

Solomon Islands Compendium

A Compilation of Guidebook References and Cruising Reports
Covering the Solomon Islands, Off the East Coast of Australia



IMPORTANT: USE ALL INFORMATION IN THIS DOCUMENT AT YOUR OWN RISK!!

Rev 2024.v4 26 August 2024

Keep the Solomon's Compendium alive by being a contributor!
Submit updates on atolls, islands, anchorages, businesses, snorkel spots, etc...
It's easy to participate and will help other cruisers for years to come.

Email Soggy Paws at sherry@svsoggypaws.com.

You can also contact us on Sailmail at WDI5677

The current home (and the most up to date) version of this document is located at:

<http://svsoggypaws.com/files/>

If you found it posted elsewhere, it might not be the most current version. Please check the above site for the most up to date copy, and remember...it will always be free!

Revision Log

Many thanks to all who have contributed over the years!!

Rev	Date	Notes
2024.4	26-Aug-2024	Updates to formalities, fueling in Solomons, and various island updates by Yaminda, Eastern Stream, and Sugar Shack
2024.3	19-June-2024	A note from Honu II about being charged anchoring fees.
2024.2	17-June-2024	Reorganization of entire compendium by Sugar Shack. Updates on various islands from Eastern Stream, Taenga, Trinity, and Sugar Shack.
2024.1	05-Jan-2024	Update on the situation at Liapari
2023.2	21-Sep-2023	Update on clearing in at Nendo from SV Deinemeid.
2023.1	10-June-2023	Update on Roderick Bay from sv Tequila
2020.1	07-Oct-2020	New inputs from SV Escape II
2019.9	20-Sep-2019	Clearing out of Noro. West Coast of Vella LaVella updates. Indigo II anchorages from south of Honiara. More on tropical sores.
2019.8	07-Aug-2019	Kolombangara updates, many miscellaneous
2019.7	23-June-2019	Haulout info for Liapari, Sesape, and Avi Avi, updates on Munda and Noro
2019.6	13-June-2019	More Honiara info and visa renewals
2019.5	17-May-2019	Western Province stuff from Lorelei, updates from Soggy Paws on Russells, Tetepare, Marovo Lagoon, and Honiara
2019.4	13-Apr-2019	Updates on checking in, Shortlands, Stirling Island, Vella Lavella, Gizo, and Vonavona
2019.3	23-Mar-2019	More Screensaver, Sieling References, etc
2019.2	18-Mar-2019	More Screensaver and etc.
2019.1	21-Feb-2019	Shango's notes, Adina waypoints, various stuff from various sources
2018.1	15-Dec-2018	Bits from L'il Explorers. Notes on Gulf Harbor Radio (SSB section)
2017.1	11-Aug-2017	Info from Screensaver Blog
2017.0	04-Apr-2017	Info from s/v Field Trip's blog, Adina's waypoints, Carina's write-ups from SSCA newsletter.
2016.0	01-Nov-2016	Initial version, still very rough at this point!!

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1 Introduction

We started creating compendiums for the Tuamotus in French Polynesia as a way for s/v Soggy Paws and a few friends to organize notes and various internet sources. Later, it became a way for us to pass on what we've learned to other cruisers.

We have since created over 25 compendiums all the way across the Pacific and in to SE Asia. Including, Panama, Ecuador, French Polynesia, Cook / Samoa Islands, Tonga, Solomon's, Fiji, New Caledonia, Micronesia, Marshall Islands, Hawaii, Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia, the Indian Ocean, and the Red Sea. Plus, we have received updates from cruisers since 2011 (please send us yours!).

If you haven't found our other 'Compendiums', they're free at www.soggypaws.com/files. There are also links on that page to our satellite charts, track files and anchorage waypoints in GPX format.

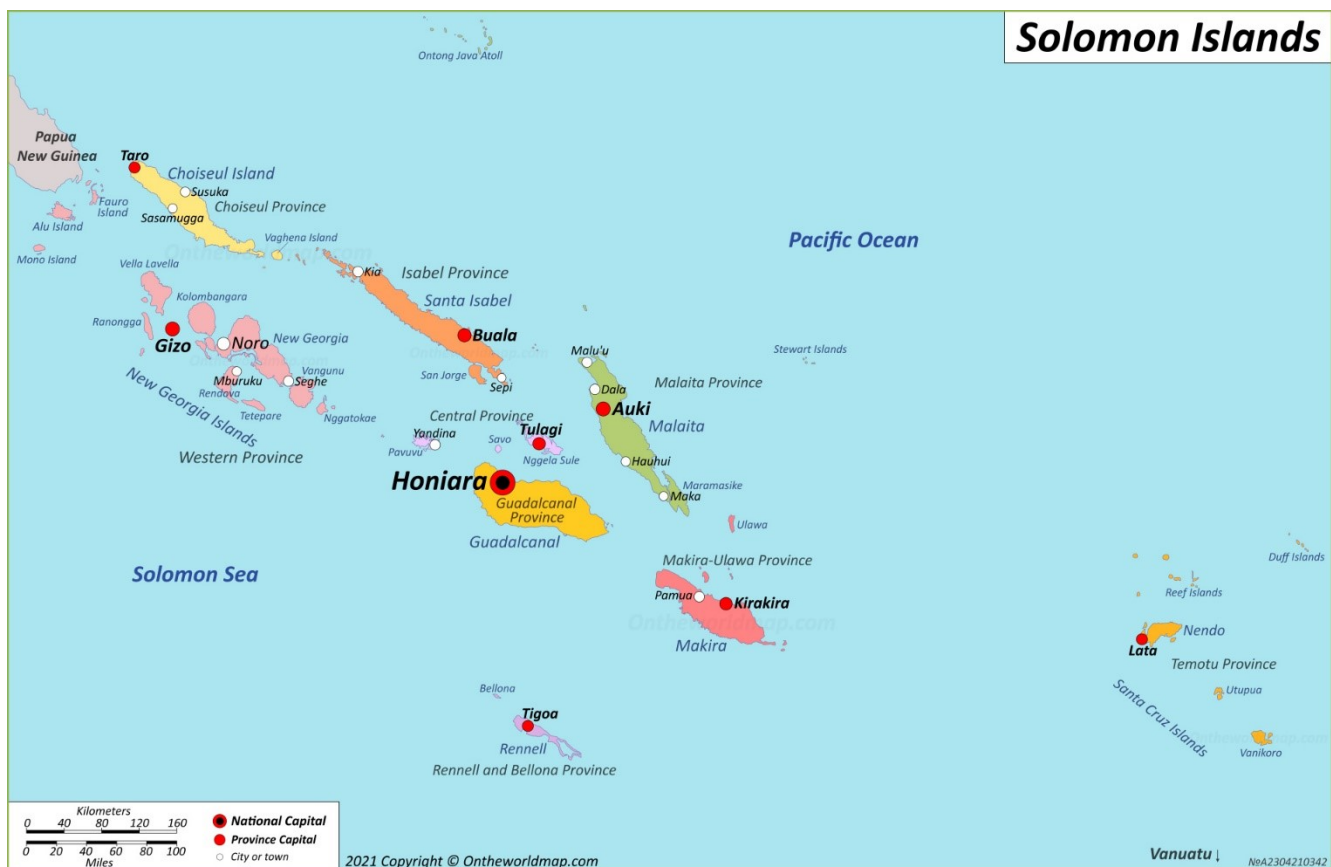
This is not intended to replace the guidebooks or charts, but to supplement out-of-date guides with recent cruiser first-hand reports, and fill in information on places that the guides don't cover.

This 'compendium' contains cruiser feedback from personal experiences, some website content, and information from our own experience. Source and date of information are noted.

1.1 Organization of the Guide

This guide is loosely organized by provinces starting east to west. The islands listed within the provinces are also listed east to west.

There are nine administrative provinces in the Solomon Islands.



The largest islands of each province are listed below (please note that not all islands are listed, only the large islands within that province):



1. Temotu Province

Reef Islands	Sana Cruz Islands (Nendo ** Port of Entry, Utupua, Vanikoro)	Duff Islands and Tikopia Islands
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2. Makira and Ulawa Province

Makira (Santa Cristobal)	Owariki Santa Catalina	Pio	Ulawa
Owaraha (Santa Ana)	Three Sister Islands (Ali'iti, Malaulalo, Malaipaina)	Uki ni Masi Islands	

3. Malaita Province

Malaita	Small Malaita (Maramasike)	Ontong Java Atoll 138nm N Santa Isabel	Sikaiana 117nm NE of Malaita
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4. Renell and Bellona Province

Renell (Mu Ngava)	Bellona (Mu Ngiki)
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5. Guadalcanal Province

Guadalcanal ** Honiara Port of Entry	Marapa Island	Mariupapa Island
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6. Central Province

(Nggela Sule and Nggela Pile)	Savo Island	Pavuvu	Russell Islands
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7. Isabel Province

Santa Isabel	Maleivona	Sikopo	Papatura F'a Papatura Ite
Arnarvon	Onogou Island	Mahige	
Kerehikapa	Ramose	Barora Fa'a	
Fera Island	San Jorge	Barora Ite	

8. Western Province

Akara Island	Liapari	Mondomondo	Shortland Island
Faisi	Logha	Mono Island	Simbo
Fauro Island	Lola Island	Nakaza	Stirling Island
Gizo ** Port of Entry	Maraovo Island	New Georgia ** Port of entry at Noro	Telina
Ghoi	Marovo Lagoon	Nggatokae	Tetepare
Kennedy Island	Matikuri	Nusatupe	Uepi
Kingguru	Mbava	Ranongga	Vella Lavella
Kohinggo	Mborokua	Rendova	Vangunu
Kolombangara	Mbulo Island	Mono Island	Vonavona

9. Choiseul Province

Choiseul	Wagina (Vaghena)	Rob Roy	Taro ** Port of Entry
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1.2 Customs and Immigration

Best to double-check the respective government websites before you make landfall, to make sure you are aware of the latest government requirements.

- Solomon Islands Customs and Excise Division: <https://www.customs.gov.sb/content.jsf?c=202210>
- Customs Directive (yachts are on page 2): www.customs.gov.sb/files/CUSTOMS%20SHIPPING%20DIRECTIVE%2011th%20Oct%202022.pdf
- Noonsite: <https://www.noonsite.com/place/solomon-islands/view/clearance/>

1.2.1 Ports of Entry

- ✓ Lata, Nendo, Temotu Province
- ✓ Honiara, Guadalcanal Island, Guadalcanal Province
- ✓ Noro, New Georgia Island, Western Province (yacht friendly)
- ✓ Gizo, Gizo Island, Western Province
- ✓ Taro, Taro Island, Choiseul Province (yacht friendly)

Taro (Choiseul Island) and Noro (New Georgia) have been more yacht friendly in the past. Gizo has been reported to charge additional fees so be aware.

Do not stop at other islands prior to clearing in - as there are heavy fines. Especially if you are coming from Vanuatu, you are not allowed to stop at any of the eastern islands prior to clearing in at Nendo.

1.2.2 Customs

The Comptroller of Customs is responsible for all marine traffic. The following documents must be sent electronically to Customs at least 3 days prior to your arrival in the Solomons.

Email documents to [SI CustomsMaritimeClearances@sig.gov.sb](mailto:SI_CustomsMaritimeClearances@sig.gov.sb) and for Lata include MAusolo@customs.gov.sb.

Note that their email services CAN NOT accept emails larger than 10mb so you must send your documents in multiple emails labeling the subject line 1 of 3, 2 of 3, 3 of 3, etc... Be sure to get a "read receipt" when emailing customs.

- Customs Clearance from Previous port
- Voyage Memo Covering past 21 days
- Free Pratique
- Crew list
- Passport photo/ID page of all persons onboard. Pay \$35.00USD per meter (length of your boat)

Honiara customs may send you to SIMA to cover the Marine Light fee. If you do not go to Honiara, or if Customs does not tell you to go to SIMA then you do not need to pay this fee.

July 2024: There was no cost to clear in with customs. But we did pay \$1,000 for immigration and \$200 for Biosecurity if you have nothing to declare. – Eastern Stream

May 2024: We cleared in in Nendo and had a nice conversation with George (Customs Official). Lata on the island of Nendo is a port of entry. You can anchor at Lata but the preferred anchorage is Shaw Point (10°45.329S / 165°49.6E). The officials will come over from Lata for clearance. They require advance notice and it is wise to email them with your ETA (both customs and immigration).

GHenrySalopuka@customs.gov.sb (George, Custom Officer in Nendo)

Wilson.wilikai@commerce.gov.sb (Wilson, Immigration officer in Nendo)

There is no ATM on the island, so you cannot get Solomon Dollars here.

Custom officer in Noro who is helpful is Marrrtha Ausolo – Mausolo@customs.gov.sb. – Eastern Stream

March 2023: The rules are supposed to be the same for all ports of entry.

Team Immigration: Billy Guporo Mobil +677.761.4578, biliguporo@gmail.com and Lorraine Irofiu and Obed Rooney, obed.rooney@commerce.gov.sb

Forms 1 and 2 for inward clearance (form 1 in duplicate copy).

Form 6 for outward clearance.

All forms can be found online or at Facebook, Sailing Solomon Islands, Files

All yachts to give 48-hour notice of arrival and request for clearance. Fees \$1000SBD

Team Customs: Noro: Marrrtha mausolo@customs.gov.sb and Lata: George Henry GHenrySalopuka@custom.gov.sb, +677.772.8788. No fees except overtime after 1630 and weekends.

2019: Customs Noro Location: For Customs and Biosecurity, from the Noro yacht anchorage, you can see a red building on the hill with a phone tower. This is the My Telekom office. From that building, walk another 50 yards and turn left (towards the water) on a dirt road. About a 5-minute walk, past some houses on the left, you will find Customs on the right in a green building. Building has a Customs sign. Biosecurity is in back of this building, unlabeled. Customs hours: Mon-Fri 8am-12pm 1pm-4:30pm. – Soggy Paws

1.2.3 Immigration

Immigration must be contacted prior to arrival with your approximate arrival date, location, and time. Contact Noro Port Immigration Officer Bili Guporo at BiliGuporo@gmail.com and Lata Immigration Wilson Wilikai at Wilson.Wilikai@commerce.gov.sb.

Solomons Immigration information: <https://www.commerce.gov.sb/departments-units/immigration/visas/i-want-to-apply-for-a.html>.

The Yacht and Crew Details Form and the Yacht Particulars Form can be found on Noonsite - <https://www.noonsite.com/place/solomon-islands/view/clearance/>.

Short-term visas allow visitors to stay for 45-90 days. Europeans are granted 90 days and other countries 45 days. These visas can then be extended for an additional 45-90 days at no cost. A full 12-month visa can be obtained for an additional fee.

Visitors must:

- Have a valid passport with 6-months validity beyond your departure date.
- Have a return or onward ticket.
- Be able to show sufficient funds to support yourself.
- Have a valid visa to enter other countries from the Solomons, if required.

You do not need a visa to enter the Solomon Islands if you are a citizen of the United States, a Commonwealth citizen, or a citizen from most European countries.

July 2024: We paid \$1,000 for immigration. There was no cost for Customs. – Eastern Stream

June 2024: I emailed with Obed Rooney at Noro Immigration and he informed me that prior notification with Immigration Forms 1, 2, and 6 would be very helpful. His email is obed.rooney@commerce.gov.sb.

2019: Noro Location: Immigration is directly inward from the market on the water, upstairs in a 2-story building. The stairs are on the left, facing the building from the road. – Soggy Paws

1.2.4 Renewing Visas

June 2019: Renewing Visas (Americans): We happened to be in Honiara about a month before our initial entry visa was set to expire, so we went ahead and renewed our visas there, so we didn't have to make an effort to be in Munda/Noro when they actually expired.

We stopped in at the office in the morning and got the form, and the list of requirements, and then brought all the paperwork back an hour later. We were sent to a payment office to pay the \$1000 SD per passport fee, then brought the receipt back to Immigration and submitted it with our paperwork:

- Color copy of passport identity page
- Copy of incoming visa stamp in passport
- 1 passport photo
- Copy of boat registration and crew list
- Copy of Customs inward clearance from Gizo arrival
- Their form filled out

Once we submitted all that, the guy told us to wait, and half an hour later, we had our passports back with an extra 4 months (all we needed). As best I can tell, visa extensions are not just available in Honiara, as we saw the information about the fees posted in the Noro Immigration office as well.

In Honiara, there are 3 windows at the Immigration office (Passports, Long Stay Visa, Short Stay Visa). The short stay visa was the window we used, and had the shortest line.

It was a relatively easy process, but expensive (\$125 USD each). We got a form from Immigration, paid the fee at the designated bank, took the receipt for the payment, and the filled out form, and our passports back to

Immigration, and 15 minutes later, we had new visas good for 4 more months (I think we might have been able to get up to 1 year, not sure). I think it is possible to renew at any Immigration office. – Soggy Paws

1.2.5 Biosecurity

Solomon's Biosecurity information can be found: <https://www.biosecurity.gov.sb/Travellers>

All animal or animal products, plants or plant products and other risk items must be declared. Declared items will be assessed by an officer during border clearance. No penalties will be assessed as long as items are declared. Not declaring items could be a SI \$1,000,000 and or up to 5 years in jail and a criminal record.

July 2024: We paid \$200 for Biosecurity if you have nothing to declare. – Eastern Stream

June 2024: I emailed with Lois Stella Daiwo, the Biosecurity officer for Noro and she informed me that no forms need to be completed until arrival and clearance is performed on the boat. Louis's contact is ldaiwo@biosecurity.gov.sb. – Sugar Shack

1.2.6 Prohibited Goods

For a full list of prohibited items and or items that must be declared, visit www.biosecurity.gov.sb/Travellers.

Firearms must be declared, otherwise they may be confiscated.

Fruit and vegetables are permitted onboard, but they may ask you to not bring them ashore.

Exports of genuine artefacts, not replicas require permission. The Solomon Government prohibits the export of military artefacts from WWII, as well as the import of religious materials and antiquities.

1.2.7 Allowance of Alcohol, Tobacco

These allowances are being granted per person and applicable only for persons aged over 18 years;

- 2 Liters of wine or spirits
- 200 cigarettes or 250g of cigars or 225g of tobacco

Anything in excess may be sealed onboard.

1.2.8 Pets

An animal health certificate is required to be issued by the Chief Veterinary Officer of the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands and are only issued if the animal meets all health requirements. Visit: <https://www.biosecurity.gov.sb/News-Resources/faq-exporters-and-travellers>.

Biosecurity Forms: <https://www.biosecurity.gov.sb/Resources/category/forms-templates>

1.2.9 Yacht Length of Stay

A private yacht may stay in the Solomons for a total of 6-months. An initial 3-months will be granted on arrival and this can be extended for another 3-months.

1.2.10 Formality Fees:

Fees are broken down at this site: <https://www.sima.gov.sb/fees-charges-levies-new/>

- Immigration Visitor Visa – SBD \$90
- Immigration Extended Stay Visitor Visa – SBD \$700
- Immigration Clearing in – SBD \$500 (\$600 for super yachts)
- Immigration Clearing out – SBD \$500 (\$600 for super yachts)
- Customs Clearance Fees SBD \$25 (Mon-Fri), \$30 (Sat), \$35 (Sun)
- SIMA Marina Authority for Vessels not registered in Solomons USD \$37.76/meter LOA
- Pollution Levy USD \$3.22/meter LOA

- Health Inspection – SBD \$200
- Garbage Disposal based on volume
- Anchoring Fees are not mandatory but sometimes requested. Most villages are happy with SBD \$100

Nov. 2019: SD \$500 for 45 days, SD \$1000 for 90-day visa. After we had been in the Solomon Islands for more than 6-months, we were charged SD \$1000 for an extra 60-days.

Customs USD \$18 per foot LOA to be paid in Honiara when we arrived. The conversion rate is flat rate determined annually.

Biosecurity SD \$200 to be paid in Honiara

We also paid Temotu Province tax of SD \$200. – Escape

April 2019: Clearing in Northern Solomons 44ft (13.4m) American flagged boat with 2 people onboard.

Immigration - \$500 SBD (\$62USD), Customs \$2530 SBD (\$308USD), Bios \$200 SBD (\$25USD). – Soggy Paws

Feb. 2019 – Large Increase in Fees: The Solomon Islands government has introduced a substantial increase in fees for visiting yachts. The cost of clearing in for a yacht has increased to over US\$100 with additional charges for weekend clearance and rubbish disposal. On top of this, there is now a US\$22.97 per meter Customs fee.

Depending on the size of the yacht, this means a cost of several hundred dollars just to clear into the country.

In contrast, nearby Western Pacific Islands, including Papua New Guinea, Fiji and Vanuatu, have no clearance fees if clearing during normal business hours except for quarantine charges. – Noonsite

1.2.11 Customs and Embassies

Papua New Guinea: There is a PNG “High Commission” office in Honiara, where it is possible to get a PNG visa in advance.

USA: U.S. diplomatic representation is handled by the U.S. Embassy in Papua New Guinea. The United States maintains a Consular Agency in Honiara, Solomon Islands to provide consular services.

Australia: There is an Australian High Commission office in Honiara: <https://solomonislands.embassy.gov.au/>

1.2.12 Entering Solomons: General Process

Raise your Q flag prior to arrival and then report directly to the authorities and request clearance. Clear in during daylight hours to avoid overtime fees.

If you arrive after hours you should raise your Q flag, contact Customs, stay at anchor, and wait until the officials open (nobody should go ashore).

Health officials will go aboard first.

May 2024: Be aware that some of the officials are not fully aware of the rules regarding cruising yachts. They may try to give you a 30-day visa when in reality you are eligible for a 90-day visa on arrival. Useful links to help you prove the 90-day visa:

- Concessional Entry Agreement Countries as it relates to the Immigration Act: <https://www.commerce.gov.sb/activities-updates/resources/public-notices.html?task=document.viewdoc&id=155>
- Immigration Act of 2012: <https://antislaverylaw.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Solomon-Islands-Immigration-Act.pdf>
- S.I. Govt webpage 90 days: <https://solomons.gov.sb/tourism-solomons/essential-services/how-to-get-a-visa/>
- Solomon Islands Immigration Service: (+677) 22179, 22194 or 22199, immdir@commerce.gov.sb and <http://www.commerce.gov.sb/>

Provided by Taenga.

Sept. 2023: Lata, Nendo: We checked in to the Solomon Islands in September 2023 at Nendo and had a great experience. We paid 500 SD for immigration (2 EU citizens on board) and that was all. Nobody asked for any extra payments and they worked very professional. Customs came on board with us to finalize his paperwork. The whole process was smooth and professional; they had even received our documents that we sent pre arrival. The people on the island were very friendly and helpful.

There was no working ATM at the time of our visit, but we could change USD for SBD for a tough rate (100usd for 500 SBD).

All the people seemed really happy to have us visiting their island. Not all spoke English. – SV Deinemeid

Nov. 2019: – Santa Cruz Island, Lata: Clearance port is Lata, Nendo

Fees: Immigration Fee \$500Sd = 45 days; 1000Sd for 90-day visa. After we had been in the Solomon Islands more than 6-months we were charged 1000Sd for an extra 60 days Temotu Province tax = 200Sd

Customs: \$18US per foot of length of boat to be paid in Honiara when you arrive (they charge you in US Dollars then convert to Solomon Dollars. The conversion rate is a flat rate determined annually

Bio Security 200Sd is also dealt with in Honiara. – Escape II

June 2019: Here are contact numbers we have acquired for Officials, so far in 2019.

The numbers starting with 7 are cell numbers and the numbers starting with 6 are office numbers.

The Solomons country code is 677.

Name	Location	Position	Contact Info
Asley	Gizo (sometimes Munda Airport)	Customs	745-9766
Gizo Biosecurity	Gizo	Biosecurity	749-3211
Gizo Police	Gizo	Police Office	60999
Noro Immigration (Billy)	Noro (\$500 SD if he goes to Gizo)	Immigration	761-4578, 61011
Noro Customs	Noro	Customs	61097
John (Noro Customs)	Noro	Customs	756-2829
Noro Biosecurity	Noro / Munda	Biosecurity	748-8498

Above provided by. – Soggy Paws

1.2.13 Clearing out of Solomons

Clearance out of Solomons can happen at any port of entry. However, Taro and Noro are more yacht friendly.

1.2.14 Official's Operating Hours

Most officials work during daylight hours or 0800-1700 with a lunch break from 1200-1300.

Aug. 2019: Noro: It took us a total of about 2 hours to clear out of Immigration and Customs in Noro. We had called both offices ahead of time to make sure the officers we needed would be in (they are not always there).

We had extra copies of everything, but didn't really need it. There was an aggravating amount of paperwork to fill out in both offices, but the officers were friendly and helpful.

Officially you have 24 hours to leave the country (according to Bill at Noro Immigration). And you are permitted to stop on the way out for a short overnight anchorage, but not go ashore. When we expressed our desire to stop in the Shortland Islands on our way north, Bill cautioned us not to do that. There are apparently regular patrols in that area now (with Bouganville threatening independence from PNG), and if we were caught staying any time, or going ashore, after clearing out in Noro "there would be heavy fines." – Soggy Paws

1.2.15 Emergency Toll Free Numbers



Provided by Hilde Larsen on Sailing Solomons Facebook Group

1.3 Getting Visitors In and Out

1.3.1 Flying out and Returning to your Boat

It is best to make arrangements prior to departing Solomons. Request a list from the Director of Immigration stating that you are returning to your boat and will leave the country by boat. The fee is between \$100-\$200 USD if you apply outside of the country.

Notify Customs: If you plan to leave your boat unattended, contact Customs before you leave to inform them. Tell them the following: Where the boat is stored, reason why you are leaving your boat (reason for travel), date of your return, boat name and home port, photo of your boat. Customs will confirm that its good.

Liapari has been reported as a safe place to leave your boat and they have staff who can mind your boat.

Immigration Letter: You will also need a letter from Immigration to allow you to fly in on a one-way ticket (sometimes it can take 3-4 weeks) if the Director is out of the office in Honiara.

1.3.2 Crew Arriving or Departing in Solomons

Crew arriving by plane and departing by yacht must apply for a visitor's permit BEFORE their arrival. The application should include: arrival date, vessel name and registration details, vessel's arrival date, length of stay in Solomons, and a request of a one-way (arrival only) entry on an airline ticket. Immigration will issue a permit to be presented at the airline check-in (without it the crew may be denied boarding).

1.3.3 Getting Visitors in and Out

By Boat:

The cargo boat **MV Fair Glory** offers a weekly service between Honiara and Gizo via Marovo Lagoon. The Gizo–Honiara trip costs SD \$480 in deck class (SD \$1490 per cabin) and takes about 27 hours. For Seghe, it's SD \$270. It generally leaves Gizo on Tuesday morning; check while you're here.

The cargo boat **MV Anjeanette** also offers a weekly service between Gizo and Honiara via Marovo Lagoon. The Gizo–Honiara trip costs S\$460 (S\$500 in 'first class'). It leaves Gizo on Monday afternoon.

A Rava shuttle boat connects Gizo to Munda (\$250, 2 hrs) stopping at various places en route. It usually leaves Gizo at 1pm on Monday and Friday. It also operates on Wednesday if there's a minimum of six passengers.

By Air:

Solomon Airlines has up to 3 daily flights between Gizo and Honiara (from SI\$1380). There are daily flights between Gizo & Munda (from SI\$685), and 3 weekly flights between Gizo and Seghe (from SI\$790). From Gizo you can also fly to the Shortland Islands & Choiseul. The airfield is on Nusatupe Island (boat transfer SI\$60).

The most popular airlines that fly to Solomon Islands are Qantas, Solomon Airlines, Air New Zealand, Fiji Airways and Air Niugini.

The main international airport is at Honiara International Airport in the province of Guadalcanal.

The secondary international airport is Munda in the Western Province.

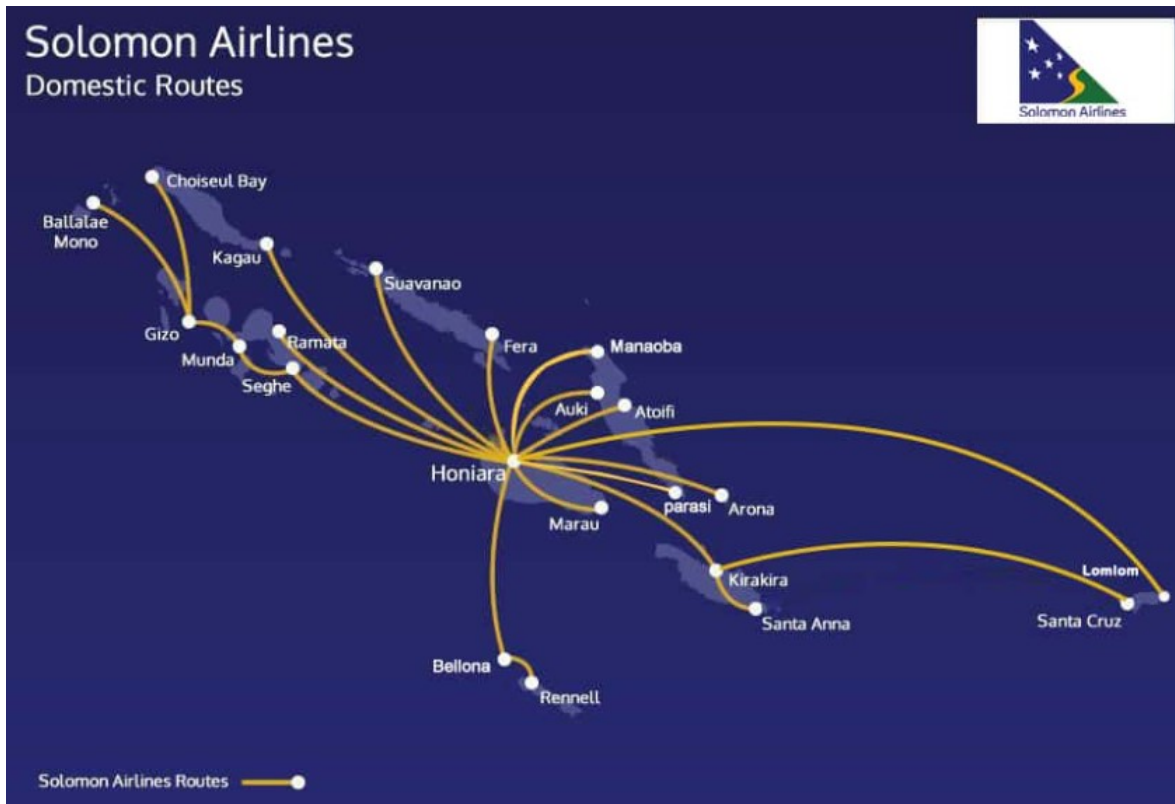
Here are the Solomon Airlines International routes:



Regional Routes:



Domestic Routes:



1.4 Navigating Around Coral

May 2018: Though we found both the CMAP (CM93 v2) and Garmin charts to be fairly accurate, your ability to explore coral-laced atolls is greatly enhanced by acquiring high-resolution satellite images.

1.4.1 KAPS and mbtiles (used by charting programs like OpenCPN)

There are a number of sources of satellite charting/imagery.

- [Zen Again's Charts](#) Pacific Ocean, SE Asia, Crossing to S Africa, S Atlantic, Brazil
- [Soggy Paws' Charts](#) Pacific Ocean, SE Asia, Red Sea
- [Jacaranda's Charts](#) French Polynesia
- [Valhalla's Charts](#) SE Asia and Western Pacific
- [Ocelot's Charts](#) SE Asia, Western Pacific, and Indian Ocean

Make Your Own: You can make your own, look for the Sat2Chart program here: <http://gdayii.ca>

There is a Facebook Group called GE2Kap that provides support for Sat2Chart (formerly GE2KAP).

OpenCPN is a free fully functional navigation program, downloadable from <http://opencpn.org> It runs on Windows 7-11, many flavors of Linux and Raspberry Pi, and Apple Macs (but not iDevices).

1.4.2 Anchoring in Coral

Please remember, we are guests visiting this country, islands, and backyards of the lovely locals. We must take responsibility to protect the lagoons and bays.

Often lagoons are not clear and many times you are anchoring without knowing if there is coral on the bottom. Some cruisers have found the use of a fish finder to locate clear spots on the bottom invaluable in murky situations. We have a cheap one with the transducer stuck to the inside of the hull with silicon.

Each year sail boats cruising in get into trouble at anchor: They get trapped on lee shores after a shift in the wind direction and/or foul their anchor and/or chain in coral. The results are stressful maneuvers to get the anchor back up, bent bow rollers, and ruined or even ripped out windlass. Of course, the fragile coral structures get badly damaged with each of these messed up maneuvers as well.

It is **easy to avoid damage** to the coral and your boat if you:

- Anchor in conditions with **good visibility** (don't drop your anchor blindly)
- Try to find a **big, sandy spot** to drop your hook
- Anchor in **shallow** water...
 - ...where you can see the bottom clearly
 - ...usually fewer coral heads grow on sandy shelves, and
 - ...you only need a short chain.
- **Float the chain** so that the boat can swing around in shifting winds without getting the chain caught in coral heads
- Keep an eye on the **weather forecast** and move to a safe anchorage before the wind shifts

There are many ways to float your chain. Some people set their chain first, then pull back on it to ensure it is set properly. Once set, they will slowly pull up the chain to install the floats and then pull back again. Another way is listed below.

Floating the chain is a simple procedure. You just need:

- (3) or more medium-sized fenders or buoys
- (3) or more carabiners that fit into your chain

1. Drop the anchor in the middle of the biggest sandy spot you can find,

2. Pay out chain while reversing gently,
3. Look around at the surrounding coral heads and estimate your swinging radius,
4. Hook in the first fender/buoy before the chain could touch any of the coral heads,
5. Pay out some more chain and set the anchor gently pulling in reverse,
6. If the scope is still not sufficient, additional floats can be added followed by more chain.

The general rule:

The first float should be inserted at double the depth. If you drop the hook in 5 meters, put the first float on at 10 meters. Then add another float every 7-15 meters. If you have small floats/fenders, then add them every 7-10 meters. If you have a larger float/fender, then add them every 12-15 meters. The goal is to keep the chain off the surrounding coral heads. For more information, visit www.pitufa.at

If your chain does get wrapped...

If you are in a storm situation, it is critical to maintain some free chain. Boats have successfully weathered bad storm situations by going to a really long really strong snubber and/or letting out more chain as their chain gets wrapped (having a spare buoy rigged for this would make a lot of sense).

In some deep anchorages inside the lagoon, it can be difficult to see the bottom snorkeling, and therefore difficult to see what's going on when your chain seems stuck. It is USUALLY possible to unstuck your chain without diving on it—patience and calm weather are helpful. A snorkeler in the water can be helpful. But this is a time where having a dive tank can be a big help.

Another very useful resource about Floating Your Chain can be found here:

<https://www.jacarandajourney.com/floatingyourchain>

1.5 Weather

1.5.1 General Weather Conditions

The Solomon Islands are hot and humid almost all year round, with an average temperature of 27 Celsius. There are two distinct seasons: November-April is the wet season and May-October is the dry season.

Soggy Paws – 2019 – March-August Weather (Mostly Western Province): When we arrived in March, and continuing into April, the weather was mostly sunny and very light winds. March the winds were from a NW sector, mostly. By late April, it had switched fairly consistently to S and SE, but still very light. In about mid-May, the wind started picking up a little from the SE, but there were still days of fairly calm winds. By mid-May we were down by Honiara, which is the northern border of the SE Trades. June, July, and August were fairly windy, usually from the SE. July and August were consistently rainy—the SPCZ seems to hang right over the island chain, bringing overcast and (usually) light drizzle for days. We'd occasionally get a 2-3 day sunny period and then the overcast for another week. Up in the Gizo area, sometime, when it got rainy, the winds turned northerly.

Noonsite: The Solomons experience high temperatures, and January to March are the months of heaviest rainfall. April to November is the season of the SE trades, while the rest of the year is the NW monsoon, which is also the cyclone season. Long periods of calm weather are not uncommon among the islands.

The Western Province is reputed to be safe from cyclones.

2010 – October-December weather: The further to the NW we went and the later the year advanced, the weaker the winds became, thus we were still in strong trade winds (20 to 25 knots) in the Santa Cruz group and en route to Santa Ana, but from Honiara onwards (October) the winds began to die, moving more into the NE and N, and were often calm.

In November, however, squalls from the N or NW started to become more frequent. After mid-November would not be a good time to be in Honiara (which is exposed to that direction). Westerlies had not yet materialized in Western Province when we left in late December (we were told they were late). – Bosun Bird

1.5.2 Weather Sources - with Onboard Email / SSB

2019: In our transit through this area, what we used most of the time for watching the weather were these files (via the free service Saildocs). You send the request to saildocs at the address query@saildocs.com, with the coded request in the message body, and Saildocs will email you the response.

- Text forecasts (): send Met.10ne
This returns the forecast from the Australian Met Office which covers the High Seas Forecast for North Eastern METAREA 10:
NORTH EASTERN AREA: COAST AT 142E TO 0S142E TO 0S170E TO 25S170E TO COAST AT 25S
- A spot forecast for the location we were in—every 6 hours for 10 days
send spot:07.1N,171.3E|10,6|PRMSL,WIND,WAVES,RAIN,LFTX
- A 'local' GRIB file that gave a fairly detailed forecast for a reasonably small area for about 5 days, and included sea state information
send GFS:6N,10N,173E,165E|.5,.5|0,6..144|PRMSL,WIND,HTSGW,WVDIR,RAIN
- A 'wide range' GRIB that watched conditions approaching us. The area we request while in transit was a pretty wide area on a 3x3 grid, for the next 10 days. This is about a 25K GRIB file. This provided a decent long range forecast.
send GFS:0N,30N,160E,175W|3,3|0,12..240|PRMSL,WIND,RAIN
- During times of tropical activity, we also found these sources useful for additional perspective:

I couldn't find a subscription on Saildocs that included the tropical weather for the SW Pacific. What we do is go to <http://www.tropicalstormrisk.com/> and subscribe to their weather updates by email. As soon as something is brewing in the tropical SW Pacific, you will get an email from Tropical Storm Risk. – Soggy Paws

1.5.3 Weather Sources – Voice / Radio

The best source of voice weather for the Solomons and Vanuatu is the **Gulf Harbor Radio** net, which is on 8752 kHz or 8779 kHz or 8297 kHz. (In that order, depending on interference).

This broadcast is available at 0515 UTC / 17:15 NZST May 01 - 15 Nov.

Daily during passage making - otherwise weekdays only

The latest info on Gulf Harbor Radio scheds and frequencies is available on this website: www.ghradio.co.nz.

Aug. 2023: The number of yachts with radios has diminished over the years so in 2022, Gulf Harbor Radio will be on air daily during passage making but will review their schedule at other times.

Contact GHR prior to going on passage, and see what they will be able to do for you. Make sure you have a working marine radio or a way to receive a text email. Contact: www.ghradio.co.nz/contact.html

1.5.4 Weather Sources – Internet

Windy seems to be the go-to weather source around the world. It gets better and better.

<https://www.windy.com/>

If you want more personalized, and yachtsman-focused weather, Live Streaming from Gulf Harbor Radio their daily weather broadcast (weekdays May 1 to Nov 15)

Details here: <https://www.ghradio.co.nz/live-streaming.html>

Soggy Paws and friends have created a “[French Polynesia Weather Compendium](#)” for overall Pacific weather systems which is very useful for all cruisers. Here are a few additional sources:

Color Satellite View of Entire SW Pacific: www.goes.noaa.gov/sohemi/sohemiloops/shirgmscol.html

It requires Flash (didn't seem to work on my IE instal, and may not on an iPad, but works well on Chrome).

Surface Analysis from New Caledonia: www.meteo.nc/nouvelle-caledonie/observations/carte-analyse

Bob McDavit's Weather Blog: <https://metbob.wordpress.com/>

Fiji Met Service

Home Page: <http://www.met.gov.fj/>

Surface Maps: <https://www.met.gov.fj/index.php?page=maps>

Daily Marine Forecast: <https://www.met.gov.fj/index.php?page=marine>

Australia Met

Some of the weather coverage for Australia does also cover Solomon Islands. Start here:

<http://www.bom.gov.au/australia/charts/>

1.5.5 Tropical Weather and Cruising During Cyclone Season

The Solomon Islands are covered by Australia's Met Service. Below is a capture from the Australian tropical weather page, showing cyclone tracks in the Solomons from 2010 to 2018.



Western South Pacific Cyclone Tracks 2010-2018

To check on individual storms, dates, etc, visit: www.bom.gov.au/cyclone/history/tracks/index.shtml

Another good source for tropical weather tracking in Vanuatu is this one: www.tropicalstormrisk.com/

2014: Having recently arrived back on the east coast of Australia, after spending the 2013 cyclone season in the Solomon Islands, I was surprised at the small number of other cruising vessels we encountered.

We arrived in Gizo in October and we only came across 10 other cruising yachts during the entire time - all of which were 'high tailing' it up to Micronesia for the pending cyclone season. The general consensus of the vast majority we spoke to, was that it was 'safer' up there in terms of safety from tropical cyclones, but almost all of them said they definitely would have liked to have stayed and seen more of the Solomons.

Now, after spending two cyclone seasons in the Solomons (one being a very active season), I was a little surprised by the skepticism of the Solomons as a safe place to spend cyclone season and decided to let other cruisers know about this viable alternative.

So, if you find yourself in the SW Pacific looking for somewhere to cruise and want to have the ability to sit out the cyclone season above 10 degrees south latitude, consider the Solomons. It's still quite remote, truly beautiful with good cyclone holes and great people.

What we didn't realize and stumbled across, was a little-known safe haven called **Liapari**, where a cruising boat can not only safely sit out the weather associated with a tropical cyclone in the Coral Sea as we did, but also have all the facilities to repair and haul out your vessel in a safe and secure area, where the proprietor is a good bloke to boot.

As far as cyclone holes go, there are numerous other anchorages away from Liapari offering sufficient shelter and holding in the weather associated with passing cyclones. As a professional master, I would not hesitate to select the Solomons for a cyclone season in a well-found vessel, adequately equipped with good ground tackle and some basic communications for early detection of pending cyclones to make sure you are in a good anchorage when the worst of the weather comes in.

A word of caution though, the Solomons is quite remote when compared to many other cruising destinations in the Pacific like Fiji or Noumea for instance. For this reason, it pays for the cruising yacht to be well equipped in way of spares and essentials that may not be readily available here. – MV Waverly

1.5.6 Tsunami Information

The entire Pacific Basin is subject to tsunamis. Since we have been in the Pacific (5 years), there have been 4 significant tsunamis which have affected cruising locations (American Samoa and Tonga in 2009, South America, Galapagos and Panama in 2010, Hawaii and Mexico in 2011, Tonga in 2023).

The tsunamis originate in various locations, but the worst origination locations were Japan and Chile, however, many 'tremors' happen in these locations that do not cause widespread tsunamis.

The Pacific Tsunami Warning Center website is located here: www.tsunami.gov/ and also check http://itic.ioc-unesco.org/index.php?option=com_contentandview=categoryandlayout=blogandid=1153andItemid=1153

If you have onboard email, it is a good idea to subscribe to tsunami warning emails while you are in the Pacific, which you can do on the above website. It might be useful to first subscribe from your internet email for a little while, to understand what messages might be coming your way, and how often, before you chance clogging up your onboard email.

1.6 Overview of Solomon Islands

Solomon Islands are made up of around 900 islands off the coast of Australia. Solomon Islands are believed to have been settled by Austronesian peoples around 2000BC. They have a varied history, but they are most well-known for the famous battles during WWII. They gained their independence from Britain in 1976.

1.6.1 Currency

Solomons use the Solomon's Island Dollar "\$" sometimes represented by SI, SBD. The bills are in denominations of SD \$100, 50, 20, 10 and 5. The coins are SD \$1, 2, .50, .20. Cash is highly recommended, but ATMs can be difficult to find.

ANZ and BSP have bank locations in Gizo, Noro and Munda.

Credit cards are not widely accepted. The conversion rate as of Aug. 2024:

SBD	USD	NZD
\$100	\$11.70	\$19.03
\$1000	\$117.00	\$190.29
\$10,000	\$1,170	\$1902.89

The banks have substantial per transaction fees with ANZ being higher than BSP.

If you are lucky, you may come across "custom" money which is very old bride money or valuable "money" from different tribes. "Custom" money was used before currency had even been thought of. It's made of shell and still highly valued.

Money Exchange: Honiara and Gizo seem to be the best places to exchange foreign currency.

It has been difficult to exchange foreign currency for Solomon dollars (SBD) in other places such as Santa Cristóbal.

1.6.2 Economy

Over 77% of the population lives outside of the urban areas.

Naturally, traditional societies' economies are based on produce from the land and staple foods like yam, taro and manioc. The bulk of the population depends on agriculture, fishing, and forestry for their livelihoods. Most manufactured goods and products are imported.

1.6.3 Medical

1.6.3.1 Malaria and Other Health Issues

Malaria is still present in the Solomons. It is highly recommended that you take the necessary precautions to avoid being bitten, malaria testing kits and/or get anti-malaria medication.

Prevention:

- Repellent treated nets and screens for your hatches and ports. Soaked in a solution of permethrin.
- Repellent devices such as ultrasonic, battery powered devices that emit high pitch sound
- Repellent lotion, DEET is best
- Coils
- Avoid areas with lots of bugs (mangroves, stagnant water)
- Wear light colored clothing, not dark
- No perfumes or fragrant lotions
- Stay put from dusk to dawn when malaria mosquitoes are most active
- Test often and frequently if anyone has symptoms

1.6.3.2 Malignant Tropical Sores

Aug. 2019 – Life Threatening Skin Infections: A big warning to all yachties cruising in the SW Pacific (and Micronesia). Ourselves and nearly every boat we have met has had at least one incidence of a tiny wound or

scratch (usually on the lower leg or foot) turning into a feverish oozing mess, requiring a full dose of heavy antibiotics (sometimes several courses). On our boat alone, with 2 crew and 6 months in this area, we have had a total of 5 of these infections.

At least one cruiser we know was airlifted home to NZ when, after a month of battling the infection, it looked like the infection was winning.

LOSS OF LIFE AND LIMB IS POSSIBLE if you let one of these tropical infections get out of hand.

Take EVERY tiny cut, abrasion, or bug bite seriously, keep it clean and out of the water. At the first sign of it getting bigger, and red or hot, start taking antibiotics (something strong and broad spectrum like Ciproflaxin). Keep it elevated, and keep it covered (bring lots of good quality bandaids).

As for what to put on it, the locals swear by Noni Root, so we tried rotating application of the local Noni Root concoction, Betadine, triple anti-biotic ointment, and an Aussie antiseptic cream called Savlon. We were given a small bottle of Noni Root by someone we asked about what they did for infections. We also saw it for sale at several local markets in small bottles.

However, the US Army medical guide to Bacterial Skin Infections says that topical skin medicines like triple antibiotic ointment have little effect for these kinds of infections. This 1994 guide recommend Dicloxacillin, or ...*"Erythromycin and clindamycin are suitable alternatives if the patient is allergic to penicillin. Cephalosporins or combinations of amoxicillin and clavulanate may also be used, but are much more expensive and seldom offer an advantage over antistaphylococcal penicillins."* They also state: *"Mupirocin is the only topical (put on the outside of the skin) medicine that has proven effective on mild infections."* And *"Debridement of the lesions is helpful but soaking in hexachlorophene or other antibacterial soaks retards rather than enhances healing."*

Another medical guide we have aboard also cautioned about daily use of hydrogen peroxide to clean the wound. Hydrogen peroxide is a good thing to use for the initial cleaning and disinfecting, but it will inhibit healing.

Sometimes it is difficult to tell whether your sore is getting better or worse... take a picture of it every day and compare results.

If it continues to get worse, and your surrounding skin is becoming hot and inflamed, or you are running a fever, it is getting to the dangerous stage. Seriously, even a tiny bug bite can become infected to the point where your life is in danger. Take it seriously!

Make sure you have several 7-day courses of Ciproflaxin aboard when cruising this area—even though there are hospitals and clinics in these areas, many times they have no available drugs. We found Cipro available over the counter in some pharmacies in PNG and the Solomons. Cipro is a heavy-duty broad-spectrum antibiotic and should be reserved for use when nothing else is working.

A pharmacist in Honiara sold us packages of a 5-day dose of Cloxacillin 250mg (2 capsules 4 times a day for 5 days) for \$5 USD each package. He said to try that first, and then use Cipro (which is more expensive) if that doesn't seem to be working. I don't know if Amoxicillin would work, but if you have nothing else, it's probably better than nothing until you can get to somewhere with something stronger.

