

# A Cruising Guide To The Kingdom Of Tonga



The Moorings®

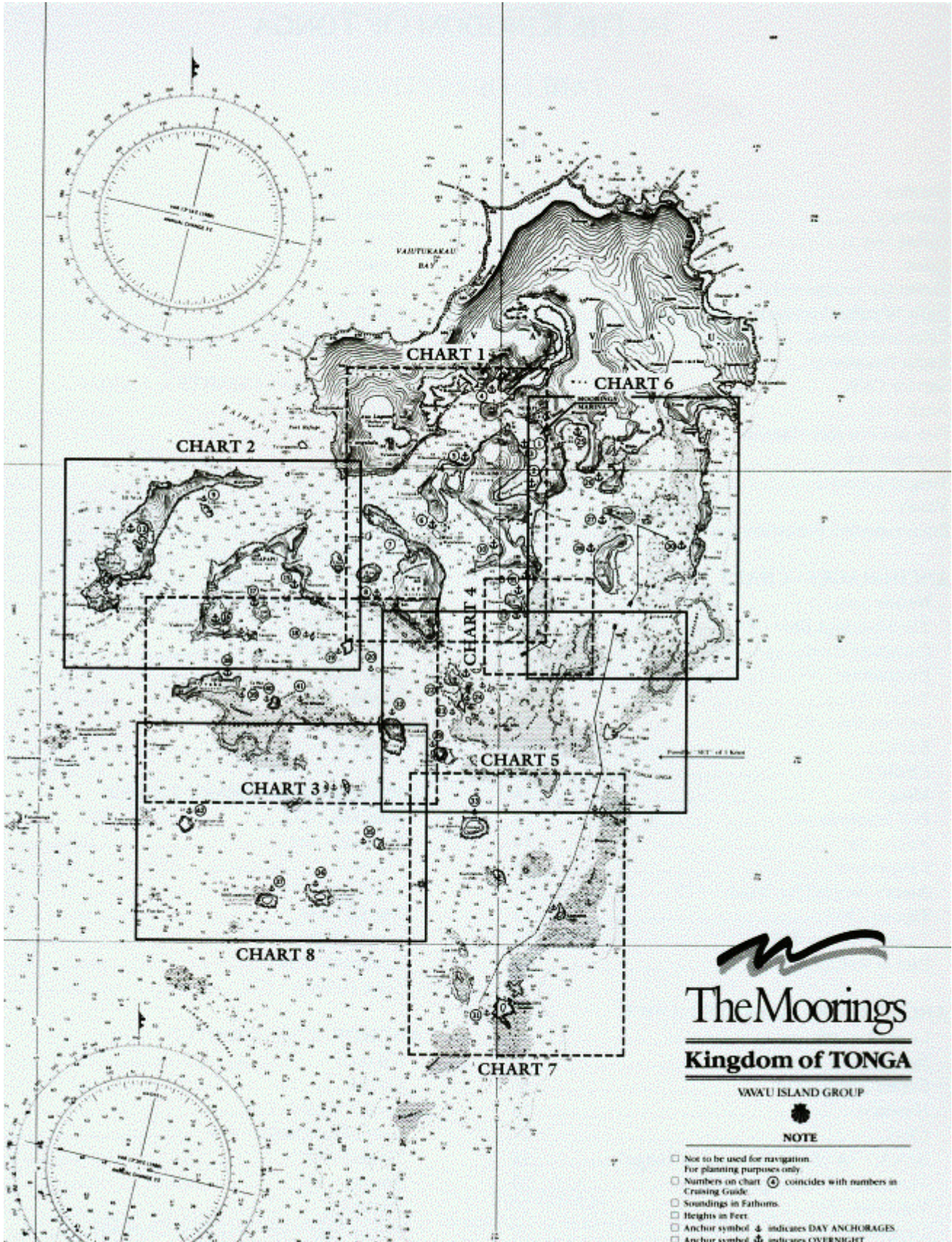
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# A CRUISING GUIDE TO THE VAVA'U ISLAND GROUP IN THE KINGDOM OF TONGA

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**MALO E LELEI!**  
**WELCOME TO TONGA!**

The following information has been compiled at The Moorings, Tonga, to help answer the most common questions which spring to mind while planning a holiday cruise. Upon arrival at the charter base, we will be happy to answer any further questions you may have remaining after your pre-cruise chart briefing.

**WEATHER**

The weather in Vava'u is very pleasant, being slightly cooler and less humid than many tropical areas. The average daytime high temperature hovers around 25 - 26C (77-80F) between May and September. It rises to 29C (85F) October through April and the humidity is highest in January and February. The average sea temperature is 25C (79F). SE trade winds (15-25 knots) predominate during the Austral winter (May - Sept). In summer, breezes are lighter (10-20 knots) and more often from the NE. Hurricane season is December-March. Happily, Vava'u has suffered far fewer storms than the rest of the South Pacific islands in the past years.

**CURRENCY**

Tongan currency is called Pa'anga. Foreign currencies are not readily accepted in Tonga. Credit cards are accepted at a few restaurants in Neiafu and at The Moorings base (Visa and Mastercard only). In general, the shops in Neiafu do not accept credit cards. The Westpac Bank of Tonga and ANZ Bank have branches in Tongatapu and in Vava'u. Westpac and ANZ Banks in Vava'u have ATM's. There is also a currency exchange at Nuku'alofa airport. Banking hours are 0930- 1600 hrs - Monday through Friday. Banks remain open throughout the day. They do not close for lunch

**EATING OUT**

There are many restaurants in Vava'u. Of these, five may be reached by yacht (anchorage # 5, 13, 14, 11, 41). Those restaurants accept credit cards. Small town restaurants require local currency. Mango Cafe, at The Moorings base, is open for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. A detailed restaurant guide will be provided at the time of the chart briefing.

**SHOPPING**

Shops and the fruit and vegetable market are open Monday-Friday from 0800-1600 hrs; and Saturdays from 0800-noon.

On Sunday throughout Tonga, all businesses are closed. This includes The Moorings base. Those choosing to shop for their own provisions in Neiafu should be aware that the local supermarkets have a relatively limited stock. All shops are subject to the vagaries of shipping schedules. There are few "light" or "low-fat" food items to be found in Neiafu. Occasional exceptions are low-fat milk and diet sodas. Self-provisioners may find it more relaxing to arrive one day ahead of their charter start in order to shop at leisure. We will be happy to provide pertinent information. A full beverage store is located at the base. Tongan handicrafts make lovely gifts or souvenirs. There is a gift shop/boutique at the base.

**DRESS**

The Tongan people are very conservative in their dress. In town or villages there is therefore a minimum "Dress Code" of shorts (not too short!) and T-shirt for all. On the many uninhabited beaches and islands, swimwear and usual holiday attire of course is fine. Topless or nude sunbathing etc. should be restricted at all times to uninhabited islands only. Visitors to Tonga should also be sure to pack the following; Ladies- longer length skirt or wrap around and a blouse which covers the shoulders. Gentlemen should pack long trousers and a shirt with a collar. (Polo or equivalent). The above are required if attending Church (highly recommended for the beautiful singing), or any special event which may be taking place at the time of your visit.

**SHORESIDE ACCOMMODATIONS**

(Vava'u) highly recommended is **The Tongan Beach Resort** (ph. 676 70380) 20 min. drive from the base which has beach bungalows and a restaurant. There are a few other shore side options in Neiafu. "Back-packer style" accommodation and guest houses are also available.

**MEDICAL DETAILS**

The Ngu Hospital in Neiafu has an out-patients' dept. and dispensary. (3 min. drive from Base.) There is also a pharmacy in Neiafu.. If you will be taking prescription medication during your charter, remember to bring enough plus a little extra in case of unforeseen delays etc. No vaccinations are required to enter Tonga however current typhoid vaccination is recommended.

## **ACTIVITIES**

In addition to exploring the Vava'u group under sail, the following list may prove helpful in planning other aspects of your time with us in Tonga. The base is happy to arrange any extra activities for you.

### **- DIVING:**

Dolphin Pacific Diving: Phone 676 70292  
Beluga Diving: Phone 676 70327  
Dive Vava'u: Phone 676 70492  
Offers full equipment rental for certified divers.  
Rendezvous dives from anchorages #1-8 inclusive.

### **- GAME FISHING:**

Kiwi Magic: Phone 71032  
Target One: Phone 70955  
Hakula Lodge: Phone 70872  
Ikalahi: Phone 70611

### **- WHALE WATCHING (July-October)**

Whalewatch Vavau: Phone 8866403,  
Dive Vavau: Phone 70492,  
Sailing Safaris: Phone 70650,  
Dolphin Diving: Phone 70292.

### **- ROAD TOURS:**

Various taxi cars and minibuses are available for full or half day tours (check upon arrival).  
We look forward to seeing you soon!

### **DAILY WEATHER FORECAST:**

At 0830 daily on channel 26 a "Cruisers Net" gives the daily local weather forecasts. If channel 26 (a repeater station) is not available the net is held on channel 6. Base personnel are happy to relay weather forecasts on VHF Ch.72 8am-5pm daily.

