered to see many human bones and skulls. One flat stone was used as the "death bed" for the dying. There are also "treasures", possessions that were buried with the owners. Joe and others are hoping for government funding or archeologists to come and carefully excavate and preserve these burial caves as museums. There are caves further up the coast with ancient handprints painted or stenciled on the walls. – Sloepmouche

### **7.1.3 Cruiser Reports**

**Sept. 2023:** There is a lovely village that grows lots of vegetables. There is a small yacht club that offers village tours. Ask for David and he will take you to the cave of bones, the rock table that Rev. Williams was cooked up on and more. He was asking 500VT/pp. – As reported to Sugar Shack

**2017:** The village is in great need of supplies, clothing, kitchen items (pots, pans, cups, utensils), school supplies, books, torches, fishing gear, staples (flour, milk, sugar), toys. – Navigator

## **7.2 Ponamias Bay**

Located at the top of the island.

### **7.2.1 Anchorage**

**June 2024: 18°37.823S / 169°02.790E.** We tried to anchor without success, our good 33kg Ultra anchor could not dig into the hard ground at all. – Trinity

**July 2019: 18°37.822S / 169°02.79E.** The anchorage at Ponamias Bay is very small but surprisingly well protected from trade winds. We had trouble setting the anchor, though. Took 4 tries. We thought the holding would be good as there is a river at the head of the bay so there should have been good mud. But if it is soupy mud the Rocna doesn't grab so well. – Eagle's Wings

## 7.3 Sowki Bay

### 7.3.1 Anchorage

**2014: 18°43.42S / 169°00.07E.** Anchored in 6-16m in sand. Exposed South thru West to NW winds and swell. Anchor in front of the small river under the cliffs, the reef will be to both your port and starboard but there is plenty of swing room. – Reflection

## 7.4 Port Narvin

### 7.4.1 Anchorage

**2014: 18°44.72S / 169°12.53E.** Anchor in 6-16m of sand. Exposed East thru North to NE wind and swell. Anchor as far in the bay as possible watching out for the coral reef the farther in you get go. – Reflection

### 7.4.2 Cruiser Report

**2014:** Port Narvin does not get many visitors, but the villagers are extremely friendly. Be sure to ask to see the stone carvings about Captain Cook and the FIRST shells of Kava from the legend of the marriage of Kava and the Coconut Palm in the village Ranulevie. – Reflection

# 8 Efate Island

## 8.1 Tukutu Bay

South west side of Efate

### 8.1.1 Anchorage

**2009: 17°42.58S / 168°10.67E.** In about 25' between coral heads. Favor the east side of the bay. Good light needed to see the coral reef that sticks out quite a bit from the shore. A convenient anchorage just west of the infamous Devil's Point.

Waters can be very rough as strong trade winds and currents can make it quite choppy. If you want to take a rest before rounding Devil's point (going to Port Vila) this is a good spot. The whole bay is pastureland with a few new constructions going on. – Sloepmouche

## 8.2 Port Vila

### 8.2.1 Pass

There are 2 passes into Port Vila. The North and the South Pass. If your mast is 19m or taller you cannot go below the wire (see below). So, pick your pass based on your mast height and depth.

North Pass:

- Quarantine anchorage, **17°44.275S / 168°18.597E** which is closest to the North Pass. If this is your first Vanuatu stop, then you have to anchor here.
- As you enter the North pass you will see a red flashing aerial beacon.
- There is another laser lead light with 3 colors. If you see the white light you are inline, if you see the red light you are north of the line and if you see the green light you are south of the line.
- If you have reservations, tie up to the Yachting World Sea Wall or fuel wharf, or swing moorings, and if your mast is under 19m high then use the North Pass.

Southern Pass

- Call Harbor Master on VHF16 prior to entering. If they do not respond after several tries, proceed with caution.
- This is dredged to 4m at 0 tide and is marked with red and green cans. Any yacht with a depth less than 4m can enter the south pass.
- You must call Port Vila Harbormaster on VHF 16 or 12 prior to entering to ensure there is no commercial traffic using the pass (they have right of way). If nobody answers, then proceed with caution, slowly
- This provides best access to the mooring balls (but you cannot accept a mooring unless you are cleared into the country already).

**LIMITED OVERHEAD CLEARANCE:** There is a wire that leads from the shore at about **17°44.62S / 168°18.80E** to **17°44.63S / 168°18.67E** at the middle the clearance is 23m. It is illegal to cross under the wire if your mast is 19m or higher. If you damage the wire you will be forced to replace the wire and will incur a significant fine. If you are unsure, just enter the south pass. Use best judgement when passing under this wire.

**June 2024:** We approached the south pass at low tide around 0700. There was another boat in front of us who had been hailing Port Vila Harbormaster and got no response. After several tries, we both proceeded with caution and entered the mooring field. The pass is a bit narrow, but we had no problem with depth or width as we entered. It is well protected and fairly easy to pass. – Sugar Shack

**Verified 2024, 2010:** Approach to Port Vila from south: The Pango Pt lighthouse is not operational. There is a giant wind generator with a red light for air traffic about halfway along the arm of land between Mele Bay and Devils Point that may confuse you if you don't know what it is. – Sloepmouche

### 8.2.2 Anchorage

**LIMITED OVERHEAD CLEARANCE:** There is a wire that leads from the shore at **17°44.62S / 168°18.80E** to **17°44.63S / 168°18.67E** at the middle the clearance is 23m. It is illegal for yachts with a mast height 19m and higher to cross under the wire. If you break the wire, you will be forced to replace it and will incur a significant fine. Use best judgement when passing under this wire.

**Quarantine Area: 17°44.275S / 168°18.597E.** When you first arrive here you must go to the quarantine area near the yellow buoys. This is north of the lead markers in 5-20m of depth and the bottom is uneven. Holding is not great, so keep an anchor alarm watch.

Do not anchor within 100m of the helicopter landing pad **17°44.175S / 168°18.622E**. Move to the inner harbor once you are cleared in as the quarantine area can be roly (exposed to Westerly wind and swell).

**Yachting World has available moorings.** You can reach them on VHF 16 or +678.23.273, [yachtingworldmarinaportvila@gmail.com](mailto:yachtingworldmarinaportvila@gmail.com). Hours: Mon-Fri: 0800-1600; Sat. 0800-1200. It is best if you make arrangements before you arrive as the moorings may be full. You can only take a mooring if you have already cleared into Vanuatu.

Download and complete the [Yachting World Agreement](#), then email to the above email address to book a swing mooring or med mooring spot. Mooring services include: dinghy access, showers, laundry facility, trash.

Pricing June 2024 in Vatu: Yacht 2800/day and 18,000/wk, Catamaran and Motor Boat 3400/day and 23,000/week. Current pricing at <https://yachtingworld-vanuatu.com/yachtingworldpricelist.html>

Some boats opt to go into the main bay to tie up to the concrete wall. Be aware that it will be noisy and can invite crime.

### PORT VILA SHORE ACCESS:

Attention all cruisers who anchor in or near Port Vila. Please note the best place to go to shore is at Yachting World (there is a small fee). Please do not use the pontoons near shore as they are not for public use.

You can also use the concrete dock with the ladder at 17°73.834S / 168°31.312E. This is close to the market, supermarket. Please use a long painter so other cruisers and local boats can use this dock for refueling.

**PRIVATE PONTOON:** Specifically, please do NOT use the pontoon located in front of Nambawon Café at 17°44.1357S / 168°18.4348E as this is a private pontoon. The owner has complained that cruisers are using his pontoon and blocking access for his commercial operations. Access to his water spicket is also prohibited as he pays for water consumption. In addition, do not leave your rubbish here as it is private property.

There is no fee for dinghy landing or rubbish disposal if you are on a Yachting World mooring.

**June 2024:** As we approached the mooring field, a yellow local long boat came to assist us with the mooring. If there is another boat in front of you, wait for him to finish with them, then he will waive you over to a mooring. If you do not see the yellow long boat, call the marina on VHF16. – Sugar Shack

**June 2024:** We arrived in Port Vila and called Yachting World Marina on the VHF once we were inside the small harbor. They answered right away and a man came out in a skiff to help us tie up to a buoy. The Yachting World Dinghy Dock is by the restaurant which also belongs to the marina. The Marina office is by the fuel dock. – Moana

**Aug. 2023: 17°44.31S / 168°18.64E.** We anchored for three weeks in the “quarantine area” in front of town. You have to search a bit on the satellite maps for a good, not too deep but sandy spot. There were 10 boats in the anchorage when we arrived. The dinghy area is at the concrete dock in front of the park. – Eastern Stream

**Aug. 2023:** The staff at Yachting World Marina (Roselyn and her team) were very helpful with the mooring and formalities. The quarantine bay is fine with some good anchorage. This bay can be a bit noisy with clubs and jet skis. Once in the marina it is quite peaceful. – Dandelion

**Dec. 2018:** Anchoring in Port Vila harbor is difficult. The protected area behind Iririki Island is small and usually crowded. Holding is not good in most of the shallow parts of the outer harbour. The inner harbour is deep with the only available anchoring areas in 35 to 40 meters of water. The bottom is excellent holding but the black mud somehow manages to strip galvanizing from anchor chains and the remains of old ships can trap your anchor.

You will probably elect to pick up one of Yachting World's yellow moorings in the inner harbour or, if you prefer to have water and electricity and step-ashore access. Get a mooring float by the Yachting World sea wall and tie up to the mooring cleats ashore. Call Yachting World first on VHF 16 and they will help you get settled.

Yachting World crew in Yachting World's yellow boat will assist you to the seawall or mooring. Yachting world has planks you can use to walk ashore and there are electrical outlets, water taps, and garbage bins within easy reach. – CruisingVanuatu.com

**June 2018:** Cyclone Season in Port Vila: Sadly, there are very few well protected and safe places in the event of a Cyclone, and Port Vila harbour while it would not get sea action, the potential risk from local boats is considerable.

This Cyclone season every week for about 6 to 8 weeks winds 35-45knots came through with Cat 1 cyclone's coming within 50-100nm and they alternated between going down the East or West sides.

In the lead up to one of these events, a yacht dragged its mooring, and they simply dragged it back with a tender, mooring and all, so that boat is NOT real secure. When the wind switched, I spent all night up with the radar on keeping an eye on it, as it was suddenly upwind of me. – Screensaver

**June 2018:** For yachts visiting Port Vila, Vanuatu. During cyclone Pam 2015 a number of yachts were sunk in the inner harbour. They were abandoned and left to Vanuatu authorities to salvage and remove. – Sirius

**2014: 17°44.203S / 168°18.604E.** Anchor in 6-15m of broken coral, not very good holding. Exposed South thru West to North. This is simply a short stay anchorage while you clear customs. – Reflection

### **8.2.3 Yachtsmen Services**

#### **8.2.3.1 Cooking Gas (Propane & Butane)**

**June 2024:** Vanuatu Gas on Wharf Road, Port Villa, 25.959, 774.2844, [vanuatugas@vanuatu.com.vu](mailto:vanuatugas@vanuatu.com.vu) will refill AU and NZ bottles.

Geogas Vanuatu Ltd. (formerly called Origin Gas) can be reached +678.35390 or +678.22046, [www.ggaspacific.vu](http://www.ggaspacific.vu). There is a cement dock (**17°45.353S / 168°18.689E**) on the southern end of the inner harbor, where you can tie your dinghy, bring your bottle up and have it filled while you wait. They should have US, AU, NZ, and French valves.

Several cruisers took their bottles to Port Vila Hardware store in Numbatu (next to Au Bon Marche) Fill within 48-72 hours. Some cruisers had luck while others got an empty bottle back. – Sugar Shack

**Sept. 2023:** LPG would not fill a fiberglass bottle. They instructed the cruiser to go to Port Vila hardware up near the grocery store. – As reported to Sugar Shack

#### **8.2.3.2 Fuel (Diesel & Gasoline)**

**Yacht World Port Vila Boatyard** +678.23 417, +678.34.579, <https://port-vila-boatyard.business.site/>

Hours: Mon-Fri: 0830-1600, Sat: 0830-1200. They sell diesel, but gasoline has to be purchased across the street at Pacific Gas station.

Depth at the fuel dock: 2.1m at low tide and 3.8m at high tide. Watch the tide!

This is the only fuel dock and only place where you can buy duty free fuel (just prior to departure).

**June 2024:** The fuel dock is very small, maybe 2 meters wide, so place your fenders accordingly. —Sugar Shack

**Oct. 2023:** There is a nice fuel and water dock along with a lovely dinghy dock. – Dandelion

**Dec. 2018:** The fuel wharf is directly in front of the Yachting World office. You can fill up any time during office hours (there is a tide gauge indicating depth on the wharf). Their fuel is clean and the nozzle fits into normal sized yacht fuel ports. A water hose is available for cleaning up afterward or filling your water tanks (there is a small fee for water if you are not using the Yachting World harbour moorings or sea wall moorings). Be sure to take advantage of the Duty-Free price for Diesel when you fill up prior to departure. You will need to tell Customs you want to buy Duty Free fuel and they will give you the necessary forms.

If you have a large motor yacht needing a large amount of fuel or if your yacht's mast is too tall to go under the overhead wire, you must get your fuel via mini-tanker at the main wharf. Yachting world will assist you with this by getting the required permission from the harbour master and checking with the oil companies to find the best price for you. This will save you a considerable amount of time and effort at making all the arrangements is often complex and time consuming. – CruisingVanuatu.com

#### **8.2.3.3 Trash**

**June 2024:** If you use a Yachting World mooring or dock, you can dispose of your trash free of charge. The bins are located behind the Waterfront Bar and Grill. Ask Rosalyn what the charge is to dispose of your trash if you are not staying on a mooring or at the sea wall. – Sugar Shack

#### **8.2.3.4 Water**

**June 2024:** There is a water hose at the fuel dock which Yachting World clients can use free of charge. Just don't get your dinghy in the way of larger boats wanting to use the fuel dock. – Sugar Shack

### **8.2.4 Formalities**

**Quarantine Area:** **17°44.275S / 168°18.597E**. When you first arrive here you must go to the quarantine area near the yellow buoys. This is north of the lead markers in 8-20m of depth.

**Aug. 2024:** Upon arrival, we hailed port control on VHF 16 and they requested we anchor near the Q buoy and await officials. Anchoring took a few tries, but we ended up in 10m next to the buoy. Nobody appeared or responded to further calls so we dinghied over to the main port, tied to the pilot boat **17°45.405S / 168°18.043E**. We met customs, immigration & bio security and there is an ATM right there. Process took 2 hrs. We declared cheap Fijian beer and ended up paying about \$60USD duty, no option to seal for re-export. So, if you are going to declare more than 9L per person, it is cheaper to buy local. – Ariel

**July 2024:** Port Vila Departure: The Customs Seaport Border and Enforcement Office and Immigration Seaport Border Office are both located by the cruise ship wharf, about a 7-8-minute dinghy ride from the anchorage. Hours: Mon-Fri: 0800-1200 and 1300-1700. Officers are very friendly and helpful. Customs Agents: Kevin Joshua +678.775.8797 or Marcel Tokone +678.775.8581

Note: The Offices for Customs (Inland Revenue) and Immigration (passports) in town do not handle sea border clearances. So, use the offices near the wharf. It is a short dinghy ride. – Moana

**June 2024:** Call Customs and let them know your boat name and request formalities. This year, they required some cruisers to go by dinghy to the customs blue building and dock (by the cruise ship terminal) **17°45.24S / 168°18.003E** first, then they had to go to shore to Immigration and Biosecurity. But other cruisers were boarded by customs. Evidently, it varies by day. Either way, you have to call Customs first to ask their process at the date/time of your arrival (as it changes).

However, Customs was not very responsive on VHF16, many boats ended up calling Harbor Control and the Yacht Club to find out how to handle formalities. It seemed very well complicated.

Customs Tel: +678.22082, [www.customsinlandrevenue.gov.vu](http://www.customsinlandrevenue.gov.vu) Hours: Mon-Fri: 0800-1200 & 1300-1700.

Immigration and Biosecurity are located across from the fresh market downtown.

**Cruising Permit:** We checked in at Port Resolution and were told to stop at Port Vila to get a new cruising permit. The initial cruising permit that we got was only for the southern islands (Aneityum, Tanna, and Erromango). We had to get a new cruising permit for the middle islands (Efate to Santo) So, we showed up at Customs and presented our sealed envelope. He handed us a new cruising permit application and told us to bring it back the day we wanted to leave.

You are required to leave after you get your new cruising permit and you cannot get the permit outside of regular business hours (not convenient if you want to leave on the weekend). Once we returned, during business hours, we handed over the application and got a new, sealed envelope and were told to exchange it for a new permit in Luganville, Santo

We paid no port fees.

Officials Hours: Mon-Fri: 0730-1200 & 1300-1630. After hours 0630-0730 and 1630-1800 requires an additional 1,000vt/hour and 1800-0600 is 1500vt/hour. Holidays and weekends are 2000vt per officer with a minimum of 3-hour charge for all clearances outside of normal hours. – Sugar Shack

**WARNING: June 2024:** We had a very unfortunate incidence where a Customs Official came by in the evening and tried to collect money from us. He came by the day before our departure in the afternoon and asked for 8000VT and gave us “strange reasons” why he needed it. We refused to pay and reported him. He was later suspended for 6 months, but be aware. You do not have to pay customs on departure. If an official comes to your boat, contact the marina for assistance. – Masim’s

**June 2024:** We took the dinghy over to customs/immigration to clear out and we had to pay 8000 vatu for port fees. It took about 40 minutes to do both of these and all crew had to be present as they now have a digital scanner. – Jamala

**Aug. 2023:** Clearance is next to the commercial dock, where you find Customs, Immigration, and Bio Security. As customs did not answer their VHF, we went over there by dinghy. – Eastern Stream

**Aug. 2023:** We cleared in at Port Vila as comms were down at Tanna (right after the storm) Customs is a dinghy ride from the quarantine bay. The staff at Yachting World Marina were very helpful with formalities and Rosalyn is a hive of information. – Dandelion

## **8.2.5 General Services**

### **8.2.5.1 Bank & ATMs**

**June 2024:** You will find lots of ATMs in Port Vila. It's funny as there are very few on other islands but there are a bazillion here. The closest ATMs are ANZ which is in front of the Grand Hotel (from marina, turn left, walk 1.5 blocks on your left) and BSP across the street. Across the street from the Grand Hotel is a BSP which offers better exchange rates. They do have a 44,000 vatu limit so you may have to go several days if you require more or visit the bank instead. There are also ATMs in front of almost every Au Bon Marche.

There are also several No.1 Currency Exchange and Western Union locations. Hours: Mon-Fri: 0730-1630, Sat-Sun: 0730-1200. – Sugar Shack

### **8.2.5.2 Bathrooms and Showers**

**June 2024:** Yachting World Clients have use of their showers which offer free shampoo and conditioner. There are only 2 showers for a lot of clients and they are right next to the Waterfront Bar & Grill. – Sugar Shack

### **8.2.5.3 Beauty**

**June 2024:** Jenny Salon and Spa +678.22613, +678.711.3146, [jennysalonandspa.vanuatu@gmail.com](mailto:jennysalonandspa.vanuatu@gmail.com), Hours: Mon-Sat: 0800-1730, Sun: 0830-1530. This is not the norm for me, but my friend and I visited Jenny Salon and Spa for a manicure and pedicure. Mainly because we had black toes from walking and hiking on the black sand beaches and up the river bed in Aneityum. It was a clean, albeit small place, but they did a lovely job for a reasonable price. They did powder dip on our hands and gel on the toes and gave us a nice massage. The manicure did not last very long, it started chipping after 3 days, but the pedicure was lovely. – Sugar Shack

### **8.2.5.4 Bottom Cleaning Services**

**Oct. 2023:** Amos will swim out to the anchored yachts and inquire about cleaning the bottom of your boat. He does a good job and is very reasonably priced. +678.736.1835. – Marianda Dupie

### **8.2.5.5 Communications, Data & Phone**

**June 2024:** There are several Digicel popup small buildings downtown. Vodafone has an office downtown (left of the marina, past the fresh market). Hours: Mon-Fri: 0830-1730, Sat: 0830-1230. – Sugar Shack

### **8.2.5.6 Computers & Technology**

**June 2024:** We came across several technology stores, but did not go in them or use their services:

- IT Solutions Solar Power Communications +678.26933, +678.23800, [etech@etech.com.vu](mailto:etech@etech.com.vu), Hours: Mon-Fri: 0730-1700, advertised DELL, HP, Motorola, etc...
- Computer World +678.22233, Hours: Mon-Fri: 0730-1650, Sat: 0800-122
- SPIM, +678.26968, [www.spim.vu](http://www.spim.vu), Hours: Mon-Fri: 0730-1200 & 1300-1715, Sat: 0830-1130

### **8.2.5.7 Duty Free Supplies**

**June 2024:** Duty-Free Fuel can only be arranged with customs at the time of your departure in Port Vila. Contact Customs for the procedure. It is a significant savings, 22% off standard pricing.

Proud Duty-Free store is located downtown. +678.22393, [prouds@pacificretailing.com](mailto:prouds@pacificretailing.com), Turn left from the marina and it will be on the right-hand side.– Sugar Shack

**Sept. 2012:** DUTY FREE FUEL: Only during the clearing-out process at Customs can you secure a special permit to purchase duty free diesel fuel (22% discount off the regular price). This will greatly reduce the price of each liter of diesel fuel. Full price must be paid for gasoline at all times and locations.

You must pay full price for fuel (diesel and gasoline) prior to clearing-out of Vanuatu. It is very unlikely that you will find fuel for sale outside of Port Vila and Luganville. If you do locate fuel at a remote island it typically sells for over \$2.90 USD per liter (greater than \$11 USD per gallon).

Unfortunately, most yachts do not depart Vanuatu from Port Vila so duty free prices are seldom paid. – Yolo

#### **8.2.5.8 Haul out, Marina, Repair Facilities**

##### **Yachting World Marina**

+678.23273, [www.yachtingworld-vanuatu.com](http://www.yachtingworld-vanuatu.com), Hours: Mon-Fri: 0830-1600, Sat: 0830-1200

They offer moorings and med-moor tie to their dock. Be sure to make a reservation.

Services offered with moorings or dock include: trash, dinghy dock access, showers (free), and access to laundry. Staff are very friendly and helpful.

##### **Port Vila Boatyard**

+678.23 417, +678.35479, <https://port-vila-boatyard.business.site/> [info@portvilaboatyard.com](mailto:info@portvilaboatyard.com).

Admin: +678.36750, [admin@niconltd.co.nz](mailto:admin@niconltd.co.nz)

Hours: Monday-Friday: 0800-1600, Sat: 0800-1200.

Full service marine repair and hardstand storage. Cyclone moorings, marine chandlery. Hold up to 30 tons.

Services: repair, cleaning, anti-fouling, glassing, joinery, welding.

Sub-contractors: engine repairs

**June 2024:** Meg and Andy the owners of Yachting World marina are lovely people. – Jamala

**Dec. 2018:** Yachting World will be your home port in Port Vila for moorings (includes water), sea wall marina services (with water and electricity), furnished 2 bedroom air conditioned apartments with kitchen, laundry, internet, for some shore leave right in front of your yacht, diesel fuel, laundry, assistance with clearing in, and internet access. Yachting World is a distributor of the Cruising Guide to Vanuatu (available in the Connect Cafe). – CruisingVanuatu.com

**Sept. 2014:** They offer a full range of repair and caretaker services including cyclone certified moorings. The small repair job they did for me was carried out very expertly and at reasonable cost. All the employees are long serving. I watched them haul a catamaran and they had 2 divers in the water to ensure that everything was OK. Efate is not somewhere you would automatically think of when getting work done but my experience demonstrates that it is a location that should be on your list. – Noonsite

#### **8.2.5.9 Hardware**

**June 2024:** Wilco Hardware is the largest hardware store in Vanuatu. +678.35240, [www.wilco.com.vu](http://www.wilco.com.vu), Hours: Mon-Fri: 0730-1700, Sat: 0730-1200. Located on Teoma. They were closing when we arrived so we did not get a chance to look around, but it was pretty darn big!

Port Vila Hardware (next to the Au Bon Marche Numbatu) is really well stocked and they have very friendly staff. They had a small marine section, a large fishing section, loads of hardware and tools. – Sugar Shack

#### **8.2.5.10 Laundry**

**June 2024:** Yachting World offers laundry services (wash, dry, fold) for 1900 for 6kg, 24hr turnaround. If you have large items (blankets) they will separate from other laundry and charge for 2 loads. We were told that the laundry service was just marginal by another cruiser. – Sugar Shack

**June 2024:** Laundry cost 1900Vatu per load and takes 24 hours, but maybe longer if they are busy. – Jamala

### **8.2.5.11 Medical**

**June 2024:** There are several medical clinics and doctors very close to the marina.

- Novo Medical: Doctor: +678.26698, family health, vaccinations, visa medicals, urgent care, disease management, located just to the left of the marina
- Novo Medical: Dentist: +678.26696, implants, orthodontics, cosmetics, urgent care 24/7, located left of the marina
- Vanua Medical Clinic & Lab +678.23911, [www.facebook.com/vanuamedical](http://www.facebook.com/vanuamedical), across street from marina, Hours: Mon-Fri: 0700-1800, Sat: 0800-1200
- Lucky Thai Massage +678.541.2359, Hours: Sun-Sat: 0900-1700. offers a very relaxing massage for 1 hour 3000vatu. Located to the left of the marina

**Healthwise Pharmacy** (right across from the marina), +678.22707, Hours Mon-Fri: 0800-1700, Sat: 0800-1200, [www.facebook.com/healthwisepharmacyvanuatu](http://www.facebook.com/healthwisepharmacyvanuatu), are so very helpful. They replaced medications that were used, without a prescription and helped me find all of the necessary medical supplies. – Sugar Shack

**June 2024:** The pharmacy refilled our prescriptions medication, we only had to show them the package of what we already had onboard. – Trinity

**Aug. 2023:** Vanua Medical Clinic (just across the road from Yachting World) is a wonderful facility. We were told not to go to the public hospital. Dr. Benito and Carine Marchioi (the are French in spite of their Italian name). +678.75.23.911. The clinic is well equipped, all brand-new equipment including the gear to do blood tests, ultrasounds, and heart monitoring. The treatment did reinforce the need to carry health insurance as the bill was over 5,000vt for 3 visits. – Dandelion

**Aug. 2023:** The pharmacies sold us over the counter medicines when we brought in our old medicine boxes. – Eastern Stream

### **8.2.5.12 Safety and Theft**

**Aug. 2024:** Our boat, Peikea was the victim of the theft of the fuel tank and fuel pipe with the pump of her tender. She was raised on her davits while parked at the Yachting World Marina for five days. The thief boarded the boat at night while we slept. – Peikea

### **8.2.5.13 Post Office**

**June 2024:** The Vanuatu General Post Office is located on Teouma Street, +678.22000, [custservice@vanuatupost.vu](mailto:custservice@vanuatupost.vu), [www.vanuatupost.vu](http://www.vanuatupost.vu) Hours: Mon-Fri: 0730-1700, Sat: 0800-1200.—Sugar Shack

### **8.2.5.14 Shipping**

See section 1.8.8 for details on shipping to Yachting World and or visit [https://yachtingworld-vanuatu.com/yacht\\_mail\\_port\\_vila\\_vanuatu.html](https://yachtingworld-vanuatu.com/yacht_mail_port_vila_vanuatu.html)

### **8.2.5.15 Tourism Office**

**June 2024:** The Vanuatu Tourism office center +678.22813, Hours: Mon-Fri: 0800-1700, Sat: 0800-1200, [www.vanuatu.travel/en/index.php](http://www.vanuatu.travel/en/index.php), Left of the marina, past the fresh market, on right side bottom floor of building. Super helpful. – Sugar Shack

### **8.2.5.16 Transportation**

**June 2024:** The buses and taxis are pretty reliable. There are two types of buses. The “mini buses” have a red “B” in the license plate. You do not negotiate the price with the mini-bus, you just ask the driver if he is going where are you going and you pay VT150. If you are on a regular bus, you must negotiate the price and ensure the driver is going to your location. The Taxis are probably 3-4x as much, but still reasonable. There are no official bus stops. You just have to waive your hand at them. Half of them will stop.

**e-Bikes** +678.750.0360, [www.ebikesVanuatu.com](http://www.ebikesVanuatu.com), Hours: Mon-Fri: 0730-1700, Sat: 0730-1200.

**Car rentals:** World Car rentals +678.26515. We rented a mini-moke from them and had so much fun touring the entire island. (24hrs 10,000VU). Another car rental place: On Wheels +678.777.1646. – Sugar Shack

**June 2024:** Buses are plentiful and cost 150 Vatu per trip/per person. Just flag one down. The license plate has a red B on it. – Jamala

### **8.2.5.17 Wifi & Internet**

**June 2024:** If you are a client of Yachting World, they will offer free wifi. The restaurant also offers free wifi, but it was pretty weak and only allowed for 5mb of download. – Sugar Shack

**Dec. 2018:** Yachting World has a brand new "WiFi" Connect Cafe Cyber Yacht Centre where you can check out the latest Vanuatu weather information, surf the web or get your email. WiFi works for any boat at the wharf and on closer moorings (and out front and inside the cafe). – CruisingVanuatu.com

### **8.2.6 Provisions**

This is the best and really the only town to provision.

**June 2024:** There are loads of great things to shop in Port Vila. This is what we found (not all inclusive):

- Au Bon Marche Central, +678.24276, Hours: Sun-Mon: 0600-1930, [www.aubonmarche.co](http://www.aubonmarche.co), located on Kumul Hwy, close to Yachting World (left of the marina, on the right. Next to fresh market)
- Au Bon Marche Numbatu +678.222945, Hours: Sun-Mon: 0600-1930, [www.aubonmarche.co](http://www.aubonmarche.co), Located south of downtown. This one has a much better selection and is bigger than the one downtown. From Marina, turn right, walk 15 minutes
- Fresh Market is HUGE and amazing! The best days to go are Mon, Wed, and Fri but they are open Tues, Thurs, and Sat. A really great market!
- Buocherie Traverso +678.26899, Located Teoma St, Hours: Mon-Fri: 0700-1800, Sat-Sun: 0700-1200,
- There are several "wholesale" markets near the fresh market and the Au Bon Marche downtown.
- Calvo Store +678.22263, Located on Kumul Hwy, hours: Mon-Fri: 0600-1830, Sat: 0600-1800. Decent market with a pretty decent large, walk in wine cooler. Decent selection
- Bakery Le Fournil De Vila +678.595.8228, Located on 40 Kumul Hwy, Hours: Tue-Sat: 0700-1800, Sun: 0700-1300 0700
- Bakery: Crave +678.23437, Located on Elluk Rd, Hours: Mon-Fri: 0700-1500
- Bakery: Brother Bakery and Bread, +678.34567, Hours: 24/7, Located Route de la Teouma
- Bakery: La Parisienne Café @ La Parisienne Bakery, +678.22493, Hours: Mon-Fri: 0600-1400, Sat: 0600-1200, Located on Teoma Street
- Bakery: Leslie's Café & Coffee Shop +678.22493, Hours: 0630-1530, Sat: 0630-1200
- Butcher: Vanuatu Butchery, Hours: Sat-Fri: 0730-1900, Sun: 0730-1400. +678.22626 is the number for the larger Vanuatu Butchery but they can probably help
- Butcher: South Pacific Meats: +678.22123, [spms@vanuatu.com.vu](mailto:spms@vanuatu.com.vu), Located on Tebakor/Lini Hwy., Hours: Mon-Fri: 0800-1200 & 1400-1700, Sat: 0800-1130
- Butcher: Calvo Butchery +678.22263, Hours: Mon-Sat: 0600-1830
- Liquor: Vila Bottle Shop +678.22240, Hours: Mon-Fri: 0830-1700, Sat: 0800-1200
- Liquor: Bottle O located in Nambatu just past the large Au Bon Marche.
- Liquor: Libation Trading +678.552.2441, [www.libationtrading.com](http://www.libationtrading.com) Hours: Mon-Fri: 0830-1800, Sat: 0830-1130. Decent selection of wine and pre-mixed cocktails, no beer.

There are loads of other stores, just walk around and enjoy.

Eggs seem to be a problem in Vanuatu. Most of the eggs we got in Tanna were bad. The best place to get eggs is Au Bon Marche in Port Vila. – Sugar Shack

**May 2024:** There is a little French shop between the marina and the market. It is a small shop with a little but great butcher. They will allow you to cut the size you want. – Eastern Stream

**Oct. 2023:** Au Bon Marche is a nice supermarket just 15-minute walk up the hill. – Dandelion

**Aug. 2023:** The best supermarket for Provisions on the more western stuff, is Au Bon Marche, just outside the city center. Pass the marina and follow up the road until you see the supermarket. There are a lot of small buses that can bring you back to the town center. All the other supplies and main staples (rice, sugar, trading goods) can be purchased at the town center. – Eastern Stream

### **8.2.7 Restaurants**

**June 2024:** We had the opportunity to dine at a few places that we found rather enjoyable:

- Waterfront Bar & Grill, +678.23490, located on the water near the mooring field. Hours: Sun-Sat: 1130-1430 & 1730-2230. Little pricey and the food was ok, they had live music on the weekends, happy hour, and delicious cocktails. Try a passionfruit mojito.
- Banyan Beach Bar +678.760.5268, Location: left from the marina, about 15-20-minute walk, hours: Wed-Sun: 1500-2330. Super beautiful beach bar with loads of seating, great atmosphere, large, tasty portions, friendly staff.
- Food trucks are located across the street from Banyan Beach Bar (17°44.02S / 168°18.40E). There are about 6 different places to dine at (the burgers are the best on the far right) and there is a fun little bar on the far left.
- The fresh market has lots of people who prepare local meals that are very reasonably priced.
- Crave Port Vila is a bakery and lunch stop. +678.23437, [crave@vanuatu.com.vu](mailto:crave@vanuatu.com.vu), Hours: Mon-Fri: 0700-1500. Located on Elluk Road.
- Stone Grill +678.546.4506, Hours: Sun-Sat: 1130-2130. Happy hour with a great view
- The Rossi restaurant +678.29661 +678.776.6676, [rossirestaurantportvila@gmail.com](mailto:rossirestaurantportvila@gmail.com), Hours: Sun-Sat: 0700-2100. Located right on the water, great atmosphere

There really are tons of places to select from. Be adventurous and enjoy the selection. – Sugar Shack

**June 2024:** The Waterfront grill was welcoming, good food, and service. – Jamala

**May 2024:** Stone grill Restaurant +678.546.4506, Hours: Sun-Sat: 1130-2130 [ericchatelain2@hotmail.com](mailto:ericchatelain2@hotmail.com). Food served on a stone, preheated at 400C. Located next to the NZ & German embassy. It is excellent.

The Au Bon Supermarket, up the hill, has a really tasty lunch take away before noon and the French pate for reasonable pricing. – Trinity

**May 2024:** Stone Lounge is a restaurant grill and offers a variety of cocktails. Located on top of Port Vila Bay. +678.555.0609, [lilichong1981@gmail.com](mailto:lilichong1981@gmail.com). Pacific Rally members receive a free shot of their choice. Ask for Mameselle Lili. – Sugar Shack

**Aug. 2023:** For a treat, visit the Stone Grill restaurant as it is very good. It is at the southern end of the township in Port Vila, off Route de la Teouma on the road opposite the NZ Embassy. Once on the road, it is easy to find – at the end on the left. We shared a fish and beef stone grill platter that you cooked on a hot plate at the table. Good service and a nice view over the harbour. Reasonably priced. – Katoa 2

**Oct. 2023:** The restaurant at Yachting World is really good. – Dandelion

**Aug. 2023:** There are several restaurants in the town center. We spent a lot of time at Rossi Restaurant for the happy hours. We went to Banyan Beach Bar for the pizza and their happy hour and we visited the Thai food place at Pad Thai Port Vila. – Eastern Stream

### **8.2.8 Activities**

**June 2024:** The Beach Bar at Mele Bay +678.560.1132, offers happy hour from 1700-1800, a fire show on Friday nights which is amazing (book in advance) and a 'circus' show on Sunday nights (not so spectacular). The

bus is \$150/each way. Make a reservation for the show, go early and eat dinner, and ask your bus driver to return to pick you up around 830pm.