On our last round of infections, from small scratches acquired on a jungle hike to see airplane relics in Stirling Island, Solomons, the Cloxacillin worked to start clearing up the sores within a couple of days. – Soggy Paws

1.6.4 Local Languages and Phrases

The official language is English; however, the lingua franca is Solomon Islands pijin. There are more than 80 different local languages plus dialects.

Basic Phrases in Pijin

- Hello = Halo
- How are you? = Lu Hao / Hao na iu?
- What is your name? = Hu nao nem blong yu?

- Please = Plis
- Thank you = tanggio / tagio tumas / thank iu
- Yes = Yes. No = No / Nomoa
- Excuse Me = TsssTss (sound made by hissing through teeth. Also used to tell bus driver to stop)
- Excuse Me (begging pardon) = Excuse mi / Sorry missus/sir
- Goodbye = Gutbae / Lukim iu
- I can't speak Pijin (well) = Mi no save (gud) hao fo spikim Pijin
- Good Morning = Moning moning
- Good evening = Ivining or Good Night = Gudnaet
- I don't Understand = Mi no save / mi no gettim
- Where is the toilet? = Wea na toilet/loo

1.6.5 *Protocols for Visitors*

When you arrive into a new bay, you should introduce yourself to the local village and ask permission to anchor, swim, snorkel/dive, fish in the bay, walk the beach, etc. This is not a requirement, but a courtesy.

Dress Code: Solomon Islanders tend to dress modestly especially in rural areas. It is best to wear modest clothing. Women should wear skirts below the knee or loose-fitting trousers and shirts. This is especially true when attending rural islands, cultural events, and church services.

Loose fitting, light, cotton clothing is best for the climate and culturally acceptable.

While swimming women and young girls should wear t-shirts and shorts or sarongs.

Attitudes: Standards of behavior are very conservative and you should take care to not offend. Public displays of affection may cause offence and swearing may incur a fine.

The islands have many traditional “kastoms” which may vary from province to province. Always ask permission before taking photos of people or places.

Aug. 2024: Anchorage Fees: We have “avoided” paying an anchoring fee by either telling the requestor(s) that we do not have any money or offering them a gift. However, we have had children and adults approaching the boat and asking for anchoring fees. We’ve tried to say we will go to shore to visit the chief, but then the male will state that he is the chief. Not sure who to believe as that would make for a lot of chiefs. It’s been frustrating to say the least. – Yaminda

June 2024 – Anchorage Fees: We are currently at the northern end of Santa Isabel, and have been asked for anchorage fees everywhere we’ve been in this area. Arnavon islands is a conservation zone and they have a well-established anchorage fee of \$100 SBD per boat per day plus one off \$80 SBD per person park fee. This seems fair enough and is a transparent easy process where you pay the rangers and they have associated paperwork outlining fees for other activities.

Other places up here we’ve been asked for an anchorage fee even though we are trading for fresh produce and always have gifts to give to local villages. The fees being asked have ranged from a one off \$100SBD per person to \$400SBD per boat per day. We always go ashore to ask permission to anchor, but often the request for fees comes after we’ve stayed (and given gifts/donations to school etc) and we’re getting ready to leave, so it’s been awkward at times. Also, it’s hard to know who is making the request and sometimes more than one person is asking, or someone coming later and saying the fee requested wasn’t high enough and asking for more.

It’s absolutely beautiful up here but this has colored our experience somewhat and if we’d known in advance, we may have made different plans. – Honu II

Marovo Lagoon: Most islanders are Seventh Day Adventists so their Sabbath is from sunset on Friday to sunset on Saturday, and visitors are not supposed to go ashore here during the Sabbath.

1.6.6 *Safety and Security*

In general, there are no problems moving around the provincial centers during the day, but it is not recommended to walk around at night. Over 98% of the land and coastal marina area is in traditional ownership. Strangers cannot wander freely through private or empty land without first seeking permission and or having a trusted local person guide you.

Areas to Avoid

- Guandacanal in general.
- Marue Sound had a recent theft. The thieves entered through an open hatch and stole from the owners as they slept.
- Honiara is known to be a bad anchorage, but no reported theft.
- Gizo town is not safe due to thieves.
- Malaita has a bad reputation and very few cruisers are going there.
- Florida Islands, especially, Tulagi have a long-standing violent crime and theft reputation. See section 8.1.5 for specifics.
- Bonabona Island in the Suau Alotau District of Milne Bay Province (320km from Port Moresby) had a murder July 2024.
- Central Province (Florida Islands)
 - Hutchison Harbour (outboard stolen off a dinghy recently)
 - Tulagi vandalism and theft of dinghy (May 2024). The thieves cut the dinghy from the davits, stole the outboard and snorkel gear.
 - If you do want to visit Tulagi, as it is a historical place, it is suggested you contact Breakwater Café in Honiara for a mooring and ask for security at night.
- Russell Islands (NW area) are very unfriendly to cruisers and will ask for anchorage fees 800 SBD/night.
- Morovo Lagoon (beside Mbili passage) has locals who ask for anchoring fee. If you do visit here, it is recommended to visit the left side of the anchorage.
- Uepi has a resort that is known to be unfriendly to cruisers.
- Munda has a group of thieves that have been causing a lot of trouble for cruisers.
 - If you do visit, anchor in front of the Agnes Lodge with an additional deck light on.
- Nusaghele has started to ask for an anchorage fee of 400 SBD

The areas marked in red below are the areas to avoid/and or be extra vigilant.

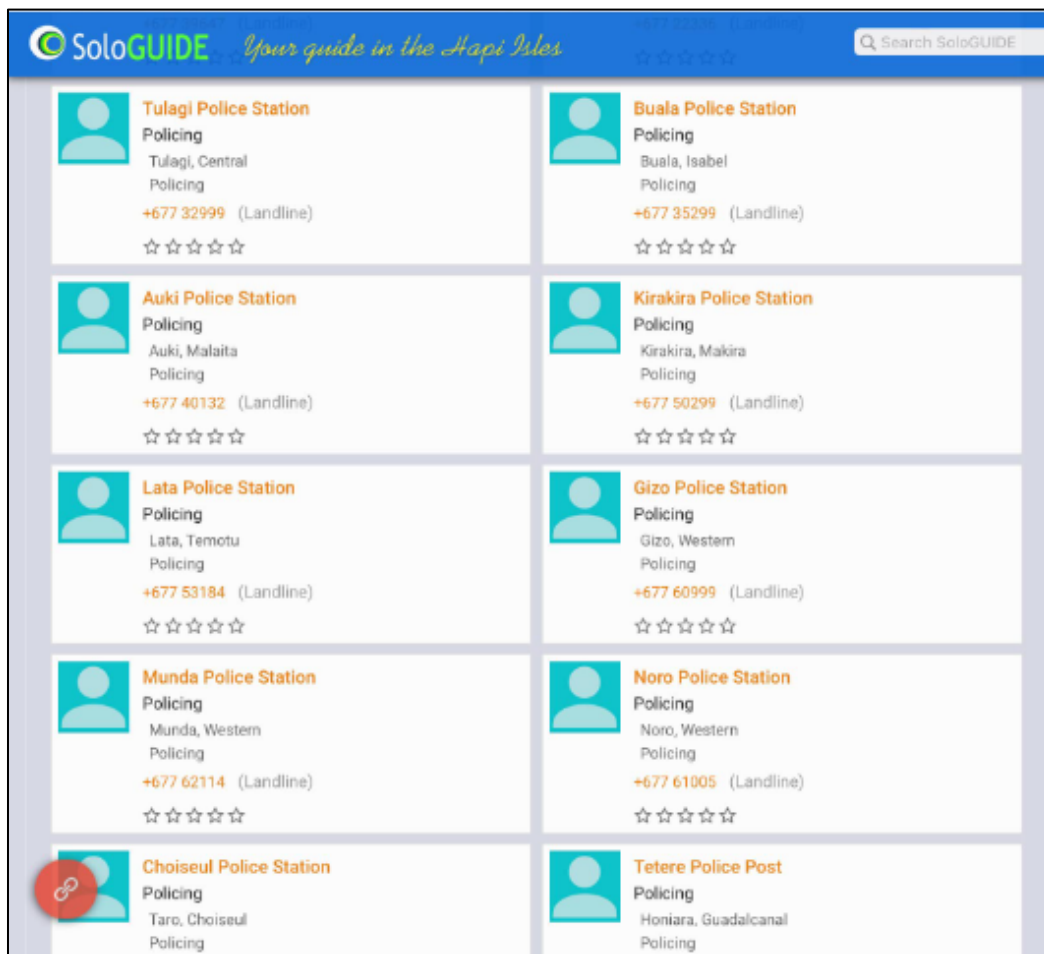
- Note: some of the islands have had a name change. For example, San Cristobal is now called Makira.



Precautions should always be taken.

- Lock all hatches and doors when off the boat.
- Don't leave anything visible (snorkel gear, clothes drying on the lines) when off the boat or at night.
- Raise your dinghy at night and lock it when you are on shore.
- Stay on your vessel after dark, avoid walking around town, even in Honiara and Gizo.
- Bright anchor and or cockpit light is a good deterrent.
- Do not leave fenders out at night as they facilitate a silent boarding.
- Ideal to park in front of a village or settlement rather than a secluded area.

In the event you require police assistance:



July 2018: After living 8 months in the Solomons and four months in Papua New Guinea, I thought I would share some general thoughts for future sailors heading this way.

There are three general categories of theft:

- Opportunistic 'Grab and Go' - Generally this consists of items stolen off the deck of boat left in plain sight and unsecured. This includes snorkels, masks, clothes drying on line, fishing rods, etc. This can occur at any time, but usually at night while the crew is sleeping.
- Forced entry - Breaking a lock and stealing something that is secured on the vessel.
- Violent theft - Using machete or other weapon to rob the boat while occupants are onboard.

In virtually all cases in the Solomons, the first category is by far the most common, and the easiest to prevent. In fact, we are not aware of any other type of theft taking place in recent years that were not opportunistic, and 100% preventable if the owners of the yachts used some level of carefulness.

During our 8 months in the Solomons we met several yachts that had items lifted off their boat. Most cases were in areas that known rascals were present (Ghizo, Florida Islands, etc). In all cases, the items were left unsecured on the boat. Two boats we met had laptops or cell phones stolen from inside the cabin. One theft incurred in broad daylight, while the other at night. In both incidents the salon doors were open, and the rascals entered and took the items he could grab, and paddled away.

Interestingly, in both cases most items were found and returned, other than one of two laptops stolen off a yacht in the Florida Islands.

We had our own issue, when a mask and snorkel were stolen off our boat in broad daylight. The offender was a kid, who climbed up and grabbed Sarah's mask and snorkel that we foolishly left visible on deck while off in the village. Some kids saw this rascal grab the mask and paddled over to tell us and the chief what happened. Needless to say, in short order the chief and I jumped in my dinghy, found the kid's parents (different village), recovered the stolen item and headed back to Field Trip. The kid was suspended from school.

Honiara was in the end a pleasant surprise (given all the bad reviews by others), and we still find ourselves missing the buzz and provisioning of Honiara. It was easy to get around, everything we needed could be found and the people were very nice. Maybe we were lucky, but I would like to think that taking simple steps to prevent casual theft kept us out of trouble, as it did with most of the other boats, we met along the way staying in these same places with no problems or issues. – Field Trip

1.6.7 Time Zone

Solomon Islands operate on Solomon Islands Standard Time, which is +11 UTC (Same as the Vanuatu).

1.6.8 Trading and Gifts

Trade: Locals like to trade with visitors and are usually in need of building materials (nails, screws, tools) for fruits and vegetables. Good items for trade: flour, sugar, salt, rice, fuel, coffee, cookies, tea bags, school supplies, clothing, fishing supplies, reading glasses, building materials, tarps, matches, laundry or dish soap.

Do not trade alcohol or tobacco. Alcohol is banded in the remote islands.

This is a great way to engage with the locals, make new friends, and distribute much needed goods in exchange for fruit, vegetables, carvings, and local artistry. Trading is not giving so please do not set a precedent by giving items to locals (unless it is a school or medical clinic or the chief). It is best to trade or something else giving each person respect and each item value.

If you are full on what they are offering, kindly ask them if they know anyone who has something you are interested in (crayfish, fish, etc...). Be sure to tell them you only need enough for the number of people on the boat. Sometimes they go a bit overboard.

Packaging is precious. If you are presented with items in a bag, no matter how small, give the packaging back to the locals. Bags of any size are valuable in the remote islands. This is what they use to transport their goods between gardens and villages.

Carry a few items in your backpack as you go ashore for either trading or a gift to the chief.

Gifts: Suggested gifts as "thank you items": school supplies, fishing gear, snorkeling gear, kitchen supplies (pots, pans, utensils), clothing, toys, hats, sunglasses, prescription glasses. Not alcohol or tobacco.

1.6.9 Traditions in the Solomons

1.6.9.1 What is Kastom?

Kastom is a pidgin word (Bislama/English) used to refer to traditional culture, including religion, economics, art, and magic in Melanesia. It is passed down from generation to generation through teachings and stories (it is not written down).

It is a truly traditional lifestyle where tourism and the modern world have no part. It is concentrated through:

- Kastom House - sites where objects and rituals are stored.
- Kastom stories - myths, legends and communal histories.
- Kastom tabu - objects of special power, significance and symbolism.

The use of the word is slightly different in the different countries and cultures of Melanesia.

1.6.9.2 Kava

Kava is not just a food crop; it is a significant part of Solomons kastom, usually drunk to seal an agreement between people after a long meeting. Kava is a derivative of the pepper tree family traditionally cut and chewed into a pulp, then spat into a bowl. The mushy pulp is squeezed and the resultant liquid drunk in. On some islands, both men and women may drink kava after a hard day's work.

Kava is part of the Kastom culture and it is a privilege to participate in a kava ceremony.

Kava in the Solomons is more peppery and generally stronger than Kava tasted in Fiji.

1.6.9.3 Betelnut

Betel quid chewing constitutes an important and popular cultural activity in the Solomons.

2011: Betelnut is a slightly intoxicating and addictive root that they mix with lime and mustard and chew. Nearly everyone there, men and women alike, had red lips and red teeth from chewing betelnut and the ground is full of what look like blood stains because everyone spits it everywhere! It's not a good look! -- Endless Summer

1.6.10 Wildlife and Fishing

Fishing in the lagoons and bays is prohibited unless you get prior approval from the chief.

Ciguatera. Even though there have not been any confirmed cases of ciguatera fish poisoning in the Solomons, several case histories have occurred in certain areas. Download a comprehensive look at ciguatera ("[You Gonna Eat That Fish?](#)" Info about Ciguatera):

From Wikipedia: Ciguatera fish poisoning, also known simply as ciguatera, is a foodborne illness caused by eating reef fish whose flesh is contaminated with certain toxins. Ciguatera Fish Poisoning commonly occurs in tropical and subtropical areas, particularly in the Pacific Ocean, the Indian Ocean, and the Caribbean Sea.

Symptoms may include diarrhea, vomiting, numbness, itchiness, sensitivity to hot and cold, dizziness, and weakness. The onset of symptoms varies with the amount of toxin eaten from half an hour to up to two days. The diarrhea may last for up to four days.

Any reef fish can cause ciguatera poisoning, but these species: barracuda, grouper, red snapper, moray eel, amberjack, parrotfish, hogfish, sturgeon fish, kingfish, coral trout, and sea bass are most commonly affected

The toxins do not affect the taste, texture, or odor of the fish and cannot be destroyed by cooking, smoking, freezing, salting or any other method of food preparation. Outbreaks can occur seasonally or sporadically, particularly after storms. Not all fish of a given species or from a given area will be toxic.

Preventive efforts include not eating reef fish, not eating high-risk fish such as barracuda, and not eating fish liver, roe, or fish heads. Ciguatoxin has no taste or smell, and cannot be destroyed by conventional cooking. There is no specific treatment for ciguatera fish poisoning once it occurs. Mannitol, Gabapentin or amitriptyline may be used to treat some of the symptoms. Gastrointestinal decontamination with charcoal has also been used. Intravenous fluids may be necessary to control nausea and vomiting.

1.6.10.1 Crocodiles

In 2018, a survey was conducted across the Solomons and 83 fatal crocodile attacks on people (including 31 on children) were recorded. On average, 5 people are killed by saltwater crocodile and many others are seriously injured and traumatized.

On arrival, be sure to ask the locals if crocodiles are common in the area. This includes prior to jumping in the water to check your anchor.

1.6.10.2 Sharks

Sharks are a serious problem and a danger to swimmers. Especially around Port Sandwich on Malekula.

Swimming off black sand beaches should be avoided.

Ask the village if it is safe to swim in their bay.

If you see a red float close to shore do not swim in the bay. The locals put bait on this float to catch sharks.

1.7 Yachtsmen Services

1.7.1 Cooking Gas (Propane and Butane)

Geogas Solomons Limited (previously Geogas Pacific) in Honiara and Gizo refills propane tanks. +677 21833, sales@ggaspacific.com.sb, geogaspacific.com. Hours: Mon-Fri: 0800-1630, Sat. 0800-1200.

July 2019: There is a propane filling place in Noro. Easiest is to use the left-most gas dock, near the Noro Restaurant on the water. You drop your tank, they fill (usually within a couple of hours), and then you pay for what they filled.

We had bought a Solomons tank in Honiara. I don't know if they will fill foreign tanks.

Friends got their tank (Australian, or SE Asia valves) filled in Honiara, near the yacht club. – Soggy Paws

1.7.2 Fuel (Diesel and Gasoline)

Diesel, Petrol, and Pre-Mix can be bought at Noro and Gizo (Western Province).

Duty Free Fuel: Is only available at Noro, but it is available to all foreign yachts, at any time (even before check out). Getting fuel at the Noro fuel dock requires patience and pre-planning.

Aug. 2024: Things have changed since Taenga's post in January. Contact Ricardo at +677.74.34119 to arrange an appointment (this is WhatsApp as well which he responds fast). He will check the schedule with Port Authority to see when the dock is available (commercial vessels always go first).

On arrival call Port Authority on VHF 16 to ask permission to go to the dock.

You will have to wait if a commercial ship is fueling, even if you have an appointment at that scheduled time. Just keep checking with Ricardo.

The minimum amount is 200L. This will be duty / tax free. Cost in Aug. 2024 was 8.63 SI / L. – Eastern Stream

Jan. 2024: We recently purchased duty free diesel alongside the fuel dock in Noro. The process requires a bit of advanced planning. It is a lot easier to come along the dock than it is to carry jerry cans when you need over 200L. The price is around 9.1 SBD per liter. In comparison, fuel in Munda using jerry cans cost 13 SBD.

Martha at Noro Customs confirmed that duty free fuel is available ANYTIME to foreign yachts. It is not like New Zealand and New Cal where you can only get duty free fuel when you are leaving.

Aljohn, at Noro Fuel Company informed us that the fuel is lab tested for impurities and water content. After looking at my pre-filter, after filling, I believe him.

- Fuel Company:
 - Contact the fuel company in Honiara at 20015 (ask for Mary) and inform her that you are a foreign flagged yacht wishing to get duty free fuel at Noro. The minimum is 200L so we told them we wanted at least 250L.
 - Or you can work with Martha from Noro Customs to arrange your fuel: +677.61097. MAusolo@customs.gov.sb
- Call Aljohn, the helpful fuel company rep at Noro (tel: 740.2427) and arrange a time for the actual fueling. There is only one dock, so call in advance as there may be a cargo/fishing vessel in that spot on your desired day.
- Fuel Day
 - Call Noro Port on VHF 16 prior to arrival on the dock

- They may ask if you are working with an agent, it is ok to say “no”
- They will ask which fuel company you are bunkering from which will either be Shell or Markwarth (Be sure to find out which one you are using)
- Do a drive by to assess the dock. Dock on the northern end of the dock as that is where the fuel hose is located. Do not arrive during lunch as you will need assistance with the lines.
- They only accept cash payment. However, Aljohn drove me to an ATM
- It is best to arrive at least the day before fueling to double check everything is in order.

The above post was provided by Taenga.

March 2019: Gasoline is widely available, sometimes only as “premix”, and sometimes at quite high prices in the outer regions.

Diesel is less available except in the major cities. In Noro, there is actually a fuel dock that you can tie up to.

In Gizo, the diesel and gas rate was around 10 SD per liter. In Noro, we were able to fill up at the Markwarth’s fuel dock for about \$7.50 SD per liter (the listed price was less, but by the time we paid for more liters than we actually got, this is the true price of the diesel we pumped).

In the outer islands, the rate for gasoline ended up at 12-14 SD per liter. – Soggy Paws

1.7.3 Trash and Recycling

Most of the larger islands will have trash disposal (Guadalcanal, Santa Cruz, New Georgia, Gizo, Taro)

There is no trash disposal in the outer islands. Please hold on to your trash until you can properly dispose of it on a larger island.

1.7.4 Water

July 2019: Liapari had water in rain tanks. The yacht club at Honiara also had water (source/quality unknown). John Ruka in Roderick Bay (Florida Group) has a pipe that comes down from a mountain or well, and will let you fill jugs.

April / May were hot and dry but in June and July, it generally rained a couple of times a week, so water was not much of an issue. During times of drought, people may be a little less giving of their water. – Soggy Paws

1.8 General Services – Overview

1.8.1 Banks and ATMs

See section “[Currency](#)” for more details (section 1.6.1)

Solomons use the Solomon’s Island Dollar “\$” sometimes represented by SI, SBD. The bills are in denominations of SD \$100, 50, 20, 10 and 5. The coins are SD \$1, 2, .50, .20. Cash is highly recommended, but ATMs can be difficult to find outside of Honiara, Gizo, Noro and Munda.

ANZ and BSP have bank locations in Gizo, Noro and Munda.

Credit cards are not widely accepted. The conversion rate as of Aug. 2024:

SBD	USD	NZD
\$100	\$11.70	\$19.03
\$1000	\$117.00	\$190.29
\$10,000	\$1,170	\$1902.89

The ATMs / banks have substantial per transaction fees with ANZ being higher than BSP.

March 2019: When you are in a city with an ATM, hit the ATM's as many times as you can to accumulate money. (We could only get 3,000 SD out at a time, at a cost of \$45 SD per time).

However, at the outer places where cruisers usually arrive, the villagers are quite used to trading for what you want. We regularly used rice, sugar, coffee, and fish hooks as currency when trading for services (guides) or local fruits and vegetables.

The wood and stone carvers will usually take some trade goods, but almost always prefer to also get some cash as part of the deal.

By the time we figured in the ATM fee, the exchange rate in mid-2019 was approx 8 SD to 1 USD. – Soggy Paws

1.8.2 Boat Parts and Repairs

There are some limited marine supplies available in the Solomon Islands.

Guadalcanal, Honiara Islands:

- Y.Sato Marine: +677 23453, www.global.yamaha-motor.com. Hours: Mon-Fri: 0830-1700, Sat: 0830-1200
- Ocean Marine: +677 30649, www.oceanicmarine.wordpress.com, oceanicm@solomon.com.sb, Hours: Mon-Fri: 0800-1630, Sat: 0800-1300

Gizo:

- Gizo Marine Services: +677 74 39906, Hours: Mon-Fri: 0800-1630, www.facebook.com/gizomarineservicesltd/ Located opposite Bales and Beyond

July 2019: Outboard Motor Repair: Jenky Wong in Noro +677 791-7888 or 716-7191. We did not use him, but he stopped by when Dave was fiddling with the outboard and said he could repair it. Good English, and seemed knowledgeable. – Soggy Paws

1.8.3 Haul Out, Storage, Repair Facilities

Western Province, Liapari (14nm from Gizo)

Liapari Marine: +677 7495119 cell, +677 26867, +677 26868 Ofc, Owners: Diane and Bodo based in Honiara. Diane Dettke diane@solomon.com.sb. On-site manager in Liapari is Cynthia Pana +677 7515688, noel.hudson.liapari@gmail.com. South end of Vella Lavella.

The 60-ton slipway is operating but only for monohulls. The larger slipway used for catamarans is not operational. There is a 100' dock for berthing and moorings are available for rent.

They have a machine shop, welding, woodworking, engineering services and a trade store. Yacht storage and accommodations are available on site.

June 2019: Liapari is semi-commercial, but also a cruiser hangout. There is a nice area with a pavilion for cruiser happy hours and potlucks. With some forward planning, they can get stuff shipped in from Australia, or tell you where (if) you can find it in Gizo. They do have some basic cabins on the property, so you can live aboard or in one of their cabins (for a fee). There is a shuttle to Gizo at least once a week.

Power is available (240v) and water is nearby, out of a rain-fed tank.

There is space at the dock for a few boats, and also a few moorings (anchoring space too, but around 50-55 ft deep). A number of cruisers have left boats for several months at a time. Liapari is above 8° S, theoretically out of the cyclone belt. The harbor is completely enclosed by 70% land and 30% reef, and would be fine to weather anything but a direct hit from a major cyclone. – Soggy Paws

Central Province, Tulagi (1-hr dinghy ride from Honiara, Guadalcanal)

Avi Avi Marine Ltd. +677 30702, www.aviavimarinaltd.jimdofree.com, Hours: 24hrs. Near Tulagi, Florida Islands. Tulagi +677 29080. aviavi@solomon.com.sb, slipway: aviavi@solomon.com.sb.

3-rail slipway is capable of handling vessels up to 1000 tonnes, 80 meters in length, 20 meters beam, 5.5 meters draft. Engineering, steel fitting, fabrication, heavy machinery, mechanical work spray painting, electrical, refrigeration, accommodations.

Sasape International Shipyard: Currently closed. Government seeks financing. Tulagi, Florida Islands

June 2019: There are actually 3 haul out facilities in the Solomons. We did a little “bommie” damage to our keel, and needed to do some maintenance on our sail drives. We contacted all 3 shipyards and got verbal quotes to haul our 44’ (14m) catamaran, and have her out for 5 days while we did the repairs we need. Here is approximately what it would cost:

Note: Information is from 2019 and may not be as updated as the above contact information.

	Liapari	Sesape	Avi Avi
Location	South End of Vella Lavella	In Tulagi Florida Islands Group	Near Tulagi Florida Islands
Slipping Fee	110/meter	350/meter	270/meter
Blocking/Setup		4000	3500
Daily Fee	72/meter/day	200/meter/day	175/meter/day
Splash/Cleanup	925		2500
Insurance		2.5% of ??	2.5% of ??
Total for 14m, 5 days	SBD 7,500+10% tax	~SBD 19,370 +tax	~SBD 21,750 + tax
Contact Info	Noel Hudson Noel.hudson.liapari@gmail.com +677 30441 +677 749-6021 cell	+677 32246 finance@sasape.com Currently closed as of 8/2024	https://aviavimarinaltd.jimdo.com/ Honiara: +677 30702 Tulagi: +677 29080 aviavihoniara@gmail.com Slipway operation email aviavi@solomon.com.sb

The two shipyards in/near Tulagi are commercial yards. Tulagi is a 1 hour (wet) outboard ride to Honiara, so getting supplies and repair materials is simpler. But neither location is very nice. Tulagi has a bad reputation for theft and boardings (though once up in the shipyard, there are probably guards/dogs). Soggy Paws

1.8.4 Laundry

July 2019: Liapari has a shower facility for cruisers that also has a nice waist high wash basin, and some clotheslines nearby. I think also there is someone there that would do the laundry for you for a reasonable price. You could probably get laundry done at Agnes Lodge in **Munda**, but maybe at hotel prices.

During June and July, it rained a couple of times a week, so we always had enough water to do our laundry onboard. – Soggy Paws

1.8.5 Medical and Health

There are 9 provinces in the Solomon Islands and they each have a public hospital with on-site doctor (except Central Province and Rennell-Bellona Province). There are also 3 mission hospitals. Hospitals listed East-West

- Lata, Santa Cruz
 - o Public Hospital, +677 53044, +677 53045, very under-resourced, bring medical supplies
- Makira Province
 - o Kirakira Hospital, +677 50084, +677 50100 x212, 2-full time doctors, 40 nursing staff, 60 beds
 - o Namuga Hospital, +677 24244, 15 staff, 44 beds, radiology, pharmacy, dental, laboratory

- Guadalcanal,
 - o Good Samaritan Mission Hospital, Tetere Guadalcanal Province, +677 744 3325, not a surgical hospital, 12 nurses, 29 beds
 - o National Referral Honiara Hospital, +677 23 600 or +677 20806, largest hospital with 300 beds, 50 doctors, often over stretched. Surgical
- Central Province
 - o Tulaji Hospital, Florida Island +677 32338, very basic hospital, run by nurses with basic first aid medical treatment including local anesthetic.
- Malaita Province
 - o Atoifi Adventist Mission Hospital, +677 482 481, 1 doctor, 35 nurses, 2 operating rooms, 1 anesthetic machine, surgical hospital, laboratory, x-ray unit.
 - o Kilu 'ufi (Auki) Hospital +677 40272, 150 beds, 2nd largest hospital, but only basic medications available.
- Isabel Province
 - o Buala Hospital, +677 35211, 43 beds, 1 operating room, 1 anesthetic machine, 2 doctors, 2 nurses
- Western Province
 - o Gizo Hospital +677 60224, state of the art, operating rooms, dental and ophthalmology clinic, laparoscopic and endoscopic equipment.
 - o Helena Goldie Hospital, Munda Mission Hospital, +677 62111, +677 62197, 68 beds, basic operating room with 1 anesthetic machine, no capnography.
- Choiseul Province
 - o Taro Hospital +677 63121, 20 beds, 2 doctors, 10 nurses, operating room, basic medications, there is no anesthetic machine, oximetry, capnography, or ecg monitoring equipment.

1.8.6 Provisions

Decent provisioning can be done in Gizo, Noro, and Honiara. Munda, there are stores, but fairly limited offerings (just the basics). If you want imported goods, from Munda you can take a bus or taxi up to Noro. Seghe, in Marovo Lagoon, also has some limited stores (expensive, though).

See those island sections for specific provisioning details.

1.9 Communications

1.9.1 Internet and Cell Phone Coverage

The international dial code is +677.

There are two carriers in Solomons: [bmobile](#) (Vodafone) and [My Telekom](#) (formerly known as Breeze). Much like other countries, one carrier works better than the other depending on your location and the time of day. If you require connectivity all the time, the suggestion is to purchase prepaid SIM cards from both carriers when you are near a large city.

As of 1 June 2024, SIM cards need to be registered by Our Telekom, +677.21164, www.ourtelekom.com.sb.

My Telekom are in red houses all over the Solomons and they seem to have a better reputation for good coverage with their 3G/4G network. However, in Honiara, bmobile is better.

bmobile only operates in 4 of the 9 provinces (Guadalcanal, Malaita, Western Province, and Central Province). Their rates are slightly lower, since their coverage is not as robust as My Telekom.

My Telekom prepaid sim card is free when you top up with a data plan. They have several plans ranging with various data (from 2.5 to 10 GB) and active usage days (from 2 days to 30 days). Pricing is relatively inexpensive ranging SI \$20 for 2.5 GB 2 days to SI \$100 for 10 GB for 30 days).

Topping up My Telekom:

- Buy top up cards when you see them as you cannot top up online.
- Buy an amount, say SBD500 and top up your account which lasts one year.
- Then when you need data, you top up from your credit. The longest data lasts 30 days.
- If you top up your data before it expires then it will carry over, if not you will lose the expired data and it starts using your money – so buy data in time or turn off mobile data on your phone.
- *121# is to check your balances of credit and data
- *155# is to buy data with your credit.

Activate bmobile by dialing 121. Activate My Telekom bundle by dialing *155#.

July 2024: Topping up My Telekom on your phone,

- *155#
- Then select #1 Mobile Data
- Then Select #2, Giga Plans
- Then select your plan (3gig for \$30, 4gig for \$40, 5gig for \$50 and 13gig for \$100 (last one is good for 28 days)

May 2023: Telekom is located in red houses all over the Solomon Islands. A SIM is about SBD \$10 (as of 5/2023) and includes \$10 credit. Take a photo of the Top Up sign at the counter so you can top up later. How to top up:

- *777# you can check your mobile number
- *155# brings you to the main menu
- No 8 Help leads you to check your balance or transfer credit
- No 1 Mobile Data leads you to purchase other data plans

Provided by Amiga

2019: *Taxes are now added when you actually buy top-up. If you buy \$100 SD of top up, you only get ~\$85 credit on your phone. So, you need to buy more topup than you need to get the package you want, then you buy the package for face value. – Soggy Paws*

Top Up places can be found almost everywhere (look for “MeTopUp” logo), but finding SIM cards can be a challenge. Ask passing cruisers leaving Solomons if they have a SIM card you could have or wait until you get to Honiara.

Starlink is available in Solomon Islands.

WiFi Hotspot passes

My Telekom runs some dozen public WiFi hotspots throughout the island. Locations and maps can be found online. For access these WiFi plans are sold:

- SBD 6: 60 MB within 1 hour
- SBD 20: 200 MB unlimited
- SBD 35: 400 MB unlimited
- SBD 50: 760 MB unlimited
- SBD 100: 1 GB unlimited

To log on dial *155#, follow the prompts, select (3) for internet, (1) for hotspot access and choose plan. After purchase you will receive an SMS with password and username. As network select "Our Telecom Wifi" and connect with the given data.

June 2019: From the west side of Vella Lavella all the way down to Honiara and Roderick Bay, we had internet 3G or usable 2G all the time, using My Telekom. The noted exceptions were:

- In Viru Harbor (outside we had weak 3G, inside the harbor, nothing)
- In the Russell Islands, we had 2G signal but no real data

- Roderick Bay had up and down 2G and sometimes 3G
- Coverage was surprisingly good in Vonavona and Marovo. There are a few dead spots, but most places had coverage.
- The phones nearly always had a signal, and SMS would usually get through, even if no data would.

Friends working their way south from Honiara to Vanuatu reported a few spots where they had 2G that worked well enough to get messages through on Whatsapp, but not on Facebook.

Foreign phones with global roaming will not work in the Solomons because they do not have roaming agreements with the local carriers. – Soggy Paws

1.9.2 VHF

General VHF Advice that applies to all areas: Be aware that on high power, a good VHF will transmit 25 miles. So, if you are only doing within-anchorage communications, switch to low power. On the flip side, if you are trying to call across island, or to the next island, use high power, low squelch. Make sure you are aware which channels are automatic low power (i.e. 17), and stay away from the low-power channels for long distance conversations.

Though widely spaced in channel number, channels 16, 68, and 18 are very close to each other in frequency. Most VHF antennas are ‘tuned’ for channel 16, so long distance communications will work best on 18 or 68. Conversely, in a crowded anchorage, transmission on high power on channel 18 or 68 may ‘bleed’ over to 16 (and almost any other channel, if you’re close enough). You don’t need high power to talk to the boat next to you, so turn your radio to low power!

Be aware that some channels that Americans use frequently are ‘duplex’ channels in International mode. You may have trouble communicating with a European boat, or an American boat whose radio is in International mode, on Channel 18. (see any VHF guide for the full list of international and US channels and frequencies). Make sure you ask in each port what the local channels are--both so you know how to reach someone ashore and so you know not to use those channels for your off-channel conversations.

July 2019: Hardly anyone in the Solomons (ashore or in small boats) has VHF radios. Channel 16 was problematic to listen to because of foreign boats talking on 16. We generally used Ch 74 as our cruising boat channel, and only dual watched on 16 when underway. Ch 74 was very quiet. – Soggy Paws

1.9.3 SSB Radio Nets

Gulf Harbor Radio: David Sapiane on s/v Chameleon (and his wife Patricia), run Gulf Harbor Radio. They offer check-ins, weather, and news. They typically run the net between April-Nov. It is best to contact them prior to your journey to ensure they are up and running. www.ghradio.co.nz/contact.html

Pacific Seafarer’s Net: Time: 0300 UTC frequency 14300 KHz, pacseanet@gmail.com, If you’re a ham, for longer passages, we always checked in with the Pacific Seafarer’s Net. This is also a good frequency to have saved in case of emergency—the Hams on the PacSea net will move heaven and earth to help any boat with a true emergency—ham operator or not. Even when there is no net going on this frequency, there are often hams monitoring the frequency for emergency traffic.

They start with a ‘warmup session’ at 0300, where you can call in and chat, and maybe hook up with someone who will make a phone call to the US for you. The “Roll Call” (boats who have checked in regularly and indicated they are underway) starts at 0310 UTC, and when they finish (30-60 minutes later), they call for boats getting ready to go on passage to get on the Roll Call list for the next day’s net.

It’s always a good idea to listen up on a structured net for a day or so to get the rhythm of the net, before calling in. You can call in for a radio check during the warmup period, or just after the formal net ends. There are usually people on the net who will do a “phone patch” for you—just ask.

The net control is usually in Hawaii, but there are always relay stations on both sides of the Pacific to help with weaker signals.

The three nets that share 14300 kHz provide an outstanding safety net for cruisers. Whether you talk to the Pacific Seafarers Net, the Maritime Mobile Service Net, or the Intercon Net, all the net controls support cruising sailors (and other mobile operators), hand off well to one another, and have robust links to official responders.

Northland Radio: Northland Radio ZMH292 offers a tracking check in service for vessels underway (fee required). Northland Radio is located in the Bay of Islands, New Zealand. Peter recently installed a new large antenna and has been able to work boats throughout most of the South and Central Pacific and as far as Alaska from New Zealand. Learn more and contact Peter Mott peter@northlandradio.nz. And www.passageguardian.nz.

Emergency Frequencies: 2182 4125 6215 8291 12290 16420

NZ Maritime Radio monitors all emergency frequencies 24/7 see below for working frequencies

tel. 0800 MARITIME, 0800 627 48463 maritime@kordia.co.nz

tel . 0064 (0)4 9148333

RCC NZ tel 0064 (0) 4 577 8030 rcc@maritimenz@govt.nz

JRCC Honolulu Tel 001 808 535 3333 JRCCHonolulu@uscg.mil

NZ Maritime Radio SSB WEATHER

UTC	UTC	FREQ	FREQ
0303*	1503*	6224	12356 *warnings only
0333*	1533*	8297	16531
0903	2103	6224	12356
1003	2203	8297	16531

NavArea XIV includes: Islands- Equator to 25S, 160E to 120W

Subtropic- 23S to 40S, Australian Coast to 120W

Pacific- 25S to 55S, 170W to 120W

Far North Radio (NZ - Kaipara, Brett - Fiji, Tonga, Vanuatu)

Provide an SSB (hf) service to vessels transiting to/from the Pacific and Tasman sea areas.

See Noonsite Report for more details.

1800-1900 hours New Zealand daylight time - 6.516MHz

1900-1930 hours New Zealand daylight time - 4.417MHz

French Net, 13940 kHz at 0300Z (French). - The frequency is still available and they also use 8335 kHz.

Maritime Mobile Net (world-wide) 14300-14313 kHz 24h/day in different languages. Website www.mmsn.org

1.9.4 Real Time Tracking

Passage Guardian, Peter Mott +64.21.279.4995, www.passageguardian.nz, peter@passageguardian.nz

The Passage Guardian offers free monitoring. It is a global (free of charge) safety service for recreational vessels conducting ocean passages. Peter Mott will track your vessel using Marine Traffic satellite AIS, with notifications, GMDSS Weather reports. If sailing single handed, alerts to traffic expected to cross your track overnight, and rescue coordination.

Aug. 2024: We've used The Passage Guardian for the last 4 passages and have found him incredibly reliable, easy to work with and very professional. He has alerted us of a Chinese fishing fleet in our path and diverted us, helped us in extreme weather conditions, and has provided such immense peace of mind. – Sugar Shack

1.9.5 News

Here are some Solomon Islands News websites:

www.solomonstarnews.com/

www.solomontimes.com/

1.10 Cruising Information Sources

Every section is a mix of several sources. We recommend that you join Solomon Island WhatsApp group chats, and Facebook groups to get the most up to date information possible. Listed below are several online sources to help make your stay more enjoyable.

1.10.1 Local Websites

Here are some websites you should visit when you are looking for information on this area:

Sieling, Dirk and Brian Hepburn, Solomon Islands Cruising Guide; Island Cruising Association

- Solomon Islands Visitors Bureau: www.visitsolomons.com.sb
- Solomon Dive Adventures: www.solomondiveadventures.com
- Zipolo Habu Resort: www.zipolohabu.com.sb
- Tetepare Island Marine Reserve (required to request prior approval before arriving) www.tetepare.org

1.10.2 Digital Guide and Apps

Sail South Pacific App - www.sailsouthpacific.com

All of the route and destination planning resources from Panama West across the Pacific, all in one easy to use iOS app for iPad.

Not available on the iPhone.

Zulu Offshore is a handy, FREE, app that offers a lot of useful information.

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.zulu.offline&hl=en&gl=US>

No Foreign Land is another similar app/website where cruisers can share waypoints and other POI information, check in and post comments. <https://noforeignland.com>

1.10.3 Pacific Rally

Island Cruising organizes an amazing rally across the Pacific. You can join from just about anywhere (Panama, French Polynesia, Tonga, Fiji, New Caledonia, Minerva Reef, Vanuatu, Australia, New Zealand, Cook Islands). Rally members receive a comprehensive guide to cruising the Pacific, all check in/departure paperwork, crew help, communication tools, tons of discounts, and a bountiful of events. Cruise with the group or do your own thing, come and go when you please. – www.islandcruising.nz/our-rallies.

Aug. 2024: We have been a member of Island Cruising for several years and have had the pleasure of participating in (2) of their rallies. They provide an immense amount of required documentation, tons of communications, loads of fantastic discounts, and a wonderful community with fellow cruisers. Well worth the money. I highly recommend sailors join if they plan on cruising in the Pacific. – Sugar Shack

1.10.4 Noonsite

www.noonsite.com

Originally started by Jimmy Cornell, this site is a great repository of information for all those out-of-the-way places. Made possible by YOUR contributions.

Current formality information, anchorage details and more.

1.10.5 Seven Seas Cruising Association

www.scca.org

The SSCA is a world-wide organization for cruisers whose primary function is to exchange information about cruising destinations. They have a monthly publication that is mostly letters from cruisers about the areas they are cruising. They also have a good website and a well-attended bulletin board. Membership is reasonable, and the monthly publication and indexed back issues are available electronically.

1.10.6 Facebook Groups

There are several Facebook groups:

- Sailing Solomon Islands
- Sailing (Cruising) the Western Pacific: Tonga/Fiji/Vanuatu/NCal/Solomons
- Sailing and Cruising in New Caledonia, Vanuatu and Beyond

1.10.7 WhatsApp Group

There are a few WhatsApp groups where cruisers share valuable information and insights. If you join the Island Cruising Pacific Rally, you'll have access to one of the best WhatsApp groups in the Pacific!

1.10.8 Ocean Cruising Club

<http://oceancruisingclub.org>

The OCC is a world-wide organization for cruisers whose primary function is to exchange information about cruising destinations. They have a website and bi-annual publication that is mostly letters from cruisers about the areas they are cruising. Membership is reasonable, and the publication is available electronically. Indexed back issues are also available electronically.

1.10.9 Cruising Guides

We are consciously NOT duplicating any printed, copyrighted information here. It takes a lot of effort AND money to publish a cruising guide, and we firmly believe that if it is still in print, you should BUY it, not steal it (in electronic form).

Solomon Islands Cruising Guide – Dirk Sieling – 2000: Currently available as a reprint from Island Cruising Associations. Good but dated information.

Sail the Solomons – Dayle Smith – 1998: We picked a paper copy of this up at a cruiser swap meet somewhere. It is a loose cruising guide, but does have some charts that we don't have in the other two guides, or in our current CM93 charts (Sterling Islands). The aerial photographs in this edition are unfortunately in black and white, so aren't much good for navigation.

Cruising the Solomons – Alan Lucas – 1981: We have a scanned copy that said it was reissued in 2000. We did find at least one area covered by Lucas that Sieling didn't cover (Sterling Island Group).

1.10.10 Cruiser Reports

We are indebted to the people and organizations that have documented their experiences and shared them with us. We can't do this alone. We rely on cruisers sharing updated information. So, please be sure to document and email us your notes at sherry@svsogypaws.com.

Every section is a mix of several sources: A few details about the boats are included, so you can assess what 'a foot under the keel' means, for example.

For most of the earlier sources, we have gleaned the information off the internet (cruiser's websites, blogs, and online forum postings) or out of a Seven Seas Cruising Association bulletin. For the sources reported below, much of the info came directly from cruising friends, helping to round out the information in our various Compendiums.

Eastern Stream (2024): Jaap and Minke left the Netherlands in 2016 on their steel ketch Eastern Stream. The boat has a length of 15 meters, width of 4 meters and a depth of 2 meters. From Panama they sailed to Chile, Easter Island and Pitcairn. The last few years they cruised the Pacific. The Eastern Stream crew loves to explore the more remote places and anchorages.

Sugar Shack (2024): Matt and Christine on Sugar Shack have sailed from Turkey to the Caribbean, ABCs, Panama, Costa Rica, Galapagos, Chile, French Polynesia, Fiji, New Zealand, Minerva, Tonga, Vanuatu, and Solomons. Sugar Shack is a 47' Catana catamaran: 15m long, 7.7m wide, 1.3m draft. Sugar Shack was instrumental in the reorganization and update of the Vanuatu, Fiji, Tonga, and French Polynesia Compendiums in 2019-2024. www.svSugarShack.com

Amiga (2019-2024): Hilde has lived in the Solomon Islands for 6 years on her boat "Amiga." Amiga is a 43' steel ketch, 4.14m wide, 1.9m deep.

Escape II – 2019-2020: Escape II is a Perry 43 Catamaran - cruised from November 2019 - July 2020. Prices quoted in our comments are negotiable and will fluctuate, these prices are what we paid. Comments reflect this and are also our own based on our own experiences.

Soggy Paws (2019): Cruising south from SE Asia in early 2019, and cruising as far as Honiara before turning around and heading back north. <https://svsogypaws.blogspot.com/>

Screensaver (2017-2018): Cruising south from SE Asia in 2017 and north back to SE Asia in 2018. Hunter monohull drawing about 6 ft. <https://screensaver49.wordpress.com/>

L'il Explorers (2017/2018): We are a family with five children aged 5 to 13 years old. Our boat is a 58' Kurt Hughes Catamaran with about a five-foot draft.

Field Trip (2017) – Antares 44 catamaran, sailed into the Solomons in January 2017 from Vanuatu.

Adina (2015): Adina is a Hylas 46 with 6'4" draft. <https://yachtadina.co.uk/>

Elizabeth Jane (2014): Length 13m, width 4m.

Westward II (2011) - Westward II cruised through the Solomons in 2011, headed toward Vanuatu and Fiji.

Bosun Bird (2010): Vancouver 27 built in 1973 is 27' LOA 98.23m), draft 4'6" (1.37m).

2 Passage Reports

2.1 Sailing Here from Elsewhere

2.1.1 From Vanuatu

July 2018: Banks Islands to Vanikolo: A rough trip with 3-5m Seas and wind that never dropped below 25knts sitting around 30knts for most of the trip. Speed wasn't that much of a problem because the seas were pretty

much beam on, but because they were high and steep, even Screensaver being as high, dumped more than a few at me in the cockpit. – Screensaver

Jan. 2017: On paper, this was to be a beautiful sail - winds abeam or just behind the entire way, winds between 12 and 18 knots, and swell of about a meter from behind. BUT... gribbs aren't always accurate and passage planning is never a sure thing. If I've learned anything over the past 25,000 miles of sailing, it is this - never set your heart on what weather forecasts or route planners predict. Plan for the worst, and be pleasantly surprised at anything better.

Motors ran for 8 hours total on/off and the sails went up and down during a squally night during the 28hr trip. When we were an hour away from the entrance to Nendo, a strong squall came across us bringing a torrential downpour that forcibly rinsed any saltwater off the decks and revealed a leaky hatch in the salon. It also brought a cool breeze that filled the sails and had us broad reaching at 120 degrees and speeding along the flat water at 8 knots. Not all storms are bad news...

There are two entrances to Graciosa Bay - one narrow pass on the southwest side between Mola Island and the mainland, and the wide mouth of the bay on the north side.

Light is good. Reefs are easily visible and there's plenty of room. We've got 1 knot with us now. No problem. I relish the calm waters of the protected bay and the idea of entering yet another new country. – Field Trip

2.1.2 To/From Australia

1997: Late September, and we were sailing with moderate trades towards Townsville, Queensland. During the five days between Guadalcanal and Flinders Reef we luxuriated in consistent easterlies and settled seas. On day six the wind backed to northeast force 4, and our first contact with Australia came with the close flyby of Coastwatch Flight 162 who apparently photographed the yacht twice while interrogating me over the VHF.

