The Societies Compendium
A Compilation of Guidebook References and Cruising Reports

Rev 2020.1 – February 15, 2020

Please send us updates to this guide!

Keep the Society Compendium alive by being a contributor. We are especially looking for information on places where we have no cruiser information and new information on existing content. It’s easy to participate and will help many other cruisers for years to come.

Email Soggy Paws at sherry –at- svsoggypaws –dot- com.
You can also contact us on Sailmail at WDI5677

The current home (and the most up to date) version of this official document is http://svsoggypaws.com/files/#pacific

If you found this compendium posted elsewhere, it might not be the most current version. Please check the above site for the most up to date copy and remember, it will always be free!
## Revision Log

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rev</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2020.1</td>
<td>30 January 2020</td>
<td>Reorganization of compendium and updates from Sugar Shack</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019.3</td>
<td>28-July 2019</td>
<td>Updates from Sugar Shack and Cool Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019.2</td>
<td>06 June 2019</td>
<td>Many updates from Moon Rebel, Bora Bora mooring update from Nehenehe and Nor’Easter. Tahiti updates from Nehenehe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019.1</td>
<td>21 February 2019</td>
<td>Ciguatera warning. Lungta update on leaving your boat a Baie Phaeton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018.5</td>
<td>28 November 2018</td>
<td>Updates on Bora Bora, Maupiti, and Maupihaa by a crewmember from Consensus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018.4</td>
<td>20 October 2018</td>
<td>More updates by Jacaranda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018.3</td>
<td>20 September 2018</td>
<td>Updates by Mary Ann II for Moorea, plus an outline of clearance procedures from Marina Papeete and a link to Marine Protected Areas in French Poly as of 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018.2</td>
<td>15 August 2018</td>
<td>Updates by Jacaranda on anchorages on the South Coast of Raiatea. Theft warning for Opunohu Bay.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018.1</td>
<td>13 August 2018</td>
<td>Updates by Jacaranda on anchorages on the South Coast of Raiatea. Theft warning for Opunohu Bay.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017.5</td>
<td>25 August 2017</td>
<td>Begonia on Bora Bora, Cook’s Bay Moorea notes by Jacaranda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017.4</td>
<td>17 June 2017</td>
<td>A few updates from Spunky, and proper mooring techniques from Jacaranda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017.3</td>
<td>27 May 2017</td>
<td>Warning about theft in Haamene Bay, Tahaa. (Spunky), plus a few other updates in the Societies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017.2</td>
<td>23 March 2017</td>
<td>Updates from Mary Ann II on Cyclone probabilities in Tahiti and lots of little info updates around Tahiti.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017.1</td>
<td>13 March 2017</td>
<td>Link to the new online Tahiti Cruiser’s Guide</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Table of Contents

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 ORGANIZATION OF THE GUIDE ................................................................. 9
1.2 OVERVIEW OF THE SOCIETY ISLANDS .................................................. 9
1.3 CLEARANCE AND VISA ISSUES ............................................................... 9
   1.3.1 Visa Issues for non-EU Citizens .......................................................... 9
   1.3.2 The French Polynesia Bond ................................................................ 10
   1.3.3 Customs Issues ................................................................................. 11
   1.3.4 Clearing in to Papeete ....................................................................... 11
   1.3.5 Clearing Out of French Polynesia from Papeete ................................. 11
   1.3.6 Clearing out of French Polynesia from Bora Bora or Raiatea .......... 12
   1.3.7 Yacht in Transit – Spare Parts ......................................................... 12
1.4 GETTING VISITORS IN AND OUT .................................................................. 12
1.5 MANEUVERING AND ANCHORING IN THE SOCIETIES ............................... 13
   1.5.1 Marine Protected Areas .................................................................... 13
   1.5.2 Anchoring in Coral ........................................................................... 13
   1.5.3 Using Out-Island Moorings ............................................................... 15
1.6 WEATHER ....................................................................................................... 16
   1.6.1 General Societies Weather Conditions May – July ......................... 16
   1.6.2 Cyclones in the Society Islands ......................................................... 17
   1.6.3 Weather Sources – With Onboard Email / SSB .............................. 18
   1.6.4 Weather Sources – Voice .................................................................. 21
   1.6.5 Weather Sources – Internet .............................................................. 22
   1.6.6 Understanding the Weather Patterns .............................................. 23
   1.6.7 Professional Weather Routing ......................................................... 24
1.7 OBTAINING SUPPLIES .................................................................................. 24
   1.7.1 Bank / ATMs (Money) ................................................................. 24
   1.7.2 Cooking Gas (Propane/Butane) ...................................................... 24
   1.7.3 Fuel (Diesel/Gasoline) ...................................................................... 25
   1.7.4 Marine Supplies (Boat Parts) ......................................................... 27
   1.7.5 Importing Parts Duty-Free .............................................................. 27
   1.7.6 Shipping Items In or Out ................................................................. 28
   1.7.7 Flying Stuff in on Air Tahiti ............................................................ 29
   1.7.8 Rigging and Sail Repair ................................................................. 29
   1.7.9 Provisions (Groceries) ..................................................................... 31
   1.7.10 Trash and Recycling ..................................................................... 32
   1.7.11 Water ............................................................................................. 32
   1.7.12 Medical ......................................................................................... 32
   1.7.13 Obtaining Medicine and Prescription Drugs .................................. 32
1.8 COMMUNICATIONS ....................................................................................... 33
   1.8.1 VHF ................................................................................................. 33
   1.8.2 SSB Nets ......................................................................................... 33
   1.8.3 Telephones and Cell Phones ............................................................. 34
   1.8.4 Wifi / Internet Access ....................................................................... 35
   1.8.5 News ................................................................................................. 36
1.9 DIVING ........................................................................................................... 37
1.10 SURVEYOR .................................................................................................... 38
1.11 HAUL OUT, STORAGE, AND REPAIR FACILITIES .................................. 38
   1.11.1 Techni-Marine in Papeete .............................................................. 38
   1.11.2 Tahiti Nautic in Port Phaeton, Tahiti ............................................ 40
   1.11.3 Raiatea Carenage .......................................................................... 40
   1.11.4 CNI (Chantier Naval des Iles) Boatyard - Raiatea ....................... 40
1.11.5 Liability Insurance for Haul out ................................................................. 41
1.12 Ciguatera ...................................................................................................... 41
1.13 Cruising Information Sources ..................................................................... 42
  1.13.1 Cruising Reports .................................................................................. 42
  1.13.2 AVP .................................................................................................... 43
  1.13.3 Pacific Puddle Jump ............................................................................. 44
  1.13.4 Noon site ............................................................................................. 44
  1.13.5 Seven Seas Cruising Association ........................................................ 44
  1.13.6 French Polynesia Cruisers Facebook Page ......................................... 44
  1.13.7 French Polynesia Birds ........................................................................ 44
  1.13.8 Sea Seek ............................................................................................... 44
  1.13.9 Dream Yacht Charter (DYC) 2011 ....................................................... 45
1.14 Printed Sources ........................................................................................... 45
  1.14.1 French For Cruisers ............................................................................ 45
  1.14.2 Cruising Guides .................................................................................. 45
2 Passage Reports ........................................................................................................ 47
  2.1 Tuamotus to Papeete .................................................................................. 47
    2.1.1 Apataki to Papeete ............................................................................. 47
    2.1.2 Manihiki to Tahiti ............................................................................. 47
  2.2 Tahiti to Tuamotus ...................................................................................... 47
    2.2.1 Strategy ............................................................................................... 47
    2.2.2 Tahiti to the Marquesas via the Tuamotus ......................................... 48
3 Tahiti .................................................................................................................... 48
  3.1 Papeete, Marina ........................................................................................... 49
    3.1.1 Passes and Formalities ..................................................................... 49
    3.1.2 Transitioning from Downtown area to Taina Marina ..................... 49
    3.1.3 Anchorages, Moorings, Haul-out ................................................. 49
    3.1.4 Yachtsman Services ....................................................................... 51
    3.1.5 General Services ............................................................................ 52
    3.1.6 Provisions .......................................................................................... 55
    3.1.7 Restaurants ....................................................................................... 57
    3.1.8 Activities ........................................................................................... 58
    3.1.9 Cruiser Reports ................................................................................ 60
  3.2 Marina Taina .................................................................................................. 61
    3.2.1 Passes and Formalities .................................................................... 61
    3.2.2 Anchorages and Moorings .............................................................. 62
    3.2.3 Yachtsman Services ....................................................................... 63
    3.2.4 General Services ............................................................................ 65
    3.2.5 Provisions .......................................................................................... 68
    3.2.6 Restaurants ....................................................................................... 68
    3.2.7 Activities ........................................................................................... 69
    3.2.8 Cruiser Reports ................................................................................ 69
  3.3 Tahiti Yacht Club .......................................................................................... 69
    3.3.1 Passes ................................................................................................. 69
    3.3.2 Anchorages and Moorings .............................................................. 70
    3.3.3 Yachtsmen Services ....................................................................... 70
    3.3.4 General Services ............................................................................ 70
  3.4 Point Venus .................................................................................................... 70
    3.4.1 Anchorages and Moorings .............................................................. 70
    3.4.2 Yachtsmen Services ....................................................................... 71
    3.4.3 General Services ............................................................................ 71
    3.4.4 Activities ........................................................................................... 71
  3.5 Port Phaeton, Tahiti Nautic Center, and Taravao ....................................... 71
1 Introduction

This guide originally started out as a way for s/v Soggy Paws and a few friends to organize notes and various internet sources on Tahiti and the Society Islands, prior to our cruise there in Spring of 2011. Later, it became a way for us to pass on what we’ve learned to other cruisers.

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

1.1 Organization of the Guide

West to East. We have organized the information for this compendium from West to East as this is typically the most popular route travelled by cruiser.

1.2 Overview of the Society Islands

This picture shamelessly lifted from The Hacking Family (s/v Ocelot) website.
To see the original (and be able to click their links): www.hackingfamily.com

1.3 Clearance and Visa Issues

Most boats clear in to French Polynesia PRIOR to arriving in the Societies (in the Gambiers or in the Marquesas). However, if coming from Hawaii or New Zealand, you may clear into Tahiti.

1.3.1 Visa Issues for non-EU Citizens

To read the most up-to-date and detailed information on Long-Stay Visas, visit http://www.jacarandajourney.com/other-good-stuff.

At the above website, under “Other Good Stuff” you will two documents related to visas in French Polynesia.

- Long-Stay Visas
- 90-Day Visa for French Polynesia

Most “first world” nationalities are granted a “Visa On Arrival” good for 90 days. Applying for a 90-day visa is not required and does not help with the bond or your check-in process. There is no way to extend this “visa on
arrival”. If you wish to stay longer than 90 days in French Polynesia, you must apply for a “Long Stay Visa” (see below) PRIOR to arrival in French Polynesia. Some countries (ie Thailand) require a visa ahead of time.

Note that if you are American or Canadian, and your 90-day visa is running out, whatever you do, get cleared out of Tahiti before your visa expires.

**NO VISA EXTENSION IS POSSIBLE IN PAPÊTE.** Except under exceptional circumstances… medical issues, severe boat issues, etc, you cannot get a visa extension on the spot in Papeete. Getting a little extra time for a legitimate reason is possible, but those situations take a lot of paperwork (not covered in the normal agent fees).

Your visa normally starts when you clear in to your first port (Marquesas, Gambiers, or Rangiroa), but sometimes that isn’t the exact date, so check your passports.

Flying out and flying back in before the end of your allotted 90 days does NOT ‘reset’ the visa. It merely stops the clock. Re-entering French Polynesia 6 months from your first clearance, however, you should be given another 90 days.

The only other way to legally stay longer is to apply for a Long Stay Visa at a French Embassy/Consulate before you leave for French Poly. Panama is the quickest and easiest embassy to obtain your LS visa. You need to make 2 trips in person to the same French Consulate with your passports, about 1-3 months apart (depending on the country you submit your application), and have a lot of other paperwork done.

**April 2019** – Renewing Cartes de Sejour: *(ed note: paraphrased from an email I was copied on)* We had Tahiti Crew handling our Long Stay Visa (Cartes de Sejour) renewal, and we had moved on to Raiatea (as planned and as previously communicated to Tahiti Crew) when Tahiti Crew informed us that we needed to make an in-person visit to the HC office in Papeete to complete the visa renewal. After some investigation on our part, it turned out that they were mis-informed (thankfully we didn’t have to sail or fly back to Papeete!), and we were able to make our appearance at the HC office in Raiatea instead of Pape’ete. – Cool Change

1.3.2  **The French Polynesia Bond**

To read the most up-to-date and detailed information on Long-Stay Visas, visit


Please note that the information in this document is NOT the most current information. Visit the link above for the most up to date information on 90-day visas and long-stay visas.

**Sept. 2018:** This write up explains the types of bonds and what 90 days really means, etc. Hoping that helps clarify some of the questions that folks have on the general 90-day visa.

French Polynesia requires all non-EU visitors to either prove that they have a paid way out of the country, or pay a bond on arriving in French Polynesia. This bond basically is the guarantee that the French government doesn’t have to fly indigent people home. There are 3 ways to satisfy this requirement:

1. Show an airplane ticket out of the country
2. Pay the bond (roughly the equivalent of an airplane ticket out of the country)
3. Arrange with an agent to “guarantee” you. Essentially the agent guarantees that THEY will pay to fly you out of the country, and so you pay for an insurance policy with the agent.

The bond is refundable when you leave, with time and paperwork. The agent “guarantee” fee is not.

According to Jacaranda, even if you have obtained a long stay visa, you must pay a bond. – Jacaranda
1.3.3  Customs Issues

French Polynesia Customs Website (in French):

During “crossing season” there is normally a Customs boat wandering around in the arrival ports. They have copies of the customs declarations that are filed when you arrive, and are spot-checking to make sure everyone is being honest with their customs declarations. They are also making sure people are checking in before cruising the islands.

1.3.4  Clearing in to Papeete

Marina Papeete has published a document on clearance procedures. A downloadable PDF format, here:

2019 verified (2011): Most boats should have already done a preliminary clearance in one of the ports in the Marquesas, Tuamotus, or Gambiers. But **ALL boats must complete their clearance upon arrival in Papeete.** You must clear in and out of Tahiti (when you arrive and depart). Most boats do not do this if they are only going to Mo’orea, but if you are leaving for another archipelago, you really need to clear out.

You are actually not formally cleared in until you get to Papeete. If you have crew coming to, or leaving from, your boat before you arrive in Papeete, be sure to inquire about formalities on check-in.

We know of at least one outbound crew in 2010 who was stopped at the airport in Papeete and hassled a little, because he was flying out from a yacht in the Marquesas, and not officially cleared in. Having an agent would certainly facilitate this, but I’m not sure it’s absolutely necessary.

In 2011, we (Soggy Paws) used the services of Cindy Deitrich of the CMA-CGM agency in Papeete. This cost about $200 and included bond exemption, preliminary clearance paperwork in port of arrival, clearance into Papeete, exit paperwork, and duty-free fuel and alcohol paperwork. This was a negotiated cost for the Puddle Jump group, but I think it wasn’t very much discounted over normal costs. Cindy was fabulously organized, very responsive to emails, had excellent English, and also speaks French and German, and perhaps Spanish. Our experience was very positive, and all things considered, we would use her again. ppt.cdittrich@cma-cgm.com.  – Soggy Paws

2020: The current email address for the CMA-CGM office in Papeete is ppt.genmbox@cma-cgm.com

1.3.5  Clearing Out of French Polynesia from Papeete

2017: Marina Papeete has published a document on clearance procedures. A downloadable PDF format, here:
http://svsoggypaws.com/files/ENTRANCE-DEPARTURE from TAHITI and MOOREA.pdf.  – Mary Ann II

2011: Clearing out with Cindy Deitrich from CMA-CGM (the PPJ Agent in 2011). Here is exactly what Cindy told us: 2 working days before you want to leave Papeete for good, let Cindy know, and she will prepare your outbound paperwork. This will include the paperwork you need to show to Kim Fa to get duty free liquor delivered to your boat on the day you leave.

You will need to give Cindy your passports and everything and they will get stamped for outbound. However, she still requests that you do also take your paperwork to the Gendarmerie in your last port of call to get fully cleared out.

Note: Alegria reports in 2013 that they have tightened up the Duty-Free Liquor rules. See Section 3.1.6.3 for more details. – Soggy Paws

**July 2010** - We paid our bill at the quay and officially checked out of French Polynesia. Papeete is the center of all things official in FP, and once cleared out in Papeete, we need do nothing more than check in and out with local gendarmes at each subsequent island (we’re even stamped out in our passports). Once we had our
clearance paperwork, we then made the five-mile trip to Marina Taina past the Papeete airport where we filled up with gasoline and duty-free diesel. (see Papeete section for more details). – Nakia

1.3.6 Clearing out of French Polynesia from Bora Bora or Raiatea

Bora Bora is normally the cruiser’s last stop in the Societies before heading west. So normal checkout is in Bora Bora. It is also possible to clear out at Uturoa on Raiatea, if you don’t plan to stop in Bora Bora.

June 2017: We went to the gendarme as someone told us they would need some days. The gendarme gave us about 5 forms to fill (some same but different), and 2-3 of those should be emailed (by making a photo) to Papeete the day before you plan to leave. At the day you want to leave, you come with all crew and passports and filled forms to the gendarme and they will give you your international clearance (permis de sortie).

That is how it should work, but in our case Papeete had not handled our email (yet), so Bora Bora had to ask Papeete to do so (I presume searching our file in Papeete), which caused some delay. You also receive (as with arrival) a copy of the declarations of customs file, that you need to send by post to Papeete (so you have to go to the post office to buy a stamp (or buy a postcard with stamp at a souvenir shop). Anyway, as an email address was indicated, I just sent a photo/scan by mail to this address. – Spunky

1.3.7 Yacht in Transit – Spare Parts

Jan. 2020 - Tahiti Cruiser’s Guide: This information resource for the cruising community now covers all of French Polynesia. Lots of info about what’s available in Tahiti, and how to ship stuff in if what you need is not available. [http://www.tahiticruisersguide.com](http://www.tahiticruisersguide.com) – Soggy Paws


Sept. 2013: Spare parts and equipment required to repair a vessel under the temporary admission status (“admission temporaire”), may be imported and cleared through customs without paying customs dues. However, since mid-July 2013, these goods must also be declared for export when you check out of French Polynesie.

Yachts owners/skippers can import/export goods by themselves, however there is alot of paperwork involved and the process can be “tricky”. Assistance of a yacht agent can be very helpful (which also includes extra services like collecting the shipment at the port/airport and arranging final delivery to the yacht). If the total of the shipment is over 350 Euros you are now required to have an agent under the new law.

Fees involved for bringing in spare parts are those charged by the customs broker (for the 2 Customs declarations/paperwork for “temporary admission” and “final exportation”) and NOT for Customs duties. These fees depend on the shipment’s CIF value (goods value + insurance + freight). On average, fees invoiced by the customs broker for each declaration are between 10 and 25,000 Cfp depending on the CIF value (1 Euros = 119,33 Cfp, 1 USD is currently approx. 87 Cfp). DHL can be both your shipper and agent. – Noonsite

1.4 Getting Visitors In and Out

We’ve already got friends inquiring about visiting us when we get to well-known places like Bora Bora. Here’s what we know about having friends visit.

Getting them there

Air Tahiti [www.airtahiti.aero](http://www.airtahiti.aero) offers domestic flights to other destinations in French Polynesia, and Air Moorea [www.airmoorea.com](http://www.airmoorea.com) makes the short hop to Moorea several times daily. Charters flights such as Air Archipel are available on request. Helicopters are one other option.

If your friends (or you) want to see more of French Polynesia, be sure to have them check out Air Tahiti’s multi-island Air Pass. [www.airtahiti.com/articles.php?id=69](http://www.airtahiti.com/articles.php?id=69)
There is also a ferry from Papeete to Moorea. That distance is only about 10-15 miles, and it is possible to back-track to Tahiti yourself by boat, or ferry over to meet them.

Where to have them meet you

Though Tahiti is easiest and cheapest for people to visit, it’s probably best not to have them come into Tahiti (unless you need the parts they are carrying!) You are really busy in Tahiti--fixing things and reprovisioning. Not much time to go sightseeing.

Raiatea is a good place to have sailing friends fly into. The entire Raiatea/Tahaa lagoon is available for cruising, plus good hiking and sightseeing opportunities. Plenty to keep visitors busy for 2 weeks. And, if the weather is nice, you can even get over to Huahine and/or Bora Bora (a day sail in either direction).

Many people want to come visit you in Bora Bora, just because of the name value. That’s OK, too, though in a 2 week visit you might run out of things to do, staying just inside the lagoon in Bora Bora. One option for someone wanting to come for a longer visit, is to have them fly into Raiatea and out of Bora Bora. There is one daysail in the open ocean, but otherwise the rest of the time you have sailing in the protected lagoons.

2018: Another option is Mo’orea. They can transfer from the airport to the ferry terminal by taxi and catch the ferry over to Mo’orea. You can meet them at the ferry terminal or have them take a taxi or bus to your location. This worked really well when our kids joined us for 2 weeks. – Jacaranda

1.5  Maneuvering and Anchoring in the Societies

We’ll assume that by the time you get to the Societies, you have already cruised the Marquesas and Tuamotus, so we won’t hash over all the same information here (see those Compendiums for details).

Please send us updated information, if you have anything that is specific to the Societies, or different from what we found in the Marquesas and the Tuamotus.

1.5.1  Marine Protected Areas

Marine Protected Areas Guide:


August 2018: Since we transited through French Polynesia in 2010/2011, the government has made many changes to anchoring areas. The latest copy of the Marine Protected Areas, and the regulations surrounding them, are published in a guide downloadable from the internet. Sorry, I could not find an English version. Time to start practicing your French! – Soggy Paws

1.5.2  Anchoring in Coral

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

Anchoring Conditions in the Societies (from Soggy Paws):

In most of the anchorages in the French Polynesia, your anchoring conditions are

1. Solid coral bottom
2. Sand with a lot of coral heads
3. Sand with a few coral heads (rare)

The water depth is usually 35-50 feet, and the coral heads are 4-5' off the bottom, and scattered on the bottom at about every 6-10 feet or so, with sand in between. This is a perfect setup to badly wrap your chain, damaging the coral and endangering your boat.
If your chain gets wrapped close to the boat, you no longer have the 'catenary' of chain that provides a shock absorber when the wind blows or the waves get big. You can snap the chain, or break bow rollers and windlasses in this situation.

To minimize the problems and the risks, after experimenting some, we routinely buoyed our chain to make it hang in the water above the coral heads. This turned out to be a pretty neat arrangement.

Using readily-available 'pearl farm' buoys, which can be found on any windward beach in French Polynesia, we tied 2 together with a short line, and fastened a snap shackle in the middle of the short line. This was our float. A big fender would probably work pretty well too, as illustrated above.

We did our best to drop our anchor in a sand spot, set out a normal amount of chain (only 3x-4x the water depth, due to the deep water), and back on the anchor until we were sure it was set well. Then we gently pulled in enough chain to equal approximately 1.5x the water depth, snap on our 2-buoy contraption, and gently let the chain back out. The snap shackle makes it easy to attach and detach as you are anchoring.

In a typical 35-foot anchorage, the buoys would be snapped on our chain about 50 feet from the bow roller. This leaves about 30-40' of chain laying on the bottom, where it might wrap, but also provides the correct angle of pull for the anchor. But the last 100' of chain is neatly suspended about 10' above the tops of the coral heads. (Depending on the weight of your chain and the size of your buoys, experiment with buoy-to-chain ratio to make it like this).

If the wind switched, we would probably wrap the first 30-50', but we always have more chain we can let out. We initially only deployed one float, but had a second set of buoys ready to deploy, in case we needed to let out more chain.

The snap shackle is not absolutely necessary, but it does make it easy to snap on and remove a pair of buoys in a few seconds, as the chain is coming in or going out. This is pretty important in case you need to up-anchor quickly. The shackle only has to hold a few hundred pounds of chain, in water, so it doesn't need to be super-heavy. Caribiners or something similar might be scrounged out of your spare hardware box to do the trick.

If your chain does get wrapped...

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

In some deep anchorages inside the lagoon, it can be difficult to see the bottom snorkeling, and therefore difficult to see what's going on when your chain seems stuck. It is USUALLY possible to unstick your chain...
without diving on it—patience and calm weather are helpful. A snorkeler in the water can be helpful. But this is a time where having a dive tank can be a big help—even if you’re not an active diver.

**Not anchoring in coral...** After spending two season in the French Polynesia, we found that if you can make your way to the windward side of the atoll, there are usually spots where the sand has been pushed over the coral reef in big storms, and they make good sandy anchor spots in shallower water with only scattered heads.

1.5.3 **Using Out-Island Moorings**

**July 2019:** Many new anchoring restrictions are being put in place within the Society Islands. Please be aware of what those restrictions are to ensure you are in compliance. Tahiti and Mo’orea are currently establishing new anchoring rules that seem to change quickly. Bora Bora now requires you to stay on their new moorings marked BBMS where you will have to pay a fee. $30 for one night, $50 for 3 nights, $100 for a week. Francis will come by in his white, center council dinghy. He takes a photo of your boat and will provide a receipt for your moorings. The price includes trash pickup. He can be reached on VHF 9. If there are no moorings available, you can ask Francis for anchoring suggestions. He is very reasonable and friendly. – Sugar Shack

**Sep 2018:** Another word of caution on using moorings that are in various locations in the Societies. Raiatea, Tahaa, Huahine... If the moorings are not private, use at your own risk. These moorings have >>>NOT<< been maintained since they were installed, and a number of boats have broken free of their moorings this past season. If you still want to take the risk, best to dive on the mooring and check it out - making sure the shackle is seized (one boat came adrift not having the shackle seized), and that the chain has not worn thin at the bottom.

The number of moorings is also being reduced as they fail or mooring loops are chafed through, they are NOT being replaced.

It is very surprising that these moorings are used by all the charter companies and there is NO warning to their clients. We know since we charted for 2 weeks 6 months ago and I specifically asked about this issue..... "Itapa'apa'a" (No worries in Tahitian). We have tried to find out who is responsible for maintenance but no luck. If you do know, please let me know.

Huahine - Most if not all moorings are public

Tahaa - There are some private moorings in Baie Apu, Baie Hannamene, Baie Hurepiti - The rest are public use.

Raiatea - There are private moorings near the boat yards and town, and the rest are public use. – Jacaranda

**2017:** The FP government put down new heavy-duty moorings in Raiatea, Tahaa, Bora Bora and Huahine. These are very well done and appear that they are very strong. But we have constantly seen these mooring ruined by yachties who do NOT have a clue about how to tie up to a single point mooring. We are in a set of 5 moorings in Huahine. I went around yesterday via dink before they were taken and 2 of them are in terrible shape being almost sawed thru by folks that just don’t get it. I looked this morning and everyone but us is running a line thru the mooring from port to stbd that will not only destroy the mooring but chafe their line as well.

**How to Properly Tie up to a Mooring (or, don’t wreck the mooring, please!):**

First, never ever assume that a mooring is good without inspecting it. Boats are wrecked every year while crossing the Pacific due to trusting a mooring.

A mooring that is not properly inspected and revamped every 6 months can be very dangerous for your boat. Few of the moorings you will find in the South Pacific are inspected and revamped every 6 months. So, inspect it yourself! Some things to look for:
• Inspect the loop for signs of chafe. Inspect the length of line to make sure that the line is of appropriate strength for your boat, and that the line, the chain, the shackles, and the mooring are of appropriate strength/size for your boat.

• Inspect the chain, especially if the chain hangs in the sand. As the mooring ball “dances”, the chain rubs in the sand, resulting in very thin links.

• Inspect the connection to whatever is on the bottom... some are chain wrapped around a massive (dead) coral head. Some are concrete blocks with re-bar loops cast into the concrete (these can go bad).

• If you have a concrete block on the bottom, know the dimensions of that concrete block, and remember that concrete is half as heavy in water as it is in air (so a 500 lb block is only 250 lbs underwater). Do not assume that the islander who set up that mooring understands just how big a concrete block is required to properly moor a 45 ft cruising boat in a 35-knot squall.

**Proper Way to Connect to a Mooring**

The proper way to connect to a single-loop mooring is to run two lines, one from each bow cleat. Each line should go from the cleat, through the loop, and back to the same cleat. This provides redundancy, and eliminates the “sawing” problem.

Some moorings are short; if under full load the line goes into the water steeper than 33 degrees (1 down for 2 forward), extend it with your own lines. A near vertical mooring will rip off, even with a small boat. Don’t blame the mooring when that happens.

The fundamental problem is, of course, that every time someone drops an anchor in those areas, a few years of coral growth gets destroyed; so, advising cruisers not to use moorings will quickly ruin those wonderful places.

**Avoid Connecting to a Mooring:**

DO NOT run a single line from one bow cleat to another, through the mooring loop. This is a recipe for disaster! As your boat swings back and forth, this will saw on the loop, severely damaging it. In strong gusty wind, you can saw through a 1-inch 3-strand line in a couple of hours. We pulled one boat off the rocks, and heard of another boat whose boat was a total loss due to sawing through the loop. Even in light winds, you are damaging the loop (not being a good neighbor). Don’t be lazy! – Jacaranda

### 1.6 Weather

#### 1.6.1 General Societies Weather Conditions May – July

French Polynesia has basically two seasons throughout the year – the wet and warm season which runs from November to April and the dry and cool season which runs from May to September, with stronger winds.

Although it is an all year-round destination, it is generally known that the best months to sail are between April & May (Fall) and September & October (Spring).

The prevailing winds are easterly to south easterly between 15-20 knots sometimes increasing to 25 knots. With these conditions the sea can be choppy with a 1-1.5 metre swell.

The Maraamu may occur in the winter months from June to August. Prevailing winds will then shift to the southeast between 25-35 knots with swells between 2.5-3 metres in open waters. These conditions can last a few days. Passages even downwind in these conditions can be very uncomfortable as they are exposed to large swells and some passes can be dangerous during this time. Otherwise good anchorages may also be uncomfortable in many areas in these conditions.
Using wide-range GRIB files, you can see the Maraamu conditions approaching from the west, several days in advance of their arrival—watch for strong High-Pressure areas (over about 1025mb) passing well south of the Societies.

1.6.2 Cyclones in the Society Islands

Hurricanes or tropical depressions can occur Nov-April, but are rare.

March 2017 - Cyclones in the Society Islands and El Nino

In considering options for cyclone season, the option (for EU boats anyway) of staying in the Society Islands has higher risks than going to the Marquesas.

But when the El Nino cycle is considered, the Society Islands’ risk drops significantly based on cyclone history. In a newspaper article about the 1997 “Gonzilla” El Nino it was noted that French Polynesia was hit in the 1905-1906, an El Nino year, then spared until the 1982-1983 during a very strong El Nino cycle when five storms affected the region.

Doing my own online research, I could find 7 cyclones since 1983 which impacted French Polynesia. I then listed the ONI data (most reliable measure of El Nino/La Nina cycle) which tracks ocean temperatures. Positive numbers above +0.5c to +2.3c are required for El Nino and negative numbers -.5c to -1.7c is defined as La Nina. Here are the cyclones since 1983 and the ONI index values for the month and year that each occurred. All occurred during an El Niño designated period except Niko.

- 1991 Wasa-Arthur +1.4
- 1997 Martin +2.3**
- 1997 Osea +2.3**
- 1998 Alan +1.0**
- 2007 Arthur +1.3
- 2010 Oli +1.4
- 2015 Niko +0.5*

*Niko is the only anomaly, but just barely. It came 343 miles sw of Tahiti in January 2015 (not even close in cyclone terms).

EL Nino is defined as 5 or more “consecutive” 3-month blocks above +0.5 and here are the figures for Niko. Due to the dip in the Jan-Feb-Mar figures which dropped to +0.4 (just below the +0.5 cut off), the January (DJF) block was not technically during an El Nino cycle although above the cut-off value of +0.5.

3 MONTH BLOCKS # Niko #

bold months are classified El Nino

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SON</th>
<th>OND</th>
<th>NDJ</th>
<th>#DJF</th>
<th>#JFM</th>
<th>FMA</th>
<th>MAM</th>
<th>AMJ</th>
<th>MJJ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>+0.4</td>
<td>+0.6</td>
<td>+0.6</td>
<td>#+0.5</td>
<td>#+0.4</td>
<td>+0.5</td>
<td>+0.7</td>
<td>+0.9</td>
<td>+1.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The 1982-83 season is more difficult to precisely research but suffice it to say one of the worst cyclone seasons on record and clearly the worst for French Polynesia. The season occurred during a strong El Nino period.

Finally, as of February 2017, the ONI had switched to La Nina. From March 2017 the outlook is for Neutral period. The Society Islands appear to be a safe option for spending cyclone season during a La Nina period and during most neutral periods. I would be more circumspect during periods in which models are predicting an impending El Nino. I welcome thoughts on the subject.

A good description of the ENSO and SP cyclones. [http://reliefweb.int/map/indonesia/pacific-region-historical-storm-tracks-months-nov-apr1956-2009-different-enso](http://reliefweb.int/map/indonesia/pacific-region-historical-storm-tracks-months-nov-apr1956-2009-different-enso). This article is on Noonsite. – Mary Ann II
1.6.3 Weather Sources – With Onboard Email / SSB

Jan. 2020: Download "Weather Information That We Use in French Polynesia" complete with all services and files used while cruising in French Polynesia [http://www.jacarandajourney.com/other-good-stuff](http://www.jacarandajourney.com/other-good-stuff)

This includes what we use with internet access and without internet access. It includes many sources from Soggy Paws plus other sources. One section is the format to have weather sent to your email address every day at a specific time.

2020: We (Soggy Paws) found 7 possible sources of weather useful while away from internet.

1. The French Polynesia text forecast is available via Saildocs for both 1 day and 3-4-day forecasts.

Download a picture of the French Polynesia weather zones here:

The 1-day French Polynesia text forecast available via Saildocs in either French/English
To: query@saildocs.com
Body of email:
French ‘send fr.poly’ or
English 'send fr.poly.en' to request.

The 3-4 day French Polynesia text forecast available via Saildocs in either French/English
To: query@saildocs.com
Body of email:
(Meteo France Med Range FP weather in French)
(Med Range FP in English - Not perfect - new service still with some minor bugs)
Eric from s/v Sarana has graciously made a translator from the French versions to English. If Sarana’s translation is not available, there are French weather terms provided in Appendix A.

The French forecast about French Polynesia in quadrants like A35. ‘A’ is 5-10 degrees S latitude, B is 10-15 degrees, C is 15-20 degrees, etc. The ‘35’ is the area of longitude from 135-140, ‘40’ is 140-145, etc. Most of the Societies are in C40 and C45. Here’s an example of the C40 forecast.

C45
TAHITI/OUEST TUAMOTU
SECTEUR EST 17/21KT, RAFALES 30/35KT, MER AGITEE A FORTE, AVERSES OU PLUIE SUR MOITIE SUD ZONE.

C50
ILES SOUS LE VENT
SECTEUR EST 17/21KT VENANT A EST-NORD-EST MOLLISSANT 12/16KT, RAFALES 30KT, MER AGITEE.

2. The Fiji Met office

2019 Update: The Pangolin site has disappeared Below is the Physplot download.
[http://www.softsea.com/download/PhysPlot.html](http://www.softsea.com/download/PhysPlot.html)

Saildocs request is send fleet.nadi.

Second product is a text version (not coded) saildocs request is send nadi.sopac.

Produces 2 products that cover French Polynesia, one is the ‘Fleet Code’— a coded text file that can be pasted into a software program that will decode the codes into a surface analysis chart that covers from New Zealand east to about 120W. Download the Fleet Code program before you get out of internet range. The saildocs
request is send fleet.nadi. The second product is a text version that is not coded. The Saildocs request is send nadi.sopac.

The Nadi Fleet Forecast as Decoded by PhysPlot.

2016: We have used OpenCPN plug in for fleet code as a fleet code reader. This plugin is normally part of the newer versions of OpenCPN. You can download it from the OpenCPN Plugin Page https://opencpn.org/OpenCPN/info/downloadplugins.html. – Jacaranda

3. NOAA Hawaii Produces a text forecast that covers French Polynesia. It is a ‘High Seas’ forecast and really only gives locations of fronts and such, and major areas of wind. The SailDocs request is send FZPS40.PHFO.4.

4. GRIB files. GRIB files seem to be generally accurate except when stalled cold fronts from NZ run into troughs or convergence zones which lurk sometimes over FP. Then, no one, including the French, Fiji, or NOAA weather offices do a very good job of predicting what the wind will do in any given location.

5. New Zealand Weather Faxes

They only have one transmitter in NZ, so each product is broadcast on a different frequency every 15 minutes starting at xx00 (5Mhz), xx15 (9Mhz), xx30 (13Mhz), xx45 (16Mhz daytime, 3Mhz nighttime). All times are Local Fr. Poly (Tuamotus) times.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRODUCT</th>
<th>Product Code</th>
<th>Thu 14:00</th>
<th>Fri 06:00</th>
<th>Fri 18:00</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1200 SW PACIFIC MSL ANAL</td>
<td>0645</td>
<td>0600</td>
<td>0615</td>
<td>0630</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1800 SW PACIFIC MSL ANAL</td>
<td>1200</td>
<td>1215</td>
<td>1230</td>
<td>1245</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRANSMISSION SCHEDULE</td>
<td>1300</td>
<td>1315</td>
<td>1330</td>
<td>1345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0000 SW PACIFIC MSL PROG H+ 30</td>
<td>1400</td>
<td>1415</td>
<td>1430</td>
<td>1445</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0000 SW PACIFIC MSL PROG H+ 48</td>
<td>1500</td>
<td>1515</td>
<td>1530</td>
<td>1545</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0000 SW PACIFIC MSL PROG H+ 72</td>
<td>1600</td>
<td>1615</td>
<td>1630</td>
<td>1645</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0000 SW PACIFIC MSL ANAL</td>
<td>1800</td>
<td>1815</td>
<td>1830</td>
<td>1845</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0600 SW PACIFIC MSL ANAL</td>
<td>0045</td>
<td>0000</td>
<td>0015</td>
<td>0030</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRANSMISSION SCHEDULE</td>
<td>0145</td>
<td>0100</td>
<td>0115</td>
<td>0130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1200 SW PACIFIC MSL PROG H+ 30</td>
<td>0245</td>
<td>0200</td>
<td>0215</td>
<td>0230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1200 SW PACIFIC MSL PROG H+ 48</td>
<td>0345</td>
<td>0300</td>
<td>0315</td>
<td>0330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1200 SW PACIFIC MSL PROG H+ 72</td>
<td>0445</td>
<td>0400</td>
<td>0415</td>
<td>0430</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(subtract 1.9 to get dial frequency)

6. Hawaii Weather Faxes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UTC</th>
<th>Local Time</th>
<th>Product</th>
<th>Coverage Area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1724</td>
<td>0724</td>
<td>SIGNIFICANT CLOUD FEATURES</td>
<td>30S - 50N, 110W - 160E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1755</td>
<td>0755</td>
<td>STREAMLINE ANALYSIS</td>
<td>30S - 30N, 110W - 130E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1849</td>
<td>0849</td>
<td>SW PACIFIC GOES IR SAT PIC</td>
<td>40S - 05N, 130W - 165E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>0940</td>
<td>WIND/WAVE ANALYSIS</td>
<td>30S - 30N, 110W - 130E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1953</td>
<td>0953</td>
<td>24HR WIND/WAVE FORECAST</td>
<td>30S - 30N, 110W - 130E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2302</td>
<td>1302</td>
<td>48HR WIND/WAVE FORECAST</td>
<td>30S - 30N, 110W - 130E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2315</td>
<td>1315</td>
<td>72HR WIND/WAVE FORECAST</td>
<td>30S - 30N, 110W - 130E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2341</td>
<td>1341</td>
<td>24HR WIND/WAVE FORECAST</td>
<td>30S - 30N, 110W - 130E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2354</td>
<td>1354</td>
<td>STREAMLINE ANALYSIS</td>
<td>30S - 30N, 110W - 130E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0524</td>
<td>1924</td>
<td>SIGNIFICANT CLOUD FEATURES</td>
<td>30S - 50N, 110W - 160E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0555</td>
<td>1955</td>
<td>STREAMLINE ANALYSIS</td>
<td>30S - 30N, 110W - 130E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0649</td>
<td>2049</td>
<td>SW PACIFIC GOES IR SAT PIC</td>
<td>40S - 05N, 130W - 165E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0740</td>
<td>2140</td>
<td>WIND/WAVE ANALYSIS</td>
<td>30S - 30N, 110W - 130E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0753</td>
<td>2153</td>
<td>24HR WIND/WAVE FORECAST</td>
<td>30S - 30N, 110W - 130E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1102</td>
<td>0102</td>
<td>48HR WIND/WAVE FORECAST</td>
<td>30S - 30N, 110W - 130E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1115</td>
<td>0115</td>
<td>72HR WIND/WAVE FORECAST</td>
<td>30S - 30N, 110W - 130E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1141</td>
<td>0141</td>
<td>24HR WIND/WAVE FORECAST</td>
<td>30S - 30N, 110W - 130E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1154</td>
<td>0154</td>
<td>STREAMLINE ANALYSIS</td>
<td>30S - 30N, 110W - 130E</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On the Web

The full Hawaii schedule is available as a text email via Saildocs or online at http://weather.noaa.gov/pub/fax/hfhi.txt

The Streamline is available at this URL: http://www.prh.noaa.gov/hnl/graphics/stream.gif

And the Significant Cloud Features here: http://www.prh.noaa.gov/hnl/graphics/neph.gif

The Sat Photo is here: http://aviationweather.gov/data/obs/sat/intl/ir_ICAOF_bw.jpg

Getting the Hawaii Faxes via Email from Winlink or Iridium email

To get these files, email ftpmail@ftpmail.nws.noaa.gov

Here are the files I’ve been sampling using NOAA’s FTP file server because I don’t find these in the Winlink catalog and Sailmail won’t offer graphics files/attachments.

This just boils down to sending an email to winlink with some special commands in the body of the email. They require opening up your file size limit (to 40K in some cases) but one or two are practical with a good connection, without using up all one's time. These are the same products available via wxfax IF propagation supports getting them in a viewable, usable form, and IF the timing fits the crews' other plans. So the FTP option is just another arrow to have in the quiver.

- PJFB10.TIF - Pacific Wind/Wave Analysis 30S-30N, 110W-130E (Most Current)
- PWFE11.TIF - 24HR Pacific Wind/Wave Forecast 30S-30N, 110W-130E (Most Current)
- PJFI10.TIF - 48HR Pacific Wind/Wave Forecast 30S-30N, 110W-130E (Most Current)
- PWFA11.TIF - Pacific Streamline Analysis 30S-30N, 110W-130E (Most Current)
- QYFA99.TIF - Tropical Surface Analysis 40S-40N, 100W-120E (Most Current)
- PBFA11.TIF - Significant Cloud Features 30S-50N, 110W-160E (Most Current)
- PYFE11.TIF - 24HR Pacific Surface Forecast 30S-50N 110W-130E (Most Current)
No subject; use the following format with one or more files listed: open cd fax get PJFI10.TIF quit
I'm finding that connecting to the Winlink Hawaii station must be done the evening before I do a morning weather report (in order to connect). -- s/v Whoosh

7. Bob McDavitt's Weathergram

Subscribe: bob@metbob.com

Bob McDavitt produces a weekly summary of the weather for the entire South Pacific. Current situation and expected weather are sent out each Sunday with more emails depending on cyclones or severe weather activity. Request to be added to his distribution and once a week you will receive a BobGram.

To subscribe to text-only version of the weathergram (best for Sailmail/Winlink) and/or to get on his email list, send Bob an email.

If you have internet, Bob has two sites... one WITH GRAPHICS and one without.

The site without graphics is http://weathergram.blogspot.com/ (but with translate button)

His new site (with graphics) is here https://metbob.wordpress.com/

To get his weekly updates EMAILED to you at your Gmail/Yahoo, etc, locate the “follow” button at the bottom of the home page at https://metbob.wordpress.com, and enter your email address.

Note that if you are a non-English speaker, the blogspot version has a “translate” button that can be helpful.

1.6.4 Weather Sources – Voice

2019 verified (2016): Gulf Harbor Radio from New Zealand gives specific location weather on the SSB, and we have been able to hear them sometimes in the Tuamotus. This is a free service (donations accepted) but you need to register with them first. We have heard excellent comments about their weather reporting. Usually they do not cover FP but I assume that is because many people here do not know about them. They do give weather for the area between Bora Bora and Tonga and further west. – Jacaranda

- Freq: 8.752 19:15Z
- Alt Freqs: 8.779 & 8.297
- Contact them via email at weather@ghradio.co.nz

Register at Yachts in Transit New Zealand www.yit.co.nz and send in your position reports via YIT.

If you have internet, you can listen to the Gulf Harbor Radio broadcast via livestreaming on YouTube. (May-Dec only, see link on their website).

From the Yachtsmen's Guide issued by the Tahiti Tourism Board - In French only Météo France : tél. : 36 70 08 (forecaster on live) www.meteo.pf.

VHF Channel 26 and 27 (listen for the ‘MSSA Papeete’ announcements on VHF 16 for when the broadcast is).

By BLU (Mahina Radio) on 8803 KHz at 8:45 / 11:00 / 12:00 a.m. and 2:30 / 4:30 / 8:00 p.m.; and on 2182 KHz and then 2620 KHz at 8:03 / 8:33 a.m. and 6:03 / 6:33 / 9:00 p.m. (times are all local Tahiti time, -10UTC)

RFO transmits weather reports on

- FM at 89 and 91,8 MHz, on
- AM at 738 MHz, at 5:55 / 6:57 / 7:57 / 10:30 a.m. and 5:55 p.m.
1.6.5 Weather Sources – Internet

Soggy Paws has compiled a bunch of specific South Pacific weather links on their website. These are mainly for French Polynesia, westward to NZ, and northward to Hawaii. These are all the government office forecast products that are useful. (and a few non-govt sites)

Windy.com: Of course, everyone’s go-to internet weather these days is Windy.com. With this tool (either a web page or an app on a mobile device), you can look at both the ECMWF and GFS predictions and overlay additional information.

New Zealand Met


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

Australia Met

And for Australia. There may be a more user-friendly page, but I found this that seems to list all the products: [http://www.bom.gov.au/inside/itb/dm/idcodes/tables/current/difacs_products.shtml](http://www.bom.gov.au/inside/itb/dm/idcodes/tables/current/difacs_products.shtml)

NOAA Charts in Color from Hawaii

Though these are highlighted in color (much easier reading), they are small files, only about 30K each.


24, 48, 72 Hr SFC Prog for Entire Pacific


Satellite Pictures

This is likely available on a marine weather site somewhere, but here’s the link I use for Pacific Satellite: [http://aviationweather.gov/data/obs/sat/intl/ir_ICAO-F_bw.jpg](http://aviationweather.gov/data/obs/sat/intl/ir_ICAO-F_bw.jpg)

This picture is updated about every 15 minutes, and if you download and save successive files, you can get a fairly nice moving satellite picture. There are better moving satellite pictures available elsewhere, if you have the bandwidth, but in low-bandwidth situations, this will almost always work.

FIJI Met Office


They have some very good products, but some of them only start coverage west of 155 degrees West.

French Polynesia Met Office


**Bob McDavitt's Weekly Weathergram**

Subscribe by emailing: [bob@metbob.com](mailto:bob@metbob.com)

Bob produces a weekly summary of the weather and is delivered on Sunday mornings. It’s an excellent source of the big picture with more detailed information on various locations in the SP. Bob has two types of weekly “weathergram” emails... one WITH GRAPHICS and one as text only.

For text data that works best with Airmail (Sailmail & Winlink)

Works best with internet email program like Gmail or Yahoo, etc.

Weathergram with graphics is at [http://metbob.wordpress.com](http://metbob.wordpress.com). Click FOLLOW at bottom right to subscribe. To unsubscribe from WordPress: click the “unsubscribe” link on the bottom of the email. Or, if email wasn’t from WordPress then send a reply email saying LEAVE.

The site without graphics is [http://weathergram.blogspot.com/](http://weathergram.blogspot.com/) (but with translate button).

His new site (with graphics) is here [https://metbob.wordpress.com/](https://metbob.wordpress.com/)

**Gulf Harbor Radio Daily Weather**

Gulf Harbor Radio “live streams” their daily HF/SSB weather broadcast for the western Pacific. (Mon-Friday, May-Dec only). Find the livestream link on their website: [http://ghradio.co.nz](http://ghradio.co.nz)

### 1.6.6 Understanding the Weather Patterns

We (Soggy Paws) are pretty experienced cruisers and feel comfortable normally interpreting our own weather. However, our familiarity was with the Caribbean—Northern Hemisphere—weather. We were a little stumped when we first launched off from mainland South/Central America for French Polynesia. We still have trouble remembering that everything’s backwards when weather systems pass.

Several really good sources of instructional material on South Pacific weather exist.

1. Bob McDavitt’s *Mariner’s Met Pack for the Southwest Pacific* ISBN 1-877197-08-04 published by Captain Teach Press, Auckland, NZ. Though Bob is located in NZ and his weather focus is mainly the western portion of the South Pacific, his instruction manual covers a lot of useful information for the South Pacific in general. Purchase online: [Waypoint Books](http://waypointbooks.com), [Bluewater Books](http://bluewaterbooks.com) If you can’t find it, email Bob at [bob@metbob.com](mailto:bob@metbob.com)

2. Jim Corenmans “Letters from the South Pacific” originally published in the late 1990’s in Latitude 38 Magazine. Copies of this series of articles are floating around among boaters, and might be found on Latitude 38’s website. Jim had a great article on understanding South Pacific weather that is still really helpful to newbies entering French Polynesia. Download from here: [http://svsoggypaws.com/files/index.htm](http://svsoggypaws.com/files/index.htm)

3. David Sapiane’s *Weather for the Yachtsman*. I downloaded this document from the Gulf Harbor Radio Site [http://ghradio.co.nz](http://ghradio.co.nz)

4. The Hacking Family has a great circumnavigation website, and their South Pacific weather page is here: [http://hackingfamily.com/Cruise_Info/Pacific/SPacific_Weather.htm](http://hackingfamily.com/Cruise_Info/Pacific/SPacific_Weather.htm)
5. Check the Pacific Puddle Jump ‘Files’ section on Weather, there are usually some good, updated documents there.  http://groups.yahoo.com/group/pacificpuddlejump/

1.6.7  Professional Weather Routing

Generally, the Marquesas – Tuamotus – Tahiti runs are not too difficult, but just to add some info for those of you who worry about weather for the Pacific crossing.

One of the most-mentioned names in the South Pacific when talking about the weather is Bob McDavitt. Professional forecasts can be obtained from Bob McDavitt. Email him for detail at bob@metbob.com

Soggy Paws used a USA-based weather router named Ken McKinley at Locus Weather for the Easter Island to Pitcairn and Gambiers legs of their trip. Ken did a good job for them. Email Ken at locuswx@midcoast.com.

Another source of Pay-For weather routing is Bob Cook at Ocean Pro Weather.  (we have not used Bob, but he appears to be a professional world-wide router, check details on his website).

Robert Cook, Weather Router, Ocean-Pro Weather & Routing
www.Ocean-Pro.com
oceanpro.weather@gmail.com
Naples, FL:
239-775-7435 Cell Phone:
239-877-4094
Skype: captcook52@gmail.com

1.7  Obtaining Supplies

1.7.1  Bank / ATMs (Money)

The normal currency in the Societies is the French Polynesia Franc, usually abbreviated CFP or XPF.  In Nov 2019, the exchange rate was 100 CFP/XPF per US dollar, so a 500-CFP coin is about $5.00 USD.

The major islands in the Societies (Tahiti, Mo’orea, Huahine, Tahaa, Raiatea, Bora Bora) have banks.  You can try to exchange money at the Post Offices in the smaller islands.  Like most places, some local businesses will accept USD, but the exchange rate may be arbitrary.  Very few places accept credit cards.

See section on individual atolls for banks and ATMs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tahiti: Marina Taina Carrefor-ATM Mobile Gas ATM</th>
<th>Tahiti: Papeete Many banks and ATMs located downtown</th>
<th>Mo’orea Cooks Bay Maharepa</th>
<th>Mo’orea Cooks Bay Le Petite Village</th>
<th>Huahine Fare Banque de Tahiti</th>
<th>Raiatea Uturoa Two Banks &amp; ATMs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

General Information on Money

If you are interested in opening a French Polynesia OPT bank account, be sure to download “Opening a Bank Account in French Polynesia” from Jacaranda at http://www.jacarandajourney.com/other-good-stuff.

1.7.2  Cooking Gas (Propane/Butane)

See individual island section for specifics on cooking gas options in those areas.  We were told that just about every magasin will sell gas bottles, but only those confirmed by cruisers are listed below.
The *Tahiti Cruising Guide* has a current list of suppliers that fill non-French tanks.

### Cooking Gas Suppliers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tahiti, Marina Taina, Fuel Dock</th>
<th>Tahiti, Point Venus, Mobil &amp; Shell</th>
<th>Mo’orea Cooks Bay Fuel Dock</th>
<th>Huahine Fare Total Gas</th>
<th>Raiatea Uturoa Total &amp; Shell</th>
<th>Raiatea Carinage Boat Yard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raiatea Mobile Fuel</td>
<td>Bora Bora Vaitape</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Refilling Your Propane Tanks in French Polynesia

Download “*Refilling Your Propane Tanks in French Polynesia*” as it is a very helpful instructional document, with photos, on how to fill your propane tanks in French Polynesia. You will be able to fill your tanks 100% full every time using this method. Visit [http://www.jacarandajourney.com/other-good-stuff](http://www.jacarandajourney.com/other-good-stuff).

**Sept. 2019:** We found propane pricing to refill gas tanks varied by island. We paid 4500f for 20lbs. You can get American tanks filled in Tahiti, Fakarava and Nuku Hiva. However, if your tank is older than 10 years, they may not fill it, even if it has been recently recertified. Of course, this could be an uncommon situation. We tried to fill our tanks at the Mobile gas station near Marina Taina and McDonalds but they took more than a week and we ended up getting it back empty. – Sugar Shack

**Jan. 2019:** Adjacent to the Taina Marina (in Papeete) supermarket is a petrol station which will refill US and Camping-Gas propane bottles too (24 hour turn around) but at $60 for a US 20lb bottle, I can’t recommend them unless you’re desperate – even in the Marquesas it was only $45 for a fill!

The local 13kg/30lb bottles are $28, with a refundable deposit of $30 on the bottle, so just buy a hose barb for those local bottles which will cost you $5-6 in any hardware store, a length of hose, drill-out the one way valve in an old US regulator and decant them yourself. – Moon Rebel

**Sep 2018:** The Raiatea Carenage boatyard also fills propane tanks but it is very expensive. Best to make up your own hose and do it yourself. We have had our propane tanks (35 years old) filled in Papeete and no questions about certification or inspection dates. Cost of doing it yourself is about 2900F – Jacaranda

**March 2017:** In Papeete you can purchase Propane or Butane. Propane comes in Green bottles. This assumes you’re refilling yourself. At the Yacht Club there is bottled gas at the petrol station on the General de Gaulle highway just east of the club.