Be sure to bring cash as they use credit card like a cash advance. So, you ask for “X” dollars, get charged 3.5% from them plus the cash advance fee from your card.

Yumi Tours +678.774.4382 offers lots of tours to Nemo city, the large clam shells, around Efate, and more. [www.facebook.com/YumiToursVanuatu](http://www.facebook.com/YumiToursVanuatu).

**e-Bikes** +678.750.0360, [www.ebikesVanuatu.com](http://www.ebikesVanuatu.com), Hours: Mon-Fri: 0730-1700, Sat: 730-1200.

National Museum of Vanuatu +678.22129, Hours: Mon-Fri: 0900-1630, Sat: 0900-1200. It is a little antiquated, but they offer free demonstrations: sand art, weaving, and traditional instrument playing.

We rented a mini-Moke from [World Car rentals](#) (+678.26515) for \$11,500 24hrs. We went clockwise from Port Vila. Here is where we stopped, all in one day (0830-1830):

- Secret Garden and Cultural Center – this is closed indefinitely.
- [Tanna Coffee Café](#) and distribution Center – fun coffee tour near Mele.
- [Mele Cascade Falls](#) (Tebakesa Spring Pool and bar). WOW a must visit. Super beautiful, crystal clear waters, dozens of cascading falls, restaurant, bar, changing rooms, showers, entry 1500/pp and 3000 to hike to falls (you don’t have to do the hike, just enjoy the cascades below)
- [Roawai Turtle Snorkeling Tours](#) NE Efate, +678.711.3607, snorkel 4 areas: coral restoration, nemo city, turtles, and giant clams. Afterwards she served a light lunch. Super nice. 2,000 VT/pp and they supply snorkel gear.
- WWII Museum, a handful of WWII relics, dirty, unorganized, and disappointing. Mostly a collection of old bottles. Located near Tanoliu Village. 500VT/pp
- WWII Snorkeling +678.777.7205, the planes a bit further north (17°31.67S / 168°24.52E) is another place that was closed, but they say you can snorkel the crash-landed corsair plane that is fully intact.
- [Top Rock Look Out](#) – Located near Siviri Village and I highly recommend! Super beautiful grounds, well kept, organized, and has clear signage. The lookout is breathtaking and they have a small local eatery to have lunch. Then go for a dip in the crystal-clear waters teeming with fish and explore the underwater cave! 1500VT / pp and well worth it!
- Natural hot Springs – these are hot, hot, hot. (17°32.065S / 168°26.41E.) They are not “maintained” but truly natural and very hot. Free.

We missed the following places, we ran out of time, but they might be of interest to you...

- Vanuatu Jungle, Zipline and sky bridge +678.555.0423, near Mele, <https://vanuatujianglezipline.com>
- 83 Islands Rum Distillery, +678.755.0083, about 20-25 min east of Port Vila, [www.vanuatu.travel/au/83-islands-distillery](http://www.vanuatu.travel/au/83-islands-distillery)
- Aelan Chocolate Factory +678.22554, about 20-25 min east of Port Vila (near the distillery), <https://aelanchocolate.com/>

Super fun day. We made it all the way around the island, with our above stops (0830-1830). – Sugar Shack

**June 2024:** We really enjoyed the fire show and saw it a few times. We had an opportunity to talk with the owner who informed us that the performers used to live on the streets and were a bit of troublemakers. They were taught the skills to perform with fire and have been living off their show ever since. They are now teaching other less fortunate young people to help them in their future. – Moana

**June 2024:** The Lucky Thai massage place located next to the Yacht Club gives excellent 1-hr massages for \$3000Vatu. – Trinity

**Dec. 2023:** [Vanuatu Eco Tours](#) offers 15-25% discounts for [Island Cruising Members](#). – Sugar Shack

**Oct. 2023:** Don’t miss the Cultural Center Museum (<https://vanuatuculturalcentre.gov.vu>), which is a bit tired and rusty, but the tour and the lecture by the guide is well worth it.

The next bay to the north, Mele Beach and Hideaway island have great fire shows on weekends, well worth the visit. There is good diving around the island but you must pay a fee to the lodge prior to diving. – Dandelion

**Jan. 2018:** Friends had kindly offered to take us for a bit of drive around the North and Eastern side of Efate (Port Vila mainland) which was nice to get to see the other side and away from the main tourist area.

It turned out to be a bit of a relaxed resort crawl with a tourist slant which suited me 100%. We stopped at a number of other places as we wandered along the coast road. On one outing, we stopped at a turtle farm.

There is also at least one waterfall and fresh water lagoon where we stopped for a swim. – Screensaver

### **8.2.9 Cruiser Report**

**Oct. 2023:** The town is very functional with just about anything available. A good boardwalk with artisanal market and restaurants and a dive center. – Dandelion

**Dec. 2018:** The Yachting World and Waterfront Bar and Grill complex, with its sheltered location and deep-water access provides a lively and attractive yachting center and between the two complementary businesses, they make Port Vila one of the Pacific's most comfortable and hospitable destinations for cruising yachts.

The staff at the Yachting World office are very helpful and can assist you with information, fuel, water and laundry. Just ask if you need help with anything. – CruisingVanuatu.com

**June 2018:** Pricing has also gone through the roof and is equal or more expensive than Sydney. Over and above the \$80aud for the boat on arrival, they also charge \$1.10aud/day just for being in Vanuatu waters (anywhere) add to that Visa costs @ about \$20aud/month, internet at least \$20/month, a mooring about \$30aud/day, and you won't get much change out of \$1k/month, definitely no change for the 1st month.

Depending whether you're going or coming, Port Vila is the best place to restock your food supplies in many miles. While it is expensive, most things can be bought here if you're patient. I was nearly ready to depart here when I discovered another leaking skin fitting. While it wasn't bad, pulling Screensaver out of the water after I leave here would be a long way off, so reluctantly I made plans to haul Screensaver out.

I could have got the new Skin fittings here but decent hose was not readily available and out of the US, would have taken longer along with bigger freight bill so in the end they came out of Ozy and it only took 4 days before it was in my hand. – Screensaver

## **8.3 Mele Bay**

### **8.3.1 Anchorage**

**Aug. 2023: 17°41.54S / 168°15.92E.** Anchored in sand close to the shore and behind a reef. – Eastern Stream

**Jan. 2018:** Anchored in 5m of sand. This anchorage is about 18nm from Port Vila. Mele Bay is one of the few easy anchorages with good holding on sand and relatively well protected. Many of the other spots you might want to anchor are either too deep at 30+ meters or there are moorings there. – Screensaver

**Mar. 2017:** Mele Bay - Hideaway Island is not a safe anchorage. While it's fine in good weather overnight or as a day anchorage, unless one gets very close to shore it's actually too deep to anchor there, then if a westerly comes through a vessel will then get dangerously close to shore. Not a place to leave a vessel unattended. Beach Bar is great fun but they now do have a jet-ski operator there.

We actually rescued that large red catamaran from the beach a few years ago after it was washed ashore in the night when it was left unattended. Had it not been for the immediate assistance of Vanuatu Yacht Services and Marine Surveyors and Consultants with the help of the people of Mele village that we organized to help; the vessel would have been a total loss. I am concerned that the information presented on Noonsite regarding Mele bay being a safe anchorage will lead to another yacht being washed ashore there. – Port Vila Boatyard

### **8.3.2 General Services**

#### **8.3.2.1 Boat Cleaning & Assistance**

**Sept. 2024:** If you need assistance on your boat or an extra set of hands, reach out to John “Tonga” Numalo and his friends. He can help you with bottom cleaning and anything you might need help with if you need some extra muscle. +678.541.9035. – Pitufa

#### **8.3.3 Restaurant**

**June. 2024:** The Beach Bar is a restaurant / bar and grill that is really good and on the beach. The pizzas are tasty and made to order. Be aware that it is a bit pricey and they only accept cash.

If you pay by credit card it is more like a cash advance where they charge you 3.5% and give you cash to pay your bill. So much better to just bring cash. –Sugar Shack

**Jan. 2018:** There is a nice beach, bar, food, and you can also sit and watch to sun go down. They have a few different themes going on at the Beach Bar with a movie night shown on a big screen outside on the beach, a fireworks night, live music. – Screensaver

#### **8.3.4 Activities**

**May 2024:** The Beach Bar +678.560.1132, [www.vanuatubeachbar.com](http://www.vanuatubeachbar.com), Hours Mon-Sun 0830-2030. They do a beautiful Fire show on Friday nights at 1900 and a circus show on the beach on Sunday nights. The shows are free but they do pass a donation basket.

The Hideaway Island Resort on Mele Island offers day passes for 2000 VT per person. Be sure to book in advance.

Yumi Tours offers many tours, but we highly recommend The Blue Lagoon & Eden River Tour.

<https://www.facebook.com/YumiToursVanuatu/>, Vincent was our guide and his contact +678.738.3568, The tour took 6 hours and they also do around Efate tours as well. – As reported to Sugar Shack

#### **8.3.5 Cruiser Report**

**May 2024:** Mele Bay is a great place to anchor, it is deep, and close to shore. The local resort welcomes cruisers, will allow you to leave your dinghy on the beach. They do request that you leave your dinghy far enough away from the beach/stage area that any sparks or fire from the show won't set your dinghy alight.

You can have drinks, dine, and enjoy the show. Book ahead. – Sugar Shack

**Aug. 2023:** There is a fire dance show on Friday nights at the Beach bar. – Eastern Stream

**Oct. 2014:** Beach bar has good food & entertainment. Port Vila market is only 15 mins away by public bus at 150 vatu. Quiet anchorage without all the jet skis. – Pelican

**Oct. 2011:** They claim to have the only underwater post office. You can tuck in to the NW of the island and then swim on the reef, which is a Marine Sanctuary..... you do, of course, have to pay for this and/ or landing on the island / using any facilities. It is possible to land on the main beach and I believe there is a very good 'Pizza Place' down here. You can also walk from here up the road to The Cascades or The Botanical Gardens (Secret Gardens). We did a half day at each and it worked as a nice day out. – Mr. John

## **8.4 Black Sands Bay**

### **8.4.1 Anchorage**

**2014: 17°42.625S / 168°17.426E.** Anchor in 6-16m of broken coral. Exposed South thru west winds and swell. There is good holding in the black sand and it is better to anchor close in to the beach bar. But, be mindful of the fact that they have powered water toys in use around this area. – Reflection

## **8.4.2 Cruiser Report**

**2014:** There is a resort with a restaurant, bar, small market, and secret garden. Level walk to the Mele Falls. Friday night they have fire dancing. – Reflection

## **8.5 Port Havannah Area**

### **8.5.1 Esema Bay**

#### **8.5.1.1 Anchorage**

**Sept. 2024:** **17°33.147S / 168°16.942E** in 10m sand and mud with good holding. At high tide you can go in your dinghy into the mangrove river which is really nice. – Trinity

**July 2024:** There are four usable buoys, as local people told us. Those buoys are usable by cyclone period too. On July 20, 2024, sv Masim's dove to verify the quality of those big buoys and anchorage of the buoys as well. If you prefer anchoring, it is sand and mud. Anchor in sand and mud holds really well.

- First buoy: 17°33.0560S/168°16.9701E, 13m depth  
There is a big rope installed on the buoy, usable.  
Anchorage and chain are good quality. It's the best buoy among the four buoys.
- Second buoy: 17°33.0059S / 168°16.8641E  
Buoy without attachment from above, to moor you have to place a rope underneath.  
Anchorage and chain was not verified.
- Third buoy: 17°33.0112S / 168°16.7458E, Depth 27m  
Requires putting a rope on the top ring.  
Anchorage and chain are good quality, really robust.
- Fourth buoy: 17°33.0863S / 168°16.8976E. Depth 16m  
Rope present, however it weakened.  
Requires passing a rope through the free ring.  
Anchorage and chain are less quality than the third one.

Report provided by Masim's

**June 2024:** **17°33.026S / 168°16.953E** in 15m, good holding. Anchorage is dead calm and super quiet. – Moana

**Sept. 2012:** **17°33.493S / 168°16.457E**. Anchored in 15-30' with good protection, fine coral sand bottom. Not much to see ashore. – Chesapeake

#### **8.5.1.2 Cruiser Report:**

**June 2024:** The Moso Hotel has a nice restaurant / bar. +678.776.7459, [www.themosovanuatu.com](http://www.themosovanuatu.com) – Moana

### **8.5.2 Napkoa Creek Anchorage**

#### **8.5.2.1 Anchorages**

**Aug. 2023:** The anchorage at the top of the harbour between Moso island & the mainland is good. – Katoa 2

**June 2018:** **17°36.235S / 168°14.61E**. Anchor in 18m. – Screensaver

**Sept. 2012:** Ai Creek in Havannah Harbour was only twenty miles north of Vila but would allow us to make the island of Epi in a long day sail. Unfortunately, the weather closed in on us and we were stuck in Ai Creek for four long blustery days with the dinghy up and nowhere to go. – Shango

**2009:** Ai Creek is a tricky anchorage in 50' good sand with coral heads and the bottom slopes quickly to 70-80'. – Sloepmouche

### **8.5.2.2 Cruiser Reports**

**Nov. 2023:** Ashore you will find the wreckage of a light aircraft which having run out of fuel, crash-landed on the road to Port Vila some years ago. You can get to Port Vila on the road leading to the bay and you will find many buses (red "B" on the license plate) bring day guests to the beach. – As reported to Sugar Shack

**Aug. 2023:** We found Port Havannah to be a great place to take visitors who flew into Port Vila. It is an easy sail north, although you have to pass through the Devil's Point twice! Once you arrive in the harbour it is calm.

The passage is lovely to just do a dinghy ride through or snorkel through with the current (and good for kids too). There is a little sandy spit away from the villages that you can have a fire and BBQ on and watch the sunset. Our friends loved visiting the villages. We also took them for a trip to the village opposite the passage to see the super yacht "Blue Gold" left high and dry after a cyclone made for great conversation. – Katoa 2

**2009:** Take your dinghy into the river estuary (at the point of land behind the moorings of Coongoola Cruises) and leave your dinghy at the bridge. Cross the road and walk in the riverbed for 30-45min. You will find several nice swimming holes and mini Jacuzzis in crystal clear water. – Sloepmouche

## **8.6 Lelepa Island**

### **8.6.1 Anchorage**

**June 2024:** 17°34.643S / 168°12.839E anchored in 7m white sand with very few bommies. Great protection of westerly winds. No village. – Trinity

## **8.7 Moso Island**

### **8.7.1 Anchorage**

**June 2024:** 17°30.929S / 168°16.986E in 10m. NOT RECOMMENDED. Make sure you look for your anchor spot when the sun is high above and clearly shows the sand spots as there are lots of coral pieces, bommies, and coral patches. We came on a low wind day but it took us 4 tries to stick the anchor. And even when it stuck, we hit a nice sand patch, we still got tangled. Would not recommend anchoring here, despite the beautiful bay and beaches.

On Navionics another boat claimed to have good holding in sand but we never found it and we tried all around their anchor spot. – Sugar Shack

### **8.7.2 Cruiser Report**

**June 2024:** It says on Navionics that this is a no spear fishing bay as it is a conservation area due to it being the bay the resort brings guests to snorkel. You can line fish, but no spear fishing. – Sugar Shack

## **8.8 Emae Island**

### **8.8.1 Sulua Bay**

#### **8.8.1.1 Anchorage in Sulua Bay**

**June 2024:** 17°03.005S / 168°22.234E in 14m of sand. Super good stick, nice holding. It got a little roly at night during high tide, but not terrible. – Sugar Shack

#### **8.8.1.2 Cruiser Report**

**June 2024:** We enjoyed a lovely walk around the beach and just 50' from the beach is a nice dirt road that you can walk on as well. – Sugar Shack

## 8.9 Nguna / Pele Islands

Located north above Efate.

Undine Bay on Nguna Island has been designated as a marine reserve and the village asks yachts to use the mooring. See Aug. 2024 under Anchorage.

### 8.9.1 Anchorage

**Aug. 2024:** There is a tall red mooring ball (**17°29.177S / 168°23.113E** in front of the Village of Tekilasoia in Undine Bay on Nguna) designated for cruisers. The mooring is 1.25m x 1.25m concrete block with a 7.5cm nylon line attached. Due to the growth on the line, it was not possible to determine how the line was attached to the concrete block but it appeared to be in good condition. If more than one boat arrives, the village would like boats to daisy chain together off of the one mooring ball. The cost for the mooring is 500vt.

If you plan to come to Undine Bay on Nguna, please contact Nicholas who is in charge of the marine reserve, ahead of time. He can be reached at +678.764.3583.

Do not anchor at the lat/long in the Rocket Guide, this is now a marine park reserve marked by two floats: one white near the long boat moorings and one black towards the west that marks the marine reserve. You can also identify the start and stop by the dry creek beds that flow into the ocean during the rains. – Sky Pond

**2009:** Anchoring near the pass between Nguna (pronounced noo-nah) and Pele was very nice in white sand between widely scattered, easily-seen and deep-enough coral heads in around 25 ft depth. Even in moderate Northerly winds we didn't roll too much.

NW Nguna, Nawora Matua bay: We anchored here twice just for a rest stop without going ashore to the village. If you use this, go in carefully with good light, because the chart doesn't show there are some isolated bommies too shallow for comfort. Bottom is coral and hard plateau. – Sloepmouche

### 8.9.2 Cruiser Report

**Aug. 2024:** The villagers were friendly and when asked to meet the chief we learned he was not feeling well. We asked for the head man, and Nicholas arrived explaining he was our tour guide. He gave us the highlight tour of the village. There is a volcano hike, however it requires Nicholas walking with you to a second village and then a guide from that village to take you to the top. It is about 3km and takes an hour each way. We did not do this hike. The cost for the tour was 1000vt. Be aware you are not allowed to explore the village without a guide. – Sky Pond

**2009:** The snorkeling out from the guesthouse bungalows on Nguna was some of the most colorful and diverse that we've seen in Vanuatu. You can ride the current holding on to your dinghy in the pass between the two islands. Both have beautiful white sand beaches and swimming pool blue water. – Sloepmouche

## 9 Epi Island

### 9.1 Mapouna Bay

Eastern Side of Epi

#### 9.1.1 Anchorage

**Dec. 2007:** **16°35.85 S / 168°12.66 E** in about 40' of coral with sand channels. – Sloepmouche

#### 9.1.2 Cruiser Report

**Dec. 2007:** Dugout canoes came shortly after our arrival to welcome us and ask if we needed any help getting in. Chief Pharmacopee invited us to his village the next morning. Little did we expect a royal welcome with

flower leis, fresh fruits and lots of smiles from his extended family! Very nice to be genuinely welcomed. We're glad we had some gifts with us to offer. – Sloepmouche

## **9.2 Lamén Bay**

Western Side of Epi

### **9.2.1 Anchorage**

Please do not anchor in the SE corner of the bay as that is where the dugongs feed on the sea grass.

**June 2024:** **16°35.664S / 168°09.692E** in 11m of sand. Unfortunately, several boats anchor in the shallower SE corner of the bay, potentially destroying the sea grass feeding area for the dugongs. – Trinity

**Oct. 2023:** Lamén Bay is safe and beautiful with caves and rock formations on the rock faces. – Dandelion

**June 2023:** **16°35.784S / 168°09.886E** Anchor in 5m, black sand, good holding and fair protection from SE trades. Very rocky but a stern anchor makes it bearable. – SV Complicite

**June 2018:** **16°35.784S / 168°09.886E** Anchor in 5m, Black sand. – Screensaver

**2014:** **16°35.773S / 168°09.893E** Anchor in 4-8m black sand. Exposed South thru West to North. Anchor close to the beach. Avoid anchoring too far to the south east corner as the Dugongs and turtles feed here. There are some large bommies towards the center of the bay. – Reflection

### **9.2.2 Restaurant**

**Aug. 2024:** [Bennies Restaurant](#) +678.599.7795, does a traditional beach dinner, upon request. We had a delicious meal of chicken and fresh vegetables followed by banana pie. Wonderful dinner. – Yaminda

**June 2023:** Benny's bungalows has a small café restaurant with cheap meals, coffee and freshly baked bread. Book in advance so Benny can prepare. Benny is open to trading – seeds, bedding, crockery. – SV Complicite

### **9.2.3 Cruiser Report**

**June 2024:** We came here looking for the dugongs, but evidently, they have not returned since the last cyclone. – Trinity

**Nov. 2023:** Snorkeling with the dugongs was fantastic. They spook really easily with the slightest sound so be calm, don't swim towards them, and just enjoy their beauty. There are several walks around the surrounding villages (1-1.5hrs) and a longer walk to the east coast going up over the hill through the jungle. This is an all-day hike and you should be prepared with water and good shoes. – As reported to Sugar Shack

**Oct. 2023:** The village is clean and interesting. There is great canoeing! We could have easily spent weeks here and highly recommend a visit. – Dandelion

**June 2023:** Resident dugong in the bay, we saw at high tide/sunset a few times. We did a hike along the concrete road to the windward side of the island. The walk was steep but easy, very beautiful walk through the quaint houses and coconut plantations. Lamén Island is a 5-10 min dinghy ride away with some great snorkeling and dugongs. – SV Complicite

**Dec. 2007:** Meet Tasso at Paradise Sunset Bungalows (+678.647.7405). He is a very nice fellow who organizes lots of activities for his guests. He often organizes a barbeque or pig roast. We did a nice, but long, day hike to a large, high waterfall (about three hours one way for good hikers). The transport to the starting point of the hike was itself an adventure with some great views of the bay and Lamén Island. Tasso's son, Douglas, has a small boat to go deep-sea fishing or to take you to Lamén Island to see the dugongs. – Sloepmouche

## 9.3 *Foreland Bay*

### 9.3.1 *Anchorage*

**June 2024:** 16°40.844S / 168°07.441E. in 16m of black sand. Watch coral at both sides of bay. Dinghy landing 50 meters left of river entrance. – Trinity

## 9.4 *Revolie Bay*

Western side

### 9.4.1 *Anchorage*

**Aug. 2023:** 16°43.74S 7 168°08.71E. We anchored as far behind the reef as possible to provide the most comfortable anchorage. We stayed several days here. – Eastern Stream

**June 2018:** 16°43.64S / 168°08.69E. Anchored in 6m, black sand. OK on entry but the next morning the swell started coming in, so rather than hanging around for another day, left in crappy weather. – Screensaver

**Sept. 2012:** The anchorage was well protected by a reef and was lined by a long sand beach. – Shango

### 9.4.2 *Cruiser Reports*

**Aug. 2023:** There is a nice, small village here. – Eastern Stream

**Dec. 2007:** You can do your laundry in the river, but it's not deep enough to swim in. – Sloepmouche

## 9.5 *Cape Kambioka*

### 9.5.1 *Anchorage*

**Jan. 2008:** 16°50.37S / 168°28.20E. Anchor in 20-30' good black sand. Exposed to southerlies.

16°48.16S / 168°23.06E. In Sakao Village Bay. 20-30' good black sand. Exposed to southerlies. – Sloepmouche

# 10 Maskelyne Islands

Southeast end of Malekula

The Maskelyne Islands are a nice cruising area and the place to search and find dugongs (sea cows). Be aware that they are protected animals and you must follow the strict protocols. See [Dugong section](#).

## 10.1 *Maskelyne Archipelago*

### 10.1.1 *Passes*

Maskelyne Islands has 4 passes:

1. The North East Pass, wide and deep pass.
2. The East Channel, wide and deep pass.
3. The South Channel (not recommended)
4. The SouthWest Channel (that has standing rip tides, waves, & current as noted on Navionics).

**July 2024:** We entered the **North East pass** (as we were coming from Ambrym), this is a very wide and deep pass. We had 20kts of winds coming from the East with 1.5-2m swell in short increments. We entered at outgoing mid-tide and the shallowest depth we saw was 36m.

We exited through the **East pass** during low tide. The winds 12kts and waves 1.5m from SE. We had 2.5-4kts of outgoing current pushing us along. It was sporty, but we had complete control.

Our friends on Moana exited the **Southwest** pass with 2kts of current against them, no problems though. – Sugar Shack

**June 2017:** The anchorage entrance is a nail-biter with one section narrow and quite shallow (3m) edged by reef. We used satellite images to plot our course and also cross-referenced the course with the waypoints given in the guidebooks. Highly recommend someone on the bow to lookout for hazards. – sv Field Trip

### **10.1.2 Cruiser Reports**

**Warning: 2024 (Confirmed) June 2009:** A caveat about the Maskelynes, especially around the Pescarus anchorage: many boats and land tourists complained about being conned or ripped-off by one or more young men who propose to act as guides to areas like the Giant Clam reserve or to organize a custom dance and/or feast, and who later ask for more money or more than the customary fee or even take you to the wrong area if they don't feel they're getting enough money for the effort. They are a well-known gang in the area, but the custom chiefs and villagers seem unable to control them.

Two of the main guys are Jimmy and another name like Jeffery. Kalo runs the bungalows on the beach at Pescarus and can probably tell you whom to avoid in any dealings. This situation is unfortunate because it gives all the Maskelynes a bad name. – Sloepmouche

## **10.2 Dugongs**

The best place to see dugongs is in the Maskelyne islands and the best time is during high tide. They are typically located near sandy shelves that are somewhat close to grassy areas.

**GUIDE:** Contact Marsel Nathaniel if you are looking for a guide in the Maskelyne islands. He prefers to be contacted in Facebook messenger but you can also try him at +678.505.7428 or you can try to reach him at his Family's [Malog Bungalows](#). He is located on Uliveo, Peskarus. You can anchor in Uliveo or dinghy to him. You can either take your dinghy or his boat.

Suggest you allow him to drive as he will bring an extra person to drive the boat so he can jump in and stay with you in the water. They drop you off / pick you up so you don't have to tow the dinghy which can be challenging against the current.

**Cost:** 2000vt/pp if you use your dinghy or 5000vt/pp (2024) if he drives to the dugong spots. He will also pick you up and take you. We had him pick us up at Awei Island (7nm away from Uliveo) and take us around.

The Dugong is a protected marine mammal (similar to a sea cow or manatee) and is largely dependent on sea grass. They are very nervous and skittish by nature. They frighten easily and will swim away if you approach them, swim too fast, splash, and make noise (even with your flippers).

There are very strict rules protecting the dugongs in Vanuatu. You must stay a minimum of 2m from them at all times. If you are lucky enough to encounter a mother and baby, you must stay a minimum of 5m from both of them and never, ever get between the mother and baby.

Never feed them as they only eat sea grass. Don't touch them (stay 2m away from them at all times). Don't swim towards them head on. Stay in one place and let them come to you. Here is a lovely video for you to watch <https://youtu.be/6yq45eagMZY>.

## **10.3 Sanko (Sakao) Island**

### **10.3.1 Anchorage**

**July 2024:** This is very deep, until it isn't. We tried to anchor in two areas, one at 6m and one at 4m but the anchor did not stick and we were concerned with swinging room. There are reefs and bommies. The area we tried to anchor was near **16°29.922S / 167°48.369E**

There is a mooring here managed by Tom, a friendly local who will charge you for the convenience. We did not pick up the mooring so we cannot speak to the quality or safety of it. – Sugar Shack

### **10.3.2 Cruiser Report**

**July 2024:** Super beautiful spot with gorgeous water and a pretty beach. However, we could not get the anchor to stick and we would have had to get very creative with our anchoring and 2<sup>nd</sup> anchor to feel comfortable staying overnight. – Sugar Shack

## **10.4 Awei (Awai) Island**

### **10.4.1 Anchorage**

**July 2024:** 16°32.051S / 167°46.242E dropped in 6m with 35m of scope. The way the wind was blowing forced us to take up the entire anchorage in the shallow area. Many boats anchor in the deeper areas. We had a good stick on the first drop.

Note the charts are not very accurate around here. Around 16°31.983S / 167°46.11E our friends on a catamaran ran aground (of course it was close to low tide, but the chart went from 15m to 2m almost immediately so keep a look out and be careful. – Sugar Shack

**June 2015:** The anchorage is very nice and very sheltered being completely land locked. – Alba

**2014:** 16°32.042S / 167°46.217E Anchor in 6-15m of sand/mud. Exposed North East wind and swell. Anchor in the center of the harbour. This is deceptively large bay and we have seen nine boats anchored here in a strong westerly. Great sheltered bay and fantastic option if a westerly comes up. – Reflection

**June 2009:** This is a well-protected anchorage behind the reef. The reef is high enough to break any waves, so you are in a smooth pond while the wind generators are producing. Amazingly there were 13 boats here coming back from the SW Bay festival! – Sloepmouche

### **10.4.2 Activities**

**July 2024:** We took our dinghy out two days in the rain with the hopes of finding dugongs. We searched several areas that were noted as dugong favorite spots (from other cruisers who had spotted them there this year). But we came up empty each time. We saw them in the deeper water coming up for air, but we did not spot them while we were in the water.

We finally gave up. I found Marsel (see 10.2 Dugongs above) on Facebook and called him. He was AMAZING! He drove from Uliveo to Awei which is 7nm away. He picked us up (4 people) and took us to 4 spots. We found 2 dugongs at the 2<sup>nd</sup> spot and 10 dugongs at the 4<sup>th</sup> spot. It was absolutely one of the best experiences.

He has two long tough boats. One is blue and one is yellow. They have benches to sit and you can store some items in the bow to keep them drier (note not dry, but drier). I highly recommend Marsel! – Sugar Shack

### **10.4.3 Cruiser Report**

**July 2024:** There is one village on the island and it is located opposite side of the anchorage. Go to the beach and follow the trail behind the little hut. It will take about 15 minutes to walk to the small village. The mangroves are fun to explore by paddle board or kayak. It gets pretty shallow by the reef but you can make a circle around the bay. There is some decent snorkeling by the reef (where our friends ran aground) with soft coral and nemos.

Even though the village is located on the other side of the island, they use the small beach by the anchorage as a landing area. They travel to the island across the bay where the garden is located. Lots of kids play over here and locals use the beach area to build new outriggers.

The locals are very willing to trade fruit and vegetables for charging their phones, sugar, line, small fishing hooks and gear. – Sugar Shack

**Oct. 2023:** Unlike M. Cook below, we had a very positive experience with Jimmy. He took us snorkeling and spear diving on the reef and arranged for a local style dinner on the beach at Sank Bay. I think we paid

1000VT/pp for 3hrs snorkeling with 3 guides. We ate all that they speared and had additional vegetables and fruit from the village garden for an additional 500VT/pp. – N. Smith

**Oct. 2023:** Awei was one of our favorite spots. The family on the island is wonderful. However, beware of Chief Jimmie who reportedly is chief of all of the village, but he is a “money-taker.” He will show up in a long boat with a few men and pressure you to take a tour for 2500VT/pp. They promised us all kinds of things, took us on a blah snorkel and then we never saw them again. He will say how the village children need medicine, etc... There is at least one dispute between him and the locals on Awei over the land. – M. Cook

**June 2015:** There is a small village on the other side of the island that has 15 people living there. The villager’s gardens are over on the main land and we are anchored directly in their path, so we had a constant stream of people passing by in their pangas. – Alba

## **10.5 Sughulamp Reef**

Just off Vulai Island

### **10.5.1 Anchorage**

**July 2024:** **16°32.32S / 167°47.332E.** We dropped in 2.7m during low tide in a nice sandy spot and pulled back over the ledge. We had really calm weather with a light breeze.

**16°32.341S / 167°47.303E** in 4m of beautiful sand. We were expecting some weird west winds that were blowing us onto the reef so we moved to **16°32.346S / 167°47.305E** into 7m of water but this was on a sandy shelf and I would not advise it unless you have the same weird west winds. – Sugar Shack

### **10.5.2 Cruiser Report**

**July 2024:** Perfect spot to swim the reef and search for dugongs. We spent several days here with the winds blowing us in 360°. We moved a few times to accommodate the strange wind patterns, but all in the same general area.

During mid-tide we took the dinghy into the one reef opening which led to a clearing in the mangroves on Vulai Island. This is an uninhabited island that used to be used as a leper colony. Now the locals consider it tabu so nobody lives here. The island is very overgrown with tons of palm trees and vegetation. We tried to make our way to the beautiful beach but there was no way to get there without going through the muddy mangroves. – Sugar Shack

## **10.6 Uilendeuv Island**

### **10.6.1 Cruiser Report**

**Oct. 2023:** Dugongs were plentiful in this bay located near **16°30.694S / 167°48.240E.** But you have to be patient and quiet. You can’t splash around as it will scare them away. – Starlight

## **10.7 Sanko Island**

### **10.7.1 Anchorage**

**July 2024:** **16°29.933S / 167°48.348E.** We tried to anchor here a few times and could not get the anchor to stick so we left. We later went back by the dinghy and realized had we moved over and closer to shore we would have found a nice sandy patch to anchor in.

There is a mooring here managed by a guy named Tom (or Tony). I believe he lives in the house on the north end of the bay. He charges a small fee for the mooring.

There is a pretty large wreck in the middle of the bay that we snorkeled on so be careful not to anchor too close to that. – Sugar Shack

## **10.7.2 Cruiser Report**

**July 2024:** We returned in the dinghy to see if we could come back and try to anchor again and discovered some really nice snorkeling. The reef out in the deeper water is gorgeous and there is a little wall with lots of sea life to explore as well. The wreck in the middle of the bay has some great fish and critters. – Sugar Shack

## **10.8 Uliveo Island**

### **10.8.1 Pass**

**June 2024:** Tight and narrow pass at **16°32.034S / 167°49.804E**. – Trinity

**June 2024:** We entered the pass without problems, the sand bar is around 3m+. However, upon departure, we exited at mid-tide, early morning. We passed the sand bar successfully, but touched an uncharted reef some 100-150m after the bar, we touched a reef at around **16°32.419S / 167°49.690E**. It caused damaged that had to be temporarily repaired at Port Vila, and will require a haul out for cosmetic repairs. Our centerboard was up and our draft was 1.95m. – Aliena

**June 2015:** The approach into the anchorage was a little tense, but the minimum depth of water that we saw was 4m, so no problem at all. (Our track was bang on the recommended waypoints of 16°32.180S / 167°49.777E, 16°31.965S / 167°49.802E.) – Alba

### **10.8.2 Anchorage**

Peskarus Anchorage

**Aug. 2024:** **16°31.876S / 167°49.795E** in 15m of mud, good holding. – Sky Pond

**June 2024:** **16°31.54S / 167°49.47E**. We had a very bad experience here, see cruiser report. – Aliena

**June 2024:** **16°31.869S / 167°49.795E**. Good holding in 15m. – Trinity

**June 2015:** **16°31.87S / 167°49.77E**. We anchored in 15m of water, just past the sandbar. It is a deep lagoon that has a maximum of 20m and shallows very fast at the edges. – Alba

**2014:** **16°32.169S / 167°50.202E**. Anchored in 10-14m of sand/mud. – Reflection

### **10.8.3 Cruiser Report**

**Aug. 2024:** An excellent 2k walk around the island which passes through all three villages: Lutes, Pellonk, and Peskarus. You will meet friendly villagers offering fruit and vegetables which we insisted on trading for.

Phillip runs the Lavrisi Yacht Club +678.542.1884 in Lutes and offers various tours: dugongs, snorkeling, island walking, mangrove discovery, and Lost Settlement Island. Philip also provides lunch, dinner and kava tasting. Head Chief Cherry will arrange traditional kustom dance performances on request. – Sky Pond.

