

Koro Island Vacation Rental Guide

The Island – Welcome to Koro!

The purpose of this guide is to inform visitors to Koro how things work in Fiji and enable them to be comfortable and self sufficient during their stay on Koro. It takes a little effort to organize your stay, but the effort will be well worth it. The stay on Koro Island is a minimum of 7 days, and discounts are available for longer stay in many cases.

Expect a true island environment without much of the influences of western civilization. While this sounds great, it sometimes takes a bit of getting used to. Expect rough roads, delays getting to where you want to go, and sometimes having to use a flash light or camping shower. Our staff maintains the homes, and they work hard to do so, but sometimes patience is needed, and things will work out. An unexpected dinner with candle light is not such a bad thing.

What our staff supplies:

- Pickup and transfer to your home of choice; return transfers
- Supply of gas and full water tanks upon arrival; water and gas refills if needed; please conserve water
- An introduction into the power and water systems of your home. Don't worry, it's easy!
- Delivery of your ordered food supplies
- Linens, Towels, Mosquito nets and coils
- Change of linens/towels once a week or more upon request
- A phone number for you to contact during work hours, and after hours for emergencies. Sunday services are limited since Fijians spend most Sundays in church and family affairs.

In reading this handbook you are aware that all the services, schedules and costs can change. It is best to check information yourself before you come. Tipping is NOT encouraged in Fiji and is often frowned upon. Please respect the local culture.

What to do on Koro while you are renting a home:

- Relax. Relax. Relax.
- Take in the stunning nature , beautiful beaches and active marine life
- Hiking
- Ocean activities such as swimming, diving (available with 24 hour advance notice at posted rates), boat fishing charters, sightseeing charters, boat trips to neighboring islands.
- Koro Seaview Estates property tours – make Koro your permanent home!
- Village activities such as kava ceremonies, mat weaving and watching rugby games

Koro homes do not have televisions, vcr's, play stations and similar items. We recommend bringing a small Ipod playing station and your favorite tunes. If you have an instrument and know how to play it, please do. Kids love Koro, and Koro returns the favor – it is safe, clean and full of friendly people. Kids can roam around to their hearts delight, explore the beaches and play in the water.

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What the resorts supply:

Koro Beach Resort and Dere Bay Resort are small, intimate beach resorts and both have restaurants. Since the number of guests is limited, please call the resort numbers at least 24 hours ahead to book meals. The resort kitchen sells soda, water and alcohol during opening hours 9AM to 7PM each day except Sunday. Both resorts have a limited amount of kayaks and water sports equipment. Feel free to use it. Some nights there is music at the resort, come down to listen, enjoy or participate.

Climate

Generally the summer rainy season is Nov to April with temperatures 29-31 degrees Celsius and humidity 80-90% with North West winds more common. November through April is also cyclone season, so know that there is a chance of stormy weather, which can severely hamper vacation plans if it occurs.

The dry or winter season is from May to October with temperatures 21-25 degrees Celsius and humidity 70-75% with south east trade winds common. Since this is the more temperate time in Fiji, homes tend to be booked more – make your reservation ahead of time!

Getting to Koro Island, Fiji

Entry Requirements for Fiji

A valid passport is required for entry into Fiji. Passport must be valid 3 months beyond intended stay. 4 month entry visas are issued to residents of most countries on arrival into Fiji. Complete entry details can be found at www.fiji.gov.fj

There are several international carriers to Fiji from Australia, New Zealand, Asia and North America. Call your local travel agent for details and flight specials, or visit <http://www.airpacific.com/>

Air Pacific (Fiji based airline, from NZ, Aust, Hawaii, LAX, Canada)
Qantas (Code share with Air Pacific to Aust, NZ, Hawaii and LAX, Canada)
Air New Zealand (NZ based airline from NZ, LAX, Cook Is, and Tahiti)
Korean Air (Korean based airline, from NZ, and Korea - good for European connections)
Virgin Blue (from Australia - Melbourne and Brisbane)
Freedom Air (from NZ - Hamilton, Christchurch & Palmerston North)

All flights come into Nadi International Airport on the other side of the main island of Fiji, Viti Levu. Here at the airport you can get Fiji currency and a mobile phone/ data card if you like to stay connected.

