



Ecotourism Melanesia

Discover Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands

EM203 ANZAC DAY PILGRIMAGE TOUR 2010

13 nights Port Moresby, Popondetta, Buna/Gona, Kokoda, Alotau/Milne Bay, ANZAC Day at Bomana War Cemetery, Rabaul, Lae and Salamaua

Fully escorted sign-up soft adventure tour, group size minimum 8 maximum 18.

Attending the Anzac Day dawn service at Bomana War Cemetery outside Port Moresby is one of those things to do before you die. It is one of the most emotionally moving experiences you will have in your life. There before you, as you recite the Ode and sing Abide With Me in the semi-darkness, lie the graves of 3800 men (and women) who gave their lives for Australia, Britain and Papua New Guinea in wartime. This tour provides an opportunity to learn about the Bomana War Cemetery and its role in Australia's military history, and explore some of the locations where the Pacific Campaign unfolded and those now buried at Bomana saw action.

In order to avoid congestion at Kokoda immediately before ANZAC Day, the tour group visits Popondetta and Kokoda early in the week then a few days at Alotau to learn about the Battle of Milne Bay.

After ANZAC Day at Bomana the tour group continues on to Rabaul, Lae and Salamaua to visit other war cemeteries and WW2 historical sites. If 13 nights is too long for you, you can exit the tour on ANZAC Day and fly out to Australia after the dawn service.

TOUR COST: PGK 11,040 = AUD 4850 per person (twin-share, ground only)

Single supplement is PGK 2380 = AUD 1050

Truncated tour option

Day 1 to Day 9 only (ie Port Moresby, Popondetta, Kokoda, Alotau sector only) PGK 7,450 = AUD 3,250 per person twin share. Single supplement PGK 1,300 = AUD 570.

Quoted costs in AUD are subject to change if there are major movements in the exchange rate.

TOUR INCLUSIONS (13 nights):

- Port Moresby - airport meet and greet with welcome gift
- Port Moresby - tour information kit including souvenir polo shirt, maps, country information
- Port Moresby - historical briefing
- Port Moresby - 4 nights accommodation at Ponderosa Family Motel (3 star, twin share, room only, pay as you go for meals)
- Port Moresby - full day historical tour of Port Moresby and Bomana with lunch
- Popondetta - full day historical tour of Buna and Gona with lunch
- Popondetta - 1 night accommodation at Oro Guest House or similar (2 star, twin share, includes dinner and breakfast)
- Popondetta - road transfer to Kokoda with stops at Popondetta Memorial Park, Awala village and Kumusi River
- Kokoda - walking tour of historical sites
- Kokoda - 1 night accommodation at hospital guest house or similar (1 star, twin share, includes lunch, dinner and breakfast)
- Kokoda - charter flight to Port Moresby
- Alotau - half day historical tour, excludes lunch
- Alotau - full day sightseeing tour including Samarai Island, with lunch
- Alotau - 2 nights accommodation at Napatana Lodge or Masurina Lodge (2.5 star, twin share, room only, pay as you go for meals)

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- Port Moresby - excursion to Owers Corner
- Port Moresby - excursion to ANZAC Day dawn service and gunfire breakfast
- Rabaul - 1 night accommodation at Rabaul Hotel (3 star, twin share, room only, pay as you go for meals)
- Rabaul - 1 night accommodation at Rapopo Plantation Resort (3.5 star, twin share, room only, pay as you go for meals)
- Rabaul - full day historical tour of Rabaul district
- Rabaul - half day historical tour of Kokopo district
- Lae - 3 nights accommodation at The Melanesian Hotel (3.5 star, twin share, room only, pay as you go for meals)
- Lae - full day sightseeing tour, excludes lunch
- Lae - full day excursion to Salamaua, includes picnic lunch
- Port Moresby - departure connection assistance and farewell
- all airport transfers throughout the tour
- bottled water on all day tours
- all fees and gratuities for local villages, guides and helpers
- company guide to escort tour throughout
- daily tour monitoring from our Port Moresby office
- 24 hour assistance from our Port Moresby office (phone 7686 8917 or 340 5066)

TOUR EXCLUSIONS

- International airfares
- scheduled domestic airfares POM-PNP, POM-GUR-POM, POM-RAB-LAE-POM
- bottled water (except where stated as provided)
- any meals not stated as not included, or described as "pay as you go"
- tips (not expected, and only appropriate for exceptional service)
- souvenirs and items of a personal nature
- bar drinks
- visa fees

ITINERARY

DAY 1: SAT 17 APRIL 2010

ARRIVE PORT MORESBY

On your arrival from Sydney, Brisbane or Cairns you will be met by one of our staff (look for a sign with your name when you exit the Arrivals Hall) and we will transfer you to your hotel for check-in.

