

# flysolomons

SOLOMON AIRLINES COMPLIMENTARY IN-FLIGHT MAGAZINE

ISSUE 92

FLYSOLOMONS.COM

Discovering the ancient tradition of

# Shell Money in Malaita

ALL THE LATEST  
*Airline Nius*  
& info



Solomon Airlines

Eels, caves and war  
dances: a day in  
Biche Village

Celebrating the  
Solomon Islands'  
heroic Coastwatchers

Find the perfect  
place to stay in  
Vanuatu

THE LATEST IN TRAVEL, INFORMATION AND NEWS FROM THE SOLOMON ISLANDS



**SEND MONEY HOME FREE\* FROM AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND TO OUR TELEKOM'S M-SELEN**

Visit **KlickEx.com** to Send Money Now!

Receiver will get **BONUS** up to **\$100** for each transaction\*



**Best Rates. More Value. Bonus Deals**



\*Free remittance and bonus available for first 3 months only

# Great Cars Low Rates



- ▶ We have a wide range of 4WD, manual and automatic vehicles
- ▶ Located in Central Honiara
- ▶ Next door to Solomon Islands Visitors Bureau
- ▶ Close to all major hotels

Ph: 27100 / 20005  
 We are open 7 days a week:  
 Monday – Sunday 8am to 5pm  
 Email: ecr@solomonmotors.com.sb  
 Facebook: Solomon Motors Ltd  
 SML Refueling Station, Point Cruz, Honiara



# Welkam Frens

As we soar into the new year, I extend my warmest greetings to you on behalf of the Solomon Airlines family. It is both an honour and a privilege to welcome you on board as we embark on another chapter of exciting journeys and shared adventures.

Belated Merry Christmas and a heartfelt Happy New Year to you, our loyal customers, and your families and friends. As you turn the pages of this new edition, we warmly welcome you to the promising year of 2025. We trust that this year will bring new opportunities, shared successes, and renewed hope. Thank you for continuing to choose Solomon Airlines; we are truly grateful for your trust and loyalty.

***Our growth and achievements during these times inspire us to approach 2025 with optimism, ready to embrace new opportunities and confidently overcome any obstacles.***

2025 holds great promise as we continue to connect the Solomon Islands to the world and bring the world to our breathtaking islands. This year, we are dedicated to enhancing your travel experience, prioritising comfort, safety, and our renowned island hospitality that makes every journey memorable.

Reflecting on 2024, we acknowledge that the year flew by with its challenges, yet it reinforced our resilience and determination. Our growth and achievements during these times inspire us to approach 2025 with optimism, ready to embrace new opportunities and confidently overcome any obstacles.

We are encouraged by the continued support and developments in growing the economy, supported by new airport infrastructure and initiatives to boost investment in tourism. These developments promise to elevate the

Solomon Islands as a destination of choice, and we are excited to play a pivotal role in shaping this future.

One of the most exciting discoveries of 2024 was the identification of the world's largest living coral in the Solomon Seas. This colossal coral, visible from space, is a marvel of nature and a testament to the rich biodiversity of our waters. It has quickly become a must-visit destination for our diving community, offering an unparalleled underwater experience.

At Solomon Airlines, we remain committed to investing in our greatest asset, our people. In 2024, we prioritised training and development, and in 2025, we will continue to ensure our staff is better trained, better skilled, and better equipped to navigate the dynamic aviation industry. We owe much of our success to our dedicated team and their families, whose unwavering support enables us to deliver the high-quality service you deserve.

We also extend our heartfelt thanks to our business partners and creditors. Your collaboration and trust have strengthened us, and we look forward to building on these relationships in the year ahead.

As you relax and enjoy your flight, I encourage you to explore the pages of our magazine. Here, you'll discover stories that showcase the heart of our islands—why they matter and why the Solomon Islands should remain at the top of your travel list.

Let's make 2025 a year of new beginnings, meaningful connections, and shared achievements. Wishing you and your loved ones a prosperous year filled with success and joy. Safe travels, and thank you for flying with Solomon Airlines.

**Warm regards,**

**Sean Te'o**  
CEO of Solomon Airlines

# BAORO & ASSOCIATES

CERTIFIED PRACTICING ACCOUNTANTS

Together with our sister company: **YAM & CO** CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

*Where service matters*

Our broad range of services include:

- Accounting
- Audit
- Taxation
- Payroll Services
- MYOB installation and management support
- Accounting staff billeting
- Project Management
- Financing Proposals
- Foreign Investment Application and Advice
- Work and Residency Permit Applications
- Employer of Records Services – Solomon Islands, Kiribati and Tuvalu
- All other Business Advisory Services and support.

## We will unlock your business potential

We are proud Members of the Solomon Islands Institute of Accountants (ISIA). We are locally owned and here to help your business grow. We also provide the same services in Tarawa, Kiribati.

### CONTACT US TODAY

PO Box 939, Honiara. Ph: 25822 M: 7495224 or 7477561 Email: [baoro@baoroassociates.com.sb](mailto:baoro@baoroassociates.com.sb) or [deborah@baoroassociates.com.sb](mailto:deborah@baoroassociates.com.sb)  
For Tarawa services, send us an email. Visit our office located next to the old Lime Lounge in Pt. Cruz, Honiara. [www.baoroandassociates.com.sb](http://www.baoroandassociates.com.sb)

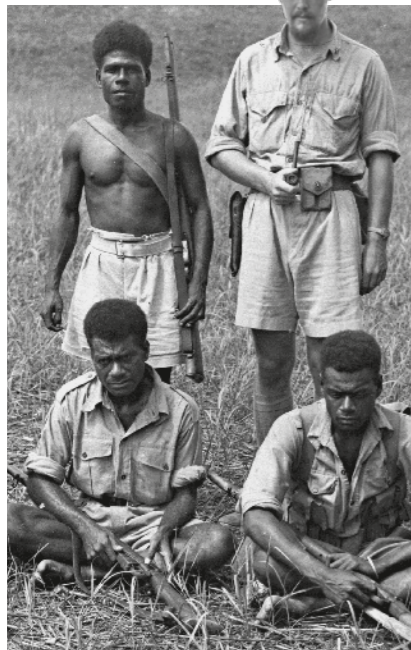
# In this issue

HISTORY

## Local Heroes

Celebrating the Solomon Islands' heroic Coastwatchers.

12



FESTIVAL

## Roviana Lagoon Festival

Celebrating a unique history passed down through generations.

18



CULTURE

## Magical Malaita

Discovering the ancient tradition of shell money in Malaita.

24



ACCOMMODATION

## Feels like a Getaway

There's plenty of barefoot luxury, cultural immersion and tropical beauty.

30



ADVENTURE

## Eels, Caves and War Dances

A day in Biche Village.

36



CULTURE

## Hotomai Cultural Village

An authentic experience and must-visit destination just outside Honiara.

40

## 8 Out and About

## 47 A Quick Guide to Honiara

## 48 Solomon Airlines Fleet Guide

## 50 Route Maps

## 52 Destination Guide

## 54 Airline Nius

Editorial

PUBLISHER Justin Jamieson  
GENERAL MANAGER Karina Schiller  
EDITORIAL CONSULTANTS David Green  
Jenny Lobo

Design

CREATIVE DIRECTOR Luke Fraser  
SENIOR DESIGNER Heather Walker  
PRODUCTION MANAGER Ivan Valachovic

Advertising

Justin Jamieson  
Ph: (61) 3 9486 0550  
Email: justin@grincreative.com.au

Address

Grin Creative  
Studio 04, 281 Brunswick Street,  
Fitzroy 3065, VIC Australia  
Ph: (61) 3 9486 0550

Contributors

Kate Gazzard, Justin Jamieson,  
Regina Lepping, Christine  
Retschlag, Kate Robertson,  
Sheriden Rhodes, Roderick Eime,  
Mike Parker-Brown

Cover image

PHOTOGRAPHER Cecilia Fazekas



© COPYRIGHT GRIN CREATIVE & SOLOMON AIRLINES LTD. 2025.  
No part of this magazine, regardless of how fantastic you think it is, may be reproduced without the written consent of Grin Creative (we will find out!). No responsibility is accepted for accuracy of advertisements or information. Opinions published in FlySolomons Magazine are not necessarily those of the editors or publication team. Whilst every care has been taken in the research and preparation of FlySolomons Magazine, the publishers, the writers and anyone else associated cannot accept any responsibility for any loss, injury or hardship arriving from any attempt to emulate or follow any of the stories, however caused. By the very nature of travel, things change daily and we cannot take responsibility for any changes that occur subsequent to going to press. The publisher does not assume responsibility for any unsolicited materials, manuscripts or photographs.

# BRED BANK SOLOMON

First European Bank in the Pacific, offering a modern, friendly and comfortable environment for all your banking needs.

BRED SOLOMON CONNECT

BRED EFTPOS

DEBIT VISA



PRODUCTS FOR  
YOUR TRIPS TO AND  
FROM SOLOMON ISLANDS

**FIND US**  
BRED Bank Haus  
Kukum Highway | Point Cruz Branch  
Commonwealth Street

**CONTACT US**  
+677 27 777  
contact@bred.sb

**FOLLOW US**  
Facebook | LinkedIn  
www.bred.sb

 **bjs agencies ltd**  
Your logistics solutions provider  
in Solomon Islands



 **LOGISTICS SOLUTIONS**

### We take the stress out of freight, clearance and customs

When it comes to logistical services, BJS has over 30 years industry experience. Let us worry about your freight, clearance and customs needs, so that you don't have to.

Visit [www.bjs.agency](http://www.bjs.agency) to learn more.

 **DHL EXPRESS & GLOBAL FORWARDING**

### Need of a reliable, international courier service?

BJS provides a full DHL operation in Solomon Islands. This includes customs clearance, pick up and drop offs. You can trust us to deliver your precious packages right to your door.

Email us at [dhlhir@bjs.agency](mailto:dhlhir@bjs.agency) today.

 **RECYCLING SPECIALIST**

### Don't let your scrap metal go to waste!

Are you passionate about recycling? Because we are. We buy all non-ferrous metals such as aluminium, copper, lead, nickel, tin, titanium and zinc and some ferrous metals, too!

Contact us today on +677 22 393.

