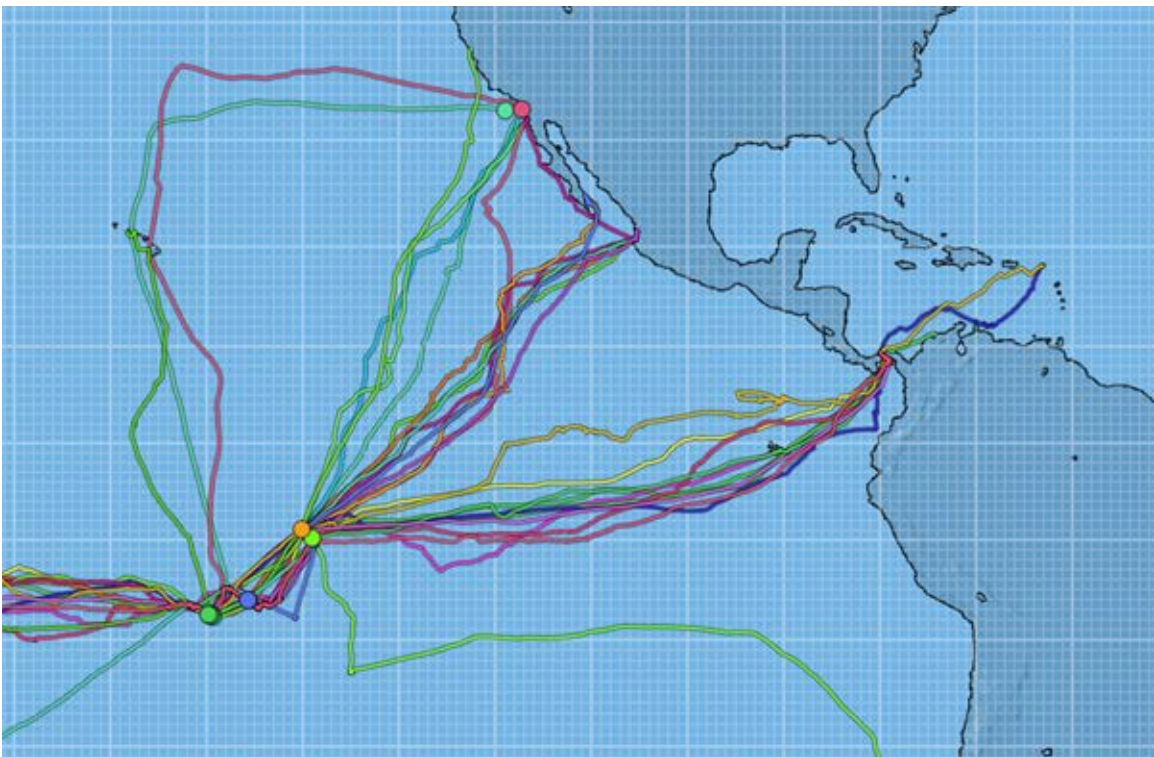


Ahoy Pacific Puddle Jumpers!

This message confirms that you are officially registered with the 2023 Pacific Puddle Jump. So welcome to the fleet!



Still today, French Polynesians revere their centuries-old traditions. (Photo Andy Turpin)



We ask all fleet members to check in daily. The PW tracking system will do that for you. (2022 boats shown here late in the season, with some boats headed west from Tahiti's Leeward Islands. (Courtesy PredictWind)

About Fleet Letters — This is the first in a series of PPJ “Fleet Letters” that you’ll receive between now and July. They will include important fleet info compiled to help you to be well-prepared for the crossing, to be clear about regulations and arrival procedures, and have at least a basic understanding of French Polynesia’s fascinating history and rich cultural traditions. Although we’ve included a photo and an illustration in this note, Fleet Letters sent out after Jan 1 normally will NOT contain photos or other graphics, in order to keep their size small. And they will usually be sent to your land-based email only, (not to offshore email addresses, (i.e. via Iridium, Sailmail, etc.) unless requested — or if the subject matter demands urgent attention.

Respect & Appreciation — Throughout the Puddle Jump’s 25-year history, we’ve met dozens of sailors who had dreamed about visiting Tahiti and her sister islands for decades before finally making the leap. And we know from personal experience about the colossal effort required to prepare for such a voyage. Once you arrive, though, we think you’ll agree that your time and money were well spent. And you’ll understand why we consider it a “privilege” to cruise these storied islands and atolls.

