

# Santa Barbara

MAGAZINE

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Monroe Alvarez at  
Knapp's Castle.

# GETAWAYS

## NATURAL NIRVANA

An aerial view of the Peninsula Residence.

*A South Pacific Heaven on Earth*

NESTLED AMONG THE FIJI ISLANDS is a sublime tropical gem—**Laucala Island**, a treasure trove that remains untouched apart from the enchanting resort that lies at its most northern point. From its sprawling white beaches and dense rainforests to the majestic volcanic mountains that overlook the 4.7-square-mile island's diverse geography, Laucala offers an escape that is as stunning as it is welcoming. The resort—which situates itself into the island's geography with >

## GETAWAYS



### GETTING THERE

Transport yourself to paradise with **Air Pacific**, 800-227-4446, [airpacific.com](http://airpacific.com), a national airline that offers four weekly direct flights from Los Angeles to Nadi International Airport in Fiji. With a wide variety of in-flight entertainment—from blockbuster movies and audio channels to interactive games—Air Pacific will turn your flight into a delightful introduction to the luxurious stay that awaits you. Once you arrive in Fiji, Laucala's private King Air B 200 will whisk you away to the resort.



TOP TO BOTTOM: The private pool in the Plantation Residence; the bathroom of the Overwater Residence; the Seagrass Lounge; the resort's main pool area and bar.

rock-formed pools and hilltop abodes—boasts unobstructed views of the turquoise seas and lush greens surrounding it.

Guests can choose from six indulgent residences, each offering a singular, organic experience of the island. "You feel like you have your own house in the most beautiful part of the world," says a recent guest. Nature's boundaries fuse with the Overwater Residence, which seems to float atop the glowing lagoon waters and bury itself into the shoreline. For those wanting more island immersion, the Seagrass Residences (with one, two, and three-bedroom villas) feature natural materials, organically shaped swimming pools, and unaltered outdoor spaces—with a private beach to boot. But the Hilltop Residence—housing a pool with panoramic views, outdoor pavilions, and a private cook, chauffeur, and nanny—is undoubtedly the most extravagant of the six, offering the height of seclusion and luxury for an unparalleled stay on Laucala.

With 333 islands ranging from the densely inhabited to the deserted, Fiji offers limitless experiences. Island-hop to the locale that suits your desires with the help of Fiji Tourism, [fijime.com](http://fijime.com), or stay put on Laucala and allow the concierge to guide you on your next excursion. An array of activities are available to guests: kitesurf the clear waters, explore the dazzling coral reefs, or try a round of golf on the championship course, which is "second to none," says the guest. "There's a golf pro on staff to help you improve your game—and he makes you feel like you are pro." Later, detox with a volcanic ash clay body wrap at the spa. After a day of diving or horseback riding along the white sand beaches, unwind with a twisted pineapple martini in the Rock Lounge



before sampling the resort's authentic Asian delicacies in the Seagrass Lounge & Restaurant. For the most elegant of dining, the Plantation House—a colonial-style mansion that hosts a seasoned international crew—serves phenomenal gourmet dishes complemented by their selection of vintage wines and fine cigars. "Most of the food is either caught or grown on the island," says the guest. "The restaurants are fully self-sufficient." And for a more relaxed atmosphere, the Beach Bar features casual delights while the Pool Bar's light Mediterranean menu and modern architecture provide a serene close to the active day. —JANA BARRETT

**LAUCALA ISLAND** 0-11-679-888-0077, [laucala.com](http://laucala.com). Rates: From \$3,800 per day per couple (all-inclusive).

