



# Reef & Rainforest



## **Mount Hagen Birding, Goroka Show, Madang and Sepik River**

Group Tour led by Local guides

11 – 25 September 2023



## Mount Hagen Birding, Goroka Show, Madang and Sepik River - Papua New Guinea Group Tour 2023

### ITINERARY IN BRIEF

This is an exceptional group tour led by local expert guides and combining many of Papua New Guinea's cultural and birding highlights. Begin with a simple highland lodge near Mount Hagen for the rare opportunity to see numerous birds of paradise. Then continue your special adventure with the spectacular Goroka Show, the largest cultural extravaganza in the country in which more than 100 tribes display their music and dancing skills over the two glorious days of this extraordinary *sing-sing*. Next comes the Pacific coastal resort of Madang for snorkelling on some of the world's best reefs and relaxation time by the sea. Finally, explore the Sepik River by motorised canoe with a two-night stay in a river settlement, allowing full immersion in the local life and culture of the longest river in the island of New Guinea. Your final night in Port Moresby includes a visit to nearby Varirata National Park for the chance to spot Raggiana bird of paradise, PNG's resplendent national bird and a fitting end to an extraordinary trip.

- 11 Sep Depart SINGAPORE on AIR NIUGINI flight to PORT MORESBY.
- 12 Sep Arrive in PORT MORESBY. Meet with group and catch AIR NIUGINI flight to MOUNT HAGEN. Met and tfr to lodge. O/n KUMUL LODGE, (RO)
- 13 – 14 Sep Visit selected birding sites over the two days. O/n KUMUL LODGE, (B)
- 15 Sep Tfr by road to GOROKA, witnessing the "Oma Masalai" performance en route. Tfr to the hotel. O/n PACIFIC GARDENS HOTEL, (B).
- 16 - 17 Sep Full days spent at the GOROKA SHOW. O/n PACIFIC GARDENS HOTEL, (BL).
- 18 Sep Morning transfer by road (c 7-8 hours) to Madang, with stops en route. Transfer to the hotel. O/n MADANG RESORT HOTEL, (B)
- 19 Sep Morning harbour cruise to Siar Island, Pig Island and snorkelling. Later, visit Amele Villages, including Hobe, Suyao and Haya. O/n MADANG RESORT HOTEL, (B)
- 20 Sep Morning tour of Madang to include Balek habitat, Museum and local market. Afternoon tfr to the airport and catch PNG Airt flight to WEWAK. Met and tfr to the hotel. O/n IN WEWAK BOUTIQUE HOTEL, (B).
- 21 Sep Morning tfr by road to PAGWI (c.4 hours) then tfr to motorised dugout canoe and commence Sepik river Canoe Safari. O/n WAGU GUEST HOUSE, (BLD).
- 22 Sep Early morning visit to the rainforest to see the Lesser Bird of Paradise. Later visit Wasukuk area including Meno and Tonginmjam. O/n WAGU GUEST HOUSE, (BLD).
- 23 Sep Return to Pagwi by canoe and transfer by road to Maprik for mini cultural show. Later transfer to Wewak. O/n IN WEWAK BOUTIQUE HOTEL, (BL).
- 24 Sep Tfr to the airport. Catch AIR NIUGINI flight to PORT MORESBY. Afternoon visit to Adventure Park. O/n STANLEY HOTEL AND SUITES, (B)
- 25 Sep Early morning visit to Varirata National Park for birdwatching. Return to PORT MORESBY and tfr to the airport. Catch AIR NIUGINI flight to SINGAPORE.

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## GROUP TOUR: 11 – 25 SEPTEMBER 2022 MOUNT HAGEN BIRDING, GOROKA SHOW, MADANG AND SEPIK RIVER

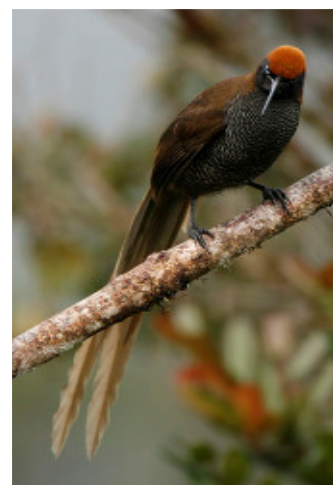
11 Sep Depart SINGAPORE on AIR NIUGINI flight PX393 at 2035 to PORT MORESBY.

