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# Fiji Time



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## Senga Na Lengā



you walk to the middle of the island all you see is crystal clear water and reef in every direction and the occasion seagull or tern stopping by to land on one of the islands three palm trees.

The islands in Fiji are perfect when the weather cooperates and that is why they filmed Hollywood movies there like Castaway, Contact and the Blue Lagoon. We visited Fiji for 8 days and the weather gave us 2 good sunny days and 6 days of rain so we spent a lot of time in our room and got a good case of cabin fever. Unfortunately in the middle of the south pacific you are at the mercy of Mother Nature.

### Special Interest Articles:

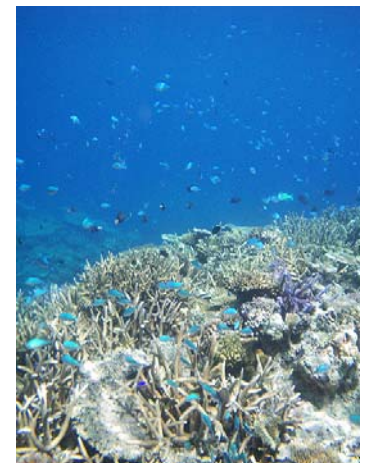
- Fijian Hospitality
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Located 1,000 miles from nowhere the small archipelago of Fiji is 300 islands of white sandy beach, coconut palm tree lined tropical paradise white sandy beaches and pristine coral reefs with turtles and fish. The problem with Fiji is it is 1,000 miles from nowhere so you are at the mercy of the Fijian people who operate on "FijiTime" meaning it happens when it happens. If you are good with this then you will have a wonderful time but if you are one that expects 1<sup>st</sup> class service on time then too bad.

They have a saying there called "Senga Na Lengā" which mean don't worry be happy and on a sunny day visiting a remote

island of sand the size of a football field that is just what we did. The island was surrounded by a perfect reef and the small boat that took us out there dropped us off on the other side of the reef. We snorkeled across the reef to reach the island seeing about every kind of small colorful fish you can imagine. The reefs are like small underwater mountains with valleys in between and everywhere you look there will be something alive hidden in every little crack.

Once reaching the island you walk onto the beach of perfect white sand and notice a band of sea shells piled up above the water line containing millions of them. When



## Fijian Hospitality



*Mela and her family in front of their house in Pacific Harbor.*

In all of our travels we have never met anyone more friendly than the people of Fiji. When you drive down the street you will often pick someone up and give them a ride and by the time you get there you already know them. Everywhere you go you will end up talking with the locals and sharing stories.

One of the ladies working at the resort Mela invited us to have dinner with her family at their house down the road. They have five children of different ages and they opened up their home to us with true Fijian hospitality. Before having traditional Fijian cuisine we talked with Mela and her husband while Maddie played with her new friends.

The food was a mixture of local vegetables, fish and fruit with some noodles and cooked in local

fashion.

It was good to sit down and talk on such a personal level and really understand how closely we live our daily lives even though we are such opposites.

They definitely do not have all the luxuries and amenities we have in the States but it does not in any way make life any worse as they are very

content and happy with life as it is.

On the other hand we have gotten used to the flat screen TV with 900 stations and pay per view movies, super Wal-Mart's and restaurants of every flavor. We strive so hard to make money to afford all these material items that in the long run really will not makes us any happier.



## Shaken not Stirred

While out on a fishing boat off the south coast of Fiji



With no idea of what is going on in the World a distress went out over the marine radio that a Earthquake in Vanuatu and create a Tsunami that was heading towards Fiji and high speed.

Of course in the boat out at sea the only thing that happens is the water swells up a couple of feet but at shore is where the

damage is.

When we returned to shore we found the entire staff at the hotel and all of our luggage was taken a few miles away to higher ground. Luckily on this day the force or harmonics of the earthquake was not enough to create a wave to cause any damage but it did create a big stir.

## Zippity Doodah



Away from the beautiful beaches and coral reefs Fiji is made of volcanic mountains and they are covered with lush rain forests. As you head inland you climb into the mountains and the vegetation gets more and more dense. Up in the forest one company called Zip Fiji has strung cables and made platforms from giant tree to giant tree so you can zip line through the canopy like Tarzan.

This was the first time for all of us to go zip lining and at first we really did not think much of it. When we started putting on the harnesses we realized this is a sport of some kind and all the equipment seemed to be designed for zip lining.

Maddie was the most excited while Lisa really did not want to go but was more forced or talked into

it. We needed to walk up a hill in order to start the journey of what was about 10 different zip lines switch backing down the mounting through the trees.

There are always 2 lines for safety reasons and you also have 2 pulleys attached to you harness. There will always be a safety person on each end of the line to attach and release your pulleys. As you accelerate down the

cable braking is applied by pulling down on the cable with one of your hands that has a special leather glove on it.

The zip lines are quite long with some stretching over 500 feet and that is a long ways as you are flying though the forest. Other zip lines were only 50 feet but you are busy clipping in and out. Some of the lines start up in the trees as high as 30 feet on a makeshift platform.

By the time we finished Lisa opened up to the whole experience and had a good time while Maddie talked me and the daughter of a couple from the resort that came along with us into going for a second round of zipping. On the second pass you definitely feel more and more in control and tend to go a little faster and stop a little quicker.




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*“Scott braking to a stop.”*



## Eight Hundred Dollar Fish



*"Master fisherman Lisa manning the reels on the high seas."*

One a clear but windy morning we decided to go out on a fishing trip on the outer edge of the reef. We split the cost and went out with another family from Melbourne, Australia. The charter cost \$800 but it was only \$400 for each family with a lunch of tasty beet and cheese sandwiches included in the price.

Once to the edge of the reef we started trolling downwind and went about 10 miles with no luck. We turned around into the wind and this is when it got fun. The swells were starting to get big and now we were straight into them. The trick to finding the fish was to find the sea birds as they are chasing the fish from

above. About 10 minutes later we were in the middle of a flock of birds and Whammo we caught the big one. Eleven year old William reeled in all 3 pounds of the giant Skipjack and then pulled the behemoth onto the boat.

Later that evening we had the fish cooked up for dinner prepared with some local Fijian dishes. It was very delicious as it should be for the reasonable price of \$20 per bite.



*"What an \$800 fish looks like up close."*

## Time Zones

On the way to Fiji you cross over the date line so you end up losing a day and if it makes sense the 10 hour flight in reality ends up being 34 hours on the clock.

To make matters more interesting on our way back from Australia on a 14 hour flight we will end up landing 5 hours earlier on the same day we took off.

Now all this can be made sense of and calculated out until you go to the outback of Australia. There you will find a time zone that is 30 minutes off from the rest of the world so when it is 12:00 in California, 6:00 in Sydney it is 5:30 in Alice Springs.



So I guess that toilets are not the only things that run backwards in Australia.