

## Ep #141: Bora Bora on Points: Flights, Hotels, and Upgrades



### Full Episode Transcript

With Your Hosts

**Alex Payne, Jess Field, and Pam Lorg**

[Points Talk with the Travel Mom Squad](#)

## Ep #141: Bora Bora on Points: Flights, Hotels, and Upgrades

Alex: Picture this. Overwater bungalows, crystal clear lagoons, and Bora Bora sunsets. And now imagine doing it for a second time. Points and Miles made this possible again for all 3 of us, and yes, for a fraction of the price. We are here to break down exactly how we did it.

Welcome to *Points Talk with the Travel Mom Squad*. We are three moms who've discovered how to leverage credit card welcome offers to get hundreds of thousands of dollars of travel expenses for nearly free. We've used credit card points and miles to take vacations to places like Hawaii, Paris, Greece, Maldives, Japan, and so much more. And the best part? We each still have 800 plus credit scores. Imagine being able to take the vacation of your dreams for nearly free. It's totally possible, and we're here to show you how.

Alex: Hey, I'm Alex.

Pam: And I'm Pam, Alex's mom.

Jess: And I'm Jess. Let's talk points. This year, we all went to Bora Bora at different times and stayed at the Conrad Bora Bora again. It was a return trip for each of us, so we wanted to go over how it lived up to our expectations on trip number 2.

And are we going to return for a third time? But first up, let's go over how each of us got to Bora Bora.

So, I am going to kick it off. We all had to position to the West Coast. If you want to go to Bora Bora, I think positioning to the West Coast is going to be key for you. So I flew from Houston to LA. My stepdaughters, Ella and Olivia went with me, and so they flew from Chicago to LA. We all met up in LA, and we flew from LAX to Tahiti on Air France, and because Bora Bora is French Polynesia. So Air France flies there. People speak French. I wasn't really prepared for that the first time I went there, but it's pretty cool. So, we flew premium economy from LAX to Tahiti on Air France for 40,000 miles per person, which I thought was a pretty good deal.

And then to go, so you have to fly from Tahiti to Bora Bora. So that's an additional flight. We booked those flights through the Capital One travel portal

[Points Talk with the Travel Mom Squad](#)

## Ep #141: Bora Bora on Points: Flights, Hotels, and Upgrades

using our three-hundred-dollar credits. I had a three-hundred-dollar credit on my Venture X, Ted had one on his, and so I booked our flights to and from Bora Bora that way. It's a very short flight, I think 45 minutes or so, and so super easy flight option.

Coming home, we flew from Tahiti to San Francisco on United. I paid 38,000 United miles in economy for us, and then at check-in, I was able to upgrade to Premium Plus, which is economy's version of premium economy, for \$399. I thought that was a pretty good deal for an 8 or 9-hour flight. And it was an overnight flight. So that was a huge reason why I decided to upgrade. The crazy thing is, it was \$824 right before check-in opened. Like I had the app open, \$824, \$824, and then as soon as that 24-hour mark hit, I refreshed, \$399.

Pam: Nice.

Jess: So, waiting until, I mean, it's it's a risk you take waiting until check-in because it could be sold out, but I paid over half. I mean, I paid less than half of what it was going to be 5 minutes before by just waiting for that 24-hour check-in mark. So that's just a little tip for United for you. Okay, what about you, Alex? How did you get there?

Alex: So I actually did the same flight as Jess, like same exact flight, same time, booked it the same way, but I paid 50,000 miles in premium economy. And I thought that was a good deal. And then Jess is like, "Oh, I paid 40,000." I'm like, "Oh, dang it." But I still think that's a great price. I think 50,000, I would assume you might see that more commonly than 40,000, but 40,000 does exist. So, Jess got really lucky with that. Jess, what did you think of the flight itself?

Jess: I thought it was good.

Alex: I do think I do think this is a really good option for people to go. And like you, we positioned, we flew Delta from Salt Lake to LAX.

Jess: Yeah, I thought the seat was really comfortable. I thought the service was good. The food is the only thing that I was like, this is not great.

Alex: Yeah.

## Ep #141: Bora Bora on Points: Flights, Hotels, and Upgrades

Jess: I did not eat dinner because our flight left at midnight. It left at like 12:05, and that was on Pacific time. And so my body felt like it was 2:00 a.m. So I did not eat dinner. That may have been great. I did not try it. I got in my seat, as soon as we were in the air I put on my eye mask and my earplugs, and I went to sleep. The breakfast, it was like, like I posted a picture on our Facebook stories, and someone was like, "That looks like hospital food." Like it was like a little orange juice, a water, a muffin, and a roll. I was like, "Really?"

Alex: And a little smoothie, like one of those like kefir or whatever.

Jess: Yeah, like a strawberry kefir drink. So it was very carb-heavy. I really didn't eat it. I was like, this doesn't appeal to me. So I think I drank the orange juice and that was about it.

Alex: You know what? I actually, the muffin was really dry. The roll was actually not bad. I ate the roll and it had good, like I had butter and jam with it, but it's very, like it leaves a lot to desired. You're kind of like, "This isn't really feel like a real breakfast, but okay." I did the same. I didn't have dinner. I went to sleep. I liked the seats. It felt like the screen was really nice. It felt new and modern. I did feel like it was a little less legroom than my second flight. So, coming home, we flew Air Tahiti Nui, premium economy, and I wasn't, I didn't have high expectations. I was like, "Oh, this is just going to be fine," you know.

I actually really liked it. Like the, there it I don't know if there was just more space between the seats. Or you know how sometimes you go on a plane, it just feels condensed. Kind of like when you fly business class and you have like the older business class where it's just all really open and it's not as private, but you're like, "Oh, I feel so free." And then you have the really narrow seat beds, which are newer and nicer, but you feel more constricted and confined. That's kind of how I felt on this. Like Air Tahiti, I mean, Air France was a nicer plane, but I actually thought Air Tahiti was a little more comfortable. It was more spacious. I would fly them again, no problem. I was pleasantly surprised with the experience.

I paid, so I kind of booked it a little bit odd. So they're in the One World Alliance. So I booked Mitch's flight with Alaska miles. It was 40,000 Alaska miles. We didn't, and he's the only one that had Alaska miles. We didn't have enough to

## Ep #141: Bora Bora on Points: Flights, Hotels, and Upgrades

book both of our flights. So I used American Airline miles to book my seat, and that was 60,000 miles.

So, pretty big difference. I think it's kind of interesting that it's 20,000 more points booking with Alaska, but I think 200,000 points round trip for two in premium economy both ways, so 100,000 per person from the West Coast to Tahiti, I think that's a really good price overall. Like I was really happy with that redemption, especially, I don't know, you guys all know we love business class. And sometimes it's like, oh, premium economy, but I would do both of those flights again. The seats recline a little bit more, you have a foot rest, you I don't remember if Air or if Air France had this, but Air Tahiti even had like a little leg rest part that comes out a little bit.

