

2007/2008



tahiti
for australians



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the australian guide to
a great tahitian holiday



Tahiti
T o u r i s m e

the australian guide to a great tahitian holiday



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Breakfast being delivered to an overwater bungalow on an outrigger canoe

*ia orana
bonjour*



*experience the
sensation of*

- ... the heat as you step from the plane
- ... the intoxicating fragrance of tiare and frangipani
- ... walking upon sugar soft sand
- ... dipping into warm crystal clear water
- ... gliding through the water on a traditional outrigger canoe
- ... snorkelling in warm waters amongst vibrant tropical fish
- ... walking through a lush emerald green valley surrounded by majestic volcanic peaks
- ... coconut and tropical fruits just picked
- ... being pampered with exotic oils
- ... being in your own private over water bungalow listening to the gentle lapping of water
- ... breakfast being delivered to you on an outrigger canoe
- ... being amongst the ruins of a sacred ancient archaeological site
- ... walking along mountain trails discovering exotic flora and fauna
- ... this extraordinary paradise....



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An International Hotel



Pension

Eric Pasquier

ACCOMMODATION

HOTELS AND RESORTS

Many of Tahiti's hotels in their design and styling are amongst some of the most unique in the world. While this level of luxury is unrivalled in the South Pacific there is a variety of options available to suit all budgets. Most offer accommodation in individual thatched 'fare' (bungalows) located in tropical gardens, along beaches, and even over water on stilts. These units are designed to be cool and normally have a high pitched roof to allow the warm air to escape. The majority of Papeete's hotels offer air-conditioned accommodation with many of the properties on the outer island having ceiling fan-cooled units assisted by the gentle sea breeze.

The overwater bungalows are an incredibly memorable hotel experience beyond the ordinary with breakfast being delivered on an outrigger canoe to the glass coffee table that provides fish viewing through the living room floor.

The vast majority of international classed hotels and resorts provide standard in room refrigerators, a minibar and tea/coffee making facilities. Check with your travel agent before you travel as to what your chosen accommodation offers.

BED AND BREAKFAST (PENSION)

The pensions de famille, are the Tahitian version of Bed and Breakfasts and are a great way to experience Tahiti and her islands on a budget. There is a variety of traditional Tahitian accommodation available in either the family pension or a home stay. Each of the properties are unique, created from personal homes and living spaces. Because they vary so much it's difficult to work these into a classification system such as the standard 1-star through to 5-star ranking. Rural lodges or family guest rooms are everywhere throughout the islands and are a great alternative accommodation option catering for visitors looking for a more authentic experience on a budget. Some pensions offer full board (pension) including meals prepared with the local specialities, while others have their own kitchens or shared facilities.

CLIMATE

Tahiti enjoys a fairly even year round climate with daytime temperatures usually around 28-33° Celsius, dropping by a few degrees in the evening.

The weather is warmer and more humid from November through to May, and dryer and cooler from June – October.

Year round the sun rises between 6-7am and sets between 5-6pm. In Tahiti there is an excellent range of local tanning lotions and sunscreens available to help protect your skin. Tahiti has a solar tide rather than a lunar tide resulting in the low tide being at sunrise and sunset. There is very little difference between low and high tide.

Average temperatures for 24 hour period (°C)

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
AIR	26.7	26.7	26.8	26.7	25.9	24.8	24.4	24.4	24.7	25.3	25.9	26.4
LAGOON	28.0	27.8	28.2	28.1	27.7	27.2	26.7	26.2	25.8	25.9	26.4	27.7

CLOTHING

With the warm tropical atmosphere, all you'll really need to pack is light casual clothing with natural fibres providing the most comfort. On page 22 you will find a 'what to pack' checklist. Even during the coolest evenings all you'll require is a light jersey or sweatshirt. You might like to wear the local 'pareo', a piece of material that you wrap and tie around yourself, worn both by men and women. They are often very colourful and can be worn many different ways, as a dress or folded in half around your waist as a skirt. There are hundreds of ways to wear a pareo.

With the exception of downtown Papeete restaurants and nightclubs, the dress code is very casual and comfortable even in the most sophisticated restaurants. Jackets and ties are very rarely worn in Tahiti. If attending one of the Church services on a Sunday it is customary to dress formally and cover up.

CURRENCY AND CREDIT CARDS

The local currency is the French Pacific Franc - known by the abbreviations CFP and XPF.