### **TIDES AND CURRENTS**

In Vava'u there are two high and low tides in a 24-hour period. The mean tide rise and fall is 3.3 feet. When going ashore, make sure the dinghy is well above the high water mark and use the dinghy anchor on the beach to prevent a rising tide from floating the dinghy off the beach. Tide tables are provided on each yacht.

The tides sometimes cause strong currents in narrow passages, as in the entrance to Hunga (#13). Please take note of the advice given in the guide regarding such locations in the cruising area. Care and normal seamanship should be used in your assessment of situations.

During periods of strong winds from a constant direction, surface currents will build up. An example of this would be during the southeast trades between April and December. These winds will build up a current across the southern part of the area from east to west. When steering a compass course, be aware these currents may set you off your intended course. Take a bearing with the hand-bearing compass to verify your position.

### **RADIO PROCEDURES**

The Moorings monitors and communicates on VHF channel 72 during office hours from 0800 to 1700 hours daily (except Sundays). Call us at any time during these hours and usually someone will be close at hand to reply. If you don't reach us on the first try, wait a short while and call again. If reception is poor the base will suggest moving to channel 26.

Channel 16 is monitored by some of the local restaurants and the police station. However, yachts cruising in the area may monitor this channel and use it to establish communication, before changing to another channel.

Call in each day between 1600 and 1630 hours to give us your location and intended nighttime anchorage. At that time we will be able to inform you of any salient weather information or notices to mariners that we might have on hand.

In the event of an emergency, should you be unable to contact us on the VHF, continue to broadcast your location and problem. At times we are able to hear you when you may be unable to hear us. Our VHF radio range is approximately 25 miles, covering all of the anchorages in the Vava'u group. Occasionally we get radio shadows at anchorages #7, #13 and #15. Communications are possible even though some breaking up of the signals will occur.

### **SERVICE CALLS**

Should your yacht need service due to mechanical or other problems, call us on channel 72 on the VHF at the time of occurrence to give us details. Anchorages #6, #11 and #25 are accessible by vehicle. At other anchorages we will be with you quickly via chase boat.

The Moorings base is happy to collect your garbage and bring provisions to anchorage #11 and #25 – Monday to Friday.

### **ANCHORING**

Most anchoring will be done at depths of 15 to 45 feet. Virtually all the anchorages have visibility beyond such depths and it is easy to check for coral heads. Snorkel over your anchor to check for proper set. Use normal anchoring techniques with scope of 4 to 6 times the depth. When using a CQR anchor, wait until the yacht is head to wind. Then check the anchor set by backing with a slow reverse pull from your engine. Should you get an anchor stuck, shorten the rode to near vertical position and fasten it off to one of the cleats. Try to break the anchor out with the yacht in forward gear at slow engine speed. Do not make the rode fast to the

windlass drum as this may damage the windlass. If you are unable to break out the anchor, cast off the entire anchor, chain and rode. Make careful note of its position and tie one of your fenders to the rode end as a floating marker for easy identification. We will send a diver to retrieve it. It is best to call us immediately if this happens at a time when you can make VHF contact with us.

In unsettled waters with strong wind conditions, use more than the normal scope. It may be prudent in some circumstances to use a second anchor, having the two anchors off the bow at a 45-degree angle to each other.

The second anchor is a Bruce, which has good holding characteristics. When the weather improves, shorten the rode to prevent the excess line from fouling on coral heads. You will find that anchorages #7, 10 and 16 make good all-weather anchorages.

There are public mooring buoys available at anchorage #7 and # 16, a charge of T\$10 per night is made to cover upkeep on these moorings. There are private moorings available at #11 for a reasonable charge.

### **FISH AND POSSIBLE HAZARDS**

Many fish can be caught and most make excellent eating. We are fortunate not to have any fish-poisoning problems. However, when fishing in any unfamiliar area, it is best to check with the local inhabitants before consuming your catch. No fishing permits are required; however, please note that spear fishing is illegal if using SCUBA apparatus.

There are few hazards in the sea, as indicated by the many Tongans you see swimming. However, normal caution justifies: (1) do not swim at night, (2) do not wear jewelry and (3) do not swim where fish have been cleaned or near garbage.

Do watch out for sea urchins as their sharp spines can inflict a painful wound. Stonefish are very poisonous, but fortunately are not very common. The stonefish is normally about 10 inches long, rests on the bottom, resembles a rock and has venomous spines.

Similarly, sea snakes are a rare problem. They are about 12 inches long, have black and white bands and bask on the surface in shallow, warm water. With a very small mouth and fangs set well back in their mouth, it is virtually impossible for them to bite a

person. You may see Tongan boys playing with these snakes, but this is not recommended

We have not heard of any cases of sea snake or stone fish poisoning in Vava'u. However, if you should experience this, go immediately to the hospital in Neiafu. These types of poisons could be serious.

Fire coral is a nuisance in all tropical waters. Therefore, to avoid the associated rashes, do not touch any coral. We suggest you wear a pair of gloves while diving.

### **EMERGENCIES**

In an emergency you have several alternatives:

Contact us on VHF 72, 16 or 26

Go to the Neiafu wharf - the police station is near the market

Ask any local boats or yachts for help or seek help in the villages.

### **TONGAN CUSTOMS**

There are several Tongan customs to be noted and respected in order that we may fit into this society with minimal impact.

Tippling in Tonga is acceptable. Good service can be rewarded.

Sunday is a religious holiday and is strictly observed. Business stops, and Tongans may not swim or fish by law. Please be quiet, tolerant and pay deference to the Tongan Sunday. However, if you are in the islands away from any villages, carry on with your usual charter activities.

Tongans are conservative in dress. Men always wear shirts in public places. Charterers should too. Tongan ladies do not wear scanty attire anywhere and even swim fully clothed. We suggest when entering a village, charterers should wear shorts and a blouse. Away from villages, a bikini, if you wear one, is fine for swimming. On Sunday, if entering a village and particularly when attending church (a worthwhile experience and you will be made very welcome), please wear long slacks and a shirt for the men and at least a knee length skirt and blouse for the ladies.

Tongan handicrafts are acknowledged to be among the best available in Polynesia. Their large Tapa cloths are unique and worthwhile buys. The basketwork is particularly distinctive and a worthwhile investment. Arrangements may be made for mail shipments at a very reasonable price if you wish. Handicrafts are available from the handicraft stores in Neiafu, at the Tongan feasts and from villagers on outer islands.

Coconuts and fruits growing ashore are private property. Do not take any without permission from the landowner. Please call The Moorings base for re-provisioning. Deliveries can be made to anchorages #11 and 25 – Monday to Friday.

## **Environmental Protection Policy:**

The Vava'u island group in the Kingdom of Tonga is a very special place in this rapidly changing world of ours. It is a paradise that has seen very little change in the past 50 years. The waters around the islands are crystal clear and pollution is minimal. Many of the local inhabitants use the ocean as a food source. It is very important that all visitors cruising the Vava'u group do as much as possible to protect the undersea environment so the future of Vava'u remains healthy. If all yachts follow the simple rules listed below we will help preserve this South Pacific paradise.

- a) Whenever possible anchor in sand. Make sure when the yacht swings on its anchor that all chain has enough room to miss any coral heads. Coral takes many years to grow and supports the delicate marine ecological balance.
- b) Do not take any live/dead coral or shells. The Giant Clam shell and the Triton shell are not allowed through U.S. customs. These shells are protected here in Tonga.
- c) Return all garbage to The Moorings base. The outer villages do not allow yachts to bring their garbage ashore. Never throw trash into the water. The Moorings now operates a recycling system. Please separate glass, tin and plastics. All organic produce can be thrown overboard for the fish to eat.
- d) When visiting outer villages, always ask permission from a village official to explore their island. This is plain common courtesy and will make your visit more enjoyable.



## CHART 1

ANCHORAGES in describing the anchorages of the *Vava'u* group we will cover those in the "*Neiafu fjord*" region first. Thereafter we will move from the west, the area of deep water, to the east where more shallows and coral heads appear. In fact, longitude 174 passes through *Neiafu* and is an easy division between the deep water to the west and the more tricky shallows to the east. The eastern area is for more experienced sailors and for exploration in good weather with plenty of sun to visibly show the hazards.

**NEIAFU AREA** The body of water on which the town of Neiafu is situated is a five-mile long bay and is well protected. It is much like a Norwegian fjord. There are two shallow areas. One extends out from the village of 'Utulei (marked F.S. on the chart) which is to the west of Neiafu on the opposite shore. As you head out of Neiafu toward Mount Talau, there is one turning buoy off the Utulei shallows. Leave this buoy to port, but stay close to the buoy. Once at this position you will see the southwest port and starboard channel buoys. Pass between them and out of the harbour. The second shallow is between our dock and the main town wharf. Avoid the area inshore between the two. In the Neiafu area there is one discernible plateau which is useful in taking bearings. This plateau, Talau, elevation 430 feet, is just a mile west of Neiafu and is easily seen from our base. Further south, about four miles S. W. of Neiafu, is a second plateau called Mo'ungalafa, elevation 610 feet. This plateau can be seen from most of the southern cruising area.