So it was really comfortable. The food on Air Tahiti was I went to sleep for bed because it was the same thing. We left Tahiti at like midnight. So I just went right to bed, but in the morning, there was an option between like a crepe breakfast or an egg. So it was like egg with potatoes, like an omelet, like a cheese omelet with potatoes and sausage. And it was like edible. It was totally fine. It felt like a real breakfast. It was, you know, like sometimes you're like, "Is this going to be terrible?" But I was like, like both Mitch and I ate it and we're like, "Okay, that was pretty good."

So, yeah. I was, thought the food, the breakfast at least was way better on Air Tahiti because it was a like actual breakfast instead of here, have a roll and a muffin. So, hands down would take either of those flights again, and they were both red eyes. You guys, I get really nervous for red eyes. I get nervous I won't sleep. I get nervous my back's going to be sore. And I did great. So, props to premium economy when you have the leg rest, it's all good.

Jess: I would also fly both again, but for Air France, I would probably just bring my own snacks. Um, but I agree with you, like I thought the seats were super comfortable, and I slept great. And so I would totally fly it again. I think United was much better, but it's a lot easier to get Air France miles since all the banks transfer to Air France. So,

Alex: Yeah, well, and you kind of had to roll the dice of, am I going to be able to upgrade to Premium Plus?

## Ep #141: Bora Bora on Points: Flights, Hotels, and Upgrades

Jess: Yeah.

Alex: Or am I going to be stuck in economy? Because being stuck in economy would have been worse than premium economy on Air France.

Pam: Well, I find this really interesting because Alex had went on the same flights in reversed order. So she was Air France flying over, Air France, Tahiti, or Air Tahiti Nui coming back. I was just the opposite. And I had different thoughts completely on my business class experiences because you know this old girl...

Alex: Well, business class is just a whole different world in itself.

Pam: But you know this old girl is not flying unless she's flying business class, you know. For that long. So...

Alex: But I will say, I think it's kind of hard to find business class seats to Tahiti though, at a reasonable rate. So you got really lucky that worked out.

Pam: Yes. Yeah. I agree. Yeah. So I positioned to Seattle from Denver, and I booked on Alaska Airlines for an Air Tahiti Nui flight. My sister and I both did this. It was 65K Alaska Airlines miles, which was, I thought was really good.

Alex: That's really good because I paid 60k for premium economy, but because I had to book through American.

Pam: Yeah. This is from Seattle to Papeete. Now, I will say that I, although the flight was great, I mean, I will hands down, I don't really care about the food as much as I used to. I'm not feeling like most of the time, the food is really amazing on any flight. And so that's not really something that factors in, but I got to tell you, Air Tahiti Nui needs to update their food choices.

So, basically we, I think we left about 9:00 at night, and they, their dinner choice was one thing and one thing only, and that was a quiche. And it came with a quiche, with a salad, some fruit, and I think something for dessert, but that's it. That was the only choice.

And then I didn't see anything. And I asked my sister because she, because I went to sleep, and I slept a lot of it. I slept more than my sister. I said, "Did they ever come around with anything else? Was there anything in the galley?" And

[Points Talk with the Travel Mom Squad](#)

## Ep #141: Bora Bora on Points: Flights, Hotels, and Upgrades

she said, "No, I don't think so." So there was no other food until breakfast. And I actually just slept through breakfast. She did have it. She said it was okay. And so I think, so my thoughts were, here, you kind of liked their food. And my thoughts were, yeah, they really need to update their food choices and the availability of just having some food.

Alex: Well, yeah, just one option for business class. I've never even really heard of that.

Pam: No, no. I kept thinking, "When are they passing out the menus? When are they, when do I see what I get to order?" And there was like, "There is one choice. Take it or leave it." And to be honest, it wasn't like it was terrible quiche, but it, you know, it wasn't outstanding.

And then my return ticket, and I and I also, also, I did the same thing that you did, Jess, my Papeete to Bora Bora, well, actually to Moorea, and then we went from Moorea to Bora Bora. I used my Capital One credits for that.

Alex: Oh, I did that too. I forgot to say that, but yeah, it's a great use of them.

Pam: It really is. And my return flight again was on business class. It was Papeete to LAX, and this time I flew Air France. It was 70K, which again, I thought was really a good price. I mean, I think that, I mean, I was really like,

Alex: Did you book via Air France too?

Pam: I did. Yes. So we used, we transferred points into Air France and then booked Air France. And we did get into LA a little late, so we did have to spend the night. We couldn't get, my sister couldn't get home to Phoenix, and I couldn't get home to Denver that night. So we stayed at the Hyatt Regency LAX on our return using points, of course.

And I will say this was a daytime flight, and I was kind of excited because I thought, "Oh, this is so fun. I get to enjoy business class during the daytime." And it was a really nice seat. It was one of those that has the doors that do close, although mine for some reason, I had trouble getting to close. Good seat, good sleep. I slept, you know, quite a bit on that flight.

## Ep #141: Bora Bora on Points: Flights, Hotels, and Upgrades

Alex: I can't believe that. That doesn't sound like you. Sleeping during the day?

Pam: And then and then you wonder why I didn't sleep very good last night. Didn't we just have an episode about jet lag? Yes, and again, I didn't follow it. But the food on this flight wasn't anything to rave about either. We weren't very excited about the food. And again, I didn't have the uh whatever was offered just before you land. My sister did, and she said it was again, okay. But you know, I'd fly either of these again, especially for these prices, just to be able to be in business class. It's not that big of a deal.

Jess: When is Turkish going to start flying to Tahiti?

Pam: I don't know.

Alex: Right, that's what we need.

Pam: That's something we do like food, we do like the food there or Singapore. You know, there's certain airlines I really do like the food, but these two, and I've liked Air France in the past, just didn't particularly like their choices on this flight.

Alex: Well, one thing, well, one thing I wanted to say first though about it is usually when you fly to Tahiti, you have to, a lot of times your flight will get in at night, and you stay the night in Tahiti, you take a flight the next morning to Bora Bora. I loved not having to do that this time. That's what all 3 of us did the first time we went. We got to Tahiti, stayed the night, and then we went to Bora Bora. I loved getting there. I mean, we was we were tired. I won't say we weren't tired. We were really tired.

But it was so nice to just kind of get the trip started, especially for myself, where I'm leaving young kids. It's, I want to maximize my time on the trip. And that was one thing that was really cool is we left, like my husband and I were talking about it when we were when we were there. We left Salt Lake, I want to say around 9 or, I mean, 5:00 p.m. And flew to LA, then flew through the night, got to Bora Bora around 5:00 a.m. We, I mean, Tahiti. We were in Bora Bora by like 9:30 a.m.

So it was just really cool because we're like, "We just had a whole day at home yesterday." Like we were living our lives like with the kids, running errands, just

## Ep #141: Bora Bora on Points: Flights, Hotels, and Upgrades

the normal day-to-day, and then we land in we get to Tahiti, we're in Bora Bora, we had the entire day in Bora Bora.

And then the same thing coming home, we were in Bora Bora all day. I think we left the resort around 6:00 p.m. We flew from Bora Bora to Tahiti, we get to LA around 11 or something like that. We get home to Salt Lake at 4. We drive home and we're at our kids' soccer game that night. And it was just like we just had two full days in each place by taking advantage of this, the time changes on your side. That is what's really nice about it. And those red eye flights, like I just was just like, "This is so cool. We just maximized our time."