PO Box 439 Commonwealth St, Point Cruz, Honiara, Solomon Islands

# Morris & Sojnocki

Chartered Accountants  
accounts for more business in the Solomon Islands

Leaders in Audit, Accountancy & Business Services

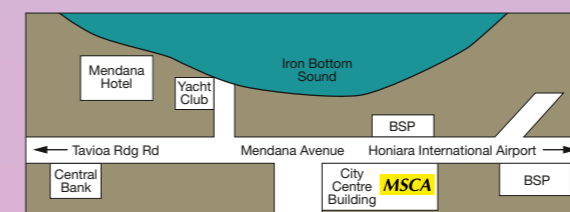


**Morris & Sojnocki** is the largest and most established accounting firm in the Solomon Islands. That's why we account for more business.

- Our broad range of services covers:
- Audit • Taxation • Accounting • Finance
  - Insolvency • Computer Consulting • Data and Payroll Processing
  - Investment Registration and Company Formation • Work and Residency Visa Applications

**Morris & Sojnocki** is conveniently located in the heart of Honiara.

For specialist business advice, call **Morris & Sojnocki**, the experts in the Solomon Islands.



**Morris & Sojnocki**  
Chartered Accountants

1st Floor, City Centre Building  
Mendana Avenue, Honiara  
Telephone: +677 21851  
Email: [wayne@msca.com.sb](mailto:wayne@msca.com.sb)  
[gregs@msca.com.sb](mailto:gregs@msca.com.sb)

# MALU'U MARKET SET FOR REDEVELOPMENT

Malaita's Malu'u Market will be redeveloped this month with local company, Alrico Constructions, awarded the Early Works contract.

The bustling market, which was originally built in 2007, serves as a central gathering place for locals and tourists alike, showcasing an array of products that reflect the rich culture and lifestyle of the region.

The upgrades will provide a significant boost to the North Malaita economy and will feature facilities for 100-150 vendors, including dedicated storage areas and separate washrooms for men and women. Ensuring the market is accessible will also be a key focus of the redevelopment with inclusive entrances, toilets, showers and market stalls set to be built.

The Early Works contract was formally signed in a ceremony with members of the Malaita Provincial Government and the Australian High Commission in attendance. Malaita's Minister for Finance, Hon. Lemuel Kevianga, expressed gratitude to Australia for prioritising the region's community development goals as part of the Solomon Islands-Australia partnership.



He emphasised that the new market would play a critical role in driving economic growth and alleviating rural poverty by creating a vital space for farmers and small-scale entrepreneurs to sell their produce, clothing, and fish.

"Ninety per cent of our market vendors are women, so this market will significantly enhance their ability to generate income for their families," said Minister Kevianga.

In good news for locals and tourists, the market won't be fully closed while the works are underway, as the Early Works phase includes the construction of a temporary market for vendors. Demolition of the existing market will follow, paving the way for the Main Works construction of the new market building, scheduled for the second half of 2025.

Alrico Constructions has pledged to collaborate closely with local communities throughout the construction and demolition phases, employing local labour wherever possible.



# CHRISTAFARI TO TOUR THE SOLOMON ISLANDS

Christafari, the pioneering American gospel reggae band, is set to tour the Solomon Islands in late May or early June 2025.

The group, led by founder Mark Mohr, made the announcement via a Facebook post, expressing excitement about returning to the islands for ministry purposes. They are currently seeking partnerships with local pastors, churches, and evangelists to aid their performance, along with recommendations for which islands to visit during their trip.

Founded in 1989, Christafari is the brainchild of Mohr, a songwriter, producer, and lead vocalist. Mohr's transformative journey from addiction to faith inspired him to create America's first gospel reggae band, blending Caribbean rhythms with Christian messages. Over the decades, Christafari has become a global phenomenon, known for their uplifting performances and community-focused mission.

Their upcoming visit to the Solomon Islands offers a unique opportunity to enhance both domestic and international tourism. The band's prior trips have already left a positive impact, including memorable performances in locations like Auki and Malaita. By returning to the islands, Christafari not only brings world-class entertainment but also highlights the region's cultural and natural beauty.

For international travellers, the tour showcases the Solomon Islands as a vibrant destination, combining spiritual enrichment with the allure of pristine beaches,



lush landscapes, and warm hospitality. For locals, it's an event that fosters community, inspiration, and a sense of pride in their islands' appeal.

The visit aligns with growing trends in faith-based and cultural tourism, drawing visitors eager for meaningful experiences. With Christafari's global fanbase and their dedication to uplifting communities, the tour is set to put the Solomon Islands on the map as a must-visit destination for travellers seeking both spiritual connection and adventure.



# SOLOMON ISLANDS **PREMIUM** LAGER BEER



Drink Responsibly



## The pride of Honiara



Centrally located with 100 fully air-conditioned rooms, four executive suites and 14 executive rooms, all boasting splendid sea views, quality facilities and contemporary furnishings.

Our conference centre accommodates 20 – 150 people and is equipped with a modern communications system.

The Capitana Restaurant offers delicious international cuisine. Panoramic views of the historic Iron Bottom Sound Lagoon can be enjoyed over drinks and snacks on the Raratana Terrace.

Traditional, imported Japanese furnishings complete an authentic dining experience at the ever-popular Hakuabi Japanese restaurant.



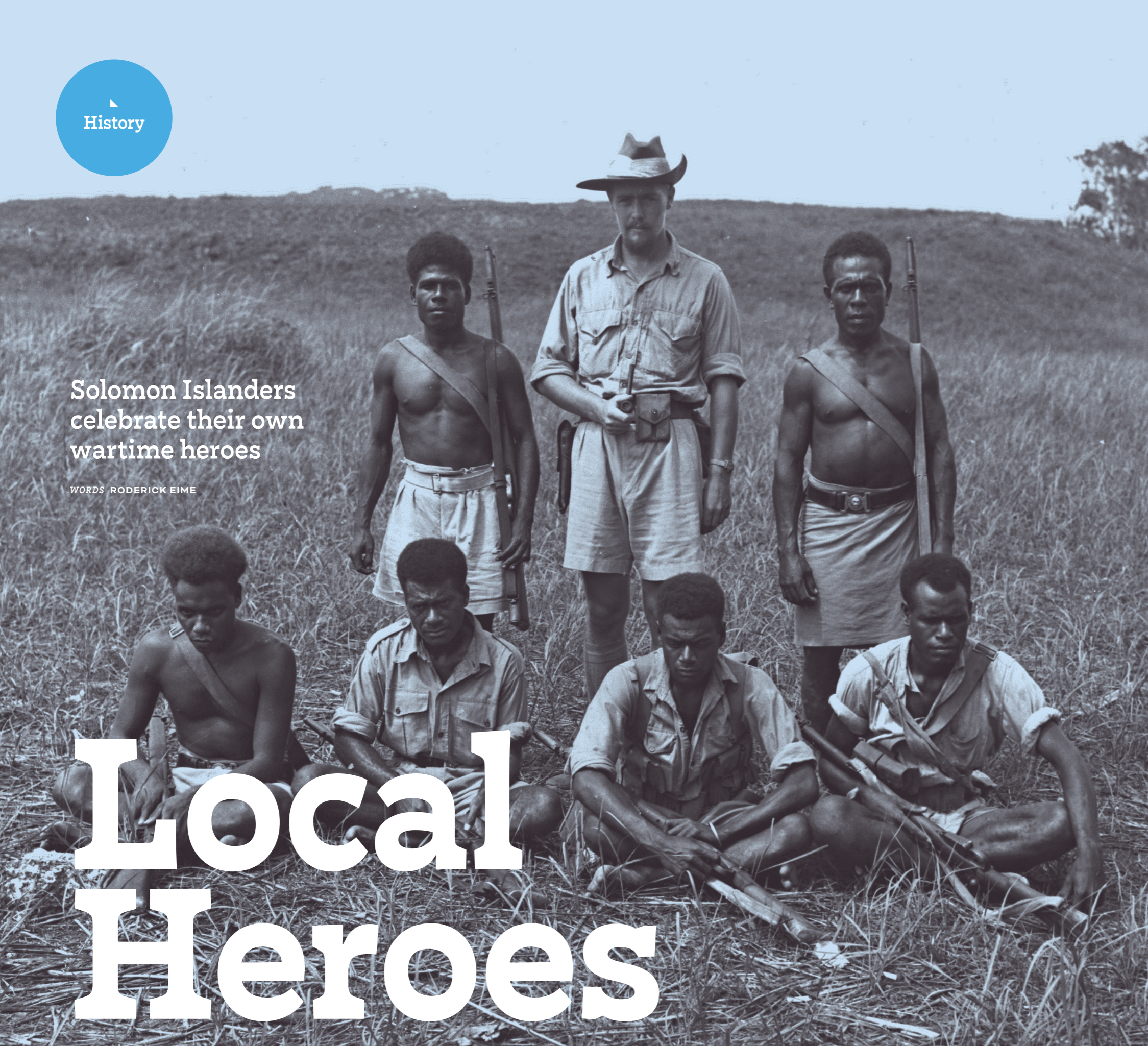
### Solomon Kitano Mendana Hotel

P.O. Box 384, Honiara, Solomon Islands  
Tel: (677) 20071 / e-mail: [reserv@mendana.com.sb](mailto:reserv@mendana.com.sb)  
[www.kitanomendana.com](http://www.kitanomendana.com) / [www.facebook.com/kitanomendana](https://www.facebook.com/kitanomendana)

## Solomon Islanders celebrate their own wartime heroes

WORDS RODERICK EIME

# Local Heroes



**I**t's impossible to count the many tales of World War II heroics of the men and women (from all nations) who faced incredible risks to serve their respective countries.

As the old adage, 'history is written by the victors,' suggests, these stories are dominated by men from the Allied forces who triumphed over the primary Axis powers of Germany, Italy and Japan.

Here in the Pacific theatre of war, we hear about the US Marines and their brave and brutal fight against the ruthless Empire of Japan, with occasional sidebar accounts of British, Australian and Commonwealth bravery.

But all too often, history ignores the courage of the local populations in their own fight against invaders and the invaluable services they provided to Allied forces during the Pacific War.

I'm, of course, talking about the much-admired Papuan "fuzzy wuzzy angels," who hauled countless tons of supplies and ammunition to the Australians fighting in the mud and blood of the Kokoda Track, before carrying the many wounded men back down to the field hospitals, and to safety.

"We never got paid," one ageing veteran once told me as we sat on the ground in front of his hut many years ago.

In the Solomon Islands and all across the Pacific theatre of war, there was a little-known organisation called Coastwatchers that provided crucial intelligence to Allied commanders, as well as vital warnings of impending attacks.



