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TAHITI

TOURISME

Conservation and Ecotourism in *The Islands of Tahiti* Fact Sheet

The Islands of Tahiti are home to some of the most luxurious eco-hotels, largest natural marine sanctuaries, as well as some of the healthiest coral gardens anywhere in the world. These conditions combined with relatively-low visitor volumes, not only make *The Islands of Tahiti* a remarkably beautiful place to visit, it also means it is the ideal choice for a traveler who is interested in environmentally-responsible travel options.

Below are just a few examples of ecotourism efforts taking place throughout *The Islands of Tahiti*.

- **Coral Garden Restoration Biorock© Program:** Aiming at protecting and preserving the amazing and vibrant snorkeling conditions that exist in *The Islands of Tahiti*, Pearl Resorts of Tahiti has joined the Espace Bleu's Biorock program. The Biorock technique helps to activate the recalcifying process of the damaged corals, through electricity from solar energy. Once these are mature enough, biologists will reintroduce them into their natural habitat, therefore repopulating reefs and coral gardens. This program is available at both Le Taha'a Island Resort & Spa and Bora Bora Pearl Beach Resort & Spa with the To'a Nui coral garden facing Mount Otemanu. Learn more: www.boraborapearlbeachresort.com/x,960,189,2342/biorock%C2%A9-program.html
- **Ecological Center at Le Meridien Bora Bora:** Since 2000, Le Meridien Bora Bora has dedicated initiatives to protecting, preserving and caring for local marine life in Bora Bora. Their efforts started with a guest who encountered an injured sea turtle and brought it back to the resort for care. The Turtle Center project was born out of that simple gesture. In 2012, the Ecological Center was officially created with a coral restoration program. On-site biologists and conservationists teach guests daily about local marine species and protections efforts. Learn more: <http://www.lemeridien-borabora.com/ecological-center>
- **Fare l'a Reserve at the InterContinental Bora Bora Resort & Thalasso Spa:** Also known as the Lagoonarium, Fare l'a Reserve is a natural aquarium and protected ocean habitat for marine life at the InterContinental Bora Bora Resort & Thalasso Spa. The reserve is home to a reef ecosystem, which recreates the natural underwater conditions for over 200 species of sea creatures including parrot fish, Picasso fish and angelfish. Every day at 2:00pm, visitors have the opportunity to interact with the resident stingrays, which swim right up to the shore.

- Largest Shark Sanctuary in the World:** In 2012, more than 1.5 million square miles of sea were set aside across the five archipelagoes that make up *The Islands of Tahiti* as a shark preserve, creating the largest shark sanctuary in the world. This move provided a moratorium on shark fishing and finning, protecting more than 20 shark species – including lemon, tiger, gray reef, blacktip, whitetip, black fin, and mako. As a result, *The Islands of Tahiti* offer some of the most extraordinary opportunities for diving to observe sharks of anywhere in the world. Particularly in the Tuatmotu Archipelago, where in addition to being a shark sanctuary, the island of Fakarava is also designated as a UNESCO Biosphere. Here it is possible to see sharks in groups as large as 700 actively feeding. Sharks are important for ecological and cultural significance in French Polynesia, often representing the souls of ancestors in mythology. Several conservation organizations, including Reef Check and *Te mana o te moana* are engaged in monitoring the shark sanctuaries throughout French Polynesia.
- The Moorea Dolphin Center:** The Moorea Dolphin Center offers educational and interactive programs with its dolphins to better understand these fascinating marine mammals and their ecosystem. Its programs have been carefully developed in collaboration with specialists to preserve the quality of life of animals, managed daily by a qualified team of veterinarians and caretakers. Their various programs allows visitors to encounter dolphins while proceeds go to protect dolphins and fund necessary research programs. Learn more: <http://www.mooreadolphin.com/>
- Paul Gauguin Cruises and Wildlife Conservation Society:** In 2017, Paul Gauguin Cruises partnered with the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), whose mission is to protect half of the planet’s biodiversity and to help build a healthy, sustainable planet. This partnership resulted in a Wildlife Discovery Series where guests learned about marine wildlife and habitats from the world’s most knowledgeable conservationists, oceanographers and conservationists. Paul Gauguin Cruises and the Wildlife Conservation Society also offer the Stewards of Nature program, which provides youth (ages 7-17) and families the opportunity to discover and appreciate the natural world together. Offered aboard the m/s *Paul Gauguin* during the summer months and holiday season, the Stewards of Nature itinerary includes naturalist-led island and beach excursions, snorkeling, dolphin-watching, swimming with sharks and rays, games and educational programs about marine wildlife. For more information on the Paul Gauguin Cruises, WCS partnership and their programs, visit <https://www.pgcruiises.com/WCS>.
- Pearl Resorts of Tahiti Okeanos Solar-Powered Cruises:** Pearl Resorts of Tahiti, the parent company of Le Taha’a Island Resort & Spa and the Bora Bora Pearl Beach Resort & Spa, is a leader in conservation efforts in *The Islands of Tahiti*. The management company recently won the Trophées du Tourisme Innovation Award for the zero emissions, solar-powered catamaran, Okeanos Pearl. The innovative solar-powered catamaran is among the first of its kind and is offered to guests daily for sunset cruises. In addition to the Okeanos Pearl, projects are underway for solar-powered and hybrid boats to be available to guests for transfers. Learn more: www.boraborapearlbeachresort.com/en-gb/activities/sunset-cruise-okeanos-pearl

