



**SIREN FLEET**

# Fiji, Beyond the Bligh

## Itinerary

The following is a sample itinerary of dive sites we may visit during your liveaboard cruise on the Fiji Siren. We wish to show you the very best diving possible, however, a number of factors determine which route the yacht takes and which dive sites we visit. Weather, tides, currents and the number of other dive vessels at a particular site all play a part in the Cruise Director's decision of where the Fiji Siren is heading to. This itinerary involves some long distance travel. Whilst we attempt to ensure the number of dives we have scheduled is fulfilled, bad weather can hinder the yacht's ability to reach a specific dive site in good time. The safety of our guests onboard is paramount and we always do our best to offer diving at alternate locations, should we be unable to visit those sites listed below.

Your Cruise Director will schedule up to 4 dives per day; 3 day dives and either a sunset or a night dive. A typical diving day is scheduled as follows:

- Light Breakfast followed by a briefing & Dive 1
- Full Breakfast, relaxation followed by briefing & Dive 2
- Lunch, relaxation followed by briefing & Dive 3
- Snack
- Briefing for Sunset or Night dive
- Dinner

For your final day aboard we typically schedule 2 morning dives. We recommend scheduling a surface interval of at least 24 hours between your last dive and your departure flight to remain on the safe side.

Whilst Fiji diving is typically fairly easy, we can, and regularly do, encounter medium to strong current, which helps bring out the fish and feed the soft coral. Many of our sites start in very shallow water and are either walls or pinnacles, allowing divers to enjoy easy drift diving or choose to spend time on the current side of the pinnacles with masses upon masses of fish life, or on the calmer side with many macro options.

## Bligh Waters & Vatu-I Ra Passage

**E6** – arguably one of Fiji's most famous and best documented/most photographed sites, starting from just 1 meter below the surface this large pinnacle drops to over 900 meter, providing a wealth of hard and soft corals along with a cathedral-like overhang adorned with gorgonian fans. Along the pinnacle wall are many crevices, swim-throughs and tunnels. Eagle rays, pilot whales and hammerheads are known to make an appearance at this isolated pinnacle; meanwhile, amidst the colourful corals numerous crustaceans,



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countless anthias and damsel fish and mollusks can be spotted. This is a massive pinnacle which would take at least 3-hours to swim around. Typically, we dive this site directly from the Fiji Siren yacht.

**Mellow Yellow** – excellent soft coral encrusted pinnacles with abundant marine life from tiny pipefish, nudibranch and blue dragons, right through to larger pelagic fish patrolling out in the blue. Like many sites in Fiji this pinnacle starts just a few feet from the surface and is covered in anemone, anemone fish and countless anthias.

**Coral Corner** – white tips, grey reef sharks, schooling barracuda and jacks dart between the schooling fusiliers, triggerfish and wrasse. The reef is the place to look out for octopus, flat worms, moray eels and scorpion fish. Typically we do this as a drift dive and effortlessly slide by healthy gold, yellow, blue, purple and red soft coral walls.

**Black Magic Mountain** – another excellent pinnacle starting just 3-meters (10') from the surface with abundant soft corals and gorgonian fans, creating a rich and healthy environment for a wide range of fish. Whilst these healthy pinnacle walls drop down to around 30-meters (100') it is not uncommon for divers to spend entire dives in water no deeper than 15-meters (50') enjoying the soft coral capital of the world.

**Mount Mutiny** – named after Captain Bligh and the famous mutiny on the Bounty this is another very large pinnacle starting near the surface and dropping off into the abyss. Healthy soft coral walls can easily keep a diver busy for many hours. Rich fish life make this isolated site home and it is not uncommon for the occasional hammerhead or pilot whale to cruise by, sometimes right behind an unsuspected diver admiring the healthy and marine lush walls.

**Vatu Express** – an exciting drift dive, able to be done on both tides, with a labyrinth of passages, crevices and the opportunity for dives to see amazing soft corals, abundant small fish life and larger action in the deeper water (remember to look out into the blue & look up).

### Namena Marine Reserve

Namena Marine Reserve is Fiji's largest marine park and home to some of the best diving Fiji has to offer. The dives we make will be based on the currents and conditions, but you can expect to see plenty of macro species including ribbon eels, garden eels and fire gobies. We are also likely to see several species of sharks and it is a popular spot for our hammerheads, schools of yellow fin tuna, barracuda and trevally jacks are prevalent as well. Manta rays, black marlin, massive dig tooth tuna and humpback whales have been known to pass by. The shallow waters of the nature reserve are the home base of beautiful healthy soft and hard coral gardens.

The Namena Marine Reserve can be divided into two halves:

**North Save-A-Tack (NSAT)** - offers a diverse reef structure and a steep reef wall. We descend to 30 meters (100') to watch for large pelagic life. Schools of big eye jacks congregate here as do hundreds of unicorn, surgeon and red tooth trigger fish.