12 Sep Arrive PORT MORESBY at 0515. Met on arrival at the airport and assisted with connection to AIR NIUGINI flight PX180 at 0830 to MOUNT HAGEN, arriving 0930. Mount Hagen Town is in the upper Wahgi Valley - a valley with some of the oldest evidence of agriculture in the world. Met on arrival at the airport and transfer by road (c.1 hour) to the lodge. O/n KUMUL LODGE, (B) "Kumul" means bird of Paradise in Pidgin English. There are not many places in PNG where you can see wild bird of paradise inside the lodge yard, sometimes from your own room! More than 70 species of birds have been recorded in the lodge grounds alone and more can be found at nearby sites. The Lodge was locally designed and built with mostly local materials. Accommodation is in simple rooms with private bathroom. There is also a stove to keep the room warm in the cool evenings.



13 Sep Morning visit to Pigsties, located approximately 5km from the lodge at 2566 metres, with a local guide in search of birds of paradise and other avian species. Afternoon visit to Kopia or Anji and Walya birding sites. **NB: Choice of site to be discussed with your guide and will depend on the conditions pertaining at the time. The best available sites at the time of visit will be selected by your guide.** O/n KUMUL LODGE, (B).

14 Sep Morning visit to Tonga birding site with a local guide. The site is 1817m above sea level and approximately 15km from the lodge. The blue bird of paradise can be seen in this area. Afternoon visit to Kopia or Anji and Walya birding sites. **NB: Choice of site to be discussed with your guide and will depend on the conditions pertaining at the time. The best available sites at the time of visit will be selected by your guide.** O/n KUMUL LODGE, (B).



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15 Sep

Morning pick up from the lodge and commence the drive to Goroka with stop at village attraction (Private transfer 5-6 hours). First drive along the vast Tea plantation of fertile Waghi valley, and eventually enter the rocky limestone country of Chimbu Province. Stop over at Mindima village to view "Oma Masalai Dance." This is a drama-type attraction based on ancient story in the area involving spirit (Masalai) and villagers.



Later, continue the drive into grassland and arrive in Eastern Highlands Province capital of Goroka. Goroka is situated 1600m above sea level and boasts its ever-spring weather. It is "Coffee Capital" of Papua New Guinea where high-grade organic Arabica coffees are produced on its rich soil. It is also a home for famous "Asaro Mudman". Mudman became the guarding symbol of Asaro villages.

O/n PACIFIC GARDENS HOTEL, (BL) Located in the beautiful Pacific Gardens Estate and one of the best hotels in Goroka. The hotel is located in over 20 acres of land with walking trails, barbecue area, playground and a meandering mountain stream. Accommodation is in comfortable rooms with private bathroom, tea and coffee facilities and tv.



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16 Sep

Morning pick up from the hotel and transfer to the hotel and show ground. You will visit Goroka Show over the 2 days (shared tour). The staging of the Goroka Show started back in 1957 at the Independence Park opposite the Goroka Main Market. It was first introduced and organized by Australian Kiaps (Patrol Officers). Kiaps from each district built round houses typical of their districts. They proudly displayed cultures of their districts. The kiaps brought in sing sing groups from their area - twenty nine different languages and societies in Eastern Highlands was reflected in their culture. Over the years, Goroka show has grown to one of the most vivid cultural events in Papua New Guinea, where visitors can experience the customs of over a hundred tribes that populate the Papua New Guinea highlands. During the course of the weekend the tribes gather for music, dancing, showing-off and extraordinary displays of tribal rituals. Amongst the performers are the legendary mud men of Asaro. Tribal folklore records that centuries ago the warriors of Asaro were defeated in a tribal fight "payback" raid, and, to make themselves look fierce in the process, covered their bodies with grey mud. According to legend, the ruse worked. Their enemies fled at the sight of these ghostly apparitions. The mud men recreated the drama at the Goroka show. O/n PACIFIC GARDENS HOTEL, (BL)



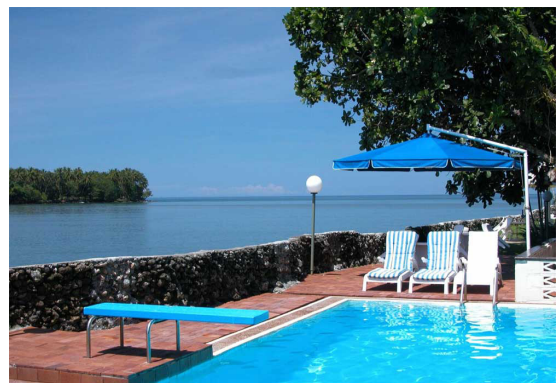
17 Sep

Another day at the GOROKA show. O/n PACIFIC GARDENS HOTEL, (BL).

18 Sep

Morning pick up from the hotel and commence the transfer (c.7-8 hours) overland to Madang. On the way, there will be stops en route including a visit to Yonki Hydro Dam (for its scenery). Arrive in Madang and transfer to the hotel.

O/n MADANG RESORT HOTEL, (BL). The Madang resort hotel is ideally located close to the centre of Madang, overlooking the Madang harbour. There are a total of 150 rooms, of varying standards surrounded by beautiful gardens that are home to exotic birds. Rooms have private bathroom, air-conditioning, satellite TV, telephone and most have private balconies overlooking the gardens or harbour. Accommodation in a Deluxe Room.