We felt like we got plenty of time there, and we were only there for five nights, and it just was really, I'm still just like, "That was so cool." Because as a parent, it's hard to leave your kids, you know. Like you know how it too Jess, it's like tough to leave for too long, and then you're like, "Oh man, we really maximized our time well." It felt really good.

Jess: Well, I didn't feel as guilty because Ted was home with mine, and I was with two of my other kids. And so I was like, "This is a family trip for us." But I agree with you, like Ted and I, Ted and I actually spent two nights in Tahiti last time because I was like, "Oh, you hear Tahiti," and you think like, "Oh, this is like I want to see Tahiti."

Alex: That's true. That's true. We did the same thing, Jess.

Jess: Y'all, there's not much, there's not much to see in Tahiti.

Alex: You don't need to. No, skip it.

Jess: Yeah, and like I stated, I stated an IHG property, they stated a Hilton, and neither one of us really loved our hotel. And so I was like, "You know what? I want to just skip Tahiti altogether this time." So I did the exact same thing where it was red eyes both ways, but yeah, it was worth it to not have to have that extra time in Tahiti.

Alex: Do you guys think when people say, "I want to go to Tahiti," and they go, "Oh, we went to Tahiti, and I just loved it so much," because that's what I

## Ep #141: Bora Bora on Points: Flights, Hotels, and Upgrades

thought. I thought Tahiti was the overwater bungalows, and that's what I wanted to go to was Tahiti. I think they just mean French Polynesia after being to Tahiti.

Pam: I think they do too.

Alex: Like I actually have a friend who went and took her kids for like right before Christmas this year, and she's like, "Oh yeah, we're going to Tahiti." And then the more I talked to her later, I was like, "How was it?" They were in Moorea the whole time.

Pam: Right.

Alex: But I think people just say Tahiti because that's where you fly into. It's not everybody knows Moorea. It's just more so much more well-known. And I also do want to say, like we like we're 10 minutes from the airport. None of us went and explored Tahiti. Tahiti could be amazing. There could be really great parts that we didn't go see. So I don't want to like knock Tahiti too much, but I do, none of us are like, "Oh yeah, let's go back to Tahiti." It's like, "Uh, no, we'll go check out the other surrounding islands."

Pam: Okay, well let's get into Bora Bora. The Conrad Bora Bora, what were your thoughts? Was it as good as you thought the second time? Who's going back?

Jess: All right, so like Pam said, we all once again stayed at the Conrad Bora Bora. This is a Hilton property, and so you are going to want to use Hilton points, Hilton free night certificates, or transfer points from Amex to Hilton if you want to book this property. It is currently 120,000 Hilton points a night to get a standard room there, which is not an overwater villa, but we'll get into that in a little bit.

So, if you with Hilton, if you have gold status, if you have any status with Hilton, you get the fifth night free. So if you hold a Hilton credit card, if you hold like an Amex Platinum or Amex Platinum business, you can get Hilton Gold status with those.

So, we did 6 nights in Bora Bora. We did 5 nights on points, so we got the fifth night free. So it was 480,000 Hilton points, and we got five nights, and then I added, I got a free night certificate, and I was like, "I'm going to add on a night." And so, I added on a sixth night with a free night certificate. This is an amazing

## Ep #141: Bora Bora on Points: Flights, Hotels, and Upgrades

use of a of a Hilton free night certificate if you have them. That's what we love about Hilton is that their free night certificates, you can redeem them at almost any property worldwide as long as there is a standard room. I thought it was just as great, if not better, than the last time that I went. Ted and I went last time.

He loved it, and it I feel like that's a testament to how great it is because he's not typically someone who's like, "I just want to sit around and sit by the water." because there's not a ton to do in Bora Bora. I mean, there's some activities that we're going to talk about, but those are expensive. And if you do an activity every day, you're going to be shelling out a ton of money on activities. But he was like, "This is amazing. It's just so like peaceful. You can see all the stars at night." And so when we were there, Ella was watching, Ella came and watched Molly while we went the first time, and we were sending her pictures and videos, and she was like, "Oh my gosh, I want to be there." So I was like, "Okay, next year I'll take you because I want to go back."

Alex: You're like, "Oh, I guess I'll come back if I have to."

Jess: Yeah, so it was just great. I mean, we, like I said, booked 6 nights. We got, when we arrived, I asked about upgrading to an overwater bungalow because let's be real, if I'm going to, if I'm flying all the way to Bora Bora, like I want to be in an overwater villa.

Alex: Jess, did they send you an email about it beforehand or no?

Jess: They didn't, and I was convinced, I was like, "Oh, they must just have like upgraded me for free, and that's why they're not reaching out about it." But,

Alex: Well, because Jess has diamond status, too, so like it would make sense that they would just upgrade you.

Jess: Yes. So I asked about it when we got there. Luckily, there's construction going on, and so it was not at full capacity, and they were able to get us into an overwater villa for our last five, to just every night but the first night. And it was around \$500 a night, which I think is a, Alex got a better deal than I did, and Pam got an even better deal than both Alex and I. But I still think \$500 a night for an overwater villa is a great deal.

## Ep #141: Bora Bora on Points: Flights, Hotels, and Upgrades

Their standard room though, it's a lagoon view suite. It's huge. So even if you're just like, "I don't want to shell out money to upgrade, I just want to go and pay zero dollars for the accommodations," the standard room is very nice. You'll still have views of the lagoon, you just won't be over water.

As far as activities, we went to, I went to the spa twice. Um, they have a really great spa with amazing views from the spa. And so highly recommend the spa. We didn't really do, they have kayaks and bikes. I didn't really do either of those. Our villa was right in the middle of the resort, so we could just walk everywhere. We didn't really need to bike anywhere, and it was really windy when we were there. And so I was like, "I don't really feel like going out on a kayak." We did some snorkeling off of our off of the deck of our villa. They provide snorkel equipment there. They provide the kayaks and the bikes if you want to do that.

As far as places to eat, you're kind of limited. There are four different restaurants. They're not all open every night. And so, I personally made our dinner reservations before we arrived. I kind of looked online at their schedule to see which restaurants were opened which night. There is a boat that you can take to the main island and then eat there. I did not personally do that. I don't know if...

Alex: The boat is expensive. Like it's during the daytime hours, it's either free or really cheap. I don't remember exactly.

Jess: I think it's free during the day, but then at night you have to pay.

Alex: But it was expensive, so you're like, "Well, by the time I pay for the both of us a round trip boat ride over to the main island, the dinner might be cheaper, but my ride's so expensive that it just, I feel like it'd cancel out." We did not go over to the main island for dinner.

Pam: I've never done it either. Sometime I would like to try it.

Alex: We did take the boat though, which I will tell you guys about later. We did take it.

Jess: There are four restaurants. Bora Bora is expensive. You just have to realize that the money that you're saving on your flights and your hotel, you're

## Ep #141: Bora Bora on Points: Flights, Hotels, and Upgrades

putting towards food and drinks, because it is very expensive. Alex and Pam don't drink, and so they probably saved a ton of money by just drinking water.

