

Island Traveler

Laucala Island - Paradise on Earth

BY ANTOINETTE, ON MAY 9TH, 2011 [PRINT THIS PAGE](#)

Antoinette interviews Laucala Island Manager Maja Kilgore, who with the help of her husband Thomas, has developed the island to its internationally-renowned status of being one of the most luxurious private island resorts in the world today.

Serene sun-kissed white beaches, sparkling turquoise waters, small romantic coves, emerald green lush tropical vegetation and spectacular ocean views wherever you are - Laucala Island, Fiji is nothing short of paradise.



Laucala paradise hideaway

The island is half an hour by plane from the archipelago's main island Viti Levu and capital city Suva. In addition to being blessed by nature, Laucala also offers guests a rich culture and diversity.

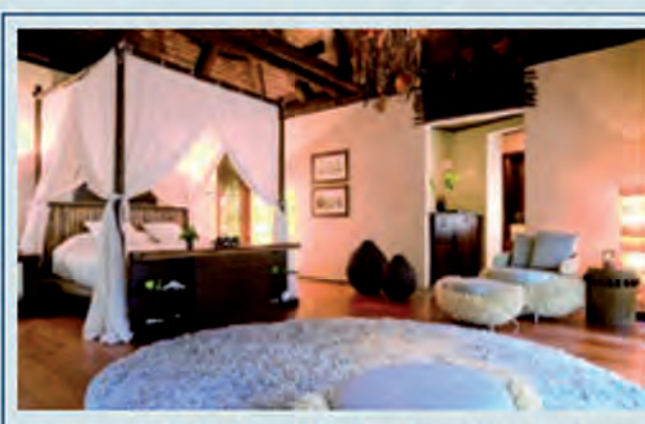
"No request is too much trouble", Ms Kilgore says proudly of her staff whose warm smiles, friendliness, and impeccable service make staying here a unique and truly unforgettable experience. A lot of work goes into running the 3000 acre island in terms of logistics and catering to the guests' needs at any time, and anywhere on the island. "A Tao or friend is assigned to each guest to take care of everything". Whether you want a snack delivered to you on the 4th whole or a romantic candle-lit dinner served to you on your private beach, everything is possible on Laucala.

Whatever your taste, the five different residences combine the ultimate in luxury with nature and Fijian traditional architecture and design

Simple yet opulent, all 25 villas enjoy complete privacy, have their own beach and pool and have been built using local materials. A striking yet subtle feature of the open designs is the effortlessly blended indoor and outdoor living throughout the resort.

Surrounded by tropical jungle on one side and Seagrass Bay on the other, the gorgeous private beach leads right to your door in the Seagrass Residences, so that the first thing you feel is the sand between their toes...

The fresh ocean sea breeze mixes with the sweet scent of tropical flowers that swirl around early morning bathers in their beautiful, secluded gardens with outdoor stone tubs - a lovely way to awaken the senses in the Plantation residences, located on the old Copra Plantation.



Traditionally designed interiors

Hidden on Nawi Hill overlooking the indigo lagoon, heavenly fragrances of the rich flora and fauna from the tropical grounds of the Plateau residences and panoramic ocean views will transport you to another place.

At the most secluded and highest point of the island, the Hilltop Residence offers breathtaking panoramas of the island and waters...which leads me to the next type of accommodation, the "Wai" or one-of-a-kind overwater residence, an absolute must for water

lovers...fall asleep and wake to the gentle lapping sounds of the ocean.

The northern-most exclusive "Udu" Peninsular Residence feels like its own island, boasting magnificent open ocean views from the fabulous bath and living rooms.

No matter where you stay, the personal touches and warmth of the local staff will entice you to learn more about their ways and lifestyle.

