

*12 night fully escorted soft adventure tour incorporating Port Moresby, Wewak, Sepik River, Mt Hagen, Trobriand Islands, and Alotau (Canoe Festival).*

The Milne Bay Canoe and Drum Festival is a celebration of Milne Bay’s traditional reliance on native canoes and drums for transportation and communication between the islands. Participants from other provinces also bring their canoes and drums to join in the canoe races, drumming contests, and sing-sing performances. Participating canoes range from tiny one-man dugouts through outrigger sailing canoes to huge war canoes from Balimo in the Western Province. This festival is the only place outside Balimo where you can behold the spectacle of 30 black-skinned Balimo men paddling a 40 foot war canoe with all their might. Participating drums range from kundu hand-drums with lizard or snake skin stretched across the opening of a hollowed log to form a tympanic membrane, through to giant slit-gong log drums made from hollowed out tree trunks and beaten with mallets to produce low frequency thuds that can be heard many miles away even from island to island. Alotau is a small town where it is safe to wander among the crowds observing the festival activities without fear of harassment or pickpockets. There will be many stalls at the festival venue selling local food, handicrafts and even older artifacts that villagers bring for sale once a year at the festival. From Alotau the tour group moves on to the Trobriand Islands, touring the main island Kiriwina and spending a whole day on tiny Munuwata Island, a sand bar lost in time where the 200 villagers spend their days fishing and tending their yam gardens. At Mt Hagen the itinerary includes cultural and nature tours featuring the Paiya village skull house, the Magic Mountain moss forest and orchid gardens, and a highlands sing-sing. From Mt Hagen there is a direct flight to Wewak and three nights on the mystical Sepik River staying in bamboo huts among the river people.

*NB This is a “wet foot” tour that involves climbing in and out of small boats, some walking in sand and mud, and a few nights in basic huts without electricity. Some physical agility is required. Also note this is a unique small group tour program. The tour price includes a tour development levy to recover our outlays on designing, reconnoitring, organising and monitoring the tour, and a share of the tour escort’s travel costs.*

**TOUR ITINERARY**

<p>Day 1 – Fri 27 Oct</p>  	<p><b>AUSTRALIA / PORT MORESBY / WEWAK (travel day)</b></p> <p>On arrival at Port Moresby airport, pass through passport control and customs checks. After exiting the Arrivals’ hall you will be met by our tour operator’s team member holding a sign with your name. (If you do not see anyone waiting for you, please wait at the Avis Rent A Car desk and our tour staff will meet up with you there. Before leaving the international terminal we will help you check in your luggage for your follow-on flight to Wewak.</p> <p>A complimentary city tour is available if you have time between flights and if you feel up to it. The city tour may include a familiarisation drive around the city and a visit to the Bomana War Cemetery, Adventure Park zoo and National Orchid Gardens. Alternatively if you are feeling overtired from your long haul flight we can arrange a day-room at one of the hotels for you to take a nap (extra cost) or leave you at the poolside of one of the hotels (no cost) where you can recline and snooze in a deck chair while ordering drinks and snacks from the bar. Lunch is not included today as some tour group members may have lunch on flights arriving from Australia. Lunch is available from various outlets at the airport or en-route during your city tour.</p> <p>14:00 Drop off at the domestic terminal for security screening and boarding</p>
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Day 2 – Sat 28 Oct



your domestic flight. Here you will meet up with your tour escort and other members of the tour group.

**15:30 Air Niugini flight PX126 departs Port Moresby for Wewak via Madang, (aircraft: Fokker F100 jet with 98 seats)**

17:45 On arrival in Wewak, transfer by hotel shuttle to your hotel. Overnight 3 star hotel, Wewak – includes set-menu dinner and breakfast.

**WEWAK / SEPIK RIVER (Pagwi to Kanganaman)**

08:00 After breakfast we check out of the hotel and depart by private four wheel drive vehicle to Pagwi, our jumping-off point on the Sepik River. The road from Wewak to Pagwi is bitumen sealed most of the way and quite a pleasant journey. First we climb steep winding curves from the steamy coastal strip to the cool forests of the undulating Prince Alexander Range. Two hours into the trip we stop at a roadside market to buy tropical fruits, cooked vegetables and delicious green coconuts to drink (pay as you go). Back on the road, we soon see fleeting views through the trees of the Sepik plains, with the river itself a fuzzy brown ribbon on the horizon. Descending onto the savannah grasslands of the Sepik Basin, we pass through a number of villages before arriving at Pagwi “station” on the Middle Sepik by early afternoon.