- **Sea Turtle Clinic at the InterContinental Moorea Resort & Spa:** Although sea turtles are a protected species, they are still threatened by extinction worldwide. The InterContinental Moorea Resort & Spa, working in partnership with *te mana o te moana*, has reserved a section of their private lagoon to shelter the turtles and instituted a donation program for guests to provide for the future of sea turtles. More than 400 sea turtles have been sheltered by the clinic since its creation (including 150 aged between 0-6 months, usually baby turtles found agonizing at the bottom of their nest), and more 190 of them were successfully released back in the wild. Learn more: <https://moorea.intercontinental.com/turtle-care-center>
- **Tetiaroa Society and Innovative Sustainability at The Brando:** In addition to being on Travel + Leisure's World's Best list and being an undisputed favorite of Hollywood's A-list, The Brando is also a leader in conservation in *The Islands of Tahiti*. The LEED Platinum Certified Resort features innovative design and conservation practices to ensure maximum water savings, energy efficiency, sustainable materials selection and indoor environmental quality. Tours are offered for resort guests who want to explore The Brando's eco-friendly facilities including the innovative Sea Water Air Conditioning (SWAC) building, the coconut oil-powered electric plant, the organic garden, bee hives, and solar panel sites. The Tetiaroa Society is an onsite conservation society which conducts scientific research, as well as managing bird and green turtle sanctuaries. For more information or reservations for The Brando, visit www.thebrando.com. To learn about the Tetiaroa Society, visit: <https://www.tetiaroasociety.org/programs/conservation>

Through the efforts of environmentally-responsible hotel and resort groups and various conservation organizations, *The Islands of Tahiti* remains one of the most pristine and bio-diverse travel destinations in the world. For more information on this and many more conservation initiatives in *The Islands of Tahiti*, please visit <http://www.temanaotemoana.org/>

About Tahiti Tourisme United States

Tahiti Tourisme United States (TTUS) is the Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) for the country of French Polynesia, more commonly known as *The Islands of Tahiti*. As the DMO for *The Islands of Tahiti*, TTUS liaises with airline, cruise line, hotel, resort, tour operator, travel advisor and consortia partners to develop product, launch marketing initiatives, and generate robust tourism trade within French Polynesia.

About *The Islands of Tahiti*

Located in the South Pacific, *The Islands of Tahiti* are just eight hours by air from California. Surrounded by pristine, crystal clear blue waters, the 118 islands and atolls offer natural beauty, authentic island culture, and unique French Polynesian style. *The Islands of Tahiti* are world-renowned for their white-sand beaches, stunning turquoise lagoons and varied landscapes ranging from coral atolls to volcanic mountain peaks. Each island offers a variety of accommodation experiences from luxurious resorts with overwater villas, to family guesthouses, to sailing via private charter or scheduled cruise. Privacy comes naturally in *The Islands of Tahiti* and offers visitors the space to relax and reconnect and to be *Embraced By Mana*. *Mana* is the life force and

spirit that connects all things in *The Islands of Tahiti*. Tahiti is halfway between California and Australia, on the same side of the International Date Line as North America and in the same time zone as Hawaii. For further information, visit www.tahititourisme.com or call (310) 414-8484.

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