

The Marquesas Compendium

A Compilation of Guidebook References and Cruising Reports



Revision Log

Many thanks to all who have contributed over the years!!

Rev	Date	Who	What
A	July 4, 2010	Soggy Paws	Initial 'compendium'
B	August 15, 2010	Soggy Paws	First revisions after arrival in Fatu Hiva
C	Sept 15, 2010	Soggy Paws	Nuku Hiva Updates
D	Oct 31, 2011	Moondance	Nuku Hiva Updates

**We welcome updates to this guide!
(especially for places we have no cruiser information on)**

Email Soggy Paws at [sherry –at- svsooggypaws –dot- com](mailto:sherry-at-svsoggypaws-dot-com).

You can also contact us on Sailmail at WDD5182

The current home of the official copy of this document is

<http://svsooggypaws.com/files/>

Check for an updated copy there.

Table of Contents

1 INTRODUCTION.....	3
1.1 ENTRY PROCEDURES FOR NON-EU CITIZENS.....	3
1.2 KAVENGA'S SUGGESTED ROUTES THROUGH THE MARQUESAS.....	4
1.3 WEATHER.....	7
1.4 OBTAINING SUPPLIES.....	11
1.5 COMMUNICATIONS.....	14
1.6 DIVING.....	16
1.7 HAULOUT, STORAGE, AND REPAIR FACILITIES.....	16
1.8 CRUISING SOURCES.....	16
1.9 PRINTED SOURCES.....	18
2 INTER-ISLAND PASSAGE REPORTS.....	20
2.1 TAHUATA TO HANE BAY, UA HUKA (EARLY JULY).....	20
2.2 TAHUATA TO FATU HIVA.....	20
2.3 TAHUATA TO UA POU.....	21
2.4 BAIE TAHAUKU - ATUONA.....	22
3 FATU HIVA.....	25
3.1 HANAVAVE / BAY OF VIRGINS.....	25
3.2 OMOA.....	29
4 TAHUATA.....	30
4.1 HANA MOE NOA.....	30
4.2 VAITEHU.....	32
4.3 HAPATONI/HANA TEFAU.....	34
4.4 IVAIVA NUI.....	36
5 UA HUKA.....	37
5.1 HANE BAY.....	37
5.2 VAIPAEE BAY.....	37
6 UA POU.....	37
6.1 HAKAHAU BAY.....	37
6.2 HAKAHETAU.....	38
6.3 VAIEHU.....	39
7 NUKU HIVA.....	40
7.1 THE SOUTH COAST.....	40
7.2 THE WEST COAST.....	45
7.3 THE NORTH COAST.....	45
8 EIAO.....	48
9 MOVING ON TO THE TUAMOTUS.....	48

1 Introduction

This guide originally started out as a way for s/v Visions of Johanna to organize notes and various internet sources on the SE Tuamotus. However, it then morphed into a 'Compendium' for all of the Tuamotus. When we got to the Marquesas, we made a 'Marquesas Compendium' to match.

It is not intended to replace the guidebooks or charts, but to supplement out-of-date guides with recent cruiser first-hand reports, and fill in places that the guides don't cover.

1.1 Entry Procedures for Non-EU Citizens

Non EU citizens still need to pay a bond to a local bank in order to be permitted to enter the country. The only ways to avoid this are to become an EU citizen, hire a local agent to help you check in and bypass the bond, or to have a flight out of French Polynesia already booked.

Otherwise you will have to pay the bond, which was 117,768 CFP per person (or approximately \$1,180 USD per person). You will receive your bond back when leaving French Polynesia, so be sure to use a bank that has a location in your port of departure.

Most boats check into the Marquesas in Hiva Oa and the only real bank option is the Bank Socredo, which happens to have a branch in Bora Bora, which is usually the port of departure. Bank Socredo in Hiva Oa is open at 8am and closes at 11:30am, but is again open in the afternoon, but Bonds must be paid before 3:30pm on the weekdays and 2pm on Fridays. They take Visa cards, assuming yours has not been turned off by your bank for being a nomad. Although Visa hit us with a \$70 processing fee and interest on each day that goes by on the cash advance. Be sure to pay your VISA bill quick! Finally, you get hit one more time by the bank, which takes a 3% commission on the total amount before they transfer it to your home bank.

In 2010, the Pacific Puddle Jump group negotiated a 'group rate' for an agent to handle the bond issue and provide the duty-free fuel paperwork. (s/v Soggy Paws: This worked very well for all involved, and we were very happy with the services of Francesco from Tahiti Yacht Agents).

If you can, marry someone from the EU and you'll be all set.

Then customs is pretty easy, the usual form asking all the usual questions.

In 2009, Americans received only a 30 day visa, which then had to be extended to get the full 90 days. In 2010, this policy changed, and Americans received a full 90 day visa on entry into the Marquesas (though you still have to formalize your paperwork when you get to Pape'ete).

Finally, once you are cleared to cruise the Marquesas Islands, you will still need to remember to check into each new island and alert the local Gendarmerie of your boats presence. Depending on the size of the island you might just tell the local police officer. Thankfully there are no additional costs for cruising, which is a nice change from Panama and Ecuador.

Lastly, you will need to fill out a form for authorization to provision your boat with fuel. It is a simple form that allows you to purchase fuel at tourist prices. If you hire an agent you can buy duty free fuel, which is much cheaper and is approximately \$2 a gallon for diesel.

If you have crew who entered with you in the Marquesas, but who will leave the boat before you arrive in Pape'ete, you should ask officials (your agent, if you have one), what you need to do to sign the crew member off your boat, and properly set their immigration status. In 2010, some crew trying to fly out from the Tuamotus, through Pape'ete, were severely hassled at the Pape'ete airport because the proper leaving formalities had not been complied with.

(s/v Nakia 2009): The customs boat was in Taiohae while we were there, they boarded us and looked over both the customs form and our passports. They asked about drugs, guns, bullets, spirits, and U.S. cash but didn't go below. I guess if we didn't answer the questions right they might have gone below to inspect.

(s/v Soggy Paws 2010): If you are Swiss, the French consider you as 'non-EU'. Plan accordingly.

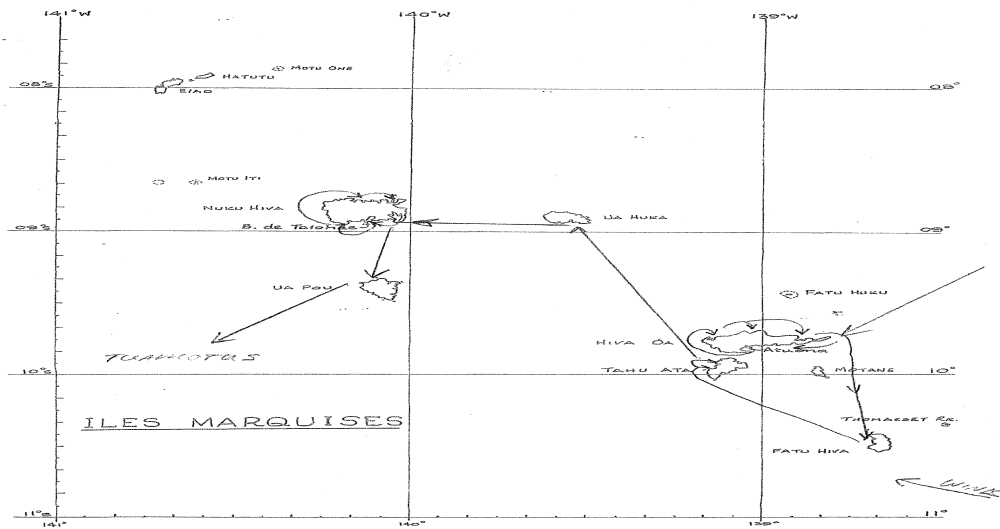
One boat who came in while we were in Taiohae, was on a delivery, and wanted to do a "check in and out". They were planning on staying only long enough to provision in Taiohae, and then leaving directly for Suvarrow. Even though they were immediately checking out again, they were still required to pay the bond, which they did on their credit card. 24 hours later when they went to retrieve their bond, they expected the bank to reverse the credit card charges. But instead, they were paid in cash—in French Poly Francs! (which they had no use for, because they were leaving French Polynesia). After much protesting, pleading and whining, the bank finally scraped together enough funds in Euros to refund the bond back in Euros. So be forewarned...

1.2 *Kavenga's Suggested Routes through the Marquesas*

This is one boat's view of how to see all of the Marquesas, from a document I downloaded, I think, from the Pacific Puddle Jump Yahoo group, so I assume it was meant to be shared. Thanks to s/v Kavenga for their input...

The route you take through the Marquesas once you get there depends on your objectives, priorities and schedule. If the Marquesas are primarily just a waypoint en route to somewhere else, or if your schedule only allows for a week in the Marquesas, that will dictate a different route than if the Marquesas is a key destination for you, and you have two weeks or more to explore them.

The chartlet below assumes the latter, that you have the desire and the time to try to see all of the Marquesas (if not, skip to the end). The basic assumption is that cruising boats prefer to sail off wind rather than up wind whenever possible.



The charted route suggests making your initial landfall at **Hiva Oa** for the following reasons: 1) it is the most windward island with a Gendarmerie where you can legally check into French Polynesia, 2) it has stores, supplies and services that you may need after your three week passage.

Alternately, you could make your landfall at the most windward island, Fatu Hiva. It is technically not legal to enter French Polynesia here, but a few boats do it every year without running into major difficulties. There are officials here who will note your presence and report it to Hiva Oa, so beware of fudging your arrival date when you do clear in.

But let's assume you follow the route as charted. Your first stop, after rounding the eastern cape, Matafenua, will be the village of Atuona and Taahuku Bay. The bay is quite small for the amount of traffic it gets from cruisers and copra ships. The swells from the SE quadrant refract off the cliffs on the northwest side of the bay and come into the anchorage. It can be so tight in here, especially with the Puddle Jumpers all converging at about the same time that everyone anchors with bow and stern anchors to make room, AND to keep their bows pointed into the swells. If a storm should crank up in the southern ocean and the winds start to come from that direction, be ready to leave Taahuku on short notice, particularly if you happen to be in the row of anchored boats furthest back. If you get caught, you could suddenly find yourself in breaking surf.

Atuona will feel like heaven after several weeks at sea and it is a beautiful place. However, we advise getting your business taken care of as quickly as possible and then moving on. The route that follows is not the one we took but is the one we wished we had taken after learning the local wind and weather patterns.

After leaving Atuona continue on circumnavigating Hiva Oa, first with a stop at Hana Menu. This is a must stop for a dip in the “Hollywood Pool” with its gushing freshwater spring and surrounding tropical flowers; and for the hike through the ruins of the ancient village and up to the high and dry plateau, where you may be treated to the sight of a herd of “wild” horses.

There are three more bays on the north side of Hiva Oa to choose from before heading off to the next island, Fatu Hiva. By coming to the north side of Hiva Oa, you have a better chance of laying Fatu Hiva in one tack. We had to tack our way there from the southern end of Tahuata.

There are two primary anchorages at Fatu Hiva, the most popular being Hana Vave or Bay of Virgins. This anchorage has probably been on the cover of more sailing magazines than any other. It is truly beautiful, although it can be a trifle rocky at times. We half expected to see King Kong peek out from behind one of the massive stone pillars.

When you're ready to leave Fatu Hiva, the fun begins because it should be a sleigh ride from then on. Head for the southern end of Tahuata and check out the various anchorages on its leeward side. Our favorite is the northernmost, Hana Moe Noa. It is one of the few bays in the Marquesas with white sand beaches and safe snorkeling. (It is considered unsafe to snorkel or swim over black sand beaches due to sharks.)

Resume your sleigh ride from Tahuata to Ua Huku. We missed this island because we hadn't figured out this route—we went to Ua Pou first instead. Because the anchorages on Ua Huku are exposed to the south, they can be rough or even untenable at times.

Your next downwind landfall will be Nuku Hiva, probably the best known island in the Marquesas, thanks to Herman Melville; Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young, and others. There are many ways you could do it and here is just one. Start with the closest bay to Ua Huku, Controller's Bay. This is also the location of the Valley of the Typee made famous by Melville. Hike up the valley to see the Tikis and maraes (temple platforms).

Continue on a counterclockwise circumnavigation with a stop at our favorite anchorage in the Marquesas, Anaho. Most anchorages in the Marquesas are exposed to swell to one degree or another. Anaho is one of the few that has 360 degree protection. And it has, to the best of our knowledge, the longest, white sandy beach in the Marquesas, and is just a flat out beautiful place. There was nothing there but a vegetable farm when we were there in 1991, but we understand there is now a restaurant and a pension (B&B). You can easily hike to the bays on either side of Anaho. The eastern bay was deserted and littered with flotsam, the bay to the west, Hatiheu, had a restaurant and other services. We would give this anchorage more time than any other in the Marquesas.

Continue on around Nuku Hiva to Hakatea Bay, better known to cruisers as Daniel's Bay, and now to the world as the site of one season of the Survivors TV series. I imagine that despite the alterations made by Survivors that it is still a beautiful anchorage.

Conclude your tour of Nuku Hiva with a stop at Taiohae Bay, with probably the largest concentration of people and activity in the Marquesas. We made this our last stop in the

Marquesas thinking it would have the best provisioning. This is another south facing anchorage, and the swell can get pretty impressive at times. Consequently, it is another anchorage where bow and stern anchors seemed to be the norm.

If we were doing it over again, and assuming conditions had not changed to a large degree, we would make Ua Pou our last stop in the Marquesas. We were disappointed in Taiohae Bay, Nuku Hiva, in that the provisioning was not as good as we had found earlier (in our case) on Ua Pou. At Hakahau Bay on Ua Pou we found at least four small grocery stores, that together gave us a better and fresher selection than what we found at Taiohae. All that may have changed by now, but what hasn't changed is the fact that Ua Pou is the departure point closest to our next destination, the Tuamotu Archipelago. It is also the most visually striking of the Marquesas.

That concludes the route for those that have the time and choose to devote it to seeing all of the Marquesas. Aside from not having the chance to visit Ua Huku, there is not one island in the Marquesas that we would have skipped based on the knowledge we gained, the sights we saw and the experiences we had.

Nevertheless, there are many who probably cannot for one reason or another, afford to allocate three to four weeks of their cruise for the complete tour, especially in light of the recent difficulties in getting visa extensions, which were not a problem when we were there.

For those of you in a hurry, we would recommend making landfall at Taiohae Bay on Nuku Hiva, spending two to five days at Anaho, and then heading to Hakahau on Ua Pou to provision and clear out for the Tuamotus or Tahiti.

