** WHERE ARE THE SOLOMONS? **
An archipelago of 99 islands, we are located in the South Pacific, north-east of Australia between Papua New Guinea (PNG) and Vanuatu.

** OUR PEOPLE AND CULTURE **
Solomon Islanders are a blend of mainly Melanesian, Micronesian and Polynesian people with a population of around 650,000. Our cultural values stem back thousands of years and are very much linked to our land and surrounding seas. Most of the population still live a subsistence lifestyle where family and village community are the centre of social life.

** GOVERNMENT **
The Solomon Islands follows the Westminster democratic system and is a member of the Commonwealth of Nations. The head of state is the Governor General, representing the British Monarch. The Government is headed by an elected Prime Minister and cabinet. There is a 50-seat parliament with elected members. Honiara on Guadalcanal Island is the capital city with a 50-seat parliament with elected members.

** LANGUAGE **
The are 89 distinct languages spoken in the Solomon Islands. The lingua franca is Solomon Islands Pigin, although English is the official language and widely spoken and understood.

** GETTING THERE **
The national carrier Solomon Airlines, fly to Honiara 4 times a week from Brisbane to Honiara. 4 times from Nadi, Fij and weekly from Port Vila, Vanuatu and Port Moresby. Virgin Australia have twice weekly flights from Brisbane, Air Pacific fly in weekly from Nadi and Port Vila and Air Niugini have 3 weekly flights from Port Moresby.

** GETTING AROUND **
Solomon Airlines to 22 domestic ports from Honiara. Regular shipping services to many parts from Honiara.

** CLIMATE **
Tropical. Drier and cooler – April to October. Warmer and more humid – November to March.

** DRESS CODE **
Tropical casual. Conservative beach wear around beach areas.

** ENTRY REQUIREMENTS **
Australian, NZ and most EU passport holders can enter for up to 30 days visa on arrival. Passport must be valid for 6 months. More information can be found on our website www.visitsolomons.com.sb

** SO Enchanting **
Solomon Islands Visitors Bureau: www.visitsolomons.com.sb
Solomon Airlines: www.flysolomons.com
Solomon Islands Immigration (entry requirements): www.commerce.gov.sb

** Cultural Tour Operators **

** MALAITA **
For cultural and bush walks around Auki and Malaita contact:

MARATA MAN TOURS
Auki, Malaita
MOBILE: (677) 745 8201
EMAIL: marata.man@yahoo.com

For village stay accommodation visiting the Solwata people contact:
BUBU CULTURAL VILLAGE AND HOME STAY
PO Box 159, Auki, Malaita Islands
PHONE: (677) 40544
MOBILE: (677) 750 7906

SERAH’S LAZOO HIDEAWAY
PO Box 241, Auki, Malaita Islands
EMAIL: serah.kei@yahoo.com.au

** OTHER AREAS **
Inbound agencies and tour operators listed below can arrange cultural experiences and village stays throughout the Solomon Islands.

** DESTINATION SOLOMONS TRAVEL & TOURS **
PO Box 1350, Honiara, Solomon Islands
PHONE: (677) 23444
MOBILE: (677) 749 4273
EMAIL: destsol@solomon.com.sb

** TRAVEL SOLOMONS LTD **
PO Box 280, Honiara, Solomon Islands
PHONE: (677) 24081
MOBILE: (677) 748 3934
EMAIL: travel@solomon.com.sb
www.travelsolomons.com

** WANTOK INBOUND TOURS & TRAVEL SERVICES **
PO Box 121, Honiara, Solomon Islands
MOBILE: (677) 747 3290
EMAIL: wantok.francis@gmail.com

** ISLAND CONNECTIONS **
Unit 18, NPF Plaza, Honiara, Solomon Islands
PHONE: (677) 742 7395
EMAIL: gporowai@island-connections.com
FACEBOOK: www.facebook.com/pages/Island-Connections/27931460609528

** SOLOMON ISLANDS HOTEL LINK **
PO Box 21, Gizo, Solomon Islands
PHONE: (677) 60526
EMAIL: info@solomonislands-hotels.travel
www.solomonislands-hotels.travel

** TOURISM SOLOMONS **
PO Box 1472 Honiara, Solomon Islands
PHONE: (677) 27772
EMAIL: tourist@solomon.com.sb

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** FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT: **
** SOLOMON ISLANDS VISITORS BUREAU **
PO Box 321, Mendana Avenue, Honiara, Solomon Islands
call (677) 22442 email info@ivsb.com.sb
www.visitsolomons.com.sb

** Solomon Islands Visitors Bureau: www.visitsolomons.com.sb **

** Solomon Airlines: www.flysolomons.com **

** Solomon Islands Immigration (entry requirements): www.commerce.gov.sb **

**acb**
Culture is at the centre of Solomon Islands society. Communal, clan and family ties remain strong with the existence of the Wantok system.