Alex: I don't even drink soda. I just drink water most of the time, you guys.

Jess: I know, I was like, Alex's bill was probably like a third of what mine was, but just for reference, a like I got a piña colada and I think it was \$36 for one piña colada.

Alex: I got a virgin one. I got a virgin one for \$15.

Pam: Yeah, and I thought that was ridiculous.

Jess: I think it was around \$30-36 for one piña colada. So, needless to say, I did not drink much in Bora Bora. I had like one drink a day, and I was like, "That's, that's good." There are four restaurants. There's Banyan, which is a Chinese restaurant, Iriatai, which is a French restaurant, Tamure Beach Grill, which is a beach grill, and then Upa Upa Lounge, which is a sushi restaurant. Upa Upa Lounge was all 3 of our favorites. It's just a cute vibe. Like there's the floor is glass, so you can like see the fish swimming while you're sitting there. They also have happy hour there, and I think you get like 20% off drinks. So instead of \$36, it was like \$26 or something, whatever the math is on that. So,

Pam: That is insane.

Jess: So, Upa Upa Lounge was our favorite, and then Iriatai, the Tamure Beach Grill was our least favorite just because it's like burgers and pizza and like not too exciting. But um, but yeah, I thought all of the...

Pam: Some of us, some of us like that, though.

Jess: Yeah. I mean, we ate there for a lunch, but like it's the same the menu is similar for dinner, so I didn't want to eat there twice every day. I think the food is good. I think if you're looking for value, you're not going to find it because you're going to be like, "I paid this much for a burger or." So, I think the food is good. Do I think it's worth the price? No, but you really don't have any other options unless you want to bring ramen from home.

## Ep #141: Bora Bora on Points: Flights, Hotels, and Upgrades

We all got free breakfast in the mornings because I have diamond status, Alex and Pam have gold status, and so if you have gold or diamond status, you get free breakfast, the continental breakfast. We honestly would fill up at breakfast. Like stuff ourselves to where we were so full, and then we would like share a pizza for lunch, and then we would go have dinner. And so that kind of helped cut down on costs, I feel like. I don't know, Alex, what did you think of your return trip to Bora Bora?

Alex: The return trip was much better than the first trip. The first trip, we went in November, which is the rainy season, and we got the rain. We had a couple days where it would rain a lot and then it would maybe stop for a little bit, and we'd go outside, but then it'd start raining on us. So there were some times where we just were in our room reading books, which is fine, but like it's not you what you picture when you're going to Bora Bora. But we did have some really nice days too, so I was like, "Okay, this is beautiful, but it wasn't like, I'm obsessed with Bora Bora." I was like, "Bora Bora hates me."

But we still had a really good trip. So I wanted to go back and do a redo. I mean, it wasn't, I don't want to make it sound like the first trip wasn't great. It was still great. We did still have a couple of days of nice weather. It was just like, "Oh, I wish it would have been this nice the whole trip." It kind of put a damper on it a little bit.

But so booked this second trip back, and Mitch had never been in, so I wanted to take him. We had been to the Maldives before, and he loved that. So I was like, "Oh, I want to see what he thinks about Bora Bora." And just to get that out of the way, I do not think that they're very comparable. Like they're both islands that have overwater villas. Like that's kind of it to me. I feel like if you've gone to one, I don't feel like it's the same thing, and I also think a lot of it comes down to, because this is a question we get a lot is, "What do you like better, Bora Bora or Maldives?"

And I'm like, "I don't think that they're different." Like they both have crystal, like they both have super clear, pretty water, but the looks of the islands are different. And one is so much more remote. Like Maldives is so much more remote than Bora Bora. There's just some differences there. And I don't think

## Ep #141: Bora Bora on Points: Flights, Hotels, and Upgrades

they're super comparable to each other, I guess, is what I'm trying to say. I love them both, and we're going back to Maldives, and I would go back to Bora Bora. I like Maldives because it feels more remote.

But this is what I was going to say. I was trying to remember. I think sometimes too, you get asked these questions, and it's like, "Well, Bora Bora is like a whole island, and I just went to one hotel on this island. Maldives is this whole like group of islands, like hundreds of islands, and I went to one little piece of it." So I think it's more accurate to say like, "Which hotel did you like better?" Because you can't compare a whole island when you've seen a sliver of it. And so that's I think something to keep in mind with the experience of Bora Bora to Maldives.

So, I will say we both really enjoyed Bora Bora. Mitch really loved it. He doesn't think they're super comparable, and I think part of the reason being is in Maldives, we barely saw another person. It felt like we literally, they dropped us in the middle of nowhere. But I know my mom's been there, and that wasn't her experience in the Maldives because we were staying at different hotels. So I think it really comes down to the hotel situation.

So, moving on from that, this second trip, enjoyed it more. We had a little bit of rain, but not near as much as last time. It was super windy, and I feel like that was maybe my thing that I didn't love so much about it. And it wasn't even that the wind was bothersome. It was actually, it made it really comfortable, but it made our overwater villa, like the water was so rough. And it just, I didn't want to go swimming and go snorkeling in it because I kind of get motion sick snorkeling as it is. And so I was like, "I'm not going in that." Mitch went snorkeling and it was great.

But on the other side, I don't even know how to like, I don't know which direction I was in. So, it's like there's the main lobby. Jess was straight in front, and then you have the right side if you're facing the lobby, there's the right side of the hotel, those overwater villas, and the left side. The left side was completely under renovation. Those were not even open. So we were on the right side, but then behind that, there's even more overwater villas. Those villas had no wind. They I was like, "Oh, I wish we were in one of those so bad," because it was just

## Ep #141: Bora Bora on Points: Flights, Hotels, and Upgrades

so serene and calm and peaceful outside their villas, and ours looked like we were in the middle of the ocean on the other side of the reef.

Pam: I was where you wanted to be.

Alex: Okay. Then I, and honestly, I think that made a really big difference would have made a big difference because it, I just look out and I'm like, "This looks like the ocean, like the rough ocean out here." So that was kind of a damper on it, but I mean, I still would upgrade to the overwater villa. It's still so nice.

I actually got an email ahead of time, maybe like 5 days, 5 to 7 days before, and they asked me if I wanted the opportunity to upgrade for \$600 a night. And I was like, "I know Jess paid 5, so I don't want to do that." And they were like, so I said, "Oh, that's a little outside my budget. Could you do like \$500?" knowing that's what Jess paid. And they said, "We are thrilled to offer you \$450." And I was like, "I'll take it." So I thought that was really funny. I'm like, "Whoever's doing their negotiating, I like you because you just saved me \$50 a night." So, um, I don't think it's normally that cheap. I think it is lower because they were at lower capacity because of the renovations going on. So I wouldn't bank on it being that low if you're going once renovations are over or anything like that.

We actually ate at Tamure Beach Grill, and then at lunchtime, I think it's called the Tava Pool Bar, but it's the same exact menu. We ate there pretty frequently. Like I can't really have soy, like it's a self-diagnosed soy intolerance. I don't know if it's real or not, but I just avoid soy. So we weren't going to be eating at the Chinese restaurant. Sushi has a lot of that kind of stuff too, so we weren't going to eat there. We ate at the French restaurant, and then basically Tamure Beach Grill. And I actually liked like the pizza was really good, we had the fish there. Mitch really liked that. I had a steak there that was good.