**Main image, left:** Native policemen with Captain Martin Clemens of the Solomon Islands Defense Forces on Guadalcanal. **Above:** A wireless telegraphist operator, probably Sgt William 'Billy' Bennett, of the British Solomon Islands Protectorate Defence Force, operating an AWA 3BZ telerradio at the Seghe coastwatchers.





Clockwise from above: Lt. Cmdr. W.J. Read of the Royal Australian Navy Intelligence Division poses with native scouts; unloading beer at a rations dump on Guadalcanal; U.S. Marines wading up the Tenaru River led by native guides; located in Honiara, the monument recalls the bravery of the Coastwatchers; native workers rush to complete the airfield the Japanese had begun to build at Lunga.

## History



*The Coastwatchers saved Guadalcanal, and Guadalcanal saved the Pacific.*

- Admiral William F. Halsey USN



However, in the annals of WWII history, one Solomon Islander stands above all others in the long list of heroes: Sir Jacob Charles Vouza, KBE, GM, QPM.

On that illustrious list, few shine brighter than Vouza. A native of Guadalcanal, Vouza was a scout, a soldier, and a symbol of unyielding courage. Born in 1892, he lived a humble life as a policeman before the terror of war arrived so suddenly in his serene island home.

Beginning in August 1942, the Solomon Islands became a cauldron of intense conflict. The US Marines, intent on halting Japan's relentless advance, landed on Guadalcanal. Sergeant Major Vouza possessed an intimate knowledge of the island's thickly jungled and treacherous terrain, making him an invaluable ally to the newly arrived US forces.

After rescuing a downed US pilot on the first day, he was quickly recruited as a scout and spy but was captured during one particularly daring mission and tortured for hours before being left to die from the horrific injuries inflicted on him. Despite this treatment, he refused to talk.

After chewing through the ropes that bound him, he crawled through the dense jungle to warn the Marines of an impending Japanese attack. Bloodied but unbowed, his actions saved countless lives and turned the tide of battle.

Vouza's bravery earned him the Silver Star, a Medal of Freedom, and a knighthood from the British Crown. But to his people, he was more than a decorated hero. He was a living emblem of resilience and sacrifice, a bridge between cultures united against oppression.

In his later years, Sir Jacob remained a humble figure, tending to his gardens and sharing his story. To those honoured to have met him, his quiet dignity spoke louder than words, reminding us that even in the darkest of times, the human spirit can shine through. ▴

"The Coastwatcher organisation of World War II has been rightly described by their wartime leader, Commander Erik Feldt, as 'one of the most successful spy rings of all time', wrote author Michael Veitch in his recent book on the subject, "achieving real battlefield results far in excess of their minuscule numbers."

There is the story (now legend) of the famous rescue of Lt. John F Kennedy and his surviving crew after the sinking of their patrol boat, PT109, which wouldn't have occurred had it not been for the bravery of two Solomon Island native coastwatchers. How different the future of the USA would have been if not for two humble Solomon Island lads and their canoe.

# Solomon's Finest Tuna

A real treat..

The most delicate flavour of premium tuna cuts served straight or prepared with delightful ingredients in exquisite recipes.

*A real Solomon Islands treat in a can.*



**SOLTUNA**

SolTuna Limited  
PO Box 965, Dowling Drive, Pt. Cruz, Honiara  
Guadalcanal, Solomon Islands  
f: +677 23462 p: +677 21664



# Unwind in Paradise

Munda Executive Studio Apartments are your island oasis in the Solomon Islands.

Conveniently located next to the Munda International Airport Terminal.

Each air-conditioned apartment equipped with bathroom, kitchenette, desk & TV.



New Munda - Kokegolo Road, Munda, Solomon Islands

FOR BOOKINGS, PLEASE CONTACT US:  
phone: +677 7825789  
email: mundaexecutivestudios@gmail.com  
www.mundaexecutivestudios.com



# HONIARA CURRENCY EXCHANGE

International Arrivals and Domestic Airport

CONVENIENTLY & SECURELY LOCATED

All Major FX Accepted | Visa | Master Card | Major Banks





# Splash *into* culture at the Roviana Lagoon festival

WORDS MIKE PARKER-BROWN  
PHOTOS DAVID KIRKLAND PHOTOGRAPHY

**T**he centuries-old traditions of the Solomon Islands remain some of the richest to be found anywhere in the South Pacific, and 'Kulture' sits at the very cornerstone of society.

Traditional story-telling, music, dance and craftsmanship has passed down from father to son and mother to daughter for centuries.

Festivals too remain a key part of life in these Hapi Isles, each of the Solomon Islands' nine provinces having cause to celebrate an event, a harvest or a significant moment in history.

This is very much the case in Munda in the Western Province, once the home of the south-west Pacific's fiercest head hunters, where today their much more relaxed ancestors celebrate their unique history and culture with the annual Roviana Lagoon Festival.

Traditionally taking part in December, the three-day festival annually attracts hundreds of locals. In recent times, certainly post-COVID, the festival has also started to attract a steadily growing number of international visitors keen to see and join in the event.

Scheduled activities, as expected, are predominantly water-based, and include rafting, dugout canoe 'tug of war' tussles and races, 'Kuku' platform high diving, speech competitions, singing and dancing.

But without doubt the event's highlights are the appearance of two giant 'Tomoko' war canoes and the Aleck Wickham Crawl swimming race.

Originally used for head hunting forays until the late 1800's when missionaries put a stop to the activity and, according to the local Roviana folk, "spoiled all the fun," two 'Tomoko' canoes took part in the 2024 event, one from

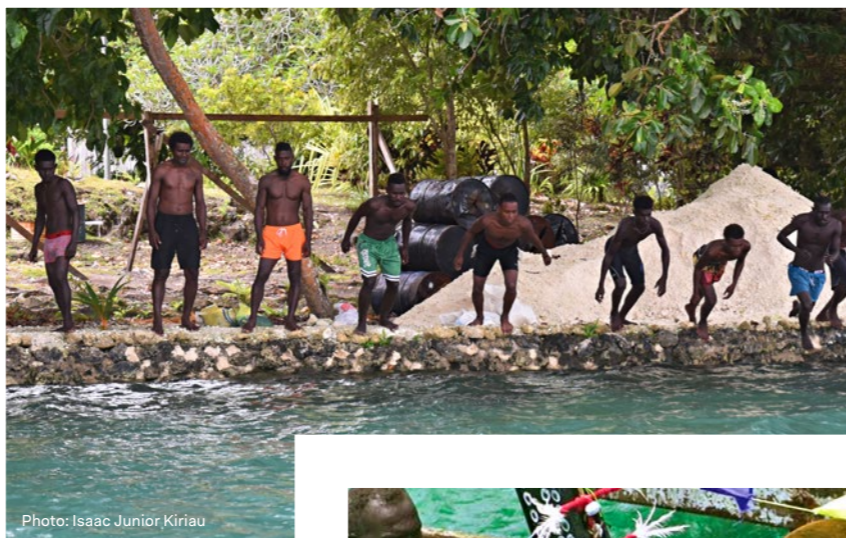


Photo: Isaac Junior Kiriau



**Clockwise from above:**  
At the starting line of one of the many water-based races held during the festival; traditionally adorned men in a canoe during the festival; a war canoe sidles up to the pier after the race.

*Originally used for head hunting forays until the late 1800's when missionaries put a stop to the activity and, according to the local Roviana folk, "spoiled all the fun"*



Photo: Isaac Junior Kiriau

Rarumana village and the other from Bebea village, both of which are located on Nusa Roviana Island.

The Aleck Wickham Crawl celebrates the Solomon Islander who is attributed with having invented the Australian Crawl swimming stroke, today better known as freestyle.

Wickham developed the style as a young child when, rather than wait for an inter-island ferry to take him to school, he would swim the one kilometre between Hobupeka Island and Munda.

Moving to Australia, Wickham's 'crawl' was recognised by legendary Australian swim coach George Farmer who saw the young man swimming at Bronte Baths in Sydney and the rest is history.

Wickham went on to become a champion swimmer, diver and body surfer. Dying in the late 60's, he was inducted into the Sport of Australia Hall of Fame in 1999.

Today both men and women compete in the event, the 2024 men's title taken out by Seke Zonga from Nusa Banga Island and Zita An from Munda winning the women's race.

Going forward, Tourism Solomons is now working hard with festival organisers to look at ways the event can be better promoted to attract more domestic traffic as well as international visitation.

**Clockwise from opposite:** A group of canoes racing towards the finish line; eager onlookers watching the canoes; local men wearing traditional dress performing for the crowd. **Bottom left opposite:** A competitive game of tug of war with a canoe.

Tourism Solomons' CEO (acting), Dagnal Dereveke said the national tourist office's approach to achieving its objectives is two-fold.

"Our first task is to further establish this and other cultural events on a local basis. Then, once fully established, play a further role in helping to promote the events in overseas markets," Mr Dereveke said.

"We have an amazing calendar of events showcasing our unique culture and traditions, all of which provide invaluable marketing content for us to promote our country's vibrancy and attractions via both traditional media, social media, websites, and promotional materials.

"These events have the potential to stimulate the local economy by drawing visitors who spend money on accommodation, food, and activities.

