



# Ecotourism Melanesia

Discover Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands

## EM33 - MAINLAND NEW GUINEA NATURE PACKAGE FOR INDEPENDENT TRAVELLERS

14 or 21 days ex-Port Moresby

Port Moresby, Varirata National Park, Lae, Kamiali Wildlife Management Area, Madang, Goroka, Minj, Mt Hagen (14 days) + Tabubil/Star Mountains, Kiunga, Ekame Wildlife Lodge (21 days)

### PACKAGE COST:

Group size	1 person	2 people	3 people	4 people
Price per person 21 days	USD 11,166	USD 8,114	USD 7,175	USD 6,462
Price per person 14 days*	USD 7,096	USD 5,418	USD 4,515	USD 4,176

\*Afternoon flight from Mt Hagen to Port Moresby on Day 13, overnight hotel and depart PNG on Day 14

### PACKAGE INCLUSIONS (21 days):

- meet and greet at Port Moresby airport
- half-day tour of Port Moresby if time allows OR Varirata National Park trip if time allows (tour provided by Ecotourism Melanesia)
- two nights premier room accommodation and breakfast at the Gateway Hotel, Port Moresby (or alternative)
- economy class airfares from Port Moresby to Lae, Lae to Madang, Mt Hagen to Tabubil and Kiunga to Port Moresby
- all airport transfers
- small boat transfers from Lae to Kamiali and return, with escort
- three nights hostel-style accommodation and meals at Kamiali Guest House
- two and a half days of nature tours in the Kamiali Wildlife Management Area (on foot or by boat)
- local guides at each destination
- a visit to The Rainforest Habitat in Lae
- three nights deluxe accommodation and breakfast at Madang Resort Hotel
- full day nature tour around Madang with packed lunch (tour provided by local tour operator)
- full day scuba diving excursion ex-Madang Resort Hotel with 2 dives and all gear (tour provided by Niugini Diving Adventures - lunch is taken back at the hotel and is not included in the tour) OR full day nature trip to Ohu Village including village-style lunch (tour provided by local tour operator)
- road transfer from Madang to Goroka with driver/escort
- Goroka town tour if time allows (tour provided by local tour operator)
- two nights premier room accommodation and breakfast at the Bird of Paradise Hotel, Goroka (or alternative)
- overnight highlands village experience at Lupipi Village ex-Goroka (or alternative village), including village-style meals, village guides and village gratuity
- road transfers from Goroka to village experience and return with driver/escort
- road transfer from Goroka to Minj with driver/escort
- one night hostel-style accommodation and meals at Minj Orchid Lodge
- two half day nature tours ex-Minj Orchid Lodge (as time and weather allow)
- two nights roundhouse accommodation and set-menu meals at Haus Poroman Lodge, Mt Hagen
- full day trip to Baiyer River Sanctuary or alternative nature tour destination ex-Mt Hagen, including packed lunch (tour provided by local tour operator)

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Section 69 Lot 12, Govea Street • Gordons, Port Moresby • Papua New Guinea  
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- two nights motel-style accommodation and breakfast at Hotel Cloudlands, Tabubil (or alternative)
- half day tour of Tabubil and Ok Tedi mining area (tour provided by local tour operator)
- full day nature tour in Star Mountains area (tour provided by local tour operator) - lunch not included (BYO)
- road transfer from Tabubil to Kiunga with driver/guide including stops for wildlife viewing etc
- afternoon bird watching trip around Kiunga on Day 16
- two nights motel-style accommodation and meals at Kiunga Guest House (or three nights if overnighing in Kiunga or Day 20)
- early morning bird watching trip around Kiunga on Day 17
- return water transfers to Ekame Wildlife Lodge
- two nights camp-style accommodation and meals at Ekame Wildlife Lodge
- two days wildlife viewing activities and guides around Ekame Wildlife Lodge
- afternoon bird watching trip around Kiunga on Day 19
- optional excursion in Port Moresby on Day 20 to artifact warehouse or museum or botanical gardens (provided by Ecotourism Melanesia)
- PNG country map
- Ecotourism Melanesia PNG souvenir polo shirt