On the way to the hotel we can take you to shops and ATMs for withdrawal of credit card cash advances in local currency, if required.

As some members of the tour group will arrive on morning flights and others on afternoon flights, there is no official tour program for today. However if you arrive on a morning flight our guides are available to take you for a familiarisation drive around the city.

8:00pm After dinner our tour group will coalesce for the first time in the hotel conference room for a 1 hour slide show and lecture on the New Guinea campaign by a local historian.

Overnight Port Moresby (Ponderosa Family Hotel, room only)

DAY 2: SUN 18 APRIL 2010

PORT MORESBY (sightseeing)

08:00am We depart the hotel for a full day war history tour of Port Moresby beginning with the harbour defences (Burns Peak ack-ack station, Paga Hill Fort), the wreck of the *Macdhui*, the Fuzzy Wuzzy Angel memorial and

Jackson Field.

Driving further around Fairfax Harbour we will revisit the site of the Australian army camps.

By 12:00 noon we will arrive at the Schwimmer Drome war relics collection to view wartime relics and memorabilia and have a picnic lunch featuring local foods. A cultural group will perform traditional dancing for us.

2.00pm On arrival at Bomana War Cemetery there will be a briefing on the history of the cemetery and recent burials, then you will have plenty of time to wander among the graves and sign the visitors book.

4.00pm Depart Bomana for hotel

Notes:

Bomana War Cemetery is the final resting place of most of those 600 Australian soldiers who gave their lives along the Kokoda Track. They were originally buried in temporary graves along the Track and their remains were later re-interred at Bomana. There are about 3800 graves at Bomana. Apart from Kokoda Track casualties many of these troops were killed in other battles including Buna, Gona and Milne Bay. There are also several hundred graves of British soldiers killed at Singapore and a few of graves of servicemen and women from other Commonwealth countries. There are no US or Japanese soldiers buried at Bomana, all US and Japanese remains found have been repatriated. (At the time of the war, Papua was Australian soil and that is why it was considered appropriate to bury Australian soldiers here).

Near Bomana is the Schwimmer Drome war relics collection, located at Goldie River in the back yard of a private citizen who discovered his house was built on top of a wartime American bomber airstrip. While gardening he dug up all kinds of relics from cutlery to gasoline containers and machine guns and decided to collect them and display them at his home.

8:00pm After dinner we will show a video of 1942 newsreels showing actual footage of the bombing of Port Moresby Harbour and fighting on the Kokoda Track.

Overnight Port Moresby (Ponderosa Family Hotel, room only)

DAY 3: MON 19 APRIL 2010

PORT MORESBY / POPONDETTA

Morning flight from Port Moresby to Popondetta

Air Niugini flight PX852 0900/0935 (aircraft: Dash 8 airliner) or Airlines PNG flight CG1670 0630/0700 (aircraft: Dash 8 airliner).

On arrival in Popondetta we will meet up with our local guide, PNG military historian Maclaren Hiari MBE, a published academic who is the founder of the Kokoda-Buna Historical Foundation and whose research focuses on the role of the Papuan carriers ("fuzzy wuzzy angels") and Papuan Infantry during the Kokoda campaign.

Depending on the weather and the condition of the road we will board either a mini coach or a lorry with padded bench seats for the drive through the old American air base at Girua to the seaside village of Buna, a major beach-head battlefield. Maclaren will brief us on the beach-head battles and show us various war relics and battle sites.

From Buna we will transfer by small boat along the beach to Basabua and Gona where the first Japanese landings took place, and view battlefield relics. Afternoon tea will be served at the Gona Guest House and our passenger truck will be waiting there to transport us through to Popondetta.

5:00 Depart Gona for Popondetta town and check in at our accommodation.

7:00 Dinner.

Overnight Popondetta (Oro Guest House or Sue's Guest House, includes dinner and breakfast).

