

Obtaining a French Polynesian Long Stay
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This document is for those folks that require a long stay visa. EU folks are exempt from a visa.

I originally wrote this document back in Sept 2015 and things have changed a bit since we arrived. Currently in our second season in FP. Updates to this note reflect current changes.

There are two parts to the process to stay in French Polynesia beyond the normal 3 months.

- Part #1 is applying outside of French Polynesia at a French Embassy for a long stay visa.
- Part #2 is applying for a carte de sejour (cds) once you arrive in French Polynesia.

Part #1 Applying for a Long Stay Visa in French Polynesia

It appears that each French embassy or consulate has their own flavor of what is required and how long it takes to obtain a long term visa for French Polynesia. Much depends on how busy the two women are in Papeete in processing your request

- Panama appears to be the easiest and quickest return of 3-6 weeks.
- Ecuador took Linda about 2 months.
- Mexico City worked well for those folks in Mexico

Linda applied in Ecuador (2015) and it was very easy. I include the message we received from the French embassy when I sent them an email asking them what Linda should supply.

“As requested, please find attached the long stay visa application form for your wife.

We are also sending you hereafter the documents you have to present with a long stay visa application form:

- Long stay visa application form duly filled and signed
- two passport photos
- Copy of your passport
- Cover letter explaining your trip project
- Sailboat registration
- Last 6 months bank statements
- Insurance

Best regards,
Visa section”

What Linda supplied was the following:

Copy of Passport

Visa application in English

Cover letter stating why she wanted a 1 year visa. Supplied in both English and French.

6 months of bank statements printed off her online account

DAN insurance card (**SEE NOTE BELOW**)

Jacaranda vessel documentation
Letter stating she would not seek employment
Letter from me stating she is onboard Jacaranda (Different last names)
2 Passport photo (US size was acceptable)
Boat card

Linda filled out the online request for an appointment, received email confirmation with time and date, arrived at the embassy and presented the paperwork. She was allowed to keep her passport as we were traveling thru South America.

There was no interview just a French embassy employee checking off the items they required. All paperwork is sent to Papeete, Tahiti for processing.

Important Notes

#1 Your health insurance MUST be valid for the entire year you want the visa. Recently visas have been issued for less than 1 year and expired when the health insurance expired. Linda's DAN coverage would expire mid visa so she extended her DAN 7 months before it expired. See note #6

#2 Some applications have a box for length of visa. Be sure to check the box for **1-2 years NOT 6 months to 1 year!!** Some folks have been issued a 6 month visa!

#3 Children under 18 years of age are automatically given a 5 year visa upon approval.

#4 Use your expected date of arrival in the Marquesas as your arrival (start) date. This is critical that you arrive with 90 days of what you enter on the application. Your visa will be valid for 90 days from the time of your start date.

#5 If your spouse has a EU passport and able to show a valid marriage certificate you can apply in French Polynesia for a cds. You do not need to begin the process outside of FP

#6 Insurance – DAN (Diver Area Network) is acceptable in French Polynesia. For those folks that are not from North America (Australia, NZ, etc) then DAN international will work just fine.

When Linda's visa arrived at the embassy in Quito it was glued into Linda's passport. The LS visa showed a valid 3 month window. The visa stated we had 3 months from June 1 to arrive and submit additional information to Tahiti. **The application asked when she would arrive and we said June 1**

Part II – Upon Arrival in French Polynesia

The following information only pertains to non EU citizens.

We arrived in Atuona, Hiva Oa . Check in was easily accomplished at the Gendarmerie by filling in one form. All crew must be present in person with their passports regardless of nationality.

No one comes onboard to do any inspection. An interesting item on the form besides the usual is an inventory of how much alcohol (liquor/wine) you have on board. You may want to do an alcohol inventory before checking in so you have that in hand while at the Gendarmerie's office. List all spirits, beer and wine as if you get boarded by the French Navy later and they want to do an inspection.....