In Fare Utu at the Mobile Station near Ace hardware (Moana). 40 43 84 28 they will arrange refilling your bottles (US or Camping Gas) at the Gas plant nearby. The price is maybe 50% higher than self-filling but certainly more convenient. If you happen to be at the Marina Papeete they have four carts available for the short walk. Turn over time is usually a couple of days.

If you are at or near Marina Taina then take you bottles to the Mobil fuel station Taina +40-45-54-80. Drop off Mon/Wed/Friday wait 2 days and then pick up. Our US bottles are 30 years old and no questions about being certified, etc. – Mary Ann II

**July 2016:** The cost of butane is a set price in FP. Deposit on the bottle is 3000F Cost of the gas is 2800F. -- Jacaranda

1.7.3 **Fuel (Diesel/Gasoline)**

See individual island section for specifics on diesel and gasoline options in those areas.
Remember when inquiring about diesel and gasoline that diesel, in French, is called ‘gazoil’ and gasoline is called ‘essence’ (eh sans). Make sure you know what you are asking for!

The Tahiti Cruising Guide has a current list of suppliers that honor duty-free certificates.

Fuel Suppliers:
The following islands offer fuel (diesel and gasoline). Smaller islands provide fuel from the supply ship when they arrive. Please note that not all of these locations will honor the duty-free fuel certificate.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tahiti</th>
<th>Tahiti</th>
<th>Tahiti</th>
<th>Tahiti</th>
<th>Tahiti</th>
<th>Tahiti</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marina Taina Fuel Dock</td>
<td>Tahiti Yacht Club Fuel Dock</td>
<td>Hitia’a</td>
<td>Taravao</td>
<td>Mataiea</td>
<td>Onshore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mo’orea</td>
<td>Mo’orea</td>
<td>Huahine</td>
<td>Raiatea</td>
<td>Maupiti</td>
<td>Bora Bora</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooks Bay Duty-Free Cert only with cash</td>
<td>Vaiare Service station next to market</td>
<td>Fare Onshore, Duty-Free accepted</td>
<td>Uturoa 2-Gas Stations Fuel Docks</td>
<td>Cash only, no duty-free</td>
<td>Vaitape Onshore</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Supply ship will sometimes sell 200-liter drums, but will not always honor the duty-free certificate.

Some of the supply ships sell diesel by the liter directly from the ship. Usually by placing a hose over the side on the dock and pumping diesel into your jugs. You would need to prepay with the ships dock master. Same guy you pre-pay for veggies and other supplies.

Gasoline - From the supply ships only is available by 200-liter drums

1.7.3.1 General Information on Diesel and Gasoline

2019 verified (2011): If you are a foreign yacht you can get a paper that entitles you to buy fuel duty free throughout the islands at specific marine locations.

Sept. 2019: Obtaining a Duty-Free Certificate: It is very easy to obtain a duty-free certificate. You can either pay Tahiti Crew $60 to do it for you or you can do it yourself for free. The Douanes office is located downtown Papeete (by the commercial docks). Location on Chenel de Motu Uta (motu by NautiSport). Go to “Francisation et Hypotheques” office (2nd or 3rd door on right). Bring original and a copy of your boat paperwork and passport. You complete a form and they will issue you the certificate which is good for 6-months. Typically, you cannot renew your certificate until it expires or is very close to expiring. – Sugar Shack

None of the inland fuel stations recognize the duty-free paperwork. And some cruisers in 2010 reported that one fuel dock in the Leewards DID NOT recognize the duty-free certificate, but another one nearby did. So be sure to ask before pumping. To the best of our knowledge, diesel and gasoline are available at the following places (not all recognize the duty-free certificate):

- **Tahiti**
  - Marina Taina in Papeete (duty free certificate recognized)
  - Tahiti Yacht Club in Arue - Shell gas station
  - Hitia’a - gas station next to small dock
  - Taravao - in town 1 Km from Faratea docks
  - Mataiea - nearby Tehoro dock
- **Moorea** - Mobil gas station dock in Cooks BayMoorea, Vaiare - Mobil gas station (on land)
- **Fare, Huahine** (not on the water)
• Uturoa, Raiatea.
  o The Shell station has a guest dock nearly in the middle of town, offers duty free fuel.
  o The Total station dock is located just north at the head of the small inlet adjacent to the municipal marina, and offers duty free diesel. The Total Station is usually easier docking if the trades are blowing as its protected.
  o They are both close to each other so you can easily check them out.
• Maupiti (not duty free, cash only)

Locations are also noted on the map in the Yachtsman’s Guide in Tahaa, and Bora Bora.

None of the inland fuel stations recognize the duty-free paperwork. And some cruisers in 2010 reported that one fuel dock in the Leewards DID NOT recognize the duty-free certificate, but another one nearby did. So be sure to ask before pumping.

**March 2017**: The Tahiti Yacht Club dock sells duty free fuel but it is not recommended for yachts over forty feet or for long keeled boats unless you find a very quiet spell, due to restricted maneuvering room. – Mary Ann II

1.7.4 *Marine Supplies (Boat Parts)*

See individual island section for specifics on marine and hardware stores in those areas. [Tahiti Cruiser’s Guide](#) lists what is available throughout all of French Polynesia, and has information about shipping in what you can’t find in Tahiti. Download and save.

There are several pretty well-stocked marine stores in Tahiti (Papeete). However, once you are out of Tahiti, there is almost nothing to be found.

**Jan. 2020**: Mat Rigging, new owner, John Morvan +689 87 72 05 02  matriggingservices@gmail.com. Our martingale (seagull striker) had 4 of the 19 strands broken. Thank goodness we caught it before any major damage was done to our rig or mast. We noticed the damage while we were in Nuku Hiva where there are no rigging services available. So, we contacted Mat Rigging and Sailtech in Papeete to get quotes. Sailtech was really hard to reach and they just stopped responding before telling us if they could help us. Mat Rigging was incredibly responsive (via email), spoke English, and eager to please. John Morvan just purchased the business from Mateo 30 days prior to our communication.

We sent many communications (text and email) with the 3 boat part numbers including photos of the boat part numbers. John said he had all the parts in stock, confirmed at the time of signing on to the job, and confirmed after receiving cash payment. The day he was supposed to put the martingale on a flight he called to say that he did not have one of the parts (he had a left-hand thread vs a right-hand thread). He could order it or upsell us a toggle. Basically, he did not read the prior information, just said he had the parts in stock, took the money and then was trying to upsell us parts we did not need. Frustrating. He was very nice and tried very hard, but delayed us 10 days. He gave us a full refund. We ordered it from the U.S. – Sugar Shack

**Jan. 2019**: Refrigeration Repairs (Papeete): Michael’s Chandlery was well stocked with the standard Isotherm/Danfoss spare parts at surprisingly reasonable prices and provided that he’s not moved on, Mike aboard the British flagged yacht ‘Alila’ is a top-notch and well equipped refrigeration engineer; 5-star pricing, but he provides a 5* service to justify it. – Moon Rebel

1.7.5 *Importing Parts Duty-Free*

For updates on this topic try the Tahiti Cruiser’s Guide.

March 2017: The vendors in Pape’ete are very familiar with shipping parts all over French Polynesia. You can order the part and have it on the next ship. Shipping parts to the islands is very cheap. We had a solar panel shipped from Papeete to Marquesas and it cost < 1000f. – Jacaranda

March 2017: Many items are now available in Papeete, and the online guide was designed as a reference to finding items or services. Replacement of broken parts for a foreign yacht is duty free but two customs applications are required—one when the item arrives, and another when the yacht leaves FP. This “duty free” exemption does not apply to any new item on your vessel—only replacement parts, therefore you need to be ready to prove “replacement” when you leave FP (although I doubt this is rigorously enforced).

We have heard of a vessel having to physically destroy their old sails in front of a customs agent before getting their new sails duty-free. The double customs applications also doubles the charges of the customs brokerage. Mary Ann II was charged 6,000xpf times two for an 800 USA dollar order.

You are allowed to receive goods valued up to $300 duty free without requiring an application to customs (this figure includes shipping cost.)

Yachts in 2017 have received parcels in this manner at Marina Papeete and at Marina Taina. Shipping via the mail system from the UK takes approximately 5 weeks. DHL, UPS and Fedex will quote the time frames. We have found Parcel Monkey in the UK very reasonable. – Mary Ann II

1.7.6  Shipping Items In or Out


Express Shipping OUT of French Polynesia:

- DHL Express: 83 73 72
- UPS: 54 57 27
- FedEx Global Air: 45 36 45

Tahiti Ocean: +689 77 01 12 - http://www.tahiti-ocean.com/ or Tehau (Tehaurai Archer) - yacht4@mail.pf

While Tahiti Ocean offers services to luxury yachts visiting French Polynesia, they are also an excellent resource for blue water sailors in need of cleaning products, small hardware (which they have in their inventory) and misc. services. They are located in the Marina Taina however will make deliveries to the Leeward islands either by ferry or plane. When Russ and I were in Moorea, we broke our Shurhold boat hook. I called Tahiti Ocean and not only did they have the hook in stock, they got it onto the afternoon ferry, had someone in Moorea pick it up at the ferry dock, and delivered it to the dinghy dock in Cook’s Bay, all in the same day. We were wowed by that experience. About a week later, our engine fan started showing serious signs of fatigue so we called Tahiti Ocean and while they did not have the part in stock, they were able to find it in Papeete and again, sent it over on the ferry and had it delivered to Cook’s Bay the next day. We worked directly with Tehau who speaks excellent English and is very professional and pleasant to work with.

Jan. 2010: Our house batteries were nearly useless by the time we reached Tahiti and after much discussion and research and obtaining local quotes, we decided it was easier and most economical to have some shipped to us via container ship.

The process of importing goods to Tahiti for a Yacht-in-Transit was not as complicated as we would have imagined. We had a friend in the U.S. who consolidated several shipments and purchases for us into two packages that he then shipped to a freight forwarder in Miami. We had contacted APX in advance to make all the arrangements and schedule a shipment to Pape’ete. APX will provide a quote in advance as well as a tentative schedule of shipment dates and arrivals. The shipping time for the shipment via cargo ship from the U.S. to Pape’ete was only 10 days.
APX provides a shipment identification number to you that must be marked on all boxes and paperwork. They will hold freight in their warehouse for consolidation for 30 days free of charge. Since we were having several items shipped to a friend for consolidation first, we needed to provide APX with a Bill of Lading and an Invoice (not pro forma). You can make it up yourself or they will provide a form. We mistakenly thought that if the paperwork was included on the outside of all of the packages it would suffice, but the office and warehouse do not communicate, evidently, and since the office prepares the ship’s manifest, it needs all paperwork sent to them directly.

The battery company (highly recommended, by the way) was DC Battery Specialists in Miami. They delivered four Lifeline AGM batteries directly to the warehouse and did an exceptional job on follow-up and follow-through. Contact information: DC Battery (Oscar Niño) Tel: (305)758-5041. The shipping cost for consolidating and palletizing/shrinkwrapping the batteries and three extra boxes (nearly 200 pounds of freight) including insurance was $358 USD. Contact info for APX is www.shipping-worldwide.com, which provides most of their information you need as well as instant quotes. Their telephone is (305)597-0258 or toll free (877)597-0259.

On the Tahiti end we needed an agent to handle incoming Customs. It appears that we might have been able to handle this ourselves, but in the end, rather than sift through the bureaucratic red tape and arrange delivery, we were happy we used Polynesia Yacht Services located at Marina Taina. Our shipment was late and Laurent Bernaert worked diligently to get it cleared through Customs quickly and efficiently. He then collected the shipment (including the four batteries!), delivered them to the dinghy dock at Marina Taina and actually loaded them into the dinghy for us. The cost for his services, including the incoming processing fees, was about $250 USD. – Nine Cups (SSCA Newsletter January 2010)

1.7.7 Flying Stuff in on Air Tahiti

April 2019: We were concerned because we had 80 pounds of luggage over what we initially paid for on our flight from Tahiti to Raiatea. Air Tahiti was very accommodating. We didn’t need to take it to Air Tahiti Cargo as I feared, risking the possibility of it not arriving on our flight with us. Instead, we were allowed to check it with our flight and just had to pay an extra $56. – Cool Change

1.7.8 Rigging and Sail Repair

There are several sail repair facilities in Tahiti. Check out the Tahiti Cruiser’s Guide for more info.

Jan. 2020: Mat Rigging, new owner, John Morvan +689 87 72 05 02 matriggingservices@gmail.com. Our martingale (seagull striker) had 4 of the 19 strands broken. Thank goodness we caught it before any major damage was done to our rig or mast. We noticed the damage while we were in Nuku Hiva where there are no rigging services available. So, we contacted Mat Rigging and Sailtech in Papeete to get quotes. Sailtech was really hard to reach and they just stopped responding before telling us if they could help us. Mat Rigging was incredibly responsive (via email), spoke English, and eager to please. John Morvan just purchased the business from Mateo 30 days prior to our communication.

We sent many communications (text and email) with the 3 boat part numbers including photos of the boat part numbers. John said he had all the parts in stock, confirmed at the time of signing on to the job, and confirmed after receiving cash payment. The day he was supposed to put the martingale on a flight he called to say that he did not have one of the parts (he had a left-hand thread vs a right-hand thread). He could order it or upsell us a toggle. Basically, he did not read the prior information, just said he had the parts in stock, took the money and then was trying to upsell us parts we did not need. Frustrating. He was very nice and tried very hard, but delayed us 10 days. He gave us a full refund. We ordered it from the U.S. – Sugar Shack

July 2019: We had Oceans Sails (Michel Pegart Maître Voilier) do repair work on our sail bag and he did not do a good job. After visiting his sail loft and speaking to him about types of threads used and process, we felt confident he’d do good work. We asked him to quote the repairs on our sail bag (strengthen and reinforce) and small spinnaker (blew out clew). The sail bag was the priority as we had a backup spinnaker.
With the sail bag we asked him to patch the small holes, reinforce all stitching, reinforce the batten sleeves, re-attach our name flap which came off, and generally reinforce everything. He said it would be “no problem, easy job, and could be done in a few weeks at very little money.” Several weeks later, my husband went to pick it up and paid $600 (more than a little money to us, but our bad for not getting an exact quote first). When my husband went to install the sail bag, he noticed several areas had the new stitching already coming out (Michel failed to lock stitch the beginning and ends). In addition, in several places the stitching was crooked when it should have been straight. Unfortunately, we had guests coming and needed the sail bag up. So, my husband finished with the install before we had to leave. Very poor craftsmanship and work.

In addition, with the spinnaker he said it would cost well over $1,000 to repair or he would have to cut it down and charge a little less. This is an 18-year-old spinnaker so it was not worth the cost to repair. We took it back.

We were very disappointed in the work from Ocean Sails. We had higher expectations since he had several good reviews, the loft was professional and he “said all the right things.” – Sugar Shack

April 2019: Tahiti Sails. We worked with Guillaume Jestin g.jestin@gmail.com. We have a DP Hydranet mainsail which is a difficult fabric to resew. We had him raise the clew, move the tack back, and repair significant damage to all seven full batten pockets. His knowledge, workmanship, and skill level were exceptionally high. I rate the business as excellent. He showed up exactly on time and completed the work. He replied to our emails very quickly and he is fluent in English. I am highly impressed given that he was under the added strain of having an entire ARC fleet in town clamoring for his attention. He worked over a holiday to complete the work at the promised time. I would rate their business a 10 out of 10. – Nehenehe

March 2017: The Tahiti Cruiser’s Guide lists three additional sail makers as of 2017: Tahiti Sails, Sail Tech and Nautilus Sails. Under Rigging you will find API Rigging, Mat Rigging and Sail Tech. Several of the chandleries also sell blocks and other rigging part including Oceans2000 and Tahiti Yacht Accessorie Marina Taina. – Mary Ann II

2014: Getting parts of the rig replaced by API Yachting (Papeete) was also a special adventure. Instead of the promised three weeks it took three months in the end to get all parts delivered (we did the replacing and tuning ourselves).

The rigger didn’t respond to e-mails or phone calls (especially nice after receiving a 60 % deposit) and wasn’t a pleasure to deal with in general. He was very expensive, did not quite deliver what we asked for, but at least the quality of the wires, terminals, toggles and turnbuckles seems okay.

Fortunately, there’s now new competition in town: Matthieu (a fellow cruiser we’ve known since the Gambier) is setting up a shop and will soon start work (contact him in Taina)! – Pitufa

2011: This short article is to advise other cruisers sailing in French Polynesia to be careful when deciding where to have sail repairs undertaken.

Pipistrelle is a 48ft Wauquiez. We left the UK in 2008, and had new sacrificial strips added to the genoa and staysail in St Lucia in 2009. On leaving Panama in 2011, all the sails which were new in 2006 looked in good shape for the Pacific crossing. By the time we reached the Marquesas the stitching on the sacrificial strips was coming undone, not an uncommon problem. They were repaired expertly in Taiohae Bay, Nuku Hiva by a cruiser who has a sail loft there.

We then sailed through the Tuamotus to Tahiti, and by that time had two tears in the main, one by the luff where one panel had given out at the first reefing point, and the second further along the 1st reef, which we had repaired ourselves on passage but required professional sail repair..

This sail and also the genoa were collected from Marina Taina by API Yachting, which is run by an American, Christophe. His sail loft is in Papeete, and we had provided details of our requirements both by email and by telephone in advance of collection. The repairs were completed and Christophe assured us he had thoroughly checked the sails. According to him, the main in particular “had a lot of beef left in it”, an expression to indicate we would have no problem reaching New Zealand, and probably Australia.
Having got the sails back on board, we were dismayed to find that although Christophe had charged for two repairs to the main, only the luff had been done. So the sail was duly collected again and repaired.

We then sailed direct from Papeete to Huahine, an overnight passage, and as so often happens in these islands, the whole time one is trying to sail slowly to avoid arriving before daybreak. We had 25 knots of wind, and sailed with two reefs in the main, and no headsail. As daylight broke, we could not believe that the main now had another large tear by the luff below the second reefing point. So much for Christophe's expert advice.

At Apooiti Marina in Raiatea we discovered Voilerie Sellerie Aveia, a sail loft run by a charming French lady, Regine. The day after we had left the main with her for inspection, she had laid out on the sail loft floor to show us the many areas of the sail where UV had damage had taken its toll, making repairs essential. Her charges were good value; her work exceptionally professional and thorough. Regine had not just stitched around the patches as was the case at Api Yachting, she had sewn down the length of the repair following the seams to match the stress in the sail. She also took the time to show us her repair work. The majority of her business comes from the two charter companies that operate from the marina, and as she pointed out, sometimes she has to turn work away from private yacht owners because she is so busy with the charter fleets. Contact Details are below. – Pippstrelle

**Yacht Services, Nuku Hiva**

- Tel 689 91 01 50
- Email: yachtservicesnukuhiva@yahoo.com
- Note: Good repair service, but no new sail material available.

**Api Yachting**

- Tel 689 42 18 10
- Email: apiyachting@mail.pf
- Note: Be very careful, little attention to detail. In our case very poor service.

**Voilerie Sellerie Aveia**

- Ent. Faux Regine
- Raiatea
- Tel 689 66 14 04
- Email: Reginenina@yahoo.fr
- Note: Excellent service, highly recommended.

**Mat Rigging**

- John Morvan
- +689 87 72 05 02
- matriggingservices@gmail.com

### 1.7.9 Provisions (Groceries)

See individual islands section for specifics on magasins, markets, and fresh produce options in those areas. Most islands with villages will have some type of magasin.

**March 2017:** The [www.tahiticruisersguide.com](http://www.tahiticruisersguide.com) lists 10 different options in the Tahiti area for groceries. The three main anchorages/moorings/marinas around Papeete all have a major Grocery Markets within a 15-minute walk. We found food to only be 23% more expensive than the UK. For the details check out Noon site March 2017. – Mary Ann II

**2011:** Papeete has an excellent selection of groceries—pretty much anything you might desire. Prices are more reasonable that in the outer islands—only slightly higher than US prices. – Soggy Paws
There are also good groceries available in...

- A big Super Champion store near the ferry dock in Moorea;
- Fare, Huahine;
- Uturoa, Raiatea
- Bora Bora

1.7.10 Trash and Recycling

Most islands will have proper trash receptacles that you can utilize. However, there are a few islands that are uninhabited or do not have a proper trash disposal system. Please be respectful of these beautiful places. Try to wait to dispose of your trash properly.

Burning Trash: If you are going to burn your trash on uninhabited islands please return after the fire is out to remove any noncombustible articles or do not burn them in the first place. Remember these islands, motus, and islets are owned by someone and you are burning your garbage in someone’s back yard. This is someone’s backyard and should be left the way you found it.

Most of the larger islands have some sort of recycling. Please be sure to separate your trash from plastic (clear and colored bottles), glass, and cans. It appears that the Marquesas do not recycle cardboard or paper.

1.7.11 Water

See individual island section for specifics on water options in those areas.

Soggy Paws gathered this list of where fresh water might be obtained ashore in the Societies.

- Marina Taina, Papeete
- Marina Papeete has potable water on the docks
- There is a ‘potable water’ spigot at Tahiti Yacht Club, accessible by dinghy, or by rafting up, from a dock with the big boat.
- Mo’orea has a fresh water spring tape between Cooks ay and Viarae Bay. Otherwise the water in Mo’orea is not portable.
- There is NO water at the fuel dock in Cooks Bay, Mo’orea
- Main quai in Fare, Huahine. Check with Dive Shop to obtain the key. They do charge a fee for water.
- The visitor’s dock at Marina Apoiti, Raiatea
- The fuel station dock in Uturoa, Raiatea
- The Vanilla Tours dock in Hurepiti Baie, Tahaa
- Taravana Yacht Club, Tahaa
- Bora Bora Yacht Club, Bora Bora
- Bloody Mary’s in Bora Bora

1.7.12 Medical

See individual island sections for more details on medical facilities and doctors.

Oct. 2019 - Dentist: Docteur Daniel Carnio, Chirugien-Dentiste, Diplome de la faculté de Nancy, Immeuble Air Tahiti, Faa’ a B.P. 61763, Tel. 4082 2228 (recommendation from Dentist Dr Guirado, André; Ua Pou, Marquesas). -- Taitonga

1.7.13 Obtaining Medicine and Prescription Drugs

See individual island sections for more details on prescription drugs.

2017: I wanted to offer a pharmacist for all of French Polynesia. Patrick Ly (pharmaciedetiarei@mail.pf) +689 87 79 16 93) runs his own pharmacy in northern Tahiti, but is available to all of French Polynesia via email, text,
phone, and Skype. He speaks English well and is willing to ship medications anywhere in FP. He understands cruisers’ needs to order large volumes and is very helpful in finding alternatives. If he can’t provide a specific solution, he will say so. – Kandu

1.8 Communications

See individual island section for specifics on communication options in those areas.

1.8.1 VHF

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

Though widely spaced in channel number, channels 16, 68, and 18 are very close to each other in frequency. Most VHF antennas are ‘tuned’ for channel 16, so long distance communications will work best on 18 or 68. Conversely, in a crowded anchorage, transmission on high power on channel 18 or 68 may ‘bleed’ over to channel 16.

Be aware that some channels that Americans use frequently are ‘duplex’ channels in International mode. So, for example, you may have trouble communicating with a European boat, or an American boat whose radio is in International mode, on Channel 18. (see any VHF guide for the full list of international and US channels and frequencies).

In Moorea/Papeete, Channels 12 and 14 are used for Port Operations—stay off those channels unless you are contacting those entities.

In Raiatea, several frequencies are monitored by locals, so stay away from those channels. We have heard regular local traffic on 67 and 10 (Sunsail)

Mahaina Radio uses Channels 26 and 27.

1.8.2 SSB Nets

Polynesian Magellan Net: Found at 8.173USB. There are two scheduled net times. The morning net is at 1800Z and the evening net is 04:00Z. The net time in the morning 18:00. (08:00 Tahiti time, 0830 Marquesas time, 0800 Tuamotus time).

During off season, the morning net is only for emergency traffic and underway boaters. There may be times when the morning net may be suspended until season. However, the evening net occurs daily throughout the year and is open to general check ins. – Jacaranda and Sugar Shack

Pacific Seafarer’s Net: If you’re a ham, for longer passages, we always checked in with the Pacific Seafarer’s Net. This is also a good frequency to have saved in case of emergency—the Hams on the PacSea net will move heaven and earth to help any boat with a true emergency—ham operator or not. Even when there is no net going on this frequency, there are often hams monitoring the frequency for emergency traffic.

The Pacsea net operates on 14,300 Khz USB at 0300 UTC. They start with a ‘warmup session’ at 0300, where you can call in and chat, and maybe hook up with someone who will make a phone call to the US for you. They start calling boats on the roll call at 0310UTC, and when they finish (3060 minutes later), they call for boats getting ready to go on passage to get on the list for tomorrow’s net. – Soggy Paws

Northland Radio offers a tracking check in service for vessels underway (fee required). Northland Radio is located in the Bay of Islands, New Zealand. Peter has large antenna and has been able to work boats.
throughout most of the South and Central Pacific. Learn more and contact Peter Mott at https://northlandmaritimeradio.nz/products/passage-tracking. Contact peter@northlandradio.nz – Jacaranda

### 1.8.3 Telephones and Cell Phones

See individual islands for internet access. Most post offices will sell sim cards and most atolls have pay phone booths in the main villages.

Also, see 1.8.4 Wifi / Internet as most resources for wifi / internet include calling.


**2018:** Thanks to Mark on Starlet for letting me know that Vini is now able to run both data and voice thru the same sim card. This is a recent event (2018) so no need to buy two sim cards. BUT data is very expensive using this method. Best to sign up for a plan if possible.

I checked in the Vini office (3-20-18) in Papeete and was assured that sim cards purchased in Marquesas can now be used for both data and voice. – Jacaranda

**March 2017:** There are now two providers in the Societies with Vodaphone and Vini. If you plan to stay in French Polynesia more than 6 months a mobile phone VV contract may be worth considering as they start at 920xpf a month for a minimum of one year. Currently that is aprox 84 US a year. But this gives you access to 3G internet at fairly reasonable prices. Again, see the internet section of the Tahiti Cruiser’s Guide for more details. – Mary Ann II

**2011:** You can call outside Polynesia from any island at the local post office. You can also call from phone booths scattered around the islands (even in small towns) by purchasing an Opticard telephone card (I think at the Post Office and maybe tourist shops and grocery stores).

**Cell Phones:** The cellular operator in French Polynesia is called ‘Vini’. Cell phone coverage in the Societies is pretty good, but operates on the European 900 Mhz frequency (so with a US phone, you will need a higher end phone, quad or tri band). The cheap single-frequency Central American phone we had does not work in Fr Poly. If you have a compatible phone, you have two options:

(a) Buy a French Polynesia ‘Vini’ prepaid sim card in Tahiti at the main post office, or the airport, in Papeete, and sometimes at the Carrefour grocery stores.

(b) use your home country sim card (with international roaming enabled)

Buying the local sim will give you a local phone number (handy for local communications), and cheaper communications. It costs (I think) 1000 CFP and you get 500 CFP phone credit. At $1/minute on international roaming, the local sim will pay for itself in local calls in one or two calls.

When buying the sim card, I would also recommend that you stock up on pre-payment cards, as you might not find them in every town.

If you have a US or EU GSM quad-band phone (ATT and T-Mobile are GSM networks), and cannot accept a different sim card, if you have International Roaming set up, you can use your cell phone WITHOUT purchasing a local sim card. When you switch on you will see the "F VINI" displayed on the screen which means you are connected. Be very wary of using this for regular calling or data, as the international roaming rates for voice and data are outrageous. (ie, one or two 10-minute calls at $3 a minute would pay for a cheap Vini phone).

Be aware however, that given the rates to call abroad it is better to receive calls than make them. We got our sim card at the Post Office in downtown Papeete. – Soggy Paws
1.8.4 Wifi / Internet Access

See individual island section for specifics on internet options in those areas. See Telephones and Cell Phones for updated information on Vini and GoogleFi.


**Sept. 2019:** Vini is able to run both data and voice. However, data is very expensive and slow. We found that where our Vini sim card worked so did our GoogleFi leading us to believe that GoogleFi was using Vini services. Both were 2G and very slow, but it was access.

If you stay in one of the marinas, ask them to write a letter for you stating you are staying in the marina (“similar to a residence letter”). Take that letter to Vini and ask for an annual plan to receive significant discount. We paid the year up front so we did not have to bother finding a Vini store each month to make a payment. We paid a flat fee for the contract and small box (around $60-80 USD) and then $50/mo for 10 gigs. They had several monthly plans including 2, 4, 6, and 10 gigs at varied prices. – Sugar Shack

**Vini Wifi Network**

Buy a Vini Wi-Fi prepaid card at any post office Vini store or many small magazines. Cost are not by the megabyte but by the hour and bandwidth can be very narrow. Cost are $5 per hour for one hour and drop to around a dollar an hour for 100 hours.

Nearly everyone who has used the hourly Wi-Fi system have seen glitches where chunks of time vanish from their account. In fact, from about May 2016 to October 2016 a one-hour Vini WIFI card never expired (those were the days!). In Papeete there are easily accessible Vini shops with English speaking staff, here buying the 100-hour cards is a safer bet as they have been able to recredit users accounts.

**VINI 3G Internet**

If you plan to be in FP for more than nine months then there are two options for 3G internet access either with your smart phone, 3g capable tablet or with a Vini 3g router. This is rather complicated to get as it requires letters from a marina to the Vini company to set up. Again, a detailed account is available at the online Tahiti Cruiser’s Guide.

If you stay in Marina Papeete they provide free wifi in their lounge with reasonable bandwidth.

The Viama Centre across from Marina Papeete has an internet cafe with excellent bandwidth if you need to download larger file etc. – Mary Ann II

**2011:** Reminder: Internet access in French Polynesia is via satellite and is REALLY SLOW. Do your fellow cruisers a favor and turn off ALL automatic downloads (Windows Updates, podcast downloads, etc). Limit your Skype calls and turn off the video. Then we can all get our email, and be able to access important website information!!

Internet access is possible at all the major harbors, here is where we know there is access.

Hotspot WDG ([www.hotspot-wdg.com](http://www.hotspot-wdg.com)) shows locations in all of the Society islands. Again, you can sign up online with a credit card, wherever you find a hotspot.
In some locations you might find a computer you can use (I don’t know if it costs to use it) at the post office. But if you really want internet access, bring your own laptop with a good wifi card.

Be forewarned that ALL internet in French Polynesia is slow. Add 20 cruising yachts who haven’t had internet in a month, and the slow internet gets slower. Be kind to your neighbors and turn off Windows Updates, and automatic download of large Podcasts while you are slow/remote internet connections. It is also a good idea to predownload anything you MIGHT need to your computer ahead of time (programs and web pages we have recommended in this Compendium, for example!!) – Soggy Paw

1.8.5 News

Here are some sources of news that we used to keep abreast of what was happening in the world.

English Language Voice News

After a lot of research on the internet before we left Central America, but I found that what worked best was to dial around on the 9Mhz band at the time of day I wanted to listen to news (morning and evening are the best times for propagation).

We found the BBC on 9695 am at 1600-1700 UTC (mornings) and 12095 usb at 0100UTC (afternoons).

Radio NZ

9.580 AM FP time
11.725 PM FP Time
15.720 PM FP time

30-minute BBC broadcast at 16:00-16:30 Tahiti local time on Radio NZ

Radio Australia

15.240 PM FP Time
Voice of America does claim to broadcast to French Polynesia, but all the broadcasts are in the middle of the night in French Poly. 1230-1300 UTC on 9600 and 1400-1430 UTC on 9830.

**Sept. 2018:** We have not found any BBC news via SSB or anything besides radio New Zealand (11.725) 18:00 local. Radio NZ gives very little or nothing of international news but does cover NZ. Frequencies we have listened to for radio NZ are 7.425, 11.725, 15.720 check around 1700Z-1900Z.

We use an app called SWBC Sked that covers the whole world but appears that the freq list has not been updated since we downloaded it 3 years ago. Soggy Paws is right SW broadcasts are being phased out – Jacaranda

**2011:** As the internet proliferates, English-language voice broadcasts seem to be dwindling. Many of the broadcasts you can find these days by dialing around are either religious-oriented, or anti-American oriented (so listen carefully!).

**News via Email**


**2011:** I don’t know of any news service that formulates a customizable daily news email for yachts at sea (if you do, please email me, see email address at front of this guide).

But we had success, using Sailmail, in subscribing to a ‘daily news email’ from Reuters. We set it up so it went to a shore email address, and then we used Sailmail’s Shadowmail feature to retrieve the daily emails when we felt we needed news, and had good enough propagation, to retrieve the email, stripped of all the graphics and stuff.

The daily ‘US News’, coming in through Sailmail, was only 7Kb. It contains the ‘top 10’ headlines, with a one sentence summary of each. Check out what Reuters offers at [http://links.reuters.com](http://links.reuters.com). – Soggy Paws

### 1.9 Diving

See each individual island for more information on diving in those areas.

If you do NOT have a compressor aboard, have your dive tanks inspected and pressure tested before you leave for French Polynesia. Getting fills at any commercial dive operation can be difficult if your inspections are not in date. Just about any dive shop can do the annual visual inspection, but the every-5-year hydrostatic test takes special equipment. Even in the U.S. the dive shops usually send the tanks out for the hydro. It is likely that the only hydro testing you will find in French Poly will be in Tahiti.

Unlike the Tuamotus, the Societies have a lot of dive operations, so finding a dive boat to supply equipment and take you on a dive is not difficult at all.

There are two guide books that we know of for diving in French Polynesia:

- **The French Polynesia Diving Guide**, Kurt Amsler, Abbeville Press (undated). This is a pretty coffee-table type book. It only covers 3 of the Tuamotus (Rangiroa, Tikehau, and Manihi), but has some stunning pictures, and has a pretty good color section on ‘The Fish of French Polynesia’. It also covers the Marquesas (Nuku Hiva) and The Society Islands. Available from Amazon.com.


We didn’t do much diving in the Societies. After the Tuamotus, the Societies are pretty drab. The Crown of Thorns starfish, and warm water events, have pretty much killed most of the coral.
We did do 2 dives in Bora Bora—the Manta Dive and the Lemon Shark dive. See the Bora Bora section for details.

1.10 Surveyor

Nov. 2019: Patrice Beuscher (+689 87 32 55 cabinet.maritime.beuscher@gmail.com). He lives in Papeete but will travel to other islands to survey boats. He is a Lloyd’s agent, marine surveyor, Cook Island and Flag State Surveyor and has been assuming surveys in FP for 9 years working with insurers all over the world. IMIS approves him (Kathleen Kathe Spidell). He speaks English, but has had issues with “translation” with a few boats.

His recommendations for boat yards are listed in priority order: Technimarine Shipyard (Papeete, Tahiti), then Raitea Carenage Shipyard (Uturoa, Raiatea, Society), third choice is Hiva Oa.

One boat reported that he is just an “ok” surveyor, report of “tick boxes” some contradicted other boxes. Did not complete or correct report. We reached out to him for a possible survey which we ended up not having to do. We found him “fairly” responsive and willing to provide information such as boat yards. – Sugar Shack

1.11 Haul Out, Storage, and Repair Facilities

There are (I think) 4 haulout/storage facilities in the Societies

- Techni-Marine (Papeete)
- Tahiti Nautic Center in Port Phaeton at the south end of the main island of Tahiti
- Raiatea Carenage
- CNI yard Raiatea

In addition to these, there is a haulout/storage facility available in Apataki in the Tuamotus. (See the Tuamotus Compendium for info).

There is also dockage available at these places, plus also at Marina Taina and the Quai in Papeete (see that section for more details).

Tahiti Nautic and Raiatea Carenage are covered with contact information and cruiser reports in their respective sections in this guide (see the table of contents).

1.11.1 Techni-Marine in Papeete

+ 689 40 43 02 22, technimarine@mail.pf, http://www.technimarine.pf They have three travel lists, the largest is 300-tons. Can accommodate monohulls and multihulls. Secure facility, fresh water, electricity (220/240volt), toilets, showers, parking, free wifi, freezer. Close to Papeava and Papeete Fishing Port.

July 2019: Patrice, the marine surveyor recommends this yard over other haul out facilities for our 47’ Catamaran. We were provided a quote for a haul and hang (survey) of 81,723 xpf. – Sugar Shack

May 2019: We worked with Teama at Technimarine. We had our waterline raised, light sanding with new bottom paint, and struts painted with LP paint. This is a difficult review to write because everyone at Technimarine worked hard to complete the work nearly on time; including a full day over the weekend which is highly unusual to have done by this yard.

While I truly liked Teama as a person VERY much, he proved to be completely inept at his job as project manager, (he is new to his job). I would strongly recommend that you work with someone else.

The long story is the following…. Teama did not track well with any of the project details, he either forgot things or got things mixed up. He said that supplies were ordered but they had not been, he said the exact same bottom paint had been found and seemed to say that it had arrived on site, it had not. When I stopped by a week before the start of work... he said he had still forgotten to order the supplies! He then scrambled
to try and find bottom paint, eventually found some, when it arrived it was not a paint we could use. Then just before work started.... he still had forgotten the epoxy primer.... This process went on, and on....

They failed to haul the boat on time, they delayed three times, one of which was with 30 minutes notice and we were already underway in the pass when Teama called to cancel. When we finally arrived for the haul out we had to motor up and drift back down the river for three hours while we waited. After we discovered the incorrect bottom paint, it was forced on me to make four trips and ten hours’ time trying to personally return the bottom paint to their supplier.

There are a lot more aspects to our difficulties at Technimarine than I wish to bore you with. In short it seemed that everyone else there was competent at their jobs and worked overtime to make up for Teama’s numerous mistakes. All the other employees were efficient and made the effort to make us satisfied. While they easily could have been much better; I must rate this business a 5 out of 10. – Nehenehe

March 2017: In 2017 Mary Ann II has gone to Technimarine on three occasions and each time found the manager friendly, helpful and in fact he made several calls for us inquiring about availability of parts. The haulout quote was 1,227xpf per foot which included power wash (that's less than we paid for any of our last three haulouts in Grenada, Antigua or Panama.)

You can do any work yourself. They have stainless welding equipment on site and spray painting can be arranged at 6,000xpf per hour. The cost may be higher if the larger travel lift is required? They currently have a 70-ton lift and a 300-ton lift. The lay days were more expensive than usual but mostly due to a 2619xpf to the Port Authority. – Mary Ann II

2014: We cannot recommend the haul-out facilities at Technimarine in Papeete. It’s expensive, the personnel were unfriendly to rude and Pitufa still bears the rust marks from the sanding of rusty fishing vessels in this boat yard. The only advantage of Technimarine is the vicinity of chandleries and hardware stores. On our second haulout we used Raiatea Carenage. – Pitufa

Jan. 2010: We chose to haul-out near downtown Pape’ete at TechniMarine on Motu Uta, just inside the breakwater when entering the Passe de Pape’ete. There is another haul-out facility for smaller vessels in Port Phaeton on the south coast of Tahiti, but it could not accommodate us.

There are also haul-out facilities in Raiatea, which did not suit our purposes since we were coordinating our shipment arriving in Pape’ete.

Though a fairly small yard, TechniMarine offered two 70-ton Travel-Lifts and a host of services. We visited the yard first and talked with Alain Blin, the owner/manager, who speaks excellent English.

The yard itself was well kept and clean, although sandblasting/sanding activities on other boats left our decks with a layer of dust. The staff was extremely helpful. There were no hidden costs or extra charges other than what we had agreed to initially and the bill was spot-on when it came time to pay. We had stainless steel welding done on-site to repair a stanchion and the work was excellent.

We also needed a shaft coupler that the yard could not provide, but they did give us a ride to a shop that had one that would fit after a bit of machining. The yard manager accompanied us to assist and help with translating. We could live aboard with no extra fee and lay-days included water and electricity. Crew amenities offered included shower, token-pay washer, loaner car for trips to hardware store, etc. The yard is closed on Sat./Sun. and they left us a loaner car over the weekend so we could get around. We also purchased ablative bottom paint through the yard (Devoe) at a significant discount over other paints offered at the chandleries in Tahiti (~$150 USD/gallon vs. $250).

We would highly recommend their services. The total cost for the haulout including four extra lay-days was about $700 USD. The bottom paint and stainless welding were another $700. Note that the boatyard does not accept credit cards. – Nine of Cups from SSCA Bulletin
1.11.2 Tahiti Nautic in Port Phaeton, Tahiti

+689 40 54 76 16, https://www/nautisport.pf/index.php/marinas/marina-taravao, marcusgrandus@hotmail.fr.
There is a small marina here, but most of the boats are anchored put in this big bay with a thick mud bottom. It appears to be a good hurricane hole as well!

At least one boat we know was hauled and stored at Tahiti Nautic in Port Phaeton. See the Port Phaeton section for more details.

Feb. 2019: We wanted to leave our boat under the care of Pakakota Yacht Services in Fakarava, but unfortunately for us Mathieu only provides that service during the "high" season. During the cyclone season (November-March), he instead works on other projects around his own property. He told us that he found that watching after boats took most of his time and interfered with his ability to get those other projects done.

Mathieu suggested that we contact a friend of his in Tahiti who has started watching boats in Baie Phaeton. We did, and found Marc to be responsible and competent. He is looking after more than 20 boats now! He gave us periodic email updates. He speaks English well, and has a long history with boats. He and his daughter make a good team!

There is a small marina here, but most of the boats are anchored put in this big bay with a thick mud bottom. It appears to be a good hurricane hole as well! – Lungta

1.11.3 Raiatea Carenage

+ 689 40 600 545, https://www.raiateacarenage.com. They have a travel lift and railway, can lift multihulls (cats and trimarans) and general facilities.

July 2019: This was Patrice’s (marine surveyor) second recommendation for haul out facility. We were provided a quote for a haul and hang (survey) for our 47’ catamaran of 93,561 xpf. They would use a hydraulic vehicle in the water to haul our boat out. Quote includes 2 days before and 2 days after on a mooring. – Sugar Shack

2014: Raiatea Carenage was much cheaper than Techni-Marine in Papeete, and the out-haul was easy to organize with the flexible office people.

Having said that, there’s also downsides: the area gets swampy in rains (be careful with mosquitoes, we caught dengue fever there), the narrow approach next to iron rails in the water’s not exactly easy and the yard features the smelliest toilet we’ve ever encountered. – Pitufa

2011: Several people we know were hauled--either for emergency repairs, or for storage--at Raiatea. See the Raiatea section for more info. – Soggy Paws

1.11.4 CNI (Chantier Naval des Iles) Boatyard - Raiatea

+689 40 66 10 10, Fax: +689 40 66 49 87, cni@mail.pf, www.cnislv.com

2011: I just wanted to recommend a place to repair your boat or antifoul it. We emailed Chantier Naval des Iles in Raiatea and got an email back with all the information. We wanted to antifoul our Delphia 40 and do it ourselves. We made an appointment 2 weeks in advance, arrived the day before and got a free mooring. The next day at high tide (we draw 2.25 meters) the boat was put on a cradle and pull out of the water. We had bought antifoul in Papeete but there is a chandlery nearby.

After 2 days they put the boat back in the water. The cost was a bargain when you look at what you pay in Sydney, Australia or even the US. The travel lift cost in Cartagena, Colombia was about the same. We stayed a few days in their little marina to fix a few problems and the staff there couldn't have been more helpful. They helped me fix the problems, import spares, etc at no or very little cost.
The mechanic speaks English very well and he is a sailor! Karin in the office speaks a little English and German. The owner Jacques seems a bit gruff, but he is very good and helpful. It always helps if you speak the local language though.

For us it was the best place ever to fix our yacht and a bargain to boot! You can leave your boat in storage there as well, the security has improved and the owner lives there. We are back in Australia now but I should tell other fellow sailors of a good place to go. -- Unknown Boat – Noonsite

1.11.5 Liability Insurance for Haul out

Most haul out facilities, marinas, yards will require liability insurance. If you need liability insurance to be hauled out, we heard that Poe-Ma Insurances is decent. +689 40 50 26 50, Fax: +689 40 45 00 97, infor@poema.pf, Located at Marina Fare Ute, B.P. 4 652 – 98713 Papeete, Tahiti. Boat insurance broker working with all marine insurance companies. Offices also in New Caledonia, France, and La Reunion.

1.12 Ciguatera

A comprehensive look at ciguatera can be downloaded from Jacaranda (Look for "You Gonna Eat That Fish?"). Info about Ciguatera):

http://www.jacarandajourney.com/other-good-stuff

From Wikipedia – January 2019: Ciguatera fish poisoning, also known simply as ciguatera, is a foodborne illness caused by eating reef fish whose flesh is contaminated with certain toxins. Ciguatera Fish Poisoning commonly occurs in tropical and subtropical areas, particularly in the Pacific Ocean, the Indian Ocean, and the Caribbean Sea.

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

Some symptoms typically remain for a few weeks to months. Heart difficulties such as slow heart rate and low blood pressure may also occur.

The specific toxins involved are ciguatoxin and maitotoxin. They are originally made by a small marine organism, Gambierdiscus toxicus, that grows on and around coral reefs in tropical and subtropical waters. These are eaten by herbivorous fish which in turn are eaten by larger carnivorous fish. The toxins become more concentrated as they move up the food chain.

Any reef fish can cause ciguatera poisoning, but species such as barracuda, grouper, red snapper, moray eel, amberjack, parrotfish, hogfish, sturgeonfish, kingfish, coral trout, and sea bass are the most commonly affected. Ciguatoxins are concentrated in the fish liver, intestines, heads, and roe. The toxins do not affect the taste, texture, or odour of the fish and cannot be destroyed by cooking, smoking, freezing, salting or any other method of food preparation. Outbreaks can occur seasonally or sporadically, particularly after storms. Not all fish of a given species or from a given area will be toxic.

Preventive efforts include not eating reef fish, not eating high-risk fish such as barracuda, and not eating fish liver, roe, or fish heads. Ciguatoxin has no taste or smell, and cannot be destroyed by conventional cooking. There is no specific treatment for ciguatera fish poisoning once it occurs. Mannitol may be considered, but the evidence supporting its use is not very strong. Gabapentin or amitriptyline may be used to treat some of the symptoms.

The US Centers for Disease Control estimates that around 50,000 cases occur a year. Other estimates vary up to 500,000 cases per year. It is the most frequent seafood poisoning. It occurs most commonly in the Pacific Ocean, Indian Ocean, and the Caribbean Sea between the latitudes of 35°N and 35°S. The risk of the condition appears to be increasing due to coral reef deterioration and increasing trade in seafood. The risk of death from
poisoning is less than 1 in 1,000. Descriptions of the condition date back to at least 1511. The current name came into use in 1787.

2010: I personally know someone who got a severe case in the Bahamas—3 boats shared the same large yellowtail snapper at a potluck. By morning, they were all very sick, and a couple of people from each boat were so sick that they were airlifted off for immediate hospitalization. They spent at least a month recovering, and even a year later were reporting lingering symptoms. As the toxin is cumulative, they can never eat another fish.

In the Tuamotus, locals told us “bring us the fish and tell us exactly where you caught it, and we will tell you if you can eat it.” However, locals do get ciguatera too! – Soggy Paws

In the Gambiers, the problem is much much worse—even traditionally “safe” fish can be highly toxic. A friend caught a grouper on his way out of the W pass, and ate it for dinner. He was very sick for the next 3 days as he was sailing single-handed northwards to the Tuamotus.

1.13 Cruising Information Sources

1.13.1 Cruising Reports

We are indebted to the people and organizations who have documented their experiences and shared them with us. We can’t do this alone and rely on cruisers sharing updated information. So, please be sure to document and email us your notes.

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

For most of the earlier sources, we have gleaned the information off the internet (cruiser’s websites, blogs, and online forum postings) or out of an SSCA bulletin. For the sources reported below as 2009-2012, much of the info has come directly from our cruising friends, helping to round out the information in our various Compendiums.

Every section is a mix of several sources:

Jacaranda (2016-2019): Jacaranda with Chuck and Linda aboard spent a year in the Marquesas before moving on to do the Tuamotus slowly in 2016, and the Societies in 2017 and 2018. They have been sending us reports to add to the Compendia, and also posting more information and details on their website http://jacarandajourney.com, and also contributing to the Tahiti Cruiser’s Guide online

Sugar Shack (2019-2020): Matt and Christine on Sugar Shack arrived in the Gambiers in 2019 and have been sailing French Polynesia for a year. Sugar Shack is a 47’ Catana catamaran: 47’ long, 26’ wide, 1’ draft. http://www.svsugarshack.com

Nehenehe (2019): Farrier F-39 Trimaran “Nehenehe” LOA 47’, Beam 26’, Draft 20” min Max 7’. John, Melanie, and Courtney are on a ten-year trip around the world out of Vancouver BC, Canada. We have been in French Polynesia for a year and a half. Just arrived in Tahiti April 25th and plan to be cruising the Societies for the next month or so.


Enavigo (2018): Steve Maine and Jody Windmiller

Begonia (2017): Maryanne and Kyle arrived in the Marquesas in May 2017 and went through the Societies in June on s/v Begonia, a Lagoon catamaran (approx. 40 ft). They are experienced cruisers having owned 3 other boats and done a lot of traveling by boat and land. Their current blog: http://sv-footprint.blogspot.com (Their previous boat was named Footprint).
**Spunky (2017)**: Robert and Aneke arrived in March in the Marquesas with our sailing yacht Spunky, a 43 foot Morgan. They are taking a short sabbatical from working life, and plan to island-hop to Australia and sell the boat and go back to work in the Netherlands in late 2017.

**s/v Mary Anne II (2016-2017)**: John & Julia Freeland

**Alegría (2013)** - Brian & Mizzy from s/v Alegría, a Caliber 40 out of Alameda, California

**Moondance (2011 & 2012)** - Moondance is a ~43 ft monohull. Somewhat on the ‘Soggy Paws plan’ (long stay visa, multiple visits), Doug and Carla cruised through the Societies in July-October 2011, then sailed to Hawaii, intending to return in 2012. [http://followingmoondance.blogspot.com/](http://followingmoondance.blogspot.com/)

**New Morning (2011 & 2012)** - New Morning is a 54’ monohull drawing 7.5’. Somewhat on the ‘Soggy Paws plan’ (long stay visa, multiple visits), Russ & Fay cruised through the Societies in July-October 2011, then left their boat for the winter in Raitea, intending to return in April 2012. [http://www.newmorning.info](http://www.newmorning.info)


**YOLO (2011)** - “YOLO” (You Only Live Once) is a 42 foot PDQ catamaran owned by Karen and Jason Trautz. During their three months in French Polynesia they divided their time equally between the Marquesas, Tuamotu, and Society Islands. [http://yolotrautz.blogspot.com](http://yolotrautz.blogspot.com)


**Slip Away (2010-2011)** - Jan and Rich on Slip Away arrived in French Polynesia late in 2010. They left their boat at Tahiti Nautic Center on Tahiti for 6 months and returned in January 2011. They had a 6-month visa in hand on their return, and spent a leisurely 4 months in the Societies. Slip Away’s website is [http://Slip Away.net/](http://Slip Away.net/)


**Nakia (2010)** - Nakia is a Hans Christain 33, drawing about 6 feet. They were in the Marquesas in 2009 and in the Tuamotus and Societies in 2010. Nakia’s blog is here: [http://svnakia.blogspot.com](http://svnakia.blogspot.com)


**Visions of Johanna (2010)** - Bill of Visions of Johanna and I worked together to create the first version of the Tuamotus Compendium, from our collected notes, in early 2010. Visions is a 62’ custom racer/cruiser with a 8 knot average cruising speed and a 6’8” draft. Visions’ blog is here: [http://vofj.blogspot.com](http://vofj.blogspot.com)

### 1.13.2 AVP


AVP is the Sailing Association of French Polynesia. There are a non-profit organization dedicated to assisting cruisers in French Polynesia. For a minimal fee ($18/year) you can support them financially as they fight your anchorages, safer moorings, and a more positive cruising experience for you.
If you need translation, go to [http://voiliers.asso.pf](http://voiliers.asso.pf), click on tab “Devenir member” on top right, then click on “creer un compte” fill in your email, your identifier, password, name, boat name, and click “soumettre”. To pay go to “Payer son adhesion” click adhesion 2020, (about $18 USD) then “etape suivante.”

### 1.13.3 Pacific Puddle Jump

[https://groups.io/g/PacificPuddleJump](https://groups.io/g/PacificPuddleJump)

This group is where the people gathering in South and Central America meet to share information about crossing the big puddle. Fortunately, many previous years’ jumpers come back and share their information with the newbies. A good source of information, but not very organized, and full of bloat from people who ask the same questions over and over again, without doing any research of their own. This group recently moved to Groups IO. Older information previously found on Yahoo will not be updated, so please visit the Groups IO for new information. (as of Nov. 2019)

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

### 1.13.4 Noonsite

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

Originally started by Jimmy Cornell, this site is a great repository of information for all those out-of-the-way places. Made possible by YOUR contributions.

### 1.13.5 Seven Seas Cruising Association

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

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

### 1.13.6 French Polynesia Cruisers Facebook Page

[http://facebook.com/frenchpolynesiacruisers](http://facebook.com/frenchpolynesiacruisers)

A French Polynesia Cruiser Facebook group has been started and offers a great way to stay up to date on news and related information. Join the group for free, contribute updates, and stay in the loop. If the above link does not work, search for “French Polynesia Cruisers” in groups on Facebook.

### 1.13.7 French Polynesia Birds

[http://www.manu.pf/E_Oiseaux.html](http://www.manu.pf/E_Oiseaux.html)

2009: The above is an excellent website for identifying birds in French Polynesia and finding out their local names. – Nine of Cups

### 1.13.8 Sea Seek


A French-maintained site that covers French Polynesia. They have assembled a pretty good harbor by harbor group of information (using Google Earth and Maxsea Chartlets). But it is mostly in French. It is possible to use Google or Babelfish Translate functions.

Page 44
1.13.9  Dream Yacht Charter (DYC) 2011

I found the Dream Yacht Charter ‘guidebook’ online as a PDF file. It has notes and useful information for their charterers. I have included a few notes and anchorages from this guide.

1.14  Printed Sources

Download some of the “out-of-print” cruising guides from Jacaranda. *http://www.jacarandajourney.com/other-good-stuff*. He had the Guide to Navigation on his website, but removed it when he learned it was sold to another publisher.

We are consciously NOT duplicating any printed, copyrighted information here. It takes a lot of effort AND money to publish a cruising guide, and we firmly believe that if it is still in print, you should BUY it, not steal it (in electronic form).

The best printed cruising guide for this area is the 1985 Davock guide, covering more of the anchorages, with good sketch charts. However, last published in 1985, this is very out of date. Charlie’s is probably the next best thing, but it too is out of date.

