

The Marquesas by Passenger Freighter

Friday 16 - Saturday 31 August 2024
15 nights

TOUR OVERVIEW

Cruise in comfort among some of the most remote islands on earth, with spectacular volcanic landscapes and a rich Polynesian culture that has ancient connections to New Zealand. For decades a Tahitian family business has provided a lifeline for these islands, and now its latest, modern ship conveys adventurous travellers as well as vital supplies and traded goods. The crew, mostly Polynesian and many from the Marquesas, are proud of their culture and history and keen to share it with you.

This cruise takes you to most of the inhabited islands in the Marquesas, sometimes more than once, as well as two different atolls in the Tuamotu Archipelago. The contrasts are great. The Tuamotu atolls rise just a couple of metres above sea level and encompass tranquil lagoons. On other islands craggy cliffs rear out of the deep ocean, and the centre of these small islands might be 1,000 metres or more high. Small villages nestle in sheltered bays, some so narrow that entering by ship requires impressive feats of navigation. The Aranui's arrival is a red-letter day for each community it visits. The crew go to work unloading goods ranging from groceries to motor vehicles and collect produce for transport to market or supplies going to another island. Watching the unloading and loading, sometimes onto a wharf and sometimes onto tenders, is part of the adventure.

The locals also come out in force with their 4WD vehicles to take you to sites of interest - ancient archaeological sites almost reclaimed by the jungle, impressive churches that indicate the influence of missionaries, and spectacular viewpoints. The islanders also put a lot of effort into cooking meals and performing traditional music and dance. You will have time to stroll around the small villages, meeting locals and shopping for unusual souvenirs.

Life on board is really comfortable. The Aranui 5 entered service in 2015 and was designed so that the rear half is a cruise liner and the front half a freighter. With only 103 cabins spread over eight decks, it feels compact. It has a restaurant where the meals are served in a casual setting, lounges, conference rooms where guest lecturers provide presentations on topics related to the Marquesas, bars with sweeping panoramic views, an outdoor pool, a shop, a fitness room and spa. Excursions are well organised, and on-board activities are also offered. The owners and crew take pride in providing a vital link for the Marquesan people and showing travellers from around the world this unique part of the Pacific. Before boarding the Aranui, you will spend three nights in Papeete with time to explore Tahiti.



TOUR INCLUSIONS

- The services of an experienced New Zealand based Calder & Lawson tour manager
- Economy class airfares
- 4 nights accommodation in Papeete
- 11 nights accommodation aboard Aranui 5
- All meals on board the Aranui 5, other meals as specified in the itinerary
- Local guides
- All group transfers
- Admissions as detailed in the itinerary
- All tips for local guides
- All tourist, cruise, and port taxes
- Pre-tour material

TOUR HIGHLIGHTS

- Visit some of the most remote islands in the world.
- Join the local inhabitants in music, dancing, and feasting.
- Watch as the Aranui's crew provides a vital lifeline to these far-flung communities.
- Learn about the ancient history and culture of this part of the Pacific.
- Discover what enchanted Paul Gauguin, Herman Melville, and Jacques Brel so much they stayed in the Islands.
- Spend 2 days exploring and relaxing in Tahiti.
- Experience the incomparable Bora Bora

TOUR EXCLUSIONS

- Airline taxes
- Personal expenses
- Travel insurance
- Meals not specified in the itinerary
- Beverages during included meals, unless specified
- Hotel portorage



IS THIS TOUR FOR ME?

You will need to be agile and reasonably fit to enjoy this cruise. On some islands, the Aranui can dock at a wharf, but at others passengers must use a small landing craft or tender to reach the shore. In some sea conditions moving between the tender and ship requires good reflexes and agility, though of course, the excellent crew will be there to help you.

Some landings are directly onto the beach, so you will get wet feet. The shore excursions require a moderate amount of walking, and while all excursions are optional it would be a pity to miss out. There are one or two opportunities for hiking on the islands, and the crew will brief you about the level of difficulty. Otherwise, you can sit back and enjoy a relaxing cruise.

There will be a few options for swimming and snorkeling and there is a pool on board the ship for cooling off each day.