Denominations available are the 1/2/5/10/20/50 and 100 CFP coins, and 500/1,000/5,000 and 10,000 CFP notes. CFP1,000 is worth approximately AUD \$14 these conversions were correct at the time of printing April 2007.

A common misconception is that US Dollars are recommended by many as being an acceptable currency for cash or traveller's cheques, changing currency into US dollars only means another change into CFP when you get there.

Most Australian banks can obtain CFP cash for you before you leave. The bank is also open to meet all international flights at the Faa'a airport in Papeete. Throughout Tahiti rates and fees vary from bank to bank, with them generally charging 5% for each transaction regardless of currency or travellers' cheques. It is common for hotels to use a 'buffer' rate when exchanging currency which is not as competitive as the banks. There are plenty of automatic teller machines on Tahiti with some of the outer islands having one or two. However, once you go out to the smaller motu or out-of-the-way places it's strictly cash only.

Credit cards are widely used throughout the islands, with the most popular cards being Visa and Mastercard, followed by American Express and Diners Club.

DUTY FREE ALLOWANCE

Similar restrictions to those found for entry to Australia apply with the exception of the extra liquor allowance offered. The general rule of thumb allows for up to two litres of either wine, spirits or a mixture of both, one dozen beer and one carton of cigarettes per person. Check with your travel agent for any specific items you are unsure of. You are able to take food into Tahiti, so long as it has been vacuum-packed or sealed, i.e., tins, packets, etc., and the seal has not been broken. For fresh meat, you will need to find a MAF approved butcher that is able to package meat for export.

A wide variety of the latest in French perfumes can also be found at a reasonable price at the airport Duty Free shops.

ELECTRICITY

Tahiti's electricity supply is 220 volts, 60 HZ. Most Australian appliances will run without any trouble in Tahiti. You will require a European 'twin pin' plug which you can purchase from any electrical shop throughout Australia or at the Tahitian hotel boutiques. Most hotels have the standard electric razor multi point outlet. In many of the outer islands, the supply is often sourced from small generators resulting in a fluctuating current which can affect the performance of some high powered appliances. Some of these hotels also have solar-heated water supplies.

We strongly recommend that you check with the hotel, BEFORE plugging in and using any electrical appliances.



The Hawaiki Nui Canoe Race

EVENTS

HEIVA I TAHITI

During the month of July the spectacular Heiva i Tahiti festivities are held and is regarded as the Polynesian equivalent to the carnivals of Brazil. It is the most elaborate annual celebration of Polynesian culture in the South Pacific offering traditional dance and song, visual arts, flowers, produce, crafts and Polynesian sports. Because of the popularity of the festival accommodation is scarce and will need to be booked in advance.

HAWAIKI NUI CANOE RACE

The Hawaiki Nui canoe race draws the whole of French Polynesia to a stand still. This three day, four island, 116km event is held in early November, with approximately 60 six-man teams from all over the region competing against each other. The vessels with burly Polynesian men, often adorned in traditional tattoos are greeted by the rhythm of drummers and cheering supporters and makes for a spectacular event.

BILLABONG PRO TAHITI

An hour's drive south of Tahiti's capital Papeete is a village called Teahupoo with one of the world's most radical waves ever surfed situated just 400 metres offshore. This break is known as Teahupoo or Chopes is Pererure and is a radical left hand barrel that is capable of instilling fear into the most capable of surfers. In recent years, usually during May, professional surf contests and high-profile tow-ins have shown the world flawless barrels as thick as they are tall.

INTERNATIONAL OCEANIA FILM FESTIVAL

This popular event is held over four days in January. The International Oceania Documentary Film Festival (FIFO) showcases a high standard of South Pacific film makers work.

FAA'A INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

The Faa'a International Airport is situated just 3kms from downtown Papeete. Air Tahiti Nui (in code - share with Qantas) and Air New Zealand are the major carriers from Australia.

AIRPORT AMENITIES:

- Money exchange point
- Bank, open for arriving and departing international flights
- A post office
- Gift and pearl boutiques
- Flower shop
- Car rental offices
- Tour operator offices
- Two restaurants
- Duty free shop after you pass through immigration
- Secure baggage storage facilities in parking lot
- Air Moorea - located adjacent to the terminal
- Le Truck stop - located adjacent to the terminal

ARRIVAL DOCUMENTS (IMMIGRATION)

Enroute to Tahiti you'll be given two forms to complete before arrival, one for Customs and Immigration, the other for statistical research. For longer stays you will need to contact the French Embassy for application details. New Zealand and Australian passport holders, and people from countries belonging to the E.U. get an automatic visa on arrival valid for up to 3 months stay in Tahiti. Don't forget to write Australia as your home country regardless of nationality as per passport.

