



# SCUBA DIVING

*A guide to scuba diving in The Islands of Tahiti*



THE ISLANDS *of*  
**TAHITI**

SOCIETY ISLANDS | TUAMOTU ISLANDS | GAMBIER ISLANDS | MARQUESAS ISLANDS | AUSTRAL ISLANDS

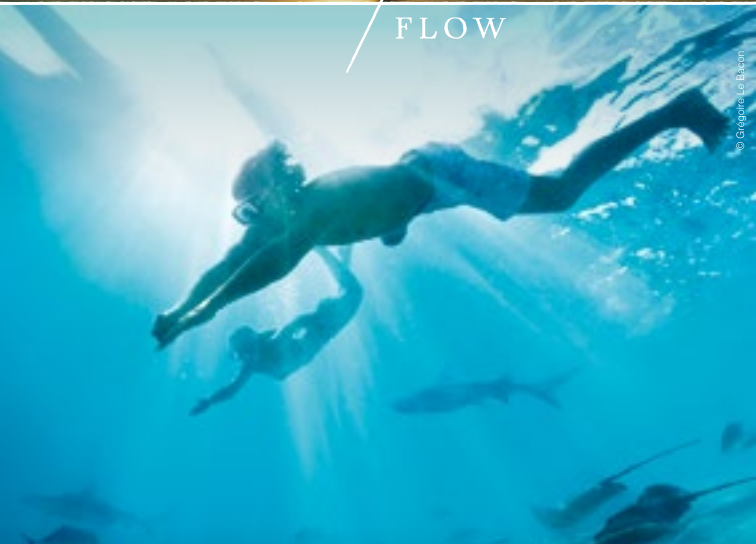
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There are many sides to *The Islands of Tahiti*. Yet they are all connected by *Mana*.

*Mana* is a life force and spirit that surrounds us. You can see it. Touch it.

Taste it. Feel it. And from the moment you arrive, you will understand why we say our Islands are **EMBRACED** by *MANA*



To discover *Mana* for yourself, visit [TahitiTourisme.org](http://TahitiTourisme.org)

THE ISLANDS of

TAHITI



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*A guide to scuba diving in The Islands of Tahiti*

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- Hotels and Tahitian Guesthouses
- Only Tahitian Guesthouses



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## ENVIRONMENT AND DIVE FACILITIES

*Te Moana Nui o Hīvā...  
The big ocean of Polynesians' ancestors*

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### The courage of the first migrants

It is commonly thought that the first inhabitants of Tahiti arrived from Southeast Asia about 2,000 years ago. They traveled on large sailing outrigger canoes guided by celestial navigation and their intimate knowledge of the ocean. Isolated for 1,500 years, the *Ma'ohi*, the original inhabitants, developed an ocean oriented society and culture. The *Moana Nui o Hīvā* still plays a prominent part for the Polynesians, especially in the remote islands where life is dependent on the ocean's bounty.

### A very specific geology

*The Islands of Tahiti* are all of volcanic origin. Their formation began about 75 million years ago. Although the different groups of islands do not date from the same period, the geological phenomenon is similar to all of them — the earth's crust, called lithosphere, moves as plates. Volcanic activity develops when a plate meets a hot area and magma is allowed to escape to the surface. Given enough time, a submerged volcano can emerge from the ocean forming an island. When the lithosphere moves again, the fissure is closed and the volcano becomes extinct.

Coral develops around the extinct volcanic island. The island slowly settles back into the sea over time. The coral continues to grow in the same place, close to the water's surface, as it needs light to develop. Thus a lagoon appears between the coral reef and the main island. After a few million years, the main island is completely eroded and has disappeared but the lagoon and the reef are still there. An atoll is born.







## Scuba Diving

The Tahitian *Moana*, or the ocean, is a truly idyllic place for scuba divers. The warm waters teem with marine life, from flirty clownfish to elegant rays and sharks. In fall, whale song from migrating humpbacks fills the sea with haunting melodies. The water is generally so clear it's more like liquid air. The ocean is calm, almost always current free, and the lush reefs are a breathtaking kaleidoscope of color and movement. But even better, with so many sites and so few divers, you will enjoy the rare feeling of being practically alone at a dive site with your guide. Most of the dive sites are close to the dive centers and transportation to and from is usually fairly short.





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## DIVE SITES: PASSES AND CORAL REEFS

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In many islands, dives take place close to a pass and the dive profile will vary depending on currents and tides. A pass is a natural opening between two ecosystems, the lagoon and the outer reef. When the tide changes, the passes funnel water into the lagoon then from the lagoon to the open sea. As the tides shift, the water squeezing through the passes creates strong, river-like currents, which make a thrill ride for experienced divers, and a create a smorgasbord for marine life. The lagoon's nutritive elements (mainly zooplankton and phytoplankton) are carried into the ocean on the outgoing tide, providing a daily ration of food, which keeps this ecosystem healthy and robust.

The outer reef slope is nice to explore. Mild or steep, sometimes vertical, it shelters a large variety of marine life. The Society Islands' reefs and shores offer a more varied habitat than that of the atolls and also more biodiversity.

Diving in a pass during the tidal shift usually requires a good level of experience and comfort in the water. The most thrilling drift dives are in the Tuamotu Islands (Rangiroa, Fakarava, Tikehau, Manihi), where you could see schooling sharks, dolphins and manta rays all during the same dive.

In the Society Islands (Tahiti, Bora Bora, Moorea, and others), the mostly current free dive sites are excellent for both beginners and for refresher dives to prep for drift diving in the Tuamotu Islands.





## Dive centers

All dive centers are fully equipped with the latest gear, and Divemasters speak French and English. Many are also conversant in Italian, Spanish, German and Japanese. There's also no need to travel with your own gear. The dive centers will have all the necessary gear for you, usually at no extra cost. However, it is recommended that you bring your own personal dive computer.

## Private dives

Most dive centers will offer you the opportunity to have a private dive with a boat and an instructor at your sole service.

## Diving with children

Your children will enjoy discovering scuba diving depending on the available gear and organization of each dive center. Most dive centers offer introductory dives and sometimes have children's gear available (small tanks, BCDs, specific boat set up, course and specialized instructor), as well as appropriate dive sites for them.



## Passes: an interesting phenomenon

For a coral reef to develop, sun light with an average water temperature of 26°C (78°F) and a salinity of 35g/kg are required. Freshwater, which typically flows from the rivers into the ocean, prohibits the formation of the reef at the river mouth. This is the reason why there are breaches in the coral, called passes, in the coral reef that rings the lagoon. This is particularly seen in the Windward Islands such as Tahiti and Moorea where freshwater flows through the rugged, steep mountains and valleys to the lagoon and its reef creating a natural path to the ocean.

## Ecology and tourism development

The islands of Moorea and Fakarava are leaders in the field of environmental protection. They have a regulatory system designed to make the most of their marine natural resources while respecting the biosphere. This marine management plan promotes harmony between tourism development and environment. As the frontline divers whose livelihood is dependent upon a healthy marine eco-system, dive centers help ensure the application and promotion of these management plans.

Today, French Polynesia has 50 marine parks, such as Hohoi Bay and Bay of Virgins in the Marquesas Islands, the marine reserves of Scilly and Bellinghausen, the whale, shark and sea turtle sanctuary, and the Unesco's biosphere reserve of Fakarava.

The marine sanctuary covers the entire Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), an oceanic area of nearly 2 millions square miles, making French Polynesia the largest marine mammal sanctuary on earth since 2002.

### *The Islands of Tahiti also offer...*

Numerous nautical activities such as surfing, kayaking and lagoon discovery eco-tours are available on most islands. Snorkeling around any island will give you the opportunity to encounter the underwater life through thousands of coral heads. You can discover the islands on horseback, hiking, or a 4WD safari trek through the lush valleys of the Society or Marquesas Islands. Seeing the astounding diversity of these islands will provide a new dimension to your stay. You will marvel while overlooking the aqua blue lagoons and be enthralled by the immensity of the ocean.

In Moorea, Coral Gardeners society restores coral reefs. You can adopt a coral on [coralgardeners.org](http://coralgardeners.org) or meet the Coral Gardeners in Moorea to plant it yourself.





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# THE UNDERWATER MARINE LIFE

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PAHUA (TRIDACHNA)

© TOP DIVE  
© Gilles Diramonds-AMV Voyages



MANTA RAYS



EMPEROR ANGELFISH



ANEMONE AND CLOWN FISH



REEF CRAB



JAVANESE MORAY EEL



GREASY GROUPER



POCILLOPORA CORAL



© Gilles Dirainondo - AMV Voyages



HAWKSBILL TURTLE

© Gregoire Le Boon



HUMPBAC WHALE

© Gilles Dirainondo - AMV Voyages



BOTTLENOSE DOLPHIN

© Gilles Dirainondo - AMV Voyages



GREY REEF SHARKS

© Jordi Chias



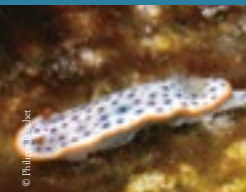
LEMON SHARK

© Gilles Dirainondo - AMV Voyages



SILVERTIP SHARK

© Philippe Bacchet



NUDIBRANCH

© Philippe Bacchet



TRITON

© Philippe Bacchet



STARFISH

© Philippe Bacchet



REEF SHRIMP

© Philippe Bacchet



TALPARIA TALPA PORCELAIN

© Philippe Bacchet



TIGER PORCELAIN SEASHELL  
(CYPRAEA TIGRIS)

© Gilles Dirainondo - AMV Voyages



PADDELTAIL SNAPPER

© Gilles Dirainondo - AMV Voyages



BLUELINED SNAPPER

© Gilles Dirainondo - AMV Voyages



SOLDIER FISH

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SCHOOL OF BARRACUDAS

© Philippe Bacchet



NAPOLEON WRASSE

© Gilles Dirainondo - AMV Voyages



BLACK JACKFISH

© Philippe Bacchet



GORGONIA

© Gilles Dirainondo - AMV Voyages



BUTTERFLY FISH

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MARBLED GROUPE



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# SOCIETY ISLANDS

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This mountainous archipelago is divided in two parts: the Windward Islands, which include Tahiti and Moorea, and the Leeward Islands, such as Bora Bora. French Polynesia has 280,000 inhabitants, and you'll find most of the population living in this part of this island nation. More than half of Tahitians live on the main island of Tahiti, which is where you'll find the only international airport in the bustling capital city of Papeete.

## Accommodations

The main islands offer a wide choice of accommodations such as luxury and intermediate hotels, Tahitian Guesthouses, villas, nautical charter and cruises.

## Scuba Diving

The conditions in the Society Islands are excellent and the dive sites are ideal for divers of all levels. The lagoons that wrap these islands in a ribbon of blue are the perfect place for a leisurely dive amongst the exceptional reef life. Most dives are organized close to the passes, and impressive animals such as black tip sharks, grey reef sharks, jacks, Napoleon wrasse and manta rays are commonly encountered.

Like all of *The Islands of Tahiti*, diving around the passes makes for an exhilarating adventure. The current in the passes of the Society Islands goes out to sea most of the time and one should be careful when diving these areas.



© Charlotte Pibo



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## Windward Islands, Niamatai

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The trade winds blow from the east and cross the archipelago meeting this group of islands first. Tahiti and Moorea are the most famous Windward Islands, known for their rugged, sharp-spined lush mountains. They are usually the first stop on any dive journey. You will find many dive shops here, some of them within the top luxury hotel resorts.

### Tahiti

The main island is often viewed as a stopover upon arrival and departure. However, the island features a magnificent, pristine mountainous interior and amazing underwater sites, which are worth spending extra time exploring. Tahiti is the ideal place for a first introduction to the bounty and diversity these waters offer. You'll find shallow, marine life rich reefs, drop-offs and walls dripping with colorful gorgonias and even a float-plane wreck ironically found just off the end of the runway of the international airport. The dive sites suit any level of certified diver, and the dive shops go to great lengths to protect the local marine ecosystem.

But don't forget to look up...

The island of Tahiti is an adventure lover's paradise, with a sharply chiseled, almost primal mountainous interior. Waterfalls tumble down Hollywood perfect vertical slopes that look almost Jurassic. You'll find dozens of ancient sacred sites called, *marae*, dotting the landscape. Whether you are hiking, riding a 4WD, ATV or exploring the vertical-walled valleys by helicopter, the scenery is phenomenal and wildly unexpected. After a day of discovering the raw and breathtaking interior, you will also enjoy wandering around the streets and colorful markets of downtown Papeete, for last minute Tahitian cultured pearl, Tahitian vanilla and souvenir shopping.





