

## Monday Bora Bora: 'Pearl of the Pacific'

– one of the Leeward Islands: 16° 31' south, 151° 46' west

After the rockiest evening and night yet, we managed to get ourselves on deck by seven to enjoy the best island approach yet, as well as the blowiest though, being early morning, the skies were overcast. The island is characterised by the beautiful Mount Pahia rising majestically behind the main port/village. Vaitape. . . . and absolutely no ghastly sixties buildings – in fact, nothing more than two-storey and those are few and far between. The pilot came aboard to take us thro' the narrow



Teavanui Pass into a wondrous lagoon where we now swing at anchor with Bora Bora on one side and the smaller Motu Toopua on the other, while the tenders take folk ashore.

As we were due to be off the boat at eleven, Nick's usual time for the gym, we both went there before breakfast.

Needless to say, we had it to ourselves though twenty minutes was enough for me; I left Nick with strict instruction to join me for breakfast at 0830. He joined me twenty minutes later, and after a relatively light meal we prepared to join the tender to go ashore. Disembarking from the tender, we boarded Le Truk, a lorry/bus with no windows/no sides, to travel the twenty miles around the island on the road built by Americans in WWII.



The weather was kind and on our first stop we were offered a selection of the islands wonderful fruit, and watched the women dying and creating patterns on the pareos. (Bora Bora's unique sarongs) We were also entertained by the local crabs (usually nocturnal); they can be tempted from their sandy holes when offered lush green leaves.

We enjoyed a delightful few hours and were impressed by the wonderful turquoise seas and white sands. This is the haunt of the rich and the famous, and we were shown Marlon Brando's old pad, built on stilts on the waterside.





Now, the tourists who are wealthy enough to afford \$800 a night, fly in, landing on the American-built airstrip on Motu Mute and are transferred by boat to their resorts where rooms are built in traditional materials on stilts in the water. Finally we walked around the port, where we viewed the local crafts, wonderful shell necklaces and earrings, and even bought a pareo.

We made our way back to the boat for some sun (both), gym (Nick) and hydrotherapy (me) before the Black Watch set sail for Tahiti where I'm off on a tour.

