



THE ROUGH GUIDE TO FIJI



INSIDE THIS BOOK

INTRODUCTION What to see, what not to miss, itineraries and more – everything you need to get started

BASICS Pre-departure tips and practical information

THE GUIDE Comprehensive, in-depth guide to Fiji, with area highlights and full-colour maps throughout

CONTEXTS History, society and culture, wildlife, plus recommended books covering Fiji and a useful language section

We've flagged up our favourite places – a perfectly sited hotel, an atmospheric café, a special restaurant – throughout the Guide with the ★ symbol

Fiji chapters



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THE ROUGH GUIDE TO **FIJI**

This third edition updated by
Ian Osborn and Martin Zatko





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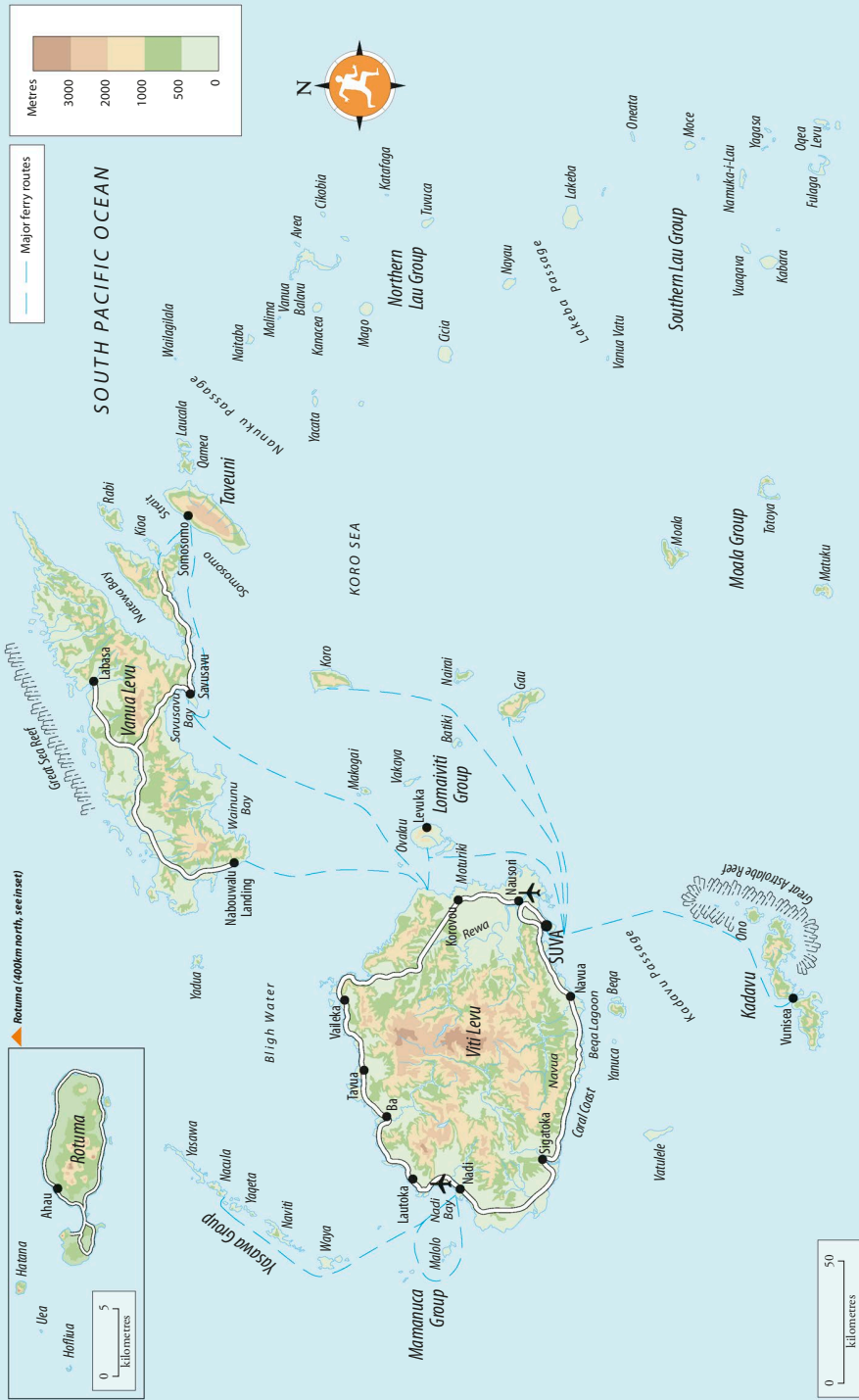
Introduction to Fiji

Sun-drenched beaches, turquoise lagoons, swaying palm trees – Fiji supplies all the classic images of paradise. No wonder, then, that every year thousands of travellers come to this South Pacific archipelago for the ultimate island escape. With over three hundred islands to choose from, Fiji is a versatile destination. Whether you're after a luxury honeymoon retreat, a lively backpacker island or a family-friendly resort, you won't be disappointed. You'll also find a warm, hospitable people, an intriguing blend of Melanesians, Polynesians and Indians.

With a reliable tropical climate, a good tourist infrastructure, English as its main language and no jabs or pills to worry about, travelling in Fiji is as easy as it gets. As the hub of South Pacific tourism, the country attracts almost a million visitors a year, mostly from Australia and New Zealand, its largest "neighbours" lying over 2000km southeast. Of the northern-hemisphere travellers, many are backpackers from Europe or surfers and scuba divers from North America.

