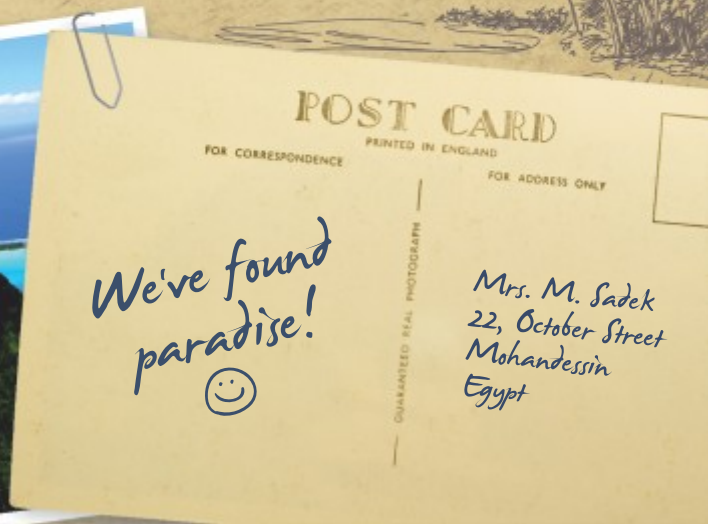
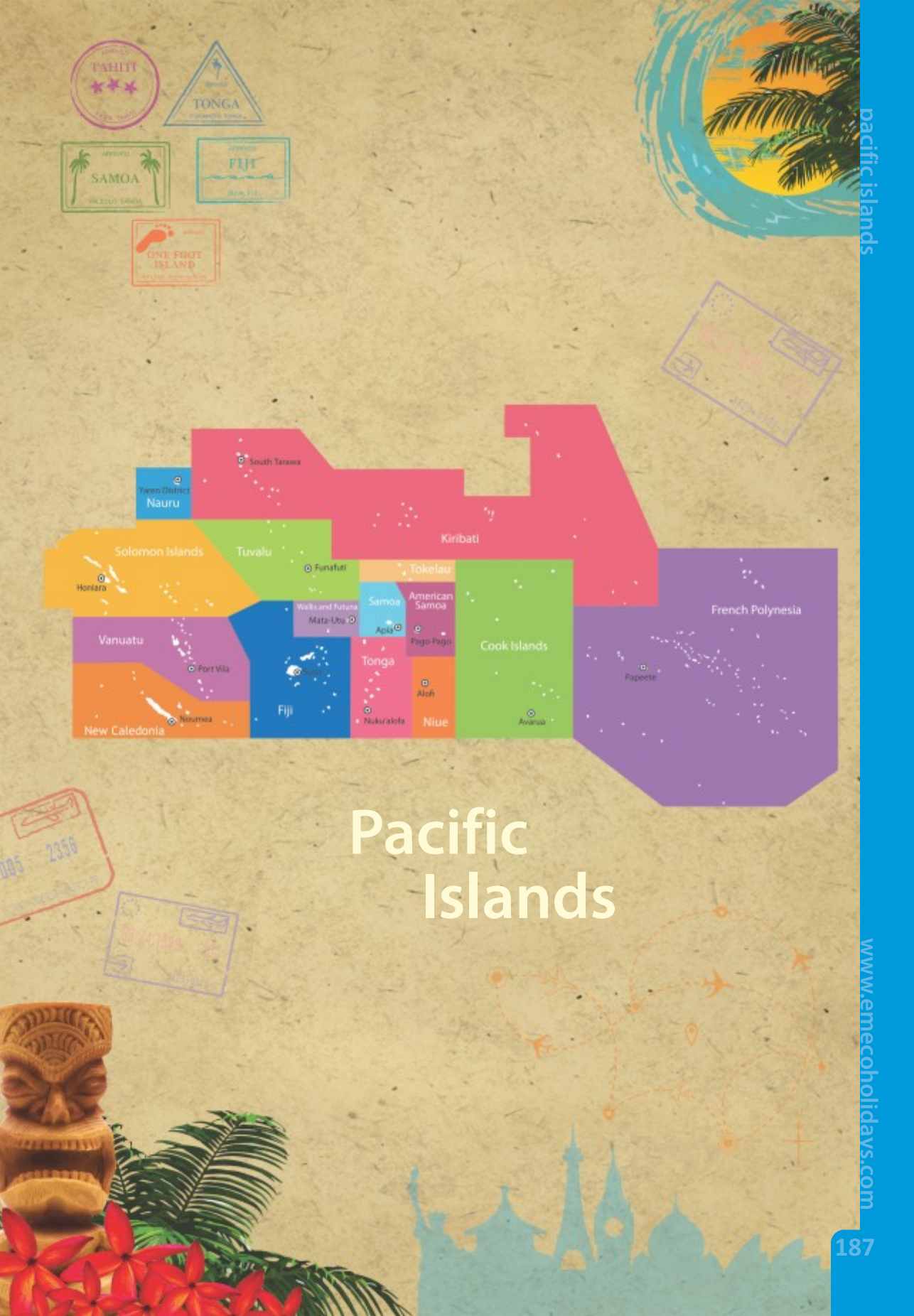


