

OCEANIA · DIVING · ISLANDS · HISTORY · OFF THE BEATEN PATH · BEACHES



Solomon Islands

Nearly a thousand islands scattered east of Papua New Guinea make up a country of WWII wrecks, coral walls and immense lagoons such as Marovo and Langa Langa, where custom still governs land and reef. Guadalcanal's battlefields recall a turning point of the Pacific War. Infrastructure is basic and travel slow, which is exactly why so few people come.

 Before you go, read the UK government's travel advice for Solomon Islands and entry requirements (visas, passport validity).
Last updated by FCDO 12 October 2026.

 CAPITAL Honiara	 CURRENCY Solomon Islands dollar (SBD) £1 ≈ SBD 10.63	 LANGUAGE Solomon Islands Pijin, English	 BEST TIME May–Oct
 DAILY BUDGET £70–£300 £££ Expensive	 PLUGS Type G, I 220V · UK plugs fit	 FLIGHT FROM LONDON 30h via Brisbane (after Singapore or a Gulf hub) ~£1,500–£2,700 return	 TIME ZONE UTC+11 standard time

The Solomon Islands are a scattered nation of nearly a thousand islands east of Papua New Guinea, with more than 70 languages and most of its people living in villages. Every visit starts in Honiara on Guadalcanal, where WWII battlefields and the beach-entry wrecks at Bonegi lie within an hour's drive. From there, most travellers fly west to the New Georgia group: Munda and Gizo for diving and surfing, and Marovo Lagoon for eco-lodges and canoe trips. Malaita, a short flight or boat ride east, is the place for Langa Langa Lagoon's artificial islands and shell-money makers.

Travel here runs on 'Solomon time': flights are small and sometimes delayed, ships are irregular, and many lodges are reached only by boat. Costs are higher than you might expect, since much is imported and accommodation is limited, but village guesthouses keep things affordable. The reward is reefs and lagoons with few other visitors, warm hospitality and a culture little shaped by tourism. Nearly all land and reefs are under customary ownership, so small custom fees for visiting sites are normal. It suits divers, WWII enthusiasts, surfers and patient, flexible travellers rather than anyone wanting polished resorts.

Top 5 highlights

1

NATURE

Marovo Lagoon

Often billed as the world's largest saltwater lagoon, Marovo is a maze of forested islands, reefs and villages known for fine woodcarving, enclosed by a double barrier reef. Stay at eco-lodges and dive, snorkel or paddle between islets.

2

HISTORY

Guadalcanal battlefields

The August 1942 to February 1943 campaign was a turning point of the Pacific War. Local guides lead tours of Bloody Ridge, Henderson Field and the American and Japanese memorials, and the open-air Vilu War Museum displays aircraft and guns.

3

ADVENTURE

Bonegi wrecks

Two Japanese transport ships sunk in November 1942 lie just off the beaches at Bonegi, west of Honiara. Both start within easy finning distance of the shore, making them superb shore dives and snorkels among coral-encrusted hulls.

4

CULTURE

Langa Langa Lagoon

South of Auki on Malaita, communities live on artificial islands built from coral blocks and still make traditional shell money, threading polished discs into long strands used in bride price. Visits are arranged locally, with custom fees.

5

BEACH

Kennedy Island

A tiny palm-covered islet near Gizo where a young John F. Kennedy and his crew swam ashore after their boat, PT-109, was sunk in 1943; now a picnic and snorkelling stop on boat trips from Gizo.

Biggest cities

LARGEST CITY

Honiara

≈ 130,000 people

The capital is a sprawling, functional town rather than a beauty, but has the National Museum, a lively Central Market, WWII memorials and dive shops for the Bonegi wrecks.

2ND LARGEST CITY

Noro

≈ 7,200 people

A port town on New Georgia built around its tuna cannery and fishing fleet; few visitors stay, but it lies close to Munda and the dive sites of the Western Province.

3RD LARGEST CITY

Auki

≈ 7,000 people

Malaita's small, friendly provincial capital and market town is the gateway to Langa Langa Lagoon, the artificial islands of Lau Lagoon and traditional villages; boats run daily from Honiara.

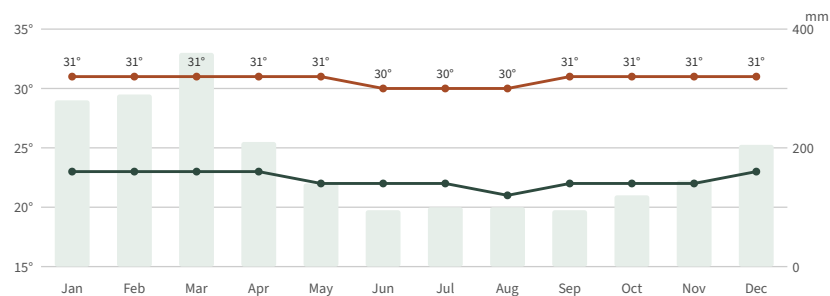
Figures are rounded from the 2019 census; Honiara's covers the city council area, and its fast-growing fringe on Guadalcanal adds more. Noro and Auki are the only other towns of any size.

When to go to Solomon Islands

Best time: **May–Oct.**

**Average climate in Honiara**

— High °C
 — Low °C
 ■ Rain (mm)



Festivals & events

Jul	Independence Day On 7 July the Solomons celebrate independence from Britain in 1978 with ceremonies at Lawson Tama stadium in Honiara, custom dancing, panpipe bands and sports across the provinces.
Aug	Guadalcanal landings anniversary Around 7 August, Solomon Islands, American and Japanese representatives hold ceremonies at the US memorial on Skyline Ridge and at other battle sites to mark the 1942 landings.

