

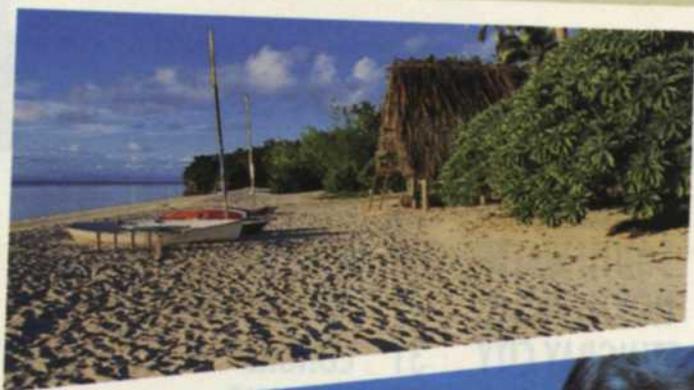
Vatulele Island Resort

A Picture Perfect Dive Vacation in Fiji

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY JACK AND SUE DRAFAHL



Top: Whitetip Reef Shark (*Triaenodon obesus*). Above and below: Romantic walks along Vatulele's white beaches begin a kiss, or two, from the resort's steps.



Fiji is one of the top dive destinations in the world and Vatulele abounds in unspoiled underwater scenery. Susan Savela (above) admires a flaming orange gorgonian.

Sit back and picture your perfect vacation. There would be warm, azure waters teeming with animal life and providing great diving; endless white beaches; romantic sunsets guaranteed to take your breath away; five star cuisine and drink; and friendly folks taking care of your every need.

Sound too good to be true? Well, maybe not. Welcome to Vatulele Island Resort, Fiji. Prepare to be pampered and spoiled at this breathtakingly beautiful property.

This retreat is just a half hour flight from the main island of Viti Levu. Vatulele Island Resort is only six years old, the creation of Emmy award winning Australian TV producer, Henry Crawford, and Martin Livingston. Martin, a fifth generation European Fijian who is part owner of the resort, is also the manager.

Vatulele has no western development apart from the resort. Nearly all the staff comes from one of the four local villages with a total population of less than 1,000. Staff members quickly learn your name and you'll feel at home here from the first sip of your welcome drink. Fiji truly has the friendliest people on earth!

Vatulele Resort's 16 villas, designed for couples, are nestled in the natural tropical

foliage offering total privacy. They feature high thatched roofs, thick, white washed walls, tables made of stone, a shaded terrace with hammocks for two, king sized beds and even a do not disturb sign made from a cowrie shell necklace. All villas were handmade from materials from the main island to preserve the natural state of Vatulele. Heavy cranes were not available, thus the high beamed ceilings were constructed with manpower alone. This incredible feat had stunning results.

Food is a special feature of the resort. The meals are five star delights with a variety of cuisine, including Californian, Thai, Italian, Japanese, Indian, etc. Weather permitting, meals are taken on a terrace overlooking the lagoon. By night, tables are set under the stars and lit by lanterns and candlelight.

You'll find that folks at Vatulele cater to romance. If you wish to dine in private, you can reserve time in the wine cellar or request a table for two at the water's edge. Just offshore is the secluded Nooki Nooki Island. Couples can be dropped off on the island for a champagne breakfast or lunch and have the unpopulated island all to themselves.

Vatulele is only seven miles long and three miles wide. The northern and eastern coasts are protected by a barrier reef that creates a lagoon in front of the resort. This makes a perfect spot for swimming, snorkeling or watersports. The endless stretches of white sand provide the perfect escape from the pressures of the daily grind—no phones, faxes or deadlines. If you get thirsty relaxing on the beach, just stand the beach flag in the sand and you will find the true meaning of service.

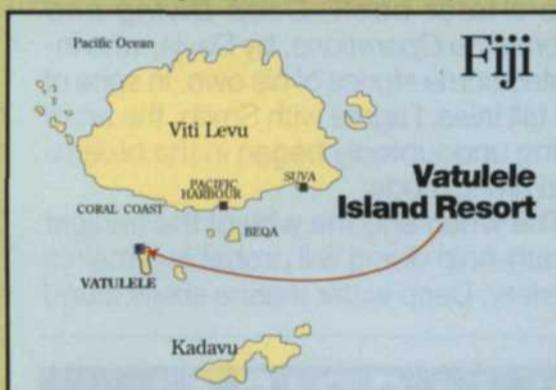
Fiji is one of the top dive destinations in the world and the clear, warm waters off Vatulele offer ideal diving. Although the diving operation has only been in business for three years, the staff members have worked hard to make it top-notch. Various dive sites surround the island, offering plenty of opportunities for all levels of diving experience. The shallows are densely populated with rich, healthy hard corals and home to fish of every color of the rainbow. You might encounter almost anything on the deep walls; schools of Barracuda, tur-

tles and the ever-present cruising reef sharks. Soft corals and seafans can be found in the areas with good currents. This underwater getaway is just waiting to be explored and captured on film.

Dive operations are managed by Malcolm Scott and his crew. The dive shop has tanks, a compressor and is fully equipped with the necessary dive gear for those who want to travel light. There are two boat dives a day and dive packages, resort courses and PADI certification classes are available.

We bet you thought we were kidding about the luxury this remote island can offer. Vatulele Island Resort is the first and only South Pacific resort to be accepted into the Relais & Chateaux hotel chain. This prestigious hotel group emphasizes the five "Cs": character, courtesy, calm, charm and cuisine.

