

DESTINATION
TAHITI
TAHITI

LOGBOOK

How can we talk about Tahiti without using certain clichés? Yes, the Society Islands are a real sailing paradise. Enchanting lagoons, sublime seabeds, deserted wild anchorages, everything here is within reach for lovers of nice cruising or idyllic holidays on catamarans. And then there is also the myth, carried by the great sailors of the past, who when they arrived here, sometimes after years at sea and having put up with iron discipline aboard the Royal Navy's ships, discovered this Eden, and the legendary Polynesian welcome. The writings of Bougainville, Cook's descriptions, or more recently those of Moitessier or Alain Gerbault, the adventures of Melville's heroes and even Hollywood, with its various versions of the Mutiny on the Bounty, mean that Tahiti and its islands have a special place in the imagination of all lovers of the sea and boats.

But does the myth live up to its promise? Is it worth taking the step, and going to the other side of the world to charter a cat locally? We have the answer: yes, yes, yes!

*A lagoon, a catamaran and the Polynesian islands...
What more could you ask for? (Photo Moorings)*

Most of the charter companies are situated at Raiatea. In the interior of the Society Islands, the sailing is finally relatively easy. The passes have better and better buoyage, and once in the lagoons, all you have to do is enjoy life and the anchorages. Obviously, in the case of a 'relaxing' cruise, the ideal is the departure base at Raiatea. This island and its neighbour, Tahaa, are situated in the same lagoon, which gives a multitude of anchorages without ever needing to go out onto the open sea. Crews which haven't really got their sea legs will be delighted... But it would be a shame to limit yourself to this lagoon, as other wonders await you further on... For those who want to move even further, you can envisage going as far as Huahine or, why not, Bora Bora. This is Polynesia's mythical island. It is one of the most visited in the archipelago. Once in the lagoon, you are free to choose your route... There are numerous anchorages and they are all as beautiful as one another. This is especially the case in the north of the lagoon, which offers absolutely wonderful underwater life, and where the water is of an indescribable blue.

Diving: You can't go to Polynesia without enjoying the incredible spectacle of the underwater life. Although using mask, fins and snorkel is easy, and will allow you to discover a real aquarium a few dozen centimetres in front of your eyes, it would be a shame to miss the opportunity for a

In the world, there are many places where cruising in a catamaran is a real dream. But just the mention of the name Tahiti makes eyes light up with a unique gleam. Tahiti really is the place where you must sail at least once in your life...



1



2

dive (or several) with bottles. There are many professionals available to organise these dives. Not to be missed!

Whales: In the southern winter, the humpback whales come to give birth and protect their young close to the reef, or inside the lagoons. This is a spectacle which once again, you must not miss. But you must be careful and above all, not disturb these animals and their young. Strict instructions must be respected, for both their safety and yours.

Pearls: Tahiti is famous throughout

the world for its famous black pearls. There are many pearl farms in the Raiatea, Tahaa and Huahine lagoons. You can, of course, visit them and buy pearls directly, for a price which will often be more attractive than in the boutiques.

Papeete: the capital of the island is noisy, the traffic is diabolical, and it is certainly not what you expect from Polynesia. If you sail there, note that there are nevertheless some beautiful anchorages, such as between the big island and the Tairapu peninsula (at the level of the G a u g u i n museum). At Moorea, although

the anchorage is superb, holding is not brilliant unless you take the precaution of anchoring at the east entrance to the bay, on sand. Finally, for the record, Cook never anchored in the famous bay which bears his name, but in the neighbouring Opunohu bay, during his third voyage in Polynesia. He preferred this anchorage to the one in Matavai bay, on Tahiti. It's up to you to see if he was right...

TYPICAL ITINERARY

In 8 days and 7 nights, it is possible to visit Raiatea, Huahine, Taha'a and Bora-Bora. Here is a typical cruise, departing from Raiatea:

**Day 1:
Raiatea - Taha'a**

After the welcome at the airport, and the transfer to the Apooiti marina, familiarisation with the boat, provisioning and

the briefing, it is time to go to sea, and head towards Taha'a. A short sail of around an hour and a half in the lagoon, to get your bearings...

**Day 2:
Taha'a - Huahine**

It will take you between 5 and 6 hours sailing to reach Huahine from Taha'a and enjoy a delightful anchorage after having visited Maroe bay.

**Day 3:
Huahine lagoon**

A day, (which is what it will take), to discover both the lagoon and the island of Huahine...

**Day 4:
Huahine - Taha'a**

It's time to set off again towards Taha'a, about a 5- or 6-hour sail... On the itinerary when you arrive: walks and swimming, exploration of the coral garden on Tautau motu. Finally, anchorage in Tapuamu bay, with a view of an exceptional sunset over Bora Bora...

