

A TRAVELLER'S GUIDE TO PASIFIKA

Midway between Terra Nova and the main Alusia continent is Pasifika which lies in tropical waters about 500 kilometres south of the equator. Most of the islands are uninhabited except for a few.

The main island group is Atiu. The central volcanic island is named Maungatake, about 1.5km wide and 800m high. No one lives here as the island is sacred to Tangaroa but restricted hunting is permitted to the natives. A coral reef surrounds the island at an average distance of 4 km from the shore. Just inside the reef and the shore is a circle of sandy islands. Most are uninhabited, apart from temporary residents, but the three largest ones, Takutea, Tamaketa and Suatuma, support native villages. Each is roughly circular about 500m across.

The main village is Aumatangi on Takutea which has a population of nearly 100. The other two villages, Amuri & Vaipepa, are three quarters of the size. Each has their local chief and shaman but all are ruled by the Chief of Aumatangi, Mariri Ariki, and his Council consisting of six individuals who have proven themselves to be wise and brave. The shaman, Ona Kaikino, is the Chief's advisor on spiritual matters.

The villagers lead a simple life with most of their food coming from the sea. They also harvest pearl which is used for trade with other islands and, more recently, with traders from the Emerald Islands, Destiny and Novadom. Coconut and other food plants grow on the islands. The villagers are peaceful and visitors are assured of a warm, friendly reception.

About 160km west of Atiu is the main mercity, also called Pasifika. This is the centre of the local mer kingdom which includes several other mer towns and villages all located on the tops of seamounts at an average depth of 50 metres. The kingdom extends nearly 300km around Pasifika. The ruler is King Kierl.

Ten miles NE from the seamount is another sunken island, on which is the ruins of the sunken city of Pasifika. This is the remains of an ancient human culture which sank beneath the sea at about the time of Penjarre. The inhabitants fled and their descendants now make up the population of the nearby islands. Of interest is the Great Library and the portal gates to the other six ancient cities.

Another inhabited island is Kailua Kona located 150 km ENE of Atiu. This island consists of two volcanic peaks, currently dormant, called Manua Loa and Kilauea. An active lava lake is located in the vent of Manua Loa and occasionally the mountain erupts, spilling lava down the slopes. Both volcanoes are sacred to Pele and a temple to Pele is located halfway up Manua Loa. The inhabitants are more warlike and visitors are advised to approach with caution.

Other inhabited islands are: Pukapuka, 175 SE of Atiu, Tuatangi, 80km south, Manuae, 132 ESE, Mangere, 113km SW and Waiheke 100km NNE. Not much is known about these islands or the people who live there although rumours do abound of some cannibalistic practises.