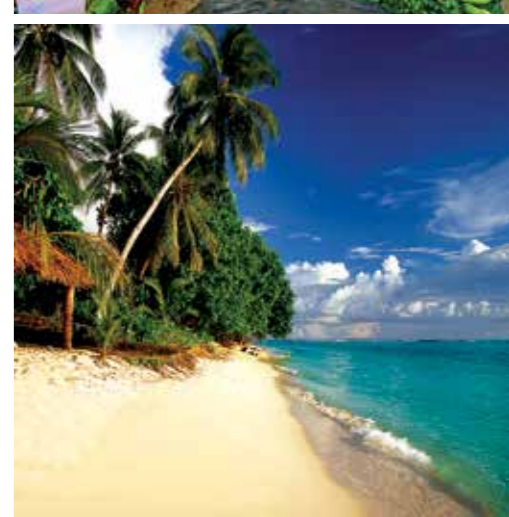


Solomon Islands



So Solomons, So Different!

Explore the hidden paradise of the South Pacific archipelago, comprising of a vast group of 922 breathtaking tropical islands.

Experience a culture, rich with traditional customs, art, dance and the iconic sound of the panpipe music of 'Are Are'.

Catch a glimpse of the fierceness of World War II battles and be touched by the bravery of soldiers by visiting historic war sites in and outside Honiara, on land and underwater.

Explore Honiara's cosmopolitan and colourful food market in downtown Honiara, a vibrant and lively melting pot of the Solomons!

Be mesmerized by the natural beauty of our many wildlife and marine parks including Marovo lagoon in the Western Province, the largest saltwater lagoon in the world and home to an array of teeming marine life.

Feel the spirit of adventure and enjoy a special piece of paradise or simply relax and discover a culture with a welcoming smile.



FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Solomon Islands Visitors Bureau Head Office
PO Box 321, Mendana Avenue, Honiara, Solomon Islands
call (677) 22442 or email info@sivb.com.sb

www.visitsolomons.com.sb

Pack Ya Bags
Be Brave..... Be Adventurous
www.packyabags.com



Solomon Islands



Solomon Islands

As you take a step back in time to the Solomon Islands you will see how very different it is to many destinations. The Solomon Islands is unhurried, undeveloped, untouched and unspoiled. From the diver's paradise of diverse marine life, to the wild interiors of local village treks, to the culture of the people, to the huge amount of adventure, this will be something new to experience. Below are a number of guidelines for you to know about as the country is remote and it is important to make sure you understand them. Just ask Pack Ya Bags if you need any questions answered.

As they say "Welkam and Lukim You!"

The Solomon Islands consists of 922 islands, cays and atolls with the main focus on the six major islands that form the archipelago.

Visa & Passport Information

Citizens of the British Commonwealth, US and most EU countries do not need visas. If you have a valid passport and a return or onward ticket, you can acquire a visitor's permit valid for 3 months on arrival.

Weather

The Solomons have a warm and tropical climate with the average day time temperature about 25-30 degrees. During the evenings it can be a pleasant 19 degrees. The wet season is from November to April and because of the low altitude of the islands, the Solomons are less affected by tropical cyclones, but these still pose a threat during the wet season. The months between April and November are the best time to visit the Solomon Islands although this should not stop you going at anytime.

Banking

All major credit cards (Visa, MasterCard, Cirrus) are accepted in the Solomons, as well as travellers cheques. (to avoid additional exchange rates, travellers cheques should be in AUD or GBP.) Eftpos and ATMs are widely available in and around Honiara, however **in the outer provinces you should carry cash.**

Tipping

This is not required, nor recommended in the Solomon Islands.

Insurance

You will be travelling well off the beaten track. Travel insurance is highly recommended.

Health

Malaria can be a problem in the Solomon Islands. It is recommended that you visit your doctor 2 weeks prior to travelling to the region to organise anti-malaria medication and any other vaccinations which may be required. Be prepared and take your own medication with you.

Getting There

By Air: Honiara International Airport (on Guadalcanal Island) is the main hub of the Solomon Islands and is located 7 miles east of Honiara. Bus and taxi services are available to and from the airport. Car hire is also available. Five airlines fly into Honiara regularly, including Solomon Airlines, Pacific Blue, Air Niugini, Fiji Airways and Our Airline. Roads to and from the airport and around urban areas are well developed.

English

Good Morning
Good Night
Thank you
How are you?
I am fine thank you
Can I have a beer?
I am hungry.
What's your name?

Roviana

Munumunu leana
Bongi leana
Leana hola
Vea si goi?
Leana mo si rau
Hiva beer si rau
Arau ovia
Esei pozamu?

