

UNTOUCHED PACIFIC ISLANDS

Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Niue, Tuvalu, Micronesia & Nauru

21 days

Created on: 9 Sep, 2025

Day 1 Arrival in Honolulu, Hawaii

Welcome to Hawaii!*

When it comes to tourism, there are always those countries that get most of the fame. There are those destinations that top the list of the 'most visited countries' in the world year after year. Now it is time for us to share with you the less visited -- but no less interesting -- nations of the world. This is a chance to explore some remote, far flung areas where few travellers venture. On this tour we will visit some countries where even the arrival of tourists is a newsworthy mention. Each year the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) collects the number of international tourism arrivals that each country receives, and on this tour we will visit some of the least visited countries in the world based on these statistics. With the globalization of the modern day world, only a small handful of countries have managed to truly stay 'off the radar'. This tour offers you the chance to visit some of these unique destinations that are not promoted in glossy guidebooks... places where you will not find crowds of tourists and luxury lodges.

This is an ambitious itinerary and a true adventure! This is a tour for real travellers -- those who have passion for exploration and discovery -- those who seek an adventure that is off the 'tourist trail' to places where few have been before. Do not come looking for 5-star resorts and high-speed wifi. Just be sure to come with a true sense of adventure and a great travel spirit!

Note: Some itinerary modifications may occur closer to the departure date due to flight routing and schedule changes, which can, of course, impact the final itinerary. The order of islands visited may change, and the number of nights on each island may have to be adjusted. We may lose one night on one island and gain a night on another.

* This itinerary does not include any sightseeing or touring in Hawaii. If this is something that you are interested in then you may want to consider arranging some extra nights prior to the tour. Due to the early start on Day 2 we also strongly recommend booking an extra night if your arrival on Day 1 is late in the evening.

Overnight in Honolulu (Waikiki).

Included Meal(s): Dinner, if required.

Day 2 Hawaii - Fly to Majuro, Marshall Islands**

This morning we start with our flight to the Marshall Islands. Our flight takes us across the International Date Line, and we therefore arrive the following calendar day.**

Fewer than 6,000 tourists make their way to the Marshall Islands each year, and in 2019 this island nation was still rated one of the top 5 'least visited' countries in the world! Today this is also considered to be one of the most 'endangered' countries in the world due to climate change and flooding. The Marshall Islands may actually disappear in our lifetime.

On arrival we begin our sightseeing program (possibly accomplishing some of the items listed for tomorrow).

* Please pack light as some flights within this tour have a strict 18kg per person weight limit for checked luggage!

** This tour is unique for us in many ways, one such way causes our automated system headaches in terms of dates and days-of-the-week. Upon booking you will receive a version of this itinerary that shows the dates of each day of your trip in the day heading. On this tour, those dates/days may not be accurate as we hop back and forth over the International Date Line. Your Tour Leader will clarify which day/date it is as the tour progresses (your final hotel list WILL be accurate). Apologies for any confusion!

Overnight in Majuro.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 3 Majuro, Marshall Islands

The island of Majuro appears as a delicate necklace of land draped around a turquoise lagoon -- some of it barely wider than the airport runway! This is a nation of aquamarine atolls where we find a landscape sprinkled with coconuts, pandanus and breadfruit trees. Few other crops grow in the atoll's salty sands, so the Marshallese long ago turned to the sea for their resources, and became expert fishers and navigators.

The Republic of the Marshall Islands is one of the world's youngest nations, independent only since 1986. With a total land area of only 70 square miles (181 km²) the atolls, islands and islets are spread across a sea area of over 750,000 square miles in the central Pacific near the equator. Just west of the International Date Line, these islands are geographically part of the larger island group of Micronesia.

For hundreds of years agricultural production has been concentrated on small farms, and small-scale industry is extremely limited. The concept of family and community are inextricably intertwined in Marshallese society. With few natural resources, the islands' wealth is based on a service economy, as well as some fishing and agriculture. Today aid from the United States represents a large percentage of the islands' gross domestic product.

Today we will visit the Alele Museum where we learn about Marshallese traditions and history. This small museum features authentic tools, artifacts, and some 19th century photographs. The Peace Park Memorial constructed by the Japanese government commemorates the soldiers who fought and died in the Pacific during WWII. At the WAM (Waan Aelon in Majol) canoe house we will learn about Marshallese canoe construction. The WAM program is a vocational training program using traditional Marshallese skills for men and women, such as canoe building, traditional and contemporary boat building, sail-races and navigation, woodworking and weaving.

