

Discover The Marquesas

The heart and soul of French Polynesia

11 nights on board

18 Days

PKG No. UC001

Departure dates

See Schedule

Starting from

\$12,989

Hot Offer!

Aranui Cruises

French Polynesia / South Pacific

Overview

Cruise on-board the custom-built Aranui 5 to the beautiful, remote Marquesas Islands! Book by 31 August 2024 and Save 10% on selected 2025 voyages! See Departure Schedule for details.

Cruising Tahiti's Marquesas Islands with the Aranui 5 is a once-in-a-lifetime experience! Unlike traditional cruising, the Aranui 5 is a working freighter delivering supplies to the people living on the remote Marquesas Islands. Everything from fresh goods to cars and building supplies arrives via Aranui 5 and watching the unloading operation is fascinating!

Aranui Cruises began solely as a freighter service, adding passenger accommodation in 1984 with Aranui I. As demand for more passenger berths increased, the ships have been replaced and now the Aranui 5 combines the freighter requirements with comfortable passenger accommodations, restaurant, bars, swimming pool and more. Passengers are able to experience the magic of cruising Tahiti's spectacular isles whilst seeing the freighter in action.

Shore excursions are included throughout the cruise, should you wish to participate. The Marquesas Islands are so remote that you won't be overrun with other tourists. Instead, the ship is eagerly awaited by the locals who will greet you and welcome you ashore. The children are likely to take your hand and the women will delight in showing you their crafts. Learn about the ancient traditions of tattooing, the history of famous writers and artists who called the Marquesas home, or enjoy the guided walks to see the spectacular scenery and sights. You may wish to do some or all of the activities on offer, or simply sit back and watch the crew in action. However you decide to enjoy the Marquesas, this is one trip that will stand out from the rest.

Vessel



Aranui 5 is a custom-built, dual-purpose passenger/freighter ship designed to offer all of comforts of a cruise liner, while operating as a supply ship. Aranui 5 is classified as a small vessel, accommodating approximately 230 passengers in 103 cabins.

With eight different guest decks, the interior decor reflects the Polynesian heritage of her owners and crew. The ship features a restaurant where all the meals onboard are served in a casual setting; one lounge; two conference rooms, where guest lecturers will offer presentations on various topics related to The Marquesas; three bars, including the Sky Bar with sweeping panoramic views; an outdoor swimming-pool; a boutique; a spa; a gym and the first tattoo studio at sea.

Passenger accommodations range from Premium exterior staterooms, of which more than 90% have a private balcony; to Standard exterior staterooms with a picture window or porthole; and Class C, shared dormitory style cabins with occupancy for four or eight people. Aranui 5's registry is France and thus sails under French pavilion. As such, she operates under the strictest building and safety guidelines, including the requirements of international SOLAS (Safety of Life at Sea) regulations and the French Coast Guard (CCS).

Features:

- All meals provided on board
- Wine with lunch and dinner (1 bottle per table)
- Pool /or spa
- Shore Excursions included
- Fitness room/gym
- Spa/Treatment room
- Tattoo studio

Tonnage 10944

Build date 2013

Crew 140

Capacity 264

Length 126m

Itinerary



Day 1 Papeete

Depart from Papeete in the late afternoon, receive a warm welcome onboard from our crew and sail to the Tuamotu archipelago.

Day 2 Fakarava (Jan-Apr), Makatea (May-July) or Kauehi (Aug-Dec)

Fakarava, 488 km northeast of Tahiti, is a huge atoll that is part of a UNESCO “biosphere reserve” because of its rich eco-system, with an abundance of rare flora and fauna. Makatea, 210 km northeast of Tahiti, is an elevated atoll, like a fortress standing on the ocean with its 70 m high cliffs. This raised atoll is home to only 94 inhabitants who have decided not to leave their beloved island and its special history. At the end of the 19th century, large quantities of phosphates were discovered here. Makatea was to have a unique industrial destiny in Polynesia. The island, until then forgotten by the modern world, was equipped with schools, a cinema, religious centres, various industrial installations, including a 100-metre metal jetty and even a railway, which are still today the silent witnesses of the island’s singular history. Kauehi, 40 km north-east of Fakarava, was uninhabited not so long ago. It was gradually populated for the exploitation of copra and for several years, pearl farming has also been developed. Recently opened to tourism, Kauehi will seduce you by its authenticity as well as by the surrealist hues of its lagoon, which you can enjoy as if you were alone in the world!