Pronounced

Mu-nu Mu-nu le-ah-nah
Boon-ghi le-ah-na
Le-ah-nah hor-lah
Ve-ah-see-ghoi?
Le-ah-nah mor see raow
Hi-vah beer see raow
Are-raow oh-viah
Es-say por-zha-muh



Provinces of the Solomon Islands

Guadalcanal and Honiara

The busy city of Honiara, is the capital of the Solomon Islands and is situated on the island of Guadalcanal. The city lies on the northern coastline and has a small picturesque sea port at Point Cruz. The rugged terrain of Guadalcanal's rainforest offers unlimited hiking possibilities across the island to Tenaru Falls, Mataniko Falls or the Boarare Cascades. The area shows WWII history and wrecks, both under the sea and on land. The people on the west coast still live in a traditional way.



Central Islands

The Central Islands include the Savo, the home of the unique Megapode Birds. Ngella (Florida) and Russell Islands, all have superb dive sites and natural wonders to explore, such as the thermal hot springs. Spectacular dive sites include reefs, pinnacles, drop-offs and the famous WWII wrecks. Take a visit to the colonial capital of the Solomon Islands, Tulagi, with its historic sites, or to the Russell Islands which has one of the largest coconut groves in the South Pacific.



Western Province (includes Gizo, Munda and the famous Marovo Lagoon)

The Western province is made up of 11 main islands, including New Georgia, Vella Lavella, Kolombangara, Rendova, Ranongga, Vangunu and the Shortlands. The province has stunning aerial views of islands and lagoons, and the fabulous underwater world where the visibility for both the diver and snorkeller is so good. The area was once home to the head hunters and skull shrines can still be found.



Choiseul

Choiseul is for the adventurer. The main attractions are its untouched natural wonders, including the nesting sands for the endangered Hawksbill Turtles and Whales in the surrounding waters. The biggest mammal is the endangered Dugong, a sea cow which lives in the waters near Rob Roy and Taro Island. Choiseul is home to rare pottery and weaving craftspeople.



Isabel

Isabel is located to the northwest of Guadalcanal and is surrounded by forests, coconut plantations and mountain villages. Also known as Santa Isabel, the island is the longest land mass in the Solomons. Features are traditional dancers and villages, bush walks and a breeding site for the endangered Hawksbill turtles. The province is also famous for its unique women's dance, the vanishing lake, numerous skull shines, bird and crocodile watching, kayaking, and panpipe concerts.



Makira

The Makira province is one of the more isolated islands in the Solomons, and is situated to the east of Guadalcanal. There are remote caves in its inaccessible inland that are said to be inhabited by Kakamora, a race of people who stand less than a metre tall. A highlight of this area is the island's annual land crab harvest.

Malaita

Malaita includes one main island and small atolls, including Ontong, Java and Sikiana, who's main inhabitants are Polynesian. Take a trip back in time to see and experience century-old cultures of the people of the Langalanga Lagoon. Malaita is also the home of the traditional shell money, which is still in circulation, and for the haunting sound of its unique panpipe bands.





Accommodation in the Solomon Islands

Accommodation in the Solomon Islands is very varied. From the busy little town of Honiara with its many resorts and hotels to the isolated and untouched islands where you can stay in a traditional village, guest house or one of the many eco lodges throughout the islands. Some of the accommodation can be basic with basic facilities so make sure you ask before venturing out to one of the lesser known islands. Most villages are welcoming, but again check first with Pack Ya Bags or the Solomon Islands Visitor Bureau.

Honiara

Lots to do in Honiara and many choices for places to stay whether in the Solomon Islands for pleasure or on a business trip. From excellent hotels to basic accommodation, Pack Ya Bags can organise whatever you want in Honiara.

Below are just a few suggestions, however we do have a full complement of accommodation to suit all budgets, not only in Honiara but throughout the Islands. Please contact us on info@packyabags.com.



Heritage Park Hotel has blended luxury with its cultural heritage. It has 48 luxury rooms and 27 apartments set amongst landscaped grounds. All accommodation units have water views. The Hotel is located adjacent to the main shopping area and corporate offices and is within 250 meters of the British, Australian, New Zealand, US, Japanese, and other embassies and consulates. This is an excellent option for business or leisure visitors.



The King Solomon Hotel is built around a beautiful, deep, infinity waterfall pool. There are 73 spacious rooms with many being self catering. The hotel overlooks the scenic Iron Bottom Sound. All rooms feature air-conditioning, satellite TV, IDD telephones, private bathroom, fridge and tea and coffee facilities. The hotel has 3 Restaurants.



