

# PAPUA NEW GUINEA

DETAILED ITINERARY

A TRIBAL ODYSSEY

Apr 09/24



Singing Festival is an exhibition of diverse tribal cultures.

Photo: © Donald Whiteley

Papua New Guinea is like no other place on Earth - culturally rich and geographically remote, with some of the most stunning scenery anywhere.

From the rugged mountains to the coastal islands, this journey is an adventure of a lifetime. We meet and learn about some of the tribal people of this land including the Asaro Mudmen, the Wahgi, the Simbu, the Kaguel and the fascinating Trobriand Islanders. Our adventure includes many village visits so that we can really meet the people and experience their way of life. We explore the Sepik River by wooden canoe and spend 3 nights on Kiriwina Island (part of the Trobriand Islands), where people live a traditional lifestyle.

Our September departure features the Goroka Cultural Festival, where the tribes come from all over Papua New Guinea for a two-day spectacular "singsing" - a traditional song and dance festival complete with traditional tribal clothing and body decoration. Throughout our journey, we encounter amazing birdlife, lush flora, stunning scenery and some of the most fascinating tribal people on Earth.

## Facts & Highlights

- 21 land days • Maximum 16 travelers • Start and finish in Port Moresby • All meals included • Includes 5 domestic flights • Encounter the Asaro Mudmen, the Wahgi, Simbu, Kaguel, Melpa and Trobriand Islander tribes • Mt. Hagen (Aug dep) or Goroka (Sep dep) Singing festival • Visit the remote Trobriand Islands • 3-day Sepik River adventure by wooden canoe

## Departure Dates & Price

**\*\*Sep 11 - Oct 01, 2024 - \$12995 USD**

Price includes \$1400 USD of domestic air cost.

\*Mt. Hagen Singing Festival - see page 3 for itinerary

\*\*Goroka Singing Festival

## Activity Level: 2 or 3

**Comfort Level:** Local roads can be rough and wet. Travelers must be flexible and prepared for day-to-day changes. Some areas are very primitive.

**ACCOMMODATIONS** On the Sepik river, we have 2 nts. in basic dormitory accommodations (tribal longhouses) with limited bathing and toilet facilities. Trobriand Island accommodation is basic with private facilities.

**ELDERTREKS**



SMALL GROUP  
**EXOTIC ADVENTURES**  
FOR TRAVELERS 50 PLUS

**Please Note:** Papua New Guinea is one of the most culturally interesting places on Earth, with many of its tribal people following a traditional lifestyle. This adventure has been designed to experience the villages and people of Papua New Guinea. In order to do this, we visit a number of local villages and we have 2 overnights in one village. There are overnight stays where the accommodation is very basic; it can be dormitory style and have no fans/air conditioning and very limited facilities. As much of the interior of the country has no roads or impassable ones, we maximize our time by flying from location to location and flight schedules frequently change. While we endeavor to do/see everything listed in the itinerary, nothing in Papua New Guinea goes as planned, so travelers must be prepared for changes to this program as we travel.

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### **DAY 1 PORT MORESBY, FLY TO MADANG**

We will meet on arrival at Port Moresby airport and transfer to our hotel. We gather this evening for our orientation meeting and dinner.

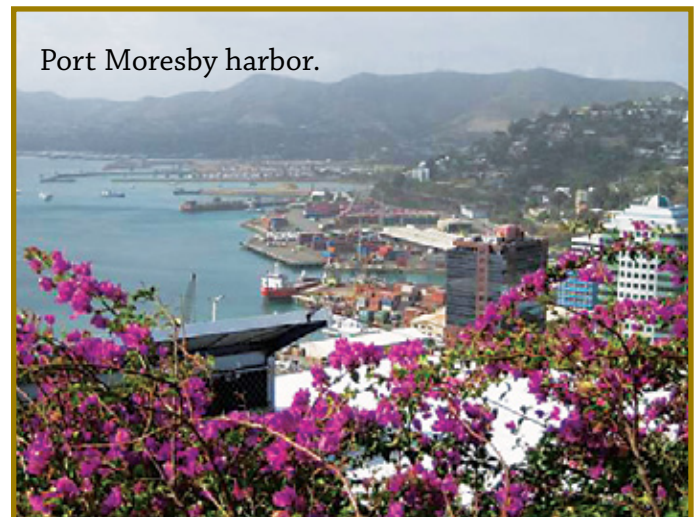
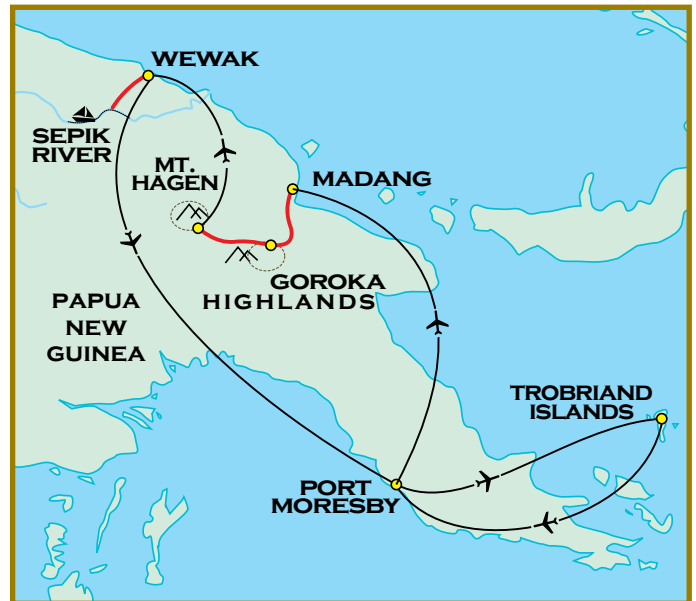
Overnight in Port Moresby.