Day 3 At Sea

There are many ways to while away a day at sea on Aranui 5 from immersing in the Polynesian culture during workshops on weaving, dancing, cooking, wrapping a pareo, playing the ukulele, language, and even ‘tatau’ or relax on deck, in one of the bars, attend a lecture, browse the boutique, work out in the gym, be pampered in Aranui’s Polynesian spa, take a dip in the pool or just gaze out at the sea. When we arrive in the waters of the Marquesas, you will have to set your watches forward by half an hour.

Day 4 Nuku Hiva

This island is the administrative centre of the Marquesas. The village of Taiohae stretches along the beach, which is like a magnificent amphitheatre created by the successive eruptions of three concentric volcanoes and dominated by towering cliffs streaked with waterfalls. In the small village, all of the government services and residences, the hospital, bank and schools, are close by. A lovely handicraft centre is located on the beach road. Your adventure in Nuku Hiva will include a tour of the Cathedral Notre Dame, famed for its stonework and wood sculptures. In Hatiheu, you will visit the archaeological site known as Tohua Kamuihei, where public festivities once took place. Here you will see the paepae, immense stone platforms on which houses were built, and huge boulders carved with enigmatic petroglyphs. Under a giant

banyan tree, enjoy a performance of traditional songs and dances, including the “Pig Dance”, which originated in Nuku Hiva. For lunch, try a traditional “Umu”, a Marquesan specialty where food is cooked in an underground oven.

Day 5 Ua Pou

Legend refers to Ua Pou as the “pillars of the archipelago” and it is often called “The Cathedral Island”. These names become clear as the ship docks at Hakahau Bay surrounded by 12 basalt summits soaring as high as 1100 metres. Every island has its own special ambience and Ua Pou’s is one of mystery and magic. You are sure to see familiar looking faces as many of our crew members are from here. Energetic early risers can hike up the hill to the Cross for breathtaking views of the valleys and village below. The artisans’ centre is a short stroll into town and the offerings include works featuring the unique flower stone and a variety of carvings and children’s clothes. Before enjoying a Marquesan lunch, take in an excellent dance show, including the Bird Dance, a traditional Ua Pou performance.

Day 6 Ua Hika

This island, the least inhabited in the Marquesas, is largely arid and home to many wild horses, goats and pigs. It is also a refuge for two endemic birds: the pati’oti’o and the pihiti, which are only found here. In the early morning, the Aranui will execute a point-to-point 180-degree turn in the narrow mouth of Vaipae’s Invisible Bay. With only metres to spare on either side, it is a skillful operation undertaken by the captain and the crew and is not to be missed. From the dock, travel by 4WD to the village of Hane. Along the way, you will stop to explore the Botanical Garden, the cultural centre Te Tumu, featuring a small museum with exquisite replicas of Marquesan artifacts, and a petroglyph museum and local woodcarvers’ studios in the fishing village of Hokatu. Look for the unusual carved black and white coconuts. In Hane, where a Marquesan lunch will be served, visit the Marine Museum beforehand and in the afternoon, hike to view red tuff tikis overlooking the bay.

Day 7 Hiva Oa

Atuona, principal village of Hiva Oa and the second largest in the Marquesas, was once the capital of this archipelago. Sweeping views of the harbour can be seen after a walk up the hill to the cemetery where Paul Gauguin and Jacques Brel are buried. Explore the Gauguin Museum, a replica of his “House of Pleasure”, and the Brel Museum, which showcases his plane JoJo, which was often used for medical emergencies.

Day 8 Hiva Oa/Tahuata

A morning drive by 4WD takes you to Puamau to visit the most important local archeological site for tikis in French Polynesia. Our guides will show you through the mysterious ruins at Mea’e lipona and share stories of these haunting statues and an ancient civilisation. In the afternoon, you will visit the impressive church of Tahuata which was built by the Vatican and decorated with beautiful carvings and a stained glass window featuring the Marquesan cross. Though the smallest of the inhabited Marquesan islands, it is historically one of the richest. Tahuata has experienced it all — it was the first island in the archipelago to be discovered by Spanish explorers, who opened fire on a crowd of curious islanders in 1595, saw the arrival of missionaries in 1797 and then became the first French settlement in the Marquesas in 1842. The locals carve exquisite tikis, sea creatures, bracelets, necklaces and more from horse and cow bone, fossilised bone, tusks and pink helmet shell.