It does get a little bit like, "Huh," Mitch and I were joking like, "What should we get tonight from here?" Um, but it was good food. I actually thought it was better than last time. The first time I went, I remember being like, "Oh, we got a pizza, and I was disappointed." And then this time, I think we had like three pizzas and they were really good. So I think the food had improved since I was last there.

## Ep #141: Bora Bora on Points: Flights, Hotels, and Upgrades

As far as at the resort activities though, Mitch went snorkeling a bunch of times. Snorkel gear is complimentary. He would have to go and check it out during like check it out and then bring it back the same day. So I mean, I think that's kind of funny that they don't just let you keep it in your room when we were told.

Jess: We kept ours. Spoiler, we kept ours.

Alex: Did you, I guess Mitch just needed to ask them. Can I keep my stuff in the room or did you just keep it?

Jess: I think we just did it. I think we just did it, and they didn't.

Alex: They told him like, "If it's not back by 5, there'll be a charge." And so we brought ours back. But I mean, it makes sense. Like where you where are you going to take it? You know what I mean? Like you're stuck at the hotel.

Jess: I mean, we returned it on our last day, but we didn't, yeah.

Alex: You didn't return it every day. Yeah. Well, because in Maldives, like when at the we stayed at the um, Le Méridien. It's a Marriott property. We check it out at the beginning and then you just keep it in your room the whole time. So we're like, "This is kind of funny that we have to return this."

We did ride the bikes around a little bit, which they don't have great brakes, at least all of the ones I tried, but I mean, it was and then they're not easy to ride. I wouldn't call they're cute. They are cute, but they're not the most functional bikes that I've ever ridden. What other activities? I think that was about it.

I mean, in the lobby, they have a or not the lobby, like kind of by the French restaurant, they have a pool table, if you want to play pool. We did a puzzle one day up there. They have other things going on, but that was pretty much it as far as activities. We would go on walks. The hotel doesn't have views of Mount Otemanu, hopefully I said that right, except if you walk up by the spa. So we would take a walk every morning, kind of like see the sunrise, see the mountain there. That was really cool. And yeah, that's about it. But yeah, we really loved it. But even I asked Mitch, just said, "How does this compare to Maldives?" He says, "I don't really think they compare. I think they're different." So, yeah. What about you, Mom?

## Ep #141: Bora Bora on Points: Flights, Hotels, and Upgrades

Pam: Okay, can I just tell you guys that I got back last night from my trip and I'm obsessed with the Conrad Bora Bora. And I wasn't that way the first time, and again, I think it was the weather. We had beautiful weather. It was completely sunny every day, not a drop of rain. And that just made such a difference. I took my sister this time. She could not believe how gorgeous it was. I mean, it was really amazing.

I agree, you probably can't compare the Maldives to it. The only thing that I can compare is the length of time it takes to get to the Maldives.

Alex: 100%. Maldives is a beast to get to.

Pam: It is a beast to get to. So if I can get to Bora Bora and have an overwater villa, have those clear water, have the beautiful sunsets, a lot of the stuff that I enjoy about the Maldives. And we didn't have, it wasn't like it was packed. So we didn't see a ton of people for it being pretty full. I'm going to probably, I'll just I kept saying, "Yeah, this is where I'm coming back to. I'm coming back here. I would come back here every year." I am completely obsessed with this place. So, I mean, I do want to try some other resorts, but that's going to be hard because I really love this.

Alex: Yeah, I do know what I think too about the hotel situation, Mom, that I noticed is and you guys maybe noticed the same thing. I want to ask you. We're going to talk about some of the activities we did, but one of the activities all 3 of us did was a jet ski tour, and that allowed us to see the whole island, and we went by the other hotels. That's the thing too with Bora Bora, there's not very many hotels. Maldives, there's a ton of hotels. So it's, there's a lot of different things to try. If you're going to Bora Bora, you're like, okay, there's like, there's an IHG property, super hard to book on points. There's the St. Regis, tons of points. There's a Westin now, and those are like, and the Hilton, those are like your pretty much your only points options for Bora Bora. So you're very limited.

I felt like when we did the jet ski tour, those other hotels, like there's the center of the island, there's Mount Otemanu, and those other hotels like are outside of it, looking straight at it. They have incredible views of it. The Hilton does not, but the Hilton is secluded in its own area, and it's so green, and it is so lush. And so I think there's kind of a tradeoff.

## Ep #141: Bora Bora on Points: Flights, Hotels, and Upgrades

Like when we came back from our tour, our tour dropped us off, and there was other people that were staying at the Westin, like, and they almost stayed at the Conrad. They're like, "Oh, this is so pretty and green here. Like it's so secluded and like" and Mitch and I were like, "Yeah, this is so pretty." Like this is prettier than where the other people are staying. It feels more resorty where the other people are because you can see the other resorts. Conrad feels so private, but those views they have of Mount Otemanu are just pretty unreal. And so, I am with you, mom, that I'd like to try another one to see how it compares having those views. But I do think the Conrad's privacy and how lush and green it is pretty unique and really, really cool. What did you guys notice that like on your tours when you were driving your jet skis around or anything?

Jess: Well, our guide even said, like, "I love the Conrad's location," because he was pointing out the other hotels. He was like, "There's the Four Seasons, there's the St. Regis, there's the Westin, there's," you know, they're kind of all in a line, and you can see, you know, you can see them all from the other. Like if you're standing on your overwater villa deck from the St. Regis, you can probably see, you know, the Westin over here, the Four Seasons.

Alex: It's like comparable to being at like a strip of beach when it's like, hotel, hotel, hotel, hotel.

Jess: So he was like, "I love the Conrad is my favorite because of how like secluded and private it is." So I agree with you though, I'm tempted to try one of the other ones. I'm like, "Can I get a points boost at the Four Seasons and stay there?"

Alex: Oh my gosh, seriously. That's the one I'd want to stay at would be the Four Seasons.

Pam: You know, one of the other things that I thought was different this time is remember Alex, our first time, we were not impressed with the service. We kept saying, "Do these people want to work here? They just all seem kind of grumpy." I don't know about you guys, but we had the best service. Everybody was happy. There wasn't anybody you passed by that didn't say, I forget, Orana, or whatever it is that they say.

## Ep #141: Bora Bora on Points: Flights, Hotels, and Upgrades

Alex: Or yeah, la Orana.

Pam: Yeah, yeah. That I mean they were just so happy to be there. They were so friendly to us. It was just, it was amazing.

Alex: No, I agree. It was so much better. Like I had no complaints. Like that was my biggest kind of issue with it last time was the service wasn't that great and the food wasn't that good. And this time I was like, "The food was better, and the service was so good." I will say that it was kind of funny, like, and we didn't have any issues with this. Like we were fine. But I think Mitch ordered an omelet every morning, and we were there for 5 days, and I think two of the mornings it came as he ordered. Every other time was like, they forgot the cheese one time. Another time like it's you I need cheese in your omelet. One time they forgot ham.

