

# EXPEDITIONS

## LAUTOKA, FIJI

Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> January 2025

**Welcome aboard!** Captain Alex Dudov, the officers, crew, and expedition staff of National Geographic Orion wish you a warm welcome aboard. Feel free to investigate the ship and to get to know your home for the couple of weeks while we explore the South Pacific! We will do our best to make this a memorable and interesting voyage!

Upon arrival, once in your cabin, please make yourself comfortable and **check that all of your luggage has been delivered**. If you are missing anything, or if you have any extra luggage that is not yours, **please tell one of the crew or expedition staff immediately**.

You will find drinks available in the lounge on deck 4 aft. Also, please familiarize yourself with key locations such as Dining room (Deck 3), Reception (Deck 4), Ship's Bridge (Deck 5), SPA & Gym (Deck 6), Library (Deck 6); as well as the stairwells that will take you to them.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask any of the staff or crew.

- 1600 Embarkation commences!
- 1700 Mandatory Ship Safety Drill: **You will be asked to come to the lounge with the lifejacket from your cabin for a short but essential safety briefing - listen out for announcements from the Bridge!**
- 1800 Meet in the lounge for a drink or two and **an introduction to the ship & our expedition ahead** from Expedition Leader Lucho Verdesoto, Hotel Manager Francoise Said & Ship's Doctor Tom Stoa.
- 1900 **Dinner is served** in the restaurant (Deck 3 aft.)

### Shipboard Information

<b>Reception</b>	Deck 4 midship: staffed 0700 until 2030. Dial 400 from your cabin phone. Note: Calls outside regular hours will be routed to the bridge.
<b>Lounge &amp; Bar</b>	Deck 4 aft: Evening recaps, briefings & talks will be held here
<b>Bridge</b>	Deck 5 forward: Lindblad has an open bridge policy, however <u>the bridge may be closed when local pilots are aboard</u> . We will let you know when this is the case, and signs on the bridge door will inform you as to the status. Please remember this is a crew working area.
<b>Fitness Studio</b>	Deck 6 midship: open from 0700-2200
<b>Spa</b>	Deck 6 midship: saunas are self-operated; treatments can be booked at reception.
<b>Observation Lounge</b>	Deck 6 forward: 24-hour coffee/tea/soda/snack station and the library.
<b>Doctor</b>	Please contact reception for an appointment.
<b>Gym</b>	Located on Deck 6. Open 0700 to 2200.
<b>Jacuzzi</b>	Located on the sundeck on Deck 6. Open 24 hours (weather permitting).

# EXPEDITIONS

## BEQA, FIJI

Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2025

Sunrise 0543 / Sunset 1850

This morning we will transfer you to neighboring Naceva village in Beqa island, from where you will walk across the pass to Naiseuseu village. This is a one-way strenuous 1-mile hike between villages, with about 500 ft elevation gain over a short distance; it would take about 1hr to hike across. Sturdy walking shoes are recommended and bring water. Knees and shoulders should be covered in the villages (please wear pants, skirt or wrap). These are wet landings but you may change shoes once ashore.

**For those not doing the hike**, you will disembark after the hikers, and visit and explore the village. Photo walks would be organized on site. Bring cash, as there will be local crafts for sale. USD is accepted (small denominations).

0700 **Morning stretches** with Wellness Specialist Tila on the Sundeck

0730-0830 **Breakfast** is served in the outdoor café

0900 **Zodiacs ashore for Village Hike followed by Village Visit-only**

1200-1300 **Lunch is served** in the Outdoor Café

1330 **Introduction to the Expedition Team:** You are invited to join us in the lounge to meet the team, followed by a mandatory snorkeling briefing followed by snorkel gear hand out

1430 **Zodiac Ashore for cultural program & snorkeling**

We will disembark on the beach (wet landing) and enjoy a nice welcome by the village followed by the traditional Meke (dance) and the Firewalking. Beqa Island is home of the Fijian Firewalkers who will perform this afternoon. Snorkeling will happen afterwards, and we will have a zodiac shuttle service from shore to ship throughout the rest of the afternoon. You may snorkel or swim from the beach, stroll on your own or enjoy relaxing at the resort. There will be some souvenir shopping available and you may use USD.