No guide available today is up to date (hence the motivation behind the Compendium). To get the best coverage, I would have the Davock guide, Charlie’s Charts, and the Bonnette guide as well. The Moorings guide is pretty good, too, but only covers part of the Societies. I believe you can get this from Blue Water Books in Ft. Lauderdale.

The Yachtsman’s Guide, put out by the port of Papeete as a guide to visiting yachts (and available free in printed form, while supplies last), is very good for up to date information, contact information, etc. It’s nice to have the printed version, but download the PDF just in case you can’t get a printed copy.

We had the other guides listed below aboard, but never cracked them while in the Societies.

1.14.1  French For Cruisers

*French for Cruisers*, Kathy Parsons, 2004

This is a fantastic French phrasebook, created by a cruiser for cruisers. Don’t leave the U.S. without it, as it is not available once you get to French Polynesia.

For anyone going to a French-speaking cruising ground, French for Cruisers is invaluable. Slightly larger than a ‘pocket guide’, it is an great reference for French terms for cruising things... like engine repair, dockage, etc.

1.14.2  Cruising Guides

When we were going through the Tuamotus in 2010/2011, Charlie’s Charts was really out of date. I haven’t seen the newer version, and so can’t comment. We used the Guide to Navigation and Tourism quite a bit. Nadine Slavinsky’s Pacific Crossing Notes are new, I haven’t seen them. The rest (mainly older guides) were interesting, but in my opinion, not very useful (you’ll get a lot more out of this compendium than the rest of the guidebooks listed here). The full list is below. —Soggy Paws

1.  *Tahiti Cruisers Guide Online*. Cruising Guide for Papeete –Started by Chuck on Jacaranda and Julien Desmont a local French sailor living in Papeete. Julien Desmont built the website and is hosting it as well. Can be downloaded as a pdf, in case you need to try to arrange parts or repairs before you get there (without internet access). If you find a service or store that is not listed please send in an update

2.  *Charlie’s Charts of Polynesia*: Charles and Margo Wood (with updates by Jo Russell and Holly Scott), 7th ed 2011. Holly Scott has taken over the helm at Charlie’s Charts and has been updating these age-old cruising guides.
3. **South Pacific Anchorages**, Warwick Clay, 2nd Edition, 2001, pages 22-33 Covers mostly the islands in the NW section, but does cover briefly a few of the atolls in the SE section (Fangataufa, Mururoa, Tatakoto, Amanu, Hao, Nengonengo)

4. **Guide to Navigation and Tourism in French Polynesia**, Patrick Bonnette & Emmanuel Deschamps, 2001. Provides the best coverage for some atolls, but is out of print and is becoming quite expensive to purchase if you can find it (in the $200 range on Amazon). If you see it at a cruiser flea market, buy it.


8. **Yachtsmen’s Guide to French Polynesia 2011 (PDF)**. This 40-page PDF is downloadable from French Polynesia Tourism Bureau (French & English). (Note, it can be hard to find, and may disappear off their website from time to time, so I have put the latest copy of the English version on my website at [http://svsogypaws.com/files/#pacific](http://svsogypaws.com/files/#pacific) ) It includes a lot of useful information about all of French Polynesia—clearance information, etc. It includes a nice 2-page map of FP, and shows where fuel is available. Also has advertisement from marine-related businesses that can be useful. However, coverage in the Tuamotus is limited to Manihi, Fakarava, Rangiroa, and Tikehau (all in the NW).

9. **Cruising Guide to the Leeward Islands of Tahiti** – The Moorings
This book is the handbook that the charter company, The Moorings, provides to its charterers. We bought our copy from Bluewater Books in Ft. Lauderdale. Ours looks like it was done in about 2006. It is only 32 pages, but has probably everything you’d need to know about the easy anchorages and passes in the Leewards.

10. **Dream Yacht Charters Guide to the Leeward Islands**. Downloaded from Dream Yacht Charters site. Copy posted here:

11. **The French Polynesia Diving Guide**. The French Polynesia Diving Guide, Kurt Amsler, Abbeville Press (undated). This is a pretty coffee-table type book. It only covers 3 of the Tuamotus (Rangiroa, Tikehau, and Manihi), but has some stunning pictures, and has a pretty good color section on ‘The Fish of French Polynesia’. It also covers the Marquesas (Nuku Hiva) and The Society Islands. Available from Amazon.com.

12. **Diving in Tahiti Guide**. The Diving in Tahiti, A Diver’s Guide to French Polynesia, Thierry Ziesman covers diving in the Society Islands pretty well. This is less of a coffee-table book, and a more practical guide to how to find dive sites on your own. We had an electronic copy from another cruiser, and I have never been able to find this online.

13. **Cruising Guide to Tahiti and the French Society Islands** – Marcia Davock. This was last published in 1985 and is currently out of print. It is a very thorough coverage of the available anchorages in the Societies, with good sketch charts, and, as they say “Rocks don’t move.” It is, of course, very out of date with regards to the procedures and services ashore.
2 Passage Reports

2.1 Tuamotus to Papeete

2.1.1 Apataki to Papeete

July 2010: We left from Apataki for a two-night sail to Papeete, it was a roolly downwind sail with a wicked half hour squall the first night. The wind gusted to 45 knots and it poured rain. But we left Apataki with two reefs in the main and only a little bit of the jib out because we knew we were likely to go through some heavy rain clouds. John hand steered through two more squalls that night but nothing as bad as the first one. Rather than get bulky foul weather gear-soaked John prefers to wear swim trunks and his wet suit jacket to stay warm out in the rain. Fortunately, there were only a couple of light showers during my watches, and nothing requiring hand steering.

We arrived after sunrise on Friday as planned and called Port Control for permission to enter the busy harbor. We stood off for a few minutes to let one of the Moorea ferries go ahead of us. We then turned left into the harbor only to be met by a wall of canoes in the distance. As part of the Heiva festivities in July canoe races were being held last weekend and Friday was a practice day. At first we tried to stay to the left side of the harbor, but after the canoes started it was apparent that was the favored side, and we dodged right to stay out of their way. After they had passed, we needed to go left again to get around and behind the buoyed start line, and into the ferry terminal and yacht quay area to our right – Nakia

2.1.2 Manihi to Tahiti

Aug. 2008: Outside the passage we were met with a big swell and a stiff wind pushing waves in an opposing direction. We pitched and rolled while I set the sails but before long they were up and finally, we were pointed towards Tahiti.

The sea was really rough after the bad weather over the past couple of days so we had a double reef in the main and same with the headsail. We had 275 miles to make Tahiti and wanted to keep things easy on ourselves and the boat.

Day one: So much for taking it slow. The wind has been between 20 and 28 knots. We are still double reefed and have covered 160 miles in our first 24 hours out.

Day two: We sighted Tahiti at 7:30 this morning. We were rolled around by big southeast trade wind swells mixed with local surface conditions that never dropped below 20 knots. It wasn’t exactly a pleasure cruise and we certainly didn’t have any chess board conditions but nothing broke and we covered the 275 miles in just over 40 hours. – Slapdash

2.2 Tahiti to Tuamotus

2.2.1 Strategy

The basic strategy for doing this trip, unless you just like to beat your brains out against the tradewinds, is to wait for a frontal passage and motorsail to whatever Tuamotus destination you can reach in the window you have. In advance of most fronts, there is a near-calm period where the wind backs from E – NE – N – NW – W – S and then usually fills in from the SE. Sometimes the ‘fills in from the SE’ part is accompanied by 25+ kts and sometimes with squalls.

So, if you are wind-averse, go as soon as the wind gets light and motor. If you like the wind, wait for the SE winds and make a tack up to Rangiroa or somewhere.
2.2.2 *Tahiti to the Marquesas via the Tuamotus*

**Feb-Mar 2009:** We left Tahiti in late February. It was still cyclone season so we carefully watched the weather for any signs of tropical storm formation to the west. It was good to be at sea again—the blue horizon in every direction. But the winds were contrary and we were making slow progress. Now that we had our long-stay visas, we had plenty of time and didn’t need to rush (most non-EU cruisers get only 3 months). So why spend days sailing but not getting very far? I’d gotten a bad rope burn on my hand so we decided to take it easy and stop in the Tuamotus. We’d have preferred to be farther east—away from potential cyclones—but we would just keep a close eye on the tropical storm forecast.

February is the transition time between summer and winter. That means unsettled weather. Rain showers and squalls rolled through daily. The showers are very confined—usually not more than a mile or so wide. The squalls can be much bigger. They pass quickly but dump an enormous amount of rain in a very short time. Sometimes they are accompanied by violent winds and thunder and lightning. One night we sailed through a terrific squall as we passed close between two atolls. Thunder and lightning were everywhere and, at times, the driving rain brought visibility to almost zero. We were grateful for GPS and radar.

We headed for beautiful Anse Amyot on Toau; home of our friends Gaston & Valentine, whom we met last year. After 10 days at Toau, we decided to sail for the Marquesas again. We wanted to visit those islands before the crowds of boats arrived from Panama, the Galápagos, and Mexico in April, May and June. Unfortunately, Poseidon didn’t think it was time for our voyage. After three days we still had 350 miles to go and the wind was blowing directly from the northeast... and strengthening. Our foredeck hatch was leaking (we would later discover a cracked weld in the frame). We had a ½ knot current against us and were making about 50 miles a day toward our goal. Another week of this didn't sound fun. We spun the wheel—well, the dial on the autopilot—and headed back to the Tuamotus. (They went to Katiu and then to Makemo, where they finally got favorable winds to the Marquesas.)

Since the Marquesas were both north and east of our position, going either direction would help us when we again tried to sail there. Makemo is due east of Katiu and, having one of the larger villages in the Tuamotus and good provisioning, made a logical next stop.

At Makemo, we'd been watching the weather carefully and the forecast called for a week of light winds. The Marquesas would still be upwind, but we like sailing to weather in light air. We sealed the leaking forward hatch with duct tape and set off.

It was a quiet and calm six-day sail. Occasionally frustrating as the wind often blew directly from the direction we wanted to go, or it didn't blow at all. We made a brief detour to the remote atolls of Takapoto (Tepoto) and Nepuka, but without passes and with very steep coral shelves, the anchoring was too dicey for us. These are known as the Îles Disappointment—they were for us, as well as for some of the locals who gathered on the wharf waiting for us to come ashore. (Note: the website says ‘Takapoto’ in one place and Tepoto in another. Looking at the island locations and their probable route, I think he meant Tepoto). – Migration

### 3 Tahiti

**Guidebooks**

- Davock – Pg 64-146
- Bonnette – Pg 179-216
3.1 Papeete, Marina

3.1.1 Passes and Formalities

June 2019: We used the pass near Marina Papeete, which was wide and well-marked, each time we approached Tahiti. Our destination was the Marina Taina anchorage which meant we had to clear the air strip twice. We called port control on VHF 12 just before entering the pass. They instructed us to call again just before entering the airstrip path (there is a yellow sign to your right where you are to wait until cleared). Once cleared we proceeded forward and were again asked to call on VHF 12 just before entering the other end of the air strip. A few times we were asked to wait for an incoming our outgoing plane, but it never lasted more than 10 minutes. Port Control is very friendly, easy to communicate with, and professional. – Sugar Shack

Sept. 2018: If entering the main Passe de Papeete you must call port Control on VHF channel 12 (Not 16) and ask permission to enter and exit this pass. They will tell you to wait if there is a ship entering or exiting the harbor. Also be aware that there are 2 ferry's that make multiple runs each day to/from Moorea. They both travel at about 30+knts. – Jacaranda

July 2018: The north pass is the large shipping pass. It’s very easy, large and straight forward to go in/out of. The southern pass to enter into Marina Taina was our worst pass in French Polynesia! Don’t underestimate this pass because the other pass was easy! Definitely time this pass right with the tide and winds. We were surfing a 72’ Oyster down breaking waves inside the pass! – Consensus

June 2010: Call Port Captain on CH 12 10 to15 minutes from Pass de Papeete. There is a large amount of ferry traffic in and out. If you wish to proceed south to Marina Taina, you will need permission to pass by the airport, and radio back when you are clear. Otherwise, you will turn left towards the town quay. – Visions of Johanna

3.1.2 Transitioning from Downtown area to Taina Marina

Dec. 2019 verified (Sept. 2018): You MUST call Port control on VHF channel 12 to ask permission to cross the airport runway at BOTH ENDS (that is 2 calls to port control). Be sure to have your VHF on!! At least 1-2 times a week we hear port control calling yachts moving along this track with NO answer. They’ve had to hold planes from taking off and landing because some poor fool didn’t have his VHF and didn’t know he needed to call.

Having your AIS on and transmitting also helps port control in the airport crossing. – Jacaranda

3.1.3 Anchorages, Moorings, Haul-out

See cruiser reports below for additional information.

3.1.3.1 Marina Papeete

May 2019: We were here for two weeks. We have an over 26-foot-wide trimaran that is usually hard to find a space for at any other marina. We were easily accommodated here. They have numerous multi-hull width slips. The staff is fantastic, they were unreal... We love them.

Unfortunately, the marine is currently under major construction that will last at least another six months. They had very little in the way of facilities because everything is torn up or fenced off for construction. There was NO Internet; the air-conditioned lounge does not exist, one small washing machine (1,000 francs) that 55 boats were lined up to use (two machines were broken the entire time we were there), one dryer.

The docks are very high quality. The marina is less than 60 feet from the downtown activity and was a lot of fun to be in. However, I found it slightly awkward that there is a 300-foot walk outside the marina - along the main boulevard in town - to reach the showers and bathrooms.
We saw no evidence of theft while we were there but just previously, our liveaboard neighbor had parts on his bike stolen while locked up at the bicycle parking area just inside the locked entry gate. The old night time guards were all fired and they recently have a new guard agency that is doing a much better job.

We really enjoyed ourselves here and highly recommend them, especially once the construction is completed. (we are glad that Marina Taina would not accommodate trimarans). It looks like things will be amazing after construction is finished. I would currently rate them a 7 out of 10. – Nehenehe

July 2017: Both marinas are about the same distance from the airport. Not very close! 20-30-minute drive. The marina in town (Marina Papeete) is well set up but is busy and chaotically run. No one answers the VHF at the marina and we were told to find our own berth and come tell him what it was! You are very close to food truck nightly market, fresh veg market ($$$ but finally nice fresh veg!), bakery, flower and crafts market, restaurants, grocery stores, internet, and nice park, walking path, kids’ playground when you are based at this marina though. Be careful with water and electric at this marina. It is done by a card system and it is easy to leave your credit accidently (or use someone else’s!) on the pontoon system you were using. – Consensus

March 2017: This is a professionally run marina with friendly staff, (hot) showers, two washing machines, but also a lady that picks up laundry (2000 for washing and drying per load). And a bicycle that can be borrowed. At the boulevard, clean docks and potable water.

Security on site and locked gates. The marina only exists 2 years now, so also electricity and water are modern systems. They take care of the clearance to the port captain. Fair use internet most times available (included) (unless someone decides to download movies...). Internet is still expensive here, also for locals. Champion supermarket at walking distance with fresh baguettes. The marina is Recommended. – Spunky

March 2017: The Papeete Marina is a modern marina with floating docks with finger piers, which is very affordable in the summer months 1st November to 31st March.

As of March 2017, the cost for a 10-meter vessel (they use your registered length so bowsprits don’t count) is $81 a week. A 12-meter boat is 9763xpf. Winter rates 1 April to 1 Nov are 2.4 times higher (10-meter boat $195 a week.) Slips in the winter are not always available. The electric and water are metered with modern prepaid card (240 volt only.) In the heart of the city it has security and of course hot showers and laundry. Best of all in the summer months an air-conditioned lounge with free Wifi. Staff are very friendly and helpful.

In a strong westerly, the swell through the marina requires vigilance with fenders and dock lines. In an El Nino year one would need to have a well-considered backup plan to stay here during the FP summer.

Some pluses include the food trucks a very short stroll away and Monday night half priced beer at the microbrewery. Champion supermarket is a 10-minute walk and there are English movies on Thursday night. The Quai de Yachts used by cruisers no longer exists. – Mary Ann II

July 2010: The yacht quay now has three docks floating perpendicular to the wall complete with mooring lines, electricity, water, and locked gates. I imagine some of the flavor of the old days of tying directly to the wall has been lost, but this cuts out the hassles of crossing anchors with other boats and jockeying for position on the wall. I can’t imagine what being on the wall must have been like when the ferry wakes went through rocking all the boats. We are the odd boat in that we’re tied a good 12’ from the dock to keep Ziggy (the cat) from jumping off. We also chose a spot at the very end of the dock to keep us far from the gate which leads right out to a boardwalk along the main waterfront street where Ziggy would be toast in no time flat. Just like we did in Hawaii, we get from the boat to the dock in our dinghy which is on a pulley system for going back and forth. – Nakia

June 2010: Papeete town quay now has floating piers for med moor tie up - no longer tie to the wharf. There are locked gates that provide security, and overall it seems to be a good improvement. Blvd quiets down at night. Much less costly then Taina, but no shower or facilities, and electric is limited to 15 Amps. Most downtown shopping is easier from here, but decks will get a coat of city grime. – Visions of Johanna
3.1.3.2 Haul Facility – Technimarine

Telephone: +40 43 02 22

May 2019: We worked Technimarine. We had our waterline raised, light sanding with new bottom paint, and struts painted with LP paint. This is a difficult review to write because everyone at Technimarine worked hard to complete the work nearly on time; including a full day over the weekend which is highly unusual to have done by this yard.

While I truly liked Teama as a person VERY much, he proved to be completely inept at his job as project manager, (he is new to his job). I would strongly recommend that you work with someone else.

The long story is the following.... Teama did not track well with any of the project details, he either forgot things or got things mixed up. He said that supplies were ordered but they had not been, he said the exact same bottom paint had been found and seemed to say that it had arrived on site, it had not. When I stopped by a week before the start of work... he said he had still forgotten to order the supplies!  He then scrambled to try and find bottom paint, eventually found some, when it arrived it was not a paint we could use. Then just before work started, he still had forgotten the epoxy primer....  This process went on, and on....

They failed to haul the boat on time, they delayed three times, one of which was with 30 minutes notice and we were already underway in the pass when Teama called to cancel. When we finally arrived for the haul out we had to motor up and drift back down the river for three hours while we waited. After we discovered the incorrect bottom paint, it was forced on me to make four trips and ten hours’ time trying to personally return the bottom paint to their supplier.

There are a lot more aspects to our difficulties at Technimarine than I wish to bore you with. In short it seemed that everyone else there was competent at their jobs and worked overtime to make up for Teama’s numerous mistakes. All the other employees were efficient and made the effort to make us satisfied. While they easily could have been much better; I must rate this business a 5 out of 10. – Nehenehe

March 2017: In 2017 Mary Ann II has gone to Technimarine on three occasions and each time found the manager friendly, helpful and in fact he made several calls for us inquiring about availability of parts. The haul out quote was 1,227xpf per foot which included power wash (that's less than we paid for any of our last three haul outs in Grenada, Antigua or Panama.)

You can do any work yourself. They have stainless welding equipment on site and spray painting can be arranged at 6,000xpf per hour. The cost may be higher if the larger travel lift is required? They currently have a 70-ton lift and a 300-ton lift. The lay days were more expensive than usual but mostly due to a 2619xpf to the Port Authority. – Mary Ann II

2014: We cannot recommend the haul-out facilities at Technimarine in Papeete. It’s expensive, the personnel were unfriendly to rude and Pitufa still bears the rust marks from the sanding of rusty fishing vessels in this boat yard. The only advantage of Technimarine is the vicinity of chandleries and hardware stores. On our second haul out we used Raiatea Carenage. – Pitufa

3.1.4 Yachtsman Services

3.1.4.1 Cooking Gas (Propane and Butane)

June 2010: Tahiti Gas will NOT fill bottles that have not been inspected (and had the date stamped into it) in the last 10 years. All of mine are older, so I could not buy gas here.  (Note, later other cruisers said they had no problems) – Fellow Traveler

3.1.4.2 Fuel (Diesel and Gasoline)

The only fuel dock in Tahiti is at Taina Marina. See section 3.2.3.2 Fuel in Marina Taina
June 2019: Duty Free Certificates can be obtained without an agent. Simply walk to their office with your boat paperwork, fill out a form and receive your certificate, for free. The Douanes office is located by the docks in Papeete and can be found on Maps.me. Douanes located on Chenel de Motu Uta (motu by NautiSport). Go to “Francisation et Hypotheques” office (2nd or 3rd door on right). They will be very happy if you bring a photo copy of your boat paperwork and passport (so they don’t have to use their old copier). We were told the only islands that accept the duty-free certificate for diesel are: Tahiti, Moorea, Raiatea, Bora Bora, Rangiroa, Huahine, and Nuku Hiva. – Sugar Shack

3.1.5 General Services

See cruiser reports for additional services.


New 2017: Started by Julien Demont a local French sailor living in Papeete. Julien Desmont built the website and is hosting it as well. Many cruisers have contributed information. If you find a service or store that is not listed please send in an update.

3.1.5.1 Auto Parts:

Sept. 2019: There is a street that has several auto parts stores, mechanics, stainless steel, and other tool-type resources. Take Route S, turn right at Total station onto Avenue de Tipaerui. – Sugar Shack.

Feb. 2019: At the intersection of Bambridge and Clemenceau is an auto-parts shop. – Lungta

3.1.5.2 Bank / ATMs

Several banks and ATMs are located downtown Papeete

3.1.5.3 Hardware Supplies

Ace Sing Tung Hing has three locations downtown Papeete. Each location sells different and unique products so be sure to visit them all to find what you are looking for. Location is around Fare Ute and Voie L.

Mr. Bricolodge is a well-stocked hardware store located near Polynesian Trading. Located off Route 1. By dinghy: Just past Intercontinental hotel are 2 docks. Large one has gate that is open most days and closest to store. Mr. Bricolodge has home goods, garden supplies (and seeds), and general hardware. – Sugar Shack

3.1.5.4 Marine Supplies & Boat Parts


- June 2019: We found this marine store to be well stocked with a good variety of marine supplies. Fishing supplies, bottom paint, stainless, lines, fenders, glues, hull cleaner, etc... Staff was helpful and willing to order parts not in stock. The location is tricky to find, but we found them using maps.me. There are a few plumbing stores close to Ocean 2000. – Sugar Shack

- May 2019: Located off Avenue du Chef Vairaatoa (Papeete). Very well stocked, helpful owner with a wife that is less so. Very good English is spoken. It seems like they had the most varied selection of general chandlery items of all four marine stores that I went to. Note that they have a 24-hour return policy that if exceeded becomes difficult to use; they tried to deduct 50% of the cost after 24 hours. Apparently,... It is all in French at the bottom of their invoice. I would rate this store a 8 out of 10. – Nehenehe

Sin Tung Hing +54 94 53. Located off Rue Alfred Poro’i (Papeete). Marine for general supplies. They have a downtown store and a satellite at Marina Taina.

- June 2019: The employees are extremely helpful in this well stocked marine store. The downtown store is far bigger than the satellite store, but they can transport items between each store. We
purchased lots of items from here, but the coolest was the spear gun which they assembled for us. – Sugar Shack

- A great enthusiastic and English-speaking contact is Sebastian, who is at Taina Mondays and Tuesdays, otherwise he is downtown. Sebastian’s cell is 73 72 96. Items can be brought to Satellite from downtown. Location is in Vaininiore, just across the canal (Riviere Papeava) from Fare Ute on the waterfront. – Visions of Johanna

TahitiSport (NautiSport): +689 40 50 59 59. Located off Pont de Motu Uta (Papeete). Good store but for the size... they don't carry much marine chandlery as Ocean 2000. Great SCUBA selection and service. Almost no English spoken here. Rated 8 out of 10. Take the bus (130xf’s from the bus stop opposite Carrefour, just past the walk over bridge). Get off opposite the tourist board on the boulevard in the town and then walk straight down the boulevard, crossing one roundabout and at the next roundabout you will see Nautisport to the left. A word of warning, if you need to order any parts, they order them from France and they take ages. – Visions of Johanna

Yung Tung Located on Voie O around the corner from Kim Fah (see below) and has an excellent supply of batteries, and some electrical parts. We bought a battery duty free. A great contact is Isabel who speaks english and was very helpful. – Visions of Johanna

July 2017: In the industrial center of town on the east side near the shipping port we found nice mechanic shops, hardware stores, marine stores, and machine shops with high quality supplies in stainless!

We drove the dinghy inside the port, under the bridge, and left it at a fishing boat dock (with the lock!) and asked the fisherman if he could keep an eye on it for us. Shops aren’t too far from here. We had a pump rewound at a mechanic’s shop for a price that wasn’t too astronomical for French Polynesia. It helps if you speak some French though! – Consensus

3.1.5.5 Medical Center & Pharmacy

Pharmacist: Patrick Ly +689 87 79 16 93 pharmacedetiarei@mail.pf. He runs his own pharmacy in northern Tahiti, but is available to all of French Polynesia via email, text, phone, and Skype. He speaks English well and is willing to ship medications anywhere in FP. He understands cruisers’ needs to order large volumes and is very helpful in finding alternatives. If he can’t provide a specific solution, he will say so. He also works with a physician in downtown Papeete who can receive your medications and administer them at a low cost (shots). Patrick can send the medications to the physician where you can pick them up (closer to downtown Papeete) you don’t have to go all the way to Patrick.

3.1.5.6 Miscellaneous Stores and Shops

Feb. 2019: Fabric Store: At the intersection of Bambridge and Clemenceau is a nice fabric shop called Arii which sells fabric with beautiful Polynesian prints and clothing made from that fabric. – Lungta

3.1.5.7 Post Office

Sept. 2019: The main post office is located downtown Papeete (across from the government buildings). Go to the 2nd floor and go to the kiosk to get a number for your particular service. – Sugar Shack

3.1.5.8 Plumbing Supplies

Sept. 2019: We were in need of several different plumbing supplies. We found several stores listed below. – Sugar Shack

- Le Plomberie has 3 well-stocked stores.
  - Le Plomberie in Papeete, near Ocean 2000
  - Plomberie de Faa’a located off Route 1 (bigger with more supplies)
- Le Plumberie in Point Venus. Main road from Pt Venus to intersection (where Super U and Champion are located). Turn left and walk over bridge. Le Plumberie will be on the right side.
- Le Plomberie (Papeete) informed us of another plumbing supply about 300 meters from their downtown store. We didn’t go, but heard it was decent.
- Plumbing store near Polynesia Trading Route 1. (see Provisioning for Polynesian Trading location)

3.1.5.9 Transportation

Public Transit – Bus System

Sept. 2019: Public bus operates between 0800 and 1700 and costs 2 xpf per person. (Usually Bus #2). Pick up is across the street from the entrance of Marina Taina and drop off downtown Papeete. Pick up downtown is next to large fresh market, in front of Vodaphone and Banque de Tahiti (blue roof building). Avenue du Marechal Foch. This is a different place than where they drop you off. The bus stop at Marina Taina: Exit main gate, go up and over bridge to be picked up. If you have a fold up bike, you can bring on the bus. There is also a bike lane, but it can be dangerous. Be sure to lock your bike and take your seat. – Sugar Shack

Car Rental - Papeete

Check out Tahiti Cruiser’s Guide online for more up-to-date info on rental cars in Tahiti.

Sept. 2019: The airport has several car rental places. We found that you can get a cheaper rate online than going blindly into the airport looking for a car so be sure to check out rates online. Usually you can rent a car for $30 (U.S.) per day with limited miles (.59 fr per kilometer) which is cheaper than paying for unlimited miles. The island is just not that big to warrant unlimited miles. We rented from Paea Auto center +40 82 33 33 – Sugar Shack

Jan/Feb. 2019: By far the best priced car hire was through Eco-car at the airport, but be sure to pay for ‘unlimited mileage’ and take out their full cover daily insurance, if you don’t it seems to be the rule rather than the exception that they manage to discover some minute but expensive damage upon your return. – Moon Rebel

2017: We got online and looked at car rentals to self-tour Tahiti (and get a passenger to the airport, do some boat part shopping, etc). It seemed like the rental car agencies were asking for $120/day!! So when our buddy boat was online and saw a deal for $35/day. Turns out that he didn’t pay close attention to the fine print...

As part of the rental, we arranged for them to pick us up at Tahiti Yacht Club, where we were staying. When we went to do the paperwork for the rental (downtown) we found that great deal did not include mileage, and it was going to cost us (after conversion from CFP and kilometers) 70 cents a mile!! Plus, our normal car insurance does not cover international rentals. So sure enough, by the time we rented the car, we paid $120 per day.

However, we managed to fit 5 people (tightly) in our micro-car, and get Infini’s son and gear to the airport at midnight, did a half day of running around for boat parts, hit the Roulottes downtown 2 nights in a row, did a huge shopping at the Carrefour and, still drove every road on Tahiti. – Soggy Paws

3.1.5.10 Wifi / Internet

Sept. 2019: Vini is able to run both data and voice. However, data is very expensive and slow. We found that where our Vini sim card worked so did our GoogleFi leading us to believe that GoogleFi was using Vini services. Both were 2G and very slow, but it was access and it was better during non-peak times.

Vini’s annual plan offers a large discount. If you stay in one of the marinas, ask them to write a letter for you stating you are staying in the marina (“similar to a residence letter”). Take that letter to Vini and ask for an annual plan to receive significant discount. We paid the year up front so we did not have to bother finding a Vini store each month to make a payment. We paid a flat fee for the contract and small box (around $60 USD) and then $50/mo for 10 gigs. They had several monthly plans including 2, 4, 6, and 10 gigs at varied prices.
Coverage will work throughout French Polynesia. You can increase your plan, but you have to be on a plan for 3 months before decreasing.

Here are some wifi hotspots:

- **Government Building** offers free wifi access during business hours. Location Route 1. Exit Marina Taina, turn right, walk about ½ mile. At roundabout, building across street with flags. You have to sit on the ground and there is no power source, but it is free.
- **Marina Taina** offers wifi if you are staying in the marina.
- **Restaurants at Marina Taina:**
  - Casa Bianca has wifi for customers, which gets bogged down during happy hour.
  - Pink Coconut has good wifi for customers. They’re lenient with cruisers, buy a drink, coffee and surf away.
- **Le Jardin Café by Carrefore** offers good internet for customers

Tahiti crew rents a wifi router that works in Tahiti & Mo’orea. tehani@tahiticrew.com. We have several friends who have used this and they have said the connection is strong and reliable all around Tahiti and Mo’orea. – Sugar Shack

**Jan. 2019:** There were both Vinnispot and WDG internet signals at $5/hour which could be picked-up out in the anchorage, alternatively a 15 minute walk south from the marina got you to the Mairie (local government office) and there was a free, steady but consistent wifi signal available in the lobby/gardens area there Mon-Fri during working hours. – Moon Rebel

**May 2019:** Tahiti WIFI (Cell Data System Rental): We found them at the airport next to the rental car area; they rent routers on their system for a standard cost of 13000 francs for 45 days with 10GB of data at up to 4G speed. They have worked anywhere that we can pick up a cell phone signal. They handle 5 devices at a time and can be topped off later on line if you need more data at a discounted price (if you negotiate with the ‘boss’).

The internet speed is fantastic and I highly recommend them. You seem to be forced into returning the router at the airport but I suppose this could also be negotiable? I would rate them a 10 out of 10. – Nehenehe

**June 2010:** Iorananet and Manaspot as well as Hotspot-WDG. Most locations have at least one of these available. – Visions of Johanna

### 3.1.6 Provisions

**2011:** You can literally find ANYTHING, groceries-wise, in Papeete, if you are willing to pay for it. The supermarkets are to die for, after months of out-island cruising. – Soggy Paws

#### 3.1.6.1 Grocery Stores and Markets

**Champion** walking distance from Marina Papeete

- **March 2017:** Champion supermarket has fresh baguettes. – Spunky
- **June 2010:** Champion is a decent market located downtown. – Visions of Johanna

Turn right at the gate and walk along the park & Blvd. Pomare until you get to the first (and for a long way, only) cross-walk. (Drivers may run you down in Pape’ete...but just like Europe, NOT if you are in a crosswalk). Cross Pomare, go one block ‘inland’ from the waterfront, and then turn right and continue walking. Perhaps 2-3 blocks later, you will arrive at a Supermarche’ Champion - smaller than the Carrefour but only because it carries only food and not all the other trinkets. It is a very nice grocery and, interestingly, they carry many Carrefour-branded products. – Whoosh
Marche Municipal located downtown by the bus stop. Large two-story building between Rue du 22 Septembre 1914 and Rue Francois Cardella. Best to visit in the mornings for the largest selection of fresh produce (veggies and fruits). The Papeete downtown market (Marche Municipal) was in full swing early Sunday morning (we went at 7 AM) when the streets surrounding the market building were full of vendors with tables full of fruits and vegetables. You will find a more limited selection indoors during the rest of the week when the outside area is devoted to pareos. Don’t miss the upstairs area where you’ll see carvings from places like Fatu Hiva and Tahuata for exorbitant prices (and wish you’d bought more while you were in the Marquesas)! You will also find jewelry stores that will let you sort through and purchase “discarded” pearls. You can search through boxes of $1, $2, $3, $5, $8, $10 pearls and higher.

- June 2010: Outdoor Market: Well, it's 'indoors' so that makes it a little less obvious, visually. It's a mix of handicrafts, fresh foods, and counter food (again, so-so)...but the fresh foods are abundant, less expensive than the grocery stores, and the choice of fresh fish is usually spellbinding. Once again, Blvd. Pomare to a right turn at either Sept 1914 (a street name) or Rue Cardella (only 4-5 blocks from the pontoons). The market is in between those two streets, only 1 or 2 blocks inland. The guides said they were open before dawn...but we were there at 0700 and many booths were not open, so perhaps things are changing there. Still, (almost) any vegetable, spice, fish or prepared food can be found there. Almost. Dave, we looked long & hard...but alas, no guacamole for SOGGY PAWS as we didn't see a single avocado. Maybe it was the time of the year... – Whoosh

Happy Markets have several locations off of Route 1 and are nice “high end” markets that offer gluten free and other specialty items. They do have a nice produce selection, but they tend to be pricier. – Sugar Shack

3.1.6.2 Bulk or Big Box Stores

Polynesian Trading: Located on Route 1. Is a big box store that sells Kirkland brands (American). You can access by dinghy (about 10-min from Intercontinental Hotel Resort) or by bus. There are 2 dinghy docks. Large one has gate that is open most days and closest to store. Smaller Fish store dock is short walk. – Sept. 2019.

Sugar Shack

Cash Box Located off Route 1. You can buy items in bulk and they sell American brands.

Cost and Company Tel: 45 54 40. Located on Avenue Pomare on block east of the large Intersport shop (Corner of Pomare & Rue des Remparts) at the corner of R. Ph. Bernadi No.

- June 2010: Bulk packaging (mini-costco) of some special items such as fruits and nuts, cereals, coffees, paper towels, olives artichoke hearts, pastas and sauces...things you do not find every day. Their stock is ‘hit and miss. – Visions of Johanna

Eco Vrac: Sells lots of products in bulk, including an assortment of flours, nuts, granola, dried fruit, cooking oils, cleaning products. Bring your own jars or find a few random ones left by other shoppers. They do have small paper bags for 25xpf. They are very close to the Clinique Mamao, I think it's near the intersection of Bambridge and Clemenceau. – Feb. 2019, Lungta

3.1.6.3 Duty Free Liquor


Sept. 2019: You can stop by Kim Fa to look at their pricing list and pick up the duty-free liquor form needed to place your order. You do have to clear out of Papeete and bring all of your exit paperwork to Kim Fa in order to place and pay for your order. They will deliver your liquor to you the day you are scheduled to depart. They have a very limited beer selection (Heineken and I think Corona), but a decent wine and liquor selection at reduced prices. – Sugar Shack
Aug. 2013: Our agent tells us that duty-free booze has gotten more restricted. Unless you check out from Papeete, it’s not available to us. If you do check out from Papeete, you have to leave FP immediately, and can’t visit any other islands. Of course, folks do try to work around this. – Alegria

June 2010: Now here is the best kept secret in Papeete. You can buy duty free alcohol! Yes, we all know you can buy duty free fuel, but no one mentions the booze. When you clear in at customs and get your duty-free fuel supply form, also get a duty-free alcohol form.

Here’s how it works. When you clear out (which you can do from Papeete and list all the islands you intend to visit before leaving Polynesia and the date you intend to leave) you then take all of your paperwork, including your clearing in docs and duty free booze supply paper, down to Kim Fa. It’s the same directions as for Nautisport, but at the second roundabout turn right (you’ll see Intersport on your left-hand side) cross the road and take the first left (there is a baby shop on the corner). You will think you have gone down the wrong street, but keep walking until you see the green wagons of the Heineken depot and the Kim Fa shop is at the end of the depot. There you can buy wines at prices from $3.30 upwards, liqueurs, Brandy, Cognac, Armenac, Whiskey etc etc. They also sell 5litre mini kegs of Heineken and bottles. The prices are a fraction of what you would pay retail.

You must give them at least 24 hours’ notice before you are due to leave. So, you go and select your goods and pay for them. They will take a copy of all your documents and passports and you will pay. You tell them when you are leaving Papeete and they will deliver to your boat the day of departure. The alcohol is bonded, which means technically you can’t drink it until you leave French Polynesia. Customs regularly board boats, so drink it at your peril.

If you can’t make it during opening hours if you call 545600 and ask to speak to Jo Ann or Laurent, they will make an appointment for you to shop while the shop is closed. – Beaujolais

June 2010: We also found Kim Fa, a downtown duty-free wine/ Heineken /alc bev supplier 1 1/2 way to Sin Tung Hing (located on Rue des Remparts, 1.5 blocks north of Avenue Pomare). Least expensive wine bottle would cost 1400 francs retail, but 460 fr duty free. Phone number is 54 56 00 and contact person is Joanne. They wish you to buy 2-3 days before your departure, and will deliver to town quay. You must then leave FP, or "lock" the beverages. – Visions of Johanna

3.1.7 Restaurants

Marina Papeete

Sept. 2019: There are lots of food trucks and pop up eateries downtown. From the marina, turn left on the main road. The first area of food trucks will be on your left. – Sugar Shack

March 2017: Some pluses include the food trucks a very short stroll away and Monday night half priced beer at the microbrewery. – Mary Ann II

June 2010: The area adjacent to the Tourist Info Center (we’re back to walking along Blvd. Pomare from the pontoons) is, at night, where the Roulettes arrive. What a treat!

I’ve read about them for decades but always formed the impression that one gets a flimsy little cardboard carton with one’s order inside and then eats it while trying not to drop it in the dirt. Not now... Each roulette sets out tables and chairs, tablecloths and waiters/ waitresses, and then does their various 'cooking shows' to serve their customers. The Asian roulette got our vote, hands down...but we started at a roulette that offered big/gorgeous salads (with tomatoes, Dave), shared a salad, and then migrated to where the next entree' appealed. Shared the main course there, as well - clearly, they serve 'Polnesian portions'. Good fun, affordable, superbly tasty. But only in the evenings. – Whoosh
**July 2010:** Roulottes: (meals on wheels) are just beyond the visitor’s center in the big paved plaza on the water. They start up around 6 PM and we think there’s a rotating combination of vendors every night of the week. Most are Chinese with a few crepe/pizza/burger ones thrown in the mix. – Nakia

### 3.1.8 Activities

#### 3.1.8.1 Tours

**Tour Guides**

**May 2019:** Natura Expeditions: We did a fantastic trip that combines jungle hiking, river trekking, and a caving exploration of the lava tubes on Tahiti. I can't say enough good things about our guide Arnaud. The trip was probably the highlight of our time in Tahiti and if you like this sort of thing a possible must do.

His business is hard to find, but here is his Facebook page [https://www.facebook.com/Natura.Exploration/](https://www.facebook.com/Natura.Exploration/)

We left at 7am and returned around 4pm, for beginners who are semi-adventurous and not afraid of looking over the edge of a small waterfall and using the assistance of a hand-ropes to descend. I had been a river guide for 12 years and taught some rope climbing skills as a guide and appreciate Arnaud's skill and character with respect to the leadership he showed with our group of eight armatures/beginners. Try and do this trip if you have the time. – Nehenehe

**Sept. 2018:** Tahitian Guide Corine Mc Kittrick PHD Polynesian Languages & Civilization. + 87-75-91-56 or makanalani56@yahoo.fr  Excellent island tour. Transportation provided. Fluent in English Can Highly recommend her – Jacaranda

**July 2011 – Tahiti VIP Tours +689 79-75-65 or tahiti1viptours@yahoo.com.** Dave Ellard, American Guide. In Tahiti, we highly recommend Dave for a land tour of the island. He offers full day, half day and custom tours. He is American, spent a good number of years in Hawaii and came to Tahiti where he met the love of this life and remained here. In addition to English, he speaks fluent French and Tahitian. For 1/2 day, Russ and I paid 4500PF / person. – Consensus

**June 2011 – Self Tour:** We “did” the west coast of Tahiti Nui and Tahiti Iti in one day, and the east coast another, and tried to drive over the top on the last day (but the road is closed), so you can’t go all the way over and back down. At about $200 per couple, total including gas, we felt it was a worthwhile expenditure, especially since we were time-limited. – Soggy Paws

**Self-Tours**

**Sept. 2019:** We rented a car and found several wonderful places to visit. There is only one road that goes around Tahiti Nui and another “main” road for Tahiti Iti.

- **Natural Grottos:** Super beautiful and serene. Head away from the airport, pass through several small towns. When you start to see the coast or ocean on your right, look for the first grotto (left).
- **Tres Cascades:** Past the airport, through a tunnel, turn right at sign. Beautiful, tall, cascading waterfalls. Super easy hike and well worth the visit.
- **Blow Hole** across the street from the Tres Cascades.
- **Snorkeling and Diving**
  - Just north of the last green/red buoys is a great snorkel with a sunken Cessna and two boats. You can easily find it by locating all the tour boats near the moorings. Depth 25-30’
  - North of the airport runway is a 60’ dive with a sunken large plane that you can swim in

There is only one main road around the entire island of Tahiti so it is pretty easy to navigate. It is worth the price of the rental to do a little sightseeing and provisioning within your 24 hour rental period. – Sugar Shack
July 2017 — Self Tour: We did rent a car at the airport but weren’t too impressed with driving around Tahiti and down to the famous surf break Teahupoo. Lots of roads were 4WD only, and we weren’t able to explore much inland. We found that most tourists don’t leave their all-inclusive resort when they stay on the island. — Consensus

Jan 2010. There’s much more to Tahiti than just Pape’ete and we were keen to venture outside the city to explore a bit. Car rentals are not cheap—about $100 USD/day plus the cost of gasoline (~$5/gallon). The bus system in-town Pape’ete is quite good, but venturing outside of town is less convenient. We originally considered sharing a rental car with friends, but our stay in the boatyard over a weekend (we finished up our work late Saturday morning!) afforded us the unexpected bonus of having a free car at our disposal and we took advantage of it.

The map view of Tahiti looks like a tilted figure eight. The island is actually separated into two parts connected by a narrow isthmus: Tahiti Nui being the larger, most developed and populated part and Tahiti Iti, the smaller. The well-maintained coastal highway around Tahiti Nui is about 114 km and a trip around the island including side trips to Tahiti Iti can easily be done in a day.

Boat work complete (hooray!), we packed a picnic lunch and left early on a Sunday morning. We had collected several brochures from the Tourist Office in downtown Pape’ete, but Lonely Planet Tahiti was actually our guide of choice. We traveled clockwise around the island as suggested in the guide, stopping at scenic vistas and points of interest along the way.

Highlights of our little road trip included **Point Venus**, Cook’s observatory set up to record the transit of Venus, with an impressive lighthouse, park and upscale crafts market, and the **Faarumi Waterfalls**, a quick 20-minute trek on a well-marked path through dense forest to three separate cascades. In Taravao, the little town at the narrow isthmus separating Tahiti-Nui from Tahiti-Iti, we opted to take the northern route to visit Tautira, where we picnicked in a little park by a lovely beach. We climbed the steep, narrow, but well-maintained road to the **Taravao Plateau** for spectacular views of both sides of the isthmus below and a caught sight of two Tahitian gray ducks in the lagoon there. On the southeast point of Tahiti-Iti, we sat through a downpour watching surfers at Teahupoo.

Back on the main road, we headed to **Musée Gauguin** and though they don’t have any original Gauguins, the grounds were pretty and the displays interesting. There are several marae (sacred sites) marked along the way. We ended the day at **Musée de Tahiti et des Îles**, an impressive collection of geological, historical and cultural displays of the French Polynesian islands. -- From SSCA Newsletter

**Touring by Bus**

It is possible to go all the way from Papeete down both sides of Tahiti to the very end at Tahiti Iti by bus. You can also easily get to the Gaugain Museum (on the west coast) by bus. We never scoped exactly the bus schedule, but we did see buses running down there. I think it is $2 each way. The schedule is light—frequent in the early morning and late afternoon, and infrequent in the middle of the day. The green and white buses seem to be the ‘long haul’ buses. So flag one down headed south, and know the name of the town you are trying to get to, and ask. Make SURE you understand when the bus comes back and how to catch it, BEFORE you get off the bus you came in on.

Understand that buses stop running in the evening about 6pm, and DO NOT run on Sunday. Saturday schedule may be limited. Many cruisers, when stuck by the sparse bus system, were successful in hitchhiking.

**Bus System**

See section 3.1.5.9 Transportation, for additional information on the bus system.

**Jan. 2019:** There are regular buses from Taina Marina (cross the footbridge and the Papeete direction stop’s 20m south of the bridge) into Papeete city, the main area for Chandlers and hardware stores is a ten minute
walk north of the town; most things can be found in/around Papeete city centre, though there are no good supermarkets and the city’s disappointingly uninteresting from a tourist point of view.

If you take the bus south from the marina for about five miles you’ll reach the Papeete/Islands museum, the two people I know who’ve been highly recommend it, but when we visited in January 2019 it had signs outside advising that it was ‘closed for renovation Jan/Feb 2018’ and was clearly suffering a serious over run on the works.

There’s a big Super-U just where the bus drops you off for the museum (10-minute walk to the west) and a five minute walk back north (over the bridge) is a decently stocked chandlery and a well-stocked hardware store, though if the museum’s still closed, neither are probably worth the trip for their own sake. – Moon Rebel

June 2010: Catching the Bus: We're passing along what we've been told but, so far, have not used ourselves. To catch the bus from the marina, exit the gate, turn left and walk past the roundabout and a bit further than the Carrefour (plus get on the other side of the street). That bus stop receives buses from 2 routes and so the pickup times are more frequent than the bus stop right outside the gate. Supposedly (s/v Victoria) it's also cheaper than the bus stop outside the gate...though if it were me, I'd cross the street first, look for the bus and, if no joy, then walk down to the further bus stop. Frequency varies from 15 mins to 30 mins to one hour, time of day depending. To catch the bus downtown to come back to the marina, you pick it up at the bus terminal, which is (just) behind the Open (that is closed) Market described above. However, after 1800 one apparently must pick it up on Blvd. Pomare instead - best to ask the bus driver or Tourist Info Center about the exact location but there is a major bus stop right near the TIC and that’s probably the place. The bus stops right near the marina (right after the Carrefour). The fares vary; just take coins, which you will find accumulate here very quickly.

Don't catch the bus: The trip in your fast dinks, from the anchorage via the airport channel into downtown Pape'ete takes about 15 mins and is another option to consider. The pontoon gates use magnetic keys so, if docking the dink there, some gate rattling will be needed after you do your shopping. The rest of the harbor area near the Yacht Quay in downtown Pape'ete is commercial and the Dockmaster didn't advise tying up to the bulkhead area by the park (tempting theft, which otherwise we'd seen no evidence of)...so the pontoons may be your best bet. Alternatively, following the same directions as fetching propane but continuing under the bridge and bending right around the marine businesses and fishing boats on the right, you'll arrive at a small sailing/rowing club dock, and landing the dink there is accepted by the locals. (BTW that puts you right at the Nautisport Chandelry, so you're back to that 'quadrant area' of many marine vendors. – Whoosh

Walking Around Papeete

March 2017: Walking in Papeete From the Papeete Marina to Fare Ute is 14 minutes at a steady pace. Ocean 2000 is twenty minutes as is Hyper Bricolage. Its similar from the bus stops if you’re coming from the out lying areas. Champion is about 10 minutes from Marina Papeete. Mary Ann II uses MAPS.ME on our smart phone so you don’t need an internet connection once its downloaded. – Mary Ann II

March 2017: We could not find bicycles for rent, so we ended up buying them at the hardware store for 13.000 each. Make sure you lock them all the time.

Most people in Papeete are really friendly, but we were warned by locals that some areas at night are not safe to go (like a few blocks inland from the boulevard). – Spunky

3.1.9 Cruiser Reports

June 2011: The local people complained about the rain and it's true it did rain heavily but only for about three days out of the eleven we were there. We also noticed a few mosquitos and flies. The good thing about this anchorage, there was never a worry about dragging the anchor. We got lots of chores done, had a nice rest and enjoyed all the interesting sites. – Percilees

June 2010: First, let's do a general orientation of the waterfront section of Pape'ete.
Let's assume you are berthed at the Yacht Quay in downtown Pape'ete. (BTW being at the Quay makes all the downtown resources so much more available than being out at the anchorage & taking the bus in, though that is an option).

The main drag along the waterfront is Blvd. Pomare and, to reach many of the vendors of interest, you'll want to turn left when exiting your pontoon and walk along that Blvd. To register with the Dockmaster, keep an eye open as you get near the Tourist Info Center. The dockmaster is in a blue/white Portacabin, off to the left, and visible from this sidewalk but only 'just'. (Ask for a copy of the downtown map as, unlike the tourist map of Pape'ete, it reflects some of the marine vendors' locations). You also can clear in here if not using an agent, and also register for the berth space you got on a 'first come/first served' basis at the Yacht Quay. We've been told that there is always a berth open on the Quay, the PPJ affair being the exception.

**Blvd. Pomare:** Tourist traps, bars, shops are on the other side of the Blvd, and also many an ATM, but you're staying on the waterfront side. After perhaps 1 KM, you reach a Roundabout (Sports shop across it and on the right). Just keep bearing left past the roundabout and, about the time the road forces you to begin bending right again, you'll see a most welcome Ace Hardware. Very big, tool repair center, orderly and helpful.

Arriving at the **Ace Hardware store**, and keeping it on your left as though you are passing it, you have:

-- ahead of you, a **Nautisport shop** that sells PWC's and such, but a second Nautisport Chandlery just a bit further on. (Expensive but helpful folks; inventory was disappointing.)

-- to your right, down a street perpendicular to the street you are on, is another Ace Hardware store - just as nice - and that is their 'home improvement' center, except that they have all kinds of plumbing stuff, fasteners and such.

-- the above two reference points - from ahead of you to your right side - form a quadrant of industrial shops that are, in a few blocks, closed off by a fetid canal that keeps you from walking further than you need to. Inside that quadrant you'll find **Yung Tung's electrical parts** shop (modern, well stocked), the Heineken (how do you spell that...?) distributor, the "Chinese Chandler", the 'inox fastener' (very good stainless) shop, and more. It's all within a few blocks N/S and E/W.

**Finding Repair Parts**, etc: I remember a comment made by a cruiser in the 80's to the effect that 'Pape'ete has everything; the trick is finding it'. That's still true to an extent but the Era of Big Box Stores has made the task easier here, as elsewhere. Another example (along with the Ace Hardware stores) is Hyper Brico, a DIY store the size (and selection) of any Home Depot you've been in. (We found a spare computer keyboard there, to give you a feel for the breadth of products). You find it by - again - walking along Blvd. Pomare but turning right at one of THE main inland roads, Avenue du Prince Hinoi. (That last 'i' has 2 dots over it). Ah...but this segues to a comment about street signs: there really aren't many. And the ones remaining from a former era are often broken. This is where the tourist map is helpful. Also, look for a large green traffic sign that directs traffic to Avenue Hinoi. The Hyper Brico is perhaps 6 blocks up that street on the right...but the efficient air conditioning rewards your arrival and the vivid yellow color of the (big) building makes it hard to miss. – Whoosh

### 3.2 Marina Taina

#### 3.2.1 Passes and Formalities

See section 3.1.1 Passes and Formalities for Papeete, Marina.
3.2.2 Anchorages and Moorings

3.2.2.1 Marna Taina

Be aware that rules on anchoring around Marina Taina are changing rapidly. Tahiti is trying to create new regulations limiting or prohibiting anchoring around Marina Taina. It is best to check with the marina or inquire at the French Poly Cruisers Facebook Group.

June 2019: We anchored several times across from the Intercontinental Hotel and Resort (huts over the water) in 2 meters of water (we are a catamaran with a 1.2-meter draft). It is a pretty, sandy ridge. Every time we anchored here (at least 6 times, we always had really good holding in the sandy bottom far away from bommies. We were able to weather out many storms with winds blowing in the 30’s. It was a bit of a drive in the dinghy to the dinghy dock, but it was worth the beautiful view and waters.

Dinghy Landing: There are several acceptable places to land your dinghy, but these are 3 most convenient.

- Pink Coconut has a nice dinghy dock closest to the anchorage. Once ashore you can dump trash and recycling easily. It is also the best place to unload groceries and leave the cart (as Carrefor picks up carts) from here.
- Inside marina by marina office. There are two spaces inside the marina, just below the marina office, but the marina typically likes to reserve this area for cruisers who are renting moorings or slips.
- From the marina entrance, turn left, past the large boat dock. Go around the back of that dock and you will find a less used dinghy dock area. This puts you closer to Casa Bianca and the marina exit.

Catamaran Corner which is in front of the beach and close to the Intercontinental Hotel has a very large pipe underground. We heard a catamaran pulled up this pipe with their anchor and it is now arched and can be seen from the surface on a clear, calm day. Be very careful. – Sugar Shack

Marina Taina has over 150 moorings which all require a reservation prior to using. They are often booked so call them as far in advance as possible for a slip or mooring. – Sugar Shack

Jan/Feb. 2019: We anchored in various spots just north of the marina, to the east of the marked channel, pretty much always around 16-18m/50-60’ but seemed always to get good holding and despite feeling open/exposed, we sat out some rough weather here and only ever saw one boat drag its anchor – a couple more broke their moorings though too.

The boats in this area are a mixture, some moored, some anchored on assorted rode lengths and all subject to odd movements due to the combination of wind and tide, so be sure to allow plenty of space on your neighbors. – Moon Rebel

July 2017: Both marinas are about the same distance from the airport. Not very close! 20-30-minute drive. We picked up guests in and out of Tahiti, and also anchored off Marina Taina in amongst the mooring field during strong winds. We had good holding in sand there with 30 knots of wind at anchor. You can anchor or pay for a mooring, but it is very expensive to stay in the marina. You can use the dinghy dock free of charge on the northern end of the marina restaurant complex. On the weekend we took the dinghy to the sandbar near the pass entrance where all the local power boats anchor up and party in the shallows. Was quite fun to be part of the local scene. – Consensus

March 2017: As of 2017 for us pedestrian class yachts under 60 feet the high season (1st March to 30th Sept) rate in the marina is $1.00 per foot per day and one half that in the low season. Mooring are $1.84 per foot per month year-round for monohulls and $2.76 for multihulls. Better protection than Marina Papeete in a north-westerly.

