

TRAVEL



10 Solomon Islands War Stories to Explore

The Solomon Islands was the setting for the most prolonged military campaign in the Pacific theatre of World War II. The campaign ran for over six months, with heavy casualties on both sides, the Allies suffering over 7,000 deaths, the Japanese over 20,000, along with over 60 ships and 1,200 aircraft.

In fact there are so many war ships at the bottom of the sea that separates the island of Guadalcanal from Savo and Florida Islands, its name was changed from Savo Sound to Iron Bottom Sound. And on land, the jungles are still littered with the wrecks of aircraft, artillery and vehicles.

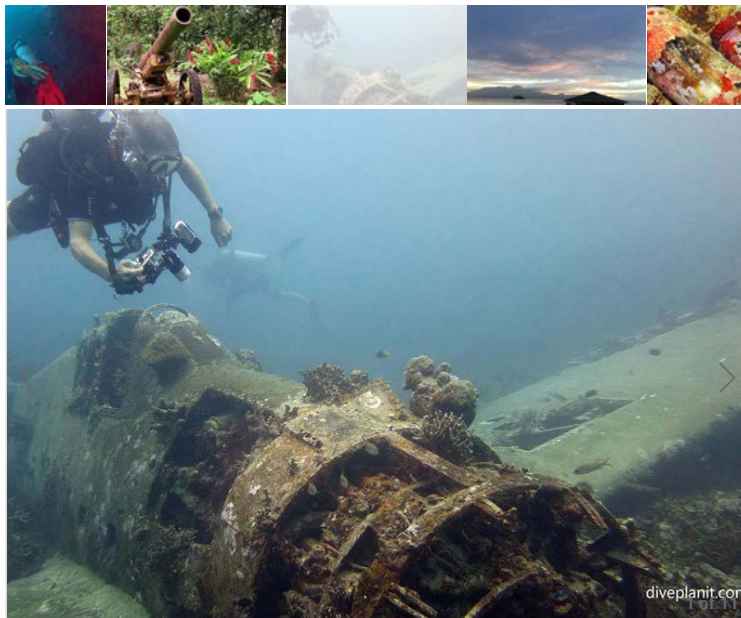
People now travel from all over the world to dive the wrecks, now providing shelter to colourful reef fish, and to explore the many collections of WWII memorabilia.

Deborah Dickson-Smith | 1:57pm 12th January 2016

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The Hellcat

This F6F Hellcat was named "Betsy" after the pilot's wife. It was ditched in January 1943, after being shot by a Japanese fighter pilot, in very shallow water off the coast of Kolombangara Island in Gizo. It now lies in less than 9m of water and is covered in soft and hard corals.

Photo: Deborah Dickson-Smith

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