



LAUTOKA, FIJI: PACIFIC GATEWAY TO TAKING IT EASY

» As South Pacific nations go, Fiji might be the most flexible. Sun-worshippers flock to sandy resorts around Nadi. Honeymooners do Turtle Island. Adventure travelers float down the Navua River. Surfers trade waves at Tavarua.

» The entry point for all of this state of the art relaxing is Lautoka, Fiji's second largest town, with a population of about 52,000. The Sugar City (it's home to the country's largest sugar mill and the town's primary employer) lives up to its sweet reputation, with wide streets laced with leafy trees, lush foliage, and tropical gardens.

» Lautoka Market is a good place to wander with or without purpose. Shopkeepers are talkative and friendly and there's much to look at amid aisles of produce (plenty of fresh tropical fruit to munch on here) and local handicraft stalls, where you can snag a unique souvenir, such as locally made pottery or a kava bowl. Produced throughout the Pacific, kava is a plant whose roots are used to make an earthy drink with a decidedly acquired taste that produces a numbing sensation on the tongue and which has a mildly sedative effect. It's "kick back and relax" in a cool native bowl.

» But you hardly need a chug of kava to feel yourself adjusting to a slower pace of life. From the Lautoka Market it's an easy amble to a serene waterfront esplanade that shows off Fiji's two most alluring assets—sugary sand bumping against pure blue waters, almost the precise hue that stress management pros call the most calming of all colors. After a taxing day of world-class tranquility, it's a perfect place to relax.

JORDAN RANE

FIND THE LATEST ASIA, AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND, AND THE SOUTH PACIFIC CRUISE OPTIONS ON PAGES 58-59.

TRAVEL HINTS

4 TIPS FOR PACKING LIGHTER

DON'T HAVE ROOM FOR THAT JACKET OR THOSE EXTRA SHOES? NOW YOU DO

BY TARA DONALDSON

Packing for a trip can be daunting. No one wants a bag that feels as if it's filled with gold bars, but no one wants to leave necessities behind either. With the right gear and the right approach, however, packing light can be painless. Here's how to fit more of your life into a bag.



1. START WITH THE RIGHT BAG

Designed to cure all manner of packing woes, the Genius Pack—a hit in its debut at the 2013 Travel Goods Show in Las Vegas—does it all. Its laundry section keeps soiled clothing compressed and out of your way. There's a water-bottle storage spot, a jacket hook, cushy neoprene handles, and an integrated portable charger for electronic devices. And that's just the exterior. Inside, designated compartments hold toiletries and undergarments, and a permanent checklist makes planning easy. It's the closest a suitcase gets to packing itself.

Genius Packer 22" Carry On, US\$198, geniuspack.com

2. COMPRESS IT ALL

Smaller than a standard carry-on, the F1 Spacepak Clothes double-compression space saver holds four pairs of men's pants, 12 shirts, and a sweater. Fold garments in alternating directions to maximize space, then release excess air to condense.

F1 Spacepak Clothes, US\$46, flight001.com

3. BAG YOUR SHOES

The standard allotment for packing shoes is three: one dress pair, one casual, one athletic, with the bulkiest worn en route. This bag provides some leeway without compromising on space. It holds a pair of women's high heels and three flats, or a pair of men's dress shoes and a pair of flip-flops.

Ourika Shoe Bag, US\$66, hudsonandbleecker.com

4. PACK MORE SPACE

Those who don't want to put limits on collecting keepsakes or gifts should pack a foldaway duffel for extra space. Lightweight nylon construction and leather trim make this multifunctional bag stylish and sensible. Folded, the bag fits neatly into the inner flap of your luggage, taking up almost no space. Expanded to its large 22" x 13" x 9" size, it can tote a lot of holiday loot.

Bric's X-Duffel, US\$115, bricstore.com

Pricing and availability subject to change.