NB Due to limited accommodation in Popondetta, we may have to split our group between two or more guest houses

DAY 4: TUE 20 APRIL 2010

POPONDETTA / KOKODA

7.00am Breakfast and check out

8.00am Visit Popondetta Memorial Park which has excellent informative displays about the Campaigns.

8.30am Depart Popondetta for Kokoda via Awala. Depending on the weather and the condition of the road we will board either a mini coach or a lorry with padded bench seats for the drive to Kokoda. The road is sealed about half way to Kokoda but is a little bumpy the rest of the way and we provide extra cushions for you to sit on. This is normally a 3-hour drive non-stop, but today we will be making several stops en route to see sites of historical interest including the Kumusi River where General Hori and his white horse drowned, and Awala village where the first contact between Japanese and Papuan soldiers was recorded.

From Popondetta the road north towards Kokoda passes through oil palm plantations, rainforest and grasslands, with many river crossings. Awala is the site of the first engagement between the Japanese spear-head and a platoon of Papuan infantry led by a white Australian commander. There was an exchange of gunfire with no casualties. On arrival at Awala we'll be given some refreshments and sit down to watch a re-enactment of the Awala engagement performed by the local primary school kids dressed up as Japanese and Papuans. This is all great fun and is followed by a short hike led by the village children to the actual site of the engagement in nearby bushland.

Back on board our vehicle we continue the drive to Kokoda arriving about 1.00pm. Check in at local guest house (basic but comfy). This is peak Kokoda trekking season so there will be many trekking groups around and accommodation will be tight.

After a barbeque lunch (included) and a rest we will explore Kokoda township, tour the little museum and visit the war memorials on the plateau overlooking the valley. The Kokoda district office stills stands here, on its original spot. This afternoon if you are feeling fit you can take a walk with our guides up the first part of the Kokoda Track as far as Hoi village and return (about 2 hours round trip).

In the late afternoon and evening we will have a traditional style meal with some of the descendents of the fuzzy wuzzy angels: the Kokoda men and boys who work for Ecotourism Melanesia as Kokoda Track porters, and their families.

Overnight Kokoda (Hospital Guest House or alternative includes lunch, dinner and breakfast).

DAY 5: WED 21 APRIL 2010

KOKODA / PORT MORESBY

8.00am we walk or ride from the Kokoda plateau down to the airstrip to wait for our charter flight to Port Moresby.

10.00am Depart Kokoda by charter flight (aircraft size depends on group size) We will ask our pilot to follow the route of the Kokoda Track so that our guide can point out major landmarks such as the Isurava battlefield memorial, and Brigade Hill near Menari.

10.45 Arrive Port Moresby, check in at hotel and have lunch (pay-as-you-go for lunch today).

NB In the event of unavailability of charter aircraft today, or unsuitable flying weather at Kokoda, the group will drive back to Popondetta today and fly out to Port Moresby on Thursday morning, connecting with our scheduled flight to Alotau.

The rest of today is at leisure in Port Moresby. You may wish to rest, go artifact shopping, see the botanical gardens, or make another visit to the Bomana War Cemetery for quiet reflection. Our tour vehicles and guides are available to take you.

The best place to buy artifacts and souvenirs is the PNG Art artifact warehouse which stocks a wide range of carvings, shell jewellery and other cultural artifacts from all over PNG. Remember Australian quarantine regulations are very strict and most wooden and feathery items will need to be fumigated before being taken in to Australia. PNG Art can arrange overnight fumigation. Best buys at PNG Art are Sepik canoe prows, (carved canoe ends cut off the canoe with a chainsaw when it develops a hole and can't float any more - these are genuine cultural artefacts, not souvenirs) and spirit masks (wall-mounted). Bilum bags and contemporary paintings by street artists are also good buys and apart from the selection at PNG Art the tour bus will take you to the entrance of the Holiday Inn where locals sell these items out in the open and are usually willing to haggle on price - your guides will assist!

The botanical gardens have a wide variety of tropical plants and flowers and some caged native animals and birds. It takes about an hour to walk through the gardens.

Overnight Port Moresby (Ponderosa Family Hotel, room only)

DAY 6: THU 22 APRIL 2010

PORT MORESBY / ALOTAU

Depart Port Moresby for Alotau on

**Air Niugini flight PX954 10:00/11:00 (aircraft: Dash 8 airliner) or
Airlines PNG flight CG1640 11:20/12:20 (aircraft: Dash 8 airliner)**

On arrival at Alotau's Gurney Airport we transfer 30 minutes into town and check in at our accommodation

2:00pm After lunch, we take a half day war history tour of Alotau and surrounds. This will include the overgrown airstrips at Gurney airfield complex, the old Gili Gili homestead used as allied headquarters, and the KB beach front where there was hand to hand combat. There are a number of memorials marking significant battle sites and a Cenotaph marking the Milne Bay campaign.