#### EXCLUSIONS:

international airfares

bottled water (BYO or ask village hosts to boil water for you)

tips (not essential, but appreciated for exceptional service)

souvenirs and items of a personal nature

bar drinks and between-meal snacks

lunches on travelling days (purchase snacks from shops en route)

lunches and dinners at hotels except where specified

other meals except where stated as included

#### ITINERARY:

##### Day 1

##### PORT MORESBY

Arrive Port Moresby. Ecotourism Melanesia staff will meet you on arrival and transfer you to your hotel, followed by a half-day tour of Port Moresby including national museum and botanical gardens as time allows. The botanical gardens has an aviary with a small number of caged species including the Raggiana bird of paradise, hornbill, sulfur-crested cockatoo, cassowary and Victoria's crowned pigeon. OR If you are arriving on the early morning flight from Singapore, a day trip to Varirata National Park can be arranged for today. Overnight hotel (includes breakfast).

##### Day 2

##### PORT MORESBY / LAE / KAMIALI

Early morning flight to Lae. A driver from Niugini Bus Lines will meet you and drive you 45 minutes from the airport into Lae town and the main waterfront where you will board a speed boat for the journey to Kamiali. The boat ride takes about 3 hours and stops may be made at the pretty little coastal township of Salamaua and various villages along the way. On arrival at Kamiali, check in at Kamiali Guest House and have lunch.

*The Kamiali Wildlife Management Area is a 47,000 hectare expanse of coastal, tidal wetlands and rainforest habitats in the Salamaua district 70km south of Lae. The WMA and associated guest house are managed by the local community with the assistance of the Village Development Trust, a non-government organisation.*

This afternoon, you will be taken for a ride by outrigger canoe to Lababia

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Village, located on Lababia Island just offshore. The village community here are the custodians of the wildlife management area. View a sago making demonstration, see how bilums and mats are woven by the women. Handicrafts are available for purchase. In the evening, a guided night forest tour to hear insects and bird calls and view other animal life especially nocturnal tree kangaroos, or view leatherback turtle nesting (Dec-Feb). Overnight Kamiali Guest House (includes meals).

Day 3

**KAMIALI**

Begin today with an early morning rainforest walk along the David Suzuki Trail for viewing bird of paradise, parrots, hornbills, wild ducks. After breakfast visit a freshwater eel farm in a nearby village and take another ride to Lababia Island to view frigate bird nesting sites and indulge in a little reef snorkelling or hand-line fishing. After lunch back at the guest house, the afternoon is free for you to photograph exotic orchids and birdwing butterflies in the guest house gardens, see local WW2 relics, enjoy some swimming or more snorkelling, take a rainforest walk, or sit on the beach. In the evening you will be paddled quietly up the Tabare River to view nocturnal river life by spotlight. Overnight Kamiali Guest House.

Day 4

**KAMIALI**

Before breakfast, take an early morning canoe transfer to a nearby wetlands habitat for wildlife watching and ecology education. Later, a walk along the beach to turtle nesting sites. After lunch, a daylight safari by motorised canoe up the Tabare River. Further upstream from the sea, where the water is no longer saline, the river is overhung by jungle and more diverse terrestrial flora and fauna is evident. Overnight Kamiali Guest House.

Day 5

**KAMIALI / LAE / MADANG**

An early morning speed boat transfer from Kamiali brings you back to Lae. Niugini Bus Lines will meet you on arrival and transfer you straight to "The Rainforest Habitat", a large walk-through aviary in a lush tropical garden setting located at the local university campus, which houses the largest collection of captive birds of paradise in the world as well as a variety of native animals including Morobe tree kangaroos. Lunch can be purchased in the café at the Habitat.

After two hours at The Rainforest Habitat, transfer to Lae airport to check in for Airlink's afternoon flight to Madang departing at 1440. Madang Resort Hotel courtesy bus will meet you at Madang airport and transfer you to the hotel. After check in, you will have some time in the late afternoon to explore the waterfront market and handicraft stalls in this friendly tourist town. Overnight Madang Resort Hotel (includes breakfast only).

Day 6

**MADANG**

Today's full day nature tour with packed lunch includes a short harbour cruise, and a visit to the Balek Wildlife Sanctuary and Sulfur Caves where the Pierce Brosnan movie *Robinson Crusoe* was shot and a local Papua New Guinean actor William Takaku played the part of Man Friday. Other destinations today include the Suyau Lookout and the Omuru Flying Fox Cave. Overnight Madang Resort Hotel.