**Day 5:
Taha'a - Bora-Bora**

It will take 5 or 6 hours' sailing again to reach the wonderful and so-famous Bora Bora...

**Day 6:
Bora-Bora lagoon**
Bora-Bora needs no introduction: discover it and enjoy it!

1: In the Bora Bora lagoon, one of the memorable, even very memorable moments of your cruise... (Photo Tahiti Yacht Charter)

2: The sights aren't just on the sea, they are also underneath it... (Photo: Dream Yacht Charter)

3: The famous Taha'a vanillas.

4: Encounter between two multihulls in the anchorage, the outrigger dugout and the cat...

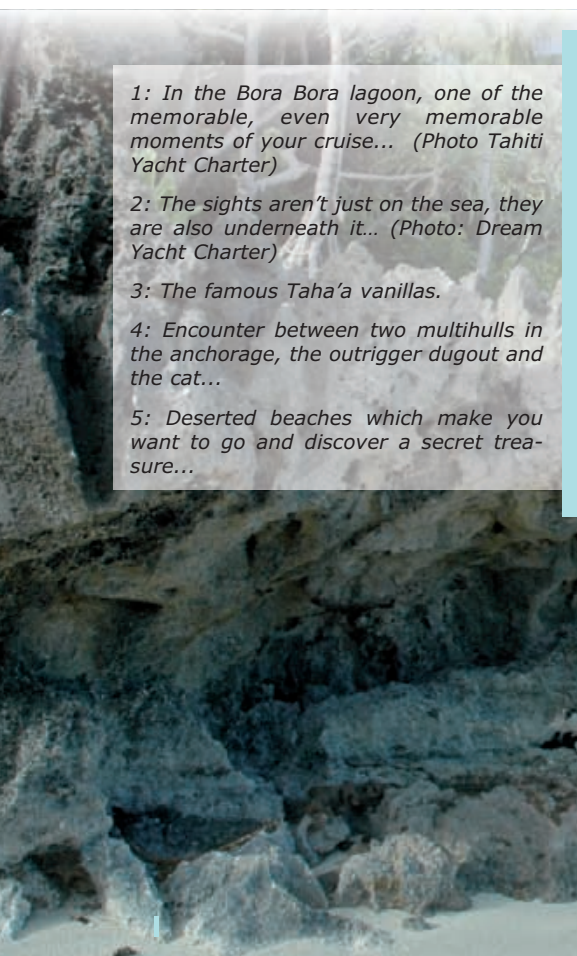
5: Deserted beaches which make you want to go and discover a secret treasure...



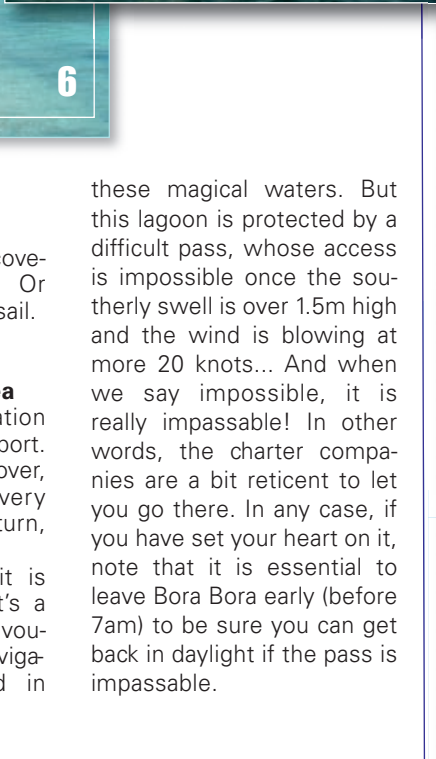
3



4



5



9

6

7

8

Day 7:

Bora Bora lagoon

A wonder cannot be discovered in just one day... Or return to Raiatea under sail.

Day 8:

Bora-Bora or Raiatea

Last sail, disembarkation and transfer to the airport. Although the dream is over, the memories, and very likely the wish to return, remain!

The case of Maupiti: it is generally agreed that it's a wonderful lagoon. The favourite of many circumnavigators who have sailed in

these magical waters. But this lagoon is protected by a difficult pass, whose access is impossible once the southerly swell is over 1.5m high and the wind is blowing at more 20 knots... And when we say impossible, it is really impassable! In other words, the charter companies are a bit reticent to let you go there. In any case, if you have set your heart on it, note that it is essential to leave Bora Bora early (before 7am) to be sure you can get back in daylight if the pass is impassable.

6 : A lagoon all to yourself: welcome to Polynesia!

