

LAST OF THE CANNIBALS

April 2015

The grass fell away slowly from the restaurant's edge, into the warm night, caressing the white sandy beach and the lonely palm. The sea was gently whispering to me as it lapped up the shore and just like the song, the stars twinkled.

The young bronzed women stood up from her table and leant forward to lift the child from his highchair. As she did, he reached up and held the front of her taught white vest firmly in his hand. The act of rejecting his advances and attempting to stand upright resulted in both of her breasts being removed from their restraint and exposing them to the full gaze of my fellow diners. An interesting start to my return to Fiji.

I did my best to avoid it but there was just no other option. I was hoping for something more appropriate but apart from the yellow scooter there just wasn't anything else. I vowed that I'd never ride one but if I was going to make Fiji country number 49, there was no choice, I'd have to ride a Harley.

My local Manager has a KTM and he'd brought along a laundry basket, full of off road gear for me to try on and his brother's helmet. I looked the part, until that is, I got on the bike.

The seat was slung so low, that my legs where almost horizontal. A pair of Alpine Enduro boots stuck out in front on those ridiculous foot pegs. Attempting to use the footbrake at speed was nigh on impossible. The pressure from the wind lifted my foot skywards every time I tilted it towards the pedal. The front end steering geometry, with those protruding front forks was awful, so bad that it felt more akin to a wheelbarrow than a motorcycle. The bike was just about manageable in a straight line but getting it to go around bends was not easy. Fortunately my companion was very understanding.

Fiji is made up of over 300 islands but has two large ones, often known as the Mainland and the North. I was visiting the west of Viti Levu, the main island, where the weather is sunnier and more stable than the Capital Suva. In Suva, where I was based, among the old Colonial buildings, the weather is moody, often overcast and wet, so it was nice to be out riding under blue skies in plenty of sunshine.

Read more overleaf...

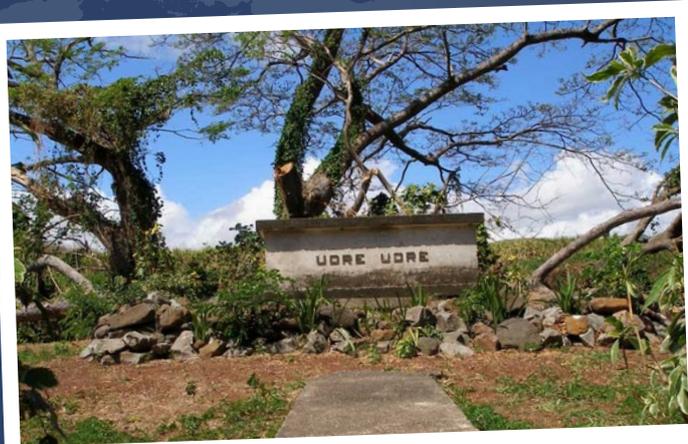


LAST OF THE CANNIBALS (cont.)

The road to the north hugs the coast with its clear blue water and white sands. Tiny tropical islands glisten in the South Pacific Ocean while spectacular mountains loom inland. I was encouraged to stop and view the grave of one the last Cannibal's on Fiji, quite a revered monument. He's reputed to have consumed over 850 human beings in his lifetime.

The views across the bay of sea, coconut trees and distant mountains were easy on the eye, perhaps even a photo opportunity. We rode round to Volivoli on the northern tip before returning at a greater pace than the outward journey.

400 kilometres in all, not a bad day out for a Harley.



Monument to one of the last cannibals



Contact Gordon

Email gordon@linbeck.co.uk for a chat or advice on your next motorcycle adventure.
