



Fiji's Coral Coast TODAY

Travel Today Feature



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**Jay's
Top Five**

- Check out the Tavuni Hill Fort, a semi-restored ancient Fijian fort and archaeological site on a hill about 4km west of Sigatoka. A museum has displays including an underground oven which once contained human bones, and there are excellent views of Sigatoka and surrounding districts. Books or guides are available for a few FJD.
- Military buffs might like to visit the Momi Guns site, a now silent gun battery constructed by the New Zealand Expeditionary Forces during WWII to guard against any attack by the Japanese.
- The Biausevu Waterfall is a pretty two-tiered 20m waterfall, reached by a pleasant and mostly flat 30-minute jungle walk. Many resorts offer organised tours, or hire a car for the freedom of exploring further.
- Keen golfers shouldn't miss the chance to play a round at championship course Natadola Bay.
- The Coral Coast is synonymous with rugby so be sure clients plan to catch a game at Lawaqa Park stadium in Sigatoka.

Plenty To Do

Like the rest of Fiji, the Coral Coast is great for relaxation—but it is also packed full of activities, from cultural to soft adventure. Clients can jet-boat down the Sigatoka River to meet locals; try their hand at surfing, fishing, diving or snorkelling; go horse-back riding on the beach; hike out to waterfalls; walk through ancient sand dunes; or delve into the rich history and traditions of the region.

Fiji's Coral Coast

**Authentic Fiji On
The Coral Coast**

For an authentic Fijian experience, the Coral Coast has it all—stunning landscapes, a huge range of activities, friendly people and of course breathtaking beaches—and local operators are keen to see the return of Kiwis who once flocked to the area.

Since the Coral Coast Coalition was formed a few years ago, a lot of time and money has been spent on developing the coast and investing in its infrastructure to make a more enjoyable holiday for everyone, says coalition chairman Jay Whyte. Now they are keen to re-establish its place as a top destination for Kiwis—and with Air Pacific boosting its capacity to Fiji by 25% from Jan, there is plenty of opportunity to sell the area. “People should head to the Coral Coast if they truly want to experience all that Fiji has to offer. We believe the Coral Coast encapsulates all that people are looking for from their Fijian experience,” he says.

“Not only do you have arguably the best resorts available to individuals, families, conference groups and others but combined with the friendliest people in all of the Fiji Islands, you will truly feel like you have joined an extended family when you stay here on the Coral Coast. There is a reason

It's Not Too Wet!

One of the biggest myths operators try to combat from the New Zealand market is the perception of heavy rainfall in the area, says Whyte, who has only lost 20 days of business to rain in six years of trading. “We are actually considered here to be a part of the western side of Fiji which is often referred to as the dry side of Fiji. The eastern region of Fiji certainly has its fair share of rain, but we are nicely positioned on the southern coastline of the main island of Viti Levu which enjoys great sunshine and a cool breeze all year round,” says Whyte.



why tourism in Fiji began here!” With Rugby World Cup fever upon the country, now could be the time to suggest sports-mad clients time a trip to coincide with the Coral Coast Sevens in Nov, he adds.

Best Beach In Fiji?

The Coral Coast is home to Natadola Beach, widely considered to be one of the best in Fiji—and the world. The white sandy beach with crystal-clear water stretches for 1.6km, meaning visitors are unlikely to be fighting for space. Off-shore, the reef forms a lagoon providing a safe environment for swimming in all tides.

Closer Than You Think

The belief that the coast is too far away may be one of the reasons people stay away—but it is only 66km from Nadi, around half an hour further than Denarau and closer than the Mamanucas. “Most Kiwis know that the best things usually are found a bit further afield and that is what makes them so appealing,” says Whyte.