There is no money required at the time of check in and a bond required if you already have a long stay visa in your passport. You will be required to purchase a 9000F stamp when submitting your application for your cds.

An agent is NOT needed when checking in if you have a LS visa already in your passport. But you may want to use Tehani from Tahiti Crew to help with your cds. See phone & email below.

Carte de Sejour

The Long Stay Visa in your passport only starts the process. The dates on the LS visa are the dates (usually a 3 month window) when you need to check in. Upon arrival you will either need to visit the Haute Commissioners office in Nuka Hiva, Tahiti or Raiatea to submit additional information so Papeete can start to process your cds. In addition you can have an agent submit the information for you. (See next paragraph) The cds is what you will need to have in hand to be legally in French Polynesia for more than 90 days.

Since Jan 2016 the Haute Commissioners office is now requiring all individuals applying for a cds to appear at the Haute Commissioners office in person either when submitting the paperwork in French Polynesia or when you pick it up. The agent(Tehani) can submit the paperwork for you or pick it up on your behalf but NOT do both. You must appear in person at least once at the Haute Commissioners office – submitting the paperwork or picking it up.

Upon arrival and after checking into French Polynesia a stamp must be purchased at the post office (9000cfp about \$90US). We have been told this is now done when you pick up your cds but we purchased one and sent it to Tahiti with Linda's renewal paperwork

The stamp, copy of your check in paperwork, a copy of your passport showing the page with the arrival stamp from the gendarme, the page with the visa (obtained at the French embassy), the page showing your photo and information and two (2) passport sized photos will need to be submitted to the haut commissaire's office.

Important Notes

#6 10-2016 update

If you have the visa in your passport when you arrive in FP you DO NOT NEED to POST A BOND OR BUY an OUTBOUND AIR TICKET!

#7 Tehani from Tahiti Crew can act on your behalf in either submitting your paperwork or picking up your cds. We used her before the rules changed(2015) when submitting the paperwork and also she picked up Linda's cds when she renewed in 2016. We can highly recommend her!

Possible Options for Processing your Paperwork

Tehani (Tahiti Crew) mentioned not wait till the end of your 90 day visa window to submit your paperwork for your cds. Folks that did wait till the last week were refused a cds and had to leave FP. Best to start the process soon after arrival.

#1 Stop in Nuka Hiva at the haute commissaires office to have your cds process started and then have the completed cds sent back to you in Nuka Hiva to the haute commissaires office in Taiohae, Nuka Hiva. Can take up to 90 days. Or have it sent to a different island.

#2 Stop in Nuka Hiva at the haute commissaires office to have your cds process started and then have the completed cds picked up by the agent Tehani (Tahiti Crew) in Tahiti and sent to you at an island of your choice. Or you can pick it up at Tehanis office when you arrive in Tahiti. Be sure to ask for a scanned copy of the CDS from Tehani to be emailed to you

For Linda's renewal we had the Tehani (Tahiti Crew) in Tahiti pickup Linda's cds and hold it for us to pickup at a later date. Tehani (Tahiti Crew) scanned the cds sent us a email attachment.

#3 Check into Hiva Oa and have the paperwork sent to the agent in Tahiti to be submitted to the Haute Commissaires office on your behalf and then you will need to pick it up at a haute commissaries office at one of the three above mentioned locations.

Paperwork required at Haute Commissioners office

Formulaire du Yachtmaster

Mandate

Yachtmasters form

Mouvement des Membres D'Equipage

Crew List

Passport Linda Edeiken

Health Insurance Linda Edeiken **SEE NOTE #1 above**

Jacaranda Vessel Documentation

Passport page of the visa obtained at the French Embassy Quito

Tehani at Tahiti Crew <http://tahiticrew.com> - yachts@tahiticrew.com

Hope this helps folks coming down next season.

Safe sailing

Chuck Houlihan

Linda Edeiken

Lifetime Commodores SSCA

SV Jacaranda

www.jacarandajourney.com