Vigilance replaced complacency when strong northerlies coincided with our new moon baptism through the Great Barrier Reef via Palm Passage, a popular ship route. The risk was acceptable given current Australian charts, GPS, radar and a couple of strategically placed lights. We hurtled into the black void of foul night under full sail, a little wary and apprehensive and with a keen eye on the sonar. Dawn, and stark-naked Australia stood. – Kama Lua (from OCC Newsletter)

2.1.3 To/From PNG

Late March 2019 – S PNG to N Solomons: We made very short overnight stops in Buka (NW Bouganville) and Torokina (SW Bouganville) (both of these are risky stops, but we had 4 boats cruising together and arrived at sunset and left at dawn, and were locked up at night). From Torokina, we had planned to stop in a small island group NW of Shortlands, which Navionics showed to have anchorable depths. On arrival, the first boat found one tiny pinnacle at anchorable depths and the rest of the atoll was 100+ feet. One of our group who hadn't stopped at Torokina anchored at the west end of Shortland Island but were accosted by persistent locals who wouldn't go away. They left immediately with the local boat pursuing them (for a little way). So our group decided to head all the way into Shortland Harbor on the eastern end of the Shortland Island group. With police presence in this bay, we felt fairly safe anchoring and met some friendly locals.

We continued south from the Shortlands in short hops. Mostly in light sailable winds, all the way to Honiara, reaching Honiara in early May. By about May 15, the SE winds started picking up, and we made the decision not to go any further south. Our friends who continued on around 1 June, beat into 15-25 knot SE winds to get to Vanuatu. – Soggy Paws

Sept. 2019 – Solomons to PNG: We stayed in the central Solomons (between Liapari and Rendova) for June-August, and finally headed off from Sterling Island north to W Bouganville in late August. We made the overnight hop from NW Bouganville to New Ireland, we had squally changeable weather and current in our face. Many sail changes and running of the engine to keep going. From Rabaul all the way back to Sorong Indonesia, in September and October, we had virtually no wind and motored most of the way. – Soggy Paws

Aug. 2014: Well, after 5 days of less than fine sailing weather we crossed the border from PNG and arrived in Solomon Islands this morning. The last 2 days have not been pleasant. VLFTS (Very Large Fucking Thunder Storms), Engine Throttle cable failure, Engine Governor Hunting, Minor lightning strike which was fun since I was holding the safety rail at the time.

The GRIB wind files for our route have all been wrong and in cases 180 degrees so and 10 kts of speed in error. We passed through Bougainville Passage this morning at first light. We took the Eastern most passage. We had 3kts of 'good' current for 2 hours prior to entering the passage then averaged 2.5 kts till well out then hit an upwelling and eddy which ended the current abruptly. Very strange but well received assistance.

We tacked several times down the Bougainville Coast and since Kavieng have used more than 300 litres of diesel. All I can say is go as far east as you are prepared to go before heading for Gizo. – Miss Behave

May 2013: We have arrived in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea. We left the Solomon Islands, for the second time, June 8th. We got beat up so bad in the first attempt we went back to Rendova to make some repairs and gather resolve. With the second attempt, on a good forecast, we got beat up again but we persevered. We didn't see the sun for the next 2 days. The second night featured torrential rain and frequent ship traffic.

We arrived in the Louisiades at the SE end and entered the Calvados Group at Snake Passage. This 6-mile passage from sea was featureless and could not be seen until we were within less than a quarter mile. From there we sailed about 10 miles per day through the Calvados to Verdano and then checked in at Misima. We were in a hurry to Port Moresby so we could be in the Sail Indonesia Rally to Kupang, Indonesia. – Mokisha

2.1.4 To/From Indonesia (via PNG)

Feb. 2019: We did mostly day hops along the coast in light following winds between Waisai and Biak. We cleared out of Indo in Biak, and did a "last" provisioning. We day hopped across to the last Indonesian island east of Biak, and set out for the 3-day passage to the Ninigos from there. We spent a week in the Ninigos in mostly windy rainy weather (all from the W-NW). We day-hopped to the Hermits and spent about a week there. Then we did an overnight to Three Island Harbor, New Hanover.

We finally cleared in to PNG at Kavieng. There is no Immigration in Kavieng, but we applied by email ahead of time and received an e-visa on arrival, allowing Customs to clear us in in Kavieng. We cleared out of PNG in Rabaul, and then mostly day-hopped south and east to the Shortland Islands, Solomons. – Soggy Paws

Jan. 2014: We sailed to Ninigo, PNG from Waisai in Raja Ampat. Safety is a real issue. Overall, you can say that mainland is a no-go area for yachties. But on the internet, there is a lot written about areas where we are very welcome. We've plotted them, and the ones we've seen so far has been the best of all places. Ninigo, Hermit, New Ireland, and right now we are in Atauu (last PNG atoll).

But season is a different thing. There is only 1 moment you can travel from West to East, and that is during the NW monsoon season. And that season starts somewhere in December and ends somewhere end of April. The best months are Jan-March. During the season you will have the wind with you and also the current.

All the bad stories we read came from sailors that were sailing against the season. Especially if you want to sail to the East against the very strong SE season, which starts in mid-May. – Gaia

2.1.5 To/From the Philippines

Jan. 2019: We left Davao Philippines on Jan. 1, and arrived at the east end of Waisai in Raja Ampat (Indonesia) on Jan 12, where we met up with several buddy boats headed for PNG.

From Waisai, we followed Gaia's advice below (see From Indonesia). We had following winds, seas, and current for the trip down to Waisai. We only had a couple of overnight runs, and day-hopped through NE Indonesia down to Waisai.

However, it would be easily possible to sail off direct to the Ninigos from Davao. In January and February, the N-NW winds would make this an easy sail. – Soggy Paws

Aug. 2014: Miss Behave originally left from the Philippines in June, and stopped in Palau and PNG before heading for the Solomons. Philippines to Palau is pretty nice in June, but the subsequent legs were not so great at that time of year. – Miss Behave

2000: We left Surigao late July and had very light winds mainly from the SW, so we took 17 days with a lot of motoring. Initially current was south going before we picked up the equatorial counter current but south of the equator, we ran into strong adverse current which we then battled all the way to the Hermit Isles and, in fact all the way to New Ireland.

If we did the trip again, we would seriously consider staying north of the equator in the counter current until north of Kavieng, New Ireland then dropping down. We found the wind, swell and current combination meant we could make southing fairly easily but easting was a real problem. Boats following later in August had better wind from the sw but still found the same easting problems as they approached PNG.

Once south of the equator we experienced frequent heavy squalls with tremendous thunderstorms. – Forza

2.1.6 From Micronesia

A few boats a year make the trek from SE Asia or Micronesia down to PNG and the Solomons.

Aug. 2014: Palau to Ninigo: After clearing customs and immigration and paying the exit fees (many) we got underway at 11:11 am. Leaving Malakal Harbour (Palau) was the first hint that things were to be less than perfect with 20kts from the SW. Exiting the eastern channel was like jumping into a washing machine. 3m waves and 25 kts from the south. Currently we have a wisp of a Genoa up and a 2xreef in the main. Waves are 2-3 metres, wind is 180/15-20 steady. We are well and getting ready for a roughish night.

July 30: 06°39.0'N / 137°09.2'E 120|5kts|10|180, 170 nm ESE of Palau - Weather is good.

Aug 1: 05°29.0'N / 139°40.0'E 130|5kts|5|130, 640 miles from Manus Island

Aug 2: 02°49.5'N / 152°16.9'E 150|5|10|120, 300 miles. We had a great night sailing last night and tonight seems to be more of the same.

We sailed initially for Ninigo then Hermit then Manus then ended up back in Ninigo. – Miss Behave

Aug. 2014: Palau to Solomons with a stop at Kapingamaranga.

Contrary to the weather forecasts that we were reading before leaving Palau, we were rocketing south and east and within 2 days and enjoying the 2 kt east setting current at 140° longitude. Combine this counter current (so named because it runs opposite to the predominant current which sets slowly with the west bound trade winds) with 15-20kts of westerly winds. We were sailing through a low-pressure system that was forming into a tropical low further north. This meant that we were experiencing lots of squalls, some that we could see forming hours in advance and others that had the rigging singing before we knew what was upon us. Most packed some hefty winds of up to 35kts, with rain and then they whipped up the seas often creating some mighty uncomfortable swell conditions.

Well we had some reasonable swell, up to 3m and buffeting us from every angle. It made for an uncomfortable trip and had me slinking into corners with a green tinge taking notable shape on my face. Averaging 6 kts of boat speed plus 2-3kts of favourable current meant that we were getting through the long-isolated ocean part of the journey at pace. The wind was always blowing, at between 10-20kts, but the direction varied almost by the minute. Relying on our wind vane steering made life a bit easier.

Day 8 saw the end of the low-pressure system and therefore the strong winds. The wind was being extremely temperamental and only routing near squally storms could we gain some wind to propel us forward. The wind was so light and variable that the sails would flap and the boom would bang, while the chop from the swell would roll the boat from side to side. The easing up of the wind did not correlate to a more comfortable ride. So, using the motor we would make some distance and sail when the wind decided to join us. We were also slowly making a bit of southerly heading and were approaching the unattractive equator and its notoriously hot and wind-free conditions.

On day 10 we bid the counter current adieu as it began to sweep northeast, weakening before disappearing below the surface entirely. The wind was still being fluky, but we were strategically planning our proposed arrival at Kapingamarangi Atoll, 250nm from the nearest atoll and 400nm from its mother-state island of Pohnpei (part of the Federate States of Micronesia), to ensure that we arrived at the best time of the day to make the tricky reef entry without incident. The atoll is a roughly squashed circular shape, an encircled lagoon ringed by reef with spotted sand bars located 1.5m above the high tide mark.

The full moon and a spring tide would make for ideal entry conditions to the lagoon and on Day 12 we were 25nm away at 7am. It was a steady sail north to the atoll and we were getting very excited and apprehensive about our intended stopping point.

1200nm, 12 days at sea and this was our first sighting of land. Paradise found!

Kapinga to Solomons: Still glowing from the magical break we had had at Kapingamarangi Atoll we launched into our next challenge, the final 700nm to the Solomon Islands western province. We sailed east initially, aiming to get more easting before we got stuck in the south-east trade winds that blow up the northern coast of Solomon and Bougainville Islands.

We were located at around 1 degree north of the equator and as such there was not much wind and it was hot. But nothing could shelter us from the squalls, as the sun slowly dipped below the horizon we sailed into darkness as thunderstorms raged off each quarter of the boat. The storms would bring intense short rain downpours preceded by 20kt wind blasts and 100-degree wind shifts. At dawn light would glimmer on the eastern horizon and become a searing globe by 8am and leave dim markers on the western horizon by 7pm. Dramatic cloud formations would tower into the stratosphere, leaving a sense of foreboding about the night ahead full of squally rains and strong wind bursts.

The last two days of passage wore us out with strong winds, big choppy seas and storms that would not let up. We hove to for 6 hours to try and let it pass. This trip had really worked our patience and we were tired. Probably a result of doing two long passages back-to-back with only a 3-day respite in the middle.

As we made our way to the north of Vella Lavella Island, we negotiated the tricky reef entry into Geva Harbour, slowly creeping our way over a shallow coral bar.

700nm completed in 7 days. We were exhausted and very pleased to be in such a tranquil river to sleep off our long eastward passage - 19 sea-days and 2000nm from Palau. –Elizabeth Jane II

2014: Chuuk to New Ireland (PNG): When people think of Doldrums they think of light winds. The cruising chute was very helpful in reducing our fuel consumption, which is good because diesel cost about USD \$4/gal in Micronesia. It worked well: we could go 7.5 knots in a 10-knot quartering wind, 4.5 with 6 knots.

For those who think the Doldrums are all light winds, be advised that squalls are common. Once we crossed to the south side of the ITCZ (Intertropical Convergence Zone) we started to get nasty stuff and adverse winds, so down went the chute and up went the "Iron Main", i.e. we started motoring for the last 2 days.

After about 5 days we arrived at Kavieng, at the west end of New Ireland, Papua New Guinea. – Amante

June 2013: Kosrae to Gizo: The route (in a direct line) was to be 815nm to the first Island in the Solomons and then an additional 80nm from there to Gizo, the capitol of the Western Province.

We motored down the protected side of Kosrae in the wind shadow of the high hills but once clear we set sail and took off. We were reaching beam-on in 14 knots and surprisingly doing over 10!! Turns out we had a 3-knot current assistance that we held for the first 3 hours. After that the current dropped a little but we did hold about 1 – 1.5 knots for the whole trip.

We managed to sail 172nm in the first day (24 hours) and did 160 and 162 for days 2 and 3. We were stoked – 2.5 days into it and we were already half way to the first landfall in the Solomons.

Slowly the wind died and by day 4 we were motor sailing and on day 5 all sails down and motoring along.

We sighted land at 10am on day 5 which was Choiseul Island at the top end of the country.

We had to motor 20nm through a wide pass that came up to 15m depth before dropping back to 100m and back up to 10m at the other end.

Once through the pass, we set sail again in light winds and flat seas for the 80nm run up “The Slot”, around the extinct volcanic island of Kolombangarra and into Gizo.

The sail was relaxing under a full moon until about 3am when the storms hit dousing us with rain and squally winds. We simply dropped sails and motored the final 15nm to the pass which was next to Panapagha Island.

The very narrow entry thru the reef, we came up over a section only 10m deep and 20m wide.

Overall, the passage was a pleasant one. We were able to sleep well, cook, eat and clean. We sailed/motored a total of 937nm in 6 days and 3 hours. – Lorelei

2.2 Passages within Solomon Islands

2.2.1 Between Honiara and Roderick Bay

June 2019: We did the passage between Honiara and Roderick Bay about 6 times, once for just a daytrip to pick up our passports from the PNG High Commission. We always had fairly changeable wind (wind speed and direction) due to the large island of Guadalcanal and the Florida Group. We mostly sailed this, but always ended up motoring in on both ends. – Soggy Paws

2012: The GRIB files showed 8kn from the ESE and we were only going 29 miles, so we didn’t worry too much about sailing slowly. Motoring out of the harbor and then almost due north on flat seas and with calm winds towards Nggela Sule (“GAY la SUE la”) Island, we pointed Carina’s bow to its north end at Sandfly Passage, off of which lies Roderick Bay, our destination.

A few miles out—perhaps out of Guadalcanal’s wind shadow— winds suddenly increased to 20+kn so we shut down the engine and close-reached at a consistent 6.5kn under triple-reefed main and about half of our 120% genoa. The wind came with short-period, 2.5m beam-to waves that built very quickly in Iron Bottom Sound.

The passage was a bit like a carnival ride and we hung on and enjoyed it as our Monitor windvane steered most of the way across. Our crossing went very quickly—so much for worrying about a slow crossing—until we entered Sandfly Passage when a strong opposing current slowed our progress as we battled “noselily” katabatic gusts that varied from 10-37kn!

Luckily, we only had to motor into the wind and current for less than five miles before we turned the corner into Roderick Bay. – Carina

2.2.2 Between Russell Islands and Honiara

March 2019: We left Russell Islands at dawn, and had nice SW winds. We had a fast sail in the open water, but the wind dropped off as we neared the Guadalcanal coast. We motored the rest of the way in. – Soggy Paws

Oct 2017: We left the east side of Russell Islands with an open mind, figuring we would either end up in the Florida Islands (i.e. East) or on Guadalcanal (SSE) whichever gave the best sailing line. As soon as we got clear of the Russell group, conditions were pretty bad with 30 plus knot wind gusts and short sharp seas. I very nearly turned back, but the weather forecast such as it was showed no sign of this, or anything changing.

Screensaver punched into more than I would like falling heavily on the next wave. There is a contour line along our route with 1200-1300m on one side and 500 to 800m on the other side. So effectively there was a 500-600m mountain beneath us. The ridge was right on our course, and while I tried running off, I would have had to go a long way off course to avoid it. In the end we punched our way through it and got to the NW tip of Guadalcanal where I had hoped we would find shelter behind the reef. But it wasn’t to be and after 30 min I decided enough was enough. We ended up around 10 nm along the western side of Guadalcanal at Kole Point. From there we made our way to Honiara the next day. – Screensaver

2.2.3 New Georgia to Santa Isabel

Oct 2017: We left from the NE corner of Vangunu Island / Marovo Lagoon, via Kokoana Passage, and headed east of Santa Isabel. Trying to go SE in SE trades is not exactly great sailing. The trouble is if you are coming from Asia or Philippines as we did, then you really don't have a choice, because SE trades run at least 80% of year to varying degrees. I usually sail as near to east as I can (in SE) and then as near to south as I can. This leg and the anchorage were all about getting east, and hopefully sailing it.

The weather forecasts here have been worse than usual, and while I don't expect them to forecast squalls, I do expect them to forecast sustained 30+ knots, instead of 15-20 they forecasted for this leg. The 30 did drop off slowly thankfully and by around 11:00am we were having a brisk sail.

The wind did back off in the afternoon eventually and to my surprise we got a good push of at least 1-1.5 knts. This anchorage wasn't in my planning, and hence I had no GE image. Internet had been broken for some time and credit had also run out. I emailed my brother (via HF) and asked if he could send me a small cut down image just so I had something else as a guide, so in the end we made it in good time. – Screensaver

2.2.4 Between Treasury Islands and Shortland Islands and Vella Lavella

March 2019: From Stirling Inner Anchorage to Vatoro Bay, Vella Lavella. In March, we had light winds and sunny skies, with a light wind from the N and a little current from the SE. We had to motorsail this leg to get in before dark. – Soggy Paws

Aug. 2019 – From Vatoro Bay to Stirling Island: August in the Gizo area was mostly rainy and somewhat windy, with a few days scattered in that were beautiful sunny days with light winds. We picked a day to do this leg that had 15-20 knots SE forecast, 2m seas, and some rain. That's pretty much exactly what we got. It was a boisterous, fast sail. – Soggy Paws

3 Temotu Province

3.1 Vanikoro (Vanikolo) Island

3.1.1 Passes

June 2012: The easiest entrance to the group is through the NE Hays Channel. The charts proved reasonably accurate and we had no trouble entering. – Carina

2010: The narrowest part of the channel is marked by a red and green beacon, but not on the sides one would expect: the red is to be left to starboard when entering from the east. In normal tradewinds conditions there was no swell in the passage and we did not observe depths less than 3m.

Exiting to the north, via Hayes Passage, red beacons should be left to starboard. – Bosun Bird

3.1.2 Sapolome Bay

3.1.2.1 Anchorages

June 2019: 11°41.546S / 166°53.712E in 12m sand at Sapolome Bay (Ramboi Bay) Vanikoro. – Indigo II

July 2018: 11°41.677S / 166°53.67E. Anchor 14m mud, no internet. – Screensaver

3.1.2.2 Cruiser Reports

July 2018: Sadly, it seems Malaysia has started logging here and what's even worse is they are cutting down very old kauri tress planted by New Zealand many years ago. The locals are far from happy and tell stories of corrupt land owners living in Fiji whom have paid off the government in order to achieve this. The locals have

tried hard to stop them at first the right way, and then by setting fire to their equipment and other fairly extreme measures, but sadly this has not worked. – Screensaver

3.1.3 Manieve Bay

3.1.3.1 Passes

2010: Approaching from Vanuatu the logical entrance to Manieve is via the narrow but navigable Navanganero Pass (Dillon Passage), at the west end of Tevai Bay. – Bonsun Bird

3.1.3.2 Anchorages

June 2012: **11°40.088 S / 166°55.796E** in 82'. We were snug, as squalls arrived from different points of the compass.

The anchorage at Numbuko Bay (at the end of Manieve Bay)—a bight off the main harbor and miles away from the nearest village—is deep and all around the edges are coral shelves that rise abruptly from deep water and loom ominously as you enter. A river enters into the bay - so there are crocs (though we saw none). – Carina

2010: **11°40.184S / 166°55.823E** in 22m. The best anchorage is in Manieve (or Mangadai/Manevai) Bay, on the NE corner of the main island, where Tevai Island adjoins Vanikolo. The water is not particularly clear and diving to check the anchor is not advisable; the mangroves are inhabited by crocodiles.

Very protected lake-like anchorage can be found in either of the two arms of the mangrove-ringed head of the bay, but fringing reefs (visible in normal conditions) should be given a wide berth. C-Map and GPS appear to coincide almost exactly. – Bosun Bird

3.1.3.3 Cruiser Reports

June 2012: Our next stop after Tikopia was Vanikoro, about 120nm further west, an island group enclosed in a broken coral reef. Coincidentally, Vanikoro means to gather to seek shelter, in Tikopian. Do not make the mistake of calling it by the misnomer Vanikolo.

Supply vessels apparently make very infrequent stops at these outlying islands of the Santa Cruz group. It is for this reason that the villagers are quite eager to trade with visiting sailboats for the types of goods that they cannot make, grow or retrieve from the sea.

If their fruits and vegetables aren't worth enough for a trade, they are very willing to buy things with Solomon Island dollars, never quibbling about the price. For our part, we wished only to trade or give gifts, but ended up sometimes selling for cash since there were only so much trading items we could use.

Paramount Chief Chris Albert Ramoli, a warm friendly man with a quick smile, visited us twice with an entourage, bearing long lists of villagers' wants/needs and their cash or trading items.

In return we got a little cash, island cabbage, eggs, papaya, oranges, grapefruit, green onions, chili peppers, yams, primitive jewelry and carvings, a fine set of wild boar tusks, and delicious mangrove oysters.

One tantalizing story about this island is the legend of the existence of the kakamora, described as "short, shy, very strong, hairy humanoids" that live deep in the bush in caves on the sides of the mountains. Chief Chris insisted they existed and claimed to have seen them many times. We never saw a kakamora despite our careful observation with binoculars. – Carina

2010: This is a high island with an encircling reef and eight coastal villages, which communicate with each other only by dugout; sailing canoes are still in use. There is no secondary school but most of the villages have primary schools. La Perouse's Boussole and Astrolabe were wrecked on the south coast (near Pallu Passage) and have been investigated by divers with the support of the French Navy.

Landing is not practical here. The nearest village is Puma (Buma) on Tevai Island, about 3 miles away, but canoes will likely visit you all the same; locals were friendly and more than willing to trade, as the supply vessel is infrequent. There is no airstrip on Vanikolo and no cellphone coverage. – Bonsun Bird

3.2 Utupua Island

3.2.1 Basilisk Harbor / Sabeen Bay

3.2.1.1 Passes

2010: Utupua Island is about 30nm NW of Vanikolo (normally visible from Vanikolo). It also has a fringing reef. Normally entry is made at Ringdove Pass on the SW corner of the reef, although there are several other uncharted passes on the western side. Approaching from Vanikolo, two large black rocks are visible on the outer reef, about a mile before the pass is reached. A little way inside the reef is a steel post with a red top-mark indicating a tongue of reef jutting out, it should be left to port. The pass leads directly into a long, wide inlet and to the center of the island, Basilisk Harbour. – Bosun Bird

3.2.1.2 Anchorages

June 2019: **11°15.3516S / 166°31.1333E** in 10m mud. – Indigo

2010: **11°15.441S / 166°31.166 E**, 17m. Where Basilisk forms into a Y-shape, considerable care must be taken to avoid the fringing reef and two isolated patches. Anchorage is best in the northern part of the Y, Sabeen Bay, which, as at Vanikolo, is mangrove-ringed and where it is not practical to land. There are crocs in this area. C-Map and the GPS coincide closely. – Bosun Bird

3.2.1.3 Cruiser Reports

2010: The island's main village (Nemboa) is at the entrance of the inlet, on the N side. On the S side a prominent white cross mark a mission of the Melanesian Brotherhood.

Several years ago, in front of his horrified wife, a Swiss yachtsman was devoured by a crocodile; his (few) remains are buried in the village. This hazard may be avoided by anchoring at locations between the main island and the fringing reef, where the water is clear and there are no mangroves. These areas are uncharted but the locals may be able to give advice. There is also dugong in Sabeen Bay.

As at Vanikolo, there is no airstrip, no cellphone coverage, and the friendly locals are keen to trade. Large mud crabs and mangrove oysters are available.

There are no government officials here but the Reverend Patterson said he keeps track of passing yachts and as at Vanikolo there is radio communication with the provincial government in Lata (Ndende/Santa Cruz Island). – Bosun Bird

3.3 Santa Cruz Islands (Ndendo / Ndendo) (Port of entry)

Port of Entry at Lata, Nendo

3.3.1 Graciosa Bay

3.3.1.1 Pass

July 2015: We entered through the pass on the west side of Ndende Island (10°42.3633S / 165°47.2411E) with good light. There is a reef in the middle and we passed to the south of it. – Adina

2010: Exit to the west is most conveniently made through West Passage, South of Te Motu (Tomotu Neo) Island. A steel post with a red top mark marks the southwestern extremity of a reef that partially blocks the eastern entrance to the Passage; it should be left to starboard; charted beacons indicating the southeastern extremity of this reef and the southwestern tip of Te Motu Island are missing. – Bosun Bird

3.3.1.2 Anchorages

Anchorage inside Graciosa Bay include Lata and Shaw Point.

3.3.1.2.1 Shaw Point Anchorage

Aug. 2024: The anchorage is calm and peaceful with a few canoes coming by to trade fruit/veg and carvings. Everyone is very friendly.

The anchorage is deep and goes up to 8m before the reef. It is a coral rubble bottom and can be difficult to set the anchor. Most of the boats had several attempts before they were well set. – Yaminda

July 2024: 10°44.185S / 165°49.723E anchored across from Lata near Shaw Point. – Li Wang

June 2019: 10°44.193S / 165°49.741E anchored in 16m on presumed coral/rock rubble bottom.

This is a great little bay, well sheltered from the dominant south-easterly winds that can make Graciosa Harbour very choppy. It is possible to arrange transport in a local speedboat from Luesalo Bay across Graciosa Harbour to the provincial capital Lata. – Soggy Paws

Nov. 2019: Best anchorage is Shaw Point at Luesola Bay (also known as Graciosa Bay), in the bay next to the Agricultural College. – Escape II

July 2018: 10°44.2141S / 165°49.7689E. 16m. I did a bit of a sail by the town and wharf on the way in, as it would be much more convenient to stop there, but as suggested there really is nowhere to anchor there due to seas, wind and depth of water.

A quick look directly opposite revealed a couple of very nice spots, one just before the recommended anchorage I would have taken if I was on my own, nice beach, clear water, sand but deep and I would have tied Screensaver stern to a tree. However, we ended up a bit further in, where most seem to go. – Screensaver

July 2015: 10°44.233S / 165°49.703E in 25m on rock and coral. The normal good anchorage is at Shaw Point. Anchoring off Lata town is not advised as it is deep and foul ground. Best is to hang off and have someone go ashore at the town jetty (10°43.2396S / 165°48.1286E).

The Shaw Point bottom is rock and coral so try to get your anchor to hook on something! On the positive side it is very well sheltered from wind. Titus is the man who looks after yachties and will canoe to you. He is a good person and will look after you wanting nothing (but clothes or a gift are appreciated).

Lata is across the lagoon, about 2nm, and has diesel, gasoline, phone cards, market, small stores, LPG. – Adina

3.3.1.2.2 Manoora Shoal

May 2024: 10°45.329S / 165°49.6E. This is a nice bay and is home to a technical boarding school. Shaw point is the preferred anchorage when doing formalities in Lata. – Eastern Stream

April 2024: 10°45.312S / 165°49.01E. Aerial photographs show coral pinnacles with uncertain depths. Mariners are advised to navigate with caution and only in conditions under which reefs are visible. – Sugar Shack via Navionics

July 2015: 10°45.578S / 165°49.348E 23m mud, good holding. This anchorage is closer to where Titus lives (see above) and also provides access to a fresh water pool where the locals get their water. Downside is it is further from Lata town than Shaw Point. Locals will catch lobster if you pay for their fuel - join them, it's good fun. – Adina

2010: 10°45.587S / 165°49.368E Here we found adequate anchorage, in 23m. Graciosa Bay is large and wide, and generally very deep; unlike Vanikolo and Utupua it should NOT be considered as a possible cyclone refuge.

There is a concrete wharf at Lata, by the side of which lies the large and semi-submerged wreck of a white-hulled inter-island freighter. The wharf is not practicable for use by a yacht except in very calm conditions; the prevailing winds blow directly onto it and there are 2 to 3 miles of fetch.

We attempted to anchor in 12m to 15m on a shoal in the S end of the bay, marked on the chart, but couldn't get the anchor to hold. We moved to the extreme SE corner of the bay, where a river debouches into the bay. There are rocks to the starboard and the river bar to port, both of which are swinging constraints, but the river's outflow seems to hold the boat in the right position, even when the winds fall calm.

We were advised that a further possible anchorage is south of Shaw Point, about 2 nm to the north of here, on the E shore of Graciosa Bay; this would offer better shelter should the wind turn into the N. However, it is a much longer walk to town; the old sawmill is no longer active. – Bosun Bird

3.3.1.3 Yachtsmen Services

3.3.1.3.1 Fuel (Diesel and Gasoline)

June 2019: PZTR, a Service Station and Grocery Store located in Lata run by Alistair Lemoba, has diesel, petrol, marine gear oil and groceries. – Indigo II

3.3.1.3.2 Trash and Recycling

May 2024: Trash disposal is available in Santa Cruz. – Sugar Shack

3.3.1.4 General Services

3.3.1.4.1 ATMS and Banks

Sept. 2023: There was no working ATM at the time of our visit in Lata, but we could change USD for SBD for a tough rate (100usd for 500sd). – sv Deinemeid

June 2019: It's not possible to get any cash out in Lata as our international credit cards were not recognized by any of the available EFTPOS machines. However, Alistair Lemoba, the owner of PZTR, a Service Station and Grocery Store located in Lata, allowed us to purchase diesel, petrol, marine gear oil and groceries totaling Solomon \$7144 (equivalent to Aus \$1385.27), which we paid for by international bank transfer using the Bumblebee hotspot available from the Telekom office at the top of the hill. Be patient – it took about ten minutes for the bank website to come up on our laptop and allow us to complete the funds transfer. – Indigo II

July 2018: No ATM and none of the 5 different cards we had between us were accepted anywhere... So where does one get money here, the search continues.

Eventually it seemed Tom (said to be an American resident here ph +677 53190) was the guy to see for money up the top around by the church. Cecile (Skedaddle) had \$50au and I negotiated with Tom an exchange rate that was meant to be slightly in our favour until we could check the real rate, but in fact was grossly in our favour. I'm unsure what rate Google gives you buy or sell but it said \$1aud = \$6.2sbd. Tom and I did 1 to 8, initially, and the next day I corrected my exuberance of our exchange. Bottom line is Tom is just a flush western local, making 1% on the way through. – Screensaver

3.3.1.4.2 Formalities

Aug. 2024: We anchored at 1600. Customs (George) and Immigration (Wilson) came over to us at Shaw Point anchorage. They had both of us cleared in by 1650. They were not fussed with checking our fruit/veg or alcohol even though we had it laid out for them in the galley.

Cost: We are Australian, 500SBD in and 500SBD out payable when we clear out at Noro. – Yaminda

May 2024: May 2014: We cleared in in Nendo and had a nice conversation with George (Customs Official). Lata on the island of Nendo is a port of entry. You can anchor at Lata but the preferred anchorage is Shaw Point. The officials will come over from Lata for clearance. They require advance notice and it is wise to email them (both customs and immigration) with your ETA.

GHenrySalopuka@customs.gov.sb (George, Custom Officer in Nendo)

Wilson.wilikai@commerce.gov.sb (Wilson, Immigration officer in Nendo)

Customs - Tel +677 7730058 and Quarantine - Tel: +677 7865296.

There is no ATM on the island, so you cannot get Solomon Dollars here. – Eastern Stream

Sept. 2023: We checked in to the Solomon Islands in September 2023 at Lata, Nendo and had a great experience. We had to pay (only) 500 SD for immigration (2 EU citizens on board) and that was all. Nobody asked for any extra payments and they worked very professional.

Customs came on board with us to finalize his paperwork. The whole process was smooth and professional; they had even received our documents that we had send pre arrival. The people on the island were very friendly and helpful. – sv Deinemeid

Nov. 2019: Immigration Fee \$500Sd = 45 days; 1000Sd for 90-day visa. After we had been in the Solomon Islands more than 6 months, we were charged 1000Sd for an extra 60 days

Temotu Province tax: \$200 SBD

Customs: \$18US per foot of length of boat to be paid in Honiara when you arrive (they charge you in US Dollars then convert to Solomon Dollars. The conversion rate is a flat rate determined annually

Bio Security 200 SBD is also dealt with in Honiara. – Escape II

2019: Immigration in **Noro** is directly inward from the market on the water, upstairs in a 2-story building. The stairs are on the left, facing the building from the road.

For Customs and Biosecurity, from the Noro yacht anchorage, you can see a red building on the hill with a phone tower. This is the My Telekom office. Stop in and get your sim card there! From that building, walk another 50 yards and turn left (towards the water) on a dirt road. About a 5-minute walk, past some houses on the left, you will find Customs on the right in a green building. There is actually a sign in front of this building that says Customs. Biosecurity is in back of this building, unlabeled. Office hours posted on the Customs building were Mon-Fri 8am-12pm 1pm-4:30pm. – Soggy paws

July 2018: The only reason one would come to Ndendo is to clear in or out, or to break up the route between Vanuatu and Solomon's. There are banana boats going from this anchorage back and forth to the town and I am 99% sure if you flagged down one of the morning runs carrying the locals you could do the trip for much less than the \$50.00sbd we paid. But for that he hung around came and went when we wanted, so all good.

There is no way you will find any of the clearance services on your own other than immigration and even with half reasonable directions it will be a challenge. Ask a local for help.

Quarantine was simply and basically a small dog leg of the end of the wharf will have you filling in some paper work and he did not seem to be phased by our lack of money or in ability to pay his fee.

I complained about the totally irrelevant questions on some 5 pages to customs, that need to be completed twice due to lack of copying facilities the very nice lady said, well it was one page until you Ozy's came and told us how to do it....this combined with a Canadian killing his wife is why it is so. Anyway, as she chewed her Beetle nut, we completed her paper work underneath her house on a picnic table.

Immigration and port clearance was interesting. She asked Skedaddle where they had been for the past few weeks given they cleared out of Vanuatu some 2 weeks ago and she stated it only takes a couple of days to get here. Knowing my clearance out was at least 6 weeks ago I interjected and explained that it cannot be done in 2 days and we got stuck in Vanuatu due to bad weather. Typically, they don't care if your extended/lost time is in the other country.

Then we got into the fees. It would seem they are trying anything they can and also quite happy to provide a receipt. They asked us to pay a Provincial harbour/anchoring tax. I simply said I'm not paying Provincial government and Honiara government, and land owners and besides we have no money. In the end we walked away with a bill for \$300sbd having paid nothing. The next boat (1 day later) got a bill and paid \$150sbd, the one after that, a French boat \$1500sdb. – Screensaver

3.3.1.5 Provisions

Sept. 2023: Lata has a market and some small shops are present. – sv Deinemeid

June 2019: PZTR, a Service Station and Grocery Store located in Lata run by Alistair Lemoba, allowed us to purchase diesel, petrol, marine gear oil and groceries. – Indigo II

3.3.1.6 Cruiser Reports

Aug. 2024: The famous Hilde came by our boat and invited us to a pot luck at her house. She gave us a tour of the school where we met the principal, Fr. Bartholomew. We had a fantastic night. – Yaminda

July 2024: Moses came out on his canoe, he has no contact, and offered to take us to the spring pool, ship wreck and waterfall. We trekked with him all day to the waterfall through bushes, along or in the river and it was lovely. Recommend an adventure with Moses. – Li Wang

May 2024: Shaw Point is a nice bay and home to a technical boarding school. Teachers and students live here. Kyle, an American cruiser is one of the teachers and is teaching the students how to build their own small fiberglass boats. It is a warm and welcoming place. They want to start a library, so English books are welcome. – Eastern Stream

Sept. 2023: All the people seemed really happy to have us visiting their island. Not all of them speak English or Pidjin. Snorkeling in the 'pass' was beautiful and the town has 4g signal and SIM cards for sale at a reasonable price (100sd for 13gb). – sv Deinemeid

Nov. 2019: Trading with Hilda (one of the teachers at the college), Moses one of the teachers is also very helpful. – Escape II

June 2019: Luesalo Bay (Shaw Point) anchorage. Teachers at the Luesalo Rural Training Centre made us welcome – Moses Tanna, Agricultural Science Teacher, organized boat transport to Lata for us and arranged for our laundry to be done by local women. Hilda Jou Kola, Electricity Teacher, generously provided some meals of local food. She was delighted to receive kitchen implements in return. Brother Elliot took us to Lata in the Brothers' speedboat and waited patiently all day for us to complete our purchases of fuel and supplies and then arrange payment by international funds transfer. We paid for this service by filling his fuel tank with petrol and buying gear oil for his outboard engine.

There is a clear freshwater pool behind the beach opposite the village, fed by a spring. Best used at low tide, it is a great place to bathe and do laundry, keeping the suds out of the pool. – Indigo II

2010: This is the largest island in the group, and the seat of the provincial government for Temotu Province. It is of some historical interest in that in 1595 Alvaro de Mendana attempted to found a Spanish colony at Graciosa Bay; it failed and the exact site is not known, but a local told us that his name lives on in that a disproportionate number of the island chiefs have names beginning with "M" (!). There is an airstrip at Lata (today's principal settlement, on the W shore of the bay), with regular flights by Dash-8 to Honiara; Lata also has the province's only secondary school.

On shore to the S, a friendly local called Titus will allow you to land your dinghy. In the past he has maintained a "yacht club" (i.e. bar) here. He has spent a number of years working on large American tuna boats in the Pacific. However, we had a stainless-steel shackle stolen from the dinghy when we left it here. Locals will come by dugout to trade but there is a small veggie market in Lata. – Bosun Bird

3.3.2 Napo Bay

3.3.2.1 Anchorage:

July 2018: Ndendo South: 10°45.8647S / 166°00.4456E. Anchored in 18m mud. This anchorage has no name as far as I can find but it is a small harbor located on south side of Ndendo just NW of Toemotu Noi. A little deep in places but well protected and the SE swell does not appear to get in there. – Screensaver

3.3.3 Mau Lagoon

South of Cape Byron and North of Cape Broby

3.3.3.1 Anchorage

Mau Lagoon: 10°44.035S / 166°07.001E in 16m sand. Just spent one night here. – Indigo II

3.4 Reef Islands

3.4.1 Anchorages

2019: 10°17.906 / 166°17.836. Mohawk Bay in 17M, sand, possible to move closer to the reef. – Escape II

3.4.2 Cruiser Reports

Late 2019: No internet here. See Ben Hepworth, expat who owns Pigeon Island. The Chief from the largest village on Fenolova is named Chris. – Escape II

April 2017: Reef Islands are reminiscent of the Tuamotus with the bright turquoise shallow water inside the lagoon. The water is every shade of blue and green imaginable as the depth changes from extremely deep to barely covering the sand near the shore.

The canoes begin to surround us quickly- all of them full of smiling, curious, naked children wielding paddles. After introductions I hand each child a pumpkin cookie. They are so careful not to bump the boat with the dugout wooden canoes, and can steer skillfully close enough to reach out a hand and politely take the cookie from me with a shy giggle.

Denzel comes out, too, a young man in his twenties in a fiberglass canoe. He kindly offers to guide us through the reefs to a place where we can easily walk ashore. Kids line the beach and the nearby cliffs whooping and waving a warm welcome, and then the crowd follows us up to the center of the village. Many of the adults are seated, their mouths full of the red, juicy spit produced by chewing a betel nut/lime powder concoction that is infamous here. They seem happy to see us, but also unsure of what exactly to do with us. We aren't the first visitors they've had, but they don't get many!! There is a discussion among the prominent men and we're not sure exactly what they are trying to decide, although I imagine they are contemplating an anchoring fee or donation. In the end, they asked if we could donate some school supplies to the kindergarten. No problem!

Mola Village Reef Islands: When we picked up anchor and moved to another portion of the Reef Islands, we were pretty 'villaged' out, meaning we'd been spending a lot of time trading, fixing, teaching, and tok-tokking. It is such a privilege and adventure to come to these far-away places and see such remote communities who welcome us with open arms, but it can be overwhelming and exhausting, too. It is pressure, knowing we are representing a community of cruisers and possibly forming ideas and assumptions in the minds of these people of what all foreigners are like during the few days we're here. We are careful to leave a good impression, show kindness and share what we can with them.

We try to smile at each canoe that comes along offering more shells or coconuts or snake beans to trade (even though we've had to throw so many papayas overboard after dark, because we can't eat it all fast enough!) When they come to trade and are not asking for something without offering something in return, then we want to honor that effort, so even though we're turning orange from all the pawpaw, we still trade for a notebook or a pen or bath soap because we have what they need and it isn't a lot, is it?

Now, some guys come by asking to trade green beans for a dive mask - and we say no. I know they need the dive masks desperately for spearfishing, but I also don't want to create inflation and unreasonable expectations either. The next cruiser who comes along won't appreciate that. We also say no to those who request alcohol of any kind. It's just not a contribution to their community we feel good about making.

Trading is just plain tricky. But we try to do right by them and by those who may come after us. We won't please everyone, but we will do the best we can. – Field Trip

3.5 Tikopia

3.5.1 Anchorages

Dec. 2017: We anchored in about 65 feet of water on sand with good holding. The Anchorage was very secure, an easy dingy pass through the reef, soft sandy beaches, and wonderful people. We used Google maps to pick out a sandy anchorage where there is a large indent in the Reef.

We have heard about there being an anchorage fee, so in the hope of avoiding this we put together a nice gift of a bush knife, rice, shirt, and Raman soup for the chief. We were not asked for an anchorage fee, though some of the people asked if we had been asked for a fee. Even when we visited Anuta later we were asked if Tikopia had collected a fee from us. – L'il Explorers

June 2012: 12°17.602S, 168°49.116E in 70' of mostly sand. Tikopia's Ringdove anchorage is a small, deep, bommie-studded bight in the coral along its western shore. It's an open roadstead exposed to westerly winds but safe during stable trade wind conditions. Williwaws are common. – Carina

3.5.2 Cruiser Reports

Dec, 2017: Within an hour of our arrival, a handful of dugouts offering various fruits and vegetables for trade.

We met with the chief and had a fantastic visit with him. At the chief's house we were introduced to some of the customs and history of the island. There are four chiefs on the island, each managing a section of the island. The houses are built on the ground with entryways only big enough to crawl through. Whenever entering a house, you must crawl to show respect for the owner, and when departing you must crawl backwards never showing your "stern" to the people inside the house. – L'il Explorers

June 2012: Tikopia is an extinct caldera covered in lush jungle and is populated by roughly 1,000 people of Polynesian descent. (Moana is the word for ocean here.) Little more than one mile in length and located just over 100 miles NE of Vanuatu, Tikopia has no electricity, public utilities, cell phones, outboard engines or even a regular supply boat.

Tikopians have an ocean-going history and Wharram, of catamaran design fame, built a catamaran for the islanders—Lapita Tikopia. The boat is still being used to connect the remote islanders to the provincial center at Lata, 200 miles downwind.

Four chiefs rule absolutely here. Their names are Kafika, Tafua, Fangarere and Taumako. Dissent is not an option in this feudal, though benevolent, society. If you visit, bring at least four equivalent sets of gifts for the chiefs. We only met chief Edward or Te Ariki Tafua, the number two chief in Matautu on the anchorage, but left gift bags and personal notes for the other chiefs when we departed quickly ahead of impending weather.

We were the first boat to visit in nine months. As such, we were treated one afternoon to a personal performance by the Marotosi dance club (for which we gave a donation, in USD since that was all we had).

Dancing to the rhythms created by a simple overturned canoe-cum-drum and their own chants, two lines of dancers emerged out of the breadfruit trees into the clearing. Clad in lava-lava made of either tapa (for women) or pandanus (for men), most dancers were painted with swaths of bright orange turmeric in coconut oil on their cheeks and shoulders and wore crowns made of bright yellow turmeric flowers. For 30 min., they danced in perfect coordination, never once stopping to rest, just smoothly moving from one dance to another until finishing with a lively staccato dance of spinning bodies and clashing wooden sticks. – Carina

3.6 Anuta / Cherry Island

3.6.1 Anchorages

Jan. 2018: The anchorage is easy to spot with google images as it is the sandy spot easily seen at the south western area of the island. Anchoring is easy in about 30 feet of sand with good holding. – L'il Explorers

3.6.2 Cruiser Reports

Jan. 2018: The first few days the waves were small enough that we could take the dingy in, but after that it was best with just the kayak. Our children loved playing in the surf with the local kids, and boogie boarding/body surfing.

This was our favorite place to visit with five years of cruising under our belt. The people were just fantastic, and so giving. Every day when we would come to shore someone would invite us to their home where there would be a meal waiting for us. They also would make crowns and lei's for us to show how Welcome we were. They even had an initiation ceremony for us where all seven of us were stripped down to our waists, (Shannon was able to keep on her tank top). We were then dressed in Lap Lap's and had our chests painted with turmeric.

This is a very remote island, and everything you donate will be greatly appreciated. They will not ask for anything though. One thing that is quite useful though is paint, as they use their dugout boats daily, and appreciate being able to protect their boats from the elements. – L'il Explorers

4 Makira Province

4.1 Santa Ana Island / Owaraha

4.1.1 Pass

July 2015: Entrance at **10°49.8899S / 162°26.7723E**, satellite images help. – Adina

June 2012: The C-Map93 chart of the bay is inaccurate and our paper chart even worse, but we determined an entrance waypoint using a satellite photo and had no trouble finding the deep-water passage into Port Mary's protection from trade winds and ocean swell. – Carina

2010: Off the eastern tip of the large Makira (San Cristobal) Island lie Santa Ana and Santa Catalina Islands, separated from each other by the two-mile-wide Paraghawa Strait. On a strong ebb we experienced a two to three knot east-going current here which, as it met the swell kicked up by the tradewinds, created steep and breaking waves. – Bonsun Bird

4.1.2 Anchorages

2019: **10°50.221S / 162°27.124E** in 13m sand Port Mary. - Port and Starboard markers on entry into bay, 2 buoys mark isolated bommies. – Escape II

June 2019: **10°50.210S / 162°27.1525E** in 13m sand. Port Mary, Ghupuna Village. – Indigo II

July 2015: **10°50.189S / 162°27.100E** 21m, sand, good holding. Well protected lagoon. Lovely place. – Adina

June 2012: **10°50.204S / 162°27.095E** in 67' sand bottom. Anchored west of the village of Gupuna. – Carina

2010: **10°50.210S / 162°27.087E**, in 20m. There is a good anchorage on the W side of Santa Ana, formed by a curve in the coastline and two arms of reef; favour the N end of the bay when entering.

The two charted lights on the N coast of Makira (Kirakira Bay and Wangoraha Point) were not functioning at the time of our visit. – Bosun Bird

4.1.3 *Cruiser Reports*

Late 2019: Chief John of Gupuna village, very helpful, will organize transport to visit the Spirit House on the other side of the island. Chief Peter of Natagero village will guide you on a tour of the spirit house. Only men can enter inside, women wait outside, but you can still see from a short distance away. – Escape II

2017: Nice village with Chief John, a great carver. There are about 1500 people in the village. Kids are many and that was the hard part as they were on the boat all the time and after a while it was challenging. We were glad to leave for some peace and quiet.... but please note we were here during the holiday season and school was out of session. I believe there would be less kids when school is open. – Field Trip

July 2015: Ask for Chief Stuart who is a friendly person, speaks perfect English and will show you around and take you to the 'Kastom Spirit House' on the other side of the island. Lots of playful happy kids. Trading, snorkeling, no crocodiles in the sea (but don't swim in the lake). Safe. – Adina

June 2012: Santa Ana is primitive, but it does have a tiny airstrip and is connected to Kirakira and Honiara by air service and a rickety cargo ferry.

The chief at Gupuna village is John Wapua. There are two other chiefs on the island in the other villages. John's domain includes the bay and surrounding reef and it is important to seek permission specifically from him.

Across a line in the village lands you'll find the Kuper family holdings. Early in the 20th century, a German man bought a large tract of land here, married a local girl, and his descendants are still known as the Germans. The Kupers seem to own most (if not all) of the enterprise on the island and live in Western-style homes. Laura Kuper came to trade immediately after we dropped anchor. She also provided laundry service.

