

Fleet Letter #1

Ahoy Puddle Jumpers!

Welcome to the 2022 Pacific Puddle Jump fleet. We are thrilled to be able to run the PPJ rally again this season after a year in ‘hibernation’ due to the pandemic. The 2022 rally is, in fact, the 25th edition of the event!

This is the first in a series of Pacific Puddle Jump 2022 “Fleet Letters” that you’ll receive between now and June, all of which will include important fleet info. These letters normally will NOT contain photos or other graphics, in order to keep their size small, and usually will be sent to your land-based email only, (not to offshore email addresses, i.e. Iridium, Sailmail, etc.) unless requested. Or if the subject matter demands urgent attention.

SAVOR THE EXPERIENCE & KEEP A CLEAN WAKE

The process of preparing for a nonstop ocean passage like the Puddle Jump can sometimes feel overwhelming. But we can assure you that all that effort and expense will be worth it when you finally find yourself sailing through the spectacular, volcano-carved lagoons of Tahiti and her sister islands. All over the world, there are thousands of sailors who dream for decades about exploring these islands under sail. But relatively few actually make it. So consider yourself one of the lucky few, and savor every moment of the adventure.

Along with the privilege of cruising here, comes responsibility — both to the people of French Polynesia and to the sailors who will follow in your wake. So please join us in always showing respect to the Polynesian people and their rich cultural traditions, and also comply with local rules and regulations, rather than seeing what you can get away with. The coral reefs, lagoons and offshore fisheries of these islands are extremely fragile ecosystems. So please help us and our Polynesian hosts to preserve them for future generations.

DUTY FREE FUEL, BOND EXEMPTIONS & MORE

One of the Puddle Jump’s most important longtime partners is the TahitiCrew yacht agency. You are under NO obligation to use their services, but if you do we think you’ll probably consider their reasonable fees to be money well spent — especially this year due to new pandemic-related regulations and policies.

As the accompanying letter explains, registered Pacific Puddle Jumpers get a 15% discount off all of TahitiCrew’s service fees, including DPAM advanced entry approval, access to duty-free fuel beginning in the Marquesas, repatriation bond exemptions, and assistance with completing Long Stay Visa procedures, and more.

ENTRY APPROVAL IN ADVANCE — As explained elsewhere, although French Polynesia’s maritime borders remain officially “closed,” the territory’s maritime agency DPAM has given us its approval to run the rally this year, and has agreed to give

registered Puddle Jumpers preliminary approval NOW to enter territorial waters in April, May, June or whenever. You will need to submit basic boat and crew info, and you must show proof that all crew members have been vaccinated. You can complete this process yourself, or have a yacht agent do it for you for a fee. The reason for making this arrangement was to give you peace of mind by knowing you will be able to get in, regardless of whether the maritime borders remain officially closed.

LONG STAY VISAS

European Union passport holders can stay as long as they want in French Polynesia (as long as they don't work). But most others, including Americans and Canadians, only get 90 days upon arrival — which is a very short time to explore an area the size of Western Europe. That's why many non-EU sailors go through the detailed (six-week) procedure of obtaining a Long Stay Visa (ultimately a Carte de Sejour residency card), good for up to a year. But this process must be done in advance of arrival. You CANNOT obtain such a visa upon arrival in the islands (unless you happen to be married to an EU passport holder — the only exception).

Longtime cruiser Chuck Houlihan keeps up with the details of this often-changing process better than anyone we know. Check out his latest update here: <https://www.jacarandajourney.com/fplongstayvisa>

SEND-OFF EVENTS

Although details are not yet finalized, we plan to hold three South Pacific Bon Voyage events in Panama, in early February, and in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico, in mid-February. Details in the next Fleet Letter.

FIND ESSENTIAL INFO IN THE FREE “STOPOVER HANDBOOK”

To assist in planning your visit to the islands, take a few minutes to download the free Stopover Handbook of French Polynesia from the homepage of www.pacificpuddlejump.com. It contains a wealth of background info on regulations, facilities and cultural traditions, and it includes contact info for many important marine facilities, suppliers and government agencies.

More to come soon...

Safe travels,

— Andy Turpin

PPJ Founder & Director