



Ecotourism Melanesia

Discover Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands

ITINERARY FOR TOUR EM80a: **7 NIGHTS HONIARA AND MALAITA ex-Brisbane or Nadi** 3 nights Honiara / 4 nights Malaita

- Day 1: HONIARA
Arrive in Honiara from Brisbane or Nadi. You will be met by our local guide and transferred by road from the airport into Honiara town, a twenty minute drive along the main road past schools, shops and residential areas. Check in at the Solomon Kitano Mendana Hotel, popularly known as the Mendana (named after the Spanish explorer). The hotel is located on the main waterfront and is walking distance to everything. If you have arrived on an early morning "red eye" flight you will be given some time to get some sleep and take a leisurely brunch before your guide takes you on an orientation drive around Honiara including the high ridges overlooking the coastal strip (2 hours). The rest of the day is free to explore the nearby shops and the waterfront, to swim in the hotel pool or catch up on some more sleep. A guide is available on request to accompany you on walks outside the hotel, though the town area is generally safe for visitors to walk around. If you have arrived on an afternoon flight your orientation drive will commence straight after check-in and have you back at the hotel in time for dinner.
Overnight Solomon Kitano Mendana Hotel (room only, credit cards accepted for payment of meals and extras.)
- Day 2: HONIARA
Today you will further explore Honiara and environs including a trip to the little museum and cultural centre, a poke around the main market and a visit to an urban village where you will meet local families from various islands living together in clan groups within the town environment. Local-style food will be cooked and prepared for your lunch. Later, a drive out the west coast road to see coconut plantations and World War 2 Guadalcanal Campaign relics at the Vilu Cultural Village including rusting artillery pieces and lichen-covered aircraft frames.
Overnight Solomon Kitano Mendana Hotel
- Day 3: AUKI / LANGA-LANGA LAGOON
0500 transfer to Honiara Airport to check in for Solomon Airlines flight IE130 to Auki departing 0630 arriving 0700. Our local tour guide will meet you at Auki airfield and transfer you to Auki town for check in and breakfast at Auki Lodge. From there you will be taken down to the waterfront to board a motorised canoe for a full day tour of the Langalanga Lagoon. You will stop off at a number of villages located on the edge of the lagoon and on the various artificial islands which have been built up over centuries by piling up stones on the floor of the lagoon. Visiting the artificial islands of Alite, Busu or Laulasi you will be shown local fishing methods, inspect the ancestral skulls, see how shell money is

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Section 69 Lot 12, Govea Street • Gordons, Port Moresby • Papua New Guinea
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made and learn about the pagan shark worshipping cult. Local-style food will be served for lunch at one of the villages, including unique local delicacies such as mangrove soup made from the grated propagules (fruit) of the large-leafed orange mangrove (*Bruguiera gymnorrhiza*), *kata* pudding made from indigenous nali nuts mashed with boiled taro and coconut cream, and *takuma* swamp fern cooked in coconut milk. Late in the afternoon on returning to Auki Lodge, enjoy a poke around in the Chinese shops nearby. Stop and chat to locals in the street or in the shops.

Overnight Auki Lodge (includes dinner and breakfast).

Day 4:

AUKI / EAST MALAITA

Your guide will call for you at 5am to commence your full day trip to the east coast of Malaita. Your vehicle will head north past the airfield before turning off on to the east coast road, climbing across the spine of the island, coursing through dense jungle and across a number of rivers and finally descending to the coastal government station of Atori. This road trip take approximately three hours.

Near Atori you will visit the village of Kwaiabu or Kwarea to see a traditional "custom house" (men's cult house), witness a custom dance and have refreshments.

At the Atori jetty you will board a motorised canoe for the fifteen minute water transfer across to Kwai and Ngo-ngo-sila, twin islands joined by a sand bar that can be crossed at low tide. These tiny islands are very densely populated and have their own language distinct from the mainland. The people live on fish and have garden land on the mainland where they raise vegetables, paddling to and fro every morning and evening.

Mid-afternoon you will commence your return journey to Auki, arriving in time for dinner.

Overnight Auki Lodge (includes dinner and breakfast).

Day 5:

AUKI / VILLAGE EXPERIENCE

Friday and Saturday will be spent enjoying the hospitality of a local family in a village homestay near Auki (your luggage can be cloaked at Auki Lodge for safekeeping and you can just take an overnight bag with you to the village).