"As importantly, local support for these events engenders a sense of community pride and encourages residents to engage with the tourism sector." ▴

# CORAL SEA RESORT & CASINO

CORAL-SEA-RESORT.COM

# HAYDN'S



LUXURIOUS OCEANFRONT  
**ACCOMMODATION**  
*VILLAS & SUITES*



SWIMMING  
**POOL**

*the*  
**BOARDWALK**  
at Coral Sea Resort  
BAR & RESTAURANT

**HAYDN'S**  
STEAKHOUSE  
BOAT HIRE +

**CASINO**  
& RED KOI VIP ROOM  
POKER · SLOT MACHINES

TANDAI HIGHWAY, TOWN GROUND, HONIARA

TEL. 26288

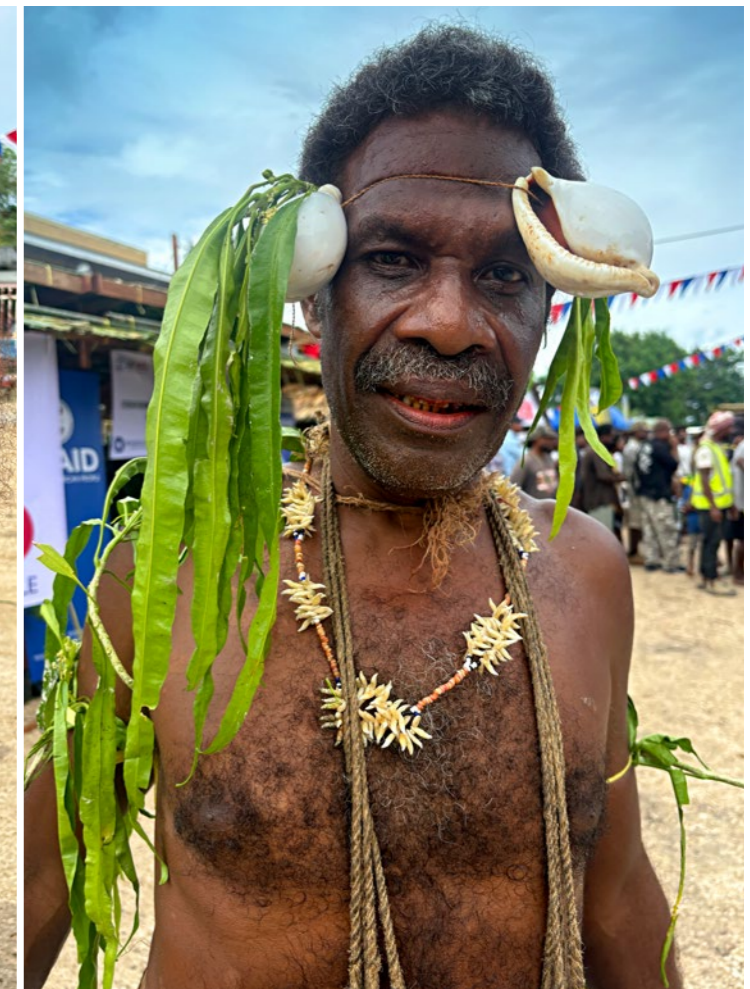


# Magical Malaita

Where cash is *not* king

**B**eneath the buzz of an overhead fan and the hum of ancient tradition, Sonia Naofalu speaks of reconnecting with her one true love and the shell money that sealed her bride price and marriage.

WORDS AND PHOTOS CHRISTINE RETSCHLAG





*“Shell money is believed to have entered the Solomon Islands between 16 and 17 generations ago”*

And it's a romance that has endured much in the same way the Solomon Islands shell money has survived and thrived for centuries.

Sonia, 36, was born in Honiara to parents who hailed from the northeastern province of Malaita's Kwarae ethnic group.

The family moved back from Honiara to Malaita's township of Auki when Sonia was 13 and during high school she dated a boy called Jonathon.

“My parents thought education was very important, so they sent me to school at the far end of this island so I wouldn't be disturbed by boys,” she says.

I finished high school, I went to Honiara and went to work for the national newspaper – The Solomon Star – on the marketing side of things.

“I didn't see Jonathon for 13 years, but I returned to Malaita after my sister died so I could help my parents.”

It was during the COVID pandemic when Sonia was volunteering to conduct RAT tests in front of the Auki wharf, that she reconnected with Jonathon, a policeman she worked with for three days before she recognised him.

“He asked me if I was already married and I said 'no' and we had to make connections again, so he dated me,” she says.

“I thought maybe the love had faded away because we'd been separated.

“After 1.5 years he asked me whether he could ask my parents to marry me. My parents said, 'that's OK, she's old enough'. We were married on August 29 in 2023.”

Shell money is believed to have entered the Solomon Islands between 16 and 17 generations ago when a “shell money woman” was banished from Papua New Guinea and came by canoe into Malaita.

Malaita is home to the annual Shell Money Festival where the province's 13 ethnic groups adorn themselves in elaborate shells and gather to celebrate culture.

While Malaita is renowned as the home of this ancient currency, which is still used today to buy anything from

**Previous page, clockwise from bottom:** A local girl heavily adorned in shell money; shell money's intricate details; crafting these pieces can be a time consuming activity; even men wear shell money; another woman wearing plenty of shell money; honouring the ancient tradition. **Clockwise from left:** Local woman offers up her shell money wares; shell money comes in all different colours and styles; the beautiful landscape of Malaita; a local shop in Malaita selling shell money.

groceries to settling disputes and paying for funerals, it's making a comeback all over the Solomon Islands.

It's often used to pay a dowry, with the average “bride price” around \$SBD10,000.

Shell money is most commonly found in the Malaita Central Markets and can also be purchased in Honiara's China Town at Shaenkola Shell Money Shop.

Here, Mary Sifoburi, who also hails from Malaita, and her three siblings are keeping the tradition alive, selling necklaces, bracelets earrings and decorative costumes, as well as offering a hire service for shell money products.

“The tradition is growing because Malaita people have preserved the culture and spread it around the different islands in the Solomons. People feel really special when they have shell money,” Mary says.

Back in Malaita, Sonia says her tribal people of Kwarae don't traditionally charge a high bride price.

“My parents only charged \$SBD1000 shell money for my engagement,” she says.

“People told them they should charge a larger price because I was their only daughter but my dad said I had obeyed them so they wouldn't charge a higher price.”

For Sonia, the Head of Tourism and Culture at the Malaita Province Government, no amount of shells could buy the happiness she now feels.

“I don't say that Jonathon is perfect, but he matches me. In Malaita culture, women are supposed to be at home cooking and working for their relatives, but because of my work I engage in a lot of activities and he understands me a lot,” she says.

“I was like 'oh, thank God'. Some males in the Solomon Islands still think of the patriarchal system and are the dominant ones. But Jonathon is a good man.”

The writer travelled as a guest of Tourism Solomons.

GETTING THERE

Malaita is a 30-minute flight from Honiara or a two-hour express ferry ride across Indispensable Strait.





WWW.HERITAGEPARKHOTEL.COM.SB  
info@heritageparkhotel.com.sb



A WORLD CLASS HOSPITALITY DESTINATION IN THE SOLOMON ISLANDS

WHEN ONLY THE BEST WILL DO







Vanuatu

# FOR STAYS THAT FEEL LIKE

# Getaways

WORDS SHERIDEN RHODES

**Barefoot luxury, cultural immersion and tropical beauty abounds in this vibrant Pacific archipelago. Dive world class wrecks, discover Melanesian culture, trek through jungle and swim in water the colour of sapphires.**

Vanuatu is open for business following last December's earthquake in Port Vila (the CBD and some hotels remained closed) and ready to welcome guests. Find your place in the sun on one of Vanuatu's 83 islands.



## Turtle Bay Lodge

This rustic chic resort on Espiritu Santo's east coast offers 14 rooms and glamping tents steps from the sea. Be lulled to sleep by the sound of lapping waves in recently refurbished family rooms with expansive verandahs or in new air-conditioned waterfront marquees complete with four poster beds and private decks. There's also a PADI dive centre, quad bike hire, SUP boards and kayaks for paddling over to Turtle Island or one of the Blue Holes.

[turtlebaylodge.vu](http://turtlebaylodge.vu)

## Whispering Palms

Offering three self-contained bungalows in lush tropical gardens, Whispering Palms is found on Vanuatu's main island of Efate in Siviri Village. Swim, kayak or snorkel two stunning reefs from your own private white sand beach and enjoy a warm welcome from friendly staff. P.S. Ask Pete for a coconut demonstration.

[whisperingpalms.guestybookings.com](http://whisperingpalms.guestybookings.com)

# Mid-Range

## Aore Island Resort

This charming resort offers 18 rustic beachfront bungalows a short boat ride from Vanuatu's largest island Espiritu Santo (Spanish for 'the Holy Spirit' and commonly called Santo). Enjoy ocean and farm-to-plate dining in the open-air nakamal (meeting place), kayak and snorkel turquoise waters and enjoy a passionate performance by the 'water music' ladies.

[aoreislandresorts.com](http://aoreislandresorts.com)





### Breakas Beach Resort

This feet-in-the-sand, adults-only tropical getaway is set on a secluded private beach on the breezy Pango peninsular (close to Port Vila). Think swaying palms, dotted pandanus trees, a 22m infinity pool, a beautiful reef for snorkelling and 60 bungalows steps from the sea. Pango Point, directly in front of the resort, is also Efate's best surf break.

[breakas.com](http://breakas.com)



### Barrier Beach Resort

This barefoot luxe, adults-only resort is located on the east coast of Espiritu Santo. Wake to waterfront vistas from one of 18 spacious villas set in tropical rainforest where ancient trees overhang a beach lapped by clear blue water. This intimate resort prides itself on personalised service and a menu of organic local produce sourced from local communities served at its onsite Waves restaurant. Nearby swim in the amazing Blue Holes with their staggeringly beautiful water the colour of sapphires.

[barrierbeachresort.com](http://barrierbeachresort.com)

### Island Magic Resort

Set among lush tropical gardens, Island Magic Resort's self-contained bungalows overlook the pristine waters and coral reef of Mele Bay. Soak up water views from private decks, snorkel from the jetty and enjoy poolside meals at the newly launched Birdies Bar and Kitchen. Yoga classes and sundowners are held on the deck.