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## FAVORITES

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### Seaplane and schooner

One dive, two wrecks! These wrecks were sunk intentionally: the Catalina seaplane was sunk in 1962 and the old wooden schooner, the *Goelette*, in 1976. Both wrecks lie on the white sandy bottom of the lagoon outside the international airport of Faa'a at depths between 7 and 22 meters (23 and 72 feet). Numerous species of fish have taken refuge in the wrecks making for memorable experience for divers and a unique opportunity for underwater photographers.

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### The Marado

This sumptuous drop-off unveils a vibrant seabed covered in wrasse, butterflyfish, schools of sergeant major; certainly one of the most beautiful of Tahiti. Covered with gorgonias from a depth of 20 meters (65 feet), it suits diver and will provide numerous marinelife encounters.



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### White valley

Incredible diving along a reef slope a stone's throw from the pass near Papeete. The site itself is remarkable in its coral contours, which overlook a bright white sandy bottom that gives the site its name. The currents can be rather strong at times, but currents bring big schools of trevally, sharks, barracudas and turtles, all of which give divers a prime site to experience the abundance of sea life in Polynesian waters.

# Tahiti



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## Diving centers:

- A** ARCHIMEDE EXPEDITIONS
- B** ELEUTHERA TAHITI
- C** FLUID
- D** SCUBA TEK TAHITI
- E** TAHITI ITI DIVING
- F** TOPDIVE TAHITI  
*Diving child limited from 6 and 8 years*

## Dive sites:

- 1** **ARUE CLIFFS**  
Ocean, outer reef slope  
Max. depth 60m (197ft)
- 2** **ARUE'S FAULT**  
Ocean, outer slope  
Max. depth 60m (197ft)
- 3** **LA ZELEE**  
Ocean, outer reef slope  
Average depth 18m (59ft)
- 4** **FAA'A SHIP WRECKS**  
Lagoon - Average depth 18m (59ft)
- 5** **WHITE VALLEY**  
Ocean, outer reef slope  
Average depth 18m (59ft)
- 6** **THE AQUARIUM**  
Lagoon, protected area  
Up to 14m (46ft) of depth
- 7** **EEL VALLEY**  
Ocean, outer reef slope  
Average depth 25m (82ft)
- 8** **SAINT-ETIENNE DROP-OFF**  
Ocean, outer reef slope  
Up to 60m (197ft) of depth
- 9** **TURTLE PLATEAU**  
Ocean- Bay - Average depth 20m (66ft)
- 10** **THE SPRING**  
Ocean- Bay - Average depth 29m (95ft)
- 11** **TE MARUATA**  
Ocean, outer reef slope  
Average depth 29m (95ft)
- 12** **PAPEARI'S WHITE CANYON**  
Ocean, up to 60m (197ft) of depth
- 13** **HOLE IN THE LAGOON**  
Lagoon - Up to 29m (95ft) of depth
- 14** **GORGONES**  
Ocean, drop off  
Up to 60m (197ft) of depth
- 15** **THE VAVI**  
Ocean, outer reef slope  
Up to 50m (164ft) of depth
- 16** **THE MARADO**  
Ocean, outer reef slope  
Up to 60m (197ft) of depth
- 17** **THE HORSESHOE**  
Lagoon - Ocean
- 18** **TE PARI CAVE**  
Ocean - Depth: 5 to 17m (16 to 56ft)
- 19** **TAUTIRA'S FAULT**  
Ocean  
From 40 to 60m (131 to 197ft) of depth
- 20** **FAAONE ROSES**  
Ocean  
From 29 to 49m (95 to 161ft) of depth



# Moorea

Tahiti and Moorea are only 17 km (11 miles) apart. Moorea is easily accessible by plane or ferry. And, although Tahiti and Moorea are close in distance, Moorea is a totally different world. Moorea is calm and peaceful, as if there is a quiet hush in the air. The island is well known as a shark dive destination, especially for encountering fearsome-looking lemon sharks.

But, the landscape will stop you in your tracks...

Moorea shelters two large, stunning bays, Cooks Bay and Opunohu Bay. Despite the famous name behind Cooks Bay, Captain Cook actually arrived on the island in the adjacent Opunohu Bay!





© Tahiti Tourisme



© Gregoire Lehuon



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## FAVORITES

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### Tiki

On the northwest point of the island, the strength and direction of the current change quickly. This is the ideal habitat for schooling grey reef sharks, which have made this their home. It is a thrilling and educational dive, with a front row seat to watch and learn about their behavior. During the humpback whale season (July to November), you are likely to hear whale song (the males sing) announcing their presence to female whales in the area.

### Vaiare

This site faces the village of Vaiare's and is home to black tip reef sharks, sea turtles, schools of barracudas and, occasionally, manta rays. During the dive season, up to six lemon sharks can be encountered.

# Moorea



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## Diving centers:

- A** IA ORA DIVING
- B** MOOREA BLUE DIVING CENTER
- C** MOOREA FUN DIVE
- D** SCUBAPITI
- E** TAHITI SHARK EXPEDITIONS
- F** TOPDIVE MOOREA - HILTON
- G** TOPDIVE MOOREA - INTERCONTINENTAL

## Dive sites:

- 1** **THE DROP-OFF**  
Ocean, outer reef slope  
Max. depth 45m (148ft)
- 2** **THE MOTU**  
Ocean, outside reef slope  
Average depth 25m (82 ft)  
Max. depth 50m (164ft)
- 3** **RAY PASSAGE**
- 4** **VAIARE RIGHT**
- 5** **TEAVARO**  
Lagoon - Average depth 6m (20ft)
- 6** **WHALES' CORRIDOR**  
Ocean, outer reef slope  
Up to 29m (95ft) of depth
- 7** **TEMAE**  
Ocean, sandy bottom slope  
Average depth 29m (95ft)
- 8** **BALI HAI WALL**  
Ocean, outer reef slope  
Max. depth 29m (95ft)
- 9** **THE AQUARIUM**  
Lagoon - Up to 18m (59ft) of depth
- 10** **THE BLUE ISLAND**  
Pass - Depth up to 29m (95ft)
- 11** **LEMON SHARK VALLEY**  
Ocean, outer slope  
Between 15 and 25m (49 to 82ft) of depth
- 12** **THE ROSE GARDEN**  
Deep ocean - Up to 50m (164ft) of depth
- 13** **THE CANYONS**  
Ocean, outer reef slope  
Max. depth 29m (95ft)
- 14** **TAOTOI**  
Ocean, outer reef slope  
Average depth 20m (66ft)
- 15** **THE TIKI**  
Ocean, outer reef slope  
Average depth 20m (66ft)



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## Opunohu Canyons

Sheltered from the trade winds, Opunohu Pass covers a large area, and is a favorite of the area's dive centers. Among the most diversified dives off the island, with canyons, drop-offs and caves, at Opunohu Canyons you'll encounter black tip reef and lemon sharks, as well as green and hawksbill sea turtles, schools of snappers and surgeonfish, all of which are well-accustomed to divers and underwater photographers. Further down, at a depth of about 40 meters (131 feet), more experienced divers will discover the famed "Rose Garden", a vast area of rose petal shaped *montipora* coral.



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## Leeward Islands, Raromatai

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This group of islands includes five main “high” islands. All of them are fairly close to each other, but they each have their own distinctive and unique Polynesian charm. These islands also each have a wide variety of lodging options as well as a multitude of diving centers.

### Huahine

Slightly off the usual tourist track, the island of Huahine actually consists of two islands linked by a 50 meters (164 feet) long bridge. Huahine Nui, the smaller of the two islands, is the most untouched. The economy of the island remains mostly oriented towards agriculture and fishing, giving savvy travelers a glimpse into the authentic local Tahitian culture.

Equally untrammelled underwater, Huahine’s Fiti Pass compares to some of the remote Tuamotu Islands in terms of fish variety and thrills. Schools of sharks, jackfish, spadefish and barracuda live there in harmony with squadrons of smaller tropical fish, and the pass has several cleaning stations, which are a great place to watch the underwater players gather.

But walk through the forest of history...

The local history of Huahine particularly rich in interesting stories, myths and folklore. You will also discover numerous ancient *marae* – open-air religious temples. Huahine managed to remain fiercely independent throughout the history of French Polynesia, from the time of the powerful tribal chiefs of Bora Bora to the arrival of the first European explorers.





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## FAVORITES

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### Avapehi Pass

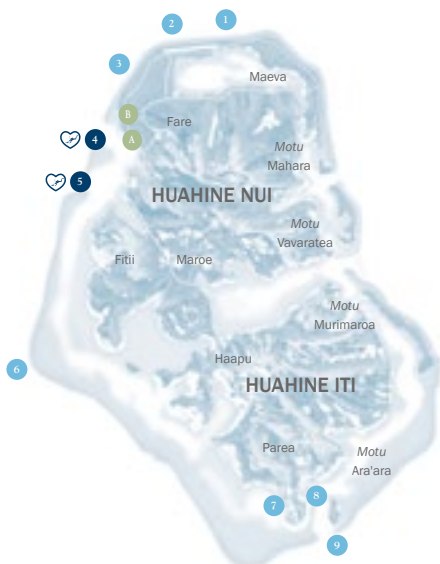
This dive is considered an exception to the rule for pass diving. It is the only dive starting from the outer reef and going into the lagoon through this pass. A massive school of jackfish from 7 meters (23 feet) to the surface will typically greet you. Further down, (15 meters / 50 feet) you will come upon a school of barracudas. They hover, suspended in between the water and the weak current. Around 25 meters (80 feet) you will enjoy diving with eagle rays, sharks and spadefish.

### Fa'a Miti

On the ocean side and usually sheltered from the swell, wind and current, the spot is perfect for divers of all levels. The mild outer slope is covered with a endless fields of vibrant coral. As soon as you start your descent, a few black tip sharks followed by a friendly Napoleon wrasse will come and greet you. Legions of flirty butterflyfish, unicornfish and surgeonfish will surround your guide, hoping for snacks. However, the highlight of the dive comes when the large moray eels come out of their reef hideaways to prowl in the open water. The dive ends in a valley where small caverns hide lionfish in the shadows.



# Huahine



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## Dive sites:

- 1 **THE ROSES**  
Ocean - Max. depth 60m (197ft)
- 2 **CORAL CITY**  
Ocean - Max. depth 29m (95ft)
- 3 **FA'A MITI**  
Ocean - Max. depth 25m (82ft)
- 4 **FITII DROP-OFF**  
Lagoon - Max. depth 6m (20ft)
- 5 **AVAPEHI PASS**  
Pass / Close to the reef  
Max. depth 20m (66ft)
- 6 **YELLOW VALLEY**  
Ocean - Max. depth 35m (115ft)
- 7 **AVEA BEACH**  
Lagoon - Max. depth 6m (20ft)
- 8 **PAREA DROP-OFF**  
Lagoon - Max. depth 20m (66ft)
- 9 **HIVA SPOT**  
Ocean - Max. depth 29m (95ft)

## Diving centers:

- A **MAHANA DIVE**
- B **PACIFIC BLUE ADVENTURE**

# Raiatea

For centuries, Raiatea was the religious and cultural center of not only the Society Islands but also all of Polynesia. Tales of the great “hawaiki”, the starting place for the Pacific migration of the original Polynesians, were referring to this beautiful island, which is the second largest in all of French Polynesia. The largest sacred *marae* in Tahiti — Taputapuatea — has been restored. Archeologists have determined that Raiatea was the departure point of all important *Ma’ohi* migrations, which formed the initial populations of the Hawaiian Islands and New Zealand. This island offers a wide diversity of dive sites.

But also a river runs through it...

The *marae* at Taputapuatea was the religious and political center of all of Polynesia. It has been restored and now hosts cultural events and ceremonies. The island also hosts the only navigable river of the country. Since July 9<sup>th</sup>, 2017, the *marae* Taputapuatea is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Kayaking or stand up paddleboarding the Faaroa River at dusk is a very special experience, especially when the vivid red flowers have fallen off the local *pūrau* trees by the hundreds and flow towards the ocean as your paddle through them.



