

Gambier Islands, French Polynesia

One of the most remote ports in French Polynesia, the Gambier Islands reward expedition cruisers with a stunning lagoon, 19th-century stone ruins, and the world's finest black pearls.

- Tender port (no pier)
- Typical call: 6–8 hrs
- CFP Franc (XPF) — no ATMs, bring cash
- French / Mangarevan

MY DAY IN PORT

Ship/Date:	Arrive:	All aboard:
Excursion:	Notes:	

GETTING ASHORE

Docking: Tender to Rikitea wharf — no cruise pier

Walk to center: 2 min from tender wharf to village centre

Best For: Black pearl shopping, historic ruins, lagoon excursions

Don't Miss: St. Michael's Cathedral interior with pearl-inlaid altar

Getting around:

TOP THINGS TO DO

- St. Michael's Cathedral & Historic Ruins** — The 1848 coral-stone cathedral dominates Rikitea and can be explored in 30–45 minutes.
- Mount Duff Summit Hike** — A strenuous 441m ascent through pine forest and grassland rewards hikers with a 360° panorama of the entire Gambier lagoon and surrounding islands.
- Black Pearl Farm Tour** — Visit a working periculture farm and see how Gambier's prized black pearls are grafted and harvested.
- Lagoon Island Hopping (Aukena & Taravai)** — Boat tours visit uninhabited outer islands in the lagoon.
- Motu Beach Day** — The volcanic main island has limited beaches, but the outer coral islets offer white-sand, turquoise-water beaches accessible by boat.

BEST WALKS

- Rikitea Village & Cathedral Walk** 45 min · Easy · Flat — From the wharf, walk through the village to St.
- Mount Duff Trailhead Approach** 20 min walk to trailhead · then 1.5 hrs up — Follow the main road south from the wharf to reach the start of the Mount Duff trail.

WEATHER · DAYLIGHT · MONEY

CLIMATE (AVG °F · RAINY DAYS)				DAYLIGHT & MONEY	
Mon	High	Low	Rain	Apr 6:13AM–5:45PM · Jun 6:39AM–5:21PM · Aug 6:24AM–5:43PM · Sep 5:56AM–5:53PM · Oct 5:26AM–6:04PM	
Apr	78°	75°	16d		
Jun	74°	72°	13d		
Aug	72°	70°	11d		
Sep	72°	70°	12d		
Oct	73°	71°	14d		

