

*Sunsational Vacations
Your Tahiti Specialist*



Tahiti Frequently Asked Questions

If ever there were islands which not only met, but also exceeded your expectations of paradise, they are the islands of French Polynesia. Your senses are overwhelmed the moment you step off your flight with the scent of frangipani and tiare blossoms. Your eyes will be trans-fixed by rich and vivid colors and your ears will pick-up the distant seductive beat of the Tahitian music.

The paradise that is Tahiti is very much the same as it has always been. Instead of 100 room high-rise hotels, Tahiti still offers small, thatched-roof bungalows in harmony with the landscape. The hustle and bustle of the everyday urban world is forgotten in the serenity of Tahiti, the most beautiful and romantic place on earth.

Q. When is high season in French Polynesia?

A. High season in the islands, with correspondingly higher prices, runs from June 1 until November 1st or 15th (depending on the resort).

Q. When is rainy season in French Polynesia?

A. November through March is considered to be the rainy season, and July to September the dry season. However, as with most tropical areas, the weather can be unpredictable, and it's not uncommon to experience days on end of perfect sunshine in February or more rain than expected in July!

Q. What is a motu?

A. A motu is a small, flat island that often looks very similar to the classic "desert island" image.

Q. Is it better to stay on the main island or a motu in BB?

A. Some people like to be on the main island for easy access to town and more restaurants, and some prefer to be on a motu in order to have a gorgeous view of the main island and Mount Otemanu (Bora Bora's famed peak). Staying on a motu also allows you to have the experience of staying on a "private" resort island (though some of the motus do host more than one resort).

Q. How long is the flight?

A. The flying time is approximately 8-8.5 hours between Los Angeles, CA and Papeete, Tahiti. From there, the flight to Moorea is about 10 minutes, about 50 to Bora Bora

Q. Can I take a boat between islands?

A. A ferry is available between Tahiti and Moorea, as well as between Raiatea and Tahaa. However, to get between other islands, a short flight is necessary, unless you take a cruise.

Q. What does food cost on average?

A. Average buffet or room service breakfast at a resort: \$35-\$40 per person

Lunch (entree, shared dessert): \$25-\$35 per person
Dinner (appetizer, entree, dessert): \$75-\$100 per person
Soft drink: \$3-\$5 each
Beer or glass of wine: \$5-\$10 each
Alcoholic cocktail: \$12-\$20 each

Q. Do I need a passport and visa to travel to French Polynesia?

A. You do need a US passport with at least 6 months validity remaining as of the day you leaves the islands to fly back to the US. A visa is not required for US citizens staying fewer than 30 days.

Q. Are vaccinations required to travel to French Polynesia?

A. None are required, though checking the CDC website for their current recommendations

Q. What are the baggage restrictions on the airlines?

A. Air Tahiti Nui and Air France allow passengers 2 pieces of checked luggage, up to 50 pounds. However, Air Tahiti (the inter-islands carrier) only allows up to 44 pounds of checked baggage, and 6 pounds of carry-on baggage. Any additional baggage may incur a fee.

Q. How do I get from the airport to the hotels and back to the airport?

A. There are always taxis and limousines waiting at the airport but this can get pricey. "Le Truck" is the famous non-rapid transportation system of Tahiti. This brightly painted jitney is actually a flatbed truck outfitted with an open- air cabin and wooden seats. It is an entertaining and inexpensive way to get around and see the sights. However, I do not recommend using these to get back and forth to hotels and the airport dragging all your luggage with you. When you plan your trip using a tour package, we always include the necessary ground transfers. This means included in the price of your package will be all the transfers necessary for you to get from the airport to the hotel and back to the airport. They also include transfers that are necessary to get you to an excursion, a sightseeing tour or a special lunch or dinner that has been included in the itinerary. This is a definite money-saving benefit, not to mention the convenience. Your baggage handling is taken care of, and you get door-to-door service every step along the way.

Q. Can I use American dollars in French Polynesia?

A. No. The currency of the islands is the French Polynesian Franc (XPF/CFP). Credit cards are widely accepted (Visa and Mastercard more so than American Express, though most of the major resorts do accept AMEX as well). For the best exchange rates, we recommend using ATMs (though do be advised that many banks charge a fee for using ATMs that are out of network/in another country than your bank).

Q. How much duty free liquor can I bring into French Polynesia?

A. You are allowed 2 liters per person.

Q. Is it really romantic?

Because of the wild beauty of its scenery and its pristine multi-hue lagoons, French Polynesia is the essence of romance and sensuality. These islands will cast their love spell on you as you arrive and will make it last way after you return home. The exotic islands of French Polynesia were made for lovers. Intoxicating scents, palm-shaded beaches, secluded coves, private bungalows on crystal lagoons with a view of emerald islands more sensuous than the works of Gauguin. Tahiti is without a doubt the most romantic place on earth!

Q. Is there a strong language barrier?

A. At most of the major resorts and restaurants, English is widely spoken. At some of smaller hotels, restaurants, and other sights, English speakers may be a bit less common. However, overall it is not

difficult to enjoy the islands without speaking French or Tahitian. Though we do always recommend learning a few basic words, in order to really get the most out of your experience!

Q. Is there a bug problem in French Polynesia?

A. As with any tropical destination, you may encounter some insects during your stay. To avoid any mosquito or fly bites, be sure to pack bug spray. You may never need it during your stay, but it's always best to be prepared.

Q. What is the most romantic island/resort?

A. While every resort in French Polynesia is romantic, some of the more intimate resorts include Le Taha'a, Tikehau Pearl Beach, Kia Ora Sauvage, St. Regis Bora Bora, and the Four Seasons Bora Bora.

Q. Is it possible to vacation in French Polynesia for under \$5000?

A. It is possible to go to French Polynesia and stay in the \$5000 range for your air and resort in low season, so don't abandon all hope just yet! While it's impossible to stay in an overwater bungalow for your entire stay for \$5000, you can still experience the lovely islands in one of the more inexpensive room categories, such as a garden room or garden bungalow. These bungalows often have the same interiors as the overwater bungalows and are very close to the beach. Also, do not rule out some of the lesser known islands, such as Huahine, Tikehau, or Manihi. These islands are a wonderful value. Tikehau, while not mountainous like Moorea and Bora Bora, offers lagoon colors that rival Bora Bora! The Te Tiare Resort in Huahine is very intimate and secluded, and the garden bungalows are surrounded by beautiful flowers and trees that offer true privacy. A week-long trip or more will generally not be possible for less than \$5000 unless your entire stay is on the island of Tahiti, but even a 4 or 5 night trip is absolutely worth it, especially if you are already on the West Coast of the US, where travel time to the Caribbean can actually be much longer!

Q. When should I book my trip?

A. Please keep one thing in mind when making plans to travel to Tahiti, the number of properties are very limited and the demand for them is great. We suggest making your reservations six to eight months in advance to guarantee availability. This is especially important if you are planning to honeymoon in Tahiti.

**Contact Sunsational Vacations today
for a customized quote for Tahiti and Her Islands**

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