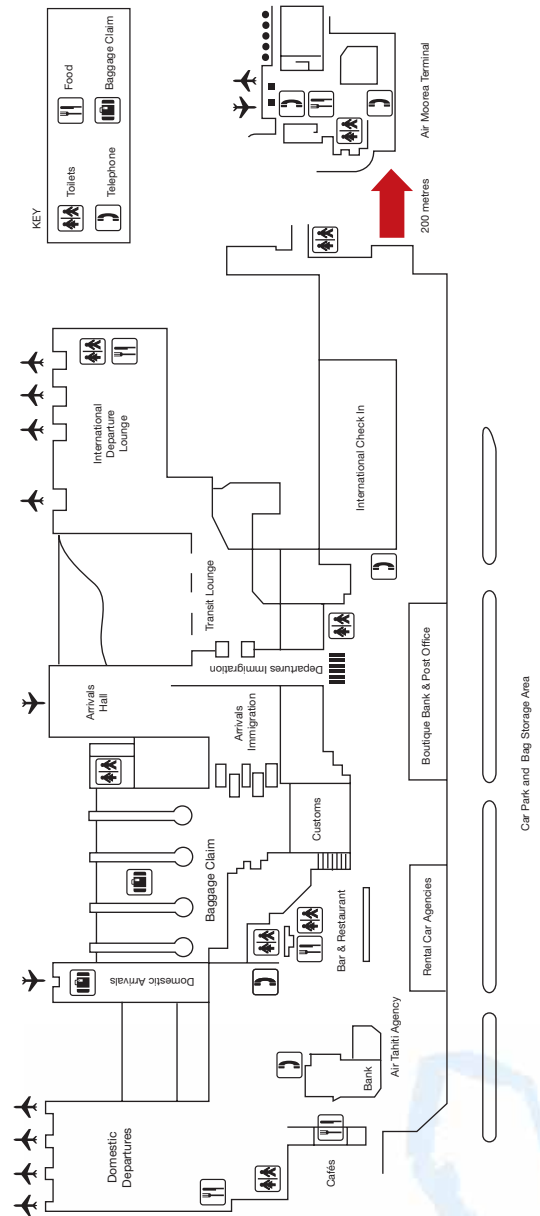
If you are travelling on another passport it is wise to check with your travel agent, as some nationalities do require such documentation. Your passport must also be valid for 6 months before the expiry date to allow entry. No special vaccinations or certification is required for entry under normal vacation circumstances.

Arrival document
- for Customs and Immigration

Visitor entry document
- for statistical research

NOTE: After you've passed through immigration, the small slip at the bottom of the white form will be left in your passport and will be taken from you on your departure. Should you lose it ask personnel at the airline check-in for a replacement form, this will assist in the efficient processing of your departure documents.

MAP FAA'A INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT



THINGS TO NOTE:

The Air Moorea terminal "red path" walkway: provides access to the outer islands, the bank and the post office.

Bag Storage: Located in the car park area is the bag storage facility, short term bag storage can be left here for a small fee.

Map not to scale - guide only



Le Retro located in Papeete



Les Roulottes, downtown Papeete

FOOD

EATING AND DRINKING

French Polynesia is reknown for its unique cuisine using traditional cooking methods combined with French gastronomy and Italian and Chinese influences. This can be sampled at the many sophisticated restaurants and at the cheap road side mobile snack bars. Many of the gourmet restaurants are air-conditioned with superb food served with great care and attention, sure to satisfy the most discerning of palates. Accompanying the food in the restaurants is a wide selection of wines from all the major regions of France. An extensive range of refreshing tropical cocktails are also something that must not be missed.

With Tahiti being surrounding by the sea, there is always plenty of fresh fish. The ocean fish most commonly used in French Polynesian recipes are several species of tuna, mahi mahi (dorado or dolphin fish), wahoo, moonfish and swordfish. The smaller lagoon fish that are most preferred for frying or grilling are the parrot fish, blue spotted grouper, goat fish and the red soldier fish. Reef fish also include rock lobster and clams.

The delicious freshwater shrimps or French 'crevettes' caught in Tahiti's many pristine mountain streams and rivers are highly recommended.