**Aug. 2009:** We went back to Peskarus Village (Uliveo anchorage) and still found some demanding folks, and our Peace Corps guide was attacked by the same dog that had bitten our friend Commodore Jean on Quest just two weeks before! Something about this particular village! But the rest of the Maskelynes has no problems! – Sloepmouche

**Oct. 2007:** Well protected anchorage. We also anchored behind the reef (Mamu AB on Rocket Guide), but did not find the good sand at 6m – it must have shifted away and left only coral rubble. – Sloepmouche

## **10.9 Melip Bay**

Southern end of Malekula

### **10.9.1 Anchorage**

**June 2015:** **16°34.67S / 167°29.42E**. The sandy sea bed shallows very slowly and we anchored in 5m with a small swell. We eyeballed our way in and found that there was lots of depth all the way into the lovely bay

with no hazards. The Navionics charts only have a little detail - the mainland is correctly positioned, but there's a small island shown in the middle of the bay, which is actually further south at the edge of the bay. – Alba

**July 2009: 16°34.694S / 167°29.4421E.** You can dinghy up the river seen in the satellite photo in the Rocket Guide quite a long way. Go at high tide as the bar at the mouth is very shallow, and you may have to walk the dinghy in or time the swells for an exciting surf-riding entry. You can dinghy to Tomman if you have a good motor. There is a small channel cut through the reefs; ask the islanders who paddle across daily to go to the gardens or the Catholic school. Very interesting island with complex, ancient culture.

The water between Tomman and the main island as you travel to/from SW Bay is deep enough to pass without problem. With good light you will see the isolated reefs clearly. – Sloepmouche

### **10.9.2 Cruiser Reports**

**June 2015:** Tomman Island is owned by two families (hence “To - Mann”) and the land is split in two. Priscilla belongs to one family called Jimmy and Angela married into the other family called Aisoh. As Angela showed us around, she told us which family owned which land. The ground is obviously very fertile and we were shown through coconut groves and gardens containing banana, taro, papaya, etc. – Alba

### **10.9.3 Cruiser Report**

**June 2024:** Warning about Jimmy. About an hour after we arrived, Stuart, a very friendly man approached us and offered help with excursions (in a very friendly, welcoming manner). We were preparing lunch and told him we would contact him later.

But around 1 hour later, the famous “Jimmy” approached our boat with 3 other, bad looking, unfriendly men who were all in a foul mood. Jimmy demanded the presence of the Captain and offered excursions and other services stating that the profit goes to pay for kids' education. It was a very terrifying experience for all three of us. He was insistent, rude, and unyielding. We said we would contact him the next day as we were tired from our passage. Not a good experience at all. – Aliena

**June 2024:** Philip rebuilt the yacht club and gives tours of the three villages. – Trinity

**June 2015:** We went ashore to watch some Kastom dancing. The men were dressed in their traditional Nambas, which are penis pouches made from banana leaves. In this area, the men are known as Smol Nambas (which means small penis pouch). In the north of Malekula, live the Big Nambas who (errrr) have big penis pouches - I'm not sure if the men from the north are better endowed...

The dance is performed only by men and the local ladies are not allowed to even see the performance (female tourists are exempt from this restriction). In addition to their smol nambas, the men wear ankle bracelets made from nuts called Navake, which rattle as they dance. The dances all enact traditional stories including pig hunting, the flight of a hornet and even child birth. Along with the rhythmical drumming on traditional bamboo instruments, it was interesting and enjoyable.

It seems like they've only recently started to re-perform these kastom dances and there were three old guys who played the drums and are teaching them the traditions. It was a fun half an hour for only \$20US each.

There are three villages on the island each with 500 people, so there's quite a population here. In between the villages is extensive bush containing coconut trees and the villager's gardens, with pleasant dirt footpaths joining everything. We spent an enjoyable two hours walking around and chatting to people. – Alba

**Oct. 2007:** We did some bartering for fruits and lobsters. Being spoiled by many cruisers, they were quite demanding, but with patience and good will you can have a good relation. There is local music, kava-drinking and a small resort aspiring to develop tourism.

Ask Kalo to show you the best snorkeling spots around. There is also a giant clam and marine reserve they can show you. – Sloepmouche

## **10.10 Lutes**

### **10.10.1 Anchorages**

**Jan. 2017:** Deep anchorage, 20+M, leaving plenty of swing room between boats. – Bold Spirit

The entrance to the anchorage was a bit of a nail-biter with one section narrow and quite shallow (3 m) edged by reef. We used the satellite images to plot a course and also cross-referenced the course with the waypoints given in the guidebooks. Still, I stood up on the bow, keeping a lookout for hazards below and cringing as the crystal-clear water made things look so close to the surface! Mark carefully monitored the depth sounder over the shallow bit, and we were fine. – Bold Spirit

**2014: 16°32.169S / 167°50.202E** Anchored 10-14m of sand/mud in center of harbour. Exposed to south wind and swell. Arrive at high tide and have a lookout on the bow. 2.4m deep at low tide and narrow. – Reflection

### **10.10.2 Cruiser Report**

**Jan. 2017:** We were excited to explore the clam sanctuary and to participate in the Vanuatu Independence Day celebrations. We paddled in authentic outrigger canoes, and had a chance to snorkel in shallow waters over extravagantly colored clams. The sanctuary had been set up by a local man, seeing the need to protect these vital sea creatures. Although Cyclone Pam depleted the population of clams, many are still thriving.

The big news in Lutes, was that only 3 weeks prior, a sandspit had risen up suddenly from the shallows. A new island had been pushed up from below by some sort of tectonic plate movement, and the owners of that portion of the reef were preparing to have a dedication and naming ceremony for this new piece of land. It was quite the event and somehow, we all were invited as the honored guests - the first white men to set foot on the dry sand. The Ni-Vans sure do love any reason to create a full-on celebration! – Bold Spirit

## **10.11 Avokh Island**

### **10.11.1 Anchorage**

**2014: 16°30.974S / 167°47.151E** Anchor in 6-15m loose coral. Exposed North to east winds and swell. The coral offers very little holding and you will need constant eye on your position. – Reflection

## **10.12 Akhamb Island**

### **10.12.1 Anchorage**

**2014: 16°30.858S / 167°38.936E** Anchor 6-14m sand/coral. Exposed South to Southwest wind and swell. Anchor close to sand bar north of the island. If the wind moves to the south, move to the other side of the sand bar. Delightful wee island that rarely sees visitors. – Reflection

# **11 Malekula**

## **11.1 Gaspard Bay**

### **11.1.1 Anchorage**

**Aug. 2023: 16°29.92S / 167°48.34E.** Gaspard Bay on SW tip of Sakau island. We went here to get some protection from a weather system. Protection from N through E to SSW with no swell and well sheltered from the trade. No clear water and lots of mangroves surrounding the bay. Often you hear the sound from the dugongs coming to the surface to breathe. – Eastern Stream

**Aug. 2023:** Many dugong have been spotted here. – As reported to Sugar Shack

**2014: 16°28.115S / 167°48.764E** Anchor in 4-6m sand/mud. Carefully make your way into the back of the bay and anchor close to the mangroves, watch the sticks marking the reef as it comes up quickly. Great sheltered bay with Dugongs constantly surfacing especially in the early morning and late afternoon. – Reflection

**June 2009:** Gaspard Bay is good spot and a cyclone hole if you go all the way inside. We checked the depth by dinghy, and it is possible to go in with 6' draft, and we feel safer than inside Port Sandwich. – Sloepmouche

## **11.2 Metenovor Bay (Southwest Bay)**

### **11.2.1 Anchorage**

**Aug. 2018: 16°29.42S / 167°25.78E.** The SW Bay anchorage is very protected from SE trades. – Eagle's Wings

**June 2015: 16°29.59S / 167°25.74E.** Anchored in 5m near Lembinwen village over dark sand. – Alba

**2014: 16°29.583S / 167°25.876E.** Anchored 6-18m sand. Exposed West thru to North. Anchor in the bay to suit wind direction. It's a big bay. – Reflection

**July 2009: 16°29.56S / 167°25.54E.** Anchored in 20' of good sand. There are no dangers anywhere around, so we felt safe in strong winds. As there was no swell in SE winds, we had restful nights. – Sloepmouche

### **11.2.2 Cruiser Reports**

**Aug 2024:** We just attended the Nalawan program SW Bay Malacula Vanuatu.. They looked after us very well, the dancing and costumes were impressive. No issues with price changes etc. – The Answer

**June 2015:** We went for several lovely walks and hikes with the locals. – Alba

**Aug. 2009:** The Labo Festival (Aug.12-14) which is a 3-day festival in three villages and is great fun. The small French community of Bennorce (10 Stick) welcomed us nicely again, but because of rainy weather, very few went snorkeling or diving. Day three of the festival happened in Labo. The Nalawan dancing was really good in the very nice setting along the beach. And this year the lunch was great (with a reduced fee for the day).

We also visited the small French community of Bennorce at the SW point of the bay in front of Ten Stick rock (which earned the natives ten sticks of tobacco during WWII so U.S. planes could use it for target practice.)

After a nice visit of the community, we snorkeled with Chief Ronald on the reefs surrounding the rock. What a surprise for us to discover some of the nicest reefs we have seen in Vanuatu!

South of Ten Stick, there is a waterfall that you can see from the sea. You can go most of the way by dinghy at medium tide up along the beach, inside the reefs. Halfway, we met Kali, who sometimes lives isolated with his small family in a small valley. He is a Vanuatu boxing champion and has competed overseas. He wants to build a stone dam at the foot of the fall so visitors can bathe under the fall. Nice people! – Sloepmouche

## **11.3 Tavendrua and Dixon Reefs**

Southwest side of Malekula

### **11.3.1 Anchorage**

**July 2018: 16°20.09S / 167°22.73E.** Anchored in a very serene spot near Dixon Reef. – Eagle's Wings

**July 2009: 16°20.102S / 167°22.821E.** Anchored just north of Lamendranga Point near the mouth of a little river. Villagers said that most yachts anchor in the north corner of the bay in front of a black sand beach. It looked calm.

We also anchored on the south side behind the reefs, but found the holding only fair in the 20' depths. Next day we went into the bay and could easily see the channel around the reefs, even in black cloudy weather. Keep a good watch for a few isolated reefs indicated on the charts inside the bay. – Sloepmouche

### **11.3.2 Cruiser Reports**

**July 2018:** We spent a wonderful week of diving on Dixon Reef and meeting the welcoming locals of Tavendrua. – Eagle's Wings

## **11.4 Lambumbu Bay**

Western side of Malekula

### **11.4.1 Anchorage**

**Sept. 2024:** 16°11.179S / 167°23.362E in 5m sand, good holding in the center of the bay behind the broken jetty. – Trinity

### **11.4.2 Cruiser Report**

**Sept. 2024:** Easy dinghy sand beach landing in inner bay in front of the Presbyterian Church school. Walk up to the friendly Vinbil village (12 minutes up the road east). They are happy to show you around and trade. We were invited after church (Sunday 1000) to celebrate Father's Day and had the most beautiful day. – Trinity

**July 2009:** The copra pier is now gone, but you can still put your dinghy at the stone jetty and walk to the small settlement (Presbyterian Church school). There's some swell despite being tucked in.

We met Amil Setla, a chief of a small village in the "neck" of Malekula (where, unfortunately, there is no anchorage). He belongs to a tribe of the Middle Nambas. We had only heard of Small and Big Namba tribes. He showed us a fascinating area with many custom stories and tabus and spiritual powers. He, as the eldest son of the paramount chief of the area, had been initiated to all the custom ways.

We saw human bones and an ancient overgrown ceremonial nasara. In the afternoon he took us to a beautiful waterfall at the end of a 1.5-hour walk up the river past crystal clear natural terraced pools. That's the beauty of Vanuatu: by talking to locals, you can just chance on fantastic, spontaneous opportunities to get glimpses of an endangered ancient culture. – Sloepmouche

## **11.5 Willekh Bay**

Western side of Malekula

### **11.5.1 Anchorage**

**2014:** 16°06.917S / 167°10.545E. Anchored 10m sand and rubble. Exposed N – W – SSW. Stay clear of the isolated rock on the south side to clear the reef. Beach landing on the south side at low tide and anywhere at high tide. – Reflection

**July 2009:** The anchorage is protected from the wind, but you get a swell—amazing how swell rounds any point to get at you! – Sloepmouche

### **11.5.2 Cruiser Reports**

**Sept. 2023:** A cruiser reported that there are 4 islands just off Malekula which are beautiful and worth the stop if you are heading north. The best anchorage is the island of Rano where there is a traditional Ni-Vanuatu village. They will do a dance and tour for you including dancing, snorkeling, weaving, sand drawing. Call Tom +679.512.1670 to schedule. – As reported to Sugar Shack

**July 2019:** Just a bit of a caution. We were North of South-West Bay in Willkeh Bay, supposedly an uninhabited bay a few weeks ago. DH was approached by a guy in a dugout offering to sell him a bag of dope. DH promptly informed him that he was a policeman, which quickly got rid of him. – Thor

**July 2009:** You will be quite isolated as there's no village. There's good snorkeling with lots of turtles at the reef around the isolated rock on the southern part of this little bay. – Sloepmouche

## **11.6 Malua**

Northen of Malekula

### **11.6.1 Anchorages**

**Aug. 2024:** 15°59.513S / 167°11.006E. in 8-9m sand with good holding. – Trinity

**Nov. 2016:** 15°59.47S / 167°10.93E. We sailed to Malua Bay on NW side of Malakula Island. – Eagle's Wings

**June 2009:** Comfortable anchorage. You can anchor very close to shore to avoid any swell. – Sloepmouche

### **11.6.2 Cruiser Report**

**Aug. 2024:** Peter and Vivian are happy to trade anything and to show you around. They have a great community and also help out the less privileged. If you want to donate something to Peter, he is really honest and will connect the items to the needy. – Trinity

**June 2009:** We were welcomed by one of the three schoolteachers from the Seventh Day Adventist primary school in the bay. The school is always in need of any materials. We had nothing left except scrap paper, and they were happy for that.

After visiting the school, Fredrick, one of the teachers, guided us to a nice swimming hole on the river that flows to the anchorage. There is also a nice swimming hole only about 100 yards from the beach just where the road crosses the river.

Natives paddled in their canoes to speak to us and to offer us fruits. Chief Don came with the yachtie's gold book to sign.

We also walked with Rodrick and Alfred to the Lekhan Spirit Cave described in the Lonely Planet guide (about 45 minutes one way). It is a big cavern where the top caved in, letting the light through. Some pictograms can be found on the walls, and some bats inhabit part of the cave. – Sloepmouche

## **11.7 Asuk Bay**

Entrance to Port Sandwich

### **11.7.1 Anchorage**

**June 2024:** 16°25.139S / 167°48.041E. – Trinity

### **11.7.2 Cruiser Report**

**June 2024:** Great sting ray watching at the edge of the southerly reef entrance Port Sandwich. Just snorkel next to the Dinghy. – Trinity

## **11.8 Port Sandwich**

Eastern side of Malekula

**WARNING:** Do not go swimming in this bay, not even to check your anchor. The locals dispose of carcasses and they attract sharks which might mistake you as dinner.

### **11.8.1 Anchorage**

**June 2024:** 16°27.661S / 167°46.710E Anchored in 7m of mud at Pengabu Point. This is an excellent anchorage, protected, and beautiful. – Trinity

**June 2023: 16°26.340S / 167°46.997E** Anchored in 16m mud, good holding. The flattest, calmest anchorage we've ever experienced. Felt like we were in a marina. A very beautiful and peaceful area. Lots of spaces to anchor and protected from strong winds in all directions. – SV Complicite

**June 2015:** This is a long deep bay. We went 3 miles up the bay in an isolated anchorage near a wrecked ship on the west side of the bay. It was so peaceful, being surrounded by jungle and coconut trees, with one small hut just visible on the shore. – Alba

**2014: 16°26.302S / 167°47.202E.** Anchored in 8-10m sand/mud. Exposed West thru to North. Excellent, sheltered anchorage in most weather. It can get noisy close to the wharf. – Reflection

**Oct. 2007:** This would be a good hurricane hole if ever needed. Although there is a three-mile fetch if the winds are out of the north. There are majestic views as you enter. – Sloepmouche

### **11.8.2 General Services**

**June 2023:** There is a bank and places to buy Digicel credit. – Sv Complicite

### **11.8.3 Provisions**

**June 2023:** 'Rainbow Shop' is a very short walk from the anchorage. Fresh bread on Mon, Wed and Fri. other basic supplies available. A 45-minute easy walk through the quaint houses to the small town of Lamap. Wednesday mornings they have fruit veg markets, you need to go early around 8am.– SV Complicite

### **11.8.4 Cruiser Reports**

**June 2024:** Pengabu Point has a really pretty dinghy ride through the mangroves in Navung River. The entrance is at **16°27.937S / 167°46.232E.**

We asked a local, fisherman dugout to trade for fish. They came back the next day and brought us a spot-fin porcupine fish. Unfortunately, they did not tell us that the skin and spines are toxic – even deadly. We asked to trade it for a parrot fish which they happily did as they considered the porcupine fish to be a delicacy and if cooked properly is edible. – Trinity

**June 2009:** If you anchor close to the old Ballande wharf, don't miss a visit to Rock, who welcomes cruisers at his house behind the beach. He created a book exchange/public library for the locals. You can do your laundry, fill water, and he can organize a pig roast for cruisers. Nice guy! Their quality of life was better in the outer islands in those times with better communications, schools and health care. – Sloepmouche

## **11.9 Banam Bay**

Eastern side of Malekula – just above port sandwich

### **11.9.1 Anchorage**

**July 2024: 16°20.277S / 167°45.487E** in 8m with a solid hold. Perfectly calm and protected. This was one of our favorite anchorages as it is super beautiful and very comfortable. – Sugar Shack

**Nov. 2023: 16°20.27S / 167°45.43E.** Give Bangoon point a wide berth and negotiate your way to the SWS corner of the bay. Come in the bay with good light and satellite charts. Be aware of the coral heads. Protection ESE through SW to NNW. – As reported to Sugar Shack

**2014: 16°20.34S / 167°45.44E** Protected except from the north (unusual). Vellela

### **11.9.2 Cruiser Reports**

**July 2024:** There are lots of villages along the beach, each with their own chief. They were all lovely. We only had one boat come out and ask to trade something (unlike multiple boats at other anchorages). They came prepared with a huge bowl of fruit in exchange for some 2-stroke oil.

There is a road that runs parallel to the beach where you will encounter lots of lovely locals.

There is good snorkeling around the coral heads in the bay. The outer reef is adventurous with a good variety of fish. – Sugar Shack

**2014:** Interesting diving but infested with crown of thorns. Good walks to Aulua Mission Station. – Vellela

**Oct. 2007:** No fees, no begging. The chief of the small community near the beach can organize some very interesting custom dances for a group of yachties (the dances involve the whole community). There's also a pleasant little waterfall about a 20-minute walk away. – Sloepmouche

## **11.10 Pankumu Bay**

Eastern side of Malekula

### **11.10.1 Anchorage**

**June 2018:** 16°16.12S / 167°39.53E. Anchored in 11m sand and coral rubble. – Screensaver

**2014:** 16°16.151S / 167°39.539E. Anchored in 6-12m sand/coral. Exposed NW – N – E. Anchor between the two reefs don't get too close as the bottom turns to broken coral, rocks, and bommies. – Reflection

### **11.10.2 Cruiser Report**

**June 2018:** This place is just a place to stop rather than motor on up and in these flat conditions it was just fine. – Screensaver

**June 2009:** The Pankumu Bay anchorage was as described in the Rocket Guide and a bit rolly due to strong SE winds. We did get into the river with our dinghy, but we had to cross the shallow bar with breakers (very exhilarating!). Alas, we were only able to navigate the first half a mile.

Even though this is the second largest river of Vanuatu, there are too many shallow rapids shortly after you get in to safely navigate. – Sloepmouche

## **11.11 Crab Bay**

Eastern side of Malekula

### **11.11.1 Pass**

**July 2024:** Enter at high tide with the sun up high, and a look out on the bow. Lots of reefs and coral heads to navigate around, but once inside it is perfect. – Sugar Shack

**Oct. 2023:** The entrance needs to be carefully negotiated but it is worth the stop. – Dandelion

### **11.11.2 Anchorage**

**July 2024:** 16°10.007S / 167°31.8962E dropped in 10m with 360° turning radius. We hid out here when there were 25kt E-ESE winds. We put out 50m of chain which when extended had our stern over a reef. However, we always had a minimum of 4.6m clearance.

The low lying shore provided protection from wind and swell. If you are comfortable, each of the three anchorages listed on Rocket Guide, could possibly accommodate one boat each. A small monohull came in after us and ended up anchoring in the 20m just off the reef. – Sugar Shack

**2014:** 16°10.074S / 167°31.959E. Anchored in 5-12m sand/coral. Exposed North winds and swell. Anchoring is general between small reefs, take care navigating in good light. – Reflection

### **11.11.3 Provisions**

**July 2024:** Sarmette Village, located around 16°11.271S / 167°3382, has a co-op. +678.774.9610, +678.711.5316, Hours: Mon-Fri: 0630-1130 & 1330-1800, Sat: 0600-0800 & 1630-1830,. It is a surprisingly decently stocked store, albeit only a few of each item, but they had sugar, brown sugar, flour, sodas, clothing, hardware, bread and several baked goods, Vodafone refill services and more.

The store is probably a 45-60-minute walk along the beach and/or road. The dirt road has many fallen trees, branches, and obstructions. The beach has a few areas that are blocked by the reef. So, you have to pop up to the road and back to the beach. Carry a stick to get rid of the spiderwebs. But easy, flat walk. – Sugar Shack

#### **11.11.4 Cruiser Report**

**July 2024:** The entire bay is a reserve so there is no fishing or collecting of anything allowed. The once sturdy and very beautiful educational center is now defunct and closed. There were still 5 educational fliers on the floor that we posted on the table.

Sarmette Village: 16°11.527S / 167°33.02E (rough location). We anchored the dinghy at mid-tide (going down) by the point (beach in front of the educational center) and walked clockwise. There is a shipwreck of an 18-20m metal boat called Tantrum from Australia around 16°09.767S / 167°32.605E on the beach in two sections. If you keep walking you will come to Sarmette Bay. It is rather large village that extends almost from the center of the bay to the end (just to the river). Super nice folks.

Matt paddle boarded around the bay and thinks there may be a turtle sanctuary around the corner entrance 16°09.695S / 167°32.076E where he saw over a dozen turtles. – Sugar Shack

### **11.12 Bushman's Bay**

Eastern side of Malekula

#### **11.12.1 Anchorage**

**July 2024:** 16°09.573S / 167°30.332E in 9.5m sand/rubble. Not ideal as it has a side swell that wraps around the reef. Super pretty bay surrounded by reefs. If you move too close to shore, the bottom turns to rocks and bommies so be careful. – Sugar Shack

**June 2018:** Anchor in 10m, Sand some rock/rubble. – Screensaver

**2014:** 16°09.593S / 167°30.344E 9m sand/coral. If you move too close the bottom turns to rocks/bommies. – Reflection

#### **11.12.2 Cruiser Report**

**July 2024:** There is a village to the north side of the bay but from our anchor spot it was really hard to see where we could safely land the dinghy. It looked like reefs lined the entire bay in front of the village area. We arrived late in the afternoon and left early the next morning. – Sugar Shack

**June 2018:** This place is not in any of the books and I picked it straight out of Google. I crept right up the head of the bay as it did open out a bit, however it just seemed a little squashed and shallow for the looming bad weather. Deciding to anchor just a bit further out as the bullets came through and a ratio of 3:1, I could not get a firm hold and Screensaver slowly crept backwards.

The local village and the people were all very nice giving us a tour around and introductions. – Screensaver

### **11.13 Nunbecken Bay**

Eastern side of Malekula

#### **11.13.1 Anchorage**

**June 2009:** 16°07.44S / 167°29.48E in 22' on foul ground but had a very calm anchorage despite the trade winds. As at Crab Bay, you can just duck in behind the first reef and get out of the swell without going all the way in. On the aerial photo it looked like you could go all the way into the mangroves, but when we explored by dinghy, we found it was almost too shallow for the dinghy in some places. – Sloepmouche

## **11.14 Port Stanley**

Eastern side of Malekula

### **11.14.1 Litslits (Litzlitz)**

#### **11.14.1.1 Anchorage**

**July 2024:** 16°06.602S / 167°26.384E 6m during low tide. It took us several tries to stick the hook, but after the 4<sup>th</sup> time she stuck good. We dropped 45m of chain and landed in a spot with good spinning radius.

Getting ashore: There is no convenient way to get to shore. During low tide the entire shoreline is muddy, marsh and mangrove that lead to local's backyards. We did see 2 outriggers pull their boats onto the mud and gingerly walk across the mud. During high tide you might be able to get your dinghy over the muddy marsh area (1m depth) and leave it on shore in someone's backyard, but if you return when the tide goes out you'll have to drag the dinghy through the mud a very long way.

The commercial dock is covered in barnacles and way too high to use for small boats/dinghies. To the side of the commercial dock are large boulders. We ended up dropping a stern anchor and tying the bow to the light pole (it was mid tide going up). By the time we came back the stern anchor was under water and the dinghy was floating nicely. We saw several tough boats/long boats do the same thing in this area. – Sugar Shack

#### **11.14.1.2 Yachtsmen Services**

##### **11.14.1.2.1 Cooking Fuel (Propane and Butane)**

**July 2024:** Dennison Trading offers Origin Gas. I believe they just trade bottles. Located to the right of the dock, 5 minutes down the main road. Hours: Mon-Fri: 0600-1830, Sat: 0600-1130. – Sugar Shack

##### **11.14.1.2.2 Fuel (Diesel and Gasoline)**

**July 2024:** There is a Pacific Fuel station with diesel and gasoline. From the commercial dock, turn right and it will be on the right side. About 5-7-minute walk. Hours: Mon-Fri: 0700-1800, Sat 0700-1130. – Sugar Shack

#### **11.14.1.3 General Services**

**July 2024:** Dennison Trading has Vodafone & Digicel top-up and many popup grocery stores have Digicel top-up. – Sugar Shack

#### **11.14.1.4 Provisions**

**July 2024:** As you walk off the dock, just as you come to the main road, there is a popup market on your right. Basic supplies available. Hours: Mon-Fri: 0800-1700.

Dennison Trading is located right behind the Pacific Fuel station. Hours: Mon-Fri: 0600-1830, Sat: 0600-1130. They have a collection of grocery, some meats, canned goods, hardware items, plumbing, 2-stroke oil, silicone, tape, toys, clothing, cold soda, kitchen supplies.

Bakery: Just 3 minutes down the road (turn right from dock), on the left is a white building (16°06.903S / 167°26.472E). They sell all sorts of bread. They sell out quickly.

There are several popup stores in Litslits and along the road to Lakatoro. – Sugar Shack

#### **11.14.1.5 Cruiser Report:**

**July 2024:** They have a proper asphalt road with lots of traffic. Lots of taxis will pass by. We did not bother to flag them down as we wanted to walk. It took about 45 minutes to walk from Litslits to Lakatoro along the road with not much shade.

Not our favorite stop that is for sure. The anchorage was challenging, getting to shore was challenging and it was not as pretty as most of the other places we've been. – Sugar Shack

### **11.14.2 Lakatoro**

The town is located primarily on one main road. From Litslits, turn right and you will walk into town. All of the stores below are located on the main road.

#### **11.14.2.1 Yachtsmen Services**

**July 2024:** There is a Pacific Fuel Station here as well. Location: Main road as you enter town. – Sugar Shack

#### **11.14.2.2 Provisioning**

**July 2024:** The main supermarket is called Retensel Supermarket and they offer both basic grocery items, hardware, clothing, and kitchen goods. They also offer some banking services.

Butcher & Fresh Fish: is just down the street in the blue building.

They have a fresh market every Monday-Friday from 0800-1500. – Sugar Shack

#### **11.14.2.3 General Services**

##### **11.14.2.3.1 Banking (ATM)**

**July 2024:** There is a Western Union / No. 1 Currency in the main shopping mall (behind Pacific Fuel). Hours: Mon-Fri: 0730-1645, Sat: 0730-1200. – Sugar Shack

##### **11.14.2.3.2 Communications**

**July 2024:** Vodafone and Digicel both have offices here (main road near Pacific Fuel). – Sugar Shack

#### **11.14.2.4 Cruiser Report**

**July 2024:** The town was very vibrant as a soccer/football game was going on and many people were out and about just saying “hello” (it was Friday afternoon after all). Small town, single road. – Sugar Shack

### **11.14.3 Uri Island**

#### **11.14.3.1 Anchorage**

**July 2024:** We tried to anchor near 16°05.851S / 167°27.596E in 17-19m, but decided with the strong 18-19kts SE winds it was not worth the effort. It is super pretty and we saw several locals onshore.

Port Stanly outer arm: We then tried near 16°06.698S / 167°27.561E in 20m but the hook was not sticking well and we were really exposed to the strong winds. We headed to Suaro Island. – Sugar Shack

**June 2009:** Port Stanley offers several anchorages. We anchored off the Eastern end of Uri Island (see Rocket Guide) where we were welcomed by the small community. We toured their clean village and snorkeled in the marine park, where we took underwater photos of very vibrant corals and the giant clam shells.

We also anchored temporarily on rubble off the dock in Lislits in order for one of us to walk to Lakatoro to get bread. – Sloepmouche

#### **11.14.4 Suaro Island**

##### **11.14.4.1 Anchorage:**

**July 2024:** 16°06.699S / 167°27.568E in about 8m did not feel comfortable with the neighboring reefs. We wanted to go in closer to shore, but the trade winds were not cooperating and anything further out would have been on top of live coral (according to navionics). – Sugar Shack

### **11.15 Norsup Island**

Eastern side

### **11.15.1 Anchorage**

**July 2024: 16°03.524S / 167°24.3336E** in 9m with good holding. We had 20-25kts of SE winds and a .5m swell while we were anchored at Port Stanley so we came to hide behind Norsup Island. We did have a small wrap around swell, but it was still better than our previous spot.

Another boat anchored at 16°03.320S / 167°24.486E in 9-14m of sand. – Sugar Shack

**June 2018: 16°03.532S / 167°24.305E.** Anchored in 7m, sand. Again, just a quick stop, but there is a lot of protection within this 1-mile area. – Screensaver

**2014: 16°03.320S / 167°24.486E.** Anchored in 9-14m sand. Exposed N-ESE winds and swell. Search for the sandy patches in the sheltered part of this bay. – Reflection

### **11.15.2 Cruiser Report**

**July 2024:** Very lovely village on the island with about 50-75 people living here. You can easily walk around the entire island in a few hours including greeting the many locals who come out to say “hello” – Sugar Shack

## **11.16 Wala Island**

Eastern Side

### **11.16.1 Anchorage**

**Nov. 2023: 15°58.650S / 167°22.00E.** The anchorage can be accessed from either the north or the south. It is located on the western shore of the island. You anchor in 4-5m of sand and coral and hang in 10m. It is best to creep up towards the right end of the beach and drop the hook. The drop off is steep so be sure your anchor is set and not dragging off the ledge. Protection ENE through to E to S. – As reported to Sugar Shack

**July 2023:** To the left of the concrete jetty is good holding (for a catamaran). There was plenty of depth so a mono should be fine as well. – Katoa 2

**2014: 15°58.597S / 167°22.443E.** Anchored in 6-18m sand. Exposed west thru north east winds and swell. You will be surprised how close you get to the beach before dropping anchor. – Reflection

### **11.16.2 Cruiser Report**

**Nov. 2023:** Organize a guide to walk around Wala as it is a very interesting and unique island. Walk the beach at low tide as you can't get to the other side at higher tides. It takes about an hour to walk around the entire island. – As reported to Sugar Shack

**July 2023:** There is a local boat bus that goes from the village to the mainland and back (taking kids to school). It was a gold coin payment to use it.

There is very good snorkeling around the northwest corner of the island.

On Wala Island we met Elizabeth and Mike and their 3 daughters, who were very hospitable. Mike took us for an island tour up to where the old village was before they moved to the beach front. It had some interesting features and Mike was very good at explaining things. Along the way we came across local fruit that he offered us. I think it cost 100 Vatu. Elizabeth is very warm and communicative. She organized a 'kastom' dance put on by the village on the mainland opposite Wala Is. There were only 3 of us attending but they seem to be able to put it on, on request for a group. I think I paid 11,000 vatu which Elizabeth thought was too expensive, but they did go to the effort for 3 people. It was a very good display with both men and women dancing in traditional costume, traditional fire making, traditional food preparation and cooking that you got to try, weaving and sand drawing. It was set just on the beach edge with caves so was very picturesque. – Katoa 2

## **11.17 Atchin Island**

### **11.17.1 Anchorage**

**July 2024: 15°56.600S / 167°20.208E.** Anchored in 12m with really good holding, anchor stuck well. Just past all of the tough boats (on moorings) and the sand bar. – Sugar Shack

**July 2024: 15°56.619S / 167°20.20E.** Anchored near the sand bar. There are several moorings for local boats in this area as it is really the only suitable place to anchor. – Moana

### **11.17.2 Safety & Theft**

**July 2024:** Around 10 p.m., we heard impacts against a hull. There was an empty canoe tied to the stern of the starboard hull. My wife found herself face to face with a young man armed with a machete. She screamed, "What are you doing here? What are you doing here?" Fortunately, he got scared and jumped into the water. I shouted loudly enough to wake up an island resident who understood the situation. She came with other people to intercept our burglar but he was able to escape by threatening them with his machete. – Paikea

### **11.17.3 Cruiser Report**

**July 2024:** Information claims that this is an island of master canoe carvers. However, we only saw a handful of canoes and lots and lots of tough boats. There is a lovely path around the entire island, but I suggest you ask for a local to show you around as there are lots of beautiful nassara (sacred) spots.

We did spot our first two face tam tams, which are very, very rare. The carver has to pay double to carve two faces on the tam tam so not many carvers do this. One tam tam can have no more than 5 faces but there is no record of one. There are a few 4 face tam tams in museums, but typically multiple face tam tams are difficult to find, especially ones that are still in their original location.

It was day 3 of the 5-day Independence Day so very few villagers were around while we were here.

We were told by several locals NOT to swim here as there are sharks. Several fatal shark attacks have occurred here so be careful. – Sugar Shack

**July 2024:** This is a very interesting island and a must see. – Moana

## **11.18 Vao Island**

Eastern Side

### **11.18.1 Anchorage**

**Nov. 2023: 15°54.07S / 167°18.16E.** Protection from NE through E to SE. – As reported to Sugar Shack

**2014: 15°54.114S / 167°18.158E.** Anchored in 6-12m sand/rubble. Exposed to anything from the north. Tuck in behind the small spit of sand and wait for the parade of canoes. – Reflection

### **11.18.2 Cruiser Report**

**June 2009:** At Vao Island we were lucky to meet Juliette, a very nice, enterprising lady who gave us a tour of the island after we charged the batteries of her mobile phone.

There is a large French Catholic school there. We took lots of photos/video of several nasaras (ceremonial dance areas) and local artists, who do nice wood and coral carvings. – Sloepmouche

## **12 Ambrym Island**

**Volcano:** If you plan to do the two day hike to the volcano, be sure to visit the Vanuatu Meteorology & Geo Hazards Department website at [www.vmgd.gov.vu/vmgd/index.php/geohazards/volcano/our-active-](http://www.vmgd.gov.vu/vmgd/index.php/geohazards/volcano/our-active-)

[volcanos/ambrym](#) to determine if it is safe to hike the volcano. You do not want to visit the volcano if it is above a level 1.

