

The Societies Compendium

A Compilation of Guidebook References and Cruising Reports



Rev 2019.1 – February 21, 2019

**We welcome updates to this guide!
(especially for places we have no cruiser information on)**

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If you found it posted elsewhere, there might be an updated copy there.

Recent Updates Log

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

Rev	Date	Notes
A	05-April-2011	Initial version, extracted from the Tuamotus Compendium, supplemented by Slipaway's info from Port du Phaeton Still very rough at this point!!
2017.1	13-March-2017	Link to the new online Tahiti Cruiser's Guide
2017.2	23-March-2017	Updates from Mary Ann II on Cyclone probabilities in Tahiti and lots of little info updates around Tahiti.
2017.3	27-May-2017	Warning about theft in Haamene Bay, Tahaa. (Spunky), plus a few other updates in the Societies
2017.4	17-June-2017	A few updates from Spunky, and proper mooring techniques from Jacaranda
2017.5	25-Aug-2017	Begonia on Bora Bora, Cook's Bay Moorea notes by Jacaranda
2018.1	13-Aug-2018	Updates by Jacaranda on anchorages on the South Coast of Raiatea. Theft warning for Opunohu Bay.
2018.2	14-Aug-2018	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
2018.3	20-Sep-2018	Various updates by Jacaranda
2018.4	20-Oct-2018	More updates by Jacaranda
2018.5	28-Nov-2018	Updates on Bora Bora, Maupiti, and Maupihaa by a crewmember from Consensus
2019.1	21-Feb-2019	Ciguatera warning. Lungta update on leaving your boat a Baie Phaeton.

Table of Contents

1	INTRODUCTION	9
1.1	ORGANIZATION OF THE GUIDE	9
1.2	OVERVIEW OF THE SOCIETY ISLANDS	9
1.3	CLEARANCE IN AND OUT	9
1.3.1	<i>Visa Issues for non-EU Citizens</i>	<i>9</i>
1.3.2	<i>Clearing in to Papeete</i>	<i>10</i>
1.3.3	<i>Clearing Out of Papeete</i>	<i>11</i>
1.3.4	<i>Clearing Out of Bora Bora or Raiatea.....</i>	<i>11</i>
1.4	MANEUVERING AND ANCHORING IN THE SOCIETIES.....	12
1.4.1	<i>Anchoring in Coral</i>	<i>12</i>
1.4.2	<i>Marine Protected Areas.....</i>	<i>14</i>
1.4.3	<i>Using Out-Island Moorings</i>	<i>14</i>
1.5	WEATHER.....	16
1.5.1	<i>General Societies Weather Conditions May-July</i>	<i>16</i>
1.5.2	<i>Cyclones in the Society Islands</i>	<i>16</i>
1.5.3	<i>Weather Sources – With Onboard Email/SSB</i>	<i>17</i>
1.5.4	<i>Weather Sources – Voice</i>	<i>20</i>
1.5.5	<i>Weather Sources – Internet.....</i>	<i>21</i>
1.5.6	<i>Understanding the Weather Patterns</i>	<i>22</i>
1.5.7	<i>Professional Weather Routing.....</i>	<i>23</i>
1.6	OBTAINING PARTS & SUPPLIES.....	23
1.6.1	<i>Importing Parts Duty-Free</i>	<i>23</i>
1.6.2	<i>Rigging and Sail Repair.....</i>	<i>26</i>
1.6.3	<i>Money</i>	<i>27</i>
1.6.4	<i>Diesel and Gasoline.....</i>	<i>28</i>
1.6.5	<i>Misc Boat Parts.....</i>	<i>28</i>
1.6.6	<i>Propane</i>	<i>29</i>
1.6.7	<i>Groceries</i>	<i>31</i>
1.6.8	<i>Water</i>	<i>31</i>
1.6.9	<i>Obtaining Medication and Prescription Drugs</i>	<i>32</i>
1.7	GETTING VISITORS IN AND OUT	32
1.8	COMMUNICATIONS	33
1.8.1	<i>VHF.....</i>	<i>33</i>
1.8.2	<i>SSB Radio Nets.....</i>	<i>33</i>
1.8.3	<i>Telephones & Cell Phones</i>	<i>34</i>
1.8.4	<i>Internet Access.....</i>	<i>35</i>
1.8.5	<i>News.....</i>	<i>37</i>
1.9	DIVING	38
1.10	HAULOUT, STORAGE, AND REPAIR FACILITIES	38
1.10.1	<i>Techni-Marine in Papeete.....</i>	<i>39</i>
1.10.2	<i>Tahiti Nautic in Port Phaeton, Tahiti</i>	<i>40</i>
1.10.3	<i>Raiatea Carenage.....</i>	<i>40</i>
1.10.4	<i>CNI Boatyard Raiatea.....</i>	<i>40</i>
1.11	EATING THE FISH (CIGUATERA!).....	41
1.12	CRUISING SOURCES.....	42
1.12.1	<i>Cruiser Reports.....</i>	<i>43</i>

1.12.2	<i>Dream Yacht Charter (DYC) (2011)</i>	46
1.12.3	<i>Pacific Puddle Jump Yahoo Group</i>	46
1.12.4	<i>Noonsite</i>	46
1.12.5	<i>Seven Seas Cruising Association</i>	47
1.12.6	<i>Sea Seek</i>	47
1.13	PRINTED SOURCES	47
1.13.1	<i>French for Cruisers</i>	47
1.13.2	<i>Cruising Guide to Tahiti and the French Society Islands – Marcia Davock</i>	48
1.13.3	<i>Charlie’s Charts of Polynesia</i>	48
1.13.4	<i>South Pacific Anchorages – Warwick Clay</i>	48
1.13.5	<i>Guide to Navigation and Tourism in French Polynesia (French)</i>	48
1.13.6	<i>The Pacific Crossing Guide – RCC Pilotage Foundation</i>	48
1.13.7	<i>Landfalls of Paradise – Earl Hinz</i>	48
1.13.8	<i>Pacific Crossing Notes – Nadine Slavinski</i>	48
1.13.9	<i>Cruising Guide to the Leeward Islands of Tahiti – The Moorings</i>	48
1.13.10	<i>NEW Tahiti Cruiser’s Guide Online</i>	49
1.13.11	<i>Dream Yacht Charters Guide to the Leeward Islands</i>	49
1.13.12	<i>The French Polynesia Diving Guide</i>	49
1.13.13	<i>Diving in Tahiti Guide</i>	49
2	PASSAGE REPORTS	49
2.1	TUAMOTUS TO PAPEETE	49
2.1.1	<i>Slapdash – Manihi to Tahiti – Aug 2008</i>	49
2.1.2	<i>Nakia – Apataki to Papeete – July 2010</i>	50
2.2	TAHITI TO TUAMOTUS	50
2.2.1	<i>Strategy</i>	50
2.2.2	<i>Migration – Tahiti to the Marquesas via the Tuamotus - Feb-Mar 2009</i>	50
3	TAHITI	52
3.1	APPROACH, ARRIVAL, AND FORMALITIES	52
3.1.1	<i>Entering Tahiti Harbor</i>	52
3.1.2	<i>Transiting from Downtown area to Taina Marina</i>	52
3.2	PAPEETE – GENERAL SERVICES	52
3.2.1	<i>Provisioning</i>	52
3.2.2	<i>Shipping Stuff in or Out</i>	54
3.2.3	<i>Dockage & Moorings</i>	55
3.2.4	<i>Sail Repair</i>	57
3.2.5	<i>Other Repairs</i>	57
3.2.6	<i>Touring Tahiti</i>	57
3.2.7	<i>Bus System around Papeete</i>	59
3.2.8	<i>Walking around Papeete</i>	59
3.3	PAPEETE – CRUISER REPORTS.....	59
3.3.1	<i>Baraka – June 2008 – Anchorage Point Venus</i>	59
3.3.2	<i>Nine of Cups – 2009 – Exploring Tahiti by Car</i>	60
3.3.3	<i>Visions of Johanna - June 2010</i>	61
3.3.4	<i>Whoosh - June 2010</i>	62
3.3.5	<i>Fellow Traveler – June 2010</i>	66
3.3.6	<i>Nakia - July 2010</i>	67
3.3.7	<i>Beaujoulais-Marina Taina – June 2010</i>	68
3.3.8	<i>Mr John – Anchoring in Papeete – 2008</i>	69
3.3.9	<i>Bluebottle – Tahiti Yacht Club – June 2010</i>	69

3.4	PORT PHAETON ANCHORAGE AND TAHITI NAUTIC CENTER	70
3.4.1	<i>Lungta – February 2019</i>	70
3.4.2	<i>Periclees – June 2011</i>	71
3.4.3	<i>Slip Away – Tahiti Nautic Center - February 2011</i>	71
3.4.4	<i>Dreamcaper – April 2011.....</i>	73
3.4.5	<i>Slip Away – Taravao – February 2011</i>	73
3.5	TETIAROA (MARLON BRANDO'S ISLAND).....	74
4	MOOREA.....	77
4.1	CAUTION – DINGHY THEFT	77
4.2	BOAT SERVICES.....	77
4.2.1	<i>Refrigeration Repair.....</i>	77
4.2.2	<i>ATM's.....</i>	77
4.2.3	<i>Ferry to Papeete.....</i>	77
4.2.4	<i>Grocery Stores.....</i>	78
4.2.5	<i>Obtaining Boat Parts.....</i>	79
4.2.6	<i>Moorea's Bus System.....</i>	79
4.2.7	<i>Bicycle Rentals</i>	81
4.2.8	<i>Car Rentals.....</i>	81
4.3	VAIARE.....	81
4.3.1	<i>Mary Ann II – 2017</i>	81
4.4	COOKS BAY.....	83
4.4.1	<i>Jacaranda – August 2018.....</i>	83
4.4.2	<i>Mary Ann II – 2017</i>	83
4.4.3	<i>Jacaranda – July 2017.....</i>	84
4.4.4	<i>Consensus – July 2017</i>	84
4.4.5	<i>Spunky – March 2017.....</i>	84
4.4.6	<i>New Morning - September 2011 - Cook's Bay</i>	85
4.4.7	<i>Eden -- July 2011 -- Cook's Bay, Moorea.....</i>	86
4.4.8	<i>Soggy Paws – July 2011 - Cooks Bay.....</i>	87
4.4.9	<i>Baraka – June 2008 – Cooks Bay.....</i>	87
4.4.10	<i>Mr John – 2008 – Cooks Bay</i>	87
4.5	OPUNOHU BAY	88
4.5.1	<i>Enavigo – July 2018 – Theft Warning.....</i>	88
4.5.2	<i>Mary Ann II – 2017</i>	88
4.5.3	<i>Spunky – March 2017.....</i>	89
4.5.4	<i>New Morning - Aug 2012 - Shrimp Farm.....</i>	90
4.5.5	<i>New Morning - Sep 2011 - Opunohu Bay.....</i>	90
4.5.6	<i>Eden -- July 2011 -- Opunohu Bay, Moorea.....</i>	90
4.5.7	<i>Nakia – July 2010 – Opunohu Bay.....</i>	91
4.5.8	<i>Baraka – June 2008 – Opunohu Bay</i>	92
4.5.9	<i>Ventana - Diving In and Near Opunohu Bay - 2003.....</i>	93
4.5.10	<i>Mr. John – 2008 – Papetoai Bay (Reef Anchorage W of Opunohu)</i>	94
4.5.11	<i>Mr John – 2008 – Robinson's Cove (Hiking up to Belvedere)</i>	94
4.6	OTHER MOOREA ANCHORAGES	94
4.6.1	<i>Haapiti (SW Coast) – Surfer's Anchorage</i>	95
4.6.2	<i>Maharepa.....</i>	95
4.6.3	<i>Vaiare.....</i>	96
5	HUAHINE	96
5.1	CRUISER'S REPORTS - FARE	96

5.1.1	<i>Consensus – July 2017</i>	96
5.1.2	<i>Slip Away – July 2011</i>	96
5.1.3	<i>Moondance - September 2011 - Fare Snorkeling</i>	98
5.1.4	<i>DYC – 2011 – Fare</i>	98
5.1.5	<i>Baraka – July 2008 – Hieva in Fare</i>	98
5.1.6	<i>Mr John –July 2008 – Heiva in Fare</i>	99
5.1.7	<i>Nakia – July 2011 – Fare</i>	99
5.1.8	<i>Mr John – 2008 - Fare</i>	100
5.2	CRUISER’S REPORTS – AVEA BAY	101
5.2.1	<i>Slipaway – July 2011</i>	101
5.2.2	<i>Nakia – July 2011 – Baie Avea</i>	101
5.2.3	<i>Mr John – July 2008 – Baie Avea</i>	101
5.3	CRUISER’S REPORTS – BOURAYNE BAY	102
5.3.1	<i>Slipaway – July 2011</i>	102
5.3.2	<i>Mr John – 2008 – Port Bourayne</i>	102
5.3.3	<i>Mr John – 2008 – Motu Vaioarea</i>	103
5.4	CRUISER’S REPORTS – HAAPU BAY	103
5.4.1	<i>Slipaway – July 2011</i>	103
5.4.2	<i>Nakia – July 2011</i>	103
5.5	CRUISER’S REPORTS – EAST SIDE OF HUAHINE	103
5.5.1	<i>Alegria - August 2013</i>	103
5.5.2	<i>Visions of Johanna – June 2010</i>	103
5.6	CRUISER’S REPORTS – OTHER	104
5.6.1	<i>Periclees – Bicycling Huahine</i>	104
5.6.2	<i>Visions of Johanna – Late June 2010</i>	105
5.6.3	<i>Vesper – July pre 2008 – Sightseeing by Car</i>	106
6	RAIATEA	107
6.1	SERVICES IN RAIATEA	107
6.1.1	<i>Pitufa – 2014: Haulout</i>	107
6.1.2	<i>Alegria - August 2013 - Updates on Raiatea Services & Dockage</i>	107
6.1.3	<i>Pua’ena - August 2011 - Electrical/Electronic Work</i>	108
6.1.4	<i>Sail Repair</i>	108
6.1.5	<i>Freedom – August 2010 – Fuel in Uturoa</i>	108
6.1.6	<i>Nakia – July 2010 – Marina Uturoa</i>	109
6.1.7	<i>Uturoa General</i>	109
6.1.8	<i>Checking Out in Raiatea</i>	110
6.1.9	<i>Raiatea – Medical</i>	110
6.1.10	<i>Flying Guests In</i>	111
6.1.11	<i>Soggy Paws - Touring Raiatea by Car or Scooter</i>	112
6.2	RAIATEA’S NORTH COAST (UTUROA AND CARENAGE AREA).....	113
6.2.1	<i>Consensus – 2017 – Marina Apooiti</i>	113
6.2.2	<i>Noonsite – 2015– Theft and Yacht Boardings</i>	113
6.2.3	<i>Soggy Paws - July 2011 – Anchoring and Mooring Options Near Uturoa</i>	113
6.2.4	<i>Soggy Paws - July 2011 - Anchoring / Mooring Options Near the Carenage</i>	115
6.2.5	<i>Slipaway - July 2011 - Uturoa</i>	116
6.2.6	<i>Tackless II – Early 2005 – Saturday Night Dancing in Uturoa</i>	116
6.2.7	<i>Mr John – Carenage & Apooiti Marina Area</i>	117
6.2.8	<i>Raiatea Carenage – Tackless II – 2004</i>	117
6.2.9	<i>Raiatea Carenage – Sloepmouch - 2003</i>	119
6.2.10	<i>Baraka – 2008 - Marina Apooiti</i>	119

6.3	CRUISER'S REPORTS – RAIATEA EAST COAST.....	119
6.3.1	YOLO – July 2011- <i>Raiatea's SE Coast</i>	119
6.3.2	<i>Nakia</i> – July 2010 – <i>Baie Hotopuu</i>	120
6.3.3	<i>Nakia</i> – July 2010 – <i>Baie Opoa (Marae Taputapuatea)</i>	120
6.3.4	YOLO – July 2011 – <i>Faaroa</i>	121
6.3.5	<i>Nakia</i> – July 2010 – <i>Faaroa</i>	121
6.3.6	<i>Nakia</i> – July 2010 – <i>Vairahi</i>	122
6.3.7	<i>Nakia</i> – July 2010 – <i>Motu Taoru</i>	122
6.4	CRUISER'S REPORTS – RAIATEA'S SOUTH COAST	123
6.4.1	<i>Jacaranda</i> – June 2018 – <i>Passe Nao Nao & Motu Nao Nao</i>	123
6.4.2	YOLO – July 2011 – <i>Passe Nao Nao & Motu Nao Nao</i>	123
6.4.3	<i>Visions of Johanna</i> – July 2010 – <i>Ile Nao Nao</i>	124
6.4.4	<i>Nakia</i> – July 2010 – <i>Ile Nao Nao</i>	124
6.5	CRUISER'S REPORTS – RAIATEA'S WEST COAST.....	125
6.5.1	<i>Nakia</i> – July 2010 – <i>Baie Ereea</i>	125
6.5.2	<i>Nakia</i> – August 2010 – <i>Near Baie Faafau</i>	125
6.5.3	<i>Rutea</i> – July 2011 – <i>Toamaro Anchorage, SW Corner Raiatea (AVOID)</i>	126
7	TAHAA	126
7.1	BOAT SERVICES.....	126
7.2	TAHAA'S SOUTH COAST	127
7.2.1	<i>Moondance</i> - September 2011 - <i>Baie Apu</i>	127
7.2.2	<i>Eden</i> - August 2011 -- <i>Baie Apu / Taravana Yacht Club, Tahaa</i>	127
7.2.3	<i>Nakia</i> – August 2010 – <i>Baie Apu / Taravana Yacht Club</i>	128
7.2.4	<i>Visions of Johanna</i> – July 2010 – <i>Taravana Yacht Club</i>	129
7.3	TAHAA'S WEST COAST	129
7.3.1	<i>Consensus</i> – <i>Coral Garden & Vanilla Tour – 2017</i>	129
7.3.2	<i>Baie Tapuamu</i> - <i>New Morning</i> - 2012.....	130
7.3.3	DYC – <i>Baie Hurepiti & Vanilla Tour</i>	130
7.3.4	YOLO – July 2011 – <i>Baie Hurepiti</i>	131
7.3.5	<i>Nakia</i> – August 2010 – <i>Baie Hurepiti</i>	132
7.3.6	<i>Nakia</i> – August 2010 – <i>Baie Tapuamu</i>	132
7.3.7	<i>Baraka</i> – July 2008 – <i>Tapuamu, Tahaa</i>	133
7.3.8	DYC – <i>Ile Tautau & Coral Garden</i>	133
7.3.9	<i>Nakia</i> – August 2010 – <i>Ile Tautau & Coral Garden</i>	133
7.3.10	<i>Alegria</i> - August 2013 - <i>Ile Tautau</i>	134
7.3.11	<i>Tackless II</i> – 2005 – <i>Ile Tautau & Coral Garden</i>	134
7.4	TAHAA'S NORTH COAST	135
7.4.1	<i>Nakia</i> – August 2010 – <i>Baie Pueheru</i>	135
7.4.2	<i>Mr. John</i> – 2008 – <i>Puheru</i>	135
7.5	TAHAA'S EAST COAST.....	135
7.5.1	<i>Spunky</i> – June 2017 – <i>Haamene Bay</i>	135
7.5.2	<i>Spunky</i> – May 2017 – <i>Theft/Boarding in Haamene Bay</i>	136
7.5.3	<i>Alegria</i> - August 2013 - <i>Haamene Bay</i>	136
7.5.4	<i>Moondance</i> - September 2011 - <i>Haamene Bay</i>	136
7.5.5	<i>Soggy Paws</i> – July 2011 – <i>Haamene Bay</i>	136
7.5.6	<i>Mr John</i> – 2008 – <i>Haamene Bay</i>	138
7.5.7	<i>Nakia</i> – August 2010 – <i>Ile Mahaea (near Passe Toahotu)</i>	138
7.5.8	DYC – <i>Motu Mahaea</i>	139
7.5.9	<i>Ventana</i> – <i>Diving in Tahaa</i> – 2003	139

