



Ecotourism Melanesia

Discover Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands

ITINERARY FOR: - **TUFI TREKKING TOUR - 8 DAYS 7 NIGHTS (TOUR CODE EM15)**

This is a village to village trek in a safe rural area of PNG with spectacular scenery and fantastic snorkelling. The tour can commence any Wednesday or Friday. Tour cost includes airfares, accommodation, meals, canoe transfers, guides and activities (except where stated). BYO snorkelling gear. The trek features daily hikes of decreasing duration - the first day's walking from Wanigela to Uwe is the longest (about 6 hours) and the last day from Tainabuna to Bauwame is the shortest (1 hour). This allows increasing amounts of time each day to be spent swimming, snorkelling, canoeing, fishing, beachwalking and birdwatching from your base at the guest house where you overnight in each village. Each day your host from the previous village will walk with you (or paddle in some cases) and deliver you safely to the next village in the itinerary. At each village there is a choice of activities which are all included in the cost of your tour package (except outboard dinghy hire).

The Tufi district of Oro Province is famous for its Nordic-type fjords. The breathtaking topography is dominated by some 25 fjords which penetrate deep into the coastal landscape. Many of the fjords feature sheer basalt cliffs. There are numerous white sandy beaches perfect for swimming, and pristine fringing reefs offer excellent snorkelling. The water clarity is stunning and scuba diving is a major attraction for visitors to the area. The people of the Tufi area have a rich cultural heritage that is nurtured and treasured. Village people in the Tufi district are experienced at hosting visitors in village guest houses for hiking, fishing and skindiving experiences.

Day 1 (any Wednesday or Friday): fly to Wanigela Mission and overnight.

Depart Port Moresby on Airlines PNG scheduled flight to Wanigela Mission departing Port Moresby 11.45am on Wednesdays and 4.00pm on Fridays. Arrive approximately 2 hours later if the flight goes via Kokoda or Tufi, or 1 hour later if the flight is direct. On landing at the Wanigela airstrip you will be met by your host from the Mission guest house. It's only a short walk from the airstrip to the Mission. You will spend the rest of this afternoon exploring the Wanigela station and village. There is good birdwatching in the nearby freshwater wetlands but you would need to arrive on the Wednesday to have time for a birdwatching excursion.

Overnight Wanigela Mission guest house (basic twin share accom, includes dinner and breakfast).

Day 2: trek from Wanigela to Uwe.

Departing shortly after daybreak you will hike with your guide through a variety of flat ground habitats including wetlands, swamp, rainforest and dry grasslands, crossing the Ajova River around 10.00am and crossing in to the flood plain forests of the Ajowa and Goia Rivers. You will strike the Goia River proper at Itoto Village around noon. You will be able to purchase green coconuts, fruit, vegetables and probably some baked fish from village people in small hamlets along the way, or at Itoto village. Bring your own biscuits or other munchies for the first day if you fancy eating something dry, but there should be a good variety of local foods available.

In the afternoon you will follow the Goia River downstream to its mouth, then follow the beach for another hour to Uwe village, arriving mid-afternoon if you have made good time.

You can spend the rest of the day on the beach, swimming in the sea and snorkelling. There is a snorkelling reef at the northern end of Uwe beach. Your hosts from the

village guest house will show you around.

Overnight Village guest house, Uwe village (includes local style dinner and breakfast). Your guide from Wanigela will overnight at Uwe and return to Wanigela the next day.

Day 3: paddle and hike from Uwe to Utukwafu (Siu)

Departing Uwe around 7am you will paddle for about an hour by native outrigger canoe past mangrove swamps to Giriwa village. The canoe and a few extra paddlers will be provided by the Uwe guest house. Colourful reef will glide under the canoe and you are welcome to stop and dive in with your mask and snorkel at any point. At Giriwa you will alight from your canoe and begin walking with your guide from Uwe who will accompany you as far as Utukwafu. Hiking today involves following a coastal track for a while and then climbing up and over several spurs and passing through several small villages until arriving at Kabubu Village. Here you will have to pull out K10 from your wallet and pay somebody to paddle you in their canoe across to the other side of Wajama Inlet as it is impractical to walk around the end of the inlet. From there another half an hour of walking will bring you to Utukwafu Village where you will be welcomed by Gladstone Aguba at his guest house. You should arrive by mid-afternoon and Gladstone will have a late lunch ready for you. Again, you can purchase fruit and vegetables from village people en route as well.