[islandmagicresort.com](http://islandmagicresort.com)

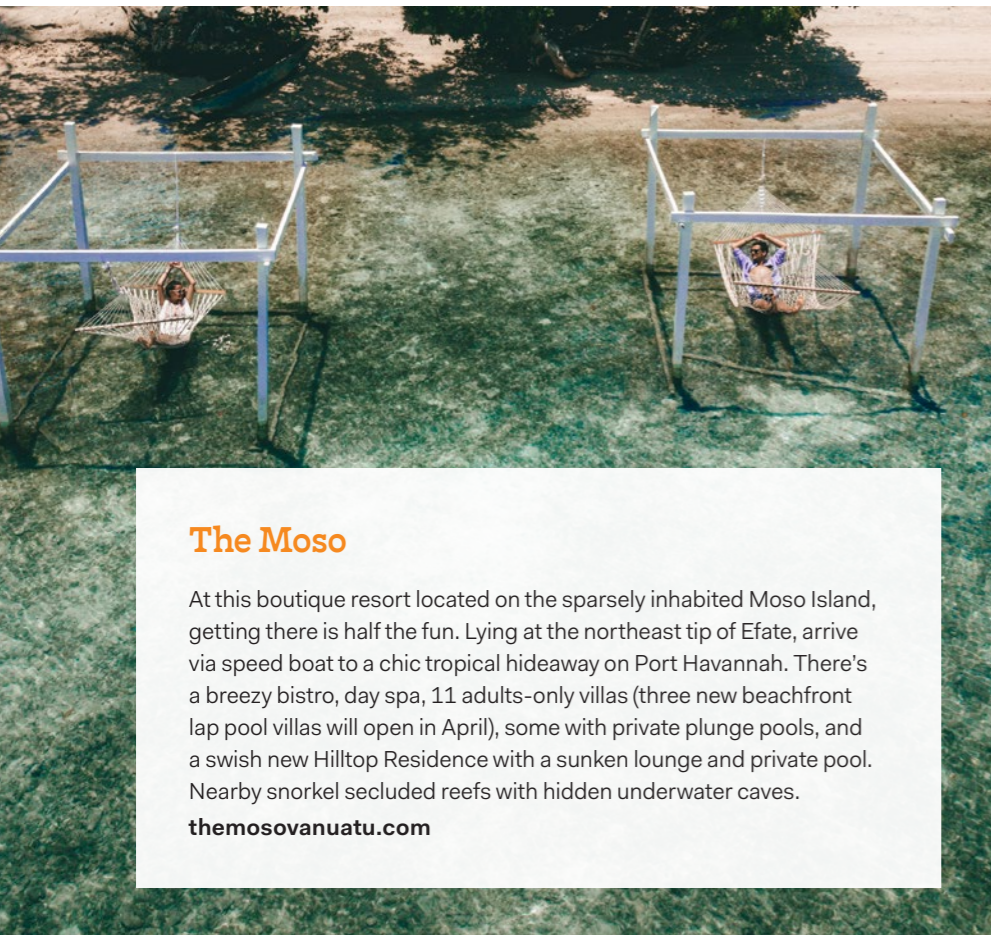


Accommodation

### M Resort & Spa

This new beachfront resort on Efate fills a gap in the market for boutique family-friendly lodging. Four three-bedroom villas (there are more planned, along with an infinity pool) sit on a calm inlet overlooking Eretoka and Lelepa Islands. Dine on contemporary Pacific-inspired cuisine with an Asian twist at the onsite restaurant, experience blazing sunsets, sip on tropical cocktails and enjoy phenomenal snorkelling in marine-protected reefs.

[mresortvanuatu.com](http://mresortvanuatu.com)



### The Moso

At this boutique resort located on the sparsely inhabited Moso Island, getting there is half the fun. Lying at the northeast tip of Efate, arrive via speed boat to a chic tropical hideaway on Port Havannah. There's a breezy bistro, day spa, 11 adults-only villas (three new beachfront lap pool villas will open in April), some with private plunge pools, and a swish new Hilltop Residence with a sunken lounge and private pool. Nearby snorkel secluded reefs with hidden underwater caves.

[themosovanuatu.com](http://themosovanuatu.com)

### The Havannah Boat House

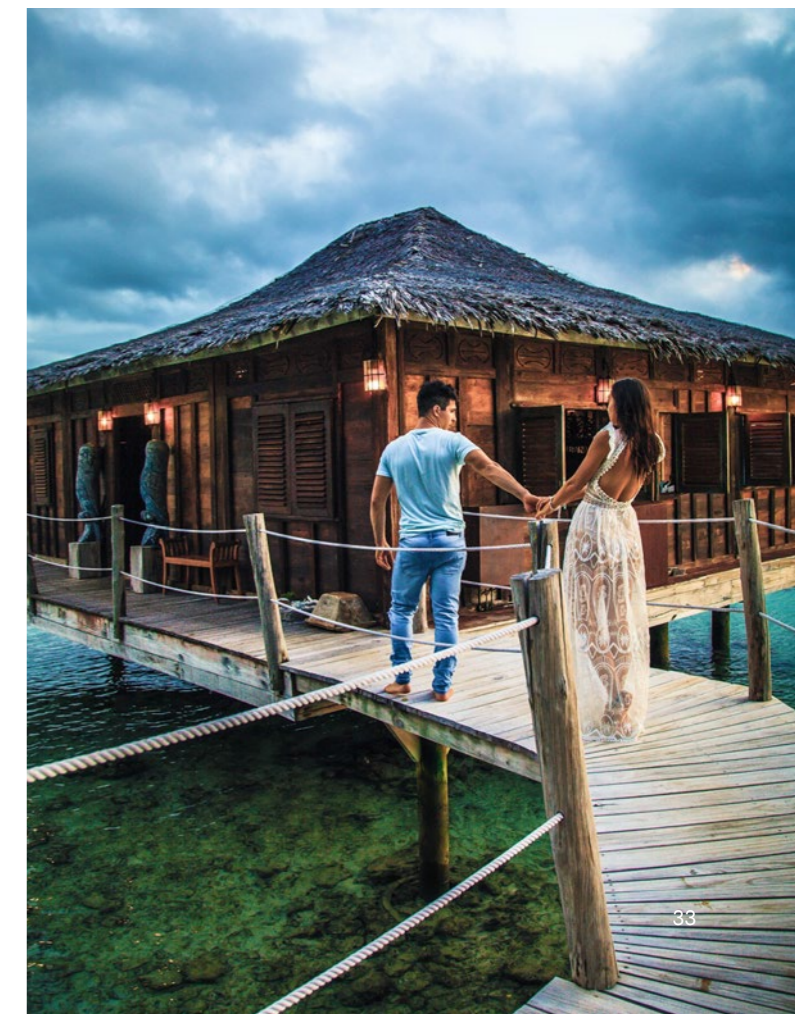
Located on the harbour's northwestern side, learn about local 'kastoms', enjoy a private massage, try kava under the nakamal or take a pottery or basket weaving class at this waterfront estate. Offering a main residence sleeping eight and boasting a tropical pool and lush gardens with crushed coral paths, guests can opt for in-house catering by K2 Kitchen. A neighbouring self-contained Boat House perched on the water's edge, complete with plunge pool and jetty, sleeps up to three.

[havannahboathouse.com](http://havannahboathouse.com)

### Ratua Island Resort and Spa

This private island resort hemmed by secluded beaches, lagoons, and coral reefs offers barefoot eco-luxury at its best. Stay in 13 restored Javanese villas or two deluxe beachfront marquees. Guests can explore the island by foot, bike, quadbike or horseback and see dugongs, tropical fish and turtles in a protected marine reserve. Ratua Island is a 35-minute boat ride from Santo.

[ratua.com](http://ratua.com)





## Breakas 'Stay & Pay' Deals

**Deal 1: Stay 7 nights Only pay for 6**

**Deal 2: Stay 5 nights Only pay for 4**

**Deal 3: Stay 4 nights Only pay for 3**

Breakas Beach Resort is an intimate tropical retreat providing the ultimate "feet in the sand" beach holiday. Enhanced by the natural beauty of a private cove on Pango peninsular, Breakas Beach Resort rests in an unrivaled backdrop in Port Vila. The Award Winning Resort features a stunning 22-metre infinity pool which falls into the horizon of the Pacific Ocean.

Scan for reservations



breakas.com



# HIT THE ROAD IN STYLE

## Discover the ELITE experience

ELITE have a large fleet of vehicles to suit your transportation needs.



All of ELITE's vehicles are maintained to the highest standard.

We offer call out service for extra assurance.

Discounts apply to longer term rentals by negotiation.

Airport transfers or vehicle delivery available on request.



**ELITE**  
Vehicle Rental Limited

Ranadi, Honiara, Solomon Islands  
Contact us:  
Phone / WhatsApp +677 7736229  
Facebook or email admin@elite.com.sb

RESORT-VANUATU

Oceanfront Accommodation  
Private Jetty  
Incredible Snorkelling

---

WEDDING VENUE  
EVENTS  
YOGA RETREATS

Bar & Kitchen  
— VANUATU —

Open Tuesday to Sunday  
Breakfast • Lunch • Dinner

---

CULTURAL SHOWS  
SUNDAY LIVE MUSIC

Enjoy international cuisine in air conditioning comfort or alfresco dining, all in the centre of town.

GRAND  
HOTEL AND CASINO

T +678 34050 | info@grandvanuatu.com | grandvanuatu.com

## MARINA HOTEL

YOUR IDEAL PLACE TO STAY

📍 LEMBU BAY, NORO, WESTERN PROVINCE  
☎ +677 725 0125 / 8584455 / 7939758  
✉ marinahotelnoro@gmail.com  
🌐 <https://www.marinahotelnoro.com>

**FACILITIES**

- Restaurant and Bar
- Karaoke room
- Billiard room
- Conference room
- Gym room
- Laundry

**ROOMS**

- Budget Room
- Deluxe Rooms
- Suite Rooms

**ACTIVITIES**

- Tours
- Snorkeling
- Turtle Feeding

# Eels, caves, & WAR DANCES

## A Day in Biche Village

WORDS AND PHOTOS JUSTIN JAMIESON

**T**here are days in your life when you wake up knowing you're about to embark on something so ridiculous that it'll either end in a great story or a call to your insurance company. My visit to Biche Village in the Solomon Islands was one of those days.

Biche Village, nestled somewhere between lush jungle and the middle of absolutely nowhere, is the kind of place that even Google Maps seems to give up on halfway through the directions. But after an hour-long boat ride and a short hike that made my legs question their life choices, I finally arrived. The village was a picture of tranquillity—beautiful, serene, and, as I soon discovered, brimming with more eccentricity than a Monty Python sketch.

*“Biche Village is famous for these slippery little creatures, which, as it turns out, are considered sacred.”*

The day started off innocently enough. I was greeted by a group of locals with smiles so genuine that I briefly forgot how many times I'd cursed the heat and the bugs during the hike. They told me I was in for a real treat: a day filled with their local customs and traditions. “Sure,” I thought. “How bad could it be?” Little did I know that my first task would involve getting up close and personal with eels.

Yes, eels. Biche Village is famous for these slippery little creatures, which, as it turns out, are considered sacred.

The villagers took me down to a freshwater stream where the eels were wriggling around like something out of a

B-grade horror movie. But here's the kicker: they expected me to feed them. Apparently, the eels are quite partial to coconut, which is ironic given that I'm quite partial to not being bitten by anything remotely resembling an eel.

With a mixture of trepidation and curiosity (and the knowledge that I'd probably end up telling this story at parties for years to come), I tentatively tossed a piece of coconut into the water. The eels went for it like toddlers at a candy store, and I couldn't help but laugh at the absurdity of it all. I was feeding eels in the Solomon Islands. If my friends back home could see me now...