8	BORA BORA.....	139
8.1	GENERAL INFORMATION	139
8.1.1	<i>Caution – Dinghy Theft.....</i>	139
8.1.2	<i>Consensus – August 2018</i>	140
8.1.3	<i>Dreamcaper – May/June 2011 - Passenger Arrival by Air</i>	140
8.1.4	<i>Nakia – August 2010 – Bora Bora General.....</i>	143
8.1.5	<i>Visions of Johanna – July 2010.....</i>	144
8.2	VAITAPE TOWN, BBYC, MAI KAI AND BLOODY MARY'S	144
8.2.1	<i>Begonia – Update – July 2017</i>	144
8.2.2	<i>Spunky – Update – June 2017</i>	145
8.2.3	<i>New Morning - Update - July 2012</i>	146
8.2.4	<i>New Morning - Update - Oct 2011.....</i>	147
8.2.5	<i>Bora Bora Yacht Club & New Mai Kai Marina - Update - July 25, 2011</i>	147
8.2.6	<i>Bora Bora Yacht Club Update –June 17, 2011</i>	149
8.2.7	<i>Receiving mail at Mai Kai Marina</i>	149
8.2.8	<i>Nakia – August 2010 – Bloody Mary's.....</i>	150
8.2.9	<i>Nakia – August 2010 – Ile Toopua</i>	150
8.3	EAST SIDE OF BORA BORA	150
8.3.1	<i>New Morning - July 2012 - East Side Anchorages.....</i>	150
8.3.2	<i>YOLO - July 2011 - SE Bora Bora Motu Anchorages</i>	151
8.3.3	<i>Nakia – August 2010 – Motu Tupe.....</i>	151
8.3.4	<i>Nakia – August 2010 – Motu Taurere.....</i>	152
8.3.5	<i>Tackless II - 2004 - Bora Bora's East Side.....</i>	153
8.3.6	<i>Vesper – July Pre 2008 – Bora Bora for Heiva & Mantas</i>	153
8.3.7	<i>Ventana – Diving in Bora Bora – 2003.....</i>	154
8.3.8	<i>Tackless II – September 2004 – Weather, Bora Bora Diving & Etc</i>	154
9	MAUPITI.....	156
9.1.1	<i>From Sunsail Charter Notes</i>	156
9.1.2	<i>From Dream Yacht Charter Notes.....</i>	157
9.1.3	<i>Consensus – August 2018</i>	157
9.1.4	<i>Sara Jean II – July 2011.....</i>	158
9.1.5	<i>Beachhouse – 2010.....</i>	158
9.1.6	<i>Sea Mist – 2010.....</i>	159
9.1.7	<i>Visions of Johanna – 2010</i>	159
10	MOPELIA (AKA MAUPIHAA).....	159
10.1.1	<i>Consensus – August 2018</i>	159
10.1.2	<i>Sara Jean II – July 2011.....</i>	160
10.1.3	<i>Visions of Johanna – August 2010.....</i>	162
10.1.4	<i>Beachhouse 2010 – Entry into Mopelia.....</i>	163
11	BEYOND FRENCH POLYNESIA	165
12	APPENDIX A – FRENCH WEATHER TERMS.....	166

1 Introduction

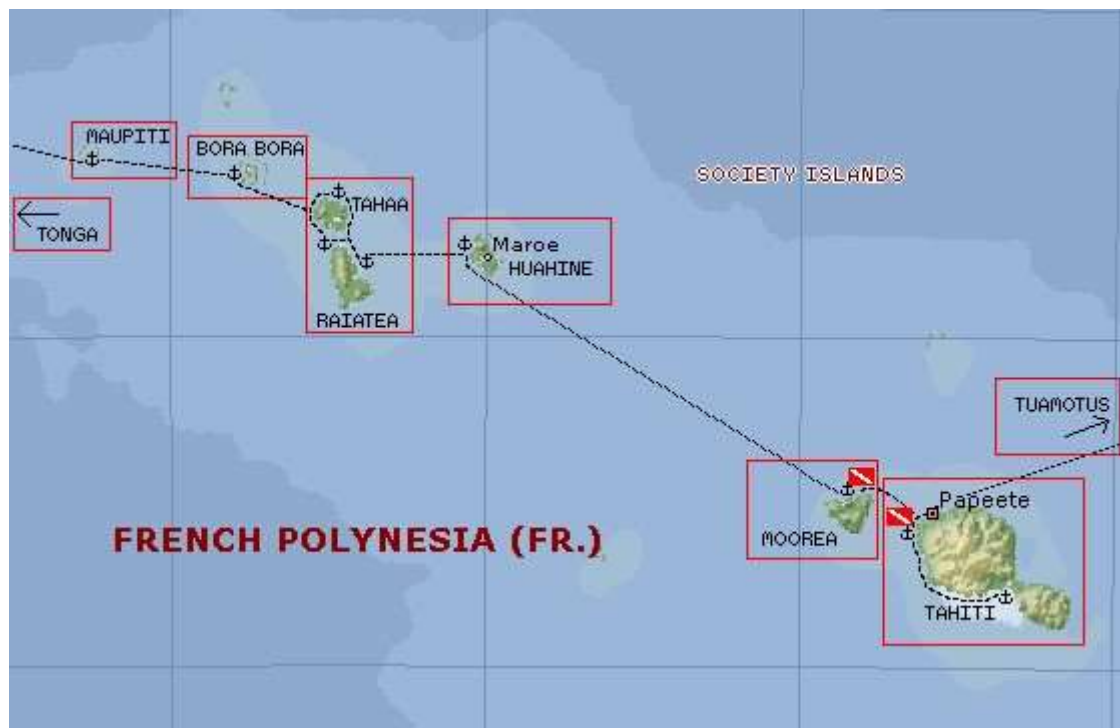
This guide originally started out as a way for s/v Soggy Paws and a few friends to organize notes and various internet sources on Tahiti and the Society Islands, prior to our cruise there in Spring of 2011. Later, it became a way for us to pass on what we've learned while cruising the area in 2011.

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. Right now I am just editing in all the 'cruiser's reports' I have on my hard drive—scavenged from online blogs and emails from friends.

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): hackingfamily.com

1.3 Clearance in and Out

1.3.1 Visa Issues for non-EU Citizens

Jacaranda – September 2018: The French Polynesia Long Stay visa process changes so often that I have revised my document 15 times since I originally put it together. Because I don't want to have to remember to update the Compendium every time they

make a change, I would rather detail the process in my own document and have you see the current details there:

Notes on "How to Obtain a French Polynesia Long Stay Visa" see <http://www.jacarandajourney.com/other-good-stuff>

This should supersede anything written below about visas, which is older and less complete.

Soggy Paws – 2011: Americans and Canadians do not need a visa prior to arriving in French Polynesia. When you clear in (usually in the Marquesas), you are given an automatic 90-day visa. Many other non-EU countries also fall into this category, too. 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. It is possible (but IS illegal) to then cruise the Leewards on your way out of French Polynesia. You might get stopped and checked, but this seems to be rare.

NO VISA EXTENSION IS POSSIBLE IN PAPEETE. Except under exceptional circumstances... medical issues, severe boat issues, etc, you cannot get a visa extension on the spot in Papeete, and those take a lot of paperwork (not covered in the PPJ agent fees).

Americans (and I think Canadians and other non-EU citizens) are given a 90 day visa, which is good for 6 months. This 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 the 6 months does NOT 'reset' the visa. It merely stops the clock. After 6 months from your first clearance, you should be given another 90 days on re-entry.

The only other way to legally stay longer is to apply for a Long Stay Visa in your home country before you leave for French Poly. You need to make 2 trips in person to the French Consulate with your passports, about 3 months apart, and have a lot of other paperwork done. (See the updated Marquesas Compendium for information on getting a Long Stay Visa).

1.3.2 Clearing in to Papeete

Mary Ann II – 2017: Marina Papeete has published a document on clearance procedures. *Ed Note: You can find it in a downloadable PDF format, here:*

<http://svsoggypaws.com/files/ENTRANCE-DEPARTURE from TAHITI and MOOREA.pdf>

Soggy Paws – 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 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 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

1.3.3 Clearing Out of Papeete

Mary Ann II – 2017: Marina Papeete has published a document on clearance procedures. *Ed Note: You can find it in a downloadable PDF format, here:*

<http://svsoggypaws.com/files/ENTRANCE-DEPARTURE from TAHITI and MOOREA.pdf>

Nakia 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)

Soggy Paws 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 3.3.10 for more details.

1.3.4 Clearing Out of 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.

Spunky – 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 (same 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 souvenirshops)). Anyway, as an email address was indicated, I just sent a photo/scan by mail to this address.

1.4 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 that information here (see those Compendiums for details)

If we have information that is specific to the Societies, or different from what we found in the Marquesas and the Toots, we'll add it here later.

1.4.1 Anchoring in Coral

From Soggy Paws. In most of the anchorages in 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 (best)

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.

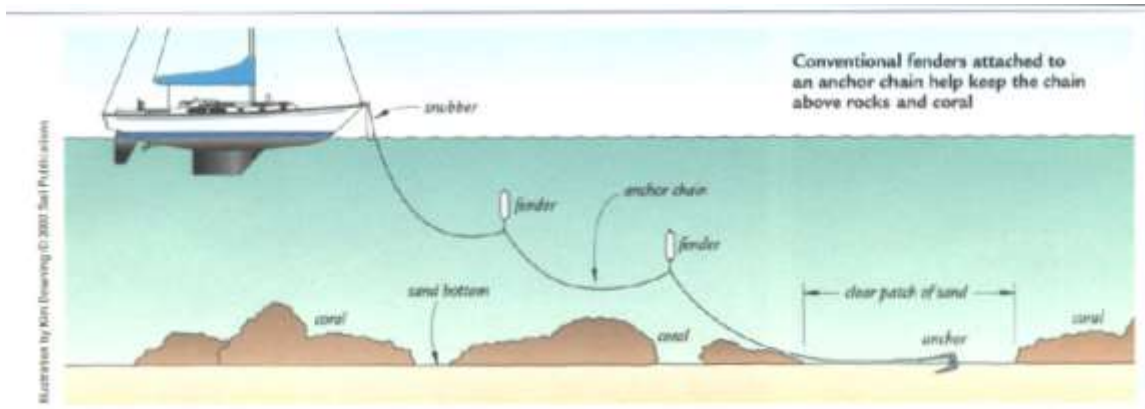


Illustration taken from a July 2002 Sail Magazine Article
 "Fending off the Coral" by David Content

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 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-hefty. Carabiners 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 very helpful to direct the direction the bow needs to go to unwrap the chain. But this is a time where having a dive tank can be a big help—even if you're not an active diver.

Many cruising boats are equipped with dive tanks, so plea on Channel 16 might produce a neighbor with tanks who would dive your chain free for you.

Not anchoring in coral... After spending two seasons in 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.

1.4.2 Marine Protected Areas

Soggy Paws – 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.

As it has already changed location since 2017, here is the current location:

<http://www.ressources-marines.gov.pf/wp-content/uploads/sites/24/2018/07/Brochure-Zones-maritimes-r%C3%A9glement%C3%A9es-en-PF-web-31.07.2018.pdf>

In case it disappears again, I will upload a copy to my Files page also.

Sorry, I could not find an English version. Time to start practicing your French!

1.4.3 Using Out-Island Moorings

Jacaranda – 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 chartered 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 not private

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. Its appears like a hopeless cause but maybe people will get educated by seeing the note in your guide. 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 Connection 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 who's 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!

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.

1.5 Weather

1.5.1 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 passages 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.

1.5.2 Cyclones in the Society Islands

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

Mary Ann II - 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

SON	OND	NDJ	#DJF	#JFM	FMA	MAM	AMJ	MJJ
+0.4	+0.6	+0.6	#+0.5	# +0.4	+0.5	+0.7	+0.9	+1.0

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.

For a good description of the ENSO and SP cyclones.

<http://reliefweb.int/map/indonesia/pacific-region-historical-storm-tracks-months-nov-apr-1956-2009-different-enso> . This article can also be found on Noonsite.

1.5.3 Weather Sources – With Onboard Email/SSB

Jacaranda – September 2018: For Jacaranda's "Weather Information That We Use in French Polynesia" see <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.

Soggy Paws – 2011: In our second season in French Polynesia, what we used most of the time for watching the weather were 3 files:

1. A spot forecast for the location we were in—every 6 hours for 10 days
2. A 'local' GRIB file that gave a fairly detailed forecast for a reasonably small area for about 5 days
3. A 'wide range' GRIB that watched conditions approaching well to the west and south of us. The area we requested was 05S-40S,175W-140W, for the next 10 days. This was about a 40K GRIB file (we had to use Winlink, and our Iridium to receive one that big). This provided a good long range forecast.

We also got the FR.POLY text forecast and the Nadi Fleet codes daily, but rarely looked at them unless we were puzzled by the current wx.

We found 6 possible sources of weather useful while away from internet in French Poly

The French Polynesia text forecast is available via Saildocs in either French 'send fr.poly' or English 'send fr.poly.en' to request. Eric from SV Sarana has very graciously built a translator for the French daily weather forecast. This should really help out the non French speakers that cruise French Polynesia.

1. 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.

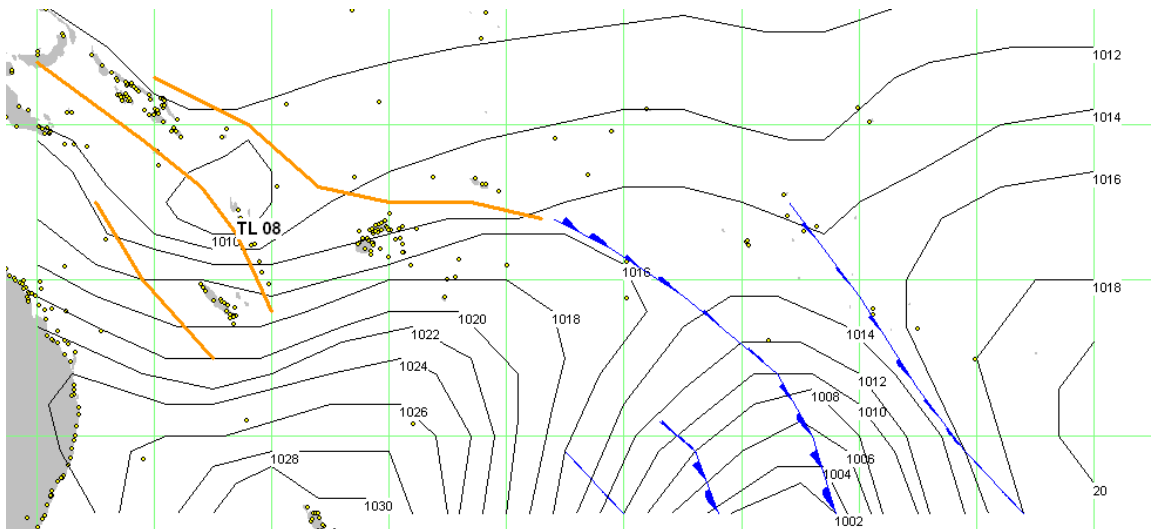
Download a picture of the French Poly weather zones here:

http://www.meteo.pf/images/carte_zones_mar.jpg

A brief list of French Weather Terms is included in the last section of this document. A French Dictionary and/or the French for Cruisers book would be helpful.

2. **The Fiji Met office** 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 on the Pangolin website www.pangolin.co.nz 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

3. **NOAA Hawaii** also produces a text forecast that covers French Poly. 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. **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 French Poly. 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 (Tahiti) times.

PRODUCT	TRANSMISSION		TIMES (Local)		Freqs
	3247.4	5807	9459	13550.5	16340.1
1200 SW PACIFIC MSL ANAL	0645	0600	0615	0630	
1800 SW PACIFIC MSL ANAL		1200	1215	1230	1245
TRANSMISSION SCHEDULE		1300	1315	1330	1345
0000 SW PACIFIC MSL PROG H+ 30		1400	1415	1430	1445
0000 SW PACIFIC MSL PROG H+ 48		1500	1515	1530	1545
0000 SW PACIFIC MSL PROG H+ 72		1600	1615	1630	1645
0000 SW PACIFIC MSL ANAL		1800	1815	1830	1845
0600 SW PACIFIC MSL ANAL	0045	0000	0015	0030	
TRANSMISSION SCHEDULE	0145	0100	0115	0130	
1200 SW PACIFIC MSL PROG H+ 30	0245	0200	0215	0230	

1200	SW PACIFIC MSL PROG H+ 48	0345	0300	0315	0330
1200	SW PACIFIC MSL PROG H+ 72	0445	0400	0415	0430

(subtract 1.9 to get dial frequency)

6. Hawaii Weather Faxes

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

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_ICAO-F_bw.jpg

1.5.4 Weather Sources – Voice

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.

1.5.5 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 I have found to be 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

Current surface analysis:

<https://www.metservice.com/maps-radar/maps/southwest-pacific-low-bandwidth>

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 here's 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/australia/charts/>

NOAA Charts in Color from Hawaii

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

Current Streamline and Streamline Loop:

<http://www.prh.noaa.gov/hnl/graphics/stream.gif>
<http://www.prh.noaa.gov/hnl/graphics/streamloop.gif>

24, 48, 72 Hr SFC Prog for Entire Pacific

<http://www.prh.noaa.gov/hnl/graphics/24hrsfcprog.gif>
<http://www.prh.noaa.gov/hnl/graphics/48hrsfcprog.gif>
<http://www.prh.noaa.gov/hnl/graphics/72hrsfcprog.gif>

Full List of Hawaii Marine Weather Products:

<http://www.prh.noaa.gov/hnl/pages/marine.php>

Satellite Pictures

This is likely available on a marine weather site somewhere, but here's the link I use for Pacific Satellite:

<https://aviationweather.gov/satellite/intl?region=f>

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.

FIJI Met Office

Fiji Met Office Maps and Satellite page

<http://www.met.gov.fj/sat-map.html>

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

French Polynesia Met Office

Text forecast

http://www.meteo.pf/bulletin_marine.php

36 Hour Forecast Map

<http://www.meteo.pf/previsions.php?carte=preiso36>

Satellite photo - French Poly - Updated every half hour

<http://www.meteo.pf/observation.php?carte=pf>

Satellite photo - South Pacific - Updated every 3 hours

<http://www.meteo.pf/observation.php?carte=ps>

Bob McDavitt's Weekly Weathergram

<http://weathergram.blogspot.com>

1.5.6 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](#) [Bluewater Books](#)
If you can't find it, email Bob at mcdavitt@metservice.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>

3. David Sapiane's Weather for the Yachtsman. I downloaded this document from the Pangolin site:

http://www.pangolin.co.nz/jetsam/view_article.php?idx=19

It is an 11-page Word document dated June 2008, with a bunch of good information on terminology and understanding weather for the South Pacific.

4. Some practical tips on planning a passage can be found here:
<http://www.pacificyachtdeliveries.co.nz/weather.htm>
5. 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
6. Check the Pacific Puddle Jump 'Files' section on Weather, there are usually some good, updated documents there.
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/pacificpuddlejumps/>

1.5.7 Professional Weather Routing

Generally, the Marquesas – Tuamotus – Tahiti - Societies 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 mcdavitt – at - metservice.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 – at - 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
Website: www.Ocean-Pro.com
oceanpro.weather@gmail.com
Naples, FL: 239-775-7435
Cell Phone: 239-877-4094
Skype: captcook52@gmail.com

1.6 Obtaining Parts & Supplies

1.6.1 Importing Parts Duty-Free

Mary Ann II – March 2017: For updates on this topic try the [Tahiti Cruiser's Guide](#) .

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 leave 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

From Nine of Cups - SSCA Newsletter January 2010 – To Tahiti

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/ shrink-wrapping 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.

To Huahine – Slipaway – July 2011

I wanted to pass on our experience with having something shipped into French Polynesia. We ended up having our radio shipped to us in Huahine and picked it up at the airport there. It was very easy - we did not use an agent and there was no need for one. Another boat who had spent the past year in Huahine and had several items shipped to them there recommended shipping via either UPS or DHL because FedEx charged a higher fee (8000 XPF on two separate occasions) to clear items through Customs. We had our radio shipped via UPS.

The UPS agent in Papeete is J.A. Cowan & Fils. We found this information on the internet and called their phone number: 54 57 27. We spoke to Jasmina Veron, the Service Secretary, who spoke excellent English. For shipping to Huahine, she told us to address the package to: Yacht In Transit - Boat Name, Boat Owner Name, Huahine, French Polynesia. She also told us to send them an email - to jac@jac.pf - with the tracking number when the item was shipped.

When we sent her the email with the tracking number, Jasmina responded and asked us to send her a copy of our boat document, passport, and our customs entry paperwork. We scanned and emailed all of that information.

Our shipment from Seattle, WA, took 6 days to arrive in Tahiti. Jasmina notified us via email the day before arrival to let us know they expected it the next day. When it arrived, she sent us another email confirming arrival and telling us that they would complete all of the Customs formalities. She then told us Tearu Anau from their Airport Office would be in contact with us. Later that day, we received an email from Tearu letting us know that our package cleared Customs, and she attached an invoice for their Customs clearance fees - 1228 XPF. The invoice indicated their bank account numbers at four different local banks, and we could pay the invoice by depositing the money into their account at any of those banks. After depositing the money at Banque Socredo, we scanned and emailed the payment receipt to Tearu. She then sent us the Air Waybill and advised us on which flight the radio would arrive at the Huahine Airport. (We sent the payment receipt at around 8:30 a.m., and our package arrived that same afternoon.) We went to the airport at the appointed time, showed the Air Waybill to the baggage agent, and they gave us the radio. That was it - piece of cake!