There was a couple times at dinner where something was a little off, but it wasn't, like they were so nice. I think it, and we didn't, we just ate it. We weren't like, "We need a new omelet." We were easygoing. It was still fine. But I think it was more like a lost in translation thing, or maybe I was like, "Okay, we really need to speak slowly when we're placing our order, and like I they didn't really write things down all the time either. They just memorized it. And so that was kind of funny because I'm like, "If I wasn't using points and I was paying a lot of money for this breakfast, I might be a little bit more like, um this isn't what I how I ordered this." But it was it was just kind of funny to us more than anything, but we still ate it and the food was still good. It was just, yeah, just funny.

Pam: Well, no, you guys both got um well, I guess just you didn't. I thought you had, but Alex got an email about upgrading. I never got anything, so I was being proactive saying, "I'd really like to upgrade to an overwater bungalow." I just thought my sister's never been there. I'm willing to pay the money. I want to do that. And they had nothing. And I knew before going in that they had nothing, that they were, I guess booked, although it wasn't that busy. And then, it didn't seem that busy. And then I tried at another resort I went to first, which I'll talk about later, the Hilton Moorea, there was nothing available there. And I just thought, "Okay, I guess we're not going to have this overwater villa." They did

## Ep #141: Bora Bora on Points: Flights, Hotels, and Upgrades

upgrade me to this gorgeous, it was the same type of room that we had um the first four nights last time, Alex.

Alex: But king, like the king, just the standard room.

Pam: Yes, but this was a little upgraded. I think we had this what I mean it was huge. It was gigantic. It was probably twice the size of our overwater villa. It was gigantic. And it was gorgeous. I feel like they had kind of upgraded them. The walls were all white instead of any wood or anything. So they were brighter. It was really amazing. And but when I got there, we had, we met our concierge. You get a concierge who checks on you every day. Ours was Claire. She was amazing. Shout out to Claire. If anybody goes there, tell Claire that the sisters said hi because she was so sweet. And she told me from the start, she says, "I saw that you really like to upgrade. I am going to do my best. I will get you an upgrade."

So the second day, she called and said, "I got you an upgrade for your last two nights. Will that be fine?" And I said, "That is great. Thank you, Claire." I said, "How much is that going to cost me?" She says, "It is my pleasure. It is complimentary." So, I mean, I didn't even have to pay. So my cost of staying there for our food was \$1000. That's what I would have paid for my upgrade. I feel like I stayed there for nothing. So it was so, it was so great.

My sister and I, like we talked about, it is expensive, the food's expensive. We probably spent close to \$100 a day, obviously, because five nights at and we end up with a bill of \$1000. That did include our boat transfers over, which were \$16 a person from Bora Bora Airport over to the Conrad. That was \$16 a person.

Alex: Did you say \$16?

Pam: Yeah.

Jess: No. They're way more than that.

Alex: No, they're like \$125. They're like \$125 a person.

## Ep #141: Bora Bora on Points: Flights, Hotels, and Upgrades

Pam: Oh, maybe I'm getting it mixed up with my, I'm getting it mixed up with my Hilton Moorea.

Alex: Oh, because I'm like, if they did that, I need to call them.

Pam: But that but that did include that did include my transportation. So we ate, not, we did, we would do the same thing. We'd have a big breakfast. We would split a burger or pizza for lunch. A couple times, we didn't even have lunch. We would go get chips and candy, you know, and have that. And then we'd have dinner.

Jess: Well, I'll just say not drinking alcohol saved you a lot of money because I had two, I had two adults with me, and we like to have some champagne with dinner, and yeah, it was it was more than \$1000.

Pam: Wow. Yeah, so, you know, but it is, but it isn't cheap, you know. So we had, I'd say, our favorite place to eat was probably the French restaurant. We went there twice. We had steak there both nights. It was really good. Uh, we did like the grill though. You know, I do like a burger, I did like, I agree, Alex, the pizza was really good, and I thought their fish was amazing. I wish that they had more places to eat or that at least all the restaurants were open all the time. We did hit up the Banyan, the Chinese place, and that was really good. So I was supposed to go to the sushi place, but my sister really doesn't do that well, and I thought, "Well, they've got to have like teriyaki chicken or teriyaki steak too." Nope, it's just sushi. So we switched over to the Chinese, and that was great.

While we were there, we did kayak, and it was a little windy, so that took a lot of arm strength. We did ride bikes, and I agree, Alex, the brakes aren't great. I ran into a sign and thought I broke my toes one time.

Jess: Oh my gosh. But we don't have video of that? We don't have video of it.

Pam: There's no video of that. I was so worried that I wasn't going to be able to walk the next day or that I would hurt, but it wasn't that bad.

Jess: Oh my gosh.

Alex: Oh, dear.

## Ep #141: Bora Bora on Points: Flights, Hotels, and Upgrades

Pam: I just got to say though, I am obsessed with this place. We did run into a, I ran into a reader there who I actually done a strategy call with. I forgot, years before it to go there, and she, they were finally there for their 40th birthdays, and I think combined with a wedding anniversary. That's always really fun, and they were loving it too.

Now, I did stay additionally at two other Hiltons. So I want to talk just a little bit about them. When we first flew into Papeete, we got there at 3:30 in the morning. I mean, this is rough. 3:30 in the morning. We had 6 hours before we flew out to the Hilton Moorea. That was a rough 6 hours for me. I'm not going to lie.

Alex: Yeah, that is rough. There's nothing to do there at that airport. It's tiny.

Pam: There's nothing to do. It's just a little airport. My sister though, on the other hand, loved it. There were so many people there. There were people singing, they were, everybody was giving out leis. She loved watching the culture. She just loved it. She had the best time. I, on the other hand, found it very rough.

So we went to the Hilton Moorea. The redemption there is 95K a night if you can find it. And it's, it's a little harder to find, but I have seen it fairly often. I just looked the other, the other day. Um, people love the Hilton Moorea for, especially for families. Now, I've been to the Conrad Bora Bora, so I knew what that was like. So when I got there, I mean, my sister loved this right from the start. And I was like, "Oh, that's not the Bora Bora, it's not the Conrad." You know, but we got, it was a nice room, it was a big room, we had our own little private plunge pool. The thing that I'd like...

Alex: Not an overwater villa, right?

Pam: Not an, no, couldn't get an overwater villa. What I did like about it is that it's on this, it's on an island, and you can kind of get out and explore more, not saying that we did. We were only there for two nights, but it's something that I would have liked to have done, that I would do if I went there another time.

It does have very limited eating there at the hotel. I think there's, there's a little grill that is open during the day, that is also open at night, and then there's a

## Ep #141: Bora Bora on Points: Flights, Hotels, and Upgrades

creperie. And that's about it. We ate the creperie, really good crepes. Again, kind of like you did with Upa Upa, you have the sand sharks and all the fish swimming below. Really thought that was fun. The thing that's nice about this hotel is that there are a lot of restaurants on the island, and they will send a taxi, complimentary to you, to pick you up, take you to their restaurants so you can eat there. And I've heard really good things about a restaurant named Rudy's. We just got lazy. We were still a little tired, and so we had planned to go there, and then we heard after we left from people that said, "Rudy's was amazing," and so it's definitely something you might want to think about.

