

# FIJITIME

WELCOME TO OUR HOME

LEVUKA  
World Heritage Town

SAMOA  
Cradle of Polynesia

HONG KONG  
24-hour escape

## The Lush Isles of Lau

*Ranked one of the world's most beautiful places*





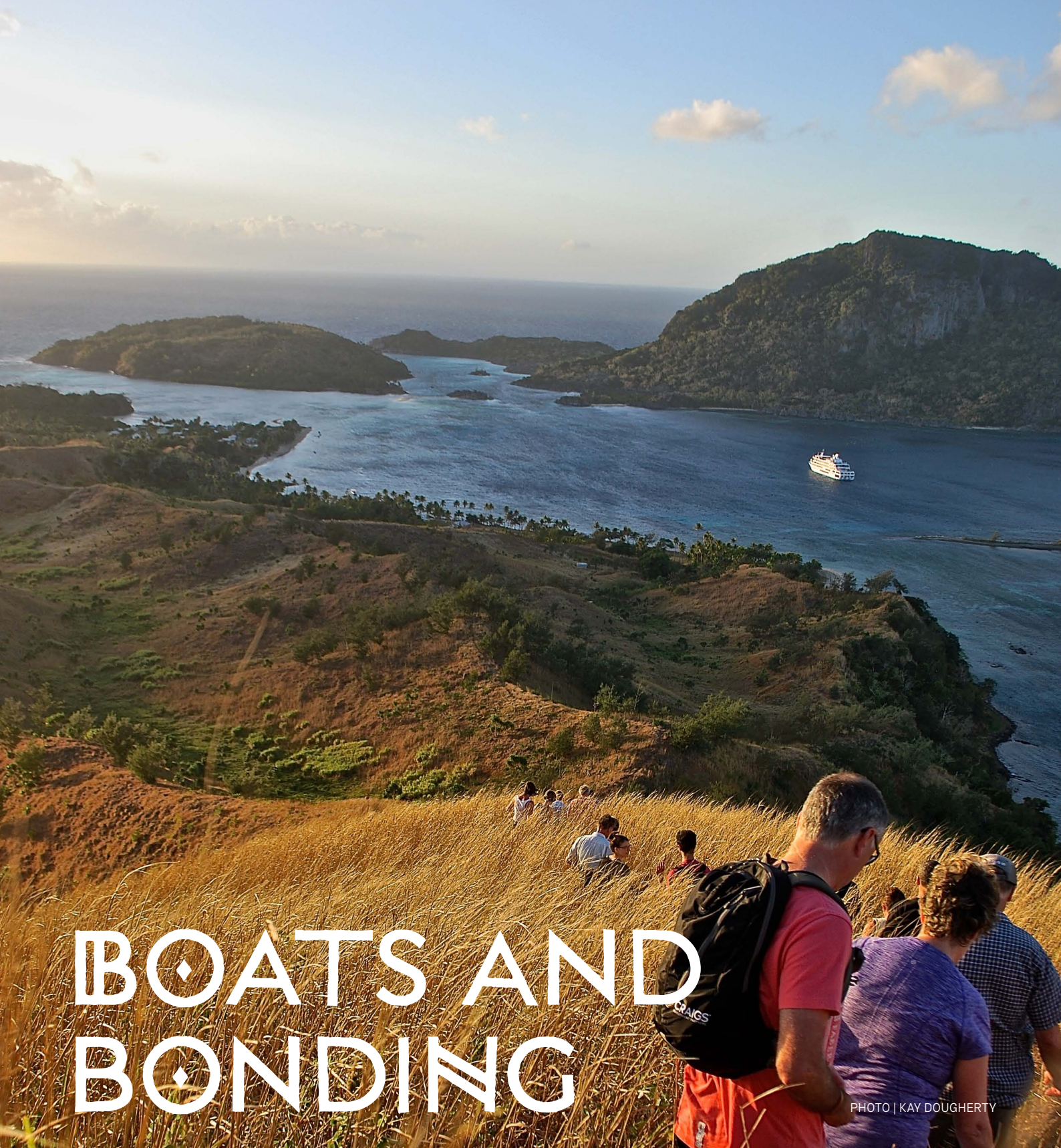


PHOTO | KAY DOUGHERTY

# BOATS AND BONDING

BY KAY DOUGHERTY

"Hi Mom. What did I get you for your birthday last year?" Long pause. Mother frantically tries to remember and finally confesses that she doesn't recall. "Maybe a blouse?" Daughter's response: "That's why I'm calling. Instead of buying stuff we don't need or even remember getting, let's start a fund for family travel."