## **12.1 Craig's Cove**

### **12.1.1 Anchorage**

**July 2024:** **16°15.142S / 167°55.223E.** Anchored in 14 meters of gravel and rocks, very poor holding and dangerous rocks too close for swinging radius, so we left. Only recommend in no wind conditions. – Trinity

**July 2024:** This is a wide-open anchorage exposed to wind and swell, very little protection. The bottom is riddled with large rocks and bommies. We came here by dinghy from Lonwolwol and I can't imagine why anyone would want to anchor here.

The only somewhat safe spot to leave the dinghy, out of the big swell and wind was around **16°15.388S / 167°55.29E.** As it was, we got pummeled with multiple waves. – Sugar Shack

**Nov. 2023:** **16°15.28S / 167°55.26E.** Anchor in 8-15m black sand and rock (not a great anchorage). Anchor further north in the bay in about 20m. Protection from N through E to SSE. – As reported to Sugar Shack

**Oct. 2023:** The anchorage here in Craig's Cove is not the greatest, but it is adequate. – Dandelion

### **12.1.2 Yachtsman Services**

#### **12.1.2.1 Cooking Gas (Propane and Butane)**

**July 2024:** They had several bottles at the small grocery store that they allow trade. However, we noticed the nozzle or connection looked different so be aware you may have to transfer the gas. – Sugar Shack

#### **12.1.2.2 Fuel (Diesel and Gasoline)**

**July 2024:** The grocery store (green building behind the broken wharf) sells gasoline \$400vt/L. – Sugar Shack

### **12.1.3 Provisions**

**July 2024:** There is a small grocery store (to the left of the dinghy landing) in a bright green building behind the old, destroyed wharf. Ask one of the locals to open it for you as they don't have standard operating hours. Inside the market they had 3 coolers of meats (mostly chicken), a cooler of ice cream, wine, beer, canned goods, flour, sugar, etc...not a bad little store. The supply ship comes 4x per week so they are replenished frequently.

They have a fresh market every Wednesday and Friday in a bright orange building in front of the grocery store. It is close to the old, destroyed wharf. – Sugar Shack

### **12.1.4 Cruiser Reports**

**July. 2024:** We took our dinghy from Lonwolwol to Craig's Cove and it is not something I would recommend. It is about 3.4nm and as we turned the corner, we were exposed to the seas which built from 1m-3m and the winds were 20+kts. Not our finest moment, but we committed to going. Once we got there we were shocked by the huge boulders and bommies all over the anchorage and along the shoreline. We finally found a somewhat decent spot to leave the dinghy (see anchorage above) but even then, we got soaked coming and going. The locals were lovely. The chief had 3 children show us around to the schools, airport, and market. Not many people out and about like other villages. – Sugar Shack

**Oct. 2023:** The Ni-Van were so very friendly! The often yell the only English phrase they know "I love you." We distributed some clothing, glasses, and toys. They are grateful for anything. – Dandelion

## **12.2 Lonwolwol Lake**

### **12.2.1 Anchorage**

**July 2024:** **16°13.011S / 167°480E** in 5m with good holding. This spot had a little less swell than our first spot and it was a bit closer to shore.

Originally, we anchored at **16°13.013S / 167°56.336E** in 8m of black sand with really good holding.

**16°13.037S / 167°56.453E** in 10m of black sand is where our friends anchored. There is a wee swell coming in when we had light SE winds/seas, but it was gentle and not too bad.

It seems it does not matter where you drop the hook in this anchorage, you will get the swell, which is constant and ranges from livable to awful. – Sugar Shack

**July 2024:** **16°13.033S / 167°56.432E** in good holding, 8 meters of black sand. Be prepared to use your 360-degree swinging radius within a few hours, even in a constant trade wind conditions. The waves coming from the side contrary to the wind direction. – Trinity

**Feb. 2024:** This is a good anchorage with good protection from the Easterlies. Quite striking to sail into and out of this bay with the two volcanoes dominating the island. – Katoa 2

### **12.2.2 General Services**

#### **12.2.2.1 Yacht Club**

Lonwolwol Yacht Club is run by Jessie and his son Jimmy. They offer many types of events and tours. Contact: +678.548.7330, WhatsApp: +678.562.8415, [jessietemar@gmail.com](mailto:jessietemar@gmail.com) and [jimmy.temar550@gmail.com](mailto:jimmy.temar550@gmail.com). They can also be found on Facebook as they list current activities.

They offer lots of activities, festivals, and things to do (volcanic trek, lake tour, snorkeling, hot springs, bird watching, sailor's night campfire, traditional cooking and baking, kayaking and canoeing the lake), they have an amazing vegetable farm and will sell tomatoes, salad, and more. You can preorder the vegetables by DM or WhatsApp.

You can book a private tour or go with a group. Book tour one week before coming to ensure availability.

Tours and Activities (or have them customize one for you):

- Local Tour: Historical story of the village and tour, garden tour, and access to lake for swimming, kayaking, canoeing, and rope swing - 700vt/pp
- Around the Lake and Local Tour: Everything above plus a lovely walk around the lake 2.5-3hrs, in the shade and maybe you'll find megapode and duck nests, coconut cake, and land crabs. 1200vt/pp
- Cultural Festival (need 5-7 days advance notice) with sand drawing, black magic, dancing and lunch or dinner. 4-8 people 6,000VT/pp and 10+ people 5,500vt/pp

They have the most amazing garden where you will find beautiful, fresh tomatoes, cucumbers, pumpkin, taro, kasava, salad, green onions, carrots, and sweet potatoes. They also have papaya.

They host several festivals including:

- Early June: Regenerative Vanua (back to the origins) 6,200vt /pp
  - Traditional methods of food roasting/baking, Sand Drawing, Black Magic, Custom Dance, Bamboo Flute music, Garden & Lake Tour, swimming, kayaking, bird watching, Beach Dinner
- Mid-July: Ancestor's Lifestyle Heritage Festival 6,000 vt/pp
  - Traditional methods of food roasting/baking, Lunch with string band, Circumcision custom dance, lake tour (swimming, kayaking) bird watching, garden tour, Sailor's night on the beach
- Volcano Eruption 6,000 vt/pp is early August 7,000vt/pp
  - Volcano exhibit, activities, dances, sand drawing, traditional cooking, cruiser bonfire
- Lolibul Jungle Cultural Event late August 7,000vt/pp

- Custom dances, sand drawing, black magic, activities and lunch
- Hidden treasure of Ambrym's people and cultures \$6000/vt/pp is mid Septembers
  - Traditional dances, cooking, sand drawing, volcano exhibit, birdwatching, activities, beach fire.

### **12.2.3 Cruiser Report:**

**Aug. 2024:** We had a wonderful cultural experience at Lonwolwol Bay! Chief Jessie Temar and his son Jimmy welcomed us to their village and organized a full day of events for us. We were able to experience Kastom dance, black magic, sand drawing, slow food cooking and then a delicious meal. All of the vegetables came directly from Jessie's amazing garden. To cap off our day, we had a beach campfire and dinner. – Yaminda

**July 2024:** Jessie and his son Jimmy are lovely people! They run a top-notch yacht club and garden, and offer many activities, and tours (see above). We did the all in one tour where we toured the garden, the village with the historical background, and the around the lake for 1200VT/pp. The tour around the lake is a very easy, flat walk in the shade of the trees. Can be done in flip flops but long pants would be nice as our legs got scratched with lots of twigs. Everything took about 3.5 hours as Jimmy explains many things along the way. In addition, if you are lucky enough, he will show you a Megapode nest, duck nest, and procure you some coconut cake and land crabs.

We bought a bag of tomatoes (7) for 300vt, 1 HUGE papaya 350vt, regular papaya 200vt.

Jessie and Jimmy hosted a lovely Cruiser night on the beach where they served traditional foods to 11 cruisers. They cooked laplap (banana and pumpkin) in a loc (lovo), cooked pork, chicken, kasava, taro, salad (with cucumbers and tomatoes), all for 1000vt/pp. It was delicious and a delightful evening. – Sugar Shack

**July 2024:** Jessie is the best gardener of the island where you can buy fresh, directly from the field. His son Jimmy gives very informative tours 2-3 hours (700vt) around the lake grabbing Megapode bird eggs of significant size for you to cook. Very special. We also bought plenty of land crabs for only 50vt each. They show you how to kill and clean them. Do not execute without wearing heavy gloves. – Trinity

**Feb. 2024:** Jessie and his family have a yacht club and run educational, history, and cultural tours with a walk around the lake. He can also include "Kastom" dances and cultural activities. There are bungalows and canoes to hire as well. On 18 July 2024, the village runs an event on the traditional livelihood of the people. On 8 August 2024 there is an exhibition of Dippoint Volcano which erupted in 1913. – Katoa 2

## **12.3 Buwuma Bay (Hot Pools)**

### **12.3.1 Anchorage**

**July 2024:** 16°11.667S / 168°01.895E. Anchored in 8m of black sand with good holding with ground swell. This is probably more of a day anchorage to visit the beautiful hot pool behind the beach. Be sure to watch out for the reef south of the bay. – Trinity

**Aug. 2023:** 16°11.69S / 168°01.80E. Not sure the name of this spot so we named it Hot Pools. We were here just for a few hours as weather conditions changed and we were on the lee side. – Eastern Stream

### **12.3.2 Cruiser Report**

**Aug. 2023:** We swam to shore and you can feel the water temperature shift. The hot pool is no longer connected to the sea via a stream. The hot pool water can be a little green, but you can clean up a little space on the side of the pool and make your own private pool. – Eastern Stream

## 12.4 Double Bay

### 12.4.1 Anchorage

**July 2024: 16°10.811S / 168°04.796E.** 7m of black sand. Big enough for 2 boats with swing room. We were free and clear of rocks and bommies as this is a sandy bottom. There are patches of “yellow” which we believe is sulfur sediment.

We downloaded satellite images in Feb. 2024 and none of the images match this bay so be aware and be careful. Every chart, including navionics, had us anchored on shore. This particular anchorage has changed dramatically since the last cyclone. Images in the Rocket Guide are not accurate either.

Friends of ours anchored .02 nm away from us and they dropped in 14m (whereas we dropped in 7m).

The beach has really easy dinghy access as there are no big rocks or bommies near shore.

Winds shifted dramatically and gusts were coming down at 30kts, both of us dragged. We reset in the same general area and seemed to hold. Both of our boats, catamarans, spun around in all directions.

Other side of Double Bay: We took the big boat to the other half of “Double Bay” and found it to be very, very deep in the center. It is a shame because it is so beautiful. Near the wall was 10m but in the center it was 25-32m which makes it hard to anchor. – Sugar Shack

### 12.4.2 Cruiser Report

**July 2024:** Super quiet and peaceful bay. We walked on the beautiful black sand beach and climbed over the rocks and large lava shelves (which are unsteady toward the edges). On shore, toward the right side of the beach are several river run offs (they appear to come from under the sand) and you will find that they have warm water flowing toward the sea. There are lots of flies on the beach and some near the boat.

We had a very large manta ray swimming around this bay.

The water is pretty murky as you have different thermal layers (cold from the sea and hot from the volcano). We had a lot of black debris (either black sand dust from the beach due to the strong winds or volcano dust) all over the boat and we had a nice yellow stain on the waterline from the sulfur in the water. – Sugar Shack

## 12.5 Ranvetlam

**Volcano:** If you plan to do the two day hike to the volcano, be sure to visit the Vanuatu Meteorology & Geo Hazards Department website at [www.vmgd.gov.vu/vmgd/index.php/geohazards/volcano/our-active-volcanos/ambrym](http://www.vmgd.gov.vu/vmgd/index.php/geohazards/volcano/our-active-volcanos/ambrym) to determine if it is safe to hike the volcano. You do not want to visit the volcano if it is above a level 1.

### 12.5.1 Anchorage

**Nov. 2023: 16°09.08S / 168°06.45E.** Anchor in 10m in black sand with good holding. Protection in NE through S to SSW. – As reported to Sugar Shack

**Aug. 2023: 16°09.13S / 168°06.42E.** 8m deep. Anchored in sand with good holding. – Eastern Stream

### 12.5.2 Cruiser Report

**Nov. 2023:** Land your dinghy ashore on the western end of the beach where you will find stakes to fasten your painter. Walk west along the track to get to the village (5min) where they have great carvings and will take you on guided walking / hiking trails to the volcanos.

The stunning volcanic cliffs that form the beachfront make for spectacular diving. – As reported to Sugar Shack

**Aug. 2023:** A nice friendly village to visit. We came here to hike to the crater of the Benbow volcano. Jaap did this in 2011 when the crater lake was still lava. With the earthquake in 2018, the implosion caused the lake to disappear. However, the views were still incredible and the crater was very impressive. Be aware that it is a

hike 25-30km. We did it in one day, but it is also possible to do it in two days and have an overnight in a shelter. You can arrange a guide in the village.

Most Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays the local ladies will cook food which they sell for dinner (starting around 1700). – Eastern Stream

## **12.6 Ranon**

### **12.6.1 Anchorage**

**July 2024: 16°08.550S / 168°06.985E** in low tide we were at 3.5m and high tide we were at 4.6m. Solid holding in black sand. We had a rather large weather system during our stay here and we saw gusts up to 30+kts but we had good holding.

There are plenty of spots to land the dinghy on the beach, but most cruisers just go near the area where the local boats are moored. – Sugar Shack

**July 2024: 16°08.530S / 168°06.950E.** Excellent holding at 8 meters black sand, but pretty gusty with down-drafting winds and short winds coming from the side. Easy access to the beach. – Trinity

**Nov. 2023: 16°08.549S / 168°07.00E.** 4-10m. Ranon is a big bay with good holding. The wind swings round about -- so give yourself lots of swing room. Protection NE through S to SSW. – As reported to Sugar Shack

**Oct. 2023:** The anchorage in Ranon was much better than at Craig's Cove. – Dandelion

**June 2015:** The sea bed shelves slowly from over 100 metres deep and we anchored in 10 metres on black sand 50 metres off the beach. The village of Ranon is spread out along the shore. – Alba

**2014: 16°08.511S / 168°06.936E.** Anchor in 4-10m black sand. Get as close to the shore as you are comfortable, either get far north or south, but avoid the middle. – Reflection

### **12.6.2 Medical**

**July 2024:** There is a medical clinic open Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 0900-1100. From the beach, walk on the main road to the left. It will be on the right-hand side, white building. – Sugar Shack

### **12.6.3 Provisions**

**July 2024:** The chief owns a two-story building (16°08.687S / 168°07.005E) with a very small, and lightly provisioned store on the bottom and bungalows on the top (for rent). However, when we peeked inside the windows there were very few supplies. We were told that they had a fresh market on Wednesday and Fridays but evidently that is not happening anymore either (we asked the chief and 2 other people). – Sugar Shack

### **12.6.4 Transportation**

**July 2024:** If you would like a guide to Fanla, you can call Freddy at +678.511.6391. He is very prompt and will walk down from Fanla to take you back to his village. He charged 1,000vt for the group. He is super friendly, and very welcoming.

Chief Sekor can also arrange a truck for 2,000 (one way for the entire truck) or he can arrange a guide.

**Ferry Service:** The store had a flyer with information on a passenger ferry called MV Princess Marie. +678.29873, +678.771.6121, +678.565.6689. MV Princess Marie stops at Ambrym (Craig's Cove, Ranon and Nebul) and then it goes to Pentecost (Bay Homo, Waterfall Bay, Melsis, Bwatnapni, Namaram, Nambaranguit, Lolong, Abatuntora, and Loane) and it goes to Ambae (Boeboe, Lolowai, Lolopuepue, Waloriki, Nangire, Nduindui, Walaha, Redcliff, and Sako). – Sugar Shack

### **12.6.5 Cruiser Report**

**July 2024:** The village is really spread out along the coast and up the mountain. We met the chief (his house is near the only 2 story building, to the right of the anchorage off the main road). He organized all of the carvers

at one time so we could see everything all at once. We heard rumors that if we did not do this it would cause great discord amongst the many carvers and they would each come to the boat individually.

We anchored at Ranon because it is closer to walk to Fanla for the Fanla Festival (rather anchoring at Nobul).

The Solomon Douglas Bungalow is permanently closed.

Chief Felix organized a carving demonstration for us 500vt/pp. The carvings in Fanla are more sophisticated and they have a much larger selection.

**Fanla:** If you wish to go to Fanla, the Ranon anchorage is the most convenient. From the beach, take the main road to the left. If you follow the road (use GoogleMaps or Maps.me) along the coast, you will go up hill most of the way. You will come to a cement section of road. If you are feeling adventurous, just past the cement section of road is a dirt path on the right which is the “short cut” and will lead you back up to the road. If it has rained a lot or you aren’t feeling adventurous, then stay on the main road, keep to the right. If the road splits and goes left/or down, then take the road to the right that goes up. This road will take you to Fanla. The road walk is about 1hour and the short cut is about 45 minutes.

For the Fanla Festival notes, see the Fanla section.

**Linbul:** Linbul is just below Fanla. Take the same main road left, keep going along the coast. It will split and you want to take the left going down. – Sugar Shack

**July 2024:** Bought and traded two wooden carvings and discovered onboard with the magnifying glass that both were contaminated with very small wood eating bugs - so they went immediately over board.

Waking up to the custom village Fanla was a 40 minute steep walk and you have to pay 1000 Vatu just to see the village, which was quite disappointing since many houses are now made of concrete. They have a very big interesting tree, but also pretty demanding villagers who like to empty your bags. For our two friends they did a little ROM dance with 4 masked dancers for 5000 Vatu per person.

If you do not look for a performance, we suggest to rather visit Linbul direction north. It’s is way prettier. Ask there for Ruben. He is the master carver for wood and stone called Lengnaqulong. – Trinity

**Oct. 2023:** We met the chief and bought carving that is unique to this island. They also offer you a chance to see the ROM dance. They also have volcano tours. – Dandelion

## **12.7 Fanla**

### **12.7.1 Anchorage**

**July 2024:** Anchor in Ranon for the easiest access to Fanla which is located up in the mountains. See Ranon section above for anchoring notes.

Note, Chief Sekor who organizes the Fanla Festival really pushed hard for us to anchor in Nobul but that is a more exposed anchorage and required a truck to transport us to Fanla (it’s further than Ranon.) – Sugar Shack

### **12.7.2 Transportation:**

**July 2024:** Freddy is a guide and can be reached at +678.511.6391. He is very prompt and walks down from Fanla to take you back to his village. He charged 1,000vt for the group. He is super friendly, and very welcoming.

Chief Sekor can arrange a truck for 2,000 (one way for the truck) or he can arrange a guide. —Sugar Shack

### **12.7.3 Cruiser Report**

**July 2024:** The Fanla Festival was truly amazing (11-12 July 2024). We walked there and back, in the rain, but it was still a lovely walk. Two of the highest graded men live in this village, they are grade 11 and proudly wear multiple circular tusks. They also have 6 really large Tam Tams (one being at least 4m tall) that they play during the drum and flute demonstrations.

The ROM dance was performed with 10 masked men and 20 additional singers (including 2 drummers). It was a true spectacle and one that I won't forget. It was an honor to witness this in person. The masks are spectacular and very intricate (such a shame they destroy them after the ceremony). The ROM dancers performed as part of their grading ceremony.

They also performed 3 black magic tricks, did 2 sand drawings on the ROM dance and the mountain, and had lots of wood, stone, and lava rock carvings. Very impressive.

The original price was 10,000 Day 1 and 15,000vt Day 2. We had 8 people coming so Chief Sekor came down in price to 8,000 and 10,000. In the end we had 18 people show up on Day 1. As it turned out, Freddy said he only charged 6,000vt for each day. So, we basically got charged double by chief Sekor. We won't be attending any more of his festivals and I strongly encourage you to attend any of the other festivals for a much lower price. – Sugar Shack

**June 2015:** We went ashore and walked for 45 minutes up to the village of Fanla, which is a Kastom village where they put on ROM dances for tourists. There's a dirt road which heads north along the edge of the shore and after about ½ mile, there's a small path off to the right, which goes up steeply following a small gorge. We walked past it thinking that it led to someone's garden, so had to walk a bit further and follow another dirt road that branched off ½ mile further on. (The small path is a shortcut back up to this road.)

As we walked into Fanla, we met a guy called Freddy, who said that he could arrange a ROM dance tomorrow. It's going to cost us 5000vt each, but we agreed and arranged to be back at nine o'clock tomorrow.

Our man Freddy met us on the beach. Freddy is the brother of one of the chiefs in Fanla and he's one of the few people allowed to make the traditional masks for the ROM Dance.

Fanla is a traditional Kastom village steeped in tradition and "Majick". Having a volcano on the island gives great powers to sorcerers and Ambrym is the magic capital of Vanuatu. The men in the village go through a grading process over many years and have to perform various rituals to increase their grade, which seem to mostly involve killing pigs.

Most of the men have a large number of pigs - Freddy has 19. On some animals, they remove the top teeth to allow two of the lower teeth to grow abnormally in a six-inch diameter circle. It takes twelve years to grow a complete circle and these "Tuskers" are greatly prized for grading rituals.

Many of the more powerful chiefs/sorcerers cook and eat their meals alone in tabu places, where women are not allowed to go. Freddie showed us around the village and pointed out a number of places that were tabu - one belonging to his father who is buried in the place where he used to prepare his meals.

The ROM dance was good - it's a traditional dance and ritual that is one of the levels in the grading process. Some of the dancers are dressed in large masks and costumes made from Pandanus leaves, while the others dance in the middle chanting and drumming, wearing only nambas (penis pouches). There were only 4 dancers in ROM masks, so I suspect that they were a little short-handed for our display, but it was enjoyable. – Alba

## **12.8 Nobul / Nebul**

### **12.8.1 Anchorage**

**June 2024:** 16°06.582S / 168°07.793E in 10 meters of good holding in black sand. The anchorage is calm and beautiful. Do not anchor closer to the beach as there are plenty of coral heads. – Trinity

**2015:** Anchored in 11m in front of white sand beach. Walking tracks to Ranon and around the northern point where there are quite a few villages. – Vellela

**Aug. 2008:** 16°06.6S / 168°07.7E Anchored in 13-20m in black sand. We came back at the end of August to assist with the famous "back to my roots" festival.

We were lucky to anchor close enough to **Olal** to be able to walk to the new North Ambrym Yacht Club and Bungalows. The anchorage is not mentioned in guides and is much more protected than the small exposed anchorage just north of Olal.

From the beach there, it is an easy 45-minute walk past several villages to Olal or a five-mile dinghy trip best done only in mild conditions. You can ask Chief Johnson from Nebul Bay village. –Sloepmouche

### **12.8.2 Activities**

There are loads of festivals in North Ambrym. Chief Sekor is the main contact for most of the festivals. Be aware that he often overcharges for his festivals. You can see the same or similar activities at other festivals for half the price!

- Regenerative Vanua – in Craig Cove June
  - Contact: Lonwolwol: Jessy Tamar +678.548.7330
- Sand Drawing Festival – Anchor Nobul short walk to Olal June
  - Chief Sekor +678.560.7551. Cost 27,000VT / pp
- Fanla Festival – Anchor in Nobul, transport to Fanla July
  - ~~Chief Sekor +678.560.7551. Cost 25,000VT / pp~~
  - Contact Freddy, +678.511.6391 instead. Cost 12,000vt/pp
- Ancestor's Lifestyle Heritage Festival July
  - Contact: Lonwolwol: Jessy Tamar +678.548.7330
- Back to My Roots Festival Aug
  - Contact: Lonwolwol: Jessy Tamar +678.548.7330

### **12.8.3 Cruiser Reports**

**June 2024:** Sand Art Festival: We had 8 people so Chief Sekor lowered the price per person to 25,000 and he provided transport. A few of us opted to walk the 40-minutes down the road. The festival was very authentic and included many dances, songs, and storytelling along with the sand drawing. – Trinity

**June 2024:** When walking the beach road bring valuables to trade for great stone carvings called Lengnaqulong. – Trinity

**Aug. 2009:** Thirty yachts attended the 8th Back to My Roots Rom dance, a three-day festival (7,000 vatu/person). Like years before, we think this is one of the best cultural festivals in Vanuatu.

This year, Norbert (a school principal) took his sixth chief's grade. There were more dancers this year including the new generation. Money is raised to help kids with the school fees, and several cruisers sponsored some students. Don't miss this annual event at the end of August in Olal.

It takes a little effort, but to witness one of their festivals and Rom Dance is definitely worth it. Unique to the northern region of Ambrym, the Rom dancing truly gave us the feeling of stepping into a living National Geographic magazine. There's a long, complicated cultural significance to the dance. The high chief decides who can dance. Men pay high prices in pigs and goods for the privilege. Some of the dancers disguised themselves with layers and layers of dry banana leaves and wore elaborate tall conical masks, the design of which is closely guarded by each clan and passed along to initiates who pay. The masks are destroyed after the ceremony, which is why ancient masks that exist in collections are so rare.

The other male dancers were clad only in nambas, a woven sheath that covers only the penis and is attached to a wide bark belt holding it straight out or erect. Women danced in grass skirts only. The rhythm was primitive and compelling to the deep bass reverberation of a gigantic three-meter tam-tam, accented by the energetic higher pitched beats of smaller tam-tams and handheld bamboo models. The dancers sang and chanted and stamped, vibrating the ground around them. This was the first dancing we witnessed where we could believe they were actually dancing the dance for its original spiritual purpose, not as a show to entertain tourists. Very powerful! – Sloepmouche

## 13 Pentecost

### 13.1 Martelli Bay (South Pentecost)

Anchorage is only good in N/W winds

#### 13.1.1 Anchorage

**April 2008: 16°00.4S / 168°13.5E.** We anchored on the side near the church, not getting any closer than 30' depth, and found good black sand unencumbered by reef. Any closer, though and the reef rises to just under the surface. We sheltered from a northwesterly, so we went into this south-facing bay.

The bay is huge, and there are many places to anchor. It is very picturesque with wild, tall cliffs and jungle on one side and, on the other, a beautiful, gleaming green-blue church perched on a hill overlooking a small inviting beach that is protected by giant rock outcroppings. Steep, jungled hills form a backdrop and reminded us of the Marquesas.

There looked to be a reef extending out from the rocky cliff area that separates the bay's two black sand beaches. – Sloepmouche

#### 13.1.2 Cruiser Reports

**April 2008:** From the church there is a beautiful view of the bay, and from the anchorage is a view of the beautiful bay and beaches and seaward, a beautiful view of Ambrym and the cone shaped Lopevi Island. If the wind goes N or W, hopefully you'll have a chance to visit this lovely place. – Sloepmouche

### 13.2 Bay Homo / Home Bay

Naghol / Land Diving at Ratap Village. Access is either by truck transport or a 45-minute walk each way.

#### 13.2.1 Anchorage

**June 2024: 15°57.672S / 168°11.274E.** Dropped in 10m of black sand, good holding, slight swell and a light breeze in this very large bay. This spot is pretty close to one of the many villages. They had an event or something going on with someone preaching on a very loud speaker so we ended up moving over to Wali Bay where it was much quieter. – Sugar Shack

**Oct. 2023:** We anchored in Homo bay to access the land diving tour. – Dandelion

**Oct. 2023: 15°56.83S / 168°11.36E.** In the northern corner of the bay in 5-10m of black sand. Protection N through E to SSE. – As reported to Sugar Shack

**June 2023: 15°57.163'S 168°11.515'E.** Anchored in front of the village in 6m black mud. very protected from SE winds, sandy bottom, no bommies seen, no roll. – SV Complicite

#### 13.2.2 Cruiser Reports

**June 2024:** From Homo Bay you can access Ratap Village to see the Naghol (land diving). Contact the spokesperson: Bartholomew Garae [bartholomewgarae@gmail.com](mailto:bartholomewgarae@gmail.com) +678.730.8732 +678 731 0690 or Melsul Beta [melsulbetu@gmail.com](mailto:melsulbetu@gmail.com). The benefit of going to the Ratap Naghol is that they host it thru mid-July and it is held on Mondays and Fridays (not Saturdays like the other villages).

Cost is 10,500VT for adults, 5,000 (8-12 years), under 8 free. Cost for transport is 3000VT round trip for up to 10 passengers (split cost for the round-trip transport). 15-minute drive to the Kastom village. They originally charged 6000VT per van (of 10ppl) but lowered the price when cruisers said it was too high.

Once you schedule it, they will meet you on the beach at 0830 on your scheduled day and drive you 20 minutes to their Kastom village. They have a tower that is 20-30m tall with up to 11 jumping platforms. Bartholomew can be very eager by reaching out to you a lot, so be warned. – Sugar Shack

**Oct. 2023:** We made a contact in Port Vila for the Land Diving Tour so that when we arrived, we just had to reach out to Josef. They took us to the event up the mountain, which was an adventure in itself. The land diving was spectacular, authentic, and very brave! The history and tradition are well worth reading up on prior to attending the event. – Dandelion

**June 2023:** The land diving occurs on Saturday and it is recommended that you arrive on Friday to organize the event. Land diving occurs every Saturday between April and July. The spokesperson comes to see you and organizes transport for the next day. We got picked up at 7am and got back at 1:30pm, 1000 VUT for transport p/person, 9500 for entry to land diving, cash only - the inland village where the Nagol is very basic, they would appreciate any donations/trading (they didn't ask, just noticed it was more basic than other villages).

Email or text the spokesman if you are going next week and how many people so he has a rough idea of how much lunch and transport to prepare. Spokesperson Bartholomew Garae 7310690 [melsulbetu@gmail.com](mailto:melsulbetu@gmail.com).

Note: Ratap changed their dates and prices in June 2024 (see Sugar Shack above). – SV Complicite

**April 2008:** We took a walk (90 minutes one way) to Ratap Cultural Village. Alas, the whole community but one was gone to Bunlap for 100 days of mourning. No custom dancing, but a nice walk back following the river this time. Nice swimming holes and a pleasant hike with Chief Luke.

There are 3 towers for public performances. Pangi Village at the north end of Homo Bay. Londot village in Wali Bay and one near the Airport of South Pentecost.

Men, if you can, ask permission to go to the tower the day before the jump and see the jumpers preparing the vines and the platforms. Very interesting. Women are not allowed to go to the tower until the day of the jumps and cannot go near the base until the native women dancers go up there. – Sloepmouche

### **13.3 Wali (Land Diving)**

Naghol / Land Diving access is a short walk from the beach.

#### **13.3.1 Anchorage**

**June 2024: 15°54.672S / 168°11.274E.** Dropped in 10m of small rocks/pebbles/rubble but the anchor stuck good after pulled back with 1800RPM. There is a slight swell in this very large bay. This spot has a perfect view of the tower and is right by the walkway to the village (they lined a 'walkway' with posts and on Naghol day they put flowers in the posts. – Sugar Shack

**June 2015:** We dropped anchor just north of Wali, village. The anchorage is more of a road-stead being on a long straight beach. It's sheltered from the main brunt of the prevailing south east winds, but there's still some swell and wind waves bouncing us around a bit. – Alba

**2014: 15°54.78S / 168°11.277E.** Anchor in 7-10m brown sand. Exposed S – W – N winds and swell. Small round rocks on the bottom if you get too close to shore. – Reflection

#### **13.3.2 Provisions**

**June 2024:** There is a very small, sparse store. Plis: Nomo Koan Long Store at (15°55.197S / 168°11.36E), turn right on the road, blue building. Ask one of the locals to open if it is closed. Hours: 0600-2000. – Sugar Shack

#### **13.3.3 Cruiser Reports**

**June 2024:** This is a large, lovely bay with a small bit of a roll with the waves coming from the south. There is a very long, black sand/pebble beach that is great for a stroll and several villages to visit.

Dugongs have been spotted in this bay at sunset but only one evening out of the 5 nights we stayed.

On arrival, a few days before the Naghol, Elleen met us on the beach and took us on a personal tour of both villages. She showed us their meeting space, their “market”, their gardens, the weaving house. She is super friendly and personable and really trying hard to ensure visitors have a great time on her island.

**Naghol / Land Diving:** Londot Village and their Naghol tower is an easy 2-minute walk from the beach. Contact: Elleen Wano ([elleenwano66@gmail.com](mailto:elleenwano66@gmail.com)) or her phone +678.766.1274, +678.567.3932. Schedule your Naghol with Elleen so she knows how many are participating in the ceremony.

They perform Naghol on Thursdays and Saturdays in April, May and June. They ask that you book in advance, and arrive no later than 1000 to participate in the full ceremony. There is a custom dance during the Naghol ceremony.

Adults 12,000/adult/pp, Kids (12-16 years) 6,000/pp and kids under 12 are free.

Women are not allowed near the tower until the day of the Naghol ceremony. However, men are free to go and watch them prepare the tower for the next day’s events. And if you are feeling fearless, you can ask the constructor if you can climb the tower yourself (men only).

Elleen and the ladies of the village created a lovely walking path with a sign and flowers on the beach leading to the tower. It was a lovely welcome!

**Other Towers:** If you walk 8-10 minutes to the left of the village you will see their “practice tower” and if you keep walking 25-30 minutes you will come to another village that has a tower (about 25m tall). – Sugar Shack

**June 2024:** We booked a tour with Air Taxi to Pentecost Island from Port Vila to see the land diving. They picked us up at 0715 by the marina and dropped us at the airport. Cost for two people was 122,720 vatu plus 3% credit card fee and 200 vatu per person for departure tax.

At 0915 we were called to the plane and they flew us to Pentecost where we watched the land diving. They gave us sandwiches for lunch. The tour included all fees, transport in Port Vila, the flight, transport in Pentecost, the land diving, the lunch. The plan picked us up at 1500 and flew us over the Ambrym volcano on the way back. It was worth the money as we did not have time to sail over to Pentecost. – Jamala

**2014:** Great access to land diving April – June. Hot water springs, snorkeling on WWII planes. – Reflection

### **13.4 Waterfall Bay (west side)**

Two beautiful waterfalls, one you can see from the bay and the other is inside a cave!

#### **13.4.1 Anchorage**

**June 2024:** 15°47.130S / 168°09.739E in 5m of beautiful holding sand! A wee bit of a roll but not too bad. This anchorage has a great view of the Madiut waterfall and a beach full of cows. When the wind dropped the water was gorgeous crystal clear where you could easily see your anchor and chain. – Sugar Shack

**2014:** 15°47.197S / 168°09.720E. Anchor in 4-10m Sand. There is a constant, but not horrible roll in this anchorage. – Reflection

**April 2008:** 15°47'.2S / 168°09'.7E. – Sloepmouche

#### **13.4.2 Cruiser Report**

**June 2024:** Wonderful anchorage! There are dolphins and dugongs that love this bay (we anchored 2x here). We did not get to swim with the dugongs, but we enjoyed watching them from the boat and SUPs! And there are two great waterfalls to visit! One you can see from the anchorage (Madiut Waterfall) and the other you need a guide as it is inside a beautiful cave with stalactites and bats!

From the anchorage you can see the **Madiut waterfall**. We brought the dinghy up close to the river and tied it to a tree with a stern anchor. We walked up to the road and turned right. The path to the Madiut waterfall is 5 minutes down the impressive road starting at 15°47.060S / 168°09.887E. A local offered to show us the path

and frankly you can find it on your own, but you cross into someone's private property (over a fence). So probably best to go with a local. The path is pretty clear, albeit muddy. There are two beautiful, bubbly pools to swim in under the falls. Very refreshing and super beautiful. We paid Glen 1000VT as he stayed with us for the 2 hours and was super nice.

The **Rell Cave Waterfall** is super difficult to find, you really need a guide. It is close from the beach, but you will have a hard time finding the cave without a guide. We went to the Noda Guesthouse and asked for Venneth and she helped us find a local to take us to the cave. Her number is +678.594.3287. If you cannot reach her you can call her husband Silas but he is often at Port Vila +678.547.3071. The Noda Guest house can be found by turning right on the road, walk about 8-10 minutes. You will see a red iron gate on your left which leads to her house.