1.3 Weather

1.3.1 Weather Sources

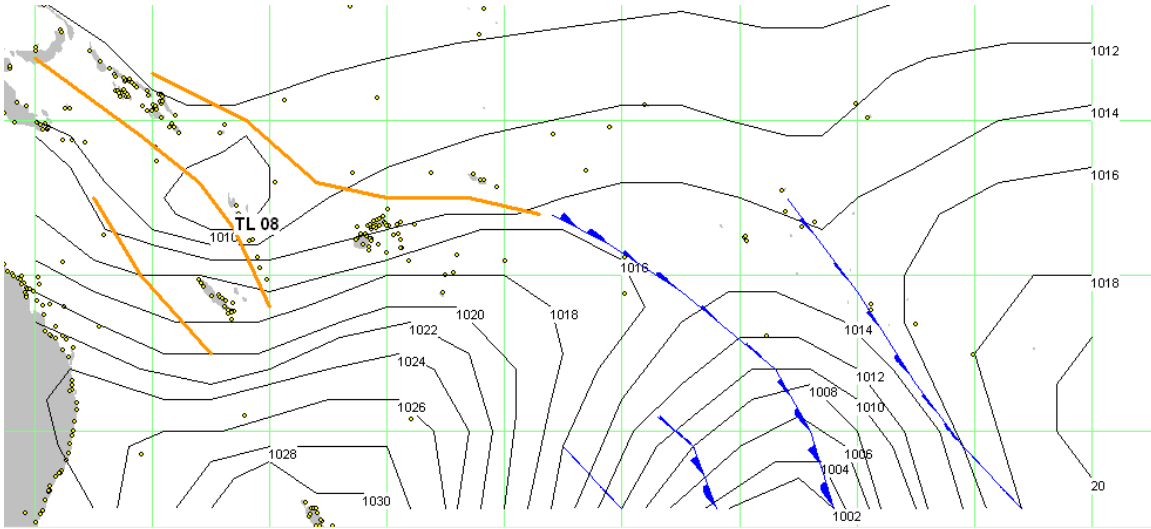
We found 4 general sources of weather useful while away from internet in the Marquesas.

1. **The French Polynesia text forecast** is available via Saildocs 'send fr.poly' to request. It talks about French Polynesia in quadrants like A35. 'A' is 5-10 degrees S latitude, B is 10-15 degrees, C is 15-20 degrees, etc. The '35' is the area of longitude from 135-140, '40' is 140-145, etc. The Marquesas are in A35, B35, and B40. Here's an example of the C40 forecast.

```
EST MARQUISES  
SECTEUR EST 13/17KT FRAICHISSANT TEMPORAIREMENT 18/22KT, RAFALES  
25/30KT, MER AGITEE, AVERSES ISOLEES.
```

2. **The Fiji Met office** produces 2 products that cover French Polynesia, one is the 'Fleet Code'—a coded text file that can be pasted into a software program that will decode the codes into a surface analysis chart that covers from New Zealand east to about 120W. Download the Fleet Code program on the Pangolin website www.pangolin.co.nz before you get out of internet range. The saildocs request is

send fleet.nadi. The second product is a text version that is not coded.
 The Saildocs request is send nadi.sopac.



The Nadi Fleet Forecast as Decoded by PhysPlot

3. **NOAA Hawaii High Seas Forecast.** Hawaii also produces a text forecast that covers French Polynesia. It is a 'High Seas' forecast and really only gives locations of fronts and such, and major areas of wind. The SailDocs request is send FZPS40.PHFO.
4. **GRIB files.** GRIB files seem to be generally accurate except when stalled cold fronts from NZ run into troughs or convergence zones which lurk sometimes over the Tuamotus. Then, no one, including the French, Fiji, or NOAA weather offices do a very good job of predicting what the wind will do in any given location.

5. New Zealand Weather Faxes

They only have one transmitter in NZ, so each product is broadcast on a different frequency every 15 minutes starting at xx30 (5Mhz), xx45 (9Mhz), xx00 (13Mhz), xx15 (16Mhz daytime, 3Mhz nighttime). All times are Local Marquesas times (-9:30 UTC).

PRODUCT	TRANSMISSION TIMES (Local) & Freqs				
-----	3247.4	5807	9459	13550.5	16340.1
-----	-----				
1200 SW PACIFIC MSL ANAL	0715	0630	0645	0700	
1800 SW PACIFIC MSL ANAL		1230	1245	1300	1315
TRANSMISSION SCHEDULE		1330	1345	1400	1415
0000 SW PACIFIC MSL PROG H+ 30		1430	1445	1500	1515
0000 SW PACIFIC MSL PROG H+ 48		1530	1545	1600	1615
0000 SW PACIFIC MSL PROG H+ 72		1630	1645	1700	1715
0000 SW PACIFIC MSL ANAL		1830	1845	1900	1915
0600 SW PACIFIC MSL ANAL	0115	0030	0045	0030	
TRANSMISSION SCHEDULE	0215	0130	0145	0130	
1200 SW PACIFIC MSL PROG H+ 30	0315	0230	0245	0230	
1200 SW PACIFIC MSL PROG H+ 48	0415	0330	0345	0330	
1200 SW PACIFIC MSL PROG H+ 72	0515	0430	0445	0430	

(subtract 1.9 to get dial frequency)

6. Hawaii Weather Faxes

UTC	Local	Product	Coverage Area
1724	0754	SIGNIFICANT CLOUD FEATURES	30S - 50N, 110W - 160E
1755	0825	STREAMLINE ANALYSIS	30S - 30N, 110W - 130E
1849	0919	SW PACIFIC GOES IR SAT PIC	40S - 05N, 130W - 165E
1940	1010	WIND/WAVE ANALYSIS	30S - 30N, 110W - 130E
1953	1023	24HR WIND/WAVE FORECAST	30S - 30N, 110W - 130E
2302	1332	48HR WIND/WAVE FORECAST	30S - 30N, 110W - 130E
2315	1345	72HR WIND/WAVE FORECAST	30S - 30N, 110W - 130E
2341	1411	24HR WIND/WAVE FORECAST	30S - 30N, 110W - 130E
2354	1424	STREAMLINE ANALYSIS	30S - 30N, 110W - 130E
0524	1954	SIGNIFICANT CLOUD FEATURES	30S - 50N, 110W - 160E
0555	2025	STREAMLINE ANALYSIS	30S - 30N, 110W - 130E
0649	2119	SW PACIFIC GOES IR SAT PIC	40S - 05N, 130W - 165E
0740	2210	WIND/WAVE ANALYSIS	30S - 30N, 110W - 130E
0753	2223	24HR WIND/WAVE FORECAST	30S - 30N, 110W - 130E
1102	0132	48HR WIND/WAVE FORECAST	30S - 30N, 110W - 130E
1115	0145	72HR WIND/WAVE FORECAST	30S - 30N, 110W - 130E
1141	0211	24HR WIND/WAVE FORECASTS	30S - 30N, 110W - 130E
1154	0224	STREAMLINE ANALYSIS	30S - 30N, 110W - 130E

On the Web

The full Hawaii schedule is available as a text email via Saildocs or online at <http://weather.noaa.gov/pub/fax/hfhi.txt>

The Streamline is available at this URL: <http://www.prh.noaa.gov/hnl/graphics/stream.gif>

And the Significant Cloud Features here: <http://www.prh.noaa.gov/hnl/graphics/neph.gif>

The Sat Photo is here: http://aviationweather.gov/data/obs/sat/intl/ir_ICAO-F_bw.jpg

Other Weather Resources Online

www.windguru.com

www.buoyweather.com

www.meteo.pf

1.3.2 Understanding the Weather Patterns

We (Soggy Paws) are pretty experienced cruisers and feel comfortable normally interpreting our own weather. However, our familiarity was with the Caribbean—Northern Hemisphere—weather. We were a little stumped when we first launched off from mainland South/Central America for French Polynesia. We still have trouble remembering that everything's backwards when weather systems pass.

Several really good sources of instructional material on South Pacific weather exist.

1. Bob McDavitt's "Mariner's Met Pack for the Southwest Pacific" ISBN 1-877197-08-04 published by Captain Teach Press, Auckland, NZ. Though Bob is located in NZ and his weather focus is mainly the western portion of the South Pacific, his instruction manual covers a lot of useful information for the South Pacific in general. If you can't find it, email Bob at mcdavitt@metsservice.com
2. Jim Corenmans "Letters from the South Pacific" originally published in the late 1990's in Latitude 38 Magazine. Copies of this series of articles are floating around among boaters, and might be found on Latitude 38's website. Jim had a great article on understanding South Pacific weather that is still really helpful to newbies entering French Polynesia.
3. David Sapiane's Weather for the Yachtsman. I think I downloaded this document from the Pangolin site:
http://www.pangolin.co.nz/jetsam/view_article.php?idx=19
or the Pacific Puddle Jump Yahoo site. It is an 11-page Word document dated June 2008, with a bunch of good information on terminology and understanding weather for the South Pacific.
4. Some practical tips on planning a passage can be found here:
<http://www.pacificyachtdeliveries.co.nz/weather.htm>
5. Check the Pacific Puddle Jump 'Files' section on Weather, there are usually some good, updated documents there.
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/pacificpuddlejump/>

1.3.3 Professional Weather Routing

Generally, the Marquesas – Tuamotus – Tahiti runs are not too difficult, but just to add some info for those of you who worry about weather for the Pacific crossing.

One of the most-mentioned names in the South Pacific when talking about the weather is **Bob McDavitt**. Professional forecasts can be obtained from Bob McDavitt. Email him for detail at bob.mcdavitt – at - metsservice.com.

Soggy Paws used a USA-based weather router named **Ken McKinley at Locus Weather** for the Easter Island to Pitcairn and Gambiers legs of their trip. Ken did a good job for them. Email Ken at locuswx – at - midcoast.com.

There is also a pretty good amateur weather router operating out of Panama, who is useful for the weather information leaving the Central American coast, but his net on 12Mhz SSB in the middle of the day in French Polynesia is not readable from the Marquesas and west. His name is **Karsten Staffeldt**.

Karsten is a Danish sailor and long-time resident of Panama who has a keen interest in the weather systems of this area and, just like Herb Hilgenberg (SOUTHBOUND II), offers routing advice, both by voice and email to yachts making this run. This is especially helpful because one of the unique characteristics of this far-eastern section of

the ITCZ is its tendency to move north or south very quickly, by up to 120 NM in a single day. Having a savvy fellow ashore who consults a wide mix of NOAA, satellite and other real-time weather sources (including ship & other boat reports), and who can provide ITCZ and wind forecast updates daily, is a wonderful service. And note: You don't even need a SSB radio aboard to take advantage of this, provided you have an Iridium or other sat-comm system that picks up email. For a full vita on Karsten, his service (which is without charge) and to read his thoughts on this passage, I encourage you to email him karstenpanama - at – hotmail.com

1.4 Obtaining Supplies

1.4.1 Money

The normal currency in French Polynesia is the French Polynesia Franc, usually abbreviated CFP. In June 2010, the exchange rate was 85-90 CFP per US dollar, so a 500-CFP coin is about \$5.50 USD.

There are ATM's in the Marquesas in these locations:

- Taiohae, on Nuka Hiva
- Atuona, on Hiva Oa

Further down the line, in the Tuamotus, ATM's are almost non-existent, and prices are high. Though in some places in the Tuamotus, you can change Euros or US Dollars into CFP in the Post Office (Rikitea in the Gambiers, Fakarava in the Tuamotus) or at a major grocery store (Makemo in the Tuamotus). Some, but not all, bigger establishments will take U.S. cash, but usually not at as favorable exchange rate.

I would advise trying to leave the Marquesas with plenty of CFP.

1.4.2 Diesel and Gasoline

There is a fuel dock in Taiohae, on Nuka Hiva, where you can go alongside and take on fuel. However, the bay is roly and the dock is concrete. Since we only needed 40 gallons, we opted to take our dinghy instead, and use jugs.

We have also been told by s/v Moondance that in 2011, the Yacht Services people located at the dinghy dock area will deliver the fuel to your boat in jerry cans and handle the duty free paperwork for a \$35 fee. Depending on how much fuel you need, this could be a better option instead of taking the boat over to the wharf.

Since we used an agent, we were able to get a duty free fuel paper from our agent and use it at this gas station (you also need to show your clearance paper and your boat documentation). This cut the cost of fuel from near \$6/gallon to \$3.40/gallon, a substantial savings, and one which would justify the cost of an agent, if you needed much fuel.

It is our understanding that that duty free fuel paper is good for 6 months, and can be re-used at other stations in Tahiti and the Societies. But it won't be much help in the

Tuamotus, where most fuel is obtained directly from a visiting ship, who do not recognize the duty free fuel paperwork.

1.4.3 Propane

It IS possible to get US tanks filled in Taiohae, in Nuka Hiva, at Yacht Services. But the discussion below is useful for anyone making a Pacific crossing or cruising out of the way places. There are no propane refill places in the Tuamotus (though you can buy gas bottles and gravity fill your own tank, with the equipment below).

Propane fill fittings are non-standard around the world, and French Polynesia is no exception. In addition, throughout the islands, everyone just exchanges propane tanks. Most of the filling goes on back in Tahiti. So it is a bit difficult to get US propane tanks refilled.

Note: There is a GREAT discussion on propane issues for Americans cruising with propane in foreign countries on s/v Whoosh's web page:

<http://www.svsarah.com/Whoosh/LPG%20in%20Europe.htm>

The best option is to arrive in French Polynesia with a 'gravity fill' setup as described on Whoosh's site... basically the fitting end for your tank and 5-6' length of hose. Then go to a local hardware store and buy the French propane fitting. Then you can 'rent' a local tank, and gravity fill from the local tank to your tank. This method works pretty well—hoist the local tank upside down in your rigging, or on your dinghy davit, and place your tank below it. Be patient and eventually your tank will be mostly full.

Here is the info I found on the internet about the 'gravity fill' technique:

1. Always wear gloves, as the propane that comes out of a tank it is very cold and can freeze your skin.
2. Connect the tank to be filled with the fuel source.
3. Open the bleed valve of the tank to be filled, the main tank valve and the fuel source valve.
4. As soon as liquid propane starts to spurt from the bleed valve, close the fuel source, the main tank valve and the bleed valve.
5. Disconnect the fueling line as described above.

The 'full' tank must be inverted and placed above the empty tank so liquid, not gaseous propane will flow. The connectors and hoses must be purged of air before connection to the tanks. Internal pressure should be released on the empty tank, then the full tank's pressure plus gravity will transfer liquid propane to the empty tank. It is not possible, without a special pump or a vapor relief valve on the tank being filled, to totally refill the empty tank. It is dangerous to overfill a tank - they should be filled only 75% to allow for the liquid to expand if heated.