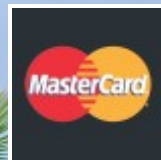


Pacific Islands





Pacific Islands



Transportation

Convenient bright yellow Cook buses circle Rarotonga in both directions every half hour, they stop operating at midnight. Taxis are available, but can be expensive. Rental cars or scooters are very popular. A drivers license can be obtained from there, ask at your hotel.

Tipping

Tipping and bargaining are not customary in the Cook Islands and can be considered offensive by some.

Language

Cook Islands Maori (Polynesian) is the official language but everyone speaks English, and all signs are also in English.



The Cook Islands

A mix of coral atolls and volcanic islands make up the 15 islands of this unique group located half way between New Zealand and Hawaii in the Pacific Ocean. Largely unspoiled by tourism they offer glistening white sands, warm waters and palm fringed blue lagoons. Overlooked by volcanic mountains lush with tropical green vegetation these islands make up some of the most spectacular natural scenery in the South Pacific and are truly a vacationer's paradise!



Life changing experiences...

Explore Rarotonga This lush green tropical paradise is the capital and the hub of the Cook Islands. Rarotonga is surrounded by a sparkling blue lagoon, water is paramount to this island's lifestyle, enjoy fishing, diving, snorkelling, sailing or simply paddling. Venture into the rainforest interior to explore waterfalls, villages and plantations. Friday is the big night out so check out the island's colourful bars and clubs, great fun to be had by all ages!

Lagoon Cruise Take a glass bottom boat cruise through the Muri lagoon and marine reserve, swim and snorkel through the coral gardens, try your hand at coconut tree climbing and enjoy a delicious fish BBQ on the beach. A variety of local tours are available and worth trying out. (Note that some companies donate a percentage of sales to marine conservation).

Fishing paradise Marlin, Barracuda, Sailfish and Tuna are just a few of the exciting game fish that swim the waters around the Cook Islands. Rarotonga's rich waters are amongst the richest in the world and offer some of the best deep sea fishing and saltwater fly fishing. The perfect place to make a few "fish that got away stories" to take home.

Set off on a shopping expedition The busy Saturday morning market at Punanga-nui is worth a trip, traditional tivaevae (quilts), cushion covers and

bedspreads can be found. Look out for fine white "rito" hats and fans made in the outer islands, or search out the beautiful Cook Island's black pearl, a unique reminder of the islands or the perfect gift for a loved one.

Try the Aitutaki tempo Life on this popular island moves at a wonderfully relaxed pace. Explore the crystal clear lagoon, lie on the finest white sand beaches or soak up a little of the local culture. The Saturday market at Orongo Center is a hive of industry and on Sundays visit Vaipae village, nicknamed "Hollywood", the fire dancers, drummers and performances are not to be missed!

Visit Atiu The third largest island in the Cooks, Atiu is over eight million years old. A volcanic mass, risen from the sea and surrounded by a coral limestone reef. With no nightclubs, virtually no township, around 400 people and a couple of cafes and precious little traffic, this is a true island escape. For the adventurer a visit to the amazing three caverns harbour is a must, with clear cool pools of water, stalagmites, stalactites and a high natural cathedral ceiling above it is well worth the trip.



Facts for the traveller...

Weather

Warm and sunny all year round. The winter months, May to October, have average temperatures of 18 -28°C. The summer months from April to November experience averages of 21-29°C with tropical rains and some humidity.

Best time to go

Sept-Oct | March-April

Time zone

GMT-10

Currency

New Zealand Dollar

Shopping hours

Mon - Fri: 8pm to 4pm

Sat: 9am to 12pm

Saturday Raratonga market
6am to 11.30am

Did you know?

There are no traffic lights in the Cook Islands and only one roundabout.

The Cook Islands are named after the famous explorer Captain James Cook.



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A vibrant tropical beach scene under a clear blue sky. Several tall palm trees with lush green fronds stand on the left. In the background, a building with a traditional thatched roof is partially visible. The sandy beach curves along the water's edge, where a small white boat with a motor is anchored. The water is a clear, light blue. A text box with a blue border and white background is overlaid on the lower-left portion of the image, containing information about transportation.

