

Fiji

Travel



A vibrant tropical scene in Fiji. The foreground is filled with dense, bright green foliage, including large-leafed plants and palm trees. In the middle ground, a traditional wooden boat with a thatched roof is docked on a calm body of water. The background is dominated by tall palm trees and other lush vegetation under a clear, bright blue sky. The overall atmosphere is serene and idyllic.

Experience Fiji

What does life in Fiji look like? Fiji is famous for its tropical landscapes and stunning beaches; however, it has so much more to offer. Life in Suva, Fiji's capital and vibrant urban centre, offers an entirely new side of life in the South Pacific. From daily life in Suva, to weekends spent exploring Fiji's tropical highlands, rainforest and coastlines, your 12 weeks in Fiji will be a truly unforgettable and enriching experience!

Did you know ...

- Fiji is an island nation, comprised of more than 330 islands, over 110 of which are inhabited. About $\frac{3}{4}$ of the country's population lives on the largest island, Viti Levu, home to our SID program base of Suva, Fiji's capital city.
- Fiji was the first country to approve the UN Climate Deal after ratifying the Paris agreement!
- Fiji has 3 official languages - English, Fijian and Hindustani. Fiji's largest ethnic minority is Indo-Fijian, who make up close to 40% of the country's overall population. ITaukei are the major indigenous people of the Fiji islands.





Did you know ...

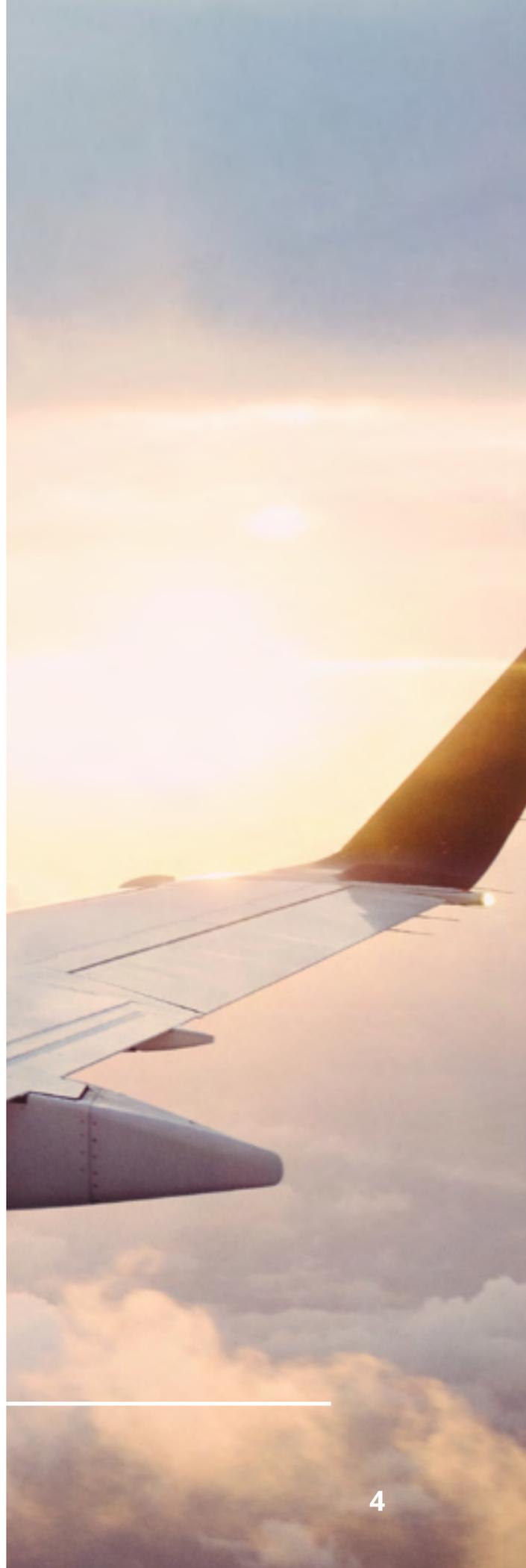
- Most Fijians are religious. It is not uncommon to see people praying before meals, hear the sound of church choirs on Sundays, or observe a variety of Hindu celebrations.
- Fiji is located on the International Date Line, an imaginary line in the Pacific Ocean that splits consecutive calendar days. There is a marker that you can visit on the island of Taveuni where you can stand between 'yesterday' and 'today'!
- Kava, also known as yaqona, is Fiji's traditional drink. It is made from the powdered root of the kava plant, from the pepper family. Kava powder is mixed with water in a traditional bowl called a tanoa, and drunk from a coconut bowl shell, also called a bilo. Drinking kava can be ceremonial, but kava is also enjoyed quite casually throughout Fiji!
- Fiji was listed in a global survey as the happiest country in the world in 2018!

Visa, flights & arrivals

You will be responsible for booking your own flight to Fiji; Your SID Fiji Program Director will work with you one-on-one to ensure that you apply for the correct visa to cover your time in Fiji. You will receive a Letter of Invitation from your internship host organization in order to secure this visa.

Your Fiji Program Director can provide recommendations and contact information for a travel agent should you require assistance with this process. The recommended arrival and departure dates will be shared with you upon your acceptance into the program.

You will fly into Nadi International Airport, where you will be met by a local driver who will greet you with an 'Insight Global Education' sign in hand.