Not only do French Polynesia’s five archipelagos comprise one of the most dramatically beautiful cruising grounds in the world, but the population is generally cheerful and welcoming toward sailors. That said though, maritime tourism is a relatively small contributor to the economy of this French Overseas Territory, and most residents would like to keep it that way. No one wants to see these anchorages become as crowded as those in the Med or Eastern Caribbean.

In contrast to many popular travel destinations that tend to be overrun with tourists, a big part of Tahiti’s allure to both land-based tourists and sailors is that the region’s rich cultural traditions — in music, dance, sport and cuisine — exist in the forefront of everyday life here, while international tourism in all forms exists quietly in the background. And as you’ll soon see, that’s a good thing.

Bottom line: French Polynesia is a very special place. So we ask every Pacific Puddle Jumper to always show respect to the islanders, as well as to their laws and traditions, and always do your best to avoid damaging the territory’s spectacular-but-fragile underwater ecosystems — so those who follow can “share the magic.”

First Steps — As elsewhere, the pandemic led to a variety of changes to immigration rules and regulations, some temporary and some semi-permanent. Consequently, there has been a lot of conflicting info floating around, especially on social media. The following, however, is accurate and up-to-date.

Length of Stay in French Polynesia —

— **European Union passport holders** can stay as long as they want in French Polynesia without having to obtain visas in advance, as long as they *do not* work.

— **Non-EU passport holders** (including Americans, Canadians, Brits, Aussies and New Zealanders) can stay only 90 days unless they have obtained “Long Stay Visas” for up to a year BEFORE MAKING THE CROSSING. Time and

patience, but it's well worth the effort. As we often say, Tahiti is not the sort of place where you'd want to be in a hurry — 90 days is just too short. Please see Chuck Houlihan's tirelessly updated explanation of the LSV process here <https://www.jacarandajourney.com/fplongstayvisa>.

— **Non-EU Vessels** can stay in French Polynesia for two years, after which they must stay out of the territory before they can return and begin another two-year stay.

— **Vaccinations** — Presentation of COVID-19 vaccination history is no longer required to enter FP. However, a Maritime Declaration of Health must be submitted 48 hours before arrival. (Details on this to follow.)

— **Duty-Free Fuel Documents** — In the past, there have been some misunderstandings about obtaining duty-free fuel in the islands. Because visiting cruisers are “vessels in transit” they are eligible to obtain a document that allows them to buy diesel fuel in the Marquesas, or Society Islands at a deeply discounted rate (30% to 40% savings). If you wait to fill up until you reach Tahiti, you can obtain this document without the help of a yacht agent, but in the Marquesas you will need an agent to obtain a duty-free fuel document for you. Yes, agents charge a fee for this service, but the savings in fuel cost will typically outweigh the broker's fee on your first fill-up (i.e. \$100 to \$140 savings on 50 gallons). The document will be good for six months before it needs to be renewed.

Helpful PPJ Partners — The Pacific Puddle Jump is primarily focused on building camaraderie between fleet members, providing an additional measure of safety via vessel tracking, and keeping crews accurately informed about current and future government regulations and policies. That said while offering sponsor discounts is not our primary purpose, we are happy to offer you the following discounts from key sponsors:

— **PredictWind** offers existing customers a 20% rebate on existing subscriptions, and new customers a 20% discount on new subscriptions for their weather prediction and tracking services. PW staff will facilitate our fleet tracking functions throughout the 2023 PPJ (Jan to July), which will allow fleet monitors, plus friends and family back home to track your progress. Please see the related attachment.

— **TahitiCrew** yacht agency has been a key partner of the PPJ for the past decade. The agency offers Pacific Puddle Jumpers a 15% discount on all their services, including bond exemptions and duty-free fuel certificates. In addition, PPJ entrants are eligible for a whole program of tourism-related goods and services, administered by TahitiCrew (i.e. car rentals).

— **STH Marine**, the territory's biggest chandlery, offers 10% off most products, which can save you a bundle.

— We are also proud to have the support of the **South Pacific Sailing Network**, whose members promote sustainable cruising practices throughout the Central South Pacific, as well as the support of our longtime partners at Tahiti-based **Archipelagoes**, whose free Stopover Handbook for French Polynesia is a comprehensive resource for FP cruising, including contact info for government agencies and yacht services throughout the archipelagos. Download it for free from the PPJ homepage.

— **Save the Dates** — We have partnered with key members of the South Pacific Sailing Network to offer a series of highly informative South Pacific Bon Voyage seminars (free): January 27 & 28 at Panama's Shelter Bay Marina (Caribbean side of the Canal), and January 30 at the Vallarta YC in Nuevo Vallarta, Mexico. (We'll also do our best to make video versions available afterward.)

Safe travels,

— Andy Turpin, PPJ Founder & Director