We were very impressed with the service provided by the UPS office here in French Polynesia. They responded promptly to each email we sent to them.

We would highly recommend using UPS if you need to have something shipped here.

1.6.2 Rigging and Sail Repair

Mary Ann II – 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 chandeliers also sell blocks and other rigging part including Oceans2000 and Tahiti Yacht Accessorie Marina Taina.

Pitufa – 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)!

From s/v Pippstrelle 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

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.

1.6.3 Money

The normal currency in French Polynesia is the French Polynesia Franc, usually abbreviated CFP. In June 2010, the exchange rate was 85-90 CFP per US dollar, so a 500-CFP bill is about \$5.50 USD.

1.6.4 Diesel and Gasoline

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!!

Mary Ann II – 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.

Soggy Paws – 2011: If you are a foreign yacht, with the services of an agent, you can get a paper that entitles you to buy fuel duty free throughout the islands at specific marine locations. To the best of our knowledge, diesel and gasoline are available at the following places (not all recognize the duty free certificate):

- Marina Taina in Papeete (duty free certificate recognized)
- Alternate locations in Tahiti
 - 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 Bay
- Moorea, Vaiare - Mobil gas station (on land)
- Fare, Huahine (not on the water)
- Uturoa, Raiatea. The Shell station has a guest dock nearly in the middle of town, offers duty free fuel. The Total station dock is located just north at the head of the small inlet adjacent to the municipal marina, and Total DOES offer duty free diesel. The Total Station is usually easier docking if the trades are blowing as its protected. 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.

1.6.5 Misc Boat Parts

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

Mary Ann II – March 2017: The new online [Tahiti Cruiser's Guide](#) has (depending on pdf text size) 81 pages of information for acquiring parts or services in the area around Papeete and Tahiti.

New Morning - 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/>

1.6.6 Propane

Jacaranda – 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.

Mary Ann II – March 2017: As of 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.

Soggy Paws – 2011 – Gravity Filling Your Own Tank: If you cannot get your tank filled, one option is to get a local tank and fill it with an adapter via gravity fill.

Propane fill fittings are non-standard around the world, and French Polynesia is no exception. In addition, throughout the islands, everyone just exchanges propane tanks.

All the filling goes on back in Tahiti. So it is a bit difficult to get US propane tanks refilled.

Note: There is a GREAT discussion on propane issues for Americans cruising with propane in foreign countries on s/v Whoosh's web page:

<http://www.svsarah.com/Whoosh/LPG%20in%20Europe.htm>

The best option is to arrive in French Polynesia with a 'gravity fill' setup as described on Whoosh's site... basically the fitting end for YOUR tank and 5-6' length of hose. Then go to a local hardware store and buy the French propane fitting. Then you can 'rent' a local tank, and gravity fill from the local tank to your tank. This method works pretty well—hoist the local tank upside down in your rigging, or on your dinghy davit, and place your tank below it. Be patient and eventually your tank will be mostly full.

Here is the info I found on the internet about the 'gravity fill' technique:

1. Always wear gloves, as the propane that comes out of a tank it is very cold and can freeze your skin.
2. Connect the tank to be filled with the fuel source.
3. Open the bleed valve of the tank to be filled, the main tank valve and the fuel source valve.
4. As soon as liquid propane starts to spurt from the bleed valve, close the fuel source, the main tank valve and the bleed valve.
5. Disconnect the fueling line as described above.

The 'full' tank must be inverted and placed above the empty tank so liquid, not gaseous propane will flow. The connectors and hoses must be purged of air before connection to the tanks. Internal pressure should be released on the empty tank, then the full tank's pressure plus gravity will transfer liquid propane to the empty tank. It is not possible, without a special pump or a vapor relief valve on the tank being filled, to totally refill the empty tank. But $\frac{3}{4}$ full is possible, and should get you to Tahiti where you can get a refill.

It is dangerous to overfill a tank - they should be filled only 75% to allow for the liquid to expand if heated.

The 'propane' in French Polynesia is not propane, but butane. It burns a little cooler than propane, but most stoves work OK on it.

Jacaranda – Sep 2018: Your write up is spot on with the exception of a couple of comments. As a kid I use to work in a trailer park and filled about 40 tanks a week. We used basically the same method but with a huge master propane tank. I have filled propane tanks many times in FP and can always get the tank 100% full. The key is to open the bleed screw so you get a loud hiss until it starts to squirt liquid gas, then stop filling. I use a digital luggage scale to determine 1. How empty it is to start and 2. Throughout the process to determine the state of fill.

1.6.7 Groceries

Mary Ann II – March 2017: The March 2017 version of the 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. Mary Ann II conducted a price comparison of a standard UK shopping cart (used to measure inflation and regional variation) in the UK and compared it to the prices at Champion in Papeete. We found food to only be 23% more expensive than the UK. For the details check out Noonsite March 2017.

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

There are also good groceries available in...

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

See each section for more details.

1.6.8 Water

We've gathered from various sources this list of where fresh water might be obtained ashore in the Societies.

- There is a 'potable water' spigot at Tahiti Yacht Club, accessible by dinghy, or by rafting up, from a dock with the big boat.
- Marina Taina, Papeete
- Marina Papeete has potable water on the docks
- The beach at Opunohu Baie in Moorea has 2 open showers in the park that can be used for filling jugs. You will need a funnel and length of hose. We have used this for jerry jugging water for dishes, clothes and sun showers
- There is NO water at the fuel dock in Cooks Bay
- The main quai in Fare, Huahine. Check with the Dive Shop to obtain the key. They do charge a fee for water.
- The visitor's dock at Marina Apooiti, 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

1.6.9 Obtaining Medication and Prescription Drugs

Kandu - 2017: I wanted to offer a pharmacist for all of French Polynesia.

Patrick Ly 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.

Contact Info:

Patrick Ly

pharmaciedetiarei@mail.pf

+689 87 79 16 93

1.7 Getting Visitors In and Out

We've already got friends inquiring about visiting us. And 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 offers domestic flights to other destinations in **French Polynesia**, and Air Moorea 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. <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 re-provisioning. 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.

Note: See the Bora Bora section for Dream Caper's comments on friends visiting in BB.

Jacaranda – 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.

1.8 Communications

1.8.1 VHF

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 Radio Nets

With most English-speaking boats limited to 3 months in French Polynesia, the English SSB nets that are established in one year never seem to perpetuate into the following year. What seems to work well is to organize a net in the Marquesas on 6 or 8Mhz as boats get ready to leave the Marquesas. Understand when organizing that the Marquesas is on a weird time zone (-9.5 UTC), ½ hour before the Tuamotus and Tahiti, which are on -10UTC. Planning for this time zone change ahead of time helps reduce the confusion in the long run.

In 2018, the Polynesian Magellan net (operating for the past 3 1/2 years) is on 8.137 0400Z and 1800Z

Important Note: In 2010, we had a bunch of trouble communicating between boats in the Tuamotus and boats in the Societies on 8Mhz SSB. Boats in transit between the Tuamotus could talk to both sides, but plan for some amount of 'radio silence' when you arrive in Pape'ete. It seemed like one or two days a week we had good comms, but the rest of the time, we could not hear the Tuamotus boats from the Societies at all. The mountainous areas in the Societies makes radio contact somewhat spotty between locations in the Societies. We were fortunate to have enough organization to our SSB net by then to use relays, and to switch off towards the end of the net to a 4Mhz frequency. In 2011, this was not so much of a problem (propagation is getting better, and 6Mhz seems to do better).

Though we have no specific knowledge of them, there is probably a French net and probably a German net operating on other frequencies. If you speak French, the French net would probably be the best source of information, because the French boats are more 'plugged in' and can stay longer in French Polynesia than most English-speaking boats.

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. Warmup starts 0300Z. Rollcall starts at 0310Z. You can join the roll call either during warmup or at the end of roll call when net relays ask for additional boats to join. There is usually someone onboard that can make a phone patch for you. Also you can call in to obtain a radio check, before or after the formal roll call.

1.8.3 Telephones & Cell Phones

Mary Ann II – March 2017: As of 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.

Soggy Paws – 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..

1.8.4 Internet Access

Mary Ann II – March 2017:

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 surer 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.

Soggy Paws – 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) 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 pre-download anything you MIGHT need to your computer ahead of time (programs and web pages we have recommended in this Compendium, for example!!)

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

Jacaranda - September 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.

Soggy Paws – 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!).

I did 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).

And Radio Australia on 9580 at 1700 UTC.

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.

News via Email

Jacaranda – 2018: We use the NPR (US National Public Radio) news feed when away from internet. It gives a headline with a short 2-3 line of data.

<http://www.npr.org/sections/news/>

Soggy Paws – 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>

1.9 Diving

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 guides 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.
- Diving in Tahiti, A Diver's Guide to French Polynesia, Thierry Ziesman covers diving in the Society Islands pretty well.

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 Haulout, Storage, and Repair Facilities

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

- Tahiti Nautic Center in Port Phaeton at the south end of the main island of Tahiti
- Techni-Marine in Papeete
- 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).

1.10.1 Techni-Marine in Papeete

Mary Ann II –March 2017: Techni-Marine. 40 43 02 22

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.

Pitufa – 2014: We cannot recommend the haul-out facilities at **Technimarine** in Papeete. It's expensive, the personnel was 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.

Soggy Paws – 2011: There is an advertisement for Techni-Marine in the 2011 Yachtsman's Guide (a PDF file downloadable from the internet, see Printed Sources).

They have 3 travelifts-the largest is 300 tons. The can accommodate monohulls and multihulls. Contact Techni Marine at 430 222 or technimarine@mail.pf

<http://www.technimarine.pf>

Close to Papeava and Papeete Fishing Port

Nine of Cups – 2009: Haul-Out at TechniMarine

From SSCA bulletin January 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 was another \$700. Note that the boatyard does not accept credit cards.

1.10.2 Tahiti Nautic in Port Phaeton, Tahiti

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

Lungta – February 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! 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!

1.10.3 Raiatea Carenage

Pitufa – 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.

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

1.10.4 CNI Boatyard Raiatea

Chantier Naval des Iles
Raiatea, French Polynesia

Email: cni@mail.pf
www.cnisl.com

Jacaranda – September 2018: You should add a bullet in your haulout list for the CNI yard Raiatea.

Unknown Boat – Noonsite 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 pulled 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.

1.11 Eating the Fish (Ciguatera!)

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.

Soggy Paws - 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!

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.

Jacaranda: Linda from s/v Jacaranda has compiled a much more comprehensive look at ciguatera. You can download it from their website, here:

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

Look for "You Gonna Eat That Fish?" Info about Ciguatera

1.12 Cruising Sources

We are indebted to the people and organizations below for documenting their experiences and sharing them with us. We hope they don't mind that we've gathered their comments into this document to share with other cruisers who don't have internet

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.

Where it's important, we've annotated the contributions. But every section is a mix of several sources.

1.12.1 Cruiser Reports

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.

Heart of Gold (late 1990's) - We are indebted to Jim and Sue Corenman for their Letters from South Pacific, originally published in Latitude 38 in the late 1990's, referenced in our Weather section, but also which contain a bunch of still-relevant information about cruising in the South Pacific.

Vesper (2003) - <http://sailvesper.org>

Ocelot (The Hacking Family) (2005) - This is a family traveling around the world on a catamaran. They have done a great job documenting where they've been and what they've learned. Here is their web page for the Societies. There is a lot of other useful information about French Polynesia, and other Pacific destinations on other pages of their website.

http://hackingfamily.com/Landfalls/French_Polynesia/societies_map.htm

We arrived in Tahiti in August of 2003, and left the boat there for five months while we flew back to the States. When we got back in January, we spent two months hopping back and forth between Moorea and Tahiti, doing quite a bit of diving. With the press of visitors, we sailed to Huahine, then stayed for a few days before sailing to Raiatea. We had a night or two there and at Tahaa. Then to Bora Bora for a week, and back to Raiatea. We stayed in Raiatea for about a month, including both Jon's and Amanda's birthdays. Then to Bora Bora for a night, and a week or so at Maupiti before jumping off for Tonga.

Tackless II (2004-2005) - T2 is a 44' CSY center cockpit cruiser (5.5' draft). They first came into French Polynesia in 2004, left their boat in Raiatea Carenage for 7 months, and continued west in 2005.

<http://www.thetwocaptains.com/logbook/frenchpolynesia.htm>

Baraka (2008) - Baraka arrived in Tahiti in June of 2008 and left the Societies in August

<http://svbaraka.com/societieslog.htm>

Mata'irea (2007) - They transited through French Polynesia in 2007

<http://matairea.blogspot.com>

Iron Bark (2007) - They transited through French Polynesia in 2007.

<http://anniehill.blogspot.com/>

Migration (2008-2009) - Migration is a trimaran with a beam of 25' and 4'9" draft. They entered French Polynesia from the southeast in 2008, and traveled NW toward Tahiti. They left the boat in Tahiti for cyclone season, and then went back to the northern Tuamotus enroute to the Marquesas from Papeete in 2009.

Most of their comments in this booklet come from Bruce's website. Bruce has also contributed a few comments via the PPJ Yahoo Group.

<http://brucebalan.com/migrations>

Migrations 10 and Migrations 11 cover their 2 trips through the Tuamotus in 2008 and 2009.

Mr John VI (2008) - These comments came from a PDF file floating around on the web called 'Mr John's guide to French Polynesia'. It seems to be a compendium of his own experience in 1987 and revisiting in 2008, and shared experiences from other yachts. Useful guide and it includes some nice sketch charts which are not included here, so Google for it and download a copy for yourself.

Mr. John IV is a Bristol 35.5 with a fairly shallow draft (for a monohull). He has a tendency to want to anchor in shallow water, so if you have boat with a draft over about 5 feet, take care!

Mr. John also has a blog, where they elaborate more on their experiences at each place.
<http://yachtmrjohn.blogspot.com>

Slapdash (2008) - Slapdash is a smallish catamaran crewed by a youngish couple on a fast trip around the world. Their log is great reading. <http://www.theslapdash.com>

Nine of Cups (2009) - Nine of Cups came in from Chile via the southern route, arriving in the Gambiers. They got hauled and did some fairly major repairs in Tahiti. Nine of Cups is a deep draft 44' cruiser.

<http://www.nineofcups.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' blog is here: <http://vofj.blogspot.com>

Visions is a 62' custom racer/cruiser with a 8 knot average cruising speed and a 6'8" draft.

Soggy Paws (2010 & 2011) - Soggy Paws spent 2010 in the Tuamotus and Marquesas, wintered in Hawaii, and came back to French Polynesia, revisiting the Tuamotus in May and the Societies in June-Aug of 2011.

Soggy Paws is a CSY 44, a 44 foot monohull with a 5.5' draft.

Soggy Paws' blog is here:

<http://svsoggypaws.blogspot.com>

Whoosh (2010) - Whoosh 's major contribution is to the Pape'ete information.

You can find Whoosh's log at:

<http://www.svsarah.com/Whoosh/WhooshUpdateLog.html>

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>

Slipaway (2010-2011) - Jan and Rich on Slipaway 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.

Slipaway's website is <http://slipaway.net/>

Periclees (2011) - Angus and Rolande on Periclees passed through the Societies in June/July 2011.

<http://www.sailblogs.com/member/periclees/>

Mahina Tiare III (2010/2011) - John and Amanda Neal run a custom Offshore Sailing Experience business call Mahina Expeditions. They have criss-crossed the Pacific and shared their experiences on their website and on noonsite.com.

<http://www.mahina.com/>

Sete Mares (2011) - Sete Mares is a 60' catamaran. John and Marie-Andrea cruised through French Polynesia in 2011.

<http://www.sailblogs.com/member/andreatsea/>

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>

Eden (2011) - Eden is a Nordhavn 47 with a 5' draft. Adam and Eve cruised through French Polynesia in 2011.

<http://seekingeden.com>

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/>

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>

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

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

Jacaranda (2016-2018): 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.

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.

Enavigo (2018): Steve Maine and Jody Windmiller

1.12.2 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.

1.12.3 Pacific Puddle Jump Yahoo Group

This is a 'group' on Yahoo 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.

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/pacificpuddlejump/>

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 Yahoo and then sign up for this group. Be sure to explore the Files and Links pages, there is lots more information there.

1.12.4 Noonsite

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.

<http://www.noonsite.com>

1.12.5 Seven Seas Cruising Association

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.

<http://www.ssca.org>

1.12.6 Sea Seek

This appears to be a French-maintained site that covers French Polynesia.

[http://www.sea-seek.com/#Archipel de la Société](http://www.sea-seek.com/#Archipel_de_la_Société)

They have assembled some information (using Google Earth and Maxsea Chartlets). But it is mostly in French. It is possible to use Google or Babelfish Translate functions.

1.13 Printed Sources

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.

1.13.1 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 invaluable reference for French terms for cruising things... like engine repair, dockage, etc.

1.13.2 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.

1.13.3 Charlie’s Charts of Polynesia

[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.

1.13.4 South Pacific Anchorages – Warwick Clay

[South Pacific Anchorages](#), Warwick Clay, 2nd Edition, 2001, pages 22-33

1.13.5 Guide to Navigation and Tourism in French Polynesia (French)

[Guide to Navigation and Tourism in French Polynesia](#), Patrick Bonnette & Emmanuel Deschamps, 2001 This book 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).

1.13.6 The Pacific Crossing Guide – RCC Pilotage Foundation

[The Pacific Crossing Guide](#), published by the Royal Cruising Club Pilotage Foundation in association with the Ocean Cruising Club. Originally edited by Michael Pocock, and Revised by Ros Hogbin. We have the 2nd Edition published in 2003. Amazon has a version dated 2013.

1.13.7 Landfalls of Paradise – Earl Hinz

[Landfalls of Paradise](#), Earl Hinz, 5th Edition, 2006, University of Hawaii Press.

1.13.8 Pacific Crossing Notes – Nadine Slavinski

[Pacific Crossing Notes](#), Nadine Slavinski, 2015, Rolling Hitch Press

1.13.9 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.

2015 Update – Soggy Paws: When I googled, I found this link:

http://www.moorings.com/files/ASSETS/Base_Guide/Tahiti_GuideGB.pdf

1.13.10 NEW Tahiti Cruiser's Guide Online

Cruising Guide for Papeete – New 2017 - 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).

<http://www.tahiticruisersguide.com/>

If you find a service or store that is not listed please send in an update

1.13.11 Dream Yacht Charters Guide to the Leeward Islands

Downloaded from Dream Yacht Charters site. Copy posted here:

<http://svsoggypaws.com/files/#frpoly>

1.13.12 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.

1.13.13 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.

2 Passage Reports

2.1 Tuamotus to Papeete

2.1.1 Slapdash – 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.

2.1.2 *Nakia – Apataki to Papeete – July 2010*

The next day we left for a two night sail to Papeete, It was a rolly 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.

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 desitnation 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 *Migration – 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).*

3 Tahiti

Guidebooks:

Davock – Pg 64-146

Bonnette – Pg 179-216

3.1 Approach, Arrival, and Formalities

3.1.1 Entering Tahiti Harbor

Jacaranda – September 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.

Consensus – July 2018: The north pass is the large shipping pass and it is very easy, large and straight forward to go in and 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!

3.1.2 Transiting from Downtown area to Taina Marina

Jacaranda – September 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 have 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.

3.2 Papeete – General Services

Cruising Guide for Papeete – 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. Can be downloaded as a pdf

<http://www.tahiticruisersguide.com/>

If you find a service or store that is not listed please send in an update

3.2.1 Provisioning

Lungta – Feb 2019: While in Pape'ete, we were introduced to a shop that we think others might also be interested in. It's called Eco Vrac, and they sell 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.

Also on that block is an auto-parts shop and a nice fabric shop called Arii which sells fabric with beautiful Polynesian prints and clothing made from that fabric.

Alegria - August 2013 - Update on Duty Free Liquor Rules: 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 here. Of course, folks do try to work around this.

Soggy Paws – 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.

Beaujolais – June 2010: There is a Carrefour hypermarket just 5 mins from the Marina Taina (turn left out of the gate). Also at the Carrefour you can buy a local pay as you go phone if you need one or just a sim card, but take your passport if you do want to buy one. There are plenty of nice shops in the little mall and the food selection in Carrefour is brilliant, but the fresh fruit and veg is better at the Market in town.

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.

Duty Free Liquor: 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 hours are Mon to Fri 7am to 11 then 1 until 4pm. Saturday they are open in the morning. 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.

Visions of Johanna – June 2010: Carrefours is awesome. Exit Taina and go left. Excellent cheese, meats, and produce at USA prices or better for most! Otherwise, Champion is a decent market located downtown, and around. ATm's are all over downtown. You can find an ATM machine by gas station south of Taina - exit and go right.