7 : Tahiti, a perfect destination for a honeymoon, as well as with the family or friends... (Photo Tahiti Yacht Charter)

8 : What better than a catamaran for discovering all these wonders? (Photo: Sunsail)

9 : Two catamarans at anchor near a motu, or how to enjoy your holidays as several families... (Photo Tahiti Yacht Charter)

PRACTICAL TAHITI

Getting there: It's simple, it's on the other side of the world. From Europe or the USA, you have to stop over in Los Angeles, then cross half of the Pacific. From Europe, reckon on a twenty-hour flight, not counting the stopovers...

Weather: In Polynesia, it's whenever you want... The trade winds blow constantly and both air and water temperatures vary little. Note that there are nevertheless two major seasons:

- from November to April, the so-called rainy season, with a hot, damp climate.

- from May to September, the dry season, a bit cooler (26 to 29°) and windy. The periods between the seasons, April-May and September-October are the best for sailing.

Sailing conditions: The biggest danger comes from coral heads. You must pay attention to the differences in the colour of the water, which inevitably mean a change in depth or the nature of the seabed. It is therefore wise to sail with the sun high in the sky, and if possible, behind you. The setting sun is a real trap; it hides absolutely everything on the surface of the water. Otherwise, there is no tide (30cm range), and going through the passes is the only thing that requires a bit of nautical common sense...

Formalities: Valid passport. Very few health problems, apart from ciguatera, which can be avoided quite simply by not eating fish caught in the lagoons.

Currency: Pacific franc

Local charter companies: Tahiti Yacht Charter - Moorings - Sunsail - Dream Yacht Charter

NEWS FROM THE CHARTER COMPANIES

CRUISES IN THE CANARIES AND CAPE VERDE

Cap Ocean is offering cruises, over periods of a few days to several weeks, as well as sailing lessons, courses and other events on a fast, sporty 15-metre catamaran which is also convivial and comfortable. The boat will be in the Canaries and Cape Verde until March 2012... A good way of combining something useful with pleasure, by taking lessons and visiting these absolutely wonderful places...

Information:

www.cap-ocean-sailing.com

AROUND THE WORLD IN A LAGOON 450...

Hugues has just set off on a big voyage with his brand new Lagoon 450, which is going to take him to Alaska... You can embark with him to enjoy his experience and discover the countless stopovers, each of which is more beautiful than the last.

On the itinerary: the Caribbean until April 2012, then the Bahamas, and finally the San Blas until October 2012, before tackling the Panama Canal and the long sail up to Alaska...

For more information:

<http://cattheworld.com>

BAHAMAS

Continuing the series 'offers of embarkation from our readers on the other side of the world', here are Alexandra and Hervé (a former Whitbread sailor) aboard their Catana 48. The boat and its crew are currently in the Bahamas, for the whole of winter 2012, and the four double cabins and two singles are at your disposal to go and discover the Exumas, a wonderful archipelago of uninhabited islands, white sand and crystal-clear water...

For more information:

www.seasidecharter.com

CORSICA SPECIAL OFFER

If you want to discover Corsica in 2012, don't hesitate to visit the 'Corse Catamarans' web site. The charter company is offering a 15% reduction on all bookings made before 31st December 2011...

The company is situated at Propriano, and is offering Mahé 36s, Leopard 38s, Lagoon 380s and Lagoon 400s without a skipper and Lagoon 450s and 560s with.

Information: www.corsecata.com

NEW BOATS IN CORSICA

Following the opening of its second base in Corsica, devoted solely to catamaran charter, Liberty Sea is offering five new multihulls from its Solenzara base, thus doubling its offer for 2012. You will therefore have the choice of cruising aboard several brand new boats, such as a Nautitech 442, a Lipari 41 and a Lagoon 400.

Moreover, Liberty Sea has become the distributing agent for MultiHull-Marina, the new Fontaine Pajot concessionaire (see our 'News from the Pontoons') and is also the Nautitech agent.

For more information: www.libertysea.com

CATAMARANS AT FOOTLOOSE IN THE BVI

Footloose Charter is offering catamarans (and monohulls) for charter at knockout prices. The boats on offer are those which are leaving the Moorings fleet, perfectly maintained and in excellent condition. You will therefore not be sailing on new boats, but the prices are really attractive. The company is now therefore offering Leopard 46s (called the Footloose 4600) from its Tortola base in the British Virgin Islands.

Discover it on:

www.footloosecharters.com

NAUTITECH 542 FOR CHARTER

The no.2 Nautitech 542 has just arrived in the Punch Croisières fleet for the whole of the winter season. It will therefore be available with a crew from Le Marin, from the end of December.

The opportunity for everyone to take advantage of this superb boat to discover the West Indies, or for future customers to try the boat out 'for real', in the magic surroundings of Martinique.

Information: www.punch-croisieres.com