



ANDREW HARPER'S
Hideaway Report
GOLF EDITION
MAY 2011
online

**A NEW
ZEALAND
ODYSSEY**
PRIVATE
LAUCALA
ISLAND
**NEW LINKS
AT BANDON
DUNES**

{ CANDID REVIEWS BY A WRITER WHO TRAVELS INCOGNITO AND ALWAYS PAYS HIS OWN WAY }

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THE HILLS CLUBHOUSE



Fiji's Laucala Island

12th green at **Laucala Island**



LAUCALA ISLAND FIJI

ONE OF THE BEST NEW COURSES IN GOLF IS ALSO ONE OF THE MOST PRIVATE and remote. Designed by Scotsman **David McLay Kidd**, the par-72 track is located on **Laucala Island** in Fiji, and is part of a new resort created by Red Bull energy drink co-founder Dietrich Mateschitz. As Laucala Island resort accommodates a maximum of 80 guests on the 3,500-acre isle, players will frequently have the greens all to themselves.



11th fairway at **Laucala Island**

Kidd is one of the bright young architects in golf. He made his mark a decade ago when he laid out Bandon Dunes in Southern Oregon and has since produced an impressive body of work, including The Castle Course in St. Andrews, Scotland. At Laucala, Kidd and his crew hacked the 18-hole track from the jungle, taking five years to complete the job. It opened in

DAVID MCLAY KIDD IS ONE OF THE BRIGHT YOUNG ARCHITECTS IN GOLF.

2010, and deserves to be considered among his finest work — perhaps not on the level of Bandon, which is regarded as one of the top courses constructed in the modern era, but very good indeed.

The holes at Laucala wind around hills so dense with vegetation that golfers might consider carrying machetes along with their irons and woods, should they need to chase after errant shots. Massive coconut palms line several fairways, and a number of holes provide sweeping ocean views,

while others hug the island's sandy shores.

Kidd has given golfers the chance to hit several downhill tee shots, which are always a delight, as they make players feel they are hitting their drives longer and higher. He has also provided a pleasing mix of long and short par-4s, as well as a couple of 5-pars that can be reached in 2. A halfway house perched on a small cliff overlooking the

sea provides as scenic a mid-round respite as any course in the game,

and is well-stocked with fresh pineapples, coconut and sparkling rosé wine.

My favorite hole is the 12th, owing to its huge greenside bunker; it runs from the right side of the putting surface into an adjoining beach, across which small crabs scurry and waves break. I also fancy No. 13, a little par-3 with slivers of the ocean and beach visible through the palms behind the green from the tee — cheerful reminders of what awaits golfers when their rounds are done. **AH**





Laucala Island resort in Fiji