In the low season leaving your yacht for the "cyclone" season in the Marina generally requires a reservation by June/July. The manager noted that during the only cyclone to ever come close to Tahiti, the marina lost two cleats with little damage to boats. Beware that agents have been known to claim that only they can secure a
reservation, which the manager insisted is not true. The area does not usually require dehumidifier in the rainy season generally.

Many yachts anchor across from the mooring field and use the dinghy dock to come ashore. – Mary Ann II

**June 2010:** To hail Marina Taina use channel 09. They have some mooring buoys, but frankly you may as well just anchor, it’s cheaper and you can still use the marina facilities. – Beaujoais

**June 2010:** Marina Taina is the more upscale marina, excellent and helpful staff. Med moor bow or stern to the dock and divers will tie your outside lines to moorings. – Visions of Johanna

Many boats anchor or moor off Taina. There are 21 balls just south of marina labeled with letter "C", first come first served. Anchoring nearby can be tight if crowded. – Visions of Johanna

**June 2010:** Anchorage over by the marina is difficult....I finally squeezed in on a 10' sand shelf by the outer reef, which is the best place, I guess. I am anchored just off the Marina Entrance. Straight out from it there is a reef area that comes right to the channel...can’t miss it for the lack of moorings. The moorings to the N. are all long-term rentals. Those to the South are available to transients, or so I was told.

If you go to the North side, there is a large bank of clear sand at 10’ deep that fills the triangle between the main reef and this inward-running offshoot of it. There are some smaller boats on moorings here, but there is space to anchor around them. Off the bank, depths are about 55’. Further North, the bank gets skinnier, but there are fewer boats due to the longer dinghy ride to the marina, and weaker internet I guess, so there are possibilities up there. I did not check it much. I passed through with my dinghy and saw several possible places. Opposite the marina, however, you will not run out of water due to the bank; rather, the coral heads become too dense to go further out. There are some dark spots just on the edge of the bank that are grass, not coral. – Fellow Traveler

### 3.2.2 Coral Gardens Anchorage

**Jan/Feb. 2019: 17.33.40S / 149.37.44W.** A couple of miles north of Marina Taina, is a really nice anchorage (no services) just across from the airport runway- you need to call Papeete Port Control on VHF for permission to cross the flight path) anywhere. just chose a depth you’re comfortable with. Few and easily seen bommies, superb holding and great snorkeling, to north south and west; you can dinghy from here to either Taina or Papeete town (we managed both with just a 3.5 hp outboard), but they can be a slow/wet rides when the breeze picks up in the afternoon. – Moon Rebel

### 3.2.3 Yachtsman Services

#### 3.2.3.1 Cooking Gas (Propane and Butane)

**Sept. 2019:** Mobile Gas Station (to the right of Marina Taina) proved to be disappointing for us. We were told that tanks were picked up/dropped off only on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. We tried to fill our tanks there, but they took more than a week and then they ended up being returned to us empty. We were more than frustrated. However, several other boaters had no problems. We found propane pricing varied by island. When we did find it, we paid 4500f for 20lbs. The – Sugar Shack

**Jan. 2019:** Adjacent to the Taina Marina supermarket is a petrol station which will refill US and Camping-Gas propane bottles too (24 hours turn around) but at $60 for a US 20lb bottle, I can’t recommend them unless you’re desperate – even in the Marquesas it was only $45 for a fill! The local 13kg/30lb bottles are $28, with a refundable deposit of $30 on the bottle, so just buy a hose barb for those local bottles which will cost you $5-6 in any hardware store, a length of hose, drill-out the one way valve in an old US regulator and decant them yourself. – Moon Rebel
### 3.2.3.2 Fuel (Diesel and Gasoline)

**June 2019:** The Marina Taina fuel dock monitors VHF channel 09. Mon-Sun 0630-1200 & 1300 – 1700. The fuel dock is easily accessible with the big boat and dinghy. They accept the duty-free certificate, credit cards, and are very friendly. It was very easy to navigate to and from the fuel dock. In addition, their Volvic flavored waters are the cheapest in town.

**Duty Free Certificates** can be obtained without an agent. Simply walk to their office with your boat paperwork, fill out a form and receive your certificate, for free. They are located by the docks in Papeete and can be found on Maps.me. Douanes located on Chenel de Motu Uta (motu by NautiSport). Go to “Francisation et Hypothèques” office (2nd or 3rd door on right). They will be very happy if you bring a photo copy of your boat paperwork and passport (so they don’t have to copy it at the office).

The duty-free certificate is good for 6-months and cannot be renewed until it expires. The duty-free certificate only applies to diesel (it does not apply to gasoline). However, the discount for diesel is substantial, almost 45-50% off.

We were told the only islands that accept the duty-free certificate for diesel are: Tahiti, Moorea, Raiatea, Bora Bora, Rangiroa, Nuku Hiva, and Huahine will offer duty free fuel at Fare gas station.

Tahiti Crew will help you obtain a new duty-free certificate or a renewal certificate for $50-$60. – Sugar Shack

**June 2010:** There’s one fuel dock in the Greater Pape’ete Metropolitan Area, and that’s immediately to port on entering Marina Taina. They sell both gas & diesel. On the unlikely chance they are out of either one, there’s a Total gas station right outside the Marina gate, to the right. Immediately adjacent to it is a very nice though much smaller grocery store - and definitely a shorter walk than the Carrefour if you park the dink at the inside dink landing, on the right and inside the marina entrance.

To refill a small gas jug, I found it easier to do a baguette run to the smaller store and fill the jug on the way. You obtain a duty free fuel permit on arrival here either from the Customs folks after clearing in or from an agent you use (see more below), and this doc is kept aboard and can be used for 60 days at multiple marine fuel docks...so you can use it to bunker before departing the Leewards.

The advice/rumor that it can’t be used to fill jugs appears bogus, as multiple boats have been filling jugs and barrels on their boats when at the fuel dock. Another yachtie also tried to use it when jugging to a local gas station (when the fuel dock had no diesel) but those folks don’t even know that duty is being collected via their tax scheme, so I’d forget about that. We don’t know if the duty-free offer applies to gas but our impression is that it doesn’t. – Whooosh

**June 2010:** The Fuel dock has both diesel and gasoline which is excellent quality and very clean. – Beaujoais

### 3.2.3.3 Trash and Recycling

**Sept. 2019:** Marina Taina is huge on recycling and they offer a lot of great resources for cruisers to recycle items. Trash can be dumped in the solid black trash bins.

- Glass in large green/white bins.
- Cans, plastic, and cardboard can be disposed of in the solid green bin.
- Flares: There is a small red bin to place expired flares (near Tahiti Crew)
- Batteries (small): Marina Taina has a small yellow bin for expired batteries (near Tahiti Crew)
- Batteries (large): For full size batteries (boat, car, engine) recycle them at the Mobile Gas Station (they have a large yellow bin). Exit Marina Taina, turn right, on your right.

If you are uncertain as to what items go where, please ask the marina office. Do not mix plastics with cans or glass as someone from the marina has to sort it out. There are cameras near the recycling so please do your part and recycle items properly. And please do not dispose of recycling items in the trash bins. – Sugar Shack
June 2010: Trash is available, but you should go to the office to pay for disposing of trash. – Beaujoais

### 3.2.3.4 Water

**Sept. 2019:** There is a water spigget near the Pink Coconut pier (Marina Taina) that has potable water for free. – Sugar Shack

**Feb. 2019:** Dinghy landing is at the marina and there’s free water at the north-end dinghy dock at least, probably elsewhere too. – Moon Rebel

**June 2010:** Water facilities are available; the water is free and good quality. – Beaujoais

### 3.2.4 General Services


See cruiser reports for additional services.

**New 2017:** Started by Julien Demont a local French sailor living in Papeete. Julien Desmont built the website and is hosting it as well. Many cruisers have contributed information. If you find a service or store that is not listed please send in an update.

#### 3.2.4.1 Banks / ATMs

- ATM located inside Carrefor (Taina Marina)
- ATM by gas station and McDonalds (Taina Marina, exit and turn right)

#### 3.2.4.2 Laundry

**July 2019:** Marina Taina (24/7) have self-serve laundry facilities. Purchase tokens from the marina office. We heard it was a bit pricey. There were several washers and dryers available. We heard from other cruisers that the washers are good, but it is not worth the cost to use the dryers. – Sugar Shack

**June 2010:** The laundry machines are large and take 8 x 100 franc coins for a wash (so that's $8/load to wash) and each 100 franc coin buys you some small number of minutes in the driers. We've been told not to bother using the driers; not hot enough to dry a full load even after a sizeable investment of coins...so bring the wet/clean stuff back to the boat and hope the Net's weather man got the weather right. – Whoosh

#### 3.2.4.3 Marina Taina

**Sept. 2019:** The marina office is located on the 2nd floor of the two-story building adjacent to the parking lot and the inside dinghy dock. From Pink Coconut, walk toward the parking lot and you will see the 2-story roundish building on your right. The marina is nice and has several laundry machines, dry cleaners, recycling, trash, chandlaries, restaurants/bars, Tahiti Crew Agency, dive operations, and is walking distance to a huge Carrefor (market), Mobile Gas Station, and internet spots. – Sugar Shack

**Feb. 2019:** A small book-swap library in the laundry room. – Moon Rebel

**March 2017:** Marina Taina Is a modern well-equipped marina, 5 miles out of town to the east of Papeete past the Airport. It is close to a large Carrefour and has both laundry and showers. Tahiti Yacht Accessorie (known generally as Michel's) is in the compound. The complex has friendly staff, diesel (duty free) dockside. Water available for those on paid moorings. – Beaujoais

**June 2010:** They have very clean, good (cold) showers, nice nautical ambience. Best provisioning around is walkable at Carrefour grocery - take a cart back with goods. – Visions of Johanna

**June 2010:** Boats at anchor off the marina help themselves to the marina’s facilities and this is apparently either accepted or at least not prevented by the marina staff. Water jugs are filled at the 'N dinghy dock', the Lavaree/laundry is a short walk from there (turn left, first paved walkway you come to while walking along the
'big boat' bulkhead from the dinghy landing), and the laoranet antenna is right near there so folks will use computers in the shady breezeways (though it works fine from way down the anchorage, we've found, as does Hotspot). – Whoosh

3.2.4.4 Marine Supplies and Boat Parts

Sin Tung Hing +54 94 53. Satellite store located in marina. The main store is located off Rue Alfred Poro’i (Papeete). Marine for general supplies. A great enthusiastic and English-speaking contact is Sebastian, who is at Taina Mondays and Tuesdays, otherwise he is downtown. Sebastian’s cell is 73 72 96. Items can be brought to Satellite from downtown. Location is in Vaininiore, just across the canal (Riviere Papeava) from Fare Ute on the waterfront.

Tahiti Yacht Accessories. +689 87 74 10 02 or tyaccessoire@yahoo.fr

- May 2019: Excellent and highly knowledgeable business. Kind, helpful, and generous. Extremely well stocked for the size business. More parts for high performance boats than anywhere else. Excellent selection of cordage for our boat. I am left with the impression that the owner would sell the shirt off his back to help you out. I would rate them a 10 out of 10. – Nehenehe

- June 2010: Here is the way the agents charge for their services beyond check-in. TYA’s agent, Francesco Canonni charges 4500f/hr, with a 6% surcharge on his expenses. For instance, we gave him our propane bottles to be filled and he added 6% plus 1 hour (more $$ than we expected). He will not add 6% to the cost of the sail he is receiving for us though as he did not front the money, nor did he do the work. He will charge us for handling by the hour, and add 6% to shipping it to us in Moorea, if we ask. – Visions of Johanna

Chandlery Taina Marina: 74 10 02- Michelle

- Feb. 2019: The small Chandlery (Michael’s) was surprisingly well stocked and VERY helpful. – Moon Rebel

- If you need a chandler, Michel has a little shop next to Tahiti Yacht Agents, in the marina. He has a certain way about him, but he knows his stuff. – Nehenehe

- Located next to the dive shop behind Casa Bianca. If you can’t find what you need there, try Nautisport in town. – Nehenehe

3.2.4.5 Medical

Pharmacy: 2019 verified (June 2010): If you need to renew any vaccinations, then you simply go to the pharmacy in the Carrefour shopping mall (turn left out of the marina and walk for 10 mins, you can’t miss it) tell them which vaccination you need (there is one assistant who speaks excellent English) pay for it, then pop next door to the doctors and ask if he would inject it. Our Typhoid Vaccines cost 30000Xpf’s (about $30) each and he doctor injected both of us for 1000 xpf’s. Both pharmacy and doctor are open until 8pm. – Beaujolais

Pharmacist: Patrick Ly (pharmaciedetiarei@mail.pf +689 87 79 16 93) runs his own pharmacy in northern Tahiti, but is available to all of French Polynesia via email, text, phone, and Skype. He speaks English well and is willing to ship medications anywhere in FP. He understands cruisers’ needs to order large volumes and is very helpful in finding alternatives. If he can’t provide a specific solution, he will say so. – Kandu

Dentist: Jan.2019: Immediately across the road from the Marina Taina supermarket is a dentist – he speaks a little English, but proved very good and reasonably priced. – Moon Rebel

3.2.4.6 Miscellaneous Stores and Shops

Various shops can be found at the Carrefor near Taina Marina including pharmacy, physician, Vini, clothing, flowers, restaurants, and more.
3.2.4.7 Refrigeration Repairs

Jan. 2019: Michael’s Chandlery was well stocked with the standard Isotherm/Danfoss spare parts at surprisingly reasonable prices and provided that he’s not moved on, Mike aboard the British flagged yacht ‘Aila’ is a top-notch and well equipped refrigeration engineer; 5-star pricing, but he provides a 5* service to justify it. – Moon Rebel

3.2.4.8 Transportation

Car Rentals see section 3.1.5.9 Transportation

Paea Auto Center +40 82 33 33

Sept. 2019: The airport has several car rental places. We suggest booking the car online and picking it up at the airport (take the bus to the airport). The rates are far cheaper online. You can find rates as low as $30/day that do not include mileage. We toured the island and ran errands (chandlery, market, fuel) three different times and found it as cheaper to pay by mileage than pay for unlimited mileage. The island is just not that big to warrant unlimited mileage. – Sugar Shack

Public Transit – Bus System

- Sept. 2019: Public bus operates between 0800 and 1700 and costs 2 xpf per person. (Usually Bus #2 takes you to and from downtown and Marina Taina). Pick up is in front of Marina Taina and drop off downtown Papeete. The bus stop at Marina Taina: Exit main gate, turn left, go up and over pedestrian bridge, turn left again and wait by the wall to be picked up. Pick up downtown is in front of Vodaphone and Banque de Tahiti (blue roof building). Avenue du Marechal Foch. This is a different place than where they drop you off. If you have a fold up bike, you can bring on the bus. There is also a bike lane, but it can be dangerous. Be sure to lock your bike and take your seat. – Sugar Shack
- March 2017: The bus stand for Marina Taina from Papeete is a block south east of the main market (marche). If your French is poor just say Marina Taina to the bus driver and he will tell you yea or nay. The cost in 2016 was 320xpf one-way. The bus drops you just in front of the Marina. Coming back just cross at the pedestrian crossing and look for the bus stop sign. – Mary Ann II

3.2.4.9 Wifi / Internet

Sept. 2019: Vini is able to run both data and voice. However, data is very expensive and slow. We found that where our Vini sim card worked so did our GoogleFi leading us to believe that GoogleFi was using Vini services. Both were 2G and very slow, but it was access.

If you stay in one of the marinas, ask them to write a letter for you stating you are staying in the marina (“similar to a residence letter”). Take that letter to Vini and ask for an annual plan to receive significant discount. We paid the year up front so we did not have to bother finding a Vini store each month to make a payment. We paid a flat fee for the contract and small box (around $60-80 USD) and then $50/mo for 10 gigs. They had several monthly plans including 2, 4, 6, and 10 giga at varied prices.

Here are some wifi hotspots:

- Government Building offers free wifi access during business hours (Mon-Fri: 0800-1700). Route 1. Exit Marina Taina, turn right, walk about ½ mile. At roundabout, building across street with flags.
- Marina Taina offers wifi if you are staying in the marina.
- Restaurants at Marina Taina:
  - Casa Bianca has wifi for customers, which gets bogged down during happy hour.
  - Pink Coconut has good wifi for customers. They’re lenient with cruisers, buy a drink, coffee and surf away.
• Le Jardin Café by Carrefore offers good internet for customers

Tahiti crew rents a wifi router that works really well in Tahiti & Moorea. tehani@tahiticrew.com. – Sugar Shack

Jan. 2019: There were both Vinnispot and WDG internet signals at $5/hour which could be picked-up out in the anchorage, alternatively a 15 minute walk south from the marina got you to the Mairie (local government office) and there was a free, steady but consistent wifi signal available in the lobby/gardens area there Mon-Fri during working hours. – Moon Rebel

May 2019: Tahiti WIFI (Cell Data System Rental): We found them at the airport next to the rental car area; they rent routers on their system for a standard cost of 13000 francs for 45 days with 10GB of data at up to 4G speed. They have worked anywhere that we can pick up a cell phone signal. They handle 5 devices at a time and can be topped off later on line if you need more data at a discounted price (if you negotiate with the ‘boss’). The internet speed is fantastic and I highly recommend them. You seem to be forced into returning the router at the airport but I suppose this could also be negotiable? I would rate them a 10 out of 10. – Nehenehe

June 2010: Iorananet and Manaspot as well as Hotspot-WDG. Most locations have at least one of these available. – Visions of Johanna

3.2.5 Provisions

Carrefor Super Market: Turn right out of Marina Taina and walk 10-minutes along the highway.

• Sept. 2019: Carrefor has a wide variety and good selection of produce, meats, and products. There is one store about .9 miles from Marina Taina and there is another one on Route 5 (main road) that is not as “picked over”. It is on the bus route about 3 miles from the marina. – Sugar Shack
• June 2010: Carrefours is awesome. Excellent cheese, meats, and produce at USA prices or better for most. – Visions of Johanna

Marina Supermarket: Turn left out of Marina Taina, just past McDonalds. Open 24 hours and surprisingly well stocked. Not much more expensive than Carrefor.

Veggie Stands: Turn right out of Taina Marina, on the highway before Carrefor. Slightly more expensive than Carrefour. A second one is on the corner of the main highway just as you turn left into Carrefor parking lot. – Sugar Shack

Provision Cruiser Reports

Jan. 2017: Turn right out of the Taina Marina and there’s a big Carrefour supermarket and a variety of other stores/cafes about ten minutes’ walk along the highway, there’s a reasonable fruit stand about half way there and several somewhat more expensive ones just beside the supermarket too. Alternatively turn right leaving the marina and there’s the small ‘Marina Supermarket’ along with a McDonald’s burger bar perhaps five minutes’ walk to the south. The marina-supermarket’s surprisingly well stocked, not significantly more expensive than the Carrefour and open 24/7. – Moon Rebel

June 2010: As you will immediately discover when anchoring off Marina Taina, there is a HUGE Carrefour grocery store a few blocks away. Some folks here take 1, 2, 3 (keep counting…) trolleys from the Carrefour back to the marina when provisioning their boats (& then perhaps out to the anchorage via dink). It reminded us of the typical Hypermercados we found in the major cities of Europe; for Americans, think SuperWalmart, a mix of groceries and other (often, Chinese) stuff, from linens to auto parts. There’s a separate computer/electronics store, as well…though think ‘French OS’ for any ‘smart’ product they sell. – Whoosh

3.2.6 Restaurants

Sept. 2019: Inside the Marina Taina grounds are several restaurants. The Casa Bianca is best known for its happy hours (beer on special) and wifi (which gets bogged down with users). Pink Coconut is a little more
expensive, but has strong internet. They also have a happy hour discounting cocktails. Across from the Pink Coconut is another really nice restaurant (I forgot their name), but it is expensive and has no wifi. – Sugar Shack

**March 2017:** The Pink Coconut and the Dingy Bar are in the compound to libations. – Mary Ann II

**June 2010:** They have 3 restaurants and bars;

- Casa Bianca is the liveliest bar with happy hour between 5 and 6pm when beers are buying one get one free. But the food there is mediocre to say the least.
- Les Iles des Quais. If you want a really good meal (for the same price as Casa Bianca) it’s right next to all the big motor yachts.
- Roulotte. If you are on a budget then you could always try it, located at the bus stop opposite Carrefour. We had a great chow mein (a Polynesian popular dish) and instead of letting us buy 2 (at a price of 1000 Xpf’s each) the lady advised us that one would be big enough to share and she was right. – Beauvais

### 3.2.7 Activities

See section 3.1.8.1 Tours, for more information

### 3.2.8 Cruiser Reports

**June 2010:** Dinghy Landings at Marina Taina: There are three (at least) on floating pontoons although you'll find dinks tied up everywhere. The 3 on floats are the 'inside one' mentioned above and a north 'outside one', which is on N end of the marina, adjacent to the main anchoring area. (Boats also anchor across the channel from the marina, squished in among the two large mooring fields and mostly anchored on a flat, sandy 3m shelf just behind the reef break. The moorings supposedly cost 1/2 the marina's berth rate and are first come/first serve).

If using the 'N dinghy dock', approach it obliquely as there is a huge coral farm just N of the dock that extends out from the land & the dock a bit, and it isn't always easily seen and is right below the surface. Finally, there is a 3rd dinghy landing on the S side of the marina. And probably others we haven't found yet. If e.g. tempted to dock the dink right next to the Laverie, check the tide as it can be a stretch to get onto the bulkhead from the dink. – Whoosh

### 3.3 Tahiti Yacht Club

VHF 06, vctahiti@mail.pf

#### 3.3.1 Passes

**June 2010:** The waypoint for the start of the buoyed channel is 17 30.352 S, 149 31.383 W. Reach the manager, Michel Anton on VHF 06. He will also give you a key to the showers if you ask.

Now - the first buoy is a white 5-gallon drum of some sort, after that on the left, from memory, is a blue bottle (Bluebottle!!), and then on the right another bottle sort of dark colour and I think one more. Move thru these toward the shore on approximately 180 true bearing. As you face the buoyed channel you see a low red roofed church, to the right is a pointy church. The confusing thing is that the red and green marker posts may appear to be reversed. They are near to the low church, and stand at 90 degrees to the shore.

So after you come through the pass, keeping off from the breakers on the right, you turn a sharp right turn and pass thru the (tall posts) markers, then the red and green make sense, red on the port side - green on the starboard (opposite to American!) the channel is safe after the reef - it's marked by pairs of posts. So you come past the reef and turn right, running parallel to the shore. Up ahead you'll see a bunch of yachts on moorings and on the left more tied up to slips.
We are very insecure about entering passes, but we came in about 4.30pm last Saturday and it was ok for us. We are 46 ft, and were charged 900 CFP/day (2 persons) + 200 CFP for an extra person, for a mooring.

2 hazards - there is supposed to be a bommie near the stone wall/long thatched roof with canoes, which is right in front of the slips; and there is a sunk yacht, mast visible, between that wall and the slips. The dinghy dock/fuel, water dock is between two rows of slips. Dinghy dock is free. – Bluebottle

3.3.2 Anchorages and Moorings

March 2017: The anchorage around Tahiti Yacht club is just west of Point Venus and is generally in the twenty-meter range. Their moorings are rarely available and cost is high. The club charges 1500xpf a week for the dinghy dock and access to their hot water showers. They also have good clothes washing facilities. You can occasionally get an end tie for a day or two on one of their docks. Staff were very friendly and helpful in finding resources. – Mary Ann II

June 2010: Tahiti Yacht Club is located along the coast east of Papeete. They have moorings available for visiting yachtsmen. – Visions of Johanna

3.3.3 Yachtsmen Services

Fuel (Diesel and Gasoline)

March 2017: The Tahiti Yacht Club dock sells duty free fuel but it is not recommended for yachts over forty feet or for long keeled boats unless you find a very quiet spell, due to restricted maneuvering room. You can take diesel but not water there but the maneuvering room is very tight (wouldn’t recommend for a full keel boat for sure.) – Mary Ann II

3.3.4 General Services

3.3.4.1 Transportation

March 2017: Bus. If you are staying near Tahiti Yacht Club in Arue, buses run from very early until at least 6 pm. Walk across the big sports field to Ave General de Gaulle then a few hundred meters east, stand on the pavement (sidewalk) in front of the funeral home/marble counter tops shop. Wave at any bus you see as they approach. They tend to run about every 20-30 minutes. The cost in Dec 2016 was 200xpf one-way and 360xpf return. The smaller buses go by the nearby Carrefour but this can’t be a 15-minute walk. The big buses stop in the same bus stand as the bus to Faa and Marina Tahina. The small buses stop next to the town hall, the Marie

3.3.4.2 Wifi / Internet

March 2017: WiFi is available from adjacent cafe from the WDG pay-as-you-go cards. – Mary Ann II

3.3.4.3 Provisions

March 2017: Carrefour is close and several food trucks come every night. – Mary Ann II

3.4 Point Venus

3.4.1 Anchorages and Moorings

June 2019: We arrived to Tahiti at night, much to our dismay. After a 4.5-day passage from Hao we were tired and just wanted to anchor. Typically, we will not enter an anchorage at night unless we have been there before and have tracks. However, we were assured by many knowledgeable cruisers that this bay is wide, safe to enter, and well charted. We came in with no moon, found 2 other boats anchored, dropped the hook in 9 meters. The next morning, we snorkeled and found our anchor buried nicely in sand. This bay is wide, well-marked and accurately charted. We enjoyed several weeks in the bay which is lovely, peaceful. Lots to see and
do here including an artisan market, small eatery, historical sites, and lighthouse. We visited this bay multiple times over the summer and always found it to be a peaceful, beautiful anchorage. – Sugar Shack

Jan/Feb. 2019: 17.29.96S / 149.29.8W We found good holding in clean sand (and needed it!) contrary to some preceding Soggy Paws reports, both we and everyone else we spoke to who stopped there found the anchorage rolly and uncomfortable, even in light weather, when we got a series of night-time squalls, it was positively evil. If you really want to visit (not much to see anyway) then either hire a car/scooter, or take a bus from Papeete and walk the ¾ mile from the main road/bus stop. – Moon Rebel

3.4.2  Yachtsmen Services

3.4.2.1  Cooking Gas (Propane and Butane)
Sept. 2019: There are two fuel stations that sell cooking gas. Take the road away from the beach, up to the main road and you will come across a Mobile and Shell Station. They both sell cooking gas. – Sugar Shack.

3.4.2.2  Fuel (Diesel and Gasoline)
Sept. 2019: There are two fuel stations: Mobile and Shell in Point Venus. Take the road away from the beach up to the main road and you will come across a Mobile and Shell Station. I do not know if they accept the duty-free certificate for diesel. – Sugar Shack

3.4.3  General Services

3.4.3.1  Post Office
Sept. 2019: Post office is located on the main road on the right-hand side. Before the markets. – Sugar Shack

3.4.3.2  Plumbing
Sept. 2019: There is a Le Plumberie (plumbing store) in Point Venus. Take the main road away from the bay. At the intersection (where Super U and Champion are located), turn left and walk over the bridge. Store will be on the right-hand side. – Sugar Shack

3.4.3.3  Provisions
Super U and Champion are located across the street from each other. Take the main road away from the bay and pass the post office. At the intersection you will find both stores.

Super U has a large market with a good fresh produce selection. In the same area are several other stores including Vini and Vodaphone.

Champion has a decent selection but is not as large or “clean” as the Super U. But they do offer a few different items so it might be best to shop both stores to find what you need.

3.4.4  Activities
Sept. 2019: Snorkeling: There is a really cool underwater educational area with signs marking each station telling you about the fish and corals. It is located right off Point Tefaura. From the main anchorage, take your dinghy outside the white market, then hug the black/yellow markers. You will see w small opening for the dinghy dock to go ashore, past that. Then continue toward the small motu until you see the signs above water.

On shore there is lots to see. A beautiful, towering lighthouse with a great history, artisan market, life size whale made of aluminum cans, and a dozen historical markers with signage in English/French. – Sugar Shack

3.5  Port Phaeton, Tahiti Nautic Center, and Taravao
Guidebooks:
3.5.1 **Passes**

**Dec. 2018:** We departed Phaeton via Passe Teputa without difficulty, though in heavy weather – particularly southerly or westerly – or in darkness, I’d go the extra couple of miles south to Passe Tapuaeraha and use that. – Moon Rebel

**June 2011:** After the Tuamotu Atolls we aimed for Port Phaeton which is on the south side of the isthmus joining Tahiti Nui to Tahiti Iti. Never having been through a reef surrounding an island before, we choose Pass Tapuaeraha which can accommodate an air craft carrier or cruise ship. The water in the pass was flat but, on both sides, huge waves were breaking with a thick fine mist rising above them like smoke. The pass is well marked with buoys and a range light.

We followed the marks down the channel towards Port Phaeton noticing our electronic charts are off and shifted about a hundred meters to the south. The channel narrows at Pt Riri where the channel markers are red marking the shore and green marking the reef. There is an abandoned yacht basin at that point which later we explored by land. It looked perfectly serviceable with bollards on a concrete wall to tie to, good quality fresh water, and about three meters depth in the basin. It might be risky leaving your boat unattended there, though.

We had no trouble following the channel to the upper reaches of Port Phaeton where we anchored in twenty-four feet in sand and mud. We never felt the boat move from any waves for the eleven days we were there. The anchorage is surrounded by verdant hills and is well-protected from all directions. There is a small marina holding twenty boats, a dinghy dock, a covered breezeway, no laundry facilities, hot showers, friendly people, a repair shop and a road behind where you can pick up a bus to Papeete. – Percieles

3.5.2 **Anchorages and Moorings**

**Feb. 2019:** We wanted to leave our boat for a few weeks under the care of Pakakota Yacht Services in Fakarava, but unfortunately for us, Mathieu only provides that service during the "high" season. During the cyclone season (November-March), he instead works on other projects around his own property. He told us that he found that watching after boats took most of his time and interfered with his ability to get those other projects done.

Mathieu suggested that we contact a friend of his in Tahiti who has started watching boats in Baie Phaeton. We did, and found Marc to be responsible and competent. He is looking after more than 20 boats now! He gave us periodic email updates. He speaks English well, and has a long history with boats. He and his daughter make a good team! His email address is: marcusgrandus@hotmail.fr

There is a small marina here, but most of the boats are anchored put in this big bay with a thick mud bottom. It appears to be a good hurricane hole as well! – Lungta

**Dec. 2018: 17-43.80S / 149-19.52W** We anchored in 7m/23’ the bottom was heavy mud and holding bullet-proof. Once again, we found both CM93 and Navionics charts to be accurate for the passage inside the reef with hazards all well marked and depths generally more than charted. There are lots of moorings outside the Phaeton marina/boatyard, but also ample anchoring space.

Getting ashore you can go to the marina on the north side of the bay, alternatively (and better?) take your dink into the NE corner of the bay and just around the corner to port, you’ll find a small boat ramp beside the Boule Club. Land it there and try to sit it on one of the old tires in the shallows as it’s a bit rocky when the tide ebbs. There are potable water taps right beside the boat ramp and a ¼ mile walk around the ‘bouledrome’ and along the gravel track will bring you out to the main road.

We did visit the marina/boatyard one day, just for a look around: It appeared ‘basic but OK’ – we’ve certainly hauled out in worse! – but in early December, it was hot, humid and well stocked with mosquitoes. We’ve
often heard that ‘Phaeton’s much wetter than Taina’ and that’s probably true, the high humidity here might cause problems with long-term lay-ups, but should some serious weather arrive it certainly feels better sheltered spot to be anchored or moored here rather than up at Taina. That said, I also suspect that if/when Tahiti should ever get a direct cyclone hit, there’s a strong possibility that the centre will track straight through here; it’s the low spot between the two halves of Tahiti. – Moon Rebel

3.5.3 Yachtsmen Services

3.5.3.1 Water

Dec. 2018: There are potable water taps right beside the boat ramp and a ½ mile walk around the ‘bouledrome’ and along the gravel track will bring you out to the main road. – Moon Rebel

Feb. 2011: The dock water is not potable, and it turned brown-ish after heavy rains. We could use it for cleaning, but we obviously did not put it in our tanks. – Slip Away

3.5.4 Tahiti Nautic Center

www.tahitinauticcenter.pf. The marina manager is Yvan Allano, tel 74 85 60, email tnc@mail.pf

June 2011: There is a small marina holding twenty boats, a dinghy dock, a covered breezeway, no laundry facilities, hot showers, friendly people, a repair shop and a road behind where you can pick up a bus to Papeete. – Percilees

April 2011: After 8 months on the hard, we were happy to see that Yvan, the manager at Tahiti Nautic Center Marina, took good care of her. It helped that we had left on board an air conditioner/dehumidifier turned on 24/7 which Yvan checked every month to make sure it was running. – Dream Caper

Feb. 2011: Tahiti Nautic Center (TNC) marina facilities are pretty basic, but they do have restrooms (bring your own TP) with hot showers, and 220 electricity and water on the dock. In addition to the marina, boatyard and boat builders, there are also a sailing school and a scuba shop (Tahiti Iti Diving) located on the premises.

We left Slip Away at TNC in Port du Phaeton for 4 1/2 months (mid-September 2010 to February 1, 2011). Port du Phaeton is located on the southwest side of the isthmus that connects Tahiti Nui and Tahiti Iti. It is the best hurricane hole on Tahiti. Slip Away stayed in the water at the TNC Marina, but they also have a boatyard and can haul out boats and store them on the hard. anchorage in Port du Phaeton is spacious, well-protected and has good mud holding. We anchored in about 30 feet. There is usually a good breeze in the anchorage during the day, but it is normally very calm at night.

There are a couple of rivers feeding this bay, so visibility isn't terrific, but it was fine for a swim or cleaning the bottom. In the marina, the mosquitoes were bad in the evening, but we rarely had them at the boat at anchor. On a couple of very calm evenings, we had a few, but they went away when we burned a mosquito coil (which are sold at the grocery stores in town). It rains quite a bit more here than in Papeete.

Yvan kept an eye on Slip Away while we were gone, and the boat fared well in our absence. It rains a lot in Port du Phaeton, so we had some green slime to clean up on the decks and some mildew on the inside, but overall, it wasn't too bad.

Upon our return to TNC February 1, we had a significant repair job to do.

Our aluminum bowsprit was bent, and our staysail deck connection pulled out of the fiberglass after bashing through some waves entering Fakarava atoll.

We were very fortunate in that just next to the TNC is a Nautisport boat building operation, and they build aluminum boats. They straightened the bowsprit and welded some reinforcement and other minor items on it. It wasn't cheap, but it wasn't outrageous, and they did an excellent job. Yvan from TNC helped us install a
backing plate for the staysail attachment, repaired and painted the fiberglass, and also painted the bowsprit before we reinstalled it. Yvan also did an excellent job and we felt his charges were very reasonable.

By the time we left the TNC marina, Slip Away had been there for 6 months without an interim bottom cleaning. Again, we were pleased that the bottom growth wasn't too bad. The prop was encrusted in barnacles, and there were a few on the bottom, but it was mostly brown/green slime. Our bottom paint (one-year-old Hempel) did a good job. We were able to motor out of the marina with no problems and clean the prop and bottom in the bay where the water was a bit clearer. All but the random barnacles just wiped off.

The anchorage in Port du Phaeton is spacious, well-protected and has good mud holding. We anchored in about 30 feet. There is usually a good breeze in the anchorage during the day, but it is normally very calm at night. – Slip Away

### 3.5.5 General Services

#### 3.5.5.1 Hardware Supplies

**Dec. 2018:** Taravo has an Ace Hardware store, which once again, proved to be far bigger and better stocked than any we found in Papeete. – Moon Rebel

**Feb. 2011:** There is a good ACE Hardware store in Taravao (a smallish selection of stainless fasteners, bedding compound and marine stuff. – Slip Away

#### 3.5.5.2 Laundry

**Feb. 2011:** There is a "Blanchisserie" in Taravao, and they would do 10 kilos of laundry for 2500 francs - wash, dry and iron. To find it, one needs to turn on to the road to Teahupoo, and then it's on the first road on the left (there's a sign at the intersection). We did not use their services. – Slip Away

#### 3.5.5.3 Marine Supplies

**Feb. 2011:** Next to TNC is a Nautisport boat building operation and they build aluminum boats. They have some supplies – Slip Away

#### 3.5.5.4 Medical

**Pharmacy:** **Feb. 2019:** Arnaud, the proprietor of Pharmacie Taiarapu, speaks English and is very helpful. Pharmacie Taiarapu is located in a small strip plaza on the main road between the small Champion store and the Ace Hardware. We found prices on blood pressure and cholesterol medications to be about the same as Panama. – Slip Away

**Physician:** **Feb. 2011:** There is also an excellent gynecologist/obstetrician in Taravao - Dr. Laurent Bonnamy - tel 57 99 57. His office is located on the second floor of the "Shop Tahiti" small shopping complex located a kilometer or two down the road to Teahupoo (on the right-hand side of the road). He speaks excellent English. – Slip Away

**Dentist:** **Dec. 2018:** A good dentist who speaks English is located almost directly across the road from the Super-U. – Moon Rebel

**Dentist:** **Feb. 2011:** Yvan at TNC recommended the dentist Dr. Arnaud Delphin, who is located in a small plaza to the right of the Hyper Champion. We had our teeth cleaned for 8040 francs each. Dr. Delphin does not speak much English. – Slip Away

#### 3.5.5.5 Miscellaneous Stores and Shops

**2011:** Taravao has a couple of clothing and fabric stores. – Slip Away
3.5.5.6 Transportation

Dec. 2018: There are public buses from Taravao to Papeete, we never tried them but were advised that: They were most frequent in the morning, stopped around 17:30/18:00 and ‘don’t leave it too late to return, as if the last bus is full, you’ll have to get a $50 taxi’. – Moon Rebel

June 2011: The buses have no schedule and we found them to be unreliable. The best time to catch one was between seven and nine in the morning. They do not run after 5pm or on weekends. We rented a 4x4 jeep from the Avis dealer in Taravao for 19,800 pf for 2 days. We did a lot of exploring, found lots of beautiful anchorages behind the reefs, did some bicycling and lots of walking. Some roads have bicycle paths. – Percilees

3.5.5.7 Wifi / Internet

Feb. 2011: The sailing school broadcasts the iaoranet wifi signal, so it's a good strong signal (although occasionally unreliable) in the marina. – Slip Away

3.5.6 Provisions

Feb. 2019: Directly across the road is a huge Carrefour Supermarket, much better stocked and far cheaper than the ones you’ll find at Marina Taina/Papeete and with good, free wifi available at the tables in the entrance lobby; why did we ever leave?

A further twenty minutes’ walk to the east (past a McDonald’s for those who’ve been too long without their burger-fix) and you’ll reach the town of Taravao. Turn right just before the church and you’ll soon reach both a Champion and a huge Super-U grocery store. – Moon Rebel

June 2011: There are at least three good sized markets with prices sometimes better than Papeete. – Percilees

April 2011: Taravao has three well stocked grocery stores - a Hyper Champion, a Champion and another - as well as several smaller magasins and an organic vegetable stand. Prices on some items in Taravao were slightly cheaper than in Papeete (a case of beer in returnable bottles went on sale a few times for 3095 francs), but a few items were more expensive. – Slip Away

3.5.7 Restaurants

Feb. 2011: Taravao has a few restaurants and a few snack stands. We only ate at the Motu Hana Snack stand across the street from the Hyper Champion. The food was good and reasonably priced, and the proprietors - Rita and Bernard - as well as their assistant Delfina, were incredibly friendly and welcoming. – Slip Away

3.5.8 Cruiser Reports

Feb. 2011: The small town of Taravao is about a 20-minute walk from the TNC marina, but one can get closer by taking the dinghy up near the head of the bay and tying it to some trees. That puts you close to the intersection of the turn-off to Teahupoo, and the center of town is about 5-minute walk from there. In general, we found the people in Taravao to be very friendly and helpful toward us. Taravao is not a tourist town, so we were an anomaly. After a couple of times in the stores, the clerks all recognized us, and they always smiled and were very pleasant. – Slip Away

3.6 Teahupoo / Havae Pass – SW Coast Tahiti

3.6.1 Passes

Dec. 2018: Having arrived at the south end of Tahiti (bound for Port Phaeton) we came in here to find an anchorage before dark. It looked hairy on approach, but once we actually reached the leading line, the entry opened-up and was safe/simple enough and unlike the Tuamotu reef passes, neither this nor any other pass we’ve used through the Society Islands is significantly different, whatever the tide state.
Having since seen photos and videos of the ‘Teahupoo Wave’ in its pomp, I’d be rather wary of using it in strong winds from the west and never in the dark. The CM93 and Navionics charts were accurate for both the entrance and passage north through/behind the reef to Phaeton, though both were sketchy with regards to depth information for the first mile or so north from Havae Pass/Bay.

It’s actually well marked and we never saw less than 7m/25’ in those ‘vague’ areas. Our only problem having arrived very late in the afternoon was in trying to interpret the marker posts guiding you through the channel around Maeretauro Reef, just off Teahupoo village whilst looking into the setting sun. – Moon Rebel

### 3.6.2 Anchorages and Mooring

**Dec. 2018:** 17-51.21S / 149-15.60W in 15m of water immediately to the east of the reef, finding good holding in mud, and well sheltered other than a lot of small boat traffic passing until it got dark – to be fair, we were smack in the middle of the navigable channel. – Moon Rebel

### 3.6.3 Provisions

**Dec. 2018:** There’s a small but well stocked grocery store on the main road close to the marina – a veritable cornucopia after months in the Marquesas and Tuamotus! – which was open on Sunday morning and had really old beer. – Moon Rebel

### 3.6.4 Activities

**Sept. 2019:** If you are a surfer, then this is your happy place. We rented a car and came here for the World Surfing Competition which was nothing short of spectacular. We paddle boarded out to the safety line and watched as dozens of world-class surfers attacked the killer and monstrous waves. There is a large fake wave that you can pose in front of and several snack stands along the shore. I am not sure if the snack stands are always here or just here for the festivities, but they were reasonably priced. – Sugar Shack

**Dec. 2018:** A very pleasant thirty-minute walk to the south takes you back to the bay where the entry pass is and home of the ‘World Famous Teahupoo Wave’; it was 2’ high the days we were there, but the U-tube videos suggest it gets more exciting. – Moon Rebel

### 3.7 Uritutua

#### 3.7.1 Passes

**Dec. 2018:** Coming north from Teahupoo inside the reef we found both CM93 and Navionics charts to be accurate, the hazards are well marked and depths generally more than charted. – Moon Rebel

#### 3.7.2 Anchorages and Moorings

**Dec. 2018:** 17-48.48S / 149-17.642W. Good holding in 18m/60’ in what felt like heavy mud; light weather the night we stayed, but it seems to be a popular spot with empty/laid-up yachts, so I presume it’s well sheltered and secure? It’s also only about 1 mile south of the Tapuaeraha Pass, in reasonable conditions and with care, both the pass and the route from it to here should be negotiable in the dark. – Moon Rebel

### 4 TEITIAROA (Marlon Brando Island)

Teitiaroa is 30 miles from Tahiti

#### 4.1 Anchorages and Moorings

Motu Rimatuu
**Sept. 2019:** We had heard Teitiaroa was a beautiful, albeit small island with no anchorages and only a few charter moorings. However, we were determined to visit this small piece of paradise so close to Tahiti. It was also a perfect jump off point for Makatea, in the Tuamotus where we were headed next. We arrived just before noon and found 5 moorings. Two different charter boats were on the outer moorings closest to the entrance. Five moorings: two of the moorings are very close to one another. Another two are very close to the reef. The fifth is the furthest from the entrance and others and is the one we selected to use. Note: it is not advisable to stay here with winds blowing from the south or west as your boat will be too close to the pounding reef.

We were told that if a charter company wants / needs the mooring we would have to leave and we were ok with that. Some have said that the charter boats will allow you to tie up to them after they are secured to a mooring. We did not have to do this, luckily.

We sat back and watched the circus arrive. It appears that each mooring is tied to a specific charter company. The charter company “Moorings” takes the mooring ball to the right (far east). The charter company “Poe” takes the next ball (west of the Moorings ball). And the charter company “Tahiti Tours” takes the ball west of Poe. Nobody took the 4th ball while we were here.

The oddest thing happened while we were here. One Moorings boat and one Tahiti Tours boat came in and took their respective moorings. A 48’ Poe catamaran came in and took its ball. Then another Poe cat came in and tied off to the first one’s stern. Then a 3rd came in and tied off to the 2nd one’s stern. Then a 4th large, 55+ catamaran came in and made the other 4 move so it could tie off to the mooring directly. Once it did, the other 3 tied themselves back off to each other. And if you can believe this, two more catamarans came in and tied off to each other’s stern. So, there were 6 catamarans tied to one mooring.

There is a big surge that breaks about 30 meters from the moorings which can make this spot really rolly (we are a 47’ cat), but it is so pretty and worth it for a night or two.

On our way to Makatea, we motored around the Brando resort (south west side) to see if we could find an entrance to the lagoon. To our surprise we found a nice, somewhat shallow area (15-18 meters) that we might have made a decent anchorage. We were anxious to get to the Tuamotus, so we did not stop. – Sugar Shack

**July 2011:** We arrived at the south end of the atoll to find three catamarans moored off the motu Rimatuu. There are two very large moorings that could take a vessel of virtually any size and one small mooring that a 45-foot catamaran was attached to. We spoke to one of the boats and discovered they were day charters out of Papeete. They arrive about 10:00AM and depart at 3:00PM. So, we figured we would be able to attach to one of the moorings for the night. The captain of the charter boat warned us, however, that if the winds came around to the south it could become dangerous as you would have your back to reef, which is relatively close to the moorings. The winds were ESE at 10-15 knots when we were there and presented no problem. However, there was a relatively large ground swell that rolled through. Being a large catamaran, it presented no difficulty for us, but it might not be acceptable to mono-hull sailors who prefer calm anchorages.

Since the moorings were being occupied for a bit we decided to investigate if there were any places to drop anchor. On our charts there was noted nearby a bank with soundings on one chart of 20 meters and on another of 6 meters. We motored over the area, but found no such depth. There may well be a pinnacle somewhere in the area, but we had no soundings at all, which means the water must have been over 100 meters deep. This was the case in the entire bay except right at the reef edge, which because of the breaking swell you would not want to attempt to anchor next to. – Sete Mares

### 4.2 Activities

**Snorkeling**

**Sept. 2019:** We snorkeled on our mooring, right by the reef and enjoyed a large variety of fish and pretty hard coral. It is a little nerve racking as there was a lot of swell, but the wild life loved it. – Sugar Shack
**July 2011:** We decided to do a bit of snorkeling along the edge of the reef. It was very good indeed, quite reminiscent of snorkeling in the Tuamotus. Diving would be excellent as well. The reef edge is a virtual wall of coral that drops to 80 feet or more, then quickly drops to oblivion. The coral along the face of the reef is in excellent condition and fish are abundant. I would highly recommend it. – Sete Mares

4.3 **Cruiser Reports**

**Aug. 2019:** This is an extremely beautiful, peaceful and isolated island. However, there is a huge surge that breaks 25-30 meters from the moorings which makes it a rolly anchorage. We are a 47’ catamaran and it was a little uncomfortable.

There is no pass into the lagoon. We searched and searched and could not find an entrance. So, we observed the charter captains as they shuttled their guests ashore. They only took 2 passengers per trip so they made a LOT of trips. Each captain masterfully timed the waves and surge to bring their dingy over the reef. It was frightening and exciting. We were not brave enough to risk our dinghy and did not want to bother the busy captains with an extra trip for us.

The Marlon Brandow resort on Moty Onetahi. It is very exclusive and we were told we would not have permission to enter the facilities. However, as we left the island, we did see a momma and baby whale which was spectacular. We later found out that whales’ love visiting here between July-November. – Sugar Shack

**July 2011:** Tetiaroa being only 30 miles from Tahiti and nearly on the route from Rangiroa in the Tuamotus to Tahiti it is a tempting place to visit. Previously owned by Marlon Brando as a private island it has gone through a few transitions in recent years. We attempted to find some information about the island as a cruising destination that might give us some insight about anchoring and going ashore. Unfortunately, no guide we found nor could any other cruisers we talked to give us any help. So, we decided we would venture out on our own from Papeete for an exploratory trip of our own. We figured the worse that could happen was we would get there, find no place to anchor and simply return to Papeete before dark. When the trade winds are blowing from the east the wind angle out and back is favorable for a quick trip each way. So, we set sail early morning and sailed to the island in less than four hours. Note Sete Mares is a relatively large catamaran. But most cruising boats can make seven knots in favorable beam reaching conditions, making a four-hour trip under sail feasible.

We noted there were people walking the beach from the charter boats and assumed there must be a way to get ashore. We then watched as they were picked up by dingy to be taken back aboard their boats. Frightening is the word for it. There is no break in the reef. With each swell the edge of the reef appears above the water by a foot or two, and then is covered over as the swell breaks over it. The dingy driver literally times it to pass over the reef and through the crest of the wave as it passes over the edge of the reef to a calm area inside. Any mistiming and he would crash hard on the coral. He obviously was quite experienced at it as he made about six trips without a mishap.

When the charter boats departed, we attached ourselves to one of the large moorings. We took our dingy and ran for a mile in each direction to see if there was break in the reef somewhere to allow us to cross into the lagoon. We found none. There were a few spots where one could have surfed into the lagoon perhaps; but I wasn’t about to try it.

We enjoyed a peaceful private night on the mooring with a beautiful moon reflecting off the lagoon. That’s pretty hard to find in this part of the Pacific, especially so close to Tahiti. The next morning a charter catamaran arrived about 10:00AM. So, to be polite we dropped the mooring and decided to motor around Tetiaroa to see if we could find any other potential anchorages, perhaps on the west side in the lee.

Much to our surprise as we came around the corner of the motu Onetahi we saw a fairly substantial construction project underway. Onetahi has an airstrip on it and appears to be the site for a large resort being built there. When I say large, I presume it will be more along the line of small bungalows catering to the
$1,000 to $2,000 per night end of the market, but I can’t say for sure. The contractors appeared to be cutting a route through the reef toward the potential resort. It didn’t look passable as yet, but you could see the dredging being piled up along the side of the cut. So, it may be possible to get into the lagoon through this pass someday in the future.

There was also on the very edge of the reef a large concrete platform with a crane on it. When we arrived a cargo ship was unloading containers onto small barges which came up alongside the concrete platform from the seaward side. The crane lifted them off and placed them on another small barge on the lagoon side of the platform, where it was then transported ashore. This appears to be the way materials are moved on and off the island, as there appears to be no passes through the reef to move barges of material safely.

From a cruiser’s perspective, however, we did find two more large mooring in this area. I assume they are used by the contractors, and would thus not be available for use by visiting cruisers. Moreover, with all the traffic and construction going on I doubt it would be a very attractive place to moor anyway. So, we continued on motoring around the atoll. We motored relatively close to the reef and found no water shallow enough to anchor in. Nor did we find any breaks in the reef that might allow one to enter the lagoon.

In conclusion, all in all we did enjoy our overnight visit to Tetiaroa. The snorkeling was great. And again, where can be anchored by yourself so close to Tahiti, even if only for the night. But it is a bit rolly and wouldn’t be for everybody. – Sete Mares

5 Mo’orea

5.1 Transportation Around the Island

5.1.1 Ferries (Vaiare Baie)

There are two ferry companies that service Mo’orea. Usually, the one-way trip takes about 30-40 minutes. Round trip is slightly cheaper than 1 way. Double check all times before planning your trip. If you are waiting at the ferry landing in Papeete there is an excellent restaurant upstairs. Great poison cru!

- **Terevau** is painted red with Vodaphone on the side. It has a bar, but no wifi. This ferry is a few minutes faster and slightly cheaper. Cost: Adults 1160F, Residents 1000F, Seniors 950F. Departure from Mo’orea: 05:55, 07:25, 09:00, 12:15, 14:45, 16:40 Departure from Papeete: 06:40, 08:10, 11:30, 14:00, 15:55, 17:25 Download App Terevau

- **Aremeti** has two boats with a bar and free wifi. Costs: Adults 1500f, Senior 950F
  - Aremeti II: Departure from Mo’orea (M-W 07:45), (Thurs-Fri 08:30) (M-W 11:00), (Thurs 12:30), (Thurs-Fri 14:45) (Thurs 15:00), (Fri 16:15) Departure from Papeete M-W 06:00, (M-W 09:00), (Thurs-Fri 08:30), (Wed 11:00), (M-W 12:45), (Thurs 13:45), (Fri 15:00, 17:45)
  - Aremeti V: Departure from Mo’orea (M-F 05:20), (M-F 06:50), (Tues 14:45) (M-Thurs 16:45) Departure from Papeete (M-F 06:05), (Tues 09:00), (M-Thur 16:00, 17:30) (Fri 16:15)

5.1.2 Bus System

**Sept. 2018:** To add to Soggy Paws’ bus information IMHO -- The bus service on Mo’orea is very unpredictable but usually there is a bus that feeds each departing Aremeti ferry arriving at the ferry terminal in Viare about 15 minutes before departure. They also wait to pick up incoming passengers. So if you need to get to the ferry and don’t get a ride hitchhiking then “maybe” a bus will come. We have taken the ferry 5-6 times and one time the bus never came. If it is critical that you catch a certain ferry then best to take a taxi. The locals all shake their heads and say there is no schedule and it’s a hit or miss.

There is a bus that meets each arriving Aremeti ferry. One bus travels clockwise and the other travels counter clockwise. Be sure to ask the driver if it’s the correct bus you are getting on. You can then ask the driver to
drop you in Cooks or Oponuhu Bay. Or if you are anchored in Haapiti you can get off there. Current Bus fare: 300f. – Jacaranda

**2011:** We think we have finally figured out the bus system in Moorea. The bus does circle the entire island, but it will cost you a total of 900 CFP to do so (3 bus segments). The bus runs more frequently in the morning and the afternoon, with a gap in service at mid-day, and stops completely at about 6pm. There are two schedules listed... departures from the Ferry Terminal, and departure from Haapiti / La Petite Village (the NW corner of the island).

The two bus routes run from the Ferry Terminal on the east side of the island around to the NW corner of the island (to La Petite Village). One goes clockwise and one goes counter-clockwise.

This schedule is accurate for most weekdays. They add at least one bus route in the middle of the afternoon on Friday and Saturday.