This is just one tale told by families vacationing in Fiji who have embraced multi-generational travel, a fast rising trend

Fiji, with its distinctive customs, environmental importance, colorful history and strong cultures is a wonderful place to learn lessons that won't even feel like lessons. They'll be experienced as intriguing glimpses

into other people's values and daily lives. And there can be no lovelier setting for learning than the beaches, reefs and turquoise waters of Fiji. Cruises, such as the variety offered by Captain Cook Cruises, are popular with multi-generational families. Mom could be getting a massage while dad is experiencing the ritual of a village kava ceremony. Grandparents and grandchildren may be snorkeling a reef filled with rainbow colored coral and fish after having first hearing an engaging talk on board about the importance of reefs, mangroves and other forms of aquatic life. Everyone will be back together at lunch and dinner and never have to run around trying to figure out where Junior ran off to this time. There's no trying to agree on a restaurant – the food is ready and waiting for you with a tempting range of options. Most buffets offer at least two types of





PHOTO | COUSTEAU FIJI

meat, fish, vegetarian foods and a beautiful array of salads. Evening entertainment on Captain Cook often involves combinations of dance, song and theatre known as *meke*, which will delight children and adults. Crab races are popular too. Skeptical adults may be embarrassed by how desperately they care about the speed of a particular hermit crab scrambling out of a circle.

Others may prefer to stay on land where they can do many of the same activities and some that cannot be experienced on a cruise – such as going to a water park or viewing Indian firewalking.

If you like to keep travel to a minimum, a mainland resort such as The Sheraton Fiji could be a possibility. Like several others, the Sheraton is on Denarau so you get to the resort very soon after arrival and can

begin your holiday immediately. Or you may choose to combine a four day cruise with three days at a resort.

The Sheraton is unusual as you can also use the beaches, pools and other amenities of the adjacent Sheraton Villas and the Westin Denarau Resort, Spa, Golf & Racquet Club which offers you a wide range of entertainment options.

A sampling includes an 18 hole championship golf course, spa, stand up paddle boarding, jet ski trips, forays to villages, a dedicated kids' club, daily cultural demonstrations, a fitness center, six swimming pools across the complex (and yes, some are for adults only) and evening entertainment appropriate for all ages.

Children and adults alike will be fascinated by the dance performances





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that include flaming torches. (Be sure to remind the kids not to try that at home!)

If you're willing to travel a bit further from Nadi the Jean-Michel Cousteau Resort has unique and comprehensive programmes for children ranging from infants to age five (each of whom get their own nanny at no extra charge), 6 to 12 year olds, and a new programme for teenagers.

The activities are both fun and educational: 6 to 12 year olds tour the organic garden, learn about food safety and hygiene, select ingredients and work with the resort's chef to make, plate and serve a meal. They are given a chef's jacket and hat so good luck getting them to wear anything else for the rest of the trip!

The programme for teens is less structured and has more of a buddy or

mentor feel to it. There is flexibility for them to do things with adults as well as a list of alternatives. Those may include coral planting, a rainforest hike to a waterfall and riding down the river on a rubber tube, Fijian language lessons, playing volleyball with teens in a nearby village or learning about the medicinal use of plants in Fiji.

Experiencing Fiji's temperate climate, friendly people, unique cultures, vibrant reefs, picturesque waterfalls and volcanic islands will create happy memories that will endure for generations. It will help your family to see each other in new ways, share experiences and knowledge and strengthen your bond.

Doesn't that sound a lot better than trying to remember if you got a blouse or a scarf for your last birthday?