6:00 Return to accommodation

Overnight Alotau (Napatana Lodge or Masurina Lodge, room only)

DAY 7: FRI 23 APRIL 2010

ALOTAU (sightseeing)

Today we take an extended day tour of Alotau and district including a village tour, a visit to ancestors skull caves and a boat trip to historical Samarai Island. Includes lunch.

Overnight Alotau (Napatana Lodge or Masurina Lodge, room only)

DAY 8: SAT 24 APRIL 2010

ALOTAU / PORT MORESBY

This morning we transfer to Gurney Airport for our flight to Port Moresby,

**Air Niugini flight PX954 10:00/11:00 (aircraft: Dash 8 airliner) or
Airlines PNG flight CG1641 12:50/13:50 (aircraft: Dash 8 airliner)**

On arrival in Port Moresby we will check in at our hotel in time for lunch then take a drive up to Owers Corner which is 90 minutes from the city.

3.00pm Arrive Owers Corner. Here there is a memorial park with informative displays about the history of the Kokoda Track, and a Howitzer

field gun on display identical to the type used there in 1942. Those members of the tour party who are feeling up to it can follow our guide down the first stretch of the Kokoda Track, a steep descent to Goldie River, perhaps take a dip in the cool water, then just as steep a climb back up. This will take about an hour altogether. At least then you can say you've tasted the Kokoda Track.

The rest of us mere mortals will wait at the memorial park. Owers Corner will be like Flinders Street Station today, with hundreds of trekkers ending their 7-day walk from Kokoda today, aiming to arrive in time for tomorrow's dawn service at Bomana.

4.30pm Depart Owers Corner

6.00pm Arrive back at hotel

Overnight Port Moresby (Ponderosa Family Hotel, room only)

Note:

On our 2006 Anzac Day tour we hosted George Gwilliam and Ron Phillips who were among the gunners who manned the Howitzers at Owers Corner in '42. How emotional it was for them to return and see a Howitzer sitting there, just as if it had been there all along since the day they finished their tour of duty and left. "We pumped 700 rounds into the Japanese position at Ioribaiwa Ridge until they turned tail" says George. The official history says the Japs retreated because they ran low on supplies. We'll go with George's version! (George and Ron are still mates after 65 years - good on you diggers, that kind of mateship is the backbone of Australia.)

DAY 9: SUN 25 APRIL 2010

PORT MORESBY (ANZAC Day) / FLY OUT OR CONTINUE TO RABAUL

3.30am Early morning wake-up call. Rise and shine.

4.00am Board our tour bus for the 20 minute drive out to Bomana War Cemetery. An orange juice and a piece of fruit is handed out during the ride, to keep you going till breakfast.

4.30am Be seated on lawns, groundsheets and/or stackable chairs for the dawn service. Printed programs and candles are supplied by the event organisers.

5.00am Dawn service commences with the arrival of dignitaries.

Note:

If you would like to lay a fresh wreath at the service we can purchase one for you from the local florist and you can reimburse us on arrival. Please contact us well in advance to arrange. An artificial wreath can be brought with you from Australia.

6.00am Dawn service concludes, people mingle afterwards and wander among the graves. There will be upward of 2,000 people present - most of the Australian and New Zealand community in Port Moresby attends, plus there will be literally hundreds of trekkers.

7.00am Depart Bomana for Australian High Commission at Waigani and "gunfire breakfast" (bangers and beer) sponsored by the Port Moresby RSL Sub-Branch. (Hopefully this will be the only time in your life you will drink a cold stubbie at this time of the morning!) This is a great opportunity to mingle with Papua New Guineans from all social classes, local expats, war veterans, Defence force personnel and tourists.

9.00am Return to the hotel for rest and catch-up sleep.

If you are exiting the tour today you will be transferred to the airport in time for your flight to Australia.

If you are continuing on to Rabaul and Lae we will be checking in at 1.00pm for Air Niugini flight PX206 to Rabaul departing 3.15pm

On arrival at Rabaul's Tokua Airport we transfer 90 minutes by scenic road trip along the coast to old Rabaul town.