Arrival in Suva

From the Nadi International airport, it will be an approximate four hour drive to Suva, our program home base. You will be driven straight to the student guesthouse in Suva. Your Program Director will be waiting to greet you at the guesthouse and show you to your room. Once you've had a chance to settle in, in-country staff will take you on a neighbourhood orientation and help to set you up with a sim card, ATM withdrawal, currency exchange, and groceries.

First week

You'll also take part in an extensive in-country orientation alongside your fellow participants over the course of your first few days in Suva! This will help you to get your bearings so that you're feeling comfortable and well-prepared to begin your internship the following week.





Budgeting

Fees & Finance

Insight believes in providing a program that is of the best possible value to a student who is intent on furthering their knowledge and experience abroad.

For students who want to challenge themselves while exploring a new culture, the costs involved don't even compare to the life experiences gained while travelling abroad! However, we understand that spending a semester abroad is a financial sacrifice for many students, so we want to ensure all participants have a full understanding of the costs involved in participating in the Semester in Development.

Admitted participants will be asked to confirm their spot in the Semester in Development within by making a non-refundable deposit of \$1000 USD within 10 days of their official offer of acceptance.

Remaining costs are outlined within your acceptance letter, and are related to what term you'll be travelling abroad with us.

What We Provide

In-Country Support

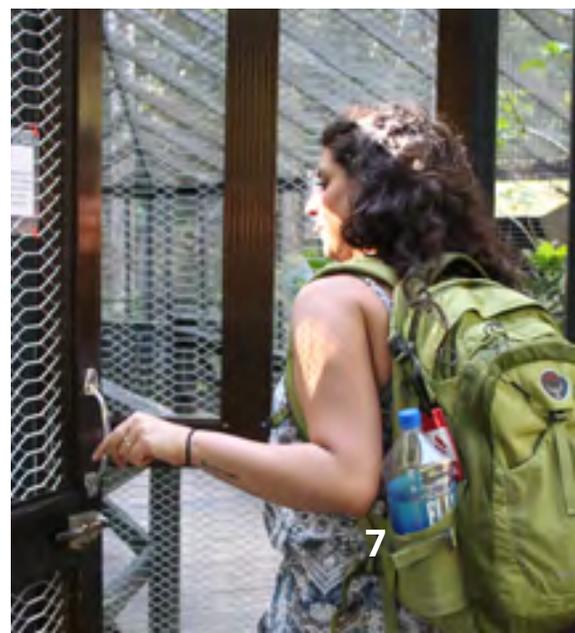
Unlike most international programs, the Semester in Development includes in-person support throughout the program. Our in-country staff arrange and liaise internships, oversee program safety and security, run orientation upon arrival, facilitate educational reflection sessions, organize social and personal/professional development activities, and provide ongoing personalized support as needed.

Tuition & Academic Expenses

You will learn from experienced local professors in private classes to learn subjects from a new perspective in the local context. Upon the completion of these courses, your transcripts are delivered directly to your school so that you can earn credits.

Internship Coordination

We put in the time and effort to find a placement that is right for you; one where you can learn about social/global issues in a relevant and hands-on context, develop transferable skills, and see what it's like to work in a different country. Through a collaborative and personalized process, we will work with you to pair you with suitable internship opportunities. In many cases, what you are studying back home is going to be directly related to your internship placement.



Accommodation

SID participants will be provided with safe and secure accommodation, living in shared dorm-style rooms during their stay with access to a kitchen, laundry/cleaning services, and utilities. Housing will be located within 30 minutes of internships and near a number of restaurants, shops, and more!