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## FAVORITES

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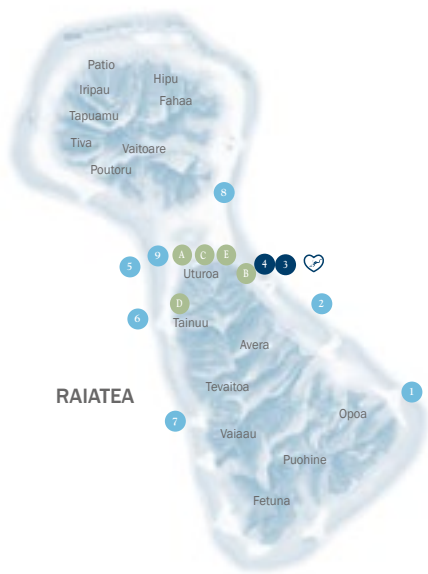
### The wreck of the *Nordby*

This Danish three-masted ship journeyed the world's oceans. In 1900, while cruising from Auckland to Liverpool, the ship stopped in Raiatea. She anchored off Tepua on the 25<sup>th</sup> of August to unload goods but a storm carried her onto the reef where she slowly sank. Now lying on her port side, the 50 meter (164 feet) wreck now rests at the bottom, a giant stride off a local hotel dock. It is an easy, but incredibly interesting dive. There is a huge air bubble stuck inside the ship at 15 meters (50 feet) of depth and you can stick your head out of the water. If you like macro critters, the *Nordby* is home to a stunning array of colorful nudibranches.

### Teava Piti Pass

This is one of the nicest drift dives in the Leeward Islands. The topography reveals an underwater plate that crosses the pass from one side to the other. You will encounter grey reef sharks, black tip and white tip reef sharks, barracudas, large schools of jackfish, eagle rays, dog tooth tuna, Napoleon wrasses and big groupers.

# Raiatea



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## Dive sites:

- 1 OPUA PASS**  
Pass - Max. depth 29m (95ft)
- 2 RAIRA**  
Ocean, outer slope  
Max. depth 25m (82ft)
- 3 THE NORDBY WRECK**  
Lagoon - Max. depth 29m (95ft)
- 4 TEAVAPITI PASS**  
Pass - Drift diving - Max. depth 29m (95ft)
- 5 THE ROSES AND NAPOLEON WRASSES**  
Ocean - Max. depth 29m (95ft)
- 6 MIRI MIRI PASS**  
Pass - Drift diving - Max. depth 29m (95ft)
- 7 TEVAITOA PASS**  
Pass - Max. depth 35m (115ft)
- 8 THE OCTOPUS HOLE**  
Lagoon, cave - Max. depth 55m (180ft)
- 9 THE AQUARIUM**  
Lagoon - Up to 25m (82ft) of depth

## Diving centers:

- A HEMISPHERE SUB PLONGÉE APOITI**
- B HEMISPHERE SUB PLONGÉE HAWAIIKI**
- C NIYATI PLONGÉE**
- D POLYNÉSIE CROISIÈRE**
- E TE MARA NUI PLONGÉE**



# Taha'a

Taha'a and Raiatea lie in the same lagoon and are only separated by a 3 km (1.8 mile) channel. You can only reach Taha'a by boat either from Raiatea or Bora Bora. Taha'a is a secluded island with an economy based on agriculture, primarily the famous and exquisite Tahitian vanilla, as well as the sought after Tahitian cultured pearl. Underwater, Taha'a is equally bountiful with a number of unheralded, but robust and active dive sites.

But follow your nose...

A tour of the vanilla plantations will allow you to appreciate the delicate work performed by specialists who obtain this very special bean grown from a type of orchid. In terms of accommodation, you will enjoy the Tahitian Guesthouses and two resorts on private *motu*.



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## FAVORITES

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### Paipai Pass

Off the west coast of Taha'a, you'll encounter a bustling variety of sealife within the pass. On the right side of the pass as you come into the lagoon, experienced divers will discover a drop off covered in yellow coral. The dive lies between 25 and 30 meters (80 and 100 feet) and small caverns along the wall on the right side of pass shelter shy *ma'o mamaru* (white tip reef sharks). On the left side of the pass, the dive is shallower between 15 and 18 meters (50 and 60 feet) and you will see a profusion of life, such as Napoleon wrasses, eagle rays, tuna, spadefish, moray eels, surgeon and parrotfish.

### Ruutia, Tau Tau, Taputapu

The outer north reef offers beautiful diving along the slope with exceptionally clear water and excellent visibility up to a depth of 40 meters (130 feet). In such conditions, divers can stop at the bottom and enjoy the show: schools of jackfish, big Napoleon wrasse, Maori snappers, barracudas, black and white tip reef sharks.






# Taha'a



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## Dive sites:

-  **1 CERAN HOOKS**  
Pass- Drift diving  
Max. depth 50m (164ft)
- 2 COAST 323/ TAPUTAPU**  
Ocean - Max. depth 29m (95ft)
- 3 IVY/ HONU REEF**  
Lagoon - Max. depth 18m (59ft)
- 4 TAU TAU**  
Ocean - Max. depth 50m (164ft)
-  **5 PAI PAI/TIVA PASS**  
Pass- Drift diving  
Max. depth 29m (95ft)
- 6 HIRO'S CANOES**  
2 dive spots, ocean, max. depth 25m (82ft)
- 7 TOARAA**  
Lagoon, max. depth 15m (49ft), black coral
-  **8 RUUTIA**  
Reef external, - Max. depth 40m (131ft)
- 9 THE OCTOPUS HOLE**  
Lagoon, cave - Max. depth 55m (180ft)

## Diving centers:

- A TAHA'A DIVING - RELAIS & CHÂTEAUX**
- B TAHA'A DIVING - TAPUAMU**

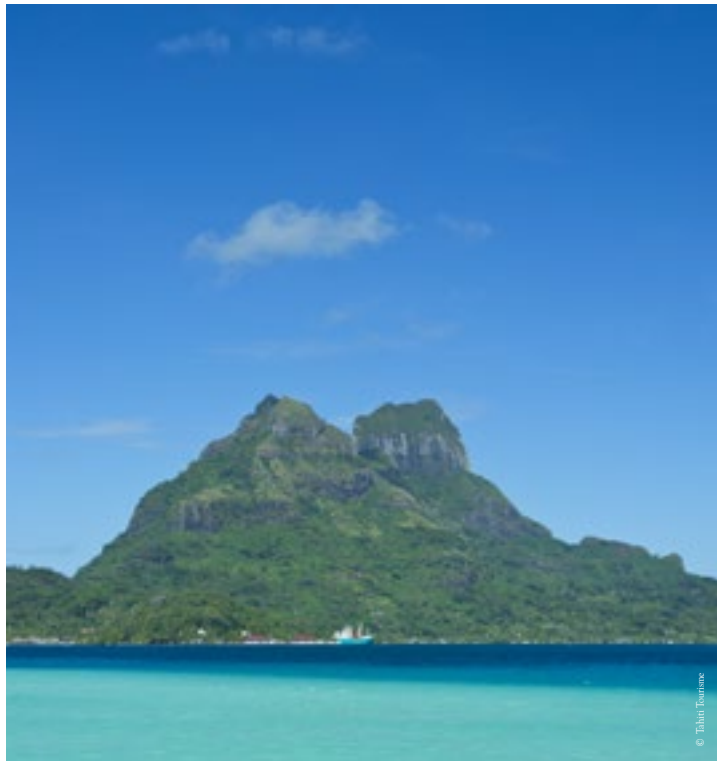
# Bora Bora

The mere mention of this mythical place sparks a glitter in one's eyes. Bora Bora symbolizes the tropical dream around the globe. The island also offers the most diverse choice in luxury lodging.

The island's ideal dive conditions will suit everything from discover scuba diving to thrilling shark dives. You will be able to discover the exhilarating pass and the outer reef to encounter, among others: sharks, sea turtles, barracudas and jackfish.

## But also indulge in WWII History...

Bora Bora wasn't always honeymooners and starry-eyed lovers. Take in a bit of the island's history with a walk or 4WD ride to see the remnants of WWII cannons from when Bora Bora was a U.S. military base.





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## FAVORITES

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### Anau

This site, in the lagoon off the east side of the island, will thrill every level of diver with a passing parade of a wide variety of marine organisms, fish and corals. Manta rays have made this site famous worldwide. Recently, the dive shops have regulated the access to the site for conservation.

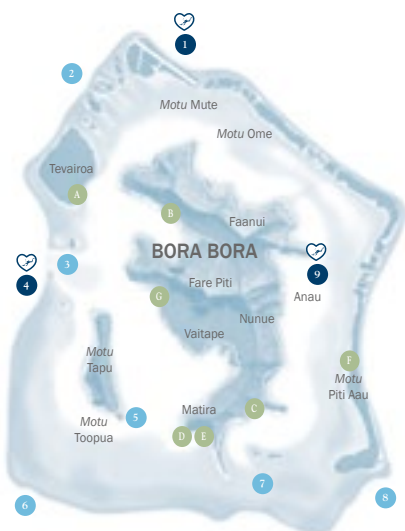
### Tapu

Named after the *motu* (small islet) used to find the dive site, Tapu is the first site on the outer slope to the left of Teavanui Pass. Thrill seeking divers and avid photographers will be overwhelmed at the sight of the massive lemon sharks that frequent the site, usually at a depth of 25 meters (80 feet). They will not hesitate to take close passes around the divers and they seem to seek out the cameras for their Hollywood-style close-ups.

### Muri Muri

Also named the White Valley, this long bright, white sand pathway surrounded by coral lies in 40 meters of depth (130 feet). It leads to a large garden eel colony. As you ascend the lush coral slope, you will encounter large schools of jackfish coming to greet you. Barracuda also like to meander among the divers. At the end of the dive, you can explore the wide coral fields in the shallower areas, looking for invertebrates. Here, chances are you you'll encounter zippy blacktip reef sharks, before going back to boat at anchor.

# Bora Bora






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© Gregoire Le Baouan

## Dive sites:

-  **1 MURI MURI**  
Ocean - Max. depth 25m (82ft)
- 2 HAAPITI**  
Ocean, outer reef slope  
Max. depth 20m (66ft)
- 3 TEAVANUI PASS**  
Pass - Max. depth 40m (131ft)
-  **4 TAPU**  
Ocean - Max. depth 22m (72ft)
- 5 TOOPUA**  
Lagoon - Max. depth 15m (49ft)
- 6 TURIROA**  
Ocean, outer reef slope  
Max. depth 45m (148ft)
- 7 THE AQUARIUM**  
Lagoon - Max. depth 6m (20ft)
- 8 TUPITIPI TI**  
Ocean, outer reef slope  
Max. depth 60m (197ft)
-  **9 ANAU**  
Lagoon - Max. depth 18m (59ft)

## Diving centers:

- A BLUE NUI BY TOPDIVE  
BORA PEARL BEACH**
- B DIVEASY**
- C DIVE N' SMILE BORA BORA**
- D ELEUTHERA BORA DIVING CENTER**
- E HIRO DIVE**
- F TOPDIVE BORA BORA  
INTERCONTINENTAL THALASSO**
- G TOPDIVE BORA BORA - VAITAPE**

# Maupiti

Only a couple of hours by boat from Bora Bora, or a few minutes away by plane, this island is virtually untouched by tourism and development. The few Tahitian Guesthouses will greet you in the most traditional and friendly ways. You can walk or ride a bicycle around the island. Maupiti is renowned for its ancient petroglyphs. A dive center recently opened on the island, which means you could be one of the first divers to pioneer and explore this amazing destination!

One of the unique experiences on Maupiti is a phenomenon accessible to divers of any experience level. From March to September, Tahiti's emblematic manta rays frequent a "cleaning station" in the lagoon. Their elegant underwater ballet is mesmerizing and one could easily pass an entire dive watching the rays come and go.





© Frédérique Legrand



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## FAVORITES

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### *Fa'a'apu*

This Tahitian word means “orchard”, which is what this stunning site brings to mind. Only 20 minutes by boat from the island, *Fa'a'apu* features an abundance of dazzling coral, which hosts an incredible reef fish nursery. In the clear waters, you commonly encounter sharks passing by, jackfish and parrotfish playing in the waves and swell on the fringing reef. It is the perfect dive for all divers, easy, exciting and delightful.