Next on the itinerary was a visit to the village's infamous birthing cave. Now, if you're anything like me, the words “birthing cave” conjure up all sorts of bizarre mental images.



Opposite: The eels are always fascinating to watch. Above: Unusual tree carvings.

And trust me, none of them come close to the reality. The cave, a dark, damp, and decidedly claustrophobic hole in the ground, was where women used to give birth. As the villagers led me to the entrance, I couldn't help but wonder how many mothers had managed to squeeze out both a baby and the primal urge to run screaming from the cave.

Stepping inside, I was immediately hit by the musty smell of earth and history. The air was thick with the weight of countless generations, and as I crouched down to avoid banging my head on the low ceiling, I tried to imagine what it must have been like to bring new life into the world in such a place. The villagers told me that the cave was believed to have special powers—something about the spirits of ancestors watching over the birth. All I could think about was how the whole thing would make one hell of a haunted house attraction back home.

After crawling out of the cave (and yes, my knees were definitely reminding



me that I'm no spring chicken), it was time for the grand finale: the war dance. The villagers gathered in the middle of the village, their faces painted with fierce expressions that made me question whether this was a performance or a declaration of war. As the drums began to beat, the warriors erupted into a dance so intense that I was convinced they were going to summon a thunderstorm or, at the very least, make me spill my drink.

The war dance was a spectacle of raw power and energy, with the warriors stomping, shouting, and wielding spears with a level of coordination that I can only describe as terrifyingly impressive. I stood there, mouth agape, wondering if I should be clapping, cowering, or joining in. The answer, it turns out, was to stand absolutely still and hope they didn't mistake me for a trespasser.

By the time the dance ended, I was both exhilarated and slightly relieved to still be in one piece. The villagers, now back to their smiling, friendly selves, invited me to join them for a feast, complete with fresh fish, yams, and the obligatory coconut water. As I sat down to eat, I couldn't help but marvel at the day's events. Eels, birthing caves, and war dances—all in a day's work in Biche Village.

As the sun began to set and the village settled into a peaceful evening, I knew I had experienced something truly unique. Biche Village may be off the beaten path, but it's a place that will stick with you long after you've left its shores. And if you ever find yourself in the Solomon Islands, do yourself a favour—pay the village a visit. Just be prepared for some serious eel action. ▀



*“Biche Village, nestled somewhere between lush jungle and the middle of absolutely nowhere, is a picture of tranquility—beautiful, serene, and brimming with eccentricity.”*

Clockwise from opposite: A traditional war dance performed by the warriors of Biche Village; the children of Biche Village; the coastline of Biche Village.



Culture

Local man in traditional dress standing in front of a house in the Hotomai Cultural Village.

# Into the Heart of Hotomai

Discover the traditions, dances, and stories that makes Hotomai Cultural Village a national treasure.

WORDS REGINA LEPPING  
PHOTOS ROGER BRADFORD DAKAMAE



**I**f you're searching for something truly authentic, beautiful and natural, Hotomai Cultural Village is a must-visit destination just outside Honiara.

Located in Central Guadalcanal, between Belaha and Tenaru Falls (about 15 kilometres from the Henderson International Airport), this vibrant cultural hub offers an unforgettable insight into Solomon Islands' Guadalcanal Province's rich traditions.

Our adventure began when my friends and I were picked up at Tenaru Road by Jessy Koli, the visionary behind the cultural village tours. Jessy and his family are passionate about sharing their culture and have already attracted visitors from around the world. His warm smile and enthusiasm immediately set the tone for a day full of discovery.

Upon arrival at Hotomai Village, we were greeted by men, women, and children in traditional attire, their smiles as radiant as the fresh Guadalcanal air. I learned that "Hotomai" means "welcome" in the Birao dialect of the Guadalcanal Language, and this welcoming spirit was felt throughout the day. Jessy, our guide and MC, expertly balanced storytelling with coordinating activities.

The festivities began with a beautiful welcome dance performed by the women and children. At the village entrance, a little girl and an elder presented betel nut and fruit leaf, a traditional gesture of hospitality. For those not willing to try a betel nut, bananas hung from nearby trees



**Clockwise from top:** Female residents of the Village wearing traditional dress; a group of women ready to weave baskets; songs, dances and stories are passed down through the generations; Jessy Koli, one of the Hotomai Cultural Village tour guides.





***“This is how we know who we are. This is how we can pass on what we know to the next generation.”***

as an alternative snack. Under the cool shade of a large tree, Jessy shared the history of the villagers, their origins, and their way of life, emphasising the barter system that continues to unite their community.

The songs and dances we witnessed—some rarely performed today—are an essential part of the villagers’ heritage. Jessy has made it his mission to preserve these cultural treasures, ensuring they are passed on to future generations.

After the performances, we explored the village. The men demonstrated how to start a fire using sticks, while the women cooked bananas in temporary huts. We admired their intricate weaving skills, which produce durable baskets and trays crafted from wild vines only found in untouched forests. Unfortunately, deforestation has made these materials increasingly scarce.

The village gardens showcased an abundance of root crops, a testament to the people’s connection to their fertile land. At another hut, women and girls mashed ngali nuts, offering travellers a taste of traditional snacks. The harmony between the villagers and their environment was evident in every corner of Hotomai.

**Clockwise from top:** Three traditional huts adorned with unique patterns and designs; a group of women ready to weave baskets; a local villager sitting in quiet reflection.



We visited three traditional huts adorned with unique patterns and designs made from various vines and cane. Inside the first hut, villagers in traditional costumes sang enchanting melodies, their voices carrying on the wind like echoes from the past.

Two young girls in traditional attire shared their thoughts with me. Jesminda, one of them, said, “This is how we know who we are. This is how we can pass on what we know to the next generation.” Pulling her younger cousin close, she spoke with a deep sense of pride and responsibility for preserving their heritage.

The day concluded with a final performance and a generous distribution of food. Root crops were presented to guests as tokens of gratitude, their abundance leaving us in awe. Villagers called out each guest’s name, loudly and joyfully, as they handed over baskets of food. The children’s laughter and smiles were infectious, making the farewell as memorable as the welcome.

Mr Koli wrapped up the day with a hopeful message, envisioning Hotomai as a place where visitors from all over the world can experience Guadalcanal’s rich culture while helping to preserve its unique identity. True to its name, Hotomai is a heartfelt welcome that leaves visitors enriched and inspired. ▀



Do *move* with a bundle!

Get 35 TV Channels + Unlimited Internet from only \$870 / mo. ONLY available at SATSOL.

Join the Solomons favourite Internet and TV service provider today.

Whether you're here on business or if you call the Solomons home, our incredible team will look after all of your internet and entertainment needs.



Call us on **22422** or email [info@satsol.net](mailto:info@satsol.net) to find out more



**No1 currency** THE PACIFIC ISLAND CURRENCY SPECIALISTS  
**Currency Exchange**

We won't be beaten on price

- ✓ Great rates
- ✓ Commission Free
- ✓ No hassle

Look out for No1 Currency, we have 6 convenient locations across Solomon Islands.

- Point Cruz - City Centre Building
- Kukum - ACE Building
- Capital Park - Burns Creek
- Auki - Justin Fuo'o Building
- Gizo - Adventure Sports
- Munda - R&J Haus



**GREAT RATES | NO FEES | NO HASSLE**



HONIARA ☎ 20414 | AUKI ☎ 40345 | MUNDA ☎ 62110 | GIZO ☎ 60805

Guide

# A Quick Guide to Honiara

Conveniently positioned centrally within the South Pacific and embedded deeply in World War Two history and Melanesian culture, Honiara is not only the capital of the Solomon Islands, but a great base for travellers visiting the South Pacific.

As well as this, there are a number of excellent food and drink options throughout the city, and modern facilities available for every kind of traveller.

Check out our map for information on where to go in the capital.



## BSP Branches are located in the following locations in the Solomon Islands.

### Our Locations

- Auki
- Gizo
- Honiara
- Munda
- Noro

Talk to any of our friendly staff today to access BSP Products and Services.

☎ 677 21874 - Mon to Fri week days only  
 ✉ [servicebsp@bsp.com.sb](mailto:servicebsp@bsp.com.sb)  
 🌐 [www.bsp.com.sb](http://www.bsp.com.sb)  
 📍 Visit your nearest BSP branch



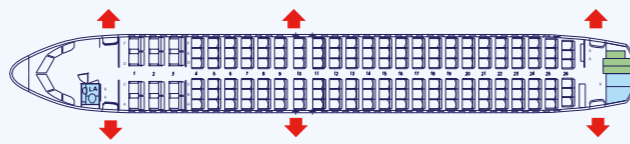
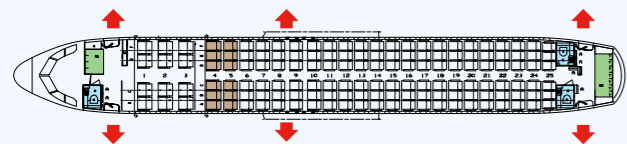
# Solomon Airlines Fleet



## A320

Registration: **H4-SIB**  
 Length: **37.57 m**  
 Wing Span: **34.10 m**  
 Range: **3,000 nm**  
 Cruising Speed: **830 km/h**  
 Seating capacity: **144**  
 Configuration: **Business: 12, Economy: 132**  
 Current Routes: **All international routes**

Registration: **H4-SAL**  
 Length: **37.57 m**  
 Wing Span: **35.80 m**  
 Range: **3,350 nm with sharklets**  
 Cruising Speed: **830 km/h**  
 Seating capacity: **150**  
 Configuration: **Business: 12, Economy: 138**  
 Current Routes: **All international routes**



▲ Emergency Exits    ▲ Toilets    ▲ Galleys    ▲ Belama Club



## Dash 8-102

Length: **22.25 m**  
 Wing Span: **25.91 m**  
 Range: **2,040 km**  
 Cruising Speed: **490 km/h**  
 Seating capacity: **36**  
 Crew: **3 crew including 1 cabin crew**  
 Aircraft in Fleet: **1**  
 Current Routes: **Honiara, Munda, Gizo; Kirakira, Lomlom**



## Twin Otter

Length: **15.77 m**  
 Wing Span: **19.81 m**  
 Range: **1,350 km**  
 Cruising Speed: **338 km/h**  
 Seating capacity: **16**  
 Crew: **2**  
 Aircraft in Fleet: **3**  
 Current Routes: **All airports in the Solomon Islands**

# Inflight Info

## Business Class

Enjoy the comfort of our friendly skies onboard our A320-200 aircraft, with a full meal service and range of alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages available, personalised service and extra seat comfort, including 42-inch seat pitch and 27-inch of seat width, offering 30% more space than economy.