Be sure to try the delectable national dish, 'poisson cru', fresh fish marinated in lime juice and fresh coconut milk, both the French and the Chinese have their own versions, each superb.

Throughout Tahiti and her islands, food is still cooked in traditional pit ovens. The food is wrapped in banana leaves and placed in a hole in the ground on top of stones that have been heated in a fire then covered with earth. This steaming process takes several hours resulting in mouth watering food. Local pork features in many Tahitian dishes and is good eating especially when accompanied with one of the many locally grown varieties of kumara.

Throughout Tahiti you will find an astonishing variety of succulent fruits often ornately presented, all as appealing to the eye as it is to the palate they make a wonderful accompaniment to every meal.

Select from juicy pineapples, mango, lime, coconut, papaya, oranges, fresh lychee, the 'pamplemousse' a huge local grapefruit and over 300 different varieties of banana.

LES ROULOTTES

Along Papeete's waterfront, the Vaiete and scattered throughout Tahiti you will find colourful vans that have been converted into mobile restaurants called 'les roulottes'. They're great places to sit and eat, especially on Papeete's paved dockside area, with the flaring, multi-coloured sunset over the peaks of Moorea providing a brilliant backdrop to watch the locals stroll by.

Usually family run, the roulettes offer a variety of chicken, steak, fish, waffles, crêpes, pizza and other substantial meals often cooked over gas fires and costing approximately AUD \$20.



Le Meridien Hotel, Bora Bora



IS TAHITI EXPENSIVE?

While Tahiti cannot be considered a 'budget' destination, it certainly can be an affordable place to holiday.

In Tahiti there are no taxes levied on personal income, but indirect taxes and import duties on almost everything you buy.

People often ask 'how much spending money should we take', this really depends on your tastes and pocket.

Below is an indicative price range you can expect to pay:

[a] AUD \$80 - 90 per day

For the budget conscious, this amount of money allows for food each day and limited excursions and activities. NB. for those who have pre-purchased a meal plan or have self-catering facilities, this is a good allowance.

[b] AUD \$100 - 120 per day

An average amount of expenditure, allowing enough for food and excursions.

[c] AUD \$150 - 170 per day

A higher level of food and activities.



Below is an indicative guide to the prices you can expect to pay for specific products from various suppliers as at April 2007.

PRODUCT	PURCHASED	CFP	AUD\$	TYPE
Local Beer - Hinano (btle)	Supermarket	180	2.23	Drink
Local Beer - Hinano (btle)	Resort/Hotel	420	5.20	Drink
Coke/Pepsi (500ml)	Supermarket	140	1.73	Drink
Water(1.5L)	Supermarket	106	1.31	Drink
Fresh Juice (glass)	Resort/Hotel	400	4.95	Drink
Juice (litre)	Supermarket	450	5.57	Drink
Whisky (btle)	Supermarket	3400	42.08	Drink
Whisky (double)*	Resort/Hotel	800	9.90	Drink
Wine - French (btle)	Supermarket	995	12.32	Drink
Wine - French (btle)	Resort/Hotel	2300	28.47	Drink
Coffee	Resort/Hotel	260	3.22	Drink
Chicken Meal	Snack Bar	1000	12.38	Food
Chicken Meal	Resort/Hotel	2000	24.76	Food
Crossiant	Supermarket	150	1.86	Food
Curried Prawns	Café/Restaurant	2000	24.76	Food
Grilled Mahi Mahi	Café/Restaurant	1600	19.80	Food
Fresh Fruit Salad	Café/Restaurant	600	7.43	Food
Hamburger/Fries	Snack Bar	900	11.14	Food
Hamburger Meal	Resort/Hotel	1500	18.57	Food
Kids Menu Meal	Resort/Hotel	1500	18.57	Food
Mixed Salad	Café/Restaurant	1000	12.38	Food
Poisson Cru (raw fish)	Roulottes	1200	14.85	Food
Poisson Cru (raw fish)	Resort/Hotel	1800	22.28	Food
Pizza (large)	Roulottes	1000	12.38	Food
Pizza (large)	Café/Restaurant	1200	14.85	Food
Plat du jour	Café/Restaurant	1500	18.57	Food
Sandwich	Café/Restaurant	450	5.57	Food
Steak and Fries	Roulottes	1000	12.38	Food
Steak and Fries	Café/Restaurant	1800	22.28	Food
Tuna Sashimi (large)	Roulottes	1500	18.57	Food
Bananas (kg)	Supermarket	170	2.10	Groceries
Bread (French Stick)	Supermarket	47	0.58	Groceries
Cereal	Supermarket	495	6.13	Groceries
Cheese (250g)	Supermarket	295	3.65	Groceries
Chicken (frozen)	Supermarket	450	5.57	Groceries
Margarine	Supermarket	200	2.48	Groceries
Milk (UHT 1 Litre)	Supermarket	120	1.49	Groceries
Pineapple (kg)	Supermarket	223	2.76	Groceries
Pizza (frozen)	Supermarket	800	9.90	Groceries
Sliced Ham (per 100g)	Supermarket	140	1.73	Groceries