It is a 15-minute. I mean, you really literally take off and then land on Moorea, and it cost us over \$100 for that little tiny flight. We did use again, Capital One credits for that because I had my husband's too. But you can take a ferry over there for about \$20, so much less. So that's always an option. And I it has a really nice pool and, you know, it's definitely a good place for families and probably for a lot of couples if you haven't been to the Conrad Bora Bora. I was just comparing to the Conrad Bora Bora a lot, and so, but it was it is something I still go back to. I just would want to get out and see more of the island.

And then we did have that flight that we talked about where you have to stay a night at the near the airport. So we stayed at the Hilton Tahiti near the airport. I used a Fine Hotel and Resorts credit for my Amex Platinum, and we paid cash for the extra. It is about \$20 to get to and from the airport.

I'll tell you what we did get out and explore. Well, it was a forced exploration for me. So my sister wanted to go meet some missionaries from our church that were in Tahiti. So we went and took a taxi to go meet them, and we were going to go take them out to dinner. They had us meet them at this restaurant. We got there, the restaurant's closed. There's no restaurants anywhere around. Luckily, I had asked when we left the Hilton Tahiti, I said, "So, if we're taking a taxi there, how do we get a taxi back?" She says, "You ask the taxi driver to come back and get you and give them a time."

So, we met these cute missionaries, we talked to them for a little while. They didn't know where to go to eat. So we just talked to them. We gave them some money that they could go out to eat sometime or go get something. And then we

## Ep #141: Bora Bora on Points: Flights, Hotels, and Upgrades

prayed that our little taxi driver girl would show up and pick us up because otherwise we were like, "We don't know how we're going to get back."

So we saw a little bit of the island. I don't think there was anything that we saw that was really exciting. I mean, it was kind of reminded me a little bit of being on Hawaii. And luckily, she came back and she picked us up because I don't know where we would have, you know, we would have had to call those cute missionaries or we would have had to call the hotel and say, "Please send someone to pick us up." We're two grandmas on the side of the road. You know...

Alex: So it was funny.

Pam: Yeah, yeah, it was a bit, the Hilton Tahiti is a fine hotel stay for an airport hotel, but that's all it is. You know, it's um it's it's nothing exciting. You know, it has a nice pool, but you just feel like you're, you know, it doesn't feel anything like either of the other hotels that I stayed at.

So we did have do some fun activities, and really our activities are really similar. So Alex, tell us about yours and um then we can each tell about ours.

Alex: Yeah, so Mitch and I did an ATV Jet Ski combo tour. I thought this was so fun. Like, so started off driving ATVs. We drove around the whole island. And then, oh, so to start, though, I said we did take a boat. Transportation's included, but they had us take the boat from our hotel to the main island, and at like 8:00 a.m., and the hotel took us over complimentary. It's the same boat you would take if you were going for dinner, but it would just cost you more money. So we took that over.

The cute guy from the Conrad waited with us, because I was like, "Okay, we get off at this dock, but then where do we go? Like, how do we find somebody?" But he was cute. Like he went off with all of us. He made sure each of us got on our rides. Um, and then we met up at the main building of this place. I don't remember the exact name of it, but I'm going to put a we're going to have a link to all of the excursions we booked. So, and I will put down like Alex's, you know, ATV Jet Ski combo, Jess, Pam, so you know whose is which one that you heard about.

## Ep #141: Bora Bora on Points: Flights, Hotels, and Upgrades

Uh the this was so fun though. We took the ATVs around the whole island. So I was, you'd go in a group. Like if you booked, you can do this by yourself. You don't need someone to go with you. There was a girl in our group who was by herself, and she just had her own ATV. I, Mitch and I rode together. If you go with someone, you'll have, you'll share an ATV.

So, we drove around the whole island, and then we would go up a couple different viewpoints, and that was really cool. Like amazing views of Mount Otemanu. There were snacks. Like what one of the stops we did, we did a little off-roading and went kind of higher up for some amazing viewpoints, and saw like these cannons from World War II when the U.S. was stationed there.

He, our guide was really great. He's a local. He's lived there forever. He was telling us about the history of the island and the Polynesian culture. And he had, they're kind of like grapefruits, but they were not the same color as ours, and they weren't as tart. They were, I thought they were way better. I don't like grapefruit. He had that cut up on a board for us with like pineapple, cans of pineapple juice, water, and then bread that was, it's like a type of coconut bread, and it's like baked in a leaf. It was really good.

And then we drove back down, and the whole time, like I let I let Mitch drive. I didn't really care to drive the ATV, but I just had a smile on my face the whole time. I was like, "This is so fun." Just seeing the whole island, we drive by like people's houses, and every time we drive by, people are waving to us. I would have like, sometimes as a tourist, you go places and you're like, "Is this annoying for the locals to have all these like line of ATVs just driving on their main roads?" No, they were so nice. We just felt so welcomed. And I think that's just something about Polynesian culture in general. They're just so welcoming and kind people. And so that was really fun. And it was on a Sunday. And so we saw, there's some really pretty churches that we drove past too.

We saw like this little old man riding his bike in all his church clothes on his way to church, a lady in like a really pretty dress that was more like, I would imagine, more traditional wear for them. So I love the cultural side of getting off of the resort because the first time we were there, because it rained a lot, we didn't

## Ep #141: Bora Bora on Points: Flights, Hotels, and Upgrades

really leave the resort. So it was really nice to like go into the town, see locals, see what, like get a little tiny taste of local life. I loved that part of it.

So then after that, we got on our jet skis, and we did the same tour with like pretty much the same thing, but on land, or on the water. So we drove around the whole island. We stopped in some coves. They told our guy told us a few different things. We saw all the hotels. There was free, we had like a 15-minute free time where we were right by, I want to say it was by the Westin. And this little inlet there, where we were able to just drive around the jet skis and just kind of have fun. I did drive the jet ski. That was really fun. I almost threw Mitch off, which got a little scary for a second, but uh, he survived. None of us fell off.

And then they took us to a private island, which is right next to the Westin, but if you're staying at the Westin, you can't like go on the island because the other people in our group were staying there. They're like, "Oh yeah, this island's right here." But they're like, "You can't go on the island. It's a private island." So we got to go on the island, and we had a like a traditional lunch there, so much food. There was grilled fish, grilled chicken, rice, different types of fruit, different types of breads, and it was like the presentation was really cool. It was um, like woven leaves, as like the plate kind of, but then inside there were coconut shells with our food inside of it. It was really cool.

And then we had free time at the private island to just like swim around. It was beautiful. It was all day, an all-day excursion, but it was so fun. I would say it's one of the that and the tour that we did in Costa Rica, the zip line tour and repelling tour were the two best excursions I've ever done. I thought it was, I just loved it. And a really cool thing, too, is I booked it via Viator. And when I booked, I think I booked back in like December or something when they had 20% back through Rakuten. I earned like over 11,000 points on the booking. I think the cost was about \$570. So that was for two of us, and I we were literally, we left at 8:00 a.m. I think we got back at 4. It was an all-day thing. And I we were tired afterwards. I will say I was tired, but it was so fun. Okay, what about you, Mom?