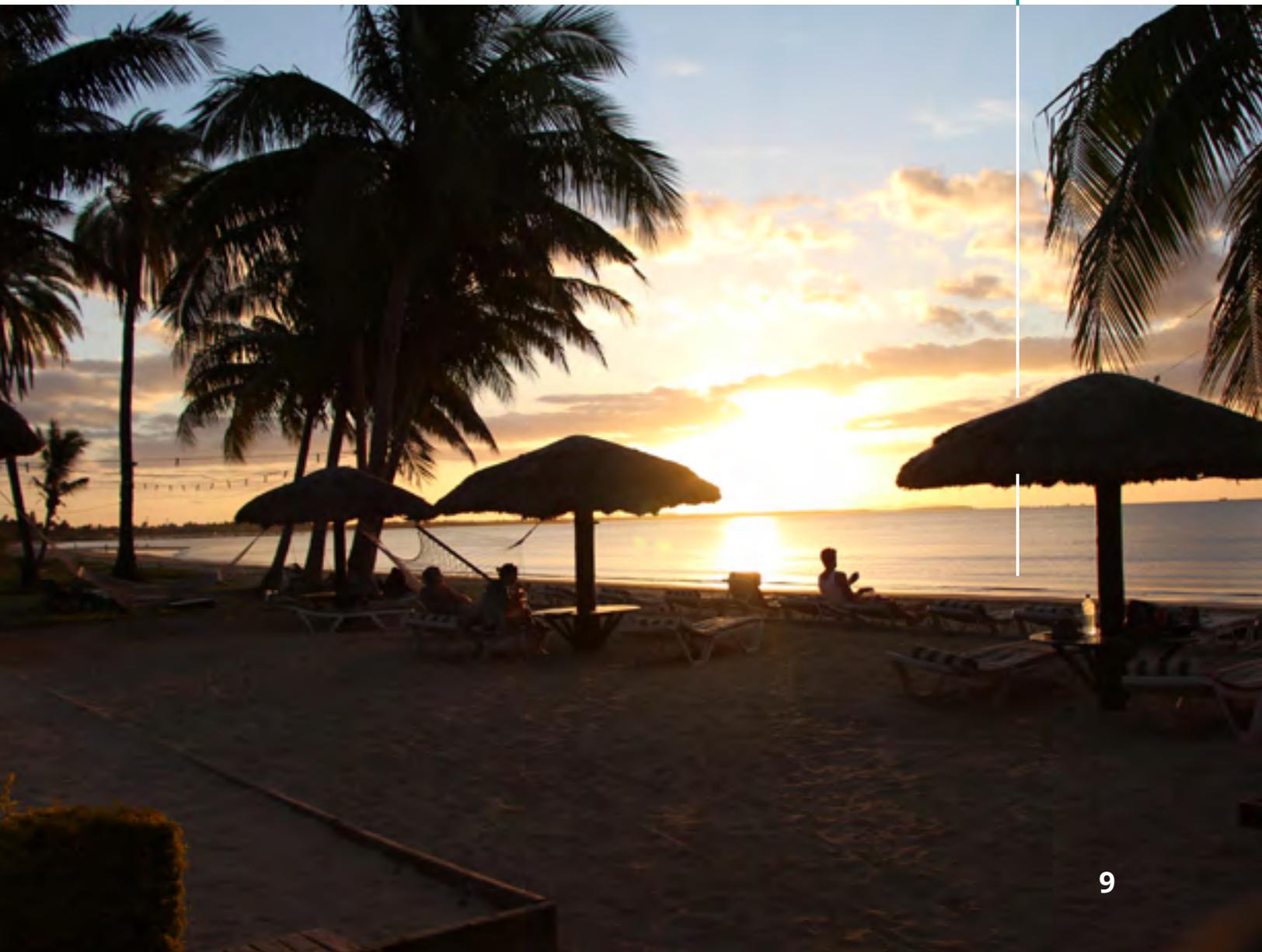
Orientation & Arrival Airport Pick-Up

We want to ensure you feel comfortable, safe, and excited as soon as you arrive! You'll be picked up from the airport and taken directly to your new home, where you will be immediately greeted by our in-country staff. We'll help you settle in and get you set up for the remainder of the program, while also running a number of fun activities for you to get to know the city and your fellow cohort members. Additionally, you'll be provided with detailed pre-departure orientation prior to your arrival.



Personal Costs

Insight gives students the freedom to experience the semester abroad on their own terms. Many programs will force students onto set meal plans, strict allowances, and mandatory arrival and departure dates. Our program allows students to spend as much, or as little as they want on what they value when travelling. For this reason, we have not included the following items to our program cost, and we allow students determine their own budgets.





International flights

It is very common for students to travel on their own, or with friends prior to arriving in-country. The following prices are estimates of round trip flights with no other stops, booked 3-4 months prior to departure. Your itinerary may be quite different!

Toronto to Nadi (roundtrip) - **\$1,700+**

Vancouver to Nadi (roundtrip) - **\$1,400+**

Food, transportation, and personal expenses

Some of our participants buy groceries at the local markets and meal prep for themselves, while others will eat out almost every night! Some participants leave their semester abroad with less than what they brought, while others can't fit all the souvenirs into their bags. How you choose to live during your semester abroad is entirely your choice. Below, we've included some sample budgets for you to get a better sense of costs in-country varies.

Health/Travel insurance

We require that all participants of Semester In Development have travel insurance before arriving in-country. Some academic institutions offer travel insurance with tuition, while some credit cards also offer travel insurance. Who you decide to go with, and the price is up to you.

Approximately **\$250 USD***

*Estimate based on quote from World Nomads

Vaccinations, medication, etc.