● **Transportation**

● Public bus services are available in the largest cities Nadi and Suva. Tour buses cover all the island's places of interest and are a good option for a relaxing holiday. Taxis are common, usually without a meter so best to agree on the fare in advance. ● Car rentals are also popular with many companies to choose from. ● Boats and ferries ply the offshore islands along with air travel where distance is a factor. ●

Fiji

The essence of a tropical island paradise

Set in the tropical South Pacific, Fiji offers the holiday of a lifetime, relaxation combined with sheer natural beauty, swaying palms, clear waters, blue lagoons, rain forests and people with warm friendly smiles. Made up of more than 300 islands the country is a vibrant melting pot of cultures with an array of accommodation to suit all tastes and budgets, Fiji offers something for everyone. Every activity you could wish for on a tropical island is available, dive, snorkel, swim, play golf, shop or simply just lie on the beach, soak up the sun and watch it set at the end of each day ... true holiday bliss!



Life changing experiences...

A golfing heaven! Some of the best courses in the world, with a range of choices for beginners to championship courses, the famous Sheraton Fiji Resort course, known as the "Thinking" course features water hazards on 15 of the 18 holes!

Incredible diving Beautifully clear water with myriads of coloured fish and coral. Professional friendly people on the islands make sure you get the best from your dive.

Take a scenic tour Discover the main island, venture inland to Navua where you can enjoy a longboat ride, try bamboo rafting and swim in the waterfall. The beauty of this island really has to be seen to be believed.

Shopping in Nadi & Suva Shop in the local markets, stylish boutiques or browse the budget gift and souvenir shops, get you bartering skills ready. Wood carving is popular along with woven mats, baskets and masi (tapa) cloth. Don't go home without a one size fits all "sulu" (sarong) for men or women, ladies can wear them in so many different ways, the men wear them as a skirt, and yes, many wear them to work!

Try a little adventure Jet boating, white



Facts for the traveller...

Weather

Fiji enjoys a warm sunny climate without extremes of heat and cold. There is a mild, dry season from May to October with a warm, wetter time from November to April, with the possibility of cyclones during this period. Average temperatures throughout the year range between 26°C to 30°C

Best time to go

April to October

Currency

Fijian Dollar F\$

Time zone

GMT+12

water rafting, rainforest hiking, mountain biking, big game fishing or swimming with Manta rays. With so much available the hardest thing you'll have to do during your holiday will be to choose!

Honeymooners Fiji is an obvious choice for the ultimate in romantic honeymoons with luxury resorts, white beaches, warm sea breezes, fragrant tropical flowers, breathtaking sunsets, what more could a happy couple wish for in a special holiday.

Language

English is widely spoken plus other local dialects.

Tipping

Tipping is not encouraged anywhere in Fiji. Tip with a smile and 'vinaka', which is Fijian for 'thank you'. Some resorts operate a staff fund where any tips received are shared.

Did you know?

Only 110 of the 332 islands in Fiji are inhabited.

Fiji is situated on the International Date Line, there is a particular spot on Taveuni Island where a person can stand with one foot in the current day and one foot in the day before!

Until the mid 19th Century eating one's enemy was an accepted and honoured tradition in Fiji! Meet your enemies with sharp knives! (...and forks!)

Fiji is home to the world famous professional golfer Vijay Singh.

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Tahiti & Bora Bora

Paradise on earth!

Tahiti is the largest island of 118 islands in the archipelago known as "The Society Islands" which form French Polynesia. Bora Bora, a traveller's favourite, is surrounded by a lagoon and a barrier reef with two distinct twin peaks towering above the center. This exotic island group offers idyllic getaways for anyone in search of the perfect tropical holiday. Enjoy the markets of Papeete, Tahiti's capital, search for the perfect "Black Pearl", try out the island nightlife or just soak up the sun, a memorable holiday for all those who visit.

Bora Bora



Life changing experiences...

Join the annual Heiva Festival Watch the traditional fruit carrying race, the festival includes Bastille Day celebrations, held on July 14th commemorating the island's 'French Connection'. Enjoy outrigger canoe races, fishing competitions and dance performances.

Bungalows on the water There's really no other experience like it, stay in a luxurious bungalow right over the lagoon, some suites have glass floors and breakfast is delivered by an outrigger canoe, you can spend your days swimming right from your door.

Explore the Lagoon There are so many activities in this famous lagoon some visitors never leave the water. Snorkel your way around or see the stunning coral and schools of colourful fish in a glass bottom boat. Rent a jet ski and beach hop your way around the island, or take a shark and ray safari, totally memorable.

Honeymooners There is a reason why Bora Bora is considered the most romantic island in the world! An idyllic spot for newlyweds, with luxurious service, comfort and privacy, the island

and its special resorts are the ultimate in honeymoon heaven.

Tahiti



Life changing experiences...

Take a "Le truck" ride The local transport to get you around Papeete, an experience in itself, Le Truck will get you to where you want to go, fun, cheap and definitely not to be missed.