We stayed at Santa Ana six glorious days, walked across the top of the island to Natagera in company of James, John's son-in-law and deacon of the evangelical church.

Natagera is the location of the last kastom house in the Solomon Islands. A kastom house contains the skulls and bones of former chiefs and other deceased villagers and is the center of the traditional religion. Most have been destroyed at the encouragement of the Christian churches vying for the souls of the people. A friend of the chief in Natagera, Peter, asked for a kastom fee for the tour of the kastom houses and village.

We paid 100 SBD, worth roughly \$14 USD, for our party of six yachties. The kastom house was well-cared for and worth the hike.

While in Santa Ana we acquired the first of our Solomon Island carvings, a fish float and a walking stick. Carvings from the Makira province tend to be of light-colored hardwood, acquired locally, but colored in a dark, semi-glossy finish and decorated with nautilus shell inlay. – Carina

2010: This is an interesting, densely populated island, with three villages; Gupuna (on the bay) and Nafinuatogo and Natagera on the east side. Chief John of Gupuna welcomes visits and it is advisable to check in with him. He is a carver; the carvings of Santa Ana are distinctive but not as finely executed as those of the Western Province. They are also expensive; several times a year, small cruise ships call in here and keep the prices high. John specializes in carving a half man/half shark figure, which depicts an episode from a local legend. There are more carvers on neighboring Santa Catalina Island, but this lacks a good anchorage.

John keeps a logbook for passing yachts, and so does Katie, who can arrange fresh bread, laundry and other services. Katie is a member of an interesting local family descended from a German trader, Heinrich Kuper, who arrived in these islands in 1912 and married a local girl. Other members of the family in residence when we visited included the very helpful Greta (Katie's cousin) and Greta's brother

Gupuna has piped running water of good quality. Ten minutes' walk away through the woods is a large freshwater lake, excellent for swimming; there used to be crocodiles here, but no longer. The path to the east coast leads over the top of the island, past the secondary school, to Nafinuatogo, then Natagero. There is a very interesting "kastom" house at the latter village, which you can visit after seeing the chief (men only; contribution of 15/20 SD expected). This contains old miniature canoes in which the bones of former chiefs are buried, many carved dishes for offerings, and the bones and skulls of village elders. Photography is permitted.

Cellphones do not work here; the nearest tower is at Star Harbour, on Makira Island; locals often paddle to Star Harbour to make calls. However, Santa Ana has an airstrip with weekly flights to Honiara. – Bosun Bird

4.2 San Cristobal / Makira Island

4.2.1 Star Harbour / Namuga Village

4.2.1.1 Anchorages

Nov. 2017: 10°49.206S / 162°17.082E. – Screensaver

4.2.2 Wanione Bay

4.2.2.1 Anchorages

June 2019: 10°30.025S / 162°02.299E in 9m silty sand, near the river mouth. We snagged a huge root with the anchor – had trouble getting free.

10°29.174S / 162°02.850E in 8m sand. The next day we moved to an anchorage off the Catholic Boarding school (much better anchorage than further in – less affected by swell). We stayed a few days in this anchorage, repairing stuff and waiting for a good weather window to head further south. – Indigo

July 2015: 10°30.026S / 162°02.256E. 11m Mud, good holding. – Adina

4.2.2.2 Cruiser Reports

July 2015: Village, school, no cell. Seldom visited, not used to visitors. Large school and many of the kids will paddle out and hang around at your boat. Pretty bay. – Adina

4.2.3 Kira Kira

4.2.3.1 Anchorages

2020: 10°27.195S / 161°55.058E in 9.3m. – Escape II

4.2.3.2 Cruiser Reports

Early 2020: Village has a market, few shops, and Telekom Office. We found it a helpful and friendly place. – Escape II

4.2.4 Oneibia Village (NW Tip)

4.2.4.1 Anchorages

Unk Date: 10°20.25S / 161°21.26E. 12-14m anchoring depth. – Unk Source

4.2.5 Maro'u Bay

4.2.5.1 Anchorages

2020: 10°12.258S / 161°19.499E in 10m of sand. – Escape II

June 2019: 10°12.256S / 161°19.515E in 11m and some swell. We only spent one night here. – Indigo II

4.2.5.2 Cruiser Reports

2020: Friendly--traded with locals. The logging camp that was there has now closed down. – Escape II

4.2.6 Tawatana Village

4.2.6.1 Cruiser Reports

May 2024: Tawatana Village in the Northwest Makira lies one of the largest caves in Solomon Islands. No special equipment is needed to explore this amazing cave apart from torches. There are two entrances and it takes 3 hours to walk through the whole cave. Including the walk there and back its a full day hike. A truly spectacular tourism attraction! – Amiga

4.3 Three Sisters Islands (*Tres Marias/Olu Malau*).

4.3.1.1 Anchorage:

2010: 10°15S / 161°58E. We intended to anchor here but found the obvious anchorage (Mosquito Bay) had been rendered inaccessible by a buoyed shark net all the way across its entrance. We briefly considered a N-S running enclosure in the reef about one mile to the N but decided that there was insufficient swinging room. There was no other obvious place to anchor. – Bosun Bird

4.4 Uki Ni Masi Island.

4.4.1 Anchorages (*Selwyn Bay*)

2020: 10°17.018S / 161°43.351E in 9m of sand. – Escape II

June 2019: 10°17.035S / 161°43.5592E in 9m sand. – Indigo II

July 2015: 10°17.028S / 161°43.554E. 11m, sand, good holding. – Adina

2010: 10°17.033S / 161°43.553E in 23m sand. Anchorage was towards the southern end of Selwyn Bay, in good visibility. In case of a NW blow, shelter might be found in the NE extremity of the bay. – Bosun Bird

4.4.2 Cruiser Reports

2020: School here. The teachers and pupils were very friendly, worth a visit. Trading. – Escape II

2010: Above the anchorage and a little to the N of it are the relatively modern buildings of a large secondary (boarding) school. Pawa. Distinguished alumni include Fr Walter Lini (first PM of Vanuatu); formerly run by the Church of Melanesia, the school is now run by Makira Province and could do with some new investment. It is interesting to chat to the teachers and older students, who come from all over the Province.

There are small one and two-family villages along the shoreline, hidden by the trees, with the main village at the N end of the bay, where Lever Brothers formerly ran a plantation; trading for vegetables and fish was possible. Local coasters call at the island quite frequently, so be sure to use an anchor light. There is cellphone coverage here and "top up" cards reportedly available at the school. Fair snorkeling. – Bosun Bird

5 Malaita Province

5.1 Malaita

SAFETY: Malaita has a very bad reputation for heavy thefts. Recommend avoiding.

5.1.1 Lau Lagoon (*top of island*)

5.1.1.1 Anchorages

2013: 8°18.238S / 160°45.216E in 10' of water. We stayed for two nights in Lau Lagoon, anchored just in front of the village of Gelaulu. The pass into Lau Lagoon was well marked. We came in just before dark, and

dropped the hook in the first sandy spot we found. We used fore and aft anchors to make sure we didn't go dry, but the holding was excellent and we had no problems.

The locals told us you could anchor in deeper water (60-70 feet) in the channel, which might be a better option during low low tide events. There are other places to anchor further in the lagoon, but we'd suggest starting in Gelaulu and talking to Chief Paul Tuita right away.

Also note that, when we stopped here this year (2013), Gelaulu had recently established a **marine conservation area** very near the spot we anchored. They are serious about the conservation area, and there are fines for even passing through it (fines go to a community fund). You'll see a couple of buoys on your left as you enter the lagoon. We set our stern anchor right next to one of them, not realizing what it was. Be sure you do not anchor within the conservation area! – Kate Glover (Noonsite)

5.1.1.2 Cruiser Reports

2013: We came to Lau Lagoon to look for dugongs (we saw one, but they are still eating them in the lagoon, so there aren't many of them anymore), but found it was the locals that made the trip worthwhile. They hadn't had a boat there in many years. When we went to shore in the morning to bring a gift to the chief and ask permission to anchor (note, he really likes tea), we were greeted by a really excited village. The old folks were out, tattooed head to toe, with betel-nut stained teeth, and when we pulled out photos from home, everyone gathered around to take a look. A young man, in the category you might think was up to no good, smiled broadly and scurried up a tree to grab us some coconuts.

Later, the chief came out to the boat to "story" with us about the area. We learned a lot. Chief Paul said he'd arranged to have a canoe come paddle around our boat all night for security, but it was too windy out, so he offered to sleep on deck instead. We declined, and said we'd keep a careful watch ourselves instead, but we had no trouble. We did have one visitor in the middle of the night our first night there, before we'd been in to visit the chief, but we think he actually just came to leave us some fish. The chief assured us he'd made sure his village understood daytime visits are okay, but not nighttime. He also chatted with us for a long time about local customs, tabu sites, the artificial islands, troubles in Malaita (from "time befoa" and today), and all sorts of other things. It was all quite interesting, and worth the visit. Note that the chief did lament that men and women wear the same clothes these days—he strongly believes that women should wear skirts or dresses, not pants, so it's not a good spot to push the boundaries. – Kate Glover (Noonsite)

5.1.2 Bitama Harbour

5.1.2.1 Anchorages

2013: Bitama is an excellent anchorage with protection from any direction. We anchored in two different spots and both were great. The first time, we tucked into the small cove on the right as you head in. The second time, we anchored at the southern head of the bay. A couple of locals did tell us that if you go in too far toward the head of the bay, you'll get to the coral. We were in about 40 feet and did not get tangled on anything. They told us they used to get boats here, but haven't had any in a few years, and they desperately want the boats back. – Kate Glover (Noonsite)

5.1.2.2 Cruiser Reports

2013: We anchored just as the school bell rang and had kids full of canoes out at the boat pretty much constantly. But they were all very polite, and when we told them we needed to do something, they would leave (until a new batch came out). The chief, Derek, told us not to let anyone on the boat, so we told the kids no one was allowed on board, and they didn't push back. Although, as far as we could tell, there are really no security issues here, the chief paddled his canoe around our boat, fishing, most of the first night to be sure we were safe. When we came ashore, he appointed one of his sons to watch the boat for us. We had absolutely no trouble. The whole bay is the same village, and the chief is determined to make sure it's safe for yachts.

In Bitama, there are lots of cultural sites you can see if you stick around for a bit. They have traditionally done a dolphin hunt in the bay—they call dolphins through a traditional kastom, and then kill them. They eat the meat and use the teeth for brideprice. They have just recently worked with a conservation group and agreed to stop the dolphin hunt. Instead, they are going to try to turn live dolphins into tourist dollars and share their kastom with visitors. We met the “last old man,” a 109-year old man who is the last man who knows how to call the dolphins through the traditional ceremony. He also fought as a scout in WWII, and he has quite a story to tell and some scars to show you. There’s much to tell from Bitama, but these are their stories and it’s best to let the people of Bitama tell them. – Kate Glover (Noonsite)

5.2 Ontong Java and Roncador Reef

138 miles north of Santa Isabel

5.2.1 Pass

July 2018: The seas were calm as we entered the pass, and the sun high in the sky made reefs easily visible and avoidable. Mark had shown me the track he planned to take before we entered, so I could reference what I was seeing as I spotted for reefs on the bow. Slowly, we navigated to our proposed anchoring spot, and all looked good. – Field Trip

2012: Approach and Entry: The light ships are not in positions indicated by C-maps, but there are some there. Lots of fishing boats in the region as well.

I entered the atoll via the pass at 5°31.48S / 159°37.48E. The pass seemed to be a few seconds east of where shown on Google Earth. This pass was very wide (watch for two shallow-ish areas you pass between, with 75’ in the pass, shallowing to 50’ once inside the lagoon). There was no noticeable current, either when I entered or when I left. – Fellow Traveler

5.2.2 Anchorages

July 2019: 06°16.82S / 159°20.88E. – Field Trip

July 2018: 1st spot 06°16.82S / 159°20.88E. 2nd spot 06°10.93S / 159°22.27E - The visibility up at this end of the reef was not great compared to the southern end. We had about 30m of visibility up here vs. 50+m on the southern end. We dropped the hook in 23 meters of water, clear of any obstructions. Ahead of us loomed a massive ship sitting high up on the coral reef. – Field Trip

2012: The shallows behind the island of Luaniua are 20-30 feet deep along the outer area, but with many coral heads scattered about, including some that did not appear to have adequate depth over them. Anchoring here involves finding a nice sand patch with no shallow coral heads in the swinging area. A Bahamian moor might be wise to keep from wrapping or hitting heads. Wind stayed E-NE the 48 hours I was there. – Fellow Traveler

5.2.3 Formalities

Aug. 2024: Officially, one cannot stop here without first visiting Malaita, the region of the Solomons it is a part of, and getting permission and paying a fee. – Sugar Shack

5.2.4 Cruiser Reports

July 2019: We had many great dives. The outside reef was very interesting. We explored the wrecked ship which was super eerie walking around. There are three shipwrecks in this area. – Field Trip

July 2018: Satellite images have changed sailing dramatically. Roncador Reef https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roncador_Reef is a perfect example. While looking at the satellite images months ago and planning our stops on the way to PNG, Mark noticed a small reef just between Ontong Java and the Arnavon Islands. Zooming in, he could see a clear entrance to the circular reef, and that was the tipping point. This little spot in the middle of nowhere suddenly found its place on our agenda.

Reminded us of Minerva Reef, the remote reef between Fiji and New Zealand where cruisers stop for a rest if the weather permits. Fish and lobster are abundant and enormous, the water is crystal clear, and the diving is pristine. These are places that you won't find on a travel brochure or in any cruise itinerary. – Field Trip

June 2018: Administratively Ontong Java belongs to the Solomon Islands. As an outlying part of Malaita Province, it forms the northernmost tract of land of this state, over 250 km north of Santa Isabel Island. The closest land, however, is Nukumanu Atoll, which lies only 38 km due north of Ontong Java's northern tip and, though historically closely related to Ontong Java, is now under the administration of Papua New Guinea.

Ontong Java is roughly boot-shaped. The entire size of the atoll is 1400 km², but there are only 12 km² of land, spread out over 122 small islands. The islands are mostly low-lying coral formations, the highest elevation being 13 metres.

Approximately 2000 people live on the atoll. There are two main villages where the population is concentrated with 1,386 on the island of Luaniua in the eastern end and 689 on Pelau in the northeast.

Today the atoll's inhabitants make a subsistence living by means of coconut and taro (root) cultivation, as well as fishing. Until a ban in 2005, the primary source of income was beche de mer and trochus shells, which were shipped to Hong Kong. The inhabitants are also involved in copra production. It also has a prolific number of sea birds, including the black-naped tern, which uses Ontong Java Atoll as a breeding site.

Ontong Java is a Polynesian outlier. The inhabitants retain a Polynesian character despite their location in the Melanesian Archipelago of the Solomon Islands. In former times both men and women wore elaborate tattoos all over their bodies. Two dialects of one language are spoken in this atoll, Luangiua and Pelau. This language belongs to the Polynesian stock. – Wikipedia

2012: Officially, one cannot stop there without first visiting Malaita, the region of the Solomons it is a part of, and getting permission. Fees were quite high, I now know. But, upon arrival, no one knew the US/Solomon exchange rate, so no one knew what to charge me. I offered \$20 US and gifts of food.

Clearance: The whole shore of the island here has houses built along it with plenty of trees around, but the main village is at the S. end of the island, visible as a gray area that stretches across the island in the Google Earth photos.

I had developed a pretty strong case of flu a few days after leaving Vanuatu, and thus my "reason" for stopping (unfortunately, completely valid) was the need to rest and gain strength. I went to the village the first day and sought out Chief Willy, as I had been directed to do. He does not speak English, but the just retired representative to the Malaita provincial government translated and helped. I was told that my reasons for the stop were fine, no one inquired or cared about any clearance with the Solomon Islands government, but I was informed there was a SI\$500 anchoring fee imposed by Malaita, and that a yacht is supposed to have cleared in Malaita before proceeding to Ontong Java, but they really did not seem concerned. Since I did not have SI money, I was told other equivalent "gifts" would be accepted. I was told to come back the next day when the "house of chiefs" would be meeting.

The next day the secretary from the "house of chiefs" came out to the boat, asked a few questions, then told me I could come in and meet with the chiefs. I was told there are approximately 23 chiefs, but at the time, only a few were in the village as others were off harvesting their copra on the other islands.

Upon arrival, I was escorted to the house of chiefs, introduced to everyone, and offered a seat. I showed them the "gifts" I had brought: rice, dried beans, milk and juice I did not need. They seemed very pleased with this. Then the "fee" came up, but no one had any idea what the exchange rate was. I had brought a single \$20 US bill, and offered that, and they accepted it and again, seemed pleased. As it turns out, this is well short of the official fee, but I got the impression that, while they wanted to collect as much as they could, having few sources of income, they also were by nature, very welcoming to visitors in the Polynesian tradition.

Security: I was warned (by the brother of Chief Willy, one of the first people to stop by) to not allow two young men aboard as they had stolen from yachts before. I also, after meeting with the chiefs, noticed that there was a canoe tied up to my boat. I quickly went out there, and found two guys on the boat waiting for me.

I quickly checked to make sure that they had not tried to break in, and was very curt with them, explaining that it is considered very rude to ever go onto a yacht without permission. I refused the coconuts they offered...I was rather upset!

The Locals: I had a number of canoes visit the boat, and most wanted to trade coconuts for other stuff. I traded a little, but really have no use for dozens of drinking coconuts.... So, this is not a good place to trade for veggies, etc, and I saw no indications of traditional crafts to trade for either.

Everyone was very polite, even the two who went aboard without permission. No one seemed pushy or aggressive, and everywhere I wandered in my short time on the island, people seemed pleased to see me and eager to practice their English and chat a little.

I was definitely the only boat to visit Ontong Java this year. I heard figures from 1 to 4 years as to when the last boat was there. Clearly, few boats venture here.

Conclusion: Basically, I would say Ontong Java merits much further exploration should someone desire to visit someplace off the beaten path. People were very friendly and welcoming, in traditional Polynesian style. I was told there was a lot of coral in the center of the lagoon: thus, there could be some excellent snorkeling. Around the anchorage by the village, it was not so good. Mostly, it is nice to know that there are still islands in the Pacific that are not over-run with yachts, Aussie tourists, or other signs of development. However, to visit this and the other nearby atolls properly (with governmental clearances) would involve some rather tedious sailing between the area and the nearest ports. This is no doubt one reason so few boats come this way, and would probably suggest an extended exploration would make the most sense. – Fellow Traveler

6 Rennell and Belona Province

6.1 Rennell Island

6.1.1 Anchorage

Oct. 2012: 11°41.62S / 160°17.49E. Kanggava Bay. – Shango

6.1.2 Cruiser Report

Oct 2012: After sailing back and forth outside of Kangava Bay on the west side of Rennell till the sun rose we made our approach. The seas were pretty roly and we were anticipating the worst. In the distance, off our starboard bow we could see a small open fishing boat. It eventually occurred to us that this boat was waiting for us. When we were in range the helmsman waved in a way that suggested we should follow. At some point we passed into the protection of the southern headland and all the swell disappeared. William, our friendly fisherman, led us past several patch reefs and into a beautiful area of white sand. His hand signaled “drop here”. And we did.

Rennell was a gem after the disappointment of Indispensable Reef. We spent the next week sharing our days with William and Esther, their grandkids and an interesting cast of local characters. The setting was amazing. William and Esther’s property are the quintessential tropical paradise with 2 small houses, one of which is an accommodation for tourists (which I don’t think they get many of), overlooking a white sand beach. – Shango

6.2 Indispensable Reef (Rennell Island Ridge)

6.2.1 Cruiser Reports

Dec. 2018: The Indispensable Reefs are a chain of three large coral atolls in the Coral Sea. They are located about 50 km (30 mi) south of Rennell Island, separated from it by Rennel Trough. The chain stretches over a length of 114 km (71 mi) and its average width is 18 km (11 mi).

Administratively the Indispensable Reef belongs to the Rennell and Bellona Province of the Solomon Islands. The ship Neptune struck Indispensable Reef on August 3, 1868 and was lost.

Pacific Wrecks: After the Battle of the Coral Sea two Japanese aircraft B5N Kate EI-306 and B5N Kate EI-302 ditched onto Indispensable Reef. Both crews survived and were later rescued.

During late 1942 used by the Japanese as a temporary base for seaplanes to harass. E13A Jake seaplanes refueled by submarine operated from Indispensable Reef for two or three days at a time to search "Torpedo Alley" south-east of San Cristobal used by Allied shipping bound for Guadalcanal. Quickly the US Navy caught on, and sent aircraft and ships to patrol the area to deprive it from the Japanese. – Wikipedia

Oct 2012: Indispensable Reef is actually made up of three reefs which, combined, are approximately sixty miles long and eight miles wide. Other than some breaking waves in the distance there was nothing to see, it being a reef. It was a sunny day and we looked forward to heading into the "anchorage" after sailing up the west side in relatively calm water.

As they say, the best laid plans... When we reached our meager set of waypoints at two in the afternoon the sun had started to duck behind some clouds and the wind had begun to pick up. A stiff chop set up inside the reef and the area where we were to anchor took on a rather menacing appearance. The depth went from off soundings to thirty feet within a matter of yards and the waypoint seemed to be unpleasantly close to a nasty patch reef.

It's possible that in more benign conditions the spot might have had a certain allure but with twenty knots of wind and lowering visibility it absolutely didn't. We decided to take a pass. For us it would be one more night at sea while we backtracked to the northeast and the island of Rennell. – Shango

7 Guadalcanal Province

Starting at South East end and going counter clockwise.

SAFETY: There are higher than "normal" theft and vandalism occurrences in Guadalcanal. Especially around Maru Sound.

7.1 Marau Sound (Tavanipupu)

South East Side

7.1.1 Pass

2010: At the east end of Guadalcanal is a complex area of small islands and channels known as Marau Sound, protected by an outer barrier reef. We entered through the SE entrance, which is marked on its western edge by a metal post (indeterminate colour); several other beacons mark a route northward from here to Tavanipupu Island (the most popular anchorage), with red beacons to be left to port. The range markers which used to indicate the preferred line through the SE entrance are long gone. – Bosun Bird

7.1.2 Anchorages

2020: 09°49.634S / 160°56.192E in 8m sand. Tavanipupu Resort. A very strong current on entry. Joe, the yacht guide from the village will probably come out to help you find a good anchor spot. He will ask you to sign his log book, he will want to trade. – Escape II

May 2019: 09°49.636S / 160°51.184E in 3m sand. – Indigo II

2019: 09°49.68S / 160°51.18E. Anchored in front of the small village just below the resort. The resort and village are both friendly. It is a tight little anchorage, but we anchored in the center and swung around with no problems. – Tropical Soul

2013: Anchorage on the west side of Marau Sound, past Graham Point, was not good. We were pestered by locals for items to be allowed to anchor. – Tantalus

June 2012: 09°49.789S / 160°51.121E. We anchored in the narrow channel on the bar of the pass, in thick sand. We stayed in this location for 4-days and thankfully came no closer than 1/2 a boat length from the reef.

The anchorage at Tavanipupu sits between these islands in a tiny, deep circular pool, forcing most boats to anchor in deep water and to tie off to a tree on shore (this requires permission.) -- Carina

2010: 09°49.343S, 160°51.334E in 15m sand and coral shelf. N of Tavanipupu Island instead. We were not as impressed by the small pool east of the Tavanipupu resort as many people seemed to be. Space is very limited, meaning a stern-tie is necessary, to one side of the pool or the other; but the current can run at up to two knots through the pool, which can make tying up difficult; and the wind can blow strongly through the wide gap to the north, leaving you beam-on. Furthermore, the resort manager told us that there would be a fee of SD250 (USD \$30) for tying up – payable to the resort if “their” trees are used, or to villagers on the other side if theirs are used. Villagers later told us that they do NOT charge. But given all these difficulties we chose to go around to the N of Tavanipupu Island instead. – Bosun Bird

7.1.3 Cruiser Reports

May 2024: Reports of high thefts and vandalism have been reported in Marue Sound.

2020: We found him to be very greedy. We had a disagreement the following day and left. He agreed to keep an eye on our boat while we went for a meal at the resort that first evening and we had stuff stolen. It is possible to anchor on the other side of the reef.

The resort is beautiful with lots of history but a bit run down. We had a meal there and it was very good and good value. Gus and Brian Kaumae (Dive Guide) friendly and helpful. – Escape II

June 2019 –Theft Warning: We had engine troubles, and so had tacked onto anchor near the resort after an exhausting overnight beat south against the wind from the Florida Group. We were locked up tight against possible intruders, except for the main cabin hatch (nearly over our head) which had our wind scoop hanging in it. A thief in a canoe managed to get aboard without us hearing him, come down through the hatch, and steal a cell phone and tablet from our nav station (almost right next to where we were sleeping). We woke up when he was in our cockpit and chased him off with a spotlight, not realizing he’d already been inside and made off with a few of our precious electronics. With no dinghy in the water, we couldn’t chase after him (and wouldn’t have anyway, not knowing at the time that he’d already been inside and stolen stuff). We did report this to the local police and the resort, but never recovered our stuff. – Soggy Paws

May 2017: Beautiful area home to the two Joe's and two Gus's. The Joe's traded citrus, beans and stories for flour, soap, and clothes. The two Gus's run the Tavanipupu resort. We snorkeled off the resort and saw a devil scorpion fish that looked exactly like the dead coral around it, and the most amazing scarlet-orange anemone with two Spinecheek anemone fish. – Iolea

June 2012: Tavanipupu Island sits almost exactly in the geographic middle of Marau Sound. We arrived at the “cormorant” entrance to the sound at midday, but high thin clouds obscured visibility through the water, forcing us to creep in slowly with a bow watch.

We were visited by Joseph, son of Justin, the chief of the village immediately onshore on Marau Island. Joseph came with the chief’s yacht guest book. The following day, we landed our dinghy at the site of the original resort and walked to the new resort on the opposite side of the island. Paul is manager here and Pam is the owner. A lovely walking path circles the island and lunch was fabulous. – Carina

Oct 2012: Tavanipupu is the home to one of the most well-regarded lodges in the Solomons. It has been open for many years, surviving the “tensions” and still drawing guests from around the world. Their most notable guests of late were Prince William and his bride, Kate who visited in August.

Because there was no dinner on tap and because we wanted to leave in the dark for our trip to Honiara in the morning we decided to move to a more straightforward anchorage around the corner, about one mile from the lodge. Joining us for the sunset was our first Solomon Islands crocodile. – Shango

Notwithstanding the fee requested, the resort management are reasonably friendly and, provided one asks in advance, will let you use WiFi (free) in the bar area. They will only serve drinks and meals if there are other guests in residence. We had an excellent lunch, including one beer each, for SD125 each. The resort is very beautiful and tranquil, with a fifteen-minute walking track around its perimeter.

There is a small village opposite the resort. The Chief, Justin and his son, Joe, are friendly and keen that you sign their logbook. They will also let you know which areas are taboo for snorkeling. Trading is possible and there is a weekly market on the "mainland" at Conflict Bay (near the airport; about three miles away).

Relations between the villagers and the resort management are not hostile, but we did sense some mutual unease. The resort management advised us to remain on board the boat at night and Justin confirmed that there had been cases of thefts from boats.

There was considerable trouble in this area in the "Tension" (1999-2003); the inhabitants of Marau Sound are of Malaitan descent and there was serious conflict, leading to several deaths, with natives of Guadalcanal Island. During this period the resort was closed down (but not sacked/destroyed as others were). – Bosun Bird

7.2 *Rua Sura (Rya Sura) Island*

This island is a tiny island off the east coast of Guadalcanal.

7.2.1 *Anchorage*

2020: 09°30.076S / 160°36.096E, in 15m. Just a few fishermen here. – Escape II

2019: 09°30.10S / 160°36.21E in 20m. This is a fair stopover. OK anchorage. – Tropical Soul

July 2015: 09°30.034S / 160°36.343E 17m, sand and coral, no village. Small quiet place, pretty, snorkeling, white beach. Just a few copra workers. – Adina

7.3 *Honiara (Port of Entry)*

7.3.1 *Anchorage*

Oct. 2023: 09°25.62S / 159°56.79E. – Eastern Stream

2020: 09°25.689S / 159°56.760E in 8m sand in front of IBS Monarch Hotel.

Dinghy Landing: Pull the dinghy up on the stony beach, go to Monarch Hotel reception and ask permission.

Or at the man-made harbour at The Coral Sea Hotel. Ask permission.

Or at The Breakwater Café at the man-made harbour by the Point Cruz Yacht Club. Go and speak to Fred Douglas, the owner, an expat who is very helpful.

You can also pick up mooring or anchor outside the yacht club, and tie your dinghy to their wharf. But the harbor was congested and no moorings were available when we were there. – Escape II

June 2019: 09°25.66S / 159°56.80E. The first visit, we anchored off the Coral Seas Resort. At the time the wind was blowing from the west, and this anchorage became quite roilly in the afternoons, when the wind would pick up and swing to onshore (due to the mountains of Guadalcanal). Note, this happens at the Yacht Club too—even though the harbor looks protected from the SE trades, the afternoon winds can make the entire coast a roilly hell for a few hours every afternoon. – Soggy Paws

June 2019: 09°25.65S / 159°57.27E. Very pleasant, calm conditions. – Field Trip

2019: 09°25.66S / 159°56.80E in 8m of good holding. We preferred to anchor in front of the Coral Sea Resort Casino. There is a small rock breakwater to tie the dinghy behind. Friendly place. You can get a local bus out front into town, or walk the 1.5km. – Tropical Soul

July 2018: Anchor in 18m, churned mud, 4G. There are a couple of moorings in Honiara which cost around \$100SBD/day. Only one of which I would trust at any level run by the dive shop there. It's just a bit more exposed to an already roly exposed anchorage, so I personally chose to anchor.

Anchoring anywhere there has been a lot of anchoring in past means that the bottom is all churned up and soft or loose, so there is a good chance you will drag, or at the very least move a fair bit as your anchor burrows down. In my opinion, this place rates as one of the worst anchorages for a port or harbour. It is typically very uncomfortable. Predominately the only reason you come here is to check in/out or get supplies. – Screensaver

Oct 2017: 15m mud/sand. I never have liked Honiara as an anchorage and that view was only reinforced this time around. It is roly, and exposed, and there are often too many boats there and generally gets a squall through when you want to have sun downers. My advice, make it as short a stop as possible. – Screensaver

Oct 2012: I had been dreading this anchorage since I knew we'd be stopping here. It is a small anchorage inside the arms of a reef that doesn't quite close enough to provide protection. The holding is awful and the wind seems to come up every afternoon, blowing directly into the anchorage. Your best bet if you want to keep from dragging is to drop your anchor in front of a rip rap wall and row two lines ashore (really long lines) to tie yourself in place. After an hour we were at least nominally secure. – Shango

7.3.2 Yachtsmen Services

7.3.2.1 Cooking Gas (Propane and Butane)

May 2026: Geogas Solomons Lid (formerly Geogas Pacific) +677 21833, sales@ggaspacific.com.sb, geogaspacific.com. Hours: Mon-Fri: 0800-1630, Sat. 0800-1200. – Sugar Shack

June 2019: For Propane/Cooking Gas: Just inland from the Yacht Club is a gas bottle exchange place. A block west on the main drag is an appliance store that sells gas appliances, and here we asked if they could fill our Asian tank. They could not, but were helpful in supplying a Solomon's gas setup so we could buy and use local gas. Other boats were able to get their more common tanks filled, with a one-day turnaround. – Soggy Paws

June 2012: Propane refills (American tanks okay) is at the Origin gas store, a half block east of the Yacht Club on Mendaña Ave. – Carina

7.3.2.2 Fuel (Diesel and Gasoline)

June 2019: Small quantities of fuel can be jugged from the gas station on the main road just inland from the yacht club. The yacht club has a sturdy hand truck that you may be able to borrow to facilitate transportation, or walk your jugs up and taxi them back.

For larger quantities of fuel, and the possibility of duty-free prices, you can pull into a dock at the port to fill up from a fuel truck. You must arrange this ahead of time and schedule a time. The fuel pier is at the very far (west) end of all the piers at the port. It is a bit scruffy, so make sure you have good fenders. We inquired if we could anchor our boat close to the fuel pier and do the fueling in jugs, and as long as we were buying a minimum quantity of 200L, it could be done (but we decided we could wait until Noro, where the fueling facility is much better).

Set up an appointment for the fuel dock at the Markworth's office (somewhere near Sullivan's at the Port—where the huge fuel storage tanks are). It is best to plan fueling at the port as early in the morning as possible, as the sea gets rough along the coast in the afternoons due to the sea breeze. If you are jugging, best to plan for high tide, as the lift down to the dinghy at the Yacht Club dock is a long way at low tide. Again, minimum quantity is 200L. I don't know if you could do it in jugs WITHOUT bringing your boat around (ie hire a van for an hour to transport all your jugs). – Soggy Paws

Oct. 2012: Amazingly the gas station in front of the Yacht Club was open on Sunday so we spent several hours lugging jerry jugs of fuel. – Shango

7.3.2.3 Trash and Recycling

May 2024: The Yacht club offers trash and some recycling services. – Sugar Shack

June 2019: There are a few trash barrels near the gate to the road, where you can deposit your small bags of rubbish. – Soggy Paws

7.3.2.4 Water

May 2024: There is a water source near the anchorage. – Sugar Shack

7.3.3 General Services

7.3.3.1 ATMS and Banks

June 2019: Conveniently, there is a BPM ATM at the Coral Seas Resort near the front desk. – Soggy Paws

June 2012: ATMs can be found at Westpac, ANZ and BSP, though charges at the BSP are most modest. – Carina

7.3.3.2 Formalities

Aug. 2024: SIMA is now enforcing their (3) levies for all vessels entering and staying in Solomon Islands. Note, these levies are per meter and per week. Yes, they are in USD! See www.sima.gov.sb/fees-charges-levies-new/

- \$37.36 per meter, per week for Navigation
- \$3.22 per meter, per week for Pollution
- \$3.22 per meter, per week for Maritime Development

So, for our boat, a catamaran, it is \$43.80 per meter x 14.3m = \$626.34 per week! This is absolutely unheard of and unacceptable.

We heard that customs were not “officially” asking recreational boats to go to SIMA to pay this fee outside of Honiara. Officials in Honiara are asking all vessels to pay this fee.

However, Customs can ask any and all boats to pay. SIMA said Customs will soon be forced to require all vessels (commercial and recreational) to pay this fee. – Sugar Shack

Oct. 2023: This was our port of entrance and clearance went very smoothly. – Eastern Stream

2017: There was no customs charge here, but we had to pay about £200 for quarantine who didn't even visit the boat. If you're only staying in the islands for a short time, you may be able to negotiate a lower charge. – Michael Foote (Noonsite)

June 2012: Checking in: this is the first port of entry when coming from the east with a full complement of officials—and it proved to be expensive. Customs levied a “lights” charge of a staggering \$1,330 SBD for tiny 8-ton, 10m Carina. Immigration charged a \$300 SBD clearance fee (and stamped our two passports with a 90-day visa). Quarantine demanded an additional \$150 SBD and gave us a “Payment Advice” in lieu of a receipt (though it was stamped). The total for check-in fees amounted to about \$260 USD.

(Extending our two visas for an additional 30-day period later cost us \$70 SBD for each visa. Visas may be extended to a maximum of six months during any given year.)

NOTE: Some yachts negotiated lower Customs fees despite being significantly larger-sized vessels; others, like ourselves, paid in full.

Interestingly, when we checked out of the Solomon Islands, the Customs official in Gizo commented that he thought the lights fee was excessive and would deter visiting yachts who would, in his opinion, have a positive effect on the economy. He said he had passed his opinion along to his superiors and recommended the fees be reduced for pleasure vessels. – Carina

7.3.3.3 Hardware Stores

April 2024: **ITA Hardware:** +677 26868, sales@hhs.sb, Hours: Mon-Fri: 0800-1630, Sat: 0800-1300. Located on Prince Highway, Ranadi Roundabout (opposite Big Chainsaw).

Bowmans Hardware. Located across the street from the Hyundai Mall. bowmansolomon@outlook.com. Has International paint products and varnish. – Sugar Shack

June 2019: The best all-around hardware store close in to town is ITA Hardware across the street from Hyundai Mall. (Hyundai Mall is just before the main Central Market).

In Hyundai Mall there is a high-quality solar place where you could find solar panels, circuit breakers, good quality wire, MPPT charge controllers, and batteries.

Another hardware store close to the yacht club is Bowmans. We bought some bottom paint there. They are at the port, past Sullivans, past Customs, all the way at the end of the road (the container storage has almost taken over Bowmans).

When we were looking for specific things, people kept referring us to Island Enterprises and Bishop Brothers out in the Renandi area, well east of downtown. You can taxi for \$50 SD or take the King George 6 shared van for \$3-4 SD per person. We got a new fitting put on our hydraulic hose for the watermaker by Bishop Brothers. There are a couple of other similar businesses out in the Renandi area. – Soggy Paws

7.3.3.4 Marine Services

May 2024: There are two stores that offer basic marine services and boat parts:

- Y. Sato Marine: +677 23453, www.global.yamaha-motor.com. Hours: Mon-Fri: 0830-1700, Sat: 0830-1200
- Ocean Marine: +677 30649, www.oceanicmarine.wordpress.com

Information provided by Sugar Shack

7.3.3.5 Medical

Oct. 2023: This is the only town that has a pharmacy. – Easter Stream

7.3.3.6 Pet Supplies

June 2019: Sullivans at the port (the liquor store) had Cat Food, Dog Food, and Kitty Litter. – Soggy Paws

7.3.3.7 Marine Supplies

April 2024: APCO Coatings +677 30484, +677 30485, www.apaints.com, ak.paranthaman@apcoatings.com, paranths63@yahoo.com – Sugar Shack

June 2012: Antifouling can be purchased from the APCO office at Ranadi business park (Transocean self-polishing, call ahead to confirm stock, \$1,540 SBD for 4L), otherwise cheap hard antifouling can be purchased in any one of dozens of small hardware stores. Bowman's on Point Cruz has some International paint products including varnish. – Carina

7.3.3.8 Transportation

June 2019: Getting around: The resort makes the taxi drivers remove their (magnetic) taxi signs when they come in the parking lot, so you won't see any obvious taxis lined up in the parking area. However, if you ask around in the lounging area, there may be one or two taxi drivers hanging out there. Regardless, it was usually easy to flag a taxi on the street. Taxi fare to within the main part of Honiara was \$10 SD, and some of them are air conditioned. Alternatively, there are shared ride vans going back and forth down the main drag that should cost \$3 SD pp. The ones that say "Central Market" go to the big open market about a mile SW of the Yacht Club/Harbor. These stop on the way by near the Yacht Club and near the port facilities.

It's also not a terrible dinghy ride from the resort anchorage to the Point Cruz Yacht Club in the inner harbor. There is now a dinghy dock there—it is high off the water, but there is (currently) at least one ladder to climb up (don't block the ladder with your dinghy, please). The YC dinghy dock is closer to the downtown area and so convenient for all your restocking activities. – Soggy Paws

7.3.3.9 Post Office

2010: The Post Office is ten minutes to the west. There is an internet cafe at the Post Office. – Bosun Bird

7.3.3.10 Provisioning

April 2024: Sullivans and Nambawan Meat. +677 21643, www.sullivans.com.sb, sales@sullivans.com.sb, Hours: Mon-Fri: 0800-1700, Sat. 0800-1500. Largest importer of beer, wine, spirits, non-alcoholic beverages, meats, and general goods.

Wings Mini Mart +677 21608, accounts@wingsminimarket.com.sb, Hours: Mon-Fri: 0800-1800, Sat: 0800-1600. Provisioning, some home goods, beauty products.

Ausmart Company +677 20657, auspac2nd@gmail.com, large big box store, items sold in bulk. – Sugar Shack

June 2019: Besides the main market, there are a million “Chinese” stores where you can buy the basics, but we shopped mostly in the “Bulk Store”. There are now apparently more than one of The Bulk Store in Honiara, but we did most of our shopping at the one within walking distance of the Yacht Club. This store had LOTS of first world name brand products (mostly Australian-sourced at Australian prices), cheeses, AND veggies that are hard to find in the Solomons—real potatoes, onions, cabbage, carrots, and celery (sometimes).

Numbawan Meat (a part of Sullivan's) for meat and frozen goods, was the place. They had first world meat products at first world prices, plus bags of a variety of frozen veggies. They will deliver to the Yacht Club if you buy a lot, but it is not a long walk back to the YC if you are buying just a few items. Numbawan Meat is right next to the Sullivan's liquor store at the port.

Sullivans Liquor. There is a Sullivans right across from the Bulk Store, but we didn't ask there about Duty Free Liquor. There is another Sullivans down in the Port area where it IS possible to buy duty free liquor, even if you aren't checking out right away. The duty-free liquor is all top-shelf stuff and I believe only comes in case lots (some as small as cases of 6). But you can buy single bottles of a variety of wine and liquor at non-duty-free prices, too. To get the liquor duty free, you have to put in your order and supply some boat paperwork, and it takes a couple of days for them to process your paperwork and finalize your order (we never did this, so I don't know if it can be expedited). Ask at the desk in the Sullivan's at the port for their Duty-Free pricing sheet, it's several pages long. You MAY be able to email in an order and your paperwork ahead of time, and have it ready for pickup when you arrive.

We ended up never staying in Honiara long enough to put in an order and wait for it. They had some boxed wine from Australia when we first arrived (at \$275 SD per 4-liter box). This was not on the duty-free list, and wasn't a great bargain, but it's the easiest to transport and store aboard. Beer wasn't a bargain at Sullivans, but just around the corner (at the port) was another “bulk” store that had SolBrew at reasonable prices per case (about \$50 SD cheaper than Sullivans!). – Soggy Paws

July 2018: For the next 2000nm the chances of getting half reasonable meat red or white will be significantly reduced, so I have placed a large order with Sullivans whom typically supply quite reasonable meat and if you're lucky, at wholesale prices. – Screensaver

Oct. 2017: Last time I was here I bought a decent amount of alcohol duty free from Sullivan's, a wholesaler for duty free alcohol and they also have a meat import section. I was keen to see how much pricing had changed because so far Solomon's prices have tended to match Ozy prices in many areas.

I am pleased to say Johnny Walker Red 1125ml was \$148 SD (\$24.23AU) and a 1L Vodka Smirnoff was \$92 SD (\$15.06 AU), so that really wasn't too bad compared to Ozy. However, they wanted a week's notice for duty

free, and I really didn't want to hang around here any longer than necessary. The cheapest carton of beer was \$258 SD (\$42,24au), which is considerably less than the \$350 SD I paid at the outer Islands. – Screensaver

June 2012: Wings, across the street from the YC, is the big grocer, but also visit Aus-Mart (one block in, also across the street) and both Bulk Shops (one near Aus-Mart and one at the public market). Panatina Plaza out of town (take the KG6 bus for \$3 SBD) has a great deli for American products (and the only place to buy cat food) and on Fridays receives a delivery of fresh basil.

In this same little mall is Cruz Communications that handles ICOM radios. At Discount, further east of Panatina, there is a Punjas store with good prices on flour, peanuts, wash soap and it offers Indian style roti for sale. Chinatown is full of shopping opportunities. The massive public market is open five-and-a-half days per week and is on Mendaña Ave. roughly four blocks east of the YC. Bring your own plastic bags and watch for pickpockets. – Carina

Meat can be obtained from Meatlovers across from the Pacific Casino Hotel (same KG6 bus) or from Nambawan with locations at Point Cruz and the Public Market.

Duty-free alcohol is available from Sullivan's on Point Cruz (next door to Nambawan meat and kitty-corner). They'll give you a form and you place an order and they deliver free to the YC. They will sell you duty-free even if you are not leaving the Solomons immediately, though they will want your next international port of call. (No one asked about duty-free purchases when we checked out of Gizo.) – Carina

7.3.3.11 Restaurants

2020: We visited several places: Monarch Hotel are friendly with nice meals and security. Coral Sea hotel offers coffee and a meal, very friendly. Breakwater Café at the man-made harbour by the Point Cruz Yacht Club, ask for Fred Douglas, the owner, an expat who's helpful. They have good meals and coffee. – Escape II

2010: The Lounge is excellent for light meals. Turn left out of the YC, down the main street for three or four mins, left again. It is painted a bright lime colour and very popular with expats. – Bosun Bird

7.3.4 Cruiser Reports

2020: Locals Dive Guides to travel with you on your boat: John Pimo: +677 749 0862 or Francis: +677 747 6718. See Fred Douglas at The Breakwater Café for other recommendations. +677 749 5415. – Escape II

June 2019: The Coral Seas Resort seemed friendly and welcoming. There is a protected place to leave your dinghy (a shallow basin with a rock outer wall). The tides made it challenging getting in and out of the dinghy, and a stern anchor is required, but it was safe to leave the dinghy there. The workers at the waterside bar/restaurant were very friendly, and we made sure to ask permission to leave our dinghy there, and to have drinks and the occasional meal there. We picked up a tourist map at the front desk at the Coral Seas Resort.

Once a week the resort has a local entertainment group come in after dinner for a performance, but rather than seeing local culture, this seemed to be imitating Hawaiian hula, not Solomon Island dancing. – Soggy Paws

July 2018: The **Vilu War Museum** has been something I have been going to do for some time and the guys of Sanuk were going so I got to tag along. It's a good 1-hour cab ride and don't expect the driver to actually know where it is or for there to be a sign you can't miss.

If you turn up unannounced, then you will wake the caretaker up. There are Museums and there are those with plenty of land who collect old cars, aeroplanes, gold rush memorabilia and place them neatly around. Stefan had higher expectations and yea I would not call it a museum, either.

We declined the guide, figuring we would have a look first. As it turned out the caretaker/guide/curator was very knowledgeable about what was there, from where it came, what happened etc. In hind sight we probably should have had her accompany us and I believe the experience would have been better.

If you go as a part of a bus tour, all the signs around the various items are placed around. But given its outside they don't stay there so these were not there when we went.

I guess I thought the Americans or other Pacific countries might have thrown a bit of money at this given the significance, but clearly, they haven't, and Solomon's don't have funds. – Screensaver

2017: Honiara was in the end a pleasant surprise (given all the bad reviews by others), and we still find ourselves missing the buzz and provisioning of Honiara. It was easy to get around, everything we needed could be found and the people were very nice. Maybe we were lucky, but I would like to think that taking these a few simple security steps kept us out of trouble, as it did with most of the other boats, we met along the way staying in these same places with no problems or issues. – Field Trip

2017: The Point Cruz Yacht Club in Honiara were incredibly helpful and allowed us free use of showers, toilets, even chilled our white wine and provided ice as our fridge and freezer had packed in. A large jug of beer is a very reasonable £5.00. Be careful when landing on the beach there as there are numerous rusting tins and broken beer bottles, no one seems interested in clearing it up. – Michael Foote (Noonsite)

2010: On the street behind the Post office (i.e. to the S) is the Ministry of Lands. On the ground floor is a separate office with the sign "Maps". Here you can obtain a number of relevant BA charts, plus some key locally-produced charts, notably SI07, of Marovo Lagoon (SD 150). If the office is down to its last BA chart, they will copy it for you (full-size, but bandw).

There is a small **museum** on Mendana Avenue but even the keenest culture-vulture may find it difficult to enthuse about it. There are a number of collapsing "kastom" houses in a garden, and one room with miscellaneous items that look not to have been renewed or dusted in thirty years. Entry is however free and the museum shop contains a surprisingly good collection of reasonably-priced carvings. A visit may be useful if only to give you an idea of how much such items (which will be encountered in Western Province) should fetch. There is also a good shop in the Mendana Hotel, adjoining the YC.

In the hills behind Honiara (45 mins walk or a minibus ride – frequent service) is an impressive US war memorial, with full details of all the major battles fought around here in WW2. – Bosun Bird

7.4 Bonegi Beach

NE Side of Guadalcanal above Honiara

7.4.1 Anchorage

2020: Anchorages 12M sand, next to Bonegi 1 wreck. Pay fees ashore. – Escape II

7.5 Lambi Bay (Kole Point)

North west tip of the island

7.5.1 Anchorage

Oct. 2017: 09°24.42S / 159°36.34E 5m sand, 2g gust. – Screensaver

7.5.2 Cruiser Reports

Oct 2017: We left the east side of Russell Islands with an open mind, figuring we would either end up in the Florida Islands (i.e. East) or on Guadalcanal (SSE) which ever gave the best sailing line. As soon as we got clear of the Russell group, conditions were pretty bad with 30 plus knot wind gusts and short sharp seas. I very nearly turned back, but the weather forecast such as it was showed no sign of this, or anything changing.