Departing from the Ferry Terminal, headed both ways around the island toward La Petite Village:

- 0645
- 0815
- 1010
- 1245
- 1645
- 1800

Departing from La Petite Village, headed both ways around the island, for the Ferry Terminal

- 0400
- 0530
- 0700
- 0930
- 1330
- 1530

The actual schedule was posted behind the driver on the bus. The bus costs 300 CFP per segment. To go all the way around the island from Oponohu/Cooks takes 3 segments and takes about 90 min.. – Soggy Paws

### 5.2 Cooks Bay

#### 5.2.1 Anchorages and Moorings

**July 2019:** We entered Cooks Bay at the start of a maramu (strong southerly winds that occur in the winter in this region). It was raining and we had winds of 20+kts. Cooks Bay is deep and protected. We anchored on a sandy bottom in 20 meters of water with good holding. From Cook’s Bay you can walk to the village of Paopoa. Park dinghy by the hotel, turn left to get to Paopoa. – Sugar Shack

**May 2019:** Dinghy Landing: There is a fuel dock on the west side of Cook’s Bay or land at the head of the bay for the Super-U store in Paopao – be wary of the small dock in Paopao is ramshackle and unforgiving to inflatables, in any wind or seas land on the small mud beach, it’ll be a wet landing/departure, but better that than a punctured tube. – Moon Rebel

**Feb.2019: 17.28.93S / 149.48.80W.** 11m/35’ over sand, holding felt (never tested) good. We spent just the one night here – it was handy for the supermarket/internet café/hardware & other stores in Maharepa, but we thought comfort/protection at anchor was much inferior to Opunopu Bay.

**2017:** The anchorage at the eastern entrance of Cook’s would best be called Maharepa Anchorage as it is near that village.
The Maharepa anchorage is along a 3 to 4-meter-deep sandy shelf which drops off steeply to 20+ meters in the channel (white dots and red marker on satellite photo.). Holding is good in sand with only small bommies. Snorkeling on the reef is lovely. Dingy landing (1) is best found by following a narrow passage to the dock at the Moorea Beach Club then turn west about 40 meters to the beach. (2) is the route to the village.

Head of Cook’s Bay is good holding in soft mud which shelves gently. You’re in the village of Paopao – Mary Ann II

**Sept. 2011:** 17°29.9′S / 149°49.2′W Depth 80’. If you have enough chain and rode, don't be shy about anchoring deep into Cooks Bay. You’ll be rewarded with a very scenic anchorage. We anchored in 80’ and let out 250’ chain. It is a mud bottom (have a bucket on the foredeck when pulling anchor) with excellent holding. We were in Cook's Bay twice, each time about 5 days and on a couple days, we experienced katabatic winds that gusted to 30 knots. The bay was so well protected that we never saw more than 1 foot of chop. We had no concerns about dragging our Rochna anchor. – New Morning

**Sept. 2011:** There is a public dinghy dock with gas pump next to Club Bali at the SE corner of the bay. There is another public dock at the NE corner next to Hotel Kaveka. – New Morning.

**July 2011:** 17°30.2′ S / 149°49.2′ W. When we came into Cook’s Bay, we found it largely empty save for a sailing megayacht and a couple of cruisers. We anchored in 55′ of mud just west of the dock at the Bali Hai resort, good holding. We picked up a strong laoraspot wi-fi signal from the resort. — Eden

### 5.2.2 Yachtsmen Services

#### 5.2.2.1 Fuel (Diesel and Gasoline)

**July 2019:** The Mobile Gas Station has a dock but it looked really shallow when we came by in the dinghy and we did not feel comfortable bringing our boat with a 1.5-meter draft in for fueling. You can bring in jerry cans, walk across the street to the main station and fill up there. They accept the duty-free certificate. – Sugar Shack

**Aug. 2018:** The pump at the Cooks Bay Mobile Station has been repaired and now able to pump diesel direct from the end of the dock. If you want duty free fuel, they require cash payment. – Jacaranda

**July 2017:** Next to the Bali Hai there is a Mobil station with a small dock. There is a new pump on the end of the dock which pumps either gasoline or diesel. The dock end has cleats on either side and usually its flat calm. Plenty of water off the end of the dock for sailboats to come in and fuel. They can process duty free. You can fill jerry jugs as well.
In our opinion it is so much easier to obtain fuel here in Mo'orea than in Marina Taina, in Tahiti. No boat traffic, current, etc to deal with plus you can also come by dinghy and fill jugs.

Correction to New Mornings report about this gas dock. It is >>NOT<< a public dock but owned by the folks that own the Mobil station. – Jacaranda

March 2017: The petrol station (with a pump on the dock for dinghies). – Spunky

2017: The Mobil station sells duty free diesel at the dock which reportedly has 4-meters depth. —Mary Ann II

5.2.3 General Services

5.2.3.1 Banks / ATMs

There are 2-3 banks in the town of Maharepa and the town east of Cooks Bay, at least one of them should have a working ATM. There is also an ATM at La Petite Village at the end of the bus trip on the NW corner of Moorea, but the machine was out of order when we were there.

2017: The small village (2) has two banks. – Mary Ann II

5.2.3.2 Hardware Store

2017: A bit further east is Polymat a well-stocked hardware / builder’s supply. Mary Ann II

5.2.3.3 Laundry

2017: There is laundry which does wash/dry/fold (2017 price 1500xpf for 5kg load). – Mary Ann II

5.2.3.4 Marine Supplies and Boat Parts

2011: While Tahiti Ocean offers services to luxury yachts visiting French Polynesia, they are also an excellent resource for blue water sailors in need of cleaning products, small hardware (which they have in their inventory) and misc. services. They are located in the Marina Taina; however, they will make deliveries to the Leeward islands either by ferry or plane. When Russ and I were in Moorea, we broke our Shurhold boat hook. I called Tahiti Ocean and not only did they have the hook in stock, they got it onto the afternoon ferry, had someone in Moorea pick it up at the ferry dock, and delivered it to the dinghy dock in Cook's Bay, all in the same day. We were wowed by that experience. About a week later, our engine fan started showing serious signs of fatigue so we called Tahiti Ocean and while they did not have the part in stock, they were able to find it in Papeete and again, sent it over on the ferry and had it delivered to Cook's Bay the next day. We worked directly with Tehau who speaks excellent English and is very professional and pleasant to work with. Contact info for Tahiti Ocean: Tehau (Tehaurai Archer) - yacht4@mail.pf - +689 77 01 12 - http://www.tahiti-ocean.com/ – New Morning

5.2.3.5 Medical

2017: West of the dinghy beach, near there is a medical complex with GP and Pharmacy. – Mary Ann II

5.2.3.6 Post Office

2017: The small village a post office. – Mary Ann II

5.2.3.7 Transportation

2017: About 1-km east of the village, Albert’s rents cars, scooters and books tours. Mary Ann II

5.2.3.8 Wifi / Internet

2017: Caramelina’s Cafe has free wifi. There’s also an internet cafe, CyberMoorea. – Mary Ann II
5.2.4 Provisions

There are two decent-sized grocery stores at the head of Cook’s Bay and another in the town east of Cooks Bay. There is a nice fruit/veggie stand on the road between Cooks Bay and the town of Maharepa.

**July 2019:** All three markets mentioned by Jacaranda are still open. The Super U is surprisingly well stocked. The Mobil Gas Station market had some provisions and baked goods. – Sugar Shack

**July 2017:** The are a few choices in Cooks Bay. – Jacaranda

1. **Super U at the head of the bay.** There is a small dock next door owned by the folks who run the snack shop. We asked permission to tie up there and they said no problem.

2. **Mobil Station next to the Bali Hai - Fresh bread, fruit, eggs, beer, soda, milk, and lots of other items.** Newly expanded and modern looking.

3. **Chinese store to the N of the Bali Hai (turn left from Bali Hai) about 1/4 mile.**

**March 2017: March 2017:** The petrol station market sells baguettes in the morning. – Spunky

**Sept. 2011: Patisserie Sylesie 56-34-99 or 77-93-17.** Look for the Hot Pink sign. Nice selection of pastries and desserts, and you can place orders by calling ahead. The almond croissants are out of this world. An easy 10-minute walk to the Patisserie from either dinghy dock. There are few grocery stores as well. 1) in the town of Paopao @ SE corner of the bay - a well-stocked SuperMarche but they only take cash. Use the Mobile station dock for this store (1) in the town of Maharepa. Use the NE dinghy dock to walk to Maharepa. Between the dinghy dock and Maharepa, a local woman has a very nice veggie and fruit stand. – New Morning

**June 2011:** The next day I went in early to get baguettes from the Chinese magasin located on the road a few minutes north of the Bali Hai resort -- they had a pretty good selection of fresh product as well. – Soggy Paws

5.2.5 Restaurants

**July 2019:** Allo Pizza: Excellent pizza place walking distance from the Mobile gas station. From Mobile Gas Station, turn left, walk about ½ mile down the road on the right-hand side. Free internet, great pizza and cold beer. – Sugar Shack

**March 2017:** If you anchor in the bay, at the end of the bay, there is a little dock, and Snack Rotui, open during lunch times, with coffee, patisserie, french fries and poisson cru. – Spunky

**Aug. 2018:** Aimeo Lodge (Previously Club Bali Hai) - Has been taken over by the original owners with much less services than before (Similar to Air B&B). The deck restaurant is still open for breakfast and lunch - No dinners. Employees are still as friendly as before. – Jacaranda

**July 2017:** We were able to use the dock and pick up wifi on the boat from the Bali Hai hotel. We not able to use their pool, but they had a nice bar with good cocktails and burgers for lunch. Good but very expensive dinners can be had at Moorea Beach Club or Mahogany. Both will send a van to pick you up from the Bali Hai hotel entrance. – Consensus

**June 2011:** Exiting Hotel Kaveka, we turned right and walked about a mile to Allo Pizza, the best pizza place in all of Polynesia. Sit outside at the counter and chat with Sommers, who will take your order and quickly turn out from the wood-fired oven (imported from L.A.) a perfectly cooked thin crust pie. Don't pass up on the chocolate pot du creme, also hand-made by Sommers. Deliciousness has its price, as usual in FP; two pizzas, two soft drinks, and one pot du creme came to about 5000 CFP. We ate breakfast at Carameline, which we found underwhelming after the rave reviews we'd read. While the croissants and pan chocolate were good, the service was indifferent and prices high, especially for the "petit dejeuner americain". – Soggy Paws
5.2.6 Activities

Tours:

**July 2019:** There are lots of tours around Mo’orea, but here are few that we tried and or heard recommendations from other cruisers. – Sugar Shack

- **Sugar Shack Mario Tours** +689 87 217 436. Tour will take you through pineapple plantations, around the island, up Belvedere Mountain and Magic Mountain. $60/pp 4-hour tour, very well done. Very informative and fun tour that takes you through the pineapple plantations (with details on growth process), up Belvedere Mountain, up Magic Mountain, and to a Vanilla Plantation.
- **Dolphin and Whale Spirit Adventures** +87 36 59 91.
- **Mo’orea Photo Safari** +689 87 73 65 40 or eloyservices@gmail.com ($50/pp) visit pineapple plantations, Belevedere Mountain, Tropical Gardens, Distillery, Cooks Bay, Opunohu Bay, Marae (not to Magic Mountain)

**2017:** Just west of the dinghy beach you’ll find Mario’s Tours, excellent 4x4 tour of Moorea. – Mary Ann II

**July 2011:** This is also where an Albert’s Tours location is (across from the Bali Hai), where you can rent a car or book a tour. However, you can also dinghy to Cooks from Opunohu, make your arrangements, and then have them pick you up at Opunohu. – Soggy Paws

Hiking:

**July 2019:** There is a nice hike up to the pineapple plantations which was lovely. Leave your dinghy at the end of the bay by the snack (near Super U). Turn left towards Super U, then turn right at the “T” intersection (the street that dead ends into Super U) and follow the road to the pineapple plantations that dot the hillsides. There are plenty of places to hike, but the ones we visited are listed below. – Sugar Shack

- Belvedere Lookout hike can be accessed from Opunohu Bay
- Magic Mountain (two paths, take path on right as it is shorter and a bit easier)
- Waterfalls: (from hospital go 100 meters to blue house, turn to go down road about 30 minutes)
- Pineapple plantations (super easy walk on paved roads through plantations)

**Sept. 2011:** Just west of the bridge in Paopao is a road that takes you up past pineapple plantations. It is the shortcut to the Opunohu valley and ultimately leads you to the Belvedere viewpoint (we opted to hike there from Opunohu Bay). We would walk up and down this road to get exercise. Take your camera, the scenery is beautiful. – New Morning

Snorkeling and Diving

**Sept. 2011:** Decent snorkeling all along the barrier reef. We only explored west of the Avaroa pass. The coral here is not in good shape due to a cyclone however it is making a comeback but it will take many years before it’s interesting again. However, there are a lot of fish and on a calm day when the water is clear, it’s beautiful. Try different areas along the barrier reef to get a variety of experiences, some better than others. We found good snorkeling close to the mooring balls immediately west of the pass.

There are several dive shops in Moorea. I dove with Moorea Fun Dives. They do not believe in feeding the sharks or fish, unlike other operators. Russ dropped me off at the University of California Biological Research Station located on the west side of the bay near Avaroa Pass. If you speak with the researchers there, you can probably leave your dinghy. The owner of Moorea Fun Dives picked me up from the research station and drove me to their dive shop on the NW side of the island. Bathy’s Top Dive will pick up from the Club Bali Hai
or Hotel Kaveka. Lemon Shark Valley was particularly impressive. Not so much for the fish but for the large pelagics. – New Morning

Biking

**Sept. 2011:** Kaveka Bike Rental - phone: 56-50-50 1000 cost - pf for 4 hours and Jeff’s Mt Bikes will deliver to Bali Hai phone - 70-96-95 cost - 1000 pf for 4 hours. – New Morning

**5.2.6.1 Cruiser Reports**

2017: The small village (2 in the above photo) has numerous pearl and gift shops. – Mary Ann II

**July 2011:** On our first night we took the dinghy up along the east side of the bay and nearly went aground on the coral shelf. It's hard to see in low light, and the sun goes down early over the mountain on the west side of the bay. The Hotel Kaveka, located on the northeast end of the bay, has a long beautiful dinghy dock. To avoid the shallows, wait for the dock to be on your dinghy's beam before turning in towards it. The hotel didn't seem to mind that we left our dinghy there while we ate dinner elsewhere (the hotel offers dinner as well and you can have drinks on the dock).

I had tied up at the landing at the resort and when I returned a lagoon tour boat was circling in irritation just off the pier. I quickly zoomed off with a yell of "desolé", but others may wish to tie their dinghy to the south side of the concrete landing to avoid such problems in the future if tying up during the day.

Later we walked up to Mahareva, which is two to three miles north and east on the coast road. We didn't find much there of interest, though the extensive land crab burrows offer some entertainment; the crabs bolt back to the shelter of their holes when they see you, and their eyesight is surprisingly good. Eva Pearls in Mahareva is a beautiful place, and Eva is one of the few craftspeople in FP with a GIA pearl certification, for whatever that is worth. Across from Eva's is another magasin, marginally larger than the one near the Bali Hai.

In the afternoon I headed down to Paopao at the very head of Cook's Bay. There is a magasin there with a short dock. While the water is extremely shallow, I was able to raise the motor enough to avoid grounding while still keeping the prop in the water. Turning right at the road takes you along the west side of the bay. The road, which is surrounded by extremely dense foliage, rises for a half mile or so to perhaps 300' elevation before dropping rapidly back to sea level. South from here is a small housing development with some lovely homes.

Continuing north, I passed Gump Station on the right. Gump is a joint marine biology research facility operated by the University of California. They have a relatively large dock which they later allowed us to tie up to after asking permission, but be advised that their research dinghies come and go frequently. Across the street from the research structures are the administrative building and dorms. Another quarter mile north is the yellow sign for the Rotua fruit juice factory. I turned left (inland) and walked a quarter mile to the large warehouse on the left (south). Just past the warehouse is the factory store where you can try samples of alcoholic and non-alcoholic juices. They sell the beverages as well as the usual array of Polynesian knickknacks. We returned there later and bought a case of Tahiti Drink, but didn't realize until after signing the credit card bill that what we thought was the price was actually the expiration date! – Eden

**July 2011:** We never actually anchored in Cooks Bay, but had friends who did, and we bicycled around one day from Opunohu. According to Two Amigos, the best thing about Cooks Bay is the (currently free) internet from the Bali Hai hotel. There is also a decent grocery store, and several ‘snack’ for eating out at cheaper prices. It is also closer to walking or dinghy distance of the town of Maharepa, just east of Cooks Bay, where there is a bank with an ATM and some other services (Post Office, restaurants, etc). – Soggy Paws
5.3 Opunohu Bay

Danger: 2018: I want to add another word of warning about theft. There have been reports of dinghy engines and dinghies stolen off the beach at night in Opunohu Bay and also a locked outboard stolen off a dinghy in the small boat harbor of Papetoai near the Tiki anchorage (West side of Opunohu Bay. Please take the time to lock your OB, dinghy and boat when leaving it. At least it presents another obstacle for the thieves to deal with. – Jacaranda

July 2018: We beached our dinghy in Robinson's Cove for a day hike up to Belvedere. (Wind had been gusting 25-30 knots from the north; there was quite a swell running, so we didn't fancy landing at the head of the bay.) It is a small beach right by the busy road, but screened off from sight. We locked our dinghy to a tree, locked the fuel tank to the engine lock and took the fuel hose with us. We left at 9:45 and returned at 3pm to find that someone had stolen our fuel out of the tank (which had just been filled up in Tahiti!). We are so disappointed and angry; it is a sad indictment of a beautiful island. Please post a notice on your website to warn others. – Enavigo

5.3.1 Anchorages and Moorings

July 2019: We entered the channel and turned right. We dropped the hook in a small, shallow spot good for about 6-8 boats. It had a sandy bottom with good holding in about 3-4 meters water. – Sugar Shack

March 2019: We anchored in several spots in and around the bay.

17-30.83S / 149-51.07W deep in the bay’s SE corner, good holding in thick mud and 6m/20’ depth; the holding was excellent and needed to be, as we came into here from the outer/reef anchorage when strong ENE were forecast – a bad decision! The winds channeled/accelerated into the bay and we got much bigger seas and stronger winds than the yachts that stayed out on the reef. On the upside it was handy for going ashore on the muddy beach at the bay’s head, where you land just across the road from the shrimp farm (fresh prawns @ $28/kilo).

17-29.28S / 149-52.75W: behind the reef at the west side of the bay’s entrance in 6M/sand and good holding; the channel to reach here’s much easier than it looks on the charts, being deep and well-marked; we found here better protected by the reef, better snorkeling and weaker tidal currents running through than in the more popular reef anchorage on the eastern side of Opunohu Bay. There’s room for perhaps five or six yachts and it’s an easy/sheltered dinghy trip through to the ‘stingray city’ a further mile to the west. A similar 5-10-minute dinghy ride will take you around the inshore reef (in either direction, it’s isolated) to Papetoai where there’s a sheltered small boat harbour to dock and reasonable provisioning – see above. We didn’t get either a WDG or Vinnispot wifi signal here. Through the day you’ll get some wash from the tripper-boats going to/from stingray city (worst on cruise-ship days), but undisturbed at night. Friends stayed here and sat out a 30-40 knot NW blow and from conversations after, it was clear that they had a better time of it than idiots like us who’d gone around to Vaiare for ‘better shelter/protection’

17-29.50S / 149-51.14W behind the reef at the east side of the entrance to the bay. 12M/sand, good holding but strong tides running through; there’s shallower depths (but stronger tides) if you move further in, but here gave us the best connection to the WDG-wifi signal. This seems to be the main/favoured anchorage and invariably has lots of boats there, many of them long-term/permanent, so be careful as some are swinging to very long rodes. – Moon Rebel

Dinghy Landing: March 2019: Be careful landing dinghies on the beach as you need to weave through lots of bommies and in many places there’s a rock-strip right at the beach-line. This is also one of the few and a very popular public-beach, so particularly in the early evening and at weekends, don’t mess the beach-users around. There are several previous posts noting difficulties and restrictions in beaching dinghies here, but speaking to the locals it seems there’s no problem provided that the yachtsies show due consideration for the other beach users. – Moon Rebel
March 2017: There are three anchorages: (1) the eastern entrance of the bay – Ta’ahiamanu; (2) the head of the bay; and (3) behind the reef west of Papetoai.

TA’AHIAMANU ANCHORAGE

Ta’ahiamanu Anchorage is just inside the reef on the east side of Opunohu Bay. The Anchorage is in 2.5 to 4-meter depths on a sandy shelf just out of the small channel (the numerous white dots are anchored yachts). Snorkeling on the reef is very nice. Up to twenty boats can comfortably be anchored here. The easiest dingy landing is the area marked (1) along the main road near the small stone pier. You can also pick through the reef to the small beach park marked (3). Across from the park the new parking lot has dumpsters and new public toilets. There are fresh water showers at the beach park.

Head of Opunohu Bay. Fine mud bottom shelves slowly as you head north with excellent holding. Certainly, one of the most visually spectacular anchorages in the world (opinion of this circumnavigator). The best dingy landing is directly across from the road which ascends up the Opunohu Valley. Fresh shrimp can be purchased from the Shrimp farm on Wednesdays. Walking up the valley is lovely and there is horse riding and zip lining available about thirty-minute walk up.

PAPETOAI Anchorage. Anchoring near the village is now discouraged. Yachts anchor further east which allows access by dingy to the ray/shark feeding area and snorkeling on the underwater tikis. On the Satellite shot the red and black markers are approximate and the anchorage is in yellow. The circle marked (1) is a smaller magazine but with generous stock of baguettes. The circle 2 is the Post Office. The LMS church is interesting. Follow the markers west in your dingy to “Sting Ray City” for an unusual experience of string rays climbing up you back (not joking.)
Papetoai Anchorage

Sept. 2011: 17°30.73 S / 149°51.2 W  Depth: 70 feet. Like Cook's Bay, if you have enough chain and rode, don't be shy about anchoring deep into Opunohu Bay. Most boats anchor just east of the pass. While you are closer to snorkeling anchoring just east of the pass, the view is not as stunning. We anchored within the bay in 70' and let out 250' chain. Mud bottom (again, have a bucket on the foredeck) and excellent holding. Here we experienced 2 days of squall filled weather with 25+ knot winds. The bay is not as well protected as Cook's so there can be swell and chop but nothing bad enough to discourage us from staying. We had no concerns about dragging the anchor. There is less development around the perimeter of the bay and the scenery offers a “Fatu Hiva on steroids” wow factor. We were the only boat in this bay for most of our 7 days.  — New Morning

July 2011: 17°30.86' S / 149°51.15 W. After a few days in Cook's Bay, we headed out and around to Opunohu Bay. The anchorage at the northeast end of the bay being quite crowded, we elected to head deep into Opunohu. We anchored in 40' of mud, good holding, in Robinson Cove, about 500 yards from the head of the bay. As it turned out, we had the bay entirely to ourselves for three days. The first night we had winds of nearly 40 kts from the south, but the Rocna held with no problems and no fetch and plenty of swing room meant that we slept quite well. No wi-fi was available in Robinson Cove.

July 2010: 17°29.346S / 149°51.082W. We anchored in 12' of water next to the coral extending out from the reef inside the pass. In most of these bays you can also anchor at the head of the bay where the water is much deeper and you are more shaded by the high mountains. If we were to do it again, we would anchor closer to the beach side because all the tour/diving boats speed between Nakia and the reef on their way back and forth between Cook's Bay and our pass and beyond.  — Nakia

5.3.2 General Services

5.3.2.1 Post Office

March 2017: The post office is most easily reached by the PAPETOAI Anchorage.  — New Morning

5.3.2.2 Refrigeration Repairs

2011: If you find yourself in Moorea and needing refrigeration repair, we can recommend David at Moorea Menager Depannage, cell 72 33 82, tel/fax 56 38 73. He re-charged our freezer for us while we were anchored in Opunohu Bay. He works in shorts and flip flops, and had no problem with the dinghy launch and landing.
(He met us at the public park/beach near Point Vaipahu.) Very nice guy, quite dependable (he showed up early) and he did a good job. He speaks only a little English, so it’s helpful if you can speak a little French. – Slip Away

5.3.3 Transportation

5.3.3.1 Car Rentals

July 2017: You can rent a car or motorbike across the street from Bali Hai at Albert Tours for $50 a day. It’s worth it to take the short trip around the island and to stop at the Belevdere viewpoint in the middle of the two valleys at the agricultural school. Great homemade ice cream here too! – Consensus

5.3.3.2 Scooter Rentals

March 2019: We had a hire-scooter delivered to here (Rent A Bike phone: 87-711-109) $50 for the day, only 50cc. – Moon Rebel

5.3.4 Provisions

There is a tiny grocery store at the west end of the beach at Opunohu, where fresh baguettes can be had early in the morning, and basic supplies. If you want to guarantee your baguettes, stop in the afternoon before and order and pre-pay. The shrimp farm down by the head of Opunohu Bay (on the road to the Belvedere from Opunohu) sells fresh shrimp only on Weds between 10am and 2pm. (1000 CFP/kilo for medium shrimp).

Papetoai: There are 2-3 small grocery stores in the town of Papetoai, just west of Opunohu (where the octagonal church is).

March 2019: SE Corner of the bay. Walk west around the bay for a good mile/2km and there’s a small but surprisingly well stocked magasin (open Sunday) continue on for another mil/2km and you’ll reach Papetoai with two more magasins and a selection of fruit & veggie stands along the road heading west out of the village, between them you’ll find most provisions. If you walk east from the beach after perhaps a mile you’ll reach another isolated veggie stand, in our opinion, definitely the best choice/quality and the cheapest too. – Moon Rebel

Aug. 2012: Shrimp Farm: At the inner end of Opunohu Bay there is a shrimp farm where on Wednesdays from 1000-1400 they sell their shrimp to the public. It’s several green buildings on the left side of the road that leads up to the Belvedere; essentially on the NE corner of that intersection. Walk to the last building and you’ll see an open room with some large stainless tables where you will be warmly greeted.

They charge 2,500XFP / kg and the shrimp are packed to order in a plastic bag with crushed ice to get them back your boat. The shrimp are very tasty, sweet like lobster rather than bland like most store-bought shrimp. We like them sautéed in olive oil and garlic served over tagliatelle with a nice chardonnay (OK, the nice chardonnay is wishful thinking!). – New Morning

5.3.4.1 Restaurants

March 2017: Northeast of the anchorage you find Lilikoi’s a small cafe / restaurant which has wifi, does laundry, rents scooters and will even food shop for you.

About a fifteen-minute walk from the anchorage is the Moorea Tropical Gardens, lovely spot for a lunch, ice cream or fresh squeezed juice. – New Morning

5.3.5 Activities

Sting Ray City
**July 2019:** Sting Ray City (Opunohu Bay) super cool to swim with sting rays and black tip sharks. Take dinghy west and hug the right side of the black/white markers. Do not go on the left side of the markers as you will hit the reef. Past the resort and Taoti Pass and just before Motu Irioa. Near a green buoy. Swim in 2.5 meters of water with sting rays and black tip sharks. Best time early morning before the tours. Mo’orea provides many amazing snorkeling spots, but don’t miss the ones below. – Sugar Shack

- The Nursery (east side of Opunohu Bay)
- East of Opunohu Bay before public beach and at the pass (turtles and rays)
- Underwater sculpture garden west of Opunohu Bay
- Tropical Gardens east of Opunohu Bay
- Opunohu Pass (east of buoy) see turtles and stingrays

See photo of map to sting ray city under anchorages, March 2017 from Nakia for a visual.

**Sept. 2011:** Swimming - the water was murky in the anchorage from run off from the surrounding hills so we decided to get our swimming in when we snorkeled in the barrier reef.

Snorkeling: Don’t miss Sting Ray City. From Opunohu Bay, travel west and the site is west of the Taotoi Pass on the barrier reef side. When you see several moorings balls, you are there. If you end up at the Motu Irioa, you have gone too far.

Scuba Diving: We didn’t go on any dives from here but it’s easier to dive from here than Cooks Bay, both from your dinghy and with a dive company. You’ll see the dive boats along the lagoon and outside the lagoon. With a dive book, you should be able to get a pretty good idea of where you can expect to see the dive boats. – New Morning

**July 2011:** We went twice to swim with the stingrays west of the Intercontinental Hotel. Getting there is a bit dicey as the route is quite shallow in places. The trick is to keep tight to the white and black markers; the "road" with a churned-up bottom runs just a few feet north of them. When you reach the marker at about 17°29.2’ S, 149°52.61’ W, turn south towards the resort, again staying close to (just west of) the markers. Our charts have no data for the area around the Intercontinental, but it was easy to navigate by sight.

Stingray City is located about one half mile west of the Passe Taotoi entrance, near the green buoy. Water is 3-4’ deep and there are multiple mooring buoys. If you get there before 10a you'll beat the hotel boats and their hordes of tourists. – Eden

**July 2010:** We made a brief visit to Stingray City where the tour boats don’t mind if cruisers join in the melee of feeding rays and black-tip reef sharks (there were easily over two dozen of the latter darting in between people standing in the shallow water). We had done something similar in the Bahamas with a smaller group and fewer sharks and this was a bit too chaotic for me. We took the dinghy farther down the bay to try to find some snorkeling but the wind suddenly kicked up and we needed to go upwind back to Nakia. We managed to get in the wake of a small speedboat who "broke trail" for us. Then we passed a smaller dinghy with four people going very slowly. They were having trouble with their motor and motioned us over. We offered to take their two Belgian guests aboard our dinghy, which improved their situation, and we led the way back to their boat. Of course, not much later, the wind calmed down and it was a beautiful afternoon. – Nakia

**Hiking**

**March 2019:** Walk West along the bay. The ‘Cook Monument’ is also along this road – hard to spot, it’s on the shore-side of the road, perhaps 50m away in long grass, tucked away behind a couple of shipping containers. Reasonable snorkeling out on the reef and the shoal just inshore of the anchoring waypoint, but beware the strong tides. – Moon Rebel
March 2017: The walking tracks to Belvedere are clearly indicated (you can also follow the road). I would not recommend to walk in the woods when it has just rained, it will be muddy and slippery. – Spunky

Sept. 2011: Belvedere Point. Dinghy to the end of the Bay and either tie off on a mooring or beach land the dinghy. Beautiful hike about 5km each way. Take water, it can be a hot hike depending on what time of the day you go. Early morning is best for photos. – New Morning

July 2010: Hiking and Sightseeing: Since the snorkeling isn’t very interesting, we’ve concentrated on land exploration. On Saturday we made a five-hour round trip hike to Belvedere (lookout) and Three Pines for stunning views of the two bays and the pineapple fields in Paopao valley. Sunday, we took a walk after the solar eclipse to Jus de Fruit in Cook’s Bay, but alas it was closed. – Nakia

5.3.6 Cruiser Reports

March 2019: We had a hire-scooter delivered to here (Rent A Bike phone: 87-711-109) $50 for the day, only 50cc but it happily hauled us both around the island and up to Belvedere, there are no really steep hills, though if you walk to Belvedere it feels like it – hot and humid too, if you’re doing that/any walk, be sure to set off early. Halfway up the Belvedere road (before it gets steeper, so a pleasant walk) is the Agricultural College – the coconut ice cream is every bit as good as you’ve heard, walk/scooter a further mile on the left and there are some impressive (and a little different) Maraes to be seen too. The walk around from Opunohu to Cook’s Bay via the ‘Pineapple Road’ is worth the effort, probably 10-12M all the way, but you can take a bus/hitch-hike along the coast road (4 miles?) stretch.

There is a moderately sized Super-U Supermarket and veggie stands in Paopao at the head of Cook’s Bay and a bigger/better Champion store around in Viare and an Independent supermarket and other stores & veggie stands in Maharepa. Paopoa and Maharepa are dinghyable on a nice day, or you can hitch-hike, hire a scooter or catch the bus to any of them, the bus fare whether you’re just travelling the 4 miles into Paopao or all the way Viare is still $3 each way. – Moon Rebel

March 2017: Ta’ahiamanu Anchorage. Across from the park the new parking lot has dumpsters and new public toilets. There are fresh water showers at the beach park. The small shop at the south west end of the park (5) has baguettes most days. Northeast of the anchorage you find Lilikoi’s (2) a small cafe / restaurant which has wifi, does laundry, rents scooters and will even food shop for you. About a fifteen-minute walk from the anchorage is the Moorea Tropical Gardens, lovely spot for a lunch, ice cream or fresh squeezed juice.

Head of Opunohu Bay. Fresh shrimp can be purchased from the Shrimp farm on Wednesdays. Walking up the valley is lovely and there is horse riding and zip lining available about thirty-minute walk up. There a small magazine about mid-way up the west side of the bay near the three sail boats permanently moored near the shore.

PAPETOAI Anchorage. See image under anchorage for reference. The circle marked (1) is a smaller magazine but with generous stock of baguettes. The circle 2 is the Post Office. The LMS church is interesting. Follow the markers west in your dingy to “Sting Ray City” for an unusual experience of string rays climbing up you back (not joking.) -- Mary Ann II

July 2011: On our way back from the stingray feed we stopped in at the Intercontinental for the breakfast buffet. Keep the tourist, PWC, and dive boat docks on your left all the way in, and watch depth. We were able to tie up the dinghy just to the right (west) of the boat ramp, in 1’ with a stern anchor to keep the motor from grounding. No one seemed to care that we used the pool and bathrooms. If you are interested in diving, Bathys/Top Dive has an outlet at the hotel. We didn’t dive with them in Moorea, but found their operations in Fakarava and Bora Bora to be outstanding. – Eden

2011: We flagged down the bus in front of the Magasin (store) at the SW end of the Oponohu Beach, headed from La Petite Village toward the Ferry Terminal (ie clockwise around the island), at about 0940. The bus
stopped briefly at the Ferry Terminal at about 1005, and departed on schedule at 1010 to continue on around the island in the same direction (but you should ask the bus driver).

We arrived at La Petite Village (on the NW corner of the island near the big hotel), about 1050. We thought the driver then said in French, ‘10 minutes’ for the next bus, but later realized that there is no bus scheduled to depart from La Petite Village until 1330, according to the schedule. So we are not sure what the ‘10 minutes’ referred to. We did not notice another bus, but we were also not paying a lot of attention.

This stop is within cruiser walking distance of the major hotel and restaurant facilities located out on the NW corner of Moorea. If you are trying to get to a particular place, ask the bus driver and he will most likely let you off where you want to stop, including the surfer town of Haapiti. There was a tourist map of Moorea also on the wall behind the bus driver, and at least our driver spoke reasonable English.

There are 2 restaurants, a small grocery store, and a couple of shops at La Petite Village on the NW corner, and several high-end pearl places a short walk down the road. At least one of the two restaurants offered sandwiches in the 500-700 CFP range. You could also buy some lunch items from the grocery store.

We opted to walk about a half mile on down the road to the small restaurant called Tiahura (aka Chez Irene), where someone else had previously told us they’d had a good meal. Irene speaks good English and had a variety of local meals on a lunch menu (but nothing under about 1000 CFP). She gave us a free welcoming punch with alcohol in it, and then served a great local meal. Ours was Curried Chicken and Poinsson Cru with rice. Irene will also come to pick up yachties from the Oponohu Bay area (and maybe Cooks area too). Call 56-52-33 to arrange transport. The brochure says they have local music and dancing there on Fridays after 2pm (and maybe other days, ask on the phone).

The cost of our days outing was 600 CFP apiece for bus fare and $1000-$2000 for lunch from Irene, but which included a free ride back in her car (make sure you confirm this up front). We felt that this was a good way to see the rest of Moorea at a time when the weather was not very good for going out and exploring by boat.

Once you know the bus schedule, you can also combine a hike across the island with a bus ride back, as long as you get finished and out on the road to catch the bus on the last trip back (1530). Or bus to the other side of the island and hike back. – Soggy Paws

5.4 Vaiare

The ferries come and go into Vaiare from Tahiti.

5.4.1 Anchorage and Moorings

March 2019: We anchored in a few different places, but had some issues with two of them.

17-31.343S / 149-46.78W – offers bullet proof holding in 7m/24’ over thick mud. This is NOT an everyday anchorage; the whole bay is designated a ‘No Anchoring Zone’ to prevent any restrictions to the ferries maneuvering. We bounced in here at dark o’clock in 30-40 knot WNW winds, initially anchoring further to the NE and moving to this spot in daylight, when the day’s first ferry arrived (he especially diverted his route to show we were in the way!) and then complained loudly. The local fishermen guided us to this spot and shouted down the ferry-crew, where after we sat contentedly for 48-hours; the valley definitely accelerates the wind gusts mind. Thereafter a Port Policeman arrived just after 08:00, very reasonably and politely advised that this was strictly a ‘No Anchoring Area’ and now the big-winds were finished, we must move within one hour. Don’t abuse the privilege, but if the weather’s turned nasty, this is a bail-out option and the local authorities seem to realize that too.

17-31.89S / 149-46.17W: There always seemed to be yachts anchored here – some permanent? – but couldn’t work out why; when we tried here we found the water shallowed very quickly from 30m/100’+ to>2.4m/8’ sand shelf (OK for cats/shallow-draft?) had strong through currents with the tide and lots of trash floating through on the tides too; it was just out and out uncomfortable.
**17-30.45S / 149-45.79W:** We came here from Opunuhu to find better shelter from forecast 30-40 knot NW/WNW winds and it proved a bad decision! There are two or three free moorings which I’m told are in ‘reasonable’ order (all in use when we arrived) beyond which you’re anchoring on a 3m/10’ sand shelf, strewn with loose coral rubble. We found decent holding, but only on the third attempt, having picked-up a loose dead-coral ‘rock’ in the anchor flukes on our first two attempts. In ‘normal’ conditions I’m sure you’ll be fine, but do snorkel over the anchor to be sure you’re cleanly dug-in. Once the strong winds arrived, they were accelerated and very gusty due to the island’s topography, at times ‘bending’ around from the north so there was much yawing to the anchor and yachts swinging wildly differently. Three yachts dragged (including ours) and one broke a mooring, though our having dragged was user-error, rather than a reflection on the anchor/holding: Our deck-stowed dinghy flipped-up and ‘sailed’ us off the anchor. – Moon Rebel

**2017:** Mary Ann II has been on the north side of Moorea in three episodes of the squeeze zone when a southern high pressure markedly accelerates the trade winds up to 25 to thirty knots. We would not have chosen to stay in the Vaiare Anchorages in those situations.

The northern anchorages would all appear to be reasonably protected in a south easterly. However, our experience suggests for the most comfort and safety go to the head of Cook’s or Opunohu. The anchorages east or west of the entrances get very strong katabatic winds pushing you toward the barrier reef. This is also borne out by the 1km resolution GRIB file from Predict Wind.

**Vaiare North** Also called the Sofitel Anchorage the yellow strip is good holding in 3 to 6 meters or deeper further back. Catamarans have gone up the channel just southeast of the Sofitel but they appear to be bold and have local knowledge. Fine snorkeling. Local Tahiti sailboats often come here Fridays to Sundays to this anchorage. If you dingy to the Sofitel you can use their wifi at the bar. Further up from the hotel is a nice public beach.

**Vaiare South.** A more popular spot with room for at least 15 boats, yellow strip south of pass.

Exercise caution going to and from the bay as the ferries to Tahitian move at speed with powerful wakes. We’ve dingied to the small shore just east of the ferry dock or to the northwest corner of the inner bay. We tied up the dingy at marina (2) to go shopping at Champion (3) just down from the Marina, this is the best stocked grocery on Moorea. See map below. – Mary Ann II
2011: Vaiare is the ‘town’ where the Papeete ferries dock. There is a big pass leading in, and from there you can go north or south inside the reef. On our bus trip around the island, we saw isolated boats anchored both north and south of the pass.

There is a marina with a slipway there at Vaiare, but it is full of local boats. – Soggy Paws

5.4.2 General Services

5.4.2.1 Hardware Store
2017: A small hardware is on shore. – Mary Ann II

5.4.2.2 Transportation
2017: There is an Avis Car rental located here. – Mary Ann II

5.4.2.3 Wifi / Internet
March 2019: If you take the dinghy to the holiday resort just to the north, they’ll sell you a cold beer and depending who’s on duty, will give you their internet code too. – Moon Rebel

5.4.3 Provisions
The Super Champion, the biggest grocery store on Moorea is on the main road on the south side of the bay that the ferry terminal is located. You can bus to the ferry terminal from anywhere on the island (see the writeup on taking the bus), but it will cost you a minimum of $6 pp and a 20-minute walk to do so from Opunohu/Cooks. But we did find nice vegetables like imported romaine lettuce, broccoli, and celery, and a wider selection of everything else.

2011: South of the pass, just south of the bay with the ferries, is the Super Champion grocery store. If you’re anchored in the area, it is worth a visit, as it is the best/cheapest on the island. – Soggy Paws

5.4.4 Restaurant
March 2019: If you take the dinghy to the holiday resort just to the north, they’ll sell you a cold beer and depending who’s on duty, will give you their internet code too. – Moon Rebel

2017: The café near the ferry terminal is pleasant with music some afternoons. There is also a pizza restaurant around the inner bay. – Mary Ann II

5.5 Haapiti (SW Coast)
July 2011: 17-34.43 S / 149-52-13 W. This is a sand bank that looks very shallow, and is only marked as 1 meter on the chart. However, there is a good-sized area of good sand, clear of coral heads, that was 7-9’ deep. We nosed in carefully in good light, dropped the hook, and mostly hung out in the deeper water. We snorkeled the area to make sure we had enough depth for swinging room for our 5.5’ draft.

In fairly settled weather, we went west and then south from Opunohu to the town of Haapiti and the Matuavu pass. The swell at the time was only about 1.5 meters. The pass was easy, even though there were a number of surfers on the break on the south side of the pass. There were 3 boats anchored right off the range at about 17-34.08 S / 149-52.43 W—these looked like surfers trying to anchor as close to the pass and the surf, and there was a little roll in that spot.

In light winds, this was a BEAUTIFUL anchorage, and the 3 boats anchored nearby left late in the afternoon, so we were all alone in an anchorage for the first time since arriving in French Polynesia.

However, we hadn’t paid attention to the swell forecast, which rose rapidly overnight (though the wind did not). This was from strong weather very far south of Moorea. By morning, the pass was looking pretty
dangerous, and by afternoon is was pretty much closed. By then, the swell height (in the grib file) was 4 meters. We were forced to stay another day until the swell moderated to about 3.3 meters.

We left with a swell height of 3.3 meters, at high tide (mid-day), in 15 knots of SE wind. It was a little dicey, but not dangerous. From our anchor spot, the pass looked closed even when the pass really was open. We had to dinghy over to get on the line of the range, before we could clearly see that there were no breakers in the middle of the pass.

Our surfer friends on Java said they spent 3 weeks there earlier in the year, and never saw the pass closed, so we might have ventured there in the rare time of the year when the SW swell was really big. – Soggy Paws

5.6 Maharepa

2011: Maharepa is the town east of Cooks Bay on the north coast. It is the largest town on Moorea. There is a pass leading in, and we did see some boats anchored off the town for a day or two. – Soggy Paws

5.7 Other Anchorages

There are a number of other anchorages around Moorea where you can get away from the crowds. However, there are anchoring restrictions in some areas. We were given a paper copy of the PGEM brochure for Moorea (2005) as part of the Tahiti Moorea Rendezvous information package, but this seems to be hard to find otherwise. We have found a copy online and put a downloadable copy on our website here:

http://svsoggypaws.com/files/

There is also an interactive (and probably more up to date) version here: http://webgis.upf.pf

Though the restrictions pretend to be mostly for fishing and coral protection, it seems that most of the exclusion zones center on the big hotels. So, in general, avoid anchoring directly in front of the big hotels with bungalows on the water, and you will probably be OK for a day or two.

Both the Bonnette Guide and the Davock Guide (see Printed Sources) cover additional anchorages. The Davock Guide, though very dated, was outstanding for finding other anchorages.

6 Huahine

Huahine (pronounced “way-a-hee-knee”) has two islands (Huahine Nui and Huahine Iti) surrounded by one beautiful lagoon. Be sure to lock your dinghy, outboard, gas can as thefts have occurred in the main town of Fare. This is called Watermelon island.

6.1 Passes

Aug. 2013: We entered Passe Farerea, on the east side of Huahine, and anchored behind Motu Murimahora. A pretty spot, but it funnels southeast winds. It also had a very strong current, from swell on the reef at the southeast end. This limited our snorkeling.

We went through Passe Tiare, and anchored for the day behind Motu Mahara. The pass is described as dangerous in Charlies, but we didn’t find it too intimidating. Winds were southeast, probably a bit less than 20 knots. Inside was very nice, we anchored to the north in sand. There’s a marked channel continuing north, too narrow for the big boat. – Alegria
6.2 Fare

6.2.1 Anchorages and Moorings

July 2019: We anchored in what is called the flats on a nice sandy bottom of about 6 meters. It is conveniently located near both passes, a quick dinghy ride to shore and far enough away from the other cruising boats. – Sugar Shack

April 2019: We weren’t able to stay long on Huahine – a pity, it was a nice and friendly island. We came in via the north entrance and there are 5 or 6 mooring buoys to port as you approach the town, these are in good order and free to use; if full there’s space for another three or four yachts to anchor there too, though don’t get too close as boats move differently in the strong tides. We and everyone else seemed to go ashore via the Yacht Club’s dinghy dock – you can see it from the moorings - we were never charged for its use, though we had a few beers there (Happy Hour as I recall was 17:00 to 18:00, though the Admiral tells me it was half an hour later?) – Moon Rebel

July 2011: 16 42.78S / 151 02.37W. We found good holding in about 30-35 feet of water. When we first arrived at Fare, we anchored just to the left of the Avamoa pass at 16 42.78S, 151 02.37W. There were a few coral heads, but they presented no problems for us. This is a fine anchorage when the swell is down. If there’s a large southwest swell, this becomes a very rolly anchorage. We spent our first couple of days here very comfortably.

16 43.080S / 151 02.264W. Then the swell picked up, so we moved to the spot recommended in the Compendium by Mr. John at 16 43.080S 151 02.264W. We found a nice sandy patch to drop our anchor, and there was no swell here. However, this wasn’t such a great spot either. The large swell generated a very strong current flowing from south to north, and the boat pointed into the current. The wind was blowing from the east (so on our beam), and it came over the mountain in big gusts (often at about 30 knots). This would heel us over quite a bit and sometimes send us sailing forward and backward and occasionally turning us in circles. As the winds sent us sailing around, our anchor chain got tangled in some coral heads ahead of us. After a couple of days of this, Slip Away was lying over top of her anchor, and our chain was snaked around several coral heads off our bow - worse than any wrap we experienced in the Tuamotus! Rich spent about 30 minutes in the water with a scuba tank and got us mostly untangled, and then we used the engine to back us out of the most severe wrap.

I'm not sure of the best anchoring spot in Fare when there are high winds and big swell. I would probably go someplace else. There are better options further south. Boats anchor all along the barrier reef from Fare to Avea Bay. – Slip Away

July 2011: 16-43.222S / 151-02.378W. We left Moorea before sunset last Tuesday and had to motor until 8 PM when the wind finally filled in for a fast sail to Huahine. The island was in sight before dawn and we entered Passe Avapehi without any problems. There were 10 boats anchored off of Fare, the largest city on Huahine, so we decided to drop the hook in shallow water halfway to the village at the Fare Surfer Anchorage. It turned out that this was where all the surfer cruising boats were anchored for easy access out of either pass (Avapehi or Avamoa) depending on what the surf was doing each day.

16-42.756S / 151-02.346W. Later we moved and anchored off Fare Village. – Nakia

6.2.2 Yachtsmen Services

6.2.2.1 Cooking Gas

July 2019: The Total Gas station sells cooking gas. Located on the main road. From Dinghy dock, turn right, pass the Super U and it will be on the left side. – Sugar Shack
6.2.2.2  Fuel (diesel and gasoline)

July 2019: The Total gas station sells cooking gas. Located on the main road just past the Super U. From Dinghy dock, turn right, pass the Super U and it will be on the left side. -- Sugar Shack

6.2.2.3  Water

April 2019: The Yacht club will let you fill jerry jugs at the dinghy dock (no idea on the price). Alternatively, you can go alongside the commercial dock and replenish water tanks there at $10/boat, regardless of amount. -- Moon Rebel

2011: Fresh water is available from faucets southeast of the main commercial town dock. Ask for the key at the scuba diving club on the dock itself. There are usually some fishing boats moored stern to. Anchor close in to that area and take a line back to one of the bollards on the wharf at that point. Take care not to run aground with the rudder. The quality of the water is usually good. (Note: we saw boats alongside, in the mornings)

The Sunsail Charter Guide says this about water: Never pull up to the dock without first asking permission. Call Martine and Claude by phone: 68 72 49 and they will tell you when to tie up to the dock and fill up water tanks. You will be charged 1000 cfp. -- DYC

6.2.3  General Services

6.2.3.1  Bank / ATM

July 2019: Banque de Tahiti is on the main road just past the Super U. -- Sugar Shack

6.2.3.2  Gendarmerie

July 2019: Located on the main road, past the Super U about ¼ mile on the right. -- Sugar Shack

6.2.3.3  Medical

July 2019: There is a well-stocked pharmacy with very helpful staff. From the yacht club, take main road left until it dead ends into another street, turn left again. Pharmacy will be on the left (there are signs to follow). -- Sugar Shack.

July 2017: We had to see a local doctor here in town and it was a good experience removing stitches. -- Consensus

6.2.3.4  Post Office

July 2019: The post office is located on the same street as the pharmacy. From the yacht club, take main road left until it dead ends into another street, turn left again. Follow the signs to the pharmacy. Post will be on the right. -- Sugar Shack

2011: The post office is located at the end of the village on the way to the airport. -- DYC

6.2.3.5  Transportation

July 2019: There are several places that will rent you a car for a ½ day, full day, or more. -- Sugar Shack.

- Avis ask for MJ +87 36 74 69 about $65/8 hours. They are located behind the fuel station on the 2nd road from the lagoon.
- Eurocar 689 87 40 45 8259 rents cars, scooters, ATVs, bikes. Located across the street from Izzy's
- Boutique Joly (blue building on main road before Super U) rents cars and bikes
- Isabelle Locations rents cars, scooters, bikes (often sold out) main road before Super U

Bicycles and Other Transport

- Next to Yacht club, red building, space on end near road rents bikes, boats, and more.
• Main road, before Super U, blue building has two shops that rent bikes (no name on shops, but staff are super friendly, bikes are in good condition and locks are included)
• Next door to Izzy’s Burgers and More is a bike rental

April 2019: Just before the Super U (on main road) is a small office doing reasonably priced car and scooter ($35/day – 125cc) hire, but if you want one, book it immediately as the chances of your wandering in and hiring one for ‘right now’ are slim; the island was definitely worth the scooter ride around, even on a day of heavy rain showers. – Moon Rebel

6.2.3.6 Wifi / Internet

July 2019: Izzy’s Hamburger’s and More has the best internet on the island. Purchase a meal or beer or beverage and she will be more than happy to share the password.

The internet at the Yacht club was down every time we visited over a 3-month period.

There is an Internet Café located on the main road (before the Super U) on the left side. It serves snacks as well. – Sugar Shack.

April 2019: The Yacht Club also sells WDG-internet cards – got a good signal with our small booster on the moorings. – Moon Rebel

July 2017: We were able to pay for wifi at the yacht club. – Consensus

July 2011: The Iaora Spot and Hotspot wifi signals are available in the bay. You might also pick up ManaSpot if you have a good antenna. – Slip Away

6.2.4 Provisions

July 2019: There is a really huge and well stocked Super U. From dinghy dock, take main road to the right. Will be on your left-hand side. Fresh fruit and veggie stands are outside the market from 0600-1000. It is a really large market so be sure to explore all isles. – Sugar Shack

April 2019: There’s a reasonable Super-U supermarket just 200m east of the dinghy dock and several people selling fresh fish and fruit/veggies in the same area. – Moon Rebel

July 2017: There is a decent supermarket in the small-town area here, with frozen meats and some fresh vegetables. In the morning there were vendors selling fresh fruits, veg, and fish outside of the supermarket near the pier, but $$$ – Consensus

July 2011: Fare has an excellent supermarket - an outstanding selection of lots of items and prices not so different from Papeete. Also, each morning, several vendors set up stands and sell fruits and veggies on the street in front of the supermarket. – Slip Away

6.2.5 Restaurants

July 2019: There is a great hamburger place called “Izzy’s Burgers and More” just past the pharmacy and poste. She offers amazing and reasonably priced food including turkey and veggie burgers, pasta, cous cous, and more. Plus, if you get a loyalty card, every 10th burger is free. Added bonus she has super-fast wifi available for customers.

The yacht club offers happy hour (punch, mai tai and beers ½ price) 1700-1830 Monday-Friday.

Café Guynette offers internet and reasonably priced food. – Sugar Shack

July 2017: The Yacht Club had a great happy hour with live band from 5:30 to 6:30. – Consensus

July 2011: We ate out a few times in Fare - lunch at New Te Marara (the Snack-Bar next to the dinghy dock), lunch at Pension Guynette which advertises daily specials on a chalk board in front of their dining area, and
breakfast at Mahi Mahi (past the supermarket). Prices were moderate - not cheap, but not terribly expensive - and the food was good at all of them. There are also several roulottes serving food on the street, but we did not sample them.

The New Te Marara Snack-Bar next to the dinghy dock has Happy Hour every day from 5 p.m. to 6 p.m. - half price draft beer, maiats and rum punch. Draft beer prices are 200 XPF for a small beer, 250 for a large beer and 750 for a pitcher. I think the maiats and rum punches were 400 XPF each. This is a great place to watch the sunset, and the woman who works there - I think her name is Ini - is really pleasant and sweet. – Slip Away

6.2.6 Activities

July 2019: There are lots of fun things to do on Huahine. You can rent a car, ride a bike or go for a really long walk to see these fun sites.

- Sacred Eels (feed them sardines) in the river by the village Faie
- Huahine Lagoon fun for a dinghy or outrigger tour
- Fare Pote’é Museum (historical site & lots of Mare). $2/pp, main road, past airport, on left in Maeva
- Distillery Huahine Passion – great rum tastings for free. Main road, turn right, walk past the market and around the bin, will be on your right.
- Shopping: There are several stores that sell local wares (tikis, wood carving, jewelry, clothing) in the downtown area off the main road.
- Hike: By Fare Pote’e Museum, turn by rock wall and hike to largest Mare near bannon tree, continue to the left and hike to the top of the mountain with a beautiful view.