At Pagwi we board our waiting motor canoe and head down-river approximately one hour to Kanganaman, one of the Middle Sepik crocodile cult villages. After we settle into the village guest house we take a familiarisation walk around the village, stopping at the Haus Tambaran (men’s spirit house) where the curator will show us the tambu artefacts and explain the traditions of the crocodile cult. (See trip notes at the end of this itinerary).

Overnight village guest house, Kanganamun (1 star village hut, includes meals and drinking water).

*A supply of dry groceries - flour, sugar, biscuits, coffee/tea etc - will be supplied by the tour company to supplement food provided in the villages, plus an adequate supply of drinking water. Accommodation will be twin-share or dormitory style in the village guest hut. Tropical sleeping bags and mosquito nets are supplied. We strongly suggest you bring a battery-operated personal fan to cool yourself when sleeping under your mosquito net.*

Day 3 – Sun 29 Oct



**SEPIK RIVER (Kanganaman to Chambri Lakes)**

This morning we cross the river to Palimbe, a village situated behind a vast field of water lilies and boasting several large spirit houses. From Palimbei we continue downstream via an off-river channel and into the Chambri Lakes, visiting the village of Aibom famous locally for its clay pots used as cookware, and Kirimbit where we will stay overnight.

Today’s travel will include hot afternoon sun (and/or rain !) so wear long sleeves, plenty of sunscreen, a hat, sunglasses and even hold an umbrella to keep the sun off you. Beware also of the sun’s reflection off the water which

	<p>can burn you under your chin. Overnight village guest house, Chambri Lakes (1 star village hut, includes meals and drinking water).</p>
<p>Day 4 – Mon 30 Oct</p> 	<p><b>SEPIK RIVER (Chambri Lakes to Kundima)</b></p> <p>Departing Chambri Lakes after breakfast we continue motoring down the main Sepik River with your guide, stopping at the villages of Mindibit and Angriman to see their distinctive artifact carving styles (moon-faced figurines at Mindibit and long-faced masks at Angriman). Around lunchtime we arrive at Tambanum, the largest village on the Sepik River and locally renowned as “the carving factory of the Sepik” (see trip notes).</p> <p>As we walk through village (about 30 minutes’ walk from one side to the other) the village people will come out of their houses to say hello and answer any questions we may have about the decorations and wares displayed on and under their homes. Our guide will arrange a visit to one or two of the house tambarans and some smoked fish and bananas for lunch.</p> <p>From Tambanum it is another ninety minutes downstream by motor canoe to the confluence of the Sepik and Yuat rivers. Most tourists exploring the Sepik by motor boat or small cruise vessel don’t venture up the smaller tributaries like the Yuat River but this is where you get to see a quieter side of the Sepik Basin, off the “main drag”.</p> <p>Half an hour up the Yuat River – now moving at a slower pace motoring upstream against the flow of the river current – brings us to Kundima village, located on a bend in the river with a large sand bar. Every evening locals gather on the sand bar to socialise, play scratch matches of soccer and volleyball that we will be welcome to join in.</p> <p>Tourists never stay at Kundima and there is no village guest house but an empty hut is provided for us to sleep in. We will set up our mosquito nets and bedding on the floor - sorry no single supplement here and snorers will be banished to the corner ☺ and locals will provide some village food for dinner to supplement our camp rations. The staple food here is sago cooked 20 different ways. Fresh sago starch has a moist consistency and orange/tan colour, very different from the desiccated white pellets of pearl sago you might buy in the supermarket back home. Fresh sago dough can be baked as damper in hot coals, fried in hot oil to make thick heavy pancakes, or boiled to make a purplish gel. Locals at Kundima sometimes eat their sago dishes with a plate of sago grubs on the side for extra protein, fried in oil or simmered in coconut milk. The fat sago grubs have a nutty taste and are similar to the “witchetty” grubs consumed by Australian aborigines. (It’s OK nobody will mind if you suddenly turn vegetarian today ☺)</p> <p>Bathing will be in the river and there will be a camp toilet (you’ll survive). Overnight camping at Kundima village, Yuat River</p>