A key part of the Solomons culture, Wantok means people from the same language group who are blood relatives and part of the extended family support and assist one another. Kastom, the Pidgin term for custom, refers to traditional beliefs and land ownership. Despite the predominance of devout Christians, traditional practices are still being followed, especially by those living in the interior of the country’s larger islands. Off the beaten path, village life remains much as it has been for centuries. Many cultural traditions are still widely practised throughout the Solomons.

Below are a few of the more unique cultural highlights that make us So Solomons. So Different!

**SOLWATA PEOPLE**

Known as the “Salt Water” or “Solwata” (in Pidgin) People, these are people who live on man-made artificial islands around Lapanganaga and Lau Lagoons in the Malaita Province and Duff Island in Temotu Province. These islands are built by human hands with skills which have been handed down from one generation to the next. The largest, oldest and the most densely inhabited of such islands is Sololou in the Lau Lagoon. There are more than 100 families and about 2000 people living there. In the Lapanganaga Lagoon one has the opportunity to experience life on an artificial Island first hand. You can stay on artificial islands in Lapanganaga Lagoon “Busu Cultural Village” and “Serah’s Lagoon Hideaway”, both offer accommodation, demonstrations of island building and several other traditional arts that are still kept in practice.

**SHELL MONEY THROUGH THE SOLOMONS**

Before bank notes arrived, the traditional form of currency for the Solomon Islands was shell money, which was widely used throughout the archipelago for trading, barter and various other usages. Today, shell money is still in use in many areas. In some local produce markets it is used as a form of barter, but its main usage is through its symbolic and traditional value for settling disputes, bridaland land payments.

**PAN PIPERS**

Pan-pipe music has become a well known icon of Solomon Islands entertainment around the world. Traditionally people from Guadalcanal, Makira and Malaita were well known for making music from blowing into bamboo flutes. And the people from the Vonavona and Roviana lagoon sing along to the sound of hitting columns of bigger open ended bamboo tubes with a coconut husk. Modern Solomon Islands panpipe music incorporates the use of both the traditional instruments styles to form a panpipe band made popular in Are Are and Isabel. To this day Isabel panpipe is popular with the contemporary music while Are Are panpipe music turns to seek the originality of the music. This form of music was traditionally played by hitting open-ended bamboo tubes with coconut husks. The coconuts husks have now given away to sandals or rubber shoes; but the rhythm and beat of the pan-pipes remain pure and distinctive. The best known pan-pipe groups, which can comprise groups up to 10 or 12 musicians, come from Malaita, Isabel and parts of Guadalcanal.

**PEOPLE OF THE SEA - WARRIORS OF THE PAST**

The people of the Solomon Islands had been hunters and gatherers to start of with in their ancient history. They settled down on the Islands and become protective of their possessions, land and their belief (custom) especially. Head hunting and Cannibalism become widespread in most part of their history. The most popular stories were told by the people from the vonavona and Roviana lagoon. Their warriors seemed to cover a lot of grounds hunting for heads of Chiefs and warriors that they believed were becoming more powerful and by doing so, turn those powers in their favour. Some heads as trophies from those activities in those past days still remains on the Island of Kabo Tinoni in the Vonavona lagoon and other sacred site that still retain the “tabu” visitors not allowed status.

The warriors of Vonavona and Roviana used to travel as far as Choiseul Island and Isabel in their war canoes ‘the Tomoko’ guided by their guardian spirit in the symbol of a ‘Ngunguzu’ that hangs at the prow of the tomokos. Those warriors were considered fierce as going to war meant going travelling for days and weeks until their mission is completed or they become defeated.

**RENELL & BELLONA - POLYNESIAN OUTLIERS**

Whilst much of the Solomon Islands population are of Melanesian background and origin, the people of Rennell and Bellona island are distinctly Polynesian. Both physically and culturally their way of life is tied more to that of Polynesia. Oral history handed down over the centuries tells of the islands being previously inhabited by peoples of another culture who lived in caves around the islands. The ancestors of the current inhabitants are said to have arrived from West Uvea (Loyalty Islands near New Caledonia) and East Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional dancing and other customs are closely aligned to those found in Polynesian islands much further east in the Pacific.

**TRADITIONAL WAR CANOE NGUZU NGUZU PROW.**

Completed or they become defeated.

(Wellins Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Loyalty Islands near New Caledonia) and East Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Loyalty Islands near New Caledonia) and East Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional Uvea (Walls Island near Samoa). The local languages, traditional