While it can be tempting to spend your whole time in Fiji sunbathing and sipping cocktails from coconuts, there are plenty of **activities** to lure you away from the beach. Within a ten-minute boat ride of most resorts you can find yourself **snorkelling** over colourful reefs, sometimes amid dolphins and manta rays, or **scuba diving** at pristine drop-offs covered in soft corals and sea fans. In addition, at the exposed edges of the reefs are some of the world's finest and most consistent **surfing breaks**. **Nature lovers** are also spoilt for choice, both underwater and on dry land, and wildlife-spotting opportunities are plentiful, whether you're seeking turtles, exotic birds or 3m-long tiger sharks.

Away from the beach resorts is a land of stunning mountains, rainforests and **remote villages**. Here you'll find big-hearted and hospitable Fijians living a similar lifestyle to their tribal ancestors. Staying a night or two at a village homestay will give you an authentic insight into the ethnic culture as well as the chance to sample **yaqona** or *kava*,



FACT FILE

- Fiji is made up of 333 **islands** and many tiny islets. Two thirds of Fiji's islands remain uninhabited.
- The **name** Fiji is an adaptation of the Tongan pronunciation of "Viti", originally written by Europeans as "Feejee".
- Of a total **population** of just over 900,000, roughly 500,000 are iTaukei (indigenous people) and 300,000 are Indo-Fijians (of Indian origin); the remainder are mostly Kailomas, meaning "in-between people" (of mixed Fijian-European blood), Rotumans (Polynesians) and Chinese.
- Some 87 percent of land in Fiji is tribally owned, with one in five of the population living a **subsistence lifestyle** in a communal village.
- English is one of three official **languages** in Fiji, and is spoken by almost all Fijians in addition to their mother-tongue.

the national drink. Fiji is also home to a large **Indian community** and their influence is seen in the delicious Indian food served in almost every town, Bollywood films showing in the cinema and vibrant Hindu festivals celebrated throughout the year. While Fiji is not renowned for its towns or **cities**, three are definitely worth exploring: quaint, colonial-era Levuka, yachting hotspot Savusavu, and Suva, the lively capital city and the best place to party in the South Pacific.

However long you spend in the country you'll notice an unhurried, good-humoured lifestyle. This is the essence of **Fiji Time** – an attitude that can be both inspiring and infuriating. Away from the organized upmarket resorts, life runs at a different pace; bus and ferry timetables serve more as guidelines and a simple meeting in a village can last for days. It's best to leave your inner control freak at home – you never know, you may come back a calmer person.



SEVEN OF THE BEST RESORTS

Fijian resorts range from simple beachside **bures** (traditional thatched huts) with cold-water showers to opulent **villas** with private spa pools. Out of almost a hundred resorts throughout the islands, we've picked our seven favourite.

Luxury *Jean-Michel Cousteau Resort*, Savusavu, Vanua Levu. See p.198

Budget *Barefoot Kuata*, Yasawa Islands. See p.95

Backpackers *Caqalai Island Resort*, Lomaiviti. See p.176

Romance *Matangi Island Resort*, off Taveuni. See p.208

Families *Volivoli Beach Resort*, north coast Viti Levu. See p.124

Divers *Taveuni Dive Resort*, Taveuni. See p.213

Eco-adventure *Colo-i-Suva Eco Lodge*, Suva, Viti Levu. See p.148



Where to go

The vast majority of travellers arrive at Nadi International Airport on **Viti Levu**, the archipelago's biggest island. Most stay around the suburban tourist hub of **Nadi** for a day or two to organize travel to other parts of the country, while some base themselves at **Denarau's** international hotels and explore the surrounding country and offshore islands on day-trips. The most popular destination in Fiji lies visible off Nadi's coastline – a gorgeous collection of islands known as the **Mamanucas**. Here you'll find sublime beaches and tiny coral cays with suitably exotic names such as "Castaway" or "Treasure Island". Extending north of the Mamanucas are the palm-fringed volcanic **Yasawa Islands**, home to Fiji's most tantalizing snorkelling lagoons and a string of budget beach accommodation and secluded upmarket boutique resorts.

Almost as popular as the Mamanucas and Yasawa Islands, especially with families, are the beach resorts of the **Coral Coast** along the south coast of Viti Levu. Around an hour's

LEFT MUSKET COVE, MALOLO LAILAI IN THE MAMANUCAS

UNDERWATER FIJI

Dubbed “the soft coral capital of the world” by Jacques Cousteau, Fiji has ten thousand square kilometres of **coral reef** twisting and turning around every island, including the world’s third longest barrier reef – the 200km-long Great Sea Reef, off the north coast of Vanua Levu. These amazing structures provide habitats for thousands of species of colourful fish, plants and animals, including sea fans, manta rays and reef sharks, and boast an astonishing biodiversity comparable to that found in rainforests. Throw in crystal-clear water and temperatures rarely below 25°C and you have one of the world’s greatest snorkelling and diving destinations.

The three most common types of reef found in Fiji are **fringing reefs**, which are attached to an island and offer snorkelling direct from the shore; **patch reefs**, individual coral reefs found within a lagoon and usually attracting great numbers of reef fish; and **barrier reefs**, which are separated from the shore by a deep channel and feature steep drop-offs and strong currents.