### Coral garden

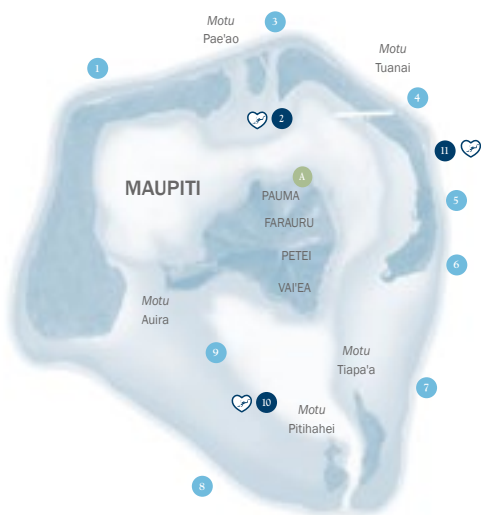
In the lagoon off the island's northern shore, this *hoa* is sheltered from the trade winds. The site boasts an abundance of brilliantly colored coral, and it's an ideal place to not only discover scuba diving for the first time, but also to experience a snorkeling safari that will set the bar against which you will measure all other snorkeling sites. With more than 100 different fish species, you will encounter black tip sharks, eagle and stingrays in large numbers but also jackfish, schools of goatfish, cleaner wrasse and a wide diversity of invertebrates.



## Mantas Maupiti

The dive takes place at a manta ray cleaning station in less than 10 meters of depth (30 feet). These majestic animals, the symbol of *The Islands of Tahiti*, will perform a dance ballet like show. Out of curiosity, they may turn the coin and come in for a closer look the divers.

## Maupiti



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© Gregory Lecocq

### Dive sites:

- 1 THE TREVALLY HOOK  
Ocean - Max. depth 35m (115ft)
- 2 CORAL GARDENS  
Lagoon - Max. depth 3m (10ft)
- 3 LITTLE DROP-OFF  
Ocean - Max. depth 40m (131ft)
- 4 AIRPORT PLACE  
Ocean - Max. depth 35m (115ft)
- 5 THE HOLE  
Ocean - Max. depth 25m (82ft)
- 6 THE CAVE  
Ocean - Max. depth 35m (115ft)
- 7 MAUPITI VERTIGO  
Ocean - Max. depth 40m (131ft)
- 8 LES AVENTURIERS  
Ocean - Max. depth 40m (131ft)
- 9 NEMO  
Lagoon - Max. depth 12m (39ft)
- 10 MANTAS MAUPITI  
Lagoon - Max. depth 10m (33ft)
- 11 CHEZ MAX (MAX'S)  
Ocean

### Diving center:

- A MAUPITI DIVING



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## TUAMOTU ISLANDS

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The Tuamotu Islands are the largest group of islands in *The Islands of Tahiti*, and yet the least populated. Comprised entirely of coral atolls surrounded by a vast Pacific Ocean, you will feel isolated from the rest of the world. Just like the mere 16,000 *Pa'umotu* (inhabitants of these atolls), you will learn the power of the *Moana Nui o Hīvā* (the big ocean of Polynesian's ancestors) as it influences everyday life in these remote coral outposts. The main terrestrial resources are copra (coconut palm), while fishing, pearl farming and dive tourism provide the main sources of income on the more developed atolls.

### Accommodation

A few hotels and resorts provide a variety of accommodations, from ultra-luxe to family-style on the most developed atolls. Tahitian Guesthouses are found almost everywhere and provide a more authentic experience to your time in this corner of French Polynesia. The *Pa'umotu* are proud of their islands and will be delighted to share a few days of their life with you.

### Dive shops

Despite the isolation, the dive centers throughout the region are well-equipped and their guides highly experienced. Diving is organized following the safety requirements inherent to the electrifying pass diving, which is the hallmark of the region. Rangiroa spearheaded scuba diving in this archipelago, and its Tiputa Pass has become legendary in dive circles. Other top dive areas soon followed on the atolls of Fakarava, Tikehau, Manihi and Makemo, each with its signature pass dive.



© Tahiti Tourisme



© Frédérique Legrand



## Diving

Most dives take place in the passes and requires a bit of experience in drift diving. If it has been a while between dives, a refresher dive on the outer reef slope may be well advised. A briefing is necessary to all skill levels of divers before they attempt to do a drift dive through a pass. You will always start your dive on the incoming tide (from the ocean to the lagoon), and as you are swept along, you will get this amazing feeling of weightlessness — like flying! The Tuamotu passes are renowned for encounters with the local pelagic fauna — schools of sharks, mantas, dolphins and more. The water is exceptionally clear and the visibility typically exceeds 46 meters (150 feet).

### How will the drift dives take place?

Drift dives (shooting the pass) begin outside of the reef near the pass entrance. Your guide will give you a complete briefing of the dive profile beforehand. Depending on experience level, the dive master may drop divers and meet them inside the lagoon, or shoot the pass with the divers. Dives typically start deeper at the mouth of the pass, where you'll encounter large schools of sharks. You'll feel the tug of the incoming tide and then just let the moving water do all the work, as you go from a slow drift to electrifying rush in the narrow pass. Finally, the river of water thrusts you into the lagoon where the boat will meet you.



# Rangiroa

Rangiroa hosts two world-class passes. It is the second largest atoll in the world after Kwajalein in Micronesia. Its lagoon covers a length of 76km (47 miles) with a width of 24km (15 miles). The entire island of Tahiti could fit within Rangiroa's lagoon! There are 240 *motu* and hundreds of *hoa* that shape the coral reef. Made up almost entirely of lagoon, Rangiroa is famed for its unique and fabulous underwater encounters, and the atoll enjoys a reputation as one of the top dive destinations in the world for exceptional underwater encounters, and boasts a large number of world-class dive sites.

Dives in Rangiroa vary depending on the prevailing tides, the seasons, and the lunar cycle, so no two dives are ever the same, in speed or encounter! (See the wildlife season calendar on pages 128-129). In *The Islands of Tahiti*, Rangiroa is also where you will have the best chance to observe great hammerhead sharks between the months of February and April, a truly breathtaking encounter.





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## FAVORITES

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### Tiputa Pass

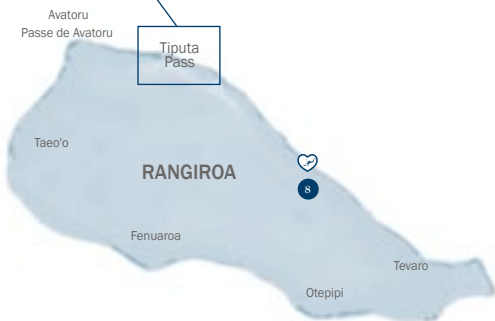
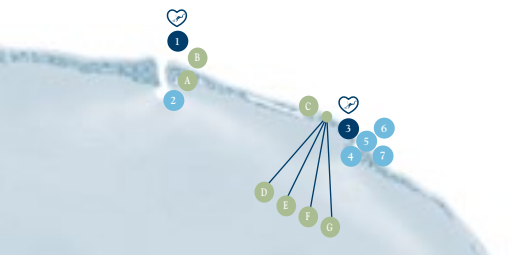
The sun's rays break through the water surface into the deep blue ocean. The show starts immediately. One of the highlights of this dive is an encounter with the wild bottlenose dolphins swimming over a school of grey reef sharks. This pod of dolphins frequents Tiputa Pass. About twenty years ago, when recreational diving first started in Rangiroa, the dolphins were there but would keep their distance. Today, the new generation of dolphins likes to come close to the divers and the magic of this encounter happens almost every day.

### Avatoru Pass

This is your chance to encounter large, usually solitary *tapete* (silvertip sharks) patrolling the deeper waters just outside the pass. This species of shark habitually prowls much deeper water, so it is truly an opportunity not to be missed. A little further on, as you start to enter the pass, you will see a huge school of jackfish, which polarizes as a *raira* (grey reef shark) passes through the school, or a Napoleon wrasse in a hurry. You are likely to encounter a manta ray during this marvelous dive, and large aggregations of vivid red bigeyes. This pass is much wider than Tiputa Pass and you'll find hoards of marine life throughout.



# Rangiroa






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## Dive sites:

-  **1 AVATORU PASS**  
Pass  
Up to 25m (82ft) of depth
- 2 AVATORU THE SMALL PASS**  
Pass - Average depth 20m (66ft)
-  **3 THE CANYONS**  
Pass - Up to 30m (98ft) of depth
- 4 THE AQUARIUM / MOTU NUI NU**  
Lagoon  
Average depth 15m (49ft)
- 5 HAMERHEAD PLATEAU**  
Ocean - Up to 50m (164ft) of depth
- 6 THE ANGLE**  
Ocean, outer reef slope  
Up to 50m (164ft) of depth
- 7 THE WINDMILL (TIPUTA)**  
Ocean, outer reef slope  
Average depth 20m (66ft)
-  **8 THE BIG BLUE**  
Ocean - Up to 50m (164ft) of depth  
Average depth 20m (66ft)

## Diving centers:

- A ITEMATA CROISIERE**
- B RAIE MANTA CLUB RANGIROA**
- C RANGIROA PLONGÉE**
- D THE SIX PASSENGERS**
- E TOPDIVE RANGIROA KIA ORA**
- F TOPDIVE RANGIROA PLAGE REPOREPO**
- G Y AKA PLONGÉE RANGIROA**

# Tikehau

Well-known for its pretty pink sand beaches and its amazing surf spots, Tikehau is 30 km (18 miles west of Rangiroa) and less than 1-hour flight from Papeete. Tikehau is said to be the atoll with the greatest abundance of fish of all the Tuamotu. The island's unique pass is where many pelagic species congregate and some beautiful encounters are awaiting you during any drift dive.



© Top Dive



© Tahiti Tourisme



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## FAVORITES

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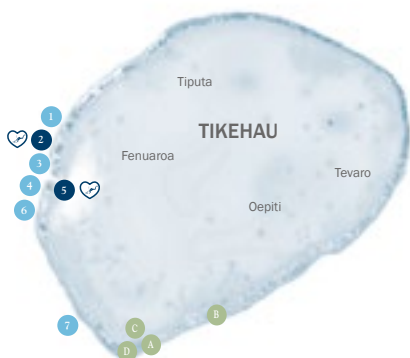
### Tuheiva Pass

An easy dive, the pass has numerous small caverns, where you will discover a variety of underwater fauna, including sharks, bigeyes, snapper, resting turtles, all enjoying a respite from the current. You will dive surrounded by the whole book of coastal reef life and see moray eels, Napoleon wrasse, barracudas and tuna all prowling in their daily dance of predator and prey. Encounters occur almost daily with a group of *tapete* (silvertip sharks).

### Teonai

Most of the marine wildlife of the Tuamotu Islands can be seen during this dive: from small fish hiding in coral cavities to large pelagic predators. The dive usually starts along a wall riddled with small nooks and crannies where you will enjoy a profusion of lionfish, moray eels, schools of paddletail snappers, Napoleon wrasse, surgeonfish and white tip sharks. The dive carries on along the drop off towards the pass to encounter *tapete* (silvertip reef sharks). Dog-tooth tuna circle around Heller's barracudas. The best time for encounters is between October and December.

# Tikehau



© Pacific Images - D'Ar. Ill. Suquet



© Gregory Lacroix

## Dive sites:

- 1 **PUAFA**  
Ocean, outside reef slope  
Up to 16m (52ft) of depth
- 2 **TEONAI**  
Ocean, outer reef slope  
Up to 20m (66ft) of depth
- 3 **TUHEIAVA NORTHERN EXIT**  
Pass / outer reef slope  
Max. depth 25m (82ft)
- 4 **TUHEIAVA SOUTHERN EXIT**  
Pass / outer reef slope  
Max. depth 22m (72ft)
- 5 **TUHEIAVA PASS**  
Pass / Incoming currents  
Max. depth 14m (46ft)
- 6 **TURTLE HOLE**  
Ocean, outer reef slope  
Max. depth 18m (59ft)
- 7 **HINA CHURCH BELL**  
Ocean, outer reef slope  
Max. depth 45m (148ft)

## Diving centers:

- A **API DIVE TIKEHAU**
- B **BLUE NUI BY TOPDIVE TIKEHAU**
- C **RAIE MANTA CLUB  
TIKEHAU - DIVING SAFARI TIKEHAU**
- D **TIKEHAU PLONGEE**

# Manihi

Known worldwide for its Tahitian cultured pearl farms, Manihi is the ideal place to visit pearl farms and see how these amazing gems are created. There is only one pass on the atoll where manta rays are often encountered. In June, groupers come and breed by the thousands, which offer a unique underwater show for those lucky enough to dive in Manihi. Grouper breeding occurs during the June solstice.





