



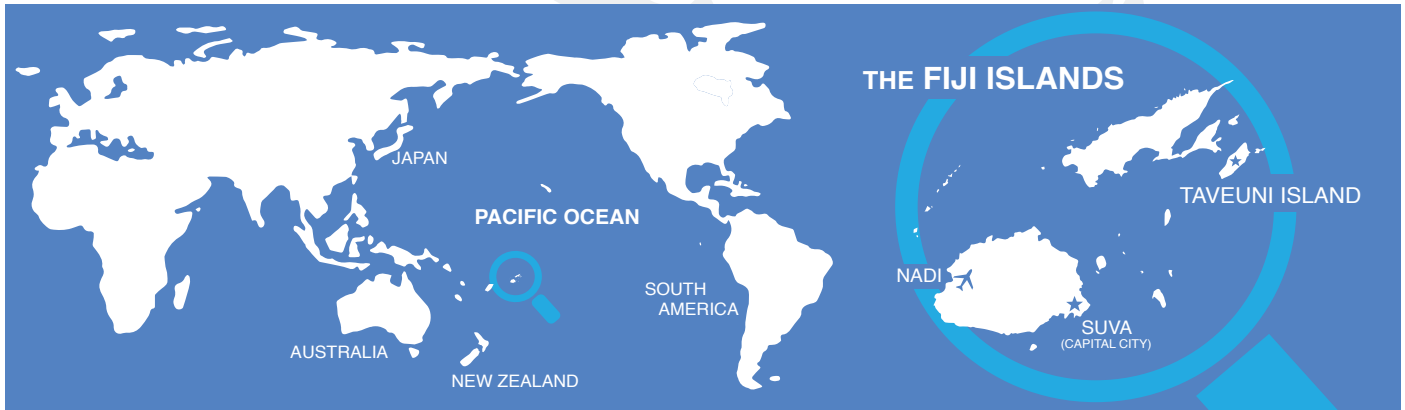
PARADISE TAVEUNI - FIJI

Taveuni – The Garden Island of Fiji (last updated Sept 2014)

Geography & Geology

Much of Taveuni's coastline is rugged and set against some of Fiji's highest peaks. Des Voeux Peak reaches up 1195m and the cloud shrouded Mt Uluiqalau, at 1241m, is country's second highest summit. The volcanic soil and abundant rainfall make Taveuni one of Fiji's most fertile areas. While the northeast of Taveuni is fringed by reefs, the southwest has deep water close to shore.





Orientation

Matei airport is in the island's northernmost point, where most of the island's resorts, restaurants and dive shops are based. Head southeast from Matei (90 minute drive from Paradise Taveuni) and you'll reach Bouma National Heritage Park, where the roads stops at Lavena. Head southwest from Matei and you reach the town of Somosomo, Naqara and Waiyevo where there's some budget accommodation, shops and services. If you arrive by ferry, it will be at one of the two wharves in the Waiyevo area. Further south there is Paradise Taveuni and the village of Vuna. The road then goes only as far as the blowhole on the South Cape, making much of the southeast coast almost inaccessible.

Diving & Snorkeling

Taveuni has achieved mythical status among divers, who come to the Somosomo Strait to see incredible coral, a profusion of fish and the occasional shark, turtle or even pilot whales from September to November. The most famous of the vibrant soft-coral sites is Rainbow Reef, which fringes the southwest corner of Vanua Levu but is most easily accessed from Taveuni. Highlights include the luminescent Great White Wall.

There is plenty for snorkelers, too. Vuna Reef, just minutes from Paradise Taveuni, boasts dazzling coral and improbable creatures. The snorkeling directly off the private marina and the three small islands immediately offshore from Naselesele Point in Matei also have good snorkeling (the third is known as the local 'Honeymoon Island'). You can also snorkel at Prince Charles or Beverly Beaches. Pro Dive Taveuni is on site on the Paradise oceanfront.

Hiking

Taveuni's wild interior makes it perfect for exploring on foot. Bouma National Heritage Park offers hiking action. A 10 minute stroll gets you to the first and most famous fall, then hike for 2 hours return to the second and third falls. From here you can amble beachside on



the Lavena Coastal Walk. Our local guide will lead you on hikes from Paradise allowing you to discover rainforests, rare birds, local fruits and more about the culture of Taveuni and the Fijian people. Paradise Taveuni also offer guided mountain treks offering a 360 degrees view of the beautiful southern Taveuni reefs and virgin rainforest.

