

EYOS

M/Y AFTER YOU · FRENCH POLYNESIA

# THE MARQUESAS ISLANDS

Sample Itinerary 4 – 11 April 2027.

8

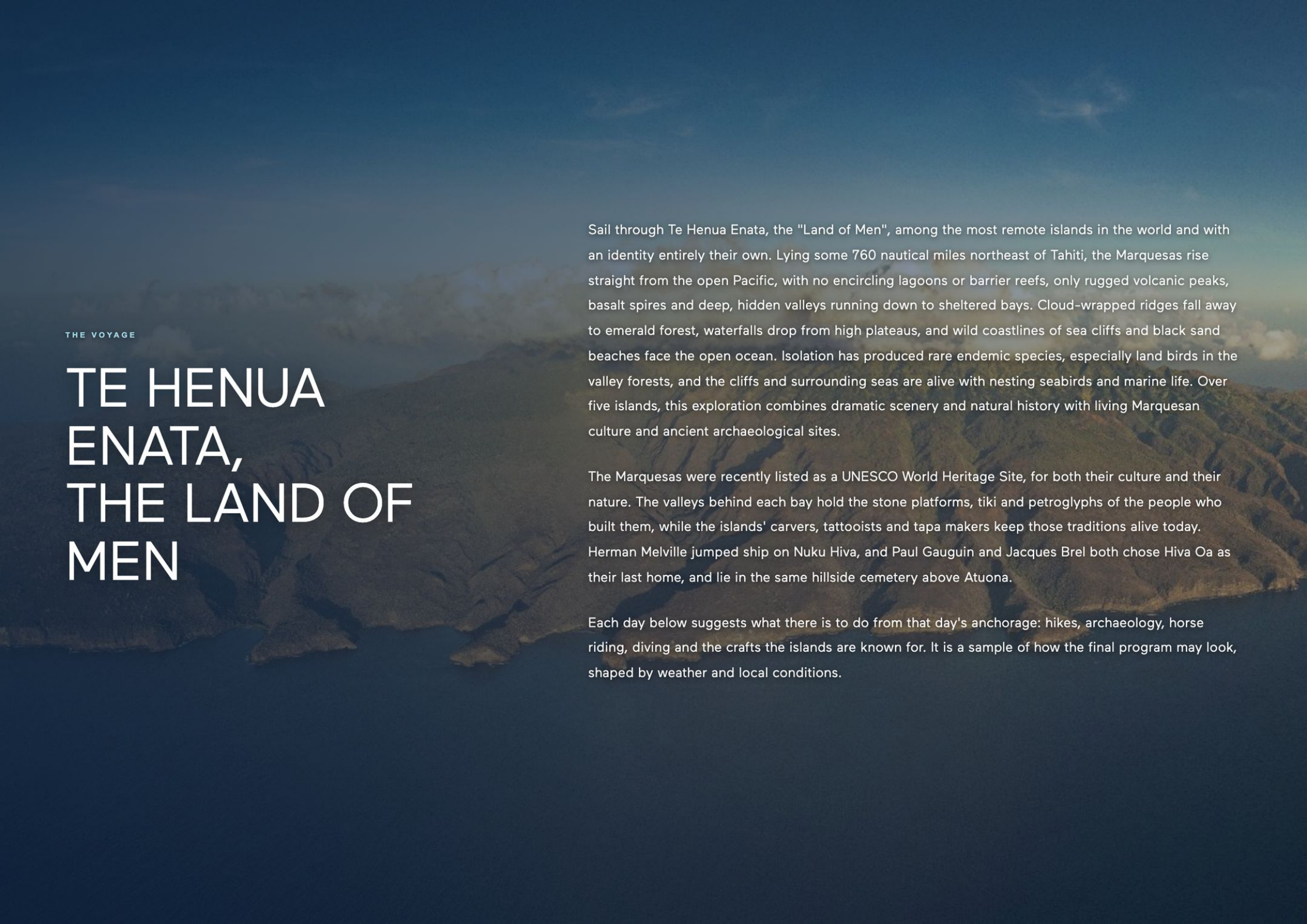
DAYS

325<sub>nm</sub>

DISTANCE

5

ISLANDS



THE VOYAGE

# TE HENUA ENATA, THE LAND OF MEN

Sail through Te Henua Enata, the "Land of Men", among the most remote islands in the world and with an identity entirely their own. Lying some 760 nautical miles northeast of Tahiti, the Marquesas rise straight from the open Pacific, with no encircling lagoons or barrier reefs, only rugged volcanic peaks, basalt spires and deep, hidden valleys running down to sheltered bays. Cloud-wrapped ridges fall away to emerald forest, waterfalls drop from high plateaus, and wild coastlines of sea cliffs and black sand beaches face the open ocean. Isolation has produced rare endemic species, especially land birds in the valley forests, and the cliffs and surrounding seas are alive with nesting seabirds and marine life. Over five islands, this exploration combines dramatic scenery and natural history with living Marquesan culture and ancient archaeological sites.