At the **Honiara Hotel** a warm island welcome is a distinctive trait. The hotel is located in tropical surroundings only a few minutes from the city centre. A new hill top wing adds large balconies overlooking Honiara and the historic Iron Bottom Sound. All rooms feature air-conditioning, satellite TV, IDD telephones, private bathroom, fridge and tea and coffee facilities. The hotel has 3 Restaurants.



Aotaha Cave Lodge features 10 beds, and is situated in the rural village of Pangangiu, located on the eastern coast of the Bellona Islands. Aotaha Cave Lodge is inspired by the natural sculptured caves, beauty and peaceful atmosphere of the atoll. Aotaha Cave Lodge is an art work of nature, and confidently states that it has been the only one of its kind in the Solomon Islands and the South Pacific offering total uniqueness. Aotaha Cave Lodge is focused around sharing this treasure with their guests. A comfortable stay surrounded by graceful, natural décor from the wonders of nature. Truly unique!



Zipolo Habu Resort is located on Lola Island in the beautiful Vona Vona Lagoon, 20 minutes by scenic boat ride from Munda Airport in the Western Province. Excellent bungalow accommodation, plus in-house restaurant and bar facilities. Specialises in fishing with a tackle shop, but also offers diving and surfing.

Tavanipupu Private Island Resort is located in Marau Sound. Only 25 minutes east by plane from Honiara. This privately owned 5 star island is one of the South Pacific's best kept secrets. If you want something exclusive, then try this place out. It is extremely private and secluded.



Papatura Island Retreat, is Santa Isabel's first world standard, tourism project with excellent fishing, great surfing, and world class snorkelling. The resort has 4 beach bungalows, all located on the beach front and with views of the Isabel mountain range.



Accommodation in the Solomon Islands

Gizo and Surrounding Area

A number of accommodation options are available throughout this area including hotels in Gizo and a number of excellent resorts close by. A village stay is an option as you will learn from the villagers such things as cooking, traditional fishing and the customs of how the locals live. There are a number of guest houses and eco lodges of all types and budgets scattered throughout the region. This area is an excellent base for your adventure in the Western District of the Solomon Islands.

Munda and Marovo Lagoon

Munda

While Munda has a good lodges, an Inn and resorts, there are also a number of guest houses and home stays to choose from.

Morovo Lagoon

One of the most famous lagoons in the world being the longest saltwater lagoon in the world. The inner lagoon has many islands and accommodation is scattered around. Uepi Resort is one of the really well known resorts visited by people from all over the world. Throughout the Lagoon, guest houses and village life can be experienced. This truly is an adventurer's paradise.



The name **Fatboys** is derived from the Charles Dickens book "The Pickwick Papers". **Fatboys Resort**, bar & restaurant is situated on the jetty overlooking the crystal clear waters of Mbabanga Island, an 8 minute boat ride from Gizo. The resort offers a completely unique hideaway and is a fantastic, tropical beachside, reef experience. All accommodation is situated on the water's edge with a short walk to the restaurant.



Sanbis Resort is around 7 minutes from the Gizo airstrip by boat. It offers excellent accommodation with each bungalow having its own private beach, luxury ensuite bathroom with hot water and a terrace with a stunning view across the lagoon. The resort boasts the best stocked bar in the West. Fantastic meals are prepared by the international chef and served by the very friendly staff. An adults only resort with no children under 12 years.



Gizo Explorer Hotel is located on Gizo's waterfront next to the local markets, and has 51 rooms and offers good accommodation. The 'Leaf Haus' restaurant and bar offers a wide variety of fresh, local cuisine. Local entertainment is a regular feature. The Hotel offers the "Best in the West" for those seeking all the adventure and excitement the Western Province has to offer. This is a good base from which to explore the region.



Uepi Island Resort is situated on a small tropical island perched on the edge of the longest lagoon in the world. Accommodation comprises six bungalows, two units and two guest rooms. They are spaced among tropical gardens ensuring that all guests can enjoy privacy and intimacy, complemented by easy social interaction between small groups of people. The healthy resort meals are based around fresh local seafood and organically grown fruits and vegetables.

Uepi enjoys an international reputation for world class scuba diving & snorkelling, romantic honeymoons, exciting cultural and nature tours, and a genuine South Pacific Island hospitality.



Munda

Agnes Lodge is in the heart of Munda on the shores of the Roviana Lagoon, and offers accommodation, meals and refreshments to all who travel through the Western Province. It is a family-owned company has continued its hospitality role for half a century without losing its unique character. The lodge was started by Agnes Kera who, for nearly 30 years, had been the cook and custodian of the original British Solomons Government Resthouse.



