**News Release – Rarotonga’s Seven natural Wonders**

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If there is one place on this planet that is a true tropical paradise it has to be beautiful Rarotonga, located in the South Pacific’s Cook Islands. Often referred to as ‘being like Hawaii was 50 years ago’, and famous for having no buildings taller than a coconut tree, this idyllic destination offers something for everyone. Already well known for its friendly locals, great food, and its ‘Kia Orana spirit’, lets now explore seven natural wonders that call this little paradise home.

**1. Muri Lagoon**

This journey starts with an easy one that many people, the world over, are already aware of - Muri Lagoon! Probably the most popular hub on the island, and with its crystal clear waters it offers much to locals and visitors alike. Muri Lagoon is famous for its four small Motus (islets). These picturesque islands are unique sites to explore and are also perfect picnic spots! Swimming in Muri Lagoon’s safe and warm waters is perfect for families and those who want a bit more of an adventure can head out on a snorkelling excursion to witness the abundant marine life. Another activity that might be of interest, is to grab a kayak or stand up paddleboard (complimentary for guests of Pacific Resort Rarotonga) to do a bit of exploring on the surface of the lagoon. Finally, one might want to just sit back, and enjoy a cruise on Pacific Resort Rarotonga’s glass bottom boat, ‘Moana Roa’; for a novel and entertaining experience with its friendly crew.

**2. Fruits of Rarotonga**

Located on the southeast tip of the island, the famous ‘Fruits of Rarotonga’ Marine Reserve is well known for its vivid turquoise waters. Not only is it an amazing sight on the surface, but the view underwater is nothing short of mesmerising. That’s because there’s a phenomenal number of fish species that call this area home, including Angel Fish, Butterfly Fish, Parrot Fish to name just a few. Fruits of Rarotonga is easily accessible, just park up the scooter or car, change into swimwear, and set off on an aquatic adventure!

**3. Te Rua Manga (The Needle)**

Many could be forgiven for thinking that all these natural wonders would be of the aquatic variety, but Rarotonga is also blessed with some fantastic on-land attractions too. One of these is Te Rua Manga, otherwise known as “The Needle”. It’s the iconic mountainous landmark of the island that you can get to via the “Cross Island Walk”. The walk itself is striking, snaking through some of the island’s most beautiful natural vegetation. The real reward, however, is near the base of the summit, where a lookout point gives panoramic views of the entire island. It’s a fantastic example of the variety of landscape to be appreciated and enjoyed during a visit to this little paradise.

**4. Black Rock**

Another intriguing spot which offers something a little bit different is Black Rock. The well known attraction is a collection of volcanic black rocks that rise from the sands at the end of a beach known as ‘Nikao Social Centre’. They also make great platforms to dive off, when the tide and conditions are right (safety always comes first). The black rocks are so picturesque many have chosen to take their wedding photos on and around them.

Unique and prominent, these basalt rock formations hold considerable cultural significance, as according to mythology, this is the place for spirits departing the island.

**5. Takitumu Conservation Reserve**

The protection of the land, sea, and all of its creatures, is an important aspect of Cook Islands culture, and this is truly evidenced by the Takitumu Conservation Reserve. Set up primarily to support the growth of numbers on the indigenous Kakerori bird, Rarotonga’s native ‘flycatcher’, it also contains rare flora and other bird species. Lovingly taken care of, this beautifully manicured area sits on the south east side of the island - inland, and there are tracks to utilise where visitors can take time and wander amongst the tropical surrounds listening to the bird calls…you never know, if the birds that call this spot home are whistled to, they may just whistle back to say Kia Orana (hello)!

**6. Avana Point**

Another area of cultural significance to Cook Islanders is Avana Point. History dictates that after travelling from Hawaii navigating by the stars to arrive in Rarotonga, seven full canoes then set off and found a new home in New Zealand from this very site. Located on the eastern side of the island, and only around 15 minutes drive from the main township of Avarua, you will find a memorial site with 7 rocks representing each of the canoes and the brave sailors that departed these islands towards their new homes and represents the important connection with New Zealand Maori culture. This area of the coastline is also a stark contrast to the calm beaches on the rest of Rarotonga, with its rugged coastline and reef close to the shore.