New Luxury Bures At Hideaway

New deluxe beachfront bures have just been unveiled at the Fiji Hideaway Resort and Spa, a boutique property set along one of the Coral Coast's beautiful white sandy beaches. The renovations and refurbishments on the bures allow the resort to cater for its ever increasing visitor numbers, says general manager John McFadden, who adds the resort and spa offers all the friendliness and fun of Fiji, with a few indulgences. “Whether you're after an exotic escape or an action-packed getaway, our resort is the perfect Fijian holiday destination,” says McFadden. Altogether the resort has 115 bures, from romantic and secluded deluxe beachfront bures to family

villas, all located on a coral lagoon. Guests can enjoy a huge array of activities such as snorkelling, surfing and scuba diving, volleyball, tennis, kayaking and a kids club, or relax in the spa with the unique Lava Rock Sauna. The resort also offers a fully stocked wine cellar, Fijian cooking classes, fire walking and traditional Kava ceremonies and full Polynesian dance shows. Meanwhile the true Fijian culture is just a stone's throw away. “Guests are welcome to visit local villages and experience breathtaking natural attractions such as hot springs, ancient caves and tropical rainforests,” says McFadden.

Click on the below links:

- ▶ Shangri-La's Fijian Resort & Spa
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- ▶ Mango Bay Resort
- ▶ Warwick Fiji Resort & Spa



Ancient History

Relics such as 2600 year old pieces of pottery continue to emerge from the famous Sigatoka Sand Dunes, a world heritage site with fantastic tramping. There are many tracks through the dunes to the beach and an informative visitor centre.

The sacred Naihehe Caves have an intriguing history, and remnants of its former use as one of the last fortresses of pagan tribes include a cannibal oven. See historycavetourfiji.com

Sugar Cane Train Ride

Clients can ride through forests and villages, passing sugar cane plantations and grizzled cane farmers while riding the Coral Coast Railway. Trains depart Queens Rd next to Shangri-La.

Take A Jetboat Ride To Authentic Fiji

Fiji's original jet-boat safari, the award-winning Sigatoka River Safari takes clients on a half-day eco/cultural adventure to visit traditional villages and experience a day in the life of a Fijian. Passengers are taught about the rich history, customs and legends of the area and treated to typical Fijian hospitality with lunch and dancing. For many of the villages the jet-boat safari is their first experience with tourism so clients should expect to see

The Coral Coast is packed with things for the active traveller to do, and one of its great advantages is that everything is so close—clients can be fishing, diving, surfing and snorkelling in the open water or visiting locals in a Fijian village without having to travel for miles.

Adventurous clients might like to have a go surfing at the mouth of the Sigatoka River, which is becoming increasingly popular with some great waves around the dunes (the best time is two hours either side of high tide). The mouth is also a great place to try your hand at fishing, says Coral Coast



truly authentic Fiji. They should also expect a bit of excitement with the jet boat driver demonstrating some gentle manoeuvres on the river. The river safari was started by Australian man Jay Whyte, whose love affair with the “real Fiji” began in 1991. He loves to share his passion with visitors, and it is not just limited to his safari business – Jay is the Coral Coast Coalition chairman and key in bringing the Coral Coast Sevens tournament to the region.

Action Packed Coral Coast

Boredom Is Simply Not An Option



Coalition chairman Jay Whyte. The coast is rich in history and culture and there are plenty of places for clients to discover more about its fascinating past.



Fantastic Diving

Coral Coast dive operators are blessed with only very short boat rides to fantastic dive sites where clients can experience a vast array of ocean life, including sea turtles, reef sharks and eagle rays, says Diveaway Fiji's Alice Hill. At certain times of the year, reef sharks will come to the area to birth their pups, and on occasion lucky divers can hear humpback whales as they pass. Most operators liaise direct with customers, says Hill, but she suggests agents contact dive operators if they have groups.



Active Guests Love Mango Bay Resort

Active clients can't go wrong staying at Mango Bay Resort, Fiji's first 'flash-packer' resort, which offers a huge range of action-packed activities including a new surf school which has already been a huge success with guests. It operates daily pick-ups from the resort and offers personalised surf lessons in a friendly, safe and fun environment at the Sigatoka Sand Dunes National Park. The resort, which has rooms ranging from a 16-bed dorm to beachfront bures, overlooks an enclosed bay and offers a huge range of activities including its very popular gamefishing, diving, shopping trips, white water rafting and horse riding, as well as some fantastic nightlife including sunset booze cruises, traditional Fijian dance shows or bonfires. Equally, clients can just relax by the oceanfront lagoon pool, the white-sand beach or in the spa. The resort has also started offering wedding packages.