Screensaver punched into more than I would like falling heavily on the next wave. There is a contour line along our route with 1200-1300m on one side and 500 to 800m on the other side. So effectively there was a 500-600m mountain beneath us. The ridge was right on our course, and while I tried running off, I would have had to go a long way off course to avoid it. In the end we punched our way through it and got to Laovavasa where I had hoped we would find shelter behind the reef. But we didn't and left after 30 min.

About 10 nm around the western side of Guadalcanal was Kole point and a deep bay. While it was taking us further away from Honiara, I was pretty sure I would at least be able to drink my expensive beer in the calm of a nice bay. Of course, having made that call and got going, the wind began to drop, and while I did get my beer and a swim in a very nice sandy bay it was possibly unnecessary. This was also the first place I got asked to pay to anchor. I just played dumb and ignored it, but the guy who approached Ken on Watusi was a little more direct. Neither of us have paid. – Screensaver

7.6 Tambea Resort

7.6.1 Anchorages

2010: 09°15.835S / 159°39.858E, in 10m, sand. Shelter is adequate in normal conditions, except from strong winds/swell with a northerly component. We only had one visitor, an annoying child who tried to persuade us to give him 100SD for anchoring. Later we were told that there is a sunken Japanese submarine in 20m of water, somewhere in this vicinity.

Approach should be from the north, giving appropriate clearance to Mary Shoal (E) and Paul Shoal (W). Steer for a prominent white-painted concrete block (Japanese war memorial) on the black sand beach. – Bosun Bird

7.6.2 Cruiser Reports

2010: The resort was burned down during The Tension. There are, however, still people living in this bay at the west end of Guadalcanal, including, apparently, the elderly former owner of the resort. There is a road to Honiara. – Bosun Bird

7.7 Visale Village

7.7.1 Anchorage

2020: 09°15.082S / 159°40.759E in 22m sand. We could anchor shallower, but we arrived quite late in the day and didn't have time and light to fully check out the options. This is opposite the village. This is a wreck site of Japanese 1-1 submarine, which starts on the reef at 5m.

Anchor fee \$100Sd, \$50Sd per diver. Go ashore for diving information, friendly village. – Escape II

8 Central Province (Russell and Nggela (Florida Islands))

8.1 Nggela / Florida Islands

8.1.1 Siota

East side between Nggela Sule and Nggela Pule Islands

8.1.1.1 Anchorages

2020: 09°03.790S / 160°18.566E in 8m sand. Friendly. See teachers for a tour of the oldest Anglican Missionary school in the Solomon Islands. Johnson was one of the teachers we met. – Escape II

8.1.2 Anuhu / Vatunum Island

NE Side off of Nggela Sue Island

8.1.2.1 Anchorages

2020: 09°00.111S / 160°13.633E in 18m. We were followed out of the anchorage by a Banana boat with 3 men aboard, demanding money. We hadn't been approached by anybody previously. We gave them \$100 SD and they were happy. But they said that they would have asked \$100SD a day. – Escape II

8.1.3 Roderick Dhu Bay

Home of the World Discovery Wreck. Between Nggela Sule Island and Mbokonimbeti Island

8.1.3.1 Pass

Oct 2017: Sandfly Passage had a bit of current against us, but not too bad and we explored behind a few Islands before settling for the night. – Screensaver

8.1.3.2 Anchorage

Nov. 2023: 09°00.96S / 160°07.42E. John and his family are very cruisers friendly. They have three moorings in the bay. We cleaned the one, we were on and it was ok. If there are more boats than moorings you can anchor close to shore with a line to the trees. – Eastern Stream

June 2019: We broke loose the outer mooring at Roderick Bay, so got a good look at the entire composition of the mooring arrangement.

Mooring composition: Small ball with small line to the down-line, which has a loop with a bowline knot in the top. The downline is 1" 3-strand polypropylene. This goes down to a splice, which is 2 loops spliced together. At the bottom of the lower line is a spliced eye with a galvanized thimble. Attached to that is a 5/8" D-shackled, which connects the line to a 15 ft length of 10mm (3/8") G3 chain. This chain is in a loop connected at the end with a stainless steel 5/16" shackle. The loop of chain goes around a coral head. When we were there, we actually broke the coral head off and came adrift. Fortunately, it was in the middle of the day with everyone around, and we had no issues with our boat.

Like Tropical Soul, we came for a few days and stayed 3 weeks. We were 3 boats together and had a nice time with John and family. – Soggy Paws

Jan. 2019: 09°01S / 160°07.4E. I dove on the mooring a week ago and repaired the chain and thought it was safe. However, the line broke and we drifted off in a squall. We adjusted course before we hit the reef, but it was heart stopping scary. – Field Trip

Jan. 2018: 09°00.97S / 160°07.38E. We came for a couple of days and stayed for 5 weeks! This is a small village with chief John. He is a very good guy with a nice family. Has 3 free moorings with ropes renewed in mid-2018. You can also anchor. It is 1 ½ hours by boat to Tulagi. John is a very good boat handler and will go with you for security. – Tropical Soul

Aug. 2018: 09°01.34S / 160°07.42E. Anchor in 19m sand, Telekom 3g. The expectation of anchoring fee's and gifts is climbing. We did a few simple things for these guys and then as we were leaving someone was sent out asking for anchoring fees, we weren't impressed or paying. – Screensaver

Jan. 2017: 09°00.97S / 160°07.41E. We are still in Roderick Bay. We have had great weather, and a good time with the locals here. We fixed three of the four moorings, and Johnny is very happy. You MUST inspect the moorings to be sure you are safe and secure. The mooring lines appear OK, but be careful. Anchoring is also an option. – Field Trip

July 2015: 09°00.953S / 160°07.363E. Mooring buoys. They have four mooring buoys, but be warned these are just tied to coral blocks. 21 tonne Adina was fine in winds up to 16 knots. Jonny will move you into the mangroves if there are strong winds forecast. – Adina

8.1.3.3 Yachtsmen Services

8.1.3.3.1 Water

May 2024: Water is available to fill water jugs. – Sugar Shack

8.1.3.4 General Services

8.1.3.4.1 Internet and Phone

Aug. 2018: 3G Internet still working here. – Screensaver

Jan. 2017: There is very fast 3G here, which makes this a great place to get caught up with family and friends while relaxing outside of the Honiara hustle. – Field Trip

8.1.3.5 Cruiser Reports

May 2024: It has been reported that it is not a wise decision to leave your boat keys with John Ruka or any other person (see Solomon's Facebook post on dated 15.2.24) – Amiga

Nov. 2023: John and his family can organize local dance and pan pipe music with a local dinner. They pass by with fresh fruits and veggies for trade. We hiked around a bit, visited the wreck and enjoyed the evenings on the beach. A nice spot after the busy days in Honiara. – Eastern Stream

June 2023: Solomon's Rodrick Bay Hideaway: We had a great welcome by John Ruka and family at Rodrick Bay Hideaway, Nggela Sule, Solomon Islands (just 29 nm from Honiara).

As you turn into Rodrick Bay, they are in the first village on the right, way before the MS World Discoverer wreck (9°0.58S / 160°7.26E). If you enter slowly someone will come out in a canoe to greet you. Many who have passed this way will also remember his lovely wife Lillian who sadly died two years ago.

John has a mooring just off his village which he offers for free (very strong, set by a yachtie, held our 12 tonne boat in 16knts no problem). He also invites cruisers into his village to share meals, walk to his amazing lookouts, enjoy the reef and learn all about life in the Solomon's. He suffered lots of damage in a recent cyclone and is building it all up again. At the moment he is working hard to get solar panels and a solar water pump. John Ruka +667 7107423, Facebook: Roderick Bay Hideaway– sv Tequila

June 2019: We wanted to see the rest of the Florida Group—especially the World War II sites, but were scared of the raskals and having to pay everywhere we went. So, we hired John Ruka and his friend Willy to escort us around. We took John and Will aboard (we fed them, and they slept in the cockpit, to keep a lookout at night). The other boat took friends from the 3rd boat aboard, and we circled Nggela Sulu clockwise. We stopped at the Watering Hole and anchored overnight next to a half-sunk ship. The next day we visited several spots including a sunk Japanese ship, and several bases. We anchored near the seaplane base the 2nd night, and in the middle of the night, John and Willy saw someone trying to climb aboard our friend's boat, but shined a spotlight on them and they went away. John's presence didn't do away with payments here and there to be able to stop and see, but he negotiated reasonable fees.

We did a mid-day stop at Makambe Island (which Willy owns) off Tulagi town, and dinghied in to the resort for lunch, and a walking tour of Tulagi under John's guidance, then late afternoon sailed back to Roderick Bay. It was a fast and fun tour of all of Tulagi with no rascals to bother us. – Soggy Paws

Aug. 2018: There are two Johns there one John Ruka with the mooring in the bay before the wreck and another John in the back with the wreck. A little rivalry exists along with some different stories. – Screensaver

July 2015: This is a 'Must Stop' place mainly for the reason that Jonny and his family love having yachts to stay. From here you can take a private boat to Honiara and bypass the risk of security issues of staying there. Fresh water and laundry available from Jonny's family. Ask to do a meal with Jonny and his family and ask the boys to play their pipes. A great place to linger a while. – Adina

Aug. 2012: There is a **festival** here in August, contact: Roderick Bay: Bonina Vale ni Vaka Seloga festival, Solomon Islands Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Lilly Tinoni, lillym_tinoni@yahoo.com, +677 763 7667. – Carina (SSCA Commodore’s Bullet

The Ruka clan village at Roderick Bay stretches along the western shore of the small bay on a narrow strip of flat land below Susupu Hill (named for a local soup) and is composed of sago palm raised floor homes with porches. Homes are small and simple but are comfortable and dry even during torrential rains. (Interestingly, sleeping mats are protected by mosquito nets provided by the government in their aggressive, and mostly successful, malaria eradication program.) Walking the path, worn into the sandy soil by the bare feet of generations, we came upon a strange looking thing—a rag, cut in thirds and strung between two posts on a small line. Peter, a cousin of the clan chief John Ruka, explained that this is an ancient symbol used to indicate to those who may not read or write that it is tabu (“TAM boo”) to enter this plot. It is essentially the symbolic equivalent of a “no trespassing” sign.

The plots thus labeled were the areas used to grow economically valuable crops: betel nuts and copra on Nggela Island.

Later in the day we were shown how local crafts are made. Shell money is an important commodity here in the Solomon Islands. The people from Malaita Island (“MAH lie TAH”) are known for shell money, but if you ask the Nggela people, the currency originated here. It is still essential for buying a bride.

Buying a bride? Yes, a young man who wants to acquire a bride—even when the bride is quite willing to wed the prospective groom—must obtain and bring to the bride’s family about 75 fathoms of shell money. If we are doing our calculations right, that’s 450’! All that being said, shell money’s value varies by its quality (uniformity, smoothness) and its color, and we cannot begin to understand the subtleties of the value given to a bride as measured in shell money. When we asked what the bride’s family does with the shell money, we were told that it is used for the sons of the family to, in turn, buy brides. In practice, we saw beautiful and numerous strands of shell money on women that had been given to them by their husbands for their wedding. In Nggela, dolphin teeth are also included in artful strands of shell money as, historically, dolphins were part of the diet for the native people.

In addition to a discussion of shell money, we learned how to weave food platters, sleeping mats, baskets, plus the sago palm roof and wall panels used in construction here. As the afternoon wore on we had had the opportunity to shop and purchase carvings, shell money, shells, baskets, crafts, locally grown vegetables and even WWII war relics from villagers from around the entire area, including from villages on Sandfly Island to the north. At this bazaar we spied a lovely Triton Trumpet shell that we fancied for a horn for Carina. It wasn’t until the following day, after much deliberation and discussions with those who knew exactly where and how to cut a hole for the mouthpiece, that we obtained our foot-long, perfectly-formed, natural musical instrument. To be honest, we’re still learning to produce a clear note. –Carina (SSCA Commodore’s Bulletin)

8.1.4 Maravagi Resort

North of Sand Fly Pass

8.1.4.1 Anchorage

2020: Mooring ball at **08°57.015S / 160°03.403E** in 10M. There are 2 moorings in the bay, check them before using. (The Bilikiki liveaboard sometimes uses mooring). See John at the resort. – Escape II

8.1.4.2 Cruiser Report

2020: Diving the Devils Highway, strong currents, manta rays sometimes. – Escape II

8.1.5 Tulagi

West side of Nggela Sule Island.

SAFETY: Thieves reported here. In 2024, thieves cut a dinghy and outboard off the davits. In addition, they stole snorkel gear while the owners were onboard asleep. – Amiga

8.1.5.1 Anchorages

Jan. 2019: 09°06S / 160°09.2E in 30m of water off the resort. Calm anchorage, but lots of crocs. – Field Trip

Feb. 2017: Anchored in front of Raiders Hotel. Probably the most protected anchorage in the area. – Rehua

Jan. 2017: 09°06S / 160°09.2E in 30m off the resort. The biggest issue here is there are crocs in the area, so we have to be careful when swimming. They rarely come over to this side, but at night they have been spotted roaming the waters in the anchorage...so we are VERY careful. – Field Trip

8.1.5.2 Cruiser Reports

Tulagi Island is part of the Florida Island Group, north of Iron Bottom Sound and Guadalcanal. Tulagi Harbor is the anchorage to the east and Macambo Island. Japanese called the location "Tsuragi".

History: The British colonial government was based here prior to WWII, fleeing before the Japanese arrived. A small number of Japanese worked on Tulagi prior to the war, in Marine industries. There was a strong suspicion of Japanese "yellow peril" leading up to the war and what the Japanese were doing in the mandated islands so the British watched them fairly closely.

The Japanese 3rd Kure Special Naval Landing Force (SNLF) landed on Tulagi to establish a seaplane base there (on the adjacent islands of Gavutu and Tanambogo) without resistance on May 3, 1942 and garrisoned it, and established a seaplane base at nearby Gavutu (also referred to as Tulagi Seaplane base) in the area.

There was a prewar seaplane base used by RAAF and British. Occupied by the Japanese, liberated by Marines.

American missions against Tulagi: May 4 - August 7, 1942

Liberated as the first phase of the Guadalcanal campaign, by the US Marine Corps on August 7, 1942 meeting fierce resistance from the Japanese defenders. By nightfall of the following day, Tulagi was declared secure, but for several days, individual Japanese and small groups continued to be flushed from hiding places and hunted down by patrolling Marines.

Three U.S. Cemeteries were established on Tulagi: USN and USMC Cemetery #1 (White Beach), USN and USMC Cemetery #2 (Police Barracks) and USN and USMC Cemetery #3 (Chinese Barracks). Later, these graves were exhumed and transported to American Cemetery Guadalcanal.

Today: After the war, the colonial government moved to Honiara to utilize the infrastructure left by American forces. Tulagi became a quite provincial capital. The facilities left in the area by the US Navy are still used to this day, with pontoons and overhaul areas on the island still used for small craft. – Pacific Wrecks

May 2024: Thefts are high in this area. If you really want to visit Tulago, as it is a historical place, it is recommended to contact Breakwater Café in Honiara for a mooring and nighttime security. – Amiga

Feb. 2017: The diving here is amazing. Our favorite was the Twin Tunnels but we also did some great wreck dives, all organized by Raiders (who also do superb meals). – Rehua

April 2013: There is some theft here, be careful. Anchor in front of police station, see chart. We hiked into the hills for caves and WWII stuff, into caves, plane wrecks. Clear water, no dive shops. – Mokisha

Oct. 2012: The Florida Islands, now known locally by their traditional name the Nggelas (pronounced with a silent N), are known for their beautiful cruising grounds and safe all-weather anchorages. Unfortunately, in the last decade they are also known for the regular acts of piracy against visiting yachties. Politics and community governance in the Nggelas in general are fragile, and there is no reliable, centralized law and order.

The Sesape shipyard, in Tulagi harbour, has been undergoing a multi-million-dollar refurbishment in recent years, that is now largely complete. It offers international-standard shipyard services, overseen by a NZ shipwright and engineer, including a 500 tonne slip, and a 65 tonne crane and hardstand area. As usual in the

Solomons, it is best to confirm pricing in writing before going too far out of your way. Email kim.hamilton@sisl.com.sb for further information. You can anchor in Tulagi harbour safely if you speak to Kim first and follow his advice. – Aita Pe'ape'a (Noonsite)

2009: THEFTS and DANGER: While in the Solomons we heard of 16 robberies in the Florida Islands, specifically Tulagi, all with people on board and at night with knives and clubs.

We were robbed at gunpoint, war club, and bush knife in Avi Avi (slipway), near Tulagi, we were sleeping on deck. A couple of days later the police came out, they were friendly. I filled out their report/form. I asked them if they would send me three copies to the yacht club, but this was never done. I even went to the main police station in Guadalcanal twice (but they) refused to follow up. I heard through the yacht club that they had arrested the four guys. The police let these guys go and still have our things.

In October, Dave and his wife (Koreans on a cat from Australia) were robbed at knifepoint to their throats and had binoculars stolen (later recovered by offering reward). They ended up hiring a local guard.

On December 2nd, Tody from New Zealand arrived in Liapari with a broken motor. I went over to help and was advised the week prior he sailed into Tulagi, anchored off the police station, and that morning, early, he heard people on deck and shouted "who is on my boat". He opened the hatch a large tall man placed his shoed foot on his hand and threatened to chop it off with a meat cleaver. They had bush knives and war clubs. They knocked all his front teeth out and proceeded to steal everything. From his description, (it was) the same four guys who robbed us.

Our friend Frank from Holland was robbed of everything at the Point Cruz yacht club on December 2nd. (The yacht club is a) nice place, nice people, very interesting expatriate community, however poor anchorage, no security and I suspect someone is giving inside information for robberies of people anchored and tied to the wall. All robberies here no one was on board. We were told in the beginning to not anchor by the yellow buoy as you will surely get robbed.

Shawn and Lulu from Australia, nice people, they went back to their vessel and approximately 8000 AUS dollars had been stolen (computer, pactor modem, monies, pictures, etc). I mentioned this to a local expatriate and he found out who the thieves were and made arrangements for the people to buy their stuff back.

Take pictures of every canoe that comes to your boat. Honiara now has a new law...no canoe within 15' of a yachtie. Of course, no one cares and not enforced. The week prior to our robbery a man in a canoe went around our vessel at least 3-times, eying everything on board, no eye contact at all. Keep your valuables on your person (passport). – Noonsite

8.1.6 Quin Point (Water Pump)

West side between Nggela Sule and Neggela Pile Islands

8.1.6.1 Anchorages

2020: 09°07.774S / 160°16.457E in 4.6m.– Escape II

May 2019 –09°07.6416S / 160°16.8012E. Day Anchorage. – Soggy Paws

8.1.6.2 Cruiser Reports

2020: Chief John, visit the Bat Cave (bit of a climb up a steep hill), can take on water, from the water pump that was left over from the war--ask first. – Escape II

May 2019: Wind SE 10-15. John Ruka directed us here to visit the water system and caves at Watering Point. John accompanied us to the village to ask permission. We left one of John's people on board for security while we were hiking (all afternoon).

60-65 ft flat bottom, 3G Telekom. Village to ask permission of and get guides from is just SW of here.

After anchoring, we jumped in the dinghy with John Ruka and went to ask permission of the chief here to go into his cave system. We took a good quantity of food gifts (rice, sugar, coffee) and did not have to pay a fee. Chief is a wantok of John's. The chief and several young men guided us into the cave (tough scramble up the hill then wet muddy and dark in the cave). There is also a waterfall near the village somewhere. – Soggy Paws

8.2 Buena Vista Island

North end of the Nggela Island Chain

8.2.1 Anchorages

Aug. 2018: Anchor in 29m sand. Next morning, I was pulling up the anchor and clearly, I have hooked something as my winch struggles and there is much groaning going on--in 29m of water. Eventually I got it to within 8m and could see I had hooked a very heavy chain.

At a guess I would say it was 12-15mm chain, the 2nd time, I manage to get a rope loop around the chain secured to Screensaver to take the weight of the chain, then let anchor down a couple of meters and unhooked it from under the chain. I'm guessing it was what used to be the bow line of the yacht that has been there for some years. – Screensaver

8.3 Russell Islands

NE of Nggela Island and Guadalcanal

8.3.1 Cruiser Report on Russell Islands:

May 2024: The northeastern area seems to be very unfriendly and the locals ask for anchorage fees up to 800 SBD. – Amiga

2010: The Russells are a convenient stopover en route to Western Province. However, good anchorages are not as numerous as one might think from a first glance at the chart – most bays are deep and/or encumbered with coral. Pre-independence, the Russells were effectively owned and managed by Lever Brothers, as a vast plantation, employing 2000 or more people. Yandina was a western-style company town. The plantation then became a joint private/govt enterprise, but all activity ceased about seven years ago – on the one hand there is an ongoing dispute over pay and conditions, and on the other the main installations were burned down. As a result of this, there is some social discontent. – Bosun Bird

8.3.2 Lolokolin Island (Lologhan Island)

Southeast of Mbanika Island. Sieling Pg 236-237

8.3.2.1 Anchorages

Ukn. Date: 09°06.8S / 159°21.3E 18m, coral/sand. Shelves steeply. Best in SE conditions.

8.3.3 Sunlight Channel

Between Mbanika and Pavuvu Islands

8.3.3.1 Anchorages

2019: 09°04.682'S / 159°12.845'E in 35 feet off the fishing pier at. Later we moved to 09°04.505'S / 159°13.354'E in front of the Police Station. This is where they wanted us to anchor for security. We spent 4 nights anchored in Sunlight Channel. We – Soggy Paws

2010: 09°06.914S, 159°08.835E, 13m in sand and coral. We finally found secure anchorage in the southern end of the west arm of Sera Me Ohol (Sunlight) Channel, west of Hoi island. There is a bommie with only 2m of water over it, about 100m north of here; C-Map seemed to be spot-on. – Bosun Bird

8.3.3.2 Cruiser Reports

2019: We had hired John Ruka from Roderick Bay to accompany us to the Russell Islands to smooth the way and make sure there were no problems with the locals. John has a nephew that works for the Russell Islands Police Force. We wanted to see a couple of WWII spots in the Russells. We spent several days exploring the Russell Group with John Ruka and his nephew. We hired a boat to take us around to a couple of WWII spots we knew about from www.PacificWrecks.com. When finished, we sent John back to Roderick Bay by ferry and carried on further north on our own. – Soggy Paws

2010: Good visibility but there are crocs in the vicinity and locals warned us that last year two people had been eaten in the eastern Russells. One or two canoes passed, on their way from a village on Hoi island (not visible) to their gardens on Pavuvu. They were friendly, with good veggies to trade. Leaving the Russells, a canoe paddled out to intercept us from Taina Island. They were keen to trade and had another good selection of vegetables. – Bosun Bird

8.3.4 Tillotson Cove

Sieling – Pg 244:

8.3.4.1 Anchorage

Unknown Date: 09°04.02S / 159°11.43E in mud or coral in 6-11m.

8.3.5 Hoi Island

Sieling – Pg 246

8.3.6 Lingattu Cove

Sieling – Pg 246

8.3.7 Mbanika Island

8.3.7.1 Anchorages

June 2019: 2nd spot: **09°04.51S / 159°13.355E** in 35' in coral and sand right off the police station, where they can keep an eye on our boat. We were usually in 50-90 ft. I snorkeled the ridge and it was fairly extensive. You could probably fit more than one boat on this ridge. If the wind is south of east, you are just behind the point. There is some tidal current in the bay, so when the wind drops, you may hang backwards to the wind. 1st spot: **09°04.68S / 159°12.84E** in 20 ft, just on edge of shelf. (Not Recommended. Go to 2nd Anchoring spot). The depth goes from 90 ft to 12 ft in a boat length, and some massive very shallow coral heads dot the shallow water, so there's no swinging room in the shallow water.

Anchorage is just past the center of town near a group of piles. Pass beyond the copra wharves and township to anchor NNW of a small row of old pilings, the bottom comes up to 18m. Being just south of midchannel keeps a vessel clear of mozzies and provides some breeze. The copra smell is not so bad here. – Soggy Paws

Oct 2017: 09°04.63S / 159°12.87E. 28m sand/mud. – Screensaver

8.3.7.2 Cruiser Reports

June 2019: I had an "E" signal on my phone the whole time we were there, and occasionally something would get through, but we had no usable internet for the 3 days. Phone and SMS worked OK, though.

We did not look for groceries, having recently come from Honiara and Roderick Bay. There seemed to be a market going on Saturday near the outermost (main) pier.

While here, we snorkeled and then scuba-dived the main pier. Lots of years-old debris, including an old tractor, some bullets, and a more recent fishing boat upside down perpendicular to the east end of the pier. We also found some WWII vintage coke bottles in the debris. We forgot to ask about crocs of the locals, and we didn't see any thankfully.

We also hired the services of an outboard motorboat to take us around to various World War II sites. Arnold at the Police Station hooked us up with a local guy who was familiar with what there was to see. If you are a WWII buff, it would be interesting. For anyone else, it would be pretty boring. – Soggy Paws

Oct 2017: 3G if ya lucky. In the end we headed to Yandina thinking it would be bigger than it really was, with hopes of getting some more supplies. As Screensaver was fast becoming a dry boat, I was getting desperate for some alcohol as all I had left was top shelf stuff. Some of the other minor basics were also getting low like milk, flour, neither of which we could get. I coughed up for an expensive carton of beer figuring it had to be cheaper than drinking JW Blue, or 30-year-old Chivas and we found some eggs. Only two market days a week, and the little street side stalls had nothing of interest. – Screensaver

8.3.8 Mbakui Island (Russel Islands)

East of Pavuvu Island. Sieling - Pg 242.

8.3.8.1 Anchorages

Nov. 2023: 08°58.46S / 159°10.88E. We loved this anchorage; it is nice and calm. – Eastern Stream

Aug. 2018: 08°58.48S / 159°10.98E in 7m sand. – Screensaver

Once you cross a small reef, you're inside pretty much 10m of sand with odd low-level coral crops to gaze at from your transom and watch the fish swim by.

It's a great little spot, probably not ideal in strong southerly winds. It has little wind protection, but I doubt you would get much sea action. – Screensaver

8.3.8.2 Cruiser Reports

Nov. 2023: The diving and snorkeling of the outside wall is beautiful. Holding was good, but keep an eye on the weather as waves can get uncomfortable if the weather changes. From here we arranged a fiberglass boat to bring us for a dive trip to Leru's Cut. Be sure to visit the chief first and pay the dive fee to go diving there. On the island there is a house, but the owners live in Honiara. – Eastern Stream

Aug. 2018: This spot is one of the nicest spots we have had in Solomon's. Why? No one lives on the island only a couple of fishermen come and go, the water is lovely and clear, the sand is white and goes from the boat to the beach with no fringing reef in between. The clams had not been raided and the fish, well at least 1 big odd-looking guy got my attention. The water was pretty much like a swimming pool. – Screensaver

8.3.9 Pavuvu Island

8.3.9.1 Pipisala Bay

East side of Pavuvu Island

8.3.9.1.1 Anchorages

Oct. 2017: 09°00.380S / 159°06.958E, in 27m, Sand. The spot I had picked out was at the NE corner of the bay, but at 40+ meters, that wasn't going to work. Eventually I found 27m in the SW corner and as luck would have it the locals told us just as well you anchored here as that guy over where you first tried to anchor, wants to charge you.... and these guys didn't ask us for anything. – Screensaver

8.3.9.1.2 Cruiser Reports

Oct. 2017: We had been told by a few people not to go here and there are some warnings on Noonsite as well, but it is a logical stopover location. If you are traveling in either North or South the Russell group is positioned such that you don't have to do an overnigher. No cell. – Screensaver

8.3.9.2 Kilimolent Bay / Kekeghen Bay

East side of Pavuvu. Sieling Pg 248-249

Dec. 2013: 09°02.175S / 159°06.481E. – Aurora Star

8.3.9.3 Nggee Bay

East side of Pavuvu. Sieling Pg 248-249

8.3.9.3.1 Anchorages

2019: 09°02.547S / 159°05.150E in about 50 ft, of “smooth coral” (it was pretty grumbly on anchoring, but we had no problems with stuck chain in the morning). The wind was blowing right up the bay, so we were hanging parallel to the shore. It seemed we were on a direct line between the two villages... one at the mouth on the west bank and one just ahead of us on the east bank.

We came screaming into Nggee Bay in the late afternoon, hoping to find an easy anchorage at Sielings “12 meter” spot. We found a place in that bay that came up significantly—from 125 ft to 65 ft, and this is probably what Sieling anchored on. However, there was a mooring buoy right at that spot. We looked inshore a little bit, off the little beach, but it was 95 ft then 2 ft. No swinging room. So we crept down the east side of the bay, looking for a coral knot we could anchor on that was not too corally, and not too close to the reef along the shore. – Soggy Paws

Sept. 2018: 09°03.10S / 159°05.22E. Anchor in 15m mud rock. Last time I was here was around 2011 and I rafted up to a friend's boat, who clearly must have anchored in about 30+m, something I wasn't keen to do. Having wandered around the edges there is not a lot of choice in spite of what the chart suggests and plenty of rocky things just waiting to grab your anchor. Of course, if that is not enough throw in a few crocs just for good measure. However, “Murphy” must have been on holidays and cut us break so all was good. – Screensaver

8.3.9.3.2 Cruiser Reports

June 2019: There was a fairly steady flow of canoes in the evening hours, of course everyone altering course a little bit to look at us. But no one bothered us—just stares, and some smiles and waves. We locked up tight and weren't aware of any problems in the night. —Soggy Paws

Sept. 2018: No cell. – Screensaver

8.3.10 Sau Island

8.3.10.1 Anchorages

July 2015: 09°06.542S / 159°07.490E. 25m soft mud. Anchorage is at a river mouth and you may drag very slowly through the mud - just need to re-anchor. Well sheltered. – Adina

8.3.10.2 Cruiser Reports

June 2019: We visited this spot in an outboard motorboat, and it was surprisingly protected from the 15-20 kts of SE winds, and no swell. The little village has a nice-looking beach, and looked peaceful. – Soggy Paws

July 2015: This is a very poor small island but with friendly welcoming people. Anything you give will be gratefully received - there is not even a school. Good trading. Crocodiles up in the river. – Adina

8.3.11 Alakan Island

SW Side of Pavuvu Island

8.3.11.1 Anchorages

2010: We attempted to anchor W of Alakon island (in the S of the group). Alakon is uninhabited and there is ostensibly reasonable shelter off its NW corner. The bottom was sand, but obstructed by large coral heads; although we were able to place the anchor in sand, we were not confident of remaining clear of the coral, and moved on. This would however, be a pleasant day anchorage prior to making an overnight passage to Western Province. Water visibility was excellent and there was a pod of friendly dolphins in evidence. – Bosun Bird

8.3.12 Tuul Island

SW Side of Pavuvu Island

8.3.12.1 Anchorages

2010: We then tried an anchorage north between tiny Tuul island and the big island of Pavuvu, about two miles west of the southern entrance to Sera Me Ohol (Sunlight) Channel. There was a small village on Pavuvu and huge logs on shore were evidence that this was once a log-loading ramp. However, the water was deep (20m plus), there was a W-going current of about 2 kts and the bottom looked to be very uneven, perhaps encumbered with waterlogged timber and/or industrial equipment. We decided again to pass. – Bosun Bird.

8.3.13 Mborokua Island

17nm W of Russell's

Sieling Pg 248

8.3.13.1 Cruiser Reports

Ed Note 2019: *Someone who used to work on the Bilikiki Dive Boat told me they only ever used that anchorage and/or mooring as a daytime stop only. When the diving was done, they'd take off to another place*

2014: On the west coast of this island is a dive boat mooring. Great diving along here. Liveboard mooring, plus small dive boat moorings. Tie to shore as well as mooring, or you'll drift away. – Gaia

9 Isabel Province

9.1 San Jorge Island

9.1.1 Cruiser Reports

Jan. 2009: The GPS coordinates we were given had brought us to San Jorge Island, an island inhabited by Devils, rich in sorcery, swimming with crocodiles and 20 miles short of our eventual destination at Papari Village. Was it the work of Devils that lead us here?

Enchanting dense jungle overhung meandering hidden beaches that disappeared around the bay, no villages could be seen in fact no evidence of human activity whatsoever. Where were the canoes that had been arranged to come out and welcome us to Papari? Something was wrong and we could feel it.

The sun was dipping the horizon when a distant motor canoe speeding past abruptly banked, eventually coming alongside in a bow wave wall of white water. Its occupants of three young men scanned the area nervously with fear in their eyes and urgency in their voice. "What are you doing here? You must leave this place. Only devils and crocodiles here. You must leave. Go now!" – Wiikirri

9.2 Santa Isabel Island

9.2.1 Leleghia (Ortega Channel) Papari Village

9.2.1.1 Anchorages

Jan. 2009: 08°24.0 S / 159°39.5E. (PA) Papari Village was not marked on any of our charts and it took another day of asking fishing canoes and pulling into suspected villages before we found Papari eventually sailing past it by nearly a mile before a canoe finally came out to wave us back. – Wiikirri

9.2.1.2 Cruiser Reports

Jan. 2009: The bay consists of several scattered villages, settlements and camps each containing an assortment of extended family groups. It is our understanding that people have only recently begun to resettle this section of Isabel, before many headhunting raids devastated and all but wiped out the original inhabitants but with the lucrative spoils from logging contracts people have returned to claim land with communities springing up in their wake.

Papari is one of the communities taking advantage of clearings, roads and basic infrastructure such as sawn logs left behind after no less than three logging companies had worked the area. Normally we'd avoid such a destination like the plague but found ourselves here to bring supplies and catch up with Darren, soon to arrive for a short break from Honiara. His onsite friend also from Australia is funded to be here for 12 months to observe the effects that two Anglican churches are having on the communities. There are two churches of the same denomination, one from America the other Australia and barely 50m apart. The rivalry between congregations is visible even though they themselves deny it. – Wiikirri

9.2.2 Ghaghaolo Point

Southwest Coast

9.2.2.1 Anchorages

Oct. 2017: 08°12.37S / 159°15.97E, in 26m, Coral/rubble. I also had no satellite image here, and next to no depths on the either charting system so I was going pretty quietly as we came in. Luck would have that it was all pretty deep and in fact we struggled to find somewhere shallow enough to anchor. It's well protected and very quiet. – Screensaver

9.2.2.2 Cruiser Reports

Oct. 2017: No cell. Next to no locals with only a few logging workers traveling out to the ships which are dotted down the coast line. There is a lack of cell towers, and very few villages. – Screensaver

9.3 Arnavon Islands

North East of Santa Isabel

9.3.1 Kerekikapa Island (Marine Reserve)

This is the Solomon Islands first declared nationally protected area. It covers land and sea in the Manning Straights between Choiseul and Isabel Province. This is home to the largest rookery of the critically acclaimed hawksbill turtle in the south pacific.

Marine Reserve: +677 20940, +677 749 5374, dazpitakaka@gmail.com

9.3.1.1 Anchorages

July 2024: 07°27.787S / 158°01.808E. Great spot between a few bommies in 4m depth. The fee to anchor here is changing. We paid 100 per night plus the 80 sd reserve fee per person. But they had asked for 300 per night. – Eastern Stream

June 2023: Arnavon islands is a conservation zone and they have a well-established anchorage fee of \$100 SBD per boat per day plus one off \$80 SBD per person park fee which seems fair enough and is a transparent easy process where you pay the rangers and they have associate paperwork outlining fees for other activities. – Honu II

March 2017: 07°27.38S / 158°01.59E. – Field Trip

1997: The daily anchorage fee contributes to a good cause as this is a model project, supported by Nature Conservancy, to encourage sustainable harvesting. – Kama Lua (OCC Newsletter)

9.3.1.2 Cruiser Reports

The Nature Conservancy Office: 677.20940, www.arnavons.com, info@arnavons.com, finance@arnavons.com, megan_ryan@tnc.org. They state that the park entrance fee is 80/pp.

They offer activities for a minimum of 2 people (as of July 2024):

- Snorkeling at one site is \$200/per person
- Snorkeling at two sites is \$300 per person
- Turtle Rodeo is \$300 per person
- Megapods and Meleivona is \$150/pp
- Turtle hatchling/night patrol/turtle tagging at Kerehikapa station is \$200/pp
- And they have several package deals

May 2024: This is a community run marine park and a fee is charged to anchor and do certain activities (pricing is negotiable). The rangers are very friendly. The marine life is fabulous, great diving. There are crocs in the anchorage but you can swim near the shoreline. – Hilde Larsen Sailing Solomons Facebook

March 2017: We made it to Kerehikapa island, and had a great trip (from Marovo). We had a lot of current against us, so it took us 12-hours to go 64NM, but it was worth the effort. We checked into the ranger station here upon arrival and gave them a freshly caught tuna. They were happy, and showed us around the station. We will explore more this afternoon after school. – Field Trip

May 2013: OMG! Turtles galore – the best experience ever. The conservatory has 8 rangers who work one month on and one month off. They record, protect and help the hatchlings to sea. Once the mother lays the eggs, they count the eggs (if they find the nest in 24 hrs.), install a heavy-duty wire on top the nest and label the nest with data. Natural turtle egg predators are the Megapode birds who dig up the eggs and eat them. We were lucky enough to witness a nest of turtles that were ready to come out of their nest and head for the sea. The turtles were so cute – I wanted to keep one. Only 10 out of a 100 will make it. As the turtles hit the water, a small black tip reef shark was waiting to dine on whatever little turtle he could find. It made me want to swim out there and get rid of that shark myself!

Our nest had 131 babies in it. Dixon and Lionel said it was a pretty big nest. The march to the sea for these little guys took about 15 minutes. None of them strayed from their path to the sea. Their compass was on automatic as they headed straight for the water. They will always come back to this island. The females will always lay their eggs on this beach. It was an amazing sight and one we'll never forget.

The other absolutely wonderful thing we did was snorkel the reserve's reef. It was a great snorkel in warm, clear water. The giant clams are wide open and you can actually see into the clam. Usually you only see the hole on the top of the clam. There was also a quite a bit of jelly fish.

We were there 3 days and enjoyed every bit of our time there. The guys don't get much variation in their diet so the last night I whipped up a pot of good ole American pasta and garlic bread. At the end of the meal it was all gone. They are all super guys and we learned so much from them. – Mokisha

9.4 Sikopo Island

No Anchoring without ranger permission, this is a Marine Reserve

9.4.1 Anchorages (Pre-approved and Paid)

March 2017: 07°26.31S / 157°58.41E. We moved to a new island and anchorage yesterday. It is still part of the same marine reserve. Normally yachts are not allowed to anchor here, but if you get special permission from the rangers, and pay the anchoring fee (100SB) in advance, you can come up here. – Field Trip

9.4.2 Cruiser Reports

March 2017: It is a beautiful spot. The biggest issues are crocs and mosquitoes. The rangers told us 'not' to swim here as there are many crocs. So, we spent the afternoon exploring by dinghy. We are being picked up today by the rangers to go and visit an island that is a nesting area for megapode birds. – Field Trip

10 Western Province

The Marovo Lagoon is actually composed of three separate lagoons that surround Vangunu Island: Nono Lagoon to the west, Marovo Lagoon in the north and Kolo Lagoon in the SE, though collectively they are referred to as the Marovo Lagoon. Marovo Lagoon is littered with small islands, islets, coral bommies and shoals too numerous to be charted in most cases.

Note: Do not go ashore during Sabbath. Marovo Lagoon: Most islanders are Seventh Day Adventists so their Sabbath is from sunset on Friday to sunset on Saturday, and visitors are not supposed to go ashore here during the Sabbath.

10.1 Mbulo Island

10.1.1 Anchorages

Sept. 2017: 08°38.93S / 157°52.54E in 22m, mud/sand/coral. – Screensaver

10.1.2 Cruiser Reports

Sept. 2017: Marovo Lagoon Contact: While we were exploring Marovo Lagoon we came in contact with a very motivated local, Mervin Kuve (cell 7488 8610, kuvemuven1@gmail.com). Mervin has been around this area for many years and has actively worked to promote the general area and been recognized for his assistance and help with various groups at the time. I said I would help get the word out for him once I recognized that he was both genuine and not without some supporting proof of his work.

Marovo Lagoon is the eighth wonder of the world and one could easily spend a considerable time poking around in all its corners and still miss something.

Having worked with a number of different film tourism and eco groups along with Solomon's Tourism I have little doubt that Mervin would be your best contact in the area and what he doesn't know I expect he will try to find it for you.

If you're looking for the more traditional village culture accommodation traditions, etc., I believe this would align well with Mervin's intentions and he can help you find the local specifics you might be looking for.

Mervin is trying to organize tours, home stays, alignment with local events, assistance with travel arrangements and anything in the lagoon area. Mervin helped us, so if you are in this area give him a call send him txt, or try his email. – Screensaver

May 2013: Marovo is famous for its wood carvers. We've got masks in-laid with Nautilus Shell, carvings and bowls. We've traded away old spear guns, masks, fins, clothes, rice, etc. - you name it, and we've traded it.

The lagoon is beautiful with clear water. It was nominated a World Heritage site in 1991 but didn't make it as the government still allows logging and mining within the lagoon, even today. Maybe one day they'll stop the plundering and it will become a World Heritage site. Marovo struggles with very little tourist infrastructure.

Highlight of the lagoon was Talina. A village of many carvers. Here we met, Rocky, a highly artistic carver. From him we got "custom" money which is very old bride money or valuable "money" from different tribes. "Custom" money was used before currency had even been thought of. It's made of shell and still highly valued. Rocky also carves red coral and I got a small dolphin from him.

We met several other carvers including Lulu, Vinyale, and John Wayne (the most famous carver in the lagoon). In any event, Solomon's has been a wonderful place to visit and we've enjoyed it very much. – Mokisha

10.2 Nggatokae Island

10.2.1 Peava

Sieling Pg 116

10.2.1.1 Pass:

Sept. 2015: The entrance is 5m deep and about 15m wide. At the time of writing, it is marked with a pole float with red reflector marking port side of the entrance. This may have changed if the float is washed away or has been changed. The passage is clearly visible to the eye in high sun. – Wade Fairly (Noonsite)

July 2015: The lagoon has a very narrow pass (15m wide) and you will need good light and light winds to enter. Satellite image helpful. Leave first post to port, second to starboard. – Adina

Aug. 2012: 08°47.1430S / 158°13.9660E approximate area, and it's narrow. Depths range 11-12'. On approach, we came through the gap between Mbulo and Malemale Islands and it was deep and wide. The narrow gap between Malemale and Nggatokae looked okay on Google Earth, but it appeared to be full of serious tide rips and has swell breaking on the reefs on both sides.

Kicha Island is located just SE of Mbulo and does not appear on the U.S. paper chart 82015 (part of the Bellingham set). As per our radar it's located at 008°47.5000S / 158°19.0000E, which agrees reasonably well with cm93. It gives a good radar return.

HAZARD: There is something that looks like a Fish Accumulating Device (FAD), with a light on it, at (approximately) 08°50.1163S / 158°25.9940E. – Carina

10.2.1.2 Anchorages

Jan. 2017: 08°47S / 158°14E. – Field Trip

Sept. 2015: 08°47.342S / 158°14.208E. Peava is a recommended anchorage when entering the Western Province from Honiara. Inside the lagoon you will find good holding in 20m. Favour the north end slightly so as not to hinder and be disturbed by traffic that use the entrance. Good protection from prevailing weather SE and NW, however during the austral summer months, short but violent squalls from NE occur, so leave some room with this in mind. – Wade Fairly (Noonsite)

July 2015: 08°47.168S / 158°13.848E. 20m, sticky mud, good holding. Small lagoon with local village. – Adina

2010: 08°47.165S, 158°13.857E in 22m. The anchorage is in a small standalone lagoon off the small village of Peava. It is not evident on any chart, but is clear on Google Earth. Shelter is also so-so. At mid to high-tides the chop outside made it over the reef and set us rolling. – Bosun Bird

10.2.1.3 Cruiser Reports

Jan. 2017: We stayed 2 weeks here. This is a very nice place and we are looking forward to some village time. The crocs are in another area, so we are told there are no issues here. However, around the corner is a lake, and a young girl last year was eaten...so we stayed vigilant. – Field Trip

Sept. 2015: Peava is the village that faces the lagoon. Very friendly village with a long history of visiting boats, though these days there are only a few each year. They welcome trade, particularly for fruit and vegetables but they are not pushy and in general leave boats in peace.

They have high quality wood carvers. I met a Canadian boat who spent some weeks there and had the internal wood form (beams and pillars) on their boat hand crafted. – Wade Fairly (Noonsite)

May 2013: We did two excellent dives in Pavea (pa-A-va) which is about 7 miles outside noro. The reefs were teeming with fish, sharks and exotic fans and coral. Lisa, is an American ex-pat who owns the dive shop and we had a great time with her. – Mokisha

Aug. 2012: Peava was our first stop in the western province and our entrée into the world of abundant master wood carvers, all anxious to sell. We did eventually acquire one lovely carving at Peava—a large turtle carved with sea life on its shell, a scene called (generally) “the spirit of the Solomons,” which we traded for our old digital point-and-shoot camera, a file and a knife. – Carina

2010: The village is very tidy and friendly and there are many carvers here but they are not at all pushy.

Marovo Lagoon, this is a Seventh Day Adventist (SDA) community, whose holy day is Saturday; visitors are asked not to snorkel on that day.

Visibility inside the lagoon is so-so but there is good snorkeling on the encircling reef.

There is a tourist lodge, here, the Wilderness Lodge, but at the time of our visit they were not in the least welcoming to yachties. Signs on their jetty warned that it was STRICTLY for the use of hotel guests. However, yachts are welcome to land their tenders at the second jetty (just to the S), which is owned by Lisa, an expat American who runs a dive operation. Good drinking water from a tap at the head of Lisa's jetty. – Bosun Bird

10.3 Ulukoru Island

South side between Vangunu & Hotoanivena Island

10.3.1 Anchorage (Wickham Harbor)

Sieling Pg 120-121. Sail the Solomons Pg 151 (chartlet only, no verbiage). Wickham Anchorage is on the south side of Vangunu Island.

Nov. 2023: 08°44.65S / 158°04.14E. We came here to shelter from some nasty weather and it was a good spot. – Eastern Stream

Dec. 2018: 08°44.70S / 158°04.26E. Nice anchorage with sandy bottom. – Field Trip

April 2011: 08°44.70S / 158°04.09E. – Westward II

10.3.2 Cruiser Reports

Nov. 2023: There is a family living on the island. They were very friendly. – Eastern Stream

Dec. 2018: From here you can dive wrecks around the corner and stage here for Tetepare. No villages. All friendly. – Field Trip

10.4 Mbili Island

NE Side of Nggatokae Island

10.4.1 Anchorages

June 2019: 08°40.53S / 158°11.48E. One of our favorite anchorages in the Western Province. – Field Trip

May 2019: 08°39.78S / 158°11.13E in 20-25 ft mostly sand. Our anchorage had quite clear water and a sand bottom. But there are occasionally crocs in the area, so it is wise not to snorkel or swim on your own, and especially not at dawn and dusk or near the mangroves. At this point in time, the only crocs seen in our 5-6 days there were small ones, drifting by at sunset. – Soggy Paws

2010: Navigation in the lagoon, Solomon Islands Chart SI 07 is invaluable. C-Map is of some use, but latitudes require significant adjustment – for example our charted position at Seghe was 8°34.200S, but the GPS showed 8°34.583S. Most of the charted beacons (painted steel posts with top-marks) are in existence, but at least the following (numbered from Mbili counterclockwise, as per the chart) are missing: 1, 17, 18, 19. – Bosun Bird

10.4.2 Transportation

May 2019: If you have guests arriving, it is possible to have them come in by the once or twice a week ferry. The ferry we know about comes from Honiara I think leaving Sunday and stopping at Mbunikalo (a few miles south of Mbili passage) before going on to Gizo. The ferry returns on Tuesday evening, picking up passengers headed for Honiara, again from Mbunikalo. There may be other stops – Soggy Paws

10.4.3 Cruiser Reports

June 2019: This village is our favorite in the Western province, and our third visit. – Field Trip

May 2019: We stopped at Mbili for one or two nights but ended up staying for nearly a week,

Paul came out in his canoe from Sanihulumu and offered to arrange a carving showing at the clearing on his island. The only mistake we made was not allowing enough time for him to get word to everyone. (we gave him 2 hrs—a few more would have helped). At 2:30, our 3 boats converged ashore, and we eventually had about 5-6 carvers with some very nice stuff to show. Even though we had all already bought all the carvings we thought we needed/had space for/could afford, we each ended up buying a few more.