Hiking

July 2011: In Fare we walked 7 km to the village of Maeva where there are several marae (historic) sites. There's a big reconstructed one right off the side of the road which received all of the tourist attention. But we followed a hiking trail through the woods to see several more, which we had all to ourselves except for a few locals doing maintenance work at one. It was a beautiful walk and it felt great to get off the road for a while. But we were dead tired by the time we finished the trail so we hitched a ride back to Fare with a Marquesan woman and her 10-month-old baby. She's married to a New Zealander and they've done quite a bit of travel themselves. – Nakia

Snorkeling

Sept. 2011: We had a great snorkel on the shelf between the Passes of Avamoa and Avapehi. There is boat permanently anchored out by the reef - just follow the black and white channel markers. Since there was no one around, we tied up to the boat. Apparently, that was a No No. We got chastised by a French gentleman that has a Shark Feeding tour service and was bringing guests out. But you can drop your anchor anywhere nearby. Because of the shark feeding events, as soon as you jump into the water, you are surrounded by all kinds of fish - big and small, plus some black-tip reef sharks. – Moondance

July 2011: We tried to snorkel on the reef marked off by the green markers in the center of the bay, but with the big surf, the current was very strong, and we didn't stay in very long. I didn't think that the area lend itself well to a drift snorkel because it was shallow and easy to get caught up on something. When the swell is down, I'm pretty certain the current is much less. We really enjoyed watching the surfers near the pass during the big swell. – Slip Away

July 2011: Both of the snorkels we did on the reef next to the boat were disappointing, although perhaps better than Moorea. We saw a few crown of thorns and lots of dead coral, but some of it was okay. -- Nakia

2011: On the wharf you will find a scuba diving club. Horseback riding excursions are also available at the Petite Ferme located between Fare and the airport. Telephone 68 82 98. – DYC
Bicycling

**July 2011:** We rented bicycles from a shop near the supermarket for a day (500 XPF for a half day, 1000 XPF for a whole day). We intended to just visit the marae near Maeva, but ended up riding all the way out to Faie and back. At the marae site, there was a nice hike up into the jungle to visit some other marae structures. If you go out to Faie, be sure not to miss the blue-eyed eels - since we didn't plan to go that far, we didn't read up on Faie before heading out, and we missed that. Also, if you get an early enough start, you can hike (or if you're really ambitious you can ride your bike) up the hill to the Belvedere (2 km, 15% grade). We didn't get an early enough start to do that. You might want to take a lock for the bikes, or just find a place to hide them if you hike up the hill. We did find some good ice cream in Faie.

---Slip Away

**June 2011:** Note: Periclees had their own bicycles, but you can rent bikes at the little shop next to the dinghy dock in Fare. Finding a new place to bicycle is always a treat. Huahine is a magic place for getting around by bicycle. We have made three trips in the last three days.

The first was a circumnavigation of Huahine Nui. Huahine is about eight by five nautical miles. It seems the road circling the island has been newly paved and is smooth as silk. With the exception of the hill that goes over the center of the island, the roads are very flat as they follow the old coral shelf around the edge of the island.

We rode north through the town of Fare after landing our dinghy in Haavai Bay. A cruise ship, the Paul Gaugain, was anchored in the bay making the place look very busy by ferrying in hundreds of tourists. Some were obviously on the same route as us because truck loads stopped to take in the sights. The tour guides don't seem to mind if we mingle with the tourists and listen to their spiel. The people in the back of the trucks couldn't resist giving us a hearty wave as they passed us by on the steep hill across the center of the island.

We got to a tiny village of Faie where the blue-eyed eels live. We forgot to look for them the first time because we saw a sign saying for the next two kilometers there was an uphill grade of fifteen percent. I explained to Rolande saying if we got to the top, we would be close to heaven at that rate. It was too steep for me to peddle and about half way up I realized we would only climb about three hundred meters or around a thousand feet.

At the top Rolande told me the guide book says we should walk our bicycles down because it was too steep and in the past a tourist had died. I followed her as she mounted her bicycle and disappeared around a corner. With trepidation I slowly made my way down the incredibly steep hill with both my brakes on. In the back of my mind I tried to remember when I had last serviced Roland's brakes. When I went around corners, I searched the shoulder for evidence of an out of control bicycle. With relief I found her listening, at the bottom of the hill, to a tour guide explaining the benefits of the taro plant. Intrepid Rolande! -- Periclees

---

6.2.7 Cruiser Reports

**July 2011:** We scrambled to launch the dinghy when we heard drums on shore after the anchor was set. We arrived in town just in time to catch a parade of local dancers as part of the Bastille Day festivities. Each group performed a short piece in the town square before standing aside for the next group in line on the road. Three songs were played for the raising of the French, French Polynesian, and Tahitian (or Society Islands) flags and of course we only recognized the Marseilles (if that's how you spell the name of the French national anthem...). When the speeches started, we hit the grocery store which was packed with people. We were surprised to find it open on a holiday, and it closed very shortly after our visit. – Nakia

**2010:** The next morning we retraced our steps to see the blue-eyed eels but didn't go over the hill again. Instead we rode back the way we had come.

That afternoon we moved the boat south and anchored in the bay of Haapu. The next morning, we found a place to land our dingy and again brought our bicycles ashore to explore Huahine Iti. Again, we rode down the smooth roads with the warm sea breeze blowing through our hair. At the south end of the island is an amazing
beach with a large motu forming a breakwater for a long white sandy beach. On the sea side of the Motu the raw sea crashes, making huge waves popular with the surfers. The waves were so big it looked too dangerous to surf. Some young boys sat on the beach with their surf boards and finally their mothers came and they left the beach with disappointed looks.

In the middle of the beach is an ancient stone platform surrounded by coral slabs sticking out of the sand. The guide book quotes a priest who lived there a generation before Europeans arrived as saying fourteen people were sacrificed there in his life time. Their bones are buried under each of the 4 corners of the platform.

We rode on searching for a restaurant for lunch. We found a tiny shop in a container on the side of the road and mistook it for a snack bar. We told the proprietor we were hungry and looking for lunch and she volunteered to cook us some steaks. She sat us down at a table facing the sea and placed two huge steak dinners in front of us with salad and pomme-frites. She charged us twelve dollars total which was a quarter of what we expected to pay. The people here are very generous. – Periclees

**June 2010:** Huahine is the most laid back/quiet large island in FP. Fare was a friendly village. There is one anchorage on your left as you enter off the beach by town. We continued around to the right and anchored at the edge if the channel on either side of the green buoy opposite Bank Taiuriu.

Got the bikes out and went for a nice ride to visit the Marae (ancient temple platforms). Roads were flat and newly paved which made for some excellent cycling.

There is good provisioning at the grocery although it was a bit more expensive than Papeete, and fresh produce was hit and miss. There is an enjoyable waterfront bar/restaurant by the dinghy landing, and a few crafts shops in town.

We dove Pass Avapehi but coral was not healthy and the dive was just ok.

There is not enough swing room to anchor in the small cove inside Bank Taiuriu. Baie Fiti is a wind tunnel with SE winds. Anchoring inside Port Bourayne was difficult. And we anchored just outside. We did not make it as far as Baie D’Avea, as winds were fresh and the anchorage too exposed. – Visions of Joahnna

### 6.3 Avea Bay

#### 6.3.1 Anchorages and Moorings

**July 2011:** 16 48.75S / 150 59.45W - good holding in sand and no coral heads. We spent 6 days in Avea Bay, and it was great. – Slip Away

**July 2011:** 16-48.712S / 150-59.475W. After Teapaa we moved to Baie Avea at the southernmost end of Huahine. This is as far as you can take a big boat on the western side of the island because the lagoon is choked with coral at the southern point. – Nakia

#### 6.3.2 General Services

##### 6.3.2.1 Wifi / Internet

**July 2011:** There is wifi in the bay - Iaora Spot and Hotspot. – Slip Away

##### 6.3.2.2 Provisions

**July 2011:** There is a small magasin on the way to Parea, but they didn't stock much of anything. They told us we could buy bread there at 5 a.m. - we did without! -- Slip Away

##### 6.3.2.3 Activities

Hiking
July 2011: The hike that Nakia recommends (trail starts across from the Marae site) is excellent. We did it twice. However, we could not find where the trail “looped back to Parea.” It just kind of petered out, and we hiked out the same way we hiked in. Another couple on another day also looked for the trail to Parea, and they could not find it either. – Slip Away

July 2011: We were able to get off the boat for a walk on Sunday. We visited a small marae around the point and walked through the village of Parea before returning to a trail head across the street from the entrance to the marae. The trail climbed up a pine covered ridge for great views of Baie Parea and Baie Avea, but it looped back to Parea so we turned around at the top of the ridge and went back down the way we had come. -- Nakia

Snorkeling

Aug. 2013: We took the dingy up, and snorkeled off the offshore side of Motu Oavarei. Pretty nice, in front of a sleepy resort. From this anchor point, it might be possible to dingy farther up the channel up to the “Maeva”. This is a large, somewhat developed, archeological site. – Alegria

July 2011: I snorkeled the coral heads along the beach in Avea Bay, and there was good fish life, but visibility was not very good. In settled weather, we dinghied around to the Araara Pass and snorkeled inside Parea Bay across from the motu. Visibility was excellent, and the snorkeling was very good. There are probably some other good snorkeling spots down there that we didn't find. – Slip Away

July 2011: This morning we snorkeled inside Passe Araara where the current was too strong but I got to see two anemones each with a pair of colorful anemonefish (not actual clown fish like Nemo though!). Then we tried the east side of Motu Araara where I was amazed by the number of sea urchins. John went as far as he could out to the reef and said it was live coral all the way there instead of having a big dead ditch inside the reef like we saw at Fare. – Nakia

6.4 Bourayne Bay

6.4.1 Anchorages and Moorings

July 2011: 16 46.80S / 151 01.80W. We anchored outside Bourayne Bay. The anchorage had a lot of coral, but our anchor chain managed not to get tangled in it. There was very little current here, and the winds were significantly lighter than they were in Fare. – Slip Away

6.4.2 Activities

July 2011: Bourayne Bay. We snorkeled around the motu at the entrance to Bourayne Bay and saw lots of shrimp gobies in the sand. The corals and other fish life were pretty good too. We heard there is a good hiking trail to the top of the hill just in front of this anchorage, but we did not get to that because we were only there for an afternoon and continued down to Avea Bay the next day. We took the dinghy into Bourayne Bay, and the bay was very pretty. There are some shallow spots inside the bay, so if you take the big boat inside, keep a good lookout. There is Iaora Spot Wifi inside the bay. This is an area where we would have liked to have spent more time. – Slip Away

6.5 Motu Murimahora

6.5.1 Anchorages and Moorings

June 2010: 16 45.86S / 150 57.56W. Gorgeous anchorage in a 17-foot deep. Broad, plateau of sand. An absolute favorite spot (and a great cruising experience) was at the Motu Murimahora anchorage on the east side of the island. We entered Pass Farerea, immediately turning south towards Bai Apoomati and Motu Murimahora.
Following a line of island side marks as we proceeded south, we snuck into a narrow-channeled harbor on this quiet side of the island. As you approach the middle point of the motu, the line of marks on your right-side ends but continues with marks a bit farther down on the (left) motu side. Between the sets of marks. – Visions of Johanna

### 6.5.2 Provisions

**June 2010:** We made a shore excursion as we heard there were fruits/veggies for sale. Immediately south of a prominent and fancy "plantation" belonging to the family that owns the large grocery in Fare, we met 2 families and were given cantaloupes, papayas, string beans, bok choy, and fresh herbs; neither family would take money. Pascal is the husband residing in the second house, along with spouse and many children. They hardly accepted the gifts we returned with later that day. The children took chocolates however, and we also gave some veggie seeds to help their burgeoning vegetable growing business, starting soil, a pair of extra reef flip-flops, and 2 nat'l geo mags for the children learning english. Our friends Steve and Trish brought some pens and pencils, sunglasses, and a frisbee for the kids. As a final thank you, we took the children "tubing" the next morning before we left. What a hoot! – Visions of Johanna

### 6.5.3 Activities

**June 2010:** We had a nice drift snorkel, driving the dink about a mile south then drifting back to the boats over some decent coral with TONS of reef fish. The water was the most incredible color of turquoise as it was a white sand bottom and very clear water. The people on the motu were very kind and even more generous. – Visions of Johanna

### 6.6 Point Teapaa (Huahine Iti)

#### 6.6.1 Anchorages and Moorings

**July 2019:** Point Teapaa is a beautiful anchorage. We dropped the hook in 6 meters of water in sand. Most boats anchor closer to the beach, but we anchored on the opposite side by the reef where we would not feel crowded. The beach, just off of Motu Vaiorea, is beautiful and has a guardian who will greet you with a smile. Perfect place to hang out in the shallow water with a cold beverage. – Sugar Shack

### 6.7 Other Anchorages

**July 2019:** We found several other great places to anchor and stay for a few days. Unfortunately, I did not note our lat/long, but hopefully you will stop by them anyway for a visit. See below. – Sugar Shack

- Hana Iti Beach is a serene and beautiful spot to anchor. Not many boats were here when we visited.
- Point Ofaiorio is south-east of the main village and about 100 meters from the green bouy.

**July 2011:** Baie Haapu 16-47.487S / 151-00.387W. After Fare we moved south to Baie Haapu but it was windy so I didn't feel like getting off the boat. John went in for a walk and reported nothing much going on in the very small village there, although we heard drums for a little while just before sunset. – Nakia

### 7 Raiatea

**Danger: Reported by a cruiser in June 2015:** I want to report three cases of boats being boarded in the last two weeks in Uturoa on the town public dock. We are still cruising here and want to make sure fellow cruisers are aware of petty crime here.

The first incident happened two weeks ago to a friend's boat tied up close to the Shell Gas Station. His boat along with three others were boarded at night and various items were stolen. All three boats were unlocked. The perpetrator was maced and fled leaving various items behind.
We pulled back into the public dock today to re-provision and met two Australian boats that were boarded last night with a Laptop stolen with forceful entry and the perpetrator being chased off a second boat when the owner was awoken.

Local recommendations are NOT to tie up here over night but anchor off the town or pick up a mooring ball over night. Our suggestion is to go to Taha’a and pick up a mooring ball by the old yacht club and spend the night there. – Noonsite

7.1 Marina Uturoa

7.1.1 Anchorages and Moorings

July 2019: There are several “Dream Yacht Charter” moorings just outside Uturoa. If they are available, you can take one for a few nights. They will ask you to either pay $25 or provide a 6-pack of beer (we paid with beer as it was cheaper) to the guy who sometimes comes around to collect payment. We stayed in the one closest to Uturoa and it held our 47’ catamaran during pretty strong winds. Each time we stayed here (3 in total), we inspected the moorings and they were well maintained. – Sugar Shack

May 2019: 15-44.16S / 151-29.30W. If the moorings are full or you don’t want to use them, we found decent anchorage in about 14m/45’ depths, holding seemed good and no problems recovering the anchor, but there was definitely the sound of a few rocks being down there. The charts show a shallower (7m/25’) area just WNW of our anchoring position, we found that to be more like 9m/30’ deep and it had a lot of rocks and bommies on it; we spent one night there, but it was noisy and the chain snagged during the night, though we got it up without too much drama the following morning. That anchorage area (and the outer moorings too) are very tide-riven, so you’ll generally find yourself sitting across or even stern to the wind. There are more moorings off the charter-yacht base’s marina further to the east, which are very handy for the airport but friends report they were charged $25/night to use one.

Town Dock: On the day’s that we visited the town dock looked uncomfortable or downright untenable in only moderate easterly winds, instead we picked-up one of the three moorings just off the marina entrance; we heard various suggestions as to who owns and maintains them (I suspect it’s the marina?) but on four separate visits there seemed to be no problem with or charge for, our picking one up mid-morning and leaving again by mid-afternoon; from there it’s only 100m to a secure and sheltered dinghy landing in the fishing harbour(?) immediately inshore of the marina, a half-mile’s walk into the town centre.

Moorings: We never did discover exactly who owns and maintains what of the ten or a dozen moorings just outside the marina entrance. A couple at least were marked with a boat-name and ‘private’, but were still seemingly used by anyone and everyone. At least two or three more were marked ‘CNI’ – presumably Chantier Naval’s? – but nobody appeared to be charging for their use, then again, they didn’t look to be particularly well/recently maintained either; we spent a few nights on various buoys, but I’m not sure I’d like to trust to them in a serious blow. The majority seemed to be occupied by permanent residents, but the three or four (including the ones marked ‘private’) near the boatyard entrance seemed to be used by anyone, though if a genuine boatyard customer needed one ahead/after a haul-out, then they would ask the interloper to move. – Moon Rebel

July 2011: The problem with Uturoa is that it is deep as heck around town, so it is difficult to find a good spot to hang out near town. Here is a summary of the locations you can either anchor, dock, or pick up a mooring ball near the north end of Raiatea, close to Uturoa, starting from the closest to town. – Soggy Paws

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Dist from Uturoa</th>
<th>Approx Lat/Long</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Uturoa Town Quay</td>
<td>0 meters</td>
<td>16-43.75S / 151-26.60W</td>
<td>Free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Off Sand Shelf</td>
<td>.4 nm</td>
<td>16-43.44S / 151-26.34W</td>
<td>Free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Off Marina Uturoa</td>
<td>.4 nm</td>
<td>16-43.36S / 151-26.67W</td>
<td>Free</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Mooring Marina Uturoa | .4 nm | 16-43.40S / 151-26.83W | ~$25/night
Marina Uturoa | .4 nm | 16-43.48S / 151-26.79W | ??
Behind the Reef, N | 1.1nm N | 16-42.62S / 151-26.73W | Free
Behind Ile Taoru | 1.4nm SE | 16-44.68S / 151-25.52W | Free

**Uturoa Town Quay** - Though free, and usually open, the town quay has three distinct disadvantages--you are sideways to the prevailing wind, and could have a hard time getting off the dock in any wind. And second, the wave slap at the quay is pretty loud. Third, you are right in town, accessible to anyone who walks by. If you do want to go alongside, the two BEST spots at the quay is inside the outer spur at the north end (because the wind is then blowing you OFF), at the large angled concrete dock that encloses the ferry dock area. This is concrete (bad), but angled enough towards the east that getting off the dock in the prevailing ESE wind is easier.

**Off the Sand Shelf** - This is close to town, but still isn’t perfect. Basically, you slowly approach the sand shelf off town (anywhere between the two green markers), heave your anchor up on the shelf, and back down. Up on the flat part of the sand, the depth is about 6-7 feet deep, so a 6-7-foot draft boat can easily put the bow up on the shelf to set the anchor, and this is the best option. If you don’t get your anchor on the flat part of the sand, it will be at a 30-degree incline, and much more likely to drag off. Once placed, back down hard to make sure it is set, and visually check your anchor, to make sure it is buried in the sand, on the shelf. Set your anchor alarm to wake you up if you drag off.

You don’t want to drag off the shelf, because then you’ll completely break free, as the water depth drops quickly off to over 100’. There is current in the deep water that runs north and south, setting you some of the time sideways to the wind. It feels precarious but is the best ‘close to town’ option besides being on the Quay. Obviously, this wouldn’t be good in any winds other than ‘mostly east’.

There were 7 boats anchored in this area in July 2011 for some of the Heiva festival in town, in 20-25 knots of wind, and Soggy Paws spent 3 nights anchored there in 15-20 knots of wind. With a good wifi antenna, both loraspot and WDG Hotspot can be picked up from this anchorage.

**Marina Uturoa** - It might be possible to get a night’s dockage here. No one we know did, so I don’t know much about it--availability or cost or who to contact. But this is the Dream Yacht Charter base, so that would be a good place to start.

**Marina Uturoa Moorings** - There are two moorings maintained by Dream Yacht Charters, right off Marina Uturoa. These are often available for a night or two. You must contact them for availability (pick up a mooring if available, then immediately go in and check).

**Off Marina Uturoa** - This is also pretty close to town. There is a shallower water area (easily seen on the chart) off Marina Uturoa, that we have seen boats anchored in. There are two problems with this area, one is that it has coral in it, and a friend misjudged where he put his anchor, and ended up with his anchor stuck on coral well below snorkeling depth. Second, there is (most of the time) a reversing NW-SE current in the channel. When the current is against the wind, this can make boats anchored close together dance around in unpleasant ways. One other friend anchored here, had to move in the middle of the night when the current changed and his boat came too close to another.

**Behind the Reef, N** - We saw two boats, a large catamaran and a smaller monohull anchored in this area for a week. This would be a good anchorage, not too far from town, in which to spend some time. But you have to figure out how to get in. One way in is next to Motu Aito (across the channel from Marina Uturoa). If you watch, you will see power boats running this channel back and forth from Tahaa to Uturoa. The chart says it is only 1 meter in the pass, but it looked deeper to me. We never explored it though.

There is a second entrance that looked deeper, located near 16-41.0 S / 151-26.83W (about 3 miles N of town), but you’d need to explore this in good light and good weather.

Page 106
Behind Ile Taoru - There is a good spot in 20’ of water in the lee of Ile Taoru, the motu just inside Passe Teavapiti. Two Amigos spent 3 days anchored here in 20-25 kt ESE, and reported great holding in nice conditions behind the motu. About 2-3 boats can fit in this anchorage comfortably.

July 2011: 16 43.40S / 151 26.38W. In settled weather, we found a good anchorage along the barrier reef across from the town of Uturoa. We dropped the anchor in about 15-20 feet of water and then settled back over the deeper water. From that anchorage, we could dinghy to the town wharf. -- Slip Away

July 2010: 16-43.404S / 151-26.834W. We’re currently on a mooring outside the entrance to Marina Uturoa (16-43.404S / 151-26.834W) enjoying Hotspot’s Wi-Fi to the boat, water from the docks to top our tanks, and grocery stores nearby for provisioning. We plan to spend a second night on the mooring before crossing to Tahaa tomorrow. Note: in 2011, we heard the charge for a mooring here was about $25/night. – Nakia

7.1.2 Chantier Naval des Isles – Haul Out

May 2019: We used the Chantier Naval des Isles yard on a friend’s recommendation, rather than the Raiatea Carenage one next door and we’re more than happy to pass on that recommendation. I understand that the two yards are similarly priced and that the facilities (basic but reasonably clean) are similar too. Chantier des Isles lifts out using a trailer which whilst not being so hi-tech as those hydraulic trailers we’ve previously used, is more than adequate for the job and the guys who get you in/out certainly seem to know what they’re doing. The biggest down side of their lift-out trailer is that you seem finish well off the ground once chocked-up in the yard – particularly so with catamarans – so almost every boat-job needs to be done off a ladder or hop-ups & scaffold boards (the yard has plenty of both).

2019 price for our 35’ yacht was US$550 for a lift in/out & 4 days ashore, plus a further $48 for each additional day, this price also included a night either end of your stay in their small marina. No charge for water but I think the electric’s (not sure, as we didn’t need it) charged extra.

Besides French, the yard guys all have a little English and Karin who runs the Chantier Naval des Isles’ office also speaks English and German fluently. – Moon Rebel

7.1.3 Yachtsmen Services

7.1.3.1 Cooking Gas (Propane and Butane)

July 2019: Both the Shell and Total fuel stations sell cooking gas. – Sugar Shack

May 2019: The fuel/propane station (Total) adjacent to these moorings; we’ve only been there in the dinghy, but I’ve seen several 2m+ draft yachts go alongside, so there should be no depth issues. – Moon Rebel

7.1.3.2 Fuel (Diesel and Gasoline)

July 2019: The Shell station is under new management and now accepts duty-free certificates. In addition, they are lovely, friendly, and eager to please. The Total station still accepts duty free certificates and payment by credit card. – Sugar Shack

Aug. 2013: Town dock, Uturoa – We can confirm some of the warnings previously mentioned. The fuel dock operator is territorial, and aggressive. It’s not clear how much of the dock is “his”, he seems to go for as much as he can get. The charter companies also claim a lot of real estate here.

The threat of getting pinned on this dock by strong winds is also very real. It came up while we were there, and was too strong to spring off. Ended up with damage.

There were also reliable reports from other cruisers of nighttime boardings and thefts from the cabins, and of people waking up in the morning to find that their dock lines have been untied. Unclear if this is kids ‘playing’, or something more targeted. – Alegria
2010: Fuel is available at the main village of Utaroa. The Shell station has a guest dock nearly in the middle of town, but does not offer duty free fuel. The Total station is located just north at the head of the small inlet adjacent to the municipal marina, and Total does offer duty free diesel. We fueled at Total late morning on Saturday, and then were able to lie there for the afternoon (they operate 7-11AM on Saturdays & Sundays) for the 10-minute walk into town and provisions. Have large and plenty fenders on the ready for either dock. – Visions of Johanna

7.1.4 General Services

7.1.4.1 Bank / ATM

May 2019: At least two banks with ATMs. – Moon Rebel

7.1.4.2 Computer / Electronics

May 2019: A mile’s walk to the west of the marina (just before you reach the airport) is computer & electronics store. – Moon Rebel

7.1.4.3 Hardware Store

May 2019: A very good and larger than it looks hardware store almost next door to Legotite. – Moon Rebel

7.1.4.4 Marine Supplies / Boat Parts

June 2019: Richard Neufeld is a Motorola trained radio technician, marine electrician, font of general knowledge and good guy. Richard_neufeld@yahoo.com. See section 7.2.2.1 for more on Richard. – Sugar Shack

May 2019: A mile’s walk to the west of the marina (just before you reach the airport) is another retail and industrial area: Socimat gave us what we felt was a very good price for Hempel Globic antifoul paint, we also used a good, but rather expensive stainless steel welder there called Alunox who are located immediately behind Socimat. – Moon Rebel

7.1.4.5 Medical

May 2019: Like a previous contributor, I too had a problem wart sorted out here, surprisingly little English was spoken by the hospital staff but we got by and whilst the hospital looked a bit tired/scruffy, the service provided was excellent, the waiting times reasonable and provided at an unbelievable cost: <$40 for the initial consultation, then the minor-op two weeks later cost <$60, with a free check on the wound a couple of days later at which I was deemed good to go (dissolvable stitches), with the proviso that I should call in at Bora B’s health clinic if you’re at all concerned.

Pharmacy: Near, the boatyard, just west of the airport, pharmacy perhaps 1 mile/2km to the east, beyond that you’re on your own. – Moon Rebel

Sept. 2010: I just wanted to let you know that I had to go to the hospital in Raiatea and had emergency surgery the following day to fix a gynecological problem. Without going into details, all is well. It was a long surgery and took a long time for me to get out of the general anesthesia - so it was a hard time for Larry, but a happy ending.

The miracle is that a French surgeon, also a professor of gynecology and apparently well known in France for just this type of surgery arrived just a week before to go sailing in French Polynesia with his wife and he was volunteering at the hospital and he performed the surgery. I am so VERY grateful. I’ll need a few more weeks for recovery because of all the blood loss, but we still plan to head to New Zealand this year. – Miss Kathleen
7.1.4.6 Transportation

May 2019: A mile’s walk to the west of the marina (just before you reach the airport) are several rental car and scooter hire operations. One at the western end of the development the others further west on either side of the airport—sorry, we didn’t use them so no info. – Moon Rebel

2011: We wanted to take a day to see the rest of Raiatea that we couldn’t see from the boat. Though it would have been slightly cheaper for two couples to go together and rent a car, we opted to rent two scooters from the Eurocar/Avis car rental place (see their ad in the Raiatea tourist pamphlet). We called and made a reservation for the next day. They picked us up at 8am at the Shell station by the municipal dock in Uturoa. Though we wanted a 24-hour rental, the guy renting didn’t want us leaving the scooters on the street overnight in Uturoa, so we arranged to return them just before he closed up shop at 6pm. The cost (taxes, poor exchange rates, etc) was about $72 per scooter for the day. – Soggy Paws

7.1.4.7 Wifi / Internet

May 2019: Internet is via the WDG cards ($5/hr) but at least the signal’s better than usual, with our smaller booster antenna, it could be picked-up well out on the moorings/anchorage outside the marina too. If you’re staying longer or needing more internet, the adjacent Raiatea Carenage’s wifi is the same $5/hour, $20/4hrs or $35/10 hrs, but in addition they also offer 1 month, unlimited internet for $50; this had an equally good, stable and fast(ish) connection, so we could sit at anchor and ‘catch-up’ on things in the real world. – Moon Rebel

2008: Wifi is known to be available in these Raiatea locations: Raiatea Carenage area, Marina Apooiti, Marina Uturoa, and the downtown Quai area. Most have both Iaoraspot and WDG Hotspot. At least one has a Manaspot (but I can’t remember where). Anchored off the shelf off town, we could get both Iaoraspot and Hotspot, with a good antenna. – Baraka

7.1.5 Provisions

July 2019: Right in front of the marina is a rather well stocked Champion. However, if you turn left, you will find two more markets that are less expensive. We really liked Liaut market (the Chinese market) on the 2nd street (Located Route Cotiere) that was well stocked and more reasonably priced. – Sugar Shack

May 2019: By far the best provisioning since Tahiti with Champion, Liaut (small Super-U) and an independent Legotite (our favourite) supermarkets all within 100m of the town centre’s main veggie-market hall. – Moon Rebel

Aug. 2013: You will find 3 well stocked supermarkets in Uturoa as well as the local markets where you can stock up on your vegetables. There is a large range of fish and meats supplies in the supermarkets, along with wine, beer and soda drinks. Bring as much duty-free alcohol as you can. You will find that you are mostly eating fresh vegetables that are in season. You will find some imported vegetables at a price that can be low in quality. Try and buy your seafood direct from the fishermen where possible. Outside of Uturoa, there are very few places to reprovision. Note: Take your own shopping bags! – Alegria

7.1.6 Restaurants

May 2019: Near, the boatyard, just west of the airport, is a small restaurant/café (open for weekday lunches only) about 5 minutes’ walk east of the boatyards. – Moon Rebel

7.1.7 Activities

Hiking

July 2011: We also really enjoyed the hike up to Tapioi Hill, the peak topped by big antennas behind Uturoa. It’s an easy to moderate hike - took us about 1 1/2 hours to hike up the hill. From town, walk north along the inside road (not the one along the water that goes to the Total Station). Walk past the Post office on
the left, and then turn left on the road just before the Gendarmerie. Cross over the cattle grid where you will see a sign that indicates hikers are welcome but cars are not. From there, keep going up the hill. On a clear day, the views are spectacular - you can see Raiatea, Tahaa, Bora Bora & Huahine. We did the hike twice. — Slip Away

Touring by Car or Scooter

2011: We rented two scooters from the Eurocar/Avis car rental place (see their ad in the Raiatea tourist pamphlet). Because we told them we were planning to circumnavigate the island, they loaned us an empty 2-liter jug, that would fit in the compartment under the seat, to make sure we had enough fuel to go all the way around. This we filled in Uturoa as we left town headed south down the east coast. We returned the scooters full of fuel.

We had enough time and fuel to pretty much see everything we wanted to see in one day. We took several side excursions...one up the road to the ‘3 waterfalls’ (partly dirt road). We parked the scooters hiked in to the first waterfall for half an hour before turning back. We took another diversion a long way up a major side road into the center of the island (paved road next to a store, midway down the east side of the island). The pavement petered out but we kept going on fairly decent dirt road into a little-visited valley that was an ancient volcanic caldera. We left the scooters at a house near a stream (where the stream crossed the road), and hiked another hour round trip up the dirt road.

We backtracked out to the main road again, and next stopped at the Marae Taputapuatea, where we had a picnic lunch and looked around. Though interesting and historic, you can see everything there is to see there in about a half an hour. There are small restaurants on the roadside at Taputapuatea, and a bathroom.

Then we backtracked to the point in the main road where the road crosses to the south part of Raiatea (the ‘round the island’ road was damaged by a mudslide on the SE side, and was impassable). We stopped at a viewpoint, and continued on around to the south coast, and up the west coast. We took a few more side trips up interesting-looking side roads, and stopped at 2 more smaller marae, before returning back to the north coast.

This was a really fun way to sightsee, and we plan to investigate scooter rentals in the future. However, if you want to see it all in more comfort and slightly cheaper, a small car rental for two couples would be a good option too. I think it was 5000 CFP for each scooter and you could rent a car for 8000. — Soggy Paws

7.1.8 Cruiser Reports

Aug. 2013: Airport – The airport is very nice, and even has an accessible dingy/taxi dock to pick up or drop off folks flying in and out. – Alegria

July 2011: A couple of times in the evening, we dinghied from this anchorage to the town wharf and then walked to the Heiva tent to watch traditional dancing shows. The Heiva tent is a big white structure on a point of land just past (North of) the Total Station. There was no charge for any of the shows, and they were excellent entertainment. There are also a number of traditional fare buildings constructed near the tent, and they house small restaurants, festival rides and other entertainment. We do not recommend tying up your dinghy at the Municipal Marina (by the Total Station), which is closer to the Heiva tent, because one cruiser had his gas tank stolen there. -- Slip Away

Sept. 2010: Flying Guests In. Raiatea is a good place to have guests aboard—you can easily spend a week or two moving around and doing things, without ever having to go to sea. The airport is conveniently located on the north end of Raiatea, between the Carenage Area (and Marina Apooiti) and Uturoa (and the Quai and Marina Uturoa)

The best (and most expensive) option for taking on guests is to pull up at the ‘guest dock’ at Marina Apooiti (just east of the Carenage). This is closest to the airport, and a fairly civilized way to introduce guests to your boat. If the guest dock is not available, the Apooiti moorings are a second choice. A cheaper option would be
to anchor in the Carenage area, and use the dinghy dock at Marina Apooiti to pick up your guests. The airport is within walking distance (head east on the road out of the marina), and a short taxi ride back.

You can also anchor or moor off Uturoa on the NE corner of Raiatea. This is only marginally further from the airport than Marina Apooiti, but is somewhat exposed to the east wind, so you should have a plan as to where to go once you get your guests onboard.

(see Soggy Paws description of anchoring and mooring in the Uturoa/Carenage area for anchoring/mooring/docking options). – Miss Kathleen

7.2  Raiatea Carenage

7.2.1  Anchorages and Moorings

July 2011: Though we only spent one night in the Carenage area, here’s a summary of what we know.

There are moorings directly off the Carenage, which is on the NW corner of Raiatea. Look for the boats on the hard. Some are private moorings, and I believe there are two different entities renting moorings. When we went through the mooring field, we saw several that looked rentable, but we couldn’t raise anyone on the radio to ask about it. Later we were told to just pick one up and come in to the Carenage. Don’t pick up a mooring that says ‘Privee’ (private). The moorings in this area seem to be in the 1000 CFP range, and generally stay pretty full. There is a decent dinghy dock at the Carenage, but you can’t get out through the Carenage when the Carenage is closed (evenings and weekends). Boats on Carenage moorings seemed to use the Marina Apooiti dinghy dock when the Carenage was closed.

There are also moorings available ¼ mile east from the Carenage, at Marina Apooiti (apoo - eetee). We picked up one of these moorings and went in to pay and were shocked to find that they charged 2500 CFP per night--the same charge as being in the marina! This mooring field looked better maintained, always had available moorings, was slightly more sheltered, and had a dinghy dock that was always open. It is also slightly closer to the airport and town, and within walking distance of a moderately sized grocery store (not the one nearly across the street, but one further down on the left). The marina has luxurious looking showers but we were dismayed to find no hot water.

There are a few places to anchor in the Carenage area--the best-looking spot was a little SW of the Carenage mooring field. We saw other boats anchored on the shelf west of the Carenage. The further to the south you get, the better protection you have in strong easterlies. – Soggy Paws

7.2.2  General Services

7.2.2.1  Electrical Work

Aug. 2013: Richard Neufeld, 73-15-79, richard_neufeld@yahoo.com. An American was walking around the Papeete Quai in June 2011 handing out his business card, saying that he was based in Raiatea and could do repair, service, and installation of electrical and electronic equipment (including fixing alternators, starters, etc). His card says ‘Navigation and Communications’. He is registered electrician in Raiatea. He also said he has a workshop with a lathe and other mechanical type repair equipment. He would also be a good guy to contact for recommendations on other boat repair services.

We were very pleased to work with marine electrician Richard Neufeld after getting his contact information in the Compendium. Richard is originally from Ontario but has spent the past three decades in the Caribbean and South Pacific working on boats and electrical systems. He is licensed for work on Raiatea and has a long-term visa while he works towards citizenship here. He lives on a catamaran he sailed to Raiatea years ago and has an American wife. He fixes inverters, alternators, regulators, autopilots, radios, SSB's, etc. and has a work place ashore with mill and lathe. He has some spare autopilots and other parts. He works on engines and generators

Page 111
as well. His work was fast and very reasonably priced. He does some work for local charter companies and some by referral from Papeete.

He checked brushes and other things on my nine-year old Raymarine linear drive autopilot, repaired an engine tachometer sensor and did a variety of other mostly electrical repairs and checks. He even helped us with laundry and grocery shopping. He uses Skype and can receive and send Skype voicemails. – Pua’ena

Aug. 2013: We had a more mixed experience with Richard Neufeld. He’s a very nice man, and very prompt. But he ordered the wrong part for our refrigeration, and then we spent a lot of time and money with him adapting the system to it. In hindsight, we should have held out for the right one. – Alegria

7.2.2.2  Wifi / Internet

2008: Wifi is known to be available in these Raiatea locations: Raiatea Carenage area, Marina Apooiti, Marina Uturoa, and the downtown Quai area. Most have both Ioaraspot and WDG Hotspot. At least one has a Manaspot (but I can’t remember where). Anchored off the shelf off town, we could get both Ioaraspot and Hotspot, with a good antenna. – Baraka

7.2.3  Cruiser Reports

2019: We stayed at the Sunset Beach Motel while we were recommissioning our boat at the Carenage. We love that place. For just over $100/night, you get a huge bungalow that sleeps five, with a large deck overlooking the lagoon and the sunset. There is no air conditioning but the fans are helpful. It is a family run operation. They will pick you up for free from the airport and take you to the grocery store if they are going that way anyway. They offer free fruit from their plantation, and WiFi at the office. Cell reception is adequate. Best of all, you can walk or dinghy from your bungalow to the Carenage. Book early and for as many nights as you need - last minute extensions are usually not available because they operate at nearly full capacity all the time. The only drawback is that you are not on your boat on the water, you are on land, in a beautiful, rich, green coconut plantation, and the bugs can be bitey. – Cool Change

2014: Raiatea Carenage was much cheaper than Techni-Marine in Papeete, and the out-haul was easy to organize with the flexible office people.

Having said that, there’s also downsides: the area gets swampy in rains (be careful with mosquitoes, we caught dengue fever there), the narrow approach next to iron rails in the water’s not exactly easy and the yard features the smelliest toilet we’ve ever encountered. – Pitufo

Aug. 2013: We pulled in to have the damage repaired, from our stay at town dock. The people are very nice, the work was generally good, but it did take a long time for them to get to our boat. Most of our 3 weeks in the yard were spent waiting for workers on our boat. But it’s great if you’re doing your own work, with your own tools and parts. Dominique, the yard manager, helped us get a visa extension, based on the repairs needed to the boat. We can also say that the nearby Sunset Motel is a great refuge at the end of the day, to wash off the fiberglass dust, etc. – Alegria

7.3  Marina Apooiti

7.3.1  Anchorages and Moorings

June 2019: This is a large bay with a marina and several charter boat companies. There is lots of room for anchoring. It offers close proximity to markets, fuel, and trash. – Sugar Shack

2017: We anchored outside of the mooring field at the shipyard and used the dinghy dock at the Apooiti marina. – Consensus

Aug. 2013: We picked up a mooring here, it was fine and there are two grocery stores within easy walking distance. But the yacht club and one of the restaurants seem to be closed up, and it seems like mostly a
charter base now. The Moorings no longer does butane refills, but does offer a laundry service. People were friendly, but no paper in the toilets, cold water in the showers, and all the water faucet handles have been removed. – Alegria

7.3.2 General Services

7.3.2.1 Hardware Store
2017: A good hardware store is located just past the airport. – Consensus

7.3.2.2 Sail Repair
Aug. 2013: There is a recommended sail loft in Raiatea’s Marina Apooita. Be sure to read Pipstrelle’s write up in section 1.6.8 “Sail Repair” before you decide where to have your sail repaired. – Alegria

7.3.2.3 Wifi / Internet
2017: We could pick up wdg wifi on the boat from this anchorage. – Consensus
2008: Wifi is known to be available in these Raiatea locations: Raiatea Carenage area, Marina Apooiti, Marina Uturoa, and the downtown Quai area. Most have both ioaraspot and WDG Hotspot. At least one has a Manaspot (but I can’t remember where). Anchored off the shelf off town, we could get both ioaraspot and Hotspot, with a good antenna. – Baraka

7.3.3 Restaurants
2017: Had dinner at ia ora restaurant and the Raiatea Lodge and both were good and expensive. We shopped at two supermarkets in town. The town is more of a cruise ship port and not a town. We were told to call the airport before crossing the flight path, but we never got a hold of anyone on the VHF for runway clearance. Think it’s a sleepy little airport. In general, we like Tahaa much better as it was much more peaceful and not so busy with all the charters. – Consensus

7.3.4 Cruiser Reports
2017: We rented a car and took a whirlwind island tour. -- Consensus

7.4 Baie Opoa

7.4.1 Anchorages and Moorings
June 2019: Opoa Bay has good holding in 9-12 meters of water. It also provides easy access to Taputapuatea (archeological marae site). – Sugar Shack
May 2019: 16-49.9S / 151-22.0W in 13m/45’ in the centre of the bay, protected behind the very shallow and obvious shoal marked by a red post – room for 3 or 4 boats. – Moon Rebel
July 2010: 16-50.105S / 151-22.080W. From Hotopuu we sailed to Baie Opoa to visit Marae Taputapuatea, one of the most important of the traditional temples in French Polynesia. – Nakia

7.4.2 Restaurants
May 2019: We had a celebratory birthday lunch for a friend at the Hotel Atiapiti. After a round of rum punches, we ordered lobster for Kim, poisson cru for Don, crab salad with lots of leafy green lettuce for me, and chicken in soy/cola sauce for John. We shamelessly topped it all off with two pieces of coconut cake topped with coconut ice cream and garnished with star fruit and tea roses for dessert. It was a lovely meal but we have to chuckle when we realize that we are so well trained to French Polynesia prices by now that we think nothing of taking the equivalent of $90 to shore - and hoping it will be enough to pay for lunch. – Nakia
7.4.3 **Cruiser Reports**

**May 2019:** Marae Taputaputea is definitely one of the biggest and best preserved or at least restored, that we’ve seen and well worth a visit; it’s located at the SE corner of Raiatea, at the tip of the peninsula separating Opoa and Hotopuu Bays. – Moon Rebel

**July 2010:** We had a lovely ending to the day when the canoe replica we'd seen in Huahine sailed through the pass blowing their conch shell to announce their arrival. I convinced John to blow his horn in reply, and a small group of people gathered on shore to welcome them. – Nakia

7.5 **Faaroa**

7.5.1 **Anchorages and Moorings**

**May 2019:** 16-49.125 / 151-24.91W in 14m/45’ on 40m/130’ chain. We just anchored for the duration of our visit rather than overnighting as having looked from the anchorage at Ile Iriru, the valley appeared to be a favoured track for any squalls blowing across this end of Raiatea. That said, I doubt you’d come to any harm as the holding appeared to be very solid in what’s charted as ‘mud’. Once settled I’d estimate that the ‘shallow’ water was a further 50-60m/150-200’ astern of us; there were a couple of grubby-looking mooring buoys in the vicinity, but nobody – including a couple of skippered charter catamarans, who ought to know – was picking them up. – Moon Rebel

**July 2011:** 16.48.807 S / 151.24.806 W. Mooring ball at this location. Taking one is reported as a common practice. Baie Faaroa is a very deep and long bay on the east side of Raiatea. At the head of the bay there are several rivers which reach into the long fertile valley. while we motored our dinghy up the river. There are about ten mooring balls with no painters in this location. We heard that the moorings were provided by the Moorings charter company. – Yolo

**July 2010:** 16-49.052S / 151-24.870W. We anchored here for the night. – Nakia

7.5.2 **Cruiser Reports**

**May 2019:** The dinghy ride into/up the river proved straightforward and was definitely worth doing – reminded us of the east-coast of South America’s rivers just in miniature. I would say that we got (as the guides suggest) about 1.5 miles upriver, though there were several spots earlier that it looked like it was going to be blocked - it appears somebody cuts back the more intrusive tree branches/logs from time to time. The river’s width often went from 30/40m, to 10m then once again opened up around the next corner; keep persevering, you will eventually reach/pass an obvious and fairly new concrete dock on your starboard side at which point the water appeared to shallow, but with care you could get a further 1/4 mile before finally reaching impassable foliage. Try to row/drift back downstream, lots of birdlife appears and it’s much pleasanter in silence. – Moon Rebel

**July 2011:** When you approach the head of the bay by dinghy you will see two rivers, one in the center of the valley and one to the right/starb’ed side of the valley. The waters on the right side of the valley are very shallow and can only be explored in a very shallow draft vessel without a motor. To explore the valley with a motorized dingy, proceed between the vertical sticks at the head of the bay into the river on the left side (middle) of the bay. Keep the drift wood, limbs, and tree trunks in the delta of the river to your starb’ed side while heading up river. In general, motor in the center of the river when it is a straight section and navigate the outer edge area on the turns. During the dry season you can see the bottom of the river in the shallow spots. We motored several miles up the river until it suddenly shallowed at a home where rocks were placed across the river as stepping stones.

When you are motoring up the river you will most likely be greeted by James. He speaks at least three languages and gives tours of the botanical garden which is unmarked and located on the right side of the river. You will see a large meter high silver/white pole near the river bank, an old concrete and dirt wall/wharf, or a
short water channel cut in the mud bank for boats on your right. This is where James' free tours start. If James
is not giving a tour he is usually floating in his kayak near this location. We spoke with James, who works for
tips, and he certainly appeared to know the flora and fauna. Sampling the numerous fruits of the valley are
included in his tour.

If you proceed about a hundred meters up the river, it will take a sharp turn to the left. On your left you will
see many banana and coconut trees, and a valley farm. The farmer, Taeuro, was working his field while we
motored by and we got a tour of his acreage. By the end of the tour we were loaded up with huge squash,
papaya, a hand of bananas, coconuts, and taro, all for a fraction of the cost of local markets. – Yolo

July 2010: In the morning we took the dinghies to explore the Apoomau River. On our way past a wooden
dock we got a pitch from a man in a kayak for a plantation tour. We continued up river until we had to turn
around at a house in front of a shallow little rapids. We met back up with James at the dock to take what we
suspect was a completely unofficial tour of someone's farm. But he knew the names of most of the plants and
flowers in French, Tahitian, and English and treated us to contraband bananas, coconut, sticky purple fruit, and
fern "tattoos" made by placing a fern against your skin and smacking it to leave the pattern behind in white
pollen. We got a kick out of his style of teaching (he usually asked us for the name of plants before telling us
what they were) and his unusual patter about many of the flowers and fruits - "Is good for you?" "Is no good
for me." - which we've now incorporated into our daily routine.

On a sad note we feel it's important to report that a dinghy and outboard left trailing behind an anchored boat
overnight was stolen in this bay after we left. Always raise or lock those dinghies and motors! – Nakia

7.6 Vairahi

7.6.1 Anchorages and Moorings

June 2019: There are mooring balls and anchoring in 10-20 meters of water. Be careful as it shallows up near
palm tree lined beaches. – Sugar Shack.

July 2010: 16-46.554S / 151-25.174W. Vairahi and were happy to find a calm, protected bay for a change.
What the Dream Yacht Charter guide says about this anchorage: This anchorage is not recommend except in
very good conditions. It offers protection from the south & east winds. The northern mouth & southern point
of Baie Vairahi are marked with a black stake and there is a red cylindrical beacon just off Point Utufara. North
of the red balise and south of Puaa reef is a shoal marked by a green conical beacon. Keep close to the red
balise at Point Utufara to clear the dangerous shoals. – Nakia

7.6.2 Activities

June 2019: Hike: Tres Cascades can be accessed from Vairahi Bay. Past pink pearl farm, follow signs to Tres
Cascades Hotel/Restaurant. Easy hike 1.5 hours up with two rappels. – Sugar Shack

July 2010: Saturday morning we invited John and Kara of Orca to join us for a hike to the three waterfalls. Per
the 2006 edition of Lonely Planet we walked up the road just north of the 6km mark (at a telephone booth and
big sign for L'Excursion Bleue) to start the trail at a small parking lot where two cars which had passed us were
parked. Unfortunately, after crossing one small stream we were thwarted by a brand-new chain strung across
the opposite side of a bigger stream with no less than three hand drawn signs on it saying things like Piste
Privee (private path), Propriete Privee (private property), and Something Interdit (forbidden). Now normally
we might ignore something old and faded, but this was so obviously "in your face" that we elected to respect
the signs. Since we knew people were already on the trail, my feeling is that it's been put off limits to do-it-
yourselfers like us in favor of squeezing more tourist dollars out of shoreside sightseeing opportunities. Even
though they weren't marked the cars passing us held one or two locals with one or more tourist types as
passengers. We'd like to know if Lonely Planet has a more current version of this hike in print yet. – Nakia

Page 115
7.6.3  **Cruiser Report**

**July 2010:** Head to the south or south west part of the bay and anchor in 50 fathoms of water. The Koaha Nui ranch is nearby and offers mountain excursions on horseback. Surrounded by lush tropical scenery, you will have a birdseye view of the lagoon. – Nakia

---

7.7  **Motu Nao Nao**

7.7.1  **Anchorages and Moorings**

**June 2019:** This anchorage offers nice sandy bottom with good holding. It is gorgeous and near Motu Nao Noa and pass. – Sugar Shack

**June 2018:** The anchorage that Yolo mentions, on the north side of the island at the west end, appears to be no longer an option. We have repeatedly heard of numerous boats being chased off this anchorage. Friends reported a few weeks ago that a woman came out and said there was a cable running to the main island in this location. There is a bouy with a cross on top that signifies a cable crossing. Not sure if they just don't want yachts to anchor there or there is an actual cable.

Also, be very careful Yolo’s 4th location, as we saw depths between 6 1/2 - 7 feet in this area. It may have silted up since Yolo published this report. I would sound this area with a dinghy first.

Just across the bay from motu Nao Nao is bay Tuatua and there are 4 mooring balls available for cruisers. It’s an easy dinghy ride to Motu Nao Noa if you want to snorkel. --- Jacaranda

**July 2011:** During our visit to the southern tip of Raiatea we observed Passe Nao Nao. Ten knot winds from the east and less than two-meter swells from the south made the Nao Nao Passe an easy entrance to navigate. You can anchor off Isle Nao Nao, a small private motu at the southern end of Raiatea, in one of four locations. Each location can accommodate 1-2 yachts maximum at a time, unless you are chartering a yacht. Then you apparently can raft up as many boats as you like; fenders appear to be optional for some charters! We've even seen several charter boats rafted together while under way in some lagoons in these islands. – Yolo

See warnings above from Jacaranda (June 2018) before using these anchorages.

- **16.54.858 S / 151.25.535 W.** Several vessels can anchor in 22 feet of water, sandy bottom, just north of Nao Nao. There are old broken-down fish pens nearby, yet protection from a strong southern blow would be good.
- **16.55.048 S / 151.25.773 W.** On the north side of the island at the west end is another anchorage site with protection from southern winds.
- **16.55.133 S / 151.25.905 W.** A small basin, usually filled with charter boats, is located at the west end of Nao Nao. We dropped the hook in 10 feet of water on pure sand. This location gives you good protection from SE, E, and NE winds. The snorkeling near this location was good, but not great like some places in the Tuamotu’s. The entrance to this location is narrow and we have observed yachts anchoring in the entrance, thus blocking other yachts into the basin or requiring very tight navigation.
- **16.55.029 S / 151.26.052 W.** The 4th location is northwest of the island on the sand shelf off the channel. We anchored on a sandy bottom in 9 feet of water at this location which can be used in settled weather.

**July 2010:** **16 55.00S / 151 25.80W.** We are anchored along the north shore of Motu Naonao along a gentle slope in 25-30 feet of water with enough room to swing 360 degrees. By the NW corner of the island. – Visions of Johanna

**July 2010:** **16-55.174S / 151-25.910W.** Holding in sand was good where we were even if it was a bit breezy. I think this might be the first place we've anchored which was rooster free! Nakia
7.7.2 Activities

7.7.2.1 Snorkeling

July 2010: We just finished one of our best snorkels of the trip. Certainly, the best since "The Aquarium" in Tahanea, and possibly better than that. Along the south-western edge of the island is a nice sandy beach with a deep trench and decent coral wall down to about 50 feet. It would make a decent dive, or a nice snorkel for a decent free diver. We did that this morning, had lunch on the beach before being asked to vacate the island.

Apparently an American recently bought the Motu and is trying to kick everyone off the beach. Fortunately, we know that all beaches in FP are public and told the caretaker this. She was in a quandary and since we were finishing lunch anyway, we said we would go for a swim and stay on the beach only. The family visiting from Raiatea just down the beach moved their coolers onto their boats and their table just into the water and this also appeased the caretaker.

We then walked east along the south shore of the island to drift west along the coral heads. The coral started good and just got better, becoming more dense, healthier, and bigger as we went. I had to finish the snorkel because I was somewhat cold, quite pruny, and rather tired from 2+ hours of time in the water, but I want to go back tomorrow with charged batteries in the camera. I saw some of the deepest red anemones yet, with some sizable clownfish (think Nemo), lots of colorful damselfish, some cool rockfish, and lots more. Mostly smaller reef fish, but some larger reef fish as well, and the most varied coral species we have seen in the Pacific. It made for a great day, and this after several other good ones. – Visions of Johanna

7.7.3 Cruiser Report

July 2010: We had everything from gusty to light sailing breezes as we exited Passe Rautoanui on the NW side of Raiatea and reentered the lagoon at Passe Punaeroa on the SW end of Raiatea. From there we motored upwind through the moderately challenging channel where the coral extended out from both sides in some places. The wind was up to 20-25 by now, but there was an oasis of calm in the lee of Nao Nao on the SW tip (the guidebooks more conservatively recommend the northern side in deeper water).

The motu is private so we couldn’t go ashore but there was some nice snorkeling and a very protected anchorage if you don’t mind having only a couple of feet under your keel. Having gotten there first, our friends on s/v Quixotic had the best protection from the motu. – Nakia

7.8 East Coast Anchorages

7.8.1 Hotopuu Bay

May 2019: 16-50.56S / 151-21.7W. Better yet, though probably only space for one or two was on the north side of Hotopuu Bay. the charts show this as being only 2’ deep, but we dropped anchor in about 7m/25’ and sat in 12m/40’ with 35m/100’ of chain and ample swinging room in all directions. You’re below the big cliff face and the reefs at the bay’s entrance provide good protection there, which proved handy in 20-25 knot overnight squalls. You can land a dingy – take oars, it’s too shallow for even the outboard – on the north shore of the bay (100m away) from where it’s an easy ten-minute walk to the Marae. So, no shops/services in Hotopuu Bay and one closed (permanently?) snack bar near the church in Opoa. – Moon Rebel

July 2010: 16-50.7155 / 151-22.052W. Our first anchorage. – Nakia

July 2011: 16.49.765 S / 151-21.227 W. Just north of Passe Teavamoa, across the channel from marae Taputapuatea in 12 feet of water, sandy bottom. The marae is very large and has extensive signage explaining the historical and religious details of the site in English. We were lucky, and visited the site during a governmental holiday and were treated to local festivities. – Yolo
7.8.1.1  Cruiser Reports:

July 2010: After we got cleaned up from the passage, some kids on a paddle boat came out to give us some little fingerling fish they had caught in a net. They shared some of their fried fish patties, bananas, and a perfumey local apple with us and delighted in feeding Ziggy pieces of their fish cakes. The two pre-schoolers eventually couldn't resist climbing aboard while their older brothers and sister kept an eye on them from the paddle boat. Finally, it was time for them to leave and I dug out a ball to give to the youngest boy who was in tears when he realized the fun was over.