Copra production (the dried meat of coconuts) remains an important source of income for locals, and at the Tobolar Copra Processing Plant we can see copra being converted into coconut oil, soaps, body oil and 'press cake' (the solid remains after pressing out the liquid).

Overnight in Majuro.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 4 Majuro - Fly to Pohnpei, Fed. States of Micronesia

This morning we fly from Majuro to The Federated States of Micronesia, an independent nation of just over 100,000 inhabitants receiving fewer than 35,000 annual tourists. This remote and peaceful destination encompasses nearly a million square miles of Pacific Ocean north of the equator.

The nation consists of four states -- Yap, Chuuk, Kosrae and Pohnpei (our destination) -- comprising around 607 islands spread across 2,700 kilometers of the western Pacific. Economic activity centers on subsistence farming and fishing, with tourism potential hindered by remoteness and limited facilities.

Micronesian societies are organized around maternal clan groupings, with island heads tracing lineage to original settlers. The subsistence economy relies on tree crops (breadfruit, banana, coconut, citrus) and root crops (taro, yam), supplemented by traditional fishing. Sharing and communal work remain fundamental to both the economic system and island culture.

These volcanic islands and atolls formed millions of years ago -- some as mountain peaks surrounded by fringing reefs, others as coral rings encircling lagoons after the original islands sank beneath the surface.

This afternoon we'll explore Kolonia, Pohnpei's coastal capital. Built by Spain in 1887 as an administrative center with protective fort, the town passed to Germany in 1899, then Japan during World War I. Unlike previous occupiers, the Japanese brought thousands of settlers who eventually outnumbered indigenous populations on some islands. Today, remnants include a church bell tower and cemetery from the German period.

Overnight in Pohnpei.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 5 Pohnpei: Nan Madol

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Pohnpei Island, roughly 22.5 kilometers in diameter, is the peak of a 5-million-year-old extinct shield volcano. This rugged, brilliant green landscape features dense rainforested interior and mountains reaching 2,600 feet. With over 300 inches of annual rainfall in the interior, Pohnpei ranks among Earth's rainiest locations, creating scores of scenic waterfalls and some of the Pacific's largest intact upland rainforests. The coast is surrounded by mangrove swamps rather than beaches, with several smaller inhabited islets and atolls nearby.

Early this morning we visit Nan Madol, the ruins of an ancient city and Micronesia's first UNESCO World Heritage Site. Inscribed in 2016 on both the World Heritage List and List of World Heritage in Danger, this ceremonial center comprises over 100 artificial islets off Pohnpei's southeast coast, constructed with basalt and coral boulder walls.

Built between 1200-1500 CE, these stone palaces, temples, tombs and residential domains represent the ceremonial center of the Saudeleur dynasty. The megalithic structures' huge scale and technical sophistication testify to complex social and religious practices of the period. At its peak, Nan Madol housed over 1,000 people when Pohnpei's entire population barely reached 25,000.

The construction remains mysteriously impressive -- some basalt rocks weigh 80-90 tons yet have stood perfectly stacked for over 1,000 years. UNESCO recognizes Nan Madol as a "globally significant masterpiece of creative genius," representing the Pacific's most perfectly preserved architectural ensemble of habitation, leadership and ceremony.

Overnight in Pohnpei.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 6 Pohnpei - Fly to Nauru

This morning we fly to Nauru, the least visited country in the world! Plunked in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, this tiny island nation covers less than 21 square kilometers (8 square miles) and is home to less than 10,000 inhabitants. Only one airline serves Nauru, and flights are few and far between. Nauru sees just over 200 tourists per year, making this is the perfect destination for the true adventurous traveller. This is the smallest country in the world without a true 'capital', although Yaren - the largest village - acts like one.

This destination is by no means easy to visit, and access is subject to the whims of transport and weather. Hospitality services such as hotels and restaurants are minimal. Most visitors are diplomats, politicians, development workers and contractors. But, in spite of the present economic situation, the island still offers glimpses of its former past. For WWII buffs there are remnants of the Japanese occupation scattered around the island, and the enormous skeletal remains of mining infrastructure are truly remarkable.

Overnight in Nauru.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 7 Nauru Touring

This morning we commence touring the island. Note that the 'Nauru experience' is the exact opposite of typical South Pacific cliches -- there's nothing tourist-oriented here, and our time is entirely dictated by airline schedules.