The 'propane' in French Polynesia is not propane, but butane. It burns a little cooler than propane, but most stoves work OK on it.

Supposedly it is possible to get fills in Tahiti, but we heard from boats in Papeete that unless your propane tank is less than 10 years old, they will not fill it, even if it has been recently 're-certified'. (Later, I heard this was not true). Again, the gravity fill arrangement gets you by this problem.

1.4.4 Groceries

You will find very little in the way of fruits and vegetables in the Tuamotus. Make sure you leave the Marquesas with a good supply.

We understand that Papeete has wonderful grocery stores at not too outrageous prices.

There was a small store in Hanavave, which had staples, and frozen meat. Though the shelves and freezer was pretty empty until the Ara Nui 3 got there. You will need Polynesian Francs, though.

There are good stores at Atuona (Hiva Oa), Taiohae (Nuka Hiva), and Hakahau (Ua Pou). All are better after the Ara Nui has been there. The Ara Nui 3 is a combination cruise ship and freighter, and visits the islands about every 3 weeks.

1.4.5 Water

There is usually a water spigot near the dinghy dock in every bay with a dock. But the water is not always drinkable—ask the locals before you put it in your tank. The water at Taiohae is considered 'non-potable'. You can fill jugs in Daniels Bay, 5 miles west of Taiohae.

1.4.6 Trading

You can do some trading, but you'll have better luck in the smaller villages. There was a guy in Taiohae who wanted to trade a carved boar tusk necklace for a bottle of whiskey, but that was the only trading I found in the 'big city'.

At Fatu Hiva and Tahuata, trading was more prevalent. Booze is good for trading, as is rope (I got three tiki for 100 ft of 9/16" double braid at Fatu Hiva).

Be careful trading booze as the cops may not react well, either they want some too or they don't want you trading it into their village. The locals are good at trading, so don't expect any super bargains. They know how much you spent on that bottle of rum in Panama and will expect a reasonable exchange.

One good commodity for trading—though somewhat troublesome to carry around—are bullets that the locals use for hunting. We had requests for 22 shells and 12 gauge shotgun shells, both of which are highly regulated in French Polynesia, but which the locals use for hunting wild goats and pigs.

It's best to just take what you have to trade with and see what they will give. They aren't trying to steal from you, but they aren't going to give their stuff away either. We always give some little thing in exchange for fruit too. We've never paid cash for pamplemousse, limes, or bananas.

1.5 Communications

1.5.1 Radio Nets

With most English-speaking boats limited to 3 months in French Polynesia, the English SSB nets that are established never seem to perpetuate into the following year. What seems to work well is to organize a net in the Marquesas on 8Mhz as boats get ready to leave the Marquesas. In 2010, the net was on 8164 at 1730UTC (8am Marquesan time).

Understand when organizing that the Marquesas is on a weird time zone (-9.5 UTC), ½ hour before the Tuamotus and Tahiti, which are on -10UTC.

In the Marquesas, on 8Mhz, we could hear most boats within the Marquesas and the Tuamotus pretty well. Boats in the Societies were pretty hard to copy on most days.

Though we have no specific knowledge of them, there is probably a French net and probably a German net operating on other frequencies. If you speak French, the French net would probably be the best source of information, because the French boats are more 'plugged in' and can stay longer in French Polynesia than most English-speaking boats.

If you're a ham, for longer passages, we always checked in with the Pacific Seafarer's Net. This is also a good frequency to have saved in case of emergency—the Hams on the PacSea net will move heaven and earth to help any boat with a true emergency—ham operator or not. Even when there is no net going on this frequency, there are often hams monitoring the frequency for emergency traffic.

The Pacsea net operates on 14,300Khz USB at 0300 UTC. They start with a 'warmup session' at 0300, where you can call in and chat, and maybe hook up with someone who will make a phone call to the US for you. They start calling boats on the roll call at 0330, and when they finish (30-60 minutes later), they call for boats getting ready to go on passage to get on the list for tomorrow's net.

1.5.2 Telephones & Cell Phones

We did not find a town that did not have telephone access. Even tiny towns had at least one phone booth at the Post Office/Mairie (Town Hall). Buy telephone minutes as prepaid cards in the post office, and you can call world-wide.

The cellular operator in French Polynesia is called 'Vini'. Cell phone access is possible in the major towns in the Marquesas and within 5-10 miles of most towns in the Tuamotus, but getting a sim card is difficult. If you REALLY want to be able to call on your cell phone, either get international roaming on your home cell sim, or buy a French Polynesia 'Vini' prepaid sim card from a supplier in the U.S. before you leave (it costs 2-3 times what it would cost 'in country', but you arrive with cell phone access and 'activated' with minutes in hand).

You must also have a cell phone that can operate on the European frequencies (or a tri or quad band phone, like the higher end Motorola's).

There were no cell phone sim cards available in the Gambiers while we were there (we asked weekly at the Post Office). We were finally able to buy a cell phone sim card (from 'Vini') at the post office in N Fakarava. However, when our friends went to buy one the next day, they were out, and were not re-stocked when we checked back a month later. I'm sure Tahiti has Vini chips for sale.

My cell phone has shown Edge access in every place we had good signals, but I haven't tried using my cell phone for data in French Poly.

Places we KNOW had cell phone access in the Marquesas:

- Fatu Hiva, both Omoa and Hana Vave;
- Hiva Oa, in Atuona;
- Tahuata in the 2 bays with towns
- Ua Pou, in Hakahau
- Nuku Hiva: Taiohae, Haaupu, Anaho (but NOT Daniels)

1.5.3 Internet Access

Internet access is possible in some locations. The following are the ones we KNOW had internet access in 2010:

Nuku Hiva – Taioahae

Hiva Oa - Atuona

Mana net (www.manaspot.pf) is usually co-located with the Post Office or a government office, but may also be supported by a local Pension (small guesthouse). Check the manaspot website for the latest info on locations. You can either buy access cards in the Post Office, or sign on online with a credit card. If you buy larger blocks of time, the price is a reasonable \$2-\$3 USD per hour. The time is usable at any Mananet location throughout French Polynesia. The Marquesan Mana locations listed on the manaspot website as of spring 2010 were:

Nuku Hiva – Taioahae (usable only near the Post Office, not in anchorage)

Hiva Oa – Atuona

Ua Pou – Hakahau

Manaspot is also available in the bigger towns in the Tuamotus. Note that boats reported little evidence of Manaspot once they left Tahiti—mostly because Mana is in the towns, not out in the anchorages, so plan accordingly.

laoranet (www.laoranet.com) is privately operated by a yachting-affiliated person in Tahiti. They usually have a better wifi signal, but not necessarily a faster internet connection. You can sign up dynamically at any laoranet hotspot using Paypal. Buying an hour at time is expensive. If you buy in blocks of 100 hours, the cost is only about \$2 USD per hour, and the time can be used all the way through French Polynesia. laoranet also has an option to sell blocks of 'bits', which one cruiser told me was advantageous on really slow connections. laoranet's locations in the Marquesas are:

Nuku Hiva – Taioahae
Hiva Oa – Atuona

Hotspot WDG was also found in the harbor in Taioahae. You can purchase minutes online from the initial screen (start up your browser) using a credit card.

In some locations you might find a computer you can use (I don't know if it costs to use it) at the post office. But if you really want internet access, bring your own laptop with a good wifi card.

Be forewarned that ALL internet in French Polynesia is slow. Add 20 cruising yachts who haven't had internet in a month, and the slow internet gets slower. Be kind to your neighbors and turn off Windows Updates, and automatic download of large Podcasts while you are on slow/remote internet connections. And do not count on being able to use Skype or 'streaming' broadcasts.

1.6 Diving

There is a dive shop on the harbor near Yacht Services in Taioahae. We did not talk to them. But most bays in the Marquesas are not that clear due to run-off. Some people have talked about diving from Anaho—in the outer part of the bay where the water is clearer. The western side of Nuka Hiva is very dry, and looked like the water was much clearer in general than the rest of Nuka Hiva.

1.7 Haulout, Storage, and Repair Facilities

As far as I know, there is no haulout available in the Marquesas. Downwind, haulout is available in the Tuamotus, in Apataki, and in the Societies, in Tahiti, and in Raiatea.

1.8 Cruising Sources

We are indebted to the people and organizations below for documenting their experiences and sharing them with us. We hope they don't mind that we've gathered their comments into this document to share with other cruisers who don't have internet

A few details about the boats are included, where we know them, so you can assess what 'a foot under the keel' means, for example.

Where it's important, we've annotated the contributions. But every section is a mix of several sources.

1.8.1 Tackless II (2005)

T2 is a 44' CSY center cockpit cruiser (5.5' draft). They first came into French Polynesia in 2005, wintered over in Raiatea, and continued west in 2006.

<http://www.thetwocaptains.com/logbook/frenchpolynesia.htm>

1.8.2 Mata'irea (2007)

<http://matairea.blogspot.com>

1.8.3 Iron Bark (2007)

<http://anniehill.blogspot.com/>

1.8.4 Migration (2008-2009)

Migration is a trimaran with a beam of 25' and 4'9" draft. They entered French Polynesia from the southeast in 2008, and traveled NW toward Tahiti. They then went back to the northern Tuamotus enroute to the Marquesas from Papeete in 2009.

Most of their comments (and most of the Google Earth shots) in this booklet come from Bruce's website. Bruce has also contributed a few comments via the PPJ Yahoo Group.

<http://brucebalan.com/migrations>

Migrations 11 covers their visit to the Marquesas in 2009.

1.8.5 Mr John VI (2008)

These comments came from a PDF file floating around on the web called 'Mr John's guide to French Polynesia'. It seems to be a compendium of his own experience in 1987 and revisiting in 2008, and shared experiences from other yachts.

1.8.6 Slapdash (2008)

Slapdash is a smallish catamaran crewed by a youngish couple on a fast trip around the world. Their log is great reading. <http://www.theslapdash.com>

1.8.7 Honeymoon (2009)

From a report they sent to Noonsite.com. They have a Lagoon 380 catamaran(?). Blog:

<http://www.sailblogs.com/member/honeymoon/>

1.8.8 Soggy Paws (2010)

Soggy Paws was in the Gambiers for the month of April, 2010, and then spent May – August in the Tuamotus, and late August and September in the Marquesas.

Soggy Paws is a CSY 44, a 44 foot monohull with a 5.5' draft.

Soggy Paws' blog is here: <http://soggypaws2010.blogspot.com>

1.8.9 Nakia (2009, 2010)

Nakia is a Hans Christain 33, drawing about 6 feet. They first visited the Marquesas in summer 2009, spent the winter in Hawaii, and came back to Marquesas in the spring of 2010.

Nakia's blog is here: <http://svnakia.blogspot.com>

1.8.10 Pacific Puddle Jump Yahoo Group

This is a 'group' on Yahoo where the people gathering in South and Central America meet to share information about crossing the big puddle. Fortunately, many previous

years' jumpers come back and share their information with the newbies. A good source of information, but not very organized, and full of bloat from people who ask the same questions over and over again, without doing any research of their own.

Be sure to check out the Files and Links section—it is full of very good information.

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/pacificpuddlejump/>

You must be a member to read or post anything on this site, but if you are getting ready for a Pacific crossing, it is well worth a few minutes to sign up for Yahoo and then sign up for this group.

1.8.11 Noonsite

Originally started by Jimmy Cornell, this site is a great repository of information for all those out-of-the-way places.

<http://www.noonsite.com>

1.8.12 Seven Seas Cruising Association

The SSCA is a world-wide organization for cruisers whose primary function is to exchange information about cruising destinations. They have a monthly publication that is mostly letters from cruisers about the areas they are cruising. They also have a good website and a well-attended bulletin board. Membership is reasonable, and the monthly publication is available electronically every month. Indexed back issues are also available electronically.

<http://www.ssc.org>

1.9 Printed Sources

We are consciously NOT duplicating any printed, copyrighted information here. It takes a lot of effort AND money to publish a cruising guide, and we firmly believe that if it is still in print, you should BUY it, not steal it (in electronic form).

The best printed cruising guide for this area is Exploring the Marquesas by Joe Russell. Charlie's Charts also has pretty good coverage of the Marquesas.

1.9.1 Charlie's Charts of Polynesia - Charles and Margo Wood

Charlie's Charts of Polynesia: Charles and Margo Wood, 5th ed 2005

1.9.2 Exploring the Marquesas Islands – Joe Russell

Exploring the Marquesas, Joe Russell, 2000, Fine Edge Productions

This is a cruising guide for the Marquesas Islands, seems an excellent resource with sketch charts that show where the major hikes are, etc.

1.9.3 South Pacific Anchorages – Warwick Clay

South Pacific Anchorages, Warwick Clay, 2nd Edition, 2001, pages 22-33

1.9.4 Guide to Navigation and Tourism in French Polynesia (French)

Guide to Navigation and Tourism in French Polynesia, Patrick Bonnette & Emmanuel Deschamps, 2001 This book provides the best coverage for some atolls, but is out of print and is becoming quite expensive to purchase if you can find it (in the \$200 range).

1.9.5 The Pacific Crossing Guide – RCC Pilotage Foundation

The Pacific Crossing Guide, published by the Royal Cruising Club Pilotage Foundation in association with the Ocean Cruising Club. Originally edited by Michael Pocock, and Revised by Ros Hogbin. We have the 2nd Edition published in 2003.

1.9.6 Landfalls of Paradise – Earl Hinz

Landfalls of Paradise, Earl Hinz, 4th Edition, 1999, University of Hawaii Press.

1.9.7 Yachtsmen’s Guide to French Polynesia 2009 (PDF)

This is a 40-page PDF file downloadable from the French Polynesia Tourism Bureau.

<http://www.portdepapeete.pf/informations/guideYachts.php>

It is available in both French and English.

It includes a lot of useful information about all of French Polynesia—clearance information, etc. It includes a nice 2-page map of FP, and shows where fuel is available. Also has advertisement from marine-related businesses that can be useful.

2 Inter-Island Passage Reports

2.1 *Tahuata to Hane Bay, Ua Huka (early July)*

Mata'irea: We set out this morning for a 20 mile trip to a bay on the North coast of Hiva Oa with extensive ruins, including the largest tiki left in the islands; but, when we came around the North-west corner of the island, we ran into wind directly on our nose, and a steep sea. So we decided that we didn't need to see the big tiki, and veered off for Ua Huka.

