

## Canoes recreate Pacific migration

By Nick Bryant  
BBC News, Sydney

**A fleet of traditionally-designed Polynesian canoes has left New Zealand for a journey through the Pacific, re-living the epic migrations of the past.**

Four double-hulled canoes set off from Auckland aiming to sail 4,000km (2,485 miles) to French Polynesia. The voyage is expected to take three months.

The route retraces the great Polynesian migration journeys of 1,000 years ago - albeit in the opposite direction.

It is part of an attempt to revive traditional sailing skills.

These include navigating without instruments or maps.

Under pristine blue skies and with strong winds filling their sails, the four canoes set off on their epic voyage.

The boats are a hybrid of the old and the new, with fibreglass hulls which have been lashed together with wooden beams and ropes.

They are big enough to carry crews of up to 16 people.

The aim is to reach French Polynesia, which is thought to have been the departure point for the Polynesian migrations to New Zealand, Hawaii and Easter Island at the end of the first millennium.

It is considered a sacred route and the crews have come from across the South Pacific, including New Zealand, Fiji, the Cook Islands, Samoa, Vanuatu and Tonga.



The boats are lashed together with wooden beams and ropes

Story from BBC NEWS:

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/asia-pacific/8628185.stm>

Published: 2010/04/18 11:57:25 GMT

© BBC MMX