### (CH. 1 - #1) - THE MOORINGS BASE

You may tie alongside our dock for resupplying or to pick up one of the buoys.

### (CH. 1 - #2) - CAUSEWAY ANCHORAGE

Causeway Anchorage is about 1.5 miles south of our base on the E side of the harbour. It is good in all easterly weather conditions and the bottom is sand and coral with a depth of 20 to 30 feet. From this anchorage you may walk at low tide across the causeway and out to the reef at 'Ahanga Passage. Heading S on this reef you are sure to find good shelling. Do wear reef shoes and watch that the incoming tide does not strand you. One-half mile N of the causeway is the village of Toula where a large freshwater cave, Ve'emumuni, may be found. This is an interesting walk and a most unusual formation.

Today, in times of drought, Ve'emumuni is a communal water supply for the Toula people. Most days after school you will find it full of laughing village boys. Visitors should respect the village's claim to the pool and confine their swimming to the nearby sea.

A short walk along the east coast below Ve'emumuni will bring you to a series of caves. In the old days the Toula people buried "foreigners" (anyone from any other village) there. Today the caves are exciting places to explore. You will enjoy taking a lunch and sitting in the welcome shade while watching the waves break over the surrounding reef. Shelling is good at the caves, and in the tidal pools, one can often see the gaily colored nu dibranchiate which have been described as 'shell-less shells.'

At low tide it is possible to walk around to the north, returning to Neiafu on the opposite side of the peninsula from which the walk began, passing the Garden Bay Village Motel. Northwest of the anchorage, off the opposite shore of Pangaimotu, in about 120 feet of water, is a 400' sunken cargo ship which burned years ago at the wharf and was towed there to sink. With good visibility it may be seen from the surface.

(CH. 1 - #3) - PANGAIMOTU Directly opposite our base on the Pangaimotu shore is a fine anchorage in sand – it is a good anchorage in southerlies.

The name Pangai in Vava'u and Tonga denotes land which belongs to the Crown, as does all of Pangaimotu, including Pangai and 'Utulei villages.

(CH. 1 - #4) - TALAU Rising 430 feet from the sea, Talau is one of Vava'u's highest spots. Continuing around Talau to the north, you will come to a quiet anchorage bordered by two 300-foot mountains. The holding is generally good but there are a few coral heads to be avoided when dropping anchor.

From this anchorage one may climb Talau. However, the trail up the west slope may be overgrown and the easiest access is by way of the road up from town or the causeway. There are several trails and the best is on the E. slope. There are spectacular views of the islands from the top.

All along the N W shore of Pangaimotu you will find good anchorages. Do not, however, pass between Lotuma and Pangaimotu as there is not sufficient depth. This island SW of Talau is a Tongan Navy base and it is restricted.

(CH. 1 - #5) - LOTUMA BAY This anchorage lies south of Lotuma Island in the SE corner of the bay and east of the headland where the Tongan Beach Resort is located. Drop anchor in approximately 25 to 30 feet of water. Here you will be well

protected from most winds. Lotuma Bay is only about three miles from the base and provides a good first or last night stop for your cruise.

From the anchorage at #5, it is a short dinghy ride to the South of Utungake. Here you will find the Tongan Beach Resort with restaurant and sand bar.

You may anchor on the shelf, just in front and slightly to the south of the resort, during the day for a lunch stop or just a beer. However, this shelf is rather narrow with a steep drop-off and should not be used as a nighttime anchorage. If you wish to have dinner at the restaurant, anchor in the bay at #5 and dinghy the short distance around to the resort's dinghy dock. There are some moorings available in front of Tongan Beach – contact the resort if wishing to use them.

The Tongan Beach Resort monitors channel 71 on the VHF for reservations and they are open every day of the week. You should call before noon for reservations.

Use one of our buoys if you have to depart our marina for the airport in the early morning. We recommend dining the last night at Mango Café, The Moorings' restaurant located at The Moorings' base.

## KAPA

Kapa is another large island with two fine anchorages and several interesting off-lying islands. Swallows' Cave is a worthwhile attraction on the NW tip of Kapa and is marked on the charts. Near the cave the depth is 250 feet and therefore, anchoring is impossible. To visit the cave, either anchor 1.5 miles to the SE at Port Maurelle (#7) and dinghy to the cave, or lay just off the cave with the yacht under power and go in shifts in the dinghy to see the cave visible and accessible in all but heavy swells.

Don't forget to take your camera along with you. The cave entrance is easily visible. The best time to see Swallows' Cave is in the afternoon from 1500 hours onward, when the sun from the west lights up the multi-colored stalactites. However, at any time of the day, the cave offers beauty. The intense blue of its deep water rivals Italy's Blue Grotto and is of special interest on a bright day when the sun lights up the coral formations far below the surface. If you hit the pulpit-like rock rising on the left side of the cave with an oar, you will hear a deep bell-like tone. Overhead you will see the mud apartment-like nests of the birds that often fill the cave with their staccato calls.

Although the cave is named Swallow's Cave, according to ornithologists, the birds nesting here are swifts. The entrance and part of the walls are covered with graffiti which does detract from the cave's beauty.

At the back of the cave is a shaft of light and if you follow it by crawling around the coral wall or swimming about six feet, you will find a rocky path which will lead you into a dry cave, a great kiln-like room with a circular opening in the top through which you can see blue sky and growing trees. At the turn of the century, V.I.P.'s were entertained here. Entire feasts were let down through the opening by pulley-like arrangements making a gargantuan Tongan version of a dumb waiter. Off to the side of the dry cave is what looks to be a well-built road. This is a natural formation leading to a vast deposit of guano and walking on it gives the springy effect of walking on a mattress. To reach and explore the dry cave you will need a flashlight.

(CH. 1 - #6) - MALA is a small island just NE of Kapa. Anchor to the NW of Mala in 20 to 30 feet of water with a sand bottom. You will find a good swimming beach at Mala with good snorkeling but be careful of a fair current which runs as much as two knots at times. This current reverses with the tide and may cause the anchor to pull out. For this reason, it is prudent to move a bit to the N out of the current if you intend to stay over night.

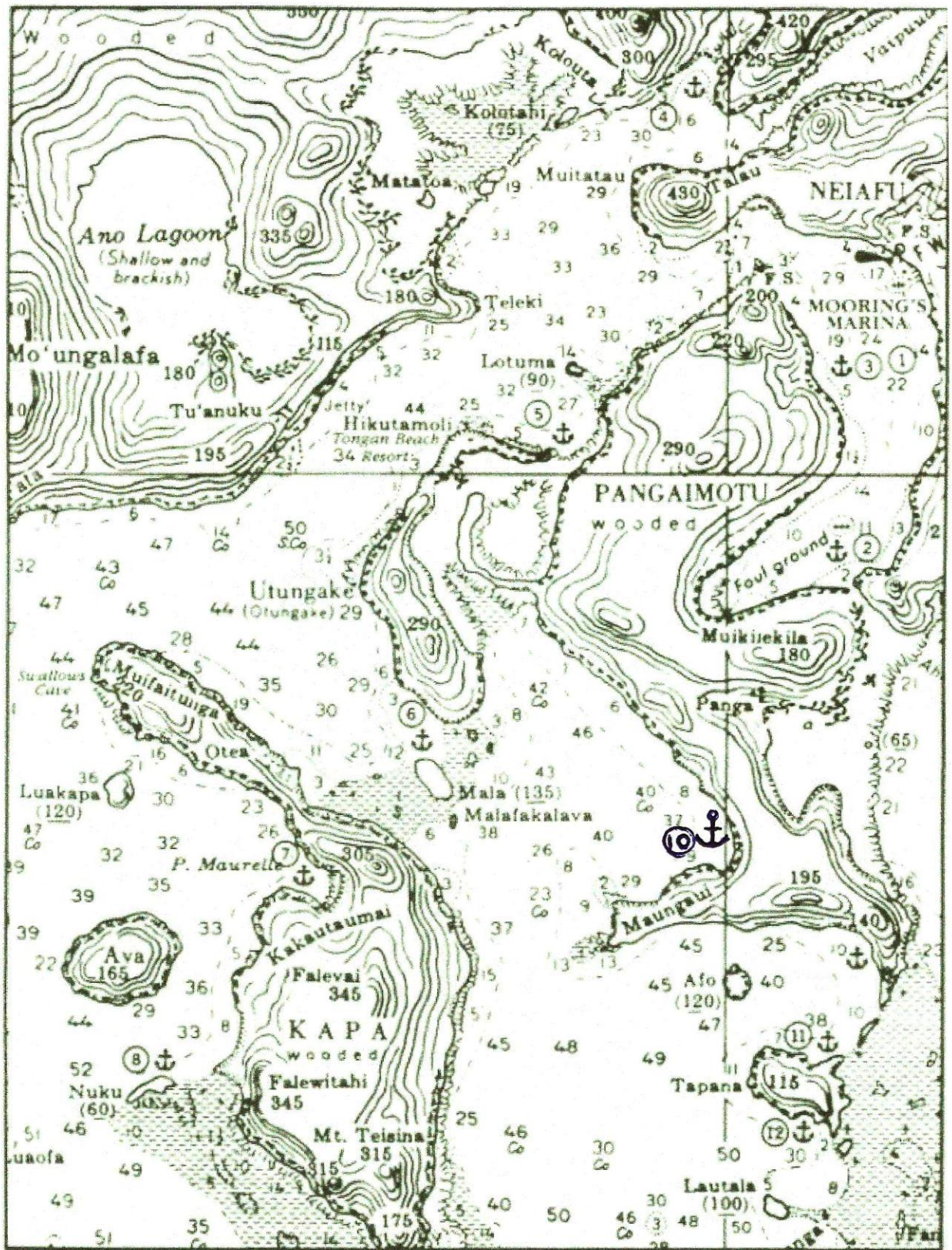
Do not try to go E over the shallows alongside Mala. This area is full of coral heads and the depth is only four feet at low tide. Recently, a cruising yacht with a draft of six feet became stuck in the area and had a difficult job getting free.