Intending to take the prudent course, and slow our boat speed down so that we would arrive the following morning, we didn't put up the main. But who were we kidding, by 11pm it was clear that as long as the nearly-full moon wasn't obscured by a cloud, and we could see our way into the harbor, we were going to drop anchor that night. We should have just put up the main and gotten in earlier. As it was, we had plenty of moonlight to see our way in at 0230, but the buoy at the mouth of the bay that was supposed to have a light on it was dark. "Turn to port!" I shouted as we skimmed past it. We seem to be fatally attracted to buoys, whether it is daylight or midnight. Our anchor wouldn't take a good bite into the bottom, so Sten set the chart plotter's anchor alarm function before bedding down in the cockpit to keep anchor watch. This morning, still not comfortable with our anchor set, with a heavy swell rolling into the bay, we left right after breakfast to see if any of the other bays appealed to us.

2.2 *Tahuata to Fatu Hiva*

Tackless II: With our rig repaired and our energy replenished, the Two Captains poked our noses back out from the quiet bays of Tahuata to make the 40-mile windward sail southeast to the island of Fatu Hiva . Few sailors really like to sail to windward, so many cruisers arriving from 'across the pond' sneak in a stop at Fatu Hiva before clearing in at Hiva Oa, because it is the nautically logical thing to do.

Depending on his mood, the local gendarme will let cruisers stop over in Fatu Hiva for a night or two. Unfortunately for them, that is really too short a time, especially since they arrive pooped.

For those who stick to the rules and check in first, this means you either sail backwards to Fatu Hiva or you give it a miss. Even though we heard some hairy tales from friends who'd bashed their way back in the preceding weeks, the Two Captains did not want to miss it. It is described as one of the most beautiful and remote of all islands. We were especially primed by having read Thor Heyerdahl's book *Fatu Hiva* , an account of his back-to-nature living experiment on the island in the 1920s.

Half-prepared to motor the whole way, we found ourselves blessed with 12 knots of wind out of the ENE, perfect conditions for a rousing six-hour close reach. After all the days of restricted sailing on the passage, this terrific sail was a great reward for our hard won repairs!

2.3 *Tahuata to Ua Pou*

Tackless II: To make the twelve-hour sail from the Southern Marquesas to Ua Pou, the closest island in the northern Marquesas, the Two Captains raised Tackless's anchor just after midnight for the 65 mile sail. The early hours of the trip, still in the lee of Hiva Oa, were windless, so we were forced to motor. By four a.m, however, our wind began to fill and we enjoyed yet another fine sail with the wind on the beam. Couple the smooth ride with a stunning sunrise and we were in a much uplifted mood as we approached the island of Ua Pou.

Hiva Oa (Airport)

2.4 Baie Tahauku - Atuona

Baie Tahauku is the main anchorage at Hiva Oa, at the town of Atuona. It is nice, but is not as nice as the other islands.

Anchoring

Make sure you anchor behind the two yellow crosses (closer to shore) or they will make you move when the supply ship comes in. The walk to town from the main anchorage is about an hour unless you have someone drop you by dinghy at the rarely used stairway on the northwest side of the anchorage, which saves you 30 minutes each way.

The anchorage itself was not all that wonderful – the water was murky/muddy and there was barely enough space for us to anchor. However, we strongly recommend the pizza from the restaurant closest to the anchorage – good stuff!

Officialdom

Check in with the *entire* crew at the Gendarmerie during weekdays before 11am. Check in is very easy. Just one form to fill out.

Stores

- Close to the Gendarmerie, across from the Gaugin museum is 1 store.
- Continue a little further into town (from the port) and past the village green and bank, you will find a cluster of 3 stores. One of them has the bakery in the back. The locals seem to favor these stores. They have a larger selection too.

Fuel: There is a fuel dispensary on the dock. However, there are limitations on bringing boats alongside. Refueling must then be done by jerry cans. Fuel should be available tax free here, on presentation of the Tax Free Fuel Permit (contact your agent).

ATMs: The post office and the bank have an ATM/Cashpoint machine. They do run out of money from time to time. (The rate currently (April 2009) is about 85 CFP to the US dollar). If you request 10,000 CFP, you may get it in one 10,000 bill (about \$110 US). But, unlike Central America, it is no problem changing this bill at any store.

Fresh Fruits and Veggies

- Each morning there is a lady with a pickup truck in the parking lot across from the bank/village green. She sells vegetables and eggs that are high quality and cheaper than what is found in the stores.
- When walking from the port into town, one has to walk around the bay in which the boats are anchored. At the head of the bay one turns left to go to town, right to go to the airport. If you walk straight ahead you enter a farmer's yard that sells Pampelmousse directly from the trees cheaper than available in the stores.

Trash: Garbage should be reduced as much as possible and then deposited on the fuel dock in the bins provided.

Airport: There is an airport on Hiva Oa which has flights 4 times a week to/from Tahiti. Flight duration is 3h 45m. Air Tahiti is the carrier, their office is located at the western end of Atuona, near the bank. Open M-F 0800-1200 & 1330-1630.

Hitch hiking: It is very easy to hitch hike into town and back. However... the town closes down from about 12:30 until 14:30. That includes the gas station at the port, which generates the traffic to and from the port. If you plan to hitch hike rather than walk avoid these hours.

Tour of the Island

(2009) Renting a 4x4 costs about \$145/day. Mary-Jo (Mobile: +689 20.07.32, Home: +689 92.73.43) does a great of the island for about \$200. We felt that having a guide, and not needing to drive the steep slopes and cliff edges was well worth it. Her vehicle can seat about 9 people (6-7 more comfortably). She can either bring baguettes and you bring the spreads, or she can book a restaurant for lunch. She speaks some English, but is particularly good at helping you dust off your rusty French.

(s/v Nakia 2009):

We made the obligatory visit to the Gauguin and Brel grave sites in the local cemetery, but balked at the 600 CFP per person charge to enter the Gauguin exhibit at the Cultural Center (plus another 500 CFP to see the Brel exhibit) in town. Instead we spent our francs on brie, baguettes, beignets, and croissants and had a picnic lunch in the big square (tohua). We walked back to the short-cut trail down to the beach where we'd left the dinghy this time, making the walk into town half as long as it is to leave from the wharf.

We agreed to share a half day rental of a four-wheel drive Suzuki Samurai (\$80 USD) with another boat to visit the lipona ti'i (tiki) site at Puamau, a two hour road trip.

Most of the road is unpaved switchbacks with several ongoing improvement projects (including a snazzy European style cement roundabout). It was an E ticket ride with lots of stops for pictures, and we really enjoyed the open air experience of the Samurai. With the top off the back seat I could look up at the amazing trees and smell the change from tropical jungle to pine forest as we gained altitude. By 2 PM when we arrived in Puamau the magasin was closed, but four ladies were playing cards at the snack shop where we stopped for a Coke and to ask directions. We paid our 300 CFP per person entrance fee and continued on up the road to the site.

This was our first visit to an archeological site and it's sure to have spoiled us for others since, according to our Lonely Planet guide, this is one of the finest to be found "in the Marquesas, if not all of French Polynesia." It was multi-levels of grass and stone with a grouping of the five most important figures on the top platforms. The landscaping surrounding the site and in between the levels was lovely and we took many pictures. Puamau also boasts a big sandy beach and is another charming village, all the more so for being in such a remote location.

We made it back to Atuona with time to spare on the car rental and decided to take the turn into the Tehueto Petroglyph site. This turned out to be an overgrown jungle version

of a "road" including muddy spots and green plants brushing the sides of the car. After passing a house with a barking dog, we came to a fork in the road and took the direction with the most recent tire tracks visible (left), but finally called it quits before having to cross some seriously deep water. The papaya trees along the way were loaded with fruit but we resisted temptation, and headed back out to the paved road to get home before sunset.

Water

There are taps at the dinghy landings/ramps in port. The water isn't potable, but usable for laundry etc.

Wifi:

- iaoranet is expensive and people report it often doesn't work yet gobbles up time (e.g. Euro 40/day!). Without paying, you can use this connection to pick up weather info (but you do have to register).

- There is a free open Wifi station (Belkin 45G). With good equipment one has a slow, but workable connection.

Arrival (s/v Tackless II – April 2004) Dawn found us right at our waypoint about four miles off the eastern cape of Hiva Oa island. Rain showers washed across the waves and the steep cliffs, and sunlight revealed lush greenery and made rainbows.

The anchorage for Atuona is tucked up in a small bay behind a man-made break-water, but this does not make it a calm refuge. We dropped our main, made a tight turn amongst the packed boats and dropped anchors bow and aft to hold us lined up cheek by jowl with the boats already here.

A 2-3 foot swell continued to roll through the bay smashing with a boom and fountains of spray onto the rocks less the 100 feet of our starboard beam! All the boats anchored here jounce and roll, but everybody works together to shoehorn the new guys in. But compared to some of our nights underway this is positively calm. And it is breathtakingly beautiful. Twists and spires of green mountains thrust up into the clouds and the air is scented with tropical flowers. Among the bouncing yachts, muscular Marquesan men paddle brightly painted outrigger canoes back and forth going nowhere in particular that I can see. We're DEFINITELY not in Mexico anymore, Toto.

There is actually quite a bit to see and do in the town of Atuona . The painter Paul Gauguin, whose art practically defines Polynesia for many, lived here, and there is a museum dedicated to him. Both he and the famous singer Jacques Brel are buried in the cemetery on a hill above the bay, There is an all-day tour available across Hiva Oa to the village of Paumau on the north coast where there is an extensive archaeological site with stone terraces, petroglyphs and the world's largest tiki. Thanks to the weather, however, we saw none of these! When we asked about the tour, we were told the roads were dangerous in the rain. Just as well. It was all we could do to get our arrival paperwork taken care of over the course of the next two days given that the town is about a mile and a half away over the hill and that everything closes down from 11:30-2:00.

We did have a nice lunch at the Snack Kaupe in Atuona, and we were quite surprised at the well-stocked shelves in the town's four or five groceries. There were lots of interesting canned goods and a whole shelf of canned patés! Prices were not as outrageous as we'd been led to expect, except of course for such important items to the 2Cs as beer and broccoli! Indeed, vegetables of any kind were very rare and priced accordingly, while fruit is so abundant as to be completely ignored, a shopping handicap for those without contacts. There was a man who sold fruit fairly near the anchorage, but the rain had so swollen the stream we'd have to cross to get to him that somehow we never made the stop. On the other hand, baguettes are everywhere (before 11am) as well as delectable pastries like croissants, pan chocolate and, our favorite, the turnovers stuffed with a filling of red bananas

3 FATU HIVA

Fatu Hiva is the southernmost of the Marquesas. Approximately 700 people live on the island. It isn't an official port of entry, but the local gendarme looks the other way. The island doesn't get many tourists, so cruising boats are most welcome. We bring rum, wine, tobacco and bullets to trade for crafts, such as tikis or tapa cloth, which is produced by pounding the bark of mulberry, breadfruit and banyan trees. Tapa used to be made throughout Polynesia, but Fatu Hiva is the only place in French Polynesia where it is still being made.

3.1 Hanavave / Bay of Virgins

The first and most important thing we can share is that Fatu Hiva should be an absolute MUST STOP for all cruisers visiting the Marquesas. The anchorage is so beautiful it immediately made it into our top three anchorages of all time. The island itself is beautiful as you approach, but the rock structures around town are mind-boggling.

You can either back track there after checking in (as we did), or it seems you can actually stop there first.

(From another boater: We got booted out of paradise yesterday. When we went in to rinse some laundry at the faucet by the boat ramp, the local cop was at the dock. He immediately asked for our passports and when we couldn't produce them (they were on board) he asked if we'd arrived directly from California or if we'd been to Atuona.

We said we'd come from the Galapagos and that we had not been to Atuona, but that we have visas which we received in Panama. He said arriving in Fatu Hiva without going first to Atuona a was 'no good' and that we needed to leave, now.

We met several boats there that made Fatu Hiva their first port of call in French Polynesia and they had no problems what so ever. There are stories of boats being fined \$200, but I expect this to be the case if a French Coast Guard boat happens to come into port. Otherwise the local police officer seemed very lackadaisical about customs. Fly your Q flag and the French flag and seek out the local police officer who will record your boat name, crew names and passport numbers by hand in a little book. It's that easy. He may ask you to leave right away, but trust me when I say it is worth the risk. It's a day sail to Hiva Oa afterward.

There is also an amazing waterfall you can hike to with a nice cool pool to swim in below the falls (but bring bug spray). Don't expect much for services though, there is only one shop and a telephone booth, and that's about all. We had dinner at Katty's house one night for 1,700 CFP (about \$17 dollars each) and that was also an experience, but more for the environment and not the food. Fresh bread is delivered to the town by truck from another village, so you will be lucky if you catch them. Tikis and Tapa cloth all seems to be sold at Tahiti cruise ship prices as this is where they ship the items they make (the prices were outrageous).

Lastly, the wind does shift around in the anchorage, so give yourself plenty of room and make sure your anchor is hooked. It's sand in the deeper sections of 40 feet+, and big rocks when you get closer to shore in the 30 foot section (we wrapped our chain on a rock and nearly hit another boat when the wind shifted and another boat dragged their anchor and drifted out to sea before realizing anything had happened).

There is no internet anywhere on the island of Fatu Hiva.

s/v Soggy Paws August 2010: We anchored in the Baie de Vierges (Hanavave) at 10-27.909S 138-40.042W, in 25', with (it seems) good holding. But no matter how calm it is here when you arrive, you MUST make sure your anchor is well set, as accelerated gusts funnel through the valley and into the anchorage. Though the wind 'outside' was only 20-25 knots, we clocked gusts as high as 60 knots in the anchorage at Hanavave.

s/v Nakia 2009: We spent a couple of hours watching a pair of humpback whales right in the anchorage Thursday morning. At first we thought there was just one big whale which would spout 3-4 times before submerging without fluking. But then Big Momma emerged and we realized that the big whale must be an older calf because mom was huge. She only did a couple of spouts to every two spouting periods of the smaller whale so we didn't get to see as much of her, but she was quite impressive. No one was up yet on the other two boats to see when the calf swam right down the side of Nakia but we were shocked at the sight of the white underside of the whale gliding by beneath the surface of the water! At this point John decided you only live once and grabbed his snorkeling gear to get in the water. He was prudent enough to stay by Nakia and not try to swim out to them, and he was richly rewarded when both of them swam close enough behind Nakia for him to see them go by him. They exited the bay soon afterwards and we were thrilled to have had an opportunity for such an up close and personal experience.