There is a mini Costco type shop named "Cost and Company" that has bulk packaging of some special items such as fruits and nuts, cereals, coffees, paper towels, olives artichoke hearts, pastas and sauces...things you do not find everyday. Their stock is 'hit and miss', and are 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. Phone is 45 54 40.

We also found Kim Fa, a downtown duty free wine/ Heineken /alc bev supplier 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.

3.2.2 Shipping Stuff in or Out

Express Shipping OUT of French Polynesia:

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

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

3.2.3 Dockage & Moorings

See also cruiser reports below for individual opinions on each place.

Consensus (72 ft Oyster with Deep Draft) – July 2017: Both marinas are about the same distance away 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 accidentally (or use someone else's!) on the pontoon system you were using.

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. The restaurants here are expensive and mediocre. It is an easy walk from the dinghy dock to an excellent Carrefour just north of the marina (take a left, you can't miss it). You can bring shopping trolleys to and fro as well. 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.

Mary Ann II – March 2017 - Quai de Yachts – Downtown Papeete: The Quai de Yachts used by cruisers no longer exists.

Spunky – March 2017 – Marina Papeete: 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 baquettes.

The marina is Recommended!

Mary Ann II - March 2017 - Papeete Marina: 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 ten minute walk and there are English movies on Thursday night.

Mary Ann II – March 2017 - Marina Taina

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. 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. The Pink Coconut and the Dingy Bar are in the compound to libations. And two dive shops are also onsite.

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 dingy dock to come ashore.

Visions of Johanna – 2010 - Moorings near Marina Taina: There are 21 mooring balls across the channel just SOUTH of the Marina. They are first come, no rez, and Phillipe (the Marina Taina Manager) says to grab one if you want one, ask Q's later.

Mary Ann II – March 2017 - Tahiti Yacht Club: The anchorage around Tahiti Yacht club is just west of Point Venus and is generally in the twenty meter range. The club charges 1500xpf a week for the dingy dock and access to their hot water showers. They also have good clothes washing facilities. Carrefour is close and several food trucks

come every night. Their moorings are rarely available and cost is high. 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.) You can occasionally get an end tie for a day or two on one of their docks. WiFi is available from adjacent cafe from the WDG pay-as-you-go cards. Staff were very friendly and helpful in finding resources in the area. See the www.tahiticruisersguide.com for details on busing into town or propane.

3.2.4 Sail Repair

There are several sail repair facilities in Tahiti. Check out the [Tahiti Cruiser's Guide](#) for more info.

3.2.5 Other Repairs

Consensus – 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 rewind at a mechanic's shop for a price that wasn't too astronomical for French Polynesia. It helps if you speak some French though!

3.2.6 Touring Tahiti

There are 3 options to tour the island of Tahiti...by bus, by rental car, and by tour operator.

Jacaranda – September 2018 – Recommended Guide:

Tahitian Guide
Corine Mc Kittrick
PHD Polynesian Languages & Civilization

87-75-91-56

makanalani56@yahoo.fr

Excellent island tour. Transportation provided. Fluent in English Can Highly recommend her.

Consensus – 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.

New Morning – July 2011 – Tahiti VIP Tours

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 . Here's his contact information:

Dave's Tahiti VIP Tours

Dave Ellard, American Guide

phone: (689) 79-75-65

email: tahiti1viptours@yahoo.com

Soggy Paws – June 2011 – Car Rental

New Info 2017: Be sure to check out [Tahiti Cruiser's Guide](#) online for more up-to-date info on rental cars in Tahiti.

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, he jumped at it. 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.

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

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 Gauguin 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.

3.2.7 *Bus System around Papeete*

Mary Ann II – March 2017:

Yacht Club Area. 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.

Marina Taina. 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.

3.2.8 *Walking around Papeete*

Mary Ann II – 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.

Spunky – 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).

3.3 *Papeete – Cruiser Reports*

3.3.1 *Baraka – June 2008 – Anchorage Point Venus*

We arrived safely here and are anchored in the lee of Point Venus at night. It is so named because Captain Cook set up an observation point here to watch Venus pass in front of the sun.

We arrived in a night squall, sideways rain with poor visibility, and thought we might have to heave-to or lie ahull until daybreak. But the rain eased, and we nosed in, and found a quiet anchorage. We used both the radar and chart-plotter to make sure we didn't get into trouble.

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 and we stopped at several to take a look. 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.

3.3.3 Visions of Johanna - June 2010

Generalities and Approach: Call Port Captain on CH 12 10 to 15 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.

Marinas: **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. They have very clean, good (cold) showers, nice nautical ambience. Best provisioning around is walkable at Carrefours grocery - take a cart back with goods. 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.

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 than 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.

Tahiti Yacht Club is located along the coast east of Papeete. They have moorings available for visiting yachtsmen.

WIFI: Iorananet and Manaspot as well as Hotspot-WDG. Most locations have at least one of these available.

Customs and Arrival: Agent will do all, or you need to visit Port Captain 1/2 mile north of town quay. Buses travel regularly during the day from Taina to town of Papeete, R/T about 200 fr.

Fuel: Agent can arrange for duty free fuel. I am not certain if it can be done on your own. Duty Free cost was \$3.40 US June 2010. (to contrast, non-duty-free fuel was about \$6/gallon)

Boat Supplies: We used Sin Tung Hing marine for general supplies. Phone is 54 94 53. They have a downtown store, and a satellite at Marina Taina. 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.

Yung Tung is 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.

Nautisport is another well know downtown marine supplier.

Tahiti Yacht Accessories, located at Marina Taina, is another option for marine supplies. Michelle is the owner, cell 74 10 02. They have a good supply of Victron battery chargers, inverters, etc.

Agents: Here is the way the agents charge for their services beyond check-in. TYA's agent, Francesco Cannoni charges 4500f/hr, with a 6% surcharge on his expenses. For instance, we gave him our propane bottles to be filled and he adda 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.

3.3.4 Whoosh - 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 Chandeldry 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.

Duty Free Liquor: Behind the Heineken distributor, the beer/wine merchant offered duty free sales. They (must) deliver to the boat and the price break mentioned by Visions was "a \$10 USD bottle of French wine for \$4 USD", though they did purchase by the case.

Note: Alegria reports in 2013 that they have tightened up the Duty Free Liquor rules. See Section 3.3.10 for more details.

Eating Out: The area adjacent to the Tourist Info Center (we're back to walking along Blvd. Pomare from the pontoons) is, at night, where the Roulottes 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 roulotte sets out tables and chairs, tablecloths and waiters/ waitresses, and then does their various 'cooking shows' to serve their customers. The Asian roulotte got our vote, hands down...but we started at a roulotte 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.

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.

Propane: Easily obtained, provided you have a dinghy and patience. Leave the pontoon via dink and motor NW across the big basin off the pontoons. You are headed in the right direction if you put the floating drydock and the navy auxiliary vessels on the dink's starboard bow. Passing the Navy Base, you bend to the right and approach a bridge, which in fact is the street you would have been on if you'd made it to the 2nd

Nautisport and then passed it by two blocks. As the dink approaches the bridge, you have a commercial wharf on your left...and a very nice stainless ladder right at it's end. Secure the dink there, hump the tank up the ladder, and then walk towards the road with the formidable security fence on your right. You can continue until you arrive at the main (always open) gate...but there's a hole in the fence only 1/3 of the way along, which shortens the walk. Thru the gate or hole, turn right and walk back down the road a short distance, cross over and head for the big propane tank (and the 2nd one, which is now a HUGE Chia Pet ala TV commercials at Xmas time). The drill we all had to go thru was to leave the tank, then show up at the appointed hour that afternoon to fetch & pay. Very narrow time windows...but they're just trying to streamline their yachtie traffic, I think. BTW it's propane, not butane - a bonus. Our 10# tank fill was \$15 USD. The rumor/advice that they only fill tanks 10 years and newer was not, in fact, observed by them.

Groceries: 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 in there, as well...though think 'French OS' for any 'smart' product they sell.

But I had previously left you downtown, so to enjoy a very nice, first class grocery adjacent to the pontoons, turn right at the gate (vs. left) and walk along the park & Blvd. Pomare until you get to the first (and for a long ways, 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.

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...

Fuel: 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.

Dinghy Landings at Marina Tiana: 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.

Marina Amenities: 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).

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. <s>

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 pick up 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.

3.3.5 Fellow Traveler – June 2010

Anchoring: 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.

Prices: I have heard endlessly how expensive things are here. Here is what I bought today:

Great big tuna filet, looking fresh and good: 600/kilo
Brocoli (from US) 395/kilo
Eggplant 280/kilo
Big hunk of brie: 350
Ribeye steak (bone in): 1000/kilo

Alcohol, coca cola, and juices are pricey, so bring as much from Mexico or elsewhere as you can. Frozen meats are cheap: chicken is US brands, US prices. Other stuff, the store brand items are very good and good prices. The tiny Mexican section was pricey...bring that too.

The hardware stores here are pretty good, almost like US. The chandlery, however, leaves a lot to be desired. I found more I needed at Abernathy's in Panama than here. And prices are very high. However, I did buy a new outboard for the dinghy: I asked for a "duty-free" price for a yacht in transit....and they said sure, and it was about 25% off the sticker, about what the same motor in Panama was.

Propane: 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)*

3.3.6 Nakia - July 2010

Here are a couple of things I thought I would pass along to you. We wasted three trips to Kim Fa before we finally got the hang of how to do it, so I hope this saves someone else some time and shoe leather!

Town Quay Dockage Papeete: 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.

Fuel: The Marina Taina fuel dock monitors VHF channel 09. Their hours are:

Monday through Sunday - 0630 – 1200 and 1300 - 1700

The girl told me they do not close for holidays, but a cruiser said they close on Jan 1.

Duty free liquor: Kim Fa is located outside the Heineken distributor in the industrial part of town (out by the Ace hardware and marine stores). You can visit anytime to borrow their price list printout and preview prices in the store. There is no price break for cases of beer or liquor (we didn't ask about wine, but they have an entire room of bottled wines). Not all liquor brands are duty free. They only carry Heineken beer sold by the case (12x650 ml bottles = 2,000 CFP in 2010).

Note: Alegria reports in 2013 that they have tightened up the Duty Free Liquor rules. See Section 3.3.10 for more details.

You cannot actually make your purchase until you have received your final clearance papers (checked out of French Polynesia). Be sure to take all your ship's papers and

passport with you and they will make copies of what they need. We paid cash and didn't ask about credit cards. You will then arrange to have your order delivered to you at either the quay (note your slip number!) or at the marina. It takes them about 24 hours to process the paperwork and make the delivery. By law you are then supposed to depart Papeete and the liquor is to remain untouched until you leave French Polynesia.

Jo-Ann Liu Sing (689-54-56-00) is the most experienced duty free sales person (although we were helped by Anais who did fine with her limited English). Jo-Ann arrives in the morning at around 0900 and after lunch around 1400. But Kim Fa is open:

Monday through Thursday - 0700-1100 and 1330-1630

Friday - 0700-1100 and 1330-1600

Saturday - 0700-1000

Market: 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)!

Roulottes: From the quay docks the 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.

Heiva: Try to be there before the official start of the dance performances (July 8 in 2010) held in the open-air stadium at the end of the waterfront promenade. Rehearsals are held at least two nights prior to opening night and you can walk in and watch for free. They got started around 6 PM and didn't end until 11 PM on the 7th. We were able to take photos/video which is not allowed during actual performances.

3.3.7 *Beaujolais-Marina Taina – 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.

They have 3 restaurants and bars, Casa Bianca is the liveliest bar with happy hour between 5 and 6pm when beers are buy one get one free. But the food there is mediocre to say the least. If you want a really good meal (for the same price as Casa Bianca) try Les Iles des Quais (could be the Quais des Iles???) it's right next to all the big motor yachts.

If you are on a budget then you could always use the Roulotte 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.

They also have a public laundry, the machines take a 9kg load and cost 800xpf's (8 x 100 xpf pieces only). There are 4 machines and the demand is high, but it is open 24/7. The driers are expensive and inefficient.

Trash and water facilities are available, the water is free and good quality, but you should go to the office to pay for disposing of trash. The Fuel dock has both diesel and gasoline which is excellent quality and very clean. There are plenty of places to tie up your dinghy for the whole day of you wish.

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. There is also another shop next to the dive shop behind Casa Bianca. If you can't find what you need there, try Nautisport in town. Take the bus (130xpf'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.

3.3.8 Mr John – Anchoring in Papeete – 2008

The entry at Papeete is easy, even at night. However the channel to Maeva Beach should be done in good visibility, so if you arrive after dark best to anchor just to starboard when inside the fairway buoys or go to the Downtown Papeete Marina, known as Quai de Yachts.

Charts: Maxsea was out in Papeete Pass, not Long but Lat by about 200mtrs..... you still go through between the buoys but you are inside by 200mtrs whilst the Maxsea shows you still between the buoys....not that it matters, as you have leading lights and buoys like crazy..... when you turn right to go down to Maeva beach you shift on to another chart and suddenly it is all spot on.....if you look at the charts on Maxsea in advance you can see this anomaly quite clearly.....

Maeva Beach Anchorage: First anchorage was Maeva Beach, we were a little late arriving and it was dusk when we reached the anchorage so Maeva Beach was an 'easy in' and being shallow it was just up our street.

Lagoon Anchorage: Discovered later that they are running a water ski school at Maeva Beach and even if you are not in their way, it tends to get a little chaotic, so we shifted to the outer reef.... There are a few spots available but we found a good area at 17 34.912S 149 37.346W; I got one anchor just over the drop off and the other a hundred yards onto the sandy plateau, there was about twelve foot of water and the way the anchors set, we weren't going anywhere no matter how it blew.

Note. In normal Trades this whole anchorage is calm however when it goes over 35kts and the wind is S of SE, it hooks around the bottom of the island and shrieks up through the anchorage.

3.3.9 Bluebottle – Tahiti Yacht Club – June 2010

Here is one way to get in to the TYC (June 2010):

The waypoint for the start of the buoyed channel is 17 30.352 S, 149 31.383 W.

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.

You should be able to call the manager on channel 06 on the VHF and he can help you. We are very insecure about entering passes, but we came in about 4.30pm last Saturday and it was ok for us. We are moored at 17 31.4 S, 149 32.2 W.

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 low 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, and the manager, Michel Anton will give you a key to the showers if you ask. His email is:

yctahiti@mail.pf

3.4 Port Phaeton Anchorage and Tahiti Nautic Center

Guidebooks:

Davock – Pg 106

3.4.1 Lungta – February 2019

Lungta – February 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!

3.4.2 *Periclees – 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.

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 and not on the weekend.

There is a public park at the top of the bay with a dock. We walked into Taravao from there in about ten minutes. There are at least three good sized markets with prices sometimes better than Papeete.

We rented a 4 by 4 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 of the roads have bicycle paths.

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.

3.4.3 *Slip Away – Tahiti Nautic Center - February 2011*

We left Slip Away at Tahiti Nautic Center (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. TNC has a website - www.tahitinauticcenter.pf. The marina manager is Yvan Allano, tel 74 85 60, email tnc@mail.pf

TNC's 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.

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.

We were able to catch enough of rainwater for drinking and cooking. There are no laundry facilities at TNC. Yvan told us he knew someone who would do our laundry for 2000 francs, but we were unclear as to how much she would do for that price and opted to do our laundry by hand.

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.

The sailing school broadcasts the laoranet wifi signal, so it's a good strong signal (although occasionally unreliable) in the marina.

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.

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. We could pick up laoranet and Manaspot wifi signals in the bay.

3.4.4 Dreamcaper – 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.

3.4.5 Slip Away – Taravao – February 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.

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.

There is also a good ACE Hardware store in Taravao (a smallish selection of stainless fasteners, bedding compound and marine stuff), as well as a couple of clothing and fabric stores, 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.

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.

LAUNDRY. 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.

PHARMACY. 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.

DENTIST. 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.

DOCTOR. 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.

3.5 Tetiaroa (Marlon Brando's Island)

Tetiaroa is 30 miles from Tahiti. Here's a report from Sete Mares in July 2011:

Report from Sete Mares (Yapluka 60 catamaran) - John Vincent & Mariee-Andree Veilleux

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 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.

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.

So instead 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. So I would highly recommend 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 cruisers 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.

4 Moorea

4.1 Caution – Dinghy Theft

Jacaranda – 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 Oponuhu Bay and also a locked outboard stolen off a dinghy in the small boat harbor of Papetoai near the Tiki anchorage (West side of Oponuhu 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.

Unknown Boat – 2011: *The following was posted on the PPJ Yahoo Group in early 2011, sorry I did not record who posted it. It was part of a post about THEIR dinghy being stolen in Bora Bora, which is also posted in the Bora Bora section. 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.*

4.2 Boat Services

4.2.1 Refrigeration Repair

Slipaway Apr 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 Oponuhu Bay. He works in shorts and flip flops, and had no problem with the dinghy launch and landing from the beach. (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.

4.2.2 ATM's

There are 2-3 banks in the town of Maharepa 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.

4.2.3 Ferry to Papeete

There are two ferry services that service Mo'orea (Terevau (Painted Red with Vodaphone on the side) and the Aremeti.). Both ferries have a snack bar and Aremeti has free wifi. Usually takes about 30-40 minutes. Round trip is slightly cheaper than 1 way.

If you are waiting at the ferry landing in Papeete there is an excellent restaurant upstairs. They have the best Possion Cru in all of Tahiti!

Best to double check these times before departing to the ferry.

Terevau is a few minutes faster and slightly cheaper. Cost: Adults 1160F, Residents 1000F, Seniors 950F.

(Weekday)

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: Two Aremeti ferries service Mo'orea and Papeete

Costs: Adults 1500f, Senior 950F

(Weekday)

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)

4.2.4 Grocery Stores

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 on (Baie Vaiare). 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.

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.

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

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.

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).

4.2.5 Obtaining Boat Parts

(New Morning - 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/>

4.2.6 Moorea's Bus System

Jacaranda – Sep 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 clock wise. 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

Soggy Paws 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 an hour and a half.

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).

So 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...

4.2.7 Bicycle Rentals

Moorea is a great place to bicycle. You can cycle all around the island, and see a lot more of the Cooks/Opunohu area.

Someone told us that there is a bicycle rental service on Moorea that will deliver the bikes to you, and come pick you up anywhere on the island (with the bikes), if you get broken down or just get tired. A local cell phone would be helpful to do things like this. I don't know the name of this service, but ask around at hotels or check the tourist brochures.

4.2.8 Car Rentals

Consensus – July 2017: You can rent a car or motorbike across the street from Bali Hai at Albert Tours for \$50 a day. Its 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!

4.3 Vaiare

4.3.1 Mary Ann II – 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 Anchorage



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. . The café near the ferry terminal is pleasant with music some afternoons. There is an Avis Car rental, a small hardware, small magazine and a pizza restaurant around the inner bay.

4.4 Cooks Bay

4.4.1 Jacaranda – August 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.

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.

4.4.2 Mary Ann II – 2017

The anchorage at the eastern entrance of Cook's would best be called Maharepa Anchorage as it is near that village.



MAHAREPA ANCHORAGE

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.

The small village (2) has two banks, post office, reasonably well stocked grocery and numerous pearl and gift shops. There is laundry which does wash/dry/fold (2017 price 1500xpf for 5kg load). Caramelina's Cafe has free wifi. There's also an internet cafe, CyberMoorea. About a km east of the village, Albert's rents cars, scooters and books tours. A bit further east is Polymat a well stocked hardware / builder's supply. The closest fuel is in the bottom of Cooks Bay. Just west of the dinghy beach you'll find Mario's Tours, he does an excellent 4x4 tour of Moorea. Near there is a medical complex with GP and Pharmacy.

Head of Cook's Bay is good holding in soft mud which shelves gently. You're in the village of Paopao. The Mobil station there sells duty free diesel at the dock which reportedly has four meters depth. The Super U is well stocked. The road up the valley connects to Opunohu Valley if you're up for a 12km stroll. About a 15 minute walk up the east side of the bay is Allo, the best pizza we've had in FP at a reasonable price.

A friend recommended the channel to the west of Cook's Bay entrance but we didn't try it.

4.4.3 Jacaranda – July 2017

Fuel: 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. Also the service station located across the street has a small store with fresh bread everyday plus fruit, eggs, milk, etc.

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.

Groceries: There are a few choices in Cooks Bay.

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 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.

4.4.4 Consensus – July 2017

Restaurants: 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.

4.4.5 Spunky – 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.

On the left is a Super U supermarket, has a lot of veggies, meat, fresh bread and even paté.

The petrol station (with a pump on the dock for dinghies) also sells baguettes in the morning.

4.4.6 New Morning - September 2011 - Cook's Bay

Anchorage Position: 17-29.94 S / 149-49.21 W Depth: 80'

Description: 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.

Snorkeling - 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.

Scuba diving. 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.

Dinghy docks. There is a public dock with gas pump next to Club Bali Hai at the SE corner of the bay.

There is another public dock at the NE corner next to Hotel Kaveka.

