

TOP 15 CARIBBEAN ALL-INCLUSIVES P. 18

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TURKS AND THE  
"OTHER" CAICOS  
P. 68

# Islands®

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20 NEW GETAWAYS

# CLOSE, FAR, RARELY SEEN

**CAYMAN BRAC**

Nirvana is cows, bikes and  
a chocolate shop  
P. 45

**CROATIA**

We were told this island  
wasn't worth visiting. Right.  
P. 46

**TIKEHAU**

It's the tiniest Tahiti  
(with bungalows!)  
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MARCH 2015 U.S. \$4.99

03



DISPLAY UNTIL 03/23/2015

LIFE HERE **My Island**

FIJI  
VITI LEVU

Upper Navau  
Gorge Rafting

Pacific Harbor  
Shark Swim

South Pacific Ocean

BEQA

DAVUI

Royal Davui  
Island Resort

\*map not to scale

## WHAT I'D DO HERE

**PRIVATE PICNIC:** There's a sand spit near Davui. Get dropped off with champagne and a lunch and do whatever you want.

**WHITewater RAFT:** The Upper Navau Gorge is the Grand Canyon of Fiji.

**SHARK DIVE:** Hang out with 40 or 50 bull and tiger sharks in Pacific Harbor.

**SAMPLE FISH:** I can pick from 20 or 30 fish species to eat, but I always take mahimahi home.

# FIJIAN DREAMER

OWNING A PRIVATE ISLAND RESORT ON FIJI IS THE ULTIMATE FAIRY TALE ... RIGHT?



GRAHAME SOUTHWICK

AGE 70

OCCUPATION

Owner, Royal Davui Island Resort, Fiji  
royaldavuiifiji.com

FORMER LIFE

Fisherman

**Building the Royal Davui was a moment of madness.**

I'd been sneaking onto the island since I was a kid, but I didn't know anything about it till I met the island's chief and he asked me if I would build a resort. I said yeah, sure.

**People think we make a lot of money.** About 30 percent of the room rate goes to taxes. And the cost of running an island resort is twice as much as a resort on the mainland.

**We get some interesting guests.** A group from Ukraine arrived with a suitcase filled with \$50,000 U.S. cash to pay their bills. We sent the notes to a bank and they said they were good but we probably shouldn't ask the guys what they did for a living.

**Guests leave all sorts of things behind.** Credit cards. Jewelry. And then there were the honeymooners who forgot their Steely Dan. We had to slip it into their luggage before they got on the boat.

**I hear lots of island stories.**

They say about 500 years ago that fishermen on Beqa, the island next to us, caught an eel. In exchange for his life, the eel gave them the ability to walk on fire. OK, it's a bunch of bull, but it's true that Beqa's men are the only firewalkers in Fiji. It's something to see.

**I've swum with sharks since I was 6.** Our isle is in a lagoon, and its sharks may check in on snorkelers. They're 3 to 4 feet long and harmless, but they still freak people out.

**There are characters living on Fiji.** Many of them are descendants of the rascals who landed on these shores in the 1890s — whalers, booze runners, slave traders. We also had our share of pirates. There are all sorts of stories about buried gold and such around Fiji. People are still looking for it. And then there were the cannibals — but don't get me started on that. — as told to David Lansing

“



It's strange what people expect on a small island. We've had guests ask us to get rid of the island's geckos.

”



## CHANGING FIJI

“My favorite things about Fiji are fading. When I grew up here, we were like the Lost Boys. We swam, we fished, we went on adventures. It's sad that most Fijian kids these days don't know how to catch a fish or tie a knot.” — Grahame Southwick