### Business class passenger benefits include:

- 40 kg checked baggage allowance
- 10 kg cabin baggage allowance
- 7 kg sports equipment allowance
- Priority check-in and boarding
- Access to partner lounges including Fiji Airways Tabua Lounge and the Qantas Club Lounge in Brisbane

## Economy Class

Our cabins are specifically configured for both space and comfort. Our inflight service offers a meal with a range of alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages included complimentary for international sectors, and on domestic sectors a snack and water is provided.

### Economy Class passenger benefits include:

- 30 kg checked baggage (or 40 kg if booking flexible economy) and 7 kg cabin baggage allowance on international services
- 7 kg sports equipment allowance
- 16 kg checked baggage and 5kgs cabin baggage allowance on domestic services

## Solomon Airlines Contact Information

### Head Office

Henderson Airport  
 P. O. Box 23, Honiara,  
 Solomon Islands  
**Ph: (677) 20031**

### Travel Center

Solomon Airlines Building,  
 Mendana Avenue, Point Cruz,  
 Honiara, Solomon Islands  
**Ph: (677) 44999**  
**Email: sales@flysolomons.com.sb**

### Australia

**Ph: 1300 894 311 or (61) 7 3860 5883**  
**Email: reservations@flysolomons.com**

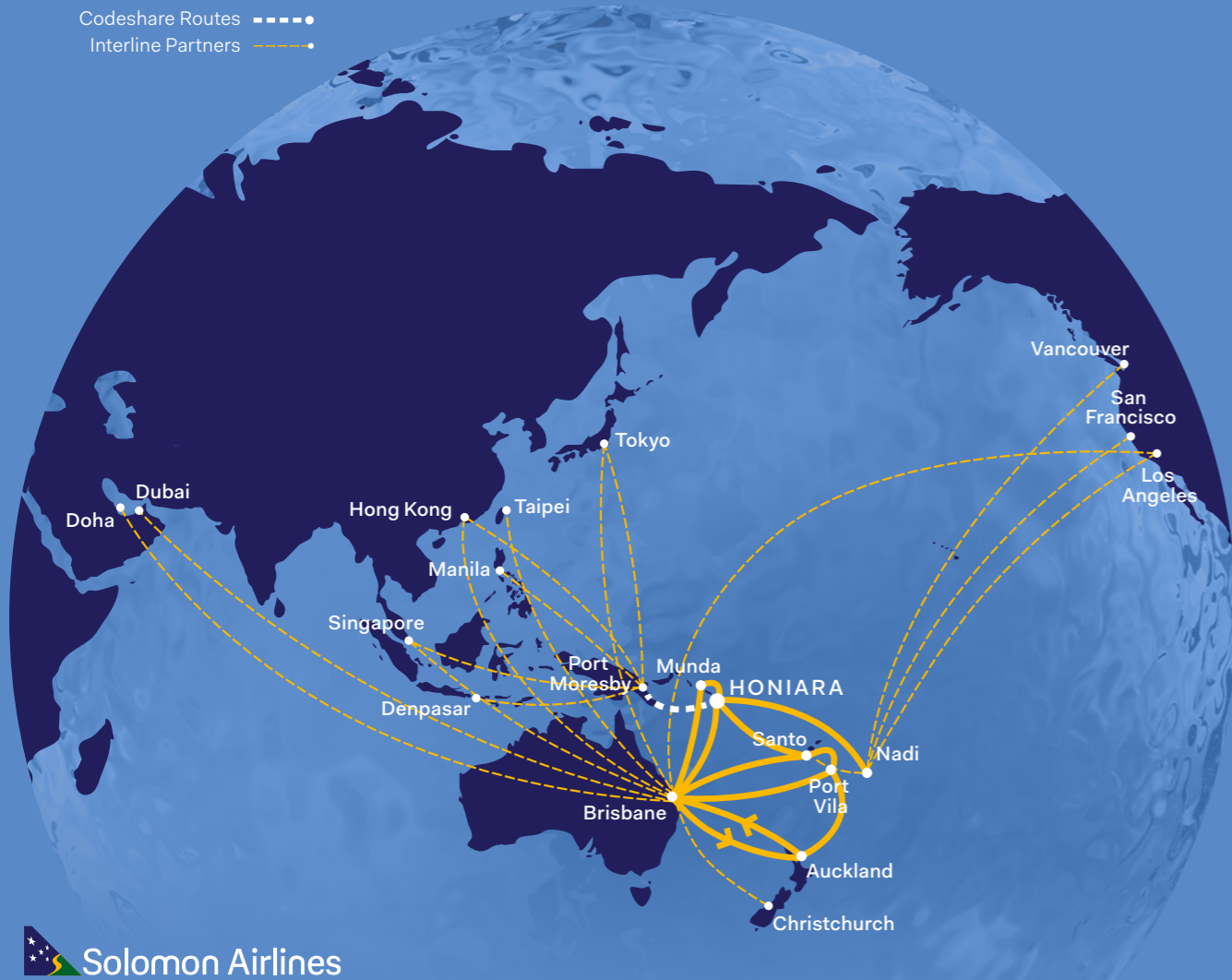
### Fiji

Nadi Airport, Office 27, First Floor  
**Ph: (679) 6722831**  
**Fax: (679) 6722140**  
**Email: solomon@connect.com.fj**



# International Connections

- Solomon Airlines Routes —●—
- Codeshare Routes - - - -
- Interline Partners - - - - ●



## General Sales Agents

**AUSTRALIA AND FIJI**  
 Australia Ph: (61) 02 8248 0098  
 Fiji Ph: (679) 6722767  
 Email: solomonairlines@airlinerepservices.com  
 Address: 27 Queens Road, Martintar, Nadi, Fiji Islands

**CANADA**  
 Ph: (1) 800 985 4997  
 Email: canada@apg-ga.com  
 Address: 1100-1200 West 73rd Avenue, Vancouver, BC V6P 6G5, Canada

**FRANCE**  
 Ph: (33) 1 53 77 13 27  
 Email: solomonairlines.fr@apg-ga.com  
 Address: 66 Champs-Élysées, 75008 Paris, France

**GERMANY**  
 Ph: (49) 6031 737 630  
 Email: germany@apg-ga.com  
 Address: Leonhardstrasse 22, 61169 Friedberg, Germany

**HONG KONG**  
 Ph: (852) 2826 9228  
 Email: hongkong@apg-ga.com  
 Address: APG 10/F Tung Ming Building, 40 Des Voeux Road, Central Hong Kong

**JAPAN**  
 Ph: (81) 50 33882939  
 Email: japan@apg-ga.com  
 Address: 8F ATT New Tower, 2-11-7, Akasaka, Minato-ku, 107-0052, Tokyo, Japan

**MALAYSIA**  
 Ph: (603) 2141 2701  
 Email: malaysia@apg-ga.com  
 Address: Suite 1001, Level 10, Wisma Lim Foo Yong, 86, Jalan Raja Chulan, 50200 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

**NEW ZEALAND**  
 Ph: (64) 9 969 7602  
 Email: flysolomons@airlinemarketing.co.nz  
 Address: Airline Marketing NZ, Level 10 BDO Tower, 120 Albert Street, Auckland 1141, New Zealand

**PHILIPPINES**  
 Ph: (632) 8896 90 75  
 Email: philippines@apg-ga.com  
 Address: 2nd Floor, Lydia Building, 39 Polaris Street, Bel Air, 1209 Makati City, Philippines

**SINGAPORE**  
 Ph: (65) 6339 5500  
 Email: singapore@apg-ga.com  
 Address: APG Singapore Pte Ltd, 114 Middle Road #05-01, Singapore 188971

**TAIWAN, CHINA**  
 Ph: (886) 2 2368 7828  
 Email: taiwan@apg-ga.com  
 Address: 11F, No.111, Sec 2 Nanjing E. Road, Taipei, Taiwan 104

**VANUATU**  
 Ph: (678) 22836  
 Email: estella@vanuatutravelservices.com.vu  
 Address: South Pacific Travel, Novo House, Port Vila, Vanuatu

**UNITED KINGDOM**  
 Ph: (44) 0844 482 1670  
 Email: uk@apg-ga.com  
 Address: 3 World Business Centre, Newall Road, London Heathrow Airport, Hounslow, TW6 2TA, United Kingdom

**USA**  
 Ph: (1) 888 468 5736  
 Email: solomonairlines@airlinepros.com  
 Address: AirlinePros, Suite 358-360, 420 Lexington Ave, New York, NY 10170, USA

# Domestic Connections

- Solomon Airlines Routes —●—



## Contacts

**SOLOMON ISLANDS – Office**  
 Head office: (677) 20031  
 Reservations: (177) local or (677) 23506

**OUTER PORTS**  
 Santa Cruz: Sales & Reservations  
 Ph: (677) 53159  
 Gizo: Sales & Reservations  
 Ph: (677) 60173  
 Munda: Sales & Reservations  
 Ph: (677) 62152  
 Kirakira: Sales & Reservations  
 Ph: (677) 50070

## International Offices

**AUSTRALIA – Reservations**  
 Ph: 1300 894 311 or (61) 7 3860 5883  
 Email: reservations@flysolomons.com

**AUSTRALIA – Operations**  
 Address: Ground Floor, International Terminal, Brisbane Airport, QLD 4008, Australia

**FIJI – Nadi**  
 Ph: (679) 6722831  
 Address: P.O. Box 10229, Nadi International Airport, Fiji

## Cargo

**AUSTRALIA**  
 Ph: (61) 7 3119 2571  
 Email: bneexports@airway.com.au  
 Address: Airway, 8 Hibiscus Street, Brisbane Airport, QLD 4008, Australia

**EUROPE**  
 Ph: (31) 0 206481220  
 Email: sandervanderploeg@speed.nl  
 Address: Speed B.V, Schiphol Airport, The Netherlands

**NEW ZEALAND**  
 Ph: (64) 9 3523409  
 Email: aki.gsa@airway.co.nz  
 Address: Airway, Level 6, 2 Commerce Street, Auckland CBD 1010, New Zealand

**SOLOMON ISLANDS**  
 Ph: (677) 36592  
 Email: cargo@flysolomons.com.sb  
 Address: Henderson International Airport, Honiara, Guadalcanal, Solomon Islands


 Destination Guide

# Things to remember before your trip to the Solomons

## Climate

Tropically warm and humid with coastal day temperatures averaging 28C (82.4F). April to November tends to be drier and November to April wetter.