Nauru was a German colony in the late 19th century, then became a League of Nations mandate administered by Australia, New Zealand and the UK after WWI. Japanese occupation during WWII was followed by UN trusteeship until independence in 1968.

Once the 'rich kid' of the Pacific through phosphate wealth, Nauru's future now hangs in the balance. The economy peaked in the early 1980s when phosphate reserves made this one of the great rock islands of the Pacific. Today, those reserves are almost entirely depleted, leaving the central plateau a barren terrain of jagged limestone pinnacles. When phosphate was exhausted, the wealth management trust diminished in value. By 2005, Nauru had become a failing state dependent on foreign cash injections to survive -- a far cry from the glory days of the 1970s and '80s.

Inland, the strip-mined phosphate fields create an almost lunar landscape known as 'topside,' where you'll also see Australia's controversial offshore detention center. The picturesque Buada Lagoon, the island's only water body, is a slightly brackish freshwater lake surrounded by dense vegetation and palm groves.

This afternoon we continue exploring Yaren, the largest settlement, with Parliament House, government buildings, and WWII relics. We'll stop at Anibare Bay's small tropical white sand beach -- probably the island's most beautiful spot.

Overnight in Nauru.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 8 Nauru - Fly to Tarawa, Kiribati

Early this morning we fly to Kiribati, a true remote island paradise and one of the world's smallest nations situated in the middle of the Pacific. With fewer than 6,000 annual visitors, it ranks as the 4th least visited country globally. This geographically isolated nation remains 'untouched' due to its extreme seclusion and inaccessibility.

The passing centuries have barely impacted Kiribati's outer islands, where people still subsist on coconuts, giant prawns and fish. The country spans just 800 square kilometers of land, but its 33 atolls and islands are spread across 3.5 million square kilometers of ocean. Remarkably, Kiribati is the only country falling into all four hemispheres, straddling the equator and extending into both eastern and western hemispheres.

Climate change projections predict the ocean could swallow this country whole by century's end. In anticipation, the Kiribati government has purchased land in Fiji for potential relocation of its people.

Inhabited by Micronesians speaking the same Oceanic language since perhaps 3000 BC, the islands developed a unique culture blending Micronesian, Polynesian and Melanesian elements through intermarriage and cultural exchange. Kiribati gained independence from the UK in 1979 and joined the UN in 1999.

The permanent population of just over 100,000 (half living on Tarawa Atoll) makes this one of the world's poorest countries with few natural resources. Phosphate deposits were exhausted at independence, leaving copra and fish as main exports. Income largely comes from abroad through fishing licenses, development assistance, worker remittances and tourism.

Time-permitting, we may begin sightseeing upon arrival.

Overnight in Tarawa, Kiribati.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

Day 9 Tarawa Exploration

Today we will enjoy a tour of the island. On the south side of the island we will see some of the WWII relics and memorials. The Battle of Tarawa was one of the bloodiest battles to take place in the Pacific during World War II, and during our visit you will hear some of the stories of the battle and visit some of the most significant sites and memorials.

Overnight in Tarawa.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 10 Tarawa Continued

Our sightseeing in Kiribati continues followed by an afternoon/evening at leisure.

Overnight in Tarawa.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast

Day 11 Tarawa - Fly to Nadi, Fiji

Today we fly from Tarawa to Nadi, Fiji. The town of Nadi (pronounced 'Nandi') was established in 1947 as a "Government Station" on the higher grounds of Nadi, and established itself as Fiji's tourist hub in the 1960s. For most travellers Nadi is a transit point for other destinations in Fiji. Our overnight on Fiji is a necessary one in order to connect with our next flight to Tuvalu.

Overnight in Nadi.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 12 Nadi - Suva

Today we commence with a drive along the southern coast to Suva on the east coast. Viti Levu is Fiji's largest island and home to 70% of the population (about 600,000). This is the hub of the entire Fijian archipelago! At 146 kilometers long and 106 kilometers wide, the island is comparable in size to the Big Island of Hawaii. In the realm of Pacific islands, it is exceeded in size only by New Caledonia.

* If you're wondering * why we don't deliberately spend more time in Fiji, we have found in the past that any time here was not considered a highlight by past travellers. That, plus the fact that the 'thrust' or theme of this tour is toward the more unknown, obscure islands, is why we do not emphasize Fiji in our promotion of the tour and treat it as simply a logistical point on our overall route.

Due to the possibility of an early flight tomorrow, and to give you a break from the group meal dynamic, dinner is on your own this evening.

