

I just arrived at this South Pacific island last night, on the once-a-week flight from Honolulu. I am temporarily staying in the main town of Avarua, at the Paradise Inn, while I look for permanent housing. Workers at the Inn told me I should visit the Cook Islands Christian Church services on Sunday mornings, at 9:30am, to hear the singing of songs in the Maori language. Most everything else closes down all day Sunday, and Saturday after noon. The town is deserted, with all shops closed.

They said I would love the Cultural Village, which is set up for tourists but gives an accurate representation of traditional Rarotongan culture.

They also recommended I attend traditional Rarotongan dances at the "Island Night" buffet dinners at various hotels around the island:

Monday: Rarotongan Hotel

Tuesday: Edgewater Hotel

Wednesday: Tamura Resort

Thursday:

Friday: Tamura Resort

Saturday: Metua's Cafe (more for locals) also Edgewater

The Sparticus Gay Guide says there are no specifically gay places in Rarotonga, but it recommends as possible meeting places:

1. Tamura Resort bar

2. Banana Court is the most popular bar in town (Wed. thru Sat.), and it is possible to meet young men there.

3. Rarotongan Hotel

An American gay man I met who has been living here for 2 months says that because Rarotongans have no prejudice against homosexuality, there are not separate gay places. He said if I want to meet local gays, just go anywhere and look for those who are obviously effeminate. He referred me to a gay Rarotongan bartender at Tamura Resort, named D.

I went there Sunday evening. The bar was dead, and I was able to talk extensively with the waiter there named B. (age 18). He told me he was straight, but he has nothing against gays at all. Very tolerant and friendly. He told me the nearby island of ATIU is known to

have “lots of queenies” (ie: effeminate males). He said I could get a roundtrip airfare to Atiu for ca. \$150 NZ (\$75 US), and could stay at Atiu Motel and rent a motorbike. To meet locals, just walk down the street, they are very friendly. In the evenings I should try to attend a TUMUNU social event with singing, dancing, drinking beer, which is very popular with the locals.

The other (gay) bartender D., however, said there are no more gays on Atiu than on the other islands. D. is age 25, the 8th child out of nine (he has 4 brothers and 4 sisters. He is the youngest male, and has one younger sister. He lives with his brothers and sisters, while his parents are working right now in New Zealand. He feels very close to his sibs and parents; good family relations. They do not talk about his gay life, or ask him questions about his boyfriends. They give him no pressure to get married or to get a girlfriend. He only started having sex three years ago, with male friends. But they have all moved to New Zealand to get jobs or to go with their family. Now he prefers to have sex with tourists. He knows about safe sex, and always practices it (he said he never has done anal intercourse, only between-the-legs and sucking). He says there is a lot of sex going on between male Rarotongans, but they are very secretive about it. I asked if this was due to the influence of the Christian church, but he said he had never heard homosexuality mentioned at church. But still, he said, most Rarotongan males only engage in sex with another male when drinking, so as to have an excuse that they were drunk and didn't know what they were doing. He does not like to drink, and prefers the more openly gay foreign tourists who come here. He says they are nice, do not have to get drunk to enjoy sex, and do not spread gossip to the locals. He says there is a lot of hypocrisy among locals.

By this time it was closing time at the bar, and D. offered to ride me back to my motel room on his motorbike. When we got there I invited him inside. He came in and soon we started kissing. We did oral sex with each other, I came between his legs, and then he masturbated while we kissed. It was really nice emotional love-making. He said if I were going to be here longer he would want me to marry him. He was really sweet. He has to work tomorrow, but promised he would come by on Tuesday, his day off, and drive me around to look for permanent housing.