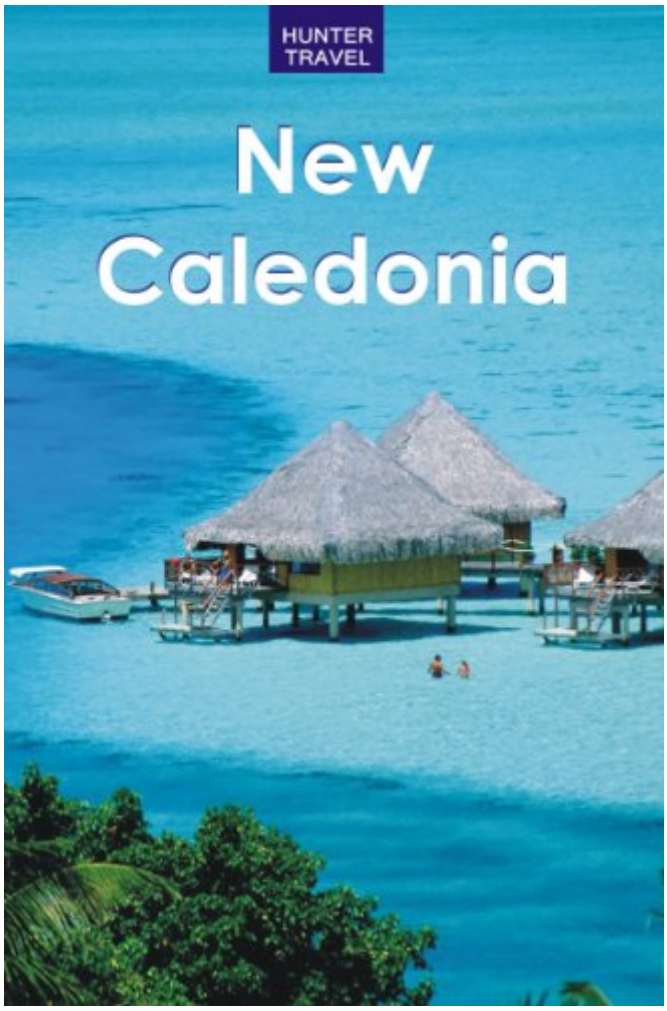
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New Caledonia (Travel Adventures)



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Synopsis

This amazing guide tells you everything you need to know about these spectacular South Pacific islands - the hotels, restaurants, the culture, what to see and do, how to get around. New Caledonia consists of a large island, Grande Terre, and a group of small islands called dependencies - the Loyalty Group, Ouen, the Isle of Pines, Huon Islands, and the Chesterfields. Grande Terre is as big in land mass as the whole state of Hawaii. Its capital NoumÃƒÂ©a, with 70,000 people, looks big too. There are imposing buildings, freeways, traffic lights, escalators and, in the center of town there is a large bowered park called the Place des Cocotiers. NoumÃƒÂ©a has sidewalk cafes, little corner bistros, boulangeries, patisseries and, if it weren't for the black faces and the climate, you could be in a French provincial town. The white inhabitants have a Gallic look, the slight difference around nose and mouth that perhaps comes from a nasal approach to words. Some look as if they had just left the farm, some are conservatively well dressed, and many of the young people are clad in the latest mod-chic. Then there are others. You see them and hear them in the bars and bistros. They are usually bearded and have a military appearance. They are clearly soldiers, perhaps of the Foreign Legion. New Caledonia needs them now and perhaps will in the future. Arrival in New Caledonia is attended by the feeling that you've arrived somewhere very colonial, very French, where everything works, except during the awkward hours from 11:30 AM to 1:30 PM when everything is closed. You'll soon become aware that the standard of living is much higher in New Caledonia than on other Pacific islands. For the present, New Caledonia is a great place for a vacation. In NoumÃƒÂ©a you'll find the big hotels, the boutiques, the casinos, the beaches, and the restaurants. Half of the population lives there. That leaves a lot of empty space on the rest of the big island and the tiny islands around it. New Caledonia and its dependencies are an island group in the southwest Pacific that forms part of Melanesia. The blg island called Grande Terre has a land area of 12,000 square miles, and is the third-largest island in the South Paclfic after New Guinea and New Zealand. Along the entire length of New Caledonia runs a chain of mountains. Mt. Passie in the north and Mt. Humbol in the south are nearly 5,000 feet high and this chain divides the island into climatic areas. In the west on the leeward side, like the Australian outback, there are wide stretches of dry savannah land dotted with eucalyptus trees. This is good cattle country but, because of invasive mangrove swamps along this coast, there are few good beaches. On the east coast where it rains over 100 inches a year, there are coconut plantations, rivers with waterfalls, and 150-foot-tall Norfolk pines. This is where most of the rural Melanesians live. Around both sides of the island, there is a protective barrier reef, the second-largest barrier reef in the world. Along the entire length of New Caledonia runs a chain of mountains.

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Customer Reviews

Not a hugely inspiring read nor did I come away with a clear sense of the place

From my enquiries elsewhere this book was written around 25 years ago. Could be more use as a history book than a travel book.

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