

animals around, one has to be cautious. A few WWII wrecks, but most are too deep to reach. Quoth Monte: "Try not to bring any live ordnance on board." The crew does a nice job of scaring away crocodiles, which we all appreciated (ok, this only happened once). On our last day we stayed topside and explored a deep, multi chambered cave in the Floridas (at a place called waterpoint). Spectacular, fun, not for the squeamish but well worth the climb (a quarter mile or so up a steep rocky piece of jungle). Tips: Book an extra day in Fiji on the way to the Solomons to minimize the chance of not arriving with your checked bags. A scheduled 8 hour layover did not suffice in this regard (delays shortened it to 2 hr, and our bags did not show up for several days). No major problem; the *Bilikiki* people rented us the gear we needed, then made multiple phone calls to track down our gear and ship it out on a commuter flight to meet us at a smaller island halfway through our trip. Temps on the boat were really not that bad (80's usually), much more comfortable than on shore. Occasional

mosquitoes despite being offshore; we took the usual malaria precautions seriously (high percentage DEET lotion as needed, mefloquine prophylaxis). The political unrest at the time (reports of scattered ethnic clashes outside Honiara) did not affect our trip.

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***Nai'a*, April 2000, Françoise Giacalone and David Da Costa, NYC, NY.** Vis: 30 to 150+. Water: 82 to 85 degrees, calm and flat, choppy, surge, strong currents, no currents. Dive you own profile: yes. Dive restrictions: common sense. This was our second trip on the *Nai'a*. A large transom has been added, significantly easing loading/unloading of the chase boats. Cuisine has improved from already high standards; this ship feels like home. This was the first Vanuatu excursion for the *Nai'a*. 16 or 18 passengers here for a return engagement. Vanuatu diving hit/miss; the President Coolidge is definitely worth a visit. (e-mail naia@is.com.fj; website www.naia.com.fj)