Another boat gave us a call on the radio to say that the drums we heard on shore meant that a dance rehearsal was in progress and it would be worthwhile for us to go in and watch. So we dropped everything to go ashore with the camera for a wonderful treat. A group of men playing drums of various sizes accompanied (mostly young) men and women rehearsing traditional dances. Even as they laughed at their mistakes, it was thrilling for us to have this first glimpse of local culture being handed down to the next generation.

We returned to the boat to gather up our trade goods determined to "purchase" tapa and tikis. Our friends had told us that only there in Hana Vave would we be able to trade for handicrafts, because people in the larger villages everywhere else wanted cash.

I searched for Teresa, a woman who sold tapa to friends of ours during their visit. At the second "house with a big hedge" I found her and she invited me in to see her work. It was not the same high quality as the woman in Omoa, but Teresa was willing to exchange for it and we began the long process of deciding what it was worth. Unfortunately I don't have what most of the women seem to want which is perfume (full sized preferred), scented lotions, blue or green mascara, and lipstick (not gloss). She ended up choosing two DVDs (her teenage son had a say in those), one old lipstick, one new nail polish (dark blue), and two new tubes of Chapstick (strawberry and cherry flavored).

I have no idea what the actual price of the tapa was but I selected a medium sized turtle on a reddish brown cloth. I wasn't so much interested in the tapa as in the experience of trading for it, especially if we won't have many opportunities for this in other places. I hooked up with John who had made out like a bandit. He walked away with three carved wood tikis in exchange for some old rope. Again, I'm not sure what we'll do with them, but he had a great time making the trade.

A man stopped to ask us for help with his broken laptops. John took a look and found one that booted up with no video (after the daughter had sprayed it with WD-40) and another one that wouldn't respond at all. He reseated a couple of the cable connections of the first one but no luck. The man will have to take them to Papeete for further testing.

On our way back to the dinghy we arranged for a trade of pamplemousse for bonbons with two boys. While John went back to the boat to drop off the tikis and get some water I waited at the wharf for the boys to return with the fruit. When they finally came into view it looked like they were empty handed but they told me to follow them back to the church. I felt like I was connecting with my "dealer" when they pulled the bag of fruit out from behind a corner of the stone wall surrounding the church yard, and it was only then that I realized they had probably not picked these from trees belonging to their families, and that they didn't want to be seen bringing them to me in front of all the people who gathered by the water in the late afternoons to swim and hang out. They didn't recognize the M&Ms I gave them, but once they started eating them they gave me the universal thumbs up sign of approval.

We returned later to a house with wood carvings native to Tahuata. As we watched our friend pulling out his trade goods we realized that the pieces were way out of our "price" range unless we were willing to give up a large bottle of rum (what they all ask for first). Our friend ended up getting the best wood and bone carving for a large bottle of wine, a new pair of \$100 sunglasses, and a \$100 bill. We thought that was a pretty high price to pay, but then the artist wasn't really interested in the wine or the sunglasses in the first place.

The weather has been fabulous with sunny days and cool nights (74 F). After being at sea we don't notice the minimal swell in the anchorage at all, but the weather has also been especially calm after our first day which was very gusty.

Mata'irea (2007): Bay of Virgins is stunningly, spectacularly beautiful. Black lava rock at the shore gives way to palm trees, above which rocky spires thrust towards the clouds that eternally shroud this verdant isle. It is the most incredibly rugged place we've ever

seen. Legend has it that the original French name for the bay was Bay des Verges, which translates as Bay of the Phalli, a reference to the spires surround the bay. But the missionaries were offended by calling it the bay of dicks, so an "i" was slipped in, making it Bay des Vierges, or virgins. This isn't the only castration performed by the missionaries in the name of spreading Christianity. They were also offended by the phalluses on the stone tikis throughout the islands, and so broke them all off. The ancient Marquesan name for the bay is Hanavave, which means "strong surf bay." We hope it doesn't live up to this name while we are here.

My dreams of fresh baguettes were not to be fulfilled here. The only baguettes come from Tahiti on the cargo ship that comes once every 3 weeks.

Today we managed to motivate ourselves off the boat for a hike up to a waterfall. It was about 1.5 hours up and an hour back down. After three weeks of barely moving on the Pacific Crossing, I was completely done in by the end. The trail passed the ruins of a marae, or ceremonial site, way up in the hills. When there are only 150 people left in the village here, it is hard to imagine that once 80,000 people populated the half-dozen islands of the Marquesas.

The population in this village is very young. We see dozens of children and teenagers, but very few people over the age of 30. Diabetes is a major problem here.

I'm chagrined that cruisers seem to be continuing the destructive legacy of the early explorers who brought the diseases to these islands that were the major cause of their depopulation. The other night I watched as cruisers passed out candy to the children of the village under a sign offering education about the causes of diabetes. "Bon bon?" seems to have replaced "bon jour" in the vocabulary of the local children. Everywhere I go, I'm asked for candy, and failing that, they run through the litany: nail polish, lip gloss, pen, paper, crayon. But my personal favorite is being asked for rum by an 11 year old. When I asked if she wasn't a bit young, she claimed that it was for her papa. Riggghht. They've been told by their teachers not to beg, and their parents wish that they wouldn't, but they won't stop until we stop reinforcing the behavior.

The village seems to live on the citrus fruit that they grow in their yards, coconuts gathered from and goats hunted on the surrounding hills, and expensive imported canned goods. Bypassing the \$4 can of Pringles and the \$8 carton of eggs, I went for the \$1.75 can of condensed milk (for an upcoming key lime pie) and the \$1.25 box of flour. I'm glad that there isn't more to tempt me to spend money here - other than a few subsidized goods, the prices are so steep.

s/v Tackless II: We did partake of a traditional Marquesan dinner here, complete with pig roasted in the earth. One of one of the European boats had organized the affair and attending were about twenty-five cruisers including several families with kids and encompassing at least three languages--German, French and English.

The dinner was served on a long table under a tent in the front yard of one of the local houses. The lady of the house 'Tia' was a generous woman wearing a sport bra on top and a pareu wrapped around her hips. Huge bowls of poisson cru (raw fish in coconut milk), *fei* (a plantain-like banana) in coconut milk, chicken nuggets with wilted

watercress, shredded green papaya salad with fresh watercress, rice and smoky sprouted coconut (the only dish that was not a hit) reached from one end of the table to the other. In the dark, the pig was dug out of the ground from beneath the layers of hot coals where it had been baked in pieces. As soon pork was on the platters and the pit was abandoned all the local dogs were in it head first!

During the course of the meal, Tia would cluck over her guests, scoop more food onto your plate and wrap her arms around you to cut the tough meat with one of the few knives on the table. Later, someone put on some local music, and Tia gave us our first exposure to what Polynesian hips can do to the right tune. Latin meringue dancers haven't got anything on Tia. Nobody's got anything on Tia!

3.2 Omoa

The Omoa anchorage is not suitable for overnight. We visited with friends on another boat on a day-trip.

It only took half an hour to motor the three miles, and Etienne set the anchor in sand in nine meters of water. What wind there was came from the west into the bay and pushed the boat back into the swell rolling to the beach instead of holding it out more offshore. But after making sure the boat wasn't going to go anywhere, we took the dinghy to the brand new concrete landing behind a new breakwater at the opposite side of the bay from the old landing where the swell breaks on the steps. Then it was into town for a walk around.

Chantal and Etienne had heard of a restaurant in town so we went off in search of Pension Chez Lionel all the while stopping to chat with the locals. Lionel wasn't set up to serve food without prior arrangements but he sat us down with a bottle of water and had a long chat with Chantal.

On our way back to the boat Chantal hunted down the woman with the key to the museum so we could see their collection of wood carvings. I think I understood that the really valuable things are kept elsewhere but we saw some lovely pieces. People were working on the big grassy area between the museum and the bay preparing for a festival in December.

It had been a long day by now but as we were almost back to the wharf we heard a hammering sound and Chantal went to investigate with us tagging along behind her. At the back of a house a woman was beating bark to make tapa cloth. She had some already out drying and she brought out finished pieces for us to see. Starting at 5,000 CFP (about \$50) and more they were too expensive for us, and besides we didn't have any local currency yet. But Chantal found one she liked enough to buy, and we appreciated having the opportunity to see the work in progress.

We arrived back in Hana Vave in time for a sunset swim, exhausted but happy to have been able to see the much larger village at Omoa.

4 TAHUATA

The island of Tahuata is another stop we would recommend. It's only 10 miles from the anchorage at Hiva Oa and is a good day sail to the Bay Hanamoenoa, which has four finger inlets that you can pick to anchor in. We chose the inlet to the north of the main harbor and had it all to ourselves. White sand beach, 20 foot sand anchorage, great snorkeling (even saw a black tip shark). Great stop, but nothing ashore, just palm trees where we anchored.

s/v Nakia: We spent over three weeks in Tahuata last year and left to make sure we could visit Ua Pou. We should have skipped Ua Pou and stayed at Tahuata. *Most of the below info is from Nakia.*

s/v Nemesis: So far my favourite island in the Marquesas group has been Tahuata. It's a small island just south of Hiva Oa and it has everything going for it - beautiful anchorages, nice people and clear water. Over the past 12 days we have spent 5 nights in different anchorages on Tahuata, using it as a stop off point between Hiva Oa and Fatu Hiva. Each anchorage has been a little different - two of them postcard perfect - Hanamoenoa and one not charted - with white sandy beaches, palm trees and water so clear you can see the bottom in 25 feet of water and no one around but a few other yachts.. The other two - Motopu and Hanatefau - were more rugged, with villages built into the side of the mountain. We went and visited one of the local villages in Hanatefau and were mobbed by a bunch of cheeky local kids, life is good for them they were playing on the beach and handing us mangos they had picked from the trees. The amount of tropical fruit here is astounding, trees everywhere groaning with mangos, pawpaws, coconuts, bananas and Jeff's new favourite - pamplemousse.

The locals love to trade here, rather than buying and selling. Last night as we were spending our last night in Tahuata watching the sun go down and enjoying a cold beer we waved to a passing outrigger canoe with three locals in it. They still use the outrigger canoes and they move, they are sleek and fast, this one especially fast since it had an outboard motor. They came over for a chat and wanted to know if we would like some fresh lobster, they were on their way out to do some lobster collecting - yes please you don't have to ask us twice! For a bottle of rum or whiskey (which runs to \$80 a bottle here in the islands) they came back around 1am and delivered 5 medium sizes lobsters. They were doing a roaring trade having supplied 3 other boats in our anchorage and about 10 in the next anchorage along. We are looking forward to enjoying fresh lobster tonight with George and Jane from Venture, we are sailing around Hiva Oa to meet them as I type this.

4.1 Hana Moe Noa

White sand beach, clear water, nice sunset views over the open Pacific. Fruit on shore, but ask permission first. No services, just a copra drying shed on shore.

Nakia's Anchor Spot: 09-54.478S / 139-06.252

(s/v Nakia-2009): We've been enjoying our stay here at Hanamoenoa even though the weather has steadily deteriorated a bit. This anchorage is on the leeward side of the island with golden grass on the hills and much drier and warmer air. I woke the first night

to the scent of dry grasses instead of the lush foliage of Atuona. In fact when we entered the bay at Atuona at sunset last Friday there was a definite chill in the air, probably from the small river running down the valley into the bay. The warmth here makes for a nice change but our night time cabin temps don't get much below 78 F and we're up to around 84 F during the day. Our first day here was calm and clear but we've had successively cloudier and breezier days, culminating in brief, heavy showers and lots of gusty wind beginning at sunset last night with no sign of letting up this morning.

Which is disappointing because the snorkeling here is fabulous. We definitely need to get a new fish book because, other than a few old friends like the sergeant majors, Moorish idols, golden puffers, parrot fish, and black spiny urchins, everywhere we turn there is a fish we don't recognize. Not to mention all the different kinds of coral, sponges, and what I think must be a sea star that looks like a small throw pillow and comes in at least a couple of color variations. It could be a sponge, but you can just make out the five points on the pillow and the edges are smooth and even, not irregular like a sponge.

Everything is absolutely beautiful, even the duller colored fish. On two of our swims back to the boat from the reefs we've spotted an enormous stingray with maybe a four foot wing span hunkered down on the sandy bottom. We've snorkeled every day, both sides of the bay and it's better than anything we've ever seen. But with the windier and wetter weather the water clarity has dropped and we haven't had as much sunlight through the clouds to help cut through the murk. We're anchored over sand but it must not be very deep over the rock because the anchor hasn't completely buried itself. But even on a somewhat short scope (125' in 25' of water) to avoid scraping our chain on a nearby exposed rock we haven't budged an inch.

We took a long dinghy ride on Saturday to explore the nearby bays. There are a couple of nice blow holes but we didn't find any anchorage that we liked better than this one. We went as far as the village at Vaitahu to check out the landing possibilities there. The large swell makes the shore landing at the launch ramp in the middle of the bay look dicey. Over on the northern side of the bay the swell doesn't seem as extreme at the concrete wharf with steps carved into the side.

Bugs: I mentioned before that we haven't had any problems with bugs yet. It's true we haven't seen anything biting except for a few mosquitoes at the cascade in Fatu Hiva, and a lot of mosquitoes at the ti'i site in Hiva Oa. But everywhere we go we are investigated by some kind of large yellow/orange wasp. They occasionally fly into the cabin and are easily encouraged back outside without getting aggressive.

(July 2009) Other than glimpses of a few goats and even a horse on the ridge, we haven't seen anyone on shore. A small boat stopped to load the copra drying in the building above the beach (that's all it turned out to be), and the scent still lingers in the air as you walk by it. There are a few lime trees accessible but no pamplemousse or bananas.

Mata'irea Late June 2007: This place smells awesome! The hills surrounding this pretty little bay are covered with blooms. Ashore there is a coconut plantation, with lime trees, mango trees, and banana plants. We gathered up at least a hundred limes, a few coconuts and 4 mangoes during our few days here. There is too much swell for the

snorkeling to be very good - the visibility is greatly reduced by the churned up sand. And there are schools of nasty little jelly fish.

Tackless II May 2004: Hanamoenoa is a lovely, uninhabited, CALM anchorage on the west side of Île Tahuata. The hills embracing the anchorage are bright green, while at the head of the bay is a white sand beach, backed by waving coconut palms and lime trees. On the ridge above, wild horses are sometimes seen in silhouette. The guide books say this has been called one of the most beautiful anchorages in Polynesia ! I don't know about that?.excepting the mist shrouded peak above, it is actually a bit reminiscent of the Virgin Islands in the green season.