1745 All Aboard!

1830 Captain's Welcome cocktails in the lounge

1930 Dinner is served in the restaurant

# EXPEDITIONS

## ONO & VUROLEVU ISLANDS, FIJI

Friday 17<sup>th</sup> January 2025

Sunrise 0543 / Sunset 1851

Ono Island is a small, idyllic island in Fiji, part of the South Pacific archipelago renowned for its stunning natural beauty. It is nestled within the Great Astrolabe Reef, one of the world's largest barrier reefs, which includes Kadavu Island, Ono Island, and various smaller islands within a natural protective lagoon. The reef, mainly located along the southern coast of Kadavu and curving north around Ono Island to Buliya, is a haven for marine life. Its numerous deep channels leading into shallow lagoons provide vital breeding grounds for large marlin species, sharks, tuna, giant trevally, mahi-mahi, and snapper. Beyond its vibrant underwater world, Ono Island offers tranquil seclusion, where visitors can enjoy world-class snorkeling and diving amidst Fiji's crystal-clear waters and vibrant coral reefs.

0630 **Morning stretches** with Wellness Specialist Tila on the Sundeck

0700-0800 **Breakfast** is served in the outdoor café

0830 **Deep Water Snorkelers: Group 1** departs the ship

0900 **Group 2 & Beach snorkelers** depart to Vurolevu Island at this time.

1000 Approximate time for Group 1 & Group 2 to switch out at the beach.

1200-1300 **Lunch is served** in the Outdoor Café

### ***Expedition Afternoon In the Great Astrolabe Reef!***

This afternoon, we plan to remain flexible to maximize our opportunities. Depending on the time available and weather conditions, we will explore options for a brief afternoon program. Please stay tuned for final plans.

1600 **Afternoon Tea** is served in the lounge

1700 **Smartphone Photography.** Join our Lindblad Expeditions Photo Instructor Jeff Litton for this presentation in the lounge. Don't forget to bring your devices!

1800 **Cocktail hour, Recap and Briefing** about tomorrow's program in the lounge

1900 **Dinner** is served in the restaurant

# EXPEDITIONS

## TAVEUNI, FIJI

Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> January 2025

Sunrise 0540 / Sunset 1839

Taveuni, Fiji's third-largest island, is volcanic in origin and crowned by Uluinggalau (4,072 feet/1,241 meters). Known as "the Garden Island of Fiji," it boasts lush plant life, including endemic species. On its eastern side, Bouma National Heritage Park preserves pristine rainforests and features a stunning 65-foot (20-meter) waterfalls, showcasing the island's natural beauty.

0630 **Morning Stretches** with Wellness Specialist Tila on the sundeck (deck 6)

0700-0800 **Breakfast is served** in the Outdoor Café

0830 **Zodiacs** will depart for **Taveuni Island**

### What you need to know:

- **Wet Landing:** Arrival on the beach followed by a bus transfer to Waitabu Village.
- **Cultural Experience:** Enjoy a performance by school children and sample refreshments and local food prepared by village women.
- **Bouma National Heritage Park:** Short drive to the park for an easy hike and a refreshing swim (optional) in a waterfall pool. Wear bathing suits underneath.
- **Essential Items:** Bring sun protection, a full water bottle, and cash for purchases.
- **Cultural Etiquette:** **Shoulders and knees must be covered in the village.**
- **Timing:** Expect to return to the ship by 12:30 PM.

1230-1300 **Lunch is served** in the Outdoor Café

If the weather conditions allow it, we would like to offer deep water snorkeling from Zodiacs. Please sign up for a round

1600 Afternoon Tea is available in the lounge

1800 **Recap & briefing for tomorrow** in the lounge

1900 **Dinner** is served in the Dining Room.

