

marin living.

DESIGN &
DOMAIN



Courtesy Tahiti Tourisme

going places.

SUDDENLY SUMMER

A transformative new center at Fioli, a heavenly seven-day excursion to Tahiti and a new Marin roommate-matching program that is changing lives for the better.

Tahiti is the summer getaway you didn't know you needed until now.



7 PERFECT DAYS IN FRENCH POLYNESIA

Waterfall hikes, secluded motu picnics and lagoon swims await in this South Pacific paradise.

By Keri Bridgwater

OVERWATER BUNGALOWS FIRST ENTICED TRAVELERS TO the Islands of Tahiti in the 1960s; today, its serene tropical landscapes, rich Polynesian culture and exceptional waves enchant adventure seekers and slow travelers alike. Across the five archipelagos, you could spend years exploring the 118 isles of French Polynesia, but it's still possible to pack plenty into a week. Consider Tahiti and its capital, Papeete, your jumping-off point for a Society Islands circuit with visits to neighboring Moorea, followed by birthplace of the Polynesian gods Raiatea and "Vanilla Island" Taha'a.

TAHITI: Queen of the Pacific
The largest island of the Society Islands, Tahiti serves as the arrival and departure point for all the area's international flights. Five minutes from Faa'a International Airport, elegant oceanfront property the Hilton Hotel Tahiti (www.hilton.com/en/hotels/ppthihh-hilton-hotel-tahiti) is a sweet spot to bookend vacations, conquer jet lag at the oasis-like swimming pool and explore Papeete. Dive into Tahitian history and Polynesian culture at the Museum of Tahiti and the Islands (www.museetahiti.pf) and learn about local food favorites on a walkabout with Tahiti Food Tours (www.tahiti-foodtour.com) that features several tasting stops, including a Tahitian breakfast of poisson cru (ceviche), firi firi doughnuts and coconut coffee. The tour culminates at shopping hub

Courtesy of Hilton Hotel Tahiti



Opposite: Heiva Lounge bar; this page: Cook's Bay Hotel & Suites, Moorea

Courtesy of Cook's Bay Hotel & Suites, Moorea, Lionel Cuveiller

Marché Papeete, which sells everything from fresh flowers and fruits to Tahitian crafts. Do lunch at fusion restaurant Kozy (www.instagram.com/kozy.tahiti/) and visit Tahiti's famed roulottes (food trucks) at Vai'ete Square for dinner. Beyond Papeete, adventurous day trips include a lagoon tour at fabled surf break Teahupoo. For onward travel to Moorea, it's a 15-minute flight with Air Tahiti or a half-hour scenic ferry crossing.

MOOREA: The Magical Island
Despite its proximity to Tahiti, Moorea feels like a secluded tropical paradise. Backdropped by Mount Rōtui, which rises dramatically between Cook's Bay and Opunohu Bay, its lush interior valleys offer fantastic hiking opportunities. Explore with Asher Te Aurahi Kora, founder of Moorea by Foot, who leads guided hikes to scenic viewpoints

and hidden waterfalls around the island. Pristine coral lagoons bustling with marine life steal the show too. They're accessed by deepwater "passes," including one called Avaroa, which leads to Moorea's most scenic harbor and, along the way, Cook's Bay Hotel & Suites (www.mooreacooksbay.com), a boutique all-suite property with a private beach, swimming pool and destination restaurant.



Moorea is one of the best islands for seeing humpback whales and the hotel makes a perfect base for Tahiti's whale season. Respected local outfitter Corallina Tours (www.corallinatours.com) runs whale swimming trips, plus lagoon swims with stingrays and black-tip reef sharks. For that next interisland hop, Air Tahiti operates a daily nonstop to Uturoa Airport on Raiatea.

RAIATEA: the Sacred Island & Taha'a: The Vanilla Island

A lesser-visited destination within the South Pacific archipelago, Raiatea is the birthplace of Polynesian culture and is significant for its historical sites, the most important

being Marae Taputapuātea. This ancient gathering place is best visited with Tahiarii Yoram Pariente, owner of heritage-tourism outfit Polynesian Escape, who was instrumental in it receiving a UNESCO World Heritage designation. From Raiatea, it's a 25-minute boat ride to neighboring Taha'a, an even smaller island along the French Polynesia "Pearl Route" whose most soulful stay is Pension Anahata (www.pensionanahata.com), a family-run guesthouse with eight charming bungalows, including three on a private beach. Slow travel days unfold here with swims from the dock and family-style meals served in a hillside dining

The lobby at Cook's Bay Hotel & Suites, Moorea

room framed by views across Haamene Bay. Alongside pearls, Taha'a is also famous for producing prized vanilla beans, and Poerani Tours owner Teva (email: rani-poe@mail.pf) can arrange day trips that feature a visit to his family vanilla farm, plus small-batch local rum distilleries. Although a motu picnic and sunset cruise soundtracked by "Tahitian Deck" music on his boat is a travel memory not soon forgotten. 

Courtesy of Cook's Bay Hotel & Suites, Moorea

SUMMER IN TAHITI



GETTING THERE & AWAY

Fly direct from San Francisco International Airport to Papeete with Paris-based airline **French bee** (www.us.frenchbee.com).

UPCOMING EVENTS WORTH TRAVELING FOR

July marks the start of whale season, when migrating humpback whales arrive in French Polynesia. Traditional cultural showcase **Heiva i Tahiti** also takes place in Papeete that month, while top surfers will compete at Teahupo'o on Tahiti Iti during the **2024 Summer Olympics** surfing event (July 27–August 8).



Courtesy of French bee (above); Tahiti Tourisme and Gregoire Le Bacon