Munda

The Kesoko Inn is a relaxing hotel in the Solomon Islands, yet is still close to the action and Munda. It is located high on a ridge with beautiful views of the Diamond Narrows, looking over the waterfront landscape. The Inn has comfortable and clean rooms with the staff being very friendly. Kesoko Inn's rooms are set out in 3 wings and open onto 2 lounge areas. All of the rooms have two beds (twin rooms), are well ventilated, have ceiling fans and are screened from insects. Facilities are shared.

Oravae Cottage near Gizo on a Private Island Very basic but if you want to be private this is one such place. Family owned. This could be a really good place to team build or for an educational visit to learn about the sea and the flora and fauna. There are many such places as this throughout the Solomon Islands. They are basic with few facilities but in fabulous locations..





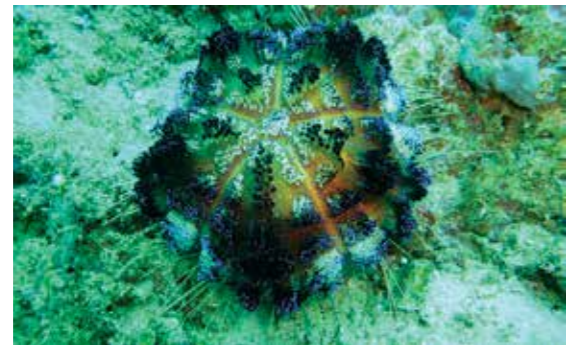
Diving in the Solomon Islands

The WWII history and wrecks together with many caverns and ledges, hard and soft corals and gigantic sea fans, make diving the Solomon Islands a must do destination. In the Iron Bottom Sound, accessed from Honiara, there are around 200 ships, almost 700 air planes and landing barges that were sunk during the war. If you enjoy wreck diving, the Solomon Islands is the country to go to. Wrecks are scattered throughout a number of areas in the Solomons, so wherever you go you will find a wreck to dive on. Outside of Honiara, moving up to the Western Provinces which include Gizo, Munda and the Morova Lagoon, you will be spoiled for choice at the varied diving in these destinations. There are many places in the Solomon Islands that have yet to be explored by anyone! Gizo has a huge fish count and many WWII wrecks. Just 20 minutes ride away is the Japanese transport ship, the Toa Maru, some 140 metres in length. Gizo also offers great wall diving to depths of 60 metres. Drift along this and take great macro photographs. Many of the resorts throughout the Solomon Islands offer diving or they operate in conjunction with one of the local diving companies. Because of the remote location it is a must that you take out insurance and some resorts insist on it, so worth organising. Pack Ya Bags can organise it for you. Enjoy the Solomons, observe the rules, enjoy the flora, fauna and history, and you will have a fantastic time.

Dive Gizo

Gizo has some of the best and most exciting diving in the world. From WWII wrecks to reefs that have some of the highest fish counts in the world, you will surely find something new and exciting under the surface. Each dive is led by a local trained and experienced guide, and in small groups of 4-6 people. No crowded boats, no tight time schedules! A typical day of diving starts at 9 am at the dive shop where the staff will set up your gear and load it on the boat. Set off on a short trip to your morning dive then a lunch break on one of the gorgeous islands, where the staff make a picnic lunch of fish, fresh fruits, and basic salads (Will cater for other dietary needs). After an hour or two of snorkelling, relaxing or exploring the islands, divers set off on their second dive, and return to town around 3 pm.

For the non-diver, Dive Gizo also conducts many WWII tours, bird tours, snorkelling, surf drops, and village tours. Dive Gizo welcomes families and can offer child care options so that everyone enjoys their trip.



Diving at Uepi

Uepi has dive first-class sites that are only minutes away from the wharf or just a short boat ride away. Diving and snorkelling in the Morova Lagoon is unique with the marine-life ranging from lagoon coral gardens to vertical drop-offs into 2000 metres of ocean (The Slot), and mostly within the confines of a three kilometre stretch of reef.

Because of the location of Uepi Island, waters may be very clear with visibility in excess of 30m. Tidal current interchanging to & from the Morova Lagoon and The Slot makes the deep water passage immediately adjacent to the resort a prime habitat for a colourful population of filter feeders such as corals & sponges as well as for reef-fish, sedentary animals and pelagics. Photography is fantastic either snorkelling or diving.

Uepi is remote so Insurance is expected and insisted upon. The stay on Uepi is one that will stay with you for a long time.