Overnight Rabaul (Rabaul Hotel, room only)

NOTE:

Why is the airport so far from Rabaul town? After the volcanic eruptions in 1994 Rabaul's original airport on the Matupit peninsula - right at the foot of one of the erupting cones - was covered in lava and ash. A new airport was built at Tokua plantation, about 90 minutes drive along the coast from old Rabaul town, which was considered at the time to be a safe distance from future volcanic activity - especially airborne ash which can damage jet engines if ingested. Locals say the long trip from Rabaul to the new airport is an inconvenience, but the distance from the ashfall keeps the airport open most of the time. Although Mt Tavurvur at Rabaul has continued grumbling and spewing smoke, ash and the occasional shower of hot rocks for the past 15 years, prevailing winds tend to blow the ash clouds away from the new airport. Occasionally, abnormal wind patterns drive ash clouds to the south east towards Tokua and the airport is closed for a few days. However this only occurs a few days per year. Mid-way between the new Tokua airport and old Rabaul town is Kokopo, the "new Rabaul" that sprang up after the 1994 volcanic eruptions. Kokopo is now the main commercial centre for the province because Rabaul continues to suffer light ash fall. The volcanic ash is inert and harmless but can be annoying and an impediment to business. However as a new town Kokopo lacks historical attractions, culture and soul, so old Rabaul town remains the major tourist centre.

DAY 10: MON 26 APRIL 2010 RABAUL (sightseeing)

08:00am Today we take a full day historical tour of Rabaul.

First up will be a visit to the old Rabaul airport on Matupit peninsula just a few hundred metres across the water from Tavurvur, the still-active baby volcano which will surely impress us by blowing smoke and spitting stones (hopefully not too close in our direction!)

Near this location is Admiral Yamamoto's bunker. Yamamoto was commander of naval forces in the Rabaul and Solomon Islands theatres in 1942-1944 until he was killed in an air crash in south Bougainville. The bunker in Rabaul was his operations headquarters, constructed underground with protective concrete ramparts at ground level to protect from allied bombing. The bunker survived the war but was completely buried in ash in 1994. It has since been partly excavated.

To augment our understanding of Rabaul's pivotal role in WW2 we will visit the Rabaul Historical Society museum which is housed in the Rabaul Yacht Club (an historical institution in itself).

On a ridge above the township, the volcano observatory has commanding views of Simpson Harbour which is a volcanic caldera. Various vents around the perimeter of the harbour can all be observed from this vantage point. There is Mt Tavurvur (known as the "baby" - still active), Mt Kombiu (the dormant "mother") and Vulcan, a minor vent which blew spectacularly in 1994 but is now quiet.

Just out of town is the Japanese submarine base, a sheltered cove where subs were based and serviced during WW2. There are no sub wrecks to be seen, only the remains of the concrete pens.

12:30pm Return to the hotel for lunch (pay-as-you-go)

1:30pm Progressing south-east down the coast, stops are made at the Japanese barge tunnels and the Chinese cemetery. The barges based at Rabaul were used for unloading supply ships and transferring troops. To

protect the barges from bombing, tunnels were dug into the cliffs and the barges were winched up into the tunnels and 'garaged' there when not in us. Your tour guide will also show you gun emplacements and observation posts.

Later in the afternoon we explore the inland plateau which offers panoramic views of Rabaul, the harbour and the volcanoes.

Tonight we check in at the Rapopo Plantation Resort near Kokopo which is handy to the airport and will allow more time for sightseeing before we fly out tomorrow.

Overnight Kokopo (Rapopo Plantation Resort, room only)

DAY 11: TUE 27 APRIL 2010 RABAU / LAE

08:00 This morning we tour the Kokopo district before flying out to Lae. The main historical attraction at Kokopo is the Bitapaka War Cemetery where the first Australian casualties of The Great War (WW1) were buried following a skirmish with German colonial forces. We will also visit the Kokopo Museum which houses interesting displays of war relics, and visit the nearby ruins of "Queen Emma's" homestead. Queen Emma was a historical figure prominent in Rabaul's colonial days.

11:30 Early lunch at the Ralum Country Club in Kokopo (pay-as-you-go)

12:30 Check in at Rabaul airport for

Air Niugini flight PX257 to Lae departing 1:50pm

14:55pm On arrival at Lae airport we transfer 1 hour into Lae town and check in at our accommodation. Allowing for late arrival of our flight, there will not be much time left to do any sightseeing today.