A trick to dealing with the carvers. They almost always start with a price that is almost double what they will settle for. So, make sure you negotiate, and when you can't quite close the gap (if you're inclined), offer to throw in a few trade goods. Most people willing to trade always want a little cash if you have it. – Soggy Paws

Nov. 2013: We had heard and read many things about the Mbili people and most were not so positive but the diving in the area is fantastic so we went there anyway but were a little cautious.

The anchorage was stunning and we quickly dropped the RIB in and went to visit Chief Lutun to pay respects and diving custom fees. He was 70, friendly, funny and great to chat to. But sadly, he is going deaf and blind.

The next day we headed to the uninhabited outer island called Karunjou for wall diving. This place is truly remote and good weather conditions are essential. The first dive was amazing with great viz and stacks to see. In the coral gardens at the end of the dive, Lisa managed to find a Black Leafy Scorpionfish which was our first for the Solomons.

Totolavae Island. This small island is on the reef edge and totally exposed to the prevailing SE winds. You can imagine our luck when we woke to find unseasonal light W winds which meant it was offshore at the island.

The dive was just fantastic and our 2nd best Solomon's dive after Lumilehe Pass. The viz was 50m+, the coral was stunning and the fish life both big and small was immense.

Whilst we were talking to Chief Lutun, we found out that there was a crashed WW2 US B-24 Liberator Bomber Aeroplane that was located in the bush not far from the village.

For our last dive we did Mbili Point. This dive has a great sloping wall with and lot of coral species in both hard and soft. We ended up doing a 106-minute dive as most of the time we were in less than 15m. – Lorelei

10.5 Sanihulumu Island

East side of Vangunu Island, long skinny island by the reef.

10.5.1 Pass

July 2015: 08°40.2894S / 158°11.4809E. Ensure you have good satellite images to navigate your way in here as it shallows at the entrance and can have strong cross currents. – Adina

10.5.2 Anchorages

2019: 08°39.73S / 158°11.28E. – Tropical Soul

2018: 08°39.723S / 158°11.259E. Good anchorage. No anchor fees. – sv Pelican

Feb. 2017: 08°39.7S / 158°11.3E. – Field trip

July 2015: 08°39.824S / 158°11.200E. 8m sand and coral. Well sheltered.

2nd Anchorages **08°39.723S / 158°11.259E.** Depth 8-10m – Adina

July 2012: 08°39.828S, 158°11.209E. We anchored north of the little island on the north of the pass, west of Sanihulumu Island and SW of the two small sea stack islands in 30' or so in mixed sand and coral. – Carina

2010: 08°39.84S / 158°11.21E, in 10m sand, in the well-protected spot. – Bosun Bird

10.5.3 Cruiser Reports

2019: Plenty of carvers here. A couple of nice local villages. Several guys visited. Lisa at the Dive Resort there seems to have a few problems with the locals. She moved her operation 2x within the lagoon. – Tropical Soul

2018: The dive resort owners are really nice and friendly. Yachts are welcome. – sv Pelican

2017: We anchored just inside the southern tip of Sanihulumu Island. It has been recommended that yachts ask the visiting carvers in canoes to view the carvings in one go either at the village community hut or on the beach. This can be organized by Paul John of Sanihulumu or by going to see Lisa at Solomon Dive Adventures (SDA) off the small island of Turupu next to the anchorage.

Chief Lutén and family live on the northern peninsula of Gatokae and they will also show you carvings there. The reason for asking for a showing ashore is so that all the villagers get a fair chance at selling their work, as some of the canoes can be rather insistent and all seem to come from the same family therefore monopolizing. If you are not firm you will get "canoed" all day every day.

There are several good dive sites in the area for which there is a Custom fee of SI \$25 pp per dive if you have your own gear, or you can dive with SDA and it is included.

Lisa at the Dive Resort was very welcoming, and helpful in explaining that the fee is meant to go into the community fund. Ownership is not always straightforward, so I recommend having a chat with her to ascertain who owns which dive site and we gave the fee to her directly as she puts it into an account for the village (rather than it ending up in one person's pocket).

Be careful that you do not get asked for the fee by different people. We tried very hard to please everybody but it seems that there are some politics and greed that marred our time there. Any concerns, talk to Lisa!

Equally, I do not want to put anyone off going there because it was a lovely spot and the diving awesome. Mbilikiki liveaboard dive boat visited the same time we were there so the carvers all gathered together for their guests to view their art. Even if you are just looking, some of the carvings were spectacular and in a group setting, there is no pressure to buy like with individual canoes coming to your boat. – Noonsite

Feb. 2017: It was a busy afternoon after anchoring as we received a number of canoes with carvings to sell/trade. We requested that we do a show on the beach.

As seems to be typical for this area the carvings were very good. Similar in quality to carvings we saw in Peava, and in some particular cases even better. The hardest part is picking which ones to trade/buy as there are so many carvings and carvers that you want to buy something from everyone, and given there are no ATM machines here, it is rather difficult when cash is low. Generally, they will trade for stuff without cash if you don't have cash, but their going in position is we are 'white guys' with 'money'...so this can be an obstacle. Regardless very nice people that are very skilled at carvings. – Field Trip

July 2015: This is the place for carvings! Tell the chief you want a display arranged on the beach at a fixed time (and no canoes at the boat). Many carvers will turn up - some wonderful carvings at very good prices. You can trade or pay cash. Haggle a little but not too much. Chief Paul is a bit surly and demanding. Ask for Elvin and his brother who have set up an Eco Lodge close to the anchorage - nice people. – Adina

July 2012: This is a special place and the birdlife and sea life is amazing. There is a bina bird here (Blyth's Hornbill), an enormous black bird with a white head and a long yellow scimitar-shaped beak; the animal is so big that, when it flies by, its wings make a distinctive and loud whooshing sound. There were lots of parrots, raptors, herons and cranes flying about, plus baby blacktip sharks in the shallow water and a school of silly-looking squid resident under the boat.

Competition to sell carvings is fierce and though carvers sit together and companionably work on their art, when it comes to selling, they'll only speak to you in whispers if other carvers are around and jealously guard any sign of interest in their carving.

We asked that they meet on shore and had 8-10 men show their wares. We photographed and talked with each individual for two hours total and eventually settled on who would come to the boat for negotiations. No one was pushy, everyone was friendly, knowledgeable and fun to talk with. The prices are actually not that bad considering the quality and most want to have a combination of money (so they can tithe) and trading.

There is an American airplane wreck from WWII immediately ashore in the bay to the south of the pass. Inside one of its wings read "766 B24-D". Luten Watts, a cousin of Alex, has a small eco-lodge on the bay, and he'll offer to take you down to it for a fee.

Once a week a boat called the Kostco comes through and picks up a cooler (eskie) of fish to bring to market in Honiara. The fishermen offered to dive for lobsters for us the evening before, as they were already fishing for the expected arrival of the supply boat. – Carina

2010: Although the main village, Mbili, is a little distance away, visits are to be expected. There is a small one-family settlement on the S tip of Sanihulumu island, just east of the anchorage. Here, John is the boss. He seems to be on uneasy terms with his brother and neighbor Alexander. John's son Paul (who is very helpful) also lives here. All are accomplished carvers. John maintains a logbook for visiting yachts. One way of dealing with the many carvers is to ask them to organize a show on shore and let them choose the location. The community is nominally SDA but no-one has any qualms in fishing for crayfish (lobster) for you. – Bosun Bird

10.6 Marovo Island

10.6.1 Anchorage:

July 2024: 08°30.254S / 157°49.022E The Anchorage Marovo, no hassles and good anchorage. – Peter Gaebler

10.6.2 Cruiser Report

July 2024: Morgan +677.77.74762 (WhatsApp) offers safety, vegetables, meal services, and can arrange fishing and other trips. His bay offers peace and quiet. – Peter Gaebler

10.7 Vangunu Island

10.7.1 Passes

The normal approach to these sheltered cruising areas is, from Gizo/Munda/Noro via the Hele Bar, in the SW corner of Vangunu, or from Honiara or the Florida Group, via Mbili Passage on the SE corner of Vangunu.

Markers exist, though they are few and some are missing.

Nov. 2013: We were only 6nm SE of **Lumilehe Pass**, the diving however was very different. Both looked much the same as far as topography and layout but not underwater. Lumilehe had 40m viz, big walls and a huge amount of big fish and schooling fish action.

Kokoana Pass had sloping reef walls inter-spaced with sand ledges. The soft corals on the reef and macro life was amazing but it lacked the viz, big fish and shark action of Lumilehe and Uepi. – Lorelei

10.8 Runja Island

Southwest side of Vangunu

10.8.1 Anchorages

May 2024: 08°40.43S / 157°48.63E. You need calm weather to anchor here. – Eastern Stream

10.8.2 Cruiser Reports

Nov. 2023: You have an uninhabited island for a bbq and from here you can dive the vertical wreck. Find your spot and float your chain as there are many coral heads in the bay.

You can find the vertical wreck in about 08°42.08S / 157°48.94E. This Tuna boat went on the reef and sank vertically. The bow is just below the waterline. – Eastern Stream

10.9 Matikuri Island (Nono Lagoon)

Mid-west side of Vangunu

This is often the first or last anchorage for people arriving or departing the lagoon area via Hele Bar.

10.9.1 Ruja Island

10.9.1.1 Pass: Hele Bar

Sieling Pg 144

July 2012: From Kalivera we made for Matikuri in the Nono Lagoon. The narrow passage near Seghe was a wind tunnel, but there were no serious issues with current as we pushed our way through. Once south of Seghe, ocean swell can be felt in the channel, but we tucked into the islands (using Google Earth chartlets) and anchored at Matikuri.

We followed cm93 chart's deep water out to Hele bar and crossed a couple of coral patches to about 25', but otherwise nothing unusual.

We crossed the Hele Bar early in the morning with a light north wind (~ 5 knots) at the waypoint given in Sieling - **08°43.240S / 157°49.610E**. From this waypoint we took the shortest route across the shallows and saw 16' at the lowest. We had unusual NW winds in the Blanche Channel as some sort of front passed bringing rain and squalls. – Carina

2010: We crossed the Hele Bar where recommended by Sieling and never had less than 5m under the keel; good visibility. The yellow buoy reported by Sieling has gone. There was some current-induced turbulence on

the bar, but the position of several islands to the S means that, in S or SE conditions, you actually pass into calmer water when proceeding to the SW. – Bosun Bird

10.9.1.2 Anchorages

April 2019: 08°39.73S / 157°52.03E in 55'. Slightly south of us, it was 45 ft, with, I think, enough swinging room. You could fit about 3 friendly boats in this lagoon. – Soggy Paws

July 2012: 08°39.687S / 157°52.070E. In 50' clay/mud/coral bottom. The anchorage was really calm. We could hear the surf on the outside and the winds 25+kn, whistled over the island, but we were snug. – Carina

2010: 08°39.723S / 157°52.01.1E in 18m, coral (we had some trouble getting the anchor up). – Bosun Bird

10.9.1.3 Cruiser Reports

April 2019: Apparently, the longtime owner of the lodge, Benjamin, passed away in 2017, and his daughter and part of his family is running the lodge now. Joshua is the primary contact, and they are still friendly and welcoming to yachties.

We dinghied in at 4:30 pm and asked if we could come in to dinner that night (4 of us) and they had no problem accommodating us. There is a large communal guest lounge and outdoor dining area which sits over the water and looks out to the lagoon. (a little in need of repair, but still a nice spot). Dinner was served at 7:30pm, and it was plentiful and good, at \$100 SD per person.

Unfortunately, anchored within view just north of the lodge is a big cargo ship, loading logs (kinda spoils the view!). They don't do the river trip to the nearby river because logging has ruined that area.

If you don't feel like wandering around the lagoon in your own boat, they can organize trips to the various attractions in the lagoon, for \$150 SD plus fuel costs (from 15L to 35L, depending on how far the distance is). Current price for fuel in the out islands is about \$15 SD per liter. – Soggy Paws

2010: We were given a very friendly reception by Benjamin at his low-key Eco-lodge on Matikuri Island. Good snorkelling on the W and N sides of the island, also on the N tip of neighbouring Kembe Kembe island (owned by Benjamin's brother) but Benjamin warned that crocs are occasionally seen at the yacht anchorage. Benjamin cooked us a fine, relatively cheap crayfish dinner. – Bosun Bird

10.9.2 Telina Village

NE Side Across from Matiu Island

Sieling 132-133

10.9.2.1 Anchorages

2019: 08°31.40S / 158°04.22E. – Tropical Soul

10.9.2.2 Cruiser Reports

2019: John Wayne and Rocky are carvers here. We have been told that they are the two best carvers in Morovo. John was very helpful. We traded with him. Has good history and good stories. – Tropical Soul

10.9.3 Mbatuna

NE side of Vangunu near Malavarai. Popular for Thursday Markets

10.9.3.1 Anchorages

2019: 08°33.46S / 158°07.42E in 3-4m. – Tropical Soul

July 2012: 08°33.452S / 158°07.439E. The abandonment of the old wharf made the anchorage very quiet and safe and we had no worries of big boat traffic arriving at night. – Carina

2010: 08°33.431S / 158°07.475E, sand/coral, 15m. North of village, good visibility and protection. – Bosun Bird

10.9.3.2 Provisions

2019: There is a good market here every Thursday morning at 7am. If you don't get there at 7am, it will be over! If you are looking for provisions, the Chinese store, about .8 nm south from Mbatuna Village, on the entrance to the passage behind the long island. – Tropical Soul

July 2012: There is a small store on shore with okay prices; 1 kg bags of rice for \$13 SBD (as opposed to \$11 or \$11.50 in Honiara). It offers the usual limited, but varied, array of goods—from food to flip-flops to fishing equipment and flashlights. A big Chinese shop sits about a mile south with big brown roof—locals pointed it out to us—but we didn't visit as we really only needed to restock on what we'd traded: sugar, rice and tinned meat. The landing craft LC Phoenix stops here, disgorging passengers and goods. – Carina

2010: There is a well-stocked shop and a good weekly market on Thursdays. It starts promptly, but check the time. We had thought 10:00 a.m. But in fact, it was 09:30, and by the time we got there, there wasn't much left. Veggies may also be available at the SDA Vocational College up the hill. Fresh water from a tap on the stone jetty. – Bosun Bird

10.9.3.3 Cruiser Reports

Carina – July 2012: From our anchorage, we found the wharf and shipwreck, though the wharf was mostly disintegrated and there was a new one built on the opposite side of the land.

It was a surprisingly pleasant stop; a neat little town with a big vocational school and administrative offices of the SDA. There is a new hospital under construction. A baby cruise ship drifted by and canoes and boats went racing up to it for trading.

There were some carvers who visited, but fewer than at Mbili. We met Peter, who runs an eco-lodge at Matikuri Island nearby; he has a yacht book signed by many boats we know. – Carina

10.9.4 Kalivera Bay

NE Top of Vangunu Island

10.9.4.1 Pass

July 2012: It was a bit of a puzzle getting in, but the lowest water we saw was 16' and our Google Earth photos were very helpful. – Carina

2010: The approach requires some care, but the port hand marker reported as missing by Sieling (#12) has been restored. Position yourself to the S of Sasaghana, as if to enter the channel behind Marovo Island, before cutting across to Kalivera Bay. – Bosun Bird

10.9.4.2 Anchorages

July 2015: 08°30.957S / 157°58.506E. 7m sand. It takes a lot of reef dodging to get here so ensure you have good light, even the satellite images aren't great but are still better than nothing. – Adina

July 2012: 08°30.88S / 157°58.45E mud/coral in 38'. Well protected by reefs and shallows. – Carina

2010: 8°30.955S / 157°58.520E, 8m. Anchor to the W of the 3 wooden houses on Kalivera Point. – Bosun Bird

10.9.4.3 Cruiser Reports

July 2015: This is the only place in the Solomons we didn't feel totally safe simply because we had a pushy raskal visit us from a nearby village on Marovo Island. Trading, lots of friendly kids.

July 2012: We met a man named Dennis, who lives on the western shore. He's a fisherman and, of course, a carver, but has also recently begun working for Save the Children. He assured us of the security in the anchorage, as he said that he and the other villagers have taken steps to punish any thieves. It was a very nice

and very well-protected spot and we stayed an extra day enjoying it. Later we heard from another yacht that crocs had been spotted on shore. – Carina

10.10 Toatelave Island (Sanhulumu Island)

Just below Njapuchanjomo Island on the NE side of Vangunu

10.10.1 Anchorages

2019: 08°35.26S / 158°09.72E. This was a very lovely spot. You need satellite charts to get in here. We saw a croc here! – Tropical Soul

10.11 Njapuchangomo Island

NE Side of Vangunu Island

10.11.1 Anchorage

Nov. 2023: 08°34.86S / 158°09.45E in 4-5m. Beautiful anchorage. – Eastern Stream

10.11.2 Cruiser Reports

Nov. 2023: Beautiful and picturesque spot to anchor away from villages and people. There should be crocodiles in this area, but the locals went spearfishing here in the night. Snorkeling on the outside was not so good. Wall diving on the outside of the pass and islands. – Eastern Stream

Nov. 2013: With the amazing conditions we found a terrific anchorage in 4m over white sand on the inside of Njapuchanjomo Island.

The timing was perfect with the glassy conditions as it enabled us to get out to the outer island of Njapuana and do a few dives in our dinghy. This spot is remote and is only dived when the Honiara based dive liveaboard “Bilikiki” visits which is about 12 times a year.

The highlights were the coral fringed small rock islands that are so prominent in this area. – Lorelei

10.12 Savae Island

NE Side between Vangunu and before Njapuchanjomo

10.12.1 Anchorages

2019: 08°35.14S / 158°08.27E. Savae Island is a small island owned by Peter. He is trying to make this into a yachtie stop. His son Nelson was very helpful. – Tropical Soul

10.13 Matiu Island / Sarumara

NE Corner of the lagoon above Porepore Island

10.13.1 Pass:

July 2015: The entrance to the lagoon is at 08°29.5593S / 158°08.0878E and then steer to 08°29.4950S / 158°08.1612E. You need good light and MUST have a look out, it will get shallow. – Adina

2010: The approach is sketchily charted and requires some care. Approaching from the SSW (Mbatuna) steer to 08°29.510S / 158°08.150E to locate a 5m pass between reefs before turning to the SE and the anchorage proper at 08°29.746S / 158°08.9 51E, 5m sand. – Bosun Bird

10.13.2 Anchorages

There are two anchorages listed here, one in the North and one in the South.

2017: North End. **08°28.19S / 158°07.29E**. This is a great anchorage. We could have spent weeks here.

South End: **08°29.80S / 158°09.02E**. You need good light to enter this area and come across the reef. It was not hard, and there was plenty of water, but lighting is key. – Field Trip

Oct. 2017: South End: **08°29.803S / 158°08.969E** and stayed 3 days. – Screensaver

July 2015: South End: **08°29.734S / 158°08.96E**. 6m Sand, good holding. – Adina

April 2011: South End. **08°29.65S / 158°08.67E**. – Westward II

2010: South End. **08°29.746S / 158°08.9 51E**, 5m sand. Very quiet. – Bosun Bird

10.13.3 Cruiser Reports

2017: It's certainly one of our favorite places to just relax. The diving and snorkeling are great around the corner on the outer reef. It is very nice. – Screensaver

South End: This is really nice, there are no villages here, and we just hung out between here and the northern anchorage to relax from all the busy villages. The diving is good around the corner on the N side. – Field Trip

Oct. 2012: Sarumara Anchorage, Matiu Island. We stayed for three nights at Sarumara. After receiving visitors, the first afternoon and the following morning we saw no one. The snorkeling here was terrific so we drifted the nearby Kokoana Passage several times. – Shango

2010: SE End (Sarumara): Very peaceful bay. Lovely beach. Good snorkelling on outer reef. Well sheltered. It looks possible to careen here if you had to. No people living there - fishermen visit the reef. – Sweet Dreams

2010: For solitude and beautiful surroundings, Sarumara Anchorage, at the S end of Matiu island, is great. Very quiet; we had only 1 canoe (selling fish) in 4-days. Good snorkelling in nearby Kokoana Passage. – Bosun Bird

10.14 Lumalihe Island (Karikana)

NE Side above Vangunu & Matiu Island. Sieling Pg 134-135

10.14.1 Anchorages

Nov. 2023: **08°27.99S / 158°03.59E**. Beautiful anchorage. – Eastern Stream

Sept. 2017: **08°27.72S / 158°03.34E**. 5m, sand. It definitely was a nice spot and with some care you can push in over the reef and get in quite close. – Screensaver

10.14.2 Cruiser Reports

Nov. 2023: Great options for snorkeling and wall diving on the outside of the pass/islands. –Eastern Stream

Sept. 2017: Some 3g. We met a French couple in Liapari who said Karikana was good spot & it is. – Screensaver

10.15 Uepi / Uepi Dive Resort

NE Side top of Vangunu and across from New Georgia. Sieling Pg 138-139

10.15.1 Anchorages

Mar. 2019: **08°24.55S / 157°57.31E**. – Field Trip

2019: **08°25.94S / 157°57.28E**. We anchored in the bay on the opposite side of the passage to the resort. It is a nice spot, but open to some wind if the wind is south or west. – Tropical Soul

Sept. 2017: **08°25.85S / 157°56.72E**. 5m, Sand,3G. Marovo Lagoon is a good test of ones' ability to navigate through a maze without carving your own dedicated track. Being the eighth wonder of the world is a bit of an incentive to give it a go. – Screensaver

10.15.2 Cruiser Reports

Oct. 2012: Diving: We dropped the hook outside the mooring ball mentioned by Grant, the owner of Uepi Dive Resort, who we had been in touch with over the previous month. In the afternoon we went in and made arrangements for diving the following day and Grant said we could join them for dinner.

Over the next 3-days we had five terrific dives. We dove Uepi and Charapoana Points, both of which were pass dives. We were accompanied on the first dive by David and Dinah who live in Honiara while she works with RAMSI (the coalition of Southwestern Pacific nations stationed in the Solomon Islands after the tensions.) There were tons of fish, numerous sharks, garden eels, nudibranchs and lots of amazing barrel sponges. Closer to the Resort's dock were the largest giant clams I have ever seen, in a wonderful array of colors.

Elbow Ave Dive. Within five minutes of dropping in we saw three pygmy mantas and a scalloped hammerhead, simultaneously. Our second dive was North Log and the structure there was great. On both dives I managed to find several nudibranchs without having to have them pointed out. – Shango

10.16 Mindeminda and Mbuinitusu Islands

SE Side of New Georgia

10.16.1 Mbuinitusu Island

10.16.1.1 Pass:

2010: The approach to the New Georgia Island anchorage just west of Mbuinitusu island is around the south end of the Mindeminda Islands. Two of the beacons in this vicinity (see above) are missing. – Bosun Bird

10.16.1.2 Anchorages

2010: 8°29.259S / 157°53.896E in 9m. We anchored in the uninhabited mangrove-lined bay 1 mile to the NW of the island, on the "mainland" of New Georgia. – Bosun Bird

10.16.1.3 Yachtsmen Services

10.16.1.3.1 Water

2010: Good quality fresh water runs abundantly from a pipe 50m inshore from W side of the bay. – Bosun Bird

10.16.1.4 Cruiser Reports

2010: Mbuinitusu is densely populated and the houses on its southern shoreline are visible from several miles away. At the time of our visit, the water main pipe to Mbuinitusu had fractured so many villagers were coming to this bay for water – it was not as quiet as we had hoped and there were some moderately annoying children. We saw a crocodile here. – Bosun Bird

10.16.2 Wilson Harbor (N Coast)

2017: This was a very peaceful anchorage and good staging spot before heading NE. The logging company is long gone. There is a village to the SW of here that has a chief. There is NO anchoring fee according to the chief, but there are some chaps that may paddle over and ask for a fee.

The fresh produce here was excellent. Better than the market in Noro so this is a good stop for getting fresh veggies. – Field Trip

10.16.3 Leva (Lever) Harbor

NE Coast. Sieling Pg 155

10.16.3.1 Cruiser Report

Nov. 2013: After a full day's 60nm run from Mbili, we arrived at dusk for our overnight stop at Leva Harbour. It's a remote area and is a logging camp so it's rarely visited by passing yachts. – Lorelei

10.17 New Georgia Island (Port of Entry)

10.17.1 Seghe

Southern tip of New Georgia. Sieling Pg. Provisions, airport, and cell service

10.17.1.1 Pass

2010: 6-miles south, on the W shore of Njae Passage, is Seghe. Currents run at up to 2kts. – Bosun Bird

10.17.1.2 Anchorages

Nov. 2023: 08°34.23S / 157°52.70E. – Eastern Stream

2019: 08°34.35S / 157°52.60E. Village. – Tropical Soul

April 2019: We drove over Screensaver's anchorage and could not figure out why he anchored there (it looked corally, and lots of banana boat traffic), but after anchoring around the corner off the pier (north of the end of the runway), and trying to find gasoline and Top Up, we understand why Screensaver anchored where he did.

From the wharf anchorage, the wharf itself is too high to be a decent dinghy dock. But there is a pebble beach next to the pier that would suffice, if there isn't too much easterly wind (otherwise it would be a lee shore).

We used a private dock a little further south, asking permission to leave our dinghy. – Soggy Paws

Sept. 2017: 08°34.91S / 157°52.59E. 17m, Sand/Coral. – Screensaver

2010: 08°34.579S / 157°52.792E, 7m sand and coral. We anchored 150m north of the village wharf (which in turn is close to the airport runway's east end). In a strong northerly this could be a little exposed, in which case it would be better to cross the channel to the twin village of Patutiva. – Bosun Bird

10.17.1.3 Yachtsmen Services

10.17.1.3.1 Fuel (Diesel & Gasoline)

April 2019: On the south side of the island we found a bar (closed in the middle of the day) that would sell petrol. – Soggy Paws

10.17.1.4 General Services

10.17.1.4.1 Medical

April 2019: There is a hospital/clinic about 5-minute walk north on the road. There is also a pharmacy across from the clinic (which may be able to do Top Up)– Soggy Paws

10.17.1.4.2 Post Office

April 2019: The post office is located inside the SDA Store, a 5-minute walk north on the road past the hospital/clinic. – Soggy Paws

10.17.1.5 Provisions

April 2019: The market was not operating inshore from the wharf (unless you wanted beetlenut), and the store there was very thinly stocked.

About 5-minute walk north on the road (past the hospital/clinic) is a small SDA store that had a limited supply of provisions and ladies selling vegetables outside.

But we found the best store(s) around the south side of the island. We found a bar (closed in the middle of the day), and two stores, a small market with more veggies than the others, petrol, and top-up. – Soggy Paws

10.17.1.6 Transportation

2010: The airport has flights to Gizo and Honiara. The Pelican Express passenger ferry calls here. – Bosun Bird

10.17.1.7 Cruiser Reports

May 2024: Nice small village with a few little shops and a small market. – Eastern Stream

Sept. 2017: Basically, a stopover for any supplies, but one must not have high expectation, and be prepared for out-island prices. – Screensaver

2010: There's a small hospital and cell service. The village, which is United Church (Methodist) is of modern construction. Diver a plane wreck (P38 fighter) off the end of the runway. – Bosun Bird

10.17.2 Mbareho (Bareho) (Nono Lagoon)

South side of New Georgia

Sieling Pg 142, approximate **08°34.315S / 157°49.052E**

10.17.2.1 Yachtsmen Service

10.17.2.1.1 Trash and Recycling

May 2024: Trash disposal is available in New Georgia. – Sugar Shack

10.17.2.2 Cruiser Reports

Oct. 2012: The trip south through Morovo Lagoon, past Seghe and into the Nono Lagoon was fairly straightforward. We watched the depth sounder and hoped for the best. The light was good and we had no problems. Our destination, Mbareho was the home of a woodblock print maker named Aldio Pito who we hoped to meet. We anchored in a very protected spot tucked between several islands. – Shango

10.17.3 Noro (Port of Entry)

10.17.3.1 Pass

May 2024: The entrance to Noro is marked with green and red markers. It is very shallow and best to cross just right in the middle (towards the green marker). – Hilde Larsen, Sailing Solomons Facebook

Sept. 2017: The entrance to this lagoon anchorage is a little tricky and shallow for 7ft draft, but you can pick your way through. – Screensaver

10.17.3.2 Anchorages

May 2024: **08°14.42S / 157°11.75E.** We anchored here most of the time for the day and one time we stayed the night. It's ok to stay the night, but many fiberglass boats pass by all the time on their way to or from Noro. – Eastern Steam

May 2024: There is a noisy club that plays loud music which can be heard throughout the anchorage. – Amiga

Sept. 2017: We ended up with 3 yachts in there which is a little tight but it worked. – Screensaver

2017: **08°14.11S / 157°11.734E.** – Field Trip

2016: A good anchorage can be found in front of Agnes Gateway Hotel in 8-10 meters, sandy mud, good holding. The hotel management welcomes yachts, has a restaurant and bar, and 24 hr security. I have stayed several months and never had problems with things going missing on my boat. No reports of theft from other yachts either. – Yawana (Noonsite)

2012: 08°19.893S / 157°16.221E. This is near Ilangana Point / Lambete. We anchored in front of the Agnes Lodge in 25' of fine talc sand. Be careful when you anchor to stay east of the concrete dock where landing craft call. Land your dink inside the tiny breakwater at the Agnes Lodge. We heard there would be a dinghy dock fee, but no one asked, so we bought drinks in the bar to earn our keep. – Carina

10.17.3.3 Yachtsmen Services

10.17.3.3.1 Cooking Gas (Propane & Butane)

May 2024: Noro offers cooking gas refills. Geogas Solomons Lid (formerly Geogas Pacific) +677 21833, sales@ggaspacific.com.sb, geogaspacific.com. Hours: Mon-Fri: 0800-1630, Sat. 0800-1200. From the market, turn left, cross a road and you will see it on the right, at the end of a big fence. – Sugar Shack

April 2019: Ashore from the dock, there is a Chinese Grocery store with propane exchange. – Soggy Paws

10.17.3.3.2 Fuel (Diesel & Gasoline)

Aug. 2024: Things have changed since Taenga's post in January. Contact Ricardo at +677.74.34119 to arrange an appointment (Tel & WhatsApp, he responds fast). He will check the schedule with Port Authority to see when the dock is available (commercial vessels always go first).

On arrival call Port Authority on VHF 16 to ask permission to go to the dock.

You will have to wait if a commercial ship is fueling, even if you have an appointment at that scheduled time. Just keep checking with Ricardo.

The minimum amount is 200L. This will be duty / tax free. The cost in Aug. 2024 was 8.63 Solomon Dollars per liter. – Eastern Stream

Jan. 2024: We purchased duty free diesel at Noro alongside the fuel dock. While the process requires a bit of advance planning, it is certainly easier than jerry canning if you are taking on 200+ liters.

The price is around 9.1SBD per liter. Here is the process:

1. Call Mary at the fuel company in Honiara at 20015. Inform her that you are a foreign flagged yacht wishing to get duty free fuel at Noro. The minimum is 200 liters, so we told them we wanted 250 liters
2. Call Aljohn, the helpful fuel company rep in Noro at 7402427 and arrange a time for the actual filing. There is only one dock, so call in advance as there may be a cargo/fishing vessel and they have priority.

Do a drive by to the dock as it is not super simple since it is designed for large ships. Don't come during lunch hour as you will need help getting tied up.

Go to the far northern end of the dock as that is where the fuel hose is located.

They only take cash but Aljohn was nice enough to drive me in his (air con) car to the BSP bank in town. He even gave me a bit of a tour and offered to drive me around to go shopping, but I politely declined.

We confirmed with Martha at Noro customs that duty free fuel is available ANYTIME to foreign yachts, similar to French Polynesia. It is not like NZ or New Caledonia where you can only get it upon departure.

Finally, since we have a picky common rail engine, we filter every drop that goes into our tanks. Aljohn informed us that the fuel is lab tested for impurities and water content. After looking at my prefilter after filing, I believe him. – Taenga

May 2024: There is tax free diesel available for foreign boats at the main dock. You have to book in advance and there is a minimum buy of 200 liters. We called Mary (20015) at the fuel company in Honiara to ask permission and then a call to Aljohn in Noro to book a spot (7402427).

Be aware that commercial ships always go first - even if you have an appointment - and that there is only one place at the dock. So, keep in good contact with Aljohn about changes in planning. The fuel hose is located at the north side of the dock. – Eastern Stream

April 2019: Diesel Fuel: The going rate for diesel in this area is \$10 SD per liter, but if you go to Markworths on the shipping pier at Noro, and you purchase over 200 liters, you can get it for \$6.72 SD per liter!! You can either go by dinghy (go around to the north end of the pier for access by dinghy) and bring jugs, or you can bring your boat alongside.

Though they are set up for re-fueling the big fishing boats, they do have a smaller nozzle for yachts. It's a little tricky to use at first, but once you get the hang of it, it is no problem.

The only glitch in the whole process was that we carefully measured what we took on (most of what we took on went into jerry jugs of known quantities). When we finished fueling (some in the tank and some in jugs) we were presented with a bill for 396 liters, when we were quite sure that we didn't take on more than 365 liters. We complained to the guy who presented us with the bill, but he said there was nothing he could do. So, the effective price for what we actually got was more like \$7.30 SD. This is still a big discount from the going small-quantity rate of \$10 SD if you went anywhere else.

It took a little work getting in to the fuel dock. They will not let you fuel (even by dinghy) if a big fishing boat is alongside unloading, or a freighter. We got the contact number for Alf, the supervisor for the fuel dock, and hung out down at Lola Island waiting for an auspicious time to fuel. We called him several times to find out when we could come in to fuel. It took 4-5 days before he said we could manage it. Alf's office number is 61235 and his cell number is 740-5607.

April 2019: Gasoline & Dinghy Dock: We bought 20 liters of gasoline from the northernmost small dock in the Noro anchoring area. The building is a wooden pinkish color. They have a decent little dock.

When we bought the gas, we schmoozed with the guys selling the fuel, and asked them if we could bring our dinghy in to their dock. We tied our dinghy out of the way (don't block their dock) and they kept an eye on it for us. The local banana boats come and go all along the shoreline there, and there are a number of small docks selling fuel that the friendly people might let you use, if you buy gas from them and ask nicely.

Sometimes the small gas docks are out of "pure gas" and only have pre-mix. Make sure you specify what you want. Our little fuel dock ran out while we were there, but they just pointed us to another fuel dock to go buy it from. Gasoline is also around \$10 SD per liter. – Soggy Paws

10.17.3.3.3 Water

Sept. 2017: You can get water on the main wharf at Noro, no charge for coming alongside. – Screensaver

10.17.3.4 Marina

Port Noro Marina Located at **08°15.097S / 157°11.784E**, WhatsApp +677.749.5415 and +677.746.1270, www.noromarina.com will soon offer service and support for yachts.

Starting July 2024, (8) swing moorings will be available. Please book in advance. Later berths with water supply, shore power, and 24/7 security will be available.

On shore, they will soon offer BBW place, yacht club, laundry service, and bathrooms.

10.17.3.5 General Services

10.17.3.5.1 Banks & ATMs

May 2024: BSP and ANZ both have locations in Noro. – Sugar Shack

April 2019: Walking ashore from their dock, right there is the BSP ATM. – Soggy Paws

10.17.3.5.2 Formalities

2024: Noro where the process is organized pretty well. Customs, Immigration, health, and bio security need to be picked up from the market jetty. They'll need prior notice with estimated time of arrival.

Customs: +677.61097. MAusolo@customs.gov.sb – alert Martha of your arrival (or spiziki@customs.gov.sb) .
Hours: Mon-Fri: 0800-1200 & 1300-1630. No fees

Immigration: Obed.Rooney@commerce.gov.sb . Immigration is located in the yellow building, first floor, opposite the market. Entrance is on the left-hand side of the building. Or Billy Guporo +677 761 4578, biliguporo@gmail.com Fees SBD \$500 to clear in and SBD \$500 to clear out (larger yachts pay SBD \$600 for each formality)

Customs is a bit of a walk up the hill, past the big red Telkomsel building, left down the next road and keep walking through the houses and then it will be on your right. – Hilde Larsen Sailng Solomon’s Facebook page

April 2019: Immigration is upstairs on the left end of the 2-story building behind the market. To find Customs, walk from there to the Telkomsel office, keep going past Telkomsel building (prominent red building on the hill behind the harbor), and turn left at the dirt road just beyond. The Customs building is 100 meters on the right (a green building). Quarantine is just behind Customs.

The officers seem to cover 3 locations with 2 officers (Gizo, Noro, Munda) and so are not always in the office. Some phone numbers for Noro officials are included in the [Customs and Immigration](#) section, in case you have to chase them down. The Noro Immigration guy will come to Gizo, but it costs \$550 SD for fuel (as of 7/2019). He said they are trying to get a full time Immigration officer for Gizo, but hasn’t happened yet. – Soggy Paws

2016: Noro is now the preferred port of entry in the Western Province, as Gizo has been experiencing reports of theft, and the Immigration officer is extremely uncooperative and is rarely available. Munda is close to Noro and is situated in the picturesque Roviana Lagoon. – Yawana (Noonsite)

10.17.3.5.3 Boat Repair & Parts

April 2019: Outboard Motor Repair: Jenky Wong +677 791-7888 or 716-7191. We did not use him, but he stopped by when Dave was fiddling with the outboard and said he could repair it. Good English, and seemed knowledgeable. – Soggy Paws

10.17.3.5.4 Hardware Shop

May 2024: Noro has a hardware shop – Eastern Stream

10.17.3.5.5 Internet & Cell Phone Coverage

April 2019: Noro has decent usable internet via My Telkomsel. The Telekom office is a prominent red building on the hill behind the harbor. It’s a short walk there from any of the waterfront locations where small boats come in. – Soggy Paws

10.17.3.5.6 Transportation

April 2019: There are taxis hanging out everywhere—they have “taxi” signs on top. The only place we went by taxi was to Muzi Boko). The cost is \$20 SD each way. – Soggy Paws

10.17.3.6 Provisions

May 2024: Noro is the Port of the Western Province. They have a big tuna cannery on shore and some more shops than Munda, like for instance the blue container shop (some more western products and wine). There are lots of Chinese shops, fresh market (especially Friday). – Eastern Stream

May 2024: There is a bakery near the bank. The Blue Container store is called Muzi Boko and they have Aussie food (bacon, meat, cheese, flour, chips, etc...). There is another container that sells liquor and one that sells hardware. – Sugar Shack

April 2019: When we finally visited Mozi Boku, we found quite a few items that we were delighted to find. Canned goods and jars of things like real mustard, peanut butter, etc. Walking ashore from their dock, right

there is a Chinese Grocery store (and one across the street that sells beer), a bakery, and a propane exchange. The fresh market and Immigration are a short walk south from this location.

Noro is a short hop from Lola Island, and we did a day trip provisioning run, loading a couple of other cruisers aboard for the day. Another time we spent a couple of nights. – Soggy Paws

Sept. 2017: There is a great supermarket here called Mozi Boko (spelt phonetically). It's about 2k away NE. We walked there and the intention was to get a cab back but in the end the cabs were full, so much to our dissatisfaction we walked back like pack horses. Mozi Boko is full of imported products and by far the best I've seen since leaving Philippines. They have freezers and fridges full of imported meats cheese and a good selection of general supermarket items. – Screensaver

10.17.3.7 Restaurants

April 2019: Eating Out: Right next to the dinghy dock we used is the Noro Kitchen. It is a small local restaurant on the water, with a nice breeze and a view of the harbor. It doesn't look like much, but the food was good, and prices were very reasonable at \$25 (for fish and chips) to \$35 (for chicken stir fry and several similar chicken, veggies, and rice meals).

Also, in the big building just in from the market (where Immigration is housed), there is another restaurant around the right side of the building on the ground floor. We had dinner there one evening. They even had beer and wine on offer. Open til 9pm. – Soggy Paws

10.17.4 Munda and Munda Bar

10.17.4.1 Pass

July 2012: From Eghelo we traveled directly to Munda, crossing the wide 24' Munda Bar, following the huge range markers. Once inside and following Sieling, the recommended track is almost due east, where you'll find a FAD of sorts with at least one dangerous line trailing from it at approximately 08°20.563S / 157°14.109E. Pass south of it. The rest of the way in is marked, though in the beginning marks are a wee bit far apart We saw about 15' at the lowest depth. NOTE: the very last mark is gone, but a fragment of pipe remains. It is dangerous. The location is approximately 08°20.0183S / 157°16.4700E. In the daylight it's no problem, but be on the lookout. – Carina

10.17.4.2 Anchorage

May 2024: 08°19.95S / 157°16.25E. The bay is big and most of the time a depth of around ten meters. Good holding in sand. – Eastern Stream

May 2024: Best anchorage is in front of Agnes Lodge. Be careful as there are active thieves in this area. Leave a deck light on at night and bring in all valuables inside. – Amiga

July 2019: 08°19.94S / 157°16.23E. Nice anchorage. – Field Trip

10.17.4.3 Yachtsmen Services

10.17.4.3.1 Trash & Recycling

June 2019: Agnes Lodge is still welcoming to yachts. They will accept your trash and recycling. – Soggy Paws

10.17.4.4 General Services

10.17.4.4.1 Banks & ATMs

May 2024: ANZ and BSP both have locations in Munda. – Sugar Shack

June 2019: There is a BSP ATM (almost to the airport, turn right toward the My Telekom office, and it is just past the My Telekom building). Max 4,000 SD on our US Visa debit cards. – Soggy Paws

10.17.4.4.2 Internet & Cell Service

May 2024: There is a Digicell shop here. – Eastern Stream

June 2019: There is fairly steady 3G internet in the harbor, and the Agnes Lodge has a wifi hotspot right at reception (doesn't work anywhere else). – Soggy Paws

10.17.4.5 Provisions

May 2024: We liked Munda for shopping. There is a vegetable market every working day, but Friday is the day that people from the outer islands bring in their veggies, so the market is bigger. There are some little shops where you can buy the basics. We liked the Solomon Brothers shop. – Eastern Stream

June 2019: They provide a safe place for the dinghy. Near the hotel entrance is the local market, and small stores line the short road going toward the airport. – Soggy Paws

10.17.4.6 Restaurant

May 2024: There is a new café between Agnes and the Airport called Wonderland Café. Hours: Mon-Sun 0830-1830. – Amiga

June 2019: There is a restaurant just off the anchorage. We had dinner several times at Agnes Lodge (it's about the only game in town if you want to eat out). It's fairly pricey for dinner, but the lunch items are also available to order for dinner (dinner selections from \$100-150 SD). Dave recommends the Seafood Fettucine for \$100 (large portion, consistently good, lobster, fish, and shrimp). – Soggy Paws

10.17.4.7 Transportation

June 2024: It is a 20-minute trip to Noro by taxi or bus. The bus is 10 each way and the taxi is anything between 280 and 400. Easier to do a taxi so you can stop at Muzi Boko on the way and they will go everywhere and wait for you and help unload back to the dinghy. – Hilde Larsen Sailing Solomons Facebook

10.17.4.8 Activities

July 2024: Peter Joseph WWII Museum – Barney Paulsen +677.71.49188, barneypaulsen@gmail.com (Facebook too). Located in Dunde Village on Munda. He has a rather extensive collection of WWII artifacts and he is trying really hard to preserve the history. – Sugar Shack

10.17.4.9 Cruiser Reports

June 2019: We really enjoyed hanging out in Munda. We did 3 days of diving with Dive Munda. Nice group, good equipment, and fairly well run. Aussie prices (shockingly expensive compared to Philippines).

Transport to Noro: If you don't feel like navigating up Diamond Narrows to Noro, you can leave your boat in Munda and get a shared van up to Noro—it's about a 20-minute ride up a good road. Cost is \$20 SD per person, one way. A taxi to Noro is \$400 SD R/T. We opted to rent a taxi for the day for \$600 SD and also explored the WWII sites that are just out of town. Agnes Lodge can call you a taxi if you want. We used Isaiah, his taxi was clean and had cold air, he speaks good English, and knows the places to go. Cell# 782-6761

Munda is a good place to have guests fly into—there's lots to do nearby (Vonavona Lagoon, Rendova, etc) no matter what the weather. And Solomons Airlines now has a direct flight from Brisbane to Munda on Saturday.

WWII Things to See: Dive Munda has 4-6 airplane and ship wreck sites to dive. Not to miss ashore is the WWII Museum kept by Barney (\$50 SD pp to see). – Soggy Paws

10.17.5 Viru Harbour

SW Side

This is a good stopover if the winds are blowing out of the SE and you won't make the pass into Marovo Lagoon in sufficient daylight. Sieling says this is very protected. Sieling Pg 96-97

10.17.5.1 Pass

June 2019: By the time we approached the entrance, the SE wind had built to 10-15 kts, and there was a good 1.5m swell outside. We had pretty good sun, interspersed with light rain showers. It was fairly easy to pick our way in here. Not all the marks mentioned in Sieling are there, but with the swell, we could see the shoals on either side of the entry area, because of the breakers.

Exiting in the morning was harrowing as the swell was right on our nose and quite steep at first. – Soggy Paws

2010: The entrance to Viru Harbour is between high cliffs. It is deep but could be daunting in a heavy S or SE swell. Entry waypoint: 08°30.716S / 157° 43.523E. There is a range consisting of two white-painted triangles, but the upper of these is 99% obscured by dense vegetation. The beacon that Sieling shows immediately in front of the range is missing, but there is a near-submerged green-painted beacon on the reef to starboard as you enter, and another red (port hand) beacon further in. – Bosun Bird

10.17.5.2 Anchorages

June 2019: 08°29.422S / 157°44.324E in 44'. – Soggy Paws

Oct 2017: 08°29.97S / 157°43.93E 18m mud/sand. – Screensaver

2010: 08°29.333S / 157°44.524E, 10m in the NE extremity of the inlet, which is very quiet and surrounded by mangroves. The water visibility is poor and there are many crocs about. The previous evening a croc had taken a dog in Tambe (E bank).

However, this is a well-protected location and would be good to ride out heavy weather. – Bosun Bird.

10.18 Tetepare Island

SW of New Georgia below Rendova island. Pg 112-113

Visit this site for anchoring information: <https://www.tetepare.org/>

PRIOR TO ARRIVAL: Rangers prefer to be notified ahead of time, prior to your arrival.

tetepareecolodge@gmail.com, the fee is \$120 SBD as a conservation levy per person (\$60 SBD for children under 14 years of age).

The Last Wild Island (Book)

Visiting Yachts: The TDA welcomes yachts and sailboats to visit Tetepare, but asks that all people visiting Tetepare on sailing boats pay the \$20 Aust per person Conservation Fee and follow the TDA visitor code of conduct, including rules prohibiting fishing within the Marine Protected Area. Yacht people are also welcome to book accommodation at the ecolodge, and to hire local guides for on island activities such as bushwalks, wildlife watching trips, kastom site visits and snorkelling trips. Should you wish to stay at the ecolodge or hire guides, we recommend you contact us in advance to ensure availability. <https://www.tetepare.org/>

Diving in Terepare: If you have your own equipment, you are obligated to pay a fee to TDA of \$150 SBD per person which will allow you 5 dives per day. The money is used to continue the conservation work.

A ranger is required to go with you on all excursions around Tetepare.

There is no anchoring in the Marine Protected area. Check in with the rangers if you are uncertain as to where that is located. They recommend you anchor at Waugh Bay.

From the Tetepare Conservation Website (2019): Tetepare Island, in the Western Province of the Solomon Islands, is one of the conservation jewels of the South Pacific. This long, rugged island, cloaked in rainforest and fringed with coral reefs, is the largest uninhabited tropical island in the Southern Hemisphere. Home to the one of the Solomon Islands' leading conservation projects and a unique, locally-owned and managed ecolodge, Tetepare's natural abundance attracts visitors from around the world.

Uninhabited for 150 years, Tetepare is an island forgotten by time and swathed in mystery. There are many stories that explain why the island was abandoned – fear of head-hunting, ill health attributed to curses, even men being turned against one another by dangerous gossiping in the villages. But what makes this island truly extraordinary is that, in a country which has lost almost all of its forests to commercial logging, Tetepare remains untouched.

At the beginning of this century, when the threat of logging loomed over Tetepare, the island's traditional landowners rejected logging offers and came together to save this pristine wilderness for themselves and for future generations. An organization made up of local community members called the Tetepare Descendants' Association (TDA) was created, to manage and protect the resources of the island as a conservation area. The history of the island and the formation of TDA are documented in the book "The Last Wild Island- saving Tetepare".

