

Raiatea Island, Society Islands, French Polynesia

The sacred heart of Polynesia — where ancient voyagers set sail to colonize Hawaii, New Zealand, and Easter Island. Raiatea is authentic, spiritual, and utterly unlike its glitzier neighbors.

 Pier (Uturoa deep-water dock)  Typical call: 7–9 hrs  French Pacific Franc (XPF)  French & Tahitian  UNESCO World Heritage Site

MY DAY IN PORT

Ship/Date: _____	Arrive: _____	All aboard: _____
Excursion: _____	Notes: _____	

GETTING ASHORE

Docking: Deep-water pier in Uturoa — walk straight off to town

Walk to center: Under 5 min to market, ATMs, and restaurants

Best For: Culture, history, Faaroa River, Taha'a lagoon day trips

Don't Miss: Taputapuatea Marae — the most sacred site in Polynesia

 Getting around:  **Taxi**  1,000–2,000 XPF (~\$10–20 USD) ·  **Rideshare**  not available

TOP THINGS TO DO

- **Taputapuatea Marae — UNESCO Sacred Temple** — The most important ancient site in all of Polynesia.
- **Faaroa River Boat Tour** — The only navigable river in French Polynesia winds through a cathedral of tropical rainforest.
- **Taha'a Lagoon & Motu Snorkel Day** — Raiatea and Taha'a share a vast turquoise lagoon.
- **Circle Island by 4WD or Scooter** — Rent a car or scooter to circle the island, stopping at Taputapuatea, Faaroa Bay, and roadside fruit stands.
- **Motu Iriu — Lagoon Islet Beach Day** — Raiatea's main island has no public beaches, but the lagoon is dotted with white-sand motus (islets).

BEST WALKS

- **Uturoa Town & Street Art Walk** 1–2 hrs · Flat · Free — Start at the pier, head to the Marché d'Uturoa for fresh fruit, Polynesian crafts, and local snacks (monoi oil, pareos, vanilla).

WEATHER · DAYLIGHT · MONEY

 CLIMATE (AVG °F · RAINY DAYS)				 DAYLIGHT &  MONEY	
Mon	High	Low	Rain	Apr 6:14AM–5:56PM · Jun 6:32AM–5:40PM · Aug 6:23AM–5:56PM · Sep 6:00AM–6:00PM · Oct 5:37AM–6:05PM	
Apr	83°	78°	24d		
Jun	81°	77°	18d		
Aug	80°	75°	16d		
Sep	80°	75°	19d		
Oct	80°	76°	23d		

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

- Sunday = ghost town. If you dock on a Sunday, the market, supermarkets, and most shops will be closed. Pre-book a ship or private excursion — don't rely on wandering into town.
- Book car rental months ahead. There are very few vehicles available in Raiatea. Walk-up rental on cruise day is nearly impossible. Reserve online well before your cruise.
- Currency is XPF (French Pacific Franc). ATMs on the main street accept international cards. Some vendors take USD/EUR but rates are poor. Credit cards work at larger restaurants and shops.
- No beaches on the main island. The shoreline is mangroves and volcanic rock. For a beach, book a motu water taxi or a Taha'a lagoon excursion — well worth it.
- The Tiare Apetahi is sacred. This rare white flower grows only on Mt. Temehani and is protected by law. Do not attempt to pick or remove it — fines are serious and the cultural significance is immense.
- Taputapuatea is unmissable. If you do only one thing on Raiatea, it's this UNESCO marae. Far more atmospheric and important than most Pacific sites — hire a guide who can explain its meaning.

Raiatea Island, Society Islands, French Polynesia — Port Map cruiseports.org

Red = walkable sights · Amber = excursions farther out · P = cruise terminal. Numbers match the order you'd typically visit.



- 1

Mount Tapioi
Forested peak rising directly behind Uturoa, reachable by a steep trail with panoramic lagoon views from the summit.
- 2

Uturoa Market
Central covered market selling produce, fish, and Tahitian crafts in the heart of town.
- P

Cruise port / terminal