The Rell Cave waterfall is fabulous. You do have to traverse up the very muddy, slippery trail, but it is worth it. Bring a water proof flashlight and water shoes. You'll love it. We paid him 500VT and Venneth would not take any money. – Sugar Shack

**June 2024:** We walked along the road to the Panas village and then walked back on the old road which gave great views of the Waterfall bay anchorage. – Trinity

**April 2008:** You will see the waterfall as you approach the anchorage off the nice beach. We met Jeffrey, who guides visitors to their two attractions: the Madiut waterfall (an easy 15-minute walk to a bubble bath pool and big waterfall) and the worthwhile Rell Waterfall Cave (an easy 15- minute walk to a waterfall inside a two-chamber cave; bring a waterproof light).

Jeffery and his community decided to clear a path and beautify those two areas for the pleasure of visitors. The 500-vatu fee can probably be negotiated for a DVD or other trade items. A 20-minute walk on the main road brings you to the High School (Wadi College) on the hill, where you can buy bread loaves. – Sloepmouche

## **13.5 Bwatnapne Bay (NW Side)**

### **13.5.1 Anchorage**

**June 2024:** 15°39.766S / 168°07.109E in 6.2m of sand with really good holding! We had no swell and the water was really nice. Super beautiful, big bay, excellent breeze. Avoid the very large bommie on the south side of the anchorage (15°39.867S / 168°07.152E) – Sugar Shack

### **13.5.2 Yachtsmen Services**

#### **13.5.2.1 Cooking Gas (Butane and Propane)**

**June 2024:** The market (see provisions below) has a propane bottle exchange but they only had a few bottles so I would not count on being able to do an exchange here. – Sugar Shack

#### **13.5.2.2 Fuel**

**June 2024:** There is a house with a small shed (from anchorage, turn right on the road, and it's on right hand side across from the market) that has several large drums that they dispense fuel from and charge 300VT per liter. They did not have much so I would not count on being able to get fuel plus you don't want to take from their limited supply as they have a lot of vehicles driving around. They also sell cigarettes. – Sugar Shack

### **13.5.3 General Services**

#### **13.5.3.1 Medical**

**June 2024:** There is a Red Cross (yellow building) located on the main road. From anchorage, turn left and it will be on your right. – Sugar Shack

### **13.5.3.2 Police Station**

**June 2024:** The police station is located on the top of the hill. From anchorage, go to the road, turn right, follow it along until you go up the hill and you will see it on the left. Roland, the officer is lovely. – Sugar Shack

### **13.5.4 Provisions**

**June 2024:** There are two very small and very limited stores. Both are located in the same general area. From the anchorage, go to the road, turn right and follow around the bend. The first store (15°40.035S / 168°07.363E) is on your left, gray building with corrugated overhang roof and with a propane cage outside. They had eggs, sugar, canned goods, ice cream, and believe it or not, beer!

The second store is by the Malaysian Brotherhood market (with a bright blue door) which was closed when we walked by a few times. They had a sign that said they had ice, ice cream and chicken wings. – Sugar Shack

### **13.5.5 Cruiser Report**

**June 2024:** Navionics shows a wreck at the Middle Bay reef (15°39.842S / 168°07.151E) but we drove over it with the dinghy and did not see it. There is a long, rocky beach to walk on or you can go up the beach to the road and walk along it. Locals are super friendly and were surprised to see us walking around. Many came out to greet us and offered to show us around. There is a beautiful river by the town.

We snorkeled the reef on both the south and north ends of the bay and found loads of fish. Sugar Shack

## **13.6 Loltong Bay (NW side)**

Home of the Loltong Bay Beach Yacht Club with Matthew and Mary who cook custom traditional meals.

### **13.6.1 Anchorage**

**June 2024: 15°32.723S / 168°08.876E** in 4.5m of sand. We were the only boat here, with calm conditions, no swell and winds from SE. However, gusts do bullet down from the mountain. It's a good thing the holding is very good, we stuck on the first try, pulled back 1800RPM and didn't budge.

The two white markers on or near shore as reported on the Rocket Guide are no longer here. However, there is one white marker floating in the sea (North side of the bay) indicating where you can bring your dinghy up easily to the beach. It is in front of what once was the Loltong Yacht Club. – Sugar Shack

**Oct. 2018:** We visited Loltong Bay which is a very secure sand bottom reef anchorage for any winds from the east. Note that the buffeting winds around the very tall steep mountains does cause accelerated bullets from all directions which jolt you but provided you have set the anchor well is still secure (we had 40kt gusts).

It is important to note where the reef is on all sides and how close you will be if the wind comes from a different direction to how you set the anchor. While most of the western coasts of Maewo & Pentecost are affected by the south east swell wrapping around in developed conditions, Loltong Bay & Asanvari on SW Maewo are calm & swell free. – Noonsite

**2014: 15°32.716S / 168°08.857E.** Anchor in 4-6m sand. Exposed SW – W – NW winds and swell. Anchor in the center inside the enclosing reefs. – Reflection

**April 2008: 15°32.81S / 168°08.79E.** This bay is protected from all directions but west. You will find a calm anchorage in 15-20' of good sand behind the reef seen in the Rocket Guide aerial photo. Follow the alignment of the two triangular markers on the beach (70°T) as you approach the shore to anchor.

We found the anchorage waypoint in the Rocket Guide slightly off, putting you in the shallow corals to the south of the sandy anchoring area, so beware! There's not much room for more than two to three boats, and the transport boat uses the channel and lands on the beach. – Sloepmouche

## **13.6.2 Yachtsemen Services**

### **13.6.2.1 Fuel**

**June 2024:** Talk to Matthew at the Yacht Club about small amounts of gasoline. There is a villager who has extra drum or two at his house who might be willing to sell it to you. It is recommended that you filter the fuel before use. – Sugar Shack

### **13.6.2.2 Water**

**June 2024:** There are lots of spickets with fresh running water coming direct from a stream. There is one in the area where the Yacht Club used to be, there is one near the community center (to the right of the little rock pier), and there are several throughout the village. – Sugar Shack

## **13.6.3 General Services**

### **13.6.3.1 Medical**

**June 2024:** Red Cross Hours: Mon-Fri: 0800-1700. There is a Red Cross up the hill (stay on the cement road) on the right-hand side. Although there was nobody here when we passed by a few times and it is very limited and rustic. – Sugar Shack

### **13.6.4 Yacht Club**

The Lolotong Bay Beach Yacht Club (previously known as the Vatulo Yacht Club) was destroyed during cyclone Pam, but Matthew and Marie hope and plan to rebuild soon. He keeps the area where the old yacht club was located clean and raked – it looks like a garden. Matthew +678.504.2814.

**June 2024:** Matthew and Mary are so very lovely. They will give you a tour of the village and the bay, will show you their garden, and offer super delicious 12 course tasting menu for either lunch or dinner for only 1800VT per person. It was absolutely lovely with flowers, table cloth and lovely company.

### **13.6.5 Provisions**

**June 2024:** There are several “markets” in the lower village, in the central village and in the upper village (by the schools). However, they have very, very limited supplies and no hours listed.

- Bule Market, located in the lower village is just being set up. Ask Matthew for details.
- Fresh Market on Tuesday and Friday. Located by the large soccer field (central village). They had lots of pre-made meals, bread, taro root, and a few other vegetables.
- Market (lunch) near the community area or the beach loading area (to the right of the rock pier) is a covered area where ladies will sell lunch (local cuisine) Monday-Friday
- Tabé Lin’s Raran store is pretty well stocked for being on such a remote island (canned goods, cookies, crackers, soda, beer, oil, flour, rice). We did not see any meats, frozen goods or fresh produce.
- Co-Op Market +678.560.3575, +678.513.9853, Hours: Mon-Thur: 0630-1130 & 1500-2100, Fri: 0630-1130 & 1500-1600, Sat-Sun: 1800-2100. They sell soda, wine, oil, canned goods, and variety of other items.

### **13.6.6 Activities**

**June 2024:** Mysterious Cave is located in the lower village. Ask Matthew to introduce you to Glenda who will give you the wonderful tour and share the cool stories of the cave. This cave was home to the first man to live on Pentecost, along with a snake and a rooster. Cost is 1000VT/pp.

We enjoyed a lovely walk up the very steep mountainside through the central and upper villages.

We spotted our first dugong in this bay and saw several lovely turtles. – Sugar Shack

### **13.6.7 Cruiser Report**

**June 2024:** Loltong is the government center for Pentecost and it is an active port. There are many different walks that range from one hour to several days. Ask the village to show you the way. The high surrounding hills offer great views.

**Women are required to wear a sarong** to hide their upper legs. Please be prepared and bring it to shore.

They get small **supply ships** in daily from Port Vila and Lungaville. Some only deliver fuel, some delivery goods, and some deliver food. They usually circle around the anchorage, and drop small skiffs that run to and from the shore. Be aware, they drop the fuel drums in the sea and wait for the skiffs to come drag them to shore – can post a bit of a hazard for your boat in the anchorage.

The villages have power and running water from the turbines that are located up the mountain. You will pass by several power meters or power boxes. – Sugar Shack

**Oct. 2018:** The family that runs the Vatulo Yacht Club here on the left-hand side of Loltong Bay are Matthew & Marie (Tel: +678 5344714) with their 5 adopted children. They were the kindest & most welcoming people we have met here in the friendliest country on earth! The rest of the village were equally friendly.

In Sept 2018 both Maewo and Pentecost received heavy unseasonal rain and the Yacht club collapsed. They used to offer yachties meals, a book swap, and tour bookings, but with no physical shelter for the club they have put all services on hold.

While we were there Marie created a wonderful meal for us out of the tiny hut next door over a fire in exchange for help fixing their sailing dingy. We encouraged them to still offer meals to yachties despite not having a permanent shelter, so anyone visiting here please support them. – Noonsite

## **13.7 Laone Bay**

### **13.7.1 Anchorage**

**Nov. 2023: 15°28.2S / 168°08.2E.** There is a reef which comes out a long way from the beach in the middle of the bay. You can choose to anchor north or south of it. We have anchored south in 10-15m on coral and sand. You need good light and satellite charts to see your way around. Protection ENE through E to ESE. Very limited protection – this is a fair-weather anchorage. – As reported to Sugar Shack

### **13.7.2 Cruiser Report**

**Nov. 2023:** The main reef is Tabu and you are not allowed to snorkel, swim, or dive. Walk through the village to the airport will take about an hour and offers lovely views of the bay. – As reported to Sugar Shack

## **14 Ambae (Aoba)**

Navionics has this island listed as Aoba.

### **14.1 Volcano Alerts**

Posted July 25, 2019 on the [Vanuatu Meteorology and Geohazards Department Facebook page](#):

AMBAE VOLCANO ALERT BULLETIN No7 issued by the Vanuatu Meteorology and Geohazards Department on 25th July 2019 at 9:07 AM:

Ambae volcano is continuing in the major unrest state. The Volcanic Alert Level remains at Level 2. Imminent eruption could occur in such major unrest state. The Danger Zone at the caldera remains at 2 km radius from the active vent. An additional Danger Zone is located within the area of flowing creeks during heavy rain.

Read more here: [www.vmgd.gov.vu/vmgd/index.php/geohazards/volcano/](http://www.vmgd.gov.vu/vmgd/index.php/geohazards/volcano/)

## **14.2 Vanihe Bay (NW Side)**

### **14.2.1 Anchorage**

**July 2024:** 15°16.607S / 167°58.417E. Anchored in 7m black sand with good holding. No rocks or coral and very well protected by cliff from south to east. – Trinity

**2014:** 15°16.599S / 167°58.418E. Anchor in 4-10m sand. Exposed to winds and swell from the North. There is a slight roll most of the time in this anchorage. – Reflection

**April 2008:** 15°16.6S / 167°58.45E. Majestic Bay as we wanted a little solitude. – Sloepmouche

### **14.2.2 Cruiser Report**

**July 2024:** Nice beach, no road and no houses. – Trinity s

**April 2008:** There's no village or easy access from shore, so we saw no locals there. The bottom is perfect volcanic sand with no corals or rocks. Pick any spot, even very close to the cliffs or the beach, in order to avoid the swell and waves created by the wind bursts coming from behind Lolowai Point. The towering brown cliffs, about 150m high, form a dramatic backdrop as they rise out of the clear blue waters, and swallows and flying foxes flit and dive and soar past the sheer walls. – Slopemouche

## **14.3 Lalowai / Lolowai Bay**

### **14.3.1 Pass**

**Aug. 2024:** We entered at exactly high tide and the shallowest depth we saw was 3m just pass the one channel mark. The one channel mark, buoy, which we passed to port is at 15°16.737S / 167°58.629E. There is one channel mark on the hillside, they cleared the trees from the water up so it is visible.

We left at mid-tide and the shallowest we saw was 2.4m. – Sugar Shack

**April 2024:** You have to sail over the reef to enter the inner bay of this beautiful anchorage. We came in about 2 hours after high water and saw a minimum of 3.3m. There was a little marker on the shallows near the entrance on the reef. Still study your satellite charts to come in. – Eastern Stream

**Nov. 2023:** To enter Lalowai Bay you must come over the volcano crater, which encloses the anchorage. Be sure to use satellite charts and your eyes. The pass is narrow and shallow so come during high tide. Once you enter the anchorage the depth drops to 8-10m. – As reported to Sugar Shack

### **14.3.2 Anchorage**

**Aug. 2024:** 15°16.928S / 167°58.715E in 12m. We came in at high tide with easterly winds and it was super calm and comfortable here. A supply ship arrived the same time we did but they stayed outside the bay and the local boats went out to him. We did have some swirly winds so be sure you have scope to swing around.

There is a mooring with a long painter. Do not use this mooring as their supply ships tie up to it.

This is a really nice, calm anchorage but it can be busy as supply ships and local boats zip around. – Sugar Shack

**April 2024:** 15°16.83S / 167°58.729E in 12m. Anchorage is open to NW- NE swell and wind. – Eastern Stream

**2014:** 15°16.880S / 167°58.748E. Anchor in 7-10m sand/mud. Exposed to winds and swell from the North. Be careful of the reef as you come in, enter at high tide and use the transit markers. – Reflection

**July 2008:** 15°16.88S / 167°58.88E. Isolated and less noisy anchorage. – Sloepmouche

### **14.3.3 Yachtsmen Services**

#### **14.3.3.1 Fuel**

**Aug. 2024:** We found two places that sold fuel. Pacific Energy has a container and fenced off area close to the Golden Memorial Hospital. It was Saturday so nobody was around to ask if they sold both diesel and benzine. The other place is Nicol & Sons market located in Avatova (about 20-25 min from Lolowai). – Sugar Shack

#### **14.3.4 Medical**

**Aug, 2024:** There is a rather large hospital that is the main hospital for Pentecost, Maewo, and Ambae. Located in Lolowai just up the road from the main dinghy beach. They are always in need of supplies, but they are pretty well stocked. – Sugar Shack

#### **14.3.5 Provisions**

**Aug. 2024:** There are several local markets in town and around the island (if you go for a walk). We left the dinghy on the southern beach. Most hours are Mon-Fri: 0800-1700 and Sat. 0800-1100.

- Right up from the beach is a blue market (meats, beer, wine, eggs, onions, potatoes)
- Behind the blue building is a pink building with a “Credit Union” sign. It is not a credit union, but a market
- To the left of the blue building is a green building which is also a market (eggs, wine, beer, meats, some basic produce)
- A little further down the road is a white building with a row of doors. This is a retail center. Only one store was open when we stopped by but they had similar items to the first three places. The store on the far left sells bread Mon-Fri but he said to come early as it goes fast
- As you continue down the road, you will find a Co-Op +678.530.6666. Hours: Mon-Fri: 0700-1200 & 1300-1800. Their sign claimed retail shops, savings and credit
- Nicol & Sons (about 15-20 min walk from Lolowai) is a lovely, well stocked market with beer, liquor, canned goods, home goods, meats, some produce, oil, and 2-stroke oil. Very well stocked store with lots on the shelves and a good variety.
- Co-Op in Longana (near the airport) +678.767.3252. Hours: Mon-Fri: 0700-1200 & 1300-1700. Really well stocked store, beer, liquor, canned & home goods, Digicel & Vodafone top up.

Several stores were ‘closed’ when we stopped by on a Saturday so there may be more not mentioned above. In general, they all had beer, some liquor, eggs, canned & home goods but Nicol & Sons was by far the best stocked with the most variety. – Sugar Shack

**April 2024:** Onshore, there are little shops with basic island supplies. We found fresh eggs. – Eastern Stream

**July 2008:** There are no doctors at the hospital, only volunteers that pass through. There is a bank and a post office. – Sloepmouche

#### **14.3.6 Safety & Security**

**Aug. 2024:** We left our boat at 0900 to go on a long walk. Lucky for us it was locked up tight. When we returned from our walk around 1430 we noticed that somebody had boarded our boat. We are pretty clean and there were muddy foot prints in the cockpit leading to the bow. We watched our security footage and discovered that two teen boys paddled their canoe over to our boat, ran around, noticed it was all locked up and left. We were lucky, but please be aware. – Sugar Shack

#### **14.3.7 Cruiser Report**

**Aug. 2024:** This is the business center for the province and can be really active. In the 3 days, 2 nights we saw 4 supply ships come and go (over the weekend). Which made the anchorage and shore very busy as the local

boats and delivery boats zipped around during the day and night. In addition to the music and horns blowing at random hours.

We decided to go for a long walk in a loop. We left the dinghy at the southern beach and turned left on the main dirt road. We passed by Lovatumemea and Avatova. At Lovunibes we turned right to head to the airport which is in Lugana. It was a thrill because we happened to be walking parallel to the runway as a small plane landed. We followed this “dirt road” along to Vusinakavika and then back to Lolowai.

We unfortunately passed right by Lake Wai Memea without even knowing it (we were not watching the map). However, we made a point to keep a look out for Lake Wai Lembutaga which is really remarkable. We did not go near the lake but got some great shots from the ridge. This lake has trees and bushes growing out of the center of it and it’s surrounded by towering cliffs. Both lakes used to be calderas but filled up with fresh water.

The walk was relatively flat and easy, can be done in flip flops. We followed a road which turned to a dirt road, paved road, small path. We ended up walking 8.1 miles or 20,820 steps! Long walk but lots of beautiful overlooks into the bays and out to the sea to Pentecost and Maewo. – Sugar Shack

**July 2008:** It is an easy and short dinghy ride into Lalowai Bay from Vanihe Bay where the village is located. You have two leading markers to get you inside the old crater bay. Nice people, as usual. – Sloepmouche

## **14.4 Loone Bay (west side)**

### **14.4.1 Anchorage**

**July 2024:** 15°21.345S / 167°45.994E 9m black sand, good holding. Different direction of current & wind causes swell and makes this anchorage more suitable for multihulls. A little challenging to land the dinghy. – Trinity

**July 2008:** 15°24.594S / 167°45.687E. Exposed to that eternal swell running along the island. Not a great stop for a monohull. Access to shore was difficult as the coast is quite rugged, and the surge makes even going up on the steep boulder beach difficult. There is an easier dinghy landing on sand in the tiny bay just east (under a derelict turquoise building on the cliff). – Sloepmouche

### **14.4.2 Cruiser Report**

**July 2024:** Nice sandy beach created by the volcano eruption in 2017/2018. – Trinity

**July 2008:** We moved about a mile north in front of Jerome Bani’s house (in Sarramundi) as he guides people up the volcano crater lakes. But five hours going up with two hours return discouraged us to go up. Like the crater in Ambrym, it’s much harder to reach than the easy Mt. Yasur volcano in Tanna. – Sloepmouche

## **14.5 Devil’s Rock (west end)**

### **14.5.1 Anchorage**

**July 2024:** 15°26.895S / 167°40.585E in 9m black sand in plateau quickly increasing depth to north and west. Do not anchor close to the sand beach since larger supply boats are landing on the beach with limited maneuverability. – Trinity

**July 2008:** 15°26.874S / 167°40.610E. In 20’ of good volcanic sand. What a surprise it was to discover a well-protected, calm anchorage in a very dramatic picturesque bay with a red sand beach! – Sloepmouche

### **14.5.2 Cruiser Report**

**July 2008:** Always curious about out-of-the-way anchorages, we decided to check out Devil’s Rock at the West end of Ambae as the description in the Rocket Guide made the snorkeling there sound interesting and adventurous, and Lonely Planet’s mention of sharks was intriguing.

After Rocket Guide’s warning of swirling currents and “unsurveyed waters.”

We might have been lucky that there were light wind conditions those three days and that the moon was in mid-phase, but can say that it was delightful. Easy access on the beach and nice reception from James, a son of the old chief. It appears the father has divided the “rights” to the sea front between his two sons. James has rights to the windward side, and his younger brother has the Devil’s Rock and anchorage side.

James ended up being our guide. He showed us his surprisingly beautiful and horticulturally-rich garden. Along with a good variety of vegetables, he has bush medicine plants and a species of orchid endemic to one of Ambae’s volcanic lakes. We hiked with him on the edge of the cliffs overlooking Devil’s Rock. We went snorkeling around Devil’s Rock twice and discovered an underwater arch that we could free-dive through. And there’s a “pancake ceiling” underwater cavern around the other side of the point. Visibility was incredible, and we even encountered a huge grouper and seven dolphins while snorkeling (but not one shark). – Sloepmouche

## 15 Maewo

### 15.1 Asanvari Bay

Waterfall hike, beautiful village, restaurant.

#### 15.1.1 Anchorage

**July 2024:** **15°22.599S / 168°07.961E.** In 13m sand with a few rocks. Good holding and nice background noise from the waterfall – Trinity

**June 2024:** **15°22.606S / 168°07.957E.** Dropped in 12m of water in a sandy patch between the reefs. The water is crystal clear and you can easily see to the bottom (12m down!) Super calm and beautiful where you can see and hear the waterfall just behind the boat. Maybe 3-4 boats can fit in this bay where we are because there are reefs that extend out on all sides.

The dinghy pass (15°22.704S / 168°07.918E) and landing is in the center of the beach to get to shore. You can also dinghy right up to the waterfall.

Because we were in 12m of water we let out 50m of chain. We had no wind and the chain sat below the boat on the ground. When had a wind shift with rain, which pushed us an odd direction and wrapped the excess chain around a dead piece of coral. After 5-6 min of maneuvering we were free. – Sugar Shack

**June 2015:** Asanvari Bay is a lovely sheltered harbour, just around the most southern headland of Maewo. It’s very deep and we had to motor around for a while to find a spot where we could anchor in 15m of sand, but far enough away from the shallow reef surrounding the shore. There was only one other boat in the anchorage, but the wind swirls around and made it a challenge to know where their anchor was.

I had a look at our anchor chain, which was wrapped around a few coral heads. I’d tied a fender on the chain when we anchored, but it wasn’t in the correct place and had been dragged down to the sea bed at 15 metres, collapsing with the water pressure. Glenys pulled up 20 metres of chain and I tied two fenders higher on the chain at 35 metres. When Glenys let out chain to a total of 50 metres, it seems to better - the chain is now suspended above the coral heads. – Alba

**2014:** **15°22.585S / 168°07.932E.** Anchor in 10m sand. Exposed to SSW – W – NNW winds and swell. Anchor close to the reef, there are three moorings serviced by ICA, pay at the Yacht club. – Reflection

#### 15.1.2 Restaurant

**June 2024:** There is a restaurant called Asanvari Ocean View Restaurant +678.532.1229 that also offers fresh bread, fruit and vegetables, tours, and massage. Unfortunately for us, the owner was off island so we did not get a chance to try it out. From the anchorage, turn right and it will be on the left-hand side. – Sugar Shack

### **15.1.3 Cruiser Report**

**July 2024:** Erica (in the big blue house) offers to cook lunch or dinner for 1500vt per person. She also organizes all kinds of veggies in good quality, but prices are at least twice as high compared with Pentecost Jerry, her husband is a fisher and delivered a tasty deep-water fish to our boat for 800vt per kilo. – Trinity

**June 2024:** What a pretty anchorage with lush green hills draped with vines that cover the rocks and form beautiful curtains down the mountain. The waterfall is beautiful and easily accessed for laundry and a bath, but the concrete structure right next to it takes away some of its beauty.

The beach is actually rocky, not sand.

Ask for Carl onshore or call him at +678.523.6904. He gives a lovely tour of the village and up to the waterfall. He will take you to two swimming pools at the waterfall, then around and back down for 1,000VT /pp. Tour takes 1.5-2 hours (depending how much time you swim). He is super nice and will explain a few things about the village.

The reef by the southern point (Teterigi Point) is “owned” by Carl’s grandfather. He asks for 1,000VT/pp to swim. We opted not to pay to swim at the point. We just swam around the many reefs inside the bay which had some lovely soft corals with nemos and lots of other beautiful fish. – Sugar Shack

**Nov. 2023:** The reef that lines the bay makes for excellent snorkeling with good fish and coral life. It is a beautiful walk through the village to the ocean side on the southern coast of the island. The waterfall is accessible by dinghy and is excellent for swimming. – As reported to Sugar Shack

**June 2015:** We went on a long (2.5-hrs one way), muddy hike, to a bat cave with Barry which was pretty amazing. – Alba

**2008:** A hydro-generator powers the village with 220VAC-500W, so there are several lights ashore at the yacht club (cold beer, DVD movies), nearby houses and in the nakamal where you will drink kava.

We did some hiking (with swimming in waterfalls and rivers) and snorkeling around the bay, so we slept well at night. The waterfall does not fall right into the sea, but is so close that we enjoyed seeing and hearing it from the anchorage and swam in the refreshing water every day.

There’s another smaller fall up above the main fall. There’s lots of rain as Maewo is the wettest island in Vanuatu with over 175 inches of rainfall a year! Luckily, we had no rain during our all-day hike to the tabu bat cave. Be careful not to slip on the muddy tracks!

There’s a lot of climbing during the first hour of the hike on sometimes slippery mud; the second hour follows the river itself, and there are several nice swimming holes. You enter a long, large chamber and quickly are engulfed by darkness with thousands of small bats and lots of smaller stalactites hanging in places where rain drips through the ceilings. Take a strong light to get the full effect.

The village is one of the prettiest we’ve seen in Vanuatu, all-natural thatch and bamboo, flowers and colorful plants all around and lots of space between houses. They are welcoming, do many things, organize custom dances, hikes, dinners, laundry, etc., for very reasonable fees.

From the amount of help and compliments showered on the chief and village from yachties, we can see that there is a special bond formed on both sides.

Nixon did a great job providing activities, bread delivery, fruit and vegetable and a handicraft market, and the delicious dinner. – Sloepmouche

## **15.2 Sanasom Bay**

### **15.2.1 Anchorages**

**2014: 15°13.325S / 168°06.729E.** Anchor in 10m sand. Exposed SSW – W – NNW winds and swell. Anchor in the sand between the bommies. – Reflection

## **15.2.2 Cruiser Report**

**2014:** The famous Moon Cave and Tavasusu Caves are here. See the village chief. – Reflection

## **15.3 Mbenavui Point (Cave of the Moon)**

The Cave of the Moon and petroglyphs in the Cavern.

### **15.3.1 Anchorage**

There are two anchorages in Sansaom Bay. One is closer to the Dinghy Landing (north, see Reflection's anchor spot) and one is closer to the Cave of the Moon (see Sugar Shack's spot).

**July 2024:** **15°14.106S / 168°06.823E.** Dropped in 17m far enough away from the coral/bommie outcropping which starts around 13m depth. Super comfortable and calm anchorage. We swam on the anchor and were very surprised to see all the way to the bottom. It was a very good stick – good holding

The dinghy landing is **15°13.370S / 168°06.866E.** The other anchorage is closer to the dinghy dock, but we wanted to be isolated and there is a beautiful waterfall in front of it. – Sugar Shack

**Aug. 2008:** **15°14.073'S / 168°06.848'E.** A strong SE wind set up a good southerly swell. When we looked at the anchorage suggested in the Rocket Guide with our own eyes, we decided to anchor instead in the most southern bay visible on the satellite photo behind a rocky outcropping. In fact, from where we anchored, we could see the big black opening to the Moon Cave and were as close, or closer, to the other caves as Rocket Guide's anchorage.

At low tide the swell was minimal, but it increased at night with the tide. Therefore, we would suggest visiting the caves as a day stop and continuing 3nm more to Narovorovo, which is calmer. – Sloepmouche

### **15.3.2 Cruiser Report**

**July 2024:** The Cave of the Moon can be seen from our anchor location. The actual lat/long are 15°13.649S / 168°06.895E. We swam inside and around the cave which has crystal clear waters and is simply gorgeous. It is believed a long time ago, the moon lived in this cave, and the light did not shine beyond the walls. The God of Sea Tagaro saw this and decided it was not good. So he threw the moon to the south but then north was dark. So he grabbed it and threw it to the North, but then the south was dark. Finally he decided to throw it to the West so the moon's light shone on all the people of Maewo. That is how the cave got three holes (entrances into the cave).

The petroglyphs cavern is around 15°13.473S / 168°06.882E. The Sanasom village chief requires that you gain permission before visiting the Cave of the Moon and the petroglyph cavern.

On the way north from Asanvari Bay to Mbenavui Point, we saw a family of whales! We hovered near them for about 30-45 minutes before moving on but they were spectacular!

The beach is covered in small rocks and pebbles making it a little challenging to walk. – Sugar Shack

**Aug. 2008:** We saw people on the beach near us, so asked to visit the caves. They said two children would go with us in the dinghy and guide us into the Moon Cave and then show us where to land to see the other caves and petroglyphs. In one cave they are making their own stalagmites, a fun game that actually could teach us about how long the process takes. Another cave serves as a tunnel for the actual coastal walking track. No one asked for fees—how refreshing! We gave the children some gifts as a thank-you. – Sloepmouche

## **15.4 Nasawa Bay**

### **15.4.1 Anchorage**

**July 2024:** **15°12.156S / 168°06.585E** in 9m black sand with good holding. Only a few rocks. – Trinity

### **15.4.2 Cruiser Report**

**July 2024:** Friendly village with two small stores, medical facility, school, and church. – Trinity

## **15.5 Narovorovo**

### **15.5.1 Anchorage**

**Aug. 2008:** 15°11.039S / 168°06.406E. If you anchor close to the beach, it's better protected from the swell going up along the coast. – Sloepmouche

### **15.5.2 Cruiser Report**

**Aug. 2008:** We hiked with Winifa (one of the trained tour guides—they have workshops) across the island to see the other coast. It took us about two hours to get to a great spot overlooking the east side. We didn't go down to the beaches as it added another 90 minutes before taking the same path back. – Sloepmouche

## **15.6 Naone Bay**

Home of the biggest waterfall of Vanuatu.

### **15.6.1 Anchorage**

**Aug. 2024:** 15°00.591S / 168°03.770E in 9m in sand with good holding. We had winds coming SW and made this anchorage very rolly and uncomfortable. We did not stay long.

Dinghy landing: The only place to safely land the dinghy is up the river to the first cascade which is at the road. The rest of the shore is covered in large rocks. – Sugar Shack

**May 2024:** 15°00.7S / 168°03.799E around 7m depth in sand and some rocks. – Eastern Stream

**Aug. 2008:** 15°00.718 S / 168°03.805E. In good sandy bottom in front of the river. – Sloepmouche

### **15.6.2 Cruiser Report**

**Aug. 2024:** You can see the first of several waterfall cascades as you enter the anchorage and it looks so inviting. The village is still doing tours up to the waterfall so be sure to ask the chief for a tour. – Sugar Shack

**April 2024:** We anchored near the Leleveia village and had to walk 5km to Naone to visit the waterfall. First, we found the Naone village chief to ask permission to visit the waterfall and paid 1,000 vatu per person. The chief gave us 3 guides to show us around. It was a great experience to walk up the waterfall and jump down in the cold and fresh water. Definitely worth a visit. – Eastern Stream

**Aug. 2008:** The cascades and waterfalls here are the best we have seen in Vanuatu! Alas, the swell along the coast cannot be avoided as there is no indentation in the coastline to protect you.

You can go with your dinghy up the creek and tie up at the first cascade that is the road. From there, after getting permission from the chief, Maurice took us up to, around and through the cascades. You walk in the running water that sheets over the rough textured rocks above you, below you, around you, under you, and then plunges over the edge in a giddy roaring rush. There are at least three different complexes of cascades, each with names and different custom stories.

The normal fee is 1,000 VT, but they will also accept gifts. The tour takes 2 hours, so you can easily plan to arrive here early morning and take off for a better-protected anchorage for the night. We left mid-day for Ambae, Lolowai, and had a lively sail in winds gusting to 25-30 (acceleration in the channel). – Sloepmouche

## 15.7 Leleveia Bay

### 15.7.1 Anchorage

**Aug. 2024:** 15°58.699S / 167°03.390E in 7m of sand with good holding. We had a southerly swell and ESE winds gusting to 20kt. It was pretty darn roly until we put a stern anchor out then it became “ok” (we are a catamaran). Not ideal and we would have left except none of the anchorages at the top of Maewo would provide a comfortable anchorage with these conditions.

The water is incredibly clear. At 17m we could see down to the bottom. Really pretty spot. – Sugar Shack

## 16 Paama

Paama is a small island at the south end of Ambrym

### 16.1 Anchorage

**Nov. 2007:** Tahi anchorage: 20-35' over good volcanic sand bottom. There is a wreck on the northern end of the beach (copra boat that caught fire in 2000). This is a small, shy, but welcoming community. – Sloepmouche

## 17 Malo Island

### 17.1 Malokilikili & Malotina

#### 17.1.1 Anchorage

Malokilikili Anchorage is a wide but very shallow anchorage. The average depth is 1.9m at 0 tide so be aware and watch for bommies and low reefs.

**July 2024:** 15°42.4371S / 167°15.3050E anchored in 3m during mid-tide. We maneuvered around the bommies and dropped the hook between two smallish bommies. We let out 15m of chain, and sat comfortably with a good turning radius. Once we flew the drone, we realized we could have moved forward more which would have provided us more space between us and the large bommie behind us. But we were fine, even with shifting winds.

**15°42.30S / 167°15.241E** Anchored in 4m in sand with crystal clear waters (mid-tide). However, once we dropped the hook, we got in the dinghy to investigate the anchorage in the Rocket Guide which looked a little more protected (see above spot).

**NOTE:** It is not recommended to come to either of the above two spots unless you have a draft below 2m. We motored over some 2.4m spots (during mid-tide) to get to where we anchored.

We had 18-20kts SE winds and 2m seas. However, here it was comfortable with just a slight roll. – Sugar Shack

#### 17.1.2 Cruiser Report

**July 2024:** At low tide, we took our dinghy over to the reef that surrounds Malotina, dropped the hook and walked the rest of the way to ‘shore’. We were able to walk around the entire island but we had to hop from the reef, to the beach, to the mangroves as there is no clear path. But it was a lovely walk and we found a giant abandoned nautilus shell which is a huge score.

We then dinghied over to the reef of Malokilikili to visit the village. There are 5 villages with about 100 people spread across Malokilili. One of the young men gave us the tour to each village where we were warmly welcomed.

The waters here are so very beautiful, clear, and full of sea life. Fun snorkeling around the bommies near the boat. Really nice spot, protected, and calm. – Sugar Shack

## 18 Ratua Island

A small island, just south of Aore Island

### 18.1 Pass

The current runs East to West on the rising tide and West to East on the falling tide. In the middle of the channel the current can reach up to 5kts.

**July 2024:** As we entered from the East, we lined up the south tip of Akari and kept the Navionics pink line just to starboard. We stayed on the south end of the channel giving the Guichen Reef plenty of space.

We timed our East entrance arrival at low tide as the Rocket Guide suggested mid-tide has strong currents. We had 7-8kts coming from behind us and no swell as we entered. We had both engines at 1500rpm and slowly pushed them to 1800rpm in the middle of the pass. On average we had 2kts of current against us but at the height of the current we saw 4kts against us. So much for entering at either low or high tide for better currents. With that said, it was not too choppy and we had 100% control of the boat at all times. We never had to increase the rpm's beyond 1800. We were happy with a slow forward trajectory of 1.2kts at times but on average we were going 2kts.