Dive Munda

Dive Munda is based in the village of Munda, on the Southern Coast of New Georgia Island in the Western Province of the Solomon Islands. It is an area renowned for its peaceful beauty and friendly people as well as it's amazing reefs and incredible biodiversity.

Dive Munda is a small operation owned and operated by two experienced British instructors with great local staff. They offer incredible diving paired with personalised service. Whether you have never dived before or you have already logged thousands of hours underwater, they plan the diving around you. Nitrox and extended-range diving are available for appropriately certified divers. As a Scuba Diving International/Technical Diving International Facility, they offer courses at all levels from entry-level to technical diving. The shop stocks a full range of well-maintained rental sport-diving equipment and their boats are equipped with oxygen and other first aid. Their 7m fibreglass boats are fitted for diving and powered by Yamaha F100 four-stroke outboards.



Diving in the Solomon Islands

The diving in Munda is superb and some of the best in the world, with spectacular walls drop offs and reef sharks routinely patrolling with eagle rays, barracuda and other pelagics. For the macro photographers there are creatures such as pygmy seahorses, squat lobsters and fiery dartfish. Munda's reefs are in excellent condition with hard and soft corals and gigantic sea fans, and great snorkelling on the hard coral gardens in the shallows. Again, many wrecks from WWII with fighter planes, bombers, a Japanese freighter and a US dump site.

Tulagi Dive is located at the Point Cruz Yacht Club in Honiara so very accessible to the huge amount of wreck diving in the area. The Florida Islands, now known by its local name of the Ngella, is surrounded by many reefs and drop offs. Being largely remote from the larger river systems on Guadalcanal, the visibility is generally spectacular and 25-30 meters of visibility is the norm.

Iron Bottom Sound derived its name from the 200 or so ships and 690 aircraft that lie within it. Ships and aircraft from both the Imperial Japanese forces and the American Allied Forces are represented. Unfortunately most are too deep for sports diving. The sound is on average 600 or so metres deep but closer to both the shores of the Ngella Islands and to Guadalcanal there are some of the world's most spectacular wreck sites. A must for wreck divers.



Solomon Star Liveaboard

Solomon Star is a 22 meter Catamaran dive vessel with accommodation for 18 passengers in 6 cabins. Each cabin has en-suite toilets and showers and air conditioned. The vessel is very spacious and stable in all weather. She has a dedicated crew of 7 people including the dive team, skipper, boat crew and chef.

Departures throughout the year from 2 days to 10 days and include such trips as:

3 Nights: Russell Islands

With spectacular steep, coral-covered walls and exceptional visibility. Many Nudibranchs, pipe-fish, sharks, manta rays and even the occasional saltwater crocodile may be encountered.

7 Nights - Central Province

Combine two itineraries such as the Florida Islands and Russell Islands, with an outstanding extension to Mary Island for an adventure of a lifetime.



Bilikiki Liveaboard Cruises

Both MV Bilikiki and MV Spirit of Solomons operate from Honiara, on Guadalcanal Island, to dive sites in the Florida Islands, the Russell Islands, Mborokua (Mary) Island and Marovo Lagoon in the New Georgia Islands. Lots of departure options throughout the year.

Both ships are large and stable and offer huge sundecks, plenty of covered areas and airconditioned accommodations.

Bilikiki has 10 deluxe cabins with a full double bed and a single above, and all cabins have private showers and toilets. Her large size and a hull that was built for South Pacific seas are two main reasons why guests from around the world still say that "the Bilikiki" is one of the most spacious and comfortable vessels that they have travelled on.

Spirit of Solomons has 7 private facility cabins with full double bed and single above, and 6 additional cabins which have 2 single bunks sharing 3 showers and 2 toilets. These smaller cabins are often booked on a single occupancy basis. Plenty of covered deck space.



Solomon Dive Adventures Marova has moved its operation to Chea and has created many advantages with this move. Great diving and easier to get to with just a 30 minutes boat ride from Seghe airstrip.

The diving here is pretty much virgin diving, with magnificent plunging walls, endless hard coral reefs, underwater valleys and ridges teeming with sharks and big fish, massive fans and sponges.

A short paddle brings you to Kahaini Island, rich in life both above the water and below. It offers spectacular snorkelling. Many birds live on the island including Parrots and Kuru Kuru and of course the Willy Wagtail.

The accommodation is very much village life and offers an insight and experience with local people.





WWII History in the Solomon Islands

1942 saw the world descend on the Solomon Islands. Japanese and American led Allied Forces turned the islands into a theatre of war.