FIJI’S TOP DIVE SITES

As well as reefs, divers will find big-shark encounters, exciting drift dives and plenty of wrecks to explore. The following are some of the islands’ best dive sites:

Beqa Lagoon, Pacific Harbour The best open-water shark dive on Earth. See p.118.

Rainbow Reef, between Vanua Levu and Taveuni Gorgeous soft corals and fast drift dives. See p.206.

E-6, Bligh Water The photographer’s favourite, accessed by live-aboard boat. See p.35.

Namena Marine Reserve, off Savusavu This protected reserve teems with fish and pelagics. See p.198.

Naiqoro Passage, Kadavu Beautiful drift dive on the Astrolabe Reef. See p.162.

The Salamander, Mamanucas A40m wreck now home to puffer fish. See p.79.



Author picks

Our authors have island-hopped around Fiji in search of pristine beaches, vibrant markets and memorable sights. They share their personal highlights here.

Explore urban life on Viti Levu Towns such as Sigatoka (p.110), Korovou (p.121), Tavua (p.126) and Ba (p.128) receive few foreign visitors, but exploring these urban pockets provides an authentic window into Fijian life.

Travel like a local Hop on a local bus or carrier truck, or ride on a cargo boat (p.179) to the outer islands and really get to know the Fijians.

Party in Suva After a week or so in the wilds, Suva's restaurant, bar and club scene (p.146) can seem quite heady. The locals are known for their fondness for a night out.

Go to church Fijians are very musical as well as deeply religious: church services (p.67) give you the chance to hear them belt out harmonious hymns.

Eat like a local The superlative kokoda (p.29), made with raw fish and lime juice, is a little like ceviche, but the addition of coconut milk trumps anything you'll find in Latin America.

Smell the flowers Fiji's orchids (p.66) and hibiscus flowers (the latter tucked behind your right ear if you're single, the left if you're taken) are wonderfully exotic and colourful. Taveuni has its own rare flower, the tagimaucia (p.213).

Sample kava Downing the merry-making (but non-alcoholic) *kava* (p.31) is almost like a religion in Fiji: try it at a cheesy resort ceremony or, better still, hunt down a village "grog" hall, or a streetside group for the real local experience.

Discover ancient Fiji Petroglyphs at Vatulele (p.156), shards of Lapita pottery embedded in the sands at Sigatoka (p.111) and huge ocean-going canoes in the Fiji Museum in Suva (p.139) are just three reminders of the country's early culture.

Our author recommendations don't end here. We've flagged up our favourite places – a perfectly sited hotel, an atmospheric café, a special restaurant – throughout the Guide, highlighted with the ★ symbol.



drive from Nadi, these larger resorts offer good-value all-inclusive packages and a great choice of sightseeing tours. Inland is the rugged **rural interior of Viti Levu**. This region was once home to fierce, cannibalistic hill tribes and is crisscrossed with **hiking trails** including the route to Fiji's highest peak, **Mount Tomanivi**. Heading east along Viti Levu's south coast brings you to **Pacific Harbour**, Fiji's adventure-tour capital offering whitewater rafting, jet-ski safaris and world-renowned shark dives in the nearby **Beqa Lagoon**. Beyond is **Suva**, Fiji's cosmopolitan capital city and the hub for sea transport throughout the archipelago.

Of the outer islands, the most accessible are in the **Lomaiviti Group**, a short trip by boat from the east coast of Viti Levu. Here you'll find the quirky former capital of Levuka on the island of Ovalau and a good range of budget island resorts – a less commercial alternative to the Mamanucas and Yasawas. Spreading east for hundreds of kilometres is the vast **Lau Group**. Reached by small cruise ship or cargo boat from the mainland, these islands provide a true adventure for the intrepid traveller. South of Viti Levu is the snaking shape of **Kadavu**, a magnet for scuba divers thanks to the impressive Great Astrolabe Reef.

Fiji's second largest island, **Vanua Levu**, is in the northern part of the archipelago. On its south coast is the beautiful sailing anchorage of Savusavu while to the east is **Taveuni**, Fiji's lush "Garden Island". Half of Taveuni is protected as a national park and it's the best place in Fiji to hike through rainforest and encounter the country's rare, native birdlife. Offshore is the stunning Rainbow Reef, aptly named after its colourful soft corals. Far to the north of Vanua Levu, the tiny Polynesian island of **Rotuma** is politically part of Fiji but so isolated it feels like a different country, with its own language, culture and traditions.



When to go

The most comfortable time to visit is during the **dry season** between May and October when temperatures hover around 25°C by day and drop to a pleasant 19–20°C at night. At this time of year the almost constant southerly **trade winds** bring cool breezes off the sea and often quite blustery marine conditions favoured by sailors and windsurfers. Coinciding with the southern hemisphere winter, the dry season is also the **busiest** time to visit, with holiday-makers from New Zealand and Australia flocking to Fiji to escape the cold. Hotels in the popular resort areas are often booked months in advance, especially around the **school holidays** between June and July.

The summer months from November to April are known as the **wet season** when temperatures rise to a fairly constant 31°C but with greatly increased humidity. Rainfall during these months is substantially higher, although most of it falls in sudden torrential **tropical downpours**, usually in the mid-afternoon. Mornings and late afternoons generally remain sunny and the sea is often beautifully **calm** – a great time for scuba divers. During the wet season the islands are lush with vegetation and waterfalls are at their most impressive; however, walking trails can get slippery and dirt roads impassable. Low-pressure systems between December and April can bring a bout of cloud and rain lasting up to five days and, in extreme cases, **tropical cyclones** can develop. Direct hits on the islands are infrequent and damage is usually localized, although in 2016 the major cyclone Winston caused significant and substantial damage across the country (see box, p.26).