## What to wear

Light and casual... take it easy!

## Health

Malaria can be a problem. Take anti-malarial medication a week before arrival, once a week during your stay, and for four weeks after departure. Consult your chemist or doctor about an appropriate brand of tablet. Maloprin is usually recommended.

## Immigration

Commonwealth, United States and most European visitors do not need holiday visas but need return or onward tickets. People intending to work must have work permit.

## Honiara

Our capital is eight kilometres (4.97 miles) from Honiara International Airport.

## Airport Tax

SB\$305 payable by passengers 12 years and over) boarding international flights, and these are generally added onto the cost of your air tickets.

## Currency

The Solomon Islands dollar (SB). \$100, \$50, \$20, \$10, \$5 and \$2 Solomon Islands notes, while coins are \$1, 50c, 20c, 10c and 5c.

## Business Hours

Government and business general hours are Monday to Friday, 8am to 4:30pm, with a one-hour lunch break normally beginning at noon.

Shops and some offices open Saturday 8am to 12 noon.

## Electricity

220-240 volts in Honiara and some outer island centres.

## Banks

ANZ Banking Group open Monday to Friday 9am to 4pm. Pan Oceanic Bank Limited opens 9am to 4pm Monday to Friday, and the Hyundai Mall main branch opens 10am to 1pm on Saturday. Bred Bank opens 9am to 4pm Monday to Friday. Bank of South Pacific opens 9am to 4pm Monday to Friday.

## Transport

Taxis and buses are readily available in Honiara. Rental cars are available from Economy car rental and Elite Vehicle Rental Ltd.

Honiara Airport Taxi Association (HATA) also provides airport transfers, tours, car hire and general transport service in Honiara.

## Telecommunications

Local, international calls and internet services are available through Solomon Telekom Company Limited (Our Telekom) and Bmobile networks. 4G network is available in Honiara, Auki, Munda, Noro and Gizo whilst all other provincial hubs are equipped with their 3G networks. SATSOL is also another internet service provider (ISP) in Honiara, other regional and provincial areas in Solomon Islands.

## International Air

Solomon Airlines operate out of Honiara and Munda International Airports, while other carriers include Fiji Airways and Air Niugini.

## Domestic Air

Solomon Airlines operate services throughout the country.

## News Media

The country has a vibrant media landscape, offering choices in both English and Pidgin. Radio services are offered by state radio, Solomon Islands Broadcasting Corporation, private operators and religious bodies.

Our Telekom relays BBC and other satellite TV networks while Island Sun and Solomon Star are the two daily news papers.

## Tippling

Not expected and not encouraged.



ANNOUNCEMENT

# 2025 SCHEDULE ENHANCEMENTS

Solomon Airlines is pleased to announce a series of strategic schedule adjustments for 2025, designed to enhance regional connectivity, improve operational efficiency, and ensure smooth travel experiences for passengers and cargo. These updates will take effect as follows:

**International Schedule Updates**

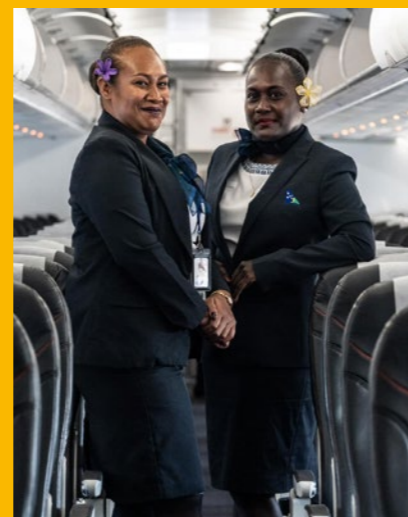
Effective 20 February 2025:

- **Solomon Islands-Vanuatu Route:** Honiara to Santo and Port Vila service will now operate on Mondays. Port Vila to Honiara service will continue on Saturdays.
- **New Services Introduced:**  
**Tuesday:** Direct service Santo to Brisbane  
**Thursday:** Santo via Port Vila to Auckland  
**Friday:** Direct services between Auckland and Brisbane in both directions.

**Domestic Schedule Updates**

Effective 13 January 2025:

- **Western Shuttle:** Continuation of Twin Otter services operating from Munda as a hub to connect with flights servicing Gizo, Ramata, Seghe, Suavanao, and Kagau
- **Eastern Shuttle:** A new shuttle service between Santa Cruz and Lomlom has been introduced, increasing capacity and improving connectivity within Temotu Province while the Santa Cruz (SCZ) runway remains under maintenance.



These enhancements reflect Solomon Airlines' ongoing commitment to providing seamless travel experiences, meeting passenger demand, and supporting regional development. We thank you for your understanding and continued support as we implement these improvements. ▶

A detailed schedule is available online at [flysolomons.com/plan/flight-schedules](https://flysolomons.com/plan/flight-schedules)

ANNOUNCEMENT

## ASPA SEMINAR ATTENDANCE

Solomon Airlines is proud to have successfully attended and participated in the 78th Association of South Pacific Airlines (ASPA) Seminar in Brisbane in late November. This year's theme, Sharing Challenges and Opportunities – Building Back Better, resonates deeply as we work together to strengthen and grow Pacific aviation.

Excitingly, Honiara will host the prestigious event later this year, bringing aviation leaders from across the region to our shores. We are honoured to showcase our beautiful islands and look forward to welcoming all ASPA delegates. ▶



UPDATE

## RESERVATIONS OPERATING HOURS EXPANSION

Solomon Airlines is extending the hours of its international reservations call centre hours, in partnership with customer solution specialists Anjuna, providing enhanced accessibility and convenience for travellers.

Effective immediately, customers worldwide can access Solomon Airlines' international reservations and support services 24 hours a day between Monday at 8:00 AM through Saturday at 6:00 PM, and on Sundays from 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM (Solomon Islands Time, GMT+11) for assistance.



Passengers can continue to reach the airline internationally by calling +61 7 38605883 or locally in Australia at 1300 894 311, and now Fiji at +679 229 8840, and New Zealand locally at 0800 005 455. ▶

Passengers may also contact the airline via email any time at [reservations@flysolomons.com](mailto:reservations@flysolomons.com)

## BELAMA CLUB

**Belama ME benefits:**  
Priority check-in | Express clearance in Brisbane | Preferential seating at check-in  
Access to Belama Club Lounge in Honiara for you and 1 companion

**Belama PLUS benefits:**  
All Belama ME benefits and access to Plaza Premium Lounge in Brisbane

**Belama MAX and BUSINESS benefits:**  
All Belama PLUS benefits and access to Air New Zealand Lounge in Auckland

Ask about our FAMILY program including Belama ME benefits and more.

CAREERS

# INSPIRING CAREERS FAIR HELD FOR SCHOOL STUDENTS

Back in November of 2024, Solomon Airlines proudly celebrated its 62nd anniversary by hosting an inspiring Careers Fair in Honiara.

Students from a number of secondary schools, including St. Joseph Catholic National Secondary School, King George VI Secondary School, Betikama Adventist College, Chung Wah School, St. Nicholas Anglican College, and Tamlan School, joined the event to explore dynamic career paths in aviation, tourism, and related industries.

A key highlight for the students was hearing personal stories from senior Solomon Airlines staff, including pilots who shared their journeys from local schools to successful careers in

aviation. This made the event especially relatable and inspiring, as students could see firsthand the potential pathways to a future with Solomon Airlines.

Through interactive booths, students engaged hands-on with various departments, such as Piloting, Cabin Crew, Engineering, Commercial, Human Resources, and IT. These immersive experiences offered a window into the skills, dedication, and passion each role demands, helping students imagine their futures in aviation.

Solomon Airlines is committed to empowering the next generation of Solomon Islanders. By investing in youth development, we hope to inspire students to strive for excellence as they approach their year-end exams and beyond, preparing them to contribute to the growth of the nation's aviation and tourism sectors. ▶

For more information, visit Solomon Airlines website: [flysolomons.com](http://flysolomons.com)



UPDATE

# THE SOLOMONS AIRLINES PEACE MARATHON DATE CONFIRMED

Solomon Airlines' flagship event the Solomons Airlines Peace Marathon is now confirmed for this year, Saturday the 30th of August.

Originally supposed to be held in October 2024, it was rescheduled so that more comprehensive planning could take place with the event's partners to ensure the safety and enjoyment of all participants, volunteers, and spectators. The marathon's rescheduling has also allowed more time to attract regional and international athletes.

The annual event, which first began in 2009, is a celebration of fitness and culture, including a full 42km marathon course, plus a 21km half-marathon, 10km and 5km races and a 2km fun run. ▶

For more information contact: [marketing@flysolomons.com.sb](mailto:marketing@flysolomons.com.sb)



A **100%** locally owned company

# DELIVERING FUEL SOLUTIONS TO THE SOLOMONS



Suppliers of **Quality Fuels** and **Lubricants** in Solomon Islands



+677 21838  
Sales & Operations

+677 36142  
Henderson Depot

+677 61077  
Noro Depot

[sales@spo.com.sb](mailto:sales@spo.com.sb)

[www.spo.com.sb](http://www.spo.com.sb)

[southpacificoil](https://www.facebook.com/southpacificoil)



# Honiara's Entertainment Hub



## Welkam to Pacific Crown Hotel

Pacific Crown Hotel offers a convenient location just 5km from the International Airport & 3km to Point Cruise (Honiara's CBD).

Our suites include private balconies, lounge areas, mini-bar, WiFi, satellite television and air-conditioning.

Sip on cocktails and dine in our famous Garden Bar & Restaurant of Malaysian Chinese cuisine!

Let us show you the warmth of Solomon Island hospitality!

Support our talented local live bands from Wednesday to Saturday at canoe bar. Happy hour 4-8pm daily.

Try our motu (Solomon dish) on our cultural nights every Thursday and watch our beautiful tamure dancers share a mix of local and international dance stories.



# PACIFIC CROWN HOTEL

( 677 ) 45000

RESERVATION@THEPCH.COM



WWW.THEPCH.COM



PACIFIC CROWN HOTEL, KUKUM HIGHWAY P.O. BOX 1298