© Frédérique Legend



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## FAVORITES

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### Turipaoa Pass

Depending on the tide and current, the dive can be organized in any direction: incoming, outgoing and even sideways! Every dive is different. Make sure that you always follow your guide who will show you the beauty of the site.

The dives take place at a depth of 25 meters (80 feet) and are recommended for experienced divers.

### The Circus

The entrance to this pass may be a bit rough and the visibility may not be very good. There is often a strong current. However, it is an ideal place for a few privileged divers to watch the majestic dance of the manta rays.



# Manihi









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© Frédérique Lézanal

## Dive sites:

-  **1 THE CIRCUS**  
Lagoon - Max. depth 25m (82ft)
-  **2 TURIPAQA PASS**  
Pass - Max. depth 23m (75ft)
-  **3 THE DROP-OFF**  
Ocean - Max. depth 40m (131ft)
-  **4 THE CRACK**  
Ocean - Max. depth 30m (98ft)
-  **5 THE WEST CAPE**  
Ocean - Max. depth 60m (197ft)
-  **6 THE CROSSING**  
Ocean - Max. depth 40m (131ft)

## Diving center:

-  **A BLUE WAY**

# Fakarava

It is the second largest atoll of *The Islands of Tahiti* and it is classified by UNESCO as a biosphere reserve, together with the six surrounding atolls of Taiaro, Toau, Niau, Raraka, Aratika and Kauehi. Fakarava has been heralded as a model of wildlife conservation combined with human development. The passes here are directly opposite one another.

North of the atoll, close to the village and airport, lies the large bountiful Garuae Pass. These drift dives are for experienced divers only. Extreme divers will enjoy diving the south pass by Tetamanu Village.

## But also church and spawning...

On the atoll, in the ancient Tetamanu Village lies one of the first Catholic churches. This icon to pious living was built from coral stones in 1874.

Come from mid-June to early July, during the marbled grouper spawning season, when large schools of groupers can be observed in passes throughout the archipelago. These are magical moments to experience underwater, and a rare opportunity sought after by divers as well as researchers from around the world. Marbled groupers are generally easy to approach, so bring your cameras for some bragging rights.





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## FAVORITES

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### Toau, the secret atoll

When the weather conditions are suitable, the dive centers of Fakarava will offer one day or several day trips to discover diving around Toau. A wonderfully local family hotel will welcome you during your stay. You will dive during the incoming drift from the ocean, and experience a prolific and teeming underwater world few divers ever see. The underwater wildlife is extremely rich, and among the aquatic stars are manta rays, sea turtles and sharks.

### Garuae Pass (The largest in *The Islands of Tahiti*)

You will start the dive in the open ocean at a depth of 30 to 40 meters (100 to 130 feet) before catching the glimpse of a big predator, such as a silvertip or great hammerhead shark. Then the incoming current sweeps you towards the lagoon, past a three-ring circus of marine life. The show is guaranteed year round. Barracudas, groupers and rays roam the area. They come in larger numbers during the full moon. Their breeding period occurs from November to March, the Austral summer.

# Fakarava



© Pacific-images - D'op-ill-Suquet



## Dive sites:

- 1 OHUTU AND MAIURU**  
Ocean, outside reef  
Slope  
Max. depth 29 m (95ft)
- 2 GARUAE PASS**  
Pass - Drift diving  
Max. depth 30m (98ft)
- 3 BAPTITO / PUFANA**  
Lagoon - Max. depth 6m (20ft)
- 4 THE SHARK PIT**  
Lagoon - Average depth 18m (59ft)
- 5 TUMAKOHUA PASS**  
Pass - Drift diving  
Max. depth 30m (98ft)

*Excursions and trips to the nearby atoll of TOAU are also available.*

## Diving centers:

- A AQUA POLYNESIE SARL**
- B DIVE SPIRIT FAKARAVA**
- C KAINA PLONGEE**
- D O<sub>2</sub> FAKARAVA**
- E TETAMANU DIVING CENTER**
- F TOPDIVE FAKARAVA MOTU PENU**
- G TOPDIVE FAKARAVA ROTOAVA**

## Tumakohua Pass

The privileged divers who will have the opportunity to shoot the southern pass (Tumakohua pass) will discover an unspoiled site both on land and underwater. Huge schools of blacktip reef sharks (200 specimens have already been inventoried), bigeyes and snapper fill the water column. Access to the south pass from the main village requires a 1-hour boat ride across the lagoon.





# Makemo

If you are a nature lover and looking for untouched areas, this atoll may be for you! Life on Makemo ripples with ancient Polynesian legends that the *Pa'umotu* (locals) will enjoy sharing with you. there, divers will encounter sharks, Napoleon wrasse, schools of barracudas and groupers. Off the usual tourist track, you will have the feeling that you are the very first to discover this beautiful underwater scenery.

A little off the beaten tourist path, you will feel as if you were the first to discover those magnificent underwater landscapes. You will be able to stay in a Tahitian Guesthouse.







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## FAVORITES

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### Pouheva Pass

A typical Tuamotu pass dive for any kind of diver, Pouheva Pass is the only opening in Makemo. You'll drift past blacktip reef sharks, which will still linger even when you get to the lagoon.

### Riki Riki and Papako

These sites, on both sides of the pass on the ocean side are not only ideal for novice divers, but also an excellent place for underwater photographers to take their time looking for colorful, life rich images of vibrant coral and abundant marine life wrapped in water so clear it seems to possess an ethereal internal light

# Makemo

## Diving center:

**A** RELAIS SCUBA MAKEMO



## Dive sites:

- 1** RIKI RIKI  
Lagoon - Max. depth 12m (39ft)
- 2** PAPAKO  
Lagoon - Max. depth 12m (39ft)
- 3** POUHEVA PASS  
Pass - Max. depth 30m (98ft)
- 4** THE HEADLIGHT  
Ocean - Max. depth 30m (98ft)
- 5** POHUE CAPE  
Ocean - Max. depth 30m (98ft)





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## MARQUESAS ISLANDS

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From a geological point of view, the Marquesas Islands are the most recent addition to French Polynesia. About 1,500 km (930 miles) from Tahiti, it is the northernmost group of islands in the country and is distinguished by its rugged topography and absence of lagoons.

Close to the equator, the climate is slightly different from the other archipelagos and the region is hurricane free. Gigantic basaltic rocks emerged from the Pacific to create these islands. Only six of them are inhabited, with a total population of merely 8,000 Marquesans. The two main differences when compared to the Society Islands are the lack of a coral barrier reef and the high level of plankton in the ocean. The rugged mountains are impressive and fall into the endless deep blue of the ocean. The scenery is rugged, raw and breathtaking! Called Te Henua Enana (The Land of Men) by the ancients, Alvaro de Mendaña de Neira named them after the Marques de Cañete in tribute to his patron.

### A culture high in spirituality

Today, Te Henua Enana remains a special place for the conservation of the cultural legacy of the local population. There are numerous archeological sites being discovered and archeologists still do not know all of them very well. Isolated for centuries, the Marquesans have managed to retain many of their customs. The art of the tattoo has its roots here, with an esthetic patterns representing the role and position a man held in his community. Tattoos told the story of their lives illustrated through legendary beliefs. The symbols of sea animals were crucial and appeared both as tattoos and in wood or stone carvings. The Marquesan artists are still famous for their fine work on wood, stone, mother of pearl and bone. Art galleries and collectors prize their pieces.



© Tahiti Tourisme



© Tahiti Tourisme



## Accommodations

The archipelago's only two resorts are on the islands of Nuku Hiva and Hiva Oa. You will be greeted in Tahitian Guesthouses on the other islands. Please note that the airports can be far from the villages depending on the islands and that a few hour 4WD ride may be necessary to reach your destination. You also have the option of discovering these islands aboard the *Aranui 5* cargo/ cruiseship during one of her 15 yearly voyages, departing from and returning to Papeete, or aboard Paul Gauguin Cruises, during its rotations from Papeete.



# Hiva Oa

Although a bit less famous than Nuku Hiva, this island welcomed a few renowned artists such as Herman Melville (the author of *Moby Dick*) and the French painter Paul Gauguin. The latter literally fell in love with this group of islands where he died in 1903. Hiva Oa shelters impressive ancient tiki, which are found in the islands' numerous archeological sites. Carved in volcanic stone, Taka'i'i is the tallest in French Polynesia and measures more than 2.6 meters (8.5 feet). A dive center has recently opened in the port town of Atuona. They specialize in dives on Hiva Oa and Tahuata. Both islands are very rich in pelagic marine life.







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## FAVORITES

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### Le Rabot

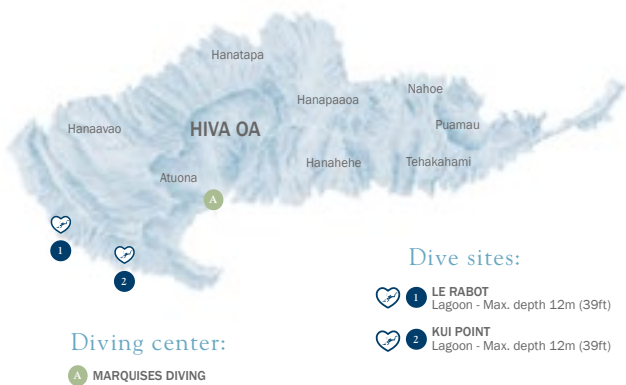
On the west coast of the island, the dive lies at 20 to 27 meters of depth (65 to 88 feet). Caves hide numerous moray eels including smaller species such as the famous Javanese. You will marvel at the sight of numerous blazingly colorful nudibranches and also discover the many archeological items lost long ago by Marquesan fishermen, such as old anchors or stone carved fish weights.

### Kui Point

Marine life is everywhere amongst the large number of caves and caverns: shellfish, scorpionfish and groupers. Stingrays fill the caverns by the hundreds in a sight you'll not likely see anywhere else in the world. However, the highlight of the show are definitely the amazingly graceful and wondrous manta rays.

# Hiva Oa

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## AUSTRAL ISLANDS

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The southernmost group of islands features a milder climate and is definitely off the beaten track. Few travelers make it to this remote corner of *The Islands of Tahiti*.

It is a relaxing place to share the islanders' everyday life and listen to their legends told orally from one generation to the next. Most of the accommodations are local Tahitian Guesthouses. The local handicrafts are highly sought after. The *mama* are gifted for braiding vegetal materials and creating beautiful hats, baskets, handbags and *peue* (mats). Among the seven islands of this group, only five of them are inhabited. Rurutu, Tubuai and Raivavae have airports where the domestic airline flies regularly.



# Tubuai

This island features a superb shallow and pristine lagoon where the mutineers of the *HMS Bounty* tried to swim and snorkel around large coral pinnacles spread all over the lagoon to guide the ship through the coral maze.

The island's only dive shop offers *a la carte* dives: drop offs, coral gardens, small caves, canyons, fish-filled caverns, pass diving... And, encounters with humpback whales are possible between mid-July and mid-October when they come to give birth.





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## FAVORITES

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### Lou Gobi

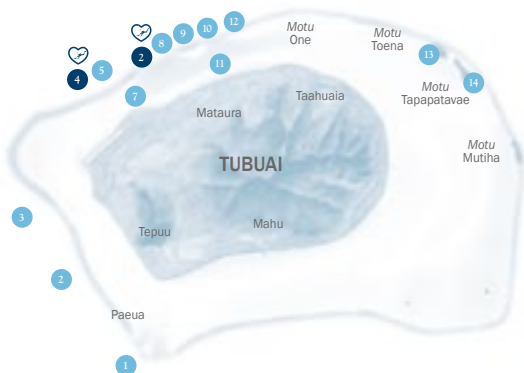
The dive site is on the left side of the pass. More than thirty species of corals cover the seabed, providing home for myriad species of marine life, which inhabit this varied environment. It is the perfect place to watch the abundant marine wildlife go by.