Overnight Village guest house, Utukwafu village (includes local style dinner and breakfast). Your guide from Uwe will overnight at Utukwafu and return to Uwe the next day.

Day 4: snorkelling at Utukwafu and hike to Orotoaba

Today's hike to hilltop Orotoaba village will only take about two hours, therefore you can spend the better part of the day enjoying the beautiful reefs around Utukwafu first. The snorkelling here is fantastic. You can paddle yourself around in an outrigger canoe exploring the coastline of the Utukwaf fjord or your hosts can take charge of the canoe while you plunge into the crystal clear water and explore the coral and tropical fish. There are a couple of scenic waterfalls in the fjord that you can paddle right up to.

After lunch and a cool shower under a waterfall or under a water bucket at Gladstone's guest house, you'll commence your hike from Utukwafu to Orotoaba. There are two ways of doing this. If you want a challenging hike, you can go the "back way" walking inland from Utukwafu via Jikuatala and follow a track that climbs up and down several steep spurs. This hike will take 2-3 hours including rest stops at the top of each spur. Or, your hosts can paddle you 30 minutes to Jebo beach and you can walk up the "front way" which is the track that the village people normally use to get to Orotoaba. This is a well worn, moderately steep foot track that wends through tall grasses up the northern spur of Uramanoa Fjord, and only takes about 45 minutes of steady climbing from Jebo beach.

Your host from Orotoaba, Rodney Mokuta, may meet you at Utukwafu and hike with you if you are taking the back way, or may wait for you at Jebo beach if you opt to walk the front way. Although a young man, Rodney is the chairman of the Tufi Ecotourism Development Association and is passionate about village-based tourism. He lives at home in the village with his father Stanley who is a retired medical doctor.

Orotoaba is a large hilltop village with green lawns, flowers, cool breezes and stunning fjord views. It is a short but steep climb down to a small beach in the adjacent Ibura Fjord for swimming (or swim to your heart's content off beautiful Jebo beach before hiking up to Orotoaba).

If you are interested in wildlife you can take a quiet afternoon foray into the forest to view a variety of insects, mammals and birds you may not have noticed during your hikes. The world's largest butterfly, the Queen Alexandra Birdwing, is native to this area and can be found in the village gardens if you are lucky. Alternatively, get up early and Rodney will take you to see a stand of trees hosting a small flock of Bird of Paradise.

In the evening a village cultural group will perform a sing-sing in your honour featuring bare chested dancers with intricate facial tattoos, adorned with traditional tapa (bark) cloth and spectacular coloured feather headdresses. You haven't seen anything like *this* before.

Overnight village guest house, Orotoaba village (includes local style dinner and breakfast).

Day 5: hike from Orotoaba to Tainabuna

A short downhill hike today, descending and ascending the spurs at the end of Ibura Fjord and then a steady downhill walk to the hamlet of Tainabuna. You can start walking straight after breakfast if you choose, or spend the morning at Orotoaba first before heading off.

The guest house at Tainabuna is across the inlet from the village proper and has its own private beach and lookout point. Spend the day beachwalking, lazing in the shadows of huge trees overhanging the beach, paddling an outrigger canoe around the calm inlet, or doing more snorkelling. You can even swim right around the inlet; there aren't any sharks due to the fringing reef. Your hosts are available to assist with showing you around or paddling your canoe if you wish, or you can explore by yourself.

Overnight village guest house, Tainabuna village (includes local style dinner and breakfast).

Day 6: hike or paddle from Tainabuna to Bauwame

Another short hop today. Bauwame is only half an hour's paddling or one hour's walk away. If walking, you have to take the back way due to mangroves further along the beach which are difficult to traverse. Your hosts will be just as keen to paddle you. Again, you can head off early or spend the morning at Tainabuna first.

Bauwame is a clifftop village at the southern entrance to Amuian Fjord, the largest of the Tufi fjords. The guest house here has panoramic views of the fjords and towering Goodenough Island which sits on the eastern horizon. There is a tiny uninhabited island about ten minutes paddling from shore which you can explore at leisure; your hosts can even maroon you there for the afternoon with some water and fruit to give you some time to yourself (walk around the island, paddle in the shallows and snorkel to your heart's content - don't forget the 15+ sunscreen).

