

Directory

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ACCOMMODATION

Five-star hotels, B&Bs, hostels, motels, resorts, treehouses, bungalows on the beach, campgrounds and village homestays – there's no shortage of accommodation options in Fiji.

Rates quoted in this book include Fiji's 12.5% value-added tax (VAT) and the 5% hotel turnover tax. Also, they are peak season rates, which tend to be 10% to 20% higher than those for the low season.

Useful accommodation websites:

- www.fiji-backpacking.com
- www.fijibudget.com
- www.4hotels.co.uk/fiji
- www.fiji4less.com
- www.fiji.pacific-resorts.com
- www.travelmaxia.com
- www.wotif.com.au
- www.fiji beaches.com

Budget

Budget travellers in Fiji can expect to pay \$25 to \$35 for a dorm bed and between \$70 and \$135 for a double. Dedicated single rooms are few and far between and solo travellers wanting privacy usually end up forking out for a double. Campsites are provided at some budget resorts, but as they are only a few dollars cheaper than dormitories the hassle of carrying a tent seems hardly worth it (see p228 for more information).

Facilities at budget places are usually shared. Many backpacker resorts in places such as Nadi and the Coral Coast on Viti Levu have their own restaurants, bars, laundries, internet access and tour desks. Some midrange resorts have converted a room or two into dorms – often a great bargain as you'll have access to all of the resort's facilities. On the outer islands amenities become simpler, and sometimes hot water and electricity is a luxury.

Budget resorts in the Yasawa and Mamanuca islands often include three meals in their tariffs, as generally they do not provide self-catering facilities and there is nowhere else to eat. An accommodation-and-meal package costs between \$60 and \$95.

Budget accommodation standards vacillate wildly during the lifetime of each edition of this guide. What can be a particularly nice *bure* (traditional thatched dwelling) one day, can be tattered and torn within hours by hurricanes and tropical storms. See the boxed text, p156, for what to expect on the outer islands. If possible, quiz other travellers, check Lonely Planet's **Thorn Tree** (www.lonelyplanet.com/thornree) or browse through the comments book in the office of the Fiji Visitors Bureau (FVB; p239) to get the latest low-down on a particular place.

BOOK YOUR STAY ONLINE

For more accommodation reviews and recommendations by Lonely Planet authors, check out the online booking service at www.lonelyplanet.com/hotels. You'll find the true, insider low-down on the best places to stay. Reviews are thorough and independent. Best of all, you can book online.

PRACTICALITIES

- The **Fiji Times** (☎ 330 4111; www.fijitimes.com), the **Daily Post** (☎ 327 5176; www.fijidailypost.com) and the **Fiji Sun** (☎ 330 7555; www.sun.com.fj) are the country's principal newspapers; all are based in Suva.
- **Fiji Magic** (☎ 330 0591; www.fijilive.com/fijimagic) is a free, monthly publication with details and prices of accommodation, restaurants, activities and tours.
- The government-sponsored **Fiji Broadcasting Commission** (www.radiofiji.com.fj) has stations in English (2Day FM – Suva 100.4 FM and Nadi 107.4 FM), Fijian (Radio Fiji 1 – 558AM) and Fiji-Hindi (Radio Fiji 2 – 620AM and 98 FM).
- Bula FM (Suva 100.2 FM and Nadi 102.4 FM) plays an eclectic mix of pop, rock, reggae, dance, folk, country and local music. Radio Fiji Gold (Suva 100.4 FM and Nadi 94.6 FM) appeals to an older generation.
- The video and DVD system used in Fiji is PAL, which is the same as in Australia, New Zealand, Europe, the UK and most of Asia and the Pacific. The US video and DVD system is NTSC, which is incompatible.
- Electricity is supplied at 240V, 50Hz AC. Many resorts have universal outlets for 240V or 110V shavers and hairdryers. Outlets use flat two- or three-pin plugs as in Australia or New Zealand.
- Fiji follows the metric system: kilometres, kilograms, litres and degrees in Celsius.

If you're making reservations at budget places while you're on the road, don't be surprised if you show up and nobody's heard of you. Administration can sometimes be a little less-than-organised and reservations don't always make it into the book. However, Fijians do take such disorganisation in their stride, and a bed will invariably be found for you, but it might be in the dormitory.

Midrange

The bulk of accommodation in Fiji falls under the midrange banner. Options include hotels, motels and resorts ranging from \$135 to \$250 for a room, regardless of whether occupied by one or two adults. Guests can expect bathrooms, TVs, bar fridges and tea and coffee facilities in hotels, while many lodges and resorts offer self-contained units with kitchens. These rooms are often more tired than one might expect from the price. A midrange hotel in Fiji is likely to be below the standard found in the developed world (although entirely comfortable), but significantly more expensive. If you're looking to stay a bit longer and want to move around, avoid paying too much in advance and keep your options open.

However, on remote islands such as Kadavu, where there are few places to stay and the main form of transportation is by small boat, it is better to book ahead. This will avoid you being left stranded without a

vacancy in your price range, and ensure you'll be met at the airport or ferry.

Top End

Fiji's top-end options do not suffer the same comparatively low-standard/high-price issues as its midrange hotels. The resorts are generally five-star chains or upmarket island resorts with rooms that equal anything else in the world. Expect day spas, landscaped pools, stylish restaurants and complimentary nonmotorised water sports. Prices range from \$250 for a double to sky's-the-limit tariffs. Children aged under 12 generally stay free (and sometimes even eat free) at the family-oriented resorts while others are strictly adult-only affairs. The prices quoted in this book are 'rack rates' and you will almost certainly be able to make a booking for less by exploring a few options, such as the following:

- Consider prebooking your accommodation as a package deal with a travel agent. Because of their buying power, they are sometimes given rates not available to the general public.
- Some hotels discount heavily on websites like those mentioned at the start of this section, or on their own web page.
- Other places offer cheap rates to those who phone, on the assumption that they are speaking to someone within Fiji. Ask for the 'local rate'.