



# Ecotourism Melanesia

Discover Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands

## EM54 - GOROKA AND MADANG 3 NIGHTS

### SOFT ADVENTURE PACKAGE FOR INDEPENDENT TRAVELLERS

1 night Goroka, 2 nights Madang

#### INTRODUCTION



This year-round structured itinerary features two of PNG's contrasting destinations with varied natural, cultural and historical attractions:

Goroka - scenic highlands terrain, biodiverse forests, mountain villages.

Madang - pretty coastal scenery, peaceful seaside villages and tropical rainforest, colonial history

The package is semi-escorted ie our trained local guides at each destination will accompany you for each day's activities but the guide does not fly with you or stay with you at the hotel.

This is not a trekking package but there are some optional walking activities.

#### PACKAGE COST: all prices per person

	Group of 1	Group of 2	Group of 4	Group of 6+
Ground package (per person)*	USD 4620	USD 2450	USD 1610	USD 1260
Single room supplement**	-	USD 400	USD 400	USD 400
Airfare supplement*** POM-GKA//MAG-POM	USD 400	USD 400	USD 400	USD 400

\* Based on twin share

\*\* Optional single supplement for single room

\*\*\* Optional airfare supplement - otherwise you may arrange your own airfares.

(NB we are a ground operator not an airline ticketing agency, but for your convenience we can purchase tickets in your name from a local ticketing agent in PNG).

*Prices subject to change but otherwise valid till end 2020.*

## PACKAGE INCLUSIONS

- Port Moresby - all airport meet and greets and check-in assistance
- Goroka - 1 night accommodation at Bird of Paradise Hotel (3.5 star “premier” room, room only)
- Goroka - ¾ day tour of Goroka town and villages by private car including Daulo Pass, Asaro mudmen and Akameku village experience (includes local style lunch)
- Goroka - road transfer to Madang
- Madang - 1 night accommodation at Coastwatchers Hotel (3.5 star “premier” room, room only)
- Madang - 1 night accommodation at Jais Aben Resort (3.5 star “deluxe” bungalow, room only)
- Madang - full day Madang town sightseeing and Hobe village tour by private car (includes local style lunch and “sing-sing” performance at village)
- Madang - airport dropoff and check-in assistance
- Throughout the tour we provide:
  - daily guide and assistant guide or driver i.e. 2 staff to accompany you or your group at all times
  - all fees and gratuities for local villagers, demonstrators and helpers
  - all airport/hotel transfers
  - road travel by late model mini bus or four wheel drive vehicle with bottled water on board
  - daily reconfirmation of flights and arrangements coordinated by our Port Moresby office
  - 24 hour assistance from our Port Moresby office (phone 7700 5066, 7204 6950 or 7686 8917)

## EXCLUSIONS

- International airfares (internal fares are quoted separately above)
- meals, bar drinks and bottled water at hotels
- tips (not expected, and only appropriate for exceptional service)
- souvenirs and items of a personal nature
- airline excess baggage charges (the free allowance on Air Niugini is 20 kg + 5 kg)
- Personal items. Bring your own personal medications and first aid kit, personal hygiene requirements, brimmed hat or cap, comfortable walking shoes and a pair of sandals, insect repellent, sunscreen. Please note that pressurised aerosol spray cans are not permitted on some domestic flights in PNG - bring pump-action sprays or roll-ons.



See itinerary next page

## ITINERARY

### DAY 1



### PORT MORESBY / GOROKA (Goroka sightseeing)

On arrival at Port Moresby airport you will be met by staff from Ecotourism Melanesia who will assist you to check in for your connecting flight to Goroka.

**08:15 Air Niugini flight PX160 departs Port Moresby for Goroka (aircraft: Dash 8-Q400 turboprop with 70 seats)**

09:10 You will be met on arrival in Goroka by our local guide - look for somebody holding a sign with your name. The guide will drive you 5 minutes to your hotel, assist you to check in and then leave you to freshen up.