Day 7

**MADANG**

Today you have a choice between a scuba diving excursion with Niugini Diving Adventures (2 dives) or a day trip to Ohu Village. Either activity is included in

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your tour. All members of your travel party - if you are not travelling alone - must select the same option. (If you are a diver travelling with a non-diver your companion can snorkel around the dive boat or sunbathe on board with a cold drink.)

The diving excursion requires you to have your scuba diving ticket, and current insurance. You will probably join other divers for the day and the dive locations will be selected by the dive master. The boat returns to the hotel for you to have lunch (not included).

The trip to Ohu Village will give you the opportunity to visit a Madang village, see a butterfly conservation project and catch and release giant birdwing butterflies, go for a bush walk to the 100m Dumeh waterfall for a cool swim, and enjoy a village-style lunch.

Overnight Madang Resort Hotel.

#### Day 8

##### **MADANG / GOROKA**

This morning a vehicle and driver will pick you up from the hotel for the drive from Madang to Goroka. The journey takes five to six hours, passing stunning coastal and mountain landscapes as you climb the winding road from the steamy tropical lowlands to the cool highlands, arriving early afternoon. Rest stops and phot stops will be made. Check in at the Bird of Paradise Hotel (or alternative) and take a late lunch if you have not already filled up on fruits and snacks available for purchase from roadside stalls along the way.

Later, your local guide will take you on a brief tour of Goroka town including the cultural centre, coffee mill and Mt Kiss lookout. Goroka is said to have the world's most pleasant climate but gets a little chilly in the evenings so bring a light sweater. Overnight hotel, Goroka (includes breakfast only).

#### Day 9

##### **GOROKA / HIGHLANDS VILLAGE EXPERIENCE**

After breakfast your local guide will drive you out of Goroka to Lupipi village (or one of the other local villages near Goroka that host eco-tourists - Mehenave, Dauilo Verulu, or Onkinofi - depending on weather, availability, and the condition of the access roads).

Lupipi (and each of the alternative villages) is off the main road requiring a walk of about one hour to reach the village: you can cloak your large luggage at the hotel and take only a small overnight bag with you, which village guides will help carry. The village community you will visit has built a guest house for visitors and they have organised themselves to show visitors their unique natural environment including savannah, hardwood forest and high montane forest. This village experience is as real as it gets in Papua New Guinea and you will gain a true feel of these people's reliance on the natural environment for their food, shelter and livelihood.

Overnight accommodation will be in a neatly constructed village guest house (highlands round house) with a central fireplace and cosy sleeping rooms kitted with beds and blankets ... camp style but comfortable. A clean sit-down toilet is available out back.

On arrival you will be allocated to a village guide to look after you during your stay ...one guide per visitor so that the experience is more personal. Your guide will be the same gender as yourself, in accordance with highlands social norms. After the meet and greet, you'll be shown around the village by your guide, although probably trailing a column of curious village kids longer than Halley's Comet. Here in the village, the tide turns and you are no longer just the observer ... you are now also the observed !

During the afternoon when the weather is warmest you'll be taken for a nature

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hike through the forest near the village. As you stare agog at the biodiversity, your guide/s will identify for you the plants that they use for eating and for various other purposes like medication, building homes, making tools and implements, and fruits and other parts of plants they harvest and sell at the market in Goroka. (In the Goroka area there is a very active interest in traditional herbal medicine and a big local market for certain plants with medicinal properties).

The nights are chilly in the highlands and as there is no running water in the village, bath time this evening will involve a small tub of water warmed for you over the fire that you will use to take a sponge bath in the bathroom shower recess - a bit like a game of Twister by yourself, in the nude, by the shadowy light of a kerosene lamp ... but you'll cope. (You're here for the experience, right?)

After a traditional style dinner that you will more than likely observe being cooked in the late afternoon (or even help in the cooking yourself) you will be drawn into the age-old highlands tradition of sitting around the central fire in the round house in the evening listening to people tell a mixture of true and untrue stories, and listen to the locals sing a few traditional songs, before heading for the warmth of your bed.

Overnight village guest house (includes meals).

#### Day 10

##### LUPIPI VILLAGE / GOROKA

The Lupipi village experience continues today - your choice of early morning bird watching, trawling through the savannah, exploring in the forest, studying local traditions and lifestyle in the village (including a look at the "village treasure" - the collection of heirloom artifacts and bride price shell money hoarded by each family), or pursuing any particular interest you have in cooking, vegetable gardening, herbal medicine, handicraft making, or learning a bit of Pidgin English (if you haven't picked up quite a bit by now - it's easy to learn).