TOUR PRICE

Share twin per person, Ex Auckland

- Stateroom Cabin NZD \$13,590 p/p (\$1000 per person deposit)
- Deluxe Superior Cabin with balcony NZD \$15,590 p/p (\$1000 per person deposit)
- Premium Suite with balcony NZD \$16,690 p/p (\$2000 deposit per person)

Note: prices may be subject to change based on airline and supplier pricing

Single supplement (limited availability, please call or email us for a price).

GROUP SIZE Minimum 10, maximum 18

VARIATIONS IN TRAVEL We can make arrangements for any travel you would like to do before or after this tour, or book business class flights. Please contact us to discuss your requirements.

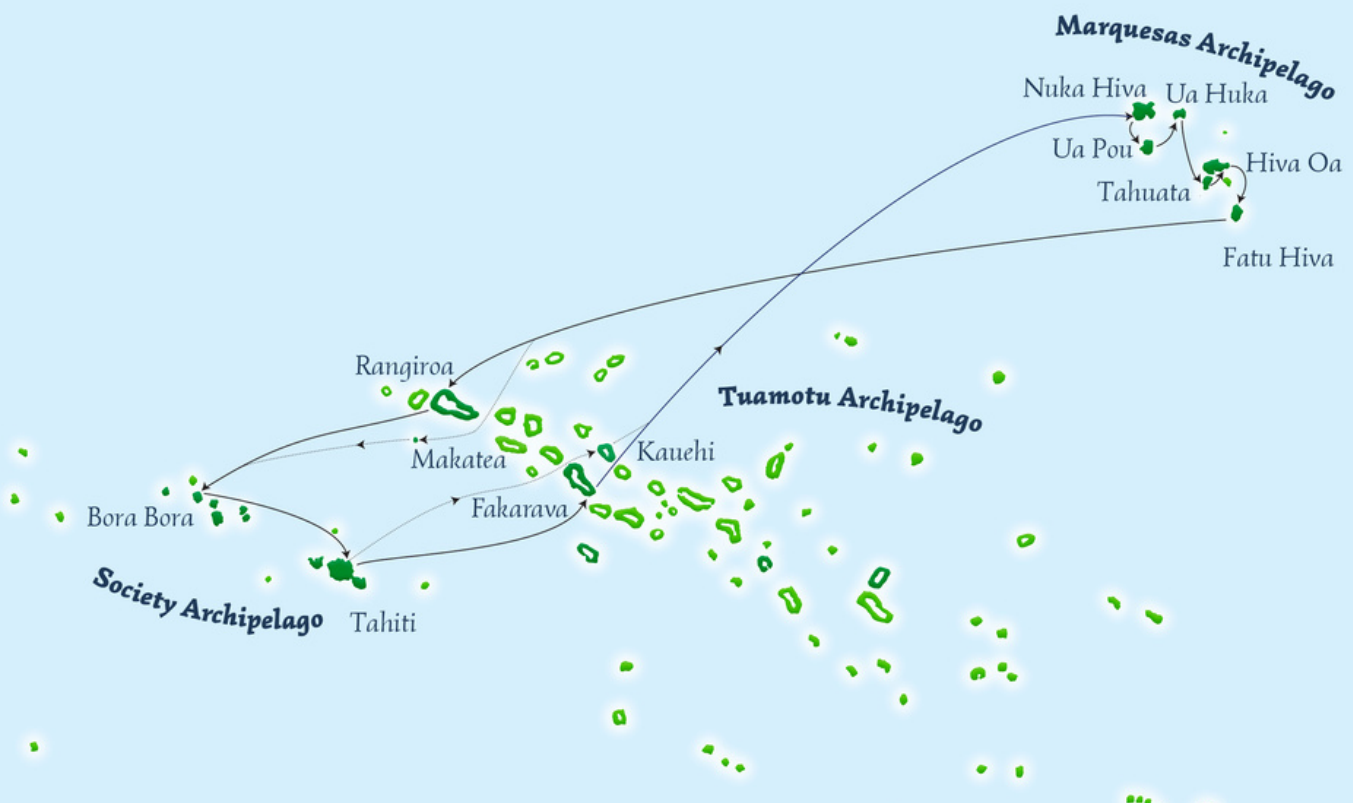
[CLICK HERE TO BOOK ONLINE](#)

TOUR MANAGER: Penny Pickett

Penny has had a long career in travel and has worked for Calder & Lawson Tours for the last six years. She is a fun and caring tour manager and always goes the extra mile to make sure you get the most out of your tour. Penny loves leading groups on small ships having had two recent adventures in the Kimberley and South Australia.