The Marquesas were recently listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, for both their culture and their nature. The valleys behind each bay hold the stone platforms, tiki and petroglyphs of the people who built them, while the islands' carvers, tattooists and tapa makers keep those traditions alive today. Herman Melville jumped ship on Nuku Hiva, and Paul Gauguin and Jacques Brel both chose Hiva Oa as their last home, and lie in the same hillside cemetery above Atuona.

Each day below suggests what there is to do from that day's anchorage: hikes, archaeology, horse riding, diving and the crafts the islands are known for. It is a sample of how the final program may look, shaped by weather and local conditions.

ROUTE MAP

# EIGHT DAYS, FIVE ISLANDS

325 nautical miles over eight days, starting and ending at Taiohae.



ASHORE AND ON THE WATER

# HIKES, ARCHAEOLOGY, CULTURE AND THE SEA

## HIKING

### VALLEYS, PASSES AND WATERFALLS

Up the Hakaui valley to the 350 m Vaipo waterfall, over the pass from Hatiheu to Anaho, or on Fatu Hiva to the Vaieenui waterfall and its swimming pool, two hours there and back from Hanavave. Trails are often unmarked, so the longer walks go with a local guide.

## ARCHAEOLOGY

### ME'AE, TOHUA AND TIKI

Stone platforms, tiki and petroglyphs fill the valleys, and several sites are part of the 2024 UNESCO listing: Kamuihei at Hatiheu, Upeke at Taaoa, and Me'ae l'ipona at Puamau with Takai'i, the tallest ancient tiki in French Polynesia.

## HORSE RIDING

### ON HORSEBACK

Herds of wild horses roam the plateaus. On Nuku Hiva, ride across the Toovii plateau or down to Colette Bay, or take the three-hour ride through the Hatiheu valley to the beach at Anaho, easy enough for beginners.

## DIVING & SNORKELLING

### OPEN-OCEAN WATER

This is open ocean: the water is rich in plankton and around 28°C. Dive centres at Taiohae and Atuona. Reef mantas and scalloped hammerheads are the stars, though both peak later in the year, and dolphins are sometimes seen.

## LIVING CULTURE

### CARVING, TAPA AND SONG

Hapatoni's carvers work rosewood, horse bone and shell, and in Omoa bark is still beaten into tapa cloth. Writing in Atuona in 1903, Gauguin saw in the Marquesans "un sens inouï de la décoration", an extraordinary sense of decoration.

## WILDLIFE

### ISLAND BIRDS

The Marquesas have their own reed warblers, olive above and bright yellow below: one species on Nuku Hiva, another on Tahuata and Fatu Hiva. The Fatu Hiva monarch is far rarer, with sixteen birds left in the wild in late 2025, all in one valley. Around the islands, IUCN counts 21 breeding seabird species.



*"The first experience can never be repeated.  
The first love, the first sunrise, the first South  
Sea island, are memories apart and touched a  
virginity of sense."*

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON, ON REACHING THE MARQUESAS · IN THE SOUTH SEAS, 1896

DAY BY DAY

## DAY BY DAY

Distances and sailing times are approximate and depend on conditions. Everything ashore is optional.



SUN 4 APRIL

# TAIOHA'E

NUKU HIVA SOUTH · EMBARKATION

Fly 3 hours north from Tahiti to arrive on Nuku Hiva to embark *MY After You* at Taioha'e, the main town and administrative centre of the archipelago, cradled in an amphitheatre of volcanic peaks. Settle in on board and decide on the first activities of the expedition. After lunch head ashore to explore Taioha'e and its cathedral, a hike, out on the water for a first dive or get underway to a nearby anchorage.