From May 1942 when the Battle of the Coral Sea was fought, until December 1943, the Solomons were almost constantly a scene of combat. Although U.S. forces landed on Guadalcanal virtually unopposed in August 1942, they were soon engaged in a bloody fight for control of the islands' airstrip, which the U.S. forces named Henderson Field. One of the most furious sea battles ever fought took place off Savo Island, near Guadalcanal, also in August 1942. Before the Japanese completely withdrew from Guadalcanal in February 1943, over 7,000 Americans and 21,000 Japanese died. By December 1943, the Allies were in command of the entire Solomon chain.

WWII Tours: For those interested in war history, you can visit an American Tank, Japanese Gun Fort and partially submerged wrecks, or just browse through the books and information folders accumulated from personal research in the US Naval Archives. There are many private war museums in the Solomon Islands to visit and the local people collect as much as possible to ensure that this piece of history is not forgotten.



Above the water there is much evidence of the WWII history from remembrance sites to wrecks littered around the islands. Both sides in the war left all equipment, including tanks, planes, guns and landing craft, in the Solomon Islands. Many are still where they were left. If the war era interests you, this is a treasure trove of war history.



The photo on the right is a diver entering the water for a wreck dive directly off the beach. Many wrecks are assessable from the beach but some of the wrecks under the water are beyond divers reach due to the depth. There are still many wrecks in the Solomon Islands that have not yet been dived on.

Pack Ya Bags can organise any tours featuring WWII interests, either on land or under the water. From just short visits from Honiara or Gizo to an extended number of days visiting many of the sights throughout the islands. The tours can be organised with a guide or just by yourselves. Accommodation, meals and transfers can be organised to suit you as an individual or your group.



The main areas:

Honiara & Guadalcanal: Many places of interest only short drives.

Bonegi River: Along the coast west of Kokumbona.

Henderson Airfield: Many battles around the airport.

Thin Red Line: Cross the Matanikau Bridge and drive two miles south down the east bank to Tuvuru.

American War Memorial: On Skyline Ridge just behind Honiara.

Vilu War Museum: Open air display of relics. Wildcat, P400 remains, Corsair, P38, assorted wings, Japanese artillery.

Bloody Ridge: Close to Henderson Field is Bloody Ridge the scene of probably the most famous battle in the Guadalcanal Campaign.

Alligator Creek: Depicted in 'The Pacific' mini series. Eastern end of runway.

The Matanikau River: Both sides of the river area saw heavy fighting for several months. Cross the Matanikau Bridge and turn right.

Iron Bottom Sound And Tulagi: The water between The Florida Islands and Guadalcanal.

Western Province: The Western Province features many World War II battlefield sites and wrecks that can be explored. The main sites are around Gizo and Munda.

Other Areas: The far-Western Shortland Islands were scenes of some activity. Battles around Santa Cruz in Temotu Province. The island of Vanikoro in Temotu was home to the only female coastwatcher of the Pacific War, Ruby Boye.



Activities in the Solomon Islands

Many people are aware of the diving and the WWII drawcards that the Solomon Islands has to offer but there are a number of other activities and things to experience in this unique and little visited region.

Not only other activities such as **Surfing, Snorkelling, Walking, Bird Watching, or experiencing the culture**, but the Solomon Islands is a good place to relax and unwind in an unhurried atmosphere. For those that just want to escape a busy lifestyle, there are many places that offer that escape. The Islands are also great places for families who want to enjoy being together as unit, **Team Building and Educational Groups** and even **Honeymooners** where they can have that truly private time to themselves.



Bird Watching Tours. There are around 50 species of birds scattered throughout the islands. Local guides can be organised, and in a number of areas you need to be a little on the fit side, as many birds are in the highlands and you will need to venture off the normal pathways.

These areas include the mountains of Guadalcanal, the higher altitudes on Kolombangara and parts of Makira, Malaita and Isabel.

Just getting out to these remote locations is a fantastic adventure but when you arrive the adventure really begins.



Relaxing. There are many ways to relax and explore the Solomon Islands. Here are just a few ideas, but there are many more.

Honeymooners. Perfect to get away from everyone and enjoy your solitude.

Team Building. Offers such great opportunities to bond together.

Families. Enjoy the hospitality of the Solomon Island people... and food!

Educational Groups. Many different options available to learn many things in these unique Islands. Geography, biology, cultural, history and so much more.

Photography. The Solomon Islands are a unique set of islands perfect for the photographer, whether into wildlife, plants, scenery, people or macro. The light and colours are excellent for that perfect shot. Even today with the small digital cameras, the interesting and sometimes remote locations are ideally suited for this great interest.

