



## CRUISE TAHITI & THE MARQUESAS ISLANDS

13 nights | 11-24 July 2025

### **Day 1 Arrive Papeete, Tahiti**

**B**

Arrive in Papeete today. Air NZ departs Auckland at 7.35pm, arrives Papeete 2.30am! You will be transferred from the airport to hotel and check into your room for a few hours rest. After a late breakfast, the day is free to relax around the pool or perhaps take a walk into the markets and have a look around town.

**Accommodation: 4\* Papeete hotel – 1 night + early check in**

### **Day 2 Cruise departs Papeete**

**B,L,D**

After breakfast, transfer to the port and board the Aranui (see ship info below). Check in to your cabin then meet the crew and familiarise yourself with your new home. The ship departs around midday.

**Accommodation: Aranui cruise ship – 11 nights**

### **Day 3 Fakarava**

**B,L,D**

Classified as a Biosphere Reserve by UNESCO for the preservation of rare species, Fakarava is the second largest atoll in French Polynesia. After a buffet on board, the Aranui will disembark at the dock of "Rotoava". Passengers will have time to discover its small village, the church built of coral, local crafts and a demonstration of the virtues of coconut. Enjoy a day of relaxation, sun and beach, swimming or snorkeling among multicolored tropical fish.

**Day 4****At Sea****B,L,D**

A day to relax at the Pool Deck or in the comfort of the air-conditioned lounge. Or why not just enjoy the view of the South Pacific Ocean during our crossing to the fascinating Marquesas Islands. Lectures on the Culture and History of the Marquesas Islands will make you go back in time and give you a complete overview of this ancient civilization. During the cruise, you will also learn how to move your hips like a true Tahitian! The fiery Polynesian crew, proudly present their way of life and entertain you with Polynesian songs and rhythms on their ukulele, guitars and drums. Before going to bed, set your watch 30 minutes in advance, we switch to Marquesas time.

**Day 5****Nuku Hiva (Taiohae – Hatiheu – Taipivai)****B,L,D**

While the Aranui is unloading, you can explore Taiohae, the small administrative capital of the Marquesas. Taiohae Bay is where writer Herman Melville then a 23-year-old sailor and buddy jumped off a whaler in 1842. After breakfast, passengers will disembark and will take the 4x4 that will be waiting for them for the day's excursion. Our first stop will be a visit to Taiohae Cathedral. You can visit the Cathedral or go to the market to buy handicrafts. Then, we will visit the archaeological site of "Tohua Kamuihei" with its giant banyan trees and petroglyphs. Your first introduction to traditional Marquesan cuisine will be served for lunch. Here the specialty is the "umu", an underground oven where food is cooked for hours. Local music during the meal will provide a great atmosphere. Your excursion will continue south to Taiohae with its spectacular bay, a giant volcanic amphitheater dominated by towering cliffs dotted with waterfalls. Back to Taiohae village, you will also find banks and shops. You can return to the ship from the village on foot or by car.

**Day 6****Ua Pou (Hakahau)****B,L,D**

From the bridges, you will see the mountain spits unique to Ua Pou. As the crew unloads supplies, cement, sugar, and loads bags of copra (dried coconuts) and fruit, you can explore the picturesque village of Hakahau and its church with a hand-carved wooden platform. Meet the island's talented sculptors and artists, climb to the Croix for stunning views of the mountains, lush valleys and the main village. Another delicious Marquesan lunch will be served: breadfruit, a staple of the Marquesan with goat curry (a specialty of the Marquesas Islands), raw fish marinated in lemon juice and coconut milk, taro and red bananas. Enjoy an excellent dance performance, including the traditional "bird dance", at UA POU.

**Day 7****Ua Huka (Vaipae – Hane – Hokatu)****B,L,D**

This island which saw the construction of the first airstrip in the Marquesas in 1972 is largely arid and home to many wild horses, goats and pigs. In the early morning, the Aranui will perform an impressive manoeuvre, a 180-degree turn in the beautiful "Invisible Bay" of Vaipae. A manoeuvre that requires all the dexterity of the captain and

crew is not to be missed. Back in your 4x4 to explore the island, stopping for stunning views, visit the arboretum born from the passion of the former mayor of the island, before reaching the beautiful village of Hane. Lunch will be served at a local family restaurant. Discover some of the island's specialties, handicrafts, wooden carvings, as well as engraved coconut shells. After lunch, you can return to the ship by 4x4 or enjoy a 3km walk. Make sure you're on deck this afternoon as the Aranui will sail all along the coast of Ua Huka for more magnificent views.

**Day 8            Tahuata (Vaitahu) – Hiva Oa (Atuona)**

**B,L,D**

The Aranui will anchor in the small bay of Tahuata. The only access is by sea, as there is no airport on Tahuata. On this leaf-shaped island, the air is thick with the scent of the “tiara Tahiti”, frangipani and history. In 1595, Spanish explorers landed in the village of Vaitahu and opened fire on a crowd of curious islanders, killing about 200 people. Tahuata is also the site of the first French colony in the Marquesas in 1842. The large church built by the Vatican is decorated with beautiful Marquesan sculptures and magnificent stained glass windows symbolizing the Virgin Mary. Tahuata is famous for its exquisite bone and helmet shell sculptures. There will be plenty to choose from in the village.