# EXPEDITIONS

## FUTUNA, WALLIS & FUTUNA

Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> January 2025

Sunrise 0536 / Sunset 1832

Artifacts typical of the Lapita civilization, which date roughly to between 850 and 800 BCE, are the oldest indications of human presence on these islands. Their inhabitants resisted Tongan invasions in the 15th and 16th centuries, but they also submitted to assimilation in varying degrees. While Wallis' society, language, and culture endured more significant fundamental changes, Futuna kept more of its pre-Tongan cultural characteristics. On the islands, the original people constructed forts and other recognizable buildings, some of which are still partially intact.

The population of Futuna today is predominantly Catholic. The small town of Poi is the site of the martyrdom of Saint Pierre Chanel (beatified in 1888). Chanel came to Futuna in 1831 and was successful at converting some of the local population to Christianity. Shortly thereafter, one of the local chiefs felt that the priest was undermining his authority. When the chief's son came to be baptised in 1841, a fight ensued and Chanel was killed. He is Polynesia's only Catholic saint and the site of the martyrdom is now the location of the Cathedral of Poi.

- 0700            **Morning Stretches** with Wellness Specialist Tila on the sundeck (deck 6)
- 0730-0830    **Breakfast is served** in the Outdoor Café
- 0930            We will depart via zodiacs for **Futuna** –Once ashore minibuses will take us to visit the **World's Last Cannibal Oven, Taro Plantations**, and the **Cathedral of Poi**. Here we will also enjoy a **Cultural War Dance** and some refreshments. It will be a **wet landing**. Please bring **water as it will be hot**, and wear **sun protection**.
- 1230-1330    **Lunch is served** in the Outdoor Café
- 1430-1730    This afternoon, we will offer zodiac transfers to shore for a **Beach Afternoon** of **Snorkelling, Swimming** and possible **Kayaking**.
- 1600            Afternoon Tea is available in the lounge
- 1800            **Recap & briefing for tomorrow** in the lounge
- 1900            **Dinner** is served in the Dining Room.

# EXPEDITIONS

## MATA UTU, WALLIS ISLAND

Monday 20<sup>th</sup> January 2025

Sunrise 0531 / Sunset 1819

**Wallis Island (Uvea)** is the largest and most populous of the islands in the French overseas collectivity of **Wallis and Futuna**. Located in the South Pacific Ocean, it is surrounded by a lagoon with numerous small islets, making it a picturesque destination. The island is known for its rich Polynesian culture, Catholic heritage, and beautiful natural features. A notable landmark is **Mount Lulu Fakahega**, the island's highest point at approximately 145 meters (476 feet), offering panoramic views of the surrounding lagoon. The capital, **Mata-Utu**, is home to the iconic **Cathedral of Our Lady of the Assumption**, a symbol of the island's strong Catholic identity.

- 0630            **Morning Stretches** with Wellness Specialist Tila on the sundeck (deck 6)
- 0700-0800    **Breakfast is served** in the Outdoor Café
- 0800            We will begin disembarkation from the ship. We are planning take mini buses to the highest point of the island, Mount Lulu. Once on top, you will have the choice to hike your way back to town (approx. 5km) and meet us at the Cathedral for refreshing drinks and fresh fruits. The non-hikers can take the bus down to the Cathedral and enjoy more time in it as well as visiting the nearby museum and post office. Make your way back to the ship anytime you want until 1145. Our departure from Mata Utu is scheduled at 1200.
- 1230-1330    **Lunch is served** in the Outdoor Café
- 1500            **Tree of Life: The Coconut Tree.** Join our Cultural Specialist Kura Happ for this presentation in the lounge.
- 1600            Afternoon Tea is available in the lounge
- 1645            **On Assignment with Your Nat Geo Photo Expert.** Please join our National Geographic Photo Expert Ashli Akins for this presentation in the lounge.
- 1800            **Recap & briefing for tomorrow** in the lounge
- 1900            **Special Dinner: BBQ Under the Stars!** Join us in the outer café for dinner this evening!

