

Puddle Jumpers,

TAHITI CREW:

PPJ email #1 includes Tahiti Crew's Information Letter and Rate Sheet, which will help you understand the steps you need to take when registering with Tahiti Crew for the Clearance/Bond/Duty Free fuel package or other services. While you are under no obligation to work with this agency, we remind you that your PPJ registration entitles you to a \$50 discount on their packages. Plus, we are told that the duty free fuel savings is around 40%.

Contact: TahitiCrew@mail.com

DAILY CHECK-IN:

As mentioned in the previous fleet letter, we encourage all PPJ boats to register at www.CruiserSat.net. The PPJ fleet has been invited to use this net for checkins, tracking, group messaging and more while fleet members are making the initial passage to the Marquesas, plus the Marquesas to Tuamotus passage, and the Tuamotus to Tahiti passage. The idea is to increase fleet safety and camaraderie.

If you did not receive the PDF about joining www.CruiserSat.net, please email events@latitude38.com with subject line: "RESEND PPJ SAT NET INFO."

PANAMA SENDOFF PARTIES:

We hope to see many of you in Panama at either of our upcoming events in Panama and Mexico. Representatives from Tahiti, Fiji, Tonga and New Zealand will attend. Seminar / party format with drinks and snacks at each of the following.

Feb 28 - South Pacific Bon Voyage at Pacific side, Panama

10am-2pm Country Inn and Suites, Amador. Co-hosted by the Balboa YC, the Pacific Puddle Jump and the South Pacific Sailing Network.

Mar 1 - South Pacific Bon Voyage at Caribbean side, Panama

10am-2pm at Shelter Bay Marina. Co-hosted by Shelter Bay, the Pacific Puddle Jump and the South Pacific Sailing Network.

BANDERAS BAY SENDOFF:

Mar 4 - South Pacific Bon Voyage and Pacific Puddle Jump Sendoff, Nuevo Vallarta, Mexico

2-6 pm at the Vallarta YC, Nuevo Vallarta. Co-hosted by the Vallarta YC, the Pacific Puddle Jump, Latitude 38 and the South Pacific Sailing Network. Email andyturpinatlarge@gmail.com for additional info.

LONG STAY VISA TIPS:

Many sailors have contacted us about this issue, so we'll share the latest info:

As explained before, European Union passport holders can stay (as non-working visitors) indefinitely in French Polynesia. All others, however, must obtain Long Stay Visas (in advance of travel) in order to visit FP for more than 90 days (the standard term given to Americans, Canadians and others upon arrival.) Boats can stay for three years without being officially imported.

A company named VFS Global now administers the application process for Long Stay visas in French Polynesia, as well as other European countries and territories.

The basic rules for Americans is that they must apply for an appointment with VFS facility in the city closest to your permanent home — on the West Coast that's San Francisco or Los Angeles, CA.

Elsewhere, Chicago, Miami, Houston, Atlanta, New York, Boston and Washington, DC. You may not

apply more than three months in advance of your estimated arrival date in FP, and you must surrender your passport while your LS application is being assessed (so they can attach the visa inside it, we are told.) One bit of good news is that you no longer have to appear in person to retrieve your passport once your case has been reviewed. Passports can be picked up in person or FedExed back to whatever address you specify (for about \$35), possibly even to Mexico. But, of course, doing this you would risk losing them, or having their delivery to you delayed.

Having said all this, the French Embassies in both Panama City and Mexico City will accept applications for Long Stay Visas from long-term cruisers. (Related: Several PPJ sailors have been told by US Consulate staff in Mexico City, that they will issue duplicate passports for Americans who need to surrender their passport in order to obtain a French visa.)

Three days ago we applied for one-year visas at San Francisco's VFS office. Here are a few tips that might help if you apply there or elsewhere.

- To apply and prepare your documents online, your computer will need to be linked to a printer and have strong wifi. The application site is: https://france-visas.gouv.fr/en_US/web/france-visas. You can make an appointment via the site, but be sure you bring with you all items listed below, as there is a \$60 charge for each appointment. (You will be asked to set up an account, after which you can save your application and make changes to it.)
- The San Francisco VFS office has moved to 110 Sutter St., San Francisco, floor 5. Parking garage a block farther up Sutter (expensive but convenient). FedEx office nearby for copying or printing, if necessary.
- Note that in the question about your accommodation plans, yachts are not a choice. But writing in Sailing Yacht Whatever, seemed to be acceptable. If you choose to list a marina as your home base, the two main marinas in Tahiti are Papeete Marina (downtown: Ph : 40 47 48 54 / 89 47 48 54 VHF 09, marinadepapeete@portppt.pf) and Marina Taina (Ph: 40 41 02 25, marinataina@mail.pf).
- Application processing time varies depending on various factors. We were told the minimum turnaround time is two weeks, but it could take four or five weeks.
- For us, the price of applying was 90 euros each (about \$113 USD).
- Once you submit your application, you may check its status online via the VFS site.
- You must submit **ALL** of the following documents:
 - Application form, printed from the VFS site
 - ID photograph (on heavy photo paper, not from a home printer; 35 x 45 mm photo with head height 32-36 mm.
 - Travel document (passport) issued in the past 10 years that is valid for at least three months after the planned end of your stay, and must have at least two blank pages. (Note that the proper choice on the form regarding your passport is "ordinary passport" not "official passport.")
 - Photocopy of passport pages with I.D. info
 - Letter stating that you do not intend to work during your stay in FP.
- If employed, letter from your employer; or copy of business license if self-employed; or pension certificate (or three months financial statements showing retirement income)
 - An OFII form, with the upper portion filled out. Note: There is no mention of this form in the

application itself, only in the checklist generated after your form has been completed. Google OFII to download and print the form.

- Proof of residence arrangement in FP: For this we were advised to submit documents proving that we owned a live aboard vessel, i.e. federal or state registration.

- Proof of health insurance certificate (covering any possible costs for medical repatriation (medieval), and emergency and/or hospital treatment. Many sailors buy a Travel Assist policy from the Divers Alert Network (DAN) to satisfy this requirement. Minimum of 30,000 euro coverage.

- Proof of ample funds to cover all your expenses while in FP (retirement funds, pension mentioned above) — 3 months of statements — plus proof of other income from non-FP sources

Yes, applying is a bit of a headache, but well worth the effort and expense.

Andy Turpin

andyturpinatlarge@gmail.com

Editor-at-Large, Latitude 38 magazine

Director, Pacific Puddle Jump

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