The water is warm, clear, blue and home to all sorts of differently-colored and patterned fish. Giant manta rays feed behind the boats every evening, and one morning we saw two four-foot yellowfin tuna chasing a shoal of silver fish only a boat length away! Now that the rain has finally cut itself back to one or two showers a day, it is truly a beautiful place.

4.2 Vaitehu

A nice little village with a couple small groceries. A good tattoo artist lives here as well as an excellent bone carver.

If you're here when the Aranui (the supply/cruise ship) comes in, make sure to go to church with the passengers. The Marquesans put on extra singers for the Aranui and it's pretty cool. The first magazin sells baguettes but get there early (like before 8 AM), or reserve in advance.

(s/v Nakia): We spent three nights anchored at Vaitahu, the largest village on Tahuata. It's nice to look at from the boat but the two potential dinghy landings pose their individual problems.

The concrete quay requires a stern anchor with a lot of rode and a long bow line to tie off to a creosote lamp post. (Clean looking water is available from two faucets on the quay.) Or there's a tiny bit of sandy beach where a stream runs into the center of the bay. If you have good dinghy wheels you can make it over some rocks and up the steep cement launch ramp there. Both landings are difficult if there's any swell running into the bay, and good timing is important. We used each method once and, though we didn't have any problems, there are easier places to visit.

The best part of our decision to leave the beautiful beach at Hanamoenoa for Vaitahu on Thursday was the surprising arrival of the Aranui 3 just before sunset. It's a combination cargo/cruise ship and puts the Galapagos cargo rust buckets to shame. Immediately after dropping anchor the two cranes on the foredeck went into action lowering flat boats with twin outboards to ferry cargo to the concrete quay. To our amazement the first item onto a boat was a brand new Toyota Hilux truck. When the barge got to the quay a front loader pressed its shovel down on the barge to hold it steady. A man got in the truck, we could see tail lights go on, and it inched forward out of it's open container. After a few swells went by one of the hard-hat crew shouted at the driver to go for it, and other shouts rose up from the crowd which had gathered on the quay to watch the proceedings (I counted 20 4-wheel drive vehicles which appeared above the quay after

the Aranui 3 set its anchor). The truck made it safely to shore and the proud new owner drove it away.

Next we saw a small sport fisher come around the point headed for the ship. It waited until a crane was free and then it hooked up four points of a chain hoist and was lifted up onto the foredeck of the ship! The rest of the evening's cargo was building materials which were unloaded by the front loader and set on the quay. On the ship itself we could see several well-dressed tourists taking photos from the upper balconies, but no one went ashore. The next morning the Aranui 3 was gone.

We went for a walk on shore to see if anyone wanted to do some trading. The only person who approached us was Jean, who was happy to walk us around the yards of his extended family to find some fruit. We really only wanted pamplemousse but he didn't have much that was ripe so he also gave us a couple each of green mangoes, green avocado, oranges, something that looks like a persimmon, bananas, and something that looks like a bright red, shiny little apple which tastes more like a pear. I found out that he is married with two daughters so I brought out my little bag of cosmetics which was all we'd happened to bring with us. He didn't want the little mirror, the mascara, or the nail polish, but he took all three of my sample perfumes (my last ones!), and ran back to his house to get us three drumstick and thigh hunks of frozen chicken (which were too big to be locally raised) and two heads of something like chard, even though we had been protesting well before then that he had already given us enough.

As we made our goodbyes he asked if we would be returning next year, and suggested that perhaps we might like to bring him a bottle of whiskey in exchange for his generosity.

We tried snorkeling the wall by the quay but it was a steep drop off to the deep bottom with not much of interest.

I wanted to leave on Sunday. Well it pays to stay flexible because what should reappear at dawn on Sunday but the Aranui 3! We immediately realized that this time the tourists would likely go ashore for services at the big Catholic church, and that tourists ashore would probably also mean handicrafts displayed for sale. So we kept a sharp eye on the ship's activity and when we saw people lining up on deck to board one of the landing barges at 0730 we threw on our church-going duds and jumped in the dinghy to hurry ashore. John made an expert landing on the beach and we hauled the dink up on the grass above the launch ramp. We blended pretty well into the crowd as they made their way to the church for services at 0800. As per any Catholic service there was an hour and 10 minutes of standing and sitting for both French and Marquesan prayers, readings, and sermon, interspersed with lovely singing by the predominantly female choir. The building itself is unique, built out of old ship's ballast stones with an open air wood ceiling. The rising sun back lit a large stained glass above the altar and I especially enjoyed the flower scented breezes and the sight of the cliffs and trees in the large gaps between the roof and the tops of the walls.

After the service we chatted with a New Zealand couple and a man from Idaho. They were loving the two-week cruise and said that although accommodations were basic, the food was fabulous, and they liked having a fixed itinerary where all shore excursions and

activities were included (although obviously the sport fishing expeditions were extra). The only drawback is that their visits to each island are brief and it didn't sound as if they'd had much opportunity for swimming or snorkeling. We followed them to the crafts display but we weren't much interested in what was mostly jewelry. The tourists had mentioned that they were headed to Hapatoni next and, since that's where we'd intended to go too, we hurried back to Nakia to sail two miles along the coast to the next small village.

Getting Fresh Water: (s/v Nakia) In Vaitehu we put 38 gallons of water into our tank, and loaded another 25 in jugs. We did it by taking a long hose to the quay from the dinghy. John stayed in the dinghy with the filter end of the hose filling the jugs, and I manned the water faucet and tried to hold the dinghy off the rough concrete wall with a stern line. There was a little surge but we managed to get that chore done without incident.

Tackless II May 2004: After a week in Hanamoenoa, we motored the few miles south to the village of Vaitahu, the largest of four villages on the island and there found our first, real Marquesan experience. So near in miles, Vaitahu was extremely different in appearance from Hanamoenoa. Instead of white sand, the shoreline was dark, with rocky, chocolate sands in front of the village and dark cliffs forming the sides. The water, too, was dark, thanks to a bottom that drops away sharply from the anchoring shelf. On all three sides, the terrain above was precipitous but green, grasses on the flanks, trees in the ravines. We saw goats scattered across the hillside, notched into crevices. Above all this the island's peak thrust up into ever-present cloud.

We were one of three boats in the anchorage. We all got ashore by taking T2's dinghy to the stone quay and anchoring it off bow and stern. From the quay it was an easy walk to the village center built on the small bit of flat land behind the beach. The town's centerpiece is its large, somewhat modern church, built in a hexagonal (octagonal? I didn't count) plan with river stones and wood with a lovely stained glass window of the Mary and the infant Jesus above.

As lovely as the church was, it wasn't what motivated us to come here. What actually motivated us to come initially was curiosity about its tattoo artist. The Marquesans were once known for their all-over body tattoos, although it (like cannibalism) died out under church repression. However (unlike cannibalism) tattoo artistry is experiencing a big comeback, probably thanks to its comeback in the western world. Almost all the men and even a lot of the women we've see in the Marquesas have some kind of tattoos. Most of the men's tattoos seem to follow the traditional designs, taking up great spaces on arms, back or legs, while a lot of the women have tattooed ornamentation just under their ears!

4.3 Hapatoni/Hana Tefau

Anchor at Hana Tefau in 50 ft, clear sand. There's no landing here, but you can dinghy . 5-.75 nm South to Hapatoni where you can land in the harbor. Excellent carvers here.

Nakia's Anchor Position: 09-57.744S 139-07.110W

The Aranui will spend Sunday morning (not every Sunday, just one every three weeks) in Vaitehu and then move over to Hapatoni. Follow them over after church and the villagers at Hapatoni will have all their crafts out on display.

You can walk the dirt roads here all the way back to Vaitehu and South over the ridge to great views of the weather side of the island. As you walk on the road above the Hanatefau anchorage there are a lot of banana plants which you can take after asking in Hapatoni (look for Rose, she lives in one of the first house on the right as you walk up from the harbor; her husband, Frederick, is a first class wood carver).

Nice snorkeling around the rock back in the anchorage with lots of cowries.

Hikes:

(s/v Nakia): Yesterday morning we took a three hour round trip hike on the rocky dirt road between Hapatoni and Vaitahu. We got as far as a ridge to the north of our anchorage from which we could see the descent down into the valley to Vaitahu. It was nice to get out and stretch our legs and we enjoyed looking at all the trees and plants, and a very few birds (including wild chickens). For this shore excursion we took the dinghy to the boulder beach and set it out with a stern anchor. We thought it was going to be a difficult landing but somehow everything went well and no one got soaked or hurt, which always makes for a successful trip.

(s/v Nakia): We took another hike, this time up the switchback road out the south end of the village. This is an early morning hike because the sun hits that end of the village first and it's straight up all the way to the top of the ridge (which itself reminded us of Na Pali on Kauai). The view from the ridge is of a few buildings on a grassy slope in an unprotected bay, with Fatu Hiva off in the distance. We could see a sailboat sailing way off in the distance about half way between the two islands. We felt the heat already beginning to radiate from the grasses and rocks on the return trip, and we were happy to be headed back downhill. This road is lined with banana and papaya plants just like the road to Vaitahu, but is less forested and not as shady.

On our way back down the hill into the village we were approached by a teenage boy carrying a big shopping bag of pamplemousse. He turned out to be Giovanni, Rose's son, and we assume the fruit was an exchange for our "gifts."

Snorkeling & Sea Life: (s/v Nakia) When we first got in the water to snorkel it seemed very boring until we found the big rock. This proved very interesting with many fish and urchins. John always goes in for a closer look than I do and when he finally figured out where to look for cowries, we started seeing them everywhere. It's like an Easter egg hunt and makes things more interesting. He's only been able to find one empty shell intact (at Hanamoenoa), and we still can't bring ourselves to take a live one.

I spotted a small octopus, but only because I saw it free swimming before it plastered itself against the rock and became nearly invisible. Yesterday John pointed out a stone fish glued under a ledge, looking just like part of the rock. He reminded me to be very careful where I put my hands if I want to hold on to the rock anywhere (As if! I try to make a point of not touching anything!).

Minutes later he motioned me over to see our first ever lion fish, one of the most poisonous spiny reef fish. Boy, that got my adrenalin going. It too was hiding under a ledge, but when we made a later pass of the area it had swum out, still against the rock, and was in its head down, spines pointed out towards us, defense posture. It clearly didn't like us being in the area and we were happy to leave it alone. We continue to be surprised by new and colorful reef fish, and there's even a small sea turtle popping up in the anchorage occasionally.

We had another good snorkel on Thursday and saw two small lion fish in addition to the big one hanging out along the same rock ledge where we first saw him. The sky was nice and clear for a change so everything was in sunlight, though the water clarity was a bit murkier than before. Friday was very windy and a small group of spinner dolphins came into the bay and hung out in the anchorage. They spent another day with us yesterday and, since we stayed on the boat all day, we had lots of opportunities to catch sight of them leaping out of the water and spinning in the air. What a treat!

Another afternoon we saw our first shark, a 3' black-tip, on our swim from the boat (anchored in 55') to a great snorkeling rock close to shore (where we saw yet another new to us kind of fish!). This morning the dolphins were back in the anchorage where they've been all day. I got a closer look at them and they have white tips on their noses and are speckled so now I think they must be spotted dolphins, although they do a lot of acrobatics similar to their cousins, the spinning dolphins. There seem to be lots of babies, so I wonder if this isn't a nursery of sorts for them.

Manta Rays: This morning, Linda noticed a couple of rays swimming around the boat. They seemed bigger than the rays we used to see in Mexico but it was hard to tell. After 10 minutes of trying to get a good look at them from the deck I decided I should just get in the water to watch them. I slipped quietly in and hid behind the rudder to keep from scaring them away and after a minute or so it was clear they couldn't care less about me so I swam over and had a great show; three 4-6 ft Manta rays swimming slowly around in circles feeding. I signaled the 'all clear' to Linda and before long we were both taking in the show. One manta even had a couple of remora fish clinging to its underside near the tail.

Handicrafts: The work here is quite different, with not only wood carving but also bone, and combinations of wood and sword fish bills. They are also noted for combination wood and stone carvings, but we saw none of these on display. The work is all very similar, but one young man's items stood out from the rest and we asked his name and the location of his house in order to pay him a visit the next day (Mark).

4.4 Ivaiva Nui

We sailed over to Ivaiva Nui anchorage on Tahuata, arriving just at sunset. This is a pretty little anchorage with a private home and neat farm above the sandy beach. It doesn't get much protection from the swell though, which has been higher than when we first arrived, so yesterday we sailed back to our favorite Tahuata anchorage at Hana Tefau.

Nakia's Anchor Position: 09-54.752S / 139-06.476W

5 UA HUKA

5.1 *Hane Bay*

Mata'irea early July 2007: We had plenty of moonlight to see our way in at 0230, but the buoy at the mouth of the bay that was supposed to have a light on it was dark. "Turn to port!" I shouted as we skimmed past it. We seem to be fatally attracted to buoys, whether it is daylight or midnight. Our anchor wouldn't take a good bite into the bottom, so Sten set the chart plotter's anchor alarm function before bedding down in the cockpit to keep anchor watch. This morning, still not comfortable with our anchor set, with a heavy swell rolling into the bay, we left right after breakfast to see if any of the other bays appealed to us.

We checked the other harbors on Ua Huka, but the swell was slamming into both of them, so we decided to continue onto Nuka Hiva. Along the south coast of Ua Huka, we saw people gathering sooty tern eggs, a local delicacy. We could also see the devastation caused by the huge herds of horses and goats - they outnumber people 10-1 on Ua Huka and have denuded the landscape. We also enjoyed having some very chatty birds swoop by to check us out. However, they were too interested in our fishing lures, so Sten had to haul them in before we caught a bird.

5.2 *Vaipae Bay*

See above comment by Mata'irea.

6 UA POU

Driving between Hakahau and Hakahetau: (Tackless II): We got a chance to ride in the back of a pickup on the road between Hakahau and Although Ua Pou is only ten miles long and seven miles wide and the distance between the two towns as the crow flies is barely three miles, the drive took at least an hour on the squiggly dirt road that followed the coastline. From our seats in the back of the pickup truck, which the four of us shared with three youngsters, we enjoyed spectacular views of Ua Pou's spine of spires on the one hand and the coves of its rugged coastline on the other. On either side of the road we often passed wild horses grazing. Our host was a good guide, stopping the truck at particularly scenic overlooks for photo ops. We wondered among ourselves what the cost in diesel (most vehicles here seem to run on diesel) was to haul four extra full-frown Americans over and back.