Day 9 Fatu Hiva

Fatu Hiva is the most lush and remote island in the archipelago, and is also a centre of Marquesan crafts. In the village of Omoa, women will demonstrate the making of tapa by hammering mulberry, banyan or breadfruit bark on a log. It is then dried and painted with traditional designs. Another demonstration will show the making of the kumuhei, a bouquet used by the local women to perfume their hair. The adjacent craft centre offers tapa, carvings, hand-dyed pareo and some of the finest monoi coconut oil found in these islands. Following the visit of the village, active passengers may choose to hike from Omoa to Hanavave, a 16 km hike offering spectacular views of towering cliffs. A picnic lunch will be served at the summit. Non-hikers will sail on the Aranui to Hanavave's Bay of Virgins, considered one of the most beautiful bays in the world. Go ashore for a visit of the village and to welcome the hikers.

Day 10 At Sea

Enjoy a day at sea to relax by the pool and participate in one of the lectures or activities offered by our guides.

Day 11 Rangiroa

Rangiroa or "huge sky" is the largest atoll in French Polynesia and the second largest in the world. The seemingly endless blue lagoon attracts divers to snorkel, scuba or shoot the pass surrounded by fish of every size, colour and shape. Rangiroa is famous for its majestic manta rays. It is also home to stunning pearls in all shades and local artisans known for their fine shell jewellery. While in Rangiroa, you will have the opportunity to enjoy the magnificent lagoon on a glass bottom boat tour or swimming, snorkelling or diving. You can also visit one of the finest pearl farms in the Tuamotus to learn about these rare gems and see how they are grown.

Day 12 Papeete

This is the end of our journey. It's time to say Nānā! (Goodbye) to your travel companions, to the Polynesian staff and Aranui guides.

Departure Schedule

2024 Departures

17 August 2024

31 August 2024

14 September 2024

05 October 2024

19 October 2024

16 November 2024

30 November 2024

16 December 2024

2025 Departures

22 February 2025

08 March 2025

22 March 2025

19 April 2025

03 May 2025

17 May 2025 ** Save 10% **

31 May 2025

14 June 2025

28 June 2025 ** Save 10% **

12 July 2025

26 July 2025 ** Save 10% **

09 August 2025 ** Save 10% **

23 August 2025

20 September 2025

04 October 2025

18 October 2025

15 November 2025

29 November 2025

15 December 2025 - Arts Festival

Activities

Guided Shore Excursions

At each port, the Aranui crew will offer a shore visit which may include a visit to historical, cultural or archaeological sites, a hike, a visit to a market or an opportunity to enjoy a performance of local songs and dance.

Shore visits are restricted to the time the ship is in port so while you may like to arrange an alternative activity (such as fishing or diving), Aranui Cruises (CPTM) neither owns, operates

or exercises any control over shore excursions arranged at any port of call. The company, its agents and employees do not assume any responsibility in connection with the operations of said programmes. The company accepts no responsibility of liability for the failure of any operator to perform any said programme and/or for any injury, damage or loss however caused or arising therefrom.

Spa Treatments

The Aranui Spa offers a variety of treatments by a fully trained wellness and massage therapist. Pamper yourself with a facial, body scrub and massages using the traditional oils of French Polynesia. Treat yourself to a manicure or pedicure or a relaxing foot massage — perfect after a day exploring.

Tattoo Studio

A licensed Marquesan tattoo artist is available onboard by appointment. He will help you design a personalised tattoo using traditional Marquesan symbols to represent the story you wish to tell. Tattooing is done in a clean and sterile environment using modern equipment. A tattoo is the ultimate souvenir from the Marquesas.

Special Inclusion



- Return economy class airfares to Papeete ex Auckland
- Transfers throughout
- 6 nights accommodation pre/post cruise in Papeete
- Wine with lunch and dinner (1 bottle per 4 people)
- Shore visits
- Guest Lecturer
- Luxury car transfers from your home to airport, return (within 35 km)

Packing Suggestions

Clothing which is informal, comfortable and easily washable is most practical aboard the ship. In addition to shorts, jeans or trousers, T-shirts and a bathing suit, a rain poncho or coat and warm sweatshirt or light sweater for chilly evenings are recommended. Comfortable shoes are

essential for walking ashore over coral reefs. Tennis shoes or sandals are recommended. For women, the native pareo, made of colourful fabric, which can be wrapped in a variety of styles, is a versatile choice for both casual and festive occasions and can be purchased onboard or during port visits.

Special Information

TRAVEL DOCUMENTS & ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Please contact us for the latest information on entry and visa requirements.

INOCULATIONS

At time of publishing, vaccinations were not required. Passengers should consult their travel agent for the latest requirements.

RATES

Rates are per adult, in double or single occupancy. These fares are correct at the time of printing and are subject to change; with or without notice.

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