Marquesas, Tuamotu & Society Islands



DAILY ITINERARY

Friday 16 August 2024

Auckland to Papeete

Meals: In flight/D

Overnight: Papeete

Depart Auckland in the evening on your Air New Zealand flight to Papeete, the capital of French Polynesia. On arrival very early Friday morning you will be met and transferred to your hotel where you will stay for two nights. Relax for the morning before meeting your tour manager and the group in the early afternoon for a walking tour of the vibrant and multicultural downtown Papeete.

Discover local produce, including fish and fruits at a traditional market, visit City Hall, a colonial palace flanked by lush gardens, and also visit the Notre Dame Cathedral which dates back to 1875 and was restored in 1987. In the evening, join your tour manager and fellow travellers for a welcome dinner.

Saturday 17 August

Papeete - on board the

Aranui

Meals: B/L/D

Overnight: Aranui 5 ship

Depart Papeete harbour in the morning for an amazing journey across the Pacific. On board the comfortable Aranui 5 for the next 12 days you will enjoy a friendly atmosphere, fine French and Polynesian cuisine, informative lectures, and the raw beauty of the destinations.

Sunday 18 August

Fakarava

Meals: B/L/D

Overnight: Aranui 5 ship

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. 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 with its authenticity as well as the surrealist hues of its lagoon, which you can enjoy as if you were alone in the world! You will have the possibility to snorkel in Kauehi and Fakarav.



DAILY ITINERARY

Monday 19 August

At sea

Meals: B/L/D

Overnight: Aranui 5 ship

A day to unwind and relax on one of the sun decks or in the comfort of an air-conditioned lounge. Or enjoy the views of the endless South Pacific Ocean as you make your way to the captivating Marquesas Islands. Lectures on Marquesan culture and history will give an insight into this ancient civilization. There will be plenty of time to socialise at the bar with fellow adventurers from around the world. The spirited Polynesian crew will proudly introduce us to their way of life and entertain with Polynesian songs and rhythms on their ukuleles, guitars and drums.

Tuesday 20 August

Nuka Hiva

(Taiohae/Hatiheu/Taipivai)

Meals: B/L/D

Overnight: Aranui 5 ship

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. 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 which will be familiar to New Zealanders who have experienced hangi before. You will have time to explore Taiohae, the tiny administrative capital of the Marquesas. Taiohae Bay is where Herman Melville, then a 23-year-old sailor, and a buddy jumped a whaling ship in 1842. You can visit the cathedral or go the market to shop for arts and crafts. There are also banks, boutiques and an internet café.

Wednesday 21 August

Ua Pou (Hakahau)

Meals: B/L/D

Overnight: Aranui 5 ship

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. 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 a local dance show, including the Bird Dance, a traditional Ua Pou performance.

DAILY ITINERARY

Thursday 22 August
Ua Huka
(Vaipae'e/Hane/Hokatu)

Meals: B/L/D

Overnight: Aranui 5 ship

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'e'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.