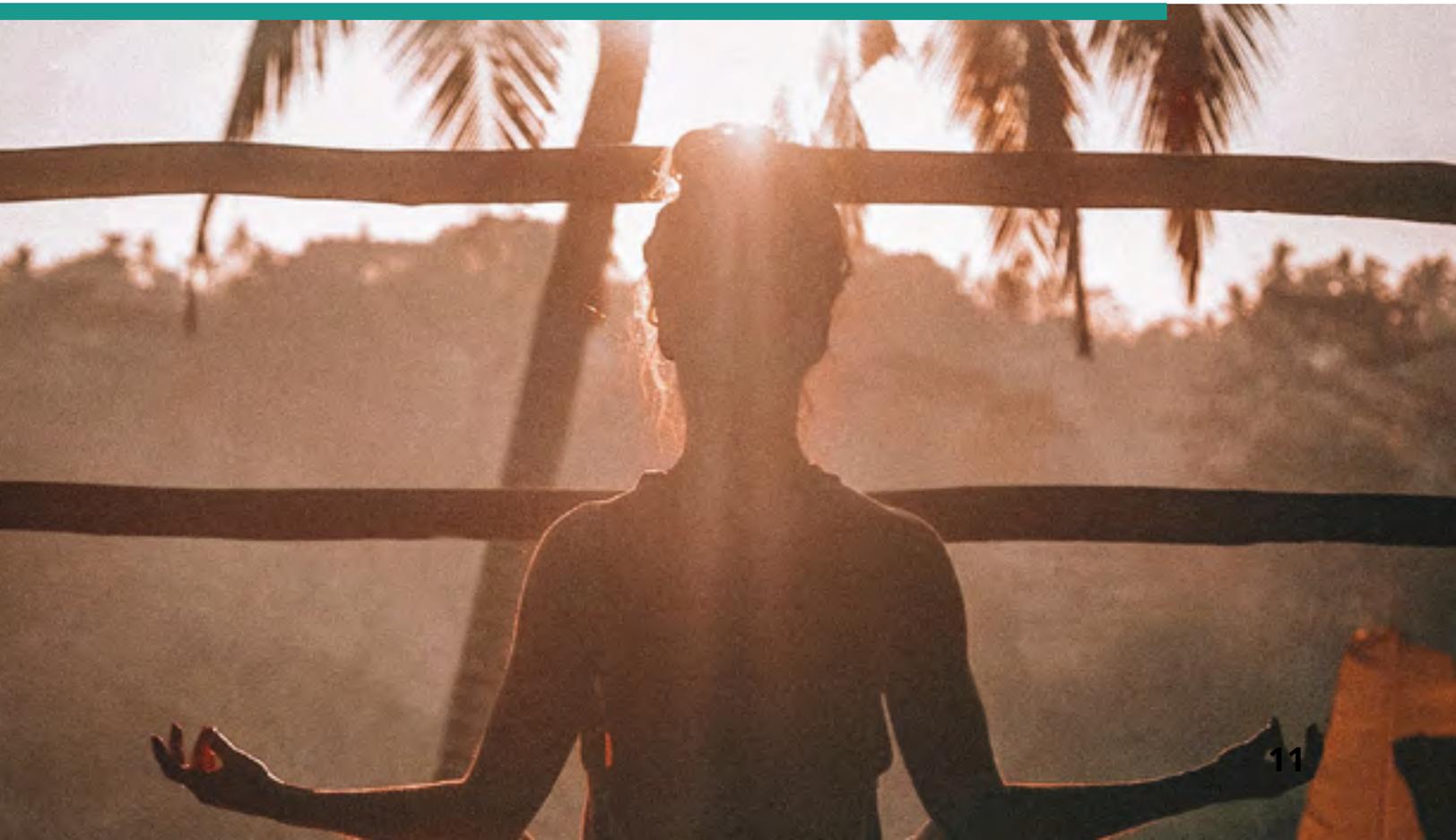
Travel clinic consultation **\$35 CAD**

Vaccinations: hepatitis A and B **\$185 CAD**; typhoid **\$30 CAD**

Passports, documentation, or entry visa

14-Day Visa on Arrival - Free

3-Month Visa Extension (purchased once in-country) - **\$112 CAD**



Sample Budgets

It helps to know how much people have spent on their trips. The following are real budgets from past student trips. All prices are listed in CAD.

SARAH, FALL 2018

ROUTINE EXPENDITURES

transportation	\$ 225
groceries	\$ 450
market	\$ 75
going out (restuarants, bars, etc.)	\$ 300

EXCURSIONS (ALL-INCLUSIVE)

beachhouse	\$ 23
uprising resort at pacific harbour	\$ 38
fiji shark dive	\$ 190
bula pass	\$ 260
week in yasawas	\$ 375

OTHER EXPENSES

phone minutes	\$ 12
3 months data	\$ 68
souvenirs from pure fiji spa outlet	\$ 55
padi diving certification course	\$ 375

TOTAL: \$ 2,446

RUDI, FALL 2018

ROUTINE EXPENDITURES

transportation	\$ 200
groceries	\$ 450
market	\$ 80
going out (restuarants, bars, etc.)	\$ 280

EXCURSIONS (ALL-INCLUSIVE)

beachhouse + shark snorkeling	\$ 70
mana island w/snorkeling + boat tour	\$ 165
takalana bay dolphin tour	\$ 68
bega island	\$ 40
nadi hiking + sigatoka sand dunes	\$ 75
natadola beach	\$ 52

OTHER EXPENSES

phone plan (calling minutes)	\$ 12
wifi router	\$ 70
gym pass	\$ 70
tattoo	\$ 95

TOTAL: \$ 1,727

Prices In-Country (2019)

GROCERIES

loaf of bread	\$ 1.00
pasta	\$ 2.50
12 eggs	\$ 3.00
milk	\$ 1.80
apples (per kg)	\$ 0.25
pineapple	\$ 1.80
carrots (per kg)	\$ 1.25
imported cheddar	\$5.00 - \$10.00
rotisserie chicken	\$ 10.00

SAMPLE RESTAURANT MENU ITEMS

local food court meal	\$ +5.00
cafe panini	\$ 5.00
medium budget meal	\$ 10.00
high end meal	+\$15.00
pecialty coffee	\$2.00 - \$3.00
fruit smoothie	\$5.00 - \$10.00
street bbq	\$ 3.00
bottle of local beer	\$4.00 - \$6.00
glass of wine	\$ 8.00
cocktail	+\$12.00

ENTERTAINMENT

movie ticket	\$4.00 - \$5.00
bar entrance	free - \$3.00
pool day at hotel	free with purchase of food