Departure: 17kts of SE winds and .5-1m sea. Heading west to east (leaving the way we came in), we left 2 hours before low tide and had a gentle 1kt of current going with us. Much nicer exit than arrival.

In retrospect, after crossing the channel in our dinghy several times, we decided that the best time to enter the pass is not mid-tide. We think it is better to enter the pass a few hours before either high or low tide. Matt was able to paddle board across the channel at one point. But coming in right at high or low tide has a lot of current and white caps.

The yellow marker on Navionics is no longer here. However, there is a buoy indicating the outer edge of the Guichen Reef. There is also a stick or pole indicating another reef. Keep a good look out. – Sugar Shack

### 18.2 Anchorage

**Aug. 2024: 15°36.656S / 167°10.510E.** We dropped the hook in 5m of sand with good holding. There was one other boat here before we arrived, so we opted to anchor behind them. To the right of them, just in front of the Ratua Island Resort jetty stayed deep, 10-12m until we got close to their buoy.

There are lots of turtles here. We dropped the hook next to a coral head only to realize that it moves. Lucky for us (and for him) we were several meters away so he was in no danger.

There are a few moorings available for rent, which the resort prefers you use. However, both were taken when we arrived. – Sugar Shack

**June 2015: 15°36.69S / 167°10.5170E.** There's a small holiday resort here with two moorings, but they looked to be in a poor state of repair. We ignored the moorings and anchored in 14 metres of water away from the various reefs in a sandy patch. It's a nice-looking anchorage. – Alba

**2014: 15°36.697S / 167°10.570E.** Anchored 6-12m sand. Lovely tranquil anchorage. – Reflection

### 18.3 Ratua Island Resort

+678.533.3301, +678.35551, or WhatsApp +64.21.927.777, <https://ratua.com>, [reservations@ratua.com](mailto:reservations@ratua.com), Leah and Brett are the owners and are previous cruisers from New Zealand. Services for cruisers:

- Moorings
  - 5000vt/per night for 2-person vessel + 2500vt/per additional person, book online
  - Fees include day visits to the island and access to resort facilities
- Wifi available at the Yacht Club

- Showers
- Laundry Facilities
- Restaurant and Bar
- Accept Visa, MasterCard, Amex (4-8% bank surcharge) and cash
- Horseback riding and swimming with the horses
- Exclusive access to the Malo Blue Hole
- Spa including massage, bathing, body wraps & scrubs, facials, grooming, spa packages

**Aug. 2024:** We really enjoyed our time at Ratua and spent several days with Leah. It is a stunning resort despite it being unoccupied (due to the shut-down of the local airline). We enjoyed several delicious meals, lots of cocktails, a wonderful tour of the property, and a visit to the Malo Blue Hole. I will admit, the meals/drinks were more expensive than we anticipated...so perhaps ask prior to scheduling a dinner. Tusker 900vt, mojito 1850vt, 3-course meal 8900vt /pp.

Swimming is ideal with the clear waters and dozens of turtles! There is a large bommie (with a float on it) that has wonderful sea life and just before the bommie, about 10m from the reef is a really large clam (about 1-1.5m wide).

On Rotua Island they have cows, goats, pigs, ducks, chickens, horses, and cats. Plus, they have a game room, volleyball court, corn hole and more! – Sugar Shack

### **18.4 Cruiser Report**

**Aug. 2024:** We were due for a nice dinner onshore so we called the Ratua Island Resort. Leah, the manager said they had no guests since the local airline is shut down and welcomed us eagerly. She also gave us a lovely tour of the island (which is owned by the resort).

There are so many turtles in this bay! It is wonderful to see.

**Malo Blue Hole:** If you time it properly you can take the dinghy across the channel to the Malo Lake and then into the Malo blue hole. You can see it on Navionics. You need to go during mid-to-high tide to get to the actual blue hole. A dinghy can easily make it to the Malo Lake up the long river. There are a bazillion sand dollars here along with lots of sting rays!

After you are done exploring Malo Lake, head left of the entrance of the blue hole, take the sticks to port, and go down a much shallower river with lots of trees and obstructions. But it is still navigable. There is a rope swing that allows you to plunge into the crystal-clear turquoise water. Super pretty and no other tourists or visitors. I believe you need to ask permission from Ratua Island Resort to come to this blue hole.

We also dinghied over to the 3 wrecks in the channel between Aore and Rotua. This is the direct result of the last cyclone that came through here.

On Aore Island is SDA (Seventh Day Adventist) community and across the channel on Malo is their large secondary school. – Sugar Shack

**June 2015:** We took some time off boat jobs to go snorkeling and first tried a spot about ½ mile to the west of the anchorage where the reef sticks out from the coast. I was hoping that it could be a dive site, but the reef quickly runs out to sand and isn't as steep as it looked on the chart. The snorkeling there wasn't too good as the water was very choppy and murky.

In the afternoon, we went for a **snorkel** on the south side of the island, but again it wasn't too good. The seabed was mostly dead coral rubble with the odd live coral head sticking up. I spotted many Crown of Thorns Starfish, which cause major damage to reefs by eating the coral polyps.

In many places throughout the Pacific, dive operators actively kill Crown of Thorns starfish, by injecting them with a poison, to reduce their numbers and protect their reefs. I believe that these starfish can also be killed by collecting them in a large flour sack, then leaving them out of the water for a day. The starfish need a flow of water over them, so die in the confines of a sack - they can then be tipped out to feed the fish. – Alba

## 19 Aore Island

Aore Island is located on the south side of Espiritu santo (across from Luganville)

Pronounced "Owree"

### 19.1 Aisari Bay

East side of Aore island

#### 19.1.1 Pass

**July 2024:** We entered at mid-tide (outgoing) and aimed for **15°34.025S / 167°12.532E** to enter the pass. The shallowest we saw was 5.9m. Navionics was not very accurate as it had us on the reef. But Rocket Guide and the satellite charts guided us safely. Winds were blowing 18-20kts SE and we had 1.5m swell.

On our departure, at mid-tide we followed our tracks and the lowest depth we saw was 5.2m. – Sugar Shack

#### 19.1.2 Anchorage

**July 2024:** **15°34.479S / 167°12.218E** anchored in 6.7m of sand with good holding. Super peaceful and calm anchorage. The many reefs offer really good protection from both the winds and swell.

Originally, we dropped at **15°34.4773S / 167°12.242E** in 10m but as we pulled down on the anchor, we found the shallower spot so we moved to the above anchor spot. This had good holding as well in sand. – Sugar Shack

**2014: Aisari Bay: 15°34.368S / 167°12.196E.** Anchored 6-12m sand. Exposed north to east wind and swell. Only attempt to thread your way in when the sun is high and visibility is good. – Reflection

#### 19.1.3 Cruiser Report

**July 2024:** This bay is really protected and very comfortable. There are lots of turtles that enjoy this bay and typically hang out by the large reef at the entrance. There are several cattle farmers onshore. The beach directly in front of us (noted on the Rocket Guide) has a "No Trespassing" sign and the other farm has a fence that prohibits exploring on the beach. But in between the two properties you can enjoy the long beach at mid to low tide. We only saw a few locals who came over to the beach behind us to fish. They were friendly but did not seem to speak much English. – Sugar Shack

### 19.2 Aore Island Resort Anchorage

North side of Aore island

#### 19.2.1 Anchorage

**Aug. 2024:** Aore Adventure Sports offers mooring balls for 2,000vt/day. It is a nice, calm part of the bay opposite Luganville. – Yaminda.

**July 2024:** **15°32.362S / 167°10.739E.** There are several moorings here for 2000vt/night payable to the resort or the Aore Adventure lodge. North facing side of Aore Island directly opposite the river in Luganville. As you come in the Segond Channel between two islands. Protection NE through S to NW from wind and swell. – As reported to Sugar Shack

**Oct. 2023:** There are a few buoys available for mooring. Anchoring at the island is near impossible but a ferry can take you twice a day departing from Starfish Restaurant (10min from Beach Resort) on Santo. – Dandelion

**Sept. 2023:** Cruisers have reported that the Aore Adventure Sports and Lodge has installed 3 moorings which are maintained meticulously. Cost \$2000vt per day. A very protected place. – As reported to Sugar Shack

**2014: Aore Resort: 15°32.315S / 167°10.707E.** Exposed West thru to NE wind and swell. Aore restaurant offers many moorings for visiting yachts at a reasonable rate. – Reflection

**Sept. 2012:** 4 moorings for \$15 USD/day at Aore Resort. It may be impossible to locate the mooring balls during high tide and swift running currents since they may be pulled under water during these events. – Yolo

**Aug. 2008:** Aore Resort. While the resort does not really seek to attract cruisers, it still offers over ten moorings at 1,200 VT/night. We explored the area on both sides of the resort and found no suitable anchorage as the bottom drops so quickly to 80' from shore. – Sloepmouche

## **19.2.2 Yachtsmen Services**

### **19.2.2.1 Trash and Recycling**

**July 2024:** Aore Resort accepts rubbish for a small fee. – Sugar Shack

## **19.2.3 General Services**

### **19.2.3.1 Aore Island Resort**

**July 2024:** Aore Resort offers moorings, rubbish disposal, restaurant and bar, use of resort facilities including pool and wifi, and transportation to/from Luganville, all for a reasonable fee. – Sugar Shack

### **19.2.3.2 Laundry**

**July 2024:** Aore Resort has laundry services for a fee. – Sugar Shack

### **19.2.3.3 Transportation**

**July 2024:** Aore Resort offers shuttle services daily to/from Luganville for a small fee. – Sugar Shack

## **19.2.4 Activities**

**July 2024:** Aore Adventure Sports and Lodge - +678.555.0271, [www.aoreadventures.com](http://www.aoreadventures.com), Hours: Mon-Sun: 0730-1700. Offers Yacht Moorings, lodging, scuba diving, snorkelling, and fishing and water activities. PADI 5-star Dive center and over 24 years in the dive industry. They have a boat that ties to a mooring at the Coolidge. You descend on the mooring line.

We dove the SS President Coolidge with them and had a good time. – SV Yaminda

**July 2024:** Allan Power Dive Tours +678 36822, is passionate about making diving accessible and ensuring each experience is profound. Located right in front of the historic wreck, their tours cater to all levels of divers. The SS Coolidge depth ranges from 20m-70m and offers great insight into a piece of WWII history. This is a beach entry and swim to the Coolidge.

Special pricing for yachties: Single dive 7,000vt, double dive 13,000vt, full day/3 dives 19,000vt Pricing including gear hire: Single dive 9,000vt, double dive 17,000vt, full day/3 dives 25,000vt Includes transport to / from Luganville.

Transport and dive site entry fees (paid to Kastom owner):

- The Coolidge included in above fees
- Million Dollar Point 1,000vt
- Blue Hole 1,500vt
- Boat Dive 2,500vt

They are truly passionate about diving and make special efforts to ensure you have a good time. – Sugar Shack

### **19.2.5 Provisions**

**June 2015:** Aore Resort provides a small ferry service to get guests to the mainland across the 1-mile channel. We caught the eight o'clock ferry then walked to the vegetable market and checked out some of the supermarkets. There's a very good supermarket called LCM, which has most of the stuff that we needed. We bought enough food to last us for a week and caught the ferry back to the resort. – Alba

### **19.2.6 Cruiser Reports**

**July 2024:** [Aore Resort](#) was closed during our visit due to the collapse of the local airline and lack of guests. So, they could not offer activities, water music, or restaurant services. – Sugar Shack

When they are open, Aore Resort is very welcoming to yachts. They would allow rubbish disposal, water, laundry, happy hour and use of resort facilities.

Aore Adventure Sports & Lodge run by Paul White offers great dives and moorings for 2,000vt/night. They were open and running all activities and moorings.

A lovely walk to the top of the plantation gives you beautiful views of Santo and has a collection of banyan trees. – Sugar Shack

**Oct. 2023:** We highly recommend a visit to the Clearwater Plantation. It is privately owned but they accept guests and it is really worth a visit. They have a freshwater spring in the seabed in front of the property and you can see an amazing bat cave and formations of stalactites. – Dandelion

**June 2015:** Aore Resort. As a treat, we went ashore to have burger and chips at the hotel. It's a very nice place with comfy chairs in the lounge area, tiled floors, cold beer, wireless internet and a swimming pool.

The hotel is very yacht friendly with free internet and they charge a reasonable price for laundry (\$8US/load).

It was hot and humid in the afternoon, so we lurked about sweating. I dropped off 3 or 4 loads of laundry at the hotel then tried to use the hotel's internet, but it was painfully slow. – Alba

## **20 Espiritu Santo (Vanuatu) aka “Santo”**

This island is mostly known as “Santo”

### **20.1 Luganville (Port of Entry)**

#### **20.1.1 Anchorage**

**Customs Quarantine Anchorage: 15°30.910S / 167°11.07E.**

After clearing in or if you have already cleared in, most boats will anchor on the other side of the river where there is a little more protection.

Ship wreck: **15°31.368S / 167°09.875E** it is not marked. Navionics has this updated to 15m SE of this location.

**Dinghy Landing:** The Beachfront Resort allows cruisers to land their dinghies on their beach. – Sugar Shack

**June 2024:** This anchorage was very rolly and uncomfortable, so we moved on to Oyster Island. – Moana

**Oct. 2023:** Beachfront Resort is a good, sheltered anchorage. – Dandelion

**July 2019:** **15°31.323S / 167°09.939E** in 6.5m sand in the Second Channel. – Indigo II

**June 2018:** Luganville Bay Beachfront Resort: Anchor in 4m, Sand. – Screensaver

**June 2015:** **15°31.46S / 167°09.80E.** We arrived in Luganville at four o'clock and picked up a mooring off the Aore Resort. It costs \$15 US per night, but what the hell. The anchorage is okay, but I guess that it will be very rolly and choppy when the wind is strong from the south-east. – Alba

**2014: 15°31.390S / 167°09.804E** in 4-10m sand/mud. Exposed to anything from the south. Anchoring close to the spit of land before the Sarakata River affords the best shelter.

**15°30.926S / 167°10.949E** 13m sand/mud. Exposed to anything from the south. Anchor close to the corner of the concrete wharf in front of the small dinghy landing (not a good place to take your dinghy). – Reflection

**Sept. 2012:** Anchor just west of the large Luganville river in front of the yacht friendly Beachfront Resort. Good holding, yet exposed to trade winds, waves, and strong current. Numerous anchoring options. – Yolo

**Aug. 2008:** Luganville's Beachfront anchorage, just south of the Sarakata River, might be a bit bumpy in trade winds but is closest to town. You can either land your dinghy at the Beachfront (yachties really welcome) or dinghy into the river (mid to high tide) and tie off just off the public market. – Sloepmouche

### **20.1.2 Yachtsmen Services**

#### **20.1.2.1 Cooking Gas (Propane and Butane)**

**Aug. 2024:** Paradise Petroleum +678.555.3379, Hours: Mon-Sun: 0600-2030. They filled our propane bottle (11kg) while we waited for 2500vt. Located about 1km from Beachfront Resort.

Origin Energy +678.35390 fills propane tanks. Origin Energy will pick up and drop off your cylinder from The Beachfront Resort. If you contact them in the morning, they should return it in the afternoon. – Sugar Shack

#### **20.1.2.2 Fuel (Diesel & Gasoline)**

**Aug. 2024:** Paradise Petroleum +678.555.3379, Hours: Mon-Sun: 0600-2030. Super nice, and the best prices for gasoline and diesel. We got 157L of gasoline at 192vt/L for a total of 30,301/vt.

Note that they only accept cash! They also sell beer by the tray/flat for 4200vt. – Sugar Shack

**Sep 2012:** It is only practical to jerry can fuel to your vessel. Taxi drivers typically charge you extra to transport jerry cans. If you are purchasing over 400 liters/100 gallons of diesel you can make arrangements for a fuel truck to meet you at a wharf and top off your tanks. In this case you will be required to pay an additional fee to the wharf owner. The length of your vessel in meters times 294 VATU (\$3.27 USD) is the fee for tying up to a government wharf for less than 24 hours. So, a 13-meter (44 foot) boat would cost 3,822 VATU (\$43 USD) per day to use the wharf. The Vanuatu rough concrete wharfs are not yacht friendly. – Yolo

#### **20.1.2.3 Trash and Recycling**

**Aug. 2024:** There is a rubbish dump just outside of town (about 8-10 minutes before town when coming from Oyster/Turtle Bay) Ask a taxi driver to take you there. We disposed of 2 very large bags and 3 small bags for a total cost of 1,000vt. They did not separate out anything.

[The Beachfront Resort](#), +678.36911, was accepting rubbish for 200vt/bag during the hours of 0730-1600. They only recycle Tusker bottles and aluminum so please separate it out before arrival.

[Turtle Bay Resort](#), +678.37988, will also take trash for 1,000/vt per bag.

Note that the municipality of each island sells garbage bags in the markets. Some are yellow, some are orange and some are red. They are different colors for different islands and you cannot mix them up. For example, we bought orange bags and tried to use them in Santo and they said we had to take them to the dump as their municipality does not recognize the orange bags.

Tusker Bottles are recyclable. You can either take them to the Tusker bottling plant or you can give the empty bottles to a café, resort, or restaurant. You will lose the small deposit per bottle, but at least they will be recycled – Sugar Shack.

**June 2024:** You can purchase the standard red garbage bags (for Santo) at most stores here. You can then ask a local where you can leave the bag for pick up along the street. – Eastern Stream

#### **20.1.2.4 Water**

**July 2024:** The Beachfront Resort offers town water at no cost and is close to the beach. Contact reception to get the tap key. – Sugar Shack

#### **20.1.3 General Services**

##### **20.1.3.1 Air Vanuatu**

**Aug. 2024:** Air Vanuatu, office on the main street. +678.36422, [sales@airvanuatu.vu](mailto:sales@airvanuatu.vu). – Sugar Shack

##### **20.1.3.2 Bank & ATMs**

**Aug. 2024:** There are several banks and ATMs along the main road through town. There are ANZ Bank, National Bank of Vanuatu, and BSP Bank.

Western Union, No. 1 Currency and another currency exchange are also on the main street. – Sugar Shack

**June 2024:** There are maybe 8 ATMs in Luganville but at least 4 of them are not working. The limit per transaction, per day is \$55,000VT. – Moana

##### **20.1.3.3 Beachfront Resort**

**Aug. 2024:** The Beachfront Resort +678.36.911, +678.77.74532, [moreinfo@thebeachfrontresort.com](mailto:moreinfo@thebeachfrontresort.com), [www.thebeachfrontresort.com](http://www.thebeachfrontresort.com).

The Beachfront Resort prides itself in supplying great service to yachts and crew. Yachtie services:

- Book swap
- Cooking Gas, they organize a pick up/drop off with Origin Energy
- Dinghy landing on the beach
- Laundry, they offer a full laundry service or you can have them wash and you can dry onboard.
- Postal services
- Restaurant and Bar
- Showers for a small fee (book at reception)
- Trash disposal for a small fee (200-300vt) between 0730 and 1600.
  - They recycle Tusker bottles and aluminum cans only (please separate out these items)
- Water available close to the beach (contact reception to get the tap key)
- Wifi service

The above information was sourced from their website. – Sugar Shack

**Aug. 2024:** Beachfront Resort was very welcoming. – Ariel

##### **20.1.3.4 Communications: Data, Wifi**

**Aug. 2024:** There are lots of Digicel and Vodafone offices / popups on the main street. They sell SIM cards, top up cards and some mobile accessories. Bring your passport when purchasing a SIM card. – Sugar Shack

##### **20.1.3.5 Duty-Free Provisions**

**June 2024:** If you clear out of Luganville, it is possible to do some duty-free shopping in the duty-free shop. You must bring your clearance paperwork and you will need a special form from customs. You will only be allowed to pick up your goods on the day of departure.

It was quite a process as we weren't anchored in town, but in Palekula (a much calmer bay and easy access to town). They do not drop off the duty-free shopping there. So, we had to take the big boat to Luganville, ask permission from the port captain to moor on the dock for 10-minutes to pick up our packages at the custom office. – Eastern Stream

#### **20.1.3.6 Formalities**

Immigration: **15°43.828S / 167°11.058E** is the location of the immigration office.

**Aug. 2024:** Check out was easy. Customs and port duties, then immigration. – Ariel

**June. 2024:** You can clear out of Vanuatu in Luganville. Departure fees 7,000VT for the first month, plus 100VT/Day for each additional day beyond the first month. If you are clearing out of the country, they will ask if your boat is anchored in town (you might want to say “yes” even if it is in Oyster Bay/Turtle Bay).

If you want to cruise the Banks islands you will have to clear out of Sola. It is recommended that you ask the officials at Luganville if the official is in at Sola around your departure date though.

We visited customs here to update our cruising permit. They required us to leave immediately and we had to pay port fees (as if we were departing the country). I ended up paying through an estimated departure date. They did provide a receipt and told us to show it to the officer in Sola when we clear out. – Sugar Shack

#### **20.1.3.7 Hardware**

**Aug. 2024:** Santo Hardware is a pretty decent hardware store with a nice fishing section. +678.36227, Hours: Mon-Fri: 0700-1200 & 1300-1700, Sat: 0700-1200.

Wilco Hardware +678.37774, Hours: Mon-Fri: 0730-1700, Sat: 0730-1200. They had a nice selection of hardware, homeware, epoxy, fishing, and electrical. – Sugar Shack

#### **20.1.3.8 Laundry**

**Aug. 2024:** [The Beachfront Resort](#), +678.36911 will do full wash and dry for a fee. They will also just wash your laundry so you can dry it onboard. Inquire with reception.

[Turtle Bay Resort](#) +678.37988, also will do wash/dry laundry at 3,000vt per load. – Sugar Shack

#### **20.1.3.9 Medical**

**July 2024:** For prescription medication, which may not be available at the pharmacy, you will be sent to the hospital, Medical Santo (said to be the best). It is clean and well supplied. The physicians and medical team are from AU, NZ, and other Western Countries and are volunteers. Tourists are charged a consultation fee of 11,000VT plus any medicine they may need. – Moana

#### **20.1.3.10 Transportation**

**Aug. 2024:** Hire a car from Espiritu Hotel. – Ariel

#### **20.1.4 Provisions**

**Aug. 2024:** LCM Market +678.365530. Hours: Mon-Fri: 0730-1800, Sat: 0730-1200, 1500-1800. Located on main street. [www.lcmstore.com](http://www.lcmstore.com). LCM has a decent bakery that sells bread July-November. They sell beer, wine and liquor and have a nice variety of NZ and Australian products.

Daming Supermarket +678.37457. They had a decent liquor selection, meats, small baked goods, and fresh fruit. Hours: Mon-Sun: 0700-1800

Fresh market which was rather lovely and well stocked (baby tomatoes, passionfruit, and usual items. It is located at the end of town and best visited in the morning. – Sugar Shack

**Oct. 2023:** There is an LCM supermarket in town. – Dandelion

**Sept. 2023:** There is a decent supermarket where you can buy some New Zealand/Australia products as cheese, wine, and beer. There is also a good butcher close to the market (I think it is the first building in Rue Cook, but best to ask a local). – Eastern Stream

#### 20.1.4.1 Restaurants

**June 2024:** The best café is Natangora Café. +678.36811, [natangoracafe@gmail.com](mailto:natangoracafe@gmail.com), Hours Mon-Fri: 0730-1600, sat. 0730-1400, one with good food, clean, friendly, no locals, only tourists (European/Asian) lunch, sushi, ice cream beer, sandwiches. – Moana

**Oct. 2023:** There are two small coffee shops in town. – Dandelion

#### 20.1.5 Stores – Variety

**Aug. 2024:** We were in a taxi and on a mission to get our errands done quickly so I did not have a chance to leisurely walk to each place and get their contact or hours. But we did see the following stores:

- The Drugstore / Pharmacy +678.22789, [drugstoremarketing@vanuatu.com.vu](mailto:drugstoremarketing@vanuatu.com.vu)
- Stationary store
- Clothing and trinket stores
- Wholesale stores (Yumi Wholesale, Century Wholesale)
- Carpenters Motors (Auto) +678.25444, Hours: Mon-Sat: 0800-1700

#### 20.1.6 Activities

- **Millennium Cave Tours** +678.771.3170, +678.547.0957, <http://millenniumcavetour.weebly.com>, [millenniumcavetour@gmail.com](mailto:millenniumcavetour@gmail.com) (Delvine doesn't check email often, but you can try)
  - 9,500vt, includes transport. All-day adventure. The office is located by the biosecurity building and near the cargo dock. In town, facing water, turn left, walk 1-2km, on water side
- **Wreck of Coolidge**, luxury liner sunk
- **WWII** history, dive the US Airforce bomber wreck & see another wreck in the jungle just off main road.
- **Ferry to Aore island** and visit the Clearwater Plantation
- **Water Music:** [Leweton Cultural Experience](#) has water music shows daily, but it is in a pool.
- **Car Rental:** Espiritu Hotel rents cars, book in advance. +678.37539, [www.the-espiritu.com](http://www.the-espiritu.com)
- **Southern Pacific WWII Museum**, +678.553.7000, <https://southpacificwwiimuseum.com>, Hours: Mon-Fri: 0800-1600. This is a really nice, well maintained museum, lots of cool artifacts. Donation only.

**Aug. 2024:** The Millennium Cave Adventure was spectacular and well worth every penny. It certainly is a full day of exertion with a 3hour trek, 45min. swimming, 45min. canyoning, climbing up and down dozens of ladders, hills and rock faces. You will see the true natural beauty of Vanuatu. It had not rained in a week but yet it was still very muddy.

Suggestions: Bring a change of dry clothes, you can leave them in the village, sturdy shoes (that can stay on in mud and swimming and still have good traction), waterproof camera/GoPro. The 9,500vt/pp fee included everything, even transport from Oyster Bay Lagoon. You don't need a torch as they provide one for you. Truly an amazing adventure tour, you will be wonderfully exhausted at the end! – Sugar Shack

**June 2024:** The Millennium Cave tour was an exceptional and fantastic tour for the fit enough and adventurous. An absolute highlight, not to be missed. The cost 9500VT/pp which included transport from Oyster Lagoon, drove us to Luganville to fill out paperwork, then drove 45 minutes to the start of the walk.

The path is very, very muddy so you need proper shoes, lunch, waterproof bag & torch, and a bathing suit. You will be provided with life jackets at the second village. You enter the cave, in the dark, through the river, until you exit to a beautiful area. The second part of the trip is called canyoning where you float down the river, climb the boulder and enjoy the journey. It was absolutely amazing!!! – Moana

**Oct. 2023:** The town offers lots to do and see, especially the good dive sites including “Coolidge and Million Dollar Reef” which has great history. There is a small museum which holds artifacts from the wrecks.

We highly recommend hiring a car and touring Santo. There is one main road out of Luganville (very potholed) but you will see so much more. There are nine blue holes to choose from Riri and Matevula were our favorites

and they are all different. There are restaurants, lodges, and other sites along the way north. Be sure to stop in Champagne Bay and Port Olry as they are very special.

Turtle Bay Lodge runs tours to see the dugongs and other dive sites. Allan Powers Tour is a friend of ours and runs a good show. Their offices are opposite the supermarket in town. Pacific Dive are also good.

Tuffenturi waterfall is a good visit but you need a 4x4 to access it. You can also schedule a traditional village visit called Lewiston Cultural experience. Lots to do here: canoeing, sailing, sunbathing, traditional living, wreck diving (even aeroplane) – Santo has it all. – Dandelion

**May 2018 – Hiking, Caves, Waterfall:** *(Millennium Cave is situated in South Central Santo, a 45-minute drive from Luganville town.)*

We had a 5km trek through the jungle to the mouth of The Millennium Cave, Santo Island, Vanuatu.

Fabulous, huge cave with bats and swallows and a river running right through.

Lunch at a waterfall and then 30-minute swim in cool, flowing river running through a deep canyon with beautiful rock faces and more waterfalls. It was like being in the movie Jurassic Park or Indiana Jones.

Then more climbing out of the canyon and more trekking back to the village and onward to the waiting vehicle.

A magic day had by all 6 of us. Fantastic adventure highly recommended to anyone (with a reasonable level of fitness) visiting Vanuatu. – Verite

### **20.1.7 Diving**

**Aug. 2024:** Aore Adventure Sports offers different levels of diving. We did the bow end, went past a number of cargo bays and around the outside of the front part of the ship. The second dive we went into Cargo Bay 2 which was more interesting as you got to see a barber's chair, officer's cabin, upturned jeeps, bull dozer and other bits of equipment. That depth was around 34m max. For more technical divers you can dive from midships down to about 60m which is what they limit to.

There was not a lot of fish life or coral growth around the wreck. The most fish and coral was at our 6m safety stop.

Aore Adventure Sport has a power boat that moors on a buoy at the wreck so you descend down the mooring. Other dive operations approach from the beach so you exert energy to get out there.

They also do other dives at Million Dollar Point, various plane wrecks and reefs. Paul is an Australian who has run his business there for 13 years. Very knowledgeable and safe operation. -- Yaminda

**July 2024:** Allan Power Dive Tours +678 36822, is passionate about making diving accessible and ensuring each experience is profound. Located right in front of the historic wreck, their tours cater to all levels of divers. The SS Coolidge depth ranges from 20m-70m and offers great insight into a piece of WWII history. This is a beach approach.

Special pricing for yachties: Single dive 7,000vt, double dive 13,000vt, full day/3 dives 19,000vt

Pricing including gear hire: Single dive 9,000vt, double dive 17,000vt, full day/3 dives 25,000vt Includes transport to / from Luganville.

Transport and dive site entry fees (paid to Kastom owner):

- The Coolidge included in above fees
- Million Dollar Point 1,000vt
- Blue Hole 1,500vt
- Boat Dive 2,500vt

There are several dive companies available, but Allan is truly passionate about it. – Sugar Shack

**July 2024:** (across the channel) Aore Adventure Sports and Lodge - +678.555.0271, [www.aoreadventures.com](http://www.aoreadventures.com), Hours: Mon-Sun: 0730-1700. Offers Yacht Moorings, lodging, scuba diving, snorkelling, and fishing and water activities. PADI 5-star Dive center and over 24 years in the dive industry. – Sugar Shack

**May 2024:** Diving the SS Coolidge historical wreck. Anchor in front of the Beachfront Resort. Visit Alan at Power Dive Tours who can cater to all types of divers. The wreck spans a large area in 20-70M of water. He offers an unparalleled opportunity to explore a significant piece of World War II history up close.

Power Dive Tours. +678.36822, or contact Oska Brooks on WhatsApp +678.768.7782, Cruisers get a discount when they dive with their own gear. The fees below include the guide, tank of gas, and weights.

- Single Dive: 7,000 Vatu
- Double Dive: 13,000 Vatu
- Full Day, 3 Dives: 19,000 Vatu (includes island BBQ lunch, night dive and full beach access)

They have other specials and can provide transport from Luganville to the dive sites (SS Coolidge, Million Dollar Point, and 2 blue holes.) – Dandelion

**Sept. 2012:** Espiritu Santo, locally know as Santo is the largest island in Vanuatu. It is home to the country's second largest "city", Luganville. Santo first came to the attention of Americans during World War II when it was a staging point for the American military. Men and equipment left here for the battlegrounds of the Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea. From a diving perspective the war left two famous sites.

**Million Dollar Point:** As the Americans were preparing to leave Vanuatu (then known as the New Hebrides) at the conclusion of the war in the Pacific, they offered to sell their surplus equipment for almost nothing to the British & French powers who jointly ruled the country. Thinking that the Americans would be forced to abandon the equipment and they would eventually get it for free the ruling powers said no deal. Much to their shock the Americans proceeded to build a long pier out into Segond Channel east of Luganville and dumped all of the equipment into the sea. This spot is now known as million-dollar point and it is a very popular dive.

**Coolidge Wreck:** The second, and to me the more interesting dive, is on the wreck of the President Coolidge. The Coolidge was built in Seattle as a luxury liner. When war broke out in the Pacific she was pressed into service as a troop ship. As the Coolidge arrived in Luganville on October 26th 1942 she hit two "friendly" mines and began to sink in Segond Channel. It took her several hours to go down so almost the entire crew was saved by the time the ship went to the bottom.

The day before we dove on the Coolidge, we met a man on the beach of the sparsely inhabited Tutuba Island, at the mouth of Segond Channel. He told us that his father, who is still living, had stood on the very same beach seventy years ago and watched the ship sink. I told him that on the same day seventy years ago my Grandfather had been on the deck of the Coolidge as it sank below him.

On Monday we were picked up at the boat by Santo Island Divers and headed out the Channel to the Coolidge dive site. David, our dive master from the previous day, took us down for our first dive. The ship is lying on its side almost completely upside down with the bow higher than the stern. We swam along the bow and past a heavily encrusted three-inch gun. Continuing on we passed the giant anchor winch and two cargo bays, the second of which was full of tires attached to what might have once been jeeps. David showed us an old cook pot into which he had put a variety of goodies such as old shoes and a comb. Rifles and helmets are strewn about as are ammunition shells, small and large.

On our second dive we went inside the ship. We followed David on a circuitous route through the bowels of the Coolidge; past the barbershop, past a long row of toilets, past sinks with handles which still turned and to the pharmacy which still had jars of powders and liquids of astonishing colors on its shelves. There was more ammunition as well as airplane drop tanks looking like gigantic eggs abandoned in their nest. For a somewhat unnerving thrill David had us turn off our flashlights and we floated in complete watery darkness except for the glowing flashlight fish which loomed around us. – Shango

### **20.1.8 Cruiser Report**

**Aug. 2024:** Luganville has a ton of car traffic including loads of taxi cabs (with a T on the license plate) and lots of buses. It is a busy center. Just one long street with businesses on either side. Unfortunately, there is a bit of trash on the streets, in the parks and around the buildings, but you don't come here to sight see, you come here to run errands and get \$hit done. – Sugar Shack

**June 2024:** What a complete disappointment. The one street with all of the shops was very dirty and unkept. – Moana

**Oct. 2023:** Espiritu Santo is pronounced just "Santo" by the locals. The beach resort has very yacht friendly staff and it is close to town. – Dandelion

**Sept. 2012:** This is the second largest Vanuatu city and most goods and services are available, including Wi-Fi Internet. You have numerous anchoring options at Luganville. – Yolo

## **20.2 Palikulo Bay**

Eastern side

### **20.2.1 Anchorage**

**Aug. 2024:** **15°29.562S / 167°14.669E.** Anchored 7m during high tide. We came over the reef (not following the Rocket Guide recommended path) and the lowest we saw was 5m (high tide). We found a nice sandy spot adjacent to a rather large bommie that is clearly visible during high tide. – Sugar Shack

**July 2024:** **15°29.150S / 167°15.050E.** Anchored in 3m depth in white sand, surrounded by lots of bommies. We ended up floating our chain with the hopes of preventing it from getting tangled. We checked the depth on the surrounding bommies at almost low tide and had a whopping 20cm to go. – Moana

**Aug. 2023:** **15°29.56S / 167°14.81E.** A nice and protected bay with a sandy bottom in most places. Check your satellite charts for entering the bay. We use SAS planet and came in at night which was ok. – Eastern Stream

**Aug. 2023:** **15°29.50S / 167°14.90E.** Protection NE through S to NW. Not good in Northerlies. – As reported to Sugar Shack

**July 2023:** **15°29.554S 167°14.885E** in 10m in between reef. We dinghy sounded it first before moving over the bommies in good lighting. The shallowest we saw was 4m. Satellite imagery is very beneficial here. Very large bay with several different places you can anchor. Very flat anchorage with excellent holding. – SV Complicite

**June 2018:** **15°29.5736S / 167°14.8903E.** Anchor in 8m behind 2 reefs. If you try to go to this anchorage be extremely careful and I strongly suggest you do not attempt it without a good image and or a good lookout up front watching for reefs. It is quite a nice spot and as you would imagine calm.

