

## General Details

Situated to the south east of Papua New Guinea and only 3 hours by air from Australia, the Solomon Islands are one of the most peaceful and beautiful areas of the Pacific. The Solomon Islands comprise 992 islands, of which 147 are inhabited. The estimated population of 560,000 are predominately Melanesian, while some outer islands are home to Polynesians and Micronesia's. The local people appear shy but are very friendly. Most live a subsistence village lifestyle retaining many traditional and ancient customs.

The international country code for the Solomon Islands is 677. The Solomon Islands are 11 hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (GMT).

## Entry And Visa Requirements

Canadian, U.S. , British, Commonwealth and E.E.C visitors do not need to obtain a visa before arrival. (Subject to change). Passports must be valid for 6 months after your departure.

## Medical And Health Requirements

Dental, doctors and hospital services are available in major centers. There is a recompression chamber in Honiara. DAN travel insurance is highly recommended and evacuation insurance is required on all of our charters.

Malaria does exist in the Solomon Islands and anti malarial precautions are recommended. Remember that some medications can make you sun sensitive, so extra care must be taken to ensure that skin is protected from sun burn. Please check with your physician for the best precautions to be taken.

Please advise us of any medication you may be taking prior to your vacation. Note: Mefloquine (brand name Lariam) has side effects which can mimic decompression sickness.

## Travel Insurance

Insurance should be taken to cover: weather problem; expedition cancellations; airline difficulties; medical problems and lost or damaged luggage. Unforeseen weather or machinery problems may cause us to cancel or change an itinerary. No refund is offered for time lost due to the medical evacuation of a guest or reduction of dives due to weather conditions. No compensation is offered to guests to change flights or holiday plans.

## Currency

The currency of the Solomon Islands is the Solomon Dollar. If you plan on shopping or purchasing handicrafts - you will need some local currency. We can help you with small denominations on board. ATMs are available in Honiara.

Payment on board for any extras such as bar drinks, gift shop items or gratuities may be paid on board at the end of the trip. We accept Solomon Dollars, US Dollars or credit card (Visa and MC) which will be processed in US\$ through our reservations office. Note a 3% fee is applied to all credit card transactions.

## Duty Free

The allowance is 200 cigarettes or 250g of tobacco and 2 litres of spirits or equivalent.

We have a fully stocked bar available on the ship. Additional soft drinks, wine, beer and mixed drinks are available for purchase on board. Please do not bring any alcohol onboard as we have a 'Ship's Bar Only' policy.

Some guests like to bring gifts for the local villagers. School supplies (pencils, erasers, rulers), soccer balls, simple grooming aids, used reading glasses, fishing lures and line are all considered valuable. Check out our [Pack for a Purpose Program](#) for more information.

## Weather

The Solomon Islands enjoy a tropical climate with daytime temperatures averaging 29C and evening temperatures averaging 19C. April to November is the most popular time to

visit as the climate is very pleasant with little rain but the Solomon Islands are definitely considered a year round destination.

## Shopping

High quality craftwork including wood carvings, mother of pearl items, shell jewellery and baskets can be bought direct from craftsmen in the outer islands or from craft and souvenir shops in Honiara. Local markets operate most days offering flowers, fruit, vegetables and handicrafts.

## Clothing

The emphasis is on light and casual clothing but not too brief in public places. Remember to cover up with light cotton clothing at dusk and dawn to prevent mosquito bites. Sun protection is absolutely essential. A sarong or skirt is appropriate for village visits as the local custom is to cover your thighs.

## Electricity

240 volts AC, Plug I - same as Australia. Power on board is created through our generator and we ask you to leave your high voltage appliances (hair dryers, etc) at home. We have a limited number of plug adapters on board and suggest you bring your own with you.

## Banking

Trading banks are ANZ and Bank of the South Pacific. ATMs are available in Honiara. If traveling to the remote outer islands, it is best to secure cash first. We can assist you with small denominations on board. Foreign currencies are not well recognized in the outer regions.

## Language

Predominately English speaking throughout although [Melanesian Pijin](#) is spoken by locals.

## Religion

Local traditional beliefs and ceremonies are maintained in remote areas but Christian influence is predominant.

## Water

In general, do not drink local water. We have ample drinking water on board and have the ability to make high quantities of good quality water. In the tropics it is important to drink plenty of non-alcoholic fluids to avoid dehydration.

## Tipping

Gratuities are never expected but always appreciated. We commonly hear comments from our guests along the lines of "this is the best dive boat that I have ever been on. The crew were incredible."

For exceptional service, tips of about 10% of the value of your trip is appropriate. You will find our live aboard crew provides excellent service day and night. A tip is always very welcome and can be given to the Trip Director to be shared among the crew. We ask that you not tip individually on board the boat so that we may recognize all of our staff's contributions.

## Departure Tax

There is currently no locally paid departure taxes for the Solomon Islands.