TRANSPORTATION

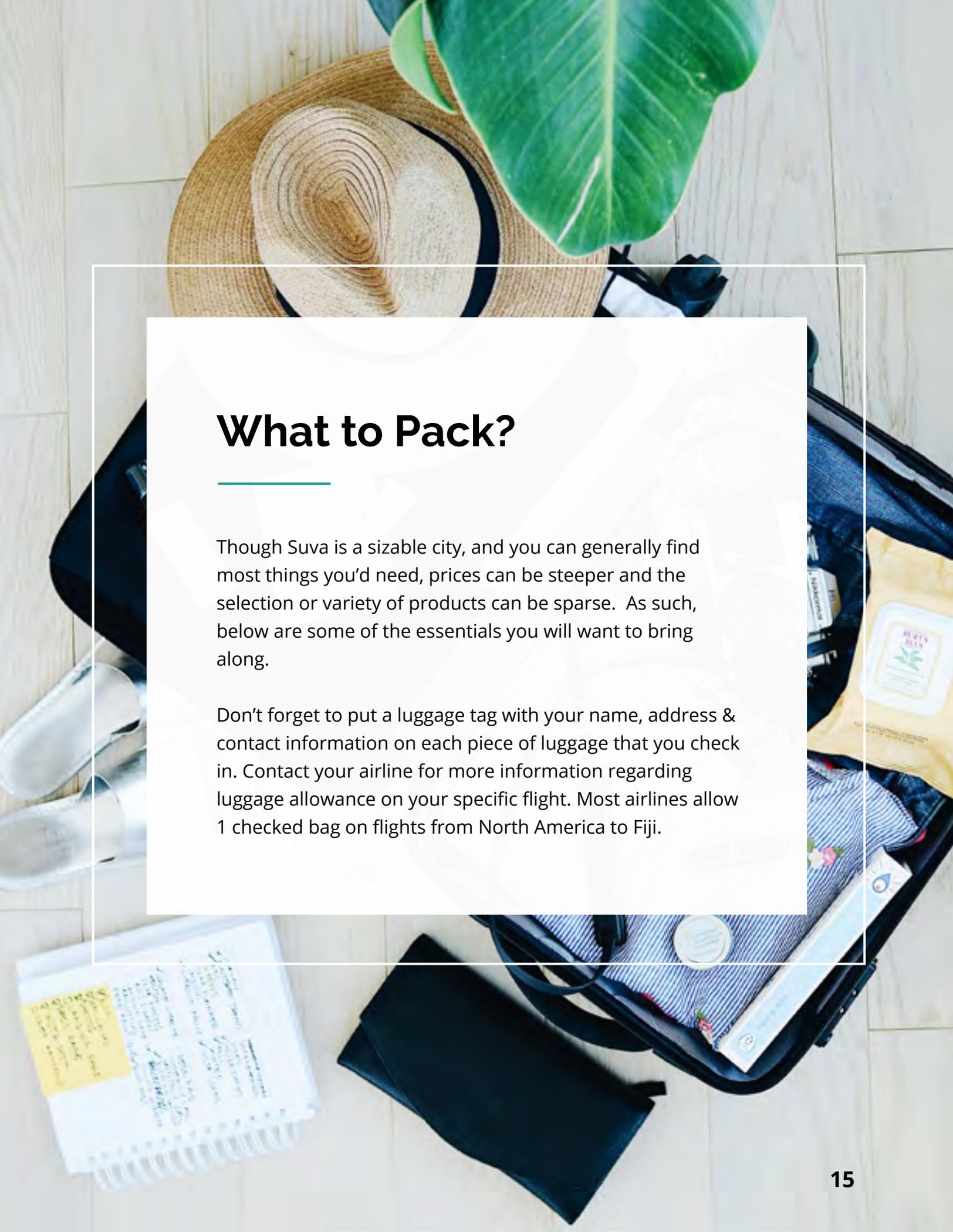
local bus fare	\$ +0.40
taxi fares (across Suva)	\$1.25 - \$4.00
coach bus (across island)	\$3.00 - \$10.00

EXCERSIZE

basic gym membership (monthly)	\$ 30.00
high end gym membership (monthly)	\$ 60.00
fitness classes (drop-in)	\$ 6.00
outdoor public gym	free!

PHONE & INTERNET

approx. 1 month of local calls	\$ 15.00
75 gb of monthly data	\$ 60.00



What to Pack?

Though Suva is a sizable city, and you can generally find most things you'd need, prices can be steeper and the selection or variety of products can be sparse. As such, below are some of the essentials you will want to bring along.

Don't forget to put a luggage tag with your name, address & contact information on each piece of luggage that you check in. Contact your airline for more information regarding luggage allowance on your specific flight. Most airlines allow 1 checked bag on flights from North America to Fiji.



