



Paul Gauguin Cruises Partners with French Polynesian Government in Local Healthcare Initiative

Collaboration is a first for the cruise industry in French Polynesia



Florence Courbière, on behalf of Paul Gauguin Cruises and Cédric Mercadal, French Polynesia Minister of Health

Paul Gauguin Cruises has partnered with the government of French Polynesia to provide healthcare assistance in the region's most isolated islands. The partnership aims to meet the health needs of the people in these remote areas in two ways: first, by offering volunteer consultations by the doctors of the m/s *Paul Gauguin* during scheduled port calls; and second, by providing transportation free of charge aboard *The Gauguin* to health professionals commissioned by the government's Health Directorate to ensure advance specialised consultations (CSA). This collaboration – a world first for the cruise industry – deepens the line's commitment to the region, which has called French Polynesia home for 25 years.

The medical partnership agreement was signed on Monday, August 21, by Cédric Mercadal, French Polynesia's Minister of Health in charge of Prevention and Generalized Social Protection, and Florence Courbière, on behalf of Paul Gauguin Cruises and PONANT.

"We welcome this public-private partnership established with a major undertaking in the country's economic development, which is fully in line with the government's desire to strengthen the offer of local care for the benefit of Polynesian families, particularly in remote archipelagos," Mercadal said.

The test phase of the project ran from 29 July to 12 August. During the m/s *Paul Gauguin*'s journey, three sessions of medical consultations were held.

"It was a very successful effort marked by over 20 consultations with patients aged from six months to 77 years," said Captain Michel Quioc. "Fatu Hiva has no medical imaging facilities so two ultrasounds were also carried out. The team was delighted to be able to provide such important medical services."

The program will feature 40 consultation shifts a year and will be offered first to the Marquesas populations, which are among French Polynesia's more remote regions. The transport of medical specialists from Tahiti to these islands will double the medical presence with patients also receiving certain medical treatments onboard such as x-rays and ultrasounds.

ABOUT PAUL GAUGUIN CRUISES

Paul Gauguin Cruises operates the 330-guest m/s *Paul Gauguin*, providing a luxury cruise experience tailored to the unparalleled wonders of Tahiti, French Polynesia, and the South Pacific. Paul Gauguin Cruises has been recognised by notable publications in travel and lifestyle including voted most recently as the "World's Best Small-Ship Ocean Cruise Line" in Travel + Leisure's World's Best Awards 2022; one of the "Top 2 Small Cruise Lines" in the Condé Nast Traveler 2023 and 2022 Readers' Choice Awards as well as named on the publication's "Gold List." The line was also recognised for the 4th time for having the "Best French Polynesia Cruises" in the AFAR Travelers' Choice Awards. In September 2019, Paul Gauguin Cruises joined PONANT's family, a designer of inspiring voyages on board small exploration ships. For more information: <https://en.ponant.com/le-paul-gauguin>

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