Eastern Taveuni

The local landowners of beautiful eastern Taveuni have rejected logging in favour of ecotourism, under the banner of the Bouma Environment Tourism Project. One show of The Bachelorette and scenes for the 1991 movie Return to the Blue Lagoon were filmed at Bouma National Heritage Parks, Tavoro Waterfalls and at Lavena Beach.

Bouma National Heritage Park

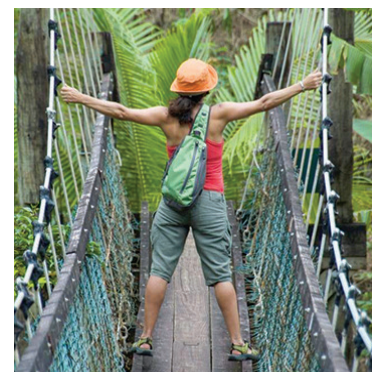
This national park (www.bnho.org) protects over 80% of Taveuni's rainforest and coastal forest.

Tavoro Waterfalls

There are three waterfalls here, each with natural swimming pools. The first waterfall is about 24m high and has a change area, picnic tables and barbecue plates and is only 10 minutes gentle stroll along a flat, cultivated path from the visitors center. Don't be fooled however, getting to the other falls isn't so easy. This hike is a good 40 minute, leg punishing climb up and down hills, to the second fall. Luckily there are a few lookout points where you can stop and rest along the way. What's more, as you approach the waterfall you'll have to make like a frog and jump from boulder to boulder to cross the river. There is a rope you can use to balance but be careful as the rocks are very slippery. It's not quite as big as the first but is more secluded and just as beautiful. Getting to the third fall involves a hike along a less-maintained, often muddy path through the forest for another 40 minutes and if it's been raining it can be difficult to access. Smaller than the other two (about 10m high) it has a great swimming pool and rocks for jumping off (check for obstruction first!). If you bring your snorkeling gear, you'll be able to see the hundreds of prawns in the water.

Lavena Coastal Walk

The 5km Lavena Coastal Walk follows the forest edge along stunning white-sand Lavena beach (known as Blue Lagoon Beach to the locals ever since the movie was filmed here, as our guide told us), landscape straight out of Jurassic Park to a gushing waterfall. There's some good snorkeling and kayaking here and Lavena Point is fine for swimming. The path is well maintained and clear.



About halfway along the trek, watch for the bizarre rock pedestals formed by the erosion of the coral base along the coast, which, according to our guide, the locals refer to as mushrooms because of their shape. Further ahead is a suspension bridge and eventually the trail takes you up the ancient valley of Wainibau Creek. To reach the falls at the end of the trail, you have to clamber over rocks and swim a short distance through two deep pools. Two cascades fall at different angles into a deep pool with sheer walls. The hardy can climb up the rocks to the left hand side and jump into the deep pool. If you're visiting in the rainy season, the rocks near the falls can be slippery, if not flooded. It can be difficult and dangerous to reach the falls at this time. Ask at Lavena Lodge for current conditions. At any time of year (even if it hasn't been raining), violent flash floods can occur and readers have advised staying to the left of the pool, where you can make an easier getaway. The walk is managed through Lavena Lodge.

Paradise Taveuni

Set on a former plantation on an elevated piece of land, this place has stunning sea and sunset views and plenty of strategically placed hammocks and sun lounges from which to enjoy them. The bures are luxury all the way with large decks, day beds, separate living and sleeping quarters and huge bathrooms, with the added bonus of outdoors Jacuzzis and rock showers. The place is run with military precision and any problems are fixed with startling efficiency. There's diving through Pro Dive and incredible snorkeling right off the shore on the reef. Activities include scuba diving, fishing, guided walks and wild boar hunting.

The above information is taken from the Fiji Lonely Planet Guide

Please visit [tripadvisor.com](https://www.tripadvisor.com) to read what Paradise Taveuni Guests say about their time in Paradise.

