



TAHITI

ARANUI 5: INTO THE WILD MARQUESAS: AN AUTHENTIC POLYNESIAN CRUISE ADVENTURE

(TOUR CODE: 16689)

STARTS AND ENDS

in Australia

TRAVEL PERIODS

from January 2027

EXPERIENCE

[Cruising](#)
[Cultural](#)

TRAVEL STYLE

Ocean Cruising

Discover the wild Marquesas on a rare Polynesian voyage blending remote islands, rich culture and adventure.

Highlights

- **Fly Direct** (one-way) to French Polynesia **from Sydney**.
- Experience a rare voyage to the remote Marquesas Islands, one of the South Pacific's least-visited destinations.
- Experience genuine island hospitality with welcoming local communities and authentic cultural encounters.
- Take in jaw-dropping scenery, from sheer volcanic cliffs to lush valleys and untouched coastlines.
- Get out and explore with guided shore visits, easy walks, and fascinating archaeological sites.
- Travel in a slower, more meaningful way that values sustainability, culture, and connection over crowds.

Entire Bonus

BONUS: Enjoy exclusive savings of up to 20% in Tahiti

BONUS: Free return transfers between the International Airport and hotel

Peace of Mind, Every Step of the Way

This holiday package is carefully designed by our team to give you complete Peace of Mind, with access to trusted local partners and expert support at your destination.

Australia's Only Industry-Accredited Tahiti Specialists

Tahiti Travel is Australia's only industry-accredited Tahiti specialist, combining genuine destination expertise with the strength and stability of an established travel group - so you can book with total confidence.

Discover one of the South Pacific's most remote and culturally rich destinations on this unforgettable voyage to the Marquesas Islands. Sailing from Tahiti aboard an authentic cargo-passenger ship, this journey offers a rare opportunity to explore untouched islands known for their dramatic landscapes, ancient traditions, and warm local hospitality. Far removed from mass-market cruising, the experience focuses on meaningful cultural immersion and genuine island life.

Along the way, you'll visit remote villages, archaeological sites, and striking natural scenery, with guided excursions that bring Marquesan history and culture to life. On board, enjoy a relaxed atmosphere, comfortable accommodation, and locally inspired cuisine while sharing the journey with like-minded travellers. Ideal for adventurous Australians seeking something truly different, this voyage reveals a side of Polynesia few ever experience.



TAHITI
SPECIALISTS



20+ YEARS
EXPERIENCE



ACCREDITED
& TRUSTED



ESTABLISHED
PARTNERSHIPS



TAILORED
ITINERARIES



ON GROUND
SUPPORT

INCLUSIONS

- Return Economy Class Airfares with Air Tahiti Nui's direct flight from Sydney (one-way), return via Auckland to Sydney
- 12-night cruise aboard Aranui 5 in a Standard Cabin (Obstructed View)
- 1 night at Maitai Express Tahiti in a Standard Room King - ★★
- Saturday Departures for Aranui 5
- Airport meet & greet with traditional flower lei
- All transfers between airport, hotel, and cruise terminal
- All onboard meals (breakfast, lunch, dinner) with wine included
- Daily breakfast at Maitai Express Tahiti
- All Aranui 5 planned Shore Excursions
- English Speaking Guides
- Port charges and government taxes

ITINERARY

Day

1

Airport Maitai Express Tahiti

Upon arrival at Faa'a International Airport, you will be transferred to Maitai Express Tahiti. Perfectly located in downtown Papeete, the hotel offers easy access to the waterfront, local markets, and the city's lively dining scene. Spend the evening at leisure, perhaps sampling dinner from the famous food truck "roulottes" or taking a stroll along the harbor.

Overnight stay in Tahiti at **Maitai Express Tahiti** in a Standard Room King.



Day **2** Maitai Express Tahiti Papeete

Enjoy a leisurely morning at the Maitai Express Tahiti before checking out of the hotel.

Depart from Papeete at 12:00 pm, enjoy a welcome from the crew, and begin sailing toward the Tuamotu archipelago.

Breakfast, Dinner



Day **3** Fakarava

A UNESCO-listed Biosphere Reserve, **Fakarava** is the second-largest atoll in French Polynesia. After a buffet lunch on board, the Aranui docks at Rotoava, allowing guests time to wander through the small village, visit the coral-stone church, browse local handicrafts, and enjoy a demonstration highlighting the many uses of the coconut.

