

# DISCOVER BORA BORA

Bora Bora is Polynesia's most famous and glamorous isle. Her lagoon is world-famous for its beauty. The main island rises from the center of a multi-colored lagoon, surrounded by off-shore motu islets inside a protective necklace of coral.

Bora Bora lies 150 miles northwest of Tahiti in the Leeward Society Islands. The main island rises from the center of a multi-colored lagoon, surrounded by off-shore "motu" islets inside a protective necklace of coral. Teavanui (the great pass) is the only navigable entrance through the barrier reef facing the principal village of Vaitape. An 18-mile road circles the island passing through the colourful villages of Vaitape, Faanui and Anau, archaeological sites and old Army bunkers and cannon left over from World War II when 5,000 American GIs made a "friendly invasion". The public beach of Matira has white sand and warm, shallow water.



- A BB Pearl Beach Resort
- B BB Lagoon Resort
- C Hilton Bora Bora Nui Resort
- D Tahiti Pearl Market
- E BPC Farm
- F Hotel Matira
- G Intercontinental Le Moana Resort
- H Maitai Polynesia
- I Novotel
- J Sofitel Bora Bora Motu
- K Sofitel Bora Bora Marara
- L Eden Beach
- M Intercontinental
- N Le Meridien
- O Saint Régis
- P Four Seasons

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## Legend of the Birth of the Turtle

(Ancient Tahiti by Teuira Henry pp. 381-382)

It happened when the world was new, that a turtle and a fowl had a dispute, one contending for the prestige above the other, when the turtle said to the fowl: "You are common, you will be eaten by women and children, but I shall be sacred to the gods, I shall leap into the god's house." The fowl answered scornfully, "How can you leap into the god's dwelling? You will yourself be eaten by women and children, but I shall dive into the depths of the sea and escape from their hands."

Just then the turtle was picked up by a strong man and taken to the king, who was so pleased with it that he sent it to the *marae* for the gods, and thus the turtle was ever afterwards held sacred for the gods and was only eaten by kings, priests, and *marae* keepers. But the fowl tried to dive into the sea for safety, it only succeeded in getting its head under water, when a party of women and children passing by went and seized it and took it home. So the fowl became a domestic animal and was eaten by women and children. Only white fowls were offered to the gods at the *marae*, because all white birds were regarded as sacred.

*Marae* dedicated to the god 'Oro were distinguished from all the others by stones that were shaped like turtles' heads and set at regular distances along the sides of the construction.

## A Ghost Story of Bora Bora Tupapau

Many vestiges of ancient times still linger on Bora Bora. The belief in tupaupau (TWO-pow-pow), ghosts of the dead, is prevalent among the islanders. Walk alone on a dark Bora Bora night and you'll see why. It is still a common practice to keep a lamp lit at night to ward off these evil spirits.

"In 1973 my son Tom and I discovered a human arm and a portion of jawbone in front of the altar of Marae Marotetini. They had been pushed to the surface by land crabs digging their burrows. Despite warnings from the locals, we took the bones as souvenirs. Shortly after the discovery, my right arm became swollen to twice its normal size, followed by a swelling of the right side of my jaw. Upon taking the bones back to Los Angeles, Tom's leg was broken in several places during a freak motorcycle accident. This was followed by a period of family sickness and bad luck that didn't cease until we returned the bones to Marae Marotetini in 1976.

"In 1981, several giant human footprints were discovered at the water's edge near Marae Taianapa. The discovery was important enough to bring government officials and newsmen from Papeete to examine the huge prints and wonder of their origin. The elders of Bora Bora didn't wonder. They knew. The prints were an omen from the distant past"

(Taken from cinematographer Milas Hinshaw's booklet *Bora Bora E.*)