# EXPEDITIONS

## APIA, SAMOA

Tuesday 21<sup>th</sup> January 2025

Sunrise 0614 / Sunset 1902

Samoa, a picturesque island nation in the South Pacific, is renowned for its stunning natural beauty, rich Polynesian culture, and warm hospitality. Comprising two main islands, Upolu and Savai'i, along with several smaller islands, Samoa is located about halfway between Hawaii and New Zealand. Its capital, Apia, is on the island of Upolu and is home to the Robert Louis Stevenson Museum, a tribute to the famous author who lived there. The country embraces traditional customs, known as *fa'a Samoa*, which emphasize community, respect for elders, and cultural rituals like the ava ceremony. Visitors are drawn to Samoa's pristine beaches, such as Lalomanu Beach, the breathtaking To-Sua Ocean Trench, and the vibrant marine life at Palolo Deep Marine Reserve. With a tropical climate and a population of approximately 200,000, Samoa's economy is supported by agriculture, fishing, tourism, and remittances. It holds the distinction of being the first independent state in Polynesia, gaining independence from New Zealand in 1962.

- 0730                    **Morning Stretches** with Wellness Specialist Tila on the sundeck (deck 6)
- 0800-0900          **Breakfast is served** in the Outdoor Café
- 1100                   **Coral Reef Ecology.** Join our Undersea Specialist Chris Cook for this presentation in the lounge
- 1230-1330          **Lunch is served** in the Outdoor Café

### *Expedition Afternoon in Apia, Samoa!*

**Option 1:** First we will visit the Robert Louis Stevenson museum followed by a stroll through the tropical botanical gardens, a visit to the cathedral and the local markets before returning to the NG Orion.

**Option 2:** Visit to the Cathedral for photo opportunity, then heading out to the Palolo Deep marine Reserve for Snorkeling and swimming.

**Please sign up this evening. Thank you!**

- 1800                   **Recap & briefing for tomorrow** in the lounge
- 1900                   Dinner is served in the dining room.

**After Dinner: Movie Night:** A heartwarming underdog story about a Dutch-American coach's efforts to lead the American Samoa national football team, considered one of the weakest soccer teams in the world, to qualification for the 2014 FIFA World Cup.

# EXPEDITIONS

## AT SEA, DAY ONE

Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2025

Sunrise 0612 / Sunset 1905

At nearly 63.8 million square miles or (165.25 million square kilometres) in area, the Pacific Ocean is undisputedly the largest body of water on Earth. Although populated for generations by Polynesians and Melanesians (amongst many others), the Pacific Ocean wasn't seen by European explorers until the first part of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Named by Ferdinand Magellan when he encountered relatively calm seas and winds, the Pacific was originally known as *Mar Pacífico*, or the Peaceful Sea.

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|-----------|---|
| 0730      | <b>Morning Stretches</b> with Wellness Specialist Tila on the sundeck (deck 6)  |
| 0800-0900 | <b>Breakfast is served</b> in the Outdoor Café  |
| 1000      | <b>Traditional Voyaging and Navigation.</b> Join our Cultural Specialist Tua Pittman for this presentation in the lounge  |
| 1230-1330 | <b>Lunch is served</b> in the Outdoor Café  |
| 1400      | <b>Pilates with Tila.</b> Join our Wellness Specialist Tila for an afternoon session of Pilates.  |
| 1500      | <b>Birding 101: An introduction to the Tools and Tricks for finding and identify birds.</b> Join our Ornithologist and Naturalist Phil Chaon for this presentation in the lounge. |
| 1600      | <b>Afternoon Tea</b> is available in the lounge   |
| 1645      | <b>Mutiny on the Bounty.</b> Join our Naturalist Elise Lockton for this presentation in the lounge  |
| 1800      | <b>Cocktails, Recap &amp; Briefing for tomorrow</b> in the lounge   |
| 1900      | <b>Dinner</b> is served in the dining room.   |