Click on the below links:

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- [Hideaway Resort](#)
- [Mango Bay Resort](#)
- [Warwick Fiji Resort & Spa](#)



Don't Miss The Singing

No visit to Fiji is complete without listening to Fijians singing in church. In Sigatoka, tell clients to head to the Korotogo Methodist Church on Sun. There is also a huge new Hindu temple in town which is well worth a visit.

All Inclusive At The Naviti Resort



The Naviti Resort is famed for its all inclusive packages, with buffet or a la carte meals and a wide range of drinks to be enjoyed in any one of four restaurants and the Salusalu lounge bar, the perfect place for pre-dinner drinks while watching the sun set over the horizon.

Naviti's Rugg Rats Club for children aged five to 12 operates three daily sessions, and babysitters are available for under-fives, allowing time for mum and dad to enjoy a treatment at the Joy Spa or a round on the executive nine-hole golf course. Other activities include windsurfing, archery, a fully equipped gym and giant chess board, as well as a huge range of tours.

Naviti is also a hot-spot for weddings, with a dedicated wedding co-ordinator who will fine-tune all the arrangements for a memorable Fijian wedding.

Naviti is found on 38 acres of vibrant tropical gardens alongside golden beaches and just 90 minutes from Nadi International Airport.

Sociable Sigatoka

Mingle With The Friendly Locals

Getting out and meeting the friendly Fijian people is a must on any visit to the islands, and on the Coral Coast the best place to do this is Sigatoka.

Home to around 10,000 people, here clients can experience a true Fijian township only a short taxi ride from most resorts in the area.

The busiest and best time to visit is a Sat morning (avoid Sun as everything will be shut).

Tell clients to head to the local fruit and vege market in the centre of



town, which also has stalls set up selling locally-made handicrafts from the surrounding villages.

There are also three large tourist stores selling clothes, perfumes, alcohol and handicrafts, and many shops sell DVDs from FJD3 each.

Pottery Village

About 5km out of Sigatoka is Lawai Nakabuta, a village famous for its pottery. The trade has been handed down for generations, and visitors can watch the craft in action.

Grab A Bite

Mango Bay Resort director Danny Friedmann suggests those looking for somewhere to eat try the True Blue hotel next to the roundabout in town for a huge range of meals and seating in a garden overlooking the river, or try the Lucky Corner next to the markets which offers plenty of local dishes.

Meanwhile John McFadden of Hideaway Resort & Spa suggests visiting La Café on the old Highway at Korotogo. A lot of locals frequent the café, where clients can enjoy sensational pizzas and cold beer while watching the sunset – it's right on the water.

Sunset Strip in Korotogo will soon be home to Koko's Bar Fiji, says Coral Coast coalition chairman Jay Whyte, where guests will enjoy picture-perfect sunsets, beautiful food, and a lounge and sports bar.



Wedded Bliss At Warwick Fiji

Warwick Fiji Resort and Spa weddings are something special—the bride is brought across the tranquil lagoon on a colourfully decorated bamboo raft (Bilibili) by Fijian bodyguards, which is followed by a fairy-tale ceremony in the Florentine Garden.

The resort is not just popular with the wedding market though. Nestled amid 28 acres of tropical gardens on the edge of a white sand beach and overlooking a calm lagoon, the resort comprises 250 rooms and deluxe suites with ocean views or sweeping mountain panoramas.

Its exclusive Executive Warwick Clubrooms floor is adults only and ideal for honeymoon couples or guests

preferring to be on the quieter side of the hotel, while two freshwater pools and the swim-up pool bar are perfect for enjoying in the company of friends.

