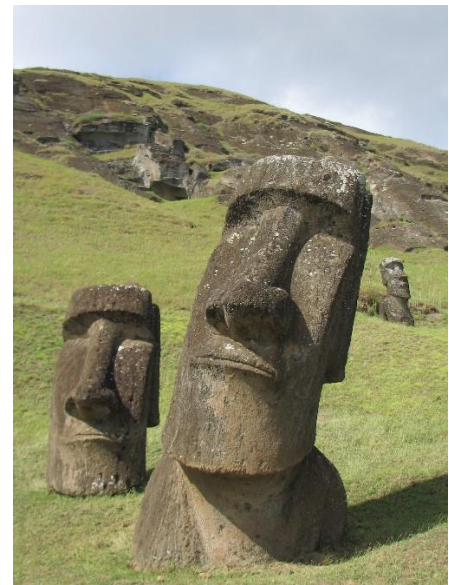
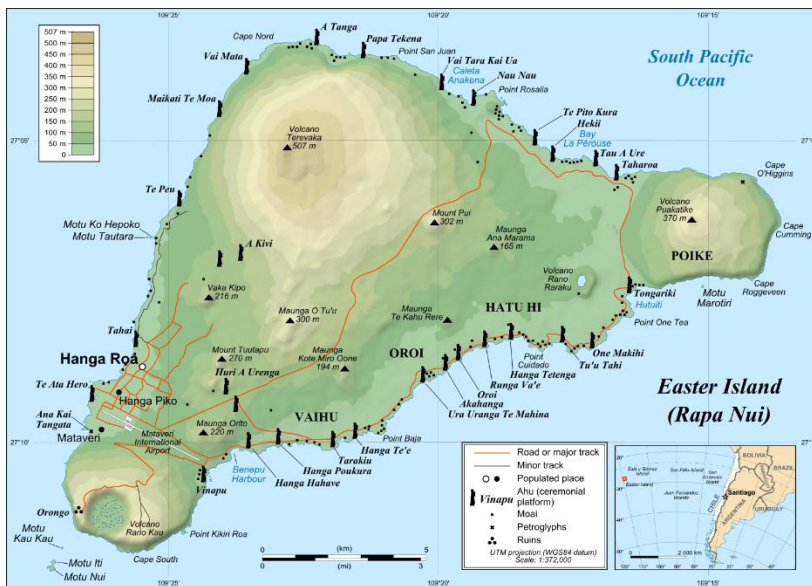


# Easter Island – “The Navel of the World”



Map: Eric Gaba [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Easter\\_Island#/media/File:Easter\\_Island\\_map-en.svg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Easter_Island#/media/File:Easter_Island_map-en.svg)

## Introduction

Easter Island, also known as Rapa Nui, is the world's remotest tourist destination. According to local legend, Polynesian mariners led by *Hotu Matu'a* and *Tu'u ko Iho* chanced upon this mysterious jewel set in the Pacific Ocean untold centuries ago. Their descendants settled the lowlands and the coast, and lived a simple life based around agriculture and fishing. In time, the various clans erected ancestral figures, known as *moai*, statues carved from the living rock of the island's three volcanoes. Many of them still guard the ceremonial stone platforms, known as *ahu*, dominating the paved plazas that Polynesians call *marae*. But how did they get there? Were they carried to their present-day locations by vast teams of islanders? Were they pulled there or rolled there on tree trunks? Did they walk to their destinations on their own, as the legends say? The answer is lost in the mists of time...

And what happened then? What caused the fertile volcanic soil those early explorers farmed to deteriorate, leaving the barren, if grassy landscape that we see today? Nobody knows. When the Dutch arrived on Easter Day 1722, they found a treeless rocky island, its population divided into rival clans — the *'Otu 'Itu* clan in the east and the *Tu'u* people to the west — apparently at war with each other over the limited resources that remained. All the large trees had gone and without the wood they needed to build sturdy Polynesian fishing boats, the protein provided by dolphin and tuna fish was no longer

available to them. Soon enough, the abundant seafood of the island's coastal waters was exhausted, too. Half a century later, a once proud people were reduced to famine and their society had fallen apart. The glory days of statue-building were over.