AVERAGE MONTHLY TEMPERATURES AND RAINFALL

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
NADI												
Max/min (°C)	32/23	32/23	31/23	31/22	30/20	29/19	29/18	28/19	29/20	30/21	31/22	32/22
Max/min (°F)	90/73	90/73	88/73	88/72	86/68	84/66	84/64	82/66	84/68	86/70	88/72	90/72
Rainfall (mm)	343	292	341	160	89	65	45	65	70	102	132	178
SUVA												
Max/min (°C)	31/24	31/24	31/24	30/23	29/22	28/21	27/21	26/20	27/21	28/22	29/23	30/24
Max/min (°F)	88/75	88/75	88/75	86/73	84/72	82/70	81/70	79/68	81/70	82/72	84/73	86/75
Rainfall (mm)	371	265	374	366	270	163	136	158	177	221	245	277

15

things not to miss

It's not possible to see everything that Fiji has to offer in one trip – and we don't suggest you try. What follows is a selective and subjective taste of the islands' highlights: from lush rainforests and quaint villages to the best activities on and off the water. All entries have a page reference to take you straight into the Guide, where you can find out more. Coloured numbers refer to chapters in the Guide section.





1 NAVALA VILLAGE

Page 130

Fiji's most picturesque village, set deep in the highlands of Viti Levu and home to over two hundred traditional handcrafted bures.

2 LABASA

Page 190

Get off the tourist trail and visit this charming town, with its attractive river, surrounded by stunning and seldom explored countryside.

3 INDO-FIJIAN CULTURE

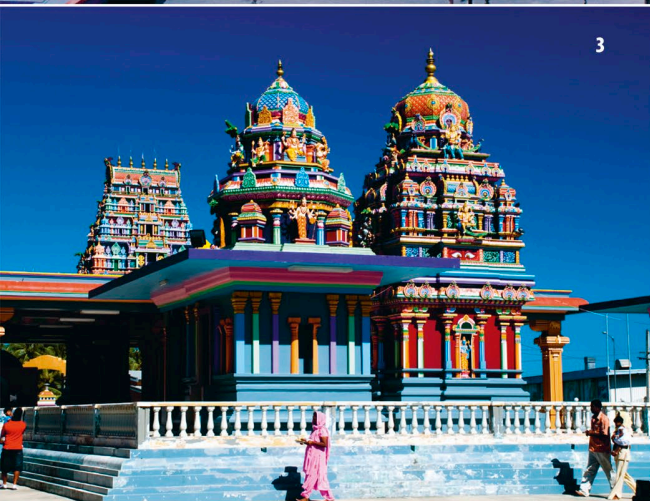
Page 53

Fiji's Hindu temples come alive throughout the year with exuberant festivals, the most spectacular being at Nadi's colourful Sri Siva Subrahmanya Swami Temple.

4 SNORKELLING

Page 35

With colourful coral reefs found off almost every beach, Fiji is a fantastic place to slip on a pair of fins and dive in.



5 ISLAND-HOPPING THE MAMANUCAS AND YASAWA ISLANDS

Page 74

Sample relaxed backpacker resorts or treat yourself to a luxury cruise.

6 RIVER RAFTING

Page 120

Head deep into the mystical Namosi Highlands on a whitewater rafting trip.

7 MEKE DANCE NIGHT

Page 63

The classic Fijian night out – traditional dancing accompanied by a feast of roast pig cooked in an underground oven.

8 SEA-KAYAKING

Page 36

Paddle your way around the islands, stopping at fishing villages and camping under the stars.

9 FIJI MUSEUM

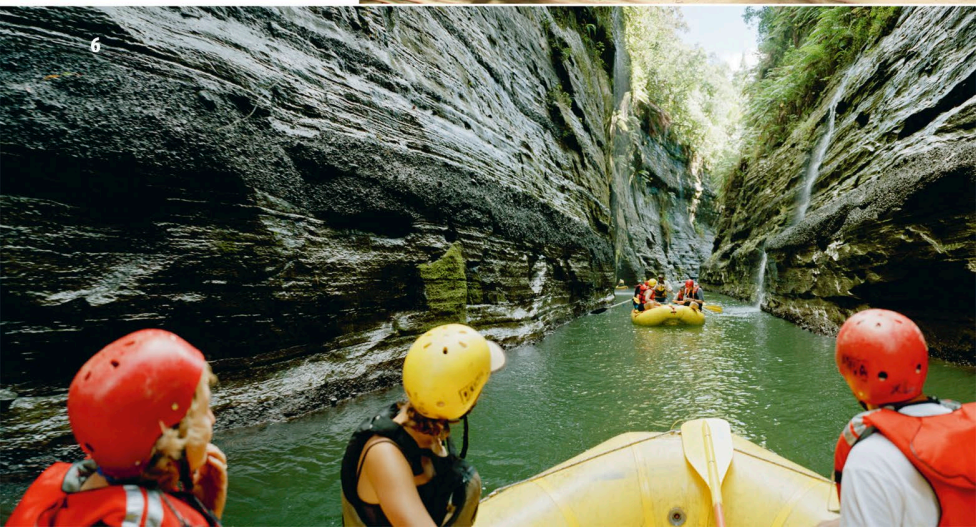
Page 139

Killing stones, cannibal forks and the half-eaten shoe of the unfortunate Rev Thomas Baker are a few of the more gruesome exhibits at Fiji's best museum.