There is a small resort on Mala Island – this is open only certain months of the year.

(CH. 1 - #7) - PORT MAURELLE is a beautiful and well-protected anchorage, except in a strong blow from the NW. Entering Port Maurelle is not difficult, but remain well away from the beach area as there are numerous coral heads close to the beach. Drop anchor at least 50 yards out in 20 to 35 feet of water.

Upon leaving our 'fjord', the area to the west is generally deep water with very bold shores and you may encounter a ground swell. For those wanting to feel the long Pacific swells under their keels, just turn to starboard at Mo'ungalafa, the big plateau, then head north. The view of Vava'u is impressive with its five hundred foot cliffs. You may also see dolphin and whales offshore in this area, along with considerable bird life.

Port Maurelle is where the Spaniard Maurelle, the first European to see Vava'u, anchored while watering his ship. Present day inhabitants of nearby Falevai, who collect their water by catchment for storage in cement tanks, have neglected the overgrown spring-fed swamp close to the village, which was probably the source of Maurelle's water.



HAZARD

THE KINGDOM OF TONGA • CHART 1

(CH. 1 - #8) - NUKU Nuku offers a good overnight anchorage. Anchor between Nuku and the village on Kapa, staying clear of the shallows running between Nuku and the shore. Nuku is known as the picnic island of Vava'u. Many official functions for visiting dignitaries have been held here. Churches and schools use it for annual celebrations, and private parties constantly visit the sandy white beaches to explore the island. The reef on the northern side of the island is an ideal spot for beginning snorkelers, because there is little or no tidal surge here.

If the wind is fairly strong and you wish to anchor for the night a little closer to the village of Falevai on Kapa, you should drop anchor close to the island in front of the village, over the spot indicated by the 8 fathom mark on the chart and you will be well protected in the lee of Kapa. Do not anchor to the north of the jetty off the village.

There is great snorkeling on the northern side of the island of Ava which you can visit by dinghy from either #7 or #8.

Hazard: When rounding the SE end of Kapa there are extensive shallow reefs approximately 1/4 of a mile off. They are generally easy to see, but keep well offshore and avoid them.

**Pangaimotu** is a large island connected to Vava'u by a coral causeway at Ahanga Passage. On the S end of this island are beautiful and well-protected anchorages.

(CH. 1 - #10) - LISA BEACH was a pearl farm but is now clear for anchoring. Anchor in 30 to 40 feet of water. This is a well protected anchorage in strong east or south easterlies.

(CH. 1 - #11) - TAPANA This bay formed by Pangai to the N and Tapana to the S offers several good anchorages in about 15 feet of water with good beaches.

There are two beaches on Pangaimotu known as Ano Beach and Hinakauea and are popular Tongan feast locations. When the wind is strong from the SE, a sheltered anchorage may be found in the S of the bay just off the small beach. On the north end of Topana there is a restaurant called La Paella. La Paella monitors Channel 10. The Ark Gallery offering unique and personalized gifts and paintings of local scenes also has moorings buoys available to hire. The Ark Gallery monitors channel 10.

(CH. 1 - #12) – TAPANA SOUTH

This is a quiet little anchorage tucked close under the southern shore of Tapana, in about 10 feet of water at low tide, on a gravel shelf.

Tapana will be to the N and the tip of a small island to the E. Lautala and a small islet will be on the south, and this may be used as a nighttime anchorage in settled wind conditions.

## CHART 2 & 3

(CH. 2 - #9) - LUAMOKO

There is a small shelf running along the eastern side of this island, which provides a daytime anchorage where the snorkeling is interesting. Use this anchorage only in fine weather as the sandy area is very small and holding is marginal. Avoid anchoring on the coral as this is a pristine reef.

(CH. 2 - #13) - HUNGA *Hunga* is the most westward island and it is a beautiful island with abandoned citrus orchards on the SE end of *Fofoa Island* and a fine village in the lagoon. The one navigable entrance to the lagoon is on the W side of the island between high cliffs and is similar in appearance to a false entrance about 1/2 mile further N. The correct entrance is about 150 feet across and is bordered by cliffs, with a very high cliff on the S side. In the entrance is a rock about 6 feet in diameter and 10 feet high and it is about 50 feet from the N side and 100 feet from the S. side. Leave this rock to port on entering. Once between the rock and the S shore the channel becomes narrow and shallow. Bear 115 magnetic, which will lead you between two privately maintained markers and toward the small beach on the far side. Once beyond these markers and into deep water again turn and proceed to the anchorage area.

The entrance to Hunga is tricky and hazardous. It should be made at high tide without current and with good sunlight. Never try it with a large running sea, at low water, with a strong current or without adequate sunlight. You may enter only between one hour before and up to one hour after the actual high tide. Once inside the lagoon there is a magnificent lake-like anchorage. In fact, there are several good beaches and anchorages in generally deep water. The area around the two small islands midway up the E shore is too shallow for anchoring. The village is in the NE corner and at the S end you may dinghy through a shallow pass to Foata, with good snorkeling off that island, however, check the tidal times and height to make sure you will be able to return. Ika Lahi Game Fishing Lodge is based here and has mooring buoys for hire as well as a restaurant and bar and monitor channel 71.

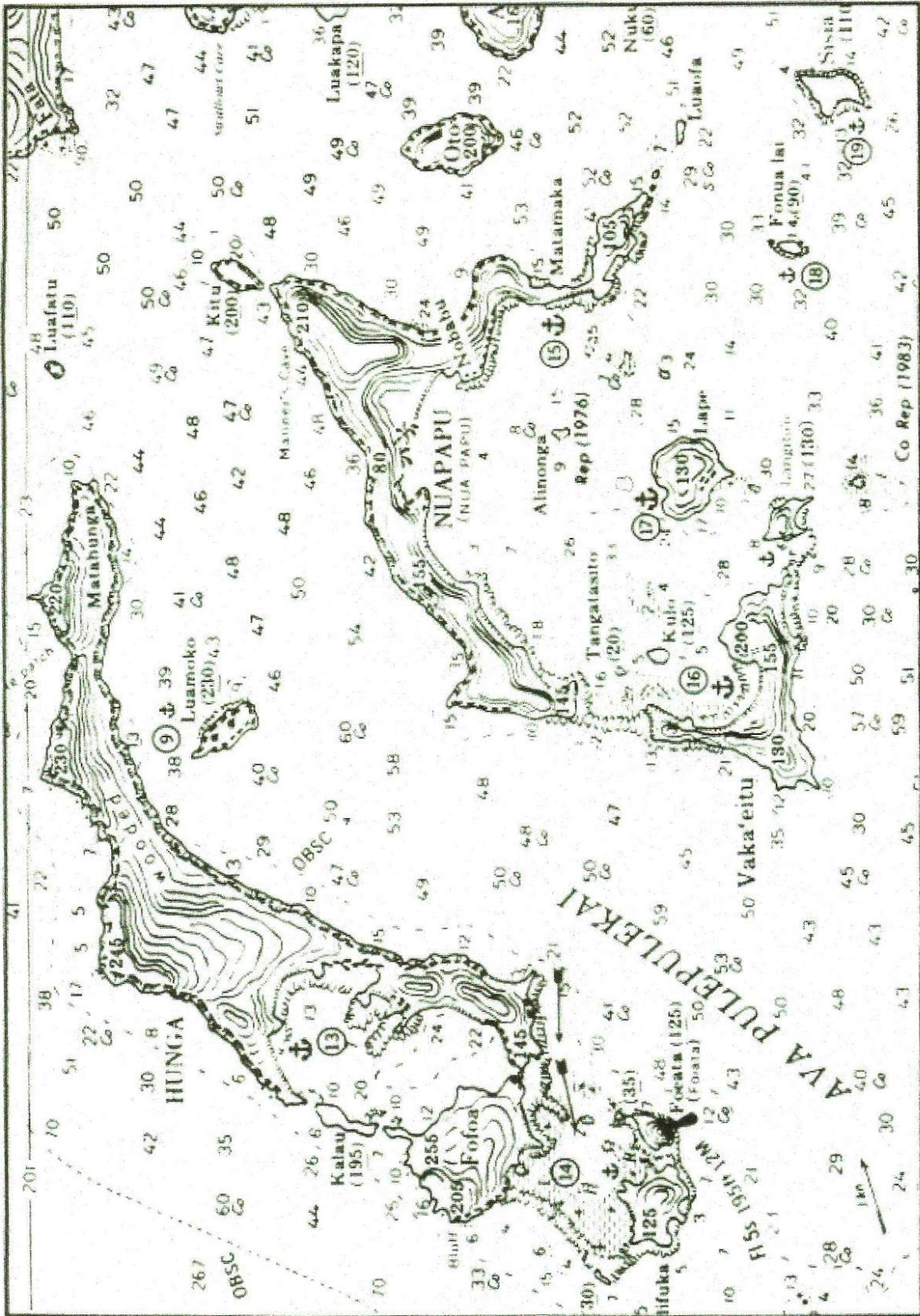
(CH. 2 - #14) - FOEATA ISLAND is a beautiful, clear weather, daytime anchorage, surrounded by magnificent white sand beaches with plenty of snorkeling. Drop anchor in the protected SE corner in about 15 feet of water. Entrance should be made through the northern pass sailing from east to west. Pass over the three-fathom mark shown on the chart lying between the southern fringe reef of *Hunga* and the coral patch to the south with two coral heads shown. When taking this route in, it is a clear pass into the area, but proceed slowly with a lookout on the bow. Remember, this is a daytime anchorage only; do not overnight here. Blue Lagoon Restaurant is located on *Foata* and monitors channel 16.

