



# ANOTHER DAY IN *paradise*

Six essential experiences for a Solomon Islands getaway

**D**reaming of a pristine tropical oasis? Enjoy the best that the Solomon Islands – or the ‘Solomons’, as the locals call it – has to offer with these unforgettable experiences.

## 1. Go island-hopping

With 900-odd specks of sand awaiting couples, the Solomons seem *made* for island-hopping.

After touching down in the capital of Honiara, catch a scenic small-plane flight out to the Western Province for clusters of jungle-topped isles surrounded by turquoise waters – a blissfully unspoiled region known for its heart-stopping adventures (diving and surfing are big here). Don't miss visiting Gizo for its enchanting villages, Olosana for its deserted beaches and fabled Kennedy Island where JFK found himself stranded on a WWII mission.

There's also plenty of postcard-perfect islands to be found just off the coast of the main island of Guadalcanal. Dotted the Marau Sound's pristine waters, the aptly named Sand Island (there's only one tree for shade here) is a must-visit for a beach picnic and Marapa Island is great for a taste of local culture.



## 2. Try the seafood

Unsurprisingly, the Solomons is where you'll come across super-fresh seafood. Here, local fishermen literally pull up to local restaurants and resorts with their catch of the day *every* morning. No specials board needed, just meet them at the jetty to find out what's good.

Gourmands, lobster and crayfish are regularly on offer, minus the usually eyebrow-raising price tag. Grilled in garlic, butter or lemon juice, or cooked on a pizza (however you like it), they're a hedonistic delight you'll want to indulge in over and over again. Heck, you can even get lobster omelettes in the Solomons on any given day – #BrunchLife.



## 3. Discover an incredible underwater wonderland

There's no denying that the Solomons' main attraction is its snorkelling and diving. And for good reason. With warm, crystalline waters and seemingly endless coral gardens on offer here, you'll have a hard time getting out of the water.

The Western Province is a go-to for water babies. Divers, delve into the deep to discover coral-carpeted fighter aircraft and sunken ships from WWII, plus eye-catching marine life. Prefer something a little more leisurely? Take your pick of gorgeous island-hugging reefs for a snorkel or simply step off the boardwalk of your above-water bungalow to see giant clams and gatherings of exotic technicolour fish.

## 4. Explore the stunning inland regions

Head to Guadalcanal to seek out time-forgotten waterfalls, sip freshly husked coconuts at the markets, wander through fascinating WWII battle fields or learn more about the Solomons'

very special culture and traditions with an insightful village visit.

Or, head to New Georgia in the Western Province and channel your inner Indiana Jones at sacred Skull Island. Here, a local head chief will lead you to shrines containing the skulls of prominent chiefs and vanquished enemies from generations before – adventure-seekers, this one's for you.

## 5. Make like Kate and Wills

If the Solomons sounds familiar, chances are you saw it all over the news when the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge honeymooned here in 2012. Take a leaf out of their books and live like royalty when you stay at one of the destination's ruggedly romantic island resorts.

For a Western Province escape, Fatboy's Resort and Sanbis Resort boast secluded beach and overwater thatched-roof bungalows – hello dream honeymoon. Or go all-out and retreat to the same place as Kate and Wills and claim one of Tavanipupu Private Island Resort's tropical-luxe hideaways for yourselves. Hammocks and swaying palms included.

## 6. Switch off

If you haven't yet made good on your New Year's resolution to put down the (damn) phone, the Solomons promises the perfect remedy. One of only a few destinations in the world where you can do a digital detox, this tranquil destination technically receives phone and internet connection but it's very patchy. And that's okay with us!

The beauty of a stay in the Solomons is experiencing its simple pleasures. Swap Netflix and Insta for enjoying a coconut oil foot massage, darting from island to island on a motorboat, living out your *Little Mermaid* fantasies under the water's surface or just relaxing lagoon-side in a deckchair. Siri? I don't know her. 📵

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