How much does Solomon Islands cost?

SHOESTRING £70 per person / day ≈ SBD 744 hostels, street food, buses	MID-RANGE £150 per person / day ≈ SBD 1,594 3-star hotels, restaurants, some taxis	COMFORTABLE £300 per person / day ≈ SBD 3,188 4-star+, guided trips, private transfers
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Estimates per person per day, excluding flights. Prices vary by season and city.

Food to try

Taro pudding

Grated taro mixed with coconut cream, wrapped in leaves and baked for hours in a motu, a stone earth oven; the centrepiece of feasts, weddings and church celebrations.

Slippery cabbage

Tender leafy greens simmered in coconut milk, often with fish or tinned tuna; the everyday vegetable served alongside rice, sweet potato or cassava.

Ngali nuts

Rich, almond-like canarium nuts sold at Honiara Central Market in season, eaten fresh or smoked, or baked into puddings.

Getting around

Solomon Airlines flies small planes from Honiara to dozens of airstrips, including Munda, Gizo (whose airstrip is on Nusatupe island, a short boat ride from town), Seghe for Marovo, and Auki. Passenger ships and faster boats link Honiara with Malaita and the Western Province, while outboard-powered banana boats handle local hops. Honiara has minibuses and taxis; agree fares first. Roads beyond Guadalcanal's north coast are limited.

Practical information

PLUGS & VOLTAGE  G I 220V — UK plugs fit	EMERGENCY NUMBERS Ambulance: 111 Fire: 988 Police: 999 Source: FCDO “Getting help”
DIALLING CODE +677	TIME ZONE UTC+11 (standard time)
TAP WATER Not safe — drink bottled or treated water	DRIVING On the left

TIPPING

Tipping isn't customary and isn't expected; a sincere thank-you, or a contribution to a village school or church project, is more appropriate.

ETIQUETTE

Almost all land and reefs are customarily owned, so ask permission and pay small custom fees before swimming, diving or photographing. Women should cover their thighs, and Sunday is kept for church.

MAIN AIRPORTS

Honiara International Airport (HIR), Honiara

Visas & entry for Solomon Islands

Shown for a British passport.

Check the entry requirements

If you are visiting Solomon Islands as a tourist, you must apply for a ‘tourist visa’ through the new Solomon Islands Immigration Division visa portal.

The visa costs 100 US dollars. You will need to provide:

From the UK government's FCDO entry requirements for British passport holders — read the full page for passport validity, permits and exceptions.

Health & vaccinations

See a travel health nurse, GP or travel clinic **6–8 weeks before you go**. Make sure routine UK vaccinations (such as MMR and diphtheria-tetanus-polio) are up to date.

RECOMMENDED FOR MOST TRAVELLERS

- Hepatitis A
- Tetanus
- Typhoid

SOMETIMES ADVISED — DEPENDS ON YOUR TRIP, ACTIVITIES AND HEALTH

- Dengue
- Hepatitis B
- Bat Lyssavirus
- Tuberculosis

YELLOW FEVER CERTIFICATE

A yellow fever certificate is only required if you arrive from (or transit through) a country with yellow fever risk — not if you fly direct from the UK.

MALARIA

High risk of malaria

- There is a high risk of malaria in the Solomon Islands: antimalarial tablets recommended.

Source: TravelHealthPro (National Travel Health Network and Centre), checked 21 October 2026. This is a summary, not medical advice.

Public holidays in Solomon Islands

The next 12 months. Banks, offices and some sights may close, and transport and hotels get busy around these dates.

Fri 25 Dec 2026	Christmas Day
Sat 26 Dec 2026	National Day of Thanksgiving

Mon 28 Dec 2026	National Day of Thanksgiving (observed)
Fri 1 Jan 2027	New Year's Day
Fri 26 Mar 2027	Good Friday
Sat 27 Mar 2027	Holy Saturday
Mon 29 Mar 2027	Easter Monday
Mon 17 May 2027	Whit Monday
Fri 18 Jun 2027	King's Birthday
Wed 7 Jul 2027	Independence Day

National holidays only. Dates based on lunar calendars can move by a day or two depending on official announcements.

Useful phrases in Solomon Islands Pijin

ENGLISH	SOLOMON ISLANDS PIJIN	SAY IT
Hello	Halo	<i>HAH-loh</i>
Thank you	Tanggio	<i>TANG-ghee-oh</i>
Please	Plis	<i>pleess</i>
Excuse me	Skius mi	<i>SKYOOS mee</i>
How much is this?	Hao mas nao diswan?	<i>how MAHS now DIS-wun</i>

Know before you go

Carry Solomon Islands dollars in cash before leaving Honiara: ATMs are scarce in the provinces, and lodges in remote lagoons may not take cards.

Malaria is present throughout the islands; check antimalarial and vaccine advice on TravelHealthPro before you travel, and pack strong repellent and long sleeves.

Domestic flights use small aircraft with tight baggage allowances and frequent schedule changes, so keep spare days in your itinerary and reconfirm flights the day before.

Visa, health and safety rules change. Before you book or travel, check the FCDO travel advice (gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice) and TravelHealthPro (travelhealthpro.org.uk). Costs are estimates. © 2026 Pick My Trip.