Patisserie SyLesie - look for the Hot Pink sign. Nice selection of pastries and desserts, and you can place orders by calling either 56-34-99 or 77-93-17. The almond croissants are out of this world. An easy 10 minute walk to the Patisserie from either dinghy dock.

Fuel - Mobile gas station in SE corner

Groceries - (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.

Hiking - 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.

Biking - 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

4.4.7 Eden -- July 2011 -- Cook's Bay, Moorea

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.

Anchorage location: 17°30.2' S, 149°49.2' W

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). Exiting the hotel 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.

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. 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. 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".

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!

4.4.8 Soggy Paws – July 2011 - Cooks Bay

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's 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).

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.

4.4.9 Baraka – June 2008 – Cooks Bay

Yesterday we sailed around the corner into Cook's Bay, Moorea. Just how many bays are named after Captain Cook? And how did he manage to make it into this one, through the reef entrance in a square rigger? I know he sent longboats to explore first, but it amazes us that he visited these places with no charts or aids to navigation.

The fringing reef is almost continuous, and you thread through at an angle marked by buoys. The bay is spectacular - towering peaks and ridges, draped in mantles of rich greens. The sun and clouds change the view every few minutes. We simply gape in wonder every time we climb up the companionway.

We found a good anchorage at the head of the bay, and explored the tiny hamlet. Moorea has no large town, only small villages around its perimeter rim.

Today I booted Dave out of bed early enough for the baguette run, in drizzling rain. He came back with 4 loaves for us, and 4 for another boat. The store was sold out by 9 am. We breakfast and then went back into shore for a long walk on the perimeter road.

4.4.10 Mr John – 2008 – Cooks Bay

Our first anchorage was in the entrance to Cooks Bay 17 28.875S 149 48.885W in 10feet and sand.... Nice place, Landed ashore and found supermarkets etc only a short walk east... walked down into Cooks Bay but didn't like the road....not nice for walking due to traffic.

We fell out of love with the anchorage as the wind died and the noise of the traffic on the road reached out to us.....

Both bays have a perimeter road and the noise of the traffic is worse inside the bays..

4.5 Opunohu Bay

4.5.1 Enavigo – July 2018 – Theft Warning

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.

4.5.2 Mary Ann II – 2017

There are three anchorages: the eastern entrance of the bay – Ta'ahiamanu; the head of the bay; and 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). Snorkelling 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. 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. 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. 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. Anchoring near the village is now discouraged. Yachts anchor further east which allows access by dingy to the ray/shark feeding area and snorkelling 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



4.5.3 Spunky – 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.

While at anchor the Police aux Frontieres came with a boat (name on the boat) and asked for passports and customs declaration. They checked all boats at the anchorage.

4.5.4 New Morning - 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!).

4.5.5 New Morning - Sep 2011 - Opunohu Bay

Anchorage Position: 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.

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.

Dinghy docks - We didn't find a dinghy dock so we did beach landings.

Hiking - 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.

4.5.6 Eden -- July 2011 -- Opunohu Bay, Moorea

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.

Anchorage location: 17°30.86' S, 149°51.15' W

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.

There is a small, thinly stocked magasin in a cove on the southwest side of the bay. It's accessible by dinghy if one person keeps the boat idling while another wades ashore a few feet -- the store is across the road. (Go ashore at approximately 17°30.6' S, 149°51.5' W) We found that they had tasty baguettes one afternoon but when we went back the next morning they were out.

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.

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.

4.5.7 Nakia – July 2010 – Opunohu Bay

We anchored in 12' of water next to the coral extending out from the reef inside the pass (17-29.346S / 149-51.082W). 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/dive boats speed between Nakia and the reef on their way back and forth between Cook's Bay and our pass and beyond.

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.

In fact every day has been absolutely gorgeous and it wasn't until yesterday afternoon that we had any clouds. After our trip to Stingray City we went for a snorkel on the shallow reef next to Nakia, but most of the coral was dead and covered with some kind of strange weed. I counted five crown of thorns sea stars so that is part of the reason for the poor condition of the coral.

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. And yesterday we caught an early morning bus to the ferry terminal in Vaiare. I was under the mistaken belief that it would be the biggest city on the island, but there wasn't even a bank. Instead the main city appears to be Maharepa where the post office and a few banks are located. Without much to see in Vaiare we walked to the Super Champion grocery store and then back to the terminal to wait for the next bus. The bus schedule is tied to ferry arrival/departure times so we waited for over an hour just people watching. We caught the bus going to the south and west sides of the island even though we were fully aware that it only went as far as Hauru at the northwestern tip. Hauru was a little tourist town where we bought a couple of fresh baguettes and started walking towards Papetoai with our thumbs stuck out for every passing car. Finally a pickup truck slowed for us and we hopped in the bed. But the driver motioned for us to get in the cab with him because it's illegal for people to ride in the back. Our driver turned out to be a city councilman who spoke excellent English. We told him how much we were enjoying Moorea and he told us that there's been a big campaign to get the garbage off the road sides and beaches. He said the next big job will be to build some new schools.

It's nice to be out of the big city, but this is also a busy place probably because it may be a holiday week for many people with Bastille Day coming up tomorrow (Wednesday). Saturday night a place on shore right next to the anchorage blared awful music literally all night long. The volume went down a bit some time in the wee hours of the morning when we think someone might have complained.

4.5.8 Baraka – June 2008 – Opunohu Bay

This afternoon we pulled anchor from Cooks Bay, and motored out through the reef pass, then 2 miles west to the next entrance into Opunohu Bay, possibly even prettier than Cook's. Just inside the entrance we turned left into a lagoon, joining 20 other boats at anchor. I dropped the hook into 13 feet of water over white coral sand in crystal clear water. We can see every wrinkle of the bottom. Should be great snorkeling here!

Today we had one of those rare omigod-I-can't-believe-this experiences. We are anchored inside the reef at beautiful Opunohu Bay on the north side of Moorea. The day

dawned bright and sunny and calm. Our friends, Tom and Dawn on Warm Rain guided us in our dinghies across the bay to a channel, marked by buoys, for a mile or two to an area near the Hotel Inter-Continental. A half-dozen other skiffs and dinghies were already there, anchored in 4 feet of clear water over white coral sand. The attraction is several dozen large stingrays who come to be hand-fed. Dave tied our dinghy's painter to a coral head, then opened a can of Opal's sardines. Soon a half-dozen rays were eating out of his hand and climbing on him looking for more. He learned to hold his hand flat, thumb in, but was still bitten twice, more pinched than chewed, though one slightly broke the skin.

A few larger boats arrived carrying more tourists from the hotel. The rays seemed to recognize these boats and literally swarmed up the backs of the men feeding them raw fish. By this time the rays were everywhere. You could see that some had two stinging barbs in their tails. We waded among them in chest deep water, and Dave continued to feed them sardines. Then the black-tipped reef sharks arrived, cruising among the waders, moving much faster than the graceful rays. Dave fed them too, though not by hand! We stayed an hour, snorkeling and wading among the rays and sharks.

When the sharks began outnumbering the rays, we hopped back in the dinghy and went a little further on to snorkel between two small motu - islets on the outer reef, in beautiful healthy corals with nurseries of tiny tropical fish.

Next day, hiking to Belvedere... This morning after the baguette run, we dinghied into Opunohu Bay to Richardson's Cove and pulled the dinghy ashore. We hiked up the road, up the valley past ancient stone platforms, including several for ceremonial archery contests. After a couple miles we came to the agricultural school where we could buy freshly-squeezed fruit drinks and delicious sorbets made from local fruits, a welcome treat on our hot uphill walk. We continued on several more miles, arriving at a lookout point where we could see both bays, Opunohu and Cook's. We wandered back down, again stopping at the auspiciously-located agricultural school for more refreshments.

4.5.9 Ventana - Diving In and Near Opunohu Bay - 2003

In Moorea like Rangiroa and all the Society Islands the dive operators feed the sharks, morays, stingrays, turtles and other fish. It assures that their clients see lots of action but of course alters the creature's natural behavior. An excellent dive here is on the buoys just east of the entrance to Opunohu Bay. There are half a dozen buoys strung out along the reef here or you can also drop your dinghy anchor in the sand if need be. The buoys are sometimes hard to see but if you continue east along the reef you will come upon them. Besides the sharks and turtles expecting handouts the highlights are the Opunohu Canyons and The Roses – plate corals that look like giant roses at about 100 feet.

There is also good snorkeling between the anchorage and the east end of the public beach.

Another adventure is to dinghy from Opunohu to the first green marker past the Intercontinental hotel. Anchor on the reef side of the marker in 5 feet of water and get in

to snorkel with the stingrays. Dozens of them will swim up within arms reach expecting to be fed. If you comply you can pet them and play with them.

4.5.10 Mr. John – 2008 – Papetoai Bay (Reef Anchorage W of Opunohu)

Moved to Papetoai Bay, very busy in the 'internet anchorage' on the eastern side... didn't fancy that so went west and followed the marks to 17 29.224S 149 52.735W.. now this was perfect paradise. (Mr. John's guide has a sketch chart)

There is just a little passing water traffic but we had no problem with it..... Found the nearest three coral heads were in fact TIKI's ... in good condition don't know how they got there!

This is also the best anchorage for doing the Stingrays as they are about a mile or so west of this position.... You follow the marked dinghy channel west, past the Intercontinental Hotel (with its huts over the water) and half way between that and the Motu on the west end of the island you will find a shallow sand bank on the north edge of the channel where they do their thing.....usually there are tourist boats there... they have fish etc and don't mind you joining in.... ITS GREAT..... we went twice. Tinned SQUID would work as well if you have some....

4.5.11 Mr John – 2008 – Robinson's Cove (Hiking up to Belvedere)

To do the walk up to Belvedere, the look out. we shifted down to Robinsons Cove, deep inside Opunohu Bay.

Wow but that location has gone down hill! We opted to anchor off....17 30.802S 149 51.041W in 27 feet mud. You can dinghy in to the cove where there is a suitable tree that acts as a dock.

Walk to head of bay and take road up to lookout.... Weekdays is best.. there is an agricultural school on the way and you can stop in to taste local products and buy a cold drink etc.....About 40min walk to the top, 1 hr if you keep stopping to take photos... this is a VERY beautiful valley to walk up.

4.6 Other Moorea 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.

4.6.1 Haapiti (SW Coast) – Surfer's Anchorage

Soggy Paws – July 2011: 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.

We went further in and anchored at about 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 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 it 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.

4.6.2 Maharepa

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.

4.6.3 Vaiare

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.

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.

There is a marina with a slipway there at Vaiare, but it is full of local boats.

5 Huahine

5.1 Cruiser's Reports - Fare

5.1.1 Consensus – July 2017

We didn't stop long in Huahine. We anchored in sand off of the beach. 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 \$\$\$.

We had to see a local doctor here in town and it was a good experience removing stitches.

We were able to pay for **wifi** at the yacht club.

They had a great happy hour with live band from 5:30 to 6:30. Would have liked to hike or took a bike ride here, but no time to do so.

5.1.2 Slip Away – July 2011

Anchoring: When we first arrived at Fare, we anchored just to the left of the Avamoa pass at 16 42.78S, 151 02.37W. We found good holding in about 30-35 feet of water. 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.

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.

There's a very nice dinghy dock in front of a thatched-roof A-frame structure between the village and the old Bali Hai Hotel.

Wifi: The laora Spot and Hotspot wifi signals are available in the bay. You might also pick up ManaSpot if you have a good antenna.

Groceries: 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.

Restaurants: 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.

Happy Hour: 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, maitais 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 maitais 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.

Snorkeling: 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 lended 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.

Bicycling & Sightseeing: 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.

5.1.3 Moondance - September 2011 - Fare Snorkeling

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 gentlemen that has a Shark Feeding tour service and was bringing guests out. But, you can drop your anchor anywhere near by. 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.

5.1.4 DYC – 2011 – Fare

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.

Remember that most island shops and facilities close for lunch between 1130 to 1400.

Banks may be found on the waterfront near the shops.

The **post office** is located at the end of the village on the way to the airport.

Barbecues are erected on the dock when the inter-island freighters come, and food wagons appear. You can sample good, reasonably priced food while watching the freighters being loaded with the island's produce.

Activities: 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.

5.1.5 Baraka – July 2008 – Hieva in Fare

We are anchored off the tiny hamlet of Fare on Huahine with a dozen other boats, just inside the reef entrance. Despite the town's small size it has an excellent grocery, with baguettes all day, and a daily morning farmer's market on the waterfront road, so my produce hammock is again filled with pamplemousse, bananas and papaya. Big supply ships come and go all hours, picking up copra and dropping off supplies. From the anchorage we watch surfers on the pass break just off our stern, though we are inside in calm water. Dave filled the outboard gas jug, and I did an expensive (\$13 wash) load of laundry, first washing machine since Mexico. They also had a dryer, but it blew the circuit, so I hung the laundry all over the boat to dry.

Together with some other cruisers, we rented a car to drive out of town to attend the annual island dance competition, part of the Bastille Day celebrations. Each of the 7

districts submitted a team of dancers and drummers. The winner will go to Papeete for finals on Bastille Day.

When we arrived, the roulottes had set up, so we ate a quick dinner of chow mien and steak frites. By the time we were done, 50 drummers had started a pulsating, deafening beat, perfectly synchronized. "Madame Hiva", a local transvestite and comedienne, acted as conductor, pointing to sections to have them take the lead. After a lot of speech-giving in French, Polynesian and English, a procession of young men carrying an outrigger bore the reigning queen into the hall amid blowing conch horns, and the dances could begin.

Each team was decked in elaborate costumes made from leaves, vines, and natural fibers, with fancy headdresses, layered skirts, coconut and leaf bras, fiber pom-poms. The young teenage men did the scissors step with bent legs, while the girls flipped their hips until their leaf bustles were a blur. Each team had 30 to 50 dancers, and a dozen member orchestra, and did 2 dances, one to pulsating drums, and the second to singing, slower and equally sensuous. Amazing talent - the whole island seemed to participate. Fun evening, and another glimpse into the pride Polynesians take in their heritage.

5.1.6 Mr John – July 2008 – Heiva in Fare

The next day, when we were ashore, we discovered that there was to be a Hieva that night; to be held in a large 'semi-permanent' marquee, a little way out of town towards the airport. It would have been a little better if I'd followed my instincts and gone for a 2000hrs start, not much ever happens here before 2000hrs! Unfortunately we followed local advice and arrived about 1730hrs for an 1800hrs start that was much delayed. In fairness all the dancers were ready to go at 1900hrs but the stadium was still empty and we were informed there would be a further delay for late travellers to arrive; By the time things got going at 2000hrs, we all had sore bums and sore backs as the seating was by no means comfortable, the stadium still wasn't full and I couldn't help thinking that this particular event was one of Polynesia's best kept secrets! It was a great night and quite different to what we had seen before in the other islands, it was also long and went on till nearly midnight but none the less we enjoyed it. It was a great evening and well worth the admission fee; not without a few 'small island' hiccups however, the power went down for ten minutes just as one young lady tried to entertain us with a superb display of 'bum wiggling'. She continued in the dim light of torches and many camera flashes becoming an overnight sensation, keeping us all well entertained whilst the electricians hunted madly for the fuse box!

5.1.7 Nakia – July 2011 – Fare

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. 16-43.222S / 151-02.378W

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.

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. So once again we focused on hiking. 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 awhile. 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.

Later we moved and anchored off the **Fare Village** (16-42.756S / 151-02.346W). John is at the bar next to the dinghy dock enjoying the 5:30-6:30 PM happy hour with S/V Dignity while I catch up on internet chores. Big Hinano draft beers are only 250 CFP and Mai Tais are half price at 450 CFP!

5.1.8 Mr John – 2008 - Fare

Best spot for anchoring off Fare is 16 43.080S 151 02.264W, this is to the east of the middle ground that lies to the south of the town. Here was a 12-14 ft plateau of sand. Further south on this plateau there are some coral heads so you should stay north of the first starboard marker.

I found the anchorage that is most commonly used, off the town beach, scoured out and with dubious holding unless you were in over 30ft of water where it got better. However this is also too near the pass and the swell finds its way in and sets you rocking.

Fare: has a very good supermarket and stores were available. Good hardware store and repair facilities for small problems. Dinghy dock (stern anchor)

Fresh water close by at public shower (take hose length).

Fuel a short walk from dock.

Internet Café's.

5.2 Cruiser's Reports – Avea Bay

5.2.1 Slipaway – July 2011

We spent 6 days in Avea Bay, and it was great. We anchored at 16 48.75S 150 59.45W - good holding in sand and no coral heads. There is wifi in the bay - laora Spot and Hotspot. 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!

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.

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.

5.2.2 Nakia – July 2011 – Baie Avea

After Teapaa we moved to **Baie Avea** at the southernmost end of Huahine. (16-48.712S / 150-59.475W) 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. It continued windy with a few rain showers over the weekend, but 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.

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.

5.2.3 Mr John – July 2008 – Baie Avea

This bay had been given glowing reports on the radio nets and we were expecting something really nice. It was a disappointment, but may have been much better had the weather been more co-operative; by the time we arrived there was a good twenty knots blowing out of the ESE and shortly after it increased further bringing heavy squalls and down-drafts into the anchorage.

Most boats anchor in about thirty feet off the beach, there is a public beach area to get ashore and leave the dinghy etc. Some cruisers have had a BBQ ashore there.

We anchored on the shelf at the south part of the bay in an area of six feet of water. Too shallow for most! Very happy in this position, good sand / good holding; with the wind in the SE we lay back over the drop off to the deeper water. In strong winds there is some heavy down-drafting throughout the bay (but there again, there is on the lee side of all these islands!!) Anchor Posn: 16 48.776S 150 59.497W.

We got fed up with wind generator going into over-speed (35kts) nearly all the time and left after just a couple of days.

Had a nice little coral garden with fish close astern in about 25ft... worth a snorkel however the main banks to the south were bare despite the guide books saying it was great.

Ashore: We did get ashore and discovered a nice sandy beach; not great but about as good as one is likely to get anywhere in French Polynesia (which is generally short on good beaches). There was some low key Tourist accommodation and the atmosphere was 'quiet and relaxed'; we walked the coast road around to the village of Parea where we had hoped to get bread, found two stores but neither had bread or seemed to stock it at any time. The village was not particularly attractive but had one saving grace, an Ice Cream store; so we all had large cones and felt much better for it!

5.3 Cruiser's Reports – Bourayne Bay

5.3.1 Slipaway – July 2011

We anchored outside Bourayne Bay at 16 46.80S, 151 01.80W. 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. 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 laora Spot Wifi inside the bay. This is an area where we would have liked to have spent more time.

5.3.2 Mr John – 2008 – Port Bourayne

There is a mooring for charter boats but most of the harbour seems deep. Don't, however, believe the pilot books, there is plenty of room in 10-12 ft of water with sand bottom provided you are prepared for some good eyeball navigation.

We found a good spot for two or more boats at 16 46.220S 151 01.127. however six feet draft would be max for getting in this anchorage which requires you find a small gap in the reef and come across a shelf onto the sand plateau.

The gap was located at 16 46.291S 151 01.180W and may not be wide enough for a Cat. See sketch chart in Mr. John's guide.

There were however other areas available further down the marked channel towards the bridge and over to the Port side (or north shore).

Walks available ashore, dinghy through to lagoon on East side of island, Nice dive / snorkeling on the 'wall' / drop off just near the anchorage.

5.3.3 Mr John – 2008 – Motu Vaiorea

Motu Vaiorea is just south and outside of Port Bourayne. Some sand but a lot of coral.

Noted that some boats got well fouled and had fun heaving up... Anchored 16 46.845S 151 01.689W, but this is in close and shallow.... Most yachts would be better a little outside of this and a touch south.... Nice little beach ashore, nice walk and small, abandoned fruit orchard.

5.4 Cruiser's Reports – Haapu Bay

5.4.1 Slipaway – July 2011

We did not visit Haapu Bay, but friends of ours told us there is good snorkeling by the green marker outside that bay.

5.4.2 Nakia – July 2011

After Fare we moved south to **Baie Haapu** (16-47.487S / 151-00.387W) 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.

5.5 Cruiser's Reports – East Side of Huahine

Alegria - August 2013 - Fare

5.5.1 Alegria - August 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. 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.

5.5.2 Visions of Johanna – June 2010

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 you will find a gorgeous anchorage in a 17 foot deep, broad, plateau of sand at **16 45.86S / 150 57.56W**.

We had a nice drift snorkle, 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.

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!

5.6 Cruiser's Reports – Other

5.6.1 Periclees – Bicycling Huahine

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 Gauguin, 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!

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.

5.6.2 Visions of Johanna – Late 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 of 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)

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. Roads were flat and newly paved which made for some excellent cycling.

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.