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### **DAY 2 PORT MORESBY, TO MADANG**

This morning we depart for the airport for our flight to Madang. Upon arrival we will be transferred to Jais Aben Resort. After lunch we begin a tour of Madang and the surrounding area including Madang local market, Kalibobo light house, and the Madang Museum and Arts Gallery. This afternoon we visit the Balek Wildlife Sanctuary, home of an interesting sulphur creek pouring out of a limestone formation. The creek is filled with turtles, eels and fish. The creek is said to cure illnesses of the local people. The park also has a variety of tropical trees and plants.

Overnight in Madang.





## AUGUST DEPARTURES

Follow this order due to Mt. Hagen Festival.

### DEPARTURE DATES & PRICES

Aug 16 - Sep 05, 20 **\$11995 USD**

Aug 12 - Sep 01, 21 **\$11195 USD**

Day 1: Arrive in Port Moresby

Day 2: Port Moresby to Mt. Hagen

Days 3-4: Mt. Hagen Cultural Show

Day 5: Mt. Hagen and Kumul Lodge

Day 6: Mt. Hagen to Goroka

Day 7: Goroka Sites

Day 8: Goroka to Madang

Day 9: Madang

Day 10: Fly to Wewak

Day 11: To Sepik River

Day 12: Sepik River Excursion

Day 13: Sepik River, Return to Wewak

Day 14: Depart Wewak, Loloata Island

Day 15: Fly to Louisa Island, Trobriand Islands

Day 16: Kiriwina Island, Trobriand Islands

Day 17: Kaibola Village, Trobriand Islands

Day 18: Return to Port Moresby

Day 19: Port Moresby City Tour

Day 20: Virirata National Park

Day 21: Depart Port Moresby

### DAY 3 PICNIC ISLAND, LOCAL VILLAGE

After breakfast, we will go on a harbor cruise before heading to Picnic Island for snorkelling. We will then return to the resort for lunch. After lunch we visit a local village for a traditional dance.

Overnight in Madang.

### DAY 4 TO THE EASTERN HIGHLANDS

After breakfast, we begin our road transfer to the Eastern Highlands province via Ramu Sugar. We stop at Ramu Sugar for lunch. After lunch, we continue to the Eastern Highlands province.

Overnight in Goroka.

### DAYS 5-6 GOROKA SINGSING FESTIVAL

A yearly event in Papua New Guinea, the Goroka Cultural Show is one of the best shows in Papua New Guinea to witness some of the amazing traditional dances and tribal attire from over 40 different tribal groups. An early morning wake-up call gets us to the show grounds to see the preparations before the formal show begins. We see the performers preparing their traditional clothing and body decorations and practicing for their dances. We spend the day at the Goroka Arena taking in the “singsing” performances.

Overnight in Goroka.

### DAY 7 GOROKA SITES

After breakfast, we begin our tour of Goroka, including the JK McCarthy Museum and the University of Goroka. After lunch, we visit an Asaro village to meet the famous Asaro Mudmen, who traditionally covered themselves in mud before raiding nearby villages. The legend of the Mudmen says that the tribe was attacked and forced to flee their village. To hide, they jumped in the Asaro River. When they

emerged at twilight from the river, covered in mud, the attacking tribe saw them and thought they were spirits and fled the area. While in the village we may be able to watch an eerie performance of the Mudmen, which is a production of mime. We also may see a local artist making an actual mudmask.

Overnight in Goroka.

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### **DAY 8 TO MT. HAGEN**

After breakfast, we depart Goroka for the Western Highlands via Simbu and the Jiwaka provinces. Upon arrival at Molka Lodge, we stop for lunch. We will then stop at the village of Mindima where we will witness the Courtship and Bride Price ceremony.

