

Discover The Marquesas 2026

The heart and soul of French Polynesia

11 nights on board

18 Days

PKG No. UC001-26

Departure dates

See Schedule

Starting from (AUD)

A\$12,299

per person twin share

Early Bird Savings

Aranui Cruises

French Polynesia / South Pacific

Overview

Cruise on-board the custom-built working freighter, Aranui 5, to the beautiful, remote Marquesas Islands! Early bird savings available for bookings made by 31 December 2024!

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.

Please ask us for best available pricing.

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

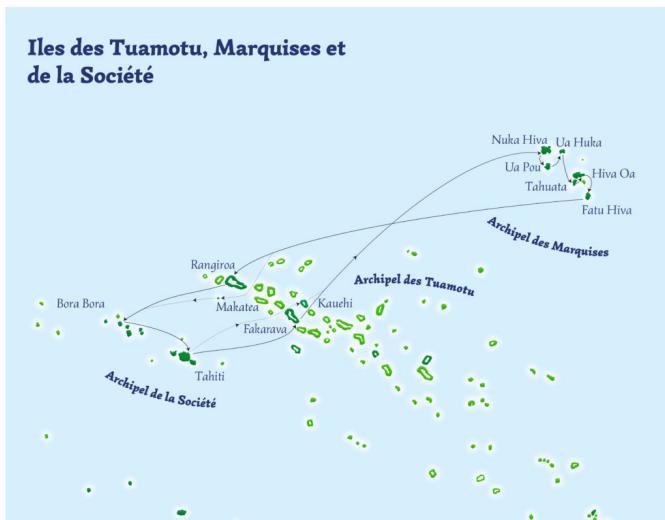
Build date 2013

Crew 140

Capacity 264

Length 126m

Itinerary



Day 1 Papeete

Departure from Papeete in the afternoon, welcome of our crew and navigation to the Tuamotu archipelago.

Day 2 Fakarava

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 3 At Sea

A day to relax at the Pool Deck or in the comfort of our 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 have the opportunity to 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 4 Nuku Hiva

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. 7pm: Polynesian evening with plancha

buffet around the pool (Deck 7) or at the Restaurant (Deck 4) depending on weather conditions.

Day 5 Ua Pou

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, 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 6 Ua Huka

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 maneuver, a 180-degree turn in the beautiful "Invisible Bay" of Vaipae. A maneuver 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, return on board in 4x4. For the more spirited, a 3km walk back from the arboretum awaits you. Make sure you're on deck as the Aranui will sail all along the coast of Ua Huka for more magnificent views.

Day 7 Tahuata - Hiva Oa

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 after lunch on board, where 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 8 Fatu Hiva

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, the most sporty passengers can opt for a 15km hike that will take them 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. Visit you land for a visit of the village and to welcome hikers.

Day 9 At Sea

A day to recover from his emotions lived in the Marquesas archipelago. During our crossing to the beautiful islands of Tuamotu, conferences and activities will be offered throughout this day. Before going to bed, back your watch 30 minutes, back to Tahiti time.

Day 10 Rangiroa or Makatea (Voy 13, 14 & 25)

RANGIROA: 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, one of Rangiroa's passes. Glass bottom boat and scuba diving excursions are available (registration at reception). Scuba diving is here classified as one of the best in the world (certified divers only). If you decide not to visit, enjoy the white sand beach of Rangiroa and the translucent lagoon. 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. **MAKATEA (V13, V14, V25)** The Aranui offers this opportunity to visit the remains of Makatea, phosphate mining and caves, cross the island on foot or by car, picnic under the cliffs or on the beach. A raised atoll or exogenous atoll, Makatea is a type of atoll or coral island whose whole or part of the earth is composed of an ancient coral reef that has emerged. The term Makatea refers to a type of raised atoll with in its center, the remains of the ancient volcanic island. This term is also used to refer specifically to escarpments of coral origin encountered in all types of raised atolls. Makatea is also the name of a coral island located in the Tuamotu archipelago (French Polynesia), where a phosphate deposit was mined from 1917. 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 11 Bora Bora

Arriving in the world famous lagoon of Bora Bora of blue and opalescent greens, you will be welcomed by the majestic «Mount Otemanu», the highest peak of the island. In this island paradise and perfect, you can enjoy a day at the beach and a barbecue on a private Motu surrounded by crystal clear waters, the «Motu Tapu». 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 12 Papeete

This is the end of our journey. It is time to say Nānā! (goodbye) to your fellow travellers, the Polynesian staff and the Aranui guides.

Departure Schedule

Cruise departure dates from Papeete:

17 January 2026

31 January 2026

28 February 2026

14 March 2026

11 April 2026

25 April 2026

09 May 2026

30 May 2026

13 June 2026

04 July 2026

18 July 2026

01 August 2026

15 August 2026

29 August 2026

26 September 2026

10 October 2026

07 November 2026

21 November 2026

05 December 2026

19 December 2026

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 Sydney, Melbourne or Brisbane
- 11 night voyage from Papeete aboard the Aranui 5
- 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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