* Double is American standard, considerably larger compared to Australian standard

LANGUAGE

Throughout Tahiti and her islands, French is the official language, with Tahitian spoken by the local population. English is also widely spoken throughout. If you speak New Zealand Maori, you'll find a lot of similarity in the Tahitian 'Maohi' pronunciation.

Out of respect and appreciation for the locals and as a great ice breaker as it can be quite amusing, we recommend you try to speak a few words of both French and Tahitian.

We have selected a few commonly used words and phrases in Tahitian and French for fun and encourage you to try them.

ENGLISH	FRENCH	TAHITIAN
Airplane	Avion	Manureva
Beach	Plage	Tahatai
Beer	Biere	Pia
Bread	Pain	Faraoa
Butter	Beurre	Pata
Car	Voiture	Pereoo
Church	Eglise	Fare Pure
Cigarette	Cigarette	Ava Ava
Coffee	Cafe	Taofe
Cold	Froid	To'e To'e
Doctor	Medecin	Taote
Drink	Boisson	Inu
Eat	Manger	Amu
English	Anglais	Beretane
Friend	Ami	Hoa
Gentleman	Monsieur	Tane
Girl	Fille	Poti'i
Goodbye	Au Revoir	Parahi Oe, Nana
Good evening	Bonsoir	la Ora Oe I Teie Po
Good morning	Bonjour	la Ora Na Oe
How are you?	Comment Allez-Vous?	Eaha Te Huru?
I'm hungry	J'Ai Faim	Ua Poi A Vau
I'm thirsty	J'Ai Soif	Ua Poi Ha Vau
Lady	Dame	Vahine
Lunch	Dejeuner	Tama'a
Man	Homme	Tane
Milk	Lait	U
Money	Argent	Moni
Papaya	Papaye	lita
Passport	Passeport	Puta Ratero
Pineapple	Ananas	Painapo
Police	Police	Muto'i
Post Office	Bureau De Poste	Fare Rata
Sea	Mer	Miti, Moana
Shop	Boutique	Fare Toa
Sun	Soleil	Mahana
Swim	Nager	Au
Thank You	Merci	Maururu
Understand	Comprendre	Taapapu
Water	Eau	Pape
What time is it?	Quelle Heure	Hora Aha I Teie
	Est-Il?	Nei?
Yes	Oui	E, Aia



Phillipe Bacchet

MEDICAL

Tahiti has an excellent standard of health care available, with several hospitals, and qualified doctors located on most islands. A high standard of dental care is also available.

As with all overseas travel, it is recommended that you purchase travel insurance before you depart.

CREEPY CRAWLIES

Fortunately, there are no real 'creepy crawlies' in Tahiti in comparison with other tropical countries. In the water, stonefish can afflict a poisonous sting if stood on, the occurrence of which is quite rare. Most hotels have access to treatment. There are very few sea snakes compared with other Pacific Island locations.

Be very careful of coral cuts and scratches, as the small particles can inflict a painful injury. The locals have a rather interesting treatment using either fresh lime juice or urine. When in the vicinity of coral, it is advisable to swim in flippers, old sandals or plastic sandals.

Mosquitoes are a nuisance and their bite can be prevented with the use of an insect repellent. Most hotels spray frequently to deter insects, have coils or other deterrents in rooms. Cockroaches are another harmless nuisance, sadly a fact of life in all South Pacific islands, they do not reflect a lack of cleanliness.

NIGHTLIFE

For a taste of the Tahitian nightlife, Papeete has a wide variety of exciting nightclubs that are open well into the early hours. Whatever your preference is whether its jazz, waltz or a chic European and Parisian styled nightclub there's something for everyone. Be aware of the tasty exotic cocktails and drinks they can be expensive, as the prices are not regulated.