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19 Sep

After breakfast, pick up from the hotel for a half day harbour cruise, including a visit to Siar island for a short walks and Pig Island for snorkelling, before returning to the hotel. Afternoon tour to Amele Villages including Hobe, Suyao and Haya. Enjoy a sing sing performance at Haya Village. O/n MADANG RESORT HOTEL, (B).



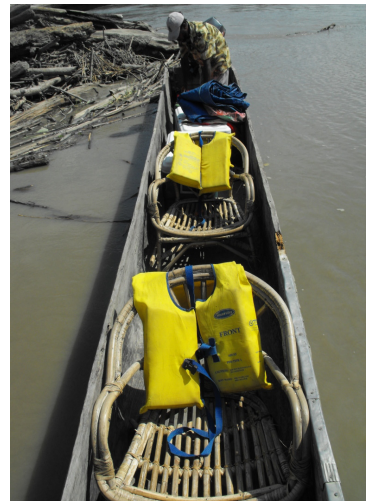
20 Sep

After breakfast, enjoy time at leisure to relax. Pick up from the hotel and transfer to the airport. Catch AIR NIUGINI flight PX128 at 1125 to WEWAK, arriving 1215. Met on arrival at the airport and transfer to the hotel. Rest of the day at leisure. O/n IN WEWAK BOUTIQUE HOTEL, (B). Situated on Wewak Hill overlooking the beautiful Bismarck Sea. Accommodation in room with private bathroom, air conditioning and satellite TV. Facilities at the hotel include resort style pool, Cocoa Cafe & Vanilla Room Restaurants for meals.



21 Sep

After breakfast, depart Wewak by private vehicle to Pagwi. The drive will take you over the Prince Alexander Ranges through to Passam, Kubalia, Yangoru, Hayfield /Maprik, Wosera to reach Pagwi. Most of the road is sealed, there is a one hour of the drive, which is on a dirt road. From Pagwi station you will start Motorised Canoe Safari Trip and travel to Wagu Lake. Wagu Lake is the gateway to the Hunstein Range Wildlife Management area and WWF tries to preserve the vast Rainforest and its inhabitants. In the evening you will visit a vast lake environment full of herons, cormorants, wild ducks, egrets, kites, jacanas and lots of species of water birds.



O/n WAGU GUEST HOUSE, (BLD). Accommodation is in a basic village hut but has common toilet, cold water shower adjacent to the main accommodation building. For a humid night, battery operated personal fan may be useful to get cool air.



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22 Sep

Early morning visit to the nearby forest to see the Lesser Bird of Paradise. Next you will head to the Wasukuk villages and visit the Haus Tamaran in Meno, where you will also enjoy a traditional sing sing. Finally you will visit Tongijamb village, which has the best Haus Tambaran in the area. A sing sing will be included at one of the villages. O/n WAGU GUEST HOUSE, (BLD).



23 Sep

Morning departure from the lodge to Pagwi. Change to road transfer and visit Maprik. The village has distinctive Maprik style Haus Tambaran and you will enjoy a mini culture show there. Continue by road to Wewak and transfer to the hotel. O/n IN WEWAK BOUTIQUE HOTEL, (BL).

24 Sep

Morning pick up from the hotel and transfer to the airport. Catch AIR NIUGINI flight PX141 at 0740 to PORT MORESBY, arriving 0900. Met on arrival at the airport and transfer to the Adventure Park. Adventure Park has the largest orchid garden in PNG, as well as a large aviary with several species of Birds of Paradise. Later, transfer to the hotel. O/n STANLEY HOTEL & SUITES, (B) The hotel offers comfortable accommodation in rooms with private bathroom. Facilities at the hotel include a swimming pool, gym, spa, restaurant and bar. NOTE: It is advisable to keep to the hotel compound, and not to venture into town at any time without an escort.).

25 Sep

Early morning pick up from the hotel and transfer by road to VARIRATA NATIONAL PARK for birdwatching. Depart the city and head for the Sogeri Plateaux, located approximately 600 metres above sea level. Keep your fingers crossed for a sighting of the Raggiana bird of paradise which can be seen here. Return to PORT MORESBY and transfer to the hotel. Collect luggage and then transfer to the airport. Catch AIR NIUGINI flight PX392 at 1450 to SINGAPORE, arriving 1920.



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Number of Participants: Minimum 4, Maximum 10 pax

Price: £5,463 per person

Single Supplement: £998 per person

NB: Single Supplement is Single room EXCEPT during the SEPIK VILLAGE stay, which will be on a twin share basis. Single rooms may be possible subject to availability. Please Enquire