<p>Day 5 – Tue 31 Oct</p> 	<p><b>SEPIK RIVER / WEWAK</b></p> <p>07:00 First up this morning is a sago-making demonstration. All along the Sepik River for the past 2 days you will have seen locals washing sago pith at rickety little tables perched at the waterside and now is the time to get a close-up view of how it works.</p> <p>08:00 From Kundima we retrace our route down the picturesque Yuat River to its junction with “Wara Sepik”. You are now on the Lower Sepik. Travelling downstream with the current our canoe will pick up speed and two hours after leaving Kundima we will arrive at Angoram township, “capital” of the Lower Sepik. We have time to take a walk around the Angoram market for some fresh fruit to eat for lunch on the way to Wewak then say farewell to our canoe crew who will head back to Pagwi.</p> <p>11:00 Our group will board our waiting vehicle and hit the road. Driving time to Wewak will be about 2 hours.</p> <p>13:30 Check in at Wewak airport.</p> <p>15:40 Airlines PNG flight CG1623 departs Wewak for Mt Hagen (aircraft: Dash 8-200 with 36 seats).</p> <p>16:25 On arrival in Mt Hagen we are met by our local guide and transfer 45 minutes via Mt Hagen town and out the other side into the picturesque Nebilyer Valley and up the lower slopes of Mount Hagen (the mountain) to Magic Mountain Nature Lodge, arriving in time for dinner and early night. You will sleep well in this cool climate after four nights in the steamy coastal tropics.</p> <p>Overnight Magic Mountain Nature Lodge (2 star, twin share bungalows, includes set-menu meals).</p>
<p>Day 6 – Wed 1 Nov</p>  	<p><b>MT HAGEN (choice of excursions)</b></p> <p>Today a choice of three activities is offered and the group may split accordingly:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Full day climb to the summit of Mount Hagen (3800m), an 8 hour return hike ex- Magic Mountain Nature Lodge which is located on the lower slopes of Mount Hagen. Most of the walking is through light bushland and open grasslands. Views of the Nebilyer Valley, Mt Hagen town and much of the southern and western highlands can be enjoyed from the summit.</li> <li>2. Day walks around Magic Mountain – there are 3 walking routes to choose from, each about 2 hours duration:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) a walk through the moss and orchid forest around Magic Mountain (which is a lesser peak at the base of Mount Hagen) with opportunities to see native birds</li> <li>(b) a scenic walk from Magic Mountain along the sealed road heading towards Enga Province, stopping at roadside hamlets to chat with locals engaged in tending their gardens and animals. For several kilometres past Magic Mountain the terrain and villages are very picturesque and make for excellent photography. Walk as near or as far as you like and the lodge vehicle will pick you up and drive you back to the lodge.</li> <li>(c) a downhill hike down the Paiyagona valley through montane forest to the high waterfall at the bottom of the valley where you can take a frosty dip and</li> </ol> </li> </ol>

	<p>then return to the lodge by car. 2 hours fast walk or 3 hours slow walk.</p> <p><i>For all walks you will be accompanied by a guide from the lodge. If you have limited fitness we recommend walks (a) and (b) because these can be cut short if you get tired whereas for walk (c) once you start walking you are committed until you reach the waterfall pickup point.</i></p> <p>Overnight Magic Mountain Nature Lodge (2 star, twin share bungalows, includes set-menu meals)</p>
<p>Day 7 – Thu 2 Nov</p> 	<p><b>MT HAGEN / PORT MORESBY</b></p> <p>08:00 This morning we will tour nearby Paiya (Paiyagona) cultural village where we will meet the chief and his three wives and see displays of Western Highlands village culture including a men’s ceremonial house, an ancestors skull house and demonstrations of traditional wig-making and the courtship ritual “tanim het” (turnim head). The highlight of the village tour will be a sing-sing performance featuring both men’s and women’s dances. (In the highlands, men and women never dance together in one group).</p> <p>After Paiya village we will make a stop at Moika village for another village tour, but different. Moika is a cluster village with the houses built in close proximity, in contrast to Paiya village which is a dispersed village where the families live on large plots of garden land at least 200 metres from their nearest neighbours. We will have an opportunity to go inside some of the houses and see the communal garden plots behind the village, plus an excellent native flower gardens</p> <p>13:00 Lunch stop at the Highlander Hotel in Mt Hagen</p> <p>14:30 We head for the airport with an optional short stop at the Mt Hagen market, the largest fresh produce market in the highlands with a huge selection of tropical, sub-tropical and temperate climate fruit and vegetables. Occasionally the market can be overcrowded and unstable (a melee can quickly erupt when vendors squabble with each other and the crowd takes sides) so we will only go in if the market is quiet.</p> <p>15:30 Check in at Mt Hagen airport</p> <p>17:10 Air Niugini flight PX187 departs Mt Hagen for Port Moresby (aircraft: Fokker F100 jet with 98 seats)</p> <p>18:20 On arrival in Port Moresby we transfer by shuttle bus to the hotel in time for dinner. Overnight Gateway Hotel, Port Moresby (4 star, twin share, room only – pay as you go for meals and extras)</p>
<p>Day 8 – Fri 3 Nov</p>	<p><b>PORT MORESBY / ALOTAU</b></p> <p>06:00 Breakfast</p> <p>06:30 We depart the hotel to check in at the airport. Due to the festival, today’s flight will probably be overbooked and it is necessary to check in early to avoid being denied boarding even with a confirmed ticket (this is where we live, unfortunately!)</p> <p>09:30 Air Niugini flight PX964 departs Port Moresby for Alotau (aircraft: Dash 8-Q400 turboprop with 70 seats)</p> <p>10:20 On arrival at Alotau’s Gurney Airport the group will transfer to the hotel</p>