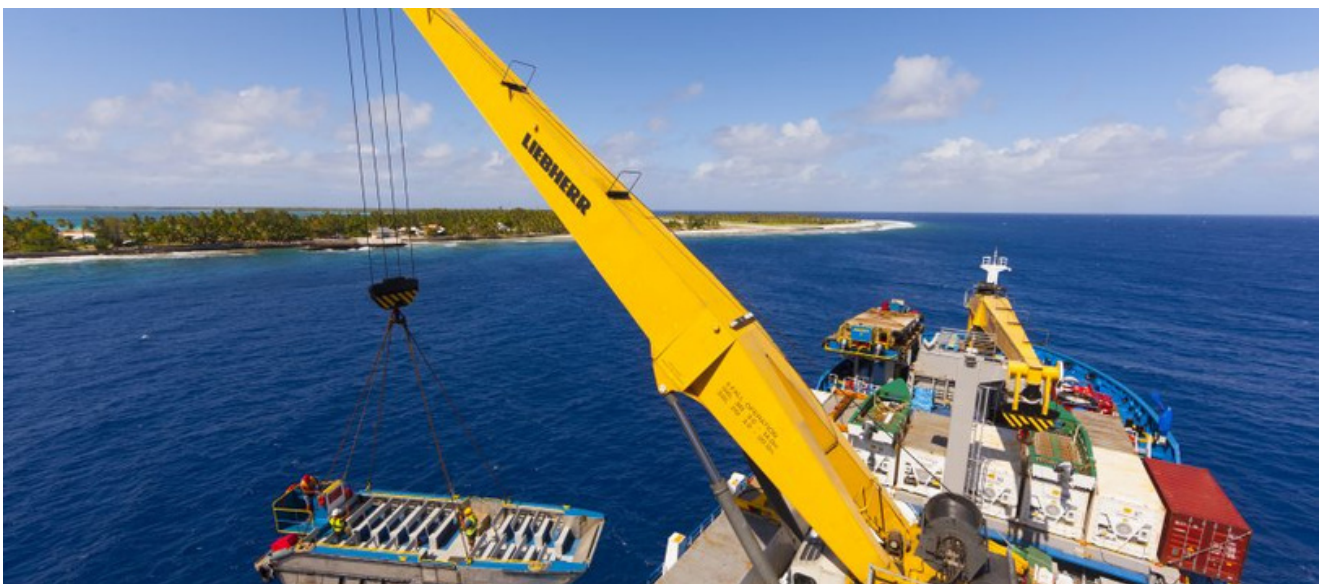
From the dock, travel by 4WD to the village of Hane. Along the way, you will stop to explore the Botanical Garden, the cultural centre Te Tumu, featuring a small museum with exquisite replicas of Marquesan artifacts, and a petroglyph museum and local woodcarvers' studios in the fishing village of Hokatu. Look for the unusual carved black and white coconuts. In Hane visit the Marine Museum, then a Marquesan lunch will be served. In the afternoon, hike to view red tuff tikis overlooking the bay.

Friday 23 August
Tahuata (Vaitahu) - Hiva Oa
(Atuona)

Meals: B/L/D

Overnight: Aranui 5 ship

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 tiki, sea creatures, bracelets, necklaces and more from horse and cow bone, fossilised bone, tusks, and pink helmet shells. Atuona, main 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.



DAILY ITINERARY

Saturday 24 August
Fatu Hiva (Omoa and Hanavave)

Meals: B/L/D

Overnight: Aranui 5 ship

Fatu Hiva is the most lush and remote island of the Marquesas. The only access is by sea, since there is no airport here. It is also the island of 'tapa' and we will discover all about this traditional cloth. In the tranquil village of Omoa we will learn about the process of pounding mulberry, banyan or breadfruit tree bark on logs to make tapa. The bark is then dried and used as a canvas on which locals paint ancient Marquesan designs. Fatu Hiva is also well-known for its hand-painted pareos (sarongs) and monoi, coconut oil infused with blossoms, vanilla or sandalwood. You will meet skilled woodcarvers in the large handicraft centre, and this will be another opportunity to purchase Marquesan art and souvenirs. During the day the Aranui will sail to the other side of the island, to Hanavave Bay, also known as the Bay of Virgins. If you are keen for some extra exercise you may choose to make the trip on foot. The 15km walk is breath-taking both for effort and for views. For hikers, a delicious lunch will be served at the top of a mountain. Sunset in the narrow Hanavave Bay is a moment of pure bliss.

Sunday 25 August
At Sea

Meals: B/L/D

Overnight: Aranui 5 ship

After an enriching journey to the heart of Polynesian civilisation, it's time to unwind or enjoy the various activities and lectures offered on board.

Monday 26 August
Rangiroa (Ohutu), Tuamotu Archipelago

Meals: B/L/D

Overnight: Aranui 5 ship

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 and scuba 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.

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 its singular history.

DAILY ITINERARY

Tuesday 27 August

Bora Bora

Meals: B/L/D

Overnight: Aranui 5 ship

As you arrive in Bora Bora's world-famous lagoon of opalescent blues and greens, you'll be greeted by the majestic "Mount Otemanu," the island's highest peak. In this perfect island paradise, you'll have plenty of time to discover how and why the Pearl of the Pacific earned such a well-deserved reputation. You can snorkel and marvel at the turquoise lagoons, among the most beautiful in the world.

Wednesday 28 August

Return to Papeete

Meals: B

Overnight: Papeete

After a morning arrival in Papeete, transfer to your hotel. Enjoy a free day and evening.