### Fabulous Drop Off

The name says it all! The top of the Drop Off is at a depth of 8 meters (26 feet) and it seems as if the wall is bottomless! The entrance to a mysterious and enthralling cave, which harbors secretive invertebrates and other marine life that prefers life in shade and shadow, lies at 20 meters of depth (65 feet).



# Tubuai



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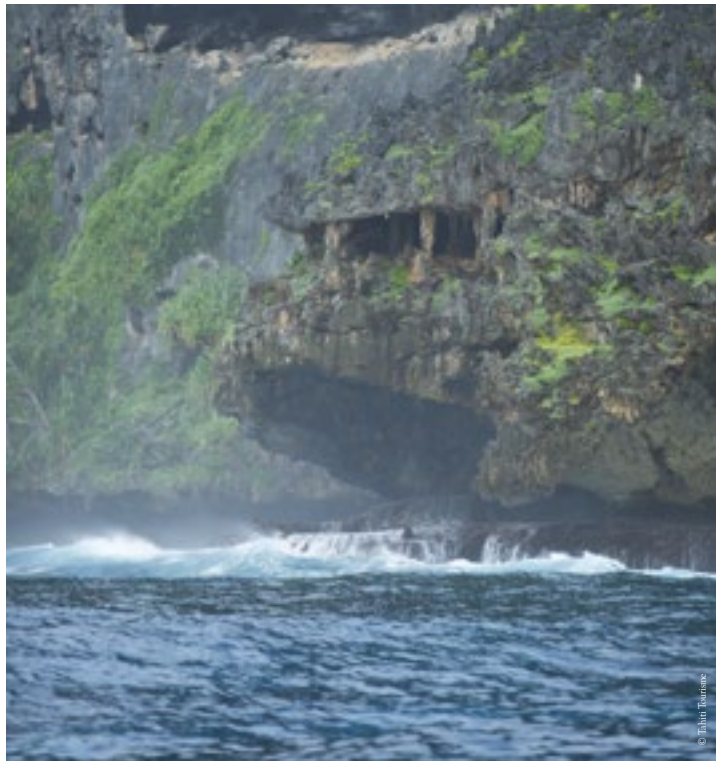
## Dive sites:

- 1 **LES FLOTS BLEUS**  
Ocean - Up to 60m (197ft) of depth
- 2 **LA TORTUGA**  
Ocean - Up to 60m (197ft) of depth
- 3 **KOMOTUAM**  
Ocean - Up to 60m (197ft) of depth
- 4 **LOU GOBI**  
Ocean - Up to 40m (131ft) of depth
- 5 **BONITA DIVE**  
Ocean - Up to 45m (148ft) of depth
- 6 **FABULOUS DROP-OFF**  
Ocean - Up to 45m (148ft) of depth
- 7 **COOL DIVE**  
Lagoon - Up to 20m (66ft) of depth
- 8 **FLYING POTATOES**  
Ocean - Up to 40m (131ft) of depth
- 9 **ENCHANTED VALLEY**  
Ocean - Up to 45m (148ft) of depth
- 10 **CHEZ NICO**  
Ocean - Up to 40m (131ft) of depth
- 11 **FRAIAN**  
Lagoon - Up to 12m (39ft) of depth
- 12 **NANUE'S BAND**  
Ocean - Up to 40m (131ft) of depth
- 13 **NICE DIVE**  
Lagoon - Up to 6m (20ft) of depth
- 14 **MOTU TRANQUILLE (THE MELLOW ISLET)**  
Lagoon - Up to 6m (20ft) of depth

# Rurutu

Whales, yes, but above ground you should not miss the impressive limestone caves and horseback riding or exploring the island by 4WD to see the beautiful wild horses.

Since the island does not have a lagoon, the ancient Polynesians could easily spot humpback whales from land. Remote from the rest of world for a very long time, whaling was the islanders' main survival means and as such, Rurutu was the very last island to carry out traditional whaling. The last hunt took place in the 1950s. But, today, the majestic animals are protected and encounters with them will give you a memory to last a lifetime.



© John Taurone



© Gregory Lecour



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## FAVORITES

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### Peva Pass

This is the only shore dive in *The Islands of Tahiti*. You will explore a long 12 meters (39 feet) spur and groove with walls and caverns harboring a multitude of coral and reef fish species including many white tip reef sharks. Your guide will take you out to the ocean where water visibility is exceptional in hopes of spotting passing pelagic marine life.

### Una'a Point

This is a typical Rurutu dive: exceptional visibility (minimum of 50 meters / 165 feet), a large coral plate with several meter high formations and bountiful marine life: schools of parrotfish, emperor angelfish, white tip reef sharks and potentially wahoos during the safety stop!

# Rurutu

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## Dive sites:

**1 MOERAI**  
Whale watching is possible from July to October

**2 POINTE UNA'A**  
Ocean - Max. depth 25m (82ft)

**3 PASSE DE PEVA**  
Ocean - Max. depth 17m (56ft)

© Pacific-images - D'ap. ill. Soquet





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## DIVING CRUISES

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Whether you would like to discover the Leeward Islands, the Tuamotu Islands or the Marquesas Islands, you will have the opportunity to combine scuba diving and cruising. Diving Cruises offer high quality services with on-board diving equipment and space for relaxation. Experienced crew will make your cruise a unique moment. During a half day trip or a one or two-week cruise, you will enjoy a complete Polynesian ocean discovery, encountering the pelagic fauna and colorful flora at each step of the way.

Contact the various dive organizations in order to choose the best option for you whether it be discover scuba, going through a beginner or advanced course or adventure diving for the most experienced.





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## UNDERWATER PHOTOGRAPHY

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Whether you are a professional photographer or avid amateur, *The Islands of Tahiti* are a perfect place for your passion. Indeed, the underwater clarity and visibility are exceptional. A wide angle lens is ideal to optimize these excellent conditions and capture your amazing encounters with the sharks and other pelagic fish.

Those of you who enjoy macro photography will find *The Islands of Tahiti* an adventure-land of photographic opportunities. Additionally, *The Islands of Tahiti* are famous worldwide for the opportunities to capture amazing images of humpback whales in clear water.

To avoid paying duty when arriving and/or returning home you should carry copies of your camera's (including accessories) purchase receipts in order to avoid any customs issues.

### Underwater video Fun dives

Many dive centers work with an underwater cameraman. He will join your group during the dives and edit a customized DVD for you.





© Gregory Lecoq



© Frédérique Legendre



## Professional video and shooting

You will find all the necessary specialized equipment and professionals to assist you in the organization of broadcast production underwater images or a TV documentary. Some local producers have a wide range of experience in their field and an excellent set of references, as well as a competent technical team who will also be able to provide you with HD video cameras and underwater housings. Each island is a natural underwater studio.

## Electrical information

If you wish to charge your devices, some accommodations have 110v outlets, but most have 220v current. Be sure to bring converters for any electrical equipment.





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## TRAINING

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... Anything is possible

All dive centers have professional instructors to provide you with the appropriate course you'd like to take while in *The Islands of Tahiti*, whether you are a beginner or already experienced.

Some criteria must be taken into account:

- the length of your stay
- the type of dive course

A beginner's course will usually only require a few days training, whereas the more advanced courses may require more time to achieve certification. It is important to take this into consideration while organizing your trip.

Please note that you will be required to provide written authorization from your medical doctor confirming that you are fit to participate in a scuba diving certification course.





## What kind of courses?

All French recreational courses in *The Islands of Tahiti* have a European (CEDIP) or worldwide (CMAS) equivalence. Most dive centers also offer PADI, NAUI or SSI dive courses.

## Technical courses

More and more dive shops offer Nitrox diving and courses. Some of them also give you the opportunity, depending on your experience and certification level, to discover a more technical way of diving, such as tri-mix or rebreather diving.





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# DIVE REGULATIONS

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## Scuba diving conforms to strict regulations

Diving regulations have been adapted from those in France, which are known as being very strict. Thus, it is mandatory for every dive center to only use the services of professional scuba instructors. They must be qualified to both teach scuba diving and also guide a group. All scuba diving operations must have valid liability insurance. Also, each dive shop must post the certifications of their instructors and guides declaring their professional status. An official diving commission regularly carries out unexpected inspections to ensure that the dive center complies with the local legal requirements for insurance, safety equipment, dive gear, instructor qualifications and dive profile.

## Safety as a top priority

Tahiti's general hospital is equipped with a modern hyperbaric chamber and the medical team is specifically trained to treat diving incidents. An evacuation procedure is in place to treat a diver showing the symptoms of decompression sickness (the bends). This plan has proved to be very efficient over the years even in the most remote atolls where many workers dive in the pearl farms. Do not hesitate to inform your guide should you not feel well after the ascent. First aid certified, your guide will immediately assist you and call the emergency unit. An oxygen kit is always aboard the dive boats. If necessary, the diver will be flown to Tahiti on an emergency flight.



## The organization of the dives

Diving groups are made up of a maximum of 5 or 6 certified divers depending on the instructor's qualifications. Generally speaking, independent diving buddies are advised to closely follow a group with a guide in order not to miss any of the highlights of the dive! If you are a beginner, you will enjoy your introductory dive with an instructor at a max. depth of 6 meters (20 feet).

## Dive certification equivalencies

For group diving, all certified divers, regardless of certifying organization, will be required to dive in accordance with local regulations. Your instructor will provide you with all the necessary guidelines during the pre-dive briefing.

Divers with the following certifications: French dive level 1, CMAS 1\*, Open Water / Advanced Open Water or equivalent are allowed to dive up to 20 meters (66 feet) or 30 meters (98 feet) deep under presentation of a PE 30 or PE 40 - OWD certificate: DEEP speciality. This is possible due to the warm water temperature and exceptional underwater visibility in *The Islands of Tahiti*.

## Regulation related to the management plan of the marine space

It is forbidden to go fishing, to feed the fish and pick shells and coral on diving sites. It is recommended not to touch corals or the sea bed. Finally, it is forbidden to feed sharks within the lagoon and in channels. You can download the Moorea and Fakarava Management Plan of the Marine Space (PGEM) on the website of the department in charge of fisheries of French Polynesia: [www.peche.pf](http://www.peche.pf)





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## CONSERVATION OF UNDERWATER SPECIES

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Aware of its amazing and unique underwater legacy, French Polynesia regards conservation as a top priority. The local government works on many initiatives to protect endangered species and coral reefs.

In 2002, the country officially became a sanctuary for marine mammals. French Polynesia is a leading country in the protection of its shark species (sharks being mostly threatened for their fins). Sea turtles are protected as well. The country features 12,000 km (7,500 miles) of coral reefs and their condition is monitored yearly in the most developed islands to ensure their good health.



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## WHALES (TAHITIAN NAME: TOHORA)

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### The Eternal Migration

Every year, from July to November, humpback whales (*Megaptera novaeangliae*) migrate from the icy waters of the Antarctic where they feed to the warm waters off the shores of *The Islands of Tahiti*. In these islands, they find the ideal place to give birth and breed, sheltered from predators. Adults measure between 15 to 18 meters (50 to 60 feet). These massive whales look very graceful when moving under the water. The calves measure about 4.50 meters (15 feet) at birth. They can put on up to 100 kg (220 lbs.) per day during the first week of life; whale's milk has the highest fat content of the animal kingdom.

As a designated cetacean (whale) sanctuary since may 2002, all whales of French Polynesia are protected. Whale watching complies with strict local regulations.

### Where can whales be encountered?

Although they can be seen and heard around any island, Rurutu is the premiere location to encounter them. You should have an experienced guide who holds an official government authorization. They will help you encounter and enjoy these giants of the ocean.

### How can you experience them?

Bubbles are a sign of aggressiveness to marine mammals. Scuba diving is therefore not the best way to encounter them. You are likely to experience a once-in-a-lifetime encounter with only your snorkeling gear. For the safety of the whales and humans, always follow your guide's instructions when you are in the water with these breathtaking animals.





© Gregory Lecomte

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## DOLPHINS

(TAHITIAN NAME: OU'A)

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As a cetacean sanctuary, the dozen dolphin species found in French Polynesia are also protected. They are present year round and can be seen around any of the islands. Dolphins have very similar behavior to humans. They give birth, nurse their calves and breathe air. Their communication skills are quite sophisticated. There is no doubt you will encounter some of them during your stay in *The Islands of Tahiti*. Three main species are easily encountered depending on the region: bottlenose dolphins (*Tursiops truncatus*), spinner dolphins (*Stenella longirostris*) and rough toothed dolphins (*Steno bredanensis*).