5.6.3 Vesper – July pre 2008 – Sightseeing by Car

We rented a car there with our friends Jackie and Steven from Moonshadow and explored the island by road. Huahine is predominately agriculture based and offers a sleepy but pleasant atmosphere with beautiful landscapes, vistas and bays.

Using our Lonely Planet guide, we stopped at several recommended sites including one of the most extensive archaeological sites in all of French Polynesia. 30 marae have been excavated along the shoreline and many more lie in the hills. Locals still use ancient V-shaped fish traps that are made from wood and coral blocks. The fish are carried by the tide into the large stone traps and the people net or spear them.

The local restaurant where we stopped for lunch had stalks of bananas hanging about the tables which inspired us to ask the proprietor where we could find some to take back to the boat. He pointed up the road and said it was about 1.5 km away. Off we went hoping to score on these and other tropical fruit. We pulled into the first property that looked as if it had banana trees and Steven and Deirdre went knocking at the door. It turned out we had a private residence - no fruit there, but the owners again pointed up the road. We kept driving, but no fruit. It had become a challenge by now to succeed in this mission. At this point we were on a narrow unpaved section of road where a local man was walking back from an out building to his home with pineapples in hand. Yippie!! He spoke no English, but in our very broken French he understood what we wanted. He handed us a bag of papaya, refused to take anything for it and waved us off. A wee bit further we found an organic fruit farm where we purchased the desired stalk of bananas and pamplemousse (grapefruit). Before the day was through we'd also found vanilla beans and enjoyed wonderful locally made ice cream.

In hindsight, we would have liked to spend more time at Huahine. There are several bays on the southwest side of the island that were inviting, but we were on a fast track to Bora Bora.

6 Raiatea

6.1 Services in Raiatea

6.1.1 Pitufa – 2014: Haulout

Pitufa – 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

6.1.2 Alegria - August 2013 - Updates on Raiatea Services & Dockage

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.

Richard Neufeld – We had a more mixed experience with Richard. 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.

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.

Marina Apooiti – 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.

Raiatea Carenage – 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.

6.1.3 Pua'ena - August 2011 - Electrical/Electronic Work

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. Contact: phone: 73-15-79 Email: richard_neufeld@yahoo.com

Feedback on Richard from Pua'ena: 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 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.

6.1.4 Sail Repair

There is a recommended sail loft in Raiatea's Marina Apooita. Be sure to read Pipstrelle's write up in Section 1 'Obtaining Parts and Supplies' entitled 'Sailmakers in French Polynesia' before you decide where to have your sail repaired.

6.1.5 Freedom – August 2010 – Fuel in Uturoa

As we mentioned on the morning net, about Uturoa, there is a Shell fuel dock at the free City dock. However, the owner and his son have quite unfriendly reputations with cruisers. I can count at least 4 individual boats that have had terrible experiences with him, in addition to us.

We were on shore helping Ceil Mor tie up to their dock, and the owner decided he didn't want that boat there even though they were going to purchase some fuel. Ceil Mor really wanted to move down the dock to the free space and tie up for the night, but the space was temporarily occupied and Shell was about to close, it was 5pm.

The Shell owner pushed the Ceil Mor captain back on to his boat, but nearly pushed him off the dock. Then the Shell men took the dock lines off and threw them on the boat, and tried to take the line Kelita was holding. The owner even raised his hand to hit Kelita, but it was only a threat. Needless to say, it became an ugly situation really fast. **So anyway, bottom line is that cruisers should avoid this fuel dock for this reason, and the fact that this station DOES NOT provide duty free fuel.**

Around the City dock & marina to the West (1/2 mile approx), is a Total station with friendly attendants & duty free fuel. You just need copies of documentation & associated paperwork. This is really the best solution for Raiatea fuel.

6.1.6 Nakia – July 2010 – Marina Uturoa

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)

6.1.7 Uturoa General

DYC – 2011 – Groceries: 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!

Baraka – 2008 – Fuel & Groceries: We tied up to the town quai at Uturoa. It's free, and we are right "downtown", within a few blocks of 3 grocery stores and a few feet from the fuel dock. This will be handy as our last provisioning stop before the next series of passages. The Uturoa town market is brand new, a two-story building with produce below, crafts above.

Wifi – 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 loaraspot 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 laoraspot and Hotspot, with a good antenna.

Visions of Johanna – 2010 – Fuel & Groceries

Fuel is available at the main village of Uturoa. 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.

In town one can provision at a Champion market, or 2 oriental markets. Jean Luc at Liaut market speaks English.

6.1.8 Checking Out in Raiatea

Our friends on Gloria Maris was trying to complete their final checkout with the gendarmerie which is somewhat complicated by the fact that they had to post a bond (we took care of everything through our agent in Papeete and were exempted from the bond requirement).

They had been told in Uturoa that they had to do this in Bora Bora, probably because the officials figure that everyone will leave French Polynesia from there since it's typically the last stop for cruisers. But Don and Kim visited Bora Bora last year and weren't stopping there again this year. In Patio (Tahaa) they were told that they should be able to do it in Uturoa as long as they weren't going to Bora Bora. So back we all went to Uturoa, where they were able to complete their check-out and get their bond returned from the bank.

6.1.9 Raiatea – Medical

Tackless II – August 2004: Uturoa, the main town on Raiatea, is the administrative center for all of the Leeward Societies, and among its many big town services is a real hospital. During the previous week or two I had become increasingly bothered by a growth on my back. On several occasions it had bled (copiously) at the slightest provocation, and, rather than healing, it seemed to be getting larger. It was time to find a doctor and get it attended to.

Uturoa may be the largest town in the Leewards, but it is still a small town. When we asked directions to the hospital we were directed to a smallish building where we took a number and stood in line with mostly mothers and their kids. When I finally got into “triage” and the nurse took a look at my complaint, I was delighted (and aghast) to hear someone actually say, “ooo la la!” It seems when they pulled the Band-Aid off, my spurter spurt, and no one was prepared. Blood everywhere. So, I was rebandaged and set to waiting some more to see the doctor. When the doctor took her look she said, “Oh, yez eeet must go!” and sent me...to the hospital! It turned out we were in some clinic.

The hospital, a gratifyingly more substantial complex, turned out to be a bit farther down the block. And so we started the process all over again...only to be given, an hour or so later, an appointment to come back in five days to see the surgeon! Okay. Five days later we came back, the surgeon looked at it and she agreed with all the previous “ooo-la-la!”s and “Eeet must go!”s only to schedule me for the NEXT day! Since we were moving the boat around in between and hitchhiking in and out of town for each of these interviews, the delays were a little exasperating. However, the next morning, almost on schedule -- snip, snip -- it was over, the stitches were in, and my verrule (the dictionary defines this as a “wart”) was off and in its test tube bound for analysis in Tahiti. There was a little delay while the doctor and the nurse – both thin, middle-aged French women – discussed excitedly the whereabouts of missing pieces for the cauterizing equipment, but when the pieces couldn't be found, the doctor whipped in a few stitches, slapped on some sticky bandages and I was sent on my way. “Ehh, you may get a bill...or you may

not,” she said, shrugging and smiling as I went out the door. You gotta just love the third world.

6 months later: We'd been living back aboard a week when out of nowhere Don was brought down by a fever. Neither of us had had so much as a cold in 12 months, and as always in the tropics one worries about dengue. When he woke the third day with the shakes, I packed him into the car and took him to the emergency room. Here we had a really good experience. The French thermometer read 40.7, which, if you have your trusty copy of French for Cruisers (p. 311) handy, you would know immediately is 105 degrees for us Fahrenheit types! The nurse raised her eyebrows and promptly slapped in a couple of IVs with saline and Tylenol to get his temperature down, drew six vials of blood for various tests, got Don's recent medical history through me as a translator, and shortly after ushered in Dr. Frederick Garcia, Raiatea's version of Dr. Kildare.

Dr. Frederick spoke good English, was nice, and had a sense of humor. “Don't worry, the surgeon won't be cutting today” after a rapid-fire consultation over Don's belly in French. Or, “Tell me, Don, how is –how do you say it – your shit?” It didn't hurt that he was a sailor to boot!

Prompted by the varied symptoms that seemed to reach from head to toe and included pain just below the chest, they ran a slew of tests, and despite it being early Sunday morning Don was seen by several specialists. By noon, however, they had ruled out every major concern and were left with the flu. By then, after a couple of rounds of IV, Don was feeling much more himself, and frankly, when he walked out, he never looked back. Oh, he was good and took it easy for a couple of days, but he was back at work by Wednesday. Dr. Frederick came by the boat Tuesday and told us they'd since seen four more cases just like Don!

Miss Kathleen – September 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.

6.1.10 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).

6.1.11 Soggy Paws - Touring Raiatea by Car or Scooter

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.

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.

6.2 Raiatea's North Coast (Uturoa and Carenage Area)

6.2.1 Consensus – 2017 – Marina Apooiti

We anchored outside of the mooring field at the shipyard and used the dinghy dock at the Apooiti marina. We could pick up wdg **wifi** on the boat from this anchorage.

We rented a car and took a whirlwind island tour. Had dinner at la 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. There was a **good hardware store** past the airport. 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.

6.2.2 Noonsite – 2015 – Theft and Yacht Boardings

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.

6.2.3 Soggy Paws - July 2011 – Anchoring and Mooring Options Near Uturoa

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.

Location	Dist from	Approx Lat/Long	Cost
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	Uturoa		
Uturoa Town Quay	0 meters	16-43.75S / 151-26.60W	Free
Off Sand Shelf	.4 nm	16-43.44S / 151-26.34W	Free
Off Marina Uturoa	.4 nm	16-43.36S / 151-26.67W	Free
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 Ioraspot and WDG Hotspot can be picked up from this anchorage.

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.

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), or on VHF Channel ____.

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.

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.

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.

6.2.4 Soggy Paws - July 2011 - Anchoring / Mooring Options Near the Carenage

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.

6.2.5 Slipaway - July 2011 - Uturoa

In settled weather, we found a good anchorage along the barrier reef across from the town of Uturoa. WP 16 43.40S, 151 26.38W. 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 and do our shopping.

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.

Hiking: 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.

6.2.6 Tackless II – Early 2005 – Saturday Night Dancing in Uturoa

Because we spent almost 6 weeks here, we learned about the weekly Saturday night dance performance on the town quay.

The dance group, which I think is called Tama Iri'i Uturoa (Good Children of Uturoa), performs almost every Saturday night on the cobblestone esplanade in front of two major waterfront restaurants (and also, by the way, at the Raiatea Pearl Resort on Friday nights). The troupe consists of male musicians pounding the drums, maternal singers and dancers who range in age from perhaps four to thirty. By no means are all the girls picture-postcard svelte, despite all the hip-wiggling, yet most of the male dancers are lean to the extreme since their moves are particularly athletic, especially in the vigorous tamure, where their bent knees vibrate in and out at warp speed.

To my amazement, each time we've been (3x), they did a different program with different costumes, from coconut bras and grass skirts, to skimpy pareus to Mother Hubbard

wedding dresses, all with beautiful flower headdresses in their hair or leis around their necks.

What makes this show particularly delightful is the way the community gathers around and sings along!

The evening always concludes with a pa reu-tying demonstration dance with “volunteers” from the audience. Don got picked once by a mama I'm sure had her eye on him the whole show. He went with good grace and, I may say, looked very handsome after she stripped off his shirt and knotted the pareu deftly over his shorts!

6.2.7 Mr John – Carenage & Apooiti Marina Area

Anchorage off the Carenage on NW sideit's all deep round here but on the offshore reef there is a nice spot near the Airport Runway Sign.... The spit will hold about three boats and you are still in range of the IORA net....16-43.888S / 151-29.375W, 15 feet sand and broken coral... there are a few small heads on the bottom but getting the chain off them was not a problem in the clear water.... There is a tide which runs both N & S here but not strong....

Ashore there are two haul out yards, one with a travel lift and the other with a hydraulic lift trailer. They pull out large catamarans here. They offer different services and price scales so should be compared before any choice is made.

Propane: Bottled Gas refills can be had here but we heard that it may be better to organise through The Moorings at the Marina one mile north. The Moorings marina has a guest berth, available at a reasonable rate.. could be very useful if you have people flying in or off!!!

6.2.8 Raiatea Carenage – Tackless II – 2004

Sitting on the mooring off the two boatyards eventually led to changing our plans on where to store Tackless II for cyclone season. Our original plan, as we've mentioned before, was to store the boat at the Tahiti Nautic Center boatyard in Port Phaeton, the same place we'd left Tackless for the Easter Island trip. We'd heard plenty of debate over the relative merits of the two yard locations. The chief argument we'd heard for storing in Raiatea versus Port Phaeton was that Raiatea didn't get as much rain. This is probably true, and with Tackless's various leaks it was an important point, but Port Phaeton had seemed more protected to us. The proprietor of the yard in Raiatea, however, opined that the mountains of Port Phaeton have an accelerating affect on any wind funneling through. Hmmm. Both yards use welded steel cradles which are a major improvement on the jackstands we knew in the Caribbean and both yards have on-site boat building operations for knowledgeable workers. Plus our insurance company would extend a rider for either yard (for a fee).

In the end, what it really came down to was that we have really liked the easy cruising in the Leewards and hauling here would mean we could stay longer and get a faster start next year. That – and the not-insignificant detail that the Raiatea yard's bathroom is much closer to the stored boats (and has an actual toilet seat) – made up our minds to change!

On their return to the boat 7 months later: Traveling back to a boat that has been stored in a boatyard for seven months is a time of bittersweet anticipation. As your attention shifts back toward the boat, the life you have been living Stateside, no matter how pleasant, subsides rapidly into memory as if it were some temporary hiatus, and, as you start considering all the projects you have to do when you get back, it is replaced by a re-blooming sense of self as a cruiser out on the seas of the world. It's a self image that seems to ring with truth.

Unfortunately, when you arrive back, with your four suitcases full of parts that you've schlepped several thousand miles and are just itching to install, and find your beloved boat filled with mold, mildew and cobwebs, well, the reality that goes with that truth can be pretty depressing. That first day, it seemed like nothing worked. As we dusted the cobwebs out of the way in the galley in hopes of a cup of coffee, none of the valves on the stove would budge, the lens of the overhead Alpenglow light had actual standing water in it, and the water pump kept cycling when the house system was turned on indicating a hidden leak somewhere. Discouraged, we found ourselves a bungalow/car rental deal for \$100 a day and took refuge there, crashing onto our twin cots under the overhead fan at 7:30pm and waking at 5am to be at the boat by first light..

Of course, it all came together eventually. I slogged away at a cleaning program that inched outward from the galley and all its chock-a-block lockers, while Don doggedly cleaned, lubricated and worked every little thing back into operation. Together we excavated sail bags, lines, cushions, and solar panels from the inside of the boat where they'd been stored and got them all back up on deck where they belonged. We carted 40 kilos of musty clothes and bedding to the only laundry service with dryers, and said last rights over the shipboard computer which the experts could not resuscitate. Even so, it took five days before we could move back aboard, and, even though during our first night aboard the boat shook in the cradle from the gusting winds and heavy rain, we hugged each other in the dark and were glad to be home.

On our second morning aboard the weather, which had for a week been demonstrating what the rainy season had been like, finally cleared, and Don was able to start on the boat's original project list. Seven months earlier he had dropped the rudder and in the process wrenched the bearing loose. Getting that all realigned was his big priority. Also, before leaving he had opened up a couple of dozen blisters on the bottom to dry while we were gone, leaving Tackless looking like she had a bad case of acne. Those blisters -- and the waterline which we were raising four inches -- now had to be ground out, filled with epoxy, sanded and barrier-coated before we could think about getting bottom paint on and getting back in the water. Plus there were new hoses for the heads, sea-cocks to be serviced, and stuffing boxes to be restuffed.

A week later, we were still on the hard, but launch was imminent. Don had been able to hire César, a fiberglass specialist whose surf board-building business was on standby awaiting materials, to work with him and catch things up. And when the bottom was done and the rudder hung, I suited up and tackled the bottom paint, something I haven't done myself in a lot of years! On Thursday the 26th, we launched, three weeks to the day after our return to Raiatea. Oh, how much sweeter onboard life gets afloat!

6.2.9 Raiatea Carenage – Sloepmouch - 2003

We finally hauled out (after three and a half years!) at Raiatea Carenage Services (VHF Channel 68 or 66 22 96 or raiateacarenage@mail.pf) on their slip way. For us, on a multihull, it was the least stressful haul-out on the boat (and on us!) we ever had. They have also a travel-lift.

Dominique, the yard manager, and his crew were nice, competent and helpful. Things generally go better and faster when you bring your own materials and do the job yourself, but that's true any where. Many boats stay there on the hard during the cyclone season while the owners fly back home. Next to this boatyard, you find the equally well run Chantier Naval des Îles Sous le Vent where they have a hydraulic trailer (with the advantage to not to have to loosen the standing rigging). Both yards provide a lot of specialized work (painting, mechanical work, refrigeration, welding, wood and epoxy repairs, etc.). We think Raiatea offers more relaxed and more cruiser friendly boatyards than Papeete. The haul-out and lay-day costs for us, as a multihull, were very reasonable even compared to many yards in the Caribbean.

6.2.10 Baraka – 2008 - Marina Apooiti

Marina & Laundry: We tied up to the quai at **Marina Apooiti** (NW corner of Raiatea) for one expensive night. The moorage wasn't too bad (about \$30) but the handy laundry did 3 loads for me for another \$35. It was great being dockside to do a few chores. Dave spent an hour up the mast, making sure all is secure, and caulking some holes.

Note: Puaena reported in 2011 that the laundry at Marina Apooiti is no longer open.

6.3 Cruiser's Reports – Raiatea East Coast

6.3.1 YOLO – July 2011- Raiatea's SE Coast

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!

We then decided to motor south, observing several yachts anchored on the sand shelf between the deep channel and the outer reef. We anchored YOLO at **16.51.893 S and 151.20.994 W off Point Tamapua**, 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 anchor chain. Welcome to paradise...break out the rum...no street traffic, boat traffic, dogs, chickens, construction equipment, jet skis, etc.

Several days later we anchored **just north of Passe Teavamoa**, across the channel from marae Taputapuatea in 12 feet of water, sandy bottom, **at 16.49.765 S and 151.21.227 W**. 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.

6.3.2 Nakia – July 2010 – Baie Hotopuu

Our first anchorage was at **Baie Hotopuu** (16-50.715S / 151-22.052W)

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 perfume 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!

6.3.3 Nakia – July 2010 – Baie Opoa (Marae Taputapuatea)

From Hotopuu we sailed to **Baie Opoa** to visit Marae Taputapuatea, one of the most important of the traditional temples in French Polynesia (16-50.105S / 151-22.080W). 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.

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 with us - and hoping it will be enough to pay for lunch.

6.3.4 YOLO – July 2011 – Faaroa

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.

We grabbed a **mooring ball** for several hours, which was reported as common practice, at **16.48.807 S / 151.24.806 W**, 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. When you approach the head of the bay by dingy you will see two rivers, one in the center of the valley and one to the right/starb'd 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'd 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.

6.3.5 Nakia – July 2010 – Faaroa

From Opoa it is a short sail to **Faaroa** (16-49.052S / 151-24.870W)

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 most likely stolen in this bay after we left. Always raise or lock those dinghies and motors!

6.3.6 Nakia – July 2010 – Vairahi

After Faaroa, we moved to Vairahi and were happy to find a calm, protected bay for a change at **Vairahi**. 16-46.554S / 151-25.174W) It's been very windy and we're on the windward side of the island, so this was a welcome respite. 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.

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.

Head to the south or south west part of the bay and anchor in 50' 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.

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.

6.3.7 Nakia – July 2010 – Motu Taoru

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. Ideally it's a one or two boat anchorage so we stern tied Nakia and Orca to trees on shore (16-44.728S / 151-25.506W). 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.

6.4 Cruiser's Reports – Raiatea's South Coast

6.4.1 Jacaranda – June 2018 – Passe Nao Nao & Motu Nao Nao

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 Nao if you want to snorkel

6.4.2 YOLO – July 2011 – Passe Nao Nao & Motu Nao Nao

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 one or two 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.

Several vessels can anchor in 22 feet of water, sandy bottom, just **north of Nao Nao at 16.54.858 S / 151.25.535 W**. There are old broken down fish pens nearby, yet protection from a strong southern blow would be good. On the north side of the island at the west end, **16.55.048 S / 151.25.773 W**, is another anchorage site with protection from southern winds.

A small basin, usually filled with charter boats, is located at the **west end of Nao Nao at 16.55.133 S / 151.25.905 W**. 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.

The 4th location is northwest of the island on the sand shelf off the channel, **16.55.029 S / 151.26.052 W**. We anchored on a sandy bottom in 9 feet of water at this location which can be used in settled weather.

6.4.3 Visions of Johanna – July 2010 – Ile Nao Nao

We just finished one of our best snorkels of the trip. Certainly the best since "The Aquarium" in Tahanea, and possibly better than that.