## Day 1

EMBARKATION

### ASHORE AND ON THE WATER

#### ARRIVAL

##### Papeete to Nuku Hiva

From Papeete, 3 hours 20 minutes by chartered turboprop aircraft or the jet (TBC). Then about an hour and a half by road over the mountains to Taioha'e, sharing the way with horses and cattle. Helicopter transfer option TBC.

#### DIVE & SNORKEL

##### Rocky Reef

A relaxed check-out dive on the reef nearby to familiarise with equipment and refresh skills, or snorkel below the cliffs.

#### CULTURE

##### Notre-Dame des Marquises

The cathedral is built of stone from all six inhabited islands, with carved statues and Stations of the Cross by Marquesan artists. Stroll through town and along the waterfront to the cathedral.

MON 5 APRIL

# UA POU

HAKAHAU

Ua Pou rises from the Pacific like a cathedral carved by a giant: a cluster of basalt spires and phonolite pinnacles, some climbing over a thousand metres straight from the sea, their summits wreathed in cloud. Arriving by yacht is the only way to truly appreciate this Marquesan masterpiece. Drop anchor in the sheltered bay of Hakahau and step ashore into a Polynesian village where woodcarvers, stone sculptors and tattoo artists keep centuries-old traditions alive, then venture into the valleys with local guides to find hidden waterfalls, fragrant groves of sandalwood and frangipani, and the warm welcome of families who have called these islands home for generations.

30 nm

DISTANCE

3 hrs

SAILING TIME

## ASHORE AND ON THE WATER

### CULTURE

#### Saint-Étienne church

Carved in the Marquesan style by local artisans: the pulpit is a boat's prow above a net full of fish, and the Virgin holds a breadfruit.

### ARCHAEOLOGY

#### Hohoi valley

A half-day trip to the restored Tohua Mauia, its stones carved with petroglyphs, and the beach of the "flower stones" prized by carvers.

### HIKE

#### Poumaka

For a fit group with a guide: the two-headed spire, a steep half day from Hakahetau on the west coast.