Mid-afternoon your village hosts will walk you back to the main road to meet up with your vehicle and transfer back to Goroka. Yes you will probably shed a tear or two and exchange addresses, such is the friendliness of the local people around Goroka.

Overnight hotel, Goroka (includes breakfast only).

#### Day 11

##### GOROKA / MINJ

Today you will transfer by road from Goroka to Minj via the scenic Chimbu Province. This is a three to four hour journey including photo stops, rest stops, and food stops: there are cooked food stalls on the roadside at each village along the way selling everything from sweet potato chips to boiled sheep's tongues - feel free to pass on the latter.

The first part of the journey is the steady climb overlooking the Asaro Valley to the Daulo Pass, a biodiversity hotspot often covered in cloud that appears as fog you drive through. The staggering size and greenness of the ferns and flowering trees that grow right on the roadside are unmistakable through the mist.

From Daulo Pass you drive through the Chimbu Province with its precipitous ravines and steep mountainsides amazingly covered in furrowed gardens with people working in them... one foot uphill and one foot downhill to steady themselves. Mt Wilhelm, PNG's highest peak, passes you slowly on your right as you leave Kundiawa town (known locally in PNG as "cowboy town"... we'll explain later...) and you head in a westerly direction towards the small town of

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Minj. Minj lies just over the border from Chimbu in the Western Highlands Province.

Just out of town is the "Minj Orchid Lodge", located on a hilltop overlooking the Tengen River, and so named because of the many species of tropical orchids cultivated in the surrounding gardens. Although orchids grow naturally all over PNG, including many endemic species, they are often difficult to identify in the wild as they have long non-flowering periods and their green vines go unnoticed in the verdant jungle. Many species only flower fleetingly and to enjoy the brilliant bursts of colour and exquisite structure of the flowers it is necessary to plant many vines so that there will always be a few in flower, as you will find at Minj Orchid Lodge. Spend the afternoon enjoying the gardens with orchid displays and wide range of other flora. Overnight Minj Orchid Lodge (includes meals).

Day 12

#### **MINJ / MT HAGEN**

A half day excursion is provided today, to explore the natural forest of the nearby Kubor Range. This will not involve extensive hiking but rather short walks into different habitats with your guides to view the range of flora and fauna. Nesting sites of bird of paradise species and possibly bower birds will be observed. After lunch back at the lodge (or a packed lunch) you will be driven another two hours along the Highlands Highway to Mt Hagen and check in at Haus Poroman Lodge (or alternative). At Haus Poroman ("House of Friends") there is also an extensive orchid garden. The rest of the afternoon is at leisure. (Don't forget it rains a lot in the Highlands and we need a bit of buffer time in our schedule in case nature excursions have to be postponed or rescheduled due to weather.) Overnight Haus Poroman Lodge (includes meals).

Day 13

#### **MT HAGEN**

The Baiyer River Sanctuary is one of Mt Hagen's famous attractions, about 45 minutes drive out of town. It was closed for a number of years due to lack of funding but has now been rejuvenated. Having a little "fallow" time has hardly hurt the jungle which is as green and crazy as ever, nor the incredible range of bird species and other animals which live here, which are now evident in great numbers and can be approached to quite near distances. There are defined observation points in the sanctuary where particular species of plants and animals can be seen... bring your camera and binoculars and take a slow crawl from observation point to observation point. A picnic lunch is supplied. Overnight Haus Poroman Lodge.

*[If you are completing this tour itinerary on Day 14 and flying out to Australia, you will be transferred to Mt Hagen airport on the way back from Baiyer River Sanctuary (bring your luggage) and check in for Air Niugini flight PX183 to Port Moresby departing at 1640. If you are flying out to Singapore on Day 14, you may either return to Port Moresby today, or overnight at Haus Poroman Lodge tonight and fly out to Port Moresby on the morning flight on Day 14, connecting with the afternoon flight to Singapore].*

