

FIJI

The indigenous culture is very much an active and living culture, however, it has evolved with the introduction of vibrant and old cultures like the Indian and Chinese cultures, as well as a large influence from European culture, and various cultures from the Pacific neighbor's of Fiji. Fijian indigenous society is very communal, with great importance attached to the family unit, the village, and the vanua (land). The official language is [English](#) while the national indigenous language is Bauan which is only one of the many dialects that exist in the Fiji Group. Other languages and dialects spoken in the country are [Hindi](#), [Cantonese](#), [Rotuman](#), Gilbertese (Rabi Island), and [Tuvaluan](#) (Kioa Island). The existence of many dialects within the Fijian language as well as exposure to the other languages spoken has contributed to many Fiji Islanders being bilingual. For general communication in an informal environment, a very interesting cross use of the languages has developed, resulting in slang now commonly referred to as Fiji English.

Modern Fiji's national dress is the [sulu](#), which resembles a skirt. Women usually wear a multi-layered [Tapa cloth](#) on formal occasions. From 1879 to 1916 Indians came as indentured laborers to work on the sugar plantations. Fiji's arts and crafts reflect local adaptations of their Polynesian and Melanesian heritage. By tradition, the men's and women's crafts are separate. Weaving using various materials was another craft generally mastered by the women but also aspects of weaving were mastered only by the men. Carving was practiced by the men. Each district of Fiji has its own form of meke (performing arts). Music of Old Fiji consisted of various chants which often told a story or preserved information to be passed on from generation to generation, these songs used various traditional instruments.

[Kava](#), known in Fiji as Yaqona, is Fiji's national drink. Traditionally, it was used only in important ceremonies. Nowadays, it is a social beverage. The cuisine of Fiji in pre-colonial times consisted of root crops, vegetables, and fruits, as well as various land animals such as wild pig and various birds. Another popular method of cooking, which is still used today, is the lovo which is an earth oven. Modern Fiji Cuisine is rather diverse with great influence from Indian cuisine and spices. Religion of Fiji is quite diverse with Christianity being the dominant faith of the Majority. Christianity itself in Fiji has many denominations with the Majority being the methodist denomination, of the Asian Religions the Hindu faith is dominant, after which Muslim faith and various other belief systems are followed. Fiji is fanatical about sports and the two most dominant being Rugby and Soccer. Fiji is most well known for its prowess in the Game of Rugby and in particular Rugby 7's.