10:00 Commence  $\frac{3}{4}$  day tour of Goroka and surrounding villages by private four-wheel drive vehicle. First visit some places of interest around Goroka town:

- Mt Kiss lookout (see most of Goroka town and the adjacent Asaro Valley)
- JK McCarthy Museum of Highlands Culture (if open)
- fresh produce market (vegetables, pigs, chickens)
- handicrafts market (woven bilum bags are the best buy)

then continue out the Asaro Valley a thirty minute drive to Akameku, a typical local village, arriving about around midday. The village is a typical semi-rural highlands community with round huts made of bush materials, smoky cooking fires and pigs wandering around untethered. At the village you'll see local people in traditional dress engaged in a variety of daily activities such as market gardening, harvesting, food preparation, bilum weaving, hunting wild pigs with bows and arrows, crafting wooden drums and other "sing-sing" props and tending their coffee crops. Organic coffee grown on smallholder blocks is the major cash crop in the highlands.

At the village a traditional-style *mumu* lunch is ready-cooked for you. *Mumu* food Goroka style is prepared by wrapping meat and vegetables in banana leaves or stuffing them into the nodes of giant bamboo stalks and roasting in a fire or burying in a pit under hot coals or hot stones. The food takes about 2 hours to slow-cook this way and when it comes out of the "oven" it has a delightful smoky barbecue flavour.

From Akameku, back-track to the highway and continue a short distance to Asaro village, home of the famed Asaro mudmen. These people have a tradition of crafting fierce looking clay helmets worn during tribal fights in the old days to frighten the enemy. The helmets are also worn for traditional dancing and drama performances demonstrating how their ancestors confronted enemy tribes wearing their mud helmets, their bodies smeared with grey mud pretending to be ghosts. You'll be shown how the clay helmets are made and worn, and you'll be treated to some dance and drama.

From Asaro, continue 20 minutes drive up to the Daulo Pass, a high altitude biodiversity hotspot where the highway winds through swirling mists past giant tree ferns and trickling waterfalls.

Near the peak of the pass, you will leave your vehicle at the road side and some locals will lead you on a 30 minute walk through the moss forest, often enveloped in fog and dripping with condensation.

The forest is populated by flowering trees and tree ferns which form a substrate for the growth of a wide variety of saprophytic native orchids, green mosses and colourful fungi, lichens, liverworts and leafy epiphytes.

Mid to late afternoon is the time of day when the raucous Raggiana bird of paradise is most active: the bird is relatively easy to spot as it flutters from



tree to tree emitting a loud distinctive cackle. There are known nesting spots along the forest paths. Wild animals including birds of paradise are plentiful in PNG and are not protected by law but locals have preserved some areas of forest for visitors to enjoy.

*(NB Due to weather and other considerations today's itinerary may be adjusted to suit the local conditions).*

18:00 Return to hotel.



Overnight Bird of Paradise Hotel, Goroka (premier room, accommodation only).

**TOUR NOTE**

*Dinner and breakfast at this hotel are not included in the tour package (ie these meals are pay-as-you-go or PAYG - the hotel accepts major credit cards, travellers cheques and local currency). The hotel has two eateries - a bistro/pizzeria with daily specials and a formal restaurant with a la carte dining on weekdays and a full buffet on weekends. There is a good Chinese restaurant across the street. Groceries for self-catering can be purchased from the small supermarket opposite the hotel which closes at 18:30.*

**DAY 2**



**GOROKA / MADANG (scenic road transfer)**

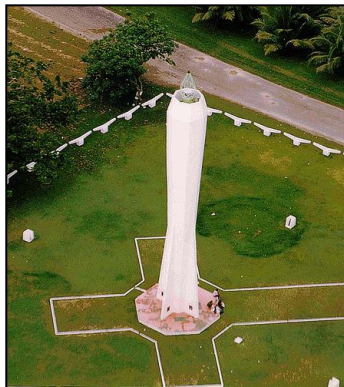
07:00 Breakfast in the upstairs bistro (pay as you go)

08:00 Your guide will meet you at reception and you will make a start on your drive to Madang. The drive from Goroka to Madang takes about 6 hours and involves a 3 hour descent along the mountainous Highland Highways to the head of the Ramu River Valley where you will make a left turn onto the relatively flat Ramu Highway for a smoother and faster 3 hour run down to Madang. The Goroka to Ramu River sector meanders over hill and down dale, crossing many bridges and passing through the rural towns of Henganofi and Kainantu.