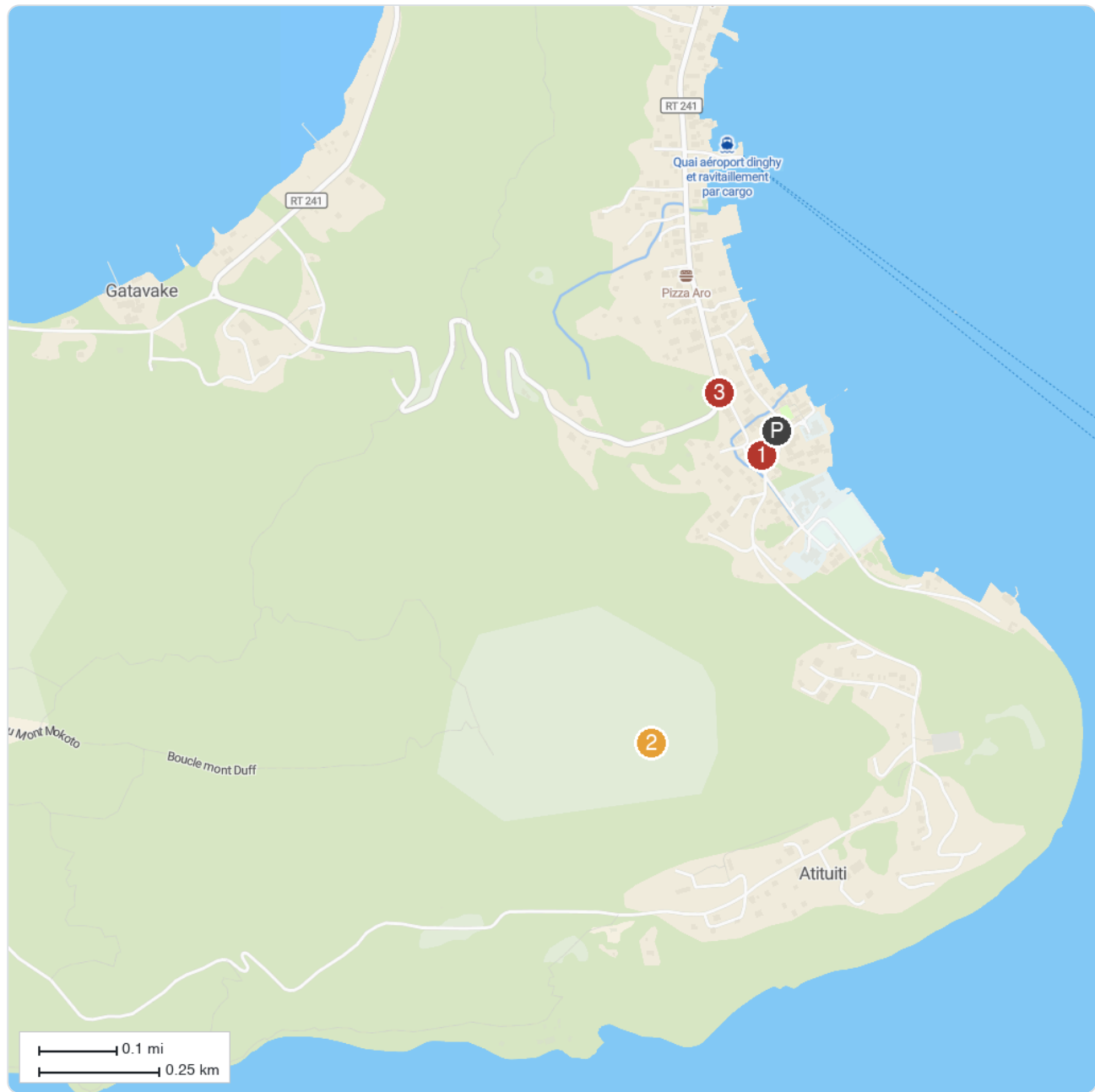
KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

- No ATMs — bring cash. There are no ATMs on the island that accept international cards. Bring CFP Francs (XPF) or small bills in USD/EUR. Pearl farms may accept cards but satellite connections are unreliable.
- Sunday mass is unmissable. If your ship calls on a Sunday, attend the morning service at St. Michael's Cathedral — the congregation's acapella singing in French and Mangarevan is genuinely extraordinary.
- Eat on the ship. Dining options in Rikitea are extremely limited — one or two casual snack bars with unpredictable hours. Eat breakfast before tendering and plan on returning to the ship for meals.
- Expect no signal. Mobile data and Wi-Fi are essentially non-existent on shore. Let family know you'll be offline for the day.
- Bring water and reef-safe sunscreen. The tropical sun is intense, especially on the Mount Duff hike. There are no kiosks on the trail.
- Book excursions through your ship. Local tour operators have very limited capacity and may not speak English. Ship-organized pearl farm and lagoon tours are much easier to arrange in this remote port.

Gambier Islands, French Polynesia — Port Map

cruiseports.org

Red = walkable sights · Amber = excursions farther out · P = cruise terminal. Numbers match the order you'd typically visit.



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| 1 Cathédrale Saint-Michel de Rikitea | Imposing 1848 coral-stone cathedral built by missionaries, one of the largest churches in French Polynesia. | 2 Mont Duff | Mangareva's highest peak at 441m, reachable by trail with panoramic views over the Gambier lagoon. |
| 3 Fort Saint-Hilaire | Ruined 19th-century missionary-era fortification on a ridge above Rikitea. | P Cruise port / terminal | |