NUAPAPU is E of *Hunga* and S of *Mo'ungalafa* and it has several anchorages in its bight. On the W shore is the famed Mariner's Cave. The western shore is generally steep, so be careful and do not go between *Nuapapu* and *Vaka'eitu*, as the reef there is continuous between the two islands. It is difficult to see at high water with the sun in the E, especially during early morning.

Mariner's Cave is an underwater cave requiring good snorkeling skills; however it is not too difficult for the competent swimmer. The best way to test your ability to tackle the entrance into Mariner's Cave is to dive from a few yards to one side of your yacht, swim under the keel and come up a few yards on the other. If you can do that with confidence, then you can try the Mariner's Cave entrance.

Mariner's Cave is situated on the chart in the position where the underlining of the name touches the cliff. This is .44nm from the centre of the gap between Kitu and Nuapapu (18.39.938sS 173.58.967sW) Proceed SW from that position and be on the lookout for a patch of white and orange 'leaching' or stain on the cliff face approximately 600 meters from the point. Mariner's Cave entrance is below this leaching (20 metres out from the cave is 18.41.203sS 174.04.098sW).

Plan to visit the cave on a bright sunlit afternoon at about 3:00 when you will have the best lighting for the cave. As with Swallow's Cave, you cannot anchor the yacht due to the depth at this point; therefore, you will have to take turns exploring the cave. You can dinghy in whilst someone remains on the yacht.



THE KINGDOM OF TONGA • CHART 2

HAZARD

You cannot mistake the entrance to the cave. It is big, wide and goes down for over twenty feet. When entering the cave, dive down and while swimming through, keep looking up at the rock ceiling above you. On the inside, when you see where water meets the rock, you can come straight up to the surface with no problems. You are now on the inside.

Nearby on the N end of Nuapapu lies Kitu. The passage between is narrow, gusty and plagued by strong currents. If you use this pass, do so under motor only.

On entering the bight of Nuapapu you have two choices. You may either follow close around to the south shore of Matamaka or enter to the E of Lape. These anchorages should be entered before 1500 as late afternoon sun reduces visibility and reefs are difficult to see.

#### (CH. 2 - #15) - MATAMAKA ANCHORAGE

Matamaka Anchorage is good in most weather except when a strong S or SW wind is blowing. In approaching from the E, stay about 100 yards offshore and watch for a very treacherous reef to port. Go in to the N end of the beach and round up N of the jetty to anchor. Just behind the jetty there is a fine beach and village. Beware of the reef coming out from the S end of the beach.

(CH. 3 - #16) - VAKA'EITU Vaka'eitu is another good overnight anchorage. Keep close to Lape and well away from Kulo on entering and anchor in about 30 to 40 feet. Shallow water extends far out and there is a coral head about 1/4 mile S of Kulo that is hard to see; therefore, give it plenty of room. There are public mooring buoys available here at a cost of T\$10 per night.

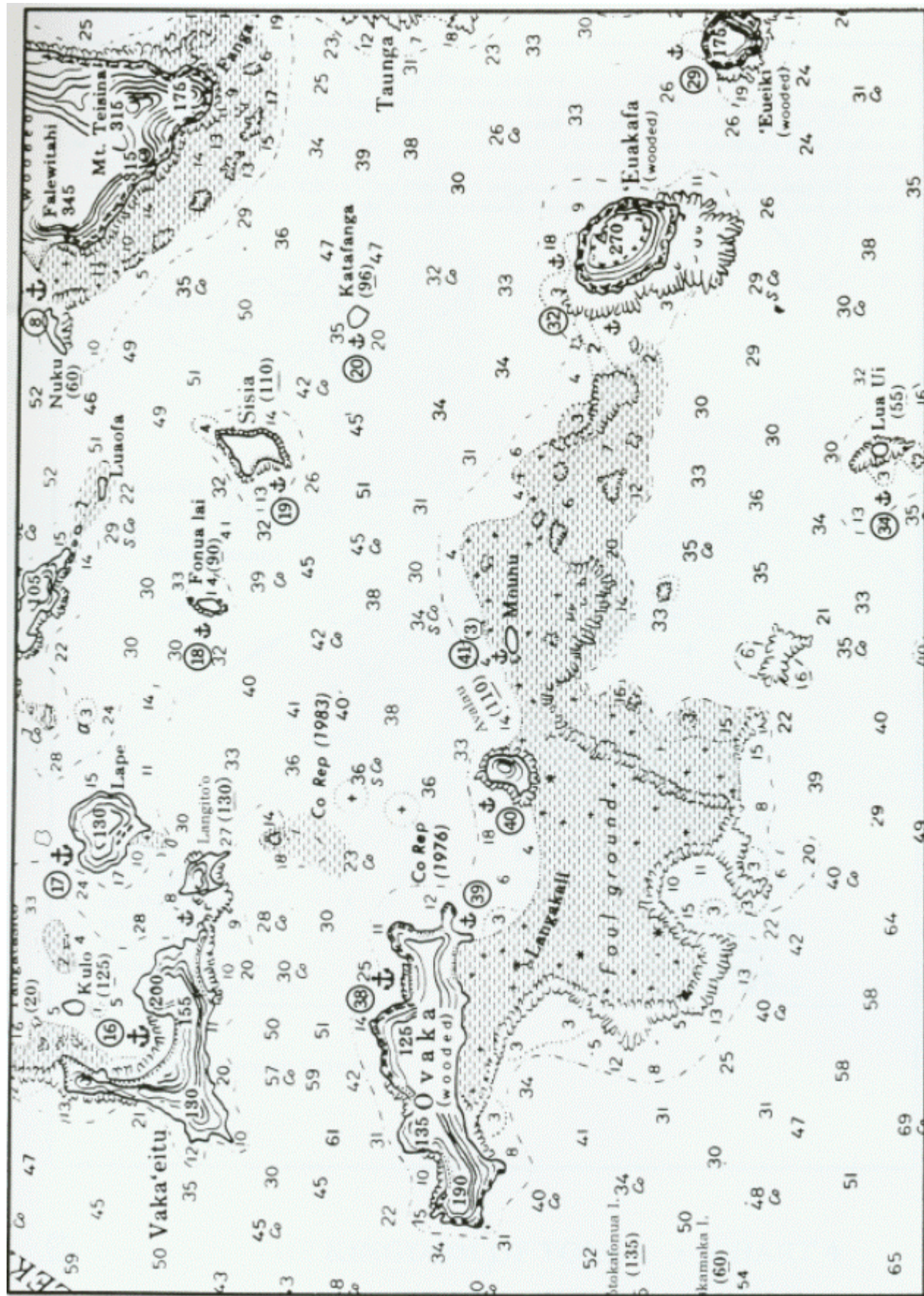
The pass between Lape and Langitau has a point of reef stretching from Lape; however, if you stay close to Langitau and post a lookout on the bow, you may use this pass with caution. Enter the pass only in good weather with bright light. If in doubt, take the northern route around Lape to make your approach to the areas west of Lape.

Langitau is a very beautiful island and, as indicated on the chart, may be used as a day anchorage, in sand, in approximately 15 to 20 feet of water. You will find interesting snorkeling in this area.

(CH. 3 - #17) - LAPE Lape is in the middle of Nuapapu's bight and shelters a fine anchorage on the NW side. There is also a small island just NE of Lape; therefore, anchor SW of this island, just off the small beach on Lape.

