

Fiji

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Best Places to Stay

- » Likuliku Lagoon (p103)
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- » Caqalai Island Resort (p114)
- » Castaway Island Resort (p103)

Best Places to Eat

- » Blue Bure (p71)
- » Guava (p92)
- » Daikoku (p71 and p92)
- » Navutu Stars (p110)
- » Mantaray Island Resort (p107)

Why Go?

With alabaster beaches, cloudless skies and kaleidoscopic reefs, Fiji is the embodiment of the South Pacific dream. Most who head here want little more than to fall into a sun-induced coma under a shady palm, and with over 300 islands to choose from, the decision on where to unfurl your beach towel isn't easy. While some may find that anything more than two snorkelling excursions a day and half an hour on the volleyball court is not in keeping with Fiji's famously languid sense of time, there is more to these isles than can ever be seen from a deckchair or swim-up bar.

In a (coco)nut shell, Fiji is arguably the easiest place in the South Pacific to travel around. The population adopts you on your arrival, and there are two robust cultures, a surprisingly diverse landscape and accommodation to suit most budgets.

When to Go

Suva

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Connections

The Mamanuca Group and Yasawa Group are reached by ferry or high-speed catamaran from Nadi. Ovalau has boat and bus transfers via Suva but these take several hours. Ovalau and further-flung islands like Vanua Levu, Taveuni and Kadavu are most quickly reached by plane, although interisland services are cancelled at the hint of bad weather. Cargo ships are another option and the new *Lomaiviti Princess* has made this a cleaner and more reliable option.

ITINERARIES

One Week

From **Nadi** follow the Coral Coast Hwy south to the **Momi Guns**, and **Natadola Beach** for horse riding. Chug into the verdant interior on the **Coral Coast Scenic Railway** or trek to the top of the **Sigatoka Sand Dunes**. Make your way to **Pacific Harbour** for diving with sharks in **Beqa Lagoon**. Don't miss the chance to raft the canyons of the **Navua River** before heading to **Suva**. Complete your loop via the Kings Rd, windsurfing at **Nanau-i-Ra** or scuba diving at **Rakiraki**. Head back to sugar country and visit **Lautoka**, the second-largest city and a great base for exploring the **Nausori Highlands**. If you have an extra night, spend it at the traditional village of **Navala** before heading back to Nadi.

Two Weeks

Thanks to a high-speed catamaran that weaves daily from **Port Denarau** through the **Yasawas** and back, this chain is readily explored. The boat passes a few of the **Mamanucas** on the way, so these islands are a good place to start. Spend the next few days on the sliver of sand that connects **Wayasewa** to **Waya** before drifting north to **Naviti** to snorkel with manta rays. Dash up to **Nacula**, or **Nanuya Lailai**, where you can paddle in the **Blue Lagoon**. From here, leapfrog back down the chain, stopping at **Matacawalevu** and Naviti once more.

Essential Food & Drink

- » **Yaqona** Also called kava or grog, this mildly narcotic drink is a muddy tea made from a root.
- » **Lovo** Traditional Fijian oven where food is cooked in a pit on hot stones.
- » **Kokoda** A raw-fish salad marinated in lime juice, mixed with vegetables and topped with coconut cream.
- » **Palusami** Corned beef or onions with coconut cream, all wrapped and baked in young taro leaves.
- » **Thali** Set Indian meals with several curries.
- » **Roti** Literally this is an Indian flatbread, but the term often refers to the bread stuffed with a dry curry dish – a great quick meal.

AT A GLANCE

Currency Fijian dollar (F\$)

Language Fijian, Fijian Hindi, English

Mobile phones Prepaid SIM cards

Money ATMs on main islands only

Visas Free

Fast Facts

- » **Capital** Suva (Viti Levu)
- » **Country code** 679
- » **Emergency** 911
- » **Land area** 18,274 sq km
- » **Population** 849,000

Exchange Rates

Australia	A\$1	F\$1.85
Canada	C\$1	F\$1.80
Europe	€1	F\$2.30
Japan	¥100	F\$2.30
New Zealand	NZ\$1	F\$1.45
UK	UK£1	F\$2.85
USA	US\$1	F\$1.85

For current exchange rates see www.xe.com.

Set Your Budget

- » **Local restaurant main course** F\$15–20
- » **Half-day snorkelling** F\$15–20
- » **Bunch of bananas** F\$2
- » **Yasawa Flyer (seven-day pass)** F\$321
- » **Car hire** from F\$125 per day