10 LEVUKA

Page 169

Fiji's most beguiling town, a colonial museum piece full of stories and colourful locals.







11 HIKING IN THE YASAWAS

Page 94

Circumnavigate beautiful Waya Island, then hike to the summit of Vatuva for stunning views, or explore the tropical vegetation of Tavewa.

12 MARKETS

Page 39

A slice of real Fiji – the bustling markets sell every imaginable type of exotic fruit, vegetable and seafood.

13 SPENDING A NIGHT IN A VILLAGE

Page 40

Sit cross-legged on the floor in one of Fiji's many rural villages and enjoy a local dinner, while Fijians perform a *kava* ceremony.

14 SWIMMING WITH SHARKS

Pages 118 & 93

Encounter mean-looking bull sharks and the odd tiger on shark-feeding dives at Beqa Lagoon or off Kuata; otherwise don your snorkel gear to spot reef sharks at Mouya Reef.

15 BIRDWATCHING IN BOUMA

Page 208

A huge tract of protected rainforest on Taveuni, Bouma National Heritage Park is littered with waterfalls and home to some fantastic birdlife, including pretty parrots, orange doves and the elusive silk-tail.





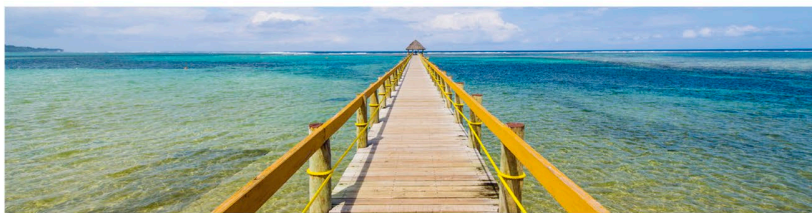
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14



15



Itineraries

With 333 islands to choose from, you'll need a focus for your Fijian travels, though any itinerary should include at least one boat trip. Desert-island beaches are most people's image of the country, with good reason, but you'll also find densely forested mountain landscapes, lively towns and resolutely traditional villages. These itineraries will help you explore the highlights.

FIJI TASTER: BEACHES, VILLAGES AND ISLANDS

This popular backpacker route takes in the bustle of Nadi and the tranquil gardens of Viti Levu, then island-hops through the Mamanucas and Yasawa Islands, where you can lounge on beaches and snorkel in beautiful lagoons. You could do the trip in ten days, but once on the islands you'll surely want to linger longer.

➊ **Nadi** This tourist town is a great place to start your tour and plan your trip, with plenty of affordable accommodation around Wailoaloa Beach. **See p.50**

➋ **Sabeto Valley** Most tours include a free pick-up from Nadi hotels to the spectacular orchid gardens, therapeutic mud pools and exhilarating zip wires of the Sabeto Valley. **See p.65**

➌ **Mana Island** Head to Mana Island in the Mamanucas, with its beautiful beaches and coral reefs right off the shoreline – you can visit on a day-trip from Nadi, or stay longer for excellent diving and snorkelling. **See p.86**

➍ **Waya** Scenic Waya and Wayasewa are highlights of the Yasawas, with rocky peaks, walking tracks and white sand beaches, plus shark dives and snorkelling trips. **See p.94**

➎ **Naviti** The largest of the Yasawas, Naviti features some great snorkelling opportunities, particularly the blue depths and manta rays of the Drawaqa Lagoon. **See p.95**

➏ **The northern Yasawas** With a good range of accommodation from locally owned backpacker resorts to fantastic village stays, these low-lying islands boast breathtaking beaches, turquoise lagoons and the limestone caves of Sawa-i-Lau. **See p.97**

➐ **Beachcomber** Last stop before heading back to Nadi is the party island of Beachcomber, a tiny coral speck in the Mamanucas. **See p.80**

EXPLORING VITI LEVU

Fiji's largest island has a bit of everything: townscapes, ancient sites and gorgeous beaches. This route takes you on a full circuit of the island, with a detour to Ovalau. Allow at least ten days.

➊ **Nadi** Starting out at Nadi, take the coastal bus southeast around the island along the Queens Road. **See p.50**

➋ **The Coral Coast** One of Fiji's most attractive stretches of coastline to drive along, the Coral Coast passes by pretty bays and through verdant rainforest. **See p.115**

➌ **Pacific Harbour** Fiji's adrenalin capital is a great place for backpackers to jet-ski, go on rafting expeditions and shark dives. **See p.116**

➍ **Suva** The only real city in Fiji, Suva has plenty of metropolitan charm: colonial architecture, some excellent Indo-Fijian restaurants, bars and clubs and a fine museum. **See p.134**

5 Ovalau This volcanic island with mountain rainforest is a fascinating diversion from the main island. Its highpoint is laidback Levuka, Fiji's former capital and a World Heritage Site. **See p.168**

6 Kings Road Once you are back on the main island of Viti Levu, head over to Nadi via the northern Kings Road. If you have time to dawdle, stop off at some of the quaint towns along the way. **See p.121**

VANUA LEVU AND TAVEUNI: THE FRIENDLY NORTH

Small planes, ferries, speedboats and buses provide the transport for this itinerary through northern Vanua Levu, and east to the garden island of Taveuni. Allow ten days to explore the highlights – Savusavu and Taveuni – with as much leisure as possible.