Day 14

#### **Mt HAGEN / TABUBIL**

If you are continuing on the 21 day tour, after breakfast you will be transferred to Mt Hagen airport for your flight to Tabubil. Tabubil is a mining town with good facilities (perhaps the most liveable town in PNG) due to the presence of the giant Ok Tedi copper mine. While the mine has left some very big holes in the ground and dumped a lot of tailings into the Fly River, considerable efforts have been made to rehabilitate the mine site and

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protect the surrounding environment of the Star Mountains. Unfortunately a developing country like Papua New Guinea cannot afford to say no to Mining as a source of national income, despite the environmental damage caused. In the afternoon today a local guide will take you on a personalised tour of the Tabubil area including a look at the mine site and the environmental rehabilitation efforts the mining company is making, and possibly a briefing from the mine's ecology officer.  
Overnight Hotel Cloudlands, Tabubil.

Day 15

#### **TABUBIL**

Today your guide will take you deeper into the Star Mountains on a full day excursion.  
Overnight Hotel Cloudlands.

Day 16

#### **TABUBIL / KIUNGA**

Half day road transfer from Tabubil to Kiunga. After check-in and lunch at Kiunga Guest House, there will be an afternoon bird watching excursion to one of Kiunga's famous roadside birding sites (KM17 or Boystown Road). Overnight Kiunga Guest House (includes meals).

Day 17

#### **KIUNGA / EKAME**

Before daybreak your vehicle and birding guide will again take you to a roadside birding site out of Kiunga town where you will be able to hear and see different species to those observed the previous evening. After breakfast back at the guest house you will be transferred to the Kiunga town wharf (Fly River) and travel by motorised dinghy up the Fly and Elevara Rivers to Ekame Wildlife Lodge. Ekame Wildlife Lodge is located some 50 kilometres east of Kiunga and the river journey takes two hours.

The Lodge was specially built to accommodate nature lovers and is made of bush materials in local style. Facilities are very basic (no electricity), but you will not have time to notice when there is so much wildlife to be seen. However It does rain frequently here so bring a novel to read during the afternoon downpours.

The Lodge is located in a biodiversity hotspot where dozens of plant, bird and other animal species can be viewed during each foray into surrounding habitats including the river, tundra, savannah, swamp and rainforest.

At Ekame there are established nature trails passing by known species of interest, and also raised viewing platforms in key hotspots where you can sit tight and observe and photograph wildlife including ground birds. You can also cruise up and down the nearby Ketu River in a canoe or boat and see riverbank life including larger animals like wallabies and cassowaries that come down to drink.

Nocturnal wildlife viewing will be possible if weather permits - bring your own spotting torch/flashlight and batteries. Overnight Ekame Wildlife Lodge (includes camp-style meals).

Day 18

#### **EKAME**

Wildlife viewing at Ekame Wildlife Lodge

Day 19

#### **EKAME / KIUNGA**

Spend the morning at Ekame and after lunch transfer by boat back to Kiunga. If time and weather allow in the afternoon, visit the KM17 birding site for the sundown chorus. Overnight Kiunga Guest House. Day 19 **EKAME / KIUNGA**  
Spend the morning at Ekame and after lunch transfer by boat back to Kiunga. If

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time and weather allow in the afternoon, visit the KM17 birding site for the sundown chorus. Overnight Kiunga Guest House.

Day 20

**KIUNGA / PORT MORESBY**

Depart Kiunga on morning flight to Port Moresby. Afternoon at leisure in Port Moresby (optional artifact shopping or visit to national museum or botanical gardens). Overnight hotel.

Day 21

**Fly out of Papua New Guinea.**

[NB If Day 21 is a Thursday and you are flying out to Singapore, there is a connecting flight from Kiunga in the morning that will allow you to spend an extra night at Kiunga on Day 20 instead of overnighing in Port Moresby - according to your preference.]

**TRIP NOTES:**

1. The general terms and conditions applicable to this tour are those specified on your invoice and on the Booking page of our website.
2. Road transfers along major highways (eg Goroka to Lae) may be provided by dedicated vehicle with driver or by public bus accompanied by a guide, at our discretion. Likewise water transfers between Lae and Kamiali may be by dedicated boat or a seat on a boat providing public transport.
3. 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 entertained.
4. Accommodation at hotels and lodges on this tour is booked on a twin share basis. For group-of-three a combination of one twin room and one single room is normally booked. Triple share may be necessary in some circumstances where two rooms with the required configuration are not available. Single supplement is not available on this tour.

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