After the performance, we continue to Mt. Hagen for overnight.

### **DAY 9 MT. HAGEN SITES**

After an early breakfast we depart for a tour in the Tambul District, one of the highest areas in the Highlands. We visit Alkena village, which is the origin of the most spectacular and colorful dance in the province called the Ware Dance. We spend the rest of the day at the village witnessing other performances such as the Welcome Dance and other traditional activities.

Overnight in Mt Hagen.

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### **DAY 10 BIRDING IN THE HIGHLANDS, TAMBUL VILLAGE**

Today we travel along the shadow of Mt. Hagen, to an area well known for its bird watching. In addition to the birds of paradise (75% of the birds of paradise species can be seen here), you may also spot the crested berrypecker, white winged robin, tit berrypecker, brown sicklebill



Life on Sepik River.



and bibbon tailed astrapia. We will take a walk through the forest, bird spotting and looking for the beautiful mountain orchids that can be found here. We take a scenic drive to Wapenamanda in Enga province, the highest and most rugged province in Papua New Guinea.

We also visit the small village of Tambul, and if time allows, the local market. Should the local school be open we will spend some time visiting with the local school children.

Overnight in Mt. Hagen.

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### **DAY 11 FLY TO WEWAK**

After breakfast, we transfer to the airport for our flight to Wewak. Upon arrival at Wewak airport, we will be transferred to our hotel.

Overnight in Wewak.

### **DAY 12 SEPIK RIVER EXCURSION**

After an early breakfast, we drive to Pagwi on the Sepik River. The drive can take between 5 and 6 hours as we visit markets and viewpoints along the way. Arriving in Pagwi, we board our motorized dugout canoes and travel down river to Kanganamun village, home of the crocodile cult, and set up for our next two nights in the village. On the Sepik River, we will be spending 2 nights in basic dormitory accommodation (tribal longhouses) with limited bathing and toilet facilities. Each person will have a foam mattress with sheets and a pillow with pillowcase as well as a mosquito net.

Overnight in Kanganamun village.

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### **DAY 13 SEPIK RIVER**

Today we travel by dugout canoes along the Sepik River and its tributaries. Before heading out, we explore Palimbe



Baby in bilum bag

village and see their beautiful hand carved totem pole. We stop at stilted villages to learn about the local way of life, see their Haus Tamburan (Spirit House) where rituals and initiations take place and as much as possible, try to meet with the villagers. We visit Aibom village - known for its clay pot makers, and Kanganamun village to meet the people and see how they fish, make sago and build their canoes.

Overnight in Kanganamun village.

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### **DAY 14 TO WEWAK**

This morning we visit another village and Haus Tamburan before arriving in Pagwi, a small scattering of houses, where we disembark from our canoes and continue by road to Wewak. This afternoon we will walk through the town to see the memorial of the Japanese/Papua New Guinea Peace Park.

Overnight in Wewak.

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### **DAY 15 TO PORT MORESBY**

After breakfast we will be transferred to the airport for our flight to Port Moresby. The afternoon is at leisure to relax.

Overnight in Port Moresby.

### **DAY 16 PORT MORESBY, CITY TOUR**

We have a full day city tour of Port Moresby and surrounding areas, including the National Parliament and the Botanical Gardens. We also visit Hanuabada village, one of only two remaining stilt villages in the area. Later we visit the Adventure Park which has a fantastic display of orchids and birds.

Overnight in Port Moresby

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### **DAY 17 FLY TO THE TROBRIAND ISLANDS**

Today after breakfast we transfer from our hotel to the airport for our flight to the island of Kiriwina in the Trobriand Islands. The Trobriand Islanders have a fascinating and rich culture, and a unique feature of these islands is the importance of yams. The crop is an indicator of how well the producer is at gardening and there is a yearly festival held to show off the best of the yams grown that season.

Overnight in Kiriwina.







Mesmerizing mask dance.

## DAY 18 KIRIWINA ISLAND, TROBRIAND ISLANDS

The label of a “free love society” has been placed on the islands, but the sexual practices of these people have been misunderstood. The society does encourage free choice and “casual encounters” as the norm for teenagers, however, people are encouraged to settle down to married life. The belief in this society is that all children are in spirit form until they enter a woman through her head and then are born. In addition to spending time with the villagers, we also explore the island including its beautiful beaches, WWII relics and nearby caves. Our time on Kiriwina Island is flexible so that we can explore according to the group’s interests and local events.

Overnight in Kiriwina.

## DAY 19 KAIBOLA VILLAGE, TROBRIAND ISLANDS

This morning we leave the lodge and drive to Kaibola village where we can enjoy a swim, walk on the beach

or snorkel. We will have time to relax at our hotel in Kiriwina in the afternoon.

Overnight in Kiriwina.