(Ch. 3 - #18, 19 & 20) To the E of Lape lie three similar islands: Fonua Lai, Sisia and Katafanga, and they are all day anchorages, since they are very exposed. Sisia, the largest, offers good diving off the beach and towards its southern end. At Katafanga you will find a small beach lined with coconut trees and grass. It is a beautiful picnic spot.

Hazard: A most dangerous reef lies SSE of Langitau and is not properly marked on the navigational chart of Vava'u. However, we have drawn it in on Chart 3. Covered by 4 feet of water, the reef lies to the SE of the charted reef. Keep close to Langitau or Ovaka to avoid this hazard.



THE KINGDOM OF TONGA • CHART 3

HAZARD



## CHART 4, 5 & 6

### TAUNGA

Taunga is one of the smallest inhabited islands of the group and it has some excellent beaches and good diving on the S. end. Taunga is the estate of the noble Akau'ola. The title, which means "Navigator to the King," is at least five generations old and is said to have originated in Samoa.

(Ch. 5 - #21) This anchorage is the only good overnight anchorage stop on Taunga. It is protected when southerly and westerly winds are blowing.

(Ch. 5 - #22) The anchorage off the village is only a day stop and it is protected on two sides by extensive reefs that dry at low tide. Approach this anchorage from the W and head roughly for the middle of the island. As you get closer, steer E for the coral wharf. Once between the two reefs, proceed slowly until in 30 feet of water. You may then anchor with adequate swinging room. Do not go in as far as the wooden stakes. These mark a channel of about four feet depth to the wharf.

(Ch. 5 - #23) The best beachcombing and diving are accessible from a daytime anchorage to the W of the pass between Ngau and Pau. This anchorage requires good light to enter and to avoid fouling your anchor in coral. Be very cautious, as the water is either very deep or very shallow. At high tide the reefs are awash and the anchorage can be rolly. At low tide you are protected by the drying reef.

Diving is good all around this anchorage. The beach on Pau is excellent and another on the S.E. end of Ngau provides good hiking. Go N until you reach the isthmus; then cross to the village.

(Ch. 5 - #24) This is one of the most beautiful beaches in the entire Vava'u group. Enter from the S end of the beach and be sure to proceed slowly as there are some coral heads. If the south easterlies are strong, this anchorage is very exposed and can be rough; therefore, use only as a day anchorage.

### FANUA TAPU PASSAGE

Going E at longitude 174 is similar to moving from the West Indies to the Bahamas; the change is generally from deep water and high islands to shallow areas where good sunlight and eyeball navigation are necessary to avoid the numerous reefs and shallows.

The passage of Fanua Tapu is not too difficult if care is taken. The channel is deep throughout with a minimum of 15 feet at low tide. Plan to negotiate the pass in bright, high sunlight and use the chart to keep your bearings and orientation on the island of Fanua Tapu itself and Lautala. Finding the passage is easiest if you depart West of Lautala and steer 120 for about 3/4 mile. You should then see the S-shaped channel S of the small island of Fanua Tapu.

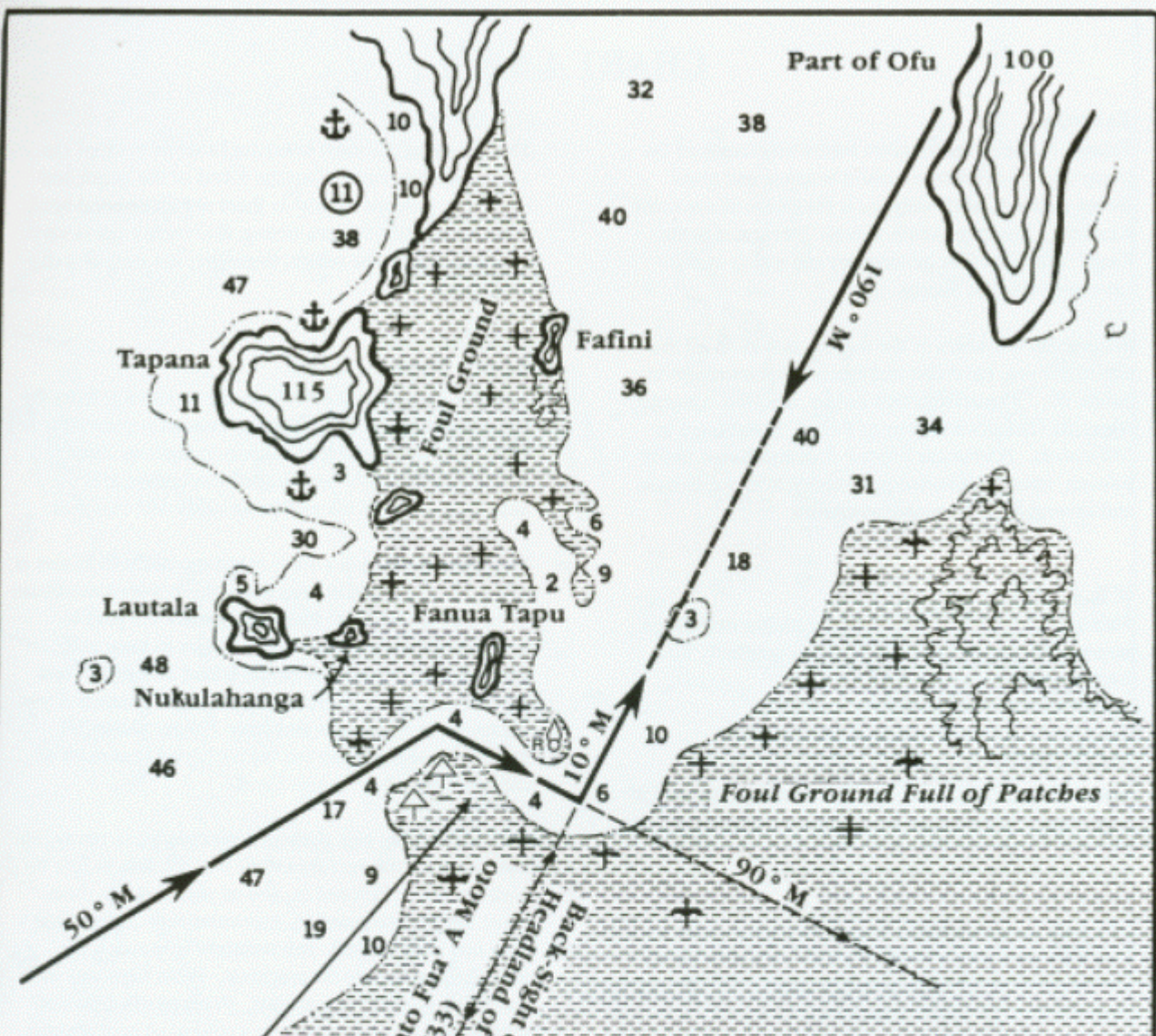
You will see the two starboard beacons quite easily, but stay out from the reef area until you are able to line up both beacons. Proceed in, and as you close on them, leave both to starboard by approximately 50 feet (just over one boat length). Immediately on passing the inner beacon turn to 90 magnetic. From here you will easily see the red buoy to port. Proceed towards that marker and leave it to port by a couple of boat lengths. Once past it, make a turn to 10 magnetic as indicated on the detail chart in the guide. Weigh points to help you are: 1) 18.43.816s S 173.59.058sW  
2. 18.43.762sS 173.58.953sW 3. 18.43.864sS 173.58.740sW

To return, again follow the course instructions on the chart. Basically, put the apparent headland of Ofu on the stern and the island of Fua'amotu (#33) on the bow.

In the eastern region around Ofu there are several anchorages protected from the normal S.E. trades. Near the village of Makave there is excellent anchorage, and it is well-protected in most all weather.

(CH. 6 - #25) – MAKAVE on Vava'u is only 1.5 miles from our base. During an easterly anchor on the E shore of this bay.

There is an excellent anchorage shown on the chart, in about 20 feet of water. Be aware of a very extensive shallow area which extends nearly 1/2 mile out from the beach on the NW shore. This area dries at low tide to become a walkway.



**NOTE:**

From West to East  
 the Pass is marked  
 with 2 Starboard-  
 Hand Beacons  
 Followed by One  
 Port-Hand Red Buoy

**DIRECTIONS FOR THE  
 FANUA TAPU PASS**

On proceeding from West to East  
 use bearing of 50° M. Two  
 Starboard-Hand Beacons will  
 be easily sighted. For East-  
 West pass, follow sighting  
 directions on the 190° M line.

Depths Shown in Fathoms

Should you wish to explore the village of Neiafu from this anchorage, leave the yacht anchored and dinghy to the W side of the bay; enter the small boat pass at the west end of the bay and anchor the dinghy near the local boats. Walk north around the edge of the bay until you come to the road which leads a short way over the hill into town. Do not, even at high tide, take the dinghy into the back where the road is, as you will most likely have to carry the dinghy the 1/2 mile back over the dried reef to get to open water again.