# EXPEDITIONS

## AT SEA, DAY TWO

Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2025

Sunrise 0614 / Sunset 1910

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The **International Date Line (IDL)**, located around 180° longitude in the Pacific Ocean, marks where the calendar date changes. Crossing it from west to east subtracts a day, while going east to west adds a day. Samoa, west of the IDL, is in **UTC+13/14**, while the Cook Islands, east of the IDL, are in **UTC-10**, creating a 23- to 24-hour time difference. When traveling from Samoa to the Cook Islands, you "gain" a day. For example, leaving Samoa on Monday morning means arriving in the Cook Islands on Sunday morning, allowing you to experience Sunday twice. This unique occurrence highlights the IDL's role in global timekeeping.

- 0700-0800      **Early raiser** is available in the Observation Lounge
- 0800            **Morning Stretches** with Wellness Specialist Tila on the sundeck
- 0930-1030    **Brunch** is served in the Outdoor Café
- 1100            **Galley Tours:** Group 1 (1100) & Group 2 (1145)
- 1300            **Travel Photography.** Join our Lindblad Expeditions Certified Photo Instructor jeff Litton for this presentation in the lounge.
- 1430            **Special Fruehshoppen** Afternoon Tea is served in the Outdoor Cafe
- 1545            **Island Life: The Weird, the Big and the Oddities; Island Biogeography.** Join our Naturalist Erin O'Brien for her presentation in the lounge.
- 1700            **Inside the Coconut: A Tasteful Journey Through Nature's Bounty.** Join our Cultural Specialist Kura Happ on deck 6 for this special workshop.
- 1800            **Cocktail Hour, recap & briefing** for tomorrow in the lounge
- 1900            **Dinner** is served in the Dining Room.

**After Dinner:** Join your photo team for a Photo Critique in the lounge.

# EXPEDITIONS

## AT SEA, DAY THREE

Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2025

Sunrise 0616 / Sunset 1920

Polynesia is a vast region in the central and southern Pacific Ocean, forming one of the three main divisions of Oceania, alongside Micronesia and Melanesia. It consists of over 1,000 islands, including Samoa, Tonga, Tahiti, Hawaii, and New Zealand, often characterized by their volcanic origins and breathtaking natural beauty. Polynesians are renowned for their navigational skills, using stars, ocean currents, and traditional knowledge to explore and settle these remote islands thousands of years ago. The Polynesian Triangle, with its corners at Hawaii, Easter Island, and New Zealand, marks the region's extent. Rich in culture, Polynesia is known for its traditional dances, tattoos, and communal living. European contact began in the 16th century, leading to significant cultural and political changes. Today, Polynesia's blend of ancient traditions and modern influences continues to fascinate travelers and scholars alike.

- 0730            **Morning Stretches** with Wellness Specialist Tila on the sundeck (deck 6)
- 0800-0900    **Breakfast is served** in the Outdoor Café
- 0930            **Melanesian Tattoo: camouflaging with Ink.** Join our Cultural Specialist Kura Happ for this presentation in the lounge
- 1130            **No Man is and Island - Exploring Symbiosis; on the Reef and it's Relevance in Everyday Life.** Join our naturalist Heather Dunham for her presentation in the lounge.
- 1230-1330    **Lunch is served** in the Outdoor Café
- 1400            **One hour advance please change your clocks from 1400 to 1500**
- 1600            **Pilates with Tila.** Join our Wellness Specialist Tila for an afternoon session of Pilates.
- 1700            **Pearls of French Polynesia.** Join Undersea Specialist Chris Cook for this presentation in the lounge.
- 1800            **Cocktails, Recap & Briefing for tomorrow** in the lounge
- 1900            **Dinner** is served in the dining room.
- After dinner   **Next Goal Wins:** join us in the lounge, or from your cabins, for a showing of Taika Waititi's comedy movie based on Thomas Rongen's efforts to lead the American Samoa national football team, considered one of the weakest association football teams in the world, to qualification for the 2014 FIFA World Cup.