Suva, the capital of Fiji, is three hour scenic drive from Nadi, or a half hour flight with a local airline, Air Fiji or Pacific Sun.

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Currency

The F\$ is the main currency in Fiji and on Koro you can only pay for services and goods with F\$. While the resort accepts credit cards, you should have a good amount of local currency available. An example would be to buy some kava in order to do a village visit – it is custom to bring a gift.

Power

Power in Fiji is supplied with 240 Volts. Make sure you have a converter if needed and several adapters for your electronic equipments. Fiji has 3-pin power outlets like New Zealand and Australia.

Domestic airlines to Koro Island by Air Fiji

We generally book flights for our guests from Nadi or Suva. **Once you send us a booking request, we will contact you with details and work out the itinerary with you.** Check with us first **prior to making your international bookings** to make sure you can connect to Koro as quickly as you can once you reach Fiji. Call our office at (679) 3311075 or contact us by email at korobeach@fijirealestate.com

Northern Air private Charter

A private charter 9 seater can do cheaper charters than Air Fiji (F\$1,850 Suva/Koro/Suva return). Please book through our office

Sea Planes

There are two seaplane companies operating out of Nadi.

They are Turtle Airways and Pacific Island Sea Planes. They are available for charter and should be contacted directly. They can land on the bay directly outside Dere Bay Resort. This is the quickest way to get to Koro Island (besides helicopters) <http://www.fijiseaplanes.com>

Helicopters

Island Hoppers is the helicopter company based at Nadi Airport . They are available for charter and we have a helicopter landing pad at Tulani, down the beach from Dere Bay resort which was used extensively during the Hollywood filming of "Under the Roof".
<http://www.helicopters.com.fj/>

Cars

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Since we offer transport to and from the airport and jetty, visitors generally do not bring cars to the island. The closest village can be reached by walking, and most of the activities originate around the resort. Around Dere Bay most spots can be reached by walking.

1. Always have a good tread on all tires as roads on Koro are rough.
2. Fuel can be purchased at the resort

Communication:

1. Rental phones can be found at arrival lounge at the Nadi airport; Our homes on Koro do NOT have phones or Internet, you have to provide you own or use the resort facilities to go online during opening hours.
2. Phone cards can be used at both resorts but should be bought while on the main island
3. Internet Connection Cards for your laptop can be rented at Nadi airport as well. Internet connection on the island is slow.

Medical Station

Koro Medical station is situated next to the High School in Nasau and has a resident doctor and nurses. This station is good for minor illnesses and accidents treatment is free. A new nursing station has been built at the next door village to us, Nabasovi. It is clean and free. They can give out antibiotics, stitch wounds etc. Have some form of headache relief in your luggage, as well as sunscreen and a band aid in case something small happens.

Supplies:

It is recommended that you source your supplies through us. There are only small village shops on the island at this time. Western goods (specialty foods, snacks, alcohol) are not available and must be ordered at least 10 days prior to your arrival.

Village shops sell only very basic dry goods and occasionally eggs. Villagers can, upon request, provide you with fresh fish, prawns, coconuts and other island delicacies. Ask our staff who to talk to and they will help set it up. If you want island goods, make sure you let people know well ahead of time – Fijians are busy too, and to get the fish for you they have to catch it first. No one works on Sunday, except our staff at the resort.

Energy System for Your Home

Koro homes are self sufficient in energy i.e. power and water etc. Homes use solar power systems to generate electricity and the collection of rainwater from the roof stored in tanks for your water supply. Bottled LPG (Liquid Petroleum Gas) can be used for cooking, hot water and even refrigeration.

Solar power systems are quiet and require minimal maintenance as compared to a diesel or petrol powered generating set. The solar power system can power lights and household appliance

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including refrigeration and water pump. To keep the power system size and cost to a minimum you should use energy efficient lighting and appliances where ever possible.