	<p>and check in, in time for lunch (pay as you go).          In the afternoon, attend festival activities such as canoe races, drum beating contests, traditional dancing, displays of handicrafts, agricultural and Mari cultural produce, demonstrations of weaving, carving, local style cooking. You can either stick with our tour leader or venture out by yourself with a copy of the tour program and town map – it's a small town and impossible to get lost. There will be big crowds of friendly locals who will look after you if you need any guidance. Alotau is that kind of place (ie very different from Mt Hagen). Overnight 3 star hotel, Alotau (room only, pay as you go for meals)</p> <p><i>Accommodation will be at the Masurina Lodge or Napatana Lodge, depending on availability.</i></p>
<p>Day 9 – Sat 4 Nov</p> 	<p><b>ALOTAU (festival)</b></p> <p>Spend a full day at the Canoe and Drum festival venue which is walking distance from our hotel. For lunch, buy some local food from the stalls at the festival, or try formal dining at the Alotau International Hotel on the foreshore. There are also a few local style diners in the shopping area where you can sit down to local fare. There will be a full day's entertainment including local bands, dancing groups, and the annual beer can regatta.</p> <p>After a hard day's festivalling, relax at the hotel for the last few hours of the afternoon. Overnight 3 star hotel, Alotau (room only, pay as you go for meals)</p> <p><i>NB A bus tour of Alotau and environs including war relics and memorials, historical points of interest etc will be arranged at some point during the two day festival but we will wait for the festival program to be published closer to the date before deciding where to slot the bus tour in.</i></p>
<p>Day 10 – Sun 5 Nov</p> 	<p><b>ALOTAU / TROBRIAND ISLANDS (half day tour of Kiriwina Island)</b></p> <p>After breakfast, settle your meals and extras at the hotel reception before we transfer to the airport by hotel shuttle.  <b>10:45 Airlines PNG flight CG1644 departs Alotau for Losuia, Trobriand Islands (aircraft: Dash 8-200 with 36 seats)</b>  <b>11:25</b> On arrival at Losuia airport on Kiriwina, the largest of the Trobriand Islands, we transfer 30 minutes by bumpy local road to Kiriwina Lodge, located on the foreshore of Losuia township.          After checking in to our fortunately air-conditioned rooms and having our first Trobriand Islands lunch – hopefully their famous chilli mud crab – we venture out on a half day tour of Kiriwina Island. Although playing host to the township, port and airport, Kiriwina Island is pleasantly traditional, most village houses are made of bush materials, and daily routine of fishing and tending yam gardens persists as it has for centuries. Overnight Kiriwina Lodge (2 star accommodation in air-conditioned room with private bathroom, includes set-menu meals).</p>

Day 11 – Mon 6 Nov



**TROBRIAND ISLANDS (day trip to Munuwata Island)**

After breakfast (crab omelette is a specialty at Kiriwina Lodge!), we board a local “banana boat” for the one hour trip out to Munuwata Island. Fortunately Kiriwina Lodge is right on the water’s edge and we won’t have to go far to step into our boat. At Munuwata we will have a full-on cultural experience with a small community of Trobriand Islanders living on a tiny island that most of us would call paradise.

On arrival at the island we will be treated to a traditional welcome procession on the beach, and dancers will escort us up to the village. Don’t worry, this is not just a tourist show as the islanders would normally offer such a colourful welcome to any native visitors from the other islands as well. At the village square, the community will then treat us to the “best of” their cultural repertoire including the tapoika dance (a hilarious sexually suggestive routine mimicking the pounding of sago with a pestle), the “string dance” and a number of children’s dances. Yes the children will miss school today to be present for our arrival ... don’t worry they will learn more from us and our visit than they would pick up in a day at school. During the traditional dancing you are welcome to get up close with your camera and take as many photographs as you like. After the performance the kids will run and play on the beach while we enjoy a selection of island foods for lunch, including fruit, fish, shellfish, sago, yam and greens.

