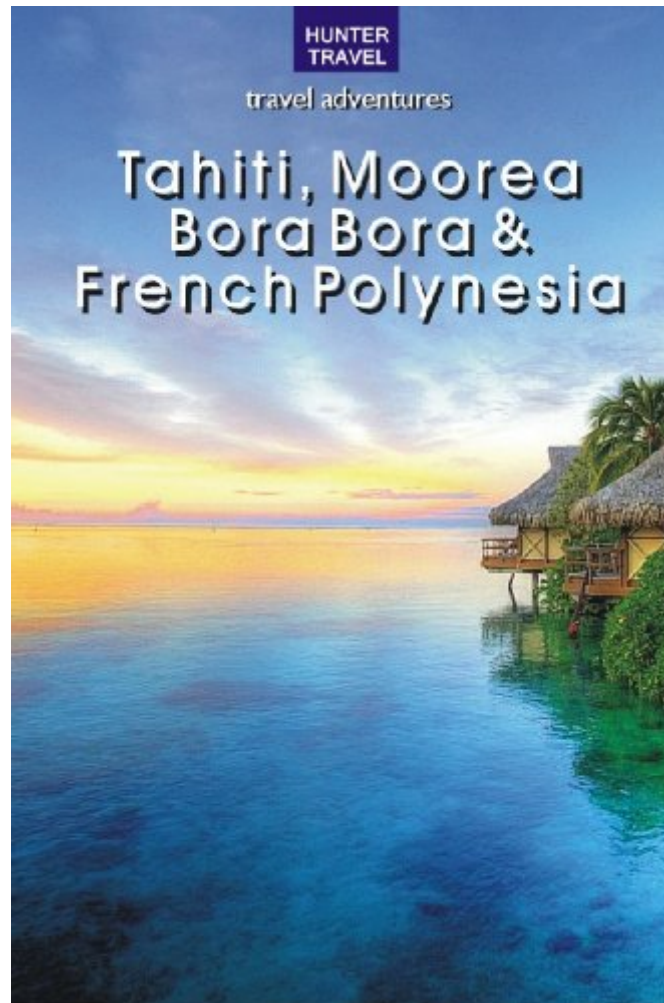




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Tahiti, Moorea, Bora Bora & French Polynesia (Travel Adventures)



Synopsis

Tranquil lagoons in shades of emerald and turquoise, palms swaying gently in the wind, powdery white beaches framed by soaring mountains and lush vegetation, waters teeming with brilliantly colored fish - this is the legendary South Pacific. Today, many of the islands remain as they were when Captain Cook and Captain Bligh of the *Bounty* sailed here, with traditional Polynesian life little changed. Where to stay, where to eat, how to get around, what to see and do - all of the practical information you need is spelled out in detail, along with maps for all of the islands and photos of all the sights. This guide focuses on French Polynesia: Tahiti, Bora Bora, Moorea, the Marquesas Islands and many more. This archipelago spread out over several million square miles of the south central Pacific is a mixture of high volcanic islands and low coral atolls. Tahiti, the biggest island in French Polynesia, has the most magical name in the South Pacific and with good reason. Papeete, her principal port, shares this distinction and for years Tahiti has been considered an island where land and sea are bountiful, the girls sensual, and the French administration casually tolerant. Mountainous Tahiti, with an area of about 400 square miles, looks from above like a deformed figure eight, a small round island joined to a large round one. A 75-mile road, called La Route de Ceinture (the Belt Road) circles the bigger part of the island, called Tahiti Nui, and a pair of roads extend eight to ten miles along either side of the smaller part of the island, called Tahiti Iti. Beyond, there are only footpaths. ã Visit Point Venus, a pretty spot which is fine for picnics, under the trees in the shadow of the old lighthouse. This is where Captain Cook on June 3, 1769 observed the transit of the planet Venus. At nearby Papeari tradition says Polynesians first settled a thousand years ago. It's also where Paul Gauguin lived and worked in the 1890's. At the nearby Gauguin Museum you can see documents and artifacts from his day. The mountains in Tahiti's interior are beautiful and challenging. The 7,000-foot Mt. Aorai climb is the most rewarding. Moorea is 12 miles away. It's a lovely 82-square-mile triangular-shaped island of sharp peaks, deep valleys, beaches, and bays. If you do the round-island trip, you'll see quaint villages, towering mountains, picturesque lagoons, and fine beaches. The most dramatic way to see Moorea is by hiking. Footpaths connect many of these old temples that were the ancestral shrines of local chiefs. Huahine in those ancient days was a center of Polynesian culture. Bora Bora ã is 160 miles from Tahiti. The pearl of all islands, it has a beauty borne of lagoon, reef, and green mountains. Tetiaroa is a 4.5-mile-wide atoll comprised of 12 motus (small islands) located just 36.5 miles (59 km) north of Papeete, on the island of Tahiti. ã It is probably most famously known for its now deceased but legendary owner, the charismatic and moody Hollywood actor, Marlon Brando. Marlon Brando first "discovered" Tetiaroa in the early 1960's while scouting locations for the film "Mutiny on the Bounty". (it was on

that same shoot that he met his future wife, Tahitian beauty Tarita Teriipaia, who played the lover of his character.) Brando's son lives on the island now. And then there are the 12 Marquesas Islands. Nuku Hiva, the administrative center, like most of the others, is majestically mountainous and beautiful. This is an in-depth guide to all of them.

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Customer Reviews

This has turned out to be a fairly good, not very detailed introduction to travel in French Polynesia, although I think it may be a little out of date in terms of prices of the accommodations it lists. If you want a really detailed account of everything there, a la Lonely Planet, Fodor's, Frommer's, etc., this isn't it.

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