You may also make a stop for a break at the Yonki hydroelectric dam before descending through the steep winding Kassam Pass to the Ramu River Valley. As your vehicle descends the hairpin bends down through the pass - which is occasionally blocked by landslides so no yodelling please ☺ - you may notice the change in temperature and humidity as you transcend the thermal inversion layer from the dry, cool air of the highlands to the moist, warm air of the coastal tropics.

The drive north west down the fertile Ramu River Valley passes by many kilometres of sugar cane farms and other agricultural ventures. Turning due north for the final run into Madang town the highway becomes more crowded with roadside villages and smallholder market gardens. For the last half hour or so of the drive you will have glimpses of the Bismarck Sea visible to your right. (Bottled water and fruit is supplied on board the vehicle).



You will arrive in Madang town mid afternoon. Late lunch is available in the hotel.

To allow for possible delays during the road journey from Goroka, no formal touring is planned for this afternoon but our guide is available to accompany you on an exploratory walk around the town area near the hotel if you wish. Next to the hotel is the Coastwatchers Memorial Lighthouse which flashes the Madang harbour signal out to sea at night and is an iconic feature of Madang - somewhat resembling a life-size space rocket. Further along the foreshore are a number of wartime artillery relics and a sheltered swimming beach where local families congregate and children swim in the



sea. Opposite the foreshore is the unfenced Madang Golf Links - the tropical plants that festoon the golf course are as beautifully manicured as any botanical garden and you are welcome to walk through the grounds. A fifteen minute walk in the opposite direction from the lighthouse brings you to the barbeque fish market where you can buy some tasty fried fish or fried banana, and the small boat dock where dinghies tie up between trips to the harbour islands for commuters.

Overnight Coastwatchers Hotel, Madang (3 star premier room, room only)

### DAY 3



### MADANG (sightseeing and village excursion)

08:00 Today's program will be a full day exploration of Madang and a local village. Your guide will arrive with an appropriate sightseeing vehicle and show you first around the town area including the Madang shops, market, flying fox trees in the town square, Madang Resort carver's hut, orchid gardens and boardwalk, Coastwatcher's Lighthouse, Madang culture museum (if open), and the Balek sulphur spring where part of Pierce Brosnan's *Robinson Crusoe* movie was shot.

12:00 From Balek another 30 minutes drive south out of town brings you to a village where a traditional style lunch and afternoon of activities have been prepared for you.

The village is a small rural community inland from the Gum River. All homes in the village are of traditional bush material construction and there is no electricity. The villagers farm the land to grow fruit and vegetables to sell at Madang market as well as for home consumption. The village is situated adjacent to a tract of tropical forest where the locals hunt for game and harvest bush materials for building and repairing their houses. On arrival you will be greeted with a welcome sing-sing and the village children will perform their butterfly dance. Locals will show you around their village and you will be able to go inside family homes and see how they live.

You may also be able to see men and women engaged in daily activities in their homes such as food preparation, weaving sleeping mats, weaving large string bags (billums) for carrying garden produce and firewood, caring for young children (often they are carried around in billums too!) and working in their nearby food gardens.

17:00 Depart village for Madang town and drop off at hotel.

Overnight Jais Aben Resort, Madang (3 star deluxe bungalow, room only).

### DAY 4



### MADANG / PORT MORESBY

The Jais Aben Resort shuttle vehicle will transfer you to Madang airport to check in for your departing flight to Port Moresby. If you are booked on a later flight you can spend some time enjoying the ambience at Jais Aben:

- take a dip in the freshwater swimming pool
- relax in a deck chair on the foreshore under shady overhanging trees
- snorkel over the fringing reef near the resort
- paddle a kayak around the Inlet and out to the small island in the lagoon

**Flight departs Madang to Port Moresby**

On arrival in Port Moresby, Ecotourism Melanesia staff will meet you and assist you with your onward arrangements.