Pam: Well, I would have loved to have done what you did, but my sister broke her wrist on an ATV when she was last time she was in Cabo. So there was no ATV riding that was going to go on. And I don't drive ATVs, and so that wasn't

## Ep #141: Bora Bora on Points: Flights, Hotels, and Upgrades

going to happen. So I thought, well, we're just going to do the jet ski. So we did a 2-hour tour via Viator. It was \$360, which is more expensive than you paid, Jess. So you might want to take Jess's instead of mine, or maybe it was just the day that I booked, and it was just more expensive.

We did an afternoon tour. Loved it. It was amazing to get out. I mean, there were a few times it was a little rough, and my sister was on the back, and she felt like I was going to throw her off, and she was very concerned, you know. But I got really good at driving it. She said I improved. And then she, she actually didn't want to drive it. I says, "You can drive halfway," and stuff. She didn't want to. I guess I'd improved enough by then. But we really enjoyed it. I love seeing the other resorts. I also love seeing the mountain and just getting a whole feel about the island. And so it was really fun.

So that's all that we did. We did say that we wish we had done another tour another day, that it would have been fun to have done something. We're not huge snorkelers anymore. We've done, both done a lot of snorkeling in the past. And honestly, when we were at the Conrad Bora Bora, you didn't even need to snorkel. The water is so clear. You can see tons of brightly colored fish without even being in the water. So that we could, we kept saying, "We really need to snorkel." And we go, "Why? Why do we have to do that? We don't need to do that." So we didn't, but I would definitely, you know, Jess will tell us a little about her snorkeling, and maybe I am here to tell you.

Jess: I am here to tell you that you do need to snorkel. If you enjoy snorkeling, Bora Bora will ruin all other snorkeling for you. It's funny because we just went on the Disney cruise to the Bahamas, and they had snorkeling gear at their little private island. And I was like, "I'm not doing that." That's going to suck compared to what I just saw in Bora Bora. I'm not getting that salt water in my face. Like it's going to it's not going to be any good. So it will ruin, so that's my only caution is it will ruin you.

We did a snorkeling half-day tour. I'll link it in the comments. They picked us up from the Conrad, and I think we were out for 3 to 4 hours, and it was great. They took us to, I think, four different locations. We saw manta rays, we saw eagle rays, every type of fish you could ever imagine. I brought my GoPro. So if you

## Ep #141: Bora Bora on Points: Flights, Hotels, and Upgrades

have a GoPro, that's a great place to bring it. I also brought it on the jet ski tour that we did. So I got some amazing footage of the fish and the rays underwater. So highly recommend snorkeling in Bora Bora if that is your thing.

And then we also did, it sounds like the exact same tour Pam did. I mean, maybe a different company, but I also booked it through Viator. It was a 2-hour jet ski tour. They picked us up from the Conrad and brought us to the jet skis. So, super convenient. We had to get, so there were three of us, so we had to get two jet skis, and that doubled the cost because you're basically paying per jet ski, not per person.

So it was \$278 per jet ski. I rode with Ella. I was like, "I will pay, you're going to drive me. I'm going to be the passenger princess on the jet ski." Um so Ella drove me around, and then Olivia was on her own jet ski, and I thought that was an amazing way to see the island. The water is so pretty, and it's like all different shades of blue. Like you see, like 12 different shades of blue. And so it's so cool to, you know, get to ride through all that on the jet ski. So I loved them both. I would I would recommend them.

Pam: Okay, so who's returning and when or why not?

Jess: I am. No, I don't have it, I don't actually have it booked yet. Um so just an update on the construction, they are doing construction. I think they're renovating all of the overwater villas and adding pools to all of them. And they are scheduled to be done with that in June of 2026. The resort is completely closing from January till April 2026. So no one will be allowed to stay there. They've actually emailed out to people like canceling their reservations if they had it booked. So I feel bad for them. I talked to my concierge, and he said that he would wait till 2027 to come back just to ensure that all the construction's done because, you know, I feel like these timelines never go according to plan and things get pushed.

So I would love to go back in 2027. I am hoping I can snag some dates before they devalue. I'm assuming that the price is going to go up, the points price. It's 120,000 right now. If they're adding pools to all the villas, I feel like it's going to go up. I would love if it didn't, but um yeah, so Alerts by Jess is going to be keeping an eye on 2027.

## Ep #141: Bora Bora on Points: Flights, Hotels, and Upgrades

Alex: Which is not a real alert service because somebody did message us and said, "Where can I find this Alerts by Jess?" We're like, "Oh no, it's just a joke, what we call when Jess puts messages in, like the Facebook group or Instagram stories."

Jess: He was like, "Where can I sign up?" And I was like, "Oh, Alex, maybe we should start charging for this because the people want to sign up." But no, I post it in our Facebook group. But yeah, I would 100% go back in 2027. I want to check out, I have to check out the renovations. I have to do it for content.

Alex: There you go. For research. I would happily return. I'm with Jess. I don't, I wouldn't want to go back before the renovations are complete. But I'm not like, "Oh, I'm going back in 2027 or I'm going back like in this amount of time." I'm like, "If I have the points and availability comes up, then sure, I'll maybe book it." But I also would be interested in trying out another resort. So, we shall see. I don't have, I mean, I've got Maldives booked for next year. So, I feel like I've got my overwater villa, uh, that kind of thing booked out for the next little bit, but I'm never going to be like, "I will never go back there." I would love to. I just don't know when.

Pam: Yeah, for me, absolutely, I will go back. I just want to say one thing too that we talked about the construction happening there. I have never seen any resort do so well with construction because I was kind of worried, "What's it going to be like?" It was like, what construction? There was nothing. I had, you know, there were a couple cranes, you know, off to the side, but they really did a great job. It didn't affect the experience at all. You know, my thought on this, this is an unpopular opinion, is why would I go all the way to the Maldives when I can go to Bora Bora? I love it.

Alex: Says the lady who's been there twice, so.

Pam: Right, right. So maybe if I hadn't been there twice, you know, I'd be singing a different tune. But it is amazing. I, too, would like to do another resort, maybe the Regis or the Westin. I would, you know, like to try out. But yeah, it's I actually did look. I'm not even going to tell you the dates that I found because I don't want anybody because I'm thinking that maybe I would book them. But maybe now, after we talked, I'm thinking, "Well, maybe I shouldn't. Maybe I need to wait

## Ep #141: Bora Bora on Points: Flights, Hotels, and Upgrades

till 2027 until the construction is done," because spoiler alert, it was 2026 in the summer that I found some 120K days. And I have enough points that I could go one more time to a Hilton property, and you know where I'm planning to use those points now.

Anyway, the idea that we went to Bora Bora on credit card points and miles was a dream come true, but we've made this a reality twice so far, because we're all probably going to go back. So, if you'd like to travel like this on points and miles, watch our free webinar, How to Get Your Next Vacation for Nearly Free. We're going to link it in the show notes.

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