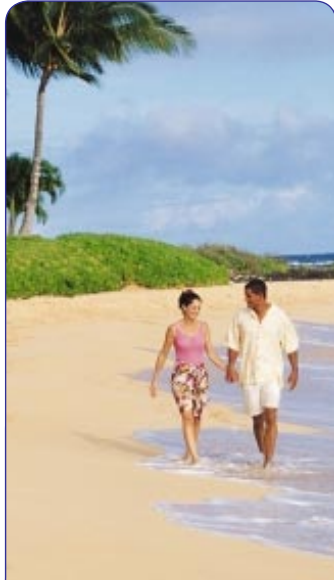
The heart of the Warwick Fiji offers a large, cool lounge and foyer which flows to the sunset deck, cocktail bar and the breathtaking view of the Pacific Ocean.

A distinctive feature is the small promontory walk to the Wicked Walu seafood island restaurant, dramatically lit by torches each evening which enhance the exotic setting.

Other gourmet options include Japanese, Italian and the sumptuous theme buffets.

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Romance Blooms

Coral Coast properties not already making the most of the popular wedding market are starting to target it, with resorts like Mango Bay introducing new private wedding packages. It is also ideal for honeymooners with plenty of beaches to enjoy long walks along and secluded walks where couples can immerse themselves in nature—and each other—without being bothered.

“The beauty of this location is that we have it all from stunning ocean views to mountain vistas and jaw dropping natural scenery,” says Coral Coast Coalition chairman Jay Whyte. “Newly-wed or soon-to-be-married couples could choose from many locations along the Coral Coast to enjoy a quiet moment together, from walking along stretches of beaches where there is no one else but them to just sitting under the shade of the mango tree next to the Sigatoka River.”

Something For Everyone

Romance, Family And Relaxation

Fiji has some of the best family resorts, wedding venues and spas in the world, and the Coral Coast is no exception.

Beautiful white sand beaches and non-tidal lagoons are perfect for entertaining young children. The best part is that everything is so accessible it's easy for mum and dad to slip away for an adventure (such as shopping or fishing) in the morning, leaving the little ones with their Fijian nannies (well known for their fantastic babysitting) or in the kids club. Later they still have the whole afternoon to spend with them.



It's the same with honeymooning couples—he can dive while she relaxes in the spa, and they need only be apart for a few hours.

Get Close To Nature

For a fantastic family day out, head to Kula Eco Park, Fiji's only wildlife park. Children and adults alike will marvel at the collection of brightly coloured tropical birds, insects and local sea life at the park, which has been awarded the Excellence In Tourism Award as Fiji's best attraction numerous times. Make sure clients say hello to Baby, the Kadavu red-breasted musk parrot, and grab a photo with parrots and iguanas before heading off to explore the park. They will wander through the forest past native flora and fauna, past trees bearing strange fruit, nuts and flowers and listening to the calls of the unusual birdlife there. The park plays a big part in conservation and offers free classes to Fijian children. It was recently involved in the captive breeding of Fiji's peregrine falcon and crested iguana. For more see fijiwild.com

Top Of The Range Spas

Clients looking to relax and indulge have plenty of choices on the Coral Coast, with some of the top spas in Fiji found there.

Shangri-La Fijian Resort & Spa says its CHI spa is home to the largest and most luxuriously appointed spa suites in Fiji.

Outrigger's Bebe spa features eight open-air treatment rooms, with treatments available including the Fijian bobo massage using warm coconut oil. The Warwick Resort Spa uses aromatics with pure water in its natural spa treatments, performed at the ocean's edge.

The Naviti Resort's Joy Spa offers treatments including a tropical back massage and deep cleanse facial, while guests at Mango Bay Resort can indulge in massage and facials at the Malumu massage bure.



Families Love Outrigger On The Lagoon

Outrigger on the Lagoon knows exactly how popular the area is for families—last month it announced it was extending its meimei nanny service due to its unprecedented success.

The original six nannies have been joined by 20 more who provide personalised care for children aged six months to 12 years. There are also the Little Riggers and Beach Riggers kids clubs.

The five-star Outrigger resort is about 80km from Nadi, with 207 rooms and suites and 47 burees stretching along the shores of a reef-fringed lagoon. A key point of difference is its Talai

butler service, with 16 staff who do everything from unpack suitcases and hang clothes to deliver champagne and canapés.