Delicious dining from nature's kitchen

It is easy to see why eating on Laucala is a tantalizing treat for the taste buds. "Freshness" is an integral part of the philosophy, which goes along with island's self-sufficiency to give everyone an unparalleled culinary experience. There island has a coconut plantation, large vegetable and herb gardens, hydroponic gardens, fruit orchards, grows papaya, bush lime, melon and pineapples. The meat, poultry and dairy produce is organically farmed and of course, there is an abundance of seafood brought in daily by fishermen from the surrounding waters.

"We've worked hard over the past three years to successfully achieve our goal of becoming around 80 per cent self-sufficient and growing all we need for the kitchens and spa", Ms Kilgore says. A large team of more than 50 people works these areas, to provide the exquisite selection of ingredients for the innovative chefs, who blend them with

Fijian influences and modern techniques. The result is sophisticated, mouthwatering cuisine that showcases the islands home-grown produce. There are five restaurants in unique settings, which add as much to the dining experience as the food itself.

"A favourite to try at the Beach Bar is our classic, traditional Fijian dish called Koko pronounced Kokonda, quite typical using fresh marinated fish or Lobster in lime juice, with coconut milk and garnished with onions, chili and chives on top, served chilled".

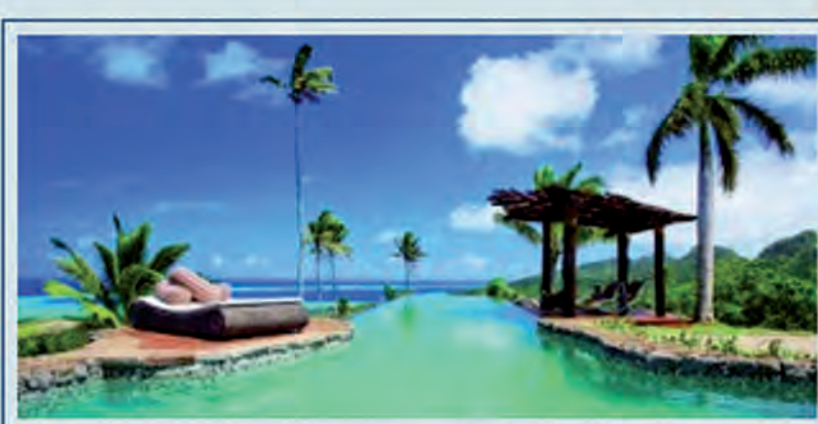
Paradise pampering

It's spa time! You are spoilt for choice when it comes to the relaxing treatments at the four private villas which make up the spa. Each features a large outdoor terrace with impressive deep-soaking tub, carved out of single blocks of stone, overlooking the ocean.

The continual theme of exclusivity and privacy has been achieved using the lush vegetation to enclose the outdoor bathing areas. Greeted with a delicious fresh fruit drink or relaxing tea, the only thing you have to do is select one of the four signature scents (citrus, earth, mint or floral), which will be added to the freshly-made coconut oil to create your personalized treatment product...bliss!

"All our products including lotions, soaps and shampoo are freshly made right before using, with ingredients from the gardens, which is why they can only be found here", Ms Kilgore explains. "Guests tend to enjoy spa journeys with body polishes and scrubs. I can recommend the most popular Fijian Bombo massage, for which we recently won an international award".

To move or to relax...



Poolside

Whether you lounge by the pool on one of the extremely comfortable outdoor cushion daybeds...snooze in the sun, savour the endless delectable delights, sip cocktails at the Rock Lounge in the late afternoon... hike, go horse-back riding, perfect your swing with a round of golf, swim, scuba-dive, snorkel, water-ski or simply take a boat out for day excursion, you will be creating the memories of a lifetime.

Time to go

When I ask Ms Kilgore what guests say at the end of their time on Laucala, she tells me that the dining experiences are highly praised, along with the island's variety of land and water sports and different ways to enjoy the privacy, peace and tranquility.

As for her personal and greatest challenge of running paradise on earth, the answer is simple: staying self-disciplined!



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Lounging outside