In due course, a new cult, the cult of the Bird Man (*tangata manu*), arose and religious leaders were now chosen in an organized competition rather by armed struggle or the outmoded hereditary principle. A tradition was established whereby the creator god Make Make's representative on Earth was replaced every year. To select a new Bird Man, a race took place, starting at Orongo at the summit of Rano Kau, with athletes from the various clans, known as *hopu manu*, running and sliding down the cliff face to the coast, then paddling to the offshore island of Moto Nui on *pora* rafts to collect the newly-laid eggs of the Sooty Tern (*Sterna fuscata*). The first contestant to bring an egg safely back to shore would nominate his leader as that year's Bird Man by shouting, "*Ka varu te puoko*", meaning "shave your head", and presenting it to his clan's chosen representative. This colourful ritual was dramatized in the film 'Rapa Nui' by Kevin Reynolds, which was shot on location, all over the island. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4d\\_oapAqo6k](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4d_oapAqo6k)

Visiting Rapa Nui is a lifetime's ambition for many although few people are lucky enough to realize this incredible dream. The sheer distance, the unreliability of flights, the lack of infrastructure on arrival, these are just some of the obstacles that have kept the number of visitors down to a minimum. Nowadays, though, it is perfectly feasible. So, seize this opportunity; live the dream; realize your ambition and return with a fund of stories to tell your family, plus a host of striking images to amaze your friends. If you like the sound of our six-day tour, contact us at Rapa Nui Travel and we'll do the rest.

## SIX-DAY TOUR OF EASTER ISLAND

\$1,500 per person

DAY 1. Flight from Santiago, Chile, to Easter Island. Transfer from the airport to your accommodation on the coast. Lunch at the Manutara restaurant in the island's only port, Hanga Roa. In the afternoon, you will tour the island's museum and visitors' centre to get an overview of the island's history and the cultural significance of the sites and artefacts you will see over the coming week. Your guide will then take you to Ahu Tahai, a classic Easter Island beauty spot featuring three pristine ceremonial sites: Ahu Tahai and Ahu Ko Te Riku, each with a single *moai*, and Ahu Vai Uri, with five. Notice how some of the *moai* are decorated with coral eyes and a red cylindrical topknot, or *pukao*, which resembles a

hat but is actually an elaborate hairstyle. Free time to explore Hanga Roa and do some shopping. Dinner at a harbourside restaurant as the sun slowly sets in the west.

DAY 2. Make an early start to watch the sun rise at Ahu Tongariki, a stunning location near the dormant volcano of Rano Raraku. Fifteen *moai* stand majestically on the island's largest *ahu*. Watch the stone change colour as a pink and purple dawn gives way to the golden light of morning. Nearby petroglyphs and a fine example of the island's unique *rongorongo* writing system add to the mystery. A quick breakfast and then a steep climb up the southern slope of Rano Raraku to see 'the nursery', the abandoned quarry where the tuff volcanic stone was broken up into blocks ranging from four to twenty-one metres in length and then carved into *moai*, which you can see at various stages of construction. Pause at the crater's edge and admire the astonishing panorama.



Lunch at Anakena beach, where the island's Polynesian discoverers first landed. Explore the Ahu Nau Nau with its seven *moai* complete with coral eyes and red cylindrical *pukao*. Then climb the nearby hillside to Ahu Ature Huki, where its lone *moai* seems to guard the



entrance to the island. Spend the afternoon relaxing on the pristine white-sand beach and enjoy the refreshingly cool Pacific surf. Dinner in Hanga Roa. Optional visit to the cinema to watch 'Rapa Nui' — Hollywood's love-letter to Easter Island.



DAY 3. Start the day with a trek to the top of the Rano Kau volcano with its spectacular view of the crater lake below. Then stroll along the lip of the crater to the ceremonial village of Orongo to see the faithfully restored homesteads of the island's traditional inhabitants and a distinctive Bird Man petroglyph. In the afternoon, take a boat trip around the offshore islands of Moto Nui and Moto Kau Kau with their amazing coral reefs and plunging drop-offs. The water is exceptionally clear and the underwater terrain is dramatic to say the least, so enjoy yourself snorkelling and diving, here, until sunset. Dinner in Hanga Roa.

DAY 4. Horseback excursion to the Poike peninsula. Admire the eerie landscape and explore the Grotto of the Virgins (*ana o keke*) where, according to local legend, young women were secluded in the weeks before their marriage to keep their skin as white as possible. You can still enter the cave and admire the petroglyphs inside but, to get there, you'll have to walk along a narrow path and then a ledge cut into the cliff face with the waves of the Pacific Ocean crashing below. Not for the fainthearted. Continue your ride around the peninsular to the famous horizontal *moai* overlooking the island's eastern tip. On the return journey, you will see a series of *maunga*, or volcanic domes, including Maunga Vai a Heva, where the face of the island's rain god is carved into the rock.

