



missing deephaven

# An Adventure *of a Lifetime*

## French Polynesian Islands

*A self-sail to the French Polynesian Islands on a 48' Catamaran sounds like a fantasy that one would only read in a romantic novel. With sky-piercing, moss-green peaks lined with vivid turquoise lagoons, sultry French Polynesia is a place to take it slow and experience warm, laid-back island culture.*

*For two Deephaven couples that 'fantasy' came true. In October of 2018, Ray and Faye Haverstock, along with Brian and Linda Ross and 6 other couples flew from Minneapolis International Airport to LAX to begin an adventure of a lifetime.*

From LAX the group embarked on an 8-hour overwater flight to Papeete, the capital city of Tahiti. We were greeted by a small propeller aircraft taking us to our next destination, the island of Raiatea, the second largest of the Islands, after Tahiti. The two mighty 48' catamarans docked at the Moorings Marina would be our home for the next five days and nights.

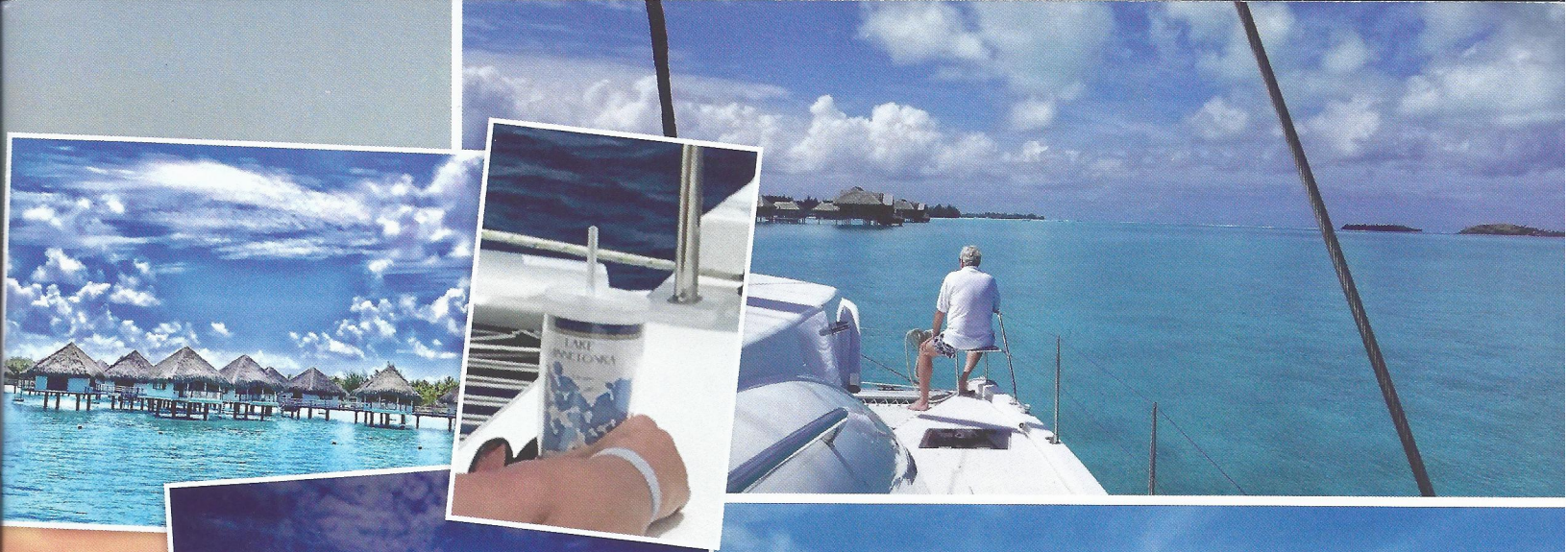
There are 118 geographically dispersed islands in French Polynesia, which make up a total land area of 1,359 square miles, scattered over more than 1,200 miles of ocean. The highest point is Mount Orohena, an extinct volcano.

French Polynesia is divided into five groups of islands: the Society Islands, Gamier Islands, Marquesas Islands, the Austral Islands, and the Tuamotu Archipelago famous for the Eden-like beauty of its turquoise waters and the abundance of underwater landscapes.

Our journey found us exploring several of the beautiful Society Islands, including the Island of Bora Bora, located halfway between South America and Australia. It has been called "the most beautiful island on the planet" and arguably "the most famous Island in the world." Author James Michener called it "so stunning, there are really no adequate words to describe it."

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On the day of boarding, chart briefings needed to be attended to. This involved an inventory check, a thorough familiarization with the yacht's systems and a detailed navigation and chart briefing. A procedure like this is recommended along with a boat check by Mooring employees explaining the various systems to the skippers and crew.

