

SHORE LINE

Edited by Elaine Lembo



Stalking Fresh Experiences

MOST OF THE THINGS THAT SEEM ROUTINE ABOARD *DREAM TIME*, the 38-foot Cabo Rico that my wife, Catherine, and I have cruised aboard for five years, appear wonderfully bizarre to someone who's experiencing them for the very first time.

We recently took on crew. Alistair Jackson, our intrepid 13-year-old nephew, was at first a little nervous about the prospect of flying alone to Tahiti, in French Polynesia, from London. "What if I get lost? What if I miss my flight?" he later wrote in a blog on our website (www.zeroXTE.com). It was Alistair's first time in the South Pacific; indeed, it was his first time flying anywhere alone, and over the course of his three-week vacation spent sailing the islands, Alistair lived the life of a cruiser and savored every moment.

He had his first reef snorkel. ("The only time I'd ever snorkel in my life was in a swimming pool!") He had his first close encounter with sharks and stingrays. ("Wow, I just swam with sharks, and three of them were circling me!") He saw his first shooting star, sea turtle, and dolphin. He took his first nap in a hammock. He fell out of his very first coconut palm. ("Ouch!")

Overall, Alistair welcomed each new experience, including even such mundane chores as shopping, with delight.

Accustomed to buying fruit back home at the air-conditioned supermarket, Alistair was enthralled when we visited Marché de Papeete, the bustling downtown market in Tahiti's capital city of Papeete. It's a colorful and dusty place where your Pacific franc can buy you anything, from giant freshly caught fish to sweet-scented tiara flowers, crispy baguettes, ripe breadfruit, shells, seeds, lustrous black pearls, and even, should the mood strike you, traditional Polynesian tattoos.

Alistair was amused when, after a brief negotiation with a farmer, we strolled out of the market and down busy Boulevard Pomare lugging an entire stalk of bananas to hang off our wind generator pole. And because it was his first time buying a whole stalk, he insisted on carrying them all the way back to the boat. It was a grand adventure, which he summed up nicely on his blog:

"On *Dream Time*, you get up eagerly, prepared to embrace the wonders and excitement that the world will throw at you." And that's precisely what he did.

For teenager Alistair Jackson, the cold climes of the United Kingdom couldn't be farther away. Among his experiences crewing aboard *Dream Time* in French Polynesia were shopping for bananas and then carting them back aboard.

Neville Hockley