The afternoon is yours to unwind, whether relaxing on the beach, swimming in the crystal-clear lagoon, or snorkelling among vibrant, multicoloured tropical fish. This peaceful stop offers a perfect introduction to the natural beauty and laid-back island lifestyle of the Tuamotu archipelago.

Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



Day 4

At Sea

Enjoy a relaxing day on the Pool Deck or in the comfort of the air-conditioned lounge, or simply take in the views of the South Pacific Ocean during the crossing to the captivating Marquesas Islands. Onboard lectures on the culture and history of the Marquesas transport you back in time, providing a deeper understanding of this ancient civilisation. During the cruise, guests also have the opportunity to learn how to move their hips like a true Tahitian. The vibrant Polynesian crew proudly share their way of life and entertain with traditional songs and lively rhythms played on ukulele, guitars, and drums. Before retiring for the night, remember to set your watch 30 minutes ahead as the ship changes to Marquesas time.

Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



Nuku Hiva (Taiohae Hatiheu Taipivai)

While the Aranui unloads, explore **Taiohae**, the small administrative capital of the Marquesas. Taiohae Bay is also where writer Herman Melville, then a 23-year-old sailor, jumped ship from a whaler in 1842. After breakfast, passengers disembark and board waiting 4x4 vehicles for the day's excursion. The first stop is Taiohae Cathedral, with time to visit the church or browse the local market for handicrafts.

The excursion then continues to the archaeological site of Tohua Kamuihei, featuring impressive banyan trees and ancient petroglyphs. Lunch offers a first taste of traditional Marquesan cuisine, accompanied by local music. Travel south to admire Taiohae's spectacular bay, a vast volcanic amphitheatre framed by towering cliffs and waterfalls. Upon returning to Taiohae village, guests may explore local shops and banks before returning to the ship on foot or by car. At 7:00 pm, enjoy a Polynesian evening with a plancha buffet by the pool on Deck 7 or in the restaurant on Deck 4, weather permitting.

Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Ua Pou (Hakahau)

From the bridge, take in views of Ua Pou's dramatic mountain spires, unique to the island. While the crew unloads supplies such as cement and sugar and loads bags of copra (dried coconuts) and fruit, explore the picturesque village of Hakahau and its church featuring a hand-carved wooden platform. Meet the island's talented sculptors and artists, then climb to the Croix for stunning views across the mountains, lush valleys, and the main village.

Another delicious Marquesan lunch is served, showcasing breadfruit—a Marquesan staple—goat curry, a speciality of the Marquesas Islands, raw fish marinated in lemon juice and coconut milk, taro, and red bananas. The visit concludes with an excellent dance performance at Ua Pou, including the traditional and captivating 'bird dance'.

Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

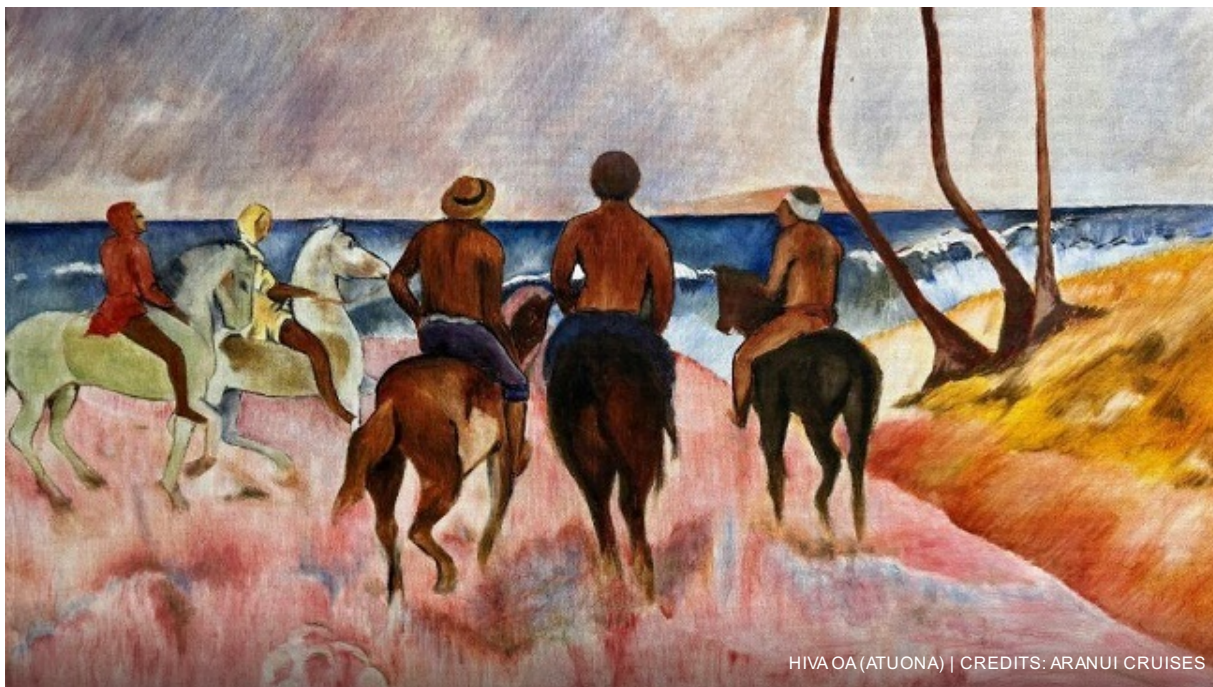


Hiva Oa (Atuona)

The Aranui anchors early at the Tahauku dock in Atuona, offering time to explore the village, the second largest in the Marquesas. Atuona is where artist Paul Gauguin lived and created some of his works, and you may visit the colonial store where he bought his bread, a replica of his famous 'House of Pleasure,' and the local museum. A walk up the hill leads to the cemetery, where breathtaking views open across the motu Hanakee. Beneath a large frangipani tree lies the modest

gravestone of Paul Gauguin, dated 1903, and nearby rests another European who fell in love with Hiva Oa, Belgian singer-songwriter Jacques Brel, who died in 1978.

Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



Day

8

Sacred Valleys & Island Heritage

While the names of Gauguin and Brel are closely linked to Hiva Oa, the true spirit of the island is found in the Puamau Valley. At the archaeological site of I'ipona (also known as Lipona), every corner reveals a sense of wonder. Nestled at the foot of Mount Toea on the island's northeastern coast, the site is home to several remarkable tiki, including **Takii**, the largest tiki in Tahiti and its islands, standing an impressive 2.57 metres tall. Nearby lies **Makii Taua te Pepe**, a recumbent tiki measuring 1.75 metres in length and 1.20 metres in height.

In the afternoon, the Aranui anchors in the small bay of **Tahuata**, an island accessible only by sea due to the absence of an airport. Shaped like a leaf, Tahuata is rich in fragrance and history, scented with Tahitian tiare and frangipani. In 1595, Spanish explorers landed at Vaitahu, where a tragic encounter led to the deaths of around 200 islanders, and in 1842, the island became home to the first French colony in the Marquesas. Visit the impressive church built by the Vatican, adorned with fine Marquesan sculptures and striking stained-glass windows symbolising the Virgin Mary. Tahuata is also renowned for its beautiful helmet shell and bone carvings, with plenty of local handicrafts to discover in the village.

Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day

9

Fatu Hira (Omoa Hanavave)

atu Hiva, the lushest and most remote of the Marquesas Islands, is also renowned as a centre of traditional Marquesan craftsmanship. In the village of **Omoa**, local women demonstrate the making of *tapa* by pounding the bark of paper mulberry, banyan, or breadfruit trees, along with the preparation of *Umuhe*, a fragrant herbal blend traditionally used to perfume the hair. After visiting the village, more active guests may choose to embark on a challenging 15-kilometre hike from Omoa to Hanavave, rewarded with breathtaking views over dramatic cliff faces. Lunch is served at the summit along the way.

Guests not participating in the hike continue by ship as the Aranui sails from Omoa to Hanavave, arriving at **Virgin Bay**, often considered one of the most beautiful bays in the world. Ashore, join a village visit and welcome the hikers upon their arrival, bringing the day together in this spectacular and secluded setting.

Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



© Filip Kulisev

FATU HIRA | CREDITS: ARANUI CRUISES

Day 10 Ua Huka (Vaipae Hane Hokatu)

This largely arid island, home to wild horses, goats, and pigs, was where the first airstrip of the Marquesas was built in 1972. In the early morning, witness an impressive maritime feat as the Aranui performs a full 180-degree turn in the spectacular 'Invisible Bay' of Vaipae—a manoeuvre showcasing the exceptional skill of the captain and crew and not to be missed.

Set out by 4x4 to explore the island, pausing at scenic viewpoints and visiting the arboretum created through the passion of the island's former mayor, before reaching the charming village of Hane. Lunch is served in a local family restaurant, followed by time to discover island specialties including handicrafts, wood carvings, and engraved coconut shells. After lunch, return to the ship by 4x4, or for the more adventurous, enjoy a 3-kilometre walk back from the arboretum. Be sure to be on deck as the Aranui cruises along the Ua Huka coastline, offering even more magnificent views.

Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



CREDITS: ARANUI CRUISES

Day 11 At Sea

Enjoy a restful day at sea to unwind after the memorable experiences of the Marquesas archipelago. As the Aranui sails toward the stunning Tuamotu Islands, a program of onboard lectures and activities is offered throughout the day. Before retiring for the evening, remember to set your watch back 30 minutes as the ship returns to Tahitian time.

Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



Day 12 Rangiroa

Watch from the deck as the Aranui approaches Rangiroa, the largest atoll in French Polynesia and the second largest in the world. As the ship enters Tiputa Pass, you may be greeted by playful dolphins. Optional glass-bottom boat and scuba-diving excursions are available (registration at reception), with diving here ranked among the world's best for certified divers. Those who prefer to stay ashore can relax on Rangiroa's white-sand beach and admire the crystal-clear lagoon, while local 'mamas' display shell necklaces, chains, keyrings, and other small souvenirs for sale. The Aranui departs at lunchtime, continuing on to the mystical island of Bora Bora.

Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



Day **13** Bora Bora

Arrive in Bora Bora's world-famous lagoon, shimmering in opalescent shades of blue and green, and be welcomed by the majestic Mount Otemanu, the island's highest peak. In this breathtaking island paradise, enjoy a relaxing day at the beach and a barbecue lunch on the private motu of Motu Tapu, surrounded by crystal-clear waters. A range of optional excursions is also available at additional cost, including scuba diving, lagoon cruises by boat or pirogue, and swimming with sharks and rays.

Bora Bora also served as an American military outpost during the Second World War, and remnants such as cannons and bunkers can still be seen during tours. In the evening, the Aranui departs for Papeete.

Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



Day **14** Papeete Airport

Our journey comes to an end as we bid *Nānā* (goodbye) to our fellow travellers, the welcoming Polynesian crew, and the Aranui guides who made this voyage unforgettable.

Our representative will be waiting for you as you disembark to transfer you to the International Airport for your return flight via Auckland to Sydney.

Breakfast



ACCOMMODATION

Maitai Express Tahiti

Discover the new "express" version of the Maitai hotel chain. Offering quality services comparable to the first three establishments, Le Maitai Express Tahiti stands out for its exclusive accommodation and breakfast offer. Ideally located in the heart of downtown Papeete, it allows guests to enjoy the culinary diversity of the surrounding restaurants and famous food truck "roulottes". It also offers easy access to all the capital's tourist attractions (waterfront, Papeete market, shopping malls) as well as the city's nightlife (bars and nightclubs). Its double-glazed rooms offer a pleasant, functional setting, ideal for a relaxing stopover in the heart of the bustling city. This touch-and-go concept is perfect for travellers in transit between international flights and the surrounding islands.



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE

French

LOCAL CURRENCY

CFP franc

FROM price reflects the lowest available price within the advertised travel period (e.g. April to October). Pricing varies depending on travel dates, availability and demand, and may not be available on all departures. Higher pricing applies during peak and shoulder periods. Final pricing is confirmed at the time of enquiry or booking. Please refer to [Pricing & Price Conditions](#) for full details, including inclusions, exclusions and other conditions.

IN PARTNERSHIP

