

# Bora Bora

POP 9600

## Includes →

Sights .....	122
Activities .....	122
Festivals & Events .....	126
Sleeping .....	127
Eating .....	131
Drinking & Nightlife .....	134
Entertainment .....	134
Shopping .....	134

## Best Places to Stay

- Sunset Hill Lodge (p127)
- Intercontinental Bora Bora Resort & Thalasso Spa (p130)
- Sofitel Bora Bora Private Island (p130)
- St Régis Resort (p130)

## Best Places to Eat

- Maikai Bora Bora (p132)
- Villa Mahana (p133)
- Restaurant Matira Beach (p133)
- Le St James (p132)

## Why Go?

Ah, Bora Bora. The stuff of dreams. As you arrive by plane, the view says it all. How not to be mesmerised by this stunning palette of sapphire, indigo and turquoise, all mixed together in modern-art abstractions? And these sand-edged *motu* (islets) and soaring rainforest-covered basaltic peaks? With such a dreamlike setting, Bora Bora is, unsurprisingly, a honeymooners' choice. But there's much more to do than clink glasses with your loved one in a luxurious hotel. The good thing is that you can mix slow-paced sun-and-sand holidays with action-packed adventures. Diving, snorkelling, lagoon tours, hiking and parasailing are readily available. What you shouldn't expect, though, is a thriving nightlife. Bora Bora is a quiet island. And this dream destination is much more accessible than you think. As well as five-star resorts, a handful of low-key midrange hotels beckon.

## When to Go

- June to October, the island's coolest months, are the most popular, but keep in mind that the lagoon doesn't *always* look like a turquoise-backed mirror, especially from June to August, when the *maraamu* (southeast trade wind) blows and may bring rain and dark clouds.
- The hottest and rainiest months are from December to April.
- Try to make your trip coincide with the Heiva i Bora Bora in July or the Hawaiki Nui canoe race in November – two highly engaging events.

## History

James Cook sighted Bora Bora in 1769 on his first voyage to French Polynesia, and a London Missionary Society (LMS) base was established on the island in 1820. Bora Bora supported Pomare in his push for supreme power over Tahiti, but resisted becoming a French protectorate (established over Tahiti in 1842) until the island was annexed in 1888.

During WWII a US supply base was established here, prompted by the bombing of Pearl Harbor in 1941. From early 1942 to mid-1946, Operation Bobcat transformed the island, and at its peak up to 6000 men were stationed on Bora Bora. Today the runway on Motu Mute is the clearest reminder of those frenetic days. Eight massive 18cm naval cannons were installed around the island during the war; all but one are still in place.



## Bora Bora Highlights

- 1 Discovering all the perks of a world-class resort on **Motu Piti Au** (p131).
- 2 Ogling the stunning cerulean-blue lagoon on a **boat tour** (p123) and enjoying a picnic on a *motu*.
- 3 Lazing on idyllic **Matira Beach**. (p122)
- 4 Huffing to the top of **Mt Pahia** (p125) to admire the sensational views.
- 5 Taking a 4WD tour to spot ancient ceremonial sites and WWII relics on **Fitiiti Point** (p122).
- 6 Enjoying a romantic dinner at Restaurant Matira
- 7 Beach, a gourmet restaurant on **Matira Beach** (p133).
- 7 Diving with manta rays at **Anau** (p37) dive site.
- 8 Getting a bird's-eye view of the surreal lagoon on a helicopter tour from **Vaitape** (p122).