There are many wrecks around this area both above and below the water. As you come through Diamond Passage and turn to port you will see a jetty and a rather large wreck. The charts will suggest you can anchor there, but I could not find a spot anything like the chart suggested. I guess in its day it was dredged to accommodate what I believe was a fish cannery factory. In the SW corner of the bay lies another wreck and in total around this area there are about 5 above water alone. – Screensaver

### **20.2.2 Cruiser Report**

**Aug. 2023:** From Palikula Bay it is a 20-minute ride to Luganville. We hitchhiked but you could wait for a taxi. It is not a main road and there are not a lot of mini buses or taxis. However, we had no problems making this trip as we did it several times. You can easily catch a taxi from Luganville back to Palikulo Bay. – Eastern Stream

**July 2023:** Dugongs, turtles, dolphins in the bay. Snorkeling closer to shore. Wrecks to check out. Great fishing. Friendly villages. Very easy to get into town from here – wait on the main road and a bus/car/taxi will pass every 15 minutes. Taxi back to the bay is 1500 VATU. No shops nearby that we could find. Very close to the airport, a great place for any crew changes. – SV Complicite

## **20.3 Surundu (Surunda) Bay**

Surunda (Surundu or Suranda) Bay is on the east side and is just over the hill 3 miles north of Luganville.

### **20.3.1 Anchorage**

**2014: 15°27.581S / 167°13.283E** in 4-10m of sand. It is tricky to get in so be sure you have the sun high, the water clear, and have a lookout on the bow. – Reflection

**Sep 2012:** This anchorage is exceptionally good, sand bottom, provides all round protection, clear water, and very good snorkeling on the outer reef. We spent over 10 days here waiting for a good weather window. A family of dugongs and numerous turtles live in Surunda Bay. – Yolo

### **20.3.2 Activities**

**July 2024:** See Santo Horse Back Riding Adventures and Santo Big Fishing Adventures. See activities 20.4.3 below. – SV Yaminda

### **20.3.3 Cruiser Reports**

**July 2019:** I have been for two weeks in extremely peaceful Surunda Bay in Santo; one night as I was at anchor in the middle of the bay, I was awakened by some noise, and found a man in the corridor of my port hull; there was no aggressiveness, in fact I think he had been smoking too much pot!

I led him back to the cockpit, vainly tried to understand his rambling discourse, and eventually locked myself inside ( I had not even closed the door before going to sleep), and he eventually left... with my little dinghy; but I had phoned a Frenchman living ashore and with whom I'd made friends, and he sent three of his workers who found the guy more or less adrift, and brought him to the police. So, nothing lost, and as I said, no violence nor threats, and I got my dinghy back. So, better lock the doors in the evening, although everybody tells me that was a very rare occurrence in this area. – Thor

**Sept. 2012:** Getting to Luganville: The main north/south paved island road runs past the head of the bay. Countless buses, taxis, and cars travel to and from Luganville. Vehicle license plates which start with a "B" for bus, "T" for taxi, and "PT" for public transportation will charge. We never spent more than 5 minutes standing by the road. It is a good idea to agree on the cost for a ride before getting into any vehicle. – Yolo

## **20.4 Pass Between Maeva and Danny Island**

**Aug. 2024:** Navionics shows this as unpassable, but we departed through the very wide pass at 2hrs before high tide, right down the middle and had no issues. The shallowest we saw was 11m deep. – Sugar Shack

## **20.5 Peterson (Paterson) Lagoon**

Blue Holes: Maletuvu and Riri Blue Hole easily accessed from this anchorage. Luganville 25 min bus/car ride.

**TIDE:** Navionics tide chart was way off. In fact, we checked 5/6 tide charts and none matched. One would say high tide and another low tide (for the exact same time, day, and location). We ended up finding "Tides Near Me" to be somewhat close to what we were seeing. [https://tidesnear.me/tide\\_stations/6937](https://tidesnear.me/tide_stations/6937)

### **20.5.1 Passes**

There are two passes into Peterson Lagoon. North and South. The south pass has obstructions and should only be entered during high tide. The North pass is tricky and most avoid it.

**TIDES:** Be sure to check several tide tables as Navionics was consistently wrong for us here. We ended up trusting Tides Near Me (webpage) as it was the most accurate for this pass.

**Aug. 2024:** South Pass: We arrived at low tide, so we anchored by Philips Bay and hopped in the dinghy to check the pass out. Once we had a good idea of the route, we entered at 2hrs before high tide. The lowest

depth we saw was 3m. We had 17-20kts and 1m swell, both from the SE. Navionics appeared to be accurate in terms of markers (which are not existent, but keep your track within them).

On our departure, we went out 2.5hrs before high tide and the lowest we saw was 1.8m.

We entered through this pass a second time at 2 hours before and then left 2 hours after with the shallowest depth being 1.7.– Sugar Shack

**June 2024:** Do NOT attempt to enter on anything but high tide! If you are entering at a “low” high tide, be very careful and watch for the very shallow and large bommie at the curve. The markers, as indicated on Navionics, are no longer here but there are a few white buoys. We checked out Peterson Lagoon, but did not stop, then went to Oyster Island Lagoon. – Moana

**Nov. 2023:** The Northern Reef pass into Peterson’s Lagoon is not recommended for boats with more than 1.8m draft. All other boats should arrive only during high tide. Sometimes there are buoys marking the entrance, but they are missing more often than not.

Southern Reef Anchorage: Best to enter at high tide to avoid skimming the bommie /bottom. – Sugar Shack

**July 2019:** We entered the North entrance 2 hours before high tide and saw min depth of 2.1m. The entry was a short but tricky path, and satellite navigation is essential to get it right. We exited by the southern lagoon and the Navionics community layer port / starboard marks are spot on. – Berzerker

## **20.5.2 Phillips Bay**

### **20.5.2.1 Anchorage**

**Aug. 2024: 15°23.0416S / 167°11.643E** in 7.5m. Not quite in Phillips Bay, but right outside the pass. We arrived at low tide and waited here for several hours before high tide to enter the pass. We had really good holding, solid stick with the anchor. – Sugar Shack

## **20.5.3 Oyster Island/ Malparavu**

### **20.5.3.1 Anchorage**

**Aug. 2024: 15°22.219S / 167°11.439E** in 11m of mud, good holding. We had all sorts of wind and managed several 360’s but holding is good and we were well protected from the big winds on the outside.

We are right across from the entrance to the Matevulu Blue Hole.

**15°22.108S / 167°11.445E** in 8.5m a little further back than our first spot. – Sugar Shack

**June 2024: 15°22.42S / 167°11.30E** in really good holding 7-10m of sand. Calm and sheltered to all sides except NE winds and sea. This anchorage is calm, quiet, and super beautiful. Complete opposite of the Luganville anchorage which was awful and roly. – Moana

**Oct. 2023: 15°22.22S / 167°11.39E.** Eyeball your way through the reefs to find yourself a protected spot in the bay. We anchored in mud opposite the entrance to the blue hole. We saw a lot of catamarans anchored closer to the resort, but it seemed more roly over there as the reef is not that high and does not give the protection needed for a calm spot. – Eastern Stream

**July 2019: 15°22.339S / 167°11.463E.** Anchored in Peterson Bay at in 10m sand. – Indigo II

**Oct. 2016: 15°22.89S / 167°11.66E.** Another beautiful anchorage. – Eagle’s Wings

**2014: 15°22.425S / 167°11.413E** in 10-14m sand/mud. If there is any bad weather about this is not the best place to be. – Reflection

### **20.5.3.2 Activities**

**Aug. 2024: Matevulu Blue Hole** has a very long 1-1.5km river to get to the blue hole, but it is a very rewarding trip up the crystal-clear waters surrounded by beautiful rich green jungles and floating plants. There are

several rope swings, a nice slide, benches, toilets, and seating areas. The fee is 1,000vt/pp which is placed in the honesty box. They also have kayaks and canoes for rent. Our dinghy has a 1.2m draft so we waited for high tide and made it all the way to the blue hole with no problems. The water, crystal clear, can be seen 18m to the bottom! Stunning and breathtaking!

**Riri Blue Hole** is closer to the pass, by Philips Bay and has a much shorter river entrance.

**Diving:** There is a corsair plane and a cockpit of a single engine plane in the lagoon. Both good diving sites. – Sugar Shack

**June 2024:** You can access two different Blue Holes from this anchorage. The Matevulu one is accessed fine up the river by dinghy, on low tide one needs to be careful in a few spots. The Riri Blue hole is definitely only possible by paddleboard, or with a local outrigger provided by the locals. But it IS STUNNING.

In this lagoon there are endless paddle boarding opportunities and snorkeling. So far very protected.

We spoke with the Tourism office in Luganville and they informed us that the female performers who do the water music at Aore resort will come to us at the Malwepe/Oyster Island anchorage to perform in the sea. The cost is 26,000vt flat fee for as few or as many guests who watch – so gather your friends and enjoy this magical experience. – Moana

**June. 2024: Matevulu Blue Hole** is accessible by dinghy at mid to high tide. The cost is 1,000vt/pp and if there is nobody from the village onsite there is an Honesty Box. The water is clear green but had a tinge of blue, so turquoise. It was a bit chilly, but there were fish to see and interesting rock formations. There is a fun rope swing and toilet facilities on site. It is very busy on cruise ship days so be sure to time it properly.

**Riri Blue Hole** on the southern end of Peterson Bay. The tide was coming in when we went exploring so it was an adventure taking the dinghy on the shallow drive to get under the bridge (the locals had a good laugh). Once under the bridge we paid our 1,000vt/pp and continued to another stunning blue hole. They built decks and picnic areas with changing rooms and toilets. The water is such a beautiful blue. – Yaminda

### **20.5.3.3 Transportation**

**Aug. 2024:** We called Bridely, the taxi driver (+678.777.6953) but he was busy so he sent his brother Linden (+678.347.6651). Linden picked us up in a beautiful pickup truck that easily sat 4 guests inside. We loaded the back up with 5 bags of trash (not all ours), 6 jerry cans, and 1 propane bottle.

He took us to the dump where we disposed of our rubbish (1,000vt for all bags), then off to Paradise Petroleum where we filled our jerry cans with gasoline and refilled our propane bottle (11kg) for 2500vt. We hit Digicel for more top up cards, a hardware store, the fresh market, and LCM for a pretty big provisioning run. And of course, beer...lots of beer.

Linden showed up 10 minutes early and was very informative telling us about certain locations, plantations, schools, resorts, etc... He helped us load everything and unload it all at the dock into the dinghy.

The normal fee to go to Luganville is 2,000vt one way. Since he was staying with us, he charged us 5,000vt and had us back by 1300. We could have hired a taxi at the road but we were not about to lug all of our crap to the main road. It worked out well and he was lovely. – Sugar Shack

**July 2024:** Bridely Riri is a taxi driver (+678.777.6953) and his brother Linden Riri (+678.347.6651) our both taxi drivers with nice pickup trucks (seat 5 inside). They will pick you up at the concrete dock in Oyster Bay (where he lives) and will take you to Luganville. He knows a lot of people and where everything is located. The rate was 2000vt each way or 4000vt for the day (which seems to be the going rate). You can also reach Bridley on Facebook messenger. – JAMS

#### **20.5.3.4 Cruiser Report**

**Aug. 2024:** Turtle Bay Resort (see Turtle Bay below) is very welcoming to cruisers and offers delicious meals and reasonable prices along with other services.

Oyster Bay Resort shut down a few years ago. It's Chinese owned and is considered private.

We stayed at this spot for 10 days and when we left, we had considerable soft growth on the bottom of our boat and the anchor chain was covered in mud which required wash down prior to pulling up. – Sugar Shack

**June 2024:** Quiet islands and reefs for exploring by paddleboard, lots of snorkeling. From the beach it is a 30-minute walk to the blue holes (or by SUP or dinghy).

You can access two Blue Holes from this anchorage. The Maletuvu Blue Hole is accessed up the river (in your dinghy at medium to high tide) or by SUP or kayak anytime. The Riri Blue Hole is definitely by SUP or kayak only or with outrigger provided by the local – it is worth the trek as it is stunning. – Moana

#### **20.5.4 Malavanua Island**

##### **20.5.4.1 Anchorage**

**June 2024:** 15°22.940S / 167°11.543E in 7 meters. This was a temporary stop so we could check out the pass and wait for high tide. – Moana

##### **20.5.4.2 Activities**

**July 2024:** Santo Horse Adventures: Megan-Jane Moderan +678.777.4700, [e.santohorseadventures@gmail.com](mailto:e.santohorseadventures@gmail.com), on Facebook: SantoHorseAdventures. Super fun day exploring the rivers and mangroves on horseback. Santo is a horse sanctuary.

Island Fishing Santo: Fabrice Moderan +678.774.0537, [e.fishingsanto@gmail.com](mailto:e.fishingsanto@gmail.com), Facebook: Island Fishing Santo. Big Game fishing, snorkelling, dugong and turtle watching.

Turtle Bay Lodge is a PADI dive center and they offer Road Buggies you can hire to get around. Turtle Bay Lodge: +678.37988, [www.turtlebaylodge.vu](http://www.turtlebaylodge.vu) – SV Yaminda

##### **20.5.4.3 Cruiser Reports**

**Aug. 2024:** We really enjoyed our time in this anchorage and spent 10 days here. Super protected, lots to see and do, great restaurant at Turtle Bay Resort and of course access to the blue holes.

Note: We had pretty heavy soft growth on the bottom of the boat and the anchor chain had to be pressure washed as it came up to remove the mud. – Sugar Shack

**July 2024:** We truly enjoyed Santo Horse-riding Adventures (which is also a horse sanctuary). We were picked up at Turtle Bay Lodge (we anchored in Peterson North). Activity is 7500vt/pp and includes transfers. You can also anchor in Surundu Bay. Meghan was our guide and is the owner. Her husband, Fabrice, also does water-based adventures. See contact information under activities. – SV Yaminda

**Oct. 2023:** With the incoming tide we paddled up the river to visit one of the blue holes, the Matavea Blue Hole. The owners ask for a fee which you can give to the caretaker or put it in the special box at the entrance (close to the parking lot). Even on cloudy day the water was an incredible blue. – Eastern Stream

**June 2018:** The river and Blue Hole on my first trip was excellent and free, then 6 months ago sadly when Kim and I went there the water was murky and they wanted 5000VUV. This time it did at least live up to its name as you can see and dare, I say he did not get his 5000vuv for what nature provides.

Cecile & Jamie came well prepared to make the most of the fresh water and had a very refreshing bath. – Sloepmouche

**Sept. 2012:** Snorkeling on a WWII airplane just south of the island, very good outer reef snorkeling, and several fresh water blue holes, complete with rope swings. – Yolo

## **20.5.5 Turtle Bay**

Inside Peterson Bay

### **20.5.5.1 Anchorage**

**July 2024:** Turtle Bay Lodge offers moorings for 2,000vt per night. – SV Yaminda

**Oct. 2023:** We were lucky enough to have friends on land who had a private mooring in Turtle Bay. You can enter this bay either from the south or the north. Both can be tricky, however, stick to the coordinates and eyeball the bommies (reference Rocket Guide and Navionics). – Dandelion

### **20.5.5.2 Yachtsmen Services**

#### **20.5.5.2.1 Trash and Recycling**

**July 2024:** You can dispose of rubbish at Turtle Bay Lodge for 1,000vt. We combined rubbish from two boats into a big bag. Turtle Bay Lodge: +678.37988, [www.turtlebaylodge.vu](http://www.turtlebaylodge.vu) – SV Yaminda

#### **20.5.5.3 Restaurants**

**Aug. 2024:** Turtle Bay Lodge has The Salty Dog bar and Restaurant offering local cuisine and international favorites. They are open for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Free wifi available.

Despite not being very busy they still offered their very extensive food and beverage menu every night we visited. They have really great good and reasonable prices! – Sugar Shack

**Aug. 2024:** Turtle Bay Lodge has a lovely fire show and they offer a great menu with excellent food. – Yaminda

#### **20.5.5.4 Transportation**

**Aug. 2024:** Bridely Riri is a taxi driver (+678.777.6953) and his brother Linden Riri (+678.347.6651) are both great taxi drivers, know the town well, and drive pickup trucks that seat 5 inside. Linden has a nicer, newer truck with working windows and AC whereas Bridely's truck is not as new. – Sugar Shack

#### **20.5.5.5 Turtle Bay Lodge**

Turtle Bay Resort +678.36988, [www.turtlebaylodge.vu](http://www.turtlebaylodge.vu), [stay@turtlebaylodge.vu](mailto:stay@turtlebaylodge.vu), is cruiser friendly and will let cruisers enjoy their facilities and services. They have a restaurant, bar, PADI dive center, diving excursions, kayaks, paddleboards, quad bikes, live music, and a lovely fire show.

#### **20.5.5.6 Activities**

Turtle Bay Lodge +678.37988, [www.turtlebaylodge.vu](http://www.turtlebaylodge.vu), [stay@turtlebaylodge.vu](mailto:stay@turtlebaylodge.vu), pricing July 2024:

- PADI Dive Center
- Quad Bike hire starts at 6,000vt/day (they have 2 and 4 seaters available.)
- Kayaks and SUPs for hire
- Float the river on a barge with a cold beverage
- Visit the Riri Blue Hole & Matevulu Blue Hole
- Banana and Donut rides around the bay

They are cruiser friendly and if their guests (who have priority) are not using their facilities or activities, then they offer them to cruisers. – Sugar Shack

## **20.6 Hog Harbor / Champagne Beach**

### **20.6.1 Champagne Beach**

#### **20.6.1.1 Anchorage**

**June 2019:** 15°08.410S / 167°07.259E in 15m sand & coral. – Indigo

**June 2018:** 15°08.409S / 167°07.272E. Anchor in 12m, Sand Coral knobs. Can be a bit rolly with more than 10-15knts from any direction. – Screensaver

#### **20.6.1.2 Cruiser Report:**

**Aug. 2024:** There is a 1,000vt fee to land your dinghy here due to the freshwater springs effervescing through the sand. – As reported to Sugar Shack

**June 2018:** 3g TVL. The trip up got quite sloppy and the swell gave my new auto pilot its first good stern quarter following sea work out. I must say I'm pretty impressed with it thus far.

On my first trip to Champagne Beach the Cruise ships used to come here. The local village setup a lot of village type infrastructure to cater for the western tourist on what is a very beautiful beach certainly in the top couple for Vanuatu. As time passed the village got greedy with their charges per person to the Cruise ship grew and eventually the cruise ships pulled the pin. So now the cows enjoy the paradise and for the moment the infrastructure remains a vacant reminder. – Screensaver

### **20.6.2 Lonnock Bay**

#### **20.6.2.1 Anchorage**

**Aug. 2024:** 15°08.746S / 167°06.975E in 7m of sand with really good holding. We could have gone further in but we arrived at dusk with poor light so opted for safety. – Sugar Shack

**Aug. 2024:** We anchored just around the point at Hog Harbour in 5-6m of crystal-clear water. Excellent anchorage. – Yaminda

**July 2023:** 15°08.684'S 167°06.878'E Anchored in 20m. Very protected from SE, E, S trades. Good holding. Some roll at high tide. – SV Complicite

**2014:** 15°08.654S / 167°06.952E. Anchor in 8-10m in white coral sand. Exposed to N-NE winds and swell. Add plenty of scope, there are several potentially good anchorages in this bay. – Reflection

#### **20.6.2.2 Yachtsmen Services**

##### **20.6.2.2.1 Trash Disposal**

**Aug. 2024:** Two of the three resorts offer trash disposal: Lonnoc Eco Beach Bungalows (middle resort) for 200vt and Lonnoc Beach Lodge (furthest west resort) for 500-1000vt. – Sugar Shack

#### **20.6.2.3 General Provisions**

##### **20.6.2.3.1 Laundry**

**Aug. 2024:** Two of the three resorts offer laundry services. Lonnoc Beach Bungalows for 500vt per load and Lonnoc Beach Lodge (furthest west resort) for 500-1000vt per bag (depending on size). – Sugar Shack

**July 2023:** We disposed rubbish here for a small fee. – SV Complicite

#### **20.6.2.4 Provisions**

**July 2023:** The village has a small store with basic supplies. – SV Complicite

### **20.6.3 Resorts**

**Aug. 2024:** There are three resorts set back from the beach on this bay.

Lonnoc Eco Beach Bungalows +678.590.6863, [lonnocbungalows@gmail.com](mailto:lonnocbungalows@gmail.com), <https://lonnoc-eco-beach-bungalows.com>. They are the middle resort and cater to all guests. They have an extensive breakfast, lunch and dinner menu as well as beer and wine. They offer trash disposal and laundry services and are a little less expensive than the other resort.

Lonnoc Beach Lodge +678.536.6445, [bvocol4@gmail.com](mailto:bvocol4@gmail.com), [lonnocbeachlodge.com](http://lonnocbeachlodge.com). Located furthest west (to your far right) Ask for Wendy. They have a restaurant with a lovely view of the bay. They offer laundry and trash services.

The first (furthest east, on your left facing the beach) was closed when we visited. – Sugar Shack

### **20.6.4 Restaurant**

**Sept. 2023:** The Lonnoc Beach Bungalows and Lonnoc Beach Lodge both offer restaurant and bar services. They both have a large varied menu but Lonnoc Beach Bungalows had a larger menu at a little less expensive price. But the view is a bit better at the lodge –Sugar Shack

**July 2023:** A few restaurants with basic but delicious food. – SV Complicite

### **20.6.5 Cruiser Report**

**Aug. 2024:** A WWII barge wreck is on the beach (under the large tree in the center of the beach) and you can ask a local to give you a tour to the secret garden and the blue hole.

The local airline was shut down so none of the resorts had guests, but two of them opened their restaurants, trash, and laundry services to cruisers. The water is spectacularly clear, lots of little fish and a few turtles. It is an easy dinghy ride to Champagne beach. –Sugar Shack

**July 2023:** Beautiful beaches and snorkeling. – SV Complicite

## **20.7 Port Olry**

East Coast

### **20.7.1 Anchorage**

**Aug. 2024:** **15°02.204S / 167°04.963E** in 7m sand with good holding. Super beautiful anchorage tucked behind Thion island. We put out 30m of scope and butted up near the bommie, but since we came in at low, low tide there were no concerns (our draft is 1.3m) so be careful if you draw more when anchoring here.

The anchorage is really well protected but you will do 360 around your anchor.

Dinghy Landing: There is a very old, concrete jetty ruin. Next to it, on either side is a beach where you can leave your dinghy (locals leave their canoes/boats here). – Sugar Shack

**Oct. 2023:** **15°02.16S / 167°05.02E**. Anchored behind Thion Island and had a great time here. – Eastern Stream

**July 2023:** **15°02.119'S 167°05.052'E** Thion Island anchorage: anchored in 8m sand, very clear blue water. Pass over a few bommies to reach this sandy patch but easy to see with good light/satellite. Protected from SE trades. Excellent holding. – SV Complicite

**June 2019:** **15°02.2788S / 167°04.2012E** in 8m sand. – Indigo II

**June 2018:** **15°02.2818S / 167°04.1541E**. Anchor in 10m Sand. – Screensaver

**2014:** **15°02.061S / 167°04.871E**. Anchor in 9-10m white coral sand. Exposed to N – NE winds and swell. There is an inner anchorage with fantastic shelter, but thread your way carefully. – Reflection

## **20.7.2 Yachtsmen Services**

### **20.7.2.1 Fuel (Diesel & Gasoline)**

**Aug. 2024:** Pacific Fuel has a 'station' near the outer edge of the village (close to the dinghy landing area) blue building. It is a large 4,000L drum of fuel. Blue container building. Nobody was around when we stopped by. – Sugar Shack

## **20.7.3 General Services**

### **20.7.3.1 Bank and ATM**

**Aug. 2024:** National Bank of Vanuatu has a branch in Port Orly. +678.22201, +678.552.2295. Hours: Mon-Thurs: 0900-1530 Fri: 0900-1600. The building is located just up the road from the dinghy area and next to the fuel station. – Sugar Shack

### **20.7.3.2 Medical**

**Aug. 2024:** Port Orly Health and Medical Clinic is in the center of town. From dinghy beach, go to "main dirt road" and take it into town. It dead ends into the clinic. It was closed when we stopped by, but we left a message for the nurse and dropped off some reading glasses for the village. – Sugar Shack

### **20.7.3.3 Provisions**

**Aug. 2024:** There are two very small markets. The Orly Superette is on the main (asphalt road) which is adjacent to the only 3 story building. Across the road is another very small market. Cooperative Fish Market Located at the two-road crossroads (the Port Orly main road and the road that goes to Luganville).

Bakery: The purple house with a satellite dish just by the concrete dock is a "bakery." – Sugar Shack

**Oct. 2023:** There is a little market close to the village shop. – Eastern Stream

**July 2023:** In the village there is a basic store (blue and white – ask a local where it is) which sells fresh steak for a 500VT per kilo, as well as eggs, onions, potatoes, sometimes bread and other basic supplies. Across from this store is a small fruit veg market selling whatever is available for a very good price. – SV Complicite

## **20.7.4 Restaurants**

**Aug. 2024:** Chez Louis at Port Orly Harbour Beach Resort was lovely! +678.599.0320 or +678.530.7869. They have a small, reasonably priced menu and bar with a beautiful seating area in the shade overlooking the beach and turquoise waters. We had the fish with chips, salad and vegetables for 2200vt. They also served lobster, crab, and steak. Highly recommend.

There are several "resorts" with restaurants along the long, white, sandy beach. However, when we visited all were closed except Port Orly Beach Resort. They could have been closed due to the airline being shutdown or they could be closed period. Not sure.

The other resorts:

Serenity Restaurant and Treehouse, +678.36616, Beach Bar +678.564.6051. – Sugar Shack

**July 2023:** There is a small restaurant and bar on the beach. – SV Complicite

## **20.7.5 Cruiser Report**

**Aug. 2024:** We went to Thion island to see if we could find the fresh water lake. We were told it was an easy 6-minute walk so we did not prepare for a big walk/hike. Unfortunately, we got side tracked with the beauty and missed the lake altogether. We ended up walking around the entire island. It was a good, healthy walk/hike and took us 5 hours as we walked along the ridge and then back down to the shore, then back up again, rinse and repeat. There is no clear path, not much to see, but lots of nature.

Matt took the SUP out to paddle around Thion island (4.5nm) and it was a challenge. He is used to long challenging paddles but this was difficult. Could have been the wind/swell direction, but the combination was hard. He was forced to paddle out further than he wanted to avoid the big seas and then they got super confused. He said it was a workout and he'd seriously reconsider doing it again.

We snorkeled near little reef where there once was a wreck but did not see the great snorkeling reported in the Rocket Guide. – Sugar Shack

**Oct. 2023:** We did some BBQ's on the beach, walked to the lakes, and had some dinners and drinks in the locally owned restaurant near the beach. – Eastern Stream

**July 2023:** Excellent snorkeling from the boat. A sandspit beach very close by with nobody there. A short walk to a fresh water lake. A short dinghy ride to the main Port Olry beach which is extremely picturesque. Not many tourists around. – SV Complicite

**June 2018:** We went into the inner anchorage across the coral/sand shelf and into the river mouth. A very safe and comfortable anchorage especially in the SE trades. – Screensaver

## **20.8 Big Bay**

In the south Eastern tip of Big Bay, you will find a well-protected, picturesque anchorage off the village. The area around the anchorage is part of the National Park, the "Vatthe Conservation Area".

### **20.8.1 Anchorage**

**Nov. 2023: 15°09.57S / 166°56.43E.** Anchor in the very SE corner of the bay. Protection from ENE through S to W. – As reported to Sugar Shack

### **20.8.2 Cruiser Report**

**Nov. 2023:** There are two villages in this bay and lots to do. Loads of snorkeling and diving and lots of walking tracks that will take you to all corners of the park. We suggest hiring a guide to share with you his local knowledge of the flora and fauna and their different uses within the village. – As reported to Sugar Shack

## **20.9 Wusi Bay**

### **20.9.1 Anchorage**

**Nov. 2023: 15°21.721S / 166°39.300E.** Anchor outside the village on heavy gray sand/mud. Protection NE through E to SE. The bay offers little shelter from the swell and wind that tends to funnel up the coastline but the holding is good. – As reported to Sugar Shack

## **21 Aese Island**

Located on the east side of Espiritu Santo.

### **21.1 Anchorage**

Navionics has this area marked as a no anchor zone.

**July 2024: 15°26.685S / 167°15.053E** in 4-10m sand/coral. Suitable in strong winds, protection from N, W and S winds. Watch out for the shallow reef. – As reported to Sugar Shack

**Oct 2016: 15°26.56S / 167°14.95E.** Beautiful spot. – Eagle's Wings

## 22 Maeva Island

Located on the east side of Espiritu Santo

### 22.1 Pass

**Aug. 2008:** We arrived at the pass south of Maeva Island around 4 p.m. with the sun right in the eyes and intermittent clouds, but were able to go through a double set of red and green markers without problem and anchor inside. Piece of cake!

After one yacht grounded earlier this season and spent the night on its side, the yachties and Grant, the new manager of Oyster Island Resort, put in the markers: long pieces of PVC pipe painted red and green and designed so that at low tide, the pipes fall over and lie on their sides, and at high, when water in the pass is deep enough, the pipes float upright clearly marking the safest way in. This channel is not where the RG waypoints indicate the way in, but if they are still there in future seasons, the markers take the uncertainties out of getting into the inner bay.

At least two-thirds high tide, we never saw less than 9' of depth. – Sloepmouche

## 23 Banks Islands

The Banks Islands: Santa Maria / Gaua, Vanua Lava, Mota, Mota Lava, Ureparapara, the Reef islands and numerous islets.



**Aug. 2009:** To get the best sailing conditions, we recommend cruising the Banks in the following order: Gaua (Losalava), Vanua Lava (Sola), Mota Lava, Reef (Rowa) Islands.

Ureparapara, Vanua Lava (Waterfall bay, and then Vureas Bay for festival). – Sloepmouche

### 23.1 Gaua (formerly) Island

#### 23.1.1 Cruiser Report

**July 2019:** The most tradable items here now is fuel for their outboards. Transport is problematic for them after the copra boats stopped coming. They used to be able to hitch a ride for free or pay very little. We visited the Eastern side, and for these villages it takes women, children and elderly up to 3 days to walk across to the

airport - and it is really too expensive for them to fly anyway. Hitching a ride with a yachtie is also something they appreciate if they have to get to Espiritu Santo.

Be prepared to be considered a free resource in terms of supplying repairs of various equipment electrical and mechanical. Also, the villages have several chiefs, and each one of them will attempt to get gifts from visiting yachties as well as not being shy from asking for various things they in particular need (eg a rope for a boat for one chief, baby's clothing for another chief's 2-month-old grandchild). There is no way of figuring out what to take for trading as that differs and they also seem to expect to just get gifts.

Overall, we were told by a Paramount Chief that things like rice, sugar, salt and flour (and now also fuel) are the best for trade as they have to pay for these. Money for school fees and taxes are their main concern. In one Village the Anglican priest was organizing a "scholarship" fund, asking visiting yachties for donations- they then try to pick the brightest to send to school. They can't find the money for school fees for all the kids - I think this is mainly about secondary school and onwards. – Thor

### **23.1.2 Pwetevut Bay**

#### **23.1.2.1 Anchorage**

**July 2024:** 14°18.780S / 167°25.880E. Anchored in good holding black sand. Well protected from SE, but gusty winds falling down the hill/valley. – Trinity

**June 2018:** 14°18.8S / 167°25.96E. Anchor in 5m, black sand some rock, no internet.

Last time Watusi and I were in this anchorage it was horrifically bad in terms of swell. When the scotch won't stay on the table at anchor it really is time to move. Last time I was here the gimbaled stove couldn't even cope, but that was NE trades, so I was hoping the SE trades would be better. So, I crept as far into the SE corner as I dare, and pushed the boom as far out as it would go. While it was far from comfortable at least my scotch didn't end up on the floor. In the morning the anchorage was becoming more roly and it seemed weather conditions were getting worse, so time to find a comfortable hole. – Screensaver

#### **23.1.2.2 Cruiser Report**

**July 2024:** Pastor Levy is very friendly, supportive and welcoming. He showed us around the village. – Trinity

**June 2018:** The bay has two villages, one at the NE end that last time charged a few thousand for their water music display and one at the SE end which interestingly didn't want money, but more down to earth things, clothes, hats fishing hooks or in my case 4L of two-stroke.

So, I got another water music rendition by the local ladies, all pretty cool and much of the rhythm was common to other villages performance. The building on the right was the first of these I have seen and was effectively the Boys club i.e. only for men and complete with carvings. – Screensaver

### **23.1.3 Bushman Bay**

#### **23.1.3.1 Anchorage**

**Aug. 2024:** 14°13.459S / 167°26.666E in 10 m of coral/sand with decent holding. Keep an eye on the satellite charts and have a look out on the bow to avoid the reefs and bommies. We hid out here for a week as a strong weather system passed over. We sustained over 40kts of wind, dragged and had to reset once, but otherwise good spot to hide. We had gusts over 40kt a few times, but mostly 15-20kts inside the bay while outside the bay was 35-40kt. The ground is broken coral and sand and does not bury itself deep. Just be aware if you have strong winds.

You can bring the dinghy up to the beach at any location as it is rock free. – Sugar Shack

**Aug. 2024:** 14°13.506S / 167°26.692E in 9m of sand with good holding. Enter the bay into the center avoiding the reef on both sides of the bay. – Trinity

**July 2024: 14°13.650S / 167°26.690E.** We spent several days at two bays close to each other, Bushman Bay and Vatales Bay. They are superb anchorages well protected from the trades. However, the volcano is still active and unbeknownst to us, it's spewing Sulphur that mixes with the rain clouds. If the mist makes it to the anchorage, not only do you feel it in your eyes, but the stainless steel quickly turns brown. So, we have a full day ahead of us of polishing including going up the rig -- we just need to find a flat spot away from the volcano's plume to do it! – Archer

### **23.1.3.2 Cruiser Reports**

**Aug 2024:** We just had a good time at Bushmans Bay, Gaua. 2 hr walk to a smallish waterfall with locals, did not accept any payment, very friendly. The village does not have a primary school, so all the small children are away during term time, very sad. (The big waterfall is on the eastern, windward side of Gaua).

**Aug. 2024:** We attempted to anchor closer to shore and as we were trying to set the hook 4 canoes come up. It was 1600 which was difficult with the setting sun so we ended up moving further out.

There are 4 villages in this bay. The main village with Chief Willy, his wife Charity, and daughter Samantha is right in front of the anchorage. It is a super pretty, clean village. The village to the left is also very nice, but we did not get a chance to meet many villagers. The other two villages are on the western side of the bay just behind the beach area.

Charity and Samantha organized a group of ladies to do a spectacular water music performance and we loved it! It is just wonderful how they are able to make so many musical sounds with just their hands and the ocean sea. They did not ask for any payment but we gave them some jewelry and women's clothing.

They also traded us with amazing produce: beans, popo, green onions, and Pamplemousses.

Expect to be visited by plenty of canoes from the 4 villages in this bay and the neighboring villages. Usually they were open to trading items, but they do ask for a lot.

We were here for about a week. During the week we had cleaned our exterior stainless as we had a super soaked trip here. Within a few days the stainless was starting to spot and turn brown so we assume it is debris or Sulphur from the volcano. We did not feel it in our eyes but saw it on the boat. – Sugar Shack

**Aug. 2024:** Bushman Bay is a beautifully kept village of about 40 people. Chief Willy and his wife Charity are very welcoming. We had several visitors interested in trading. The villagers are keen volleyball players and are interested in volleyballs and/or soccer balls. Ask them to perform their water music performance. It is spectacular. The sounds are made purely by shaping their hands through the water and you have different percussive rhythms as well as bassy rhythm played by a different group member.