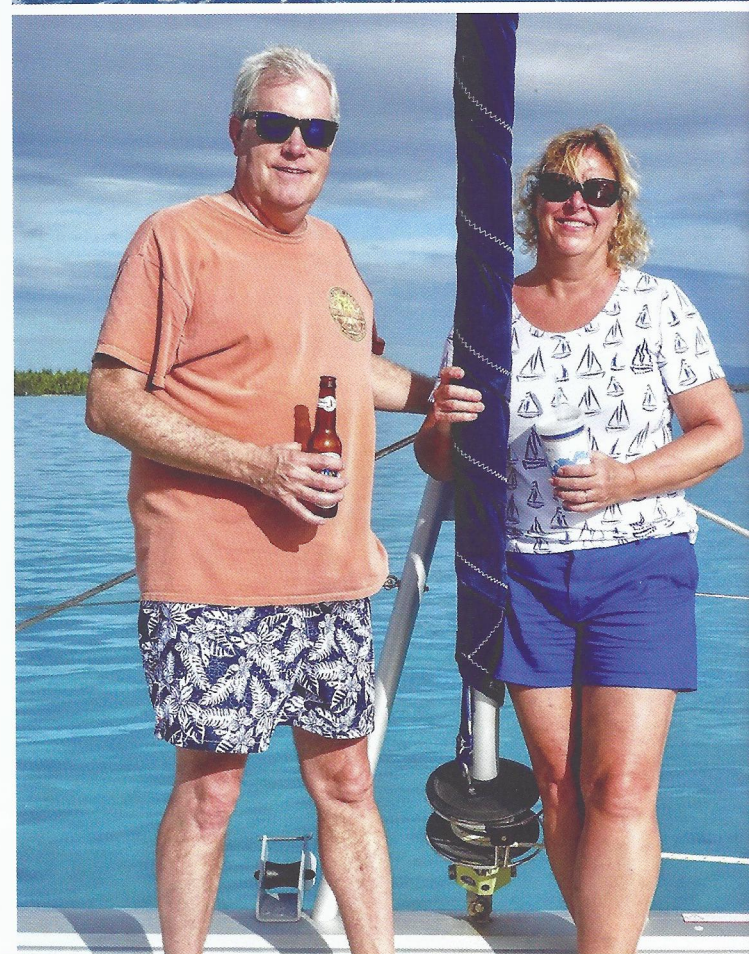
We were well prepared and ready to sail off into the sunset on our way to the Island of Taha'a and the Le Taha'a Island Resort. The resort is set on beautiful Motu Tautau, a private islet looking on the lush shores of Taha'a on one side and the majestic silhouette of Bora Bora on the other. After traveling approximately 10 miles from the marina, the plan included flogging a ball to anchor the Catamarans for the night, prepare for evening dinner at the resort and begin our celebration to what would be an amazing self-sailing trip and experience.

An early day followed as we embarked on a 3-day sail taking us to what is called "The Garden Island", Huahine. This Island is equivalent to the "Garden of Eden", it is an immense tropical jungle thriving with coconut plantations, vanilla orchids, banana groves, breadfruit trees and watermelon fields. Huahine is also a culturally preserved sanctuary with sacred temples hidden throughout dense vegetation. The beauty of the surrounding seas along with the blue lagoons and majestic islands were a site to behold. It was also a time to anchor off the main village that was just inside the Northern-most pass on the West side of the island. Time to explore, relax and enjoy the lush forests, untamed landscape and quaint villages. Last call of business was picking up extra provisions for the continued sale and selecting wines from the extensive French wine inventory.

The fourth day found us sailing to the beautiful island of Bora Bora. To find our anchor spot we needed to sail approximately 18 miles around the Southwest tip of the Bora Bora reef to the only pass into the lagoon on the Westside. Even the most seasoned traveler is stunned when entering the lagoon, which casts a spell over you from the moment you arrive. Time seemed to stop still while being surrounded by its natural beauty. It's really impossible to exaggerate how pristine and beautiful the Resorts are offering villas and bungalows that are located over the water in the lagoon.

Once inside the lagoon, a stop at the Bora Bora Yacht Club was in order to top off the water tanks on the Catamarans. Then to drop anchor and enjoy the beautiful paradise we were surrounded by for the night. The next morning a land tour was organized. The group dinged to land and met at the famous "Bloody Mary's", a funky restaurant known for its seafood and celebrity visits.

It was hard to divert our attention from the lagoon and surrounding area, but a 1/2-day tour of the main island with a knowledgeable guide was fascinating. The views of the surrounding islands from a higher elevation was spectacular. Also, a tour of a US







Military base where 5,000 soldiers installed defenses along the coast to protect the island against a possible surprise attack by Japan. The United States discovered Bora Bora in 1946 when the soldiers returned after the war and spoke of this mystically beautiful island.

When daydreaming about an escape to French Polynesia, many think first of Bora Bora, that green-and-blue blip on the radar in the Society Island chain made famous by honeymooners from all over the world, but French Polynesia is so much more than that. What we were left with from our trip was a sense of renewal, a sincere appreciation for a culture that puts its people's happiness and wellbeing over everything else, and the experience of visiting a small piece of "paradise."

So go to French Polynesia, just make sure to stay long enough for it to sink deep into your heart. That way, you can at least escape back there in a daydream any time you want.