Ask us to help you organise your stay in the Solomon Islands.

Surfing in the Solomon Islands is uncrowded and many in remote locations. Packages for individuals and some special locations available to groups. **Santa Isabel Province** is an area for both beginners and advanced surfers with places to stay including the Kagata Village who offer surfing holidays and the Papatara Retreat. Surfing is excellent with good breaks. There are a number of spots around Gizo with plenty of accommodation. Surfing can be had 20 minutes by road from Gizo and locations can be found around **Skull Island, near Zipolo, Vona Vona Lagoon, and Munda**. Surfing in **Malaita** is best around the Lau Lagoon area of Northern Malaita, where the Solwata Surf Camp is situated amidst unique and ancient man made islands and stilted villages, fringed by a massive reef system on one side and spectacular mountains on the other. 11 day surf packages for a maximum of 6 people from October to April so early bookings are essential. Remote **Star Harbour** is situated on the eastern tip of **San Cristobel Island, Makira Province** and served by swells coming from the south.



Kayaking tours from Uepi Island Resort situated on the magnificent Marovo Lagoon and where Kayak Solomons Sea Kayak Expeditions is based. The kayak expeditions commence in the outstanding environment of the Marovo Lagoon, about 90 kms long & 6 kms wide, bound on one side by a tropical barrier reef & on the other by two mountainous islands. The tours may extend to Nono Lagoon or the outer ocean areas and can be from 2 to 10 days in duration. Single kayaks and now one double kayak are used for your adventure which will be tailored to your experience and the conditions. The expeditions are in remote locations and accommodation is in Eco-Lodges which are in some of the most beautiful parts of the Marovo Lagoon.





The People and things to do in the Solomon Islands

The people of the Solomon Islands are made up of Oceania's three main cultural groups, Melanesia, Polynesia, and Micronesia. It is here that these three cultures merge. Solomon Islanders are proud, and have a rich cultural heritage commonly called kastoms, which vary from one province to another. Communal, clan and family ties remain very strong. The most memorable features are the friendly people, the unspoiled natural beauty and their relaxed, unhurried way of life. You can involve yourself in the rich culture in many ways, including through their homestays, guesthouses, cooking, art, nature and customs. Pack Ya Bags have many tours throughout the islands. WWII tours, diving, fishing, surfing, bird watching, homestays and village stay. There is something for everyone's taste.

Here are a few examples:



Honiara

The Capital City of **Honiara** offers many things to do. Here are a few things to experience while in Honiara.

The National Museum is opposite the Mendana Hotel, and houses an impressive collection of custom and traditional artefacts, photographs and historical materials.

The Botanical Gardens are only a short walking distance from the King Solomon Hotel and contain many interesting and exotic tropical specimens.

The Cultural Centre has traditional architectural styles of the eight Solomon Islands Provinces and are represented by the designs of the leaf houses built behind the museum.

The Honiara markets are down the road from the King Solomon and are well worth a visit for visitors to the capital.

Chinatown's main street is lined with stores built in the traditional 'colonial' style with verandas and iron roofs. It is also home to some of Honiara's most interesting shopping.

Historic War Memorial is just behind Honiara. Japanese and American war memorials and relics can be found overlooking Iron Bottom Sound.

Honiara is a great spot to explore many WW11 wrecks and reef dives, and is a convenient jumping off point for many more outer island diving, kayaking, surfing and adventure locations.



Pack Ya Bags Tours

We can organise many interesting tours for you for any interests. To experience the people and the culture of the islands, it is essential to get out into the everyday life that the Solomon Islands people have to offer.

From just a few hours to many days, we will work with you and/or your group to arrange that something special. Although we have many existing tours ready to go, we also will create any tour for any reason and for any budget. Drop us an email or see your agent



Markets are a great way to meet with local people so you will find almost all the islands have markets with goods and food bought in from the local villagers. In the main centres a number of crafts are also available.

Western Province

Gizo Island: Try a walk to Saeraghi village along the scenic coast to Gizo's most famous beach. Stop at the traditional villages of Gilbertese and Melanesian.

Kennedy Island: A beautiful small island where US President JF Kennedy and crew of the PT109 were shipwrecked during WWII. Great for snorkelling and beachcombing.

Skull Island: Step back in time to the days of head hunting, where you can visit a shrine composed of the skulls of chiefs and warriors from times gone by.

Simbo Island: Bush walk, or climb the volcanic crater. Take a breathtaking boat trip to Nusa Simbo viewing cascading vines and ferns down dramatic volcanic cliffs.