For a memorable night out, take in a sumptuous buffet followed by a showcase of Tahitian culture complete with traditional music, dance and spectacular costumes.

POSTAL SERVICES

A very efficient postal service exists both between the islands and for international mail. A post card mailed from Tahiti will normally take between 4-6 days to arrive in Australia. Post Offices can be found in all the islands you'll be visiting. Hotels often sell stamps and will accept mail for posting.

SECURITY

Tahiti has a relatively low crime rate so you can walk the streets at night feeling relatively safe. Common sense should prevail, don't walk alone down dark alleys, encourage or provoke people. In Papeete, late at night, you may come across transvestites, a throwback to traditional Polynesian society.

It is recommended to keep your hotel door locked, and to use the hotel safe for storing your passport and other valuables.

SHOPPING

Business hours for all shops are usually Monday through Friday from 8am to 11.30am and again from 1.30pm to 5.30pm, with the long lunch hour being time for a siesta or for a long relaxed luncheon, with hours varying by 30 or so minutes either side.

A great place to start is in the downtown Papeete marketplace 'Le Marche' open daily 5am to 6pm, Sunday is the 'big day' with the market open from 5am through to late morning. Tahitian families come to shop for their Sunday lunch and dinner. Be sure to take your camera, allowing an hour or two to take in the colourful sights and busy atmosphere. Downtown Papeete has the widest range of shops with a diverse selection of shops, cafés, chic boutiques offering French designer clothes and European shoes to Chinese merchants who stock absolutely everything in organised chaos. There is also a department store and a supermarket.

The Moana Nui Shopping centre in Punaauia on Tahiti's west coast is located near several resort hotels and only a few kilometres from the airport. There are many locally made gifts that can be purchased throughout the islands as a reminder of your trip to Tahiti, such as coconut oil perfumed with local flowers (Monoï), Tifaifai - beautiful Polynesian covers for beds made of patchwork, painted clothes and crafts.

A trip to Tahiti would not be complete without purchasing an exotic black pearl, you will find some stunning hand crafted jewellery pieces in an array of styles and colours. The naturally black Tahitian pearls are reputed to be the most valuable in the world due their exotic colours with only 20% suitable for jewellery, and of those, 5% gem quality.

Throughout the islands are many little boutiques and galleries dotted around each island's circle island road. These islands have attracted a large number of artistic people to their shores with a large variety of quality handicrafts, souvenirs, jewellery and artwork for sale.



Huahine, the garden island

THE ISLANDS OF TAHITI

French Polynesia is made up of 118 islands, divided into five groups: the Society Islands (which include Tahiti), the Tuamotus, the Marquesas, the Australs and the Gambiers. Only six of the islands are larger than 100 sq km and the northern most island, Hatutu, is more than 2000 km from the southern most island, Rapa. The nearest continental land masses are Australia, 5200 km to the west, and South America, 6000 km to the east, with the territory's nearest Pacific neighbour being the Cook Islands, to the west. The islands are a mixture of volcanic high islands and coral atolls. The high islands have rich, fertile soil and support a much wider diversity of vegetation than the atolls.

SOCIETY ISLANDS

Tahiti, Moorea, Huahine, Raiatea, Tahaa, Bora Bora, Maupiti

TUAMOTU/GAMBIER ISLANDS

Rangiroa, Tikehau, Manihi, Fakarava, Takapoto, Anaa, Mataiva, Kaukura, Hao, Ahe, Takaraoa, Makemo, Arutua, Mangareva

MARQUESAS ISLANDS

Nuku Hiva, Hiva Oa, Ua Pou, Ua Huka, Tahuata, Fatu Hiva

AUSTRAL ISLANDS

Rurutu, Tubuai, Raivavae, Rapa





Le Truck on Tahiti

Alain Nyssen

TELEPHONES

Telephones are available in all hotels and majority of bed and breakfasts throughout Tahiti and her islands for direct dial for both international and local calls.

TIME DIFFERENCE

Tahiti is 20 hours behind Australia standard time - when it is 12 noon Monday in Australia, it is 4pm Sunday in Tahiti or during Australian daylight savings, it is 3pm in Tahiti. Due to the international dateline, you will gain a day en route to Tahiti and lose one coming home.

TOURS

Your travel agent will be able to tell you about the range of organised tours available, enabling you to conveniently arrange, book and pre-purchase your tour/s before you leave.

