

## Obtaining a French Polynesian Long Stay (V8)

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This document is for those folks that require a long stay visa. EU folks are exempt from a visa. We originally wrote this document back in Sept 2015 and things have changed every year since we arrived (sometimes even monthly!) Currently into our second year in FP. Updates to this note reflect current changes. There are three parts to the process to stay in French Polynesia beyond the normal 3 months.

1. Apply outside of French Polynesia at a French Embassy for a long stay visa.
2. Check in process when you arrive in FP.
3. Apply for a carte de sejour (cds) once you arrive in French Polynesia.

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

Note: If your spouse has an EU passport and you are able to show a valid (original) marriage certificate you can apply in French Polynesia for a cds. You do not need to begin the process outside of FP

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. All documents are sent to Papeete for processing.

- Panama appears to be the easiest and quickest return of 3-6 weeks.
- Ecuador took 2 months.
- Mexico City worked well for those folks in Mexico
- US embassies are the most difficult requiring translation, police report, etc

Linda applied in Ecuador (2015) and it was very easy.

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.

### **Important Notes for Applying for a LS Visa**

**Your health insurance MUST be valid for the entire year you require 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. Others have been issued a 1 year cds if insurance expires mid visa. Luck of the draw! See note 4 below

1. 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!
2. Children under 18 years of age are automatically given a 5 year visa upon approval.
3. Use your expected date of arrival in the Marquesas as your arrival (start) date. This is critical that you arrive within 90 days of the date you enter on your application. Your visa will be valid for 90 days from the time of your start date.
4. 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. We use DAN “Preferred Plan”.

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 3 months means you have 3 months from the start date of the visa to arrive in FP. It was confusing for us at first until we had it explained as we did not know about the need for a carte de sejour upon arrival

### **Part II – Upon Arrival in French Polynesia**

Upon arrival & check-in into the Marquesas (Hiva Oa, Nuka Hiva, Ua Pou)

- Check in was easily accomplished at the local gendarmerie by filling in one form.
- **All crew must be present in person with their passports regardless of nationality.**
- You do not need to present your international zarpe. No one cares!
- Passport and Ships papers are all that is needed
- 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.....

Beginning early 2017 a bond is now required for all NON EU folks arriving with a LS visa. One of three options will work

- Money deposited in a local bank equivalent to a ticket home. Will be refunded when you check out of FP.
- Airplane ticket to your home country. Buy a refundable ticket when you arrive.
- Bond guarantee by an agent. There is a discount for members of the PPJ fleet.

If you use Tahitcrew for a bond guarantee Tehani will also email you a duty free fuel certificate once you clear in. The duty free certificate will save you 40% on diesel. Her service includes the local agent meeting you and helping you thru the check in process. The duty free certificate is free in Papeete

### **Part III– Carte de Sejour(cds)**

The Long Stay Visa in your passport only starts the process. The dates on the LS visa are the dates (a 3 month window) when you need to check into FP and submit your paperwork for the cds.

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.

#### CDS paperwork requirements

- Copy of your check in paperwork
- Application for the cds obtained at the Haute Commsionaires office
- Copy of your passport showing the page with the arrival stamp from the gendarme.
- Copy of your passport with the page showing the visa (obtained at the French embassy)
- Copy of your passport with the page showing your photo and information
- Two (2) passport sized photos
- Formulaire du Yachtmaster (available at haute commissionaires office)
- Mandate (available at haute commissionaires office)
- Health insurance (**see warning under LS visa**)
- Yachtmasters form (available at haute commissionaires office)
- Mouvement des Membres D'Equipage (available at haute commissionaires office)

- **NEW 2017** – I was informed that starting mid 2017 the Commissionaires office will now require a copy of all the paperwork you submitted to the French Embassy to obtain your LS visa. Be sure to save it and bring it with you onboard

### **Important Notes regarding CDS**

1. Tehani (Tahiti Crew) mentioned to 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 at the end of 90 days.** Best to start the process soon after arrival.
2. 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! Contact info at the bottom.

### **Possible Options for Processing your Paperwork**

1. Stop in Nuka Hiva at the haute commissionaires office to have your cds process started and then have the completed cds sent back to you in Nuka Hiva to the haute commissionaires office in Taiohae, Nuka Hiva. Can take up to 90 days. Or have it sent to a different island/atoll (post office).
2. Stop in Nuka Hiva at the haute commissionaires 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 Tehani's 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 commissionaires 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.
4. Stop in Nuka Hiva at the haute commissionaires office to have your cds process started and then have the completed paperwork held at the haute commissionaires office in Papeete and you pick it up when you arrive there.

### **Agent Contact Information**

Tehani at Tahiti Crew <http://tahiticrew.com> - [yachts@tahiticrew.com](mailto:yachts@tahiticrew.com)

Hope this helps folks coming down next season.

Safe sailing

Chuck Houlihan / Linda Edeiken  
Lifetime Commodores SSCA  
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