Outrigger canoes are available for exploring the Amuian Fjord, or you can pay extra to hire a motorised dinghy to give you the grand tour, including snorkelling stops at some of the bommies (reef outcrops) in the fjord. Amuian Fjord really is majestic. From Bauwame guest house you will also have clear views of the volcanic mountain range to the west which was responsible for the formation of the fjords from lava flows. Bauwame and all other villages in the Tufi area are littered with igneous boulders which rained from heaven thousands of years ago during what must have been one of the most spectacular volcanic eruptions in the history of the earth.

Overnight village guest house, Bauwame village (includes local style dinner and breakfast).

Day 7: Tufi Dive Resort

From Bauwame you will be paddled after lunch to Tufi proper, about 30 minutes by outrigger (too far to walk in a day due to the meandering terrain). If there is a decent breeze your canoe captain may unfurl a patchwork sail made of rice bags and cuts of black plastic which will whisk you over the reefs. Your outrigger will tie up at the Tufi wharf and then there is a steep climb up a cliffside driveway to the Tufi Dive Resort.

You will spend the last night of your tour at the Tufi Dive Resort, unless you choose to extend for a few days to do some scuba diving. Tufi Dive Resort is a small, boutique dive resort that offers a range of activities including scuba diving (if you have your scuba ticket), snorkelling, fishing and kayaking. If you are a non-diver you may prefer to spend the day relaxing at the resort which has a fully stocked bar and plenty of comfortable chairs with sea views. Snacks can be ordered from the restaurant during the day, and a buffet-style dinner is served in the evening. Accommodation here is in well-appointed rooms with ensuite facilities. The resort has 24-hour electricity and telephone.

Overnight Tufi Dive Resort (main meals are included in the accommodation package but all additional snacks, drinks from the bar, scuba diving and other chargeable activities are not included and can be paid for in cash or by credit card.)

Day 8: return to Port Moresby

This morning you may care to stroll around the nearby Tufi government station, meeting the locals and soaking up the laid back rural town atmosphere. There are about 50 houses, a couple of little shops and a few provincial government offices. Only the resort has electricity.

After lunch the resort staff will check you in for your flight (they are the airline agents) and it's just a short walk to Tufi airfield to wait for the plane. If today is a Wednesday your flight will depart at approximately 1.25pm. On Fridays the flight departs at 5.15pm. The flight may go via Wanigela, giving you an opportunity to say a final farewell to your friends at Wanigela if they happen to be at the airstrip; when the propellers stop you can jump out for a minute and say hello.

TOUR COST: (per person, rack rates)

Group of 1	Group of 2	Group of 3	Group of 4+
USD\$ 1284	USD\$ 1078	USD\$ 1032	USD\$ 992
AUD\$ 1736	AUD\$ 1456	AUD\$ 1395	AUD\$ 1340

TOUR INCLUSIONS:

- Airfares Port Moresby-Wanigela and Tufi-Port Moresby
- Six nights village guest house accommodation including local-style meals (fruit, vegetables, seafood, scones)
- One night standard accommodation and main meals at Tufi Dive Resort (twin share basis)
- Guide fees
- All non-motorised activities at villages
- Sing-sing at Orotoaba Village
- Outrigger canoe transfers
- Tropical first aid kit (on request - loan basis)

TOUR EXCLUSIONS:

- Motorised dinghy hire
- Activities ex-Tufi Dive Resort
- Snacks and bar drinks at Tufi Dive Resort

OPTIONAL EXTENSIONS:

- Extra nights Tufi Dive Resort (flights out of Tufi are on Sunday mornings, Monday mornings, Wednesday afternoons and Friday afternoons)
- Extra nights at village guest houses: there are a number of other village guest houses in the area suitable for a few days R and R (eg Kofure Village Resort, Garewa Beach Hut).

TOUR NOTES:

1. **Physical fitness.** This tour is designed for visitors with an interest in, and whom are fit for, hiking of moderate difficulty. Visitors who do not have adequate physical fitness for the hiking described in this tour should consider another tour (eg EM16 Discover Tufi).
2. **Wet weather.** Tufi is subject to regular rainfall even during the dry season (April to November), though most rain falls at night. If the weather is wet during your stay you may not be able to complete all the activities described in this itinerary.
3. **Suggested packing list for this tour:**