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## SHARKS (TAHITIAN NAME: MA'O)

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Of the 350 species known worldwide, 19 of them can be observed in the waters of French Polynesia. It is a perfect place for any diver to encounter them. It is also the ideal place to demystify their negative public image. The most commonly encountered species in *The Islands of Tahiti* are the famous black tip sharks (*Carcharhinus melanopterus* – Tahitian name: *ma'o mauri*), grey sharks (*Carcharhinus amblyrhynchos* – Tahitian name: *raira*), lemon sharks (*Negaprion acutidens* – Tahitian name: *arava*) and hammer head sharks (*Sphyrna lewini* or *Sphyrna mokarran* – Tahitian name: *ma'o tuamata*), tiger sharks (*Galeocerdo cuvier* – Tahitian name: *ma'o tore tore*) and silvertip sharks (*Carcharhinus albimarginatus* – Tahitian name: *ma'o tapete* or *ma'o marumaruru*).

### The Ma'o and the ancient Polynesians

From antiquity through the modern era, the western world views sharks as bloodthirsty animals. Yet, the ancient *Ma'ohi* lived with them in harmony. Sharks represented a protective icon in which the kind spirit of a family ancestor was reincarnated.

### An essential component for the ecosystem of the ocean

Sharks belong at the top of the food chain and are generally either predators or scavengers and cleaners. They play an essential role in regulation and balance of the marine ecosystems. Thought to have evolved about 400 million years ago, these fish are extremely well developed and perfectly adapted to their environment. Having had no predator for millions of years, the rate of breeding is slow and quite inefficient. Depending on the species, a female's gestation can take 4 to 24 months with a potential fertilization only taking place every couple of years.

### Are sharks endangered?

Overfishing, pollution and killing sharks for their fins represent some of the many threats factors threatening and endangering sharks. According to scientific data, it is believed that more than 150 million sharks are killed each year. Some species are already nearly extinct. For this reason, French Polynesia made the decision to protect them by law in 2006.

### Shark and Ray Watching

It is a popular and memorable experience in which visitors observe docile reef sharks and rays closely. Participants don a mask and snorkel and follow their guide to watch these magnificent creatures.



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# PREPARE YOUR DIVE IN THE ISLANDS OF TAHITI

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## Time difference

*The Islands of Tahiti* are 10 hours behind GMT, which is only 3 hours behind Pacific Daylight Savings time and 2 hours behind Pacific Standard time.

## Climate

*The Islands of Tahiti* benefit from a pleasant tropical climate. It is warm and humid year-round with heavier precipitations from November to March (summer in the southern hemisphere). The ocean averages 26°C (80°F) and outside temperatures remain around 30°C (86°F). This is perfect for diving with a lightweight wetsuit, such as a 3mm “shorty”. You may notice slight climate differences between the archipelagos because of distance between them. Cyclone risks during the southern hemisphere summer are close to none. Cyclone probabilities are measured every year by specialists based upon the El Niño phenomenon.

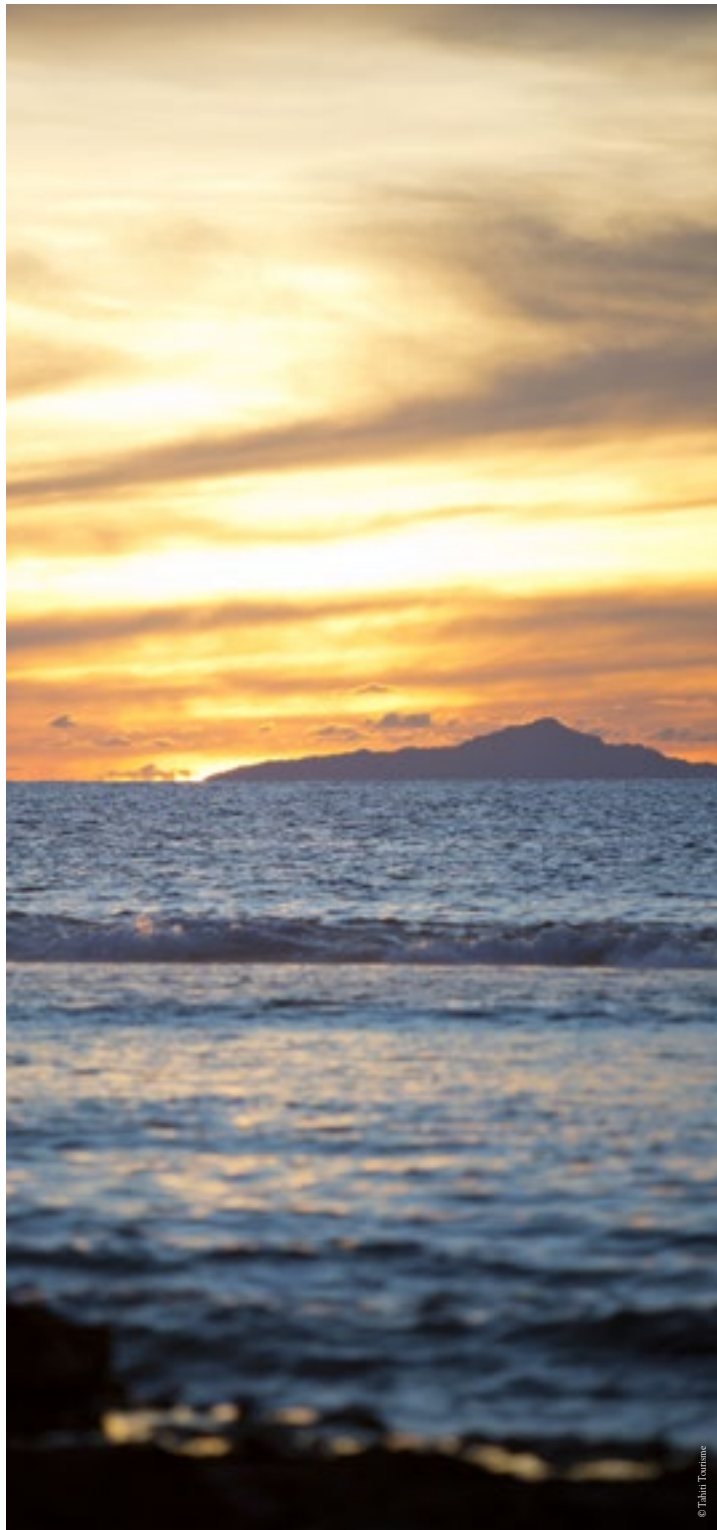
## Sun

Sun shines almost year-round and its glare is intense! It is highly recommended to wear polarized sunglasses, a hat and an eco-friendly, biodegradable and non-polluting sunscreen to avoid sunburns. It is strongly advised to drink water regularly to avoid dehydration.

## What should you pack?

You should only need bathing suits, light cotton or linen clothes and a pair of pants. You can bring a light jacket or sweater for evenings during the Austral winter. You should also make sure to pack a mosquito repellent and sandals for walking in water to prevent injuries on rocks or coral. It is also recommended for those not diving to pack snorkeling gear.







## Air transport of dive gear

For those who wish to bring their own diving equipment, please be aware that some airlines flying to Tahiti may not allow excess luggage on those flights. Be sure to consult your airline or travel agency for further information prior to departure. On inter-island flights in French Polynesia, the local airline grants a 5 kg (11 lbs.) excess baggage allowance to travelers with a SCUBA certification card presented at check-in. There is also a special class of service that you can book in order to check-in 50 kg (110 lbs.) of baggage instead of the usual allowance of 23 kg (50 lbs.). If you think that you'll be traveling with heavy luggage, please consult your travel agent for further details. If you wish to visit several islands, the local airline offers many air packages.

## Fellow divers, don't forget...

Bring your dive certification card, dive computer and insurance certificate. Also bring your logbook and underwater camera.

### *Poe rava nui*, the Tahitian cultured pearl: the gold of the *Moana Nui o Hīvā*

Mother-of-pearl bore an important place for the ancient Polynesians. The lack of metal led the *Ma'ohi* to use natural materials, such as wood or mother-of-pearl to make tools and trim ceremonial costumes of the important characters. The mother-of-pearl commercial industry, initially for making buttons, started in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century with exports to Europe. Island fishermen were able to dive 25 or 30 meters (82 to 98 feet) deep to harvest the *Pinctada margaritifera*. It was only at the end of the 1960<sup>s</sup> that Tahitian cultured pearl became one their most sought after natural treasures. In *The Islands of Tahiti*, it is something you cannot miss.

In the jewelry stores or at a pearl farm, specialists will be proud to explain the techniques of pearl grafting. The various qualities, grades and shapes will be no secret to you! This Tahitian jewel suits both ladies and gentlemen. Divers will appreciate the purity of this precious jewel originating from ocean realm.





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# SCUBA DIVING CENTERS

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## SOCIETY ISLANDS

### TAHITI

#### ARCHIMEDE EXPEDITIONS

Itinérant - Tahiti

M. Serge RENAULT

B.P. 4365 - 98713 Papeete - Tahiti

GSM : (+689) 87 70 13 04

[contact@archimede-expeditions.com](mailto:contact@archimede-expeditions.com) / [www.archimede-expeditions.com](http://www.archimede-expeditions.com)

#### ELEUTHERA TAHITI

Marina Taina, Punaauia

M. Nicolas CASTEL / M. Frederic THIBUR

B.P. 13029 - 98717 Moana Nui Punaauia - Tahiti

Tel. : (+689) 40 42 49 29 / GSM : (+689) 87 77 65 68

[info@eleutheratahiti.com](mailto:info@eleutheratahiti.com) / [www.eleutheratahiti.com](http://www.eleutheratahiti.com) / fb : Eleuthera - Tahiti Diving Center

#### FLUID

Marina Taina, Punaauia

M. Yannis SAINT-PE

B.P. 2006 - 98703 Punaauia - Tahiti

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#### FRENCH POLYNESIA MASTER

Le Régent Residence, Papeete

M. Gérard MOUSSARD

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GSM : (+689) 87 24 42 03

[fpm.ops@masterliveboards.com](mailto:fpm.ops@masterliveboards.com) / [www.masterliveboards.com](http://www.masterliveboards.com)

## SCUBA TEK TAHITI

PK 4 Arue, Yacht Club de Tahiti  
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Tel. : (+689) 40 42 23 55 / GSM : (+689) 87 74 32 10  
scubatek@mail.pf / www.scubatek-tahiti.com / fb : Scubatek-Tahiti

## TAHITI ITI DIVING

PK 58,100 Taravao, côté mer, baie de Phaeton  
M. Lionel HERTRICH  
B.P. 7725 - 98719 Taravao - Tahiti  
Tel. : (+689) 40 42 25 33 / GSM : (+689) 87 71 80 77  
tahiti-iti-diving@mail.pf / www.tahiti-iti-diving.com / fb : Tahiti Iiti Diving

## TOPDIVE TAHITI

Hôtel InterContinental Tahiti Resort, Faa'a  
M. Franck CHASBOEUF  
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Tel. : (+689) 40 53 34 96 / GSM : (+689) 87 70 16 22  
tahiti@topdive.com / dive@topdive.com  
www.topdive.com / fb : Topdive Polynésie Française

# TETIAROA

## TOPDIVE TETIAROA

The Brando, atoll privé de Tetiaroa  
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tetiaroa@topdive.com / dive@topdive.com  
www.topdive.com / fb : topdive polynésie française

# MOOREA

## IA ORA DIVING

Hôtel Sofitel Moorea la Ora Beach Resort, Teavaro  
M. Etienne GUILLOUET  
B.P. 3624 - 98728 Temae - Moorea  
Tel. : (+689) 40 56 35 78 / GSM : (+689) 87 32 03 22  
iaoradiving@mail.pf / www.iaoradiving.com / fb : laoradiving

## MOOREA BLUE DIVING CENTER

Manava Beach Resort & Spa Moorea, Maharepa  
M. et Mme Stephane & Diane JAMEN  
B.P. 3418 - 98728 Temae - Moorea  
Tel. : (+689) 40 55 17 04 / Fax : (+689) 40 56 50 87 / GSM : (+689) 87 74 59 99  
mooreabluediving@mail.pf / www.mooreabluediving.com / fb : Moorea Blue Diving