6.1 *Hakahau Bay*

The forecast looked good on Tuesday, September 22 for the sail to Ua Pou, 25 miles away, and after motoring to clear Nuku Hiva we were able to sail the rest of the way to Hakahau Bay, arriving in time for an afternoon swim to the sandy little beach and a walk on the quay.

After the rough ocean waters between the islands, and the horrible wind chop in Taiohae, we were thrilled with the quiet, protected, little harbor.

We set a stern anchor to keep us in position just off the south end of the quay in about 10' of water. Two sailboats were stern-tied to the quay when we arrived which also

looked inviting (the Aranui wasn't due to arrive for another week) and, as it turned out, we had to move there for our last two nights because of the outrigger-canoe races on Saturday.

Nakia Anchor Spot: 09-21.512S / 140-02.804W

Other than one visit to the village, we kicked back on the boat and read a lot during our stay. We would have left earlier but then we saw preparations for what we thought looked to be a big event, and decided to stay when we learned that island teams would be competing to see who would represent the Marquesas in the big Hawaiki Nui outrigger-canoe race in November. It was fun to be stern-tied to the quay to watch the starts and finishes of the two races (morning and afternoon) out to neighboring bays, but we never did figure out why the locals bothered setting up three tents which went unused the entire weekend. And the crowd reaction was very low key with no honking of horns even though the quay and breakwater were both lined with trucks. Maybe it was a given that Ua Pou would be the hands down winner, so people didn't bother getting too excited.

From Tackless II (2004) (who didn't anchor there): The main town, Hakahau is the third-largest village in the Marquesas, and on our quick drive through seemed to have a number of stores and several places to eat. Michael and Mary had a memorable meal with friends at "the house up on the hill". That's how it was described to them by the gendarme, but with a little detective work in the Lonely Planet Guide, we deduce it was the Pension Pukuéé. You walk up in the morning and discuss what you would like to eat and return in the evening to have what sounds like a gourmet feast! Hakahau also has a reputation for particularly fine carvers (in wood, stone and coconut shell) and other cruisers stumbled on a memorable dance presentation put on for the freighter/cruise ship Aranui when it comes to town.

6.2 Hakahetau

Nakia 2009: We spent one truly awful night in Hakahetau which even the rocker stopper wasn't up to (and with no possibility of a shore landing due to the swell), before we moved to Vaiehu for our last few nights at Ua Pou.

Nakia Anchor Spot: 09-21.444S / 140-06.294W

Tackless II (2004): We bypassed the main town of Hakahau to continue around the north side to the small town of Hakehetau to join up with our friends, who had started the Sunday off by going ashore to attend the local church service. There, despite having no language in common, they were befriended by a local couple, so that by the time we got our anchor down, they had a whole schedule lined up for the four of us.

It seemed that the couple's daughter had to return to school in Hakahau (after the primary grades, the kids from small towns and small islands have to live in during the week to continue their schooling), and we were invited to make the drive with them to drop her off after the weekend. Although Ua Pou is only ten miles long and seven miles wide and the distance between the two towns as the crow flies is barely three miles, the drive took at least an hour on the squiggly dirt road that followed the coastline. From our seats in the back of the pickup truck, which the four of us shared with three youngsters,

we enjoyed spectacular views of Ua Pou's spine of spires on the one hand and the coves of its rugged coastline on the other. On either side of the road we often passed wild horses grazing. Our host was a good guide, stopping the truck at particularly scenic overlooks for photo ops. We wondered among ourselves what the cost in diesel (most vehicles here seem to run on diesel) was to haul four extra full-frown Americans over and back. (Before we left Ua Pou we gave Job a length of line he'd been wanting to anchor his fishing canoe.)

Our second arranged activity seems to have gotten a little lost in the translation. Etienne Hokaupoko, a schoolteacher, resident and one-time mayor of Hakahetau has through the years cultivated visits to his town by cruising sailors. With a house in the village where his son lives, while he and his wife live on a hillside out of town, Etienne often delegates his son to invite cruisers to his house for a meal.

At eleven o'clock , Etienne showed up in his dilapidated truck to pick us up, at which time we learned we were not the only guests. Also waiting was a young couple (German and Australian) and their baby (born in Trinidad) from a tiny Australian-flagged boat. To our chagrin, there was no sign of Mike and Mary nor of the father-son pair on the fourth boat in the harbor who had also been invited, although had everyone shown up, I can't imagine how we would have fit in Etienne truck!

Having no idea what to expect, we arrived back up at Etienne's hillside home to find a picnic table set in the back yard and the BBQ grill burning hot. Although this "new" house (one of the many built by the French government) had a small inside kitchen, Etienne and his wife Yvonne preferred to cook in a separate cooking shack in the back garden. Yvonne had set out bowls full of poisson cru, rice, fried banana, and poi. In addition, there was a bowl of boiled potatoes, plantain, and on the grill thin steaks of New Zealand beef and hamburgers! Wow! Etienne stopped Don from ladling out a big spoonful of poi onto his plate, warning him he probably wouldn't like it. Marquesans, he told us, as he filled our glasses with home-made guava juice, couldn't imagine a meal without the filling starch, but he was absolutely right. To the rest of us the poi tasted pretty much like glue. The rest of the food was terrific.

To invite into your home such a mixed bag of unknown people, with three or four different languages to boot, makes for an unusual kind of hobby, which is really what I think it is for Etienne! He has been doing it for so long, it almost seemed like a routine. When we would ask him questions about himself, Etienne would refer us to his "Wednesday evening potluck" at which he does some kind of show. Unfortunately, we wouldn't be staying that long, so we never heard his story. After the meal I had a chance to chat in French with Yvonne who, although she speaks no English, seems to take Etienne's group dinners in stride. Since I was the only guest who spoke French, I really enjoyed being able to learn more about their lives, their children and grandchildren.

6.3 Vaiehu

Our first night there was perfect but then a larger than normal swell rolled in from somewhere out in the ocean and we lost both water clarity and peace. Without being able to swim or go ashore there wasn't much to do but read, cook, and make a weather cloth.

Nakia Anchor Spot: 09-23.212S / 140-07.696W

7 NUKU HIVA

7.1 The South Coast

7.1.1 Taiohae

Baie De Taiohae, the main port for the Marquesas, offers most services. There is no marina, but you can pull up to the city pier to get fuel and water with a Bahamian Moor (although apparently quite sketchy with a swell). The anchorage is huge and open with depths around 30 feet in sand.

The town has a few larger grocery stores, but they are not too different from what you will find in Hiva Oa, with the exception of more bread in the morning (they even had loafs of bread!). There is a very nice restaurant up by the hotel on the west side of the anchorage with a bar that serves happy hour drinks over looking their infinity pool and the anchorage. Dinners are \$20 each though. Internet is available for free if you anchor near shore and can pick up the "LC" signal, or you can pay for the same service offered in Hiva Oa.

Nakia's Anchor Position: 08-54.842S / 140-05.884W

The Anchorage (s/v Nakia 2009): This is a very roly anchorage and we ultimately ended up moving as close to the quay as we could get. But even after deploying a stern anchor and the rocker stopper, it still was not a comfortable place to be. There were about 20 boats when we arrived in early October and 12 remaining when we departed a week later.

All of the active cruising boats are anchored near the old quay, with only three unoccupied boats over on the more remote Keikahanui Pearl Lodge side of the bay. Our week was spent taking delivery of our new main sail from Rose Corser and visiting her lovely little museum and gift shop; browsing at the well stocked magazines; making 6 AM visits to the boulangerie and the veggie marche (only one time each and hopefully never again; baguettes and most veggies - except lettuce - are available elsewhere at more reasonable hours!); and doing laundry with plentiful, though tan, water at the quay.

Moondance 2011: When we first anchored in Baie De Taiohae it was settled, so we only used our main anchor. The next morning the swell came in and we deployed a stern anchor and that made the anchorage very comfortable. We spent 18 days there recuperating and getting some minor projects done.

Restaurants: We also had a lovely night out with Rose and another boat for dinner at the Keikahanui restaurant. The restaurant and bar are all that remain of the original hotel built by former cruisers, Rose and her husband, Frank Corser, back in the 70's (S/V Courser). Frank passed away in 1992, but Rose is carrying on with plans for a smaller business, and she's always happy to have cruisers stop by for a visit. The tropical drinks were colorful and the French cuisine was beautifully presented and so delicious that we all cleaned our plates of curried goat, rack of lamb, duck, and a steak/shrimp combo. There was a group of young men and one woman from NASA staying at the Lodge to

cover a hole in tracking coverage for a satellite launch (we passed their equipment high on a mountain during our subsequent car rental). They normally do a two month tour of duty, but it had stretched to three months this time. Tough job, but someone's got to do it!

Be sure to have a burger and fries (700 CFP) at the roulotte (van) on the waterfront in the afternoons. They close up between 4-5pm and the "Chinese" roulotte opens in front of Magazin Kamake for the evening. Do NOT bother trying that one out. Pizza at the big restaurant on the main drag was supposed to be good but is only served after 6 PM (reservations recommended).

If you have a special occasion to spend big bucks on, the Pearl Resort serves excellent French cuisine and drinks are half price (which brings them down to Hawaii tropical drink prices, \$6-8) on Fridays after 6 or 7. The bar at the resort is all that remains of Rose and Frank Corser's original establishment.

Oh, and the chocolate beignets at Magazin Kamake are yummy, as are the little tortes/tarts in the veggie market. Not cheap, but a nice treat. Don't bother trekking to the actual bakery unless you're up super early. They send baguettes to Magazin Larson but Kamake has their own bakery so they rarely run out of fresh baguettes.

Touring: (s/v Nakia 2009) We shared a car rental with with 3 other boaters to explore the island. This time we had a four door truck so there was plenty of room for all of us with our gear in the truck bed.

We started towards the airport in the Terre Deserte in a clockwise circumnavigation of the island, taking a right hand turn on a dirt road after passing a pineapple farm (the pineapple plants are obvious; don't take the turn before you see this). We scoped out several bays for potential anchoring spots, but the highlights of the trip were our picnic lunch stop at Hatiheu Bay and a visit to the archeological sites of Hikokua and Kamuihei & Tahakia, the latter two of which of just across the road from one another and comprise the largest excavated archaeological area of Nuku Hiva. Although there were no large tikis like on Hiva Oa, the size of the areas made one wonder at the lives of the people who built and lived in them long ago.

We made a pamplemousse snack stop along the river in Taipivai at the head of Controleur Bay and then, since we still had some time remaining on the truck, we made an even more arduous trek over the rough road from the Keikahanui Lodge to Colette Bay, the site of "Survivor Marquesas" (2002). They must not have put the Survivor camps at the head of the bay where there was plenty of pamplemousse, citron, and bananas on private property. Fortunately one of the pamplemousse tree limbs hung over the fence to the ground and we restocked our fruit hammock.

7.1.2 Controlleur's Bay

This bay is just east of Taiohae. There are 3 finger bays inside Controlleur Bay, and it is possible to anchor in each of them. The westernmost, Hakapaa has a hike to a waterfall. The middle bay has a town, Taipivai.

7.1.3 Daniel's Bay (Hakatea)

Daniels Bay, which is a one hour sail to the west of Taiohae. It has a narrow entrance, but quite deep. The CMap charts are very accurate here. This is a nice rest from roly Taiohae. It's pretty exciting going OUT of the bay—straight into the wind and swell (when the wind and swell are SE).

s/v Soggy Paws (2010): As has been reported, Daniel is no longer in Daniel's Bay. There are still structures there, and sometimes people are there, but there is no one in permanent residence. The floating water hose is no longer there either.

However, over in the small village, there is a family planning to start a 'snack' and tour guide service. Maria and Ma'i (pronounced 'my' or 'my-ee') live in the house on the rocky beach facing the bay, farthest to the west from the stream (on your left as you look at the 'beach' from the bay). Maria, who's family has lived in the village for generations, speaks English and French as well as her native Marquesan. Ma'i, her husband, speaks some English and French as well as Marquesan.

Maria is a great cook and Ma'i is a good hunter, and between the two of them, they can provide meals such as traditional 'poisson cru', and curried goat, and roast pig. While we were there, Ma'i took us out spearfishing, on a pig hunting expedition up the mountain near the waterfall, and on a goat hunting expedition up the east face of the mountain to the west of Daniel's Bay. They stand by on VHF Channel 71.

To get to their house, you can beach your dinghy on the beach at Daniel's Bay, and take the path that starts on the left end of the beach, around to the village, and turn left after you cross over the bridge, rather than right to go to the waterfall. Or you can, at high tide, go in the little stream in your dinghy, take the first left into the pond, and go all the way in. Their house will be ahead and to the left. There is nearly always some wave action at the mouth of the stream, and a sandbar. Hug the rock wall to the right on approach to stay out of the waves, wait for a lull and go for it, but be ready to kick the outboard up and jump out and drag your dinghy in if you hit bottom. At low tide, you can still get in, but it's definitely necessary to get out and walk your dinghy up what's left of the channel. WXTide32's tide for Taiohae seems to be accurate.

The hike to the waterfall is pretty nice (see accounts below)—not too hard as it is mostly level walking. For most of the way the path is obvious, but there are one or two places where the path ISN'T... there, look for rock cairns (a man-made small pile of rocks on a bigger rock)... they mark the way.

s/v Nakia (2009): Also a good calm spot, very popular on the week ends when 'live in cruisers' from Taiohae come here. The last weekend we were on Nuku Hiva in 2010, there were 18 boats reported here (April). The hike to the waterfall must not be missed. Potable water and fruit are available here.

s/v Serafin (2007): Sailing close to the shore we approached the nearly hidden opening for Anse Hakatea, known among cruisers as Daniel's Bay. Serafin surfed along the top of the waves and it wasn't until we'd gotten in past the opening that the sea calmed enough for Jeff to hop in the dinghy being towed behind and rescue the fishing line we'd managed to wrap around the dinghy engine and prop. The bay has two small lobes and

we chose the more protected eastern one. It sits behind a small headland providing good protection from the swell. However, we still set a stern anchor to keep Serafin's bow pointed into what little swell remained so we'd sleep comfy rather than roll around. At the head of this lobe is a pretty little beach with a single wooden house but since there was no boat on the beach we assumed nobody was home.

The western lobe is spectacular. The beach underscores the entrance to a lush green river valley. Rock spires, flukes, walls, and fins all covered in dense green growth jut up from the valley floor and form its walls. The river spills out into a corner of the bay while ocean waves crash onto the beach that makes up the rest of the shoreline. We brought the dinghy in along the calm waters of the river outlet rather than risk capsizing in the surf along the beach. We'd intended on going a bit farther up river before landing but the dinghy motor conked out just as we got beyond the beach and we quickly decided that was the perfect place to land! We rowed to the river's edge and hauled the dinghy onshore, tying it to a tree stump for good measure.