It was a bit quiet, as it was Sunday. Chief Willy had left that morning to go to Santo with another yacht. We met Charity, the chief's wife who organized a water music performance which was wonderful. It was refreshing to see no mobile phones here. We were able to donate a soccer ball, first aid supplies, fishing tackle, rice, and oil. The villagers are very keen to play volleyball so if anyone is coming this way and has one to donate, they'd be very happy. – Yaminda

**Aug. 2024:** The village likes to trade fish, lobster, vegetables and fruit against fishing gear, clothing, balls, etc... Samantha gives a nice village tour and bush garden tour. – Trinity

**July 2024:** The lovely villagers at Bushman's Bay gave us a water music demonstration, which we again thoroughly enjoyed. It's such a beautiful art-form. We spent a lot of time sitting at the beach with them exchanging cultural learnings. Our kids entertained themselves (and everyone else) by alternating swimming with chasing and holding chickens. – Archer

### **23.1.4 Matanda Bay (Vatles Bay)**

#### **23.1.4.1 Anchorage**

**Sept. 2024:** 14°12.958S / 167°27.772E dropped in 3m of water in a nice sandy patch. There are two white anchors painted on rocks on either side of a small black sand beach. There is a third white anchor painted on another rock to the left of the beach (but I do not know what this indicates as there is a reef right in front of it). The bottom is sandy but because it is black it is hard to see. There are a few coral heads around here and you have to weave between the two large reefs to get to this spot. Our draft is 1.3m. – Sugar Shack

**July 2024:** Really nice anchorage and well protected from the trades. See write up under Bushman's Bay above – Archer

#### **23.1.4.2 Provision**

**Sept. 2024:** Ask Chief Richard or his son Chief Michele for a tour of their gardens. They are super happy to share their bountiful produce. They have island cabbage, green onions, papaya, coconuts, capsicum, bananas, Chinese beans (the super long green beans), taro, kasava, manuk, (sweet potato) and more. – Sugar Shack

#### **23.1.4.3 Activities**

**Sept. 2024:** Organize several things with Chief Michele. He can provide a guide to take you up to the volcano (3 hours each way), he can organize a black magic show, and he will show you around his village and garden.

Snorkeling the reefs was pretty nice. Lots of varieties of fish, a few schools. – Sugar Shack

#### **23.1.4.4 Cruiser Report**

**Sept. 2024:** Michele came out to greet us right away. When we came to shore, they welcomed us with floral leis, gave us a tour around their very beautiful village and showed us their extensive garden. So very kind and generous.

Chief Michele also offered to have some of the young men clean the bottom of our boat. We had just cleaned it the week prior at Bushman Bay so we did not need those services. But if you do, ask for help. – Sugar Shack

**July 2024:** We met Mishel and helped him charge his speaker and wire a solar panel. Once we moved and anchored there, he showed us around his small village (just 3 families live there) and gave us lots of coconuts, fruit, and vegetables. They made welcome necklaces with flowers for us and we felt warmly welcomed. Mishel showed our kids how they make body paint, which they were thrilled about and of course R. was quick to role-play a warrior.

The spearfishing at the nearby point was the best we've ever seen. You didn't even have to dive to get a good size fish. We gave some to the village and kept a few blue parrots for ourselves, which is our favorite reef fish.

Cruisers in the area: check the weather. If you are directly downwind of the volcano and there's enough precipitation, on the mountain, it will fall in the bay. You'll know you getting acid rain when your eyes sting from it. Promptly wipe dry all the stainless once the rain stops. It's a lot more work if you let it air dry or bake in the sun, which we did before we noticed it. – Archer

### **23.1.5 Lesalav Bay**

#### **23.1.5.1 Pass**

**Aug. 2024:** Enter the bay following these waypoints:

- WP1: 14°11.981S / 167°34.357E
- WP2: 14°12.319S / 167°34.150E
- WP3: 14°12.386 / 167°34.162E

We found this to be the best way to get to the anchorage. – Trinity

### **23.1.5.2 Anchorage**

**Aug. 2024:** 14°12.480S / 167°34.198E. Perfect holding. – Trinity

**Nov. 2023:** 14°12.407S / 167°34.114E. Leslav Bay offers good protection from most swells. Protection NW through S to ENE. We stayed here through a north-westerly pretty comfortably. The outside reef broke nearly all of the swell. The further into the corner you go the more protection. – As reported to Sugar Shack

### **23.1.5.3 Cruiser Report**

**Aug. 2024:** Very friendly people in the village who love to trade for excellent veggies. – Trinity

**Nov. 2023:** Lemot village is a 10-minute walk from the anchorage. Be sure to visit the Sulphur lake of Mount Garet which is about a 3-hr walk. – As reported to Sugar Shack

### **23.1.6 Losalava**

#### **23.1.6.1 Anchorage**

**2014:** 14°12.478'S 167°34.234'E. Anchor in 11-13m dark sand. Exposed to W – N – E winds and swell. Navionics charts are inaccurate here. – Reflection

**Aug. 2009:** Losalava has a protected anchorage. – Sloepmouche

#### **23.1.6.2 Cruiser Report**

**Aug. 2009:** All yachts are now invited by Chief Edgel and his small community as they arrive. After string band welcome songs, we were given flower leis and fruits and invited to sign the guest book. It was all fun for everyone and a good way to introduce each other for trade together and activities to do on the island. There's plenty of hiking and cultural activities here. We made a day hike to the lake and volcano (Robert and his son are great guides) and another day hike to the Siri waterfalls. Make sure you leave early (6:30 a.m.) as you otherwise risk coming back after dark.

We had more traditional dancing and the famous water music. Chief Edgel also organized a Melanesian feast that was very nice! – Sloepmouche

### **23.1.7 Ngre Aro Point**

#### **23.1.7.1 Anchorage**

**July 2023:** 14°13.4356S / 167°26.6510E. Anchored in 6m of black sand. Protected from SE tradewinds. Rolly but stern anchor made it bearable.

Second Anchor Spot: 14°13.350'S 167°26.557'E Anchored in 10m sand, clear water. Some bommies but easy to see with good light and satellite. Large sandy area to anchor in. Excellent holding. Protected from SE trades but katabatic winds at times. – SV Complicite

#### **23.1.7.2 Cruiser Report**

**July 2023:** The village is very welcoming. The chief arranged the water music ladies to perform for us. It was incredible! We took a lesson from them. The chief and other men took us for a walk to waterfall, it was about 45 minutes. The waterfall was beautiful and you could swim in the fresh water. We traded clothes, fishing gear, soap and sugar for lots of fresh fruit and vegetables.

2<sup>nd</sup> Anchor Spot: Beautiful snorkeling here. The reef is so colourful and vibrant. The village is very friendly. They get very few boats visit as it does not look like an anchorage on Navionics. You can hike to the volcano from here, the chief's son can guide you there. The water music ladies did a performance for us in exchange for women's clothing. Any donations or trades are extremely welcome. We traded fishing gear, clothes, soap, sugar, flour for a huge amount of fresh fruit and veg. – SV Complicite

### **23.1.8 Pwetevut Bay**

#### **23.1.8.1 Anchorage**

**Oct. 2023:** 14°18.74S / 167°25.90E. Anchorage has good holding. – Eastern Stream

#### **23.1.8.2 Cruiser Report:**

**Nov. 2024:** We saw the famous and beautiful water music here (and at Bushman's Bay). – Archer

**Oct. 2023:** If you want to see the local traditional village and meet friendly people, visit this anchorage. This is also one of the places they do the water music dance. Friends of ours walked to a waterfall. – Eastern Stream

## **23.2 Vanua Lava (Port of Entry)**

### **23.2.1 Patteson Bay (Sola)**

The Port Patteson bay has two anchorages. You can find protection from all wind directions between these two anchorages.

- Nawono Bay: in the northern end
- Sola Bay: in the southern end.

#### **23.2.1.1 Anchorages**

**Sept. 2024:** 13°52.477S / 167°33.237E. Anchored in 4.8m of water (mid-tide) with good holding. We had a pretty awful swell during our stay. We arrived at 1200 and left early the next morning. Exposed to wind NNE-N-NW and exposed to swell from the SE-E-NE.

There is a pretty decent swell onshore so pick your best spot to anchor the dinghy. North of the defunct rock pier appeared to be the best for us. – Sugar Shack

**Nov. 2023:** 13°52.40S / 167°33.20'E. In 5-8m white sand/mud. Good holding. – As reported to Sugar Shack

**June 2019:** 13°52.428S / 167°33.1905E in 6m sand. – Indigo II

**Oct. 2018:** We checked out of the country in the Northern port of Sola. This was an experience in itself as the wind direction was coming right into the bay that we had to anchor in to go ashore, so the boat was bucking all over the place while trying to anchor. – Watering Waterhorse

**July 2018:** 13°52.322S / 167°33.236E (SE Anchorage) Anchor in 5m sand/mud, TVL GSM when the sun shines.

Nousa Point Anchorage: 13°49.584S / 167°33.152E

**Dinghy Landing:** As I approached the shoreline, the swell crashing onto the beach wasn't that large, I have yet to master a beach landing in these conditions in style or in fact in any manner that is not embarrassing. Locals pointed me to the left end beside a small break wall as do most guides. Not a wise move I should have followed my earlier landing here 6 months ago. So, after collecting a rock with the outboard and getting dunked in 1/2m of water as I exited the tender, I made it.

Making tracks back to Screensaver as soon as possible I at least exited the beach nicely and was soon heading to the Northern end of the bay which is totally illogical in these big SE conditions, but past experience suggested it was the right choice for reasons I don't understand. The SE corner of Sola... the so-called recommended anchorage has never been good for me in any season.

The Northern end which unfortunately is a Lee shore and in 30 knots this doesn't do a lot for ones relaxation at night, but holding is good and the scotch stays on the table, plus you don't need to sleep with your head on one wall and feet on the other to remain in bed. – Screensaver

**2014:** 13°52.424'S / 167°33.198E Anchor in 5m dark sand with good holding. Exposed NNE – N – NW winds and swell. This can be quite a roly anchorage but there is less swell close to the wharf. – Reflection

### **23.2.1.2 Formalities**

The Official's office is located off the main road (don't follow Navionics location as it is wrong). From the old wharf, turn right, it will be on your left (before the fuel station) in a blue building. The sign says "Ministry of Finance and Economic" Hours: Mon-Fri: 0800-1200 & 1330-1630. Weekends and holidays will incur additional charges. Call/email before arrival!

Customs Agent: Jaysen Mala, +678.33946, cell: +678.552.1221 [mjaysen@vanuatu.gov.vu](mailto:mjaysen@vanuatu.gov.vu). Here thru 2028.

Customs +678.38540 - <https://customsinlandrevenue.gov.vu/>

Jaysen Mala can issue the departure clearance certificate and completion of other departure clearance formalities.

He asks that you come with exact change for your port fees as he does not have change. 7000vt for first 30 days and 100vt for every day after the initial 30-days. Plus 7vt per ton and VAT on total.

**Sept. 2024:** We emailed Jaysen two weeks prior to our departure to ensure he would be available to clear us out of the country on our departure date – he replied 2 days later in the affirmative. We followed up a few days before our arrival and did not receive a response. Thank goodness we arrived a day before our desired departure date (Thursday) to physically check in with him. He said he had a surprise trip and would not be able to clear us out on the next day. So, he cleared us out on Thursday and dated everything Friday. Worked for us just fine.

We had to pay additional 12 days of port fees (as we only paid Luganville through 30.08.24 and had to pay thru 12.09.24. We had stopped at the bank prior to checking out to get exact change. Easy peasy. He did have us complete (2) passenger cards for immigration and 2 other forms that we did not know about (we came with just the Outward Clearance Form). – Sugar Shack

**Oct. 2018:** Check out went smoothly, if not a lengthy process. The Customs guy had gone home for lunch. We waited and waited, and he didn't seem to be coming back. One of the local guys ended up giving him a call for us and he came down to sort the process.

Once done, we were out of there as fast as a robber's dog. The swell was so bad coming in the bay and the weather was not predicted to be very nice for a couple of days so we headed to the Reef Islands to tuck out of the wind for the night and make a plan on when to leave. – Watering Waterhorse

### **23.2.1.3 Yachtsmen Services**

#### **23.2.1.3.1 Cooking Gas**

**Sept. 2024:** Lemax Market (located to the right of the old wharf, on the right-hand side of the main road, at the end of town). They sold 9kg Orgin bottles which you can buy, decant and return empty. They do not do refills. – Sugar Shack

#### **23.2.1.3.2 Fuel (Diesel & Gasoline)**

**Sept. 2024:** The Pacific Fuel container is located just to the right of the old wharf, on the left side of the main road. Benzine is very precious here and they are not always willing to sell it to non-Sola residents.

The customs agent reported that the fuel station in Sola is more often than not, short or completely out of fuel. He requested that all vessels refuel prior to arriving in Sola.

We arrived and inquired about diesel as we wanted to leave with full jerry cans. We asked several locals if we could get diesel and they ensured us that it was ok and that we were not taking from the limited supply. Evidently, the battery for the fuel pump had been down for the past 2 months so the fuel station was busy.

The cost for diesel and benzine on the fuel pump is NOT the cost they will charge you. The cost on the fuel pump is the cost for Santo fuel and the Sola agents tack on an additional .50 per liter for both diesel and benzine. (for us, the cost on the pump was 183vt/L diesel and 200vt benzine and we paid 233vt/L for diesel. They only accept cash, but they had change. –Sugar Shack

### 23.2.1.3.3 Trash and Recycling

**Sept. 2024:** Sola does not have any means of disposing of yachtie trash. Do not bring it ashore. – Sugar Shack

### **23.2.1.4 General Services**

#### 23.2.1.4.1 Banks & ATMs

**Sept. 2024:** The National Bank of Vanuatu, +678.734.2203 is located on the left side of the main road (to the right from the dinghy dock) There is a large satellite dish in front. Hours: Mon-Thur: 0900-1200 & 1300-1530, Fri: 0900-1200 & 1300-1600. They will exchange foreign notes, but they will not cash traveler's checks or take credit cards.

The customs agent reported that the National Bank of Vanuatu will exchange foreign currency but only if the bank notes are dated between 2013-2023. The bank will not accept bank notes older than 2013.

There is a Western Union and Post Office inside the bank. – Sugar Shack

**Oct. 2018:** We had hoped that the small bank in Sola would be able to change the last of our Vanuatu Vatu into Solomon Dollars, but we were out of luck. They held very little other currency. – Watering Waterhorse

#### 23.2.1.4.2 Handicrafts

**Sept. 2024:** The Sola Market House is where the locals sell their handicrafts. It was closed when we went by so we can't attest to what they sold. Hours: Mon-Fri: 0900-1200 & 1300-1600. – Sugar Shack

#### 23.2.1.4.3 Internet and Wifi

**Sept. 2024:** Our local Vodafone SIM worked throughout the village. There are several places in town that sell top up for both Digicel and Vodafone

#### 23.2.1.4.4 Laundry

**Sept. 2024:** Laundry facilities – Sugar Shack

#### 23.2.1.4.5 Medical

**Sept. 2024:** The Red Cross is located to the right of the main wharf, on the left side of the main road (flags in front). – Sugar Shack

#### 23.2.1.4.6 Post Office

**Sept. 2024:** The post office is located inside the National Bank of Vanuatu. – Sugar Shack

#### 23.2.1.4.7 Sola Yacht Club

**Sept. 2024:** We did not find the Sola Yacht club (located between the main road and the wharf). – Sugar Shack

### **23.2.1.5 Provisions**

**Sept. 2024:** We found several "stores" to purchase provisions. All were to the right of the wharf on the right-hand side of the main road:

- Fresh produce is sold Mon-Fri: 0700-0900 in front of the Sola Market House
- Blue building near the Sola Market House is a place to basic food supplies
- Lemax market was the only "bigger" store but it was still fairly limited. They did have frozen meats, snacks, canned & baked goods, some produce and they sold cooking gas. Hours: Mon-Fri: 0600-2100, Sat: 0600-1200 & 1800-2000 (13°52.598S / 167°33.32E)
- There is a white building with several small stores that sell canned & baked goods, some oil, and basics
- Vandedem Store +678.539.6709.

Even though there are several “shops” they all carry very limited supply. – Sugar Shack

**Oct. 2018:** There were 2 ‘shops’ and a market, that had nothing left to buy. – Watering Waterhorse

#### **23.2.1.6 Restaurants**

**Sept. 2009:** Enjoy the hospitality of the Sola Yacht Club (Lemerous Bungalows). Robert and Serah, gracious hosts, welcome cruisers at their restaurant and BBQ and provide services for trade like laundry, book swapping, water and trash burning.

Land your dinghy on the beach or at the jetty, and follow the road to the right to find the government buildings, then continue walking along the road to find Lemerous Bungalows (Sola YC). – Sloepmouche

#### **23.2.1.7 Activities**

**Sept. 2024:** If you are interested in hiking to the volcano (2-day hike), possible contacts: Robert +678.774.5770, Sarah +678.598.6175, George Baete +678.565.3916. – Sugar Shack

#### **23.2.1.8 Cruiser Reports**

**Sept. 2024:** We came here to check out and get diesel. The anchorage was roly and the beaches were littered with trash. The locals were lovely though and very eager to welcome us to their community. – Sugar Shack

**July 2018:** The locals here are very nice and were only too happy to see us, take us on a bit of tour. Arthur was able to give us a bit of the local history and was clearly focused on improving the place. They built quite a long fence that effectively cuts the northern peninsula off. The idea being to stop the wild pigs eating their crops. Next step is to dig a decent size hole and turn the tables on the pigs to become dinner.

As for crocodiles, there are a few croc stories from the past and it seems now the limited crocs and people have agreed to coexist. The crocs (only a couple it seems) have the ocean side, and the people have the bay, both leaving each other alone, or so they say.

The ladies were out fishing and while they were small by our standards the bucket was 3/4 full and each fish would probably feed 1 person. – Screensaver

**Sept. 2009:** This is the northernmost port of entry of Vanuatu. Walk up to the big white cross on the hill to get a magnificent view of the bay and surrounding area. You can fly crew in/out from the nearby airport (three flights a week from Santo).

A tour by boat to the crocodile river and mangrove is worth it for the tour itself, even if you do not see any alligators (they are alligators and not crocodiles!) – Sloepmouche

### **23.2.2 Nawono**

#### **23.2.2.1 Anchorage**

**Nov. 2023:** **13°49.57S / 167°33.159E.** In 5-6m on heavy brown sand. The holding is excellent and is accessible by night. Protection ESE through N to S. – As reported to Sugar Shack

### **23.2.3 Vureas Bay**

#### **23.2.3.1 Anchorage**

**Aug. 2024:** **13°55.179S / 167°26.818E** in 9 meters sand with good holding. Many heavy wind bullets, no problem for multihulls (or young monohulls), just put 65m of chain out for peace of mind to sleep well. There is lots of space to do so. – Trinity

**Sept. 2009:** **13°55.19S / 167°26.80E.** Anchored in 10m in good sand, by the black sand beach. During the festival it got very roly when the wind went more SE. Some monohulls found less rolling in the S end behind an arm of reef. – Sloepmouche

### **23.2.3.2 Cruiser Report**

**Aug. 2024:** The locals are very nice; will help you pull your dinghy onto the beach and will give you a warm welcome. They are the warmest people we've met so far! The village is 20 minutes' walk from the beach. We went fishing with a few villagers and caught a big kingfish for them – very nice contribution and they appreciated it a lot. Excellent place to make good local friends. – Trinity

**Sept. 2009:** Chief Godfrey's community is just inland of the beach. Men came on the beach to help haul our dinghies above high water line on the steep beach.

This four-day festival was well worth it at 1,000 vatu (VUV) per person with lunch included on the last day. The 14 yachts attending were quite happy they came. All stayed for the four days despite the rolly conditions. We were delighted with the variety of the program, which included very well-rehearsed new and old custom dances, singing, traditional games, demonstrations, handicrafts, historical tours and stories. This year's organizing committee did an exceptional job, especially in looking after our needs. There were food booths and a very economical lunch offered by Christina in the cute "restaurant."

One thing we noted about the dances and songs presented was a creative and happy—almost mischievous—feeling to many, unlike the seriousness and rigid ritualistic feel of most other custom dances in the islands to the south. The women especially seemed to have a lot of fun and didn't seem repressed. The most magnificent dance with the most colorful pageantry and complex choreography was the Mag dance. – Sloepmouche

### **23.2.4 Twin Waterfall Bay**

This is a beautiful place to stay on the western side of Vanua Lava. It is one of the two most frequented anchorages in the area and the locals have certainly learnt to benefit from the yachts. You can't miss the twin waterfalls on the right on the southern point of the bay.

#### **23.2.4.1 Anchorage**

**Aug. 2024:** 13°49.647S / 167°22.921E in 11m of good holding. – Trinity

**Nov. 2023:** 13°49.644S / 167°22.912E. In normal trades this is a flat anchorage. – As reported to Sugar Shack

**Oct. 2023:** 13°49.68S / 167°22.94E. We were not sure what this bay is called so we called it the waterfall bay since there were twin waterfalls that drop directly into the sea. – Eastern Stream

**Sept. 2009:** This was a nice sail in the lee of the island with a much calmer anchorage! – Sloepmouche

#### **23.2.4.2 Cruiser Report**

**Aug. 2024:** Beautiful waterfalls and rock drawings. We did a guided tour with Patterson for very little money. Very friendly villagers who will happily trade for veggies, fruits, lobster and prawns. – Trinity

**Oct. 2023:** There is a small village on the other side of the waterfall. You have to ask permission to swim in the waterfall and pay a little fee. We paid with some products they needed. A local took us on a hike to the top of the waterfall and it was lovely. – Eastern Stream

**Sept. 2009:** We met Chief Kereley and his family at the small yacht club. The twin falls are beautiful, especially with the late afternoon light giving them a special glow. Do not miss a look at the Paintings Cave. You can enjoy a good bush/garden tour with Chief Kereley.

We happily traded for fruits, vegetables, lobster, fresh water prawns and coconut crabs. – Sloepmouche

### **23.2.5 Single Waterfall Bay**

#### **23.2.5.1 Anchorage**

**Sept. 2009:** Not mentioned in the RG (Rocket Guide), this is another anchorage only a few miles north of Twin Waterfalls, just off a beautiful waterfall. – Sloepmouche

### **23.2.5.2 Cruiser Report**

**Sept. 2009:** Access ashore is not very easy as the shore is lined with shallow reefs, but worth the effort if you like waterfalls like we do.

If you take your dinghy north from here following the shoreline, you will find a large cave carved in the high cliff rocks that you can drive the dinghy into. Take a light as after you turn the corner, you'll be in the dark, and it's difficult to see how much farther you can actually go. – Sloepmouche

## **23.3 Mota Lava**

### **23.3.1 Anchorage**

**Aug. 2009:** The Rocket Guide is correct when mentioning deep water all the way to the fringing reef.

Access to the island anywhere is indeed difficult at low water since the fringing reef dries. The easiest seems to dinghy around the SE point before Ra Island.

Milli Bay anchorage is about a four-hour walk from the villages, but is very picturesque if you like solitude.

In the south, on Ra Island, you can have a delicious meal at Seaside restaurant (ask a day before for lobsters or coconut crabs) and see some of the Banks dances like the Snake Dance.

There are very welcoming and energetic people on Ra Island. – Sloepmouche

## **23.4 Rowa (Reef) Islands**

There are 15 coral cays as part of the Reef Islands including: Anwet, Enwot, Lomeur, Moie, Wosu, Wotana, Rowa (the main island), Ro, Sanna, Peten, and Lavap.

These islands are small, low lying and uninhabited, situated behind a giant reef that provides protection from the swell and waves. Not only that but they were incredible to see.

The islands used to be inhabited but they ran out of fresh water, so the people that had lived there were moved to nearby Ureparapara Island (which is another incredible place in itself!)

Navigating in this area is challenging. Suggest using satellite charts and your eyeballs on constant watch.

### **23.4.1 Anchorage**

**Sept. 2024: 13°37.810S / 167°30.414E.** Anchored in 11m of good holding sand. Winds were blowing 20+kts from the ESE and the swell was about 1m. The anchorage was breezy but comfortable. Far more comfortable than Sola anchorage. – Sugar Shack

**2014: 13°37.680S / 167°30.393E.** Anchor in 10-12m white sand. Exposed to SW – W – NW winds and swell. Beautiful calm anchorage in less than 15kt. – Reflection

**Aug. 2009: 13°37.636S / 167°30.393E.** In 30' of water. We found the anchorage quite good despite some swell (it was blowing 15-25 knots from ESE). – Sloepmouche

### **23.4.2 Cruiser Reports**

**Sept. 2024:** The Rowa Islands are uninhabited, sandy atolls. The pass from the anchorage is about 2 miles SSW from the only pass. Super beautiful spot, unspoiled by humans – nature at her best.

During mid-tide we took our dinghy over the reef to the closest island (about 1nm away). We easily landed the beach and enjoyed a nice 1.5hr walk around the entire island. The sand is gorgeous and soft and it is covered in tiny colorful sea shells. – Sugar Shack

**Oct. 2018:** After clearing out at Sola, we headed to the Reef Islands to tuck out of the wind for the night and make a plan on when to leave. We spent several hours there the next morning, wandering the length of the larger of the group and marveling at the paradise we had found. – Wandering Waterhorse

**2014:** Fantastic private beach, great snorkeling. Get permission from Chief Reuban or his son Brian from Vatop Village on Vanua Lava (+678.777.3274 or VHF 16) – Reflection

**Aug. 2009:** This is another place that is actually much better than it was described in some guides. The dinghy ride over the lagoon to reach the islands was a little long for our friends with a 5 hp outboard, but was not a problem for our RIB 15 hp. If you like pristine beaches and clear water, you'll enjoy the Reef Islands (some yachts spend over a week here). We saw some fishing charters in this area. – Sloepmouche

## **23.5 Ureparapara**

Diver's Bay has one of the most spectacular geographic scenery entrances! The old volcano blew a north easterly wall allowing the bay to form and you really do get the feeling of sailing into a volcano.

### **23.5.1 Anchorage**

Lorup bay

**Aug. 2024: 13°32.473S / 167°20.491E** in 13m sand. The other anchorages listed below felt a pretty close to the reef. Before the obvious reef is a coral rock (at approximately 13°32.505S / 167°20.488E) only 1m depth where the local anchor helper told us it would be at least 2m. Only trust your own observation. We used less chain of 45m and used a second anchor on the chain under the boat. Worked well in roly conditions with many wind bullets. – Trinity

**July 2024:** We sailed into the center of a volcano! This is a fairly well-protected bay. We managed to find the least roly corner of the bay near the village and were promptly greeted by canoes. – Archer

**July 2024:** The strong SE winds made this anchorage very uncomfortable. – Peikea

**Nov. 2023: 13°32.493S / 167°20.237E.** The best anchorage is at the very end of the bay close to the village. Anchor in 4-6m of white sand with good holding. Protection ESE through S to N.– As reported to Sugar Shack

**Oct. 2023: 13°32.49S / 167°20.49E.** We anchored in a volcano! What a great experience. – Eastern Stream

**June 2019: 13°32.482S / 167°20.3125E** in 10m sand. We did an overnight from Vanikoro in the Solomons to Ureparapara. – Indigo II

**Oct. 2018:** It has to be one of the most uncomfortable anchorages we have ever been in. We ended up staying in Ureparapara for 2 nights as there was a howling gale out in the ocean and it was making itself well known in the bay with large rolling waves and bullet winds ripping down the long bay to where we and 2 other boats were anchored. – Wandering Waterhorse

**2014: 13°32.525S / 167°20.262E.** Anchor in 4-6m white sand. Exposed to NE winds. Anchor as far in between the two bommies as possible. – Reflection

**Sept. 2009: 13°32.478S / 167°20.516E.** Chief Nickelson advised us to anchor here as there is a lot less swell. Contrary to what we read, we had two quite comfortable nights in the anchorage without bullet winds or heavy swell. Outside there were 15-20 knots from ESE, and inside we had 10-15 knots steady from the N as the wind funneled through this deep bay. – Sloepmouche

### **23.5.2 General Services**

#### **23.5.2.1 Formalities**

**Feb. 2024:** You cannot clear out of Vanuatu from Ureparapara. You must sail back to Sola. – Eastern Stream

### **23.5.2.2 Laundry**

**2014:** Laundry services are available here – Reflection

### **23.5.3 Provisions**

**2014:** Fruits and vegetables are available here – Reflection

### **23.5.4 Wifi – Internet**

**July 2024:** There is no network coverage in Ureparapara. The only way for the locals to communicate off the island is to walk a few hours up to the ridge and get a very weak signal from Vanua Lava. We happily shared our password and Archer became an internet café with people sitting on the shoreline to get a signal. – Archer

### **23.5.5 Cruiser Report**

**Aug. 2024:** The Chinese supply ship has not been here for several months so we brought sacks of rice, sugar, salt, washing powder, and matches which were highly appreciated. We were reimbursed and the same day everything was sold again in the shop. We were invited to a wedding and hosted great. Too much kava ruined the night later.

The next day we went up to the crater's edge which had a fabulous view into the crater and to other islands. Bettina took us for only 500vt. It was quite sportive and steep, where good shoes.

When you are asked to donate money for some good purpose make sure you verify with a few different families and chiefs so your contribution does not end up in one family's pocket. All locals love to trade anything. Great place. – Trinity

**July 2024:** Ureparapara is an extinct volcano that had its north-east wall blown out to create an amazing entrance to a fairly protected bay. There is a sweet smell that permeates the bay from its lush vegetation and flowers.

Instead of being asked for things like fishing gear, rope, or food, they asked for access to the internet. We shared our Starlink password and quickly became an internet café.

We met Rona (with a rolled "R"), the late chief's daughter and her family. She showed us the village which is much larger than expected. She also took us by the garden where we left with lots of fruit. We were invited to dinner on our last night as a thank you for sharing our internet and we were treated to many delicious dishes.

If you want to donate items, they love pasta. – Archer

**July 2024:** There is some sort of dispute going on between the chiefs and we were uncertain who was in charge and who to offer gifts for the community. Also, the mix of swell and water made for really poor visibility for snorkeling. There is no phone or internet and it is rare that boats visit. We were the 3<sup>rd</sup> boat this year to visit. – Peikea

**Nov. 2023:** There is some great diving and snorkeling in the bay. Ask the locals about the crayfish spots. If you are into hill climbing, there are loads of paths to explore. You can walk up to the crater rim and to several sacred sites (get permission prior to visiting the sites). – As reported to Sugar Shack

**Oct. 2023:** The men and women of the village showed us their custom dances which were beautiful. You can hike to the ridge of the volcano, visit the kavabar and more. – Eastern Stream

**Oct 2018:** Ureparapara is a volcano that has had the middle worn out of it by the sea over the years, creating a Pac-Man shaped island.

We did, however, spend the time in the bay trading tuna and other bits and bobs off the boat for all kinds of fruit and veggies.

The village in the bay (the same people that had been moved off the Rowa/Reef Islands had a multitude of gardens dotted around the area behind the beach and in the surrounding hills, so the amount of produce was

exceptional. Capsicums, tomatoes, beans, kumara, pamplemousse, island apples, eggs and mangos were all traded for tuna, fishhooks, and some of the last Vatu that we had all made for excellent deals.

Getting out was an interesting experience, as there were quite large almost standing waves at the narrow entrance for the bay. It was half an hour of holding on tight and being incredible grateful that we have such a strong and capable boat and captain to get us out.

We had a great sail heading toward the Torres Islands. These are the last in the tip of the Vanuatu Island chain and by far the most remote. Not many boats make it up to these islands and even we were only stopping as an overnight to break up the trip. – Wandering Waterhorse

**Oct. 2009:** Titinson Yacht Cultural Centre offers several tours and activities. We enjoyed the Megel and Qwat custom dances for the beautiful hats the dancers were wearing. We ordered bread from the baker and traded for more lobsters and fruits/vegetables. There's no airport here, so if you're looking for really isolated people, this is one place where people are very friendly and hope for more visitors!

They have to go about 20 miles by speedboat to get to Sola, so you can guess they do not see many visitors at all except for a few yachties. This is an easy stop on your way to the Solomons and an easy island to reach, even if you only visit the Banks before going back down to Santo or Vila! – Sloepmouche

## 24 Torres Islands

Torres Islands: Hiw Island, Metome Island, Tugue (Tegue) Island, Linua Island, Lo Island, and Toge Island



**Aug. 2009:** I (Luc) flew to the Torres Islands and visited all islands during one week of a filming assignment. I did not see too many calm anchorages except for a few spots on the western coast. You are then quite isolated as, for some reason, most villages are on the windward side.

Even more remote than the Banks, you won't see any vehicles here at all.

Metoma Island is managed by a mini family. A visit of their coconut crabs and megapodes conservation area will be remembered! The fishing was excellent between the islands as we traveled by speedboat—don't forget to troll!

The sole airport is located on Linua Island. You can walk across from Loh Island. Do stop in the Torres on your way to the Solomons. You will enjoy the contact with the friendly islanders, and you will have a good opportunity to taste some excellent coconut crabs as they still abound here! – Sloepmouche

### 24.1 Lo Island

Home of the only airport in the Torres Island group. Located at Linua on Lo Island.

### **24.1.1 Ngerein Bay**

#### **24.1.1.1 Anchorage**

**Nov. 2023:** 13°20.21S / 166°38.778E. Anchor in 10m on white sand close to the south shore or behind the reef by the airport on the northern shore. Protection SSE through S to NNE from wind and swell. In settled SE conditions it is possible to anchor but the swell does come into the bay. – As reported to Sugar Shack

#### **24.1.1.2 Cruiser Report**

**Nov. 2023:** There is a very small village that only receives supplies every few months. They are often short of school supplies and basic food staples. There is great snorkeling in the bay and a lovely walk around the island. Lo is a very low, thus the name. – As reported to Sugar Shack

### **24.1.2 Tutumel Bay**

#### **24.1.2.1 Anchorage**

**Nov. 2023:** 13°21.60S / 166°38.52E. Anchor in 10m on sand with coral patches. Some of the coral patches are 300m off the shore line. Protection NE through East to SE. – As reported to Sugar Shack

#### **24.1.2.2 Cruiser Report**

**Nov. 2023:** Beautiful 20 min walk to windward side. – As reported to Sugar Shack

## **24.2 Tegue**

### **24.2.1 Hayter Bay**

#### **24.2.1.1 Anchorage**

**Nov. 2023:** 13°14.79S / 166°35.75E. Anchor in the south side of the bay in 15m. You will have to find a sandy patch in the coral. – As reported to Sugar Shack

**July 2018:** 13°14.81S / 166°35.65E. Anchored in 18m sand/coral rubble, no internet. Having been there a couple of times before I had an entry track so I wasn't overly concerned with my arrival time which ended up being in the dark. Clearly this must be the windy season because once again I got more than my fair share. While I was running with it one gust in excess of gale-force (apparent wind) caused Screensaver to over correct, my poled-out Jib backed and well that was the end of my whisker pole. It bent in excess of 90 degrees and murphy tried to take my sail as well, but that battle I won as I got it back under control. – Screensaver

## **24.3 Hiw**

### **24.3.1 Yeu Metenia Bay**

Located on the western side of Hiw island (North island). This is a wide bay with a modest white sand beach. Be aware of the shallows between Hiw and Tegue!

#### **24.3.1.1 Anchorage**

**Nov. 2023:** 13°06.60S / 166°35.65E. Anchor in 12m on sand before you reach the coral field well off shore. Approach in good light to the deepest point in the bay. The reef fringes the beach a very long way out. There is northeast to south to southwest protection. – As reported to Sugar Shack

#### **24.3.1.2 Cruiser Reports**

**Nov. 2023:** There is a 5km walk to the windward side of the island that takes around 2-2.5 hours. – As reported to Sugar Shack