### CULTURE

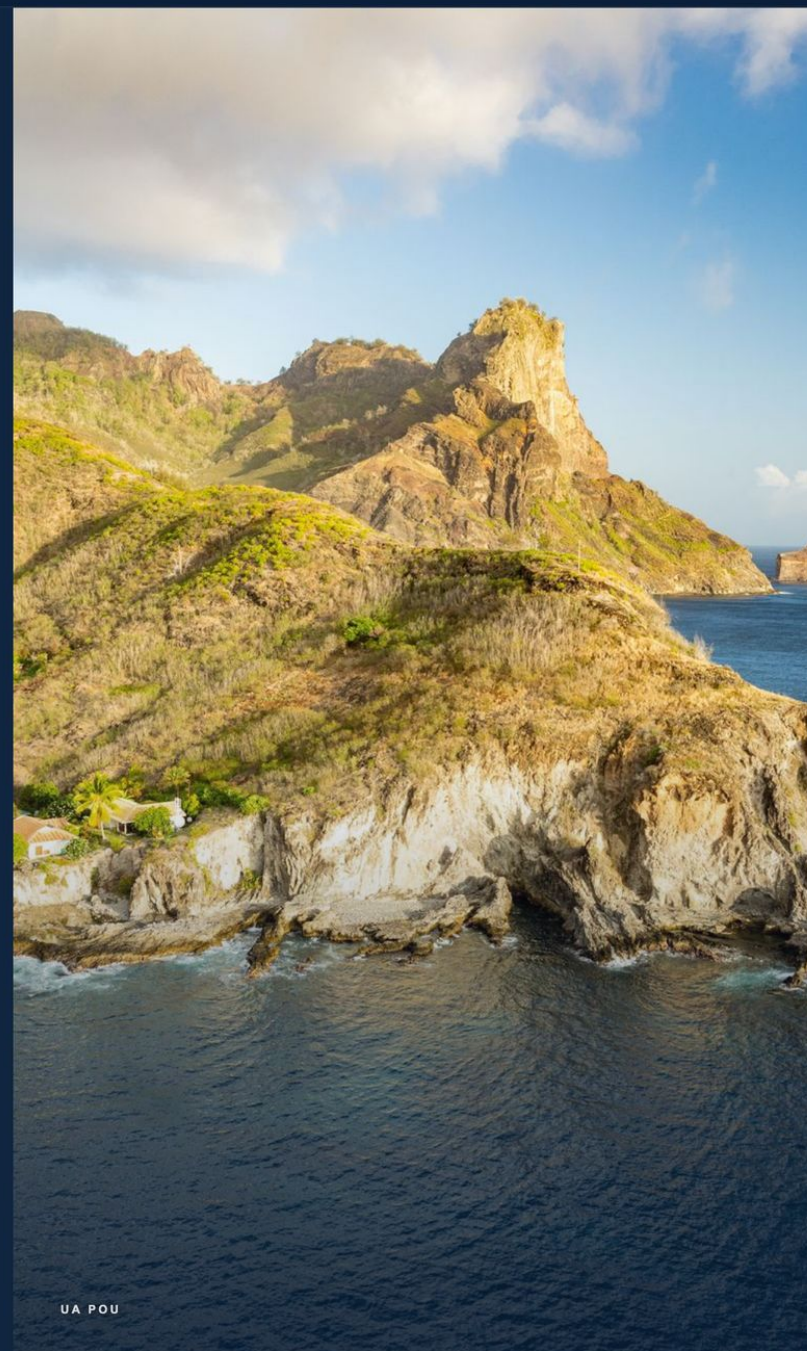
#### Hakahau cultural centre

A craft workshop and a small museum. The first Marquesas Arts Festival was held here in 1987.

### WALK

#### Anahoa beach

About thirty minutes on foot east of Hakahau to a white-sand beach.



UA POU

TUE 6 APRIL

# HIVA OA

ATUONA

Arrive in the Bay of Traitors and anchor off Atuona, the main village of Hiva Oa, where a green amphitheatre of ridges drops steeply to the sea. Head ashore to visit the hillside cemetery where Paul Gauguin and Jacques Brel are buried, then explore the cultural centre and museums that tell the story of the painter and the singer who each spent their final years on this island. Continue along the south coast to Taaoa and the great ceremonial centre of Upeke, one of the most important sacred sites of the Marquesas. With a local guide, walk the tohua, the vast public square where communities once gathered to dance and feast, and the stone paepae platforms around it, and find the tiki of Taaoa, among them a carving unique to this valley, with a face cut into a flat slab of stone. This is also a good location for diving and snorkelling, with the chance to encounter manta rays that gather outside the bay.

75 nm

DISTANCE

7 hrs

SAILING TIME

ASHORE AND ON THE WATER

CULTURE

## Gauguin and Brel

Both rest in the Calvaire cemetery above the bay, a few metres apart. In the village, the Centre Culturel Paul Gauguin shows reproductions of his paintings and a rebuilt Maison du Jouir, and Espace Jacques Brel keeps his plane, Jojo.

HIKE

## Tehueto petroglyphs

A 2.5-hour rainforest trek through lush jungle trails and river crossings to reach the fascinating megalithic site of Tehueto. Hidden deep in the forest, this sacred site features ancient petroglyphs and a traditional me'ae ceremonial platform built above a striking tiki head.

ARCHAEOLOGY

## Upeke, Taaoa

Upeke archeological site is considered to be one of the most important ceremonial centers in French Polynesia. It has a vast communal space for dancing named Tohua and several paepae stone platforms. The site is also home to a tiki whose face is carved in the stone, which is unique to the ti'i of Taaoa.

DIVE & SNORKEL

## Atuona Bay

Some good snorkeling around rocks at the entrance of the bay and with chances for manta rays.

HIVA OA

WED 7 APRIL

# TAHUATA

HAPATONI

A two-hour passage across the Bordelais Channel brings *MY After You* to Tahuata, the smallest inhabited island of the Marquesas. Anchor off Hapatoni and step ashore onto the royal road, a raised, paved way laid in the mid-19th century on the orders of Queen Vaekehu II and shaded by tamanu trees now more than a hundred years old. Wander the village with carvers at work along the road, shaping bone and wood into tiki, jewellery and ceremonial pieces, then visit the stone church with its stained glass and the ancient me'ae at the heart of the village. Relocate for the afternoon to the north west coast and the white sand beaches of Hanamoenoa or Anse Ivaivaiti for a swim, a snorkel or a dive, and spend the evening at anchor off one of the quietest corners of the archipelago.

15 nm

DISTANCE

2 hrs

SAILING TIME

## ASHORE AND ON THE WATER

### ARCHAEOLOGY

#### The royal road and me'ae

A paved causeway built on the orders of Queen Vaekehu II, under tamanu trees. Me'ae Anapara and Eiaa sit in the middle of the village, with a petroglyph near the craft workshop.

