

## Isle des Pins

October 5 ...while sending the last epistle, received an email from Find-a-Crew in response to my profile which I changed to say "have a crew for NZ, but still in Noumea and if you would like to crew for a while here, OK" ...received An email reply from Catherine in Noumea, but as we are both free mebemrs I can't contact her...what to do ?...I changed my profile and put in my Noumea number and 5 minutes later the phone rang !...we arrange to meet at 1330.....Got a berth at the marina at midday.....Catherine arrives at 1330, likes the boat, she sold her boat 4 years ago, after her husband died...she spent most of her life voyaging with him...South America, Pacific....she has another offer on a Swiss boiat, she'll come back tomorrow and tell me what she wants to do....

Oct 6...Catherine drops by...OK...do you want to go to Isle of Pines ?...Sure !..OK lets leave Friday..A bientot !

Raymond calls...biere demain soir a 5 heures ?...Sure !

Oct 7, Beers with Raymond and mate Christian.....Jean-Yves calls..diner ?....oui !...Jean-Yves comes to the boat, Nathalie arrives soon after, we go to Baie des Citrons for dinner...very nice...merci!

Oct 8 0600 Catherine arrives..OK we go to the market....0800 checked out of Port Moselle, fill with diesel and we're off. Motor sailing until the breeze comes in then tacking against SE.....hard work...anchored Baie Ue by 1400 22°25.75S, 166°47.02E.

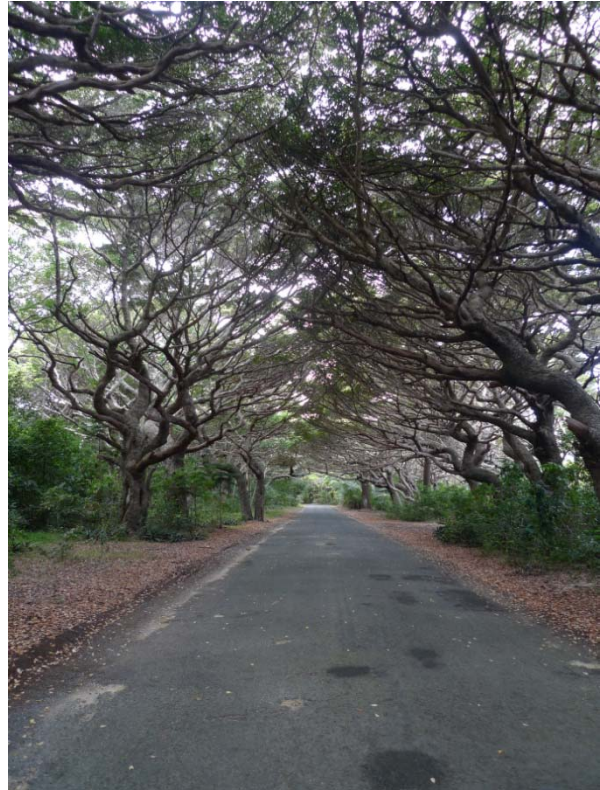
Oct 9...Leaving in SE again ..full main and genoa, Diva is flying close hauled in 20-25 knots, 1.5-2 m sea, tacking around the reefs heading for Baie Kuto on the SW corner of Isle des Pins. Straight line is 44 miles, we did 67 miles in 11 hours !...Dark on arrival, anchored with other yachts, don't know how many.

Oct 10 woke up to discover 18 yachts in the bay ! Dinghied ashore and explored the beaches etc...the following day Catherine hired a car and we drove around the island.....the pictures below speak for themselves ... white sand beaches with sand as fine as flour...crystalline waters where you can swim with the fish....wonderfully colourful and happy Melanesian people...sublime anchorages where you can see the anchor on the bottom...even went to church to hear the Melanesian women singing...rather disappointing ..the songs were depressing and the priest (RC) even more so...seems in his view all humans are pathetically useless and the only way to live a happy life is to devote ones self entirely to the worship of god and the virgin mary ... well...enough of that, back to the real world !

So the rest is just pictures of Isle de Pins...as close to paradise as one can get.



Kuto Beach



Ilot Brosse





Les Pins Colonnaires



View from Pic Nga above Kuto



Old colonial house Vao



Baie St Joseph



Pirogue (dugout) manufacture Baie St Joseph



Le Piscine Naturelle Baie D'Oro



The Saturday morning market at Vao



L'Eglise a Vao





Tepid pool over a spring built by Japanese in Baie du Prony

Most of Baie du Prony is a nature reserve with signs everywhere prohibiting vehicles, fishing etc but in the middle of the bay there is a new nickel mine !!...why are we surprised ??