In the afternoon, a local expert will take you surfing on the island's west coast. A series of lava reef breaks provide exhilarating lefts and rights for beginners at Caleta Hanga Roa. More experienced surfers might prefer Mataverí where the powerful swell of the Pacific presents a satisfying challenge. Dinner in Hanga Roa.

DAY 5. Full-day excursion on horseback. Starting from Ahu Tepeu, ride the north coast trail to the summit of Maunga Terevaka. At 507 metres, it's the highest point on Rapa Nui with the finest views of the island. A leisurely return journey takes in the archaeological sites of Ana Te Pahu, with its ancestral cave dwellings and vegetable gardens, and Ahu Akivi, whose seven standing *moai* stare impassively out to sea. Dinner in Hanga Roa followed by a spectacular Polynesian dance show.

DAY 6. Morning free for shopping in Hanga Roa. Lunch at a harbourside restaurant. Transfer to the airport at 14.00.

The cost of the 6-Day Tour is \$1,500 per person in U.S. dollars based on double/triple occupancy. There is a \$200 surcharge for single occupancy. All quotations are based on the current rates of park fees, VAT, other government taxes, and current exchange rates. Should any of these be increased or a new tax introduced, these increases will be added on even if your trip has already been paid for.

#### THE PRICE INCLUDES:

- All accommodation per itinerary
- All meals per itinerary
- All tours and entrance fees per itinerary
- All transportation and transfers per itinerary
- Transfer to/from the Mataverí Airport
- Private Guide
- Surfing instructor
- Diving instructor

#### THE PRICE EXCLUDES:

- International and domestic flights
- Beverages and alcohol
- Tips for guides, drivers, hotel staff
- Optional activities
- Single room supplement
- Airport taxes
- Travel insurance
- Any personal expenses

## 2. Reading Comprehension

- i) What is Rapa Nui?
- ii) Who discovered Rapa Nui?
- iii) When did Europeans arrive there?
- iv) Who or what is Make Make?
- v) How did the islanders choose Make Make's representative?
- vi) What is 'the nursery'?
- vii) Why did women use to go to the 'Grotto of the Virgins'?
- viii) Which outdoor activities does Rapa Nui Travel offer visitors on their six-day tour?
- ix) How much does the six-day tour cost for (i) a single traveller; (ii) a married couple?
- x) Does the price include airport tax?

## 3. Vocabulary Exercise

In the tourism sector, writers often use culture-bound words to give the reader a sense of place. Look at the exotic terms below, taken from the Easter Island text. How would you explain them in your own language?

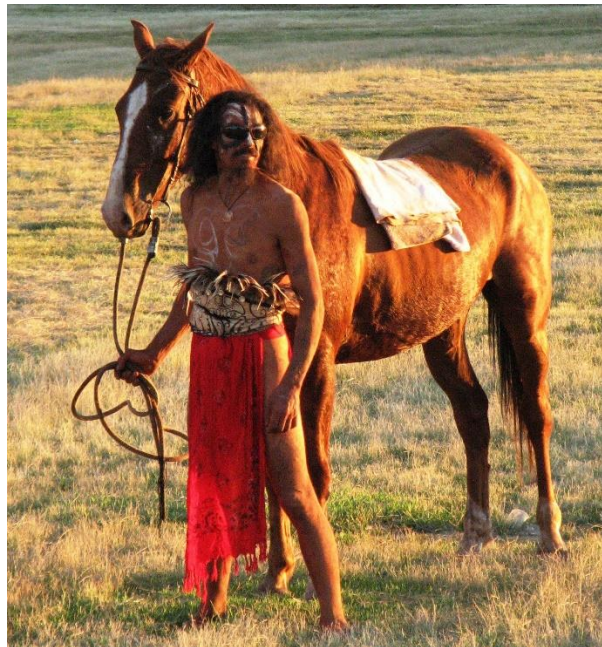
- i) Moai
- ii) Pukao
- iii) Rongorongo
- iv) Ahu
- v) Marae
- vi) Maunga
- vii) Pora
- viii) Tangata manu
- ix) Hopu manu
- x) 'Otu 'Itu

#### 4) THE DELUXE TAPATI FESTIVAL PACKAGE

\$2,000 per person



For two weeks every year, in February, Easter Island holds its fabulous Tapati Festival of traditional Rapa Nui culture. Music, dance, sporting and cultural events combine to create a magical re-evocation of the time of legends. It's a great opportunity to see, not only the Easter Islanders themselves, but also performers and dance groups from Fiji, Tahiti and the Marquesas who join together in a colourful celebration of Polynesian culture.