## DAY 20 FLY TO PORT MORESBY

This morning we leave Kiriwina for our return flight to Port Moresby. The rest of the afternoon is at your leisure. This evening we enjoy our farewell dinner.

Overnight in Port Moresby.

## DAY 21 DEPART PORT MORESBY

We say a fond farewell to this fascinating and beautiful country as we transfer to the airport for your departure flight.



Tambuli dancers.





Chief's storage house.



Ritual masks inside the Spirit House.





## QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

### 1. HOW BIG ARE THE GROUPS?

Each group is limited to 16 participants. Small groups are an important ingredient in adventure travel. They allow for more interaction and more personalized service throughout the itinerary.

### 2. WHAT IS INCLUDED IN THE TOUR PRICE?

All accommodations throughout; all meals, starting with dinner on day 1 and finishing with breakfast on departure day (i.e. the last day of the ElderTreks tour); bottled drinking water throughout the trip; all internal transportation; airport transfers on day 1 and departure day (i.e. the last day of the ElderTreks tour); all day trips and entrance fees as outlined in the itinerary; tips for hotels (porterage), national guide, bus driver, restaurants and spot guides; services of a trip leader.

### 3. WHAT IS NOT INCLUDED IN THE TOUR PRICE?

International flights, tips to ElderTreks tour leader, alcoholic drinks, visas and travel insurance.

### 4. ARE THESE “EDUCATIONAL” TOURS?

Yes, in the broadest sense of the word, “educational”. We visit museums, national parks and reserves and have talks and discussions on many aspects of history, culture and nature. But this is only a portion of the educational experience. We believe that it is equally educational to meet local people on a non-commercial basis, visit their homes and even try to learn a few words in the native language. Sometimes the most “educational” moments can be wandering through a local market of a small town.

### 5. HOW DO WE TRAVEL DURING THE TOUR?

All local transportation is included in the land price of the trip. We travel by domestic flights, micro-bus, 4 wheel drives, wooden canoe, motorized longboats and by foot.

### 6. WHAT ARE OUR ACCOMMODATIONS LIKE?

Accommodation in Port Moresby, Mt. Hagen, Goroka, Madang, Wewak and in the Trobriand Islands are in hotels that range from 2 star to 4 star and each room has private toilet and bathroom facilities. On the Sepik River we will be spending 2 nights in basic dormitory accommodation (bush longhouses) with limited bathing and toilet facilities. Each person will have a foam mattress with sheets and a pillow with pillowcase as well as a mosquito net. Single supplement rooming requests cannot be accommodated on the Sepik River nor in the Trobriand Islands.

Please note that for our journey on the Sepik River, large suitcases cannot be accommodated; please bring a small overnight bag for these two nights.

### 7. WHAT ABOUT THE WEATHER?

Papua New Guinea is south of the equator, so when it's summer in the Northern Hemisphere, it's winter there. From April to November, the days are generally in the 80-90°F (26-32°C) with nights in the 70°F (21°C). It's always warm and humid, with a chance of rain. The farther inland and higher in elevation you go, the cooler it will be, especially at night.

### 8. WHEN IS PAYMENT DUE?

A non-refundable deposit of \$500 USD (plus insurance if you require it) is due at time of booking and will reserve your place on the tour. Payment of the full land cost is due 120 days before departure. Cancellation charges are applicable and are outlined in the “Terms and Conditions” section of our brochure.

### 9. IS MEDICAL INSURANCE REQUIRED?

Insurance coverage is not included in the cost of your trip. Please note that medical insurance is not required for this adventure but is recommended. ElderTreks offers comprehensive travel insurance and we are happy to provide you with a quote if you call our office. If you are purchasing insurance elsewhere, please ensure you provide the details to ElderTreks as soon as possible.

*\*Please note those travelers with pre-existing medical conditions must take out travel insurance at the time of deposit*

### 10. WHAT SHOULD I TAKE ON THE TOUR?

There is a detailed “What to Take” list in our Trip Kit, which we will send to you after you have booked the trip.

### 11. WHAT MEALS ARE INCLUDED?

All meals during the itinerary are included, starting with dinner on day 1 and finishing with breakfast on departure day. We eat a variety of local foods prepared in a wide range of settings.

### 12. CAN YOU ARRANGE MY FLIGHTS?

We would be happy to take care of your air arrangements. ElderTreks offers personalized flight itineraries — not group flights. Stop over en route, come in a few days early, or extend your stay. Call us for a customized itinerary.

### 13. WHAT IF I WOULD LIKE MORE INFORMATION?

If you have any further questions about the adventure, please call our office for more details. A Trip Specialist will be happy to answer your questions. A Trip Kit containing further details on the destination will be sent to you once you have booked the trip.





Asaro mudmen