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. (**16 55.00S / 151 25.80W** by the NW corner of the island)

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 damsels, 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.

6.4.4 Nakia – July 2010 – Ile Nao Nao

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, but the 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!

Anchorage position: 16-55.174S / 151-25.910W

6.5 Cruiser's Reports – Raiatea's West Coast

6.5.1 Nakia – July 2010 – Baie Ereea

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!

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.

Anchor position: 16-50.014S / 151-29.105W

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.

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 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.

6.5.2 Nakia – August 2010 – Near 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.

Anchorage position: 16-44.681S 151-29.662W

6.5.3 Rutea – July 2011 – Toamaro Anchorage, SW Corner Raiatea (AVOID)

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.

7 Tahaa

7.1 Boat Services

Fuel: Duty Free fuel is available at Tapuamu, on the west coast.

Moorings are available in several of the bays. See individual sections.

There are small stores in the small towns, but most people living in Tahaa do their major provisioning in Uturoa, Raiatea.

7.2 Tahaa's South Coast

7.2.1 Moondance - September 2011 - Baie Apu

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 chose the Pearl Farm and found it to be 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. There is also a small magazin, a white bulding with green and white awning, just on the other side of the motu in the bay - a dinghy ride away.

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.

7.2.2 Eden - August 2011 -- Baie Apu / Taravana Yacht Club, Tahaa

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.

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'.

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.

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.

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.

Ile Toapuhi is a small island located in the middle of Baie Apu, northwest of the yacht club. If you head around the west side of the island it looks as if you can circumnavigate it and get back to the head of the east fork of the bay, but that's not the case. The coral forms a wall, and water depths go instantly from "too deep to see" to about 1 foot. However, it is possible to go all the way up to the head of the west fork of the bay; that fork itself forms two separate bights, the west of which is navigable almost to the stream that feeds the bay. Go in good light to avoid the clearly visible shoals. When you reach the shallows look for a well-kept wooden pier on your right (east), opposite what appears to be a tiny island with a tree and a causeway. Though the pier has no cleats it is easy to tie to; from it you can access the road without going through someone's yard.

At the end of the pier make a left turn on to the road; at the intersection 1/4 mile along, take the right (inland) fork. Another mile or so later, as the road crest a small hill and overlooks a beautiful valley, you will find the Maison de Vanille vanilla farm on your right. Gustave the owner offers a brief but free tour (in French only) and has vanilla beans to sell -- we found his prices to be high.

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 Planter plantation tour. 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. 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.

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.

7.2.3 Nakia – August 2010 – Baie Apu / Taravana Yacht Club

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.

7.2.4 Visions of Johanna – July 2010 – Taravana Yacht Club

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. He 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.

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.

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.

7.3 Tahaa's West Coast

7.3.1 Consensus – Coral Garden & Vanilla Tour – 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.

We anchored across the way on the Tahaa side off of the small town in a deep anchorage near a small ferry boat dock. It wasn't a very pretty anchorage. But here 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! There was a big Chinese supermarket in the town of Patio, but it didn't have fresh veg.

Another anchorage in Tahaa we went to 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!

7.3.2 Baie Tapuamu - New Morning - 2012

Anchorage Position: Baie Tapuamu 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 a night!). There is a ferry landing behind the dock, not obvious from this perspective.

Boats come in and "disappear" behind the dock. There is a gas station for dinghy gas (probably too shallow for the boat), and a small store a 100m to the east with very little to purchase (but they do have toilet paper and some essentials).

Great sunsets over the motu to the west with Bora Bora in the distance.

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.

7.3.3 DYC – Baie Hurepiti & Vanilla Tour

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. Favour 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 for permission.

Vanilla Tour: 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.

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 jewellery. 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.

7.3.4 YOLO – July 2011 – Baie Hurepiti

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.

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. In this bay we found three locations for anchoring/mooring.

There is a small sand spit with 11 feet of water at **16.38.652 S / 151.31.069 W**. 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. 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.

We took a long walk in the valley and observed that many landowners grow a very modest number of vanilla plants near their homes.

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.

According to Alain, a third anchorage in shallow water is located near **16.38.6 S / 151.31.3 W**. He also noted that all the deep anchorages in Hurepiti Bay were good holding in mud and/or sand.

7.3.5 *Nakia – August 2010 – Baie Hurepiti*

We stayed inside the lagoon all the way and enjoyed the flat water and well marked channel.

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). There were no other boats in the bay.

Mooring Position: 16-38.634S / 151-30.980W

We ate lunch and made a circuit of the shore by dinghy hoping someone would come out to greet us at one of the docks. We found the Vanilla Tour dock just next door, but didn't land the dinghy at either place in case there were dogs on guard. 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.

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.

7.3.6 *Nakia – August 2010 – Baie Tapuamu*

On Monday we checked out Ile Tautau but it was too windy to anchor there so we motored across to Baie Tapuamu instead where we anchored in 75' next to the road on the north side of the bay.

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.

Anchorage Position: 16-36.850S / 151-32.700W

Telephone: There is also a public phone booth but neither the store nor the gas station sold OPT phone cards.

Water: 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.

7.3.7 Baraka – July 2008 – Tapuamu, Tahaa

We dropped the mooring line at Taravana Yacht Club and motored north inside the reef up the west coast of Tahaa, hoping to anchor off a motu. We couldn't find a good spot in the many coral patches, and instead came across into this bay, dropping the hook in 80 feet next to Cutty Wren, a sister ship Slocum 43 from Boulder.

This morning we dinghied back to the motu we tried to anchor next to yesterday. We dragged the dinghy up onto the beach and walked on a trail to the far (ocean) side of the motu. We slipped into the water with masks and fins, then drifted in shallow waters with a light current over and through the coral garden/river between 2 motus - beautiful corals and the least shy fish we've ever seen. As many times as we've snorkeled, we always see something new.

We also dinghied to the next town and visited the small grocery after tying the dinghy to a dock with a dozen kids jumping into the water. No luck, baguettes gone, so we returned to the store in the bay where we are anchored, and got some nice steaks, chicken legs and baguettes. These stores aren't Safeway out here - you get whatever is left after the supply boat has come.

7.3.8 DYC – Ile Tautau & Coral Garden

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 conditons. 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.

Anchor Position: 16°37'S /151°29'.13W.

Note: s/v New Morning reported that these coordinates are inaccurate. 16-37S 151-29.13W plots in the middle of the island.

Good swimming & snorkeling. With the dinghy you can explore the Coral River between the two motus. Leave the dinghy on the northern motu side, then walk to the reef side of the island and go for a swim/snorkel. You can drift along the river and enjoy the view of coral and fish.

Note: There are many coral patches south of this motu.

7.3.9 Nakia – August 2010 – Ile Tautau & Coral Garden

JW's guide to French Polynesia is the only source we have 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. 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.

Anchorage Position: 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. A few boats moved to the southern end for a better view of Bora Bora at sunset. Each afternoon "Norbert" came by in his skiff wearing a straw hat to offer us the limes, coconuts, papayas, and pamplemousse he had for sale.

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.

7.3.10 Alegria - August 2013 - Ile Tautau

We were able to anchor overnight here, after snorkeling the Coral Garden. All good.

7.3.11 Tackless II – 2005 – Ile Tautau & Coral Garden

This is our favorite spot in Tahaa.

Anchorage Position: 16-36.164'S 151-33.428'W.

Here we have 17 feet of water and a swing radius clear of coral bommies. I can't stress enough what a treasure it is to find an anchoring spot that isn't sixty feet deep ...or more!

This visit we had many more boats coming and going, mostly bareboats, especially the first two days before the wind kicked up. Kindly retired charter captains that we are, we adopted one nice group from Hawaii and guided them to the Coral Garden snorkeling site tucked so well out of the way between the two motu. Don had blown it off last year, but this year we gave it an hour's visit and were delighted to find it just as special as before. In barely six feet of water, the garden is a bright nursery of many coral types and various tropical fish. Don's favorite was the huge mat anemone with the four clownfish (aka Nemo fish!)

At the end of the coral corridor, snorkelers can drift out to a sand bar and loll in six inches of water surrounded by palm trees. I do honestly think that of all the resorts

we've passed in French Polynesia, the Taha'a Pearl might be the one where you'd get your money's worth.

7.4 Tahaa's North Coast

7.4.1 Nakia – August 2010 – Baie Pueheru

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 back-tracked a little to Baie Pueheru for much better protection.

Anchorage Position: 16-35.220S / 151-31.605W

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.

7.4.2 Mr. John – 2008 – Puheru

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 Posn: 16-35.261S 151-31.598W and did not venture ashore although it looked possible.

7.5 Tahaa's East Coast

7.5.1 Spunky – June 2017 – Haamene Bay

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.

7.5.2 Spunky – May 2017 – Theft/Boarding in Haamene Bay

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.

7.5.3 Alegria - August 2013 - Haamene Bay

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. Had a good dinner, somewhat expensive but you can perhaps allow some for the overnight use of the mooring. Great service.

7.5.4 Moondance - September 2011 - Haamene Bay

We grabbed another mooring ball at the Hibiscus restaurant. We tried to hail them on channel 68, but no answer, so we went ashore. 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.

The Hibiscus restaurant will also 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, bannanas 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.

7.5.5 Soggy Paws – July 2011 – Haamene Bay

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 near where Mr. John anchored—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.

We were amazed what a sleepy town this was—on a Saturday night virtually nothing was going on, except roosters crowing near dawn.

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.

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.

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. 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.

Hiking: We actually did this 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.

This is the Lonely Planet hike to Patio... 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.

GPS waypoints that might be helpful:

Start of Hike (approx loc)

Belvedere 16-37.44S 151-29.27W

7.5.6 Mr John – 2008 – Haamene Bay

Baie de Haamene on the west side of Tahaa..lots of deep stuff until you get close to the village, anchored in 20feet mud and clay...(Can be mucky)

Ashore there is a Bank, two supermarkets (bread 1000hrs not before)

We found a Fresh Water tap by the yellow building on shore next to restaurant...18feet from dinghy...moor dinghy in front of restaurant as the ferry comes in to use the concrete bit with the fenders....

There is a Public Market with a fair deal on Bananas (especially when they get to know you) and a craft shop next door with reasonable prices....

We anchored 16 38.175S 151 29.310W but maybe we should have been a little more up to the NE to be further away from the ferry track.....we took steady 20 with gusts to 35+ here and were fine but it does probably funnel/ gust into the day in E – SE winds, our blow was more SSE and it was fine....

Nice walks to two bays (South and West) by road not track....you could visit the vanilla plantation from here.... Also a 4X4 trail goes north over the mountains to the N coast, great walk with great views.....

7.5.7 Nakia – August 2010 – Ile Mahaea (near Passe Toahotu)

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.

Anchorage Position: 16-38.380S / 151-25.670W

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.

7.5.8 DYC – Motu Mahaea

This anchorage is pretty and offers good holding in 2m of water.

Anchorage Position: 16°38'.480S / 151°25'.575W.

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.

7.5.9 Ventana – Diving in Tahaa – 2003

We tried two dives on Toahotu pass and have to report that both were unimpressive with only 25' visibility and not much sea life. We did see garden eels inside in the vicinity of the fish traps in only 35' of water.

8 Bora Bora

8.1 General Information

8.1.1 Caution – Dinghy Theft

Reported on Women Who Sail – April 2015: 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!

Reported on PPJ – 2011: *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 with out 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 Gendarmarie.

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.

8.1.2 Consensus – August 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!

The coral wasn’t too healthy either after snorkeling south of the pass, we did see a few sharks. As a town it is not that impressive.

This is where you clear out of French Polynesia and the clearance procedure is pretty straight forward and easy. But! They did need to physically see everyone on the crew list before stamping passports.

There is fresh bread, fruits, vegetables, and a few Chinese supermarkets with frozen meats. The best one was near the ferry dock. 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. We saw a local dance practice just up the road from here on a church basketball court one night. It was pretty straightforward to refuel with duty free diesel here at the Shell gas station. We were just ok with our 2.6m draft. We never made it to the infamous Bloody Mary’s bar and restaurant, or up to the top of the peak that we heard was amazing. But if you’re in shape, definitely do the hike up to the top, great views! Think you can get a ride up part of the way. 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.

8.1.3 Dreamcaper – May/June 2011 - Passenger Arrival by Air

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.

Option 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.

Option 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.

Option 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 more calm than where we tied up Dream Caper.

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)

Groceries

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.

Laundry

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).

Internet from Boat

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).

Moorings and Water

The moorings at the old **Bora Bora Yacht Club** were still being used by boats but don't know the arrangement with the new owner. Before BBYC closed they were charging \$20 for first night, and \$10 for any subsequent night. BBYC also had water but charged for it. We assume they will have similar rates at their new location. They have moved, but as of 6/11 had not opened, around the corner south to a cove just north of the Vaitape dock, the same cove where the Saint James Restaurant and Total fuel station are located.

Bloody Mary's has 9 free mooring balls and a beautiful dock where you can dock to get free fresh water (get key from restaurant). In return, they hope you will have a beer or eat a meal there.

Restaurants

Saint James: In cove just north of Vaitape dock. Anchor in 65-70 feet in front. Dinghy dock for customers. Inside and deck seating (where you can admire your boat while you eat). Excellent burgers & fries, poisson-cru, and daily total meal specials at 2200 cpf Lunch.

La Bounty: Located behind Sofitel Resort, 8 min walk west. One night we left dinghy at the Sofitel dock and walked: the other we dinghied to the Vaitape dock (at large map at dock) where their free shuttle picked us up around 7:10 pm and returned us after dinner. We had called 45 minutes in advance. Excellent dishes. We liked the seafood gratin, beef steak, and mahi mahi w/vanilla sauce. 2300 cpf range.

Bloody Mary's Restaurant: Excellent seafood which you see and order before you are seated, sand floors, unusual pull chain waterfall bathroom sinks, and very friendly. We liked the teriyaki wahoo (ono), pork ribs, sashimi tuna appetizer, striped marlin, and beef steak. 3000 cpf range.

Sofitel Resort Buffet with Polynesian Show: Many of the resorts have Polynesian shows on different nights, Meridien, Intercontinental at Matira, Hilton, Bora Bora Pearl Resort; go to the Tourist Center at Vaitape dock for full listings. All resort shows are with buffets, with the shows usually starting at 8pm. At the Sofitel many people were in the bar and around the pool during the show, watching from the back and side without getting the buffet. The buffet at the Sofitel was very good with lots of Polynesian dishes and desserts. Cost: About 6000 cpf which was considerably cheaper than at other resorts. They didn't charge for our 9-year old friend.

Activities

Snorkeling: 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.

Lagoonarium: 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.

Circle Island Tour: 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.

Walk on an Island: It is easy access to Motu Tapu, no inhabitants, with white sand beaches.

Bike Riding: 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.

Tennis Courts: 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.

Shopping: 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.

8.1.4 Nakia – August 2010 – Bora Bora General

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.

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.

8.1.5 Visions of Johanna – 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 ever 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.

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.

8.2 Vaitape Town, BBYC, Mai Kai and Bloody Mary's

8.2.1 Begonia – Update – July 2017

Bloody Mary's - has 3 mooring balls, and the pier has a dingy dock just inside the T at the end. Note: Closed on Sundays - water at 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).) 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.

MaiKai Marina - Closed on Sundays (no dock master nor restaurant on Sunday). Not so much a Marina as a restaurant with mooring balls but close to town. 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 stand alone floating dock and that required a leap across open water to get from the dingy dock to the restaurant dock - and I'd certainly not want to do that with groceries or after a beer.

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.

Bora Bora Yacht Club - 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 can 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.

Viatape 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)

8.2.2 Spunky – Update – June 2017

Moorings at Maikai yacht club: 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.

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 site, 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.

Snorkeling: The coral is growing again, we found some nice coral.

Between Fitiupoint and Le Meridien Bora Bora, you can see manta rays in the morning (the manta cleaning station) and the coral is nice, but not so many fish. Look for the little mooring balls or dive boats.

Near motu Piti Uu Uta clear water and many fishes.

Restaurants: St James was definitively our favorite restaurant, nice lunch menu and delicious a la carte at night. Dinghy dock available.

Gendarme/departure: We went to the gendarme as someone told us they would need some days. The gendarme gave us about 5 forms to fill (same 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 souvenirshops)). Anyway, as an email address was indicated, I just sent a photo/scan by mail to this address.

Supermarkets: 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).

8.2.3 New Morning - Update - July 2012

The largest store (aka the Chinese grocery store) and the Heiva are adjacent the large city dock at 16-30.39S 151-45.16W. The ferry and hotel shuttles all dock there.

Sharon/Vaughn and many others tied up the dinghy there for the Heiva. We took a bus from the Mai Kai, but then had to walk home (not good).

a) Free moorings off the Mai Kai Marina at about 16-29.99S 151-45.50W. 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. 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. You can unload trash there also.

b) Anchor at roughly 16-30.06S 151.45.19W

This is where Vaughn and Sharon (Reality) like to anchor and it's a shorter dinghy trip to the town dock / Heiva.

c) BBYC 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. Food is ok, water available at the dock (room for one boat to side tie). Can unload trash. Very nice setting for a beer. They will loan you a couple of new bikes, and give you a ride into town for shopping. Cruiser friendly!

The BBYC says they monitor VHF 69, but they never responded to us even though they were open and people were there. Better approach is probably:

phone: (689) 67 60 47

mobile: (689) 28 94 50

boraborayc@mail.pf

8.2.4 New Morning - Update - Oct 2011

Jessica and Tieva who formally managed the Bora Bora Yacht Club have opened the **Mai Kai Marina** adjacent to Bathy's Dive and just west of the fuel dock at roughly 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. The club itself is beautiful with soaring ceilings and Teiva's cooking is outstanding in a white tablecloth restaurant with a nice bar. 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. Jessica can be reached at 26-12-78.

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. 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 when I tried to call them. None the less they are definitely open for business and there were half a dozen boats on the moorings.

Overall the good news is that cruisers now have more services and choices available in Bora Bora.

Mai Kai is closer to town, but it is still possible to dinghy to town from BBYC.

8.2.5 Bora Bora Yacht Club & New Mai Kai Marina - Update - July 25, 2011

From s/v Yolo: Jessica and Teiva Tapare have managed the Bora Bora Yacht Club for the last three years. Because of business dispute issues between the owner of the yacht club land, the long term renters of the land and facilities, and the short term renters of the land and facilities, the Tapare's no longer live on the property and manage the BBYC.

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)**, is located at **16.29.9i78 S and 151.45.424 W**, and their phone number is 22 10 33.

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 Bathy's 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 Bathy's.

Teiva is in the process of installing an additional 16 moorings, bringing the total to 30. The new owners of MKMAYC have also ordered floating docks which should improve access to their facility in the future. Internet access and on-site laundry service are also in the works.

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.

Facilities and Services:: 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.

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. 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 turn right on the street and walk east you will see several restaurant and bars, on the right a **laundry** ("Laverie"), on the right an **Internet cafe**, on the right the Total gas station which also has a dock for servicing vessels, on the left a **marine engine repair** business, on the right a chandlery (across the street from the grocery store), and on the left a large grocery store. All of these businesses, and more, are located within a 1,000 meter walk. 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. They have several PCs for Internet access which cost 800 CFP per hour, and they also make photocopies and send faxes. The Laverie also has a one-for-one book exchange in several languages.

Fuel: 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.

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.

Downtown Vaitape: 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. The tourist office is near the southeast corner of the quay and is the location of the Hot Spot WDG antenna.

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.

8.2.6 Bora Bora Yacht Club Update –June 17, 2011

From their (new) website, update date June 17, 2011: The Bora Bora Yacht Club has been closed since the passing of Cyclone Oli last February 3, 2010. In that time the Bora Bora Yacht Club has gone through many changes both cosmetically and legally. Despite the Bora Bora Yacht Club's legal problems concerning the land, contracts and inability to get a "valid" liquor license, Teiva and Jessica remained determined to re-open and serve fantastic island drinks along with delicious food in a fun, relaxed atmosphere.

Teiva and Jessica are excited to announce that finally they will re-open a boutique marina and yacht haven in a location not so far from the old run down site. It has been a long hard road to recovery and we are sure that this new site and adventure will be a bigger, better, best yacht club as promised. Our incomparable location will have a new name and feature an expanded list of services. Teiva and Jessica are still ever committed to making the new site a place where you will feel at "home away from home!"

For those of you who have supported and encouraged us since we took over the Bora Bora Yacht Club when it was dilapidated, vacant and had a bad reputation, to it's rebirth and # 1 ranking on the island, to the cyclone that destroyed it again, we would like to extend a big hug and thank you for believing in us.