(CH. 6 - #26, 27 & 28) -'OLO'UA, MAFANA AND OFU Olo'Ua, Mafana and Ofu have similar anchorages. All three offer shelter on the West shore. Ofu is by far the most scenic, offering the best anchorage

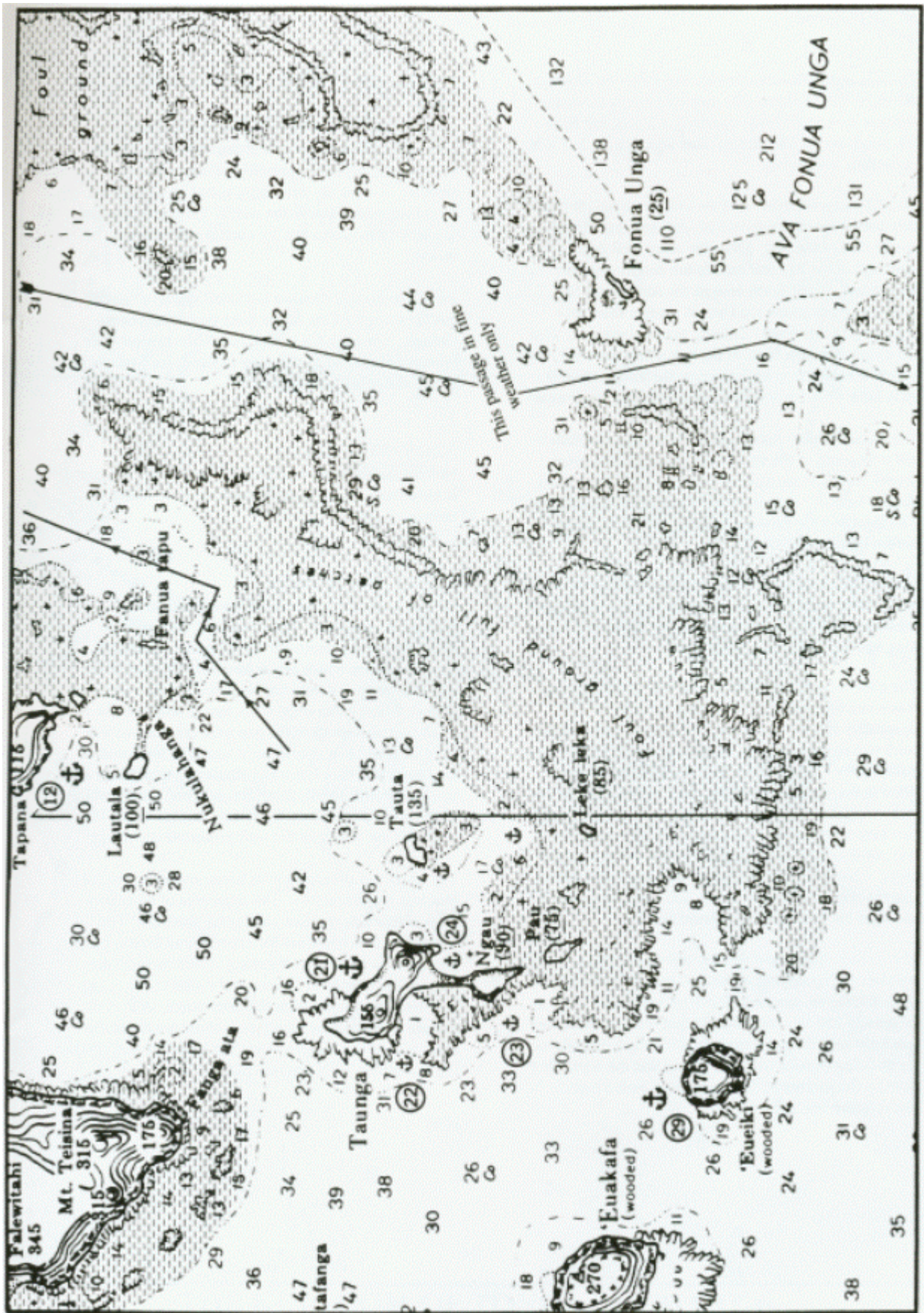
Between Ofu and Mafana is a small-unnamed island, the island is private, so please respect their privacy and stay away.

(CH. 5 - #29) - EUEIKI is privately owned and the anchorage drops away to very deep water. Take care.

(CH. 6 - #30) - KENUTU Kenutu is the most easterly of the islands and is difficult to approach. Rounding Ofu, be careful to avoid the coral patches off the SE point. There are several patches which dry at low tide. Proceed N for approximately 1/4 mile until you see a large coral head to port. Passing this coral head turn E and steer for the south end of Kenutu or the gap between Kenutu and Lolo is. The stern should be in line with the S end of the beach on Ofu. The water shallows rapidly here as you go towards shore; therefore, proceed slowly while keeping a sharp lookout for coral. Anchor about 100 yards off the island, in the well-protected anchorage.

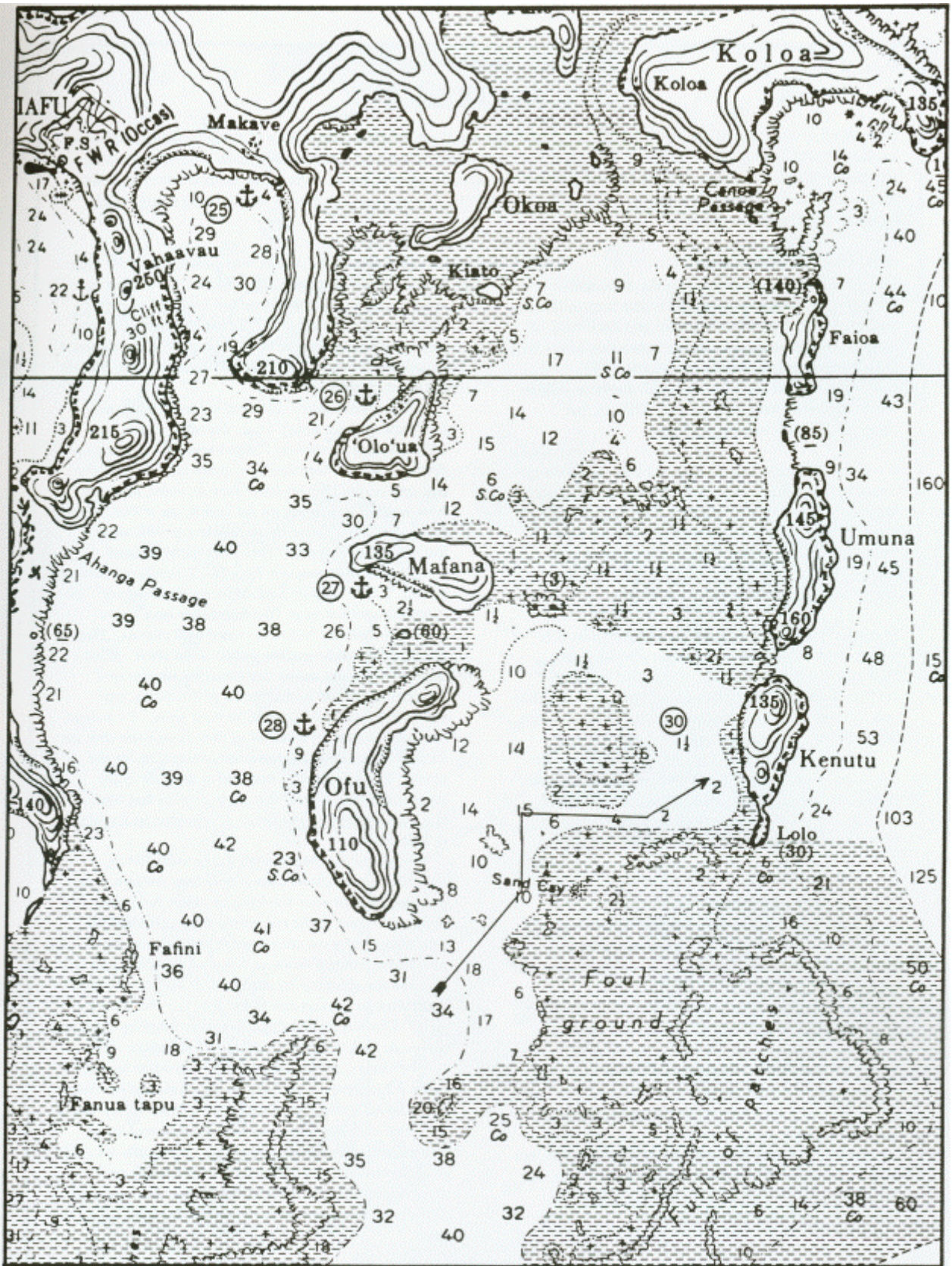
The island is overgrown with brush and trees, yet the beach is very attractive. The exposed reef is excellent for experienced divers, but be prepared, as it is difficult getting in and out of 'OLO'UA with the surge.

The islands of Umuna and Faioa to the N can be visited by dinghy from this anchorage. A visit to Kenutu would not be complete without a walk to the other side of the island to view the beautiful surf crashing against the high exposed cliffs.