### CULTURE

#### Time with artisans

Because Tahuata has no airport, it remains highly pristine and isolated. The island is famous for its towering volcanic cliffs and its deeply rooted cultural traditions, particularly the exceptional wood and bone carvings produced by local artisans.

### WALK

#### The oratory

A ten-minute climb above the village to a stone oratory, with views over the bay.

### DIVE & SNORKEL

#### Hanamoenoa

One of Tahuata's white-sand beaches, for swimming, snorkeling and diving.



TAHUATA

THU 8 APRIL

# FATU HIVA

HANAVAVE & OMOA

Remote and rugged, Fatu Hiva is the lushest of the Marquesas, a place where waterfalls plunge from basalt cliffs and tapa cloth is still made by hand. The most isolated island in the group, it can be reached only by sea. Anchor in Hanavave, the Bay of Virgins, among the most photogenic bays in the Pacific, where tall basalt pillars guard the entrance and the setting sun turns the cliffs violet and gold. Go ashore to follow the valley path to a waterfall and meet the artisans who paint tapa with designs drawn from ancestral Marquesan tattoos. For those who want to go further, cross to Omoa along the island's only road by 4x4, on horseback or on foot, past cliffs, waterfalls and gorges, to visit the small museum, the petroglyphs including the great carved fish known as the paoa, and the valley where Thor Heyerdahl came ashore in 1937.

45 nm

DISTANCE

5 hrs

SAILING TIME

## ASHORE AND ON THE WATER

### ASHORE

#### The Bay of Virgins

Hanavave's anchorage, ringed by tall basalt pillars. Its first French name referred to their shape; 19th-century missionaries added one letter and made it the Bay of Virgins. Snorkel the cliffs and caves at the entrance of the bay. A spectacular anchorage at sunset.

### HIKE

#### Vaieenui waterfall

Two hours there and back from Hanavave, with a pool to swim in at the foot of the falls.

### WILDLIFE

#### The Fatu Hiva monarch

Sixteen birds were left in the wild in late 2025, all in one valley. SOP Manu, BirdLife's partner in French Polynesia, leads the work to save them; a briefing from its team can be requested.

### OVERLAND

#### Over the mountains to Omoa

Drive the mountain road between Hanavave and Omoa to visit the neighbouring village and its museum.

### CULTURE

#### Tapa and umu hei, Omoa

Bark beaten into cloth and painted, and umu hei, the scented bouquets worn in the hair. Browse the wooden carvings for which the island is famed.

BASALT SPIRES, FATU HIVA

FRI 9 APRIL

# HIVA OA

PUAMAU

Return to Hiva Oa and the island's wild north-east coast for a landing in the remote valley of Puamau, one of the most isolated spots in the Marquesas. Facing the open Pacific, the bay is reached only by sea or by a long track over the mountains, and the valley beyond feels little changed by time. Here, among breadfruit trees and thick jungle, stand the tiki of l'ipona, a ceremonial site once among the most important on the island.

Walk among these silent stone guardians, carved from volcanic stone and some of the largest in French Polynesia. Chief among them is Takai'i, at more than two and a half metres the tallest of all. Other figures stand nearby, each with its own posture and presence, their enlarged eyes and heavy features still sharply defined. Learn what the figures meant to the people who raised them: ancestors and chiefs commemorated in stone, and a valley set apart for ritual and burial.

50 nm

DISTANCE

5 hrs

SAILING TIME

## ASHORE AND ON THE WATER

### ARCHAEOLOGY

#### Me'ae l'ipona

Considered the most important archaeological site in the Marquesas, restored for the 1991 arts festival. Best seen with a local guide.

### ARCHAEOLOGY

#### Maki'i Tau'a Pepe

A tiki carved lying down. Karl von den Steinen, who saw it in 1897, read it as a woman dying in childbirth.

### ASHORE

#### Puamau village

Unhurried village life on the wild coast with opportunities for longer hikes or exploring the coastline.

