



Pacific Expeditions to Visit the Remote Pitcairn Islands

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PR9.NET November 09, 2005 - Rarotonga, Cook Islands, November 9, 2005 - On June 20, 2006, the Research Vessel Bounty Bay will sail from French Polynesia to Pitcairn Island, one of the most inaccessible places on earth. Only 10 paying passengers will be accepted on this unique two-week expedition.

Since 1790, when Fletcher Christian and his fellow mutineers landed at Bounty Bay after overthrowing the tyrannical Captain Bligh, remote Pitcairn Island has fired imaginations. No airstrip has ever been built on Pitcairn, so the only way to get there is still by boat. Cruise ships call occasionally for a couple of hours, but overnight stays are extremely rare.

The 50 inhabitants of Pitcairn Island are direct descendants of the Bounty mutineers and their Tahitian wives. The four islands of the Pitcairn Islands group became a British colony in 1838, the first of its kind in the South Pacific and the only British possession left in the Pacific.

To join this expedition, participants must fly from Tahiti to Mangareva Island in the southeast corner of French Polynesia on an Air Tahiti flight. The sea journey to Pitcairn Island aboard the R/V Bounty Bay will take two days. Upon arrival, expedition members will be transferred ashore to accommodations in local homes (there are no hotels on Pitcairn). Several days will be spent getting to know the Pitcairners and exploring the island.

The group will then set sail again for uninhabited Henderson Island, a Pitcairn Islands dependency and World Heritage Site. From their campsite ashore, the expeditionaries will have ample time to birdwatch, snorkel, and scuba dive in an untouched location far from the world. After that, the Bounty Bay will cruise back to Pitcairn Island to drop off the local guides and prepare for the return to Mangareva.

According to expedition leader Dr. Graham Wragg, "The stay on Henderson will give you a chance to see the Henderson Dove, Henderson Rail, Henderson Parrot, Henderson Warbler, and Henderson Petrel, plus a myriad of other indigenous plants and animals. Henderson has excellent snorkeling and diving, and some of the most beautiful virgin beaches in the world."

The basic cost of sharing this unique experience is US\$2,500 per person from Mangareva, including all meals aboard ship and on Henderson. Paying guests contribute US\$40 per night to their host families on Pitcairn for room and board. A US\$25 Pitcairn Island landing fee is additional, and the flights to and from Tahiti and Mangareva must be booked separately through a travel agent. Only 10 passengers will be accepted. Anyone looking for a Survivor-type "reality TV" experience will find this the real thing.

General information about Pitcairn is available at <http://www.southpacific.org/faq/pit.html> while maps of the Pitcairn Islands are on <http://www.mapsouthpacific.com/pitcairn/>

For tour details and booking information, visit <http://www.pacific-expeditions.com>

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About Pacific Expeditions Limited

Pacific Expeditions is a Rarotonga-based charter and research company which has been running expeditions to the remotest corners of the Pacific since 1989. The operators are dedicated conservationists and mariners eager to share their knowledge. The expedition boat, the R/V Bounty Bay, is a 40-ton steel catamaran fully equipped for scuba diving. Aside from the annual Pitcairn Island expeditions, Pacific Expeditions operates regular trips to Suvarrow National Park and the Takutea Island Wildlife Sanctuary in the Cook Islands.

About Avalon Travel Publishing

The 8th edition of Moon Handbooks South Pacific (ISBN 1566914116) was published by Avalon Travel Publishing of Emeryville, California, in December, 2004. Priced at US\$24.95, the handbook is distributed in the United States by Publishers Group West, in Canada by Publishers Group Canada, in Europe by HI Marketing, London, and in Australia and New Zealand by Bookwise International.

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