Vatulele Island Resort is for the discerning diver who appreciates the finer things in life. To truly experience its uniqueness



the minimum stay is four nights, making it a perfect romantic interlude. Isn't it about time you took that perfect vacation—the one you've been dreaming of? Come experience Vatulele, your own piece of par-

GETTING THERE

Flights to Fiji are available through Air Pacific and Qantas. The nonstop Air



Pacific flight from Los Angeles to Fiji's International Airport in Nadi is approximately 10 hours. The outer islands can be reached via the local carriers, Air Fiji and Sunflower.

Air Pacific
(800) 227-4446

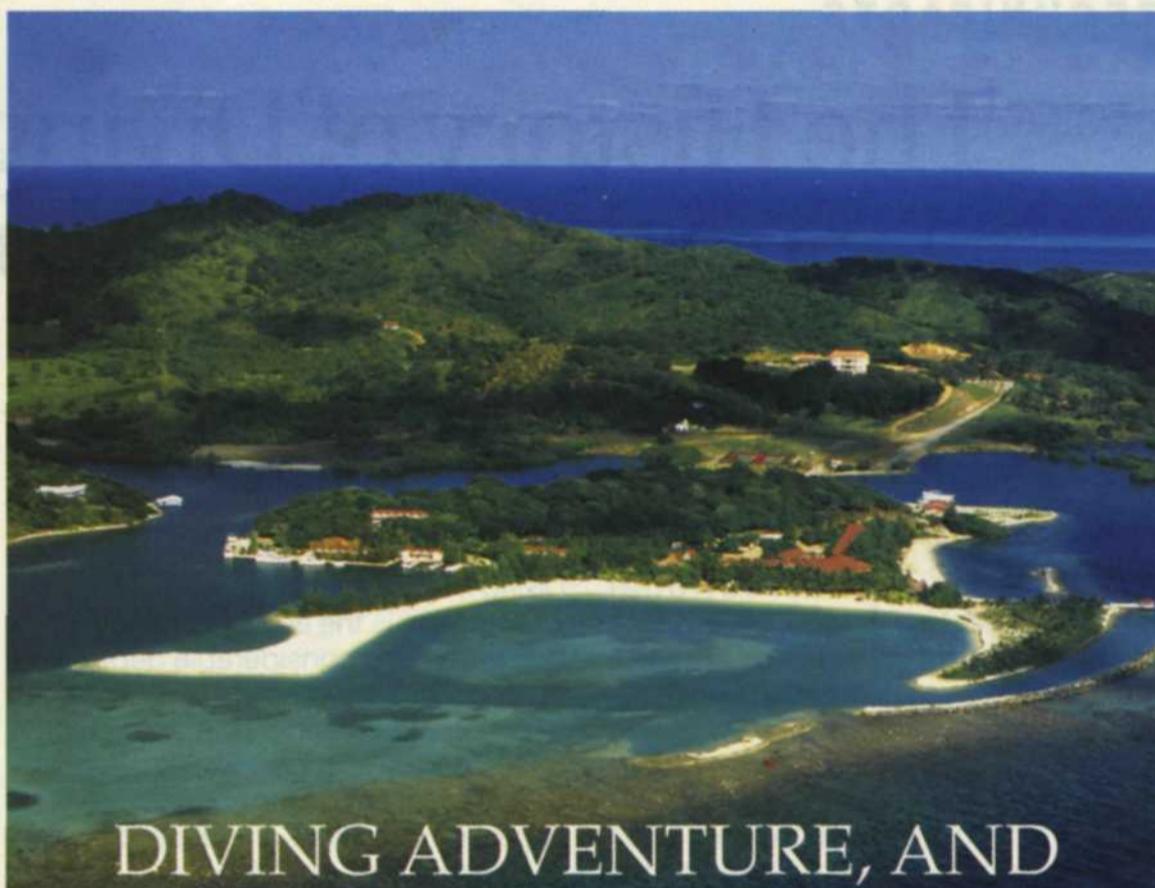
Qantas
(800) 227-4500

Air Fiji
(800) 677-4277
(310) 670-7302

Sunflower Airlines
(800) 224-0220

adise. Once you've been spoiled by the friendly Fijians of Vatulele, dive vacations will never be the same.

For more information or reservations, call (800) 828-9146, (310) 670-8430 or fax (310) 338-0708.



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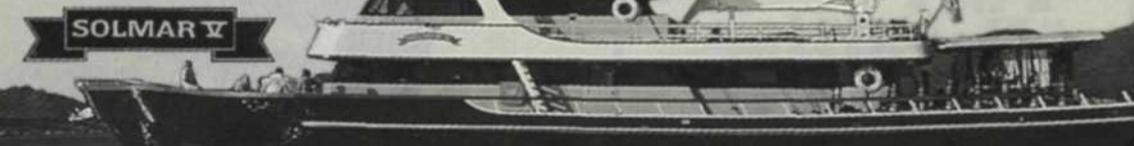
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Located on the tip of The Baja Peninsula, the Solmar is a secluded resort of intimate size that straddles the Sea of Cortez and the Pacific Ocean. Walking distance from town, all rooms are air-conditioned suites with private balconies. Shopping, nightlife, sight-seeing, two large pools/jacuzzi, golfing, fishing or Solmar's private white sand beach will be sure to make your vacation First Class. Land-based diving packages for groups and individuals... Call for more info!



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