### ARCHAEOLOGY

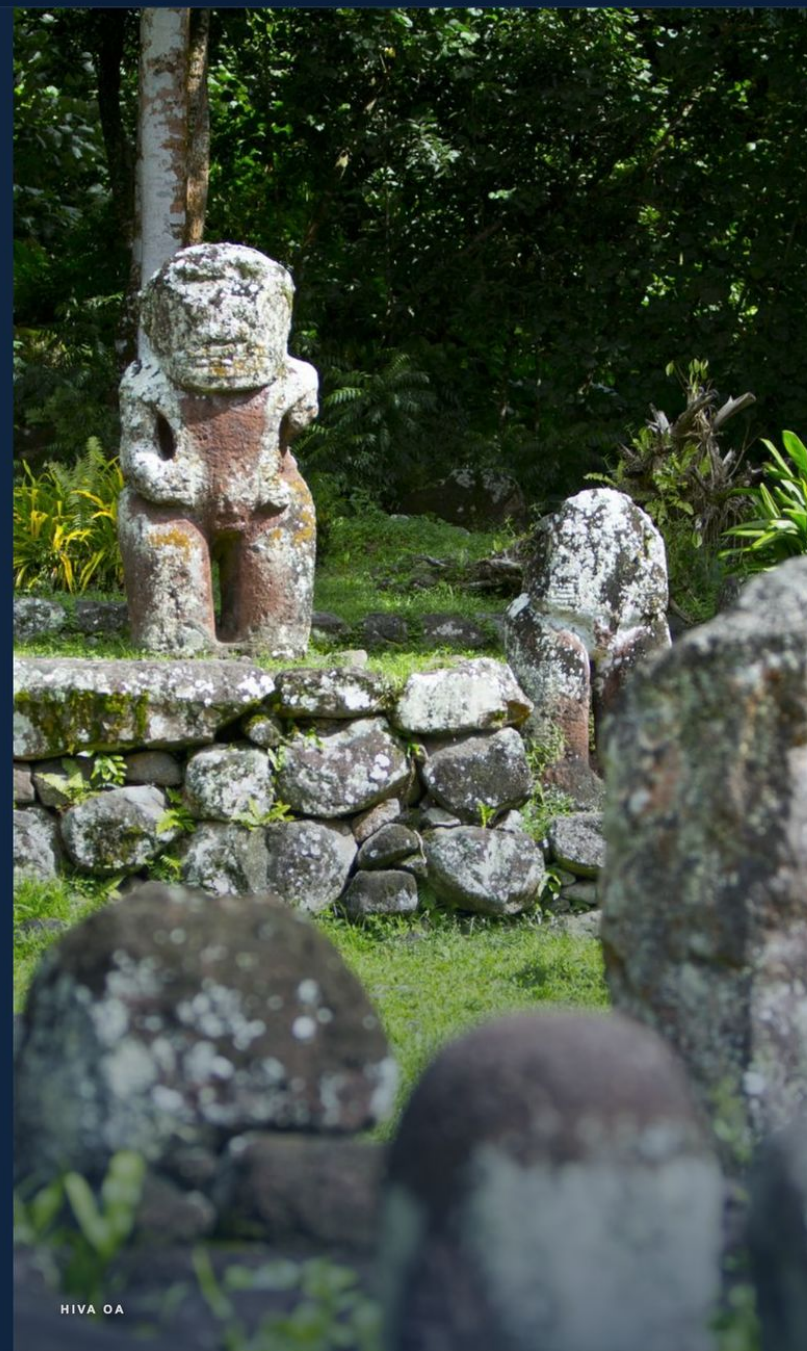
#### Takai'i

The tallest ancient tiki in French Polynesia, named after a warrior chief.

### ARCHAEOLOGY

#### Pekekea

In the village, two large tiki stand guard over the tomb of Queen Vahinetitoiani.



HIVA OA

SAT 10 APRIL

# NUKU HIVA

HATIHEU

The north coast of Nuku Hiva is volcanic terrain at its most dramatic, with towering cliffs, ancient valleys and waterfalls spilling into fertile forest. Anchor off Hatiheu, a village on a black sand beach beneath jagged basalt spires, in the valley with the island's greatest concentration of cultural sites.

Go ashore to Kamuihei, one of the most important archaeological sites in the Marquesas, where a banyan believed to be more than 600 years old spreads its roots over moss-covered stone. With a local guide, walk among the paepae platforms and the tohua where communities once gathered for festivals and ceremonies, find the tiki and me'ae, and look for petroglyphs of turtles, fish and human figures. Nearby, the tohua of Hikokua, with its stone seating around an open square, makes a valley that still echoes with ancestral presence.