Solar (PV) panels, which are usually mounted on the roof, generate electricity from the sun and charge storage batteries. These batteries then provide 24 hours power to the house regardless of whether the sun is shining. The amount of solar panels you need is determined by the amount electricity you use. The batteries are sized to store enough power for 5 days. This allows the solar power system to keep providing electricity even on rainy days.

Drugs and Alcohol

Marijuana and other drugs are illegal in Fiji and you can be deported or imprisoned for using them. Alcohol is not part of Fijian culture - Fijians drink kava. Drunkenness is not acceptable behavior in the village or around Fijians. If you enjoy drinking, please do it at home and keep noise at acceptable levels. Please do not bring alcohol as presents for Fijians. If you want to bring alcohol, buy duty free as it is available at substantial discounts.

Think of something else rather than alcohol as a present.

Rubbish:

People in the West think that garbage fairies dematerialize their garbage or that the earth is flat and it can be pushed over the edge. This is not so. On Koro you are aware of how much garbage you produce. As in Australia and New Zealand separate and recycle garbage:

1. Our staff takes care of the rubbish for you. The less you produce the better.
2. Food items left out can and will attract critters in the home. If you have a bag with food items that are trash, hang them up outside the house where animals cannot reach them.

The Fijian people have inhabited Koro Island for over 3,000 years.

Fijians have their own customs so please learn and respect Fijian culture and traditions. It is a conservative, family, community based village culture. Please remember that there is still very little interaction between the island culture and the West, so Fijians here are not used to or impressed by extremes of western behavior or dress. Fijians remember a person for their manners and the tone of voice they use.

Mode of Dress in the village

Like most of the world, Fiji has a conservative code of dress. Please respect this. Ladies wear a sulu (wrpa-around) and have your shoulders covered when you go through a village. No bare shoulders or above the knee dress- don't wear shorts.

Village Visits

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- Dress appropriately - Sulu and T-Shirt (No swimming costumes or exposed shoulders please)
- Drive slowly through villages - there are so few cars on the island that children play on the roads as do ducks and chickens so DRIVE SLOWLY, if you have to drive at all.
- Remove hats and sunglasses.
- Leave loud voices at home - Fijians speak softly in the village, and they *expect to be spoken to softly*.
- Leave your shoes at the door.

The Waisali Village neighborhood

As you are walking or driving on Koro, you are crossing over private or communally owned land. Outside of the beaches, which are public in Fiji, and the roads, most of the land around you belongs to either the local villagers, or, in the case of Koro Seaview Estates, to our island residents or overseas owners. Please do not enter private properties, driveways or gardens, and do not take fruit from private properties. If you'd like to visit someone, make yourself known and you will most likely be invited, as residents on Koro love to share stories. Here on Koro the world comes to us! If you want to enter the village, please follow village custom and ask for permission.

Alcohol

Alcohol is not an appropriate gift. Give a sevusevu (gift) of yaqona (Kava) instead - you can get this on Koro or in Suva before arrival.

What to bring to Koro Island?

Here is a short list of things that will make your vacation easier and more enjoyable.

Clothing: Bring light clothes that allow the skin to breathe. In the winter months (April to Nov), you may need a light sweater at times. A hat is a good thing to have, as well as a pair of good walking shoes. Swim shorts, bathing suits, reef shoes and snorkel.

Useful items:

Mobile Phone; Pocket knife, Mosquito spray, Flash light with batteries, any medications you need, the lotion for your contacts and all those little things we are guaranteed not to have on the island. Books! Books, more books. Koro is great for a relaxing read, so bring some books. We do have a small library opened by local residents, where books can be traded as well.

Gifts: If you wanted to bring gifts for the locals, small items are always appreciated. T-Shirts, Slippers and some other personal items you might want to leave on the island. Things that are wrapped in plastic always produce rubbish, so leave the wrapping at home.

We want you to have a great experience on Koro – the more we know about what you may need the better we can be prepared. Send your questions to korobeach@fjirealestate.com

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Koro Contact Numbers:

Dere Bay Main Reservations: (679) 3311075

Dere Bay Resort: (679)3683300

Koro Beach Resort(679)3683301

Reservations Email: korobeach@fjirealestate.com
www.korobeachresort.com , www.derebayresort.com

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