Most hotels have their own tour desks, normally contracted out to a local operator to assist guests in booking activities and tours. If you have a special request, don't hesitate to ask they will do their best to accommodate you.

Each island has a circle island tour, in some cases by outrigger speed canoe. A circle island tour shortly after your arrival will help with orientation and general layout around the islands in addition to giving you some local history. You may then choose to take a slower tour by hiring a vehicle to catch up on specific areas of interest.

TRANSPORT

There are a variety of ways to travel around the islands, with motorcycle, car and bicycle being the most popular modes of transport. Most of the roads are sealed and flat with traffic being relatively light. If hiring a motorbike we recommend you refrain from riding after dark as there are very few street lights.

Many hotels provide courtesy transport to restaurants for groups of four or more, check with your hotel reception.

LE TRUCK

In and around Tahiti, the famous "Le Truck" is at your service. Basically it's a truck chassis with an open air sheltered cabin and wooden bench seats. There are literally hundreds of these vehicles serving Papeete with nearly all routes commencing and stopping near the market in the downtown area.

There are two terminals covering both the East and West coast. If you are staying on the East (Pirae/Mahina) your "Le Truck" will depart from the waterfront adjacent to the Market, whilst those heading West (Faa'a/Punaauia) leave from behind the market. Using this mode of transport is easy and can often be one of the highlight's of a stay in Papeete, we strongly recommend you ride "Le Truck" at least once. Another bonus about the use of this transport system is the cost - still around 150CFP (AUD \$2.15). There are designated stops all along the circle island road, however, in many cases Le Truck will stop anywhere when signalled.

Each vehicle generally displays the destination/origin, and usually the hotels passed along the way, on painted panels along the side of the vehicle.

The Le Truck service hours are early morning through to late afternoon/early evening, Monday to Friday inclusive, although on the two major East and West routes, services generally run later into the evenings with a limited weekend service also available. Limited "Le Truck" services operate in the outer islands, coinciding with schools, and ferry crossings.

RENTAL CARS

There are several rental car companies available in Papeete with comparable rates to those in Australia each having a good selection of cars available. You will require a current Australian Driver's Licence to drive in Tahiti.

In Tahiti they drive on the opposite side of the road, the right hand side which is quite easy to adapt too. Always remember, the driver sits on the side of the car that is nearest to the centre line.

Like all cities, Papeete has its own rush-hour traffic hassles, it is advisable to stay clear of driving into town between 5 and

7.30 am, and out of town between 4 and 5.30 pm. On the outer islands, you will see more people on scooters than in cars, so be cautious when driving.

TAXIS

These can be an expensive way to travel around, though a recent regulation of tariffs and the installation of meters in many taxis has seen prices reduced. Prices are usually displayed within the taxi, if you are unsure about the cost ask the driver.

Those vehicles displaying a white 'tiare' flower on their illuminated sign have drivers who speak English.

There are a couple of taxi stands in the downtown centre, you will also find taxis close to all major hotels and at the airport.

In the outer islands, taxis are quite reasonably priced with a standard tariff applying to most journeys, although their availability and hours are more restricted.

WATER

In Tahiti the tap water is regularly tested and safe to drink. In the outer islands water is collected through catchments from springs and bores, often varying in quality, sometimes affecting sensitive stomachs.

Many people prefer to drink "Eau Royale", or any number of local bottled spring water which is widely available. An extensive range of international imported mineral waters are also available.

WEBSITES

For more information and specials to Tahiti and her islands visit:

www.tahitnow.com.au

Local directory www.papeeteonline.com

Tourist guide www.tahitiguide.com

WHAT TO PACK

CHECKLIST

Here's a handy checklist with a few recommended inclusions:

- Light clothes
- Light jersey/sweatshirt
- Swimming gear
- Light durable footwear
- Jandals
- Old shoes for reef wear
- Sunglasses
- Sunhat
- Sunscreen & lotion
- Mosquito repellent
- Passport
- Travel insurance
- Beach towel

It is advisable to pack plenty of film and an extra battery for your camera or video camera as film can be quite expensive in Tahiti. You may wish to bring a disposable underwater camera to photograph the beautiful underwater sea life.

Sporting gear such as tennis racquets, snorkel gear, or a pack of cards are also a good idea.

*experience
for yourself the
sensations of this
extraordinary paradise...*

FOR MORE INFORMATION
www.tahitnow.com.au