

AVSIM Commercial Scenery Review

Aerosoft Tahiti X



Product Information

Publishers: [Aerosoft](#)

Description: Scenery Add-on.

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188 MB

Format:
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Simulation Type:
FSX

Reviewed by: [Alexis Esguerra](#) AVSIM Contributing Senior Staff Reviewer - May 9, 2009

Introduction

When I think of the word paradise, several things come to mind. Sunny weather, lovely beaches, and an ocean so utterly blue it just might make you cry. I think of fish that puts the best catch of the day in my home town to absolute shame, fruit so ripe that it's almost criminal, and cocktails that hit the spot at any time, day or night.

Another thing comes to mind. A single three-syllable word that fits the bill quite nicely – Tahiti!

I'd like to think I know what I'm talking about. It was almost two years ago when my wife and I flew to that that distant place for some much-deserved R & R. For over a week, we just lost ourselves in sheer bliss in those islands, be it ATV-ing through the jungles of Moorea, or scuba diving in the oh-so-clear waters off Bora Bora. Of course, we also spent some time on Tahiti itself; we had to considering it's the island with the only airport large enough to handle an international flight, not to mention that my wife had a shopping bug that had to be satisfied.

And through it all, I remember the genuine warmth and hospitality of the Polynesians, a people that were as prone to stopping on the road to offer you a ride into town as they were likely to smile. And I remember that they smiled quite a bit.

Needless to say, when the offer to review Aerosoft's Tahiti X for FSX came to my inbox, I was a little more than just thrilled. With that excitement and a few memories in hand, it's time to see what the developers came up with in emulating paradise.

Installation and Documentation

Technically, Tahiti is just one of many islands in the eastern group of the Society Islands of French Polynesia. I point this out because on the surface, the title Tahiti X seems to indicate a modification of that sole island and its airport. This is very far from the actually truth – the eastern chain of islands, also dubbed the Windward Islands, is comprised of no less than fourteen separate landmasses spread out over nearly twelve hundred square kilometers. This is the true scope of Tahiti X (and to agree with Aerosoft's website, this reviewer does think that title does sound a lot better than French Polynesia X).

As for installation, it's an old line that I have no choice but to use again - a single auto-installer file provides a seamless and pain-free installation. No manual moving of files, no going to the Scenery Library to activate it once it's on the hard drive, just double-click and follow the prompts. Yes it is the industry standard, but nonetheless it's worth mentioning.

Now for the documentation. It is a surprising light five page PDF thrown into the Aerosoft folder in the root FSX directory, not including the readme file. In my own humble opinion, I felt it could've used a little boost in regards to some interesting historical insights for the area in question, but that's just me; it otherwise does fine in getting the job done in explaining the very basics; which is package contents, tweaking, and removal.

Test System
CPU: Intel Dual Core E6600 RAM: 2.0 GB Video: NVidia 6800XT PCI-e X2 (SLI), 256MB each Sound – SB Audigy Joystick – MS Sidewinder FF2
Flying Time: 20 hours

At the end of the PDF there is a link for online charts of the region, courtesy of Service De L'Information Aeronautique. This handy up-to-date info covers everything from enroute airways all the way down to general airport data. Oh, don't worry if you're rusty on your French; the info contained within is also printed in English.

Welcome To Paradise

As previously stated, Tahiti X makes alterations and enhancements to fourteen different islands, as well as the nine airports that service the majority of them. They are...

Island	Associated Airport(s)
Bora Bora	Motu Mute (NTTB)
Huahine	Fare (NTTH)
Maiao	
Manuae	
Maupihaa	
Maupiti	Maupiti (NTTP)
Mehetia	
Moorea	Temae (NTTM)
Motu One	
Raiatea	Fetuna (NNAO), Uturoa (NTTR)
Tahaa	
Tahiti	
Tetiaroa	Tetiaroa (NTTE)
Tupai	Tupai (NTPX)

So what does Tahiti X do for its region? First and foremost, it spiffs things up in regards to the general appearance and ambiance. This is accomplished through a redo of the land textures to better conform the islands to their actual shapes and elevations. Custom objects, seemingly chosen and designed to enhance the nature of area, are plunked down here and there.

On the more heavily populated islands, marinas, docks, resorts and the occasional beach side umbrella are found everywhere. Quieter islands that are still visited by tourists may have them as well, just on a smaller scale, and have the bonus of some rather interesting items (like an airport-side campground, for example). And let me not forget about the cabanas strung out over the water from the shore; now what's more signature to Tahiti than that?



Speaking of water, the retexturing was extended to that domain as well, and it was here that I just had to smile. Close in on the islands, the ocean has a characteristic that I will always remember, and that is that it's shockingly clear. From the air, one can easily make out of corral and underwater rock formations in areas where the water is relatively shallow, if you think 70 – 100 feet is shallow. And because of its clarity, it is easy to see where it suddenly drops off to deep, and then really deep, with dramatic changes in the hues of blue drawing the lines. These facts are made plentifully obvious in Tahiti X, both from up high and down low. The first time I saw this, I was sitting at my PC practically reaching for my diving mask!



Is it the generally good land modifications and truly outstanding water textures that make visiting the unpopulated and airfield-less islands worthwhile? I took a fast moving F/A-18 to take a glance at Manuae, some 165nm west of Bora Bora. True, there isn't much to look at in terms of objects that would suggest human activity, nor was there any place I could set down my Hornet. Still, I could appreciate what was done for a place that isn't known for much else than being a happy hunting grounds for local fishermen. Comparing what Tahiti X provides against satellite imagery showed a good overall match to the real deal.

