

TOO, TOO FABULOUS FIJI
Luxe to the max in paradise

MADE IN MOROCCO
Cashed up in the kasbah

ONE NIGHT IN NASHVILLE
Tuning up with Keith Urban

QANTAS

01
2014

THE AUSTRALIAN WAY

Special edition

HELLO HOLIDAY!

FROM BONDI TO BOTSWANA,
DUBROVNIK TO DUBAI...
HOT DESTINATIONS IN 2014

V.I.P.s ON VACATION

Kate Ceberano, Michael Clarke,
David Sedaris, Elizabeth Gilbert and
other frequent flyers on journeys
unique and unforgettable

PHOTO: JOSH WATKINSON/GETTY IMAGES

Dolphin Island

THE ATTRACTION Serenity and seclusion for the design-conscious jet set.

In the real world, most people's lives are dictated by punishing timetables punctuated by random troubles in urgent need of shooting. But on Dolphin Island, Fiji's only Relais & Châteaux property, routine be damned. Guests are empowered to call all the shots, starting with what they'd like to dine on, when and where.

Lobster tail, anyone? Maybe with a bowl of garlic prawns for good measure? Does mud crab sound more enticing? Steamed or stuffed? And to accompany your seafood – all freshly caught by local fishermen, of course – may we suggest the 2005 Giaconda Chardonnay, or perhaps the 2007 Mesh Eden Valley Riesling? Or more Bollinger?

Sitting comfortably in the top tier of private island resorts spread throughout the South Pacific, Dolphin Island – sister property to Huka Lodge in New Zealand and Grande Provence Heritage Wine Estate in South Africa – hosts pop stars on honeymoon and European royalty on holiday. There are only four burees on the 5.6ha cay, which can be booked on an exclusive basis for up to eight guests, making it truly private. An additional sleep-out buree, with ensuite and mosquito net-covered bed, is located on the sunrise side of the island.

To call the resort well-appointed would be like calling Bill Gates rich. Renowned New Zealand interior designer Virginia Fisher has opted for a low-key luxury vibe in the palm-thatched guest suites,

decorated in shades of white, rich cream, sea-foam blue and charcoal wash. The enormous bathrooms include a free-standing tub, rain-head shower, courtyard shower and dressing rooms. Marine touches such as lamps decorated with sea-urchin shells, faux-sharkskin furniture and shell-edged mirrors impart a charming sense of place.

Inside the main buree, where conversation is had, drinks imbibed and meals served (unless, of course, you prefer to dine on the jetty, on the beach or under the palms), Fisher has upped the ante with an eclectic selection of pieces, including rustic dining tables and sideboards made of reclaimed timber. Fijian *tapa* (cloth made from bark) decorates the ceiling of the pitch-roof structure, and the pine posts that support the building are tethered together with *magimagi* (woven coconut fibre). Sprinkled here and there are vintage photographs of, and traditional artefacts wielded by, warrior Fijians of yore.

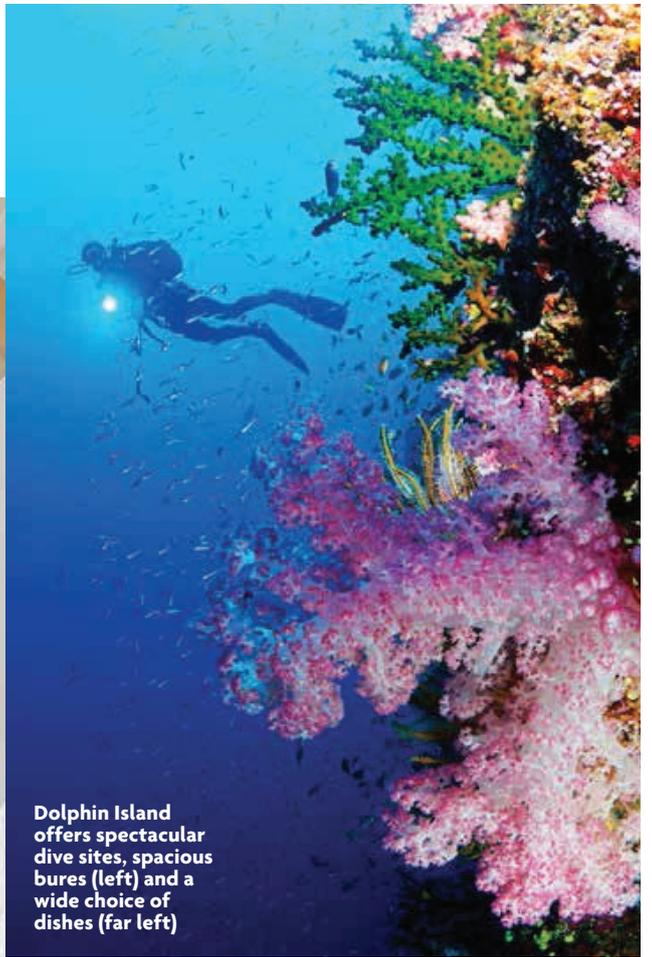
More decisions present themselves once guests have been fed and watered. To swim in the infinity pool or go snorkelling off the jetty? Sea kayak or Hobie cat? Arrangements can be made for those wishing to scuba dive, fish, try bamboo rafting or learn how to make *tapa* cloth. Spa treatments are also available. For her guests' final night, Dolphin Island host Dawn Simpson traditionally organises a bonfire on the beach and a *lovo* (underground oven) feast. Want the full *kava* drinking experience? Just say the word.

It may be but a brief boat ride from Viti Levu's northernmost point, but once there, guests are encouraged to treat Dolphin Island as their personal playground. No timetable required.

From \$NZ2886 (\$2511), buree for two, including meals and transfers. dolphinslandfiji.com

Guests can dine on Dolphin Island's floating pontoon





Dolphin Island offers spectacular dive sites, spacious bures (left) and a wide choice of dishes (far left)