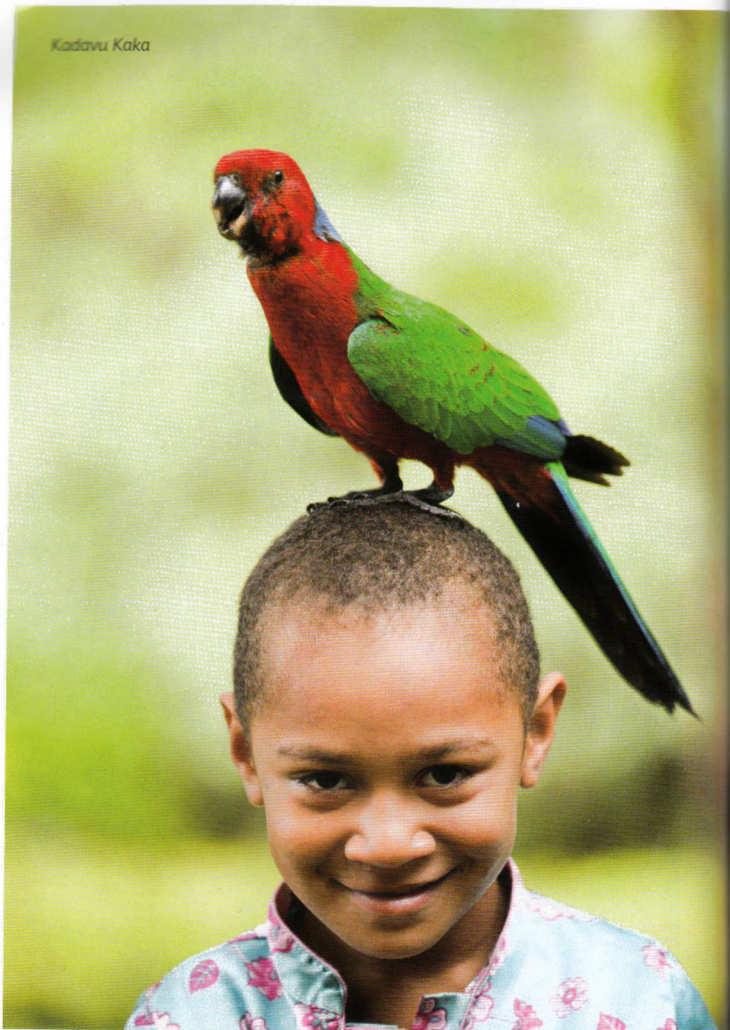


Water Taxi, the common means of transportation



Kadavu Kava



Kadavu Kava



won a silver award at the World Responsible Tourism Awards 2015 in London and the Trip Advisor Certificate of Excellence 2014.

An interesting aspect is not just what the resort offers to visitors but the relationship with local villagers. The key ingredient in keeping the relationship healthy is not only providing jobs and training, but through the Resort's involvement with corporate social responsibility. Matava buys local produce, crafts and services.

KADAVU KAVA

Amongst the many attractions of the stay is a village visit. After being briefed on protocol within the village – both women and men should wear a sulu, no hats or sunglasses -- a 45 minute stroll gets visitors to Kadavu Koro and the sevusevu presentation to the village head seeking approval to visit.

The sevusevu is a vital component of Fijian life cycle rituals, social gatherings, ceremonies and community meetings. Visitors are given an overview of the sevusevu, that may look like "a lot of talking, a little shouting", and many claps at seemingly random times; but the significance of this ancient ritual is explained so they can get the most out of the experience. A half-kilo bundle of waka yaqona is an appropriate offering (and required – you should never show up in a village without it!). This should cost you in the region of FJS25 -30.

After the first 'round' of kava served in a half coconut shell is complete and everyone has drunk, people relax and the drinking session continues with the telling of stories and perhaps inviting guests to talanoa, talk about their travels. Later, energetic young guides led interested visitors to the nearby waterfall and entertained them by jumping the 30ft drop to the pool below. The sparkling fresh water, raucous laughter and resounding splash of the jumpers were enough to bring out the inner child in everyone.

THE GREAT ASTROLABE REEF

Kadavu has the fourth largest barrier reef in the world, about 100km curving along the south coast and looping around to the east. The Great Astrolabe Reef is what scuba diving is all about. The dive sites exhibit a tremendous variety with passages, submerged pinnacles and manta ray cleaning stations. Most sites are easy to access by short boat ride and have mostly moderate currents. Innumerable bays along the island coastline also provide idyllic settings for sea kayaking, swimming and snorkeling. There is such variety on these untamed reefs that it contributes substantially to the belief of a growing number of scuba enthusiasts that Kadavu has all the elements of a perfect Fiji dive holiday.

DIVING SEASON

The season for diving Kadavu is year round. August to October generally enjoys the best visibility when the cooler sea conditions arrive (24°C). In the hot season between November and April, the seas are at their warmest (30°C) although there is a greater chance of rain at this time. Mantas can be seen throughout the year; pilot whales can be spotted in April and May, while July to August is the best time for oceanic hammerheads.

THE KADAVU KAKA

Kadavu's interior is almost as colourful as the reefs. Lush rainforests, especially on the eastern side, are home to a wide variety of birdlife including the celebrated Kadavu parrot. The coloration of this magnificent bird, known also as the Kadavu Kaka, distinguishes it from other parrot species. Its head, neck and under parts are a bright scarlet with a blue collar, shining green back and rump, with blue-green flight and tail feathers. The parrot is precious and endemic to Kadavu and nearby islands. It is listed as vulnerable under the IUCN Red list of Threatened species and is protected by law. Our bird watching guide Masi, a person totally in tune with the forest, moving with the sounds, making bird calls and identifying the returning whistles made our first hand experience even more memorable.