LIFESTYLE

LifeStyle Channel » Travel » Cruising Tahiti by Freighter Ship

Cruising Tahiti by Freighter Ship
by **Fiona Harper**

Cruising Tahiti by Freighter Ship

Pin it +1 Tweet

Tahiti is the sort of dream destination that entices many to her sun-kissed shores. A unique way to discover Tahiti's charms is by passenger carrying freighter ship.

Tahiti has long featured in the dreams of travelers looking for an indulgent tropical escape. None more so than the family depicted in a 1970's TV soap commercial luxuriously travelling the world by private jet. The glamorous young wife glances up from the magazine she's reading in the bath to announce that 'Tahiti looks nice'. Remade last year but actually little changed from the original, her husbands' subsequent instructions to the pilot, 'Simon, Tahiti' will likely resonate with a new generation of travelers.

As it turns out, nice barely cuts it to describe Tahiti's charms. There are a gazillion adjectives that better depict the island archipelago that lies south of the Equator smack in the heart of the South Pacific Ocean.

One of the best ways to explore the Marquesas Islands north of mainland Tahiti is to board the passenger carrying freighter Aranui 3. Though you won't find too many coconut palm-lined lagoons or dazzling white-sand beaches circling teeny coral atolls barely rising above the South Pacific. Nor will you come within a whisper of a thatched-roof overwater bungalow, the kind that appears synonymous with Tahitian holidays. You will however find the sort of idyllic Pacific Island idyll sought by famous visitors such as French artist Paul Gauguin who is entombed on the island of Hiva Oa.

Far removed from the most populous islands of the Society Archipelago, the wild rugged Marquesas Islands are remote, isolated and mostly uninhabited. They're not that easy to reach either, which is just how the 8,600-odd Marquesan inhabitants like it. Don't get me wrong, renowned Tahitian hospitality underpins daily life in this remotest of archipelagos and visitors are warmly welcomed into the community. Marquesan people are rather proud of their strong Polynesian culture that has thrived in relative isolation dominated by the tides and currents of the Pacific Ocean.

With few air services connecting the twelve Marquesan Islands to the Society group to the south, islanders use the sea as an emerald highway. Aranui Cruises have operated an island trading service since the 1950's but it wasn't until thirty years later that freight traders started carrying passengers. With the arrival of 117m Aranui 3 in 2002, passengers these days are almost as important as cargo on scheduled voyages to the Marquesas. Almost.

With accommodation for up to 200 passengers and 65 crew, Aranui 3's route and schedule is dictated by freight. Whether dropping off or picking up, freight is king. Heavily muscled, and equally heavily tattooed, crew work around the clock, often loading or unloading in the dead of night. Passengers tucked up in their bunks are barely aware of the action in the forward part of the ship. That's not to say that passengers merely come along for the ride. Far from it. Passengers are an integral part of the voyage with villagers rolling out the welcome mat to showcase Marquesan lifestyle, culture and crafts. Shore excursions include hiking for the energetic, village visits, cultural demonstrations or Church visits if you arrive in port on a Sunday.

Aranui 3 is not your regular freighter ship. For a start there's a freshwater swimming pool surrounded by sun lounges. Indoors is a large air-conditioned restaurant, lounge with bar and a small library with computers. Rather bizarrely, there's free wifi too! The main social hub of the ship is the top deck bar and aft deck where passengers and crew gather late afternoon to enjoy blazing scarlet sunsets washed down with cocktails or the local Hinano Tahiti lager.

So what's the attraction of travelling on a working ship? Freighter travel is definitely all about the voyage, being suitable for independent souls who are flexible and adaptable. Schedules may change due to weather or freight demands. Delays may keep the ship in port longer than expected, or scheduled ports may be bypassed entirely. Which of course is all part of the adventure. If you're the kind of traveler who can't 'wing it' a bit, then freighter voyaging is definitely not for you. However, if you're up for a little maritime adventure in one of the planet's most gorgeous archipelagoes, voyaging through the Marquesas may be just the ticket.

Yes indeed, Tahiti is rather nice.

For more Information -
Aranui 3 www.aranuicruises.com.au
Tahiti Tourisme www.tahitinow.com.au
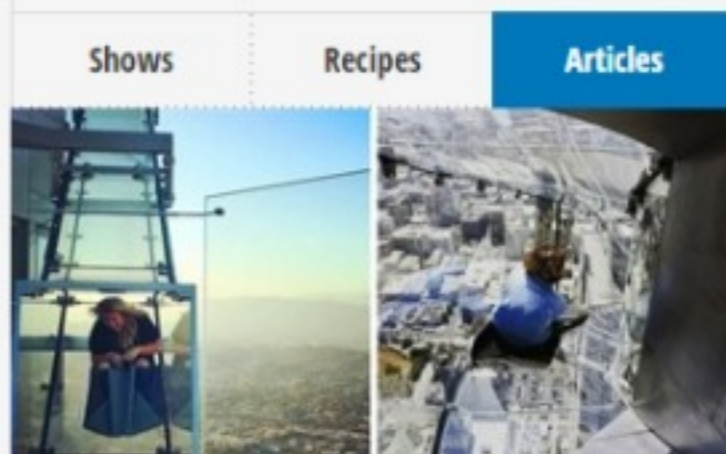
Pin it +1 Tweet

Join the Conversation

Please note, LifeStyle cannot respond to all comments posted in our comments feed. If you have a comment or query you would like LifeStyle to respond to, please use our feedback form.
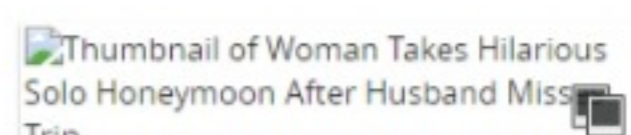
0 comments

Please login to comment

» Related

Shows | Recipes | **Articles**

Thrill-Seekers Flock to Terrifying Glass Slide in LA
On 18 Jul

Thumbnail of Australia's First Capsule Hotel Is Coming To Sydney
Australia's First Capsule Hotel Is Coming To Sydney
On 14 Jul

Thumbnail of Woman Takes Hilarious Solo Honeymoon After Husband Misses Trip
Woman Takes Hilarious Solo Honeymoon After Husband Misses Trip
On 12 Jul

» Calculators

🏠 Property Calculators   +
❤ Health Calculators   +
🏡 Home and Garden Calculators   +

Facebook | Twitter

Like us on Facebook
TheLifeStyleChannel

» TV Guide

LifeStyle | FOOD | HOME | YOU

Thumbnail of Antiques Roadshow 8   Antiques Roadshow 8
Now: 2:00pm

Thumbnail of Flog It ! 35   **Flog It!** Flog It ! 35
Next: 3:10pm

Apply to be on our TV shows!

LIFESTYLE.COM.AU   MY FOXTEL | FOXTEL PRODUCTS | FOXTEL NETWORKS | SIGN UP ONLINE
FAQ | SITE TERMS | PRIVACY POLICY | COMMUNITY GUIDELINES | SITEMAP | SITE BY CHOOK   FOXTEL

Contact Us   Online Security   Telstra Media Privacy   Terms of Use   Copyright & Trademark   Advertise with us   MEDIA

Search >