By day, you can watch youngsters compete in traditional sports like canoeing and horse racing, while their elders show off their singing, cooking, fishing and body-painting skills. By night, a spectacular sound and light show brings the past to life.





'The Bird Man Race': a triathlon based on the famous annual race to select the island's *tangata manu*, starts in the ruined volcano of Rano Raraku below the sacred site of Orongo. The contestants from the island's two remaining clans swim across the crater lake with the help of a *pora* raft made of *totorā* reeds, then sprint around the crater with heavy loads on their backs and swim across the lake again to the finish line. Meanwhile, in the hinterland, young men, naked except for a breechcloth and body paint, hurtle feet-first down the steep slope of Cerro Pui on makeshift sleds made of banana tree logs in the keenly contested Haka Pei contest. As the days pass, the two clans amass points in the various events until the winning team is announced and their representative is crowned Queen of the Festival.

On the final day, a carnival atmosphere prevails as the Queen of the Festival is paraded through the streets of Hanga Roa, leading a procession of elaborate floats followed by athletes and performers singing and dancing in traditional costume.





## There's only one thing better than watching the Tapati Festival — and that's taking part!

Yes, you, too, can participate in the dancing and the final parade. To be a dancer, you'll have to attend a month of rehearsals, however, so you'll need to be on Rapa Nui from the beginning of January. As for the parade, well, you'll need an invitation from one of the teams — and that's where we come in.



For two whole weeks, it feels like Rapa Nui is right at the centre of things. And whether you watch or whether you take part, you'll never forget your trip to Easter Island — the Navel of the World!

Contact us now at:

Rapa Nui Travel

Av. Atemu Tekena

Hanga Roa

Isla de Pascua

Tel./Fax. 800 202 320

[RNTinfo@MakeMake.com](mailto:RNTinfo@MakeMake.com)

[www.RapaNuiTravel.com](http://www.RapaNuiTravel.com)

Answer the following questions:

- i) What is the Tapati Festival?
- ii) When does it take place?
- iii) How long does it last?
- iv) Who takes part in the Tapati Festival?
- v) What kind of sports events can visitors attend?
- vi) What kind of cultural activities can visitors watch?
- vii) How is the Queen of the Festival chosen?
- viii) Who is allowed to take part in the final procession?
- ix) Can visitors take part in the traditional Polynesian dancing?
- x) How much does the Deluxe Tapati Festival Package cost?

## 5. Analysis

When copywriters need to convince their target audience to buy a product or service, they often adopt the 'You' orientation. In other words, they address the reader directly, making a personal connection by assuring him/her that they are aware of his/her needs and concerns. Prose of this kind features rhetorical questions, the imperative and the liberal use of the pronouns 'you' and 'we'; it sounds like one person advising another in a one-sided dialogue of equals. The underlying message is: "I'm like you. If I like this, then you will, too."

Look at the descriptions of Easter Island and the Deluxe Tapati Festival Package again and underline examples of the 'You' orientation. Where does the writer sound like he/she is talking to the reader directly?

Now think about how you might translate these examples into your own language.

- i) By day, you can watch youngsters compete in traditional sports like canoeing and horse racing .....
- ii) Yes, you, too, can participate in the dancing and the final parade .....
- iii) To be a dancer, you'll have to attend a month of rehearsals .....

- iv) As for the parade, well, you'll need an invitation from one of the teams — and that's where we come in .....
- .....
- v) Whether you watch or whether you take part, you'll never forget your trip to Easter Island .....
- .....
- vi) Spend the afternoon relaxing on the pristine white-sand beach .....
- .....
- vii) Notice how some of the *moai* are decorated with coral eyes and a red cylindrical topknot .....
- .....
- viii) Start the day with a trek to the top of the Rano Kau volcano .....
- .....
- ix) Admire the eerie landscape and explore the Grotto of the Virgins .....
- .....
- x) Enjoy yourself snorkelling and diving, here, until sunset .....
- .....
- xi) So, seize this opportunity; live the dream; realize your ambition .....
- .....
- xii) But how did they get there? .....
- xiii) Did they walk to their destinations on their own, as the legends say? .....
- .....
- xiv) And what happened then? .....
- xv) If you like the sound of our six-day tour, contact us at Rapa Nui Travel and we'll do the rest .....
- .....