Earlier this year the resort opened its new Sundowner Bar & Grill (pictured), offering meals from gourmet pizza to confit duck and peppered orange salad.

The resort offers plenty of entertainment and activities, including fire walking shows, kava rituals, tennis, snorkelling and kayaking. It also has its own wedding chapel, shops, a convenience store, hair salon and children's games room.

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Australian rugby great David Campese has been name ambassador for the 2011 Coral Coast Sevens event. "His endorsement of Fiji rugby is such a boost to our event here on the Coral Coast, Fiji as a destination and huge opportunity for players who will participate," says Whyte.

Coral Coast Sevens

Rugby On The Coast



Fijians are just as passionate about Kiwis when it comes to rugby, and the Coral Coast has a huge affinity with the sport, with many champion teams and players coming from the Nadroga Navosa region.

Unsurprisingly then, the region had great success last year with its Coral Coast Sevens Tournament, which it is

hoping to repeat at this year's tournament held at Lawaqa Park, Sigatoka 18-19 Nov.

During the fast-paced competition 24 teams (16 local teams and eight from Australia and New Zealand) will compete for a total prize pool of FJD56,000.

Of course visitors will want to make the most of the stunning location, and clients can be assured they can enjoy a uniquely Fijian fun atmosphere off the field as well, with locals keen to welcome them to the region.

Rugby enthusiasts couldn't pick a better place to visit in the wake of the world cup. "I believe that Fijians are made for rugby. It combines their natural physique and flair with their amazing natural strength on the field," says Coral Coast Sevens chairman Jay Whyte. "Some of the best names to come out of Fiji hail from Nadroga Navosa."

For more information on the event, visit fijiscoralcoastsevens.com

Selling The Sevens

The Coral Coast Sevens is a great opportunity to sell to groups, be it for a boy's weekend away, bonding for colleagues or as a business incentive, says Whyte. Packages available from wholesalers include GO Holidays' return economy airfares to Nadi ex Auckland, transfers, three nights accommodation 17-20 Nov and grandstand tickets from \$1149pp s/t. Infinity Holidays has packages from \$1069 with return airfares, five nights accommodation (includes two free nights), transfers and sevens tickets. Click on the link below to view packages.

Enjoy A Gold One

One of Fiji's newest beers, Vonu, is a sponsor of the sevens. Tell clients to head to the Vonu Zone where they can sample the local product for themselves.



Shangri-La's Private Paradise

Only 55 minutes from Nadi Airport, Shangri-La's Fijian Resort and Spa inhabits the private Yanuca Island, a 109 acre paradise linked to the mainland by a causeway and offering an idyllic escape for any holiday-maker.

The resort is perfect for families—children stay, play and eat for free. Kids love the play areas, child's pool and supervised Little Chief's Club, but they are not restricted to the resort facilities, with beautiful beaches and lagoons for all-day swimming right on the doorstep. Its marine centre is also popular, where they can create their own fish houses which are planted on the reef.

A must-try at the resort is the CHI spa, which boasts the largest and most luxurious spa suites in Fiji and offers unique overnight Dusk Till Dawn packages.

For a bit of culture, clients can head to Marau Village, where they can watch fire dancing shows and try a traditional Lovo feast (similar to a Maori hangi).

Whatever diners are in the mood for, Shangri-La is sure to have it covered, with six different restaurants and bars to choose from.

The resort also caters to the wedding market, with three dedicated wedding co-ordinators who will look after a bride's every need.



Rugby Mad Fiji

Clients who are keen on rugby but can't make the sevens can still experience the unique Fijian passion for the game.

Sigatoka is home to the Lawaqa Park stadium, and there are often local games on a Sat. Tickets are just FJD20 for VIP seating (alcohol is served) or FJD15 in the grandstands.

Outrigger, which sponsors the local Nadroga Stallions, organises excursions to go and watch locals play in the domestic competitions when they are on.

While in town it's also a good idea to check out the Melrose Bridge, named after the Hong Kong Sevens trophy the year Fiji won.



For Fiji Coral Coast Sevens packages

Click Here: GO Holidays

Click Here: Infinity Holidays