## MOOREA FUN DIVE

PK 27,6 Haapiti  
Mme et M. Marie et Christian VANDOREN  
B.P. 1782 - 98729 Papetoai - Moorea  
Tel. : (+689) 40 56 40 38  
info@moorea-fundive.com / www.moorea-fundive.com / fb : Moorea Fun Dive

## SCUBAPITI

Hôtel Les Tipaniers, Haapiti

M. Henri MURA

B.P. 1048 - 98729 Papetoai - Moorea

Tel. : (+689) 40 56 20 38 / GSM : (+689) 87 78 03 52

scubapitimoorea@mail.pf / www.scubapiti.com

## TAHITI SHARK EXPEDITIONS

Ateliers relais Vaiare, Moorea

M. Nicolas BURAY

B.P. 3406 - 98728 Temae - Moorea

GSM : (+689) 87 70 73 76

tahitisharkexpeditions@gmail.com / www.tahiti-shark-expeditions.com

## TOPDIVE MOOREA

Hôtel InterContinental Moorea Resort and Spa

Hôtel Hilton Moorea Lagoon Resort & Spa

M. Graeme JACK

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# HUAHINE

## MAHANA DIVE

Fare, à côté de la gendarmerie

Mme Annie BRUNET

B.P. 600 - 98731 Fare - Huahine

GSM : (+689) 87 73 07 17

annie@mahanadive.com / www.mahanadive.com

## PACIFIC BLUE ADVENTURE

Quai de Fare

M. Michel GOYET

B.P. 193 - 98731 Fare - Huahine

GSM : (+689) 87 71 96 55 / (+689) 87 26 28 15

contact@divehuahine.com / www.divehuahine.com

# RAIATEA

## HEMISPHERE SUB PLONGÉE

PK 4, ouest

Messieurs Farid SEDIRA & Julien DURIE

B.P. 1551 - 98735 Uturoa - Raiatea

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hemis-subdiving@mail.pf / www.raiatea-diving.com

## NIYATI PLONGÉE

Marina de Uturoa

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## POLYNÉSIE CROISIÈRE

Uturoa

M. Lionel DUPREY

B.P. 1284 - 98735 Uturoa - Raiatea

GSM : (+689) 87 28 60 06

info@polynesie-croisiere.com / www.polynesie-croisiere.com

## TE MARA NUI PLONGÉE

Marina de Uturoa

Mme Floriane VOISIN

B.P. 60 - 98735 Uturoa - Raiatea

Tel. : (+689) 40 66 11 88 / GSM : (+689) 87 72 60 19

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## TAHA'A

### TAHA'A DIVING

Tapuamu / Hôtel Le Taha'a Island Resort & Spa

M. Michel CORDERO

B.P. 300 - 98734 Haamene - Taha'a

Tel. : (+689) 40 65 78 37 / GSM : (+689) 87 24 80 69

contact@taha-a-diving.com / www.taha-a-diving.com / fb : Taha'a Diving

## BORA BORA

### DIVEASY

Faanui

M. Laurent GRAZIANA

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diveasy@mail.pf / www.diveasyborabora.com / fb : Diveasy

### DIVE N' SMILE BORA BORA

Anau

M. Patrick MORAND

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divensmile@mail.pf / www.divensmile.com / fb : Dive N'Smile Bora-Bora

### ELEUTHERA BORA DIVING CENTER

Plage de Matira - Bora Bora

M. Nicolas CASTEL / M. Frederic THIBUR

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GSM : (+689) 87 77 67 46

info@eleutheraboradiving.com / www.eleutheraboradiving.com / fb : Eleuthera - Bora Diving Center

### HIRO DIVE BORA BORA

Faanui

Mlle Hiroko NAKAMURA

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### TOPDIVE BORA BORA

Mai Kai Marina & Yacht Club, Vaitape / Hôtel InterContinental Bora Bora Resort and Thalasso Spa, Motu Piti Aau / Hôtel Bora Bora Pearl Beach Resort & Spa, Motu Tevairoa (Blue Nui by TOPDIVE)

M. Pascal AVILA  
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## MAUPITI

### MAUPITI DIVING

Au nord de l'île principale  
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info@maupitidiving.com / www.maupitidiving.com / fb : Maupitidiving

## TUAMOTU ISLANDS

### RANGIROA

#### ITEMATA CROISIÈRE

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B.P. 276 - 98775 Avatoru - Rangiroa  
GSM. : (+689) 87 20 09 22 - 87 31 49 91  
contact@itemata.com / www.rangiroacroisiereplongee.com / www.itemata.com

#### RAIE MANTA CLUB RANGIROA

Avatoru / Tiputa  
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## GLOSSARY

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*Arava* : lemon shark

*Fāfāpiti* : manta ray

*Fai* : ray

*Fai'u* : sting ray

*Fai manu* : (white-spotted) eagle ray

*Hōā* : passage in the reef that allows for the water to flow between the ocean and the lagoon

*Ma'o* : shark

*Ma'o mamaru* : white tip lagoon shark

*Ma'o māuri* : black tip reef shark

*Ma'o raira* : grey shark

*Ma'o tapetē* : white tip reef shark

*Mā'ohi* : indigenous people

*Ma'o taumata* : hammerhead shark

*Mārara* : flying fish

*Moana / moana nui* : Ocean / open ocean

*Motu* : islet, atoll

*Niamatai* : Windward Islands

*'Ōu'a* : dolphin, porpoise

*Pa'umotu* : inhabitants of the Tuamotu archipelago

*Pē'ue* : woven

*Poe rava* : Tahitian cultured pearl

*Pūrau* : hibiscus flower

*Raromatai* : Leeward Islands

*Tapete* : silvertip shark

*Tiare Tahiti* : gardenia flower - National flower of French Polynesia

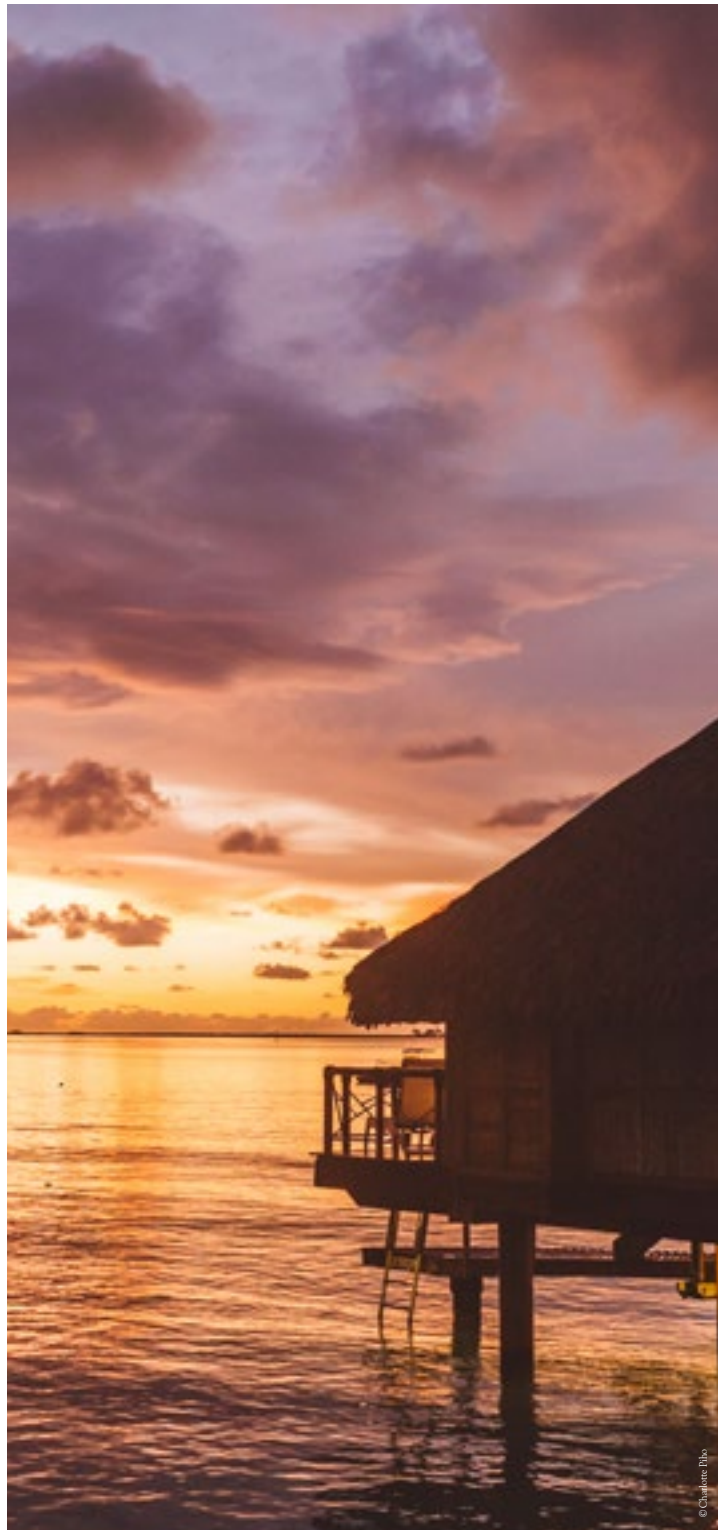
*Ti'i / Tiki* : statue representing abundance of life and death

*Tohora* : humpback whale

*Paruoa* : whale

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Heipuni Days édité par le Ministère de l'Environnement 2007



# MARINE LIFE AND WEATHER PATTERNS

	AUSTRAL SUMMER				AUSTRAL WINTER	
	JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE
<b>SOCIETY ISLANDS</b>						
MARINE LIFE	BLACK TIP AND LEMON SHARKS					
SUN	POSSIBLE SHOWERS				SUN	
SWELL	NORTH				SOUTH SOUTH-WEST	
WINDS	TO'ERAU (NORTH)				MARA'AMU (SOUTH)**	
<b>TUAMOTU ISLANDS</b>						
MARINE LIFE	HAMMERHEAD SHARKS					
			EAGLE SPOTTED RAYS			
SUN	POSSIBLE SHOWERS				SUN	
SWELL	NORTH				SOUTH SOUTH-WEST	
WINDS	TO'ERAU (NORTH)				MARA'AMU (SOUTHWIND)**	
<b>AUSTRAL ISLANDS</b>						
MARINE LIFE						
SUN	POSSIBLE SHOWERS				SUN	
SWELL				WEST		
WINDS	EAST TRADEWINDS				MARA'AMU (SOUTHWIND)**	
<b>MARQUESAS ISLANDS</b>						
MARINE LIFE	MELON-HEAD DOLPHINS OR ELECTRA DOLPHINS					
SUN	POSSIBLE SHOWERS				SUN	
SWELL	NORTH-EAST				SOUTH-EST	
WINDS				PREVAILING EAST WINDS		

		AUSTRAL WINTER				AUSTRAL SUMMER	
		JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER
<b>SOCIETY ISLANDS</b>							
MARINE LIFE				BLACK TIP AND LEMON SHARKS			
		MANTA RAYS****					
				WHALES			
SUN		SUN					
SWELL		SOUTH SOUTH-WEST				NORTH-EAST	
WINDS		MARA'AMU (SOUTH)**				TO'ERAU (NORTH)	
<b>TUAMOTU ISLANDS</b>							
MARINE LIFE		GROUPERS ***			SNAPPERS ***		
SOLEIL		SUN					
SUN		SOUTH SOUTH-WEST				NORTH-EAST	
WINDS		MARA'AMU (SOUTHWIND)**				TO'ERAU (NORTH)	
<b>AUSTRAL ISLANDS</b>							
MARINE LIFE				HUMPBACK WHALES			
SUN		SUN					
SWELL				WEST			
WINDS		MARA'AMU (SOUTHWIND)**				EAST TRADEWINDS	
<b>MARQUESAS ISLANDS</b>							
MARINE LIFE		HAMMERHEAD SHARKS					
						MELON-HEAD DOLPHINS OR ELECTRA DOLPHINS	
SUN				SUN			
SWELL		SOUTH-EST				NORTH-EAST	
WINDS				PREVAILING EAST WINDS			

\* Grey sharks can be seen year round. The highlighted part in the chart shows the breeding season.

\*\* Mara'amui (southeast trade winds) are stronger in July and August.

\*\*\* During the breeding season

\*\*\*\* Manta rays can be seen year round throughout the archipelago with a highlight over this particular time of the year.

TAHITI  
TOURISME

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