Responsibilities and Conditions:

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Pack Ya Bags acts only as agents for accommodation, airlines, coach or car companies, owners or contractor providing accommodation, transportation, or other services and all tickets, vouchers, coupons, travel orders and receipts are issued subject to any and all tariffs, terms and conditions under which any accommodation, transportation or any other services whatsoever are provided by such accommodation, airlines, coach and car companies or owners or contractors.

Pack Ya Bags shall not be liable or responsible for death or injury to any person or loss or damage to any property (including baggage) whether due to its servants, agents or employees negligence or otherwise arising out of or in conjunction with any accommodation, transportation, or any other service such as dangers incident to the sea, fire, breakdown in machinery or equipment, acts of government or other authorities, strikes, thefts, pilferage, epidemics, quarantines, medical or customs regulations, delays or cancellations of or changes in itinerary or schedules or from any causes beyond its control, or for any loss or damage resulting in from improper or insufficient passports, visas or other documents, and nor shall Pack Ya Bags nor its servants, agents or employees be or become liable or responsible for any additional expense or liability sustained or incurred by the tour members as a result of any of the foregoing causes.

All prices quoted are subject to change without notice having regard to unforeseen circumstances, foreign exchange fluctuations and variations in airline operating costs. No refund or exchange can be made for unused services. Pack Ya Bags reserves the right to cancel the tour and/or modify the itineraries in any way it thinks desirable and further reserves the right to decline to accept any person on any tour and may substitute accommodation where necessary. The issue and acceptance of receipts, tickets, vouchers, coupons or travel orders shall be deemed consent to the above conditions.

This tour brochure is issued on the sole responsibility of Pack Ya Bags and is not issued on behalf of, nor does it commit any airline or organisation whose services are used during the tour. Every effort has been made to see that content of the brochure is accurate at the time of printing and as far as is known, no false or misleading statement is included. Pack Ya Bags has the right to change or substitute tour itineraries and or accommodations due to any fluctuations in local conditions or providers of services.

Photographs in the brochure show places in the geographic areas, but are not necessarily related to the tour described.

Our thanks and acknowledgment for use of photos to: Solomons Vistor Bureau, the many resorts, dive and tours companies and the Pack Ya Bags Photo Library.

Travel insurance:

We strongly recommend that, at the time of your reservation, you purchase a comprehensive travel insurance policy of your choice.

We suggest that the policy should include, but not be limited to the following features:

Loss of deposit through cancellation. Personal baggage and loss of money. Medical expenses in case of illness or accident.

Additional expenses to cover hotel accommodation and repatriation costs should the tour need to be extended or curtailed due to illness while overseas, or due to the needs to return to your country because of unexpected death or illness. This feature should also cover cancellation of transport services due to industrial action.

How to book:

Please ask for a current price list. Prices are not included in the brochure so as to extend the practical useage of this information.

Deposits and final payments:

A deposit of 20% per person is payable on confirmation. Final payments are to reach Pack Ya Bags no later than 45 days prior to departure, unless agreed. If for any reason your balance payment is not received by us by the due date, we reserve the right to treat your booking as cancelled and to apply the appropriate cancellation charges.

Cancellations:

Are subject to a charge to cover the estimated costs and the scale of charges, per person, in the event of cancellation or failure to travel without formal cancellation, is as follows:

Land arrangements:

Cancellations prior to 14 days before departure. 20%
Cancellations within 14 days of departure. 20% plus any charges levied by hotels and ground operators up to 100% of the cost of land arrangements.

Air arrangements: (guide only)

Cancellations within 14 days of departure. 25% of the airfare or any other amount as required by Airline Tariff.
Cancellations after ticketing as required by the Airline

Refunds:

No refund is available for cancellations after the tour has commenced or in respect of any tours, accommodation, meals or any other services not utilised.

Prices:

Prices are detailed on the attached price insert. Please check that the price list is the current issue. Prices are subject to change. Please check with your Travel Agent or Pack Ya Bags.

Booking arrangements:

Pack Ya Bags communications will be sent to your Travel Agent for all booking arrangements made through your Travel Agent.

Your Travel Agent shall, on the receipt of any tour monies, hold such monies for each and every person named in the booking until that booking is confirmed, at which time those monies shall be promptly remitted by your Agent to Pack Ya Bags.

Tickets and/or vouchers shall be forwarded on receipt of full payment to Pack Ya Bags. Tickets and/or vouchers may be provided as e-tickets or hard-copy.



email: info@packyabags.com
website: www.packyabags.com

Your Travel Agent's Contact