**Big Banyan Tree and Smoking Cave**

(1 hour return from Taina’s)

Go past the entrance to Taina’s Place and up the hill. At the top, and before the gate, there is a clearing on the left. Walk in here through the trees. In ten minutes you will see the magnificent banyan or strangling fig tree. This is over 800 years old and grows around a water source. Walk all the way around and down into the sink hole. It can be a scramble to get down, but well worth it.

Walk back to the clearing and to the Tonga Forest Products gate. Turn right down a track immediately before the gate, and walk for ten minutes and you will see a faint fence and path at your left, by a pine tree. Follow the path until you see the boardwalk and viewing platform. Take care as the timber can be slippery. Smoking Cave is named for the smoky look of the mist as the sunlight hits it in the fern-covered chutes.

**Ha’aluma Beach, Rock Garden, Wild Horses, Laku Fa’anga and Natural Archway**

(half day from the Ha’aluma Beach turnoff)

To get to there, you need to go as far south as possible on the main road. Eventually you’ll come to a sign pointing left towards the Rock Garden. If you want to go to Ha’aluma Beach go straight ahead and down a steep, rutted track for 1½ km to this pretty beach. Turn left here and travel another 500m to a beach with rock pool with great snorkeling, be careful that the strong tide does not pull you out, as there is a dangerous gap out through the reef.

Back up on the main road head towards the Rock Garden for 4km, enjoy the views of uninhabited Kalakai Island to your right and go through a gate. The Rock Garden will open up behind you. Once these large rock formations were coral reefs at the bottom of the ocean, and they were pushed up to this height by volcanic activity. If you look closely at the rocks you will see distinctive coral fossils. The wild horses that roam this area are owned by the locals.

A little further on you will see the sign for Laku Fa’anga Cliffs, which tells the legend of throwing the fa’u frut over the cliff and calling the turtles. Travel on past this sign for 500m on the grass track until you come to the parking area with a sign. Climb left up a narrow path 400m up into the trees until you come to the viewing platform for the Natural Landbridge – Li’angahuo ‘a Maui. There is a sign explaining the legend of Maui throwing his spear and this archway being created when he pulled the spear out of the ground.

**Matalanga ‘a Maui**

(1 hour walk from Taina’s Place)

This “hole in the ground” is the next track on the left as you travel south after the turn off to Taina’s Place. Walk along the track for ten minutes until you see the giant pothole. Legend tells how the ancient God Maui thrust his digging stick into ‘Eua and pulled it back and forth in anger at his mother, threatening to upset the whole island.

**Hafu Pool and Big Banyan Tree**

(3 hours walking from the main road)

As you travel away from ‘Ohonua, in the village of Pangai, turn left at the MAF nursery and the old Visitor’s Bureau. Follow this road for 2km through the avenue of pine, mahogany, and teak trees until you get to the Tonga Forest Products nursery and keep going until you reach the Hafu Pools.

To reach the banyan tree, carefully cross the stream and follow the path up through the forest for 1km until you get to a small path on your right. There is a sign here, and you can see the big banyan tree, or “Ovava” ahead of you. Walk around and climb down into the sinkhole at the bottom, where you may hear the chattering small bats that live here.

**Mata Mahina hopo and Anokula**

(one hour by car from ‘Ohonua)

This magnificent viewing spot is at the north-eastern side of the island. From ‘Ohonua, travel across the bridge, past the port, and head north for about 3km until you get to the pretty village of Houma. Continue on the sealed road and through the King’s pine plantation – look out for the coffee plantations on the side of the road. Keep heading along the rutted track for another 1km until you reach the lookout platform. The red “pool” of small stones is to your right. Mata mahina hopo means moon and sunrise on the horizon, and anokula means red pool.

**GUIDED TRAILS**

**WARNING:** These trails are NOT suitable for self-guiding as they use disused forest trails, and there are hidden caves, cliffs and sinkholes in these areas. Some of the rainforest is overgrown in parts, and there is no signage off the beaten track, so these spots are hard to find. Even with a map, it’s easy to get lost.

- **Laura Platform, Rats Cave, Lokupo Lookout and Soldier’s Grave (half a day)**

These amazing viewing spots are accessed along muddy forestry roads in the ‘Eua National Park. Look below you from these fantastic vantage points onto the forest below you, and watch the sea birds like the white tropical birds and the black frigate birds as they circle around. Listen out for the fruit bats or peka as they chatter beneath you, and the puffing sound. Watch out for the whales in the season (July to October) as they splash their tails and jump out of the water. The Tongan Trench is 7km away and is 10.8km deep.

Corporal Yealand was stationed on ‘Eua with another New Zealander and four Tongan soldiers. He was shot and killed on 22nd February 1943 by one of the Tongan soldiers after a disagreement about stolen equipment. The Tongan soldier was tried and convicted of Corporal Yealand’s murder and served a life term in Tonga. Local people still care for the grave from time to time, and ancestors of Corporal Yealand still come to ‘Eua to visit this special spot.