In the afternoon the Munuwata people will show us around their village, their gardens and their daily routine. We’ll see how they build and repair houses with bush materials from the light rainforest on the island. On Munuwata, typical of most Trobriand Islands, families do not live in larger family homes but each couple or individual has his or own separate little sleeping hut. A child sleeps with his parents until puberty and then builds his or her own sleeping hut. Each extended family’s sleeping huts are built in a circle or semicircle around a central “haus win” or breeze house where the family members sit and socialise, kind of like a living room. The smoke house where food is cooked is usually attached to the haus win, because food preparation is a hugely social activity here. (On Kiriwina Island, where the villages have more space to play with, clusters of sleeping huts are built in concentric circles around a central yam house.

The Munuwata people will show us how they grow and cook their own food, and how they catch fish with lines and nets. A visit to Munuwata would not be complete without getting into (and falling out of) one of their native canoes so don’t miss the opportunity to go out for a paddle. Late afternoon, we transfer by boat back to Kiriwina Lodge. Overnight Kiriwina Lodge (2 star accommodation in air-conditioned room with private bathroom, includes set-menu meals)

Day 12 – Tue 7 Nov

**TROBRIAND ISLANDS (Wawela beach trip) / PORT MORESBY**

08:00 After breakfast we take an excursion down the bottom “tail” of Kiriwina to Wawela, a picture-perfect palm tree beach where we can take a pleasant beach walk and a dip in the Solomon Sea. Local who live near the beach will

	<p>bring us young coconuts to drink the juice.</p> <p>10:00 Depart Wawela beach for Losuia airport. A boxed lunch is provided to eat before or during the flight (all domestic flights in PNG are non-catering).  <b>11:50 Airlines PNG flight CG 1645 departs Losuia for Port Moresby (via Alotau) (aircraft: Dash 8-200 with 36 seats)</b></p> <p>14:00 On arrival at Port Moresby airport we transfer to our hotel.</p> <p><i>NB It is not unusual for the Losuia flight to arrive late so it is not prudent to schedule any formal activities for the rest of the afternoon. If time allows we may organise a sightseeing activity.</i></p> <p>Overnight Gateway Hotel, Port Moresby (4 star, twin share, room only – pay as you go for meals and extras)</p>
<p>Day 13 – Wed 8 Nov</p> 	<p><b>PORT MORESBY / FLY OUT</b></p> <p>Transfer on the hotel shuttle to the airport for your onward flight. A complimentary brief city tour is available if you missed out on Day 1 and if time allows before your flight.</p>

**PRICES**

Tour	Price per person, twin share in AUD
12 Night core tour – includes land and PNG domestic air	\$11,575
Air ex Brisbane from	\$550*
Air Ex Sydney from	\$760*
Air ex Cairns from	\$400*
Single Surcharge (land only, hotel accommodation)	\$1750