Overnight in Suva.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast

Day 13 Suva, Fiji - Fly to Tuvalu: Island Exploration

This morning we fly from Fiji to the Polynesian nation of Tuvalu, one of the smallest and most remote countries in the world.

Extremely inaccessible and far off the travellers path, this tiny nation is one of the least visited countries in the world. Situated midway between Hawaii and Australia, on average fewer than 2,500 visitors make it here each year (and just a small percentage of those are true 'tourists'). It has often been said that if you want to disappear for a while, head to Tuvalu! Due to the country's remoteness, tourism here is not significant. This is one of the least populous states in the world (after the Vatican City and Nauru), and the second smallest country in the world in terms of population size, having only around 11,000 people in its entire population.

Many believe time is running out for Tuvalu due to rising sea levels threatening its low-lying atolls. The urgency of this threat has led to an unprecedented response: Australia has created a special climate migration treaty allowing up to 280 Tuvaluans to relocate permanently to Australia each year. This represents the world's first planned migration of an entire nation due to climate change. More than a third of Tuvalu's population has already applied for these climate visas, highlighting the very real fear that their homeland may soon become uninhabitable.

Funafuti is Tuvalu's capital and the location of its international airport. Approximately 4,000 people make up the entire population here, and life is 'easy going' and laid back. Only some small manufacturing facilities remind visitors of the modern world lingering beyond the horizon. Although Tuvalu literally means 'cluster of eight', there are 9 islands in the nation (six true atolls and three reef islands).

Upon arrival we will head to the local Community Hall (Falekaupule), which is located just nearby the airport. The traditional island meeting hall is where most important matters are discussed, and is often used for wedding celebrations and community activities. Here we are welcomed with a traditional dance, and we can enjoy a light snack before heading to our hotel.

After checking in and taking some time to refresh we will head out for a short afternoon tour of the island.

Overnight in Tuvalu.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 14 Tuvalu: Funafala Islet Visit

After breakfast we will head south along the island road and then take a boat across to the gorgeous little islet of Funafala, a tiny piece of land inhabited by just a handful of families. Our journey to this 'outer island' of the atoll will take approximately 1 hour +/- (depending on weather). Along the way we will pass the southern tip of Fongafale islet, and then several other islets, before the atoll curves as we head in a southeasterly direction towards the southern end of the atoll of Tuvalu. In the northern part of Tuvalu the islets are generally quite far one from another, but here in the south we find a string of islets with only small channels between them. Believe it or not, Funafala is the second most popular islet of the atoll.

This beautiful islet makes a nice day-trip escape. Several families from Funafuti relocated here for safety during WWII, and while most moved back after the war there is still a very small community settled here. The more traditional village lifestyle in this remote paradise gives us a taste of what life on the outer islands is like. We will have time to relax in the shade and/or walk around the white sandy beach, collect some beautiful shells to take home, and see the mangroves that are part of a coastal protection project.

We will enjoy a light lunch here before heading back to the capital island. You may have some free time this afternoon to explore on your own.

Overnight in Tuvalu.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

Day 15 Tuvalu - Fly to Auckland, New Zealand

Today we fly from Tuvalu to Auckland, New Zealand (via Fiji).

Located in the northern part of New Zealand, the cosmopolitan city of Auckland is the largest metropolitan area in the country. The geographical location of Auckland is such that it lies between the Hauraki Gulf of the Pacific Ocean to the east, the low Hunua Ranges to the southeast, the Manukau Harbour to the southwest, and the Waitakere Ranges and smaller ranges to the west and northwest. The region is also the site of Auckland Volcanic Field, comprising of around 50 volcanoes. This vibrant and bustling city is also the biggest Polynesian city in the world, a cultural influence reflected in many different aspects of city life.

As this visit acts strictly as a connecting point, and due to variable air schedules, we have not planned any formal activities during our stay.

Overnight in Auckland.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast

Day 16 Auckland, New Zealand - Niue

Today we fly from New Zealand to Niue -- 'The Rock of Polynesia' -- one of the smallest and most surprising countries on earth! This rugged coral atoll spans just 269 square kilometers with around 1,200 inhabitants scattered across 14 villages. With fewer than 8,000 annual visitors, Niue offers a truly laid-back islander atmosphere.

Located 2,400 kilometers northeast of New Zealand, this hidden gem features spectacular limestone cliffs, lush forests, and dramatic coastal views accessible via a single ring road. The capital Alofi houses less than 1,000 people, where traditional Polynesian culture and strong religious values remain deeply rooted in daily life.

