

Fiji Divemaster Internship

Achieve your professional PADI diving qualification and gain work experience in marine conservation whilst diving the pristine waters of Beqa Island.

The Fijian archipelago lies scattered lazily in the achingly blue waters of the Pacific Ocean, bathed in the radiant antipodean sunlight. Its towns and villages are veritable melting pots of cultural influences.

Fiji's irresistible shores are fringed with picture-perfect palm trees, and the azure waters that surround the islands are inhabited by an astonishing array of marine creatures; over 1,200 species of fish including clownfish, triggerfish, blue tangs, 12 species of whales, dolphins, anemones, soft coral and much more.

Enjoy fragrant sun drenched days and exotic nights of delectable food cooked in a traditional underground oven. Fiji will enchant you with its infectious, chilled out "Fiji time" lifestyle, its heavenly beaches and surrounding mountains of rainforest– the perfect paradise location for your Frontier adventure!

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Help preserve Fiji's marine and coastal biodiversity
- Obtain your Divemaster qualification whilst assisting the project Dive Officer
- Make lifelong friends and return with incredible stories, photos and memories
- Dive at some of the best dive sites in the world and study their health
- Extend your experience of tropical marine and coastal zone conservation field work

PROJECT REQUIREMENTS

- CV required
- Minimum 3 month placement
- Relevant academic qualifications
- Some experience of coastal zone or marine field work

DIVEMASTER REQUIREMENTS

18 years of age

40 dives logged and PADI Rescue Diver qualification. It is possible for novice divers to be an Intern, who can amount dives during their time on the project. This will include completion of Open Water, Advanced Open Water, Emergency First Responder and the Rescue Diver course (extra costs apply).

Physician sign off – medical health check

FAST FACTS

Location	The South Pacific Island of Beqa, Fiji
Activities	Diving regularly (weather permitting) Locating, mapping and studying the coral reefs Underwater visual censuses of reef and commercial fish Assessment of algal and coral cover Line intercept transects for benthic life and indicator invertebrate species Record observations of the feeding habits and behaviour patterns of a range of marine life Study the impact of potentially destructive fishing methods on the corals reefs Study the effects of global warming on marine communities Assist with diving courses, Open water, Advanced and Rescue Diver. Learn how to lead dives including briefings, kit set up and responsibility of the dive group Basic knowledge of scuba equipment maintenance Use and maintenance of compressors
Transport	Free airport pickup and transfer to the island is provided for volunteers arriving on the first Monday of each month. For volunteers arriving on different days airport pickup, transfers to the island and hostel accomodation for the first night can be arranged at a small additional cost
Accommodation	Communal cast away style camp a few minutes walk from the bay, with timber frame house

WHAT DOES THE PROJECT DO?

The aim of Frontier-Fiji Marine Conservation Project is to better understand the marine resources of the island of Beqa, and to provide teaching and training to enable local communities to make informed decisions regarding the management of their coastal ecosystems.

To achieve this mission, we conduct scientific baseline data surveys of reef areas. Once a long-term data set is obtained, patterns of resource use can be identified and work with local communities can begin to build awareness of the value and vulnerability of their marine environment.

WHAT WILL I BE DOING?

Combining the PADI Divemaster Internship with the Frontier Fiji Marine Conservation Project offers the opportunity to gain in situ knowledge of marine systems and processes and conservation issues and experience of scientific surveying. Trainees receive lectures on the different elements of coral reef communities under the supervision of trained scientists. These lectures incorporate a range of tropical marine biology topics including the benthic make up of reefs, fish and invertebrate identification and a variety of marine methodologies. Once qualified to PADI Advanced Open Water diver, trainees will take part in Frontier's long term monitoring surveys researching coral reef community health on Mafia Island whilst assisting with training and the skills progression of new volunteers. The skills and experience gained during this course are valuable for trainees wishing to pursue a career in marine science and conservation or professional diving or a combination of the two.

To gather the data needed you will be diving to locate and map the extensive coral reefs and study the various communities living on them (if necessary you will learn to dive first). To do this you will deploy a wide range of newly learned research skills and scientific techniques including: underwater visual census of reef and commercial fish such as triggerfish and parrotfish, indicator species (both fish and coral), assessment of algal and coral cover to determine the extent of coral bleaching and damage, and line intercept transects for benthic life and indicator invertebrate species such as nudibranchs. With so much to learn it's worth noting that those joining for only a few weeks will be training most of the time and may not get to do a lot of surveying. You may record observations of the feeding habits and behaviour patterns of a range of marine life. You may even get to study the

impact of artisanal fishing on the coral reefs or report the effects of Global Warming on marine communities. The type of fieldwork underway will depend on the time of year and the content of the research program when you join up and how long you are joining for.

Whilst diving, you'll see an extraordinary array of animals from turtles to rays, sea cucumbers to feathery starfish, spiny urchins to octopus and jellyfish. When you motor out each day on the Frontier boat to distant dive sites you may even encounter flying fish, sharks and dolphins. By the end of your project you will be expert at identifying vast numbers of colourful and patterned reef fish as well as being an experienced and competent diver. Although the work is intense and challenging you'll get immense satisfaction from having survived and from having made a valuable contribution to the conservation of this untarnished marine wilderness. You will return home with the new friends you've made and a wealth of fascinating stories and memories.