1 Labasa From Nadi, fly to Labasa and mingle with the locals in Fiji's most absorbing market, then take a boat trip upriver past sleepy villages. **See p.190**

2 Labasa hills and villages Ride with the locals in an open-sided bus stopping at pretty settlements, such as Vunivau. **See p.193**

➊ **Savusavu** Stay a day or two in Savusavu, a small town with hot springs, mountain walks and some decent restaurants and bars overlooking the glorious bay. **See p.194**

4 Buca Bay dive resorts From Natuvu, a couple of dive resorts can send a speedboat to collect you, and you can enjoy a few days of utter seclusion. **See p.202**

5 Kioa Island Spend time in the tightly-knit fishing community on this unusual island, settled by Tuvaluans – it's a hidden gem between Vanua Levu and Taveuni. **See p.202**

6 Taveuni There are some great activities on verdant Taveuni, including natural rock slides, birdwatching, hikes, snorkelling tours, dives and famous surf breaks. **See p.203**

7 Suva Take a passenger ferry back to Fiji's lively capital for some intrepid urban exploration. **See p.134**





SEA-KAYAKING

Basics

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Getting there

Fiji is the travel hub for the South Pacific, and a popular stopover on round-the-world tickets. The majority of direct flights arrive from New Zealand, Australia or Los Angeles, and travellers from North America or Europe must usually connect through one of these. Arriving by boat is only possible on a private yacht or on one of the cruise ships calling in at Denarau or Suva.

From Australia or New Zealand, Fiji's main tourism market, there are heaps of **package deals** available that include flights. Most travel agents focus on the ever-popular resorts in the Mamanucas, international hotels on Denarau and the large resorts along the Coral Coast on the main island. Many offer discounts and deals, particularly in the low season months of November, February and March. From North America, the UK or continental Europe, package options are more limited, although you should find Fiji as a stopover on many round-the-world tickets.

Most packages tend to be based in a single resort for one or two weeks, so if you want to head to the outer islands or explore several different islands or regions you'll have to book your flights independently, then reserve your accommodation direct with the hotels or through a hotel booking site.

Flights from the US and Canada

The only airline that flies direct to Fiji from **North America** is Fiji Airways, which code shares with Qantas and American Airlines. It has daily direct flights from **Los Angeles**, twice weekly flights from **San Francisco**, plus three flights a week from **Honolulu**. Nonstop flights from Los Angeles (11hr 20min) and San Francisco (11hr 10min) cost from US\$1600 return, while flights from Honolulu (6hr 40min) start at US\$1100.

There are no direct flights to Fiji from **Canada**, so the easiest route is to travel via San Francisco or Los Angeles. You may find lower fares, however, by flying on the more popular routes to Auckland,

Brisbane or Sydney, then getting onwards flights from there (see below).

Flights from the UK and Europe

From the **UK**, you have the choice of travelling west via North America or east via Asia – it's 16,000km and takes around 24 hours either way. Fares follow the high and low seasons between Europe and North America or Europe and Australia, with June to August and the Christmas holidays being particularly busy, with fewer discounted deals available.

The most popular routes tend to be through Asia, with return flights from the UK starting at £1100: Korean Air flies **via Seoul**, while Fiji Airways (code shares with Qantas and Cathay Pacific) flies **via Hong Kong** or **Singapore**. Flights via North America transit through **Los Angeles** or **San Francisco** (see above), with fares starting at £1300.

The cheapest option is to fly to Fiji from the UK with Qantas or Virgin **via Australia** (see below), where you can opt for a stopover: flights on this route start at £970, but take upwards of 30hr.

Flights from Australia, New Zealand and South Africa

There are frequent daily flights to Fiji from **Australia and New Zealand**, with the best deals and accommodation packages available direct from the airlines.

Three airlines fly direct from **Australia**: Virgin Australia and Fiji Airways depart daily from **Brisbane** (3hr 30min; A\$700) and **Sydney** (4hr; A\$700), while Fiji Airways also offer direct daily flights from **Melbourne** (4hr 50min; A\$800), and twice weekly flights from Adelaide (5hr; A\$800); JetStar flies four times a week from Sydney (4hr; A\$700).

You can fly from **New Zealand** to Fiji with Fiji Airways or Air New Zealand; both have daily flights from **Auckland** (3hr; NZ\$800), while Fiji Airways also has two weekly flights from **Wellington** (3hr 45min; NZ\$800) and three weekly flights from **Christchurch** (4hr; NZ\$850).

The most direct route from **South Africa** is to fly to Sydney or Auckland and from there on to Fiji.

A BETTER KIND OF TRAVEL

At Rough Guides we are passionately committed to travel. We believe it helps us understand the world we live in and the people we share it with – and of course tourism is vital to many developing economies. But the scale of modern tourism has also damaged some places irreparably, and climate change is accelerated by most forms of transport, especially flying. All Rough Guides' flights are carbon-offset, and every year we donate money to a variety of environmental charities.