Overnight Lae (Melanesian Hotel, room only)

DAY 12: WED 28 APRIL 2010 LAE (sightseeing)

Today we explore PNG's second city, beginning with a visit to the Lae War Cemetery and botanical gardens. Other points of interest include old Lae airport (used during the war), the Amelia Earhart memorial and the Melanesian Arts Centre which has an excellent range of genuine artifacts and handicrafts from all over the country available for sale.

Lunch today will be at the Lae Yacht Club (pay-as-you-go) and in the afternoon we will explore The Rainforest Habitat, a huge walk-through aviary housing native birds, mammals and reptiles.

Overnight Lae (Melanesian Hotel, room only)

DAY 13: THU 29 APRIL 2010 LAE (day trip to Salamaua)

08:00 We transfer to the Lae wharf and board a charter vessel for the 2 hour trip to Salamaua.

At Salamaua we are met by a local guide who will brief us on the historical importance of Salamaua in the New Guinea campaign and show us some of the many war relics still sitting where they were abandoned by both Japanese and Australian military forces.

There are no roads in to Salamaua and no airstrip - the only way to get there is by boat which is why this lovely little town has become a sanctuary for Lae residents, many of whom have holiday houses here or come for weekends at local guest houses.

If you are fit enough you can climb Coastwatchers Ridge to the observation point where Australian coast watchers reported Japanese shipping and air

movements using secret radios.

Many of the casualties buried in the Lae War Cemetery were killed at Salamaua.

A picnic lunch and esky of cold drinks is provided today and we return to Lae mid-afternoon.

Overnight Lae (Melanesian Hotel, room only)

DAY 14: FRI 30 APRIL 2010 LAE PORT MORESBY / FLY OUT

Nobody likes red-eye flights so we will skip the early morning option and transfer mid-morning to Lae airport to check in for

Airlines PNG flight CG1505 departing 11:10am

This flight connects with Air Niugini and Pacific Blue's afternoon flights to Brisbane and Sydney, and evening flights to Cairns. Ecotourism Melanesia staff will be on hand at Port Moresby airport to assist you with your connection and bid you farewell.

TOUR ENDS

TRIP NOTES:

- 1. Conditions.** The general terms and conditions applicable to this tour are those specified on your invoice and on the Booking page of our website.
- 2. Change of itinerary.** Destinations are subject to change in response to local conditions. Where travel to a specified destination is contraindicated by local conditions, travel to an alternative destination of similar value with similar activities will be provided where possible, but claims for partial refunds based on quality of substitute activities will not be accepted.
- 3. Hotel accommodation** 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. Hotel accommodation in Papua New Guinea towns is very limited. Towns like Rabaul and Kavieng only have two or three hotels of 3 star standard or better. While we endeavour to book you into the hotels stated in the tour itinerary, in cases where 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 will be paid on the basis of the quality of hotel rooms provided for you while on this tour. Often the wholesale rates offered to us by tourist hotels are similar to the non-commissionable rates we have to pay lesser quality guest houses when tourist hotels are full. At hotels where a menu is available, lunches and dinners are usually not included in your tour, to give you freedom of choice. Hotel meals may be paid for in cash or by major credit card. Included with this itinerary you will find a list of tour inclusions which specifies those meals that are included in your tour price.
- 4. Single supplement.** All accommodation included in the tour package quoted is twin-share. On payment of a single supplement of 20% of the tour package price, we will arrange single occupancy for you wherever single rooms are available. On this tour, single accommodation may not be available at all destinations. The single supplement charge covers the cost of the extra rooms and our service fee for the additional arrangements. If you are travelling alone and you do not pay the single supplement you will be roomed with another solo traveller of the same gender, or possibly with the tour leader.
- 5. Group size.** The maximum group size for this tour is 18 travellers plus 1 tour leader (Ecotourism Melanesia staff) due to charter boat and bus capacity. Where the number of bookings for the tour exceeds this maximum, two parallel tour groups may be operated rather than increasing the group size. Where the number of confirmed bookings for this tour is less than 8 at the booking deadline of two months before the tour, the tour will be cancelled and deposits refunded or alternative customised (ie unescorted) arrangements to an equivalent value will be provided.
- 6. Extras.** PAYG (pay-as-you-go) meals, snacks and extras at hotels can be paid for in cash or with credit card direct to the hotel or restaurant.
- 7. Safety and security.** Some activities on this tour require water travel in local boats and native canoes that may not be carrying a full set of safety equipment. We do provide life jackets but if you require a special fitting you should bring your own. Individuals who cannot swim are advised against taking tours like this involving open water travel in small craft. Light hiking activities on this tour require an average level of fitness. Papua New Guinea is sometimes pictured 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. Even in the towns, most crime occurs in the squatter shanty-towns and betel-nut markets, and the common victims are local residents not foreigners. Nevertheless, Ecotourism Melanesia takes the safety and security of our visitors seriously and all tours we offer involve destinations that we rate as safe or minimum-risk.
- 8. Climate and clothing.** Coastal and lowland areas of Papua New Guinea, including Rabaul and Kavieng, are perpetually warm-to-hot with high humidity. Nights are cooler but still humid. We suggest visitors pack clothes made predominantly of cotton which will allow an evaporative cooling effect in hot humid areas. A battery operated personal fan is useful when travelling in rural areas without electricity. Recommended sleeping attire is shorts, 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, even on the beach.
- 9. Packing suggestions.** We suggest that your packing list include: a small flashlight with spare batteries, rain poncho, a small bath towel, your favourite soap in a leakproof container, two rolls of your favourite toilet paper, a one-litre water bottle, a small first aid kit. We recommend valuable personal items (camera, travel documents etc) be packed in ziplock plastic bags to protect them from the wet (rain, sea spray). Suitable footwear for this tour includes boat shoes/tennis shoes/sneakers, and a pair of