### PACKAGE INCLUSIONS

- ) Port Moresby – meet, greet and assist
- ) Port Moresby – domestic flight to Wewak
- ) Wewak – 1 night 3.5 star accommodation at In-Wewak Boutique Hotel (or alternative if unavailable) – room only, pay as you go for a la carte meals and extras [www.in-wewak.com](http://www.in-wewak.com)
- ) Wewak – group transfer by private bus or four wheel drive vehicle to the Sepik River (2 bus seats per person)
- ) Sepik River – 3 nights 4 days motor canoe tour with village guest house accommodation including clean bedding, mixture of camp-style and local-style meals, bottled or boiled water, village tours and demonstrations, plus associated costs.
- ) Sepik River - group transfer by private bus or four wheel drive vehicle to Wewak (2 bus seats per person)
- ) Wewak – domestic flight to Mt Hagen
- ) Mt Hagen – 2 nights 2.5 star accommodation at Magic Mountain Nature Lodge – twin share bungalow including set-menu meals and transfers, bottled or boiled water
- ) Mt Hagen – full day local walking excursion
- ) Mt Hagen – half day village cultural tour with sing-sing
- ) Mt Hagen – domestic flight to Port Moresby
- ) Port Moresby – 2 nights 4 star accommodation at Quality Inn Gateway Hotel [www.coralseahotels.com.pg](http://www.coralseahotels.com.pg)
- ) Port Moresby – domestic flight to Alotau
- ) Alotau – 3 nights 3 star accommodation at Napatana Lodge [www.napatanalodge.com](http://www.napatanalodge.com) or Masurina Lodge [www.masurina.com](http://www.masurina.com) (or alternative if unavailable)
- ) Alotau – local guides for the Milne Bay Canoe and Drum Festival (most activities are free entry and walking distance from all hotels)
- ) Alotau – sightseeing tour by bus
- ) Alotau – domestic flight to Losuia, Trobriand Islands
- ) Trobriand Islands – 2 nights 2.5 star accommodation at Kiriwina Lodge – air-conditioned twin-share room with set-menu meals
- ) Trobriand Islands – half day road tour of Kiriwina Island
- ) Trobriand Islands – full day boat excursion to Munuwata Island
- ) Trobriand Islands – short excursion to Wawela Beach, Kiriwina Island, or alternative
- ) Trobriand Islands – domestic flight to Port Moresby
- ) Port Moresby – departure check-in assistance
- ) Throughout the tour - bottled water on board all tour vehicles
- ) Throughout the tour - all fees and gratuities for local villages, guides and helpers
- ) Throughout the tour - all airport/hotel transfers
- ) Throughout the tour - services of full time tour escort from Ecotourism Melanesia
- ) Throughout the tour - tropical first aid kit and mobile satellite phone carried with the tour leader
- ) Throughout the tour - 24-hour tour monitoring and emergency assistance from our operator’s Port Moresby office

### TOUR EXCLUSIONS

- ) international airfares (unless added above)
- ) bottled water (except where stated as provided)
- ) hotel meals and any other meals stated as not included, or described as “pay as you go” or “buy your own”

- ) tips (not expected, and only appropriate for exceptional service)
- ) souvenirs and items of a personal nature
- ) bar drinks
- ) visa fees and visa assistance
- ) excess baggage charges (your free allowance on scheduled domestic flights is 16kg + 5 kg and you can check in additional kilos at your own cost)
- ) Personal items. Bring your own quick-dry bath towel, personal medications and first aid items, personal hygiene requirements, brimmed hat or cap, “amphibious footwear” (sandals or quick-dry canvas shoes), insect repellent, sunscreen, personal flashlight, battery-operated personal fan. NB Aerosol cans are not permitted on domestic flights in PNG so bring roll-ons or pump-action sprays.

## TOUR NOTES

### **ABOUT PORT MORESBY**

*Port Moresby, also referred to as Moresby and Pom Town, is the capital and largest city of Papua New Guinea with over 300,000 inhabitants. During World War II it was a prime objective for conquest by the Imperial Japanese forces during 1942–43 as a staging point and air base to cut off Australia from Southeast Asia and the Americas. Today there are many reminders of the war with museums, Kokoda Trail, war graves for visitors to see and pay their respects.*

### **ABOUT WEWAK**

*Wewak town (population around 50,000) is the jumping-off point for the Sepik River and the Wewak Islands. A smaller town than Madang, Wewak is less tourist-oriented and the local economy is mainly based on commercial fishing. There are three good hotels and a number of smaller motels and guest houses. From Wewak there are two roads leading to the Sepik River (one to Pagwi on the Middle Sepik and one to Angoram on the Lower Sepik) and charter aircraft operate from Wewak airport to airstrips along the river at Ambunti (Upper Sepik), Timbunke (Middle Sepik) and Karawari (a tributary of the Sepik). From the Wewak waterfront open speed boats travel less than an hour to the offshore Wewak Islands, Muschu and Kairiru.*

### **ABOUT MT HAGEN**

*Mount Hagen is the third largest city in Papua New Guinea, with a population of 46,250. It is the capital of the Western Highlands Province and is located in the large fertile Wahgi Valley in central mainland Papua New Guinea, at an elevation of 1,677 m (5,502 ft). The city is named after the old eroded volcano Mount Hagen, located about 24 kilometres (15 mi) to the north-west. The volcano was named after the German colonial officer Curt von Hagen (de) (1859-1897).*

### **ABOUT ALOTAU**

*Alotau is the capital of Milne Bay Province, in the south-east of Papua New Guinea. It is located on the northern shore of Milne Bay. The town is located within the area in which the invading Japanese army suffered their first land defeat in the Pacific War in 1942, before the Kokoda Track battle. A memorial park at the old battle site commemorates the event. Alotau became the provincial capital in 1969, when it was shifted from Samarai.*