Tetepare has received international recognition for its conservation and archaeological significance. Experts from around the world, including renowned ornithologist and author Jarrod Diamond, have commended the work on the island. A dazzling variety of plants and animals make their home in the island's 120 square kilometres of primary lowland rainforest – some of the last remaining in Melanesia.

Endangered Species: The island's beaches support nesting populations of three species of turtle including the endangered leatherback turtle. Other species inhabiting the island and surrounding waters include the dugong (Dugon dugon), the world's largest skink (*Corucia zebrata*), the endemic Tetepare White-eye (*Zosterops tetepari*), hornbills, tiny pygmy parrots, the endangered coconut crab, huge bump-headed parrot fish, schools of barracuda and pods of bottlenose and spinner dolphins.

10.18.1 Pass

March 2019: Follow the channel in. There is a faded orange/red buoy to starboard, then a bigger black/white buoy to port. Use satellite pics to aid you in. Lots of fish life in the channel. – Tropical Soul

Oct. 2013: The pass into the lagoon is not super obvious until you know where it is, though it can be seen on Google Earth. If you circle at the entrance for a bit, the rangers may come out and guide you in (they led us in and showed us where they wanted us to anchor). – Kate Glover (Noonsite)

2017: 8°43.187S / 157°26.125E at pass entrance. You'll see a barrel (actually, it's a mesh bag full of Styrofoam) ahead of you. As you enter keep the barrel to your right. The channel then is narrow, but it's plenty deep and pretty clear. It's pretty obvious where it starts to get shallow. You will pass between two large bommies, and then you get to a shallow, sandy patch. That's where you anchor. – Field Trip

10.18.2 Anchorages

NOTE: May 2024: Last year the Marine Preserve changed its anchoring restrictions. Yachts are no longer able to anchor in the nature reserve. Instead, the rangers ask that all visiting yachts anchor in Waugh Island (**08°42.419S / 157°26.924E.**)

This is a deep bay, but anchoring spots can be found in the 20m range. Some boats med moor tying 2 lines to the trees on shore.

There is no anchoring fee at Waugh Bay. From the beach you can walk towards the other side of the island where the Rangers are located. You can also take your dinghy to the other side.

Notify the Rangers prior to your arrival. They can be reached at teteparecolodge@gmail.com. They are a wealth of information and can tell you about activities on the island.

June 2019: 08°43.123 / 157°26.40E. This is an “ok” anchorage as the swell rolls during high tide. — Field Trip

March 2019: 08°43.19S / 157°26.41E. Anchor in shallow clear sand area. — Tropical Soul

2017: 8°43.227S / 157°26.398E 10’. There is a strong current in the lagoon (and it’s always going out), and it’s a relatively small spot, so we set a stern anchor to keep from running into coral heads. It was about 10 feet deep, but a consistent depth in the sandy area. It is exposed to the southeast winds, but the reef breaks the waves—we were there in fairly light winds, and it was great. Awesome snorkeling right off the boat.

If the wind picked up and got too strong, you could move over to Waugh Bay. It’s an easy walk from Waugh Bay to the lodge (and Waugh Bay also has great snorkeling). — Field Trip

2013: Waugh Bay Anchorages 8°42.408S / 157°26.904E in front of a sandy beach. Once you’ve paid your fees, you can anchor elsewhere around the island, and are free to wander there, which we very much enjoyed. We used fore and aft anchors to keep us from sliding down the steep slope. — Kate Grover (Noonsite)

10.18.3 Cruiser Reports

May 2024: Be sure to visit the Tetepare Island wreck dive. It is a vertical wreck hanging down the reef. It is quite impressive. Diving in the Solomon Islands is beautiful with lots of stuff to see.

Tetepare is a conservation and the largest uninhabited island in the south Pacific. There is lots of wildlife and fun hikes. — Eastern Stream

June 2019: Tetepare is the largest uninhabited island in the South Pacific. We met the rangers and they are lovely. They have a large diversity of wildlife here on the island. The diving fee here is very reasonable. You are required to have a guide (national park rules) but the guide is \$100SBD/day (about \$12 USD, unlimited divers). The guide will be in the boat to pick you up when you are finished with the dive. A very fair price. — Field Trip

March 2019: Great trekking in the jungle with William as our guide. — Tropical Soul

Dec. 2018: We visited Tetepare and enjoyed our time there immensely. We were very keen to get involved in any of their land-based activities. We were able to hire a guide for walks/ hikes for SBD\$ 150 per day. We paid the Conservation fee of SBD\$ 100 pp - for which we were supplied supporting paperwork, then asked for SBD\$ 500 per boat to anchor.

There is settlement on the north side of the island that we passed when sailing towards the lagoon anchorage. On enquiry at the station, the village there is unauthorized and is currently being dealt with. The TDA and ranger's station were not in support of the village, which was occupied by a family of descendants of the island. — Gemma Ross

2017: Tetepare Island was probably our favorite stop in the Solomons. Tetepare is the largest conservation area in the Solomons, and it seems to be effective. The snorkeling was fantastic—maybe even better than the hot spots in Marovo Lagoon. It’s run by the Tetepare Descendants Association, and they are doing a great job. There is a research station and a lodge, and when the lodge makes money, they use it to provide scholarships for school fees for some of the villages. — Field Trip

2013: There are some trails, and the rangers will take you for a guided hike. If there are guests around, or research projects going on, you may be able to tag along on some of the turtle monitoring or other projects. Unfortunately, the leatherbacks were not yet nesting while we were there, so we didn’t get to see them.

There are sometimes dugongs, but they have lost a lot of seagrass in recent years, and the dugongs have not been around as much lately.

We saw lots of birds, had a great time just having the chance to walk among the big trees, fabulous snorkeling, and we saw a bunch of monitor lizards and a cuscus.

Waugh Bay Anchorages Saw a few crocodiles, but still had great snorkeling. Tons of bumphead parrotfish and great visibility. Nice walk to the crocodile lake.

The rangers can tell you about some other spots you can anchor as well. We loved Tetepare, and would highly recommend it. If you go to the islands nearby, make sure you tell them how much you liked Tetepare so they know it's bringing people in their direction. – Kate Grover (Noonsite)

10.19 Rendova Island

Rendova is a good stopover between Munda and Tetepare.

10.19.1 Kenelo Pt (West Side)

Sieling Pg 98-99

10.19.1.1 Anchorages

May 2024: 08°24.05S / 157°20.18E. South of Kukurana island we found a spot that was not too deep to drop our hook. Nice village and you can dive on the wreck of a plane that is still in one piece. – Eastern Stream

Sept. 2017: 08°27.67S / 157°17.02E. Sand/mud. The water was murky and it looked like crock territory to me was a disincentive to go play in the mud. – Screensaver

10.19.2 Rendova Harbor (N Tip)

Sieling Pg 100-101

10.19.2.1 Anchorages

April 2019: 08°24.088S / 157°20.135E, in 45 ft. We anchored near the anchor in Sieling, just S of the west end of Kukurana Island. We did quite a bit of circling around, trying to find a spot that was not too deep or filled with corals.

Our buddy boat anchored in 60 ft about 100 m to the north of us and ended up with a gnarly chain wrap on a coral head that took 30 minutes to get loose. With light winds and shifting currents, we had been spinning in circles for 24 hours. – Soggy Paws

10.19.2.2 Cruiser Reports

April 2019: We had reports from cruisers around 2010-2011 about some armed boardings in the middle of the night, near Rendova Harbor (specifically in Balira Harbor, referencing the village at Rendova Harbor, see next section for details). But inquiring with Dive Munda, they didn't know of any problems in recent years.

We found the village ashore to be friendly, and FULL of kids. What's mostly visible from shore is a big yellow-orange building, which turns out to be the Catholic Church. The village is set back from the church, as they had a big tsunami in the past and it had washed the houses near the shore away. We were invited ashore by Daniel, the recently-expired chief's son. We took a walk around the village. The village was well tended, clean and neat, and full of gardens.

We took a dinghy ride west to the island that supposedly has an eco-lodge on it, (Lumbari Island, aka Kennedy Island). It has a dock and a big sign stating that John F Kennedy and PT109 were stationed there for part of the war. There is a small building that has a few relics from World War II, including Coke bottles, mess kits, and several other interesting things. It currently isn't functioning as an eco-lodge, except for lunch on Tuesdays when Dive Munda comes by with guests. The new owners, Nicely and Quora, are hoping to reopen soon.

Kukurana Island is owned by a retired policeman from Honiara, and they are building a house now. This island was apparently occupied by US troops during WWII, and there are a few war relics there as well.

Sieling shows the airplane, at APPROXIMATELY **08°24.571S / 157°20.006E.** – Soggy paws

10.19.3 Balira Harbour

N. Tip of Rendova Island, Sieling pg 102-103

10.19.3.1 Anchorages

2010: **08°24.280S / 157°20.742** in 13m. From Viru we sailed west to Balira Harbour, on Rendova, anchoring. Quiet and mangrove-surrounded, open only to the N. W. – Bosun Bird

10.19.3.2 Cruiser Reports

2010: We had a quiet night but the next morning two locals came by separately to warn us that in this location, a month earlier, a German yacht had been boarded in the middle of the night, allegedly by youths from the Malaitan village in the bay immediately to the West. Notes from another yacht told us that they had to deal with "aggressive" youths wanting money and cigarettes when anchored in the N part of Balira, just S of Kukurana Island. Accordingly, we decided to move on. – Bosun Bird

10.19.4 Egholo Bay

N. Tip of Rendova Island, Sieling Pg 104-105

10.19.4.1 Pass

July 2012: The entrance at **08°24.743S / 157°22.432E** is narrow but deep and very easy to transit. Egholo (Butterfly Bay) on Rendova Island. – Carina

10.19.4.2 Anchorages

July 2012: **08°24.84S / 157°22.38E** in the south part of the bay in about 50' of thick mud. The protection was great and the holding fabulous. There is an inner lagoon to the east, accessible by dinghy. There's also a mangrove river of ancient mangroves on the west side that's also fun to explore by dink. – Carina

10.19.4.3 Cruiser Reports

April 2019: We drove into Egholo Bay, but looking at the size of the village on satellite charts, felt we'd be inundated with visitors. We took a look, and then moved on to check out a less populated bay. – Soggy Paws

July 2012: There is a WWII B-17 crash site here that is fully documented. The plane was called Stingaree, serial #41-9071. An American named Shane Elliot visited here in 2008 and installed a plaque. We had hoped to visit but the weather didn't cooperate.

We saw dozens and dozens of big flying foxes and a bina bird flew over at close range. Crocs are reported, so the village will show you where to snorkel/dive should you desire doing so. Somewhere in the SE corner there's apparently a good place to wash clothes.

Carvers will come and call though they're very sensitive as to whether you wish to see their work. We told everyone we only wanted a bowl in rosewood or ebony and that's all they brought after a while. In the end we traded/bought the most exquisitely-inlaid rosewood bowl carving we've seen in the Solomons. It came with free serving spoons. – Carina

10.19.5 Mburuku Village

E. Side Rendova Island, Sieling Pg 106-107

10.19.5.1 Anchorages

2018: **08°26.92S / 157°23.91E**. We anchored in the hole at the head of the bay. There are lots of flies in the village, but otherwise good. – Tropical Soul

10.19.6 Susuki Point

E. Side Rendova Island, Sieling Pg 108-109

10.19.6.1 Anchorages

2018: 08°28.31S / 157°24.40E. Says there is fresh water in the next bay south. – Morild (a 45 ft steel mon)

10.20 Vonavona Island - South of Kolombangara & West of New Georgia

Sieling Pg 81-87

10.20.1 Anchorages

May 2024: 08°13.83S / 157°06.51E (good place to explore the lagoon), **08°12.06S / 157°05.01E** (we just dropped the hook here for the night when the wind went to zero knots. ..), **08°09.90S / 157°02.73E** (You need some calm weather to anchor here, but great views of the surroundings))

We anchored on different spots in the lagoon, but there are many more great spots. – Eastern Stream

July 2013: The Vonavona Lagoon is a large protected lagoon that encircles Vonavona Island, and is in turn encircled by an outer reef. Once inside the lagoon, depths are shallow enough for anchoring, almost everywhere. The outer reef protection is good enough that, in moderate winds, you can throw an anchor out anywhere and have a good night's sleep. – Lorelei

10.20.2 Cruiser Reports

July 2013: The Lagoon is a complex system of reef, shoaling areas and many small islands. You should only try and navigate through it on a sunny day between 10am-3pm when the sun is at its peak so you can see the reef.

We saw at least one big croc sleeping on the surface one afternoon, and there are lots of mangroves about.

We knew there was a WW2 plane and with the help of a local we discovered it. It was a US Hellcat fighter that was shot down and is lying upright and intact in only 8m of water.

The top of the reef was only 2m deep with stunning coral in perfect condition. There were a lot of things like gorgonian fans, nudibranchs, certain fish and invertebrates that we found in the shallows that normally live in much deeper depths. – Lorelei

10.21 Snake Island

10.21.1 Anchorages

April 2019: Sieling shows an anchor at Snake Island, in the north end of Vonavona. We checked it out and there are anchoring depths around, and if you had strong wind from a certain direction, it would provide some lee for one boat (it's a very small island).

Generally, when we were in Vonavona, the wind was so light that you could heave an anchor out anywhere there were anchorable depths. And most of the lagoon is less than 50 ft. – Soggy Paws

10.21.2 Boboe (Boboy, Mbomboe) Village

10.21.2.1 Pass

April 2019: Pass entrance: **08°09.0S / 157°05.85E.** The direct (outside) route from Gizo or Noro to Boboe is through a pass located. This is a "visual only" pass. We went out this pass and back in on a sunny day to make our track, and saw least depths of 8 ft. There is some current usually in the pass, but not outrageous. We came in and out on another sunny day at a very low tide (rocks showing in many places) and saw least depth of 6.5 ft.

This village is named Mbomboe on Sieling's chart on pg 85. He doesn't show a route in from the inside of the lagoon, but if you head approx ENE from Snake Island in the north end of the lagoon, you can make your way out to the village from the inside with at least 20 ft depths.

Many boats come and go through the pass off the village. Pick your anchorage so as to be off the main route of boats coming and going. There is lots of room if you have a sunny day and can see the reefs.

Sieling's chartlet is not very accurate, satellite charts would be helpful. – Soggy Paws

10.21.2.2 Anchorages

April 2019: 08°09.09S / 157°05.62E (Boboe Village), in 45-50 ft sand and scattered coral. This is a 360-degree protected anchorage right off the village. – Soggy Paws

10.21.2.3 Cruiser Reports

April 2019: The village is located inside the outer rim, approximately midway across the N end. The other way into the village is from the inside, this route is fairly deep, but you need good Google Earth charts, and good sunshine to find your way in. From Gizo, I think the least depth all the way in to the village was 20 ft.

The village is a nice one, clean and neat and friendly. The villagers are SDA, so Saturday is their Sabbath day.

There are 4-5 carvers in the village, and they will come out to you in canoes, or you can arrange to meet them in the village meeting house (an open-air covered pavilion near the stone dock, at approx. 08°09.283S / 157°05.533E).

There is 2G cell signal in the anchorage. Phone and SMS work ok.

You can buy premix gas, and probably Top Up in the village. (Gas is a couple dollars per liter more expensive than at Gizo/Noro). It's not a far banana boat ride to Noro, so I am sure you could arrange a trip into Noro by boat, if you wanted to provision.

Things to Do: We spent several days anchored here, and Rina Billy ("Billy") arranged several tours for us:

- To the east side of Kolombangara to see the Japanese Hospital Caves
- To a spot SE of the village where there is a US tank in the jungle
- To a spot W of the village where there is a downed Hellcat (airplane) in 10m, and a nice beachy island with OK snorkeling.
- Across to Ringgi Cove and up to see the [Kolombangara Cloud Forest](#).

Though we could have anchored in a couple of these places, and made our own arrangements, we felt safe leaving the boats unattended off Boboe Village.

Billy's fees were \$150 SD for the boat ride per day, plus fuel at \$13 or \$14 SD per liter. We had several boats hanging out together, so we split this cost. The boat is owned by the village, and that fee goes to the village. We negotiated trade items for Billy's time. There are several "Billy's" at Boboe Village (and indeed, in Noro and probably Munda). Ours was Rina Billy. He is a carver and an elder at Boboe Village.

Every visit to any item of interest in the area required a small "Custom" fee to the owner of the property. This typically ranged from a low of \$30 SD per person to a high of \$100 SD per person. This fee will be required for you to visit anything, no matter how you got yourself there. Sometimes these fees are negotiable (ie trade items vs cash). Sometimes not. – Soggy Paws

10.22 Tapoi / Lola Island

Sieling Pg 81-87

10.22.1 Pass

Sept. 2017: The Diamond Narrows (between Noro & Lola) is a nice passage and easy enough. – Screensaver

Aug. 2012: From Lola we passed through the Vonavona Lagoon, using satellite photos. This route requires a sunny day and a bow watch. The lowest water we encountered was about 10' at low tide. Since the water color along the shallowest stretches didn't seem to change much regardless of the depth, this gave the trip a high pucker factor. – Carina

10.22.2 Anchorages

May 2024: 08°18.31S / 157°09.93E. This was one of our favorite anchorages. There is always a little breeze and you are close enough to Munda to take your dinghy for the Friday market. – Eastern Stream

Sept. 2017: 08°18.40S / 157°09.8781E, 5m sand. – Screensaver

2012: 08°18.383S / 157°09.817E, 11m sand. – Carina

2010: 08°18.383S / 157°09.817E, 11m sand. This is a good place for a quiet, relaxing time. – Bosun Bird

10.22.3 Cruiser Reports

May 2024: Lisa and Joe who run the resort are incredibly nice people. The resort is very cruiser friendly and welcome you for food and drinks. Lisa also sells fresh eggs. – Eastern Stream

May 2024: A low key fishing resort called Zipolo Lodge welcomes yachties. Joe, the owner is happy to have cruisers at the bar and restaurant. He offers water, laundry, My Telekom top up. Snorkeling is around but not fantastic, Skull island is a dinghy ride away and worth a visit. Munda is about a 25 minute dinghy ride. – Hilde Larsen, Sailing Solmons Facebook

Sept 2017: Zipola Habu Resort, Lola Island: 2G if ya lucky. The lagoon is a complex path for those with a deep draft. A good set of eyes and a clear day may not help get you through the maze. – Screensaver

Aug. 2017: Nice resort and very friendly to yachts. It's also a nice break from Munda. Good spot. – Field Trip

July 2013: This small resort was on a beautiful island and was tastefully built in traditional leaf building and bungalows. We spent a few days relaxing, snorkeling, fishing and exploring the resort and island. One evening we splurged and had dinner at the resort and had a magnificent meal of crayfish. – Lorelei

Aug. 2012: Zipolo Habu resort is lovely and yacht-friendly. It's run by an American who is a former Peace Corps volunteer, named Joe Entrikin and his wife Lisa, and offers restaurant/bar, Wi-Fi service, book exchange, mobile top-ups, tours to cultural sites, deep sea fishing and hiking. – Carina

2010: Joe and his wife, at the resort, are very welcoming; the bar/restaurant is open daily; good fish and chips. There's a well where yachts are welcome to do their laundry. WiFi (50SD for one hour). There is a walking track around the island. Nearby is Skull Island, which can be visited once a "kastom" fee of 25SD is paid to the resort.

Sieling's directions and maps should be followed carefully when exiting in the west. It is highly advisable to travel on a sunny day, with the sun behind you. There are no sticks or beacons anywhere on the route. Only in the far western section, just before leaving the lagoon over Katherine Bar, were we unable to find the direct route and had to make a loop to the south, around a large coral patch. We passed over Katherine Bar at 08°10.320S / 156°57.435E. – Bosun Bird

10.23 Kolombangara Island

10.23.1 Ringgi Cove

South Coast of Kolombangara Island

10.23.1.1 Pass

Year Unk: Easy entrance with markers. Good all-weather protection – cyclone hole possibility. Canoes visit to trade fruit and veg. – Auspray

10.23.1.2 Anchorages

May 2024: We went in and turned right once you get into the bay and then followed the markers. Once past the marker we veered left into a little bay and anchored in 10m of sand/mud. – Hilde Larsen Sailing Solomons Facebook

Sept. 2017: 08°07.19S / 157°06.81E in 17m. – Screensaver

2010: 08°07.116S / 157°06. 862E, 17m anchoring in the eastern arm. The anchorage is very well protected but there are crocs around so swimming should only be done with care. – Bosun Bird

10.23.1.3 Cruiser Reports

Sept. 2017: 2G-3G. Kolombangara Island has the highest mountain in Solomons and beyond for many miles at around 1700mt. You can actually hire a guide and trek to the top, staying in cabins along the way. I did a day trek last time with a guide through the bush and came back down via the fresh water river coming from the mountains. Needless to say the water was very fresh (very cold). – Screensaver

Year Unk: Carvers village across Blackett Strait. Check quality of carving carefully. Good carver – Job. Fix price after inspection even with pre-ordered items. One carver offers tour of Japanese Hospital Cave. Recommend such tours organized through Munda Go West Tours – near Agnes Lodge. – Auspray

2010: Bound north to Micronesia, we backtracked from Gizo first to Ringgi Cove on Kolombangara Island. The once very large logging operation is now at a very low ebb but there remains a settlement about 1km up the road from the obvious landing place on your right as you enter the cove. We found the locals friendly and willing to trade but in December a yacht had a dinghy and outboard stolen here; the police later recovered the dinghy. – Bosun Bird

10.23.2 Vovohe Cove

South end of Kolombangara Island

10.23.2.1 Anchorages

July 2024: 08°06.995S / 157°05.960E very protected cove. – SV Lola

May 2024: 08°06.69S / 157°05.96E in 14m with good holding. The Vovohe Cove is a nice protected bay. We anchored on different spots in this bay which can be deep. – Eastern Stream

10.23.2.2 Cruiser Reports

July 2024: The Vovohe Village Pan Pipe Band provides a stunning performance by very energetic men and boys. The atmosphere is electric, happy village people proud to show off their talents. They welcome all cruisers to this calm island. – SV Lola

May 2024: The village is very welcoming to cruisers and has a great Panpipe band. After anchoring you can ask Sisi Rense for permission to anchor in the bay. He lives in the first house you see on the right side when you enter the bay. With him you can also arrange activities such as watching the pipe band or for instance a village walk. We went up the river with our dinghy. You can go up until just after the bridge. Since the beginning of 2024 the village has a water supply in the village, but before that this was their place they went for bathing and laundry. Walking up the road from there you can find some rainbow eucalyptus trees. – Eastern Stream

April 2019: It is possible to arrange a trip up to the Imbu Ranu lodge up in the cloud forest on Kolombangara. This can be arranged through a tour company in Munda (or Agnes Lodge), but we did ours with “Billy” (Rina Billy) from [Boboe Village](#) on the edge of Vonavona Lagoon. Or you can go to Ringgi Cove yourself and try to arrange it yourself. You can do this as a day trip, or stay a few days at the lodge.

The lodge is a 45-minute drive on a rough road from Ringgi Cove (approx location is 08°01.96S / 157°06.98E). You must arrange for transport, and the cost quoted to us was \$300 SD per round trip to the lodge. If you are arranging a day trip, be sure you know whether you will need to pay for 1 or 2 trips. (We thought our \$300

was to take us up and back, but when it came time to come down, they wanted \$300 for the trip up in the morning and \$300 for the trip down in the evening, because the person transporting us didn't stay for the day.).

There are 2-3 sleeping rooms in the lodge, and a small kitchen. If you want to stay overnight, you must bring your own food (not sure about cooking gas), and probably sheets and towels. There are plumbed bathrooms and showers. It would be a wonderful respite from boat life (cool and very green).

The lodge has a beautiful view of the broken caldera, which is usually visible in the mornings. By afternoon it can be socked in with clouds, or charmingly semi-visible with clouds drifting by and through the valleys.

There is a map on a board near the bathrooms at the lodge, showing where the trails are, but there are no waypoints, distances, or walking times on the map. Part of our group went down to the river (but not to the waterfall), and their hike took about 2 hrs round trip including a stop at the river. This was a steep trail. The other part of our group went up the ridge to the lookout (but we never found the lookout). We hiked an hour and a half to where there is a sign indicating that the trail splits and goes down to the river and loops back to the lodge (passing the lookout without seeing it, according to the map). Our guide discouraged us from taking the river trail—it looked like a steep trail down to the river, and we assumed a steep trail back up. So we turned around and came back down the same trail. The ridge trail was fairly level, but not a completely cleared path—lots of downed trees and branches. Wear appropriate hiking shoes. Each time we asked our guide (who didn't have much English) how far it was to the lookout, he would say "10 minutes". An hour later, still hiking through rough terrain, we asked the same question, and got the same answer! He whacked around in the bush where he thought the lookout should be, but we never saw it. Be forewarned.

Billy's fees were \$150 SD for the boat ride over from Boboe Village, where we left our boats, plus fuel. The boat is owned by the village, and that fee goes to the village. We negotiated trade items for Billy's time. Billy organized a truck to pick us up at the Ringgi Cove dock and for a guide (both are required by the forestry company that owns the lodge). You should arrange this several days in advance. We arranged the night before and the arrangement for transportation got boggled up. There are several "Billy's" at Boboe Village (and indeed, in Noro and probably Munda). Ours was Rina Billy. He is a carver and an elder at Boboe Village. Cell# 743-6577. He was very helpful and reliable, and had very good English.

It is required that you take a guide with you if you go hiking anywhere. The guide fee is \$200 SD per guide per day. (We had a large group with diverse desires and ended up wanting to split up and go in 2 different directions, so we paid for 2 guides).

The lodge has a nice veranda that can be used to shelter from rain and have lunch, while enjoying the spectacular view, even if you are not staying overnight.

Two other contacts on the island, if you want to try to arrange things yourself:

Mason Nasai – KFPL Human Resources Manager – 763-0617 and KFPL Office – 60230. – Soggy Paws

10.23.3 Kukundu Slipway / Irie (Iri) Village

West Coast of Kolombangara Island, Sieling 152-153

10.23.3.1 Pass

Aug. 2019: 08°02.36S / 156°57.18E is the waypoint we used to enter this bay. The depth went from off soundings up to about 65 feet and then leveled off at about 60 ft, and then down to 50 ft around Field Trip's anchor spot. – Soggy Paws

10.23.3.2 Anchorages

Aug. 2019: Looked like plenty of swinging room and a nice flat bottom. The slipway is on the north side of the lagoon. The water right alongside the dock was about 35 ft deep. – Soggy Paws

May 2019: 08°02.17S / 156°57.47E. Be aware there are crocs in the anchorage. – Field Trip

2017: 08°02.1861S / 156°57.4784E. This was a very nice village. – Field Trip

2010: 08°02.24S / 156°57.29E. – Sweet Dreams

10.23.3.3 Cruiser Reports

Aug. 2019: Plenty of swinging room and a nice flat bottom. We didn't go in any further than the slipway. It was a nice tidy little place. The slipway is on the N side of the lagoon. – Soggy Paws

2017 – Irie Village: We came to drop off some goods, and spent some time with the village. The kids were great, and we did a dinghy excursion up the river. There are crocs here so be careful. – Field Trip

2010: Nice anchorage near slipway. Villagers will approach for anchorage fee - approx \$100SD. This was the only place we were approached for anchorage fees, which is a shame because it is unlikely the village will get many visitors with it. There is an all-inclusive fee for Walk to mountain from here (2 days) - cost includes anchorage fee, boat minding, tabu visits, hiking guide and carriers - approx \$700 - more reasonable, if that is what you want to do. Very poor reports in relation to using the slipway. – Sweet Dreams

10.23.4 Konggulavatu and Kololuka Bay

10.23.4.1 Anchorages

May 2024: Anchorage at the west end in 12m sand/mud. You can anchor on the east end of the island as well. – Hilde Larsen Sailing Solomons facebook

2017: 08°02.725S / 156°48.69E. In 30m. This is a very protected bay, but deep. It is an easy dinghy ride around the corner to the dive site. – Field Trip

Nov. 2013: 08°02.619S / 156°48.472E. – La Gitana

10.23.4.2 Cruiser Reports

Anchorage Near Toa Maru Wreck: The Toa Maru is a Japanese transport ship sunk in WWII, and it makes a nice dive. (Dive Gizo dives this wreck). www.pacificwrecks.com/ships/maru/toa2.html

May 2019: We hiked to a small lake, and then went for a dinghy ride up the river. It was beautiful, and the water was very cool given it was a river. We did not swim in the river as there are crocs. The local kids would not swim in the water either...so that was a definite sign to be careful. Evidently there is a large croc that lives up the river according to the locals. Fun fun. We had some nice rain last night that put some water in the tanks. All is well, and we are still the only boat here. – Field Trip

2017: There is a nice small family village ashore just to the east. The main guy is named Cain, and he works at the SolTuna plant and is the head of Human Resources. We asked permission to anchor here and the family said no problem. Very nice people. – Field Trip

Nov. 2013: We spent a week diving at Konggolovatu Bay, the Toa Maru and other locations like Hot Spot and some new places we have never been to before. The weather was perfect so we decided on the more exposed locations first rather than the Toa which is in a protected bay.

The first day we did a double dive with the first being at Hot Spot. This is a small isolated reef that is out in the deep water and comes up to about 6m. The walls around the edge are covered in fish. This spot is a WWF protected area.

In the afternoon we did another spot that we had heard about but is rarely dived. The regrown coral in less than 10m was diverse, colorful and in perfect condition. The soft corals at depth were equally stunning.

Then we concentrated on the Toa Maru. We did 3 great dives and concentrated on a specific section of the wreck for each dive.

The first dive we did the stern and the last hold. This is the deepest section of the wreck and is 30m–38m deep.

For dive 2 we decided to explore the collapsed central superstructure which is now on the bottom at 33m after the Tsunami tore it off the wreck.

The dive has an element of risk as it has a lot of penetration through twisted and unstable sections that are very silty. The upside is we were the only divers on the wreck that day and there was no chance of anyone else coming in and silting the area up.

On the way back up we stopped in at the engine room and had a look around. This area is also a twisted mess as many of the engine room items have fallen because the wreck is lying on its side.

For our last dive on the Toa we decided to explore the 2 forward holds and the anchor locker.

The second hold has more relics than the other 3 combined and it is full of bottles, bullets, large artillery shells, lights and 2 tanks. – Lorelei

10.23.5 Vanga Point (NW Coast) (Mongga)

Sieling Pg 160-161

10.23.5.1 Pass:

Aug. 2019: The CM93 chart is a little bit out, and very vague about Vanga Point (and most of the west coast of Kolombangara). As always, the satellite navigation charts we used (created using GE2KAP/Sat2Chart and SAS Planet) were very accurate. Going over the bar on entry, we saw a least depth of about 22 ft. – Soggy Paws

10.23.5.2 Anchorages

Aug. 2019: 07°54.85S / 156°57.56E in 50'. – Soggy Paws

May 2013: 07°54.86S / 156°57.55E. Vanga has a small little protected bay that was only really big enough for one or two boats and just perfect for Lorelei. – Lorelei

10.23.5.3 Cruiser Reports

Aug. 2019: We hopped in the dinghy and went in to find Charlie (see Lorelei's account below). Charlie is now the principal of the school. There were a number of young men making furniture in the shed next to the dock. Contact info for Charlie: cperavae@gmail.com. – Soggy Paws

Nov. 2013: There is a small village, 2 schools and a Catholic College. The senior school teaches older teenage boys and young men farming and agriculture as well as things like carpentry and woodworking, mechanics, machinery maintenance, etc. The men attending the school have travelled from all parts of the Solomons and only return home twice a year in December and June.

The College up on the hill is set up for training mature students to become teachers in much the same skills as the school. The small primary school is there to provide education for the teachers and local villages' young children.

The best thing about this place is its very safe on all aspects, the people are so friendly and don't have any need to come out to the boat. With the large agriculture set-up, they have loads of fresh food, eggs, honey, meat, etc. Simply put an order in with Charlie the Deputy Principal and the next day it's ready to pick up.

Diving: The big bonus of the area is the stunning 500m+ deep reef walls that are only 150m away from Lorelei. There is superb wall diving, reef and blue water spearing. It's been so flat we can even do it from our kayaks! For over 3 weeks there was no wind or swell and we simply used the kayaks to explore the area both in the bay and on the outer reef drop-offs.

The only thing we had to be a little careful of was the crocodiles in the area. There is one resident one in the bay that is getting bolder as he gets bigger and is now starting to stalk and chase the local fisherman in their canoes. They have set a trap for it and hopefully it will be caught soon.

With the glassy conditions we were able to scuba dive from our kayaks. It's a little wild kayaking out to the deep walls, anchoring the kayaks on the edge and diving down the wall. We pretty much dived every day and we simply anchored the kayaks 150m past where we dived the day before and jumped in.

One day we dived a spur that stuck out off the wall that had current rushing around it. The soft corals that started at 15m were extensive with amazing amounts of different colours.

Later we dove on a point at the end of the north wall. The fish life was incredible! There were massive amounts of bait fish everywhere, turtles overhead, sharks below and schools of barracuda, tuna and trevally amongst other things buzzing around us. There were so many species we didn't know where to look. – Lorelei

10.23.6 Jack Harbor (Mbambari) (E Coast)

10.23.6.1 Anchorages

2010: 08°03.264S / 157°11.349E, in 21m. On the eastern shore of Kolombangara, fronting the Kula Gulf, Jack Harbour (or Mbambari) is also very well-protected; we anchored in the North arm. – Bosun Bird

10.23.6.2 Cruiser Reports

2010: The village on your right as you enter is Seventh Day Adventist. In the South arm, however, are the inevitable Mailaitans, who were noticeably rowdier and nosier. – Bosun Bird

10.23.7 Bat Harbour (SE Coast)

10.23.7.1 Anchorages

Nov. 2013: 08°05.181S / 157°10.897E. The anchorage in Bat Harbour was small and we had just enough swing room. It was very protected from the wind. – Lorelei

10.23.7.2 Cruiser Reports

Nov. 2013: Harbour on the eastern side of Kolombangarra Island in the Kula Gulf. The Kula Gulf was a major Japanese stronghold during WW2 and the Gulf was the scene for some of the fiercest sea battles in the Pacific. There are scores of sunken destroyers, freighters, PT boats and planes from both the Japs and the US littered on the seabed of the Gulf.

Sadly, for divers, most of the Gulf is over 400m deep making diving on the wrecks impossible. There is however still a large number of remnants on the land and some in the water.

The first stop was the 5 WW2 Japanese guns on the points protecting the harbour entrance.

From there we went to look at the old Japanese lighthouse. It has fallen into the sea and we could see the intact light through the clear water and vowed to return with dive gear and cameras to investigate.

Next stop was the Bat Cave from where the area gets its name. The tide was low and we had to paddle the RIB in over a shallow reef bar to get to a mangrove channel and lagoon which leads to the cave.

The cave system was far more extensive than we thought it would be. We had 2 powerful torches for us and we took 3 smaller one for the boys which they thought was great. We spent over 90 minutes inside exploring the different caverns. We even got lost twice and had to try to back-track out.

Inside there were 1000's of flying foxes and bats and we had them flying into us a stack of times. The local families eat the flying foxes and the boys managed to get 5 by whacking them with sticks while they were flying around. We like the local food but declined on dinner that night!

Our next big adventure was to pack up the RIB and head south for a day trip to Teme and Vila Harbour. The first stop was in a small bay were Joseph and his family lived.

They have a series of caves on their land that the Japanese used for many things such as a small hospital, ammunition bunkers, air raid shelters and accommodation.

The underground hospital was small but great to see and there were a lot of relics both inside and out.

The Earthquake/Tsunami in 2007 sadly destroyed a lot of the caves and closed a lot of entrances with soil and mud but it also open new ones that were previously undiscovered.

One was an ammo bunker that was stacked full of live ordinance. The NZ army was called in and most was taken and disposed but they left a few safe ones for the tourists to view. We also saw gas masks, helmets, digging tools, jacks and guns.

The next village down had an old Jap bridge over the water that had been destroyed by the US.

The last stop was the Fallen Jap lighthouse on the way home, which actually turned out to be a large searchlight in the shallows. – Lorelei

10.24 Gizo Island (Port of Entry)

10.24.1 Gizo (Port of Entry)

10.24.1.1 Anchorages

May 2024: 08°05.84S / 156°50.6E. We anchored at several places around this area. The depth is about 23m, but you have a nice breeze and it is a lot quieter than near the town anchorage.

Anchoring near the fuel dock is convenient but can be noisy as a nightclub opened. We anchored across the way at Logha Island which is a short dinghy ride opposite the bay. You can leave the dinghy at PT109 or the Gizo hotel. – Eastern Stream

July 2019: 08°05.37S / 156°50.54E. We had 4 boats, one with no working windlass, so we were looking for a fairly shallow anchorage that could accommodate all 4 boats. We went down to check out the Logha South anchorage but it was deep (60-ish feet), so we went back to The Bathroom Stop. It had reasonable depths, 35-40 feet and mostly sand, plenty of room for 4 boats.

The only downside to the Bathroom Stop (besides being a little far from town), was the constant coming and going of outboard boats. As best we could tell, these were boatloads of people coming and going from northern Gizo and Vella Lavella villages, possibly after a long boat ride, and they ran in for a quick bathroom stop before proceeding on to Gizo Town (where presumably there are no public bathrooms). Likewise, on the return trip, most boats would pull in for a potty stop on their way back north.

Sept. 2018: 08°06.14S / 156°50.62E. In 16m, mud. – Screensaver

2017: 08°05.68S / 156°50.54E. (Logha South Anchorage) This area is the best place to anchor in Ghizo. It is an easy dinghy ride to shore, and there have been no issues with theft. – Field Trip

Aug. 2017: 08°06.01S / 156°50.49E. In 16m, mud. – Screensaver

2015: 08°06.185S / 156°50.644E. Anchorage outside the local market.– Adina

2015: The waterfront bars are open until the early hours and play loud music, so you may wish to anchor in one of the bays further north if you like to sleep. Fatboys and Sanbis resorts welcome yachts. – Yawana

July 2014: 08°05.4S / 156°50.5E. – Miss Behave

Aug. 2012: 08°05.981S / 156°50.317E. We passed into Gizo's reefs at Kennedy Island (markers are missing at entrance) and anchored off of PT109 Restaurant and Bar, in the protected bight on the north side of town. PT109's Lawry is friendly and will allow you to leave your dinghy securely at the dock. – Carina

2010: 08°05.968S / 156° 50.394E in 15m. At Gizo, the popular area for anchoring in 2010/11 was off PT109; at This is better protected than off the market and the staff at PT109 will keep an eye on your boat and allow you to land at their dock. For most of our stay, there was also a Police boat (RAMSI) moored here (until it broke its mooring...). This was manned 24/7 and afforded an additional measure of security. In 2010 there had been a total of two security "incidents" involving yachts in Gizo; in one case a fellow yachtie was the prime suspect.

Launches buzz through the anchorage at all hours, often at high speed, but – after an initial visit to see if you wish to buy carvings - the locals will not greatly bother you. PT109 operates a very loud discotheque three or four nights a week; this can be heard all over Gizo! – Bosun Bird

10.24.1.2 Yachtsmen Services

10.24.1.2.1 Cooking Gas (Propane & Butane)

May 2024: Geogas Solomons Lid (formerly Geogas Pacific) +677 21833, sales@ggasacific.com.sb, geogasacific.com (corporate website). Hours: Mon-Fri: 0800-1630, Sat. 0800-1200. – Sugar Shack

10.24.1.2.2 Fuel (Diesel & Gasoline)

May 2024: Fuel is available but only via jerry cans (no fuel dock). No Duty Free fuel here. – Sugar Shack

July 2014: We refueled yesterday. There is a chap called Rick Splinter, an islander who acts as an agent for fuel and laundry and will look after your boat if you want. – Miss Behave

2014: Diesel is delivered in 200L drums where you then transfer into your jerry cans. We were there last year and obtaining Diesel is not a problem. The cleanest Diesel you'll find to the right of PT109 (the main yachtie hangout) where the big tanks are. At high tide you might even be able to pull up to the dock, but check first. If not, take your dinghy and purchase as many drums (sic!) as you need. They will get them to the pier for you and transfer them in your jerrycans.

If you need a lot fuel, you might also find somebody to come out to your boat with a barge and a couple or more drums to pump right into your tank. – La Gitana

10.24.1.2.3 Trash & Recycling

May 2024: Trash disposal is available. – Sugar Shack

10.24.1.3 General Services

10.24.1.3.1 Banks & ATMs

May 2024: ANZ and BSP have locations in Gizo. – Sugar Shack

July 2014: There is an ANZ branch and ATM. Change your money at the Chinese shops that have a china man sitting high at the back. They give 7SD per USD which is better than the ANZ. – Miss Behave

Aug. 2012: Along the main street are ATMs at BSP and ANZ, the Post Office and Telekom. —Carina

10.24.1.3.2 Cell Phone Repair

July 2024: Dami Tech +677.742.1655, damidaaleziru7848@gmail.com, and on Facebook. They have parts and special tools to repair your technology. – Hilde Larsen on Sailing Solomon Islands Facebook group

10.24.1.3.3 Formalities

July 2019: It is possible to clear in and out of Gizo, if you have time, and an extra \$550 SD to pay for the Immigration guy to come from Noro. We had (accidentally) met the Immigration guy in the Shortlands, and we cleared in Immigration in the Shortlands, Customs in Gizo, and Quarantine in Noro. Since it is only about 25 miles from Gizo to Noro, it's easier just to plan to go to Noro for clearance. – Soggy Paws

Aug. 2017: This is by far the most expensive place for the yacht to enter and check into that I have been to. The drop off in yachts as a result of the price hike was obvious as files for yachts in each year were stacked in shelves sorted by year. The year I first came was full, as was the year after that, then it plummeted. Looking at the stack I would estimate by 80% at least.

Instead of going to Gizo, I would probably go to Noro. You can complete the whole process there, avoid customs travel cost plus get diesel pumped straight into your boat. – Screensaver

July 2014: Rosa is the only officer in town. Rick will give you her contact number. Ring her and she may see you that day. Be prepared for a jaw dropping Customs charge of \$18USD per metre of boat length. It is outrageous and really takes the shine off the place. Quarantine is a joke but costs \$150SD, Immigration is the same \$300SD but the customs charge is mad and I am going to make a big issue of it with the forums and also with the Customs department since I have all their email addresses. One boss is an Australian. They charge the same rate as though we were a container ship whereas until 2012 it was a modest 10C per ton. – Miss Behave

10.24.1.3.4 Marine Services, Boat parts, and Hardware

May 2024: Gizo Marine Services: +677 74 39906, Hours: Mon-Fri: 0800-1630, www.facebook.com/gizomarineservicesltd/. Located opposite Bales and Beyond. – Sugar Shack

Aug. 2012: There are a few hardware stores, and the SSCA host in town, John Hutton, offers fiberglass boat repairs (he sold us some epoxy). – Carina

10.24.1.3.5 Medical

Aug. 2024: There is a hospital in Gizo. – Sugar Shack

10.24.1.4 Provisions

May 2024: The Yamaha store sells wine, beer, milk, some cheese, very little meats, eggs, and some vegetables. If the ones on display do not look good, ask them to search for fresher ones in the back.

The Station Café Coffee Shop behind the fuel area has great toasted sandwiches but it takes a long time to make. They have chicken breasts, wings 2kg, ham, salami, cheese, butter, cream, and a variety of meats.

There are fresh markets which are good and offer eggplant, sweet potatoes, ginger, bananas, limes.

The Blue Container Store is not large but it does have a good Western selection. – Taenga

Aug. 2017: The markets for vegetables have not improved, and are pretty limited. There is a store that everyone calls Yamaha, it backs onto the water and front and the main street. If you're looking for western food/products, or half reasonable meat, this is probably the best place in Gizo. – Screensaver

July 2014: The food market is Sun/Mon/Tue with basic veggies. Fresh bread in a bread shop on the main street. No milk or fresh juice. Eggs are scarce. SolBrew beer is \$10SD a can and tasty. – Miss Behave

Aug. 2012: Gizo offers moderate provisioning opportunities at prices above Honiara or Munda, though the extensive public market offers abundant and inexpensive produce. The market grows even larger on Thursdays and Fridays. (Saturday is SDA Sabbath, so the market is much smaller.) -- Carina

10.24.1.5 Restaurants

May 2024: We ate at the Gizo Hotel several times and enjoyed many happy hours at the bar. It is on the first floor and has a nice view of the main street and ferry wharf.

The market is big with lots of fruits and vegetables from the season. There are also several small Chinese supermarkets for provisioning. – Eastern Stream

Aug. 2014: Plates of local lobster ranged between \$8-\$10 at each restaurant, and they were delicious. We did, however, lock the boat up tight each night and slept soundly in the heat. – Sophie

Aug. 2012: PT109's offered modestly-priced lunches and suppers and cold SolBrew. – Carina

10.24.1.6 Cruiser Reports

Sept. 2018: 3G. Gizo has not really changed much but there is some foreshore work going on for the markets and in the pictures, this looks really good. A new supermarket is being built and a few other minor changes but otherwise, it is much the same.

A few years ago, they built a new Hospital so we all went there, J to follow up on his leg now much improved, but not right yet and I was after some antibiotics and some Solugel. It nice that you can buy much of what you want without going to get a prescription, so I restocked my medical supplies.

We managed a couple of nice nights and afternoons at the Gizo Hotel. – Screensaver

July 2015: We didn't stay here but went on Noel's boat from Liapari (and cleared out as customs/immigration don't come to your boat).

DO NOT anchor outside PT109 restaurant. Several robberies have been reported and we met a man who was robbed twice there. – Adina

Oct. 2014: "SolBrew", the local beer was only \$1 per bottle or 24 for a case. SolBrew is far and away the most inexpensive local beer we've encountered. Once we got the case back on board, we realized that it tasted like a real German lager! Jenna's verdict? "This is some of the best beer we've had!"

We are anchored off of something called the Gizo Yacht Club, which is also called the "PT 109 Bar and Grill" (JFK served here in WWII.) They are cruiser friendly.

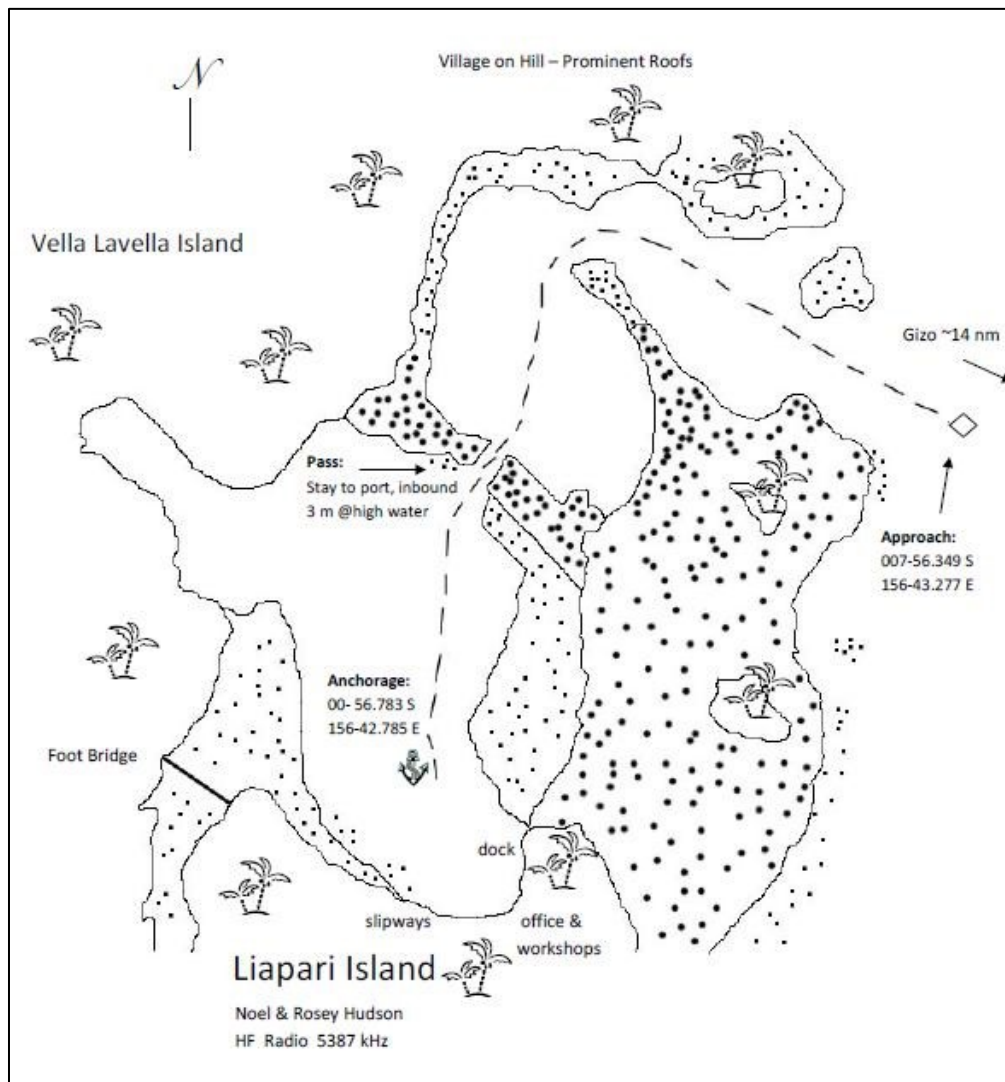
One highlight was buying stone carvings from dugout canoes that paddled up to the boat. Most were carved from river stone similar to the stone used for carvings in New Zealand. We bought about 10 pieces, including carvings of the local fishing god (body of a man, head of a bird, tuna in his hand) and carved wall hangings of "Gasere", the local worship octopus that grabs your enemies to prevent them from harming you.