The Aranui will arrive in Hiva Oa early afternoon and you will have plenty of time to explore Atuona, the second largest village in the Marquesas. This is where Paul Gauguin lived and created part of his work. By 4x4, you will visit the largest archaeological site of the Marquesas Islands, the “Tohua Ta'oa”. You can also visit the colonial store where he bought his bread, as well as a replica of his sad and famous “pleasure house” and the Museum. Walking up the hill to the cemetery, you will have a breathtaking view of the Hanakee motu. Under a huge frangipani tree is a tombstone with simple words: *Paul Gauguin 1903*. Nearby is the tomb of another famous European who was also seduced by Hiva Oa: Belgian singer-songwriter Jacques Brel, who died in 1978.

**Day 9            Fatu Hiva (Omoa – Hanavave)**

**B,L,D**

Fatu Hiva, the most lush and remote of the Marquesas Islands, is also a Marquesan craft centre. In the village of Omoa, the women will show you how to make tapas by crushing the bark of paper mulberry, banyan or bread tree but also the making of ‘Umuhei, an island herbal blend used to perfume their hair. After visiting the village, there is an opportunity for a 15km hike that will take you from Omoa to Hanavave, offering breathtaking views of the high cliffs. Lunch will be served at the top. Non-hikers will sail aboard the Aranui, from Omoa to Hanavave to Virgin Bay, considered one of the most beautiful bays in the world. Time to visit the village and to welcome hikers in.

**Day 10**                      **to Sea**    **B,L,D**

Relax onboard as we cross to the beautiful islands of Tuamotu. Guest speakers are onboard to enrich us with local history. The crew provide entertainment – join in the singing and dancing and get your hips swinging Tahitian-style!

**Day 11**                      **Rangiroa**    **B,L,D**

From the bridges, observe our approach and our arrival in the largest atoll of French Polynesia and the second largest in the world. You can see playful dolphins greeting the Ship as we enter the Tiputa Pass. Glass bottom boat and scuba diving excursions are available (registration at reception). Scuba diving here classified as one of the best in the world (certified divers only). There's also the white sand beach of Rangiroa and the translucent lagoon to enjoy. The local "mamas" will have an excellent display of shell necklaces, chains and key chains, other small souvenirs for sale on the beach. The Aranui will depart at lunchtime and sail to the mystical island of Bora Bora. After a picnic on land, the Aranui will sail along the coast of Makatea before continuing its journey to the islands of the Society.

**Day 12**                      **Bora Bora**    **B,L,D**

Arriving in the world-famous blue and opalescent green lagoon of Bora Bora, you will be welcomed by the majestic Mount Otemanu, the highest peak of the island. In this island paradise, you can enjoy a day at the beach and a barbecue on a private Motu surrounded by crystal clear waters. You can also choose from optional activities, a variety of excursions at an additional cost: scuba diving, lagoon tour by boat and canoe, swimming with sharks and rays! Bora Bora was an American military outpost during World War II and remnants of the war such as cannons and bunkers can be seen on the circuit. Departure in the evening for Papeete.

**Day 13**                      **Papeete**    **B,L**

Sadly, we say Nānā (goodbye) to our fellow sailors, and the Aranui staff. After disembarking we'll spend the morning exploring the East Coast of Tahiti Nui, often dubbed the Jurassic coast. The abundance of stunning natural wonders, from the dramatic coastal landscapes to the powerful Vaimahuta waterfall and the legendary blow hole is breathtaking. Along the way we encounter local culture and enjoy a tasty lunch. Check in to hotel later this afternoon and relax.

Accommodation: 4\* Papeete Hotel – 1night

**Day 14**                      **Depart**

Flights generally depart early from Papeete. Suggest you purchase some snacks the day before to keep you going until your light breakfast onboard flight.

**Dates:**

Starts/Ends Papeete – date to be advised for July 2026

**Approx Cost:**

NZ\$10,400 per person twin share

NZ\$13,800 single

*If you are travelling solo and would like a roommate let us know*

**Includes:**

- Papeete airport transfers
- 2 nights Papeete 4\* hotel + early check in on Day 1
- 11 nights Aranui ship in a Standard Stateroom with porthole window & ensuite bathroom
- Meals as specified | B-breakfast, L-lunch, D-dinner
- Scheduled shore excursions with English speaking guides
- One bottle of wine between 4 guests during onboard lunches & dinners
- Tahiti Nui East Coast half day tour with lunch
- Escorted by Marie Coles with minimum 8 guests

**Excludes:**

- Airfares to/from Papeete (ask for best price at time of booking)
- Meals not specified
- Refreshments not specified
- Optional excursions
- Items of a personal nature, eg. spa treatments
- Travel Insurance
- Visa (NZ passport holders do not need a visa for Tahiti)
- Upgrade to Superior Balcony cabin priced from \$2505 pp twin share, \$2925 single

**Booking Conditions:**

Non-refundable 25% deposit required at confirmation. Balance due 90 days prior departure (unless otherwise advised). Price is subject to change until confirmed and paid in full.

## About the Ship

The 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.



**Twin share Standard Stateroom**



**Deluxe Balcony Stateroom**

