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## South Pacific Handbook, 6th Edition (Review)

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but at the tourist resorts is considered offensive. Also in the up-front sections, those who have been to Easter Island may be interested in reading about where they can go to enjoy a meal of fish and sweet potatoes prepared in the Fiji version of an "umu" underground oven, called a "Iovo." Indeed, no stone has been left unturned by the author as he describes traditional customs.

This front-of-the-book section also has a pronunciation guide that will save travelers from the embarrassment of pronouncing the "n" in Nandi (should be Nadi) and the "th" in Thithia (should be Cicia). Stanley's list of toiletries and a medical kit to take to Fiji would be useful for travelers to other South Pacific Islands as well.

The second half of the book takes readers on an island-by-island journey across Fiji, detailing the sights, services, entertainment, accommodations and restaurants available. This book is so different from the usual brochure drivel about visits to a "South Seas paradise" that the reader feels an instant trust in the information. For example, how many guidebooks would warn us that at the Century Cinema in Suva "rats run freely beneath the seats as soon as the lights go out"?

Stanley encourages visitors to stay in villages if possible, rather than just relaxing on the beach at expensive resorts. After all, R&R can take place in a spot where the culture isn't so accessible and interesting. In Fiji, visitors have a chance to encounter Polynesians, Micronesians, East Indians, Chinese, and Europeans; and each have their own rituals and customs to be respected.

As one who has been embarrassed by ignorant American tourists in the past, this reviewer was pleased to see that Stanley takes every opportunity in the book to explain, admonish, and suggest acceptable way to behave with each of these groups. For example, Stanley reminds those who visit traditional Fijians to ask permission before entering a village and to take off their hats while there because only the chief is allowed to wear one. He also suggest that visitors carry bundles of *kava* roots to present to their hosts and to prepare a speech about why they are visiting. Since English is a second official language in Fiji, readers of this English book shouldn't have any problems speaking with the locals.

A seven-page "Resources" section at the end of the book suggests references on natural science, history and social science of Fiji, as well as other Pacific issues.

In short, the *Fiji Islands Handbook* is a compact, useful guide for the visitor who wants to learn about the people of Fiji and to experience its traditional life. Fiji is presented in colorful detail as an intriguing cultural crossroads of the Pacific.

**Correction:** The book review of *Easter Island: The Endless Enigma*, reviewed by Dan Gartner (RNJ 10:2, pg 49) incorrectly identified the author of the book as José Luis Velasco; The author's name is José Luis Rosasco. We regret the confusion.

David Stanley, 1996. *South Pacific Handbook*, 6th Edition. Softcover, 906 pages. ISBN 1-56691-040-4. \$22.95. Order from Moon Travel Handbooks, PO Box 3040, Chico, CA 95927; Email: travel@moon.com

*Review by Georgia Lee*

Stanley's definitive guide is divided into three parts: the Introduction (117 pages) provides information on flora and fauna, history, governments, health precautions, climate, etc., in great detail; the second portion (380 pages) covers Polynesia and includes Tahiti-Polynesia (Australis, Tuamotus, Gambiers, Marquesas); Pitcairn, Easter Island, Cooks, Niue, Tonga, the Samoas, Tokelau, Wallis and Futuna and Tuvalu. The third section (359 pages) includes the islands of Melanesia: Fiji, New Caledonia, Vanuatu, and the Solomons.

Information offices and resources are listed in the Appendix, as are literary sources and references. There is a four-page Glossary and detailed Index. Illustrations include 16 full-color pages of photographs and 143 maps. The text is liberally sprinkled with line drawings and black and white photographs.

Stanley's guides are, quite simply, the best you can buy. It is the travel book of choice for us, and is used as a general reference even when not traveling. Whatever you want to know about this portion of the South Pacific, it will be found in this book. Traveling anonymously, Stanley pays his own way and thus experiences the islands, hotels and restaurants as they are—and as you and I might encounter them. This is travel writing as it should be.

## RECORDINGS

A newly issued compact disk features recordings made on Rapa Nui in 1995 by Jörg Hertel (Brockhausstr.52, 04229 Leipzig, Germany). Titled "Rapa Nui," the disk features music and natural sounds, including parts of the Catholic Mass and "atmosphere" of the Tapati festival. Also listed are background sounds such as gurgling water and birds of Motu Nui, and the surf at Tahai. This album is released by Noiseworks Rec./Noiselab; PO Box 310 D; 09028 Chemnitz, Germany, and is said to be available also on the island. Total time: 74:20 minutes. Price is US\$20 or 25 D Marks. A second CD will appear later this year. Mr Hertel also has a book pending.

## CONFERENCES

• **Third Conference of European Society for Oceanists** is slated for 13-15 December, 1996 in Copenhagen, Denmark. The European Society for Oceanists (ESO) has issued a call for papers for its third conference titled "Pacific Peoples in the Pacific Century: Society, Culture and Nature". Abstracts should be submitted by September 1st, 1996 to: Bente Wolff, Institute of Anthropology, University of Copenhagen, Frederiksholms Kanal 4, DK-1220, Copenhagen K, Denmark. Fax: 45 35323456 or email:

esbw@palais.natmus.min.dk