Walking up the valley is magical. It begins with a cow, horse, and goat trimmed grass walkway lined with flowering shrubs, banana, and papaya trees. A family lives in the valley and there are four or five simple houses for them all. We met several warm and welcoming family members and with a little French, a little English, and a few words of Marquesan we got along great and learned about them. They have other houses in Taiohae but come here to work the plantation and do a little fishing. They usually stay a week or two at a time. On our return they loaded us up with bananas, grapefruits, and papayas.

Beyond the last house a rocky track begins. It gets muddy in spots and fords the swift though shallow river several times. We first tried to hop from boulder to boulder to cross but quickly discovered it is easier and safer to wade across instead. In about two hours we received a sneak preview of our destination, Vaipo Falls. At 350m (over 1100 feet) it's the largest in French Polynesia but it's still too far away to hear its thunder.

The entire valley is an ancient site virtually littered with ruins nearly everywhere you look. The Marquesans built their houses on stone platforms called pae pae. We came upon the ruins of temples, called me'ae, and ua ma which are stone pits they used to store fermented breadfruit. In the brush are certainly ancient ti'i carved in stone, but we weren't able to find any. Some of the stone platforms are perfectly preserved although fully overgrown. At times the track takes us across the platforms or stone walkways between them as it follows the path of an ancient royal roadway. We occasionally found a cluster of these platforms, food storage pits, and stone walls in a clearing. It's easy to imagine the whole valley filled with people living and working here. Of course the fact that the Marquesans are no longer cannibals makes exploring here lots more fun than the early Europeans and missionaries enjoyed!

As we get closer to the falls we ford the river again and we can hear the unmistakable noise that sounds like a distant drumbeat. We begin to feel the cool spray. The dense jungle has kept us out of the sun so we're not too hot but the spray feels good anyway. We can only see the very bottom of the falls. The top is obscured by rock outcroppings. Only our earlier view from afar puts it in perspective. We're in a dead-end valley now and

looking up at the clouds moving slowly overhead causes that same funny feeling as when you're stopped at a traffic light but you feel like you're moving only to discover it's the car next to you that's rolling. The brave ones among us jumped into the pool at the base of the falls and tried to swim in as close to the falls as possible, but the memory of getting whacked on the head and shoulder by a tree at Fatu-Hiva made our decision to not push our luck. Sitting in the mist and thinking about what we'd seen on the way to the falls was satisfying enough.

Mata'irea (July 2007): We're anchored in a lovely calm anchorage just 5 miles from the main town. Fans of the Survivor Series may recognize it from the season filmed in the Marquesas. To cruisers it is known as Daniel's Bay for the resident who made his water spigot available to them for over 60 years. We came over here on Saturday morning to fill our water tanks - not from Daniel's spigot, rather with our watermaker, which we weren't willing to run in the silty, murky water of the main anchorage.

We're so glad we made the move! This bay is so protected, you can't even see the ocean from where we are anchored. There is no swell in here, and we are sleeping like babies. Even better, there has been some terrific marine life. Saturday afternoon Sten went snorkeling and saw an eel, two turtles and a small black tipped shark. While exploring the bay Sten caught a snapper on a silver metal lure, which turned out to be some of the tastiest grilled fish we've had in some time. Later that afternoon we both saw a shark burst out of the water as it fed on something in the middle of the anchorage. It was brownish, which suggests that it was a bronze whaler, one of the most dangerous breeds. There go my plans to swim in this bay! Then on Sunday afternoon, while hanging laundry to dry on the lifelines, I spotted a manta ray. I was so excited that I couldn't get out any words other than "Sten, Sten, come here, come here." It gracefully floated by the side of the boat, turned up the tips of its wings, which broke the surface of the water approximately 4 feet apart, pirouetted, and came back for another look. It was beautiful.

On Sunday we hiked to the third tallest waterfall in the world. The trail starts out as a road winding past people's homes and their well tended gardens filled with fruit trees and whimsical decorations - like goat skulls. Further on, we passed a few tikis and stone walls suggesting the larger population that once inhabited these islands. Then we came to a river. I was a total sissy about not wanting to get my shoes wet, but after ranging up and down the bank for a bit, eventually I realized there was no getting to the other side without going in up to my knees. If only I had known then that there were a dozen more river crossings ahead . . .

The trail continued into the primordial forest. It was never very steep, but it was often very slick and muddy. Eventually we emerged in a river canyon with completely vertical cliffs at least a 1,000 feet high surrounding us on three sides. At the head of the canyon was the waterfall, the roar of which we could hear from some distance. Ironically, you can't see the waterfall at the end of the trail. To get to the base, you have to swim through a cloudy pool (hoping not to meet the resident eel) and scramble over some boulders. Then you find yourself in a cloud of mist generated from the impact of the water falling 1148 feet from the top of the cliff. We only stayed for a few minutes, because the bugs were swarming, before heading back down the trail.

7.2 The West Coast

Not many people visit the west coast of Nuku Hiva. It is dry and desert-like, not well charted, and not mentioned much in the guidebooks. So if you are looking for (a) unrollingly, uncrowded anchorages, (b) dry weather or (c) clear water, head for the west coast of Nuka Hiva.

By mid-morning on the west coast, even when the tradewinds are blowing pretty well out of the east, you will find a westerly breeze!

We heard that Wahoo fishing was good along the west coast of Nuka Hiva—we drug a line the whole way up the coast and only got one hit—but we were moving pretty slowly.

7.2.1 Marquisienne

s/v Soggy Paws 2010: Baie Marquisienne, in the SW corner of Nuka Hiva a few miles from Daniel's Bay, is not mentioned in any guidebook we have. But it was first visited by our friend on s/v Shapirit in late August 2010. He was leaving from Daniels for the Tuamotus, and was looking for a calm clear anchorage in which to make water. He only stayed there a few hours, but said that it was both calmer and clearer than Daniel's Bay, and it would be an OK overnight anchorage. There is no chart detail or any guidebook reference that we've seen for this bay, so you are likely to find it empty.

We passed by it on our way around to Anaho, and checked it out ourselves a week or so later. It was calmer than either Taiohae or Daniels, and nice and clear. There is room for one or two boats to anchor in 35'.

7.2.2 Haahopu

Baie Haahopu is just mentioned in the Russell guidebook, *Exploring the Marquesas*, and there is a little more in *Charlie's Charts*. *Charlie's* says "Anchorage in good holding sand can be taken inside the entrance of the bay where there is protection from easterly winds".

This used to be how passengers got from Taiohae to the airport on the NW corner (by boat to Haahopu and then bus to the airport), but I'm not sure it's much used today—the road to the airport has been improved and most people drive these days.

s/v Soggy Paws 2010: We spent a lovely night in this bay with one other boat (and room for at least one or two more without crowding). It was the first good night's sleep we had in weeks—no rolling and no gusty winds. Good holding in sand. Clear enough water for bottom scrubbing and/or snorkeling. The onshore (westerly) breeze we had in the afternoon died in the early evening and changed to a light easterly.

7.3 The North Coast

The primary cruising anchorage on the north coast is Anaho Bay, toward the eastern end of the north coast. But there are several other bays on the north coast where the adventurous cruiser can find isolation and good anchoring conditions.

s/v Soggy Paws 2010: We slogged the 10 miles to windward along the north coast in early Sept 2010, motorsailing close to the coast, trying to find some lee. The general

wind and wave conditions were 16-18 kts ESE, and a 2 meter SE swell, but we found that both the wind and waves curved around the coast and were 'noselies' no matter where we were. It was generally better than going the same distance on the south coast, but there were still big waves and big wind. But it was possible to tack into several of the bays and make some eastward progress in calmer conditions.

7.3.1 Anaho Bay

s/v Nakia: We spent three weeks in Anaho in 2009 last year and had a great time. Lots of cool snorkeling. We had uncountable Manta Rays here and actually had to get out of the water once because they were just too close. This is also the calmest anchorage in the Marquesas. Lots of fruit on shore and good walking. There are no roads into Anaho, everything comes in by boat or horse, so there are no stores.

Nakia's Anchorage Position: 08-49.260S / 140-03.852

s/v Nakia October 2009: So far it's either very windy or very rainy here in this beautiful bay. We've been doing a lot of reading and watching movies to pass the time, but we've also managed to take a few walks and do some snorkeling in between. The best thing about being here is that we are tucked back into a large bay with a long entrance to block the swells. So other than some wind chop (we're on the lee shore) it's very comfortable on the boat for a change. No stern anchor and no rocker stopper required!

Unfortunately the water is green and murky which is a shame because we are anchored right in front of a coral reef off of a narrow, but extensive sandy beach. There's a pass through the coral to take small boats through for landing on the shallow beach. There are less than a dozen homes and guest houses, no road, no cars, several horses, a few dogs, pigs, a cow and her calf, with wild goats and chickens roaming the hills. It's rare to see a light on shore at night, though we saw at least one generator. We're sharing the anchorage with 3 other boats.

We first took a hike along the perimeter of the bay over a low ridge to the wild and rugged Haataivea Bay which is totally exposed to the incoming swell and had waves crashing on the wide sandy beach. As we came out of the forest to approach the beach John remarked that he wished he'd thought to bring his 9-iron because the grass over gently sloping dunes was cropped to the quality of a golf course. We watched slender foot-long eels hunting in a tide pool, and our patience was rewarded by seeing one catch and eat a little tadpole of a fish. We eyed the huge stalks of bananas which were part of what looked like a primitive copra camp, but they were carefully propped up with heavy sticks and are obviously tended by an absentee landlord.

We are at the low tides of the full moon which expose the reef between Nakia and the beach. One or more of the local men hunt for octopus most days and we wonder what they will do when all of the octopus are gone. We took a walk on the reef on Saturday and Leopold had taken three of them because he had guests arriving yesterday. We saw some tiny bluish purple brittle stars and finger length eels, but I wasn't comfortable walking on a living reef with anemones and spongy stuff (that I won't even touch when we see them snorkeling) so we soon returned to the beach.

On Sunday we thought it might have been dry enough to hike to the ridge top on the trail to Hatiheu Bay to the south of us. It was mostly a good trail but our shoes became muddy clogs and we decided not to go all the way into the village since we hadn't brought any money with us and everything would probably be closed anyway. That afternoon we were getting ready to take the dinghy over to the windward shore for a snorkel when John was stung by a bee. He immediately got the Sawyer venom extractor out of its case, but we left the stinger in too long, and his hand swelled up like a little balloon. He took a Benadryl right away and is applying the ointment form as well to help ease the incredible itching. He was still game for a snorkel (only the finger had swollen by then) and we had a great Easter egg hunt for cowries. We easily saw over a dozen large shells but still aren't up to taking any with the animal living in them. They're so beautiful when they sparkle in the sun against the dull rock, and we have a lot of fun searching for them. We hadn't been in the water for long when I heard John shout and I hurriedly swam back to see what he'd found. I was so intent on swimming to him that I didn't look up until I was about to do a head on with a manta ray with another one right behind it. They swam past us into the murk, but what a thrill.

Yesterday I swam into shore for a beach walk and saw a foot-long baby black-tip shark as I was shuffling my feet along to avoid the sting rays in the ankle deep water. John went for a late snorkel around the point from Nakia and saw another manta ray and more cowries. We've also both had quick glimpses of turtles taking a breath in the anchorage. Today we were supposed to walk all the way to the village at Hatiheu with Romany Star for provisions but it rained all night and is still raining off and on so we decided against the muddy trek, and it's back to more reading and DVDs.

Snorkeling: We've been looking at the incredible cowrie shells our friends have collected and our desire to have one too has peaked. The thing is, most of the shells that our friends have taken were alive and they removed the animal. Rarely people say that they found the shell empty. Killing animals just to have their shells may sound like a vain activity, but the fact that the Marquesans take these shellfish by the dozens makes the one or two shells per boat seem pretty insignificant. It's interesting to note that the Marquesans don't collect the shells because they can sell them or because they find them pretty, they collect them to eat. Every beach has a pile of broken cowrie shells where the locals have smashed them to extract the meat.

So my snorkeling focus lately has been trying to find the 'perfect' cowrie. If we're going to kill one, I want it to be a good one. Once I figured out where to look for these beautiful shellfish the search got a little easier, if not more risky. These animals live right in the inter tidal zone; between the high and low tide mark. This is also where most of the surge is and since the cowries don't really like living where it's calm, you have to get close to the rocks in areas where the waves threaten to slam you if you're not careful. I'm getting pretty good at it though.

I swim along the shore, clinging to the rocks with my gloved hands, being careful not to get above a sea urchin lest a wave take the water out and drop me onto its spines while I poke my head into cracks and holes looking for shellfish. Every once in a while, when the waves get too big, I'll swim out away from the rocks and look around. Yesterday this looking was very interesting. During my search I saw two sharks, a school of big Jacks

and a lion fish. The biggest and most impressive things I saw were five manta rays. These, in addition to the three I saw from the dinghy on the way to my snorkeling area, make a personal record of eight mantas in one day.

I even found what I thought was just about the perfect cowrie. The colors on its back looked like a tropical sunset. I carefully pried it from the rock and carried it with me for a while admiring it. Then I realized I couldn't go through with it, I couldn't bring myself to kill this animal just so I could have its shell. So I put it back where I found it and decided I'd just have to wait until I found one that was uninhabited.

One of the things I've noticed in my search for cowries is a yellow coral that seems to trap things in its network of vertical bars. I've seen many old, growth encrusted shells in the clutches of these fan-like formations so I decided that I would focus on these coral heads to see if I could find a newly trapped, recently deceased, empty cowrie. And that is exactly what I found after about 10 minutes of looking. It's not quite the colors I would have chosen, but we now have a very nice example of a Marquesan cowrie and I didn't have to kill the animal to get it.

7.3.2 *Hatiheu*

Hatiheu is just west of Anaho Bay. It is reported to be a rolly anchorage. Most cruisers hike over the hill from Anaho.

7.3.3 *Hakaehu / Puua*

Exploring the Marquesas gives this a mention as a good anchorage, but I have yet to hear a personal account from anyone visiting it.

8 EIAO

Exploring the Marquesas Islands says: 60 miles north of Nuka Hiva lies the rugged crescent-shaped island of Eiao (Ay-ee-ow). This island is not the dream destination for all cruisers. If, however, you enjoy lonely windswept, desolate nature preserves, Eiao is a paradise.

9 Moving on to the Tuamotus

Download our Tuamotus Compendium here:

<http://svsoggypaws.com/files/index.htm>