### **ABOUT LOSUIA**

*Losuia is the tiny township and airfield on Kiriwina Island, which is the largest island in the Trobriands group. Losuia airfield is a former wartime American air base and has a very long runway. Losuia township has a population about 5,000 and hosts a high school, a small hospital, some minor local government offices and a dozen small trade stores. Very much a "one-horse town". Some of the population live in surveyed streets while the bulk live in satellite villages.*

*There is only one place to stay in Losuia and that is Kiriwina Lodge, a budget motel. Out near the airport is Butia Lodge (named after a local species of flower) which has bungalows built into WW2 aircraft revetments (camouflage shelters).*

### **ABOUT THE TROBRIAND ISLANDS**

*The Trobriand islanders have both Melanesian and Polynesian features and are thought to have arrived by sea from Polynesia at least a thousand years ago. The "Trobres" are known as the "islands of love" because of the islanders' custom of encouraging young males and females to engage in romantic behaviour soon after puberty. This is widely misinterpreted by westerners as promiscuity but it is actually a form of courtship and marriage ritual, its purpose is to help the young men and women quickly decide on a partner and settle down. However there is also said to be a tradition that, during the annual yam harvest celebrations, married or betrothed couples are permitted to FLIRT with other partners. The romantic customs of the Trobriand Islanders do not extend to outsiders ("dimdims"). Visitors who come to the islands hoping for a bit of nookie are usually disappointed! The Trobriand Islanders are a very proud people and they value the propagation of their genetic lines and they disapprove of casual relationships between islanders and outsiders.*

### **ABOUT MUNUWATA ISLAND**

*Munuwata is a tropical island paradise about one hour's ride due west of Losuia by banana boat. (A banana boat is large open fibreglass dinghy with outboard motor. Its up-curved shape at the front gives it a bent appearance like a banana). Sometimes the trip takes longer if the sea is choppy and your boat driver may take you the long way around, hugging the lee of Kaileuna Island to avoid the chop. Life jackets are provided but you will probably be more interested in the tarpaulin that will keep you dry from sea spray.*

*Munuwata island (also spelled Mounuwata) is inhabited by a small community of about 100 people. Their language and customs are closely related to the people of Kaileuna, the nearest large island. Despite their proximity to Losuia the people of Munuwata live a remarkably traditional subsistence lifestyle, growing yams and other vegetables in small gardens and catching fish and other seafood from the waters that surround their island.*

*Munuwata is fringed by sandy beaches and reef. You can walk around the island in about 2 hours. There are about 20 houses grouped into a small village at one end, and the rest of the island is light rainforest and gardens. All the houses on Munuwata are traditional style Trobriand huts and there are no modern buildings. There are not enough children here for the island to have its own school so the kids paddle to the next island (Kuiawa) every day for school. Fortunately there is a submerged sandbar joining the two islands and the water is not deep. Understandably though, Munuwata kids have strong arms from paddling!*

*In the past, tourists have not visited Munuwata, although the islanders travelled regularly to Losuia to compete in dance competitions at the regular festivals. In 2010 Ecotourism Melanesia came to an exclusive arrangement with the local people to host visitors that we bring in for village stay experiences. Part of the deal is a commitment by the villagers not to build any modern houses or other prefabricated buildings on the island, using only traditional*

*building materials to make and repair their houses, and to ensure that all sing-sing performances and other cultural demonstrations are true to their ancestral traditions. The village elders are happy with this arrangement because they want to motivate their young people to maintain the island traditions and not allow their dances or customs to be watered down by outside influences like plastic decorations.*