"Le Marche" Papeete This public market is in every sense the heart of Tahiti's capital. An amazing array of fruit, fish, meat and beautiful traditional arts and handicrafts can be found here. The market is open daily from 5am to 6pm, take your camera and enjoy the atmosphere.

For the Golfer Play a round of golf the on the 18 hole Olivier Breaud International Golf Course, it's been called Tahiti's best kept secret amongst golfers, overlooking the sea, palm tree lined fairways, colourful flowers and pure white sand bunkers make this course a truly memorable one.

Take a 'Circle Island' tour The road loops around the wild and rocky east coast of the island, experience the villages and Tahitian culture, see the spectacular black sand beaches. The quieter west coast in contrast has superbly peaceful lagoons and white sandy beaches, well worth the trip.

Dive and snorkel paradise All levels catered for here, from shallow lagoon diving to oceanic drop-offs with infinite marine life, coloured coral cliffs, and superb wreck dives, this is life changing underwater scenery at its best.

Did you know?

Over half the population is under the age of 20.

There are no snakes, poisonous spiders or any land creatures that can hurt or sting you on these islands.



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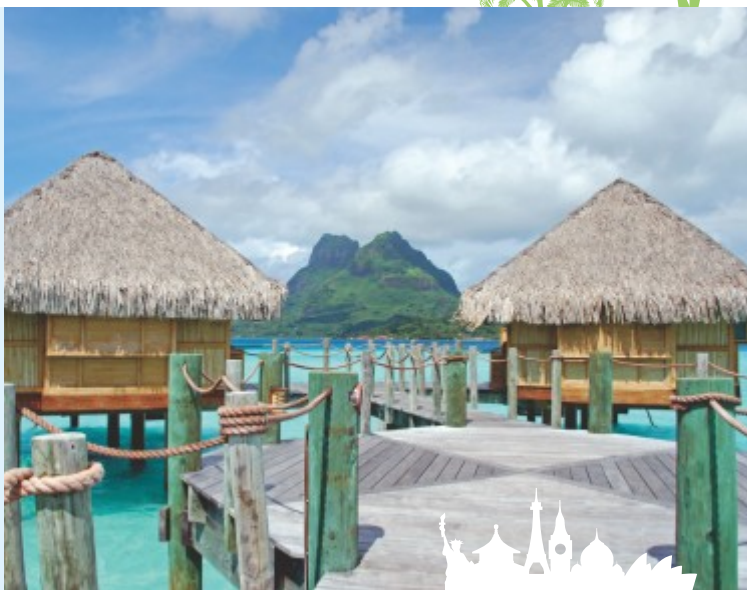
Tahiti



Life changing experiences...

Visit a pearl farm These beautiful gems of the sea come in all colours, from the stunning darkest black to green blue, bronze and even pink, they're sold in many shops around the island and can be set to your own style.

Honeymoon heaven! There's no doubt that a honeymoon in Tahiti is the ultimate experience. The sunsets alone are newlywed material! The people are friendly, beaches superb, the food delicious and the opportunity to really spoil yourselves in a luxury resort makes it the perfect location to begin life with the one you love.



pacific islands



Facts for the traveller...

Currency

Pacific Franc.

Time zone

GMT-10

Language

English and French spoken plus local Polynesian languages

Tipping

Tipping is not customary or expected, however, it is always welcome when offered for extremely good service.

Weather

Tahiti & Bora Bora are part of the "Society Islands" the climate is considered tropical and can be divided into two basic seasons, wet and dry. The wet season (low season) between November & April can be quite humid and muggy, with frequent storms, brief but unpredictable, with temperatures ranging from 27-30°C. The dry season (high season) between May and

October is the Polynesian winter where temperatures generally range between 24 and 28°C, rain is rare. The dry season is preferable for diving due to increased visibility.

Best time to go

June is festival season and considered the best time to go although it can get windy.

Transportation

Public transport offers two bus services: "Le Truck" an open windowed, truck-like bus with bench seating is a unique way to get around and meet the locals and the large white RTC motor coaches offer more conventional bus travel (Le Truck is also available on Bora Bora). Papeete has a large number of taxis, although they can be hard to find during rush hours and rain, flag one from the street or pick one up from several stations. Taxi fares are set by the government but best to agree on the price before you get in.

Did you know?

The word tattoo originates from the Tahitian word tattau, which means "a picture". Tahitian tattoos served as rites of passage, telling the history of the wearer's life.

The letter "B" does not exist in the Tahitian language. Bora Bora is actually Pora Pora, meaning first born, but early visitors heard it as Bora Bora.

The long boxes outside of the homes of Tahitians are not mail boxes, they are boxes for French bread, delivered twice a day! Mail must be picked up from the post office.



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