# EXPEDITIONS

## RAROTONGA, COOK ISLANDS

Friday 24<sup>th</sup> January 2025

Sunrise 0616 / Sunset 1925

Rarotonga, the largest and most populated island in the Cook Islands, is a jewel of the South Pacific. Known for its lush volcanic peaks, crystalline lagoons, and vibrant Polynesian culture, it serves as the beating heart of this 15-island archipelago. The island has a rich history, with Polynesians believed to have settled there over 1,500 years ago. It later became a hub for European explorers in the 18th century, with Captain James Cook charting the surrounding waters. Today, Rarotonga blends its storied past with modern hospitality, offering a unique window into the traditions of its people, including the vibrant dance, art, and culinary scenes. Exploring Rarotonga unveils its multifaceted charm and our exploration will take you deep into this enchanting destination, enhancing your perspective by experiencing it from multiple vantage points—on land, biking, and through its welcoming community.

- 0630 **Morning Stretches** with Wellness Specialist Tila on the sundeck
- 0700-0800 **Breakfast is served** in the Outdoor Café
- 0800 **Hike tour group 1:** Wear sturdy footwear, take/wear swimsuit, towels provided.
- 0815 **Bike Tour:** Wear sturdy footwear, helmets provided
- 0815 **Coach Tour:** Wear comfortable footwear
- 0830 **Hike Tour group 2:** Wear sturdy footwear, take/wear swimsuit, towels provided.
- 0845 **Birding Hike:** Wear sturdy footwear
- 0845 **Beach option:** Wear your swimsuits. Towels provided
- 1300-1400 **Lunch is served** in the Outdoor Café
- 1430 **Galley Tours:** Group 3 (1430) & Group 4 (1515)
- 1630 **Island Geology.** Join our Naturalist Erin O'Brien for this presentation in the lounge
- 1730 **Join us on Deck 6 for Sunset Cocktails and music,** as we depart the Cook Islands towards French Polynesia!
- 1830 **Recap & Briefing for tomorrow** in the lounge
- 1915 **Island BBQ Dinner** is served at the Sundeck

# EXPEDITIONS

## AT SEA, EN ROUTE TO FRENCH POLYNESIA

Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> January 2025

Sunrise 0605 / Sunset 1900

French Polynesia is an overseas collective of France, consisting of five archipelagos. These archipelagos include approximately 130 islands scattered across the Pacific. The islands are all protrusions of parallel submarine ridges trending from the northwest to the southeast. The Society Islands are the most westerly and extensive group, accounting for two-fifths of the land area and nearly nine-tenths of the population. They consist of two groups, the Îles du Vent (Windward Islands) in the east and the Îles Sous le Vent (Leeward Islands) in the west. Except for a few small coral atolls, the Society Islands resulted from the emergence of underwater volcanoes. The volcanic cones are highly eroded and cut up into high crests and deep, radiating valleys. The often lushly vegetated mountains drop abruptly to narrow coastal strips or directly into lagoons or the sea. The islands are protected from the force of the sea by almost completely encircling barrier reefs.

0730	<b>Morning Stretches</b> with Wellness Specialist Tila on the sundeck
0800-0900	<b>Breakfast is served</b> in the Outdoor Café
1000	<b>Ethical Travel Photography.</b> Join our National Geographic Photo Expert Ashli Akins for this presentation in the lounge.
1230-1330	<b>Lunch is served</b> in the Outdoor Café
1400	<b>Galley Tour:</b> Group 5
1500	<b>Mangroves: Discover How This Often-Undervalued Ecosystems Are Now Seen As Crucial To The Future Of Our Planet.</b> Join our Undersea Specialist Chris Cook for this presentation in the lounge.
1600	<b>Afternoon Tea</b> is Available in the lounge
1630	<b>Captain Cook.</b> Join our Naturalist Elise Lockton for this presentation in the lounge.
1800	<b>Recap &amp; Briefing for tomorrow</b> in the lounge
1900	<b>Dinner</b> is served

**After Dinner CREW SHOW!** We have some **Incredible Talent** onboard the Orion! See you in the **Lounge** for a **Fun Night of Entertainment!!!**