Flights from elsewhere in the Pacific

Flying to Fiji from elsewhere in the South Pacific is generally easy, although often quite expensive. Fiji Airways flies direct to Nadi from Nuku'alofa, **Tonga** (4 weekly, plus 1 flight weekly to Suva; 1hr 20min; F\$670 one way); Vava'u, **Tonga** (2 weekly; 2hr 10min; F\$830 one way); Funafuti, **Tuvalu** (2 weekly to Suva; 2hr 35min; F\$1020 one way); Port Vila, **Vanuatu** (4 weekly; 2hr 35min; F\$690 one way); Apia, **Samoa** (6 weekly; 2hr 50min; F\$750 one way); Tarawa, **Kiribati** (2 weekly; 3hr; F\$2030 one way); Christmas Island, **Kiribati** (1 weekly; 4hr 40min; F\$2030 one way); and Honolulu, **Hawaii** (3 weekly; 6hr 30min; F\$1960 one way).

Other regional airlines serving Nadi include Aircalin from Noumea, **New Caledonia** (1 weekly; 2hr; F\$950 one way); Air Vanuatu from Port Vila, **Vanuatu** (1 weekly; 1hr 40min; F\$690 one way); Solomon Airlines from Honiara, **Solomon Islands** (1 weekly; 3hr 15min; F\$870 one way); Nauru Airlines from **Nauru** (1 weekly; 3hr 10min; F\$1570

one way); and Air Niugini from Port Moresby, **Papua New Guinea** (2 weekly; 4hr 10min; F\$1060 one way). There are no direct flights between Fiji and the Cook Islands, Tahiti or Easter Island – the easiest way to get to Fiji from these eastern Polynesian destinations is via Auckland or Los Angeles.

AIRLINES

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Air Niugini 🌐 airniugini.com.pg

Air New Zealand 🌐 airnz.co.nz

Air Vanuatu 🌐 airvanuatu.com

American 🌐 aa.com

Cathay Pacific 🌐 cathaypacific.com

Fiji Airways 🌐 fijairways.com

JetStar 🌐 jetstar.com

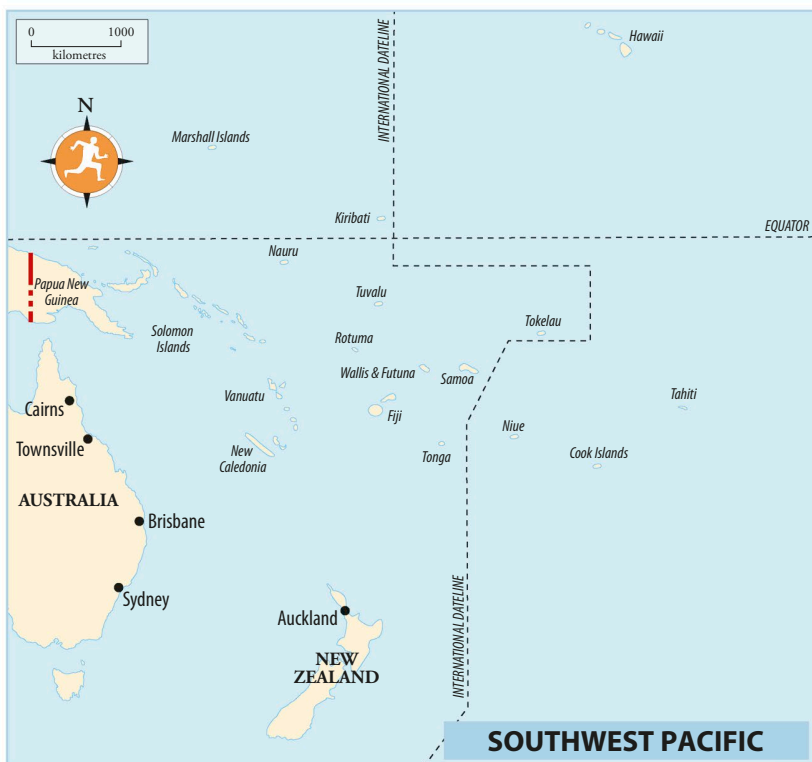
Korean Air 🌐 koreanair.com

Nauru Airlines 🌐 nauruairlines.com.au

Qantas 🌐 qantas.com

Solomon Airlines 🌐 flysolomons.com

Virgin Australia 🌐 virginaustralia.com



ONLINE BOOKING

 [eBookers.com](#)
 [expedia.com](#)
 [lastminute.com](#)
 [travelocity.com](#)
 [travelonline.com](#)
 [zuji.com](#)

AGENTS AND OPERATORS

All Ways UK ☎ 01628 526 585, [awtm.co.uk](#). Long-established independent travel agent offering tailor-made trips to Fiji and the South Pacific.

Beautiful Pacific Fiji ☎ 672 2600, [beautifulpacific.com](#). South Pacific travel specialist offering discounted room-only deals at the smaller, boutique-style resorts in Fiji.

Rosie Holidays Fiji ☎ 672 2755, [rosiefiji.com](#). Locally owned and the oldest and largest inbound operator in Fiji with a competitive and very knowledgeable travel agency.

Spacifica Travel Australia ☎ 1800 800 722, [spacificatravel.com](#). Travel company offering package deals around Fiji and the South Pacific.

STA Travel US ☎ 1 800 781 4040, UK ☎ 0333 321 0099, Australia ☎ 134 782, New Zealand ☎ 0800 474 400, SA ☎ 0861 781 781; [statravel.com](#). Worldwide specialists in independent travel; also student IDs, travel insurance, car rental and more. Good discounts for students and under-26s.

