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Paradise is more than sand and sea in Fiji





By Anne Z. Cooke Tribune News Service Fri., Feb. 23, 2018 TAVENUI, FIJI —If Fiji was nothing more than sand and sea, palm fronds and flowers, it wouldn't matter which South Pacific beach resort you visited. Every vacation would be just another ho-hum adventure. But after 15 years and as many visits to this 333-island nation, I've got a pretty good idea why each destination promises a unique experience. What's the secret? It's the Fijians themselves, proud to be Fijian and proud to show you their country. Sau Bay Resort, on Vanua Levu, the second largest island, was the first stop on my most recent trip to Fiji. Still jet-lagged, I was sitting on the deck of the lodge, gazing over the bay, when the bushes below me suddenly stirred and two hands and a pair of clippers appeared, followed by a head. Then the head looked up, saw my feet and without missing a beat asked me what I thought of the umbrella-like trees towering over the lodge. Thus was my introduction to the owner, Nigel Douglas, a Scotsman by ancestry and a fifthgeneration Fijian. "These are rain trees," he said, affectionately patting a gnarled trunk. "I took one look and I knew this was the place for me. You don't often see them so close to the shore — saltwater, you know — but they're thriving. And look at these tiny white flowers. These bushes are rare, but native." Article Continued Below He paused, scanning the hillside. "This... [Read full story]



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