Except for dogs barking overnight and the ever-present roosters crowing at dawn, we spent a quiet night all by ourselves in the anchorage. While I did my exercises up on deck the next morning I watched a woman in a small skiff setting traps with her young son; a man working a small fishing net from chest high in the water at the head of the bay; a scooter stop at one of the houses to give someone else a ride to work; a kid riding a bicycle in circles behind his house; and I could hear the clinking of dishes and cutlery as breakfast was prepared. All this activity and it wasn't even 7 AM! – Nakia

7.8.2  Isle Oatara

7.8.2.1  Anchorages and Moorings

May 2019: (1.5 mile east of Hotopuu Bay): We’d had anchoring here ‘highly recommended’ by friends, but arrived to find the sand bank only 2.4m\8’ deep wherever we nosed onto it; too shallow for comfort with our 6’ draft, but OK for catamarans and others with a foot less than ours. We could’ve anchored just off the sand bank, but it shelved steeply and we were quickly back in 30m/100’. – Moon Rebel

7.8.3  Ile Iriru

7.8.3.1  Anchorages and Moorings

May 2019: 16-47.99S / 151-22.90W. We found good holding and few bommies on the marked shoal just south of the islet. Dropped the hook in 7m/25’ and dropped back into 12m/40’, ample swinging room with 35m/120’ chain; squalls to 25 knots and no problems. – Moon Rebel

7.8.4  Ile Taoru

7.8.4.1  Anchorages and Moorings

May 2019: 16-44.83S / 151-25.56W. 12m/40’ over what sounds like rocks and coral rubble, a bit of chain-noise, but the anchor dug/held immediately and came up without problem too.). As I swam along the shore, I was dissuaded from sitting on one of the tiny strips of sand by two big black barking dogs who came out to greet me. The motu is the private reserve of Pension Manava, but even in so remote and uninhabited a place we woke to roosters crowing the next morning. We only found one live coral head complete with three big anemones, anemonefish and lionfish close to shore and it was too rough to snorkel either side of the pass (the motu actually sits in the middle of the pass). Plus, the mosquitoes ensured we wouldn't spend another night there. – Nakia

16-44.75S / 151-25.55W. On our second visit we anchored 150m further north, off the islets NW corner. We found clean sand in 8.5m/30’ depth – definitely the better spot. We never saw anyone on the island on either visit, though there were definitely a couple of unfriendly dogs that we saw chase-off a couple of kayakers and later two swimmers who tried to land; the dogs didn’t seem to mind getting wet in their pursuit, so don’t venture too close. – Moon Rebel

July 2010: 16-44.728S / 151-25.506W. Ideally, it’s a one or two boat anchorage so we stern tied Nakia and Orca to trees on shore. Tired of what I’ve begun calling "dark water" where we can't see the bottom, we
hopped across the lagoon to **Motu Taoru** (just inside the Teavapiti Pass) where Dilan and Gloria Maris were already anchored and Orca was right behind us. – Yolo

### 7.8.5 Point Tampapua

#### 7.8.5.1 Anchorages and Moorings

**July 2011:** 16.51.893 S / 151-20.994 W. Basically in the middle of nowhere. After leaving the channel we eased over the sand shelf about a hundred feet, dropped the anchor in 11 feet of water, on pure white sand, and then played our our anchor chain. Welcome to paradise...break out the rum...no street traffic, boat traffic, dogs, chickens, construction equipment, jet skis, etc. – Yolo

### 7.8.6 Ile Tipaemaou

#### 7.8.6.1 Anchorages and Moorings

**July 2019:** This is a very secluded anchorage. We did not see any other boats while we were here for several days. It is near the pearl shack “Perles d’O” – Sugar Shack.

### 7.8.7 Cruiser Reports

**July 2011:** We approached the southeast coast of Raiatea in 20+ knot winds and 2.5-meter seas from the south. We made our way through Passe Teavamoa without any issues. We were seeking an anchorage site near the marae Taputapuatea, considered “the father of all other sacred sites” in Polynesia. Taputapuatea is located slightly north and west of the pass.

We explored the head of Baie Opoa first, yet the water depths went from about 100 feet to near zero in a matter of a few feet. Our C-Map NT+ chips did not note accurate depths at the head of the bay. At the east end of the bay are several shallow (12 to 20 foot) deep pinnacles. One was being used as an anchor site by a monohull. Another was covered with fishing buoys, and we tried to use the third one. The numerous coral heads and broken coral bottom made us rethink the anchorage, lift our anchor, and move on.

Next, we motored south to Baie Hotopuu. Again, the center of the bay was very deep and the sides very shallow and narrow. At the entrance of Baie Hotopuu near the south side (Point Puutarape) our electronic chart noted a large area of 16-foot-deep water. When we passed through this area we observed a few small sandy spots and numerous coral heads, some of which were less than four feet from the surface! -- Yolo

### 7.9 West Coast Anchorages

#### 7.9.1 Baie Ereea

#### 7.9.1.1 Anchorages and Moorings

**July 2010:** 16-50.014S / 151-29.105W. In the process of dropping our anchor we went aground on a raised area of the sandy bottom. But some reverse thrust broke us loose and John reset the anchor in a better position. We are anchored in even shallower water here than we were at Nao Nao and the depth sounder alarm went off while we were watching a movie after dinner. We sort of ignored it until finally we both looked up at the unmistakable feel of the keel bumping the bottom. John let me finish the movie while he went out into the windy night to set a kedge anchor off the bow to keep us off the shallow spot. It wasn't a very peaceful night as we were hit by big gusts of wind in between the lulls, but we didn't hit bottom again. – Nakia

#### 7.9.1.2 Provisions

**July 2010:** We managed to stock up on eggs and baguettes at the little store in Baie Ereea before we left. We took the dinghy over to a ramp-like opening in the wall at the covered football (soccer) court and it was easy enough for John to land me while he waited in the dinghy. I walked to the road, took a right and the store was

Page 119
only a block away on the left. They apparently have two baguette deliveries so if you don't feel like getting up at 0600, you can go in at 2:30 PM for fresh bread. – Nakia

7.9.1.3 Cruiser Report

July 2010: With high winds in the forecast for the next few days we thought it would be prudent to find a less exposed anchorage than Nao Nao to wait out the fronts. We called our friends on Gloria Maris to see if they were still where we'd left them and they gave thumbs up to an anchorage inside Passe Tetuatiare back up the west side of the island. So we had a great downwind sail and even sailed out of Passe Punaeroa (look Ma, no hands!).

Kim warned us that someone in a skiff might come out to chase us off from anchoring so we weren't surprised when we were met by first a woman in a skiff from Ile Tiano, followed shortly after by a man in a bright purple boat from Baie Ereea. They were very worried that we might drop our anchor over cables carrying electricity and water out to the privately owned motu. They wanted us to anchor in deep water NE of the northern motu (Ile Horea), but we explained that the other two boats were our friends and we wanted to go talk to them. When we got to very shallow water south of Gloria Maris we asked Gaston (the man; both the locals were wearing Motu Tiano "staff" shirts) if this spot would be okay with him, and he was fine with it. We assume they never dreamed we'd come so far into the shallows of the small boat channel, far from where the cables are laid. We think they were also worried about how many more boats might be coming in after us! – Nakia

7.9.2 Baie Faafau

7.9.2.1 Anchorages and Moorings

Aug. 2010: 16-44.681S /151-29.662W. Near Faafau, not really in baie Faafau. Opposite Pte Tenape near Baie Faafau : We made an unplanned stop here on our way to Tahaa—due to rain and bad conditions. We nosed along the edge of the sand on the reef side until we found a spot with few coral heads, and dropped anchor in 40' of water on the sandy slope. We figured the anchor couldn't drag uphill and so we didn't mind ending up on top of the sandy shelf with 9-12' under our keel. – Nakia

7.9.3 Toamaro

7.9.3.1 Anchorages and Moorings

June 2019: We anchored on the east side of the channel in 10 meters of water with a sandy bottom. It was really lovely and breezy. We only stayed for one night, but found it to be a pretty place to visit. – Sugar Shack

July 2011: Avoid SW Corner. We have generally had good success using the Guide to Navigation and Tourism in French Polynesia, which is now out of print but still available if you persist. However, their description of the anchorage off of Toamaro Islet on the southwest corner of Raiatea we found to be incorrect. They describe it as an 'excellent anchorage' but advise that you arrive in the daytime to select your spot (duh).

We did select a spot to drop our 30-kilo Bruce anchor that was free from coral in about four meters of water. I paid out about twenty meters of chain, backed down at about three-quarters throttle for a solid four minutes, making sure we had a good set as we always do. My daughter, Corie, snorkeled over the anchor and reported that it was well-set. The wind was fairly light out of the east at about ten knots but the current was strong enough from the west that Rutea's bow was pointed that direction despite the wind. As the wind increased to fifteen to eighteen knots, Rutea's attitude didn't change. Since we hadn't moved since we dropped anchor in the early afternoon, I went to bed confident that we were secure for the night. At about 0100 hours, I woke and was watching the depth read out that we have in our cabin (which reports depth of water under the keel): eight feet, nine feet (okay with me), twelve feet (huh?), eighty feet! Yes, the sand shelf drops off that fast.

I can't remember the last time we had our anchor drag - it's been years - but we got ourselves organized quickly and proceeded to re-anchor in the pitch-black morning without incident. We maintained an anchor
watch until dawn when we pulled up our anchor and left through the Toamaro Pass. In retrospect, I don’t know what I’d do differently nor can I understand why our anchor didn’t hold but I think it’s safe to say that it had something to do with the unusually strong current.

I would recommend that cruisers avoid using this as an overnight anchorage.

*Note: This incident occurred during a period of relatively light wind, but very high swell, which seems to cause ‘high current’ in many reef anchorages around the Societies. Soggy Paws experienced the same ‘wow, where did this current come from?’ in a different place on the same night.* – Rutea

8 Taha’a

Moorings are available in several of the bays and are locally owned. Inquire about availability.

Several villages have small stores, but most of the locals do their shopping in Uturoa, Raiatea.

8.1 South Coast of Taha’a

8.1.1 Baie Apu – Taravana Yacht Club

8.1.1.1 Anchorages and Moorings

**May 2019:** Lots of moorings in the SE corner of the bay – no idea whose, or what if any charges – mostly occupied by what appear to be long-term, laid-up boats. There’s plenty of space to anchor either, but it’s 30m/100’+ deep and when we ventured further north to check out the area SE of the small islet (Toapuhi?) which is charted as slightly shallower, we found depths going rapidly from 26m/90’ to <2m/6’ in short order. Possibly somewhere in the head of the bay (we never looked) but otherwise it’s either a mooring or the choice of a deep or no swinging room anchorage. – Moon Rebel

**Sept. 2011:** We grabbed a mooring ball that was marked “Buggy Dive”. The moorings were newly installed (2011) and they were checking them the day we pulled in. Take the dinghy to the long wooden dock to the left of the yacht club. When you walk to the road, Buggy Dive is to the left and the pearl farm is to the right. We checked with Buggy Dive and they said that you could have the mooring for free if you rented a buggy, did a dive, or visited the Pearl Farm. We stayed 4 nights on the mooring ball. The yacht club is closed, but there are still moorings associated with it, yellow ones. Not sure of the maintenance schedule for them. You can’t land at the yacht club dock, tabu sign, and the American caretaker says they closed the yacht club to do some improvements but have no plan. – Moondance

**Aug. 2011:** When we were in Tahaa (second week of August), the well-constructed TYC moorings were all still in place, and Richard was still charging 2000 CFP per night for their use. On the second day we were moored there, he came by personally in his boat to collect payment. However, he is considering removing the moorings because of the hassle of upkeep and the associated liability, so future cruisers may find them missing. That’s too bad, because the bay is very deep for anchoring, about 100’. – Eden

**Aug. 2010:** Baie Apu is where the Taravana Yacht Club is located. Although we had heard wonderful things about Richard and the YC dinners, we were reluctant to spend the money for a mooring. There were a few boats anchored near the mooring field but we weren’t comfortable anchoring in 90’+ of water. We even nosed all the way in behind Ile Toapuhi - which would have been a long dinghy ride from the YC - but never found anything less than 90’. Several of our friends recommended the Tuesday YC buffet and show, but we’ll save the $60 per person for something else. Not finding any viable anchorage at Taravana Yacht Club, we continued on to Ile Mahaea near Passe Toahotu to anchor in about 8’ of water over a sandy shelf near a few catamarans. – Nakia
July 2010: The yacht club has a dozen moorings and caters to the yachties—a wonderful service as the anchorage there is 112 ft deep, and would make for an impossible place to anchor. Nice bay and very protected which was great when the winds were blowing 30-35. – Visions of Johanna

8.1.1.2  Provisions

Sept. 2011: A small magazin, a white building with green and white awning, just on the other side of the motu in the bay - a dinghy ride away. – Moondance

Aug. 2011: Just across the street from the pearl farm entrance and east a couple hundred yards is a white warehouse that houses a commercial baguette bakery. They will sell individual baguettes to cruisers for the usual 50 CFP or so. However, we found these baguettes to have thin crispy skins and airy, not chewy, interiors - the least appealing loaves we found in all of FP. – Eden

8.1.1.3  Activities

Pearl Farms

Sept. 2011: The Pearl Farm was very interesting.  If you visit before noon on Monday - Friday you can see them harvest the pearls from the oysters.  Of course, they would like you to buy something, but not necessary. Moondance

Aug. 2011: While we were in Baie Apu, the owner of the Ferme Perlière CHAMPON pearl farm dropped by in her dinghy and invited us to her shop. The shop is located just east of the TYC property. As far as we know she does not have her own pier; we used the TYC pier despite the "Access Interdite" and "Tabu" signs because Richard had previously invited us ashore. If the TYC pier is not available, there is a private pier farther north in the bay that we saw some cruisers tied their dinghies to; we don't know its status. Landing there would require a 1/4 mile walk south on the coast road. CHAMPON had some nice pearls but prices were high compared to elsewhere. – Eden

Vanilla Plantation

July 2010: Yesterday we walked (in the rain) up to a vanilla plantation to see how they process the vanilla. 2/3 of the So Pacific's vanilla comes from Tahaa and probably 90% of the world's vanilla comes from the South Pacific. It is quite a labor-intensive process. Once the beans are picked, they are washed and dried over a period of 4 months. Then by hand they are straightened and sorted by size. Have not done much swimming besides cleaning the bottom of the boat as all the rain has made the water pretty murky. – Visions of Johanna

8.1.1.4  Cruiser Reports

Aug. 2011: Cruisers should be aware that the Taravana Yacht Club is closed. No more services, dinners, or dance shows. According to Richard, he and his partner decided to shut down for an extended but undetermined period in order to make needed upgrades. Hopefully they will open again but apparently the 2011 season at least is done.

There was incredible fish activity around our boat here, the most we have seen in any anchorage. Thousands of small fry schooled under our boat, which in turn attracted large groups of trumpetfish and 3'-4' free-swimming sharksuckers. Attacking in groups of three or four, small tuna or jacks -- they were too fast to identify -- constantly charged through the shoal of fry, leaping clear of the water with a splash. – Eden

July 2010: We spent 4 nights at the "Taravana Yacht Club" and will probably go back there tomorrow to have a 4th of July celebration. Richard the owner is originally from the Bay Area of California, but has been in the South Pacific for 40 years. He had a charter business out of Bora Bora until a year or so ago when he bought the Yacht Club.

The night we got there they had a buffet and dance performance. It was both tasty food and a wonderful night of local entertainment. This group was very young/local teenagers from a few neighboring towns on Tahaa.
They were awesome! Girls were beautiful and move those hips and fannies in the most unusual way. Their arms flow like willows and the rest of their upper bodies stay perfectly immobile. The young men (if you can call an 11-year-old boy that) did not dance quite so nicely but when they did the fire dance it took our breaths away. – Visions of Johanna

8.1.1.5 Cruiser Report

Aug. 2011: We took the dinghy from Baie Apu up to Baie Hurepiti -- a fairly long ride because swell and water taxi wakes limited our speed -- to check out the Sophie Boutique and inquire into the Plantier plantation tour. Near the head of the bay on the right (south) is the dock for Sophie’s Boutique. Sophie lives on the lovely and well-manicured property and has a nice variety of handicrafts for sale in her shop, included hand-painted shirts and pearl jewelry. Sophie is French but speaks English well. – Eden

8.2 West Coast of Taha’a

8.2.1 Coral Gardens - Tautau

July 2019: This anchorage is next to the Taha’a Pearl Resort. We anchored to the left of the resort (further away from the coral gardens and other boats) on the shelf in 2 meters of water. It was sandy and can be tricky to get solid holding. Be sure to go a full boat length over the shelf before dropping the hook as the wind shifts and you don’t want to drag your anchor off the shelf. The anchorage right in front of the coral gardens gets very crowded with charter boats. – Sugar Shack

May 2019: 16-36.18S / 151-33.42W. We anchored in 8m/27’ just off the shallow sand shelf. A few rocks and bommies around – there looked to be fewer further south but the holding was good. Through the night the wind turned well north of east, so by morning we were hanging off the shallows in a F4 and a hefty chop coming down the bay, no problems, but uncomfortable and disconcerting, we lifted anchor and went in search of better shelter on the Taha’a shore. – Moon Rebel

April 2019: 16-36.967S / 151-33.735W. there are sandbars to both the north and south of the coral garden where you can anchor. We preferred the south side, and anchored in 8 feet of water. No bommies, good holding, more room on the south side than the north. There was a bit of a fetch at both anchorages, so we hobby-horsed in 15-20 knot winds, but it was not uncomfortable and we held securely. Great view of Bora Bora’s silhouette and the sunset.

Love Here Pearl Farm folks are very hospitable and not pushy. It is a nice place to dinghy to. They advertise two moorings for sailboats but there is only one mooring, and it may not be suitable for larger boats. The mooring line is thin and synthetic and there is no real loop. However, we did just fine on it in a 15,000-pound boat. The dock outside is reserved for the power boats who bring customers; sailboats are turned away. Be aware of the large pearl farm with dozens of floats between the Love Here Pearl Farm and the Coral Garden. Don’t meander too far away from shore on that stretch. The floats may be hard to see at night. They are in the reef side of the lagoon, but in deep water. – Cool Change

Aug. 2011: A cruiser on a cat docked at the yacht club recommended that we try snorkeling in the channels of the coral garden just north of the resort at Ile Tautau. We took the boat there but were unable to find a place to anchor comfortably. The bottom shoals very rapidly from 30’ to 6' or less, and there is only a narrow strip of sand on which to drop an anchor. North of the resort at least, the deeper (25’-40’) water is wall to wall coral, with no sandy spots seen. Shallow draft boats or cats might be fine, but we gave up after circling for half an hour. We considered anchoring in Baie Tapuamu and dinghying across the pass but we didn’t want to get into Bora Bora too late so we headed out through Passe Paipai. – Eden

Aug. 2010: 16-36.302S / 151-33.488W. It was calm enough for us to spend a couple of nights at Tautau. During the day it was overrun by charter and tour boats, but by evening we usually had the anchorage all to ourselves. Later we revisited Tautau and instead of anchoring off the reef in front of the coral garden, we
opted for the sandy shallow area to the south of the motu. We think this is the nicest spot for watching Bora Bora’s impressive profile in the sunset, but it can get very choppy if the wind is up. – Nakia

8.2.1.1 General Services

8.2.1.2 Wifi / Internet

July 2019: We stopped in to the Taha’a Pearl Resort for a drink and got the wifi password. It reaches the anchorage and is a strong, solid signal. – Sugar Shack

8.2.1.3 Activities

Snorkeling

June 2019: June 2019: The Coral Gardens is one of our very favorite places to snorkel. Take your dinghy past the resort and up to the floats where you can tie it off. Wade in the water to shore (on right, not the Pearl Resort) and walk toward the ocean. There is a nice path where you can walk into the Coral Gardens without damaging coral. Most likely there will be a strong current ripping through here that will allow you to do a fun drift snorkel while enjoying the colorful fish and corals. We did this 4 times over the course of several months. Only once did we have a calm day where we could swim up and down the river. Bring water shoes as the beach walk can be hard on your feet. Don’t forget your camera as there is lots to capture here. – Sugar Shack

April 2019: The Coral Garden: we love this place. It may be inaptly named, because the coral is not in great shape, but the abundance of fish is overwhelming. It really is like swimming in a fish tank. We do it over and over again. This year, oddly, it seemed deeper than last year, which was nice. – Cool Change

2017: We were not too impressed with the famous coral garden drift snorkel we had heard so much about in between the motus off the NW coast of Tahaa. Found it to be a tricky spot to anchor too, with broken coral bottom and then a steep drop off. – Consensus

2012: The big attraction is the "coral river" across the lagoon between the large motu to the south and the small motu to the north at about 16-36.33N / 151-33.85W. Leave the dinghy anchored on the spit to the N (frequented by friendly locals on the weekends) and either a) walk west on the north motu (follow the trail) almost to the ocean, then wade into the "river" and you’ll find a channel in which you can drift east back to your dinghy, or b) swim west from your anchored dinghy. The water gets churned up a bit when the tour boats are there, too many people walking through the area. Seems like they come in the morning, Fay’s preferred time was roughly 12-2. – New Morning

Aug. 2010: We snorkeled it twice and found it to be best at the end nearest the reef where the water is clearer and it’s somewhat less trafficked. We were appalled to see tourists being led by local guides over the top of the very shallow, but very alive, coral. Everyone wore shoes - from crocs, to jellies, to flip flops - and I saw broken coral in the deeper channel through which they swim out.

Both times we snorkeled I found a crown of thorns sea star busily eating the coral. John knocked it off the coral and then got it to attach to a big piece of rock that he could hold without touching the poisonous animal. We were close enough to the rocky shore that he could take it high above the waterline to die. We found the first one melted into a slimy mass overrun by hermit crabs and flies the next day. So that was our good deed for the coral garden. – Nakia

8.2.1.4 Cruiser Reports

June 2019: Swing in to the Taha’a Pearl Resort for lunch, dinner, or drinks. They are very friendly and willing to share their wifi signal which is great. We took the dinghy across the way to Tapuamu and explored the small village. – Sugar Shack

Aug. 2010: JW’s guide to French Polynesia is the only source that talks in specific terms about the coral garden at this motu, most of which is a private resort complete with thatched huts out over the water. – Nakia
8.2.2  *Baie Tapuamu*

8.2.2.1  *Anchorages and Moorings*

May 2019: Is directly across from the Coral Gardens and two previous posts suggest there’s anchorage on the bay’s north side, though one suggests 70’ and the other 20’? Whoever managed the latter’s a braver man than me: We found that depths everywhere went rapidly from >20m to <2m so no swinging room in less than 70’; no idea what the bottom’s like, we gave up and went elsewhere.

We tried on the shoal a mile or so south of Tapuamu (NW of the red post near Baie Utuone, but found little swinging room and lots of rocks on the bottom. – Moon Rebel

2012: 16-36.90S / 151-32.75W. This bay is a great anchorage. We’re in about 80’ of water, good holding, just west of a large moored derelict yacht. We stay on the north side to avoid the ships which come in and out of the dock, much more frequently than we would have thought (and late night!). There is a ferry landing behind the dock, not obvious from this perspective. Boats come in and "disappear" behind the dock. – New Morning

2012: You can anchor in the south or north east of this motu. The north side is really only suitable for day anchoring whilst the south could be used for overnight in good conditions. Follow the inner edge of the reef until around 150 - 200m from the last bungalows, then enter on the shelf slowly and drop the anchor in 2 - 3m of sandy ground which offers good holding. – DYC

Aug. 2010: 16-36.850S / 151-32.700W. We anchored in 75' next to the road on the north side of the bay. – Nakia

8.2.2.2  *Yachtsmen Services*

8.2.2.2.1  Fuel (Diesel and Gasoline)

June 2019: There is a fuel station just beyond the ferry/boat dock. You cannot bring the “big boat” but you can bring your dinghy with jerry cans for fill up. It is a short walk to the fuel station. – Sugar Shack

8.2.2.2  Water

Aug. 2010: The next day we went back in to ask about filling our water jugs and were directed to a small tap on the side of gas station wall which we had missed in our search for water the day before. John went back to Nakia for a longer length of hose and we were then able to fill all our jugs without taking them out of the dinghy (which is always a good thing). We topped our tanks and started a load of laundry soaking before raising anchor and motoring all of one mile back across to the Motu Tautau. – Nakia

8.2.2.3  *General Services*

8.2.2.3.1  Medical

Dentist.  Oct. 2019: Docteur Daniel Carnio, Chirurgien-Dentiste, Diplome de la faculté de Nancy, Immeuble Air Tahiti, Faa’a B.P. 61763, Tel. 4082 2228 (recommendation from Dentist Dr Guirado, André; Ua Pou, Marquesas). – Taitonga

8.2.2.4  *Provisions*

June 2019: There is a small market at the fuel station (near the ferry/boat dock) and another slightly bigger store across the street. No fresh produce or baked goods. – Sugar Shack

2017: There was a big Chinese supermarket in the town of Patio, but it didn’t have fresh veg. – Consensus
8.2.2.5 Activities

2017: We were able to take a tour to the vanilla plantation/house of Teva and Linda. They had pearls, jewelry, and vanilla in all variations available at a shop at their home. It was a great tour of the island and really interesting to learn about the vanilla making process! Makes you understand why it is so expensive to buy back home! – Consensus

8.2.2.6 Cruiser Reports

2017: Another anchorage in Taha’a was the old yacht club. There were moorings and a beachy restaurant that looked like fun, but they were closed when we got there. A short walk away was a small bakery and a pearl shop. The beautiful beaches nearby and on the island off the shore were private unfortunately! -- Consensus

Aug. 2010: This is the main port of Tahaa where the supply ships load/unload cargo. But you wouldn’t know it by the sleepy little village. Behind the ship quay there is an enclosed small boat basin, a gas station, and a small store with groceries, fresh baguettes, and sundries. – Nakia

8.2.3 Hurepiti

8.2.3.1 Anchorage and Moorings

July 2019: Favor right side of bay as you enter and down the bay’s coast. We failed to reserve a mooring ball when we made our tour reservations. When we arrived all four of the moorings were taken. We anchored in front of the moorings in 18 meters of water. Good holding, but watch the reef. There are 4 moorings toward the end of the bay. Two belong to Vanilla Tours Taha’a. If you take a tour with them you get a free mooring the day before, day of, and day after the tour. You must notify them ahead of time and make a reservation. Prior to tying up to the buoys call Sophie on 65 62 56 or Alain Plantier on VHF 9 or phone 65 62 46 and ask permission. – Sugar Shack

May 2019: 16°38.777S / 161°31.50W. We found good anchorage on the north side of the bay, dropped 35m/120’ in 12m/40’ depths, then dropped back into 18m/60’, there was a little scraping/graunching on the rocks as we backed down, but no noises thereafter and the anchor came up easily/cleanly the following morning; we had squalls to 25+ knots too, so no complaints about the holding either. Never ventured ashore, so don’t know what if anything’s there. There are several buoys owned/maintained/rented by an Island Tour firm on the south side of the bay – these buoys are ‘free’ if at least four of you sign-up for the $60 half-day tour. – Moon Rebel

2012: This is a lovely bay with excellent shelter in all but westerly winds. There are numerous coral shoals along the northern side of this bay and as the water is not too clear, it’s difficult to see the coral patches. Favor the south side which is clear of danger until the middle of the bay. Anchor in 20m of good holding grounds. There are 2 moorings available for Sophie Boutique clients and 2 for Vanilla Tour clients. Prior to tying up to the buoys call Sophie on 65 62 56 or Alain Plantier on VHF 9 or phone 65 62 46 and ask permission. – DYC

Aug. 2011: We took the dinghy from Baie Apu up to Baie Hurepiti. We found Hurepiti to be very windy in east winds, where Apu was quite calm. There is a large area of shoal water on the left (north) side of the bay as you are coming in, so it’s important to favor the south side. – Eden

July 2011: 16°38.652S / 151°31.069W. There is a small sand spit with 11 feet of water. This small location has a reef to the north of it and 60+ feet of water on the other three sides. It is common for strong winds to sweep down the valley/bay and we sustained 32 knot winds with no problem at this anchorage. We anchored in Hurepiti Bay which is very long and provides good protection from all directions except the west. This bay is also a great jumping off point for Bora Bora since the western pass through the reef, Passe Paipai, is at the mouth of the bay. We like to anchor in water less than 30 feet deep, just in case we have to free dive on our anchor.
At the head of Hurepiti Bay you will see a 30-foot day sailing catamaran. This catamaran is owned by Alain Plantier and is on a mooring. There are also several other moorings near his catamaran, which are available to cruisers on a first come first serve basis. Alain and Cristina would appreciate your business if you use one of their moorings. The water in this area is about 60 feet deep.

16.38.6 S / 151.31.3 W. According to Alain, another anchorage in shallow water. He also noted that all the deep anchorages in Hurepiti Bay were good holding in mud and/or sand. – Yolo

Aug. 2010: 16-38.634S / 151-30.980W. Mooring location. There were no other boats in the bay. We verified that two of the moorings are clearly marked as being reserved for the Boutique and two are less clearly marked for the Vanilla Tour. Since no one had come out to chase us off we weren't too concerned about being on a mooring without a reservation until late in the day when three charter boats arrived one after another. The first boat took its passengers to the boutique dock and John zipped in to speak to Sophie and a charter crew member who were now on the dock. We could stay on our mooring for the night even though it had been reserved for their boat and we could wait until morning to pay a visit ashore. – Nakia

8.2.3.2 General Services

8.2.3.2.1 Wifi / Internet

July 2019: When you book a tour with Vanilla Tours Taha’a, you get access to their dock and really good wifi. You can access the internet from the anchorage as well. – Sugar Shack

8.2.3.3 Activities

Tours

July 2019: We took a Vanilla Tour in Hurepiti with Vanilla Tours Taha’a (+689 87 35 86 39) with Noah, Christina and Alain. It is excellent tour of the island, 2-vanilla plantations, distillery, and more! He explains the history and culture of the island and stops to show you some cool things with plants and flowers. $60/pp for half day and $90/pp full day. If you take a tour with him you can use their mooring balls at no cost and use their internet at their dock. – Sugar Shack

2012: This is an Ethno botanical excursion by 4WD given by Alain & Cristina Plantier. Should you wish to do the tour, you will need to book in advance and the tour is for a minimum of 4 people. The tour includes a walk through their beautifully kept garden with the vanilla plantation under the shade of tropical trees. The whole process of vanilla is explained and you will appreciate the price of vanilla after this! The second part of the tour takes you in the 4WD to a view point overlooking the stunning bays. Alain will also explain the traditional uses of native plants found in the area. Alain Plantier on VHF 9 or phone 65 62 46. – DYC

Aug. 2010: Our Bonnette guide book highly recommends the Vanilla Tour offered by Alain Plantier in Baie Hurepiti. This is a very deep bay with four mooring buoys at its head. We weren't certain of where the Plantier home was and we picked up a mooring in front of the clearly signed dock for "Sophie Boutique" thinking that perhaps that was the place (our guide book is over 10 years old). – Nakia

July 2011: We had a brief sail from Uturoa, the main village on Raiatea to the west side of Tahaa. We were seeking a tour of a vanilla farm on the “Vanilla Island.” Several of our land guides stated that the epicenter of vanilla production was south of the village of Tiva and in the Baie de Hurepiti valley.

South of this location is a residential dock, a sign that states “Vanilla Tours”, and a red motor boat on a covered hoist. This dock is owned by Alain and Cristina Plantier, former cruisers from France. Alain and his wife own Vanilla Tours. Alain noted that all cruisers are welcome to use their dock as a dinghy dock. After tying up, follow the patio stone walkway pass their home (several buildings), over a small wood bridge, up the concrete driveway, to the main black top road. Civilization is to the left, and a view of the reef and ocean is to the right. The Plantiers do NOT give vanilla farm tours.
However, if you want to make an advanced reservation and pay them 5,500 CF per person (minimum of four people), Alain will give you an island tour which will last about 4.5 hours in his four-wheel drive truck. According to Alain most of the vanilla farms on Tahaa have sold out to residential development and the tourist board continues with the vanilla theme despite the sharp decline. – Yolo

### 8.2.3.4 Cruiser Reports

**2012: Sophie Boutique:** Sophie’s dock is marked with 2 flags and you will be welcomed to her boutique which offers a selection of lovely gifts and jewelry. Sophie also offers ice, water on the dock, bicycle rental and there is access to the road if you want to have a walk around. – DYC

**Aug. 2010:** So, it finally became clear to us that no cruising boats would have reason to stop at what is essentially a tourist place. The charter boats come in to shop for souvenirs or to take a tour, with the bonus of having an overnight mooring.

The next morning, we made a brief visit to the boutique (which had a lovely variety of expensive gifts) where we found a brochure for the Vanilla Tour company. The 2009 rate sheet listed a four-hour island tour at 5500 CFP per person. We walked down the road a bit and decided not to stop in at the Plantier place to inquire about 2010 prices since we felt it was already higher than we wanted to pay. – Nakia

### 8.2.4 Ilot Tautau

**July 2019:** Avg. 6 meters with sandy bottom. This is a really beautiful anchorage with very few boats. It has lovely views of Bora Bora. – Sugar Shack

### 8.3 North Coast of Taha’a

#### 8.3.1 Baie Pueheru

##### 8.3.1.1 Anchorages and Moorings

**Aug. 2010:** 16-35.220S / 151-31.605W. We had originally planned to anchor at the main town of Patio at the north end of Tahaa, but the wind had cranked up and we backtracked a little to Baie Pueheru for much better protection. – Nakia

##### 8.3.1.2 Cruiser Report

**Aug. 2010:** Kim and I went ashore in the afternoon and ended up walking to the store at Murifenua without realizing that it was the same place John had gone for propane. The Chinese woman said they had lived there for 20 years and their children also had houses in the village. It is a very nice store but their baguettes come from an in-house bakery and are probably the toughest we've had even when fresh.

The next morning the four of us walked about four kilometers to Patio where there is a post office, a computer store, several small restaurants, and at least two stores. We were excited to find that the second store had nice big loaves of French bread. They were really nothing more than an overgrown baguette, but they were nice and crusty on the outside and wonderfully soft on the inside. And when you see nothing but baguettes for months on end any variation in the form is a novelty. – Nakia

#### 8.3.2 Puheru

##### 8.3.2.1 Anchorages and Moorings

**2008:** 16-35.261S / 151-31.598W. Baie Puheru on the NW of Tahaa offered a tranquil anchorage when strong SE winds came in, the further out you were the more bullets you got. Right in the bay the coral shelf drops off to 40 feet and there is a mud bottom almost immediately. We anchored close off the remains of the old jetty in 43ft and did not venture ashore although it looked possible. – Mr. John
8.4 East Cost of Taha’a

8.4.1 Motu Mahaea

8.4.1.1 Anchorages and Moorings

May 2019: Definitely our favourite spot around Tahaa we anchored perhaps 5-600m NNW of the Motu in around 7m of water, pick your spot, there’s room for everyone; there are a few bommies but they’re easily seen and the worst avoided, many of the catamarans went substantially further east fully onto the sand shelf – it was around 2.2m/7-8’ in the couple of spots that we tried to nose on. If like us you do draw 1.8m/6’, then give yourself room to turn 360* and remain clear of the shelf, the wind switched to the west on several nights whilst we were there. No services or internet. – Moon rebel

8.4.2 Ile Toahotu

8.4.2.1 Anchorages and Moorings

July 2019: We entered the pass and turned right to find an anchoring spot. Pretty anchorage with a good, sandy bottom. – Sugar Shack

May 2019: 16-39.25S / 151-25.9W. to the SW of this motu at the south side of the pass. Depths/conditions appear similar to those north of Manaea, but we didn’t stay long enough to confirm as a pirogue arrived to chase us off before the anchor had even set. This we were advised was an area ‘reserved for fishing’ and a ‘no anchoring zone’ according to the eager citizen in his pirogue. When out of interest I enquired at the Utoroa Gendarmerie, my suspicion that the ‘fishing area’ guardian just didn’t want any yacht’s spoiling the view from ‘his’ island was confirmed. There’s similar good anchoring area a further SW still –near the west cardinal mark – though I’ve no idea if this too falls within the ‘reserved for fishing/no anchoring zone’; what the heck, it’s not worth arguing over. – Moon Rebel

8.4.3 Ile Mahaea (near Toahotu)

8.4.3.1 Anchorages and Moorings

July 2019: This anchorage is small, but there is good holding and it is very breezy. Pretty spot. – Sugar Shack

Aug. 2010: 16-38.380S / 151-25.670W. Not finding any viable anchorage at Taravana Yacht Club, we continued on east to Ile Mahaea near Passe Toahotu to anchor in about 8’ of water over a sandy shelf near a few catamarans. We had an uninteresting snorkel out near the reef. – Nakia

2011: 16°38’.480S / 151°25’.575W. This anchorage is pretty and offers good holding in 2m of water.

8.4.3.2 Activities

2011: The motus are private but snorkeling on the reef and the crystal-clear water makes this place paradise with a wow factor! Keep a good anchoring distance from the motu as the area has lots of coral heads. -- DYC

Aug. 2010. Our second day there we drift snorkeled the pass where there was mostly dead coral and no big fish, but we did see a nice variety of colorful eels. John took the dinghy back to Nakia so I could swim the rest of the way by myself over a shallow sandy bottom. I stopped to watch a pretty little nudibranch and eventually counted six of them in the general vicinity. I had passed over an old conch shell, but when I turned back to look at it again there was a tiny octopus crawling out from under it. It came most of the way out of its home, holding onto the outside of the shell with three tentacles. It's always amazing to me that there's so much to see in an otherwise barren looking area. – Nakia
8.4.4 Haamene Bay

8.4.4.1 Anchorages and Moorings

Aug. 2013: We picked up a mooring in front of the Hibiscus restaurant. The restaurant is located on the north side of the bay, about a third of the way in. “Hibiscus” is painted onto the roof, facing the water, so you’ll know it when you see it. – Alegria

Sept. 2011: We grabbed another mooring ball at the Hibiscus restaurant. We tried to hail them on channel 68, but no answer, so we went ashore. – Moondance

July 2011: Though there were plenty of (free, we think) moorings available in front of the Hibiscus Hotel and Restaurant as we came in the bay, we went further in to the small town at the head of the bay. We anchored in 25’ feet mud—it took us two tries to get our anchor to set well in the mud. This was a very light wind period and we only had a gentle breeze inside the bay, but the night was cool due to the cool air coming down from the mountains. – Soggy Paws

8.4.4.2 General Services

8.4.4.2.1 Wifi / Internet

July 2011: In the morning we took advantage of the Manaspot signal in the harbor to use up some of our leftover Mana minutes. The signal was tenuous where we were anchored—it would be a little better anchored more to the SW toward the complex of light-yellow buildings in town. You could also take your laptop ashore near the OPT building if you don’t have a high-powered wifi setup on the boat.

We left our dinghy ashore in front of the (closed) restaurant Tahaa Mai Tai in the SW corner of the bay. They had a nice wooden dock. It looks like the town is getting ready to put in a floating dock in front of the municipal area, too, which would make it more convenient. – Soggy Paws

8.4.4.3 Restaurant

Aug. 2013: Hibiscus restaurant. The restaurant is located on the north side of the bay, about a third of the way in. “Hibiscus” is painted onto the roof, facing the water, so you’ll know it when you see it. Had a good dinner, somewhat expensive but you can perhaps allow some for the overnight use of the mooring. Great service. – Alegria

Sept. 2011: We were very surprised to find that the Hibiscus restaurant had Happy Hour 5 - 7 Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. Big Hinano's were $250 cfp and all well drinks were half price $300 - $400 cfp. A very good deal. We brought our Liar's Dice game in and had a very good time. – Moondance

July 2011: Hibiscus Hotel offers dinners nightly, and a brochure says Polynesian music and dancing on Tuesday nights. They have VHF 68 painted on their roof, so you may be able to reach them on Ch 68 to make reservations for dinner or a mooring and ask about the dancing. – Soggy Paws

8.4.4.4 Activities

Sept. 2011: The Hibiscus restaurant will arrange free transportation to the La vallee de la vanille (Vanilla Farm). We really enjoyed that excursion and learned lots about growing vanilla organically. They had a buffet of fresh juice, bananas and coconut prepared for us, with the crew of Evergreen there were 5 in our party. Of course, they would like you to buy some vanilla products, but it is totally optional. – Moondance

July 2011: We walked up the road and followed the road sign to Tiva, to get to the crest of the hill where you have a view of both Hurepiti Bay and Haamene Bay—a pleasant walk on a paved road. We looked for, but not sure we found, the jeep track that the Lonely Planet shows going from Haamene to Patio. Having the Lonely Planet in hand with the map would have helped in asking directions, but we did not.
We actually did a hike from Hurepiti Bay on the west coast, by first walking over to Haamene, but it would be much better to actually start from Haamene.

A 3rd hike - is the Lonely Planet hike to Patio. Start hike (approx.) Belvedere 16-37.44S / 151-29.27W The start of the hike is in the town just to the north of the Pharmacy. It is a jeep track--and the only one that looked likely. What stopped us the first time was the wire fence across the road and the Property Prive sign. We actually had to go through 2 fences at the start, and then this road goes all the way to Patio on the north coast, via the interior. About an hour’s walk on not-too-difficult of grade and you arrive at the scenic overlook that looks out over all of Tahaa's SE coast. This is a mowed grassy area with a concrete bench and the trees cut down in front of the view. (Other spots are scenic, but the trees are always blocking the view).

As we were resting and enjoying the view, Alain Plantier of Vanilla Tours came by with guests in a jeep. In talking with him, he told us of a side trail that is very interesting that goes out along the ridge to the east. To find the start of the trail, continue down the jeep track 100 meters, and there is a small footpath off to the right (East). Follow that footpath which climbs up along the ridge, for about an hour. At one peak (see GPS list below), on the ridge, there is a trail going down to the left. Take this trail to hike back down into the valley and rejoin the jeep trail to Patio (about another hour). Alain said that if you continue on the first trail, you would eventually end up down on the coast in the bay one or two bays north of Haamene.

We never did get to Patio, because by the time we rejoined the jeep trail it was getting late enough in the day that we figured we’d best head back (we still had to walk all the way back to Hurepiti from Haamene). We ended up walking 13 miles in 9 hours, according to the GPS, by the time we got back to Hurepiti. Going from Haamene, it would only have been about 9 miles. Going just up to the lookout and back down the jeep trail the way we came is only about a 2 hr round trip hike, and not too strenuous.

Friends on Don Quixote stopped at the Hibiscus Hotel on the moorings for a couple of hours to see their turtle sanctuary, and then went out for a swim and overnight anchorage at Ile Mahaea. – Soggy Paws

8.4.4.5 Cruiser Reports

June 2017: From Hameene bay it is just a short walk up the hill to the vanilla plantation "Vallee de la Vanille". From Tahaa Maitai take the road to the left and go at a T-crossing (before you cross the water) to the right. Follow the road (uphill) until you see the plantation sign at the left-hand side of the road. The owner gives a short explanation (in French) and shows his plantation. You can buy packets of 50 gram vanilla. Besides the nice Tahaa Maitai restaurant, there is also a nice lunch/ snack bistro near the restaurant, on the other side of the road, local officials come here for lunch. – Spunky

May 2017: Theft/Boarding: We anchored at Hameene Bay (Taha’a) at the end near the moorings. A charter catamaran was nearby at a mooring and no other boats with people on board were there. We went both around the same time (18.45) with our dinghies to the Tahaa Maitai restaurant.

When we arrived at the restaurant, which is only 300 meters from the anchorage, the manager asked if we had locked our boat, which we did. (as it would not be the first-time boats are entered).

When we returned to our boats (21.00), passports, money and phones were stolen from the catamaran. Apparently, the thieves keep an eye on people/dinghies leaving and we think, but that is a presumption, that they just swim to the boats. I am not sure if they had all hatches closed. – Spunky

8.4.5 Islet Tuahine – Vahine Island

8.4.5.1 Anchorages and Moorings

Julye 2019: This is a pretty spot, but it can be exposed to weather. Sandy bottom, 8 meters of water. Go here in good sun and watch out for coral heads. – Sugar Shack
8.4.5.2  Cruiser Reports

**July 2019:** Tuahine private island with small hotel (Hotel Vahine) with open wifi. Once anchored enjoy some super-fast internet with a consistent connection. – Sugar Shack

8.4.6  Pirogue API Motu

**July 2019:** This is a fabulous spot to anchor. There are two moorings, but one belongs to the owners of the resort and the other has to be reserved. We had no problems finding a place to drop the hook in the sandy bottom with 9 meters of water. We made a diagonal approach to the anchorage as it shallowed up in several places to be sure to go during good sun. There is a deep-water path on the south side from channel to hotel. (shallowest at 5.9 meters). – Sugar Shack

**April 2019:** There are two mooring balls near the Pirogue API motu. On the motu is a reportedly excellent restaurant run by Frank and Cecile. Call ahead to make reservations for dinner or to ask to use the moorings: 87 27 56 00. – Cool Change

8.4.6.1  Cruiser Reports

**July 2019:** La Pirogue Hotel +689 87 27 56 00. Ilot Moute is a very small island with a hotel, La Pirogue (4 bungalows, restaurant, bar) run by Cecille. She will let you have drinks on the island if hotel is not busy. Super pretty beach area with clear shallow water to lounge in with a drink. Good snorkeling off the island by the reef as well. – Sugar Shack

9  Bora Bora

You cannot circumnavigate around the island. You can go from Bloody Mary’s, to the North part of the island (by the airport) and then over to the east side of the island. But the south side is not navigable.

9.1  Anchoring and Mooring in Bora Bora

**July 2019:** There are approved anchorages in Bora Bora, but for the most part you will be required to take a mooring ball. If there are no moorings available and you are in an approved anchorage, you may drop the hook (for example Bloody Mary’s anchorage).

The moorings are managed by Bora Bora Mooring Services. $30 for one night, $50 for 3 nights, $100 for a week. These moorings are new as of 2019 and are maintained. They are white and labeled “BBMS” (I believe as they were still marking them when we were there).

Francis will come by in his white, center console dinghy. He takes a photo of your boat and will provide a receipt for your moorings. The price includes trash pickup. He can be reached on VHF 9. Contact at info@boraboramarina.com or 40 67 72 22, 87 79 23 57, 89 44 08 88.

The red areas on the map below indicate PROHIBITED areas where you are not allowed to anchor. The purple circles are the “approved” anchorages where you are required to pick up a mooring.

I would not use any other mooring other than BBMS. A month before we arrived a large catamaran tied to BBYC broke free and incurred a lot of damage when it hit the resort behind it. – Sugar Shack
May 2019: Bora Bora moorings situation changed as of May 1, 2019. From what I understood from the owner of the BBYC, all of the moorings on the island are now run by one company. They charge 5000 francs for three days, or 10000 for a week.

Francis is the only guy, so don't pay anyone else. He comes in a nice 20 or so foot white center console inflatable. Mooring fees are as follows: 3000 a day, 5000 for 3 nights, 10000 a week. However, if you jump between mooring areas it is fine. Just keep your receipt. He picks up trash for free (or included rather).

They are sick of people anchoring on coral so the company Bora Bora Moorings Services is installing more and maintaining all the moorings on the island.

They have installed new moorings all over the island. I have attached the map. They are the purple diamonds. The ones off Bloody Mary's are not installed yet, but they will be putting in 20 there soon.

There also are prohibited anchor zones in red on the map (I think, my French isn't great so I could have translated wrong). – Nor'easter

9.2 West Side of Bora Bora

9.2.1 Vaitape (Main Village)

9.2.1.1 Anchorages and Moorings

July 2017: Town dock, south outer wall. The airport ferries (free with your flight ticket) tie on the inner walls - so makes for a great pickup/drop off station. Other supply ships dock at the outer west wall. We asked at the tourist info and were advised that you can tie up here for free - but don’t stay “too long - no more than one night”. That may change in the future since there are pedestals for water and electricity (Not yet functional).

Note that occasional passing wakes can turn this wall into quite the adventure - so be sure to use spring lines and supplement with your own fenders (the wall has large black rubber roller fenders). – Begonia

July 2012: 16-30.06S / 151.45.19W. This is where Vaugn and Sharon (Reality) like to anchor and it's a shorter dinghy trip to the town dock / Heiva. – New Morning

9.2.1.2 Formalities

June 2017: We went to the gendarme as someone told us they would need some days. The gendarme gave us about 5 forms to fill (some same but different), and 2-3 of those should be emailed (by making a photo) to Papeete the day before you plan to leave. At the day you want to leave, you come with all crew and passports and filled forms to the gendarme and they will give you your international clearance (permis de sortie).

That is how it should work, but in our case Papeete had not handled our email (yet), so Bora Bora had to ask Papeete to do so (I presume searching our file in Papeete), which caused some delay. You also receive (as with arrival) a copy of the declarations of customs file, that you need to send by post to Papeete (so you have to go to the post office to buy a stamp (or buy a postcard with stamp at a souvenir shops)). Anyway, as an email address was indicated, I just sent a photo/scan by mail to this address. – Spunky

9.2.1.3 Yachtsmen Services

9.2.1.3.1 Cooking Gas (Propane and Butane)

June 2019: The gas station sells cooking gas. – Sugar Shack

9.2.1.3.2 Fuel (Diesel and Gasoline)

Aug. 2018: It was pretty straightforward to refuel with duty free diesel here at the Shell gas station. – Consensus
**July 2011:** The Total gas station only accepts cash, local currency, or U.S. dollars at an unfavorable discount rate. You can also use the west end of the gas station dock as a dinghy dock. – Yolo

9.2.1.3.3 Trash and Recycling

**July 2012:** BBYC will allow you to unload trash. – New Morning

9.2.1.3.4 Water

**May 2019:** Water is available at the public dock in Vaitape by the ferries. There are machines that you need a card to use. Francis at BBMS (the moorings guy) sells the cards. Minimum cost is 3000 for a card with 1000 refunded when you return the card (they have a problem with theft). That leaves 2000 francs for water at roughly 3 cents a liter. – Nor’easter

9.2.1.4 General Services

9.2.1.4.1 Salon – Hair Stylist

**July 2019:** Bora Hair and Nails Designs in Vaitape. (Residence Alana, Tipoto). +40 67 68 79

9.2.1.4.2 Laundry

**July 2019:** Bora Bora Laverie Mimi +689 87 76 31 26 or boraboralaverie@gmail.com. (3000 fr wash, dry, fold)

**June 2011:** Behind the Saint James Restaurant is a laundry at a cost of 1000 cpf per wash load (includes soap), 1000 cpf per load to dry, and free internet time (we received an hour for 2 wash loads). – Dream Caper

9.2.1.4.3 Marine Supplies / Boat Parts

**July 2019:** Located main road Route de Ceinture. From the main village, turn left and walk about a ½ mile. Across from the market, on the left-hand side is a small, marine chandlery. They have some fishing supplies and limited marine supplies.

9.2.1.4.4 Tourist Office

**July 2019:** The tourist office offers free wifi for 30 minutes. The connection is weak and inconsistent. Located on the corner of the pier. – Sugar Shack

**July 2011:** The tourist office is near the southeast corner of the quay and is the location of the Hot Spot WDG antenna. – Yolo

9.2.1.4.5 Transportation

**July 2019:** Avis Rental car (across from the Tourist office) will rent cars, bikes, ATVs, scooters, and mini-mokes. It was very expensive. – Sugar Shack

9.2.1.4.6 Wifi / Internet

**July 2011:** The tourist office is near the southeast corner of the quay and is the location of the Hot Spot WDG antenna. – Yolo

**June 2011:** Note: we bought an USB wifi device with external antenna from Bruno while in Papeete which was well worth the $100 price and has made reception from the boat easy. **WDG Hotspot:** We found HotSpot as indicated on their service map at old Bora Bora YC location, Bloody Mary’s, and at the two eastside lagoon locations. **laoranet:** We received laoranet at the BBYC site on the last day (5/24) they were opened but then they disconnected. Bruno at laoranet told us that BBYC plans to get laoranet running at their new location. Otherwise, no laoranet anywhere (not at Bloody Mary’s as indicated). – Dream Caper
Provisions

July 2019: We were really surprised by the smallish grocery stores in Bora Bora. Clearly this is an island where people eat within the resort compounds. The markets were small and had limited variety of everything. I would not count on this as a great provisioning stock before crossing the South Pacific. The market in Huahine was much larger and a better variety selection. — Sugar Shack

June 2017: Both supermarkets are ok, but oldish and they sell less luxury/upmarket/ French products than I had expected (esp. compared to Papeete and SuperU at Moorea). — Spunky

July 2012: The largest store (aka the Chinese grocery store) are adjacent the large city dock at 16-30.39S / 151-45.16W. — New Morning

June 2011: There are two grocery stores in Vaitape. Both seem to have baguettes until late afternoon. The one just north of the church, 5 min. walk from dock, had fresh pastries in the morning, tourist soaps, vanilla, cookies, etc. Between the dock and the grocery store there are a few table stands which sell bananas, mangos, pineapples and pamplemousse, usually of better quality than the grocery. On the road between the two grocery stores, 15-minute walk, there are several table stands selling fresh fruit.

The second grocery is right near the Saint James Restaurant. If you are eating lunch at the restaurant (excellent burgers and poisson-cru and view) you can use their dock, otherwise to the right of the restaurant there is a concrete wall next to a wire fence where you can tie the dinghy but it is shallow and there are rocks just under the surface to the right just as you get to the wall so you need to pull up your motor. It is worth putting the dinghy here because you are right by the chandlery parking lot, the hardware store across the street, and the supermarket.

There is a small market with fresh baguettes and some fresh produce behind and west of the Sofitel Resort in the eastside lagoon. We tied up at the Sofitel dock without being questioned. — Dream Caper

Activities

Hikes

July 2019: Hike to Mount Pahia (one of the tallest mountains in Bora Bora). It is a strenuous hike and will take you 2.5 hours up and 2 hours back (minimum). There are dozens of rappelling spots (up and down) so where good hiking shoes. Arduous and challenging hike but the reward of the view is worth it. Total round trip took almost 5 hours. Do not do if it rained within 48 hours. Start at the Eurocar and follow the road up. The path is pretty clear. We hitch hiked back as we were spent and we are in pretty good shape.

The Valley of Kings trail is supposed to be really good too, but we did not do it. — Sugar Shack

May 2019: There is a great hike, although fairly difficult, right by the ferry dock in Vaitape. It has ropes for steep bits, and there is a sign that says they recommend a guide, but I and the other sailors I met had no trouble without one. It's best to do when it's relatively dry, and will take between 5 and 6 hours. The views from the top are spectacular.