Traifinders UK ☎ 020 7368 1200, Republic of Ireland ☎ 01 677 7888; [traifinders.com](#). One of the best-informed and most efficient agents for independent travellers.

Getting to Fiji by boat

Although a romantic proposition, arriving in Fiji **by boat** is tricky unless you're on a private yacht – it's a five- to ten-day journey up from New Zealand depending on the weather, or at least a month's sailing across the Pacific from the US west coast. Several large **cruise liners** visit Fiji but usually spend only a few days in Nadi Bay before visiting one of the port towns of Lautoka, Suva or Savusavu and then cruising around the islands for snorkelling trips, and then heading back to the open seas.

If you're arriving **by yacht**, Fiji has four main **ports of entry**, Suva, Lautoka, Levuka and Malau, all overseen by Fiji Ports ([www.fijiports.com.fj](#), ☎ 331 2700, ☎ 330 0064). Clearance must be requested via Customs (☎ 330 2864, yachtsreport@frca.org.fj, [www.frca.org.fj/yachts-arrival/](#)) at least 48 hours before arrival. For detailed sailing info, Yacht Help (☎ 675 0911, [yachthelp.com](#)), based at Port Denarau on Viti Levu publishes the extremely useful and free *Fiji Marine Guide*; they'll also try and find a yacht charter if you don't have your own boat. Otherwise, you may find **crew work** at one of the marinas and possibly passage on to New Zealand,

Australia or California. Most yachts depart Fiji by September or October before the start of the hurricane season and start to arrive again, often having sailed via Tonga or Tahiti, from May to August.

Finding passage on a **container ship** is no longer possible, due to heightened security concerns.

CRUISES

P&O Cruises Australia ☎ 1300 159 454, New Zealand ☎ 0800 780 716; [pocruises.com.au](#). Large passenger cruise ships departing Sydney, Brisbane and Auckland and visiting various ports including Denarau, Suva, Lautoka and Savusavu as well as Beqa and the Yasawas, usually on twelve-day itineraries.

Getting around

Fiji is spread over a huge area of the southwest Pacific, covering almost 1.3 million square kilometres. On a map, the islands may look close enough together to hop between, but with limited infrastructure this can be a time-consuming process, often involving back-tracking to either Nadi or Suva. Viti Levu, the main island, is extremely well connected by public transport and easy to explore, as are the popular beach destinations of the Mamanucas and Yasawa Islands, connected by fast catamaran. Exploring further afield, though, requires patience and a sense of adventure, with cumbersome passenger ferries and cargo boats visiting the outer islands, sometimes only on a monthly basis, and flights in small propeller planes landing on gravel or grass airstrips.

Nadi, on the main island of Viti Levu, is the nation's tourist hub, home to the international and main domestic airport and with sea access to the Mamanucas. **Suva**, 120km away on the opposite side of the mainland, is the transport hub for all outer-island shipping, as well as having air access to twelve outer-island airstrips.

On the two largest islands of **Viti Levu** and **Vanua Levu**, as well as on **Taveuni**, exceptionally cheap buses travel around the coast and countryside on a fairly regular basis and carrier vans or taxis can be hired for private tours. On all other islands, though, getting around usually involves a boat journey, often in a small, ten-passenger fibreglass boat with a 60HP single engine, and these, when chartered, are expensive. Hitching a ride with the locals is much cheaper but more often than not

boats are filled to the brim, sometimes with as many as twenty large Fijians plus their luggage.

By air

Fiji's **domestic flight network** is dominated by **Fiji Link**, the domestic arm of the government-owned Fiji Airways (☎672 0888, 🌐fijiairways.com), and served by small twin-propeller planes only. While flying in such aircraft may cause a little nervousness, it is by far the quickest way to get around. Flights are far from cheap, however, with standard fares F\$235 one-way from Nadi to Suva and up to F\$685 from Nadi to far-flung Rotuma, though if you plan ahead, online specials are usually half the price. Availability is seldom a problem, except at Christmas when flights can be booked out months in advance. The **baggage allowance** on internal flights is a meagre 15kg per person: if you plan on travelling with your own scuba diving equipment or surfboard, check with the airline in advance. Alternatively, **Northern Air** (☎992 2449, 🌐www.northernairfiji.com.fj), operates from Nausori

Airport (Suva) only and flies to Levuka, Labasa, Savusavu, Taveuni, Gau and Moala.

Two **seaplane** companies operate in Fiji: Turtle Airways (☎672 1888, 🌐turtleairways.com) based at Wailoaloa Beach in Nadi, and Pacific Island Air (☎672 5644, 🌐pacificislandair.com) based at Nadi Airport. Turtle Airways offers a daily flight to Turtle Island in the northern part of the Yasawas for F\$380 one way, with a minimum of two passengers, but you must pre-arrange a boat transfer on to your intended destination – departure times vary and can only be advised the day before based on sea conditions. There are also two **helicopter** companies shuttling guests to upmarket resorts: Island Hoppers (☎672 0410, 🌐helicopters.com.fj) based at Nadi Airport, and Heli-Tours Fiji (☎675 0255, 🌐helitoursfiji.com) based at Denarau. The baggage allowance on seaplanes and helicopters is also 15kg per person, with excess charges thereafter.

For an overview of air routes see the map below; details of individual flights are given throughout the Guide.