Thursday 29 August

Papeete

Meals: B/D

Overnight: Papeete

Take a half day Tahiti Island tour today, beginning with the incredible panorama from the Taharaa Lookout, then you'll head to Pointe Venus, the site where Europeans first landed on the island. James Cook named it after the planet, commemorating the observation of Venus that was made on his scientific voyage. Visit Vaipahi Garden, a vivid and varied tropical garden featuring a wonderful selection of endemic plants in an exotic environment. The garden's gorgeous waterfall serves as the centrepiece to this island getaway. Head down a hill to the Mara'a Grotto, a magical cave filled with a lake that hides its true depth with an optical illusion. Lastly, you'll visit the ancient Arahurahu Marae, Tahiti's best example of an ancient Polynesian temple and meeting place. Fully restored and maintained as a museum, the marae is used to re-enact old Polynesian ceremonies during the Islands' annual Heiva Nui celebrations.

Gather with the group for a farewell dinner this evening. You will have use of your room until you need to head to the airport for your early morning flight back to New Zealand

Friday 30 August

Departure

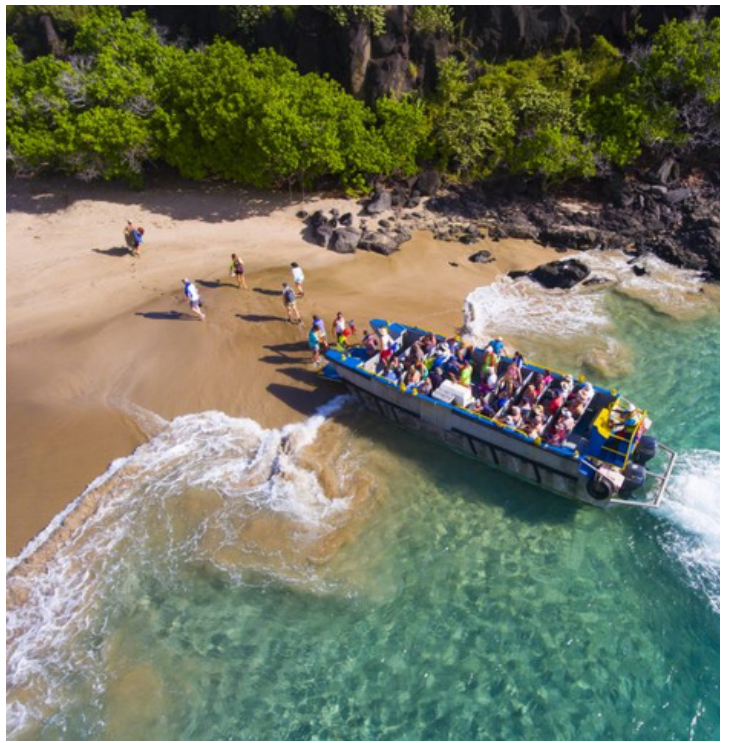
Meals: B/ inflight

Depart Papeete Airport early this morning for your flight back to New Zealand. After crossing the date line, you'll arrive in Auckland early in the morning of Saturday 31 August.



YOUR SHIP - ARANUI 5

Aranui 5 is a custom-built, dual-purpose passenger/freighter designed to offer all of the comforts of a cruise liner, while operating as a supply ship. Aranui 5 is classified as a small vessel, accommodating approximately 254 passengers and 103 cabins. With 8 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; two lounges; two conference rooms, where guest lecturers will offer presentations on various topics related to the Marquesas; four bars, including the Sky Bar with sweeping panoramic views; an outdoor pool; a boutique; a massage room and a gym.



Stateroom Cabin - Exterior cabin of 11 sq m with porthole window.



Premium Cabin - Exterior cabin of 18sq m with private outdoor balcony.

A deposit of \$1,000 (\$2000 for Premium Cabins) is required to secure your place on the tour.

When minimum numbers are reached the tour will become a 'confirmed departure' and your deposit will be non-refundable.

Click below to complete the online registration form, pay the deposit and your place in this tour is secured.

Or you can complete a paper registration form. You can download one from our website

www.calderandlawsontours.co.nz/forms/ or call us and we will email or post one to you.

[CLICK HERE TO BOOK ONLINE](#)

TERMS & CONDITIONS

Can be found on our website www.calderandlawsontours.co.nz/forms/, on the back of the paper registration form or on the summary page when you complete an online registration.

There is a 1.5% surcharge if you pay by credit card.