And Now the Airports

If there is one thing I found interesting about the airports in and around Tahiti, it's that they're different from the standard norm. NTAA, the largest of the group contained within, is at least traditional in its size and scope. Just as it should be its the primary gateway in to and out of the region. It nonetheless has a certain tropical flair about it,

evident at the terminal's entrance and the scenery that surrounds it. Those factors well set the stage for the other eight airfields that it services.



All throughout, the other airports in Tahiti X are small and quaint. Runway lengths are never larger than 4500 ft in length, sometimes aren't even made of asphalt, and are perfectly suited for such aircraft operations as ATRs, and Twin Otters (which, incidentally, happen to be the two aircraft of choice for the actual air carriers in the region).

Terminals are likewise restrained in their dimensions, and never break the mood for the incoming tourists; they resemble outlandish versions of the huts that one would be expecting to have flown so many thousands of miles to see. For the other buildings such as the occasional GA hangar, there's an air of simplicity about them, they have a look that saddles functionality with economy, and that, from what I saw over there, is not that far from the truth.

Animation

Besides mapping out relatively accurate traffic patterns for the roads on the islands that I visited on my trip (Tahiti, Moorea, and Bora Bora; the rest of the islands I'll have to take Aerosoft's word for) Tahiti X also does the same for the waterways between them. Tahiti and Moorea definitely have the most going on between them in the form of vessels making their merry way to and fro.

People are also present at the airfields, sometimes with movements that work out (example, someone chatting on their cell phone), and sometimes not (walking in place, really to nowhere in particular). An extremely nice bonus to the standard FSX movement realm that I've slowly become accustomed to, has to be dolphins.



That was not a typo. D-O-L-P-H-I-N-S! As in Flipper, those things that are known to playfully frolic by the bows of cruising ships, one of the main attractions at SeaWorld, you get the point. Always present close to a shoreline, they can be seen swimming in groups, occasionally taking a moment to leap into the air before splashing back into their domain. They are quite a departure from the norm and really do well in pulling you into the paradise theme of the place.

Other Problems?

Just one and it exists at NTAA. Take a look at this picture for reference. It shows Twy N between Twy 4-22 and the terminal.

Using the manual's settings for Scenery Complexity (Dense), this is about as close as I could get the nose wheel of the default 747 (the biggest in my FSX hangar) on the centerline of this taxiway without hitting the tree off the left wing. If you happen to be a stay-right-on-the-line junkie and collision detection is enabled, the sim will recognize a crash with the sim's default heavy.

I didn't go exploring for other places on this field for this issue, but given that trees are not a rarity in and around these parts, one should expect problems with clearance issues.



As NTAA is the only field in Tahiti X that can (realistically) handle the 747, it is probably the only place where one might have to worry about their wingtips if flying in a heavy; I never experienced this issue using A321s or smaller, nor did I have this problem at any of the other eight airports (using Twin Otters and smaller). If you must use a beast of an aircraft at NTAA, the three workarounds, other than switching to a smaller aircraft, is to disable collision detection, favor the right side of the taxiway, or lower Scenery Complexity to Normal or less.

Performance

Reviewer's Settings

Graphics	Aircraft	Scenery	Weather	Traffic
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ULTRA HIGH (1280x1024x32, locked @ 20FPS)	ULTRA HIGH	PER MANUAL (Terrain And Water – Med/75/38m/60cm/2x, Scenery Objects – Dense/ Normal/ Medium, Land Details & Shadows – ENABLED/DISABLED)	MED LOW	CUSTOM (None)
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Aerosoft warns in their manual that Tahiti X can hit the resources the closer you get to the airports, where scenery object coverage gets a little dense. This is very much true in and around NTAA, where my usual 16 FPS was getting knocked down as much as 6 FPS with the other airports being a touch kinder with a 3 or 4 FPS penalty. This wasn't that bad considering my rig and what the scenery was providing. Doubtlessly, PCs with superior specs to mine – namely 95% of the computers out there that are running FSX - will have a much better time with this package.

In Closing



When I'm asked to look at scenery that I've actually encountered in the real world, my scoring weighs heavily on if I get a sense of déjà vu. Needless to say, it was a pleasure to experience that sensation in the course of this review. Tahiti X really does drive home the unique characteristics of this tropical destination that makes it so immensely popular. In a nutshell, it does it's namesake proud.

So who would I recommend this package to? Those with Tahiti on their mind? Fledgling bush pilots? Island hoppers? Yes, yes, and yes. Short of by-the-checklist-heavy metal simmers that are looking for a variety of fields contained in one installer, this package has a lot of appealing elements that break up the routine - interesting landscapes and sceneries, charming atmosphere, and unique airfields that can provide a challenge.

Bring on the virtual Mai Tai's. I'm buying.

What I Like About Tahiti X

- Great representation of The Windward Islands.
- Excellent variety of fields that can offer a challenge.
- Good immersive scenery objects, both static and animated.
- Reasonable performance for amount of detail provided.

What I Don't Like About Tahiti X

- Very basic User's Manual.
- Potential collision glitch at NTAA's Twy N at higher scenery complexity.

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