Packing List

1. Travel Essentials

- Passport - (ensure your passport expiry date is more than 6 months after the end-date of the program)
- Itinerary/Return Plane Tickets
- \$100 USD (for unexpected expenses en route)
- Visa debit card (for ATM withdrawals)
- Photocopies of passport, birth certificate, health insurance details
- Money belt
- Student ID
- TSA approved luggage lock
- Necessary prescription medications (labelled)
- Hand sanitizer
- Ear plugs
- A spare outfit and undergarments (in case your luggage gets delayed)
- Book/e-reader
- Any valuables (electronics, cash, bank cards, travel essentials etc)

2. Carry-on Item

- Backpack (handy for daily use in Suva)
- TSA Compliant toiletry kit (also handy for weekend trips)

3. Medications

- Prescription medication (any recommended for you by your family doctor or travel clinician)



4. Toiletries & Supplies

Standard toiletry items like shampoo, toothpaste, contact lens solution and sunscreen can be found in Suva. If you're particular about brands, then it is recommended that you pack the following:

- Shampoo/conditioner
- Body wash/soap
- Toothbrush/
toothpaste/dental floss
- Deodorant
- Hairbrush/hair ties
- Razors/shaving
supplies
- Glasses/contact lenses
and solution
- Makeup/perfume
(limited selection
available in Suva)
- Face wash/ moisturizer
- Sunscreen/sunglasses
- Mosquito repellent
- Tweezers/nail clippers
- Feminine hygiene
products
- Towels (1 bath, 1 face)



5. Electronics

- Laptop computer (mandatory for internships)
- Unlocked smart phone
- Headphones
- All necessary electronic chargers
- Adapter/Converter (with power surge protection). Fiji uses a 240 volts AC 50Hz with (same as Australia/New Zealand) three-pin power points
- Camera (with memory cards) and charger
- Flashlight

Clothing & Attire

A common misconception made by first-time travellers is that all you'll need is sun hats, durable pants, Birkenstocks and plain t-shirts. This couldn't be further from the truth.

Suva is like any city with a diverse population and a range of things to do. While in Suva, our staff will dress similarly to how they do at home – similar attire for work, social settings, exercising, etc. The only real differences are: (1) because of the tropical heat, they dress fairly informally in their day-to-day;

(2) Fijians dress a bit more conservatively – long skirts worn by women and sulus worn by men. Younger Fijians in Suva dress more modern and similar to North American styles. In the village, the dress is very conservative (sleeves, sulus).

It is important to pack wisely – do you really need 10 pairs of shoes? Probably not! Think about the length of time you will be away, and the kinds of activities you will take part in. Consider the weather, culture and your comfort when packing.

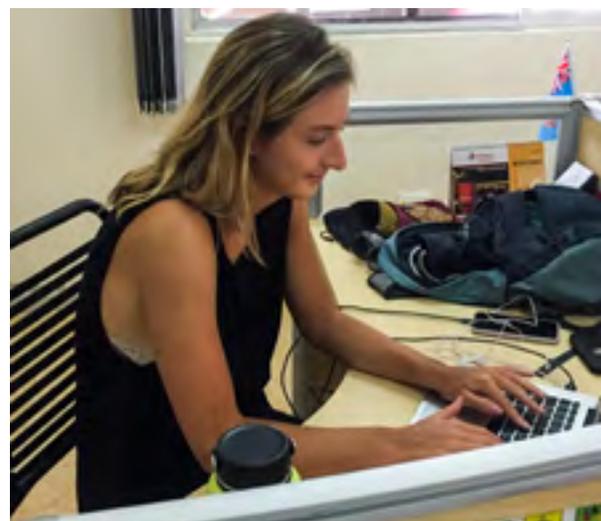


We recommend you pack the following for:

Work

What you will wear at work depends somewhat on your internship placement. Some offices wear business dress, such as dress pants and dress shirts, while others wear traditional breezy sulus and flowered bula shirts. Business dress is expected at meetings and conferences. Office temperatures can be unpredictable, as some have air conditioning and others just fans, so bring light clothes and layers. Regardless of where you intern, bring at least three professional outfits to Fiji, such as:

- Dress pants or skirts
- Nice blouses and tops
- Dress shoes (leather shoes, flats, etc.)
- Cardigan and/or blazer jacket
- A suit and a couple of ties
- A pant/skirt suit



Social Events

The nightlife in Suva is small scale but lively! There are a handful of fun bars and nice restaurants. Much like the day-to-day attire, Suva's nightlife is laid back. You can dress up or dress down! However, some bars have a closed-toed shoe policy (no flip flops). When socializing in Suva, our team wears similar clothing to what we'd wear at home. At night, the dress code becomes much less conservative amongst young Fijians. Even if you are a fairly casual person, bring one or two nicer outfits for any special events. You'll want to consider packing:

- Jeans
- Dresses/skirts
- Button-down shirts
- Nice sandals/dress shoes



Other

Otherwise, you will dress how you would on a hot day at home. Just keep in mind that Fiji is very humid, and pack accordingly. Don't forget:

- Short and long sleeved shirts
- Jeans, shorts, light pants for hot days
- Dresses and long skirts
- A hoodie or light jacket for cool days
- Heavy jackets are unnecessary, but a light rain jacket is a good idea
- Undergarments
- Socks
- Pyjamas
- Sturdy sandals and flip-flops
- Walking/running/hiking shoes
- Hat
- Swimwear
- Sporting/hiking attire





Staying Safe & Healthy While Abroad

Prior to your arrival in Fiji, there are a few steps you'll take in order to ensure that you're safe and healthy while abroad. Every SID program participant is responsible for purchasing and providing proof of Travel Insurance, which includes medical coverage for the duration of their time abroad. Your Program Director can provide recommendations of reputable travel insurance providers.

Prior to your semester abroad in Fiji, you'll also need to visit a travel clinic and speak with a travel nurse/doctor about your planned time abroad. The travel clinician will be able to identify any recommended vaccinations and/or medications that you should obtain prior to your travels.