- **Lokupo Beach**

The trek down to Lokupo Beach is not maintained and is rough in places. Your guide will need to show you the way, as it can be easy to get lost in this area. You trek through the National Park to get to the beach and once you are there, enjoy the rock pools and have a swim to cool off. The climb back is over rocks and then through the rainforest.

- **Fangate Beach**

This walk takes you to the North East of the island where you climb down a steep descent and stand on high cliffs looking down on Fangate Beach. On the way down the first cliff is over some rock faces to the foot track below. You continue down to the beach where there are about eleven caves to explore. The beach is a great spot for a picnic, and try a snorkel in the rock pool to see the colourful fish.

**WILDLIFE IN ‘EUA**

If you do walk in the ‘Eua National Park, or the rainforest, you are likely to hear the loud squawking call of the koki or ‘Eua Red Shining Parrot. Look out for this large bird, unique to ‘Eua, as it flies through the canopy of trees. The population is strong, and these noisy birds are easy to spot.

‘Eua is also home to a vast array of sea birds including the elegant tropic birds and frigate birds. Look out for turtles, spinner dolphins and other species of whales as you explore ‘Eua’s coast.

**ACCOMMODATION IN ‘EUA**

**THE HIDEAWAY**

Located just south of the port, this Tongan-owned friendly guesthouse offers full meals and you can book all your activities during your stay. They have a viewing platform right on the water’s edge, where you can relax and enjoy the sunset or even watch whales during the season.

Phone: +676 50355
Email: hideawayeua@gmail.com
Web: www.hideawayeua.com

**‘OVAVA TREE LODGE**

Another Tongan-owned lodge, they have 10 bungalows constructed from local ‘Eua cedar. Built on the cliff top, right opposite the ferry wharf, you can often see whales swim past from the decks or from the restaurant. Delicious meals are cooked in the wood fired pizza oven. Deep Blue Diving is on site for your scuba diving and whale swim tours.

Phone: +676 22840 / 8715420
Email: deeplodgembl@gmail.com
Web: www.deepblue.to

**DEEP RESORT**

This resort is located on a sandy ocean beach close to ‘Ohonua and the port. Meals can be prepared, or you can cook your own. Tours and activities can be arranged.

Phone: +676 50421
Email: thedeepresort@gmail.com
Web: www.the_deepresort.com

**TAINA’S PLACE**

This cozy operator at the edge of the forest offers cabins or camping with communal cooking facilities and bathrooms, all set in beautiful gardens.

Phone: +676 50186
Email: tainasplace@gmail.com
Web: www.tainasplace.com
There are no bars and restaurants on 'Eua, but most accommodation operators offer meals. It may pay to bring your favourite drink or snacks.

GETTING AROUND 'EUA

'Euas charm is in its basic nature so a little bit of preparation will make your visit easier. Contact your accommodation provider to book a guided tour, as this is the best way to make the most of your time on the island. A guide will take you to the best spots and will make sure you learn about the local Tongan history, culture and the environment.

CAMPING IN 'EUA

Freedom camping is not allowed on 'Eua as all of the land is privately owned. Taina’s Place offers a clean campsite and all the facilities for campers.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

HORSE RIDING

This is not a slick operation like elsewhere, just the working horses of the locals, so it’s best to give a day’s notice if you want to go horse-riding. It’s bare back riding – no fancy saddles - and a great way to see 'Eua with a low impact on the environment. One of the most popular horse treks is to ‘Utufi Beach which has great snorkelling, or you can try a trek through the villages, the bush or to other beaches. The horse owner will accompany you as a guide, and this is a fun experience for people of all ages.

SCUBA DIVING

‘Eua has beautiful diving with drop-offs, sea mountains, caves and canyons. The Cathedral Cave is a popular underwater spot where the light pours in through holes as if lit by spotlights. This is arguably the largest underwater cave in the South Pacific, shaped like an amphitheatre measuring about 100 meters. There are also all kinds of coral and sea life to explore in the waters around ‘Eua.

HANDICRAFTS

For those wanting a less strenuous activity and the chance to meet some local people, try taking part in some traditional handicraft making. On ‘Eua handicrafts are renowned for being some of the best, due to the unusual plants growing on the island and the rich soils. Learn to make bracelets and rings, and weave a basket. For about an hour and a half, you can interact with a local artist, and have a souvenir to take home.

KAVA DRINKING

Ask your accommodation provider to let you know where you can take part in a kava ceremony. This happens in the evening in each village, and visitors are usually welcome to join in for a small donation towards the kava.

SUNDAY CHURCH SERVICE

Visit a local Church to take part in the service and enjoy the melodic harmony of the locals singing hymns. Dress smartly, and the locals will welcome you into their community.

BICYCLE HIRE

Your accommodation provider can hire bikes for you. This is an effective way to get around. ‘Eua is hilly but you will be able to cover the whole island with ease. Take plenty of water, sunscreen and a hat.

WHALE WATCHING

‘Eua is the perfect spot to watch the humpback whales during the July to October season. It’s easy to see the whales from the island if you don’t want to get wet, or your accommodation provider can book you onto a whale watch boat if you want a more up-close experience. Only use licensed whale watch operators who have been trained to ensure your safety and the care of the whales.