Our Gaseres must have worked, because we went into shore on Saturday and Sunday nights for dinner at waterfront restaurants and we were not bothered by the local gangsta boys on either night. – Sophie

July 2014: Security is ok, just don't leave valuables, ropes, cans etc within easy reach. – Miss Behave

10.25 Vella Lavella

10.25.1 Liapari (SE Tip, Haulout Facility)



10.25.1.1 Pass:

Sept. 2018: I crept in over the bar in the reef at Noels place on 3/4 tide with just a couple of hairs under the keel. – Screensaver

Aug. 2017 – Getting In to Liapari with a Deep Draft Sailboat: I decided I needed real depth measurements and an exact course before going into Liapari with my deep draft. While there are markers there, these should only be treated as an indication of where the channel is if your draft is 7ft or more. I have an extendable boat hook which I have measured and marked exactly the depth of Screensaver keel. With my boat hook in hand I took Mouse (the tender) and plotted the depth both length wise and cross wise, discovering for the most part it was between 10-20cm short of my depth never mind any clearance. I also discovered that the centre was a good place to start (ie North-eastern end) but one needs to hug the port marker at the SW end.

It was about 1/2 tide, so waiting till about 3/4 tide would give me roughly 10-20cm under my keel if my tide information was correct. Noel who owns and runs Liapari, confirmed my tide data.

My expectation was that if all did not go well with luck, I would have another 10-20cm of tide to help get me off anything looking to hang onto Screensaver. In the end all went well, but with nothing to spare. You need at

least 0.62m above LW if your draft is 7ft, and don't go through the centre. If you are less than 7ft you should be fine in the centre after half tide. Once you're in, it goes to around 8m or more.

The jetty is in nice order that you can tie the stern to. You can't get quite close enough to put a plank between you and the jetty which is a bit of an issue, but at least you don't need to worry about falling off the plank after sun downers. It is well protected from any sea action and exposed wind-wise only to N-NNE. – Screensaver

July 2015: You should ideally have satellite images to enter the lagoon which is actually a double lagoon. The outer entrance 07°56.365S / 156°43.298E is easy and marked by posts after which you need to head North West to 07 56.1888S 156 42.9385E before turning South to the second pass at 07°56.4137S / 156°42.8788E.

The second pass is man-made and narrow/shallow although it is well posted - favour the left-hand side. Best to enter 2 hours either side of HW. Call Liapari on VHF16 to check if ok to enter. – Adina

10.25.1.2 Anchorage

May 2019: 07°56.72S / 156°42.76E. – Field Trip

July 2015: 07°56.805S / 156°42.856E. Mooring buoys, dockside, or anchoring. You can anchor near the second pass to wait to go in, then anchor, take a mooring buoy or go alongside. Adina

Aug. 2012: The inner lagoon is very well-protected and the blasted channel is well-marked; however, it is critical to stay east of the centerline to enjoy the 3.2m depth at high tide and about 1.8 at low tide. There is generally one high tide per day about 20 minutes after Gizo.

For those looking for an alternative cyclone haven, the Western Province is outside of the South Pacific cyclone zone, though in the area of cyclogenesis. Yachts may be safely stored at Liapari Island. – Carina (Noonsite)

10.25.1.3 Yachtsmen Services

10.25.1.3.1 Cooking Gas (Propane & Butane)

2014: LPG refills can be sourced at Liapari. – M/V Waverly (Noonsite)

10.25.1.3.2 Fuel (Diesel & Gasoline)

2014: Good clean fuel is available in large quantities only 40nm away at Noro, where we took on 3000 litres at similar prices to Australia. For smaller quantities you can buy from drums in Gizo or speak to Noel about availability at Liapari. – M/V Waverly (Noonsite)

10.25.1.3.3 Water:

May 2024: Liapari has water tanks available to fill water jugs. – Sugar Shack

10.25.1.4 General Services

10.25.1.4.1 Laundry

July 2019: Liapari has a shower facility for cruisers that also has a nice waist high wash basin, and some clotheslines nearby. I think also there is someone there that would do the laundry for you for a reasonable price. You could probably get laundry done at Agnes Lodge in Munda, but maybe at hotel prices.

During June and July, it rained a couple of times a week, so we always had enough water to do our laundry onboard. – Soggy Paws

10.25.1.4.2 Marina / Haul Out Facilities

May 2024: You can contact Cynthia for any questions or reservations noel.hudson.liapari@gmail.com

Dec. 2023: Liapari is still functioning as a safe place to be and, if required, also to leave a boat. Cynthia runs the office and Levan seems to run the rest of the place and also does banana boat trips over to Gizo which are a lot easier than taking our boat to do provisioning. Rose is also here and can assist you. – Sea Flair

Note: Noel of Liapari has passed away in 2022. I don't have any new contact info. This info is old. Contact info for Liapari confirmed Aug 2019: noel.hudson.liapari@gmail.com +677 749 6021

Aug. 2019: We stopped in at Liapari several times during our stay in the Western Province. In fact, we were only the second boat to haul out on Noel's new catamaran-capable slipway, in June. See our "Slipping in the Solomons" section, [here](#). Or our blog post with pictures, here:

<http://svsoggypaws.blogspot.com/2019/06/repairing-your-boat-in-exotic-places.html>

We enjoyed ourselves every time we stopped in Liapari. It is a pretty bay, and protected in almost any winds. Plus, it is nearly the only place in all of the Solomons you will find other cruisers (besides the ones you bring with you). And everything that others have said about Noel's capabilities (haulout, boat repair, storage, etc) are absolutely still true. *(Note: as of 2024, the catamaran slipway is no longer operating)* – Soggy Paws

Sept. 2018: Stern-to tie up. Liapari is probably the best place to have and leave your boat in Solomon's. The only place that is near enough to walk on walk off, has some power and some water. Nice safe anchorage, some security, Sunday BBQ, sun downer drinks... and somewhere you can fix stuff.

Whenever Noel is running the generators, which is 80% of working hours, and from dinner time till around 8:00pm, you can have power as well. The rates are very reasonable and there is no doubt your boat is safe.

They used to build all sorts of vessels here including some ships with a big tonnage and of course have a slipway to match. Noel's workshop has everything most of us might ever need, and what he doesn't have he can probably tell you where and how to get it. In my view the capabilities here are the best I have seen after departing Philippines and better than anything I have seen that you can take your boat to. – Screensaver

2014: The Liapari facility has a well setup engineering shop, a timber workshop and welding facilities. There is a choice of anchoring in the harbour or Mediterranean style mooring for a small fee with a clean and tidy wharf, beautiful lawns and grounds and a laundry right at your stern. There is an open-air bar at 'the round house' and great swimming, snorkeling and bush walking ashore.

The proprietor Noel, his wife Rosie, run a very efficient operation with local staff and having carried out work at the premises myself, I can attest to the fact that 'they do what they say they will do' and for a very reasonable price. Noel has 30 plus years in the islands and with his 'hands on' engineering background there is not much that cannot be done here to get any cruising vessel out of trouble.

We used Liapari as our cruising base for the whole of the Solomons and there were half a dozen yachts on long term layup (\$10AUD/day) at Noel's facility where he looks after your vessel for very minimal cost and security is provided. – M/V Waverly (Noonsite)

Aug. 2012: We made a side trip for a short haul out to Liapari Island while at Gizo. Liapari, on the SE end of larger Vella Lavella, is home to warm, wonderful SSCA Cruising Station Hosts Noel and Rosey Hudson. We spent two days on their small slipway (65 tons max and 6m wide).

We have rarely, if ever, had a more careful team haul us. It is necessary to bring your own materials for epoxy, fiberglass or antifouling (including brushes and rollers, thinner, etc.), but you can coordinate with Gisella at Noel's Honiara office to have materials shipped by landing craft that delivers to Liapari about once per month.

There is a full-service machine shop and a wood shop and skilled labor for fabrication in steel and aluminum.

Noel and Rosey live on site, in addition to many crew. There is a guest bungalow. The grounds are beautifully maintained and the setting is lovely with views over the reef on the windward side. – Carina (Noonsite)

10.25.1.4.3 Transportation

2017: Noel also runs a shuttle services to Gizo, either on demand (which is not cheap) or as a pooled run every Thursday which isn't Sydney water taxi price. So, we did the Thursday run to do a bit of shopping whizzing

across the 10nm by fizz boat certainly makes a bit of difference. Then having your groceries sent out the back to the jetty also made life easier. – Screensaver

2014: There are two daily flights (morning and afternoon) from Honiara to Gizo and if you're at Liapari, Noel has a fast longboat and can provide a transfer service to and from Liapari - so for people leaving the yacht or for guests coming in its very convenient. – M/V Waverly (Noonsite)

Aug. 2012: There is a weekly open passenger boat to Gizo—just over 14 miles SE—that costs \$100 SBD (about \$14 USD). There is no Internet coverage (though that is planned in the future) and cell phone coverage is limited. – Carina (Noonsite)

10.25.1.5 Cruiser Reports

Dec. 2023: Apparently, there are lots of politics as Rose's family and Bobo (Noel's partner in the business who is based in Honiara) are embroiled in legal action.

However, it is still a great place to be without being hassled by streams of canoes. We all feel safe without needing to lock things up when leaving the boat. – Sea Flair

Sept. 2018: Telekom 3G. It was nice not to think about anchorage, power, etc. Nice to be able to wander over have a beer with another boat, and chat between our boats. There are usually one or two boats passing through so you get to meet some nice people, tell a few stories get some other idea's etc. Noel also has an interesting file on a lot of the wartime goings on here, and also the movie on PT109. – Screensaver

Sept. 2017: A wreck lays not far off the jetty in around 6-8m of water. For the snorkeler and those who haven't seen sunken vessels before it's an interesting diversion.

I decided to have a bit of snorkel through the channel between the lagoons figuring there might be some interesting life beneath feeding. Well I wasn't exactly wrong, but the long clear jellyfish tentacles feeding on me weren't part of my vision and I had no idea until it was too late. My arm was swelling as were my fingers and track marks about 1/4" wide began to appear on back, arm and neck along with the burning sensation. Fortunately, it wasn't worse and after drowning it in Vinegar in the shower and plenty of water I was only left with some racing stripes for a day or two. This was however my worst attack in 8 years. Note: There is also at least one croc in the bay, usually in the area to the west of the anchorage. – Screensaver

July 2015: Kiwi Noel is welcoming and there is little he doesn't know or can't organize. Great place for any boat work with good prices. Transport available into Gizo. Facilities to hand wash your own laundry ashore. Small grocery shop. – Adina

2015: Liapari Island has an excellent slipway and a marine mechanic. Most works can be done here. This is a very secure place to leave your boat for weeks or months if you want to fly home. 24-hour security for less than AU\$10 per day. They do transfers to the airport and have accommodation in bungalows. It is also a very pleasant place to just stop and visit. Good walks around the island and diving outside the entrance. – Yawana

2014: Liapari is situated on the south-eastern extreme of Vella Lavella Island in the Western province of the Solomons. Although the paper charts for the area are poor, the google earth images used in conjunction with Open CPN or Maxsea are fantastic.

The harbour at Liapari is created by the natural lee of Vella Levalla, Liapari Island and the fringing reef and islets to the East. We sat here safely at anchor in more than one decent blow as a cyclone passed nearby and the holding was very good and the anchorage comfortable.

Google Earth shows the only shallow spot, which is the man made cutting on the inner reef which carries 3.0 metres at LW and there is no swell at the cut because you are well in the main reef. – M/V Waverly (Noonsite)

10.25.2 Malasoba Bay

SW side of Vella Lavella Island

10.25.2.1 Anchorages

Aug. 2019: 07°54.033S / 156°39.164E. We wanted to stop and visit Andrew, so we went around the corner 1.3nm ENE into the bay and found a good sand spit to anchor on (Malasoba Bay). There is enough room for 2 friendly boats to snuggle in there in approx 35 ft sand, and it seemed well protected in the SE winds (would not be good in NW). Dinghy distance to Yawana Dive— Soggy Paws

10.25.2.2 Cruiser Reports

Aug. 2019: We met Andrew from Yawana Dive while hanging out in Liapari. Andrew has a small resort/homestay located on the SW coast of Vella, just around the corner from Liapari (waypoints below). Andrew has a nice house on a cliff with a tiny dive operation and 2 nicely appointed bungalows, but no real anchorage (it's 250+ feet deep 100m off his dock). He's a former cruiser who sailed into the area on his sailboat, and never sailed away.

We did a couple of days of diving with Andrew on the north end of Baga Island. We anchored in one of the Sieling anchorages on the east side of Baga, and Andrew came and picked us up every morning and took us to his dive spots. Pretty good reef/wall diving, and a Jap Zero in a snorkel spot for a surface interval. He gave us a "cruiser's discount" for diving, and is keen to have more cruisers stop by (partly, he's lonely there with his all Solomons-only family).

Andrew's Place / Yawana Dive: 07°55.146S / 156°38.626E. Northernmost white house (one story) on this section of the island. Off soundings 200m offshore. He does have one mooring, but it's not big enough for yachts. Though there's a SE swell offshore, when you get in close enough, it's actually fairly calm just in front of his place.

We managed to squeeze 2 friendly boats in the sand patch for a day hike up to see the DC-3 crash site on the hill above Andrew's Place. Weak 3G cell here, better as you get further offshore (the tower is on Baga Island).

Andrew's best dives (approx. locations): Are Moran Point on the NW corner of Baga at around 07°47.4S / 156°31.8E and Puff n Stuff at approx 07°49.2S / 156°43.7E Both of these are pretty "currenty" dives and it is wise to have a surface support boat, and someone who knows the conditions. (ie Andrew). Andrew is also exploring for new dive locations, so we had fun doing an "exploration" dive with him. There's supposed to be a big US bomber that went down there, but no one has found it yet. We had a nice drift dive in that area.

He has a Solomon's style fiberglass boat that can accommodate ~4 divers.

Andrew also took us to a Japanese Zero on the north short of Baga in shallow water.

Also, there is apparently a DC-3 crash site on the hill above Andrew's, also accessible from the Malasoba Bay Anchorage. If you arrange a guide with Andrew, he can meet you on the beach right there. Or ask for Victor in the village just south of the Malasoba anchorage.

Andrew's place is pretty exposed during NW season, so may not be able to accommodate any diving during January and February. – Soggy Paws

10.25.3 Surepelo Point

10.25.3.1 Anchorages

Mar. 2019: 07°45.13S / 156°34.59E in 45'. Tucked up in the bay behind a small island, we had good protection from the light westerly winds and it was a good overnight stop. – Ocelot

10.25.4 Vatoro Bay

North West Coast, Sieling Pg 170-171

10.25.4.1 Pass

Aug. 2019: 07°41.51S / 156°29.52E is the middle of the reef entrance. – Soggy Paws

10.25.4.2 Anchorages

Aug. 2019: 07°41.11S / 156°30.24E in about 55 ft. Perfectly calm. In March we had light NW winds, and in August (outside the bay) strong SE winds with huge swells offshore. Inside it was beautiful, quiet. This is an isolated anchorage with no village ashore. – Soggy Paws

10.25.4.3 Cruiser Reports

Aug. 2019: I had good 3G cell coverage just outside the bay, but inside, nothing. There is good coverage from Vatoro south along the west coast of Vella Lavella, and in to either Liapari or Gizo. – Soggy Paws

10.25.5 Geva Harbor (N Tip) – North Coast

Sieling Pg 168

10.25.5.1 Anchorages

Unkwn Date: 07°34.293S / 156°36.697E 7-10metres. Very protected anchorage. Beware crocs. – Pura Vida

10.25.6 Sorezaru Point (NE Tip)

10.25.6.1 Anchorages

Sept. 2018: 07°34.21S / 156°37.53E. – Screensaver

10.25.6.2 Cruiser Reports

Sept. 2018: No cell service. I had never been up this side before and it would make the jump to Choiseul Island easier. Now it's all about getting some miles done. – Screensaver

10.25.7 Mbambanga Island (The Resort Anchorages) – Sanbis and Fatboys

The resort area is SE of Gizo a few miles, on Mmambanga Island. There are two resorts that are mentioned by cruisers... Sanbis and Fatboys. There may be more...

10.25.7.1 Anchorages

Aug. 2019: 08°06.82S / 156°52.72E in 65'. We had anchored close in to Sanbis's Pizza Bar dock in April when we came through and wanted to get out of Gizo late in the afternoon. We did not have the light nor the time to try to find a better anchorage. We dropped in about 65 ft. Variable winds through the night wound our anchor chain around a couple of deep bommies.

This is a pretty little spot and does have some protection from the SE winds, plus some weak 3G. The only downside is a "friendly" guy in a canoe from the island just to the west who demanded an anchoring and beach access fee of \$125 SD per person. He just came up and handed us a bill. We didn't pay and left.

The other downside of this spot is that the boats zooming from Noro and Vonavona to Giza pass close by at high speed. I would recommend checking the shoreline just SE of Sanbis—may be able to find a sandy spot in not-too-deep water with some protection from the SE.

08°06.687S / 156°52.428E in about 55 ft sand. On return, with fairly stiff SE winds, we anchored instead in the little cul de sac just north of Sanbis. – Soggy Paws

May 2019: 08°07.40S / 156°53.89E. Fat Boys anchorage. Lots of crocs. Nice anchorage, very quiet. – Field Trip

10.25.7.2 Cruiser Reports

May 2024: A nice place close to Gizo and they do great Pizza. Terrible anchorage, coral rubble bottom and only good in any winds from westerly to south east. Hans is the owner of Sanbis resort and is very accommodating. – Hilde Larsen Sailing Solomons Facebook

March 2013: Our dive trip: We had an amazing dive at "Central Station". Tons of fish, fans and sharks above our heads. The Grouper come here to spawn so there were a lot - most we've ever seen. The aggressive Trigger fish were also mating. There were Barracuda and Bat fish - great dive.

The 2nd dive was an old Japanese freighter the Toa Mara. Interesting old wreck at 280 ft. It was torpedoed and sunk during WWII. Tom got a great picture of the torpedo hole. There are sake bottles that litter the deck. A beautiful reef now covers most of the wreck. – Mokisha

10.26 Ranonnga Island

SW Side of Vella Lavella

10.26.1 Woi Island (N Tip)

April 2011: 07°54.89S / 156°31.79E. – Westward II

10.26.2 Koriovuka Harbor (NE Tip)

Sieling Pg 178-179

Aug. 2017: 07°56.52S / 156°32.67E. 8m Mud/Sand. This is a nice anchorage well protected with plenty of room in water that wasn't really deep. The locals of course set upon us with their stone carvings. – Screensaver

10.27 Baga Island (Mbava, Mbagaga)

West Coast off of Vella Lavella, Singa Harbor - Sieling Pg 172-173, Inia Island – Sieling Pg 174-175, Somolo Harbor – Sieling Pg 176-177

10.27.1 Inia Island

10.27.1.1 Anchorages

Mar. 2019: 07°48.87S / 156°33.664E in 55 ft sand. Looks open to SE but is quite calm and protected in here, even in 20-25 kts SE. – Ocelot

11 Choiseul Province

11.1 Wagina Island (Vaghena Island)

11.1.1 Anchorages

March 2017: 07°32.51S / 157°42.39E. In 18m of crystal-clear water and a sandy bottom. We are anchored in 18m, and can clearly see the hook. This is probably the clearest water we have seen in a long time, mainly due to the fact that we have been in lagoons for the past month. – Field Trip

11.1.2 Cruiser Reports

2002: Wagina Island and village are firm favorites on our list of most-popular spots. This large village of about 1000 did not look accessible, with the chart showing no decent anchorages and the reef entrance was for "surfboards only", being three meters wide with breaking waves. However, a villager showed us a wonderful lagoon a few miles away. Charts indicated nothing useful, but after travelling a couple of miles North over supposedly dry reef, we anchored in a delightful, sandy, one-yacht lagoon. – Pastime

11.2 Hamilton Channel

2010: For passing through Hamilton Channel, (between Wagina and Rob Roy islands) careful study of the tide tables and of the current stations is advisable, but even so the current turned to run to the NW earlier than we

had predicted and, by the time we were emerging from the NW end of the passage – 3-4 miles long - we were getting a lift of nearly 4kt and significant turbulence/whirlpools developed. Heading to the NW, it is advisable near the NW end of the pass to take a jog to the N, leaving a clutch of low islands to port, so as to avoid a shallow rock that obstructs the wider channel. Although the chart here is GPS compliant, you would not want to undertake this passage in the dark or in a strong wind against current situation. – Bosun Bird

11.3 Ondolou (Undolou) Island

11.3.1 Anchorages

Ukn. Date: 07°31.054S / 157°43.696E. (mentions tying stern-to trees on the beach). Clear water, good snorkeling, nice beach, no people. – Sieling Pg. 204-205

Nov.2013: We anchored up in a delightful bay behind the small Onodulo Island and stayed the night. At dusk we were sitting on the deck having a drink watching a school of bait fish being hunted by Sharks in the crystal-clear shallow water along the beach. When the fish subsided, there sitting on the surface right in the middle of the school was a large crocodile. We grabbed the binoculars and watched it for the next hour as it hunted up and down the beach chasing the fish and birds walking on the water's edge. – Lorelei

2010: The anchorage here would be adequate with winds with a S element, but in the northerlies we were then experiencing, the recommended bay was quite choppy, exposed to a 3-4mile fetch. – Bosun Bird

11.4 Eretata Island

11.4.1 Anchorages

2010: 07°29.458S, 157°43.777E, in 21m. The anchorage would be adequate with winds with a S element, but in the northerlies it was quite choppy. Accordingly, we headed straight to windward and anchored in a lee of the southern tip of Eretata Island. This anchorage is subject to a reversing current of 1 to 2 knots. – Bosun Bird

11.4.2 Cruiser Reports

2010: Choiseul Island is hardly visited. We made our landfall from the South, west of Manning Strait and first checked out Ondolou Island. Although the setting is idyllic, in the morning we noticed two crocodiles basking on the beach. We were briefly visited by a Gilbertese man from the one of the villages that are visible to the E on Wagina Island, but otherwise this location is quite far from any settlement. – Bosun Bird

11.5 Nggosele Passage

2002: Another trip we won't forget was white-water rafting in Pastime ' or fairly close to it! Cutting across the bottom of large Choiseul Island is the Nggosele Passage which is like a narrow, winding river. It comes complete with rocks, shallows and reefs.

Our cruising guide said it was navigable. A school teacher from a village near the western end also gave us excellent advice, all of which was accurate. We spent several hours motoring through the spectacular area, with up to 6.5kts of assisting current, whirlpools, bends and plenty of jungle. Imagine our heart rates when Pastime rounded a bend at more than nine knots and the narrow channel split, with white water on a reef in the centre. Fortunately, a veer to port avoided the reef then a flick to starboard stopped us ploughing into the fast-approaching bank. The teacher was right! – Pastime, Sieling, Pg.194

11.6 Choiseul Island

11.6.1 Sanggighae Inlet

West side of Choiseul below Moli Island

11.6.1.1 Anchorages

Aug. 2014: 06°57.4S / 156°41.3E. 35ft of mud and sand with good holding and wide enough to be private. There are reefs each side so take the central entry. High ground to the east and only a W or NW wind would upset your rest. – Miss Behave

11.6.1.2 Cruiser Reports

Aug. 2014: We set anchor yesterday, entertained the horde of children and village elders then set about attacking my last bottle of rum. The canoes came back early evening so I turned the aft LED flood light on and directed it aft and half the village turned up to fish using our light. It is 1030am and no one turned up with a fish so I gather the light did not work that well. The people here are friendly and welcoming. – Miss Behave

11.7 Moli Island / Mangatarav Village

West side of Choiseul across from Kuku

11.7.1 Anchorages

Sept. 2018: 06°49.2187S / 156°31.2144E in 5m mud, no cell. This is a great little spot that is well protected and a nice bunch of people. – Screensaver

11.7.2 Cruiser Reports

Sept. 2018: The locals came to visit and asked for nothing! I had never been to Choiseul Island before mainly because of safety stories, but I should have known better, the people I met seemed very nice. – Screensaver

11.8 Poro Island and The Amphitheatre Anchorage

Ukn Date: 07°21.199S / 157°.7.370E. A very special anchorage is hidden in Choiseul Island immediately north of Poro Island. – Sieling Pg.192-193

11.9 Ropa Island

Southwest side of Choiseul

11.9.1 Anchorages

Ukn Date: 07°22.2 S / 157°12.1E. 8m clear water over sand. – Sieling Pg.192

11.10 Taro Island (Port of Entry)

Northwest Corner of Choiseul

11.10.1 Anchorages

Sept. 2018: Anchor in 16m, sand and coral. – Screensaver

11.10.2 Yachtsmen Services

May 2024: Trash disposal is available here. – Sugar Shack

11.10.3 General Services

11.10.3.1 Formalities

May 2024: Taro is a Port of Entry. Be sure to bring local SBD/SI when clearing in/out. – Sugar Shack

11.10.4 Cruiser Reports

Sept. 2018: I stopped at Taro for two reasons, firstly was a possibility they may have had officials (which they did) but not for checkout, like in Shortland, this is the last tip of Solomon's.

The Shortland Island guy was in Honiara, so this was my last hope. But I really needed to get some documents to Sydney via email. Anyway, having anchored, the Police immigration etc all came to the boat.... ah I can check-out, nope it would seem not. So, they asked for all my details, which I gave them including copies of papers, they said they would just check. My next port I told them was Buka. I guess I expected they would be back. They didn't ask if I had checked out, or where I would do this. Tempted to leave straight away I decided that just makes me look guilty, so no I stayed and departed the next morning. – Screensaver

11.11 Islands in the Bouganville Strait

11.11.1 Oema Atoll

11.11.1.1 Anchorages

Aug. 2017: 06°38.91S / 156°06.43E. Anchor in 27m, sand/coral. Nice stop with next to no sea action and no residence, so no canoes. Getting in was easy enough, but it is a deep anchorage. – Screensaver

11.11.1.2 Cruiser Reports

Aug. 2017: Cell 2G PNG and 2G Solomon's Breeze. The beach was pretty cool and one could walk around the whole Island in about hour.

Like PNG and Indo many of these remote Islands have small huts and cooking camps where locals come out here to fish for perhaps several days catch their fish and return home. – Screensaver

11.11.2 Fauro Island

11.11.2.1 Anchorages

Aug. 2017: 06°50.86S / 156°02.14E in 29m sand/coral. This is the NW anchorage/corner. A couple of spots I tried to anchor were over 30m so we headed down through the channel between Ovau Island and Fauro. The current through here was heading SW with some determination. I tried a couple more spots to anchor but again they were all deep 30+m and some with 4knts of current only metres away. Eventually we found a spot on a bit of coral knob and I just had to hope that we didn't pull the anchor of the hill we dropped it on.

06°52.93S / 156°03.98E. Anchor 30m - Fauro Island West (Opposite Asie Island). Anchored on a knob, so we moved to the third spot.

06°55.84S / 156°03.46E. Anchor in mid/sand 14m Fauro Island SW. – Screensaver

11.11.2.2 Cruiser Reports

Aug. 2017: NW Anchorages Oema Island seems uninhabited and hence an attraction. 2G (Some PNG 2G) Breeze or B Mobile which is Vodafone seems to have far better coverage up the top end of Solomon's and as yet I have not picked up Telekom the other carrier.

Just behind the beach is a lagoon not all that big, but it is said that there is an airplane in the lagoon from the war days. We did not want to potentially end up as food for someone's handbag so after some deliberation we decided the mystique of the plane and its history could remain unchallenged and hidden. – Screensaver

11.11.3 Balalae

11.11.3.1 Cruiser Reports

Mar. 2019: Balalae Island was pretty amazing. We hired a boat and guide from our anchorage to take us over to Balalae. As we pulled up on the beach, there were airplanes! Apparently, most of these planes were originally located around the runway, which is a 15-minute hike through the jungle. Australians contracted to haul these planes out of the jungle and ship them to Australia. A team of 75-100 workers came and hacked the planes out of the jungle, transporting them manually on pallets made of bamboo (and some of these are BIG twin-engine Betty Bombers). Fortunately, the local people saw what was happening and stopped it before their WWII treasures were hauled off to Australia.

The beach where we landed is **06°59.75S / 155°53.13E**. There are about 10 planes in various stages of disrepair there. From there find the inland road and walk left toward the airstrip. There is one plane that made it halfway to the beach along that road, and then the buildings at the end of the airstrip. There are a number of airplanes in the jungle near the airstrip—get a guide if you want to see these. The airstrip is still in good shape, and is kept mowed every 2 weeks. – Soggy Paws

Aug. 2017: 12m, sand/coral, I did not jot down our coordinates. No cell. This has always been one of the places I liked in Solomon's. No one lives on the island and it seldom sees locals due to its wartime history. The Island as a whole are pretty much how it would have been back in WWII.

One has to go for a walk at this place as there is still lots of WWII stuff there. We set off for the trek through the bush. After about an hour or so walking and stopping to ponder the assorted WWII mechanical bits we get to the airfield and then on further to a collection of planes under a covered roof. – Screensaver

11.11.4 Shortland Islands

11.11.4.1 Anchorages

Mar. 2019: **07°04.83S / 155°52.85E** in about 40-45 ft, over what looked (on the fishfinder) like flat sand bottom. We arrived close to midnight and just threw out the anchor in a good spot. The next morning, we were awakened by 2 police boats full of serious looking guys. They asked us a few questions, and then requested that all boats follow them into the anchorage in **Kulitanai Bay** (see report below) There was quite an adverse current as we headed SE toward Shortland Harbor.

Kulitanai Bay: **07°04.57S / 155°51.41E** in 45-55' with very little current. – Soggy Paws

11.11.4.2 Cruiser Reports

Mar. 2019: Tuluve Island just NW of Shortland approx. **06°58.5S / 155°33.3E**. Arriving in the vicinity of the Shortlands after a 60 nm day, we had planned to stop at an atoll NW of Shortland Island (just because we didn't think we could make it the whole way into Shortland Island in daylight).

The atoll, on the charts, had two small islands, and an inner reef. CM93 indicated it was shallow enough inside to anchor. However, when we arrived, we found 100+ foot depths, and only a couple of tiny pinnacles that were anchoring depths—but not really suitable to anchor.

Bad Area: A buddy boat arrived anchored by themselves off the NW coast of Shortland Island, at approximately **07°00.5S / 155°40.1E**. After an hour or so there, they were approached by 4 "banana boats" (fiberglass boats with 40HP outboards) with 8 guys total. These guys, some of whom were clearly drunk, were aggressive and hostile, saying that they shouldn't be anchoring there and they would report them to the officials. They tried to come aboard but our friends managed to keep them off. This harassment went on for nearly an hour, with drunken guys trying to come aboard (but no weapons visible). In the end, they offered the guys 200 SD (all they had), to leave, and they hauled anchor and left. One drunken guy was still standing in their dinghy and hanging onto the side of the boat after they got underway (for at least 10 minutes), and eventually had to be beat off with a winch handle. The boats followed them for a few minutes, but eventually

peeled off and went away. This couple subsequently made a report to the police in the Shortlands. They had pictures and video of the guys.

So we carried on and eventually our group of 4 boats arrived at the east end of Shortland Island around midnight. We found a reasonable anchorage using satellite charts. In the morning, we were approached by police in boats. The police asked us to follow them to **Kulitanai Bay**. The police living quarters are on the hill on the south side of the bay overlooking the anchorage, so we felt very safe there, and did not worry about leaving the boats unattended while we explored the area. It's a short dinghy ride around to Nila, where there is a Catholic Mission, and a small village (unnamed on our chart) across the channel from Nila.

It just so happened that an Immigration officer who covers the area between the north end of Choiseul (Taro) and the Shortlands, was visiting the area for an exercise involving the local police, visiting police from other areas, and a few visiting Australians. This is in preparation for whatever happens with the Bouganville Independence referendum that is planned for July.

We spent 3 days hanging out in this nice anchorage and seeing the sights.

On day 1, we met Father Stanislaus, a Catholic Priest and he loaned us a local guide to take us up into the hills behind the church to see what was left of the Japanese WWII installations. Father Stanislaus asked for a donation to the church, and we gave him SD 30 from each boat, and gave the guides each SD 15 per boat. We acquired some Solomons \$ from other cruisers, there are no banks or money exchanges until you get to Gizo.

On day 2, we arranged with John Kotaru of the Tuha Traveler's Lodge across from Nila, to organize a trip to Balalae Island, where the Japanese had a major air base. (Cell: 793-4498, but be advised that cell coverage is very thin in the Shortlands). After quite a bit of negotiation, we agreed on a fee of 1400 SD to cover a banana boat big enough to fit all 8 of us, and guides (to go 5-6 miles across to Balalae), fuel, the "council of chiefs" fee, and guide(s). Split across 4 boats, this came to about \$22 USD per person. It was a little high, but way less than what John originally asked. We kicked around taking one of the big boats over, but anchoring in that area is a little dicey (too deep/too shallow, currents, and exposure to wind). See Balalae Island for report.

On day 3, we went searching for the seaplanes that we had heard were in the harbor. With a few waypoints from other cruisers, and a little help from a local, we found most of them.

Here is the list of what we found, just snorkeling. All are somewhat visible from the surface in decent light:

Plane	Latitude	Longitude	Depth	Description
#1	07°05.331 S	155°51.782 E	15 ft	Airplane wing, off Nila Pier
#2	07°05.336 S	155°51.775 E	15 ft	Airplane float, off Nila Pier
#3	07°05.307 S	155°51.796 E	20 ft	Jake, upright, 1 wing, no tail
#4	07°05.298 S	155°51.811 E	10 ft	2 Trucks with tires, and one wing
#5	07°05.214 S	155°51.907 E	15-20 ft	Sort of a Trash Pile. H6K Mavis with 2 engines; rear fuselage & wing of Betty Bomber, 1 engine. Large struts.
#6	07°05.031 S	155°51.768 E	25 ft	Very large plane, H6K Mavis. One wing pontoon, big supports. 4 engines visible.
#7	07°05.161 S	155°51.562 E	15 ft	Jake, right side up
#8	07°05.585 S	155°51.689 E	6 ft	Pete float plane, 2 seats, no wings, no engine, 2 float struts. Fuselage and tail intact.
#9	07°05.210 S	155°51.499 E	15 ft	Jake, upside down

All are in pretty sad condition and are missing pieces.

There may well be others in deeper water. It is recommended NOT to anchor in the channel as you may be destroying a historical item with your anchor and chain.

There is strong current that reverses with the tide, best to go at slack tide, especially for the ones offshore.

There is a small store at Nila where you can buy top-up for a My Telecom (Breeze) cell phone, but there are no sim cards (ask passing cruisers who have left the Solomons for their sims!) – Soggy Paws

11.11.5 Magusaia Island

11.11.5.1 Pass

Mar. 2019: Nuhu Village is at the western end of Magusaia Island. You can reach it by either going out the south entrance to Shortland Harbor and around the S coast of Magusaia, or through the passage on the north side of Magusaia. We subsequently explored in the dinghy and found a few isolated patch reefs that are a little hard to see, but no less than 15 ft (and usually more) all the way through, if you avoid the patch reefs. We found that generally, the south side of the small islands was the best clearest route. – Soggy Paws

11.11.5.2 Anchorages

Mar. 2019: 07°06.44S / 155°47.75E in 15 ft. There is quite a big area of about 25 ft deep further out. The current does reverse with the tide in the passage. There are no close tidal stations, but it approximates Gizo tides. You can anchor in a large area inside the passage, just inside Nuhu Village. There are some reefs to the south and west that provide some shelter from offshore waves, in the outer anchorage. But we had almost no wind the 2 days we were there, so don't know what it would be like in stronger winds. – Soggy Paws

11.11.6 Maleai

11.11.6.1 Anchorages

Aug. 2017: 07°06.34S / 155°50.57E. 15m Mud/Sand. The channel through Shortland is quite navigable but one has to be careful. – Screensaver

11.11.6.2 Cruiser Reports

Aug. 2017: Anchoring in almost the same spot as I did back 6 years ago almost to the day, there was little visible change. And in fact, the same guy who sold us carvings back then (John) came to visit us. – Screen Saver

11.11.7 Faisi

11.11.7.1 Anchorage

Aug. 2017: 07°04.4241S / 155°51.9898E. 15m, Sand. The charts around the top end of Solomons can be 1/2nm out and on some of the cartography there is not a lot of information. – Screensaver

11.11.7.2 Yachtsmen Services

11.11.7.2.1 Fuel (Diesel & Gasoline)

Aug. 2017: You can get fuel there, and some very limited supplies but that's about it. The very nice lady who runs the fuel station (shed on rock wall starboard side heading south) also has some new freezers and working it filling them. – Screensaver

11.11.7.3 Cruiser Reports

Aug. 2017: BMobile during the day only. A couple of locals turned up at our anchorage pretty much asking for freebie's and offering little. When asked if they had any SIM cards.... oh yes, my mate has a Telkom one, you give us 4L of fuel so we can get home, we will go and get it and bring it back. So, as I give him my very nice 4L jerry can with fuel I realize I should have poured it in his tank myself and kept my Jerry can. Anyway, by around 9:00 pm its well dark pissing with rain and they actually returned with my Jerry can and a Telkom SIM. I was quite sure I had lost my jerry can and wasted the fuel, making for a very expensive SIM. But true to their word, they did as they said. – Screensaver

2015: Shortland Island was very friendly although heavily affected by logging. Shortland Harbour is an excellent anchorage. I contracted malaria in Shortland, so precautions should be taken. – Yawana

Nov. 2014: 07°04.99S / 155°52.11E For WW2 stuff, if you get the chance, put in a stop in the Shortland Islands. A load of readily accessible airplane wrecks above and under water plus some interesting Japanese installations. – La Gitana

April 2013: The Shortlands are a remote island group, and nobody on the net knew where we were when we gave the island names. Few boats come up here. We can see Bouganville Island in PNG 10 miles away and we are about 5 miles from the border between PNG and the Solomons now.

The Shortland Islands and Mono (Treasury Islands, 25 miles SW) played an essential part in WWII although you rarely hear the history of these islands.

The Shortlands had been taken over by the Japanese, while Treasury Island was secured by the Allied troops – Americans, New Zealand and Australia after success in Guadalcanal. Both these islands proved to be fascinating with rich WWII stories and remnants of bomber planes, old equipment and piles of Coca-Cola bottles and Sake bottles. We've decided these rarely visited islands are the "Jewel of the Solomon Islands". Visitors rarely arrive in this part of the world so we encountered warm and friendly people happy to show us around and give us 'tours' of the old WWII sites. We spent an entire day with Jonathon who is a spry 81-year old. He told us stories of when the Americans came to Treasury Island and he was only 10 years old. His friend Roy, was 8 years old. Together they gave us an insight of what it was like to see a white man for the first time. What it was like for us to come in and bulldoze an island flat so they could bring in supplies and make an airfield. The airstrip is about a mile and a half long – it was built in a week!

Besides the wonderful history lesson, we been trading for lobster and the freezer is full. Every time I put my fishing line in the water, I'm catching something.

We sailed back to **Poporang Island** in the Shortlands yesterday and we hired 6 kids to hike us to a hilltop where the Japanese had 6 anti-aircraft guns, a large spotlight, two radar antennas, at least two 6" diameter guns still laying there and basically intact. There is also a motorcycle with a side cart that you'll enjoy seeing.

Today we'll see Balalai, 5 miles away from where we are anchored. The Japanese had an air base at Balalai and there are Japanese planes there, all in good shape. What happened here they said is that the US had such momentum built after Guadalcanal that they went into the Treasury Islands and set their sites on Rabaul up in New Britain so they could then deal with Philippines. The US literally just blew by the Shortlands and having cut off the Japanese supply line these chaps starved to death on the island though occasionally they tried to steal food from the native's gardens. – Mokisha

11.11.8 Treasury Islands (Stirling and Mono)

Sieling – Pg 188-189, Lucas – Pg 230-234

11.11.8.1 Pass

July 2015: 07°24.7365S / 155°33.4516E. – Adina

11.11.8.2 Anchorages

Mar. 2019: 07°24.75S / 155°32.88E in 40-45 ft. When we backed down, we found we were hanging over a pinnacle that was about 25 ft at the top, and maybe flat enough for one boat to anchor on.

We did a full circuit around the inside of Stirling Island. There are a few shoals, but in half-sun, they were easily seen. The biggest problem is finding shallow enough anchoring in an area big enough for 3 boats, and with some wind. There is a good anchoring spot at the entrance, and where the westerly breeze blows down the channel. It is 20 ft deep but would be a little tight for 3 boats. Where Adina anchored seemed to be a pinnacle, as we went by close and were in 75 ft. – Soggy Paws

July 2015: 07°24.600S / 155°32.883E. 13m, sand and coral, uninhabited. – Adina

My CM93 chart and raster chart has no detail, and the satellite images are poor, so here's a sketch chart. Where we and Adina anchored is inside the NW end of Stirling Island.

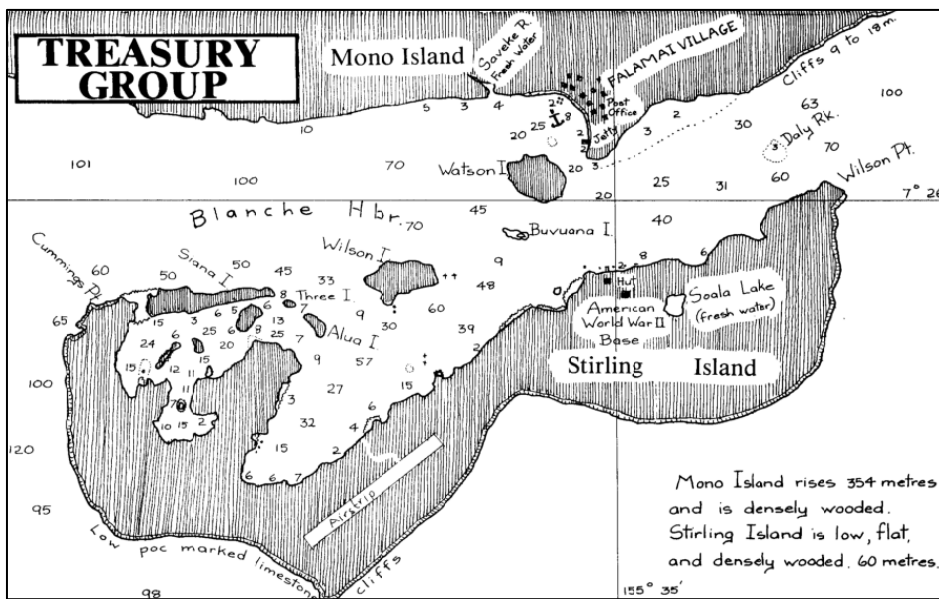


Figure 11-1 Mono and Stirling Island Sketch Chart from Lucas Soundings Probably in Meters

There is also a pretty good chart in the Sail the Solomons Cruising Guide (1998) Pg 213. This chart was taken from a survey done in 1883 by HM Surveying Ship "Lark".

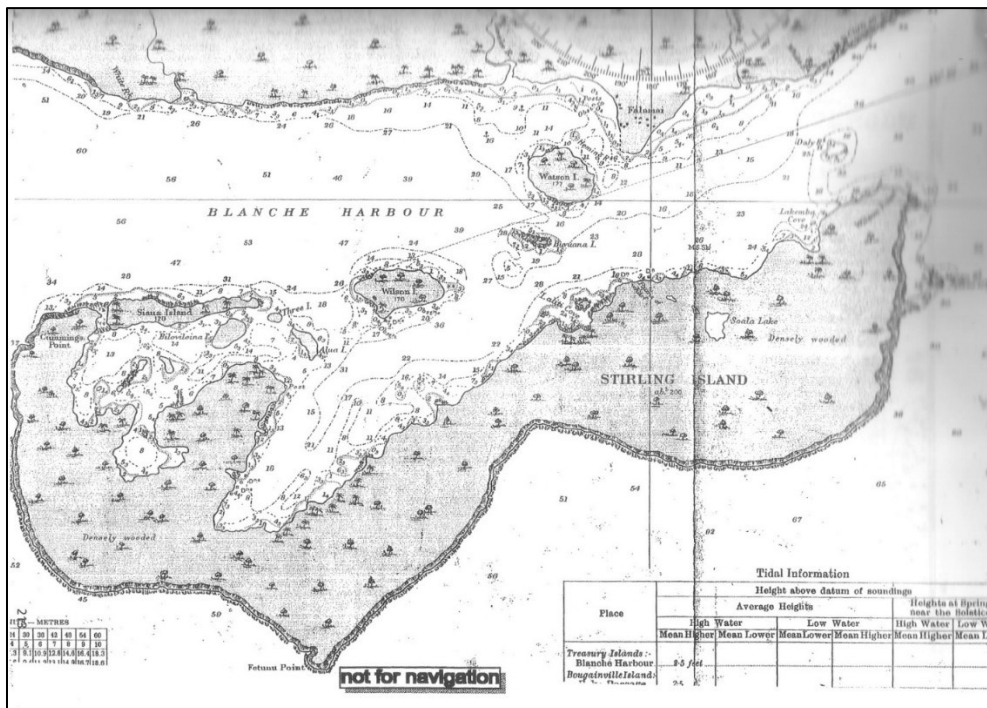


Figure 11-2 Mono and Stirling Island Chart from HM Lark, 1883 Soundings Probably in Fathoms

11.11.8.3 Cruiser Reports

April & August 2019: When we arrived, we briefly stopped at Falamae Village to see if we could find "Roy Junior" mentioned by Adina. We quickly found him, in a walk around the friendly village, and arranged for him

to give us a tour of the Stirling Island airfield the next day. Coming back in August, on our return trip to the Philippines, we had enjoyed talking with Junior enough in April, that we again organized him for another walk around Stirling. Even if you are not into wrecks of old airplanes, one highlight is the HUGE pile of WWII Coke bottles left by the US airmen stationed on the island. We also enjoyed dinghying around in the west end of Stirling near our anchorage. – Soggy Paws

July 2015: Extremely well sheltered, beautiful place. Roy Junior will paddle all the way from the village and offer to show you the WWII airfield and other relics and walk around the village. He will probably bring out eggs as he knows yachts like them. Trading. Downside, the crocodiles so no swimming. Lovely spot. – Adina

2015: I visited the Sterling Islands, plenty of excellent anchorages, WW2 relics, friendly people willing to trade for fresh fruit, veg and fish. Very well charted as this was a major base during WWII. The local chief has resisted advances from logging companies and Mono has some of the last virgin forests in the Solomons. The locals want to keep it this way. – Yawana

2014: We needed to make headway towards Gizo and therefore set sail for Mono Island.

We met with the local chief, John Goldie. The village of Falamae was hit hard by the tsunami, with 4m waves that floated off all their canoes and many houses. The villagers built a new village far up the hillside where they sleep at night. Despite their hardships they gave us a warm welcome and made us feel very much at home.

The grave of the previous chief used WWII bottles to decorate the border. The villagers make much use of their relics. Many houses have US bomber fuel tanks for their water storage.

Mono has a much better runway, built without slave labor. It's the former US strip on Stirling Island. The locals keep it mowed with machetes and the airline flies in every Wednesday.

We saw a tail of a US Navy TBF Avenger. It's become a natural planter in the jungle. The US base at Stirling was built to harass the Japanese in the Shortlands and Bougainville. There's very little left beyond some strong American building foundations and the runway. – Amante