Enjoy time at: Grand Central Station, Fiji Gold, School House, Yellow Brick Road, Oz, Kansas and The Arch – a delectable fish soup – with schools of barracuda, trevally, parrotfish, trigger fish, banner fish, octopus, Napoleon wrasse, turtles and don't be surprised if hammerhead sharks pop by to say bula!. Colourful damsel fish hover over



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the corals in clusters, whilst dog tooth tuna, Spanish mackerel, white tip and grey reef sharks patrol the reef edge.

**South Save-A-Tack (SSAT)** – typically shallower than NSAT and known for its soft coral of every colour imaginable. Enjoy sites like: Black Forest, Ned's Place, Nicks, SSAT Wall and:

**Chimneys** – there is a very good chance that you have seen photos of this site if you have ever read a dive magazine on Fiji. The site consists of 5 large coral pinnacles extending downwards from just 3 meters (10') and covered with soft corals and crinoids. Tuna, barracuda, white tip reef sharks, turtles, moray eels, lion fish, banded sea crabs are all regular residents. The white flat sandy bottom is carpeted with millions of inquisitive garden eels and the pinnacles themselves are covered of soft coral in every colour imaginable. Like at many sites here, divers could easily spend an entire dive in water no deeper than 12-meters (20').

### Wakaya Island

**Lion's Den** – we dive out into the blue to watch for patrolling hammerhead sharks and manta rays. White tips, grey reef sharks, schooling barracuda, batfish and hawksbill turtles are also commonly seen.

**Wakaya Passage** – a wall dive with cool swim-throughs & overhangs covered with soft corals; another great spot to look out for manta rays and hammerhead sharks.

**Wakaya Wall** - this sloping coral wall develops into plateaus at 18-meters (60') and 30-meters (100') coral bommies, where leaf fish, dart gobies and blue ribbon eels are hanging out.

### Gau Island

**The Nigali Passage** is a deep channel and with an in-coming current attracts schools of pelagic fish. Barracuda and trevally jacks are a common sight at the channel mouth whilst grey reef sharks form schools at just 18 meters (60'). Hang out in the channel for most of the dive and watch the action, and finish your dive in the shallow lagoon as the channel ends. Do not miss the huge groupers that cruise about.

**Jim's Alley** – typically a more relaxed paced dive than the Nigali passage, Jim's Alley offers groups of garden eels and anemone fish, black snapper and clown triggerfish, nudibranchs and banded sea snakes.

**Anthia's Avenue** – a group of small pinnacles where anything can happen right from the little guys, such as nudibranch and pipefish, right up to reef sharks and manta rays (remember to look up).

On most cruises, we also have an opportunity whilst at Gau Island to take on a short fun-filled land based tour to visit the locals in Somosomo Village. Please note this is fully dependent on tides and the local Ratu (Chief). Please speak with our Cruise Director if you are interested.



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For our guests joining us on a 10-night cruise, we also have the option of diving at the following locations:

### Taveuni Island

The dives we make in Somosomo Strait at Taveuni Island's Rainbow Reef are largely dependent on the currents and tidal conditions. Timing is crucial to your enjoyment of the diving in the region. High slack tide is often the best to enjoy the soft corals when they are open and bright without the ripping currents. Your cruise director will assess conditions and choose from the many sites the island has to offer. We will typically make a total of 8 dives here, choosing from dive sites which include:

**Great White Wall** – along with E6 in Vatu I Ra, this is another of Fiji's most famous and well documented dive sites - a steep wall which starts with a beautiful swim-through down a tunnel covered in gorgonian fans, the main wall itself is covered with white soft corals which will rival any coral wall and is extremely unique. The incoming current encourages the coral polyps to open and feed; creating a "bushy" effect. The white corals take on a purplish tinge. Add some square spot anthias and gobies to the mix and you will enjoy this stunning scenery.

**Rainbow's End** – a submerged pinnacle prone to strong currents. We make a negative descent and find shelter from where we can watch white tip reef sharks being cleaned, blue runners, triggerfish and unicorn fish. Gardens of soft corals and healthy hard coral bommies attract many other species.

**Fish Factory** – as the name indicates an absolute abundance of fish life on and around the hard coral garden reef. We have had great success with scorpion leaf fish here and divers can expect to encounter turtles, reef sharks, banner and unicorn fish.

Other sites include Barracuda Point, Jerry's Jelly, Annie's Bommie, Nuku's Reef, The Ledge, Mini Cabbage Patch, Mid-West and the Zoo can also be selected dependent on the tide, conditions and divers comfort levels.

Furthermore, Taveuni Island is home to the International Date Line; our guests can enjoy a short land based tour here; setting foot in two different days at the same time. Please speak with our Cruise Director if you are interested.