



Special *Austral Islands*

Embark on a voyage like no other

For nearly 40 years, Aranui has been offering travelers in the know, an adventure of a lifetime across the South Pacific. On board the comfortable ship Aranui 5, enjoy this exceptional voyage, outside the usual maritime routes, to discover this Polynesian archipelago with some of the most beautiful and untouched islands in the area.

Rapa Iti



Located in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, Rapa Iti or "little Rapa", is the most isolated and southernmost inhabited island of the Austral Islands.

The particular shape of the island and its remoteness does not allow one to get there by plane: only ships have access. The island is home to a population of 507, described as «the happiest people in the world». It is so isolated that the inhabitants speak reo rapa, a language that is different from the rest of the Austral Islands.

Several characteristics distinguish Rapa from the other islands of French Polynesia. As a matter of fact, it registers the lowest temperature of the 5 archipelagos: a low of up to 8°C during the dry season (July-August, with records as cold as 4°C).

Thanks to this climate, you will find a delicious flora, unique in Polynesia: apple and pear trees, nectarines... An orchard worthy of the Garden of Eden!



ENJOY MORE THAN A DAY IN RAPA

FOR A JOURNEY OFF THE BEATEN PATH

- / VISIT AHUREI, THE MAIN VILLAGE OF RAPA
- / DISCOVER THE OLD FORTRESSES LOCATED ON THE ISLAND'S MOUNTAIN TOPS
- / VISIT AN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION CENTER
- / DISCOVER LOCAL ARTS AND CRAFTS
- / MEET THE INHABITANTS OF THIS ISLAND AND SHARE A COMMUNAL WOOD FIRE MA'A (LOCAL SPECIALTIES OR MEAL) AT THE VILLAGE

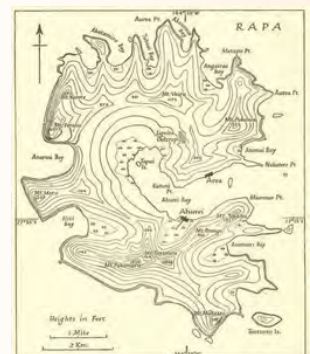


Fig. 68. Rapa
From lines at intervals of approximately 100 ft. The hatched area is generalized, and its position may not be exactly shown. Based on: (1) Admiralty chart no. 812; (2) L. J. Chubb, "Geology of the Austral or Tahoon Islands (South Pacific)", *Quarterly Journal of the Geological Society*, vol. LXXXIII, p. 203 (London, 1927).



Rurutu

Rurutu is unique due to its geological formation, which is surprising as it is not what one expects to see in the South Pacific. Basaltic and limestone cliffs dotted with caves where the islanders once lived, a volcanic interior with a lush tropical jungle, white sand beaches and beautiful bays create stunning visuals.

Archeological digs have uncovered habitation sites, council platforms and sacred temples in the village of Vitaria, showing man's presence around 900 A.D. Rurutu is known throughout Polynesia for the exceptional fine quality of its woven products.

Each year, from August to October, humpback whales can be seen and heard in Rurutu, where they come south to mate and give birth.



Rimatara

This island, the smallest of the Austral archipelago, has a small lagoon and a particular charm with many hidden treasures. Time stands still on this circular island.

Kuhl's Lorikeet or Vini 'ura, an endangered bird with bright colorful feathers, is endemic to the island.

As of recently, access to Rimatara is possibly by plane. Previously, only ships could reach this jewel of the Austral Islands.

The population's primary resources are agriculture, woven handbags and cloth made of fara pae'ore leaves (a type of pandanus without thorns).



Tubuai

Tubuai is the largest island of the archipelago and the administrative and economic capital of the Austral Islands. Its immense lagoon, nearly twice the size of the island, provides 85 km² of pure aquatic pleasure.

The temperate climate of these islands makes them ideal for agriculture. The first explorers were taken by the island's beauty. Towards the end of the 19th century, the explorers Wallis and Cook took a liking to the island's lush vegetation and its crystal clear waters. However, the area was not suitable for anchoring due to the large barrier reef surrounding the coastline. This inconvenience became an incredible advantage in the eyes of the famous mutineers of the HMS Bounty.



Raivavae

Known as the "Bora Bora of the Austral Islands", Raivavae's white sand beaches, large emerald lagoon and 28 motus encircling the lush green island, have it earned it this distinction.

Giant stone tikis resembling those in the Marquesas and on Easter Island, including an unusual smiling tiki, wood sculptures, an open air marae temple and Polynesian canoes are some of the archeological elements you will discover during a circle island tour.

If you wish to relax on one of the motus and swim in the crystal clear lagoon, an excursion by speed boat is available. A beach barbecue featuring local dishes will be served for lunch.



A Unique itinerary

11 DAYS / 10 NIGHTS CRUISE

FROM MARCH 30TH TO APRIL 09TH, 2024
FROM NOVEMBER 02ND TO 12TH, 2024

Boarding in Papeete from 7 AM to 9 AM

DAY 1 DEPARTURE

Papeete - Tahiti: at 12 PM.

DAY 2 & 3 RURUTU

Visit the Royal House, the cave Mitterand and the taro fields, and don't forget to sample the island's famous coffee.

DAYS 4 RAIVAVAE

Enjoy the beautiful beach at Mahanatoa while tasting delicious fruits.

DAYS 5 & 6 RAPA

Discover on foot the island's landscape, its forts and its hidden beauty.

DAY 7 AT SEA

DAY 8 RIMATARA

Enjoy the traditional welcome with a walk through a purification smoke, then the history of the island's king and queen at their gravesite.

DAY 9 TUBUAI

Discover the Australs' arts and crafts of woven products and wood sculptures before visiting Fort Georges, Taahueia's Sanito church and marae.

DAY 10 AT SEA

DAY 11 ARRIVAL

Papeete - Tahiti: 7 AM.

Austral Islands




ARANUI 5

TAHITI
ET SES ÎLES

