

**Sent:** Wednesday, September 23, 2009 2:16 AM  
**Subject:** Notes from Tonga

I have finally compiled a few photos of the restaurant/bar (Laredo's Bar and Grill). Paul



LEFT: front facing the water



RIGHT: behind the bar looking out over the water



LEFT: The BBQ



RIGHT: Our cook with fresh Mahi Mahi

**Sent:** Sunday, September 27, 2009 5:29 PM  
**Subject:** Notes from Tonga

Monday, Sept 28th

We've been busier than a one-armed paper hanger. The restaurant has really taken off. We even had some editor/publisher from the main island come in and take pictures for an article he's going to write about us and will publish it on their website.

Island Explorer is empty right now but we will be full through October and November.

Good weather has returned after a month of cloudiness and rain... sunny skies and the heat are beginning to return.

You would not believe all the yachts in the harbour. There are boats of all shapes and sizes. There are a few from Canada, the US and just about every European country you can think of.

Come on down sometime... you'd love it here.

That's all for now.

Paul and Brenda

**Sent:** Wednesday, September 30, 2009 3:07 PM

**Subject:** Notes from Tonga

Although the earthquake (8.3 on the scale) and tsunami were devastating to some areas, we escaped unscathed. There were lives lost in Samoa and the northern most islands of Tonga about 140 miles north of here. It now appears that about 122 lives were lost in Samoa and American Samoa, and about 10 in Tonga... this toll is expected to rise. All we felt here was some shaking of the house a bit. Brenda said the sofa was moving around... and when the tsunami hit, the water in our lagoon disappeared and then returned about a half hour later. But I missed all the action. I was walking into town when the earthquake hit, I felt nothing, and the tsunami had passed by the time I got the news of the event. So, we are all well here... nothing too eventful in Vava'u.

Just thought yiz all might want to know we are ok.

P and B

**Sent:** Saturday, October 10, 2009 5:19 PM

**Subject:** Notes from Tonga

Hi Guys

Well the heat has returned. It's 11 am and already 31 C. The good news is... we are having lots of sunny days and very little rain... the bad news... soon all rainwater tanks will start to run dry. We do need rain.

The tourist season is slowly dwindling. Many yachts have left although there are still a few hundred around. Some are here for the entire summer season and will wait out the cyclones from Dec to Mar. The whales will only be here for another month and then they migrate back to Antarctic waters. Since we are so busy with the new restaurant, Brenda and I have yet to go swimming with them. We may have to wait until next year for that experience.

Our liquor license was finally passed through Cabinet the other day and that was the last hurdle for the restaurant. Up 'til now, the authorities have been very lenient with us... we have been serving wine and beer anyway while they looked the other way. It's amazing what a free rib dinner can buy around here.

Brenda leaves for Auckland tomorrow to get some attention on her ears and her hearing aids. She will be gone for 3 or 4 days. Hopefully all will be well... it seems that this moist saltwater environment is not very good for tiny electronic devices.

The restaurant is closed today (Sunday) but we are going in anyway to do some work around the place. Got to go. Hope all is well back home and everyone is safe and healthy.

Bye for now.

Paul and Brenda

**Sent:** Sunday, October 11, 2009 9:10 PM

**Subject:** Boats in Vava'u

Just a few shots of some boats in the harbour. There are many more anchored on the out islands. The last one came in this morning... it has to be at least 40 million or more. P



**BOATS IN VAVA'U**



**Sent:** Sunday, October 18, 2009 3:38 PM  
**Subject:** Notes From Tonga

Hi Guys

Neither of us has sent email home lately and we do apologize... Laredo's has kept us busy. As of yesterday, the restaurant is open seven days a week. We decided to try Sundays as an experiment and it was a success. The laws here do not allow for most businesses to be open on Sundays. The domestic airline won't even fly on Sunday. However, because Brenda and I also have our accommodations at Island Explorer, there is a loophole in the law that allows us to be open, and serve liquor on Sundays. This is a huge advantage. We are also doing some serious damage to other restaurants here because our food is so good. This is a small community of expat business owners, and not all are friendly with us anymore... oh well. We bring our beef in from the top producer in NZ and we've been told, many times, that we serve the best steaks people have ever had anywhere in the world. There is a group of sport fishermen here next week and they have reserved the whole restaurant for 15 people next Sunday... Gotta like how this is all going. Brenda and I have even discussed trading our shares off for a boat someday to sail the south pacific... just another wild and crazy idea. But that wouldn't happen for 4 or 5 years from now.

The weather is still nice... the days are a little longer as summer approaches. It rained the most incredible torrential rain last night for about 2 hours. The sun is out now and it looks like a glorious day ahead. Brenda has coffee ready... so I must go and get my day started. I will be off to the restaurant in about an hour to get ready for the day. Mondays are not normally big days but we will see.

Take care all.

Paul and Brenda