Look for further updates at: <http://theboraborayachtclub.com>

8.2.7 Receiving mail at Mai Kai Marina

Posted on the original BBYC website in 2010: If you would like to have a parcel or letter sent here to the Bora Bora Yacht Club and await your arrival that is no problem. The address to have mail sent is:

Yacht [Name]
c/o Bora Bora Yacht Club
BP 162
Vaitape, Bora Bora,
French Polynesia 98730

A friend also received this update from the BBYC on June 17 via email:

Just to let you know we have recently moved sites from the Bora Bora Yacht Club location you visited in the past to a new site, called Mai Kai Marina, just down the road.

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 then can contact you by phone or email when your package arrives. As for a ships 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.

8.2.8 Nakia – August 2010 – Bloody Mary's

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!

Anchorage Position: 16-31.655 S / 151-44.660 W

8.2.9 Nakia – August 2010 – Ile Toopua

We are again anchored at Ile Topua in about 8' over sand. 16-30.654S / 151-46.368W

8.3 East Side of Bora Bora

8.3.1 New Morning - July 2012 - East Side Anchorages

Four Seasons 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'.

SE anchorage 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 Season 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.

SE snorkeling 16-32.45S 151-43.50W

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.

8.3.2 YOLO - July 2011 - SE Bora Bora Motu Anchorages

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.

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. We dropped the anchor in 9 feet of water, in pure fine white sand, at 16.32.125 S and 151.42.225 W. 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.

Good news...the motu has a **Hot Spot WDG WiFi** provider and we got the best signal of any location in French Polynesia.

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 or grab a mooring line at 16.32.466 S and 151.43.655 W.

8.3.3 Nakia – August 2010 – Motu Tupe

Probably our best day of snorkeling was on the reef behind the anchorage at Motu Tupe. 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.

Anchorage Position: 16-29.582 S / 151-42.238 W

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.

Later... We're back at Motu Tupe now where we girls forked over the big bucks to visit the **Lagoonarium**. 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!

8.3.4 Nakia – August 2010 – Motu Taurere

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 Motu 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.

Anchorage Position: 16-31.887 S / 151-42.358 W

8.3.5 Tackless II - 2004 - Bora Bora's East Side

From the Yacht Club, we motored all the way around Bora Bora to its east side. Here an almost continuous motu frames the lagoon. Thanks to the distance and some complicated twists and turns in the channel, bareboats rarely penetrate back here, but somewhat to our dismay we found that the long strand of motu is being taken over by the over-water-bungalow phenomenon.

A couple of kilometers north of Eden Beach is **Bora Bora's Manta Reef dive**. We buzzed up there in the dinghy with snorkel gear just to check it out, tucking the dinghy in among the flotilla of tour boats. By following one of the dive groups we managed to catch sight of a manta pretty quickly about thirty feet below us. Later, wandering around on our own in shallower water we stumbled on a big guy only about 15' below us, circling slowly, its mouth open wide for filter feeding.

Again the weather looked like it was going to cycle from sun to blustery gray cloud, so, not wanting to get trapped on the far side of the tricky channels, we decided to bail out of the anchorage off Eden Resort. We exited the tight squeeze just in time to drop the hook off the lagoon's northern motu before squalls took over for the afternoon. This was a big disappointment for me, because the area looked prime for my kind of kayaking.

8.3.6 Vesper – July Pre 2008 – Bora Bora for Heiva & Mantas

A couple days later, we headed for Bora Bora, sailing under spinnaker, arriving on time for Bastille Day celebrations and exploration on the picturesque island. One night we watched the couple's dance competition in the town's main arena. Several fare, the traditional Polynesian home dwelling made of woven palm fronds and thatch, had been constructed around the site offering restaurants, games, snacks and a casual atmosphere to an otherwise dusty parking area. It was quite an elaborate undertaking, given that the Bastille Day celebrations last only 2 weeks! The dancers represented the best of their village, of which there are 5 on the island of Bora Bora. Each team had a coach and a multi-piece band. The costumes were colorful, with traditional headdresses and accoutrements and the dancer's moves, very suggestive and seductive. One group brought their maiden in on an outrigger canoe, carried by four large men. Trophies were presented at the end of the evening. Whomever has the trophy business in town is clearly doing well, as there were easily a 100 trophies to be handed out! Every team took away armfuls of awards, and it was amusing to watch them load the prizes into their pick-up trucks at the end of the night.

Fellow cruisers and dive aficionados that we'd met in the Tuamotos had told us about a dive site here in the lagoon where the manta rays congregate. The dive was rather unremarkable as far as the coral or fishes go but we did find some interesting specimens in the shallow areas. We found the mantas between 40 to 80 feet. These gentle, plankton-eating giants are amazing. They're somewhere around 10 feet across their 'wingspan' with huge spaceship-like bodies and large mouths with 'horns' that curl in and out to help in the plankton collecting. Several of them are very friendly and curious with us divers and come right up to you, then circle back several times. It truly created a feeling that we were from another planet as these giant flying machines passed - sometimes 4 in a row. Janelle got to do the dive once before her departure and we never

tired of it on our multi-day stay on the eastern side of the island. We dove with the mantas every day for nearly a week

8.3.7 Ventana – Diving in Bora Bora – 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.

On the East side of Bora Bora you can anchor North of the Meridien hotel in 8-12 feet near 16 29.1S and 151 42.4W 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.

8.3.8 Tackless II – September 2004 – Weather, Bora Bora Diving & Etc

There's a saying we've heard quite a bit since we've been in French Polynesia: "One of the best-kept secrets about the South Pacific is its lousy weather." We heard it in the Marquesas, we heard it in the Tuamotus, and we heard it in Tahiti. It died down a bit in late July and August when the weather got so settled there was hardly any wind, although then the westbound sailors complained. But since we've been in Bora Bora, we've been hearing it again. Somehow, you just expect Paradise to be day after day of perfect sunny weather with gentle breezes. Believe me, it's not, and lousy weather punctuated our two weeks here.

However it was exactly what you dream of the day we arrived in Bora Bora from Raiatea. After a lovely downwind sail we motored into the wide lagoon that surrounds what must be one of the world's most recognizable islands. Bora Bora's signature twin peaks, thrusting skyward from a central island that very clearly is subsiding back into the lagoon around it, became well known to Americans during World War II when Bora Bora was a major US supply base. Since then it has built a reputation as one of the most exclusive of luxury-vacation destinations. What's surprising is that most of Bora Bora's luxury resorts are not on the island at all, but on the motus that nearly completely encircle the lagoon atop the reef edge. On second thought maybe that's not so surprising, since from the motus most of the hotel rooms all have the twin peaks in view.

Friends anchored along the southern reef, the only side of Bora Bora without motus, hailed us to come on down and join them. We did and found an anchorage with about a dozen boats clustered together in very shallow water over white sand. We are developing quite a taste for these reef's edge spots. Shallow though they may be, they suit Tackless II's shoal draft (5') and they are hugely more appealing than the alternatives which can be 60, 70 even 80+ feet deep! The light is bright, reflected as it is from the white sand bottom, the ocean swell breaks with a steady roar along the outer edge of the reef about two kilometers of even more shallow water away, and the wind blows steadily across Matira Point to keep the wind generator cranking. At least that's how it is in settled weather, which it was those first days.

Manta Pass Dive – Toopua: While at anchor here we made the first of Bora Bora's two "Manta" dives. Manta Pass lies west of the anchorage along the narrow channel that rounds the southern tip of Motu Toopua.

The Manta Pass dive runs south from the red nav marker along a lovely coral bank from 20-55' or so, looping back through shallow coral gardens, and although it is a popular spot for the resort dive operations, snorkel tours and the semi-submersible tourist submarine, we managed to avoid any other groups while under water. Although Bora Bora's coral suffered heavily in a recent El Nino, this particular spot is still a delight, offering us the most appealingly mixed formations we have seen anywhere in Polynesia. In the early morning light the reef fish were bright as jewels, and we saw here our first carpet anemones with the Pacific's distinctive clownfish – better known these days as "Nemo" fish (from the delightful animated Disney film) – that take refuge there.

Only Don and Ben of Waking Dream, the first two in the water, actually saw a manta here, but that did not dim anyone's enjoyment of the dive. Later while out kayaking in the same area I passed over a school of sixteen rays circling over the coral. Since the water was as still as glass, I could see the rays – which turned out not to be mantas but eagle rays – almost as clearly as I would have diving.

With diving on the collective mind, the same group moved that afternoon to anchor off **Motu Tapu**, a tiny private island just inside the main pass. The next morning, although the weather had turned grey and discouraging, five of us dinghied out to dive the wall just outside the pass. It is said if you time it right you can see the shark feeding show put on for the tourist submarine that comes out in the afternoons. We didn't time it right, but there were still more than enough sharks to make the dive memorable for those who hadn't dove the S Pass at Fakarava. Other than the sharks, however, this dive site had much less to recommend it, especially for me who had vowed to stay above 30-40'.

That evening, a weather alert – in French – came over the radio, warning of thunderstorms and winds gusting up to (did I hear "quatre-vingt"?!) Very uncertain of my translation, a lot of effort was made to get a confirmation, and indeed they did say "eighty" which nearly stopped our collective hearts until we realized they meant kilometers not knots, which cuts it by about half. Still, several of us scurried to set second anchors just to be safe...which of course guaranteed nary a puff!

The **town of Vaitape** was a surprise. For an island whose name is practically a synonym for jet-set luxury, its main town was small and relatively charmless. We truly expected to

see a string of high-end boutiques – a sort of mini-Papeete. Instead we found a pretty average strip of stores with nary a glimmer of glamour. Both markets were well-stocked, however, and there is a small chandlery run by an American as well as an Internet café with American keyboards. (The letters of the keyboard of a French computer are laid out very differently than an American one which is a real headache if you touch type!)

Instead we motored back down to the area of our first anchorage, hoping to pick up one of the free moorings off the famous **Bloody Mary's** restaurant on which to sit out the days of blustery winds. We had heard it was a good place from which to stage a bicycle circumnavigation, plus we had a date with friends for a dinner out. However as we pulled up, the moorings were full, so we went back to the spot on the southern reef edge where we'd started our Bora Bora visit. What a different place! The winds whipping around Matira Point were now almost too much for the wind generator, and the chop over the shallow sand bank kept Tackless II dancing.

Fortunately, or so we thought, a couple of moorings opened up so we were able to move into the lee of the restaurant before nightfall. In the end we were not sure it was an improvement, for while most of the time we sat in calm water, every so often a blast would whistle through that would heel the boat over fifteen degrees as she sailed around the mooring. This was very disconcerting – especially at night – given that the moorings were in ninety feet of water! Indeed, our second night there a single-hander that had tried to anchor outside the mooring field dragged through the moored boats until he got tangled up with us.

This adventure motivated us to seek out a better situation. Fortunately we had already enjoyed our evening out at Bloody Mary's if not our cycle trip around the island. (Something else to do next year.) We and our friends Shari and Dennis of Bobulona found refuge on the west side of **Motu Toopua**. It was like night and day!

The water was so protected that Shari and I were able to kayak the length of the motu, even though the weather pattern continued. One by one all the cruisers in Bora Bora seemed to catch on and gradually our private spot filled until there were fifteen boats anchored there. Most of these boats were waiting for the weather and seas to settle enough to head out westward on the long ocean legs to toward the Cooks and Tonga.

9 Maupiti

9.1.1 From 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 south west 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.

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

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.

You can make the round of Maupiti by bicycle (rental on the village).

9.1.2 From 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 rough, then consider the day trip on the ferry from Bora Bora.

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.

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 where you can find fresh fruits, veggies and fresh fish. There is one snack/restaurant near the post office.

Walking around the island takes less than one hour.

You will find good snorkeling on the coral heads approaching the reef barrier. There is one dive shop on Maupiti and you can email them on maupitinautique@mail.pf

9.1.3 Consensus – August 2018

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.

We anchored out near the motu on the north side of the pass amongst the bommies but were ok. 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.

9.1.4 Sara Jean II – 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 gribbs at the time we were there showed a 2.3m swell.

9.1.5 Beachhouse – 2010

Maupiti is only about 200 feet off on electronic cartography.

You can enter in anything under 3 meter swell for sure and less than 25 knots. Obviously less is better.

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.

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.

They are correct. 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.

Internet is OPT (not WDG Hotspot or laoranet), works pretty good from the anchorage. Purchase time at the Post Office.

Fuel is available, no permit taken and it's cash.

Supplies: Not much in the way of groceries,

Banking: NO ATM's or bank, bring cash.

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.

9.1.6 Sea Mist – 2010

Sea Mist raved about snorkeling in Maupiti

Said the Manta Rays came every morning like clockwork, and you can snorkel with them.

Also the climb to the mountain was very nice. Better than Bora Bora, though definitely a climb.

9.1.7 Visions of Johanna – 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....

10 Mopelia (aka Maupihaa)

Misc note: In early September 2010, Sympatica reported they were just leaving Mopelia for Aitutake, and that the one remaining family there (harvesting copra) really wanted canned corned beef and Pampelmouse. They would trade lobster for canned corned beef.

10.1.1 Consensus – August 2018

Maupihaa is another secret spot not to be missed! 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!

Pass: 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.

Anchorage: 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.

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.

Snorkeling/Diving: 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.

10.1.2 Sara Jean II – July 2011

This lovely atoll is about 100 nm west of Maupiti and 130 west of Bora Bora. We really loved this atoll. 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 gibs at the time we were there showed a 2.3m swell.

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. Lat & long of the pass entrance is 16.46.896 S , 153.58.659. 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 wasscarier 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.

Anchorage: 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. Lat & long of the our anchorage was 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.

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!

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.

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!

10.1.3 Visions of Johanna – August 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 out flowing 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.

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.

Mopelia highlights include a very beautiful lagoon, nice beaches, and solitude. 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.

Pass entry information was provided to us by Scott on S/Y Beachhouse (below), which we found good. These waypoints were on WGS84 – use with caution and only with good light and someone on the lookout.

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

SE anchorage area - 16 49.683S / 155 65.63W

East Anchorage - 16 47.05S / 153 56.66W.

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.

Diving: 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.

10.1.4 Beachhouse 2010 – Entry into Mopelia

Note: I have merged Visions' edits to Beachhouse's original instructions into one piece below.

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.

Only 9 people live on the island. Frankie and his wife don't get along with Calami and Sophie, they don't talk. They live 500 yds apart. Go figure.

WATCH OUT FOR THE ABANDONED PEARL OYSTER BUOYS in the lagoon. Some are a few feet deep too!.

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 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

11 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).

12 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) before they leave!!

est stableis stable
remonteis rising
	...baisse./...chute	...is dropping/....is falling
	A ... heures Temps Universal (TU)	At ... Universal Time
	a la fin	at the end
	ailleurs	elsewhere
les	alizes	trade winds
l'	amelioration	improvement
l'	anticyclone(A)	high (H)
	au debut	at the beginning
l'	averse	showers
	Avez-vous la (prevision) meteo?Do you have the weather forecast?	
l'	avis	warning
les	bancs de brouillards cotiers	coastal fog banks
le	barometre	barometer
	bientot	soon
la	brise de mer	sea breeze
la	brise de terre	land breeze
la	brouillard	fog
la	bruine	drizzle
la	brume	fog
le	Bulletin cote	coastal forecast
le	Bulletin grand large	high seas forecast
le	Bulletin large	offshore forecast
le	bulletin meteo	weather report
le	Bulletin meteorologique Special (BMS)	Special Weather Bulletin
la	carte meteo (-rologique)	weather map

	ce soir	this evening
	centre	center
	cet apres-midi	this afternoon
	cette nuit	tonight
le	ciel	sky
	clair	clear
	couvert	overcast
le	creux	trough
le	CROSS	CROSS(broadcasts weather)
le	cyclone tropical	tropical cyclone
	dans le nord	in the North
	dans le quadrant sud-est	in the southeastern quadrant
	dans un rayon de 20 mn autour du	within a 20 nm radius of
	degage	clear
le	degre	degree
le	deplacement	movement
la	depression(D)	low(L)
	devenant	becoming
le	diametre de l'oeil	diameter of the eye
la	dorsale	ridge
a mi	echeance	halfway through the forecast?
l'	echelle de Beaufort(B)	Beaufort scale
	eclaircie	sunny period
les	eclairs	lightning
	en cours	in progress
	en journee	during the day
	ensoleille	sunny
	epars	scattered
	est	East
	et au sud du 21 nord	and South of 21 North
la	force	force

la	foudre	lightning that strikes something		
	fraichissant	freshening		
	front chaud	warm front		
	front froid	cold front		
le	grain	squall		
la	grele	hail		
les	hectopascals(hpa)	millibars		
	heure locale	local time		
l'	humidite relative	relative humidity		
	Il fait un temps de chien	The weather is awful.		
	Il pleut	It is raining		
	Il y a une alerte cyclonique	There is a hurricane warning		
	isole	isolated		
	La mer est agitee	moderate	Force 4	1.25 – 2.5 m
	La mer est belle	smooth	Force 2	0.1 – 0.5 m
	La mer est calme	Calm – glassy	Force 0	0 m
	La mer est enorme	phenomenal	Force 9	(>) 14 m
	La mer est forte	rough	Force 5	2.5 – 4 m
	La mer est grosse	high	Force 7	6 – 9 m
	La mer est peu agitee	slight	Force 3 – 5	0.5 – 1.25 m
	La mer est ridee	Calm – rippled	Force 1	0 - 0.1 m
	La mer est tresse grosse	very high	Force 8	9 – 14 m
	La mer est tres forte	very rough	Force 6	4 – 6 m
	la nuit	at night		
	le long du 20 ouest	Along 20 west		
	Le vent va fraichir.	The wind is supposed to increase.		
la	ligne de grains	squall line		
	localement	locally		
	matin	morning		
a	mi-eeance	halfway through the forecast?		
les	millibars	millibars		

	modere	moderate
	mollissant	moderating
la	neige	snow
les	noeuds (nd) nuh	knots (kts)
	nord	North
	Nord-est	Northeast
	Nort-ouest	Northwest
les	nuages	clouds
	nuageux	cloudy
	occasionnel	occasional
On attend une gross houle d'ouest vendredi There is supposed to be a large swell from the west on Friday		
On s'attend a avoir des grains We're supposed to get squalls.		
On va avoir du mauvais temps We're going to have bad weather		
l'	onde tropicale	tropical wave
l'	orage	thunderstorm
	orageux	stormy
	ouest	West
	parfois	sometimes
la	perturbation	disturbance
la	pluie	rain
	plus tard	later
la	position	position
la	position prevue	forecast position
la	pression atmospherique	atmospheric pressure
la	prevision metro or just (metro)	weather forecast
	prevu	forecast
	prochain	next
	Quel beau temps !	What nice weather
la	rafale	gust
	revenant	backing
	s'attenuant	dissipating

	s'attenuant	dissipating
	s'etendant jusqu'a 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	service de meteo	weather service, met office
la	situation general	synopsis
	stationaire	stationary
	sud	South
	Sud-est	Southeast
	Sud-ouest	Southwest
	suivant	following
	sur l'extreme nord-est	in the extreme Northeast
la	temperature	temperature
la	tempeste	storm
la	tempeste tropicale	tropical storm
	temporaire	temporarily
le	temps	weather
le	temps a grains	squally weather
la	tendance ulterieure	outlook
le	thalweg	trough
le	tonnerre	thunder
la	trajectoire du cyclons	track,hurricane
la	trombe	waterspout
	valable a partir du	valid beginning
	valable jusqu'au	valid until
	variable	variable

	variable depressionnaire	variable in depression		
	venant	becoming		
le	vent	wind		
	vent - fort coup de vent	strong gale	Force 9	41 – 47 kts
	vent - bonne brise	fresh breeze	Force 5	17 – 21 kts
	vent - calme	calm	Force 0	0 – 1 kts
	vent - coup de vent	gale	Force 8	34 – 40 kts
	vent - grand frais	near gale	Force 7	28 – 33 kts
	vent - jolie brise	moderate breeze	Force 4	11 – 16 kts
	vent - legere brise	light breeze	Force 2	4 – 6 kts
	vent - ouragan	hurricane	Force 12	64(+) kts
	vent - petite brise	gentle breeze	Force 3 – 5	7 – 10 kts
	vent - tempete	storm	Force 10	48 – 55 kts
	vent - tres legere brise	light air	Force 1	1 – 3 kts
	vent - vent fraise	strong breeze	Force 6	22 – 27 kts
	vent - violente tempete	violent storm	Force 11	56 – 63 kts
	vent assez fort	fairly strong wind	Force 6	22 – 27 kts
	vent dominant	prevailing wind		
	virant	veering		
	visibilite	visibility		
	visibilite mauvaise	poor visibility		
	visibilite bonne	good visibility		
	visibilite entre 2 et 5 milles marins	Between 2 & 5 nm		
	Visibilite inferieure de 2 milles marins	less than 2 nm		
	visibilite superieure a 5 milles marins	greater than 5 nm		
la	vitesse	speed		
la	zone de hautes pressions	high pressure area		
la	zone	zone		
la	zone de basses pressions	low pressure area		