

SECRETS OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC

BEST OF THE REST

Contrary to popular belief, places like Fiji and French Polynesia are not just for honeymooners. Sure, there are plenty of luxurious digs, but there are also basic little bungalows scattered throughout the region. If, however, you're after something more adventurous, try Samoa for its incredible and virtually empty beaches, or Niue for an island escape that's well and truly off the tourist track.



SAMOA

LITIA SINI BEACH RESORT

What: In 1993, Taula and Litia Sini closed their small shop on Upolu Island and restored this once-dilapidated area into a beautiful resort. There are 16 modern yet traditional-looking Samoan beachfront fales to choose from – all with superb ocean views. This resort is part of the Sini's vision to welcome overseas visitors to their home, and provide a sustainable living to their children, family and village.

How: Double bungalows from A\$130.

www.litiasinibeach.ws

get in the know Samoa became independent from New Zealand in 1962.

SAMOA

TAUFUA BEACH FALES

What: When you hit Upolu, one of Samoa's main islands, and see Lalomanu Beach you'll understand why it's been voted one of the best beaches on the planet. This little getaway offers enclosed and open-sided beach bungalows for travellers who love life's simplicities. It's small and lively, with an excellent bar and tasty grub. If your idea of a good time is a back-to-basics beach shack then Taufua is for you.

How: From A\$70 per night.

www.samoabeachfales.com



FRENCH POLYNESIA

TE NUNOA BUNGALOW

What: This isn't any ordinary resort. Actually, it's not a resort at all. This is your own private guesthouse run by Laurel and James on Moorea Island. You'll still get all the little mod cons – a BBQ, fully-equipped kitchen, iPod dock and the internet – but in a truly local environment. Te Nunoa is Tahitian for 'red sky' and that's exactly what you'll see every evening from your bungalow, which sleeps up to three adults and two children.

How: From A\$220 per night.

www.mooreabungalow.com



get in the know Fiji comprises an archipelago of more than 332 islands, of which 110 are permanently inhabited.



FIJI

MATAVA

What: On the remote and magnificent island of Kadavu, this eco-adventure resort is a real escape from the package-holiday hoards found in the rest of Fiji. It's bordered by the Great Astrolabe Reef and is surrounded by rainforest, jungles and waterfalls plummeting from the hilltops. The Fijian-style bures have polished mahogany timber floors, large windows, timber four-poster beds and private decks.

How: Seven-night packages from A\$1,000.

www.matava.com

secrets of the south pacific



FRENCH POLYNESIA

VANIRA LODGE

What: Want something a bit different? Try one of these six eclectic fares in Tahiti. Each is a mix of bamboo, wood, glass, coral, river stones and rock. Some have traditional turtleshell-shaped roofs, others have bathrooms and kitchens, but all have intricate hand-carved furniture and airy mezzanines. Located in the village of Teahupo'o, which is renowned for its incredible waves and international surf competitions, the lodge rents out bikes, snorkels, surfboards, kayaks and more.

How: From A\$135 per night.

www.vaniralodge.com

NIUE

NAMUKULU COTTAGES & SPA

What: It's said that Niue, known as 'the rock of Polynesia', has the most beautiful limestone gorges of the South Seas. There are no ATMs on the island and barely any tourists, which makes visiting the highlights – Talava Arches, Limu Pools, Hio Beach and Palaha Cave – an absolute joy. Relax on the private deck of your one- or two-bedroom cottage, watch the whales go by or rent a motorbike and explore.

How: From A\$140 per night.

www.namukulu-cottages.nu



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