Once in-country, your Program Director will provide information on a number of reputable walk-in clinics, hospitals and pharmacies located in Suva. During Orientation, you'll also be briefed on best practices regarding safety in the city and in Fiji more generally. Insight's in-country staff are based in Suva, just a short distance from the student guesthouse, and are available to provide support and guidance throughout your entire experience.





Ins and Outs of Everyday Life in Suva

Suva is Fiji's capital and largest city, with a population of just under 90,000. It's located on the southeast coast of Viti Levu, Fiji's largest island. Suva has a long history as Fiji's capital, and contains a mix of historical buildings dating back to the 1800's, alongside a vibrant, modern cityscape. A tropical metropolis, Suva is a perfect location for the SID Fiji program!

As a participant in the Semester in Development Fiji program, you'll spend Monday-Thursday interning with one of our many change-making partner organizations in Suva. On Fridays, you'll be in class with the rest of the cohort in courses offered by Fiji National University's experienced professors.

Beyond your internship and school, life in Suva offers a variety of things to do. Whether it's kickboxing lessons after work, sunset strolls along the seawall, trips to the bustling Municipal Market or weekends at the beach in nearby Pacific Harbour, participants have found plenty of ways to make the most of their evenings and weekends too!

Getting Around Town

Relatively small in size, Suva is a very walkable city. If the heat gets to be too much, participants have a variety of transport options to get around town easily and safely with access to a public bus system, taxis (trips start at \$1 USD) as well as a series of coach buses that travel across the island. Utilizing the inner-city buses or the coach bus system is made easy with a transit card, which you can load money onto.





All Things Food

Fijian cuisine is truly a treat, with no shortage of fresh, local ingredients from the surrounding tropics. Staples of Fijian dishes include coconut, taro, sweet potato, cassava, rice and fish. A favourite style of Fijian food is lovo - food wrapped in palm fronds or banana leaves and baked in an underground oven. The result is a delicious smokey, BBQ-style dish. There is also an incredible variety of tropical fruit available in Fiji, including pineapple, watermelon, bananas, mango, papaya (also known as poupou), guava, dragon fruit and passion fruit.

Suva also boasts a variety of restaurants and international cuisines, to include Indian, Japanese, Mexican, Chinese, Korean BBQ and of course plenty of seafood!



Staying Healthy & Safe

Suva has a number of quality clinics, emergency services, pharmacies and specialists that are available to provide care. If you have specific concerns, in-country staff are available to address your questions.

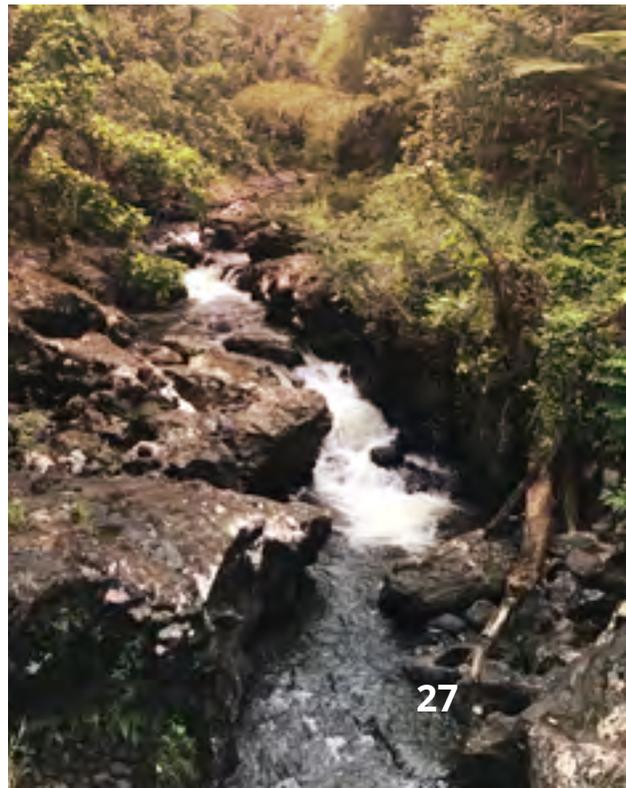
There's plenty of fun ways to stay active in Suva! There are a variety of fitness classes available, such as kick boxing, yoga, aerial arts and power-fit classes. Suva's Rucksack Club also regularly organizes hiking trips to surrounding regions. A quick bus ride along the Coral Coast can take you to the beach to enjoy a variety of aquatic activities, to include surfing, snorkeling and scuba diving.



Exploring the City

We also encourage participants to explore their new home by checking out some key spots around Suva:

- **The Suva Municipal Market** is famous for its incredible selection of fresh fruits, vegetables and seafood. Head upstairs to purchase kava, or explore the flower market vendors outside the market.
- **Thurston Gardens & the Fiji Museum** is another excellent spot to check out in Suva's city centre. Thurston Gardens, Fiji's botanical gardens, are a beautiful green space, perfect for enjoying a relaxing picnic. On the garden grounds is the Fiji Museum, which offers a window into Fiji's history and culture. The museum is attached to a lovely outdoor cafe, offering coffee and fresh juices.
- **Colo-i-Suva Forest Park** is a rainforest with hiking trails, waterfalls and natural swimming pools found just outside of Suva. It makes for an excellent day trip - be sure to pack your swimsuit, hiking shoes and a picnic lunch.





