

RANGIROA - BEACH PARTY

The island of Rangiroa is the largest of the Tuamotus islands, and is the second largest atoll in the world - only Kwajalein in the Marshall Islands is bigger. The lagoon measures 75 x 25 kilometres, and is large enough to contain the whole of Tahiti. Tourism is in its infancy here, and most activities are based on diving or snorkelling in the turquoise waters of the lagoon.

As before, the ship anchors in the lagoon at 7am, and the crew take all the provisions for a fantastic barbecue ashore, using the ship's tender boats. Some passengers are going on an excursion to a local black pearl farm, and they are tendered ashore first.

We arrive on shore by 10.15am, so we have plenty of time to walk the 1 ½ miles to the private beach, where the barbecue will be prepared. On the way, we hear children singing in a local church, today being Sunday, and stop to listen for a while.



At the beach we are ready for a cold drink of lemonade, before we cool off in



the water. Alvina takes an underwater camera to photograph the many different species of fish here. There are pale blue pipe fish, black and white barred fish, brown and yellow puffer fish, yellow and black striped angel fish, and an inquisitive ray with an enormous tail.

There is quite an art in photographing fish, while balancing on the surface of the water, trying not to scare the fish, and judging the angle to point the camera! Unfortunately, Alvina forgot to pack the lead with the camera, so we will have to wait until we get home, before we know whether we have any good underwater pictures or not!

The ship sails away from Rangiroa in the evening, and we are amazed to see the small entrance out of the lagoon that the ship needs to negotiate. Alongside us there is a small pod of dolphins escorting us into the Pacific Ocean, and we are so close to the shore on both sides that we can wave to the fishermen there.



Our next port of call is at the nearby island of Tahiti, and we will be arriving there tomorrow morning.