**7. Raemaru**

While Rarotonga and Aitutaki are sister islands, there is also a fierce rivalry between their people. According to local legends, many years ago, the proud people of Aitutaki grew envious of Raemaru’s tall peak so set out to steal it for their own. Arriving before dawn, they managed to chop the peak off the mountain, however in their haste to depart, they dropped parts on the shoreline. This area and these formations then became ‘Black Rock’ , which has been previously referred to in this article. Not only were pieces left there, but they were also spilt on the shore line of Aitutaki, the very spot that Pacific Resort Aitutaki Nui was built on. The end result of this was Raemaru having a famously flat top and Aitutaki gaining a hill – Maunga Pa!. Popular with visitors, Raemaru offers a more gentle trek than the cross island walk, taking only 30 to 45 minutes, and is suitable for all ages up until the steep rock face at the very end (which is a bit of an exciting climb!).

**Natural wonders waiting to be discovered!**

The above seven points of interest are just the ‘tip of the iceberg’ when it comes to the natural wonders of Rarotonga. This tiny island, with a circumference of just 32 kilometers, is jam packed with amazing sights and sounds, and offers a truly authentic tropical experience that will have wanting to stay.

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**Note to Editors**

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| About Pacific Resort Hotel Group Pacific Resort Hotel Group (PRHG), is the Cook Islands leading independent collection of luxury and boutique beachfront resorts. PRHG operate boutique resorts and hospitality facilities underpinned by a focus on local culture, the environment, and unique architectural and landscaping design providing discerning guests with an authentic South Pacific experience. PRHG successfully owns and operates four award-winning resorts under the Pacific Resort brand and has partnered with a further two Cook Islands property under its Franchise Partner Hotel Program. |  |
| **About Pacific Resort Aitutaki Nui** *Secluded Luxury…* The island of Aitutaki, an atoll of lush tropical foliage and white sand beaches ringed by a stunningly beautiful lagoon of turquoise water. This is where you’ll find 5-star luxury resort, Pacific Resort Aitutaki Nui, each morning greeted by a spectacular view of Aitutaki’s world famous lagoon, thanks to the absolute beachfront location of the resort’s 29 spacious and air-conditioned bungalows, villas and suites. The resort welcomes guests 12 and older and provides an intimate and romantic escape where the delights of island life are presented to you in luxurious surroundings; that illustrate exactly why Pacific Resort Aitutaki Nui is a member of Small Luxury Hotels of the World. | 78850145_EPS_PRINT_SLH_Logo_Gold_154x119 |
| **About Te Manava Luxury Villas & Spa** *The road less travelled*… Te Manava Luxury Villas & Spa has been designed just for you. This concept in luxury accommodation gives you the freedom to personalise your own leisure experience. Set on the beautiful white sand beach of Rarotonga’s stunning Muri lagoon, your private villa awaits. How you choose to tailor your villa experience is completely up to you. |  |
| **About Little Polynesian Resort** *Inspiring Romance…* Little Polynesian is one of the Cook Islands' most intimate luxury boutique resorts. With just ten beachfront bungalows and four garden studios on a beautiful stretch of white sandy beach, Little Polynesian is committed to providing the ultimate Cook Islands experience through outstanding personalised service that surpasses all expectations. | 78850145_EPS_PRINT_SLH_Logo_Gold_154x119 |
| **About Pacific Resort Rarotonga**  *Authentic Boutique*… Pacific Resort is Rarotonga’s leading full-service authentic boutique resort situated in an unrivaled location on the glorious white sands of Muri beach. This premium boutique resort offers a collection of 64, rooms, suites and villas with a perfect blend of modern comforts and traditional island hospitality. |  |
| **About Royale Takitumu (Partner property)**  *Paradise, by true definition*…. Situated on the majestic Titikaveka Beach, Royale Takitumu is the epitome of serenity, luxury and intimacy. Surrounded by beautifully manicured gardens, palm tree lined pathways lead to the stunning azure lagoon. The ten private, free-standing, thatched-roof villas offer unique, exclusive accommodation in the heart of South Seas Polynesia. |  |
| **About Moana Sands Group (Partner property)** *Your Piece of Paradise …*Two of Moana Sands Group properties, Moana Sands Beachfront Hotel & Villas are located 5 minutes from one another and set on Rarotonga's stunning southern coast. A third property, Moana Sands Lagoon resort is located in Muri featuring magical lagoon views and modern facilities. This superior 3.5 star brand provides travellers with a range of accommodation options including suites, studios, villas and apartments in the most unspoiled setting for a tropical getaway. |  |

**For further information, visit** [www.pacificresort.com](http://www.pacificresort.com)  **or contact:**Esther Heather, Marketing Manager – Pacific Resort Hotel Group [marketing@pacificresort.com](mailto:marketing@pacificresort.com)