- **The Nasese Seawall** wraps around Suva's harbour, with incredible views of the Pacific. There are outdoor gyms scattered along the seawall, as well as benches which make the perfect spot to catch the sunset.
- **Suva's Handicraft Market**, located next to the Municipal Market, boasts a wide array of locally-made handicrafts and souvenirs.
- **The Grand Pacific Hotel** is a historical icon of the South Pacific and definitely worth a visit. GPH is located along Suva's main street, Victoria Parade, along the seawall. It's also a perfect spot to enjoy sundowner drinks after work!
- **Albert Park**, located across from GPH, is another historical site in Suva. It's a popular spot for rugby games, and also includes outdoor gym facilities.

Home Sweet Home: Accommodation in Suva

We want you to enjoy all that Suva has to offer, so our participants are housed in a safe and central suburb of the city with easy access to shops, entertainment, and more. The student house is a 10 minute walk from two separate shopping complexes, which include grocery stores, pharmacies, restaurants and bars. It's also located close to a number of beautiful parks and green spaces.

The student house has 2 full kitchens, multiple shared dining/living spaces and dorm-style bedrooms with bunk beds. Bedrooms are equipped with bedding and full wardrobes with hangers. The kitchens are furnished with all basic appliances such as dishes, pots and pans, toasters, blenders, french presses, microwaves and toaster ovens.





SID Programming

As a member of the Semester in Development cohort you'll have the opportunity to participate in regularly scheduled activities, led by your Program Director.

Every two weeks you'll attend a biweekly meeting with your fellow cohort members. This will be an opportunity to check in on how things are progressing at your internship and at Fiji National University, as well as to engage in discussions on a range of topics relevant to the SID Fiji Program. Past biweekly meeting topics have included...

- Development & Neocolonialism
- Voluntourism & the White Saviour Narrative
- The Ethics of Travel
- Passport Privilege
- The Anthropocene
- Politics & History of the South Pacific

These meetings are a great opportunity to discuss and reflect on some of the challenges and new perspectives you'll gain through your time abroad, which we believe is an important part of the SID experience.

On alternating weeks your Program Director will organize a social event. Whether it's homemade taco night at the house or a night out in Suva to enjoy some live music, socials are a chance for everyone to connect, unwind and spend some time together.



Discovering Fiji & The South Pacific

Fiji is a popular travel destination for a reason. With pristine beaches, bright blue waters and vibrant reefs, Fiji looks like something out of a postcard. For seasoned and beginner divers and snorkelers alike, there are plenty of fish and seemingly endless stretches of reefs, making it a favourite for underwater exploration. For those who are more interested in staying on land, Fiji's beaches are a snapshot of paradise. There's also plenty of lush forests, fantastic hiking opportunities, and a lively nightlife.

Former participants of the Semester in Development have almost always suggested that more travel time be

incorporated into the program. As a result, our programs contain a one-week mid-program break from courses and internships, during which students will have the opportunity to travel.

All travel plans will be dependent on a participant's desire to travel, personal budget, and sense of adventure. Insight's in-country program coordinator can provide support with travel logistics and offer advice. Most participants will also use their weekends to get out of the city and explore the island of Viti Levu.



Top Destinations in Fiji

The Coral Coast

Fiji's famous Coral Coast is an 80km stretch of white sandy beaches along the southern coastline of Viti Levu. A beachcomber's paradise, the coast is known for its beautiful array of hotels, resorts and backpackers, which offer opportunities for scuba diving, snorkelling and surfing. A favourite spot along the Coral Coast is Beachouse, a vibrant backpackers that offers surf lessons, sea kayaking, yoga on the beach and a fun nightlife! Fiji's world-famous shark dive is also accessible off the Coral Coast, through Beqa Adventure Divers. Coach buses run along the coast from Suva to Nadi every hour, leaving from the Suva Bus Station in the city centre.



Leleuvia

Leleuvia is part of the Lomaiviti archipelago, a group of tiny coral islands off the Eastern coast of Viti Levu. Boat transfers can be arranged from Waidallice, a port just an hour's drive from Suva. The island is a stunning weekend getaway from Suva, with opportunities for paddleboarding, kayaking and diving, and dorm-style accommodations available through the Leleuvia Island Resort.



The Yasawas

The Yasawas are a chain of around 20 islands in the north-west, and are another of Fiji's trendiest destinations. The Yasawas are known for their exquisite, dramatic scenery and more remote island destinations. Check out the island of Naviti to swim with manta rays at Mantaray Island Resort, a happening backpackers known for its parties.



Vanua Levu

Vanua Levu is the second largest island in Fiji. Visitors often head to Savusavu, a scenic town along the coast which features white sand beaches, and opportunities for snorkelling, sailing and fishing. Ferries are available that run between Savusavu and Taveuni.

“ The Semester in Development made me really stand out to potential employers.

Thanks to the program, all of my interviews went really smooth. Living in Fiji was a big conversation topic during my interviews. The experience made me seem like a more interesting and well-rounded person. I was able to get a job with the company of my dreams soon after returning home, and I credit a lot of that to my experiences abroad, and my abilities to convey what I did in Fiji. In the last year since coming home, I've done so many more things that I would have never tried before. I am more adventurous. I used to say no to things a lot. I now say yes to opportunities a lot more than I ever used to or could have imagined. //

- Nadine Maier

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