You should pack your personal gear into a medium size lightweight pack (preferably waterproof with an internal frame). You may find it helpful to pack your personal items in garbage bags or ziplock plastic bags to protect them from the wet, especially your camera and Mars bars. Personal gear includes two or three changes of clothes (warm days, warm to cool nights), light hiking boots with 2 pairs of cotton/wool blend hiking socks, a pair of light tracksuit pants or similar to sleep in, hat with wide brim to keep sun and rain off your face, waterproof torch with spare batteries, rain poncho, quick-dry towel, your favourite soap in a leak-proof container, two rolls of your favourite toilet paper, a one-litre water bottle to carry with you (guides will usually carry extra water), and your personal first aid kit. Your personal first aid kit will contain Band-aids, blister dressings, topical cream for bites and grazes, antibiotic cream for cuts and scratches, paracetamol, Deep Heat or other muscle linament and the all-important insect repellent.
4. **Bedding.** The village guesthouses will provide clean bedding for you. Alternatively you may choose to bring your own tropical sleeping bag or a bed liner of the type used at youth hostels, or an empty quilt cover that you can sleep inside. Your sleeping bag or sheet will also protect you from mosquitoes although mosquito nets are also provided at the village guesthouses.
5. **First aid.** On request, Ecotourism Melanesia will provide you with a tropical first aid kit to take with you to Tufi and return to us afterwards. This will include emergency treatment for malaria, anti-diarrhoea medication and oral rehydration salts, topical antibiotic, wound dressings, bandages.
6. **Bathing.** At the village guest houses you have the option of bathing Asian-style by scooping water over yourself from a drum of water inside a closed-off outside bathroom, or walking down to the stream and bathing with your clothes on, usually in front of other people. Males may bathe in shorts, ladies should bring a sarong or quick-dry shorts and top to wear for bathing.
7. **Guides and helpers.** While staying in the villages and going on hikes, you will be accompanied most of the time by a village guide or helpers arranged by the operator of the village guest house. These guides / helpers are often your host's own family members. Your guides/helpers will show you around, paddle the canoe for you, help you communicate with village people who don't speak English, and accompany you on hikes and walks. There is no need for you to make any direct payment to these guides and helpers as they are paid a daily fee by the operator of the village guest house. However if you wish to reward exceptional service from a particular individual you are welcome to do so (ie pay a tip) but please be discreet so as not to cause disputes. If a guide or helper asks you for a gratuity you should politely say that you will talk to the guest house operator about it first. If you would like to take any gifts to the villages, clothing is the best type of gift to take because clothing is difficult to obtain in the rural areas. Large size T-shirts are a sure bet as they can be given to both males and females of various builds. Other suitable gifts include caps, small flashlights, soap, cooking spices and pens and pencils for the children to use in school.
8. **Food.** Most of the food that will be offered to you at the village guest houses will be freshly harvested vegetables and seafood, possibly some chicken or pork. If you are a fresh food fan, you will be very happy. There is no electricity in the villages and leftover food is given to the village animals at the end of the day and not kept for the next day. If you feel the village diet may be too bland for you, you are welcome to bring additional favourite food items with you - village people will not be offended. Dehydrated packet pasta, tinned meats, baked beans etc that you bring with you can be prepared for you by your hosts and served with your meal.

9. **Drinking water** in the villages comes from clean fjord springs and is safe to drink. If you have any concerns you can ask your hosts to boil and cool water for you to drink, or drink only coconut juice which is abundant.
10. **Safety.** There are no medical facilities available at Tufi. If you fall ill during your stay, arrangements will be made to fly you out to Port Moresby on the next available flight. If you are critically ill, a charter flight (fixed wing or helicopter) will be arranged to evacuate you, at an approximate cost of PGK 5,000. If a decision is made to evacuate you, either you or your medical/travel insurer will be responsible for the cost of this exercise. Accordingly we strongly advise that you take out medivac insurance cover for the duration of your tour. Most of the villages around Tufi now have VHF radio contact with the Tufi Dive Resort and can call for help in the event of an emergency.
11. **Malaria.** Malaria is prevalent in all parts of Papua New Guinea including Tufi. If you have recently arrived in the country you are unlikely to fall ill with malaria during your week at Tufi because the incubation period for malaria is a minimum of seven days after you are bitten by the mosquito. We recommend taking malaria prophylaxis during your visit to PNG and we recommend that you carry a course of presumptive treatment with you to Tufi. On your return home, you should immediately suspect malaria if you feel unwell in any way, and be sure to inform your doctor that you have been in a malarial area.