You'll find your team to be a fun, dynamic mix of ages and experiences, with members who all share a passion about travelling in developing countries and saving endangered life. Your staff will be young, friendly individuals who are highly experienced in their field and many have volunteered on a Frontier project earlier in their career.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I ARRIVE?

An airport pick-up service is offered to volunteers arriving on the first Monday of the month only, whose flights land before 2:30pm local time. All other volunteers must make their own way to the project site. We will provide you with easy to follow instructions prior to your departure to enable you to plan your journey. If you are arriving into Fiji before the first Monday of the month but wish to travel to the project site with the main deployment group on the first Monday of the month, the overland arrival meeting point is at Nadi international airport arrivals hall. Please make sure that your intended arrival/travel plans have been arranged and confirmed with the project field staff a minimum of 1 week before your project start date.

You will travel from the airport along the Coral Coast of the Island of Viti Levu to the town of Navua. Following this you will take a local boat for the one hour journey to the spectacular and famous south Pacific island of Beqa.

If you are an independent traveler arriving on any other date you are welcome to join the project on any Monday, (please discuss your intended arrival date and duration of stay with our travel advisers, especially if you need to book a dive training course, to confirm availability), and please be aware that you will need to organise your own transfer between Nadi and Suva and first night hostel accommodation in Suva at a cost of 34 EUR/\$40. We will arrange for you to transfer from Suva to Beqa the following day at your own cost where our field team will be ready to welcome you to the Frontier house and camp. Again, you must confirm your exact arrival time/date with in country staff at least 1 week before arrival.

WHERE WILL I BE STAYING?

Check out our Camp Tour video!

During the project you'll live in our simple but comfortable timber frame house on a cast away camp about 5-minutes walking from the Bay on the south Pacific island of Beqa. We aim to provide you with an authentic and memorable living experience. The Beqa house and camp has been constructed by local craftsmen using traditional building techniques and locally sourced building materials. The camp is situated up a short hill from the shore through the rainforest. Camp life is very

simple, unsophisticated and fun. You will be staying in communal house near to the local communities. Your "shower" consists of a pipe that runs into an outdoor stall from the local stream and runs 24 hours a day. We have a western style bucket flush toilet and camp-style gas hobs to cook on. Prepare for the basic, cast away, virtually footprint-less lifestyle!

As well as the diving and marine conservation work you may be asked to help with the scientific data entry and will need to help with daily camp maintenance, taking turns to cook, tidy and clean the camp, rinse dive kit, and help with a wide variety of other important and essential camp duties.

WHAT WILL I BE EATING?

Camp food is simple and consists largely of rice, lentils, split peas, pasta, tinned tomatoes, potatoes, onions, curry, rolled oats, freshly baked bread, and any fruit or vegetable grown on the land (pumpkin, eggplant, papaya, banana, mango, cassava, bele leaves, etc. depending on season). All food is purchased in-country or made on camp in order to help support the local economy. Luxuries such as sweets, biscuits and drinking chocolate have to be brought over to the island from Suva, so make sure you stock up before heading to the camp! Part of your role on camp will be to help with the cooking, so get your cookbooks out now and start practising! Also, with luck you'll be invited to local feasts and festivals – a great way to integrate with the local communities in the nearby villages and absorb the fabulous and welcoming local culture.

Some local dishes to look forward to include taro, taro leaves, breadfruit, sweet potato, cassava, and cassava chips, coconut and fabulous seafood. A delicious Fijian speciality is a lovo feast, which is a meal cooked in a hole in the ground – unusual but very tasty!

COSTS

12 weeks	€ 4 495
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PADI Open Water and Advanced Open Water training 918 EUR PADI Advanced Open Water training 446 EUR (at least PADI Advanced Open Water training necessary for marine surveying)

DEPARTURE DATES

First and third Monday of the month.

Alternative dates available on request.

DURATION

You can join this project for a minimum of 1 week

WHAT'S INCLUDED

Before you go

- Pre-departure support
- Travel & medical advice & documentation

- Equipment advice
- Discounted medical kit
- Free Frontier T-shirt
- UK residential briefing weekend including food, accommodation and training (extra cost applies)

in country

- All field camp accommodation & food
- Local orientation & comprehensive project training
- Project equipment & camp diving equipment
- Research materials
- 24 hour in-country support
- International HQ emergency support & back-up
- Airport pick-up for first Monday of the month arrivals (an airport pick up service is available for alternative arrival dates at extra cost)
- Internal ground transfers and first night hostel accommodation for first Monday of the month arrivals
- Boat transfer to the Island of Beqa
- Dive training PADI Open Water (473 EUR)
- Dive training PADI Advanced Open Water (446 EUR)
- In-country emergency support
- 24-hour international HQ back-up
- Dive training courses run monthly starting on the first Monday of the month. Dive training to PADI Open Water or PADI Advanced Open Water (depending on the duration of your stay) price includes PIC cards, PADI membership and use of Frontier project equipment and diving equipment, including tanks, regs, BCDs, weights, compressor etc
- Discounted further dive courses: PADI Emergency First Response (176 EUR), PADI Rescue Diver (473 EUR), and PADI Divemaster (1 013 EUR) qualifications

AIRPORT INFORMATION

Nearest airport(s): Nadi (NAN)

CONTACT INFORMATION

Call us on 020 7613 2422 (UK) / 1 949 336 8178 (US)

Mail us on info@frontier.ac.uk

Check out our social media here:

Project details were correct at the time this document was generated. Price, dates and other details are subject to change. Please see our website for current details for this project.