The village is located in light bushland close to the lagoon and during these two days you will have a choice of activities including paddling around the lagoon and exploring the mangrove labyrinths in a dugout canoe, bushwalking in the forest to learn about medicinal plants and bush foods, bird watching to catch a glimpse of the frigate bird, the Malaita eagle and the wide variety of parrots, exploring the village to learn about the Malaita culture, learning some pidgin and local language words, visiting the gardens to see how staple foods are cultivated and harvested, watching how food is cooked in the smoke-house kitchen, playing soccer or volleyball with the village kids.

Overnight village homestay with all meals. (The village homestay is very clean, food is fresh and tasty, clean bedding is provided and there is a private bathroom with running water and sit-down toilet.)

NOTE: It is possible to sleep at Auki Lodge and make day trips to the village experience instead, if preferred. This involves extra cost for accommodation, dinner and breakfast at Auki Lodge and daily transfers to the village. However, if possible we encourage visitors to stay at the village because all past visitors have said that becoming part of the village family for 48 hours was a very meaningful cultural experience.

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- Day 6: AUKI / VILLAGE EXPERIENCE
Overnight village homestay with all meals.
- Day 7: AUKI / HONIARA
The highlight of your village stay will be attending a village church service on Sunday morning. You will be made to feel very welcome and you will enjoy beautiful harmonious singing from the congregation and from "choir" groups who perform up the front. Sit towards the back so that you can exit discreetly if the service goes on for too long.
After lunch and exchanging of gifts with your hosts (be prepared for tears!) you will be transferred by road back to Auki town where you will collect your cloaked baggage at Auki Lodge and head for the airport to board Solomon Airlines flight IE133 to Honiara departing at 1655. Your Honiara guide will meet you at the airport and transfer you to your hotel.
Overnight Solomon Kitano Mendana Hotel (room only, credit cards accepted for payment of meals and extras.)
- Day 8: HONIARA / BRISBANE OR NADI
Your schedule for this last day will depend on the departure time of your flight. Options include:
- poke around the shops in central Honiara and buy some last minute souvenirs (best buys are screen-printed T shirts with local designs, local music cassettes and CDs, woven shoulder-bags from Rennell Island and ebony-wood carvings from the Western Province).
- take it easy at the hotel
- a half-day snorkelling trip out the west coast road (additional cost)

Additional days can be added to this itinerary if flights allow.

TOUR PRICE:

	Group of 1	Group of 2	Group of 3	Group of 4 or more
Price per person (rack rate)	USD 3348 pp	USD 2077 pp	USD 1863 pp	USD 1718 pp

TOUR INCLUSIONS:

- three (3) night sea view room at Solomon Kitano Mendana Hotel - room only, twin share where applicable (includes early check-in if arriving on red eye flight)
- Honiara airport meet-and-greet and transfers
- Honiara town drive-around on Day 1
- Honiara surrounds and Vilu tour on Day 2
- return airfares from Honiara to Auki
- Auki airport meet-and-greet and transfers
- two (2) nights Auki Lodge accommodation with dinner and breakfast (twin share where applicable)
- full day Langa-Langa Lagoon tour (inclusive of motorised canoe, guides, lunch, village custom fees)
- full day East Malaita tour including hire vehicle, guides, Kwaiabu or Kwarea village tour and custom dance, Kwai island motor canoe transfers and tour, village lunch
- two nights Auki village homestay including village-style meals, village guides and non-motorised village-based activities
- guide for walking or shopping outings

TOUR EXCLUSIONS:

- bar drinks, snacks, tips, souvenirs, personal items
- meals not specified as included
- international airfares Port Moresby - Honiara - Port Moresby

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- half-day snorkelling tour suggested for Day 8 if time allows (extra cost)

TOUR NOTES:

1. This tour involves travel to remote areas where medical facilities are not available.
2. This tour involves calm-water lagoon travel in motorised canoes that may not be carrying safety equipment and is not recommended for non-swimmers.
3. This tour involves travel in open-back trucks without seat belts.
4. Water provided for drinking in villages is clean and safe to drink. However, boiled water can be provided on request.
5. Malaita is a high rainfall area year-round and your daily program will be flexible. Rain in the morning means activities will be postponed till afternoon and vice-versa - rain all day means some activities will not proceed unless you are happy to get wet. There is no partial refund available for day trips or components thereof that are not availed of or which cannot proceed due to inclement weather or logistical problems (eg unavailability of outboard fuel) beyond the control of Ecotourism Melanesia or the local tour operators and guides who provide these services on our behalf.
6. Malaita is a mosquito area - bring your repellent and make sure you are up to date with your malaria medication. Monitor yourself for malaria symptoms for several weeks after returning from this trip.

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