THE KINGDOM OF TONGA • CHART 5

HAZARD



## CHARTS 7 & 8

In the southeastern area of the *Vava'u* group it is possible to sail inside the reef and chain of small islands to the most southern island of *Maninita*. The chart is not totally accurate along this route. Eyeball navigation is necessary with a constant lookout on the bow. Some of the reefs shown are actually islands, and in some areas, there are extensive reefs where none are indicated on the charts. It would be foolish to try this passage on a cloudy day or when a large sea is running. See charts 4, 5 and 6.

(CH. 7 - #31) - MANINITA The intricate net of reefs which make *Maninita* so dangerous for yachts to approach is also responsible for making it one of the most beautiful and interesting of islands. Do not attempt to anchor here when heavy or even moderate ocean swells are present. This observation is true for all of the small southern islands, where anchoring becomes not only difficult, but dangerous in high wave conditions.

It will take less than half an hour to circle *Maninita* on the white sand beach, but you'll be tempted to linger far longer on going into the interior. It is like one vast room filled with brilliant green light filtering down from the big-leafed puko trees that provide an airy ceiling. Fishing around the island is good and the many reefs provide rewarding snorkeling.

*Maninita* is a difficult anchorage, and generally it is wise to have local knowledge when visiting there. However, for the experienced tropical sailor using caution, a daytime visit will be rewarding. We ask that you leave an experienced crewmember onboard while others go ashore or snorkeling.

*Lautafito*, a good daytime anchorage in calm weather, is easier to approach than many of the other smaller islands. However, the advice on anchoring given for *Maninita* still applies to this entire area.

(CH. 8 - #32) - EUAKAFA *Euakafa* is a high island with a large plateau about 300 feet high. It is a good place to spend an entire day, with good beaches on the NE side, good snorkeling and hiking.

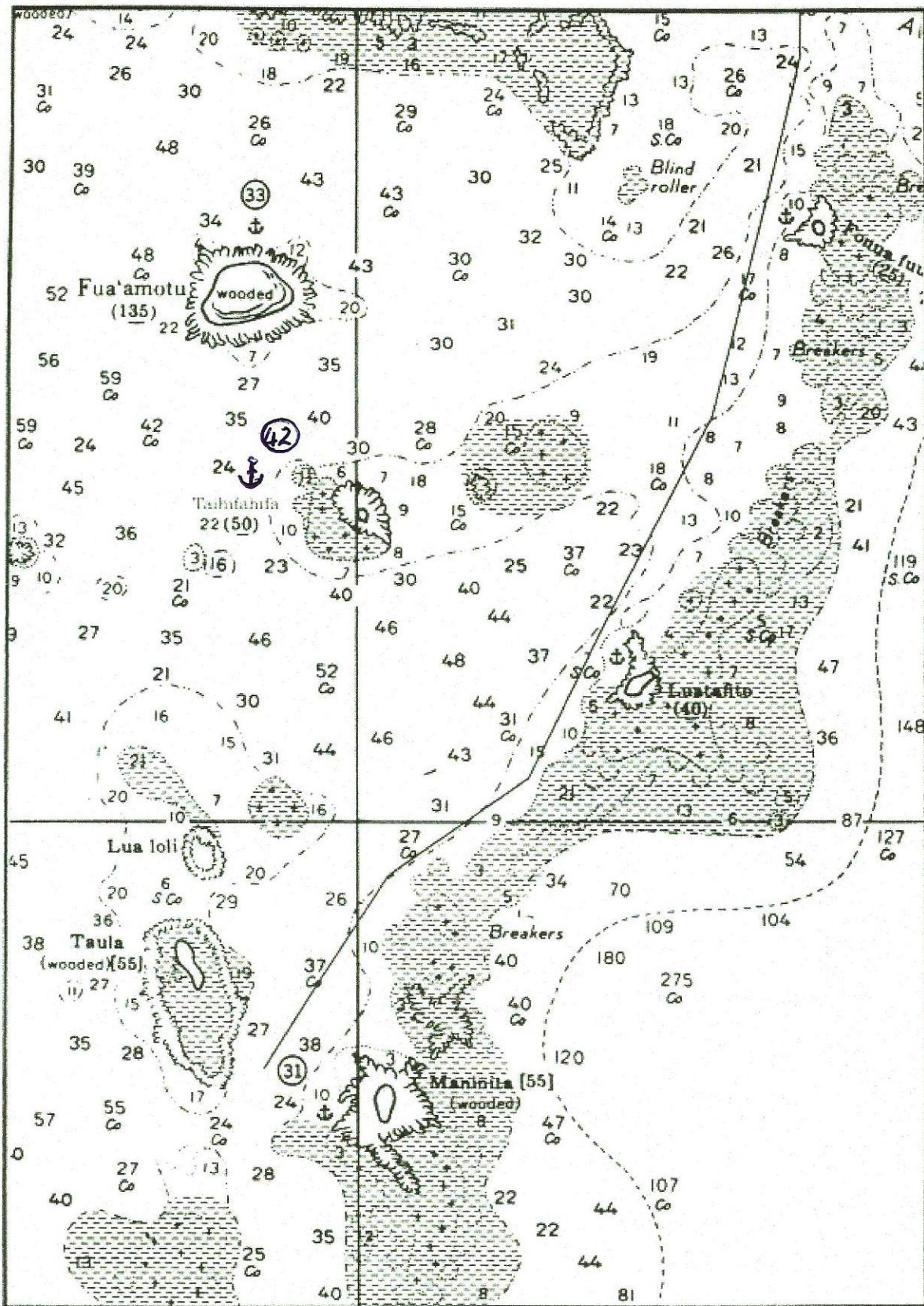
The best anchoring at *Euakafa* is on the N side, but do try to find a sandy patch for the anchor. This is very exposed, thus a daytime stop only.

There is a second anchorage on the W side of *Euakafa*. On the chart, just off the NW edge of the fringing island coral, is a small coral patch. It is possible to anchor just to the north and east of this patch or directly to its south. To approach the southern position from the N, leave the patch on your port side, pass over an area marked on the chart as 4 fathoms and anchor just S of the patch. From here there is good access to the beaches on *Euakafa* or snorkeling on the reefs nearby. Also take the dinghy over to the banks of the reef to the west where you may snorkel from the dinghy on the reef tops and swim along the edge of the drop-off. The underwater scenery is very attractive over this drop-off. Often you will be swimming among the many colorful schools of small fish.

(CH. 7 - #33) - FUA'AMOTU *Fua'Amotu* is a day anchorage in good weather but anchor with care (CH. 8 - #34) - *LuA UI Lua Ui* is a small island, 1.5 miles SW of *Euakafa* and surrounded by coral for about 50 yards offshore. There are isolated coral heads in the shallow water. *Lua Ui* is surrounded by pristine coral and anchoring should only be attempted in calm weather when you may be sure to find the small sand patch. *Lua Ui Vaha* has a larger area of sand to anchor in and is therefore favored.

(CH. 8 - #35) - LUA HIAPO - *Lua Hiapo* is a small island W to SW of *Fua'amotu* and two miles S of *Euakafa*. The island is surrounded by coral with some isolated heads 100 yards offshore, and it is a good daytime anchorage for diving.

`*Lua*' is a Tongan word meaning underwater reef or shallows, so when you sail about the *Luas*, be warned. *Lua Ui* means `the calling reef and *Lua Ui Yaha*, "the reef calling over the sea." *Luahiapo* is named for the paper mulberry tree, from which Tongans make *tapa*. *Luaa Fuleheu* is named for an attractive small bird, the "Honey Sucker", which is often found there.



HAZARD THE KINGDOM OF TONGA • CHART 7

(CH. 8 - #36) - FONUA ONE' ONE - Fonua One'One is a day anchorage in good weather and is one of the easier to use. Anchor as indicated inside the 'Hook' of coral to the W of the island on the sandy patch there. Access to the island by dinghy is then quite easy.

(CH. 8 - #37) - FANGASITO is a difficult day anchorage in good weather. Please note that none of the small southern islands are in any way suitable as overnight anchorages. Caution and care should always be exercised when anchoring at any of these southern islands. Anchoring should not be attempted if the incoming ocean swells are large.

OVAKA is no longer used for anchorages at the request of the Tongan authorities. Please do not anchor there or go ashore on Ovaka.

(CH. 8 - #40) - OVALAU Ovalua is in the shallow area to the E and provides another good picnic beach with good snorkeling. Anchor about 100 yards offshore to the W of the island after approaching from the NW. To the S of Ovalau the water shallows dramatically, accommodating only small or shallow draft boats.

(CH. 8 - #41) - MOUNU

Mounu Island Resort & Whale Watch Vava'u. Monitor VHF Channel 77. Please call 24 hours in advance to make a booking for lunch or dinner. Please do not use or pick up a mooring buoy until you have called the resort in advance.

Hazard: A very dangerous reef lies NE of Ovaka and is not properly marked on the navigational chart of Vava'u. We have, however, drawn it in on The Moorings' chart.

(CH. 8 - #42) - TAIHIFAHIFA is a day anchorage in good weather only, with nice snorkeling around the reef.