### GENERAL TOUR NOTES

1. Prices are quoted in Australian Dollar and are correct at the time of printing this document (21 Oct 16). They are subject to currency fluctuations and may need to be re-quoted if large variances occur with the USD and PGK rates. PNG Holidays **WILL NOT** be liable for changes in price due to the above and the rate is not guaranteed until paid in full. A final invoice with the amended total will be given to you by the payment due date.
2. Hotel accommodation. Hotel rooms in the towns transited on this tour are generally of three star standard. Hotel and resort rooms all have private bathrooms, TV and air-conditioning (except in the highlands), unless otherwise specified. While we endeavour to book you into the hotels stated in the tour itinerary, in cases where specified hotels are fully booked by the time we receive your tour deposit we may have to book you into alternative accommodation. In this situation we strive to book you into the next-best available accommodation and we apologise in advance for any disappointment. No compensation or partial refunds or discounts can be paid or allowed on the basis of the perceived quality of hotel rooms provided for you while on this tour because the wholesale rates offered to us by the higher quality tourist hotels are similar to the non-commissionable rates we have to pay lesser quality motels when the tourist hotels are full.
3. Extras. Bar drinks, between-meal snacks, any meals not included in the package, and other extras at hotels can be paid for in cash or with credit card direct to the hotel or restaurant.
4. Safety and security. Papua New Guinea is sometimes portrayed as a dangerous destination, but although street crime is a concern in some urban areas and tribal fights are prevalent in some parts of the Highlands, the vast majority of the country, especially the rural areas, is safe and welcoming. It is very uncommon for a tourist to be a victim of crime in PNG because tourists do not usually visit areas where crime or tribal violence are prevalent. Nevertheless, PNG Holidays takes the safety and security of our visitors seriously and all tours we offer involve destinations that we rate as safe.
5. Climate and clothing. In the Highlands areas like Goroka, Simbai and Mt Hagen, the days are generally warm and sunny with moderately cold nights and mornings. Coastal towns of Wewak, Madang, Port Moresby, Rabaul, Alotau, The Trobriand Islands and the Sepik region will be hot and humid. We suggest visitors pack clothes made predominantly of cotton which will allow an evaporative cooling effect in hot humid areas. Pack a sweater or warm jacket for wearing in the Highlands in the evenings. Recommended sleeping attire is light track pants and sweat shirt or similar. Papua New Guinea is a conservative country and brief or revealing clothing worn by foreigners is frowned upon.
6. Packing suggestions. We suggest that your packing list include: rain poncho, a small bath towel, your favourite soap in a leak-proof container, a one-litre water bottle, a small first aid kit. We recommend valuable personal items (camera, travel documents etc) be packed in zip lock plastic bags to protect them from the wet. Suitable footwear for this tour includes tennis shoes/sneakers, and a pair of sandals/thongs/flip flops. Bring plenty of spare batteries for your digital camera because batteries seem to go flat more rapidly in the humid climate and are not obtainable in all stores here. Power outlets are the same as in Australia.

7. Baggage – scheduled flights. The free baggage allowance on scheduled domestic flights is 16 kg and the carry-on limit is 5 kg. Naturally you can check more baggage if you are prepared to pay the excess baggage rate which is approximately PGK8 per kilogram Port Moresby to Goroka. Due to narrow-body turbo-prop aircraft operating some scheduled flights, large carry-on items may be taken off you and stored in the hold even if the weight is under the carry-on limit. Liquids are permitted in both checked baggage and carry-on for domestic flights but pressurised aerosol spray cans are not permitted on any domestic flights in PNG either in checked luggage OR carry-on. Bring pump-action sprays or roll-ons. When flying out on your international flight, pack all gels, lotions and other liquids in your checked baggage as carry-on luggage will be hand searched and liquids including water bottles will be removed. If you have liquids that you need during the flight, declare them, to airline staff at check-in.

8. Meals - If you are on a gluten free diet or require other special food just let us know in advance and we will do our best to accommodate you.

9. Water. Town water supplies in Papua New Guinea are treated and officially rated as safe to drink. In the villages, drinking water is usually collected in rainwater tanks or carried in containers from clean water sources. However to prevent discomfort from drinking from a different water supply every day as you progress through your tour, we recommend you drink bottled or boiled water, or use water purification tablets.

10. Visas. Tourist visas are available on arrival at Port Moresby airport for citizens of designated countries including Australia, New Zealand, the USA, Canada and Northern and Western European countries; Please note your passport must have at least 6 months validity left on it in order to be issued a PNG visa. Passport-holders of central and eastern European countries, Middle Eastern countries, African and Caribbean countries must normally apply for a visa at least 6 weeks in advance, from a PNG embassy or high commission (London, Brussels, Washington DC, Canberra, Singapore, Manila) or through the Australian diplomatic mission in other countries.

11. Money. The best way to obtain PNG currency is by withdrawing a credit card cash advance on arrival. Automatic teller machines operated by major banks in PNG will accept MasterCard and Visa Card but there is an ATM withdrawal limit of PGK2000 (about USD\$1040) per day. Larger amounts can be withdrawn over the counter in bank branches located in major towns. The currency exchange booths at Australian and Asian airports usually have PNG Kina currency in stock (banks and currency exchange booths in the city centres may not), but don't change large sums of money before arrival in PNG because the exchange rate for purchasing PNG kina is better there.

12. Health. Malaria is prevalent throughout the coastal and wetland areas in PNG. We recommend you visit a tropical health GP a few weeks prior to departure to start a course of anti-malarial tablets. Your GP will also advise if there are any other possible health issues or recent outbreaks.