

Beautiful Pacific

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Outer Islands

The outer Fiji islands are the hidden jewels of the country - away from the commercial centres you'll find plenty of delightful small boutique resorts offering first class service, genuine hospitality and the chance to explore some unique environments and traditional villages. Daily flights depart Nadi Airport for Kadavu in the Southern Islands, Ovalau (the old capital of Levuka) in the Eastern Islands and Savusavu (Vanua Levu) and Taveuni in the Northern Islands. These islands offer some of the best scuba diving reefs in Fiji, notably soft corals, as well as world class diving, hiking trails through rainforests and endemic birds.

Kadavu lies about 100km south of the main island of Viti Levu. It is a rugged island almost 60km in length and 14km wide with high volcanic peaks, rolling hills and many indented bays. There are few roads on the island and travel by small boats is the easiest and often only way to get about. The hilly interior offers good hiking trails, some nice waterfalls and several endemic species of birds including the colourful Kadavu parrot. The world famous Great Astrolabe Reef stretches for 30km off the north east coast of Kadavu. Here you'll find outstanding hard corals, cabbage patches, fans, caves, wrecks and a fantastic array of marine life due to its rich currents as well as several dive resorts.

Levuka, the old capital of Fiji and main town on Ovalau, is a charming historical town with a very slow pace of life. There are several good colonial style budget hotels as well as independent restaurants, coffee bars and historical sights. The mountains behind Levuka are truly spectacular and there are several nearby trails into the rainforest and to swimming pools and waterfalls. Just offshore is the luxury Toberua Island Resort catering well for eco-tourists and diving enthusiasts. There are some wonderful mangroves nearby which are great for exploring as well as Booby colonies. Nearby is Wakaya island, an exclusive resort for the rich and famous.

Vanua Levu is the second largest island in Fiji. The northern half of the island is dominated by sugar cane farms. The main tourist region is along the tropical southern coast around Savusavu Town which is very scenic with lush rainforest and several nice beaches. The rainforest around Savusavu is accessible with several frequented trails to some excellent

waterfalls and lookouts. Savusavu Town is a favourite destination for sailors, game fishing enthusiasts and scuba diving and has some excellent restaurants and several luxury resorts.

At the eastern end of Vanua Levu is Buca Bay, a popular spot amongst yachties with its winding coastline and many inlets. Buca Bay is also the closest spot to the colourful corals of world famous Rainbow Reef, but as yet there is no tourist accommodation here. Rainbow Reef is 32-km reef with over 16 excellent dive sites ranging from intermediate to advanced. Highlights include the Great White Wall (soft corals) and Annies Bommie. The best place to access the Rainbow Reef is from the west coast of Taveuni. Also close to the Rainbow Reef are Rabi and Kioa, two unique islands with Polynesian cultures.

Taveuni is referred to as the Garden Island of Fiji. Its rainforest is breathtaking with lots of waterfalls and walking trails. Taveuni Island is undoubtedly the most popular island for eco-travellers. The most scenic area is Bouma National Heritage Park. Access to the park is from the north-east coast, with the main attraction being the Tavoro Falls (three lovely waterfalls between 10 minutes and an hour walk from the main road). At the end of the road is the attractive village of Lavena departure point for the 3 mile Lavena Coastal Walk along the forest edge, passing cove beaches and waterfalls. This coast can also be explored by kayak.

Off the north coast of Taveuni are three lovely islands all within 20 minutes boat ride. Qamea is the largest of these and is the twelfth largest in Fiji. It has lovely bays, lush rainforest and excellent bird life. Across from Qamea is the spectacular horseshoe shaped collapsed volcanic crater of Matangi Island. There's a beautiful beach in the horseshoe, and on the other side of the island is Matangi Island Resort which specialises in intimate weddings and has excellent diving around the reefs as well as great fishing.

Rotuma Island lies to the far north of Fiji, some 500km from Nadi. The Polynesian island has its own unique culture, language and history. The island is blessed with beautiful scenery, gorgeous beaches and some interesting archaeological sites including the huge kine'he'he platform and the grave of the kings at Sisilo. The island has walking tracks meandering throughout the interior and a sand coastal road that takes a full day to circumnavigate. Villages are spread out along the road, divided into seven districts. Tourism on Rotuma is virtually non-existent and there are no hotels here and infrequent flights. The cargo boat from Suva takes 2 days and 2 nights.