Originally settled by Polynesians from Samoa around 900 AD, with later Tongan arrivals in the 16th century, Niue became a British Protectorate before New Zealand assumed responsibility in 1901. The island achieved self-rule in 1974 while maintaining New Zealand citizenship -- remarkably, 90% of Niueans now live in New Zealand.

Agriculture drives both lifestyle and economy, with most families growing taro, tapioca, yams, and bananas. Vanilla and taro have become the main export crops, replacing the copra and passionfruit that dominated in the 1970s.

* We cross the Date Line once again and go back one calendar day.

Overnight in Niue.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 17 Niue: Island Touring

Over the next three days we will explore the island of Niue.

Niue's coastline is adorned with unique geological landmarks, spectacular limestone formations and extensive cave systems. Avaiki Cave is where Niue's first settlers landed. Here a narrow gorge leads to a coastal cavern cradling a heavenly rock pool. Located south of Tuapa village along the North West coast of the island is Palaha Cave, notable for its stalactites and stalagmites in varying shades of green and red. The waterline is marked by a number of traditional canoe-landing spots, including Opaahi Landing, the place where Captain Cook made an unsuccessful attempt to come ashore in 1744.

In the main town of Alofi is the Niue Tourism office / Information Center. If we are lucky, one of the tourism staff will give us a brief talk about the local culture and life on the island.

We will enjoy a walk to the Limu pools, located in northwest Niue. Accessible via a footpath leading down to the Pacific Ocean, here we find a series of natural pools, protected from the fury of the Pacific Ocean through an 'arm' of rock that breaks the waves. Noted for its expansive cliff face and historical importance as a reserved bathing place for Niue's traditional kings, Matapa Chasm is reached by a track which branches off from the main road at the foot of Hikutavake Hill. Located just beyond the reach of the churning Pacific Ocean, the tranquil Matapa Chasm is set amid stunning limestone cliffs. As well as the Matapa Chasm we will also see the Togo Chasm.

Avatele beach is a village on the southwest coast of Niue. Here we find the largest and most well known beach on the island. Prior to the construction of the Sir Robert Rex Wharf and International Airport in Alofi, Avatele Beach was the principal landing place for many visitors to the island. During our time here we will also see the Hikulagi Sculpture Park -- established in 1996 by members of the then Tahiono Arts Collective.

Overnight in Niue.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 18 Niue: Island Touring

Today we delve a bit deeper into the heart of Niue, an island of captivating contrasts. We'll begin our exploration at the Niue National Museum, currently housed in a temporary location, where we'll unravel the fascinating history and cultural tapestry of this unique island.

Next we'll immerse ourselves in the lush greenery of Niue with a captivating plantation tour. We'll learn about the island's agricultural heritage and witness firsthand the cultivation of local crops. Following this, we'll embark on a rejuvenating rainforest walk, breathing in the fresh air and marveling at the vibrant flora and fauna.

Later we'll step back in time with a visit to one of Niue's charming villages, experiencing the authentic island lifestyle and interacting with the friendly locals. Throughout the day, we'll make scenic stops at the pristine beaches of Utuko and Tamakautoga, where we can soak up the sun, relax by the turquoise waters, and perhaps even enjoy a refreshing swim.

The afternoon is yours to explore at your own pace. Indulge in some leisurely activities, perhaps browse the local crafts market for unique souvenirs, or simply unwind and savor the tranquility of this captivating island paradise.

Overnight in Niue.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 19 Niue: Island Touring Overnight in Niue.

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Today we will continue with our island touring and exploration, and then you will have some free time this afternoon.

Overnight in Niue.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 20 Niue - Fly to Auckland, New Zealand

This morning is yours free to relax, and later today we will fly from Niue back to Auckland, crossing the Date Line once again, arriving the next calendar day and in time for dinner.

Overnight in Auckland, New Zealand.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 21 * Technical Note *

Because our database generates tour dates automatically based on the number of days in an itinerary, this is a "blank" day that we must insert in order to compensate for crossing the International Date Line while on tour and to ensure that our documents and website show the correct tour end date. Our tour is actually 21 days if the loss of time crossing the date line is taken into account.

Day 22 (Actually Day 21) Departure

Departure from Auckland (on the departure date published for your chosen departure).

PLEASE NOTE: Due to ever-changing air schedules, this tour's end point can CHANGE up to 4-6 month prior to trip start date.

BON VOYAGE!

Included Meal(s): Breakfast