Start at the church with the red roof and steeple by the gendarmerie. Go south along the road and turn into the paved road next to the car rental. There is a sign in French that says something about a hike and guides are highly encouraged, but you will only see it if you approach from the other direction. Go up that road, and it will turn into a dirt road. You will walk down this for a while, go until you see the end. There is a T with a white house on the left. Turn left on the path (more like an overgrown dirt road) just in front of this house. This path soon turns right towards the mountain. It soon comes to what looks like a four-way intersection and you start to get into forest. Go right and it is a nice trail marked with red ribbon, stacked stones, and duct tape. Some points are a little hard to follow, but if you look for the next marker you shouldn't have much trouble. It takes you to the top with views of the famous two peaks, and a nearly 360 view of the island. WEAR GOOD SHOES AND BRING LOTS OF WATER. — Nor’easter
June 2017: Climbing the mountain is really steep! Some parts you climb with hand and feet. Take good shoes! We would suggest to walk only to the first viewpoint, a big tree and a green plastic flag, with a view to Tapu motu and the moorings. The next viewpoint is almost at the top, and sometimes the clouds obscure the view. Ginger plants are growing in the wild under the trees.

To go to the start of the walk, continue from the moorings past the church with the red roof until you see after some pearl shops, and a car rental at your left-hand side, and take to road besides, up the mountain. After some time, you see a white house on the left, turn left on the path before this house. Follow the path and at a kind of four-way intersection, go right, this is the trail. We found quite some marks on trees to indicate the path. – Spunky

Tours:

June 2011: Four of us shared a private power boat (can be arranged through any hotel) at a cost of about $100 each for 4 hours. The driver took us outside the reef to feed the sharks (black tip tigers and lemon sharks) and within the reef to feed the rays, snorkel at the coral gardens (Sofitel Motu), identify all of the resorts and some gun locations. It was a good introduction to the area. We later did all of the same activities except feed the sharks outside the reef. – Dream Caper

Snorkeling and Diving

July 2019: We found some amazing snorkel spots as listed out below. – Sugar Shack

- Sting Ray City near Motu Toopua where you can swim in 2 meters of water filled with sting rays and black tip sharks. Not many people knew about this outside of the cruisers (as it is near the anchorage).
- Shark Cove just outside and south of the Passe Teavanui. Swim in 10-12 meters of clear water with lemon and black tip sharks. This is a popular stop for charter companies. You can go when they are not there, but you will find a limited number of sharks. If you go while one tour company is there you can see a lot more.
- Aquarium just off the Sofitel Motu by Pt Matira. Great snorkeling and super friendly fish.

Aug. 2018: The coral wasn’t too healthy either after snorkeling south of the pass, we did see a few sharks. – Consensus

June 2017: The coral is growing again; we found some nice coral. Between Fitiiupoint and Le Meridien Bora Bora, you can see manta rays in the morning (the manta cleaning station) and the coral is nice, but not many fish. Look for the little mooring balls or dive boats. Near motu Piti Uu Uta clear water and many fishes. – Spunky

June 2011: The coral is in sad shape but the fish are numerous only if you feed them bread. Our old baguettes came in handy for this. Best spots: South end of Toopua, South side of Sofitel Motu. We swam with manta rays: Near Point Haamaire, next to St. Regis (next to channel), there are often snorkel and scuba boats there. Sting Rays: East of the Hilton in the shallows. Tour boats are always around this area. Feed rays squid. Small black tip tiger sharks come close to watch. – Dream Caper

2003: There are several dive sites inside the lagoon that are easily accessible from dinghies as well as one site just outside the entrance to the pass to the South. All sites have mooring balls on them and should be easy to find. We found the visibility inside the lagoon a bit disappointing.

Near the Southwest tip of the lagoon is Topua Iti motu. There is a drift dive on the Southeast corner of the motu that the dive boats do daily. Jump in the water by the green mark and drift towards the yellow and black marker. You will go right past a good snorkeling area with lots of mooring balls marking it.

16 29.15/d 151 42.4W. On the East side of Bora Bora, you can anchor North of the Meridien hotel in 8-12 feet and you will see several mooring balls on the reef to the West. Diving here is reportedly worthwhile for the dozens of manta rays that cruise the channel. We were told to go to the sandy area off the wall in 75 feet of
water. Unfortunately, on the day we tried it visibility was very poor and we saw no mantas. It may be a dive where local knowledge is helpful. The chart shows a small boat pass through the reef just east of here but we were unable to get through to the wall outside.

It is important to note that we found most of these great dive sites on our own with little outside input. You can do the same so please do not rely on this article as more than a minor roadmap. Get out and explore and you will no doubt find places even better than we did. – Ventana

Lagoonarium

**July 2019:** The Lagoonarium was extremely disappointing. We went by in the dinghy to see if we wanted to pay $32 pp. The sea life are all in underwater cages. You can swim with fish, sharks, stingrays but they are all in caged areas. – Sugar Shack

**June 2011:** We took our kayak to the motu where the Lagoonarium is located. It looked like fish trap fenced areas, very shallow. They wanted to charge us $35 per person but tried to push the full package which includes lunch. It didn't look worth the price. – Dream Caper

**Aug. 2010:** This is a private motu with chaise lounges on a sandy beach fronting fenced fish pens and including a “turtle rescue program.” We initially understood the cost to be somewhere in the neighborhood of $15-20 which would be reasonable. But when we started to hand over our 1500 CFP apiece, we were told that the cost was 2500 CFP. Since the guys had opted out we decided to go proceed at the higher price (all it takes to reel me in is "turtles"). It turned out to be a lovely, if eco-questionable, place, but sadly short on small, colorful fish. The emphasis is on the big pen containing captive blacktip and gray sharks, along with stingrays and a pair of spotted eagle rays. There were also some large pufferfish, and schools of jacks and other big fish. Two small, shallow pens let tourists get even closer to stingrays. The even smaller turtle pen housed five sea turtles with an elevated wooden walkway for viewing them from above. No swimming is allowed in the turtle pen although you can wade in to hold your camera underwater for pictures.

We watched as a group of tourists brought in by boat was herded first to the turtle pen where a guide hauled one of the turtles (flapping its fins in vain) out of the water onto the sand for a photo op and lots of touching. Then on to the shallow stingray pen where guides rode the rays like bucking broncos until they finally hauled one up to show off its two male organs, tail (stinger broken off), and mouth, again with more touching. Finally the big finale - everyone into the water for the shark feeding frenzy. And then everyone out of the water to line up for a buffet lunch with musical accompaniment ("La Bamba" - in French - on the ukulele). Since we weren't part of the tour our admission entitled us to a lovely plate of fruit for our group of three. I have to admit, it was the best pamplemousse, watermelon, coconut, and bananas I've ever paid for! – Nakia

Bike Riding

**July 2012:** BBYC will loan bikes if you eat or have drinks there. Very cruiser friendly. – New Morning

**June 2011:** There are regular bicycles for hire in many places. We found electric assist bikes for $50 per day behind the Intercontinental at Matira which we almost rented but decided not to after we had walked many miles on the roads and guessed that we wouldn't see much more different. – Dream Caper

**July 2010:** The one fun thing we did on our full day in Bora was get out our bikes and do an around the island tour with Steve and Trish from Curious. It was a great ride (about 20 miles-our rendition of the Tour) and I was pleased that the only thing that hurt was my bumbum(an Emma term) and my neck. Guess my quads have kept in shape from all the snorkeling! Had a relaxed lunch overlooking the water before heading back to the boats. – Visions of Johanna

Shopping

**July 2019:** There are several trinket and pearl shops located on the main road near the dock. – Sugar Shack
June 2011: There is an artisan market right at the Vaitape dock where locals display their goods (mostly jewelry) on tables. There are a few gift type shops across the street from the entrance to the dock. There are numerous fine pearl stores with x-ray machines. – Dream Caper

9.2.1.7 Cruiser Reports

July 2019: I must admit we were totally jaded the first time we came to Bora Bora. We were disappointed in the large number of tourists, traffic, and activities that come with it all. However, the 2nd and 3rd time we went we stayed off the beaten path, anchored in quieter anchorages, talked to the locals and found the great snorkel spots and hiking trails. We fell in love with the island. – Sugar Shack

Aug. 2018: We were excited to finally be in Bora Bora, the “Holy Grail” of French Polynesia. It wasn’t what everyone thinks it is. Again, like Tahiti, tourists arrive and don’t leave their resort until they go to the airport again. The resorts have taken over the motus, you can’t even go and relax on a beach, they are all resort beaches! As a town it is not that impressive. We saw a local dance practice just up the road from here on a church basketball court one night. – Consensus

July 2011: In the month of July, on Thursday and Friday at 8:00 PM a native dance show is completed at the outdoor arena north of the quay. You will be charged 1,150 CFP if you want a seat in the grand stands, or you can watch for free from the side of the stage. Additional shows are given when cruise lines are in port. – Yolo

2011: Theft The following was posted on the PPJ Yahoo Group in early 2011, sorry I did not record who posted it. I'm sure many of you have heard that 7 dinghies were stolen in Moorea over Easter weekend. It seems that desperation and crime is on the rise here. We lost our dinghy in Bora Bora last Tuesday evening around 8pm, while we were awake and in the cabin. We use a large carabiner to the toe-rail and have done so for many years without incident. We noticed at about 8:30 (only 1/2 hour after we attached it) that it was gone. We immediately searched, the wind was very light and the tide was rising so the current was weak. The motor has 3M reflective tape on it so even at a mile away it should light up with a high powered flash light. After 2 hours of searching we could not find it. We searched most of the next day and reported it missing to the Gendarmerie.

We also were told by the Moorings had a dinghy motor stolen while a hired captain and the charter guests were on board, also shortly after sunset in the southern part of the lagoon in Bora Bora, not far from where we were anchored.

They also said that last Sunday a 40' catamaran was taken from the charter base at night time from Tahiti Yacht Charters, and is still missing. This apparently is a first for such a grand theft. – Reported on PPJ

Aug. 2010: We haven't been having much in the way of adventures since arriving in Bora Bora. In fact, it took 12 nights here before we even stepped on shore at the island itself! Instead we've focused on a motu oriented life which, since they're all privately owned, means hanging out on the boat and in the water around the motus.

The snorkeling is mostly poor here. Places advertised as "coral gardens" were devastated by natural events like El Ninos and cyclones and will take years to recover. But we keep poking around wherever we happen to be anchored and John usually manages to find something interesting like a lionfish or an eel. I'm happy just being in clear water and the smallest things will hold my interest. – Nakia

June 2011: Our favorite anchorages: SW of the Sofitel Motu; SE of Motu Tapu; NW of the Hilton Hotel (Motu Toopua); S of Motu Tevairoa; S of the St. Regis; Matira (SE of the closed Bora Bora Hotel); Motu Piti Aau (N of the S end). – Dream Caper

July 2010: We were not crazy about Bora Bora so stayed there for just a couple of days. It is built up and kind of dirty and the natives not nearly as nice as on the smaller islands...me thinks they see too many tourists and rudeness has rubbed off on them. I tell you my perspective for the difference we in a tourist driven economy
can make if we take the time to be courteous and kind to the people visiting has gotten even more enforced. They weren't so welcoming to us so we just left and didn't spend time or money on their island.

The one draw Bora Bora has is that it has all its fancy hotels are out on motus so the people that are out there are incognito and only will see other people at that resort. Hence Bora Bora is attractive to the movie stars and famous and wealthy people that don't want anything but their privacy. Obviously, we did not get to do any stargazing as we would not be able to get onto those properties.

There was a 200 ft yacht anchored a mile or so from us though that had fireworks one of the evenings. It was quite a spectacular show and so in a way we got a belated 4th of July fireworks celebration. Very nice over the water and it must have gone on for over a half an hour. – Visions of Johanna

9.2.2  Bora Bora Yacht Club (BBYC)
BBYC monitors VHF 69. +689 67 60 47 or +689 28 94 50. boraborayc@mail.pf

9.2.2.1  Anchorages and Moorings
July 2017: Not so much a yacht club as a restaurant with mooring balls - July 2017 prices were Mooring: 2,000 CPF/day. Laundry service 3,000 CPF per load (washed, line dried and folded), water 500 CPF/500L (Water filling is relatively expensive, but has easy access since you and tie your boat to the restaurant dock for filling water tanks directly). Spectacular property with plenty of photo ops and places to sit in the water. – Begonia

July 2012: 16-29.37S / 151-45.65W. Less fetch so much smoother water, perhaps slightly fewer wakes. Moorings are 1500XPF, first night is free if you eat dinner there. Mai Kai is closer to town, but it is still possible ot dinghy to town from BBYC. – New Morning

Oct. 2011 The Bora Bora YC had also been substantially rebuilt and had just re-opened. They have moorings and are in a generally more protected location. – New Morning

9.2.2.2  Restaurants
May 2019: Bora Bora yacht club still is good and have an amazing burger. Bloody Mary's happy hour is still 400 francs for two beers and buy one get one for cocktails. The food was pretty mediocre for lunch though. – Nor’easter

Oct. 2011: The dining is more casual and the fare more basic. We had burgers for lunch and enjoyed the setting. I couldn't find a phone number for the BBYC, and their former web site directed me to the Mai Kai. They did have a sign that said they monitored VHF 69, but I did not get any response. None the less they are definitely open for business and there were half a dozen boats on the moorings. – New Morning.

9.2.3  Mai Kai Marina
Jessica can be reached at 26-12-78. Not much of a marina, but more of a restaurant with mooring balls.

9.2.3.1  Anchorages and Moorings
July 2017: We picked up a mooring and discovered that the dinghy dock is a standalone floating dock and that required a leap across open water to get from the dingy dock to the restaurant dock. We were not sure if there was some strange combination of wind/current that day, or if this giant gap is normal, but we didn’t feel it was safe. – Begonia

June 2017: Current rates are 3000 CFP for the first night, including two free beers, wifi, use of the pool and 100 liter of water. Next days 1500 per day, 6000 for a week. Friendly people and location and boaties happy hour 5-6 o’clock. – Spunky

July 2012: 16-29.99S / 151-45.50W. Free moorings off the Mai Kai Marina. Nothing says Mai Kai from the water, but you'll probably see a Top Dive sign and about a 50' motor yacht med moored. There are a couple of
close in moorings reserved for Top Dive boats, and then larger moorings for cruisers. There is a floating dinghy dock. Call Kito for help with a mooring (79 23 57). It’s run by Teiva and Jessica who used to run the BBYC until the cyclone and a falling out with management. – New Morning

**Oct. 2011: 16-30.0S / 151-45.4W.** West of the fuel doc. Jessica and Tieva who formally managed the Bora Bora Yacht Club have opened the Mai Kai Marina adjacent to Bathys Dive 16-30.0S 151-45.4W. They have about 8 moorings with plans for more. They are also putting in a floating dock which should be installed by the end of October 2011. The dock will have electricity and water. We spent about a week on the moorings and the only problem was the ferry wakes and wakes from boats using the fuel dock. It is also not protected from a south wind and there is some gusting down the mountain from the east wind. Jessica and Teiva are excellent hosts happy to help with any problem.

**July 2011: 16.29.9i78 S / 151.45.424 W.** Moorings: As of July 25, 2011, MKMAYC offers free moorings (however, they will not be free after 1 August—they will be charging the same price as at BBYC). The mooring gear is brand new, includes 1.25 inch lines, metal thimbles, and six foot long retrieval lines. Each mooring has two floats. Moorings are available first come, first serve. Three moorings are reserved, unmarked, for Bathys Dive Center, so keep that in mind when approaching the 14 moorings. Three moorings should have small aluminum dive boats on them, or left open for Bathys. Teiva is in the process of installing an additional 16 moorings, bringing the total to 30.

**Location:** To get to Mai Kai Marina and Yacht Club enter the main channel (Passe Teavanui) through the Bora Bora reef and head to the main village Vaitape. The new club is one of the first things you will pass on your left. The MKMAYC complex is right next to the mooring field and is a very convenient location when compared to the Bora Bora Yacht Club which charges about $12 USD per mooring per night. – Yolo

### 9.2.3.2 Yachtemen Services

#### 9.2.3.2.1 Trash and Recycling

**July 2012:** Mai Kai Marina will allow you to unload trash at the dive boat dock in the large trash bin at the street. – New Morning

### 9.2.3.3 General Services

#### 9.2.3.3.1 Laundry

**July 2011:** Mai Kai Marina, turn right on to the street and walk east you will see several restaurant and bars, on the right a laundry (“Laverie”). The Laverie charges 1,000 CFP per wash load (8Kg), 900 CFP to dry, or 3,400 CFP to wash, dry and fold each load. The Laverie also has a 1-1 book exchange in several languages. – Yolo

#### 9.2.3.3.2 Marine Supplies / Boat Parts

**July 2011:** Mai Kai Marina, turn right on to the street and walk east, past the restaurant and bars, on the right a marine engine repair business (next to the laundry and internet cafe). There also is a small chandlery (across the street from the grocery store). – Yolo

#### 9.2.3.3.3 Wifi / Internet

**Aug. 2018:** Mai Kai Marina Restaurant has good wifi here. – Consensus

**July 2011:** Mai Kai Marina, turn right on to the street and walk east you will see several restaurant and bars, on the right an internet café (next to the laundry). They have several PCs for Internet access which cost 800 CFP per hour, and they also make photocopies and send faxes. – Yolo
9.2.3.4 Provisions

July 2011: Mai Kai Marina, turn right on to the street and walk east you will see a decent market on the left (across from the chandlery). The grocery store is one of two large ones on the island. The other grocery store (Chin Lee) is further down the road on the left side, appeared to be slightly more expensive, yet had better meats, fruits, and veggies when we visited his store—Yolo

9.2.3.5 Restaurants

Aug. 2018: There was a happy hour near where we anchored at the Mai Kai Marina Restaurant from 5-6pm. You could use their pool and good wifi here. – Consensus

July 2012: Mai Kai Marina Restaurant. White table cloth restaurant for dinner with excellent food and very reasonably priced wine list. Teiva is the owner / chef (now has a sous chef who does most the day to day cooking), the specials are usually the thing to order. Definitely should eat there once for dinner. BBYC is a nice setting for a beer. They monitor VHF 69 – New Morning

9.2.3.6 Cruiser Reports

July 2017: We were told that there is no shower, and no laundry, but we did see a book swap. We picked up a mooring and discovered that the dinghy dock is a standalone floating dock and that required a leap across open water to get from the dingy dock to the restaurant dock - and I’ll certainly not want to do that with groceries or after a beer. Closed on Sundays (no dock master nor restaurant on Sunday).

We were not sure if there was some strange combination of wind/current that day, or if this giant gap is normal, but we didn’t feel it was safe. Since the place was all closed and there were no showers, we left and did not get to verify prices. – Begonia

April 2015: Theft. DINGHY THEFT ALERT.... another dinghy stolen last night in Bora Bora. Boat was at a mooring in front of the gas station, not far from the Mai Kai Marina... there's been a rash of thefts in Huahine, Raiatea and Bora Bora... as always, LOCK IT OR LOSE IT! – Women Who Sail

Oct. 2011: The club itself is beautiful with soaring ceilings and Teiva's cooking is outstanding in a white tablecloth restaurant with a nice bar. Jessica and Teiva are excellent hosts happy to help with any problem.

July 2011: 16.29.9178 S / 151.45.424 W. As of July 2011, the Tapare’s have entered a long-term partnership with a local businessman who purchased a hotel complex that has been vacant for six years. The name of the new business is Mai Kai Marina and Yacht Club (MKMAYC).

The complex is currently being extensively remodeled. It has a dinghy dock--tie up at the west end of the dock near the metal steps to leave plenty of room for the dive boats. The large restaurant and bar is being remodeled and will soon be offering cruiser Happy Hour and other specials. Internet access and on-site laundry service are also in the works. The guest bungalows are being made into shops, the pool rebuilt, etc. Fresh water can be had at the dive boat dock and dispose of your garbage in the large trash bin at the street.

If you are going to downtown Vaitape it is a short dinghy ride from the MKMAYC to the fully enclosed quay. Tie your dinghy up in the far southeast corner of the quay entrance to avoid ferry and tour boat traffic. – Yolo

2010: If you would like to have a parcel or letter sent here to the Mai Kai Marina (which was the Bora Bora Yacht Club) and await your arrival that is no problem. The address to have mail sent is:

Yacht [Name]
c/o Mai Kai Marina
BP 162
Vaitape, Bora Bora,
French Polynesia 98730
We are now located at what used to be the site called Top Dive. Our mailing address for receiving post and parcels is still the same. Our post office box will remain the same as you found on our web site and we are happily accepting mail and packages for cruisers.

You will just need to stop in at the Mai Kai Marina, say hi, and I they can contact you by phone or email when your package arrives. As for a ship’s agent, it is not absolutely necessary, however I find that it can speed up the process significantly. They also can help with paying duties. Normally you don’t need to pay duty as you are a vessel in transit. It is important that you mark "ships parts in transit" on the package.

9.2.4 Bloody Mary’s Anchorage

9.2.4.1 Anchorages and Moorings

May 2019: We and a lot of other boats anchored off it in 82 feet. – Nor’easter

July 2017: Bloody Mary’s has 3 mooring balls, and the pier has a dingy dock just inside the T at the end. Use bug spray if you visit since the sand floor attracts biting insects. The end of the T dock is in regular use by shuttles that pickup/drop off tour groups and visitors from the outer hotels. – Begonia


9.2.4.2 Yachtsmen Services

9.2.4.2.1 Water

July 2017: Bloody Mary’s offers water at their dock (we didn’t use it, but it looks as though you *may* be able to tie up your boat and fill directly from water hose with key provided at bar). Closed on Sundays. – Begonia

June 2011: Bloody Mary’s Restaurant has a dock where they offer free water. Ask for the key at the bar. – Dream Caper

9.2.4.3 General Services

9.2.4.4 Wifi / Internet

July 2019: Bloody Mary’s offers internet to their customers. Best connection at the bar when it is least crowded (happy hour). – Sugar Shack

9.2.4.5 Restaurants

July 2019: We stopped in Bloody Mary’s many times. Mostly for happy hour and use of the internet. They offer 2 for 1 cocktails at a reasonable price. The dinner is amazing. You select your main dish from the fresh fish display and they serve it to you with tasty sides. It is a bit pricey, but a nice experience. – Sugar Shack

Aug. 2010: I hate to rave too much because we’ve been restaurant deprived for so long that we may be easily bowled over by any place, but I have to say that we had one of the best cheeseburgers and fries at Bloody Mary’s, not to mention their house specialty drink which was a perfect blend of spices and tomato juice. The ambiance (a sand floor where you’re invited to check your sandals or shoes at the entrance) was the perfect mix of casual elegance, and best of all the lunch time menu was a bargain for French Polynesia. Burgers (including a generous portion of steak fries) started at 1000 CFP and a Bloody Mary was 650 CFP. We had such a great time that we made the mistake of returning for drinks and appetizers with Sidewinder that night and ended up spending a whopping amount at the bar. Funny how that happens especially when you’re saying goodbye to friends you won’t be seeing for a long time! – Nakia

9.2.4.5.1 Activities

Tennis
June 2011: There are two decent tennis courts in Baie de Povai within the recreation complex. We took our dinghy from our mooring at Bloody Mary’s, tied up at the recreation dock and walked 200 yards to the courts which are near the road. There were no personnel there to charge us. – Dream Caper

9.2.5 Motu Taurere

Aug. 2010: 16-31.887 S / 151-42.358 W. We'll probably move back down to the really shallow water at the SE corner soon for an internet fix. We've been able to buy Wi-Fi time through Hotspot and the signal has been good in places like Motu Taurere (but not at Motus Tupe or Topua) and from the moorings at Bloody Mary's. It's expensive and mostly slow, but it's a diversion and John can get a better handle on weather with the additional resources. – Nakia

9.3 East Side of Bora Bora

9.3.1 To'opua Motu

9.3.1.1 Anchorages and Moorings

Aug. 2018: Our favorite anchorage here was just around the corner of To’opua Motu. It is out of the crazy boat traffic, idyllic little spot, but no place to go ashore here. – Consensus

Aug. 2010: 16-30.654S / 151-46.368W. We are again anchored at Ile To’opua in about 8’ over sand. We had one good day inside the reef west of Motu Toopua, but you really have to get right up next to it to find much live coral. The coral garden at the extreme southeast corner of the lagoon (around Pt. Faroone) was a desert of bare tan rock surrounded by black spiny urchins on top of the sand. The tour boats seem to focus on feeding stingrays and sharks since there's nothing much else to see. – Nakia

9.3.2 Motu Tupe

9.3.2.1 Anchorages and Moorings

Aug. 2010: 16-29.582 S / 151-42.238 W. Great anchorage for snorkeling. – Nakia

9.3.3 Four Season’s Anchorage

9.3.3.1 Anchorages and Moorings

July 2012: 16-28.31S / 151-42.79W. OK anchorage, a bit too much fetch. This requires going through the first shallow patch at roughly 16-27.89S / 151-44.02W. It's all sand bottom and there are a couple of marks. Our charts have a line on them and if you follow the line, you'll have no problems. We never saw less than 9’. – New Morning

9.3.4 SE Anchorage

9.3.4.1 Anchorages and Moorings

July 2012: 16-32.86S / 151-42.53W. Beautiful white sand anchorage with a few bommies, minimal fetch, no wakes. The bare boats travel between the outer reef/motu and the inner reef, essentially SE and then S from the Four Seasons anchorage. My charts show a minimum of 10’ - 15’ on that route and and it's all white sand bottom so you can't get in too much trouble so I considered it. However, we were with Reality so we elected to follow them through the cut in the inner reef.

The inner reef cut is directly W from the Four Seasons anchorage and very well marked. It's all coral so a bit scary, but you can watch the local boats cut through there regularly. From the Four seasons, you approach from the N towards the bit of reef with some sticks on it, then turn SW to leave the hazard marker to
starboard, then a hard left to leave the green marker to port and line up between the pair of red/green markers. Leave two more reds to starboard and then turn W (right) to exit with the last red to starboard and the hazard marker to port. It is very well marked, just a bit scary because it all hard stuff. It’s ten minutes of tense, 3-4kt motoring, then you’re back in deep water and an easy motor to the SE anchorage. – New Morning

**July 2011: 16.32.125 S / 151.42.225 W.** We dropped the anchor in 9 feet of water, in pure fine white sand. This anchorage can support dozens of yachts, yet few appear to visit this National Geographic scene. The motu gives you great protection from the north, east, and south winds. You can anchor at dozens of locations on the lee side of the eastern motus. Our favorite was off Motu Roa, AKA Motu Piti Aau, in the southeast corner of Bora Bora.

To access the eastern or southeastern side of Bora Bora you must first navigate the waters on the north side of the island. The waters at the southern tip of Bora Bora are too shallow for cruising vessels wishing to move eastward. When traveling the eastern side of Bora Bora make sure you know how to read Cardinal marks since they are used at several narrow passes on the inner reef. – Yolo

### 9.3.4.2 Activities

#### Snorkeling

**July 2012: 16-32.455 / 151-43.50W** SE snorkeling. SW from the SE anchorage and pass between the two motus. Turn right behind the west motu. Anchor the dinghy just east of the snorkeling reef. It’s open to the trades so it can be bumpy, depends on the conditions. Large reef/coral snorkeling area with good fish. – New Morning

**July 2011: 16.32.466 S / 151.43.655 W.** Great snorkeling. If you want to see plenty of fish and sting rays, dinghy to the south side of the nearby motu Piti Ua Uta. Drop your anchor at the waypoint. – Yolo

**Aug. 2010: 16-29.582 S / 151-42.238 W. Motu Tupe.** Probably our best day of snorkeling was on the reef behind the anchorage at Motu Tupe (see waypoint). There’s a beautiful live coral reef running the length of the drop off between a green navigation mark and a black and yellow West cardinal mark. We saw corals there that we haven’t seen anywhere else, though no big fish. Manta rays are supposed to run along here and John spotted two before it disappeared into the depths. My "trophy" was watching a big moray eel free swim from a small rock with no place to hide to a larger hidey hole. But the biggest surprise was seeing a juvenile Pacific Sailfin Tang for the first time, a very unusually shaped and colorful little fish. Water clarity is an issue when it’s been windy, and return trips to this reef were murkier than the first visit. – Nakia

### 9.3.4.3 Cruiser Reports

**Aug 2010:** A bonus of hanging out with other boats is getting to play with their toys. Ed on Quixotic is a certified dive instructor and has enough gear on board to share. So John went out with him for a shallow dive on the above mentioned reef. Since John already does a lot of free-diving he was perfectly comfortable with the scuba experience. Ed also has a kite board with small, medium, and large kites. He doesn't have a harness to fit John so Ed and Robert have been taking turns learning the ins and outs of flying the kite with John acting as sag wagon for them in the dinghy. – Nakia

### 9.4 North Side Bora Bora

#### 9.4.1 Airport and Airport Anchorage

The airport is on an island to the north. Sleek catamaran ferries pick up passengers and deposit them at the Vaitape dock, a free service which takes about 10 minutes. To return to the airport, the ferry leaves 1.5 hours before the scheduled flight time.
9.4.1.1 Anchorages and Moorings

**June 2019:** The airport anchorage off of Motu Mute is shallow, sandy bottom. It is perfect for dropping off or picking up guests. Be aware that there are underground cables so select your spot carefully. 200 meters north of green buoy. We picked up and dropped off several guests here. Good day spot, but you are not supposed to anchor here over night. – Sugar Shack

**June 2011:** We picked up two sets of guests two different ways. 1) For our first set of guests, we anchored just east of the airport and took the dinghy to pick them up. This worked fine but we were far from any store and our guests liked to buy personal food items, etc. for their stay. 2) For our second guests, we brought Dream Caper to Vaitape dock (same dock as ferry, opposite side) which was very convenient because there was no dinghy ride and the guests could buy groceries at the market (5-minute walk to the north) and use the ATM machines just a half block away. However, the concrete dock is only good to use when it is not windy as the surge can make it difficult to get off the dock. There are large black rubber buffers that hold the boat off the pier but if you don’t want a black smudge on your boat put fenders between the boat and the black rubber plus everywhere else to avoid contact with concrete. 3) Anchor in the cove just north of Vaitape dock, in front of the Saint James Restaurant (2-story light pink bldg. furthest in) in 65-70 feet and dinghy to the Vaitape dock. We tied up the dinghy on the ferry side of the dock, but on the east wall. The ferry side of the dock is much calmer than where we tied up Dream Caper. – Dream Caper

10 Maupiti

10.1 Pass

**Dream Yacht Charter Notes:** The passage from Bora Bora is approx 25nm. There is only one pass on Maupiti which is very narrow and exposed to the prevailing southerly swells, making it impracticable as soon as the breeze reaches more than 20kn and the swell more than 1.5m.

If you intend on visiting Maupiti, it is recommended that you contact Camille from the Pension Kuriri Village which is located near the pass. Camille is an experienced sailor and will let you know what the conditions are like at the pass. Ph: 67 82 23 or 74 54 54. There is also Alain on 70 13 69.

You will need to set out no later than 7am so you can return to Bora Bora before nightfall if you are unable to enter the pass. If the weather is too tough, then consider the day trip on the ferry from Bora Bora.

**Sunsail Charter Notes:** During certain times of the year, the only pass into the lagoon of Maupiti is completely inaccessible, especially when the swell comes from the south. Even without this swell, the current is very strong causing waves which hide the dog-legged channel. Strongly not recommended if the south or southwest swell is higher than 1.5 meters.

The pass in Maupiti should be attempted in the morning by aligning with the center of the pass from about 3/10 of mile out. It is very important to stay away from the reef, because sometimes the waves come in strong from afar.

**OUR ADVICE:** Stop at Bora Bora’s Yacht Club and call Richard of Maupiti phone: 67 80 62, cellphone: 73 55 62 or Alain of Maupiti Village pension: 70 13 69 and ask how the pass looks like. You can tell him when you will be there, and hire him as your guide to enter the pass and for an excursion within the lagoon and around this tiny island. On the same motu, but ocean side you’ll find the guest house Kuriri Village, tel 745454. They can also give you information concerning the condition of the pass.

**July 2011:** Our plan was to stop at Maupiti first for a few days after we left Bora Bora however we decided not to go through the pass. We sailed back & forth in front of the pass at Maupiti for about 45 min examining it. The pass is on the south side of the island so it is open to swells. From our stand point it appeared as though the breaking waves swept at least halfway across the pass.
A local power boat gunned it through the pass and it looked like that the wave swallowed him, so we chickened out. We spoke with boaters who had entered the pass and said that it appears that the waves break through the pass but in fact they don't. You have to get closer to see this, so perhaps we could have managed the pass. We'll never know! The gribs at the time we were there showed a 2.3m swell. – Sara Jean II

2010: The SE corner of the island is to be avoided. The currents/swell there meet and it's what the French call a Masquerade. It's really the only danger if you line up on the leading marks. You can enter in anything under 3-meter swell for sure and less than 25 knots. Obviously less is better. The pass in a large swell can be intimidating to look at, but it's safe to enter in above conditions or less.

The key is take a WIDE approach when coming from Bora Bora at the SE corner. About 1/4 mile out, line up on the leading marks. Depth is not a problem on those marks at all. The surf break to the right can be large or quite small depending on your weather. You will get abeam of the break there and think you may be heading to the west side of the reef as it's break is closer to the shore.

Just stay with the leading marks. The outer one is in between two red port hand marks. When you are abeam of the first two entry marks (red/green), look to turn right to the second set (inner set) of leading marks. Once you've made that turn the show is over.

It's quite flat between the two entrance Motus. Follow the channel which is well marked. Anchor near the church, there are small poles to keep to your west for small local reefs off the town.

Note: it is shallow in by the church, just use caution. It's nice and flat. – Beachhouse

10.2 Anchorage and Moorings

Dream Yacht Charter Notes: You can navigate on the inside of the channel from the pass to the village pier. Anchor in sandy grounds on the right of the channel at 200m in the E dock Pauma in 5 - 6m. Dinghy to the village.

Vaiea: The village runs from north to south of the main island to the east at the foot of the cliff of Mount Tiriano. Vaiea comprises the majority of inhabitants of Maupiti. It consists of houses along the beltway, a small church, town hall, post office, police station and a restaurant. The village is spread over a mile along the narrow coastal strip.

Aug. 2018: We anchored out near the motu on the north side of the pass amongst the bommies but were ok. We cleared out of French Polynesia in Bora Bora but still made a few stops before going to the Cook Islands. Cruisers think this spot is a no go as the pass sounds treacherous but if you have the right conditions go for it! Don’t miss this spot! We had light west winds and no swell when we were entering the pass. But make sure you go with enough light. – Consensus

10.3 Yachtsmen Services

10.3.1 Fuel (Diesel and Gasoline)

2010: Fuel is available, no permit taken and it is cash only. -- Beachhouse

10.4 General Services

10.4.1 Banks / ATMs

2010: NO ATM's or bank, bring cash. – Beachhouse

10.4.2 Wifi / Internet

2010: Internet is OPT (not WDG Hotspot or iaoranet), works pretty good from the anchorage. Purchase time at the Post Office. – Beachhouse
10.5 Provisions

2010: Not much in the way of groceries. Beachhouse

10.6 Restaurants

Sunsail Charter Notes: A nice place to have lunch or dinner is the Maupiti Village on Motu Tiapaa, tel 67 80 08 or VHF 67 or Pension Papahani tel 67815. They organize hikes, tours around the Island and to the motus, walks on the reef, fishing at sea etc.

10.7 Activities

Hiking and Walking

Dream Yacht Charter Notes: Walking around the island takes less than one hour. You will find good snorkeling on the coral heads approaching the reef barrier.

Sunsail Charter Notes: You can make the round of Maupiti by bicycle (rental on the village).

2010: Climb to the mountain was very nice. Better than Bora Bora, though definitely a climb. – Sea Mist

Snorkeling and Diving

There is one dive shop on Maupiti and you can email them on maupitinautique@mail.pf

Aug. 2012: There are lots of manta rays here in the shallows. There was little life on the reef here. We didn’t make it into town to do the hike here either, but heard it was great. Easier than the Bora Bora hike to the top.

– Consensus

2010: Diving on the east side of the island outside with Lionel is very nice hard coral, no sharks here. Manta Rays do show up in the A.M on the INSIDE of the western pass motu. Tie up to the RED Nav mark and go snorkeling! It’s shallow too.

Tide/current is almost always outgoing. Standing waves can occur, but not normally as the pass is deep in the middle. It is said to be best between 8 am and noon by all sources I’ve heard, but I didn’t find that the case, it wasn’t too bad most days. – Beachhouse

2010: If you read our post about diving here in Maupiti, you’ll see why the coral here is PRISTINE and the best in the Societies. There is no shark diving here (we saw one baby gray reef the other day). But the coral fields are amazing!

The Crown of Thorns Star fish is the culprit. Here, they have killed 4-5000 of them over the last three years, and it really shows. Their natural predators are the Triton Trumpet shells and the Maori (Napolean Wrasse). Locals kill the wrasse for food and the Tritons for meat (and about 200 Euros for the shell). Hence, no natural predation of the Crown of Thorns. They use a hypodermic needle with sodium bisulfate, hurts nothing else. Reefcheck.org taught them to do it to "save the reefs" Long boat ride, but really PRISTINE Coral. – Visions of Johanna

2010: Sea Mist raved about snorkeling in Maupiti. Said the Manta Rays came every morning like clockwork, and you can snorkel with them. – Sea Mist

11 Mopelia (aka Maupihaa)

11.1 Pass

Aug. 2018: There is a very narrow pass to get through here and current rips out the pass, so time it right. No problem with the depth in the pass. There were no breaking waves as we had light wind, but I wouldn’t want to attempt this one in any side swell or unfavorable winds. The current wasn’t a problem when we went through. Maupihaa is another secret spot not to be missed! – Consensus
July 2011: 16.46.896 S / 153.58.659W. Pass entrance. We continued onto Mopelia, an overnight sail away. We arrived in the morning with good overhead sunlight for the pass and crossing the lagoon. The pass at Mopelia is on the northwest side of the island.

It is actually a little south of where shown on our Navionic chart by a few hundred yards. Our track through the pass goes over the reef - as shown on the chartplotter. Charlie's Charts describes this pass as one of the trickiest in French Polynesia because it is very narrow with a strong current. "A reliable engine and a good set of nerves is necessary". This is a very good description of the pass and was scarier than any pass we encountered in the Tuamotus.

Our adrenaline was pumping as we went through and Norm made the comment "This pass separates the men from the boys!" The pass is only about 60' wide (about 30' deep) so you feel like you can reach out and touch the reef on either side. Once you start you are committed. It is simply too narrow with too much current to turn around. You can see it’s sharply defined edges. Because it is narrow, the current is strong. It is always ebbing. Charlie's says it can get up to 6 knots of current but we had 3.5 kt against us entering the lagoon. Our 55 Yanmar engine was moving the boat at 7.5 kts and our speed over ground was about 4 kts.

There are white markers on either side of the pass so when you get close enough you can see the pass clearly. The water is quite turbulent with lots of eddies but no breaking waves. Winds were moderate from the east at the time. Norm steered the boat through the pass and I kept a bow watch directing him as necessary. After you get through the pass there is an area of coral heads which were about 20' under the water so a bow lookout is helpful. We stayed a little to the right of the pass as we crossed this section. The water then gradually deepened to over 100 ft as we entered into the lagoon.

Our exit from the lagoon through the pass was uneventful but FAST! This time of course the current was with us, again about 3 - 4 kts so we rocketed through. With our fast speed of 9-10 kt with the current we went through the pass very quickly. It seemed easier than entering the pass, perhaps because it was over more quickly!

Aug. 2010: Mopelia is located approximately 135 nm WSW of Bora Bora. A true atoll, Mopelia has an extremely NARROW entry, but one that is protected as it lies on the NW corner. There is almost always an outflowing current of 3 or more knots; the water is roiled in the pass and just outside, but standing waves over 1 foot rarely will form.

Of note, there is a chart offset of approximately 220 yards, with the chart shifted to the north. In other words, the pass as seen on the chart will be north of your entry point by this amount – your boat will lie 220 yards south of the charted pass as you enter. Our waypoints were as follows:

- Approach – 16 46.868S / 153 58.735W
- Approach - 16 46.913S / 153 58.678W
- Pass Outer Entry Point - 16 46.953S / 153 58.627W
- Inner Pass Exit - 16 47.155S / 153 58.381W
- Inner Pass Approach - 16 47.317S / 153 58.242W

– Visions of Johanna

2010: Electronic charts (Navionics, Maxsea/CMap) put the island around 200 meters too far north. The only time you do not want to try to enter Mopelia is in a westerly wind. The pass current is 2-6 knots, and you will want to enter between 10am and 2pm for good light. Standing waves of only 1-2 feet when entering in normal easterlies, even at the strongest current.

The pass motu that is easily seen on approach is to the south of the entrance when approaching from the north.
There are only two black/white 4" diameter poles sticking up about 4-5 feet high, newly painted and obvious when you are close.

The key with Mopelia is that it looks very narrow for a long way on the chart. It isn't. It is narrow at the entrance, but then fans out. The charts make it look like you will see rocks or land to your left and right. NOT THE CASE. You will see a long narrow dry reef to the right, but not the left. The left side is shallow, but harder to see. Best to have some higher sun if possible. We saw 15 boats go in/out and no one had a problem.

The pass is narrow, but only at the outer entrance...60-70 feet wide, but easy to see all dangers which is the fact that it's 1 foot deep on each side at the entrance. The current is always OUTGOING. Can be 4-5 knots. The entrance is 45 feet deep. (Minimum depth in the channel on the way in was 14-16 feet. Most of the channel was around 25')

Once inside, FAVOR the right. Think of a fan out that is 25 degrees wide. Stay to the right. The land and bottom are visible on your right. The left side is very shallow but quite wide as it FANS out.

Once you are about 100 yds in past the poles, you've done it, it's really quite straight forward. The only problem is, there are no aids once inside. The lagoon has bommies but they are deep out in the middle, one reef is marked, you'll see it heading to the south motu where Calami and Sophie live. There is no village on the north as the guide books say. WATCH OUT FOR THE ABANDONED PEARL OYSTER BUOYS in the lagoon. Some are a few feet deep too.

11.2 Anchorage and Moorings

Aug. 2018: We motored into the lagoon dodging coral heads that looked very shallow but were not too shallow in the end. We anchored on the north eastern side of the lagoon without much protection from the wind chop in the lagoon. We were ok here in 12 knots of wind at anchor. Very shallow bommies here! We couldn’t get too close to the shore.

Consensus July 2011: 16-49.576 S / 153-55.633 W. It is a big anchorage. There are many pearl farm floats here that need to be avoided as well as some coral heads. There is sand for anchoring between the coral with good holding in 30 - 40 ft. We crossed the lagoon to the south end of the motu to anchor. There is some protection there against easterly winds. A bow lookout is necessary to watch for abandoned pearl farm floats. Be careful as some are submerged. It is best to cross the lagoon with the sun overhead for good visibility. There is a lovely anchorage in front of Hina’s home with a long white sandy beach. Her neighbor’s power boat is anchored in front of her house so this helps to identify the anchorage. – Sara Jean II

Aug. 2010: 16 49.683S / 155 65.63 W at SE anchorage area and 16 47.05S / 153 56.66W at East Anchorage.

The SE anchorage is near the inhabited area of the atoll, and provides slightly more protection in winds from the south to east. The eastern anchorage provides better protection from the east to north, and access to the pass for diving. Neither anchorage area would be enjoyable in westerlies. – Visions of Johanna

11.3 Activities

Snorkeling

Aug. 2018: There are lots of black tip sharks everywhere but they don't mess with you. You can swim off of the beach here. We were told about wrecks outside of the pass here, but could never find them. We drifted the pass several times holding onto the dinghy and saw so many huge fish and sharks! Grey sharks, large napoleon wrasse, large schools of jacks, snappers, and several manta rays. The atoll was very full of life in and out of the lagoon. The corals weren’t too healthy inside the lagoon.

Keep an eye out for humpback whales swimming outside of the atoll as you pass by it. – Consensus

July 2011: There is a wreck called the Sea Adler that you can snorkel. It is reportedly just outside the pass to the southwest. Some of the cruisers dinghied across the lagoon one day to the pass but we do not have a big
dinghy or engine and did not want to use the gas so elected not to go. We had heard of a boat that anchored their big boat outside the pass to snorkel on the Sea Adler and we intended to do this however the location of the anchorage (50' depths) appeared too close to the breaking waves on the reef for our liking so we did not stop when enroute to Palmerston. – Sara Jean II

**Aug. 2010:** The diving just outside the pass is exceptional, the best we had done in the Societies. The snorkeling is good too, although you have to consider snorkeling outside the pass with surge and swells, or just inside the pass with considerable current.

In light easterlies it is reported that one can anchor just inside the pass by the western motus south of the entry, but winds did not cooperate during our stay. We moved to the eastern anchorage and took the dinghy 1.65 nm across the lagoon to dive. There is quite a bit of current in the pass and a 15 HP or greater engine is best for this as you traverse the pass, and then return to the anchorage against the east wind.

There is a buoy just outside the pass on the south side which marks the anchor chain of "The Seadler" shipwreck, and one can tie the dinghy to it for a dive along the wall to the south of the pass. You can begin your dive by dropping 30 feet to the bottom in nice coral, and then proceed a short distance west to the wall. We dove to 70-90 feet and (turned left) swam south against a very light counter current along a beautiful 70-degree wall. Coral was great, fish were large and abundant. We turned around at a ravine about 20 – 25 minutes into the dive (~1800 psi), ascended to 30-40 feet, and drifted back with the current. The dive then continues past the buoy to the edge of the pass, where you hang out and watch the fish and their antics. It was stupendous.

Another time we brought a heavier anchor (mother ship stern anchor) and did a similar dive along the north wall. Also, excellent, but perhaps the coral was not quite as healthy and the North wall of the pass has more current and less visibility. – Visions of Johanna

**Aug. 2010:** Diving: We dove on the outside of the pass snorkeling on the wreck parts of the Seeadler is in 10-15 feet of water IMMEDIATELY to the south of the pass on the outside. The wreck on your charts shown north of the pass is not there. You won't see any remnant of it. If you want to see what you can dive or snorkel at either location, see our website at: [www.svbeachhouse.com](http://www.svbeachhouse.com) — Beachhouse

### 11.4 Cruiser Reports

**Aug. 2018:** Very much worth the stop if you have time and can get here. Google says this island is uninhabited but it is very much not so! See Marcelo on the shore once you have anchored. He lives here with his wife and two daughters. We were given coconuts and they just wanted to talk to us, practice their English, and tell us about their coconut plantation. They don’t get too many cruisers there every year. There are 24 people living on the island now, but they are all extended family. – Consensus

**July 2011:** There are 3 people currently living on the island. Hina used to be a pearl farmer but she has not done this for about 10 years. She found it too labor intensive. She is now a copra farmer. Monique lives down the road and Frankie lives at the other end of the motu. There is a road all the way to Frankie's place from Hina's house - about 5-6 km. We walked along it one day. The sandy beach is also great for beach walking - one of the best we've seen in French Polynesia. The water is clean and good for swimming. We kayaked as well. There were 7 boats when we were there in July 2011. A potluck party was organized on shore outdoors at Hina’s home for Bastille Day. There were boats from Switzerland, Germany, France, USA and Canada and Hina & Frankie from Mopelia. It was a fun party complete with barbecued coconut crabs from the island. Those crabs are HUGE and very tasty! – Sara Jean II

**Aug. 2010:** Charts show a village in the NE corner as well as several buoys and marks around the pass, but the village is no longer there and reportedly it was destroyed by a typhoon sometime in the 1990's. You will now find the ruins of several homes and remnants of a pier. The 3 families that inhabit the island in 2010 all live in the SE corner. A large family headed by Calami and Sophie inhabit the "middle" homestead, including Calami's
son, daughter-in-law, and several grandchildren. There are two other small families living there as well but we did not meet them. – Visions of Johanna
Beyond French Polynesia

See our other guide entitled ‘Cooks and Samoas Compendium’.

There are two general routes from French Poly through to Tonga. One is a northern route that stops in one or both of the Samoas before (usually) hooking south to clear in at Neifu, Tonga.

The other is a more southerly route through the Cooks, with some boats jumping off directly to NZ from the Cooks, and others clearing in either at Neiafu or Tongatapu.

The small island country of Niue is a fun stop, but is usually a bit trying—you use up your weather window getting there, and then sometimes find crap/untenable weather on arrival. We visited Niue from Tonga, by waiting for a low coming by to the south of us, using the westerly winds to sail to Niue, and taking advantage of a week of easterlies to enjoy the only harbor on Niue (on the west side of the island).

If you are American (with ties to US shopping), you can receive US mail easily in American Samoa.

All that, and more, in the Cooks and Samoas Compendium (which also includes Niue).
### 13 Appendix A – French Weather Terms

I copied this from somewhere (sorry, don’t remember where)

All cruisers headed for French-speaking locations should purchase the book French for Cruisers ([forcruisers.com](http://forcruisers.com)) before they leave!!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>French Term</th>
<th>English Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>....est stable</td>
<td>....is stable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>....remonte</td>
<td>....is rising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...baisse./...chute</td>
<td>...is dropping/....is falling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A ... heures Temps Universal (TU)</td>
<td>At ... Universal Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a la fin</td>
<td>at the end</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ailleurs</td>
<td>elsewhere</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>les alizes</td>
<td>trade winds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l’ amelioration</td>
<td>improvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l’ anticyclone(A)</td>
<td>high (H)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>au debut</td>
<td>at the beginning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l’ averse</td>
<td>showers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avez-vous la (prevision) meteo?</td>
<td>Do you have the weather forecast?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l’ avis</td>
<td>warning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>les bancs de brouillards cotiers</td>
<td>coastal fog banks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>le barometre</td>
<td>barometer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bientot</td>
<td>soon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la brise de mer</td>
<td>sea breeze</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la brise de terre</td>
<td>land breeze</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la brouillard</td>
<td>fog</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la bruine</td>
<td>drizzle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la brume</td>
<td>fog</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>le Bulletin cote</td>
<td>coastal forecast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>le Bulletin grand large</td>
<td>high seas forecast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>le Bulletin large</td>
<td>offshore forecast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>le bulletin meteo</td>
<td>weather report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>le Bulletin meteorologique Special (BMS)</td>
<td>Special Weather Bulletin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la carte meteo (-rologique)</td>
<td>weather map</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ce soir</td>
<td>this evening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>centre</td>
<td>center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cet apres-midi</td>
<td>this afternoon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cette nuit</td>
<td>tonight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>le ciel</td>
<td>sky</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>clair</td>
<td>clear</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Il fait un temps de chien. It is raining.

Il y a une alerte cyclonique. There is a hurricane warning.
isole
La mer est agitee
La mer est belle
La mer est calme
La mer est enorme
La mer est forte
La mer est grosse
La mer est peu agitee
La mer est tresse grosse
La mer esttres forte
la nuit
le long du 20 ouest
Le vent va fraichir.
la ligne de grains
localement
matin
a mi-echeance
les millibars
modere
mollissant
la neige
les noeuds (nd) nuh
nord
Nord-est
Nort-ouest
les nuages
nuageux
occasionnel
On attend une gross houle d'ouest vendredi
On s'attend a avoire des grains
On va avoir du mauvais temps
l' onde tropicale
l' orage
orageux
ouest
parfois

islated
moderate  Force 4  1.25 – 2.5 m
smooth  Force 2  0.1 – 0.5 m
Calm – glassy  Force 0  0 m
phenomenal  Force 9  (> 14 m
rough  Force 5  2.5 – 4 m
high  Force 7  6 – 9 m
slight  Force 3 – 5  0.5 – 1.25 m
Calm – rippled  Force 1  0 – 0.1 m
very high  Force 8  9 – 14 m
very rough  Force 6  4 – 6 m
at night
Along 20 west
The wind is supposed to increase.
squall line
locally
morning
halfway through the forecast?
millibars
moderate
moderating
snow
knots (kts)
North
Northeast
Northwest
clouds
cloudy
occasional
There is supposed to be a large swell from the west on Friday
We're supposed to get squalls.
We're going to have bad weather
tropical wave
thunderstorm
stormy
West
sometimes
Quel beau temps !

le temps à grains

s'attenuant
s'attenuant
s'étendant jusqu'à 180 mn
s'orientant
se comblant
se decalant vers
se dissipant
se dreusant
se renforçant ... lentement

le secteur

la situation générale
stationnaire
sud
Sud-est
Sud-ouest
suivant
sur l'extrême nord-est

la tempête
temporaire
temporairement
temps

temps à grains

la tendance ultérieure

What nice weather

s'attenuant
dissipating
dissipating

s'étendant jusqu'à 180 mn
extending up to 180 ns

s'orientant
turning to

se comblant
filling

se decalant vers
moving forward

se dissipant
dissipating

se dreusant
deepening

se renforçant ... lentement
strengthening ... slowly

le secteur

sector

la situation générale
synopsis
stationary

sud
South

Sud-est
Southeast

Sud-ouest
Southwest

suivant
following

sur l'extrême nord-est
in the extreme Northeast

la tempête
storm

tempête tropicale
tropical storm

temporaire
temporarily

le temps
weather

temps à grains
squally weather

la tendance ultérieure
outlook
le thalweg
le tonnerre
la trajectoire du cyclons
la trombe
valable a partir du
valable jusqu'a
variable
variable depressionaire
venant
le vent
vent - fort coup de vent
vent - bonne brise
vent - calme
vent - coup de vent
vent - grand frais
vent - jolie brise
vent - legere brise
vent - ouragan
vent - petite brise
vent - tempete
vent - tres legere brise
vent - vent fraise
vent - violente tempete
vent assez fort
vent dominant
virant
visibilite
visibilite mauvaise
visibilite bonne
visibilite entre 2 et 5 milles marins
Visibilite inferieure de 2 milles marins
visibilite superieure a 5 milles marins
la vitesse
la zone de hautes pressions
la zone
la zone de basses pressions
trough
thunder
track,hurricane
waterspout
valid beginning
valid until
variable
variable in depression
becoming
wind
strong gale  Force 9  41 – 47 kts
fresh breeze  Force 5  17 – 21 kts
calm  Force 0  0 – 1 kts
gale  Force 8  34 – 40 kts
near gale  Force 7  28 – 33 kts
moderate breeze  Force 4  11 – 16 kts
light breeze  Force 2  4 – 6 kts
hurricane  Force 12  64(+) kts
gentle breeze  Force 3 – 5  7 – 10 kts
storm  Force 10  48 – 55 kts
light air  Force 1  1 – 3 kts
strong breeze  Force 6  22 – 27 kts
violent storm  Force 11  56 – 63 kts
fairly strong wind  Force 6  22 – 27 kts
prevailing wind
veering
visibility
poor visibility
good visibility
Between 2 & 5 nm
less than 2 nm
greater than 5 nm
speed
high pressure area
zone
low pressure area