sandals/thongs/flipflops. Bring spare batteries for your digital camera because batteries seem to go flat more rapidly in the humid climate are not obtainable in all stores here.

10. **Accommodation in rural areas.** Village guest houses (such as Andi Guest House on Tatau Island) offer very basic accommodation in village-style huts accommodating two to four people per room. Bedding consists of rubber mattresses which may or may not have clean sheets and pillows, set up under mosquito net "tents" inside the hut, sometimes set on a woven mat on the floor, sometimes set on a raised bed frame. Lighting is provided by kerosene pressure lamps and flashlights. There is usually an outdoor bathroom and toilet - the toilet will usually be a sit-down pedestal over a pit latrine and the outdoor bathroom will consist of a screened-off area of grass or pebbles with a drum of water that you can use to scoop water over yourself. In some villages there is a nearby stream that everybody bathes in. When bathing in public places such as a stream it is appropriate to bathe in your clothes and change into dry gear once back inside your room. Male visitors may bathe in shorts. Ladies should bring a sarong or quick-dry shorts and top to wear for bathing.

11. **Food in rural areas.** At village guest houses local-style food is served consisting of a variety of fresh fruit and fresh vegetables cooked in coconut milk, plain boiled or baked in banana leaves under hot stones (known locally as mumu). For breakfast they provide tea with fresh scones or pancakes, and fruit.

12. **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 either drink bottled water, carry and use water purification tablets, or drink boiled water. There is also a battery-operated product called Steripen that some visitors have highly recommended - it uses UV radiation to kill bacteria in any cup of water. You may be able to buy this from camping stores. Village guest houses should routinely offer you drinking water that has been boiled and cooled. In the villages you can also ask for coconut water from young coconuts which is always sterile and safe to drink.

13. **Visas.** Tourist visas are available on arrival at Port Moresby airport for citizens of designated countries including Australia, New Zealand, the USA, Canada and western European countries. The cost is PGK100 or equivalent in major foreign currencies. There is a bureau-de-change in the Customs area and immigration officers will usually allow you to walk over and exchange your money prior to paying for your visa if you would like to pay in local currency. Getting your tourist visa issued will be quick and easy if you have a copy of your tour itinerary handy to show the immigration officer. Please note your passport must have at least 6 months validity left on it in order to be issued a PNG visa. Please check your passport to make sure the expiry date is at least 6 months away from the time you plan to enter PNG. 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 their nearest PNG diplomatic mission (ie London, Brussels, Washington DC, Canberra, Singapore, Manila). However we can usually arrange for such visas to also be issued on arrival to avoid the risk of sending your passport away. For assisting with visa matters we charge an additional fee.