Later, continue east to Anaho, a quiet crescent of white sand and coconut palms, often counted among the most beautiful anchorages in the South Pacific. One of the very few places in the Marquesas with a true coral reef, it owes its pale sand to that reef, in contrast to the dark volcanic beaches elsewhere. Swim or snorkel in the sheltered, clear water, or stroll the beach and the small village behind it.

90 nm

DISTANCE

8 hrs

SAILING TIME

## ASHORE AND ON THE WATER

### ARCHAEOLOGY

#### Kamuihei, Tahakia and Teipoka

One great complex under a giant banyan: paepae, tiki, me'ae and petroglyphs, restored for the 1999 arts festival. Take a village guide; it can fill most of a day.

### HIKE

#### Over the pass to Anaho

About an hour on foot over a 217 m pass, with both bays below.

### ASHORE

#### Anaho

A white-sand beach behind the only coral reef flat in the Marquesas, for a swim. Robert Louis Stevenson anchored here in the Casco in 1888.

### ARCHAEOLOGY

#### Hikokua

A vast rectangular tohua, with platforms for spectators and several tiki.

### HORSE RIDING

#### Hatiheu valley to Anaho

Nuku Hiva A Cheval is based in this valley: a three-hour ride with a stop on the beach at Anaho, easy enough for complete beginners.

NUKU HIVA

SUN 11 APRIL

# TAIOHAE

NUKU HIVA SOUTH · DISEMBARKATION

A final short sail returns to Taiohae. Enjoy a last stroll along the waterfront and a chance to find a Marquesan carving as a keepsake before travel back to Tahiti and onwards.

20 nm

DISTANCE

2 hrs

SAILING TIME

## ASHORE AND ON THE WATER

### ARCHAEOLOGY

#### Temehea tohua

On the seafront in the middle of town, with several gigantic tiki.

### CULTURE

#### The craft market

Carving in wood and bone, and shell necklaces.



NUKU HIVA

## ITINERARY

## AT A GLANCE

| DAY   | DATE       | LOCATION                   | DISTANCE | SAILING HRS |
|-------|------------|----------------------------|----------|-------------|
| 1     | Sun 4 Apr  | Taiohae · Embarkation      | 0        | 0           |
| 2     | Mon 5 Apr  | Hakahau, Ua Pou            | 30 nm    | 3           |
| 3     | Tue 6 Apr  | Atuona, Hiva Oa            | 75 nm    | 7           |
| 4     | Wed 7 Apr  | Hapatoni, Tahuata          | 15 nm    | 2           |
| 5     | Thu 8 Apr  | Hanavave & Ōmoa, Fatu Hiva | 45 nm    | 5           |
| 6     | Fri 9 Apr  | Puamau, Hiva Oa            | 50 nm    | 5           |
| 7     | Sat 10 Apr | Hatiheu, Nuku Hiva         | 90 nm    | 8           |
| 8     | Sun 11 Apr | Taiohae · Disembarkation   | 20 nm    | 2           |
| Total |            |                            | 325 nm   | 33          |

Itinerary subject to weather and local conditions.

GOOD TO KNOW

# BEFORE YOU GO

## APRIL WEATHER

Warm and tropical, with daytime temperatures around 27 to 29°C (81 to 84°F) and lush, green landscapes at their best after the rains. Sunny spells are common, with the odd passing shower.

## THE SEA

Ocean temperature around 28°C (82°F) with steady trade winds from the east-southeast and a swell that eases in the sheltered bays on the lee side of the islands. Anchorages are generally calm, with opportunities for swimming and snorkelling.

## MONEY AND LANGUAGE

The Pacific franc (XPF), and cash is often needed. French and Marquesan are spoken. Kaikai meitai: enjoy your meal.

The EYOS logo is centered in the upper half of the image. It features the word "EYOS" in a bold, white, sans-serif font. The letter "Y" is stylized with a blue horizontal bar passing through its center. The background of the entire image is a photograph of a seascape at dusk or dawn, with dark, silhouetted mountains on the left and a sky filled with large, dark clouds illuminated from below by a low sun, creating a warm, golden glow near the horizon.

**EYOS**

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

# THE MARQUESAS APRIL 2027

This is a first plan. Days can be trimmed, moved or given more time ashore around what you most want to do.

TIM SOPER, FOUNDER

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ITINERARY SUBJECT TO WEATHER AND LOCAL CONDITIONS