# EXPEDITIONS

## RA'IA TEA, FRENCH POLYNESIA

Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> January 2025

Sunrise 0551 / Sunset 1845

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Today we will explore the sacred complex of Marae Taputapuātea, recognized by UNESCO for its important cultural heritage. This ceremony and funerary complex is quite extensive and is a fantastic example of the many Marae created on the various islands of eastern Polynesia. This particular complex sits near the center of the Polynesian Triangle. Established around 1000AD, the Marae was a gathering place for priests and Polynesian navigators from different islands. Its importance as a place to offer sacrifices to the gods was matched in its importance as a place to connect many different people and ideas.

- 0700            **Morning Stretches** with Wellness Specialist Tila on the sundeck
- 0730-0830    **Breakfast is served** in the Outdoor Café
- 0900            **Photo Editing on Phones and on the Computer.** Join our Lindblad Certified Photo Instructor Jeff Litton for this presentation in the lounge.
- 1100            **Traditional Voyaging in Modern Days.** Join our Cultural Specialist Tua Pittman for this presentation in the lounge.
- 1200-1300    **Lunch is served** in the Outdoor Café
- 1400            We will visit **Marae Taputapuātea** (UNESCO World Heritage Site). After the Marae visit, you have the choice to **Hike** a moderate, 1 mile trail for wonderful views of the bay and the Marae from above. The track is a forest trail which can be muddy and slippery with several wooden steps, elevation gain is 350ft and will take approximately 1 hour with return.
- 1800            **Cocktail Hour, Recap & Briefing for tomorrow** in the lounge
- 1900            **Special Gourmet Dinner** is served in the dining room

# EXPEDITIONS

## TAHA'A, FRENCH POLYNESIA

Monday 21<sup>st</sup> January 2025

Sunrise 0551 / Sunset 1841

### **Hotel note:**

-Last chance for Laundry! Please make sure you turn in your laundry before 9 AM.

-The Global Gallery closes at 12:00

-Your cabin accounts close at 16:00

Today we will visit the island of Taha'a, which shares a single coral reef and a lagoon with its neighbouring island Ra'iatea, which we visited yesterday. A peaceful island charmed by soft mountains surrounded by motus with bright sandy beaches. In the fertile valleys cutting within the island, local farmers grow watermelon and produce copra (dried white flesh of coconut). But this island is best known for the production of vanilla beans and for beautiful pearls.

Taha'a was formerly called Uporu, after the island of Upolu in Samoa. Due to its proximity to Ra'iatea, it has been strongly dependent. But during the 18th and 19th centuries it was a strategic place in the conflict of rivalries between Ra'iatea and Bora Bora. According to Polynesian legend, Taha'a and Ra'iatea were separated by the wagging tail of an eel, possessed by the spirit of a princess

Today we will first visit a local vanilla plantation and learn about its production, as well as the opportunity to make purchases to take home. We will then enjoy a private motu (island) for snorkelling and swimming, and a delicious BBQ lunch. The motu has banana lounges and umbrellas for you to relax under. We will then be picked up from the motu and taken for a short ride to snorkel with black tip reef sharks.

0700 **Morning Stretches** with Wellness Specialist Tila on the sundeck

0730-0830 **Breakfast is served** in the Outdoor Café

**This morning your photo team will be collecting the images for the guests' slide show between 10 to 11 in the morning in the observation lounge.**

0845 Group 1 Vanilla Plantation – Return to ship afterwards

0945 Group 2 Vanilla Plantation – Return to ship afterwards

1045 Group 3 Vanilla Plantation – Directly to Motu for Lunch

1130 Transfers to Private Motu for Lunch, Swimming & Snorkeling

1200-1300 **BBQ Lunch is served ashore**

1330 Shark Snorkeling Group 1

1500 Shark Snorkeling Group 2

1830 **Captain's Farewell Cocktail Party** in the lounge

1930 **Farewell Dinner** is served in the dining room