14. **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\$700) per day. Larger amounts can be withdrawn over the counter in bank branches located in major towns. There are now ATMs located at Port Moresby airport that you can access on arrival. The Travelex currency exchange booths at major Australian airports including Brisbane and Cairns always 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 there because the exchange rate for purchasing kina is better here in PNG than in Australia.

15. **Costs.** To give you an indication of the costs of hotel meals, at hotels in Port Moresby fish and chips costs USD\$6, a medium pizza is USD\$7, T-Bone Steak is USD\$12 and a local beer is USD\$2.

16. **Health.** The major health risk in PNG is malaria. Preventive medication must be taken while visiting PNG (see information below). Minor health risks for which tourists are advised to update their vaccinations include typhoid, cholera and hepatitis B. Your personal first aid kit should include fabric sticking plasters (eg Elastoplast, not plastic strips), paracetamol, treatment for insect bites (eg Stingose or Calamine lotion/cream), antibiotic cream or powder (not antiseptic - Dettol etc is useless for preventing infection in the tropics, you have to hit skin wounds with antibiotics straight away - ask your doctor to prescribe it for you, eg tetracycline ointment), and prickly heat powder.

There are hospitals and doctors available in all major towns in PNG which can provide urgent medical care, but when visitors require serious medical attention we would normally contact their travel insurer to arrange a medical evacuation to Australia - this can be accomplished in a matter of hours as there are several medivac companies operating in PNG that are on 24 hour standby with fixed-wing aircraft and

helicopters. However availability of medical care in some rural areas visited as part of your tour is limited and medical evacuations may be difficult to arrange in some locations. You must be aware of this risk especially if you have a pre-existing health condition that may flare up and require medical attention. While we are on-tour our office in Port Moresby is on 24-hour alert to provide assistance but we cannot guarantee to be able to obtain 24-hour attention from other service providers.

17. **Malaria.** Before arriving in PNG you must see your doctor or traveller's medical centre for anti-malaria medication, which you will take during your time in PNG. No anti-malaria medication is 100% effective against malaria but taking something is better than not taking anything. If you are taking effective anti-malaria medication your chances of actually contracting malaria are quite low (but not zero). There are a number of recommended anti-malaria medications that can be taken weekly (eg Larium) or daily (eg Doxycycline). Doxycycline is actually an antibiotic and it was only in recent years that people discovered, quite by accident, that doxycycline is also an effective anti-malaria medication. The advantage of taking daily doxycycline to prevent malaria, if you can be sure to remember to take it every day, is that your blood remains saturated with a broad-spectrum antibiotic and this also prevents cuts and scratches from becoming infected, and may stave off chest coughs and other internal infections that might otherwise spoil your vacation. If your doctor suggests you take chloroquine as anti-malaria medication please query this because nowadays much malaria in PNG is resistant to chloroquine and it is not recommended as an anti-malaria medication for visitors. Even if you are infected with malaria you are unlikely to fall ill during your visit here as the incubation period for the malaria parasite is a minimum of seven days so even if you get bitten by a malaria mosquito on your first day here you are unlikely to experience malaria symptoms until you are back at home. Thus, if you fall ill after returning home you must seek immediate medical treatment and inform the doctor that you have been in PNG. Early malaria symptoms include body aches and pains, diarrhoea, headache, high temperatures and general "sick" feeling. Symptoms are almost identical to flu. As the illness advances without treatment you will experience fever and chills (feeling cold while your body is actually hot). The only way to correctly diagnose malaria is with a blood test. If laboratory facilities are not available, health workers in PNG generally treat patients presumptively. In your country, your doctor or hospital will probably insist on waiting for a blood test result before treating you and you might suffer for up to 24 hours before beginning treatment. Pharmacies in small towns in your home country may not stock medications for malaria and other such "exotic" illnesses. Therefore we recommend you either treat yourself with a presumptive course of malaria when you leave PNG, or take a box of the pills home with you and take them presumptively if you fall ill. The medication recommended by the World Health Organisation for presumptive treatment of malaria in Papua New Guinea is a combination of artemether and Fansidar tablets. This treatment is available over-the-counter from pharmacies (five days artemether with Fansidar on the third day). Artemether has no known side effects or interactions with other medications so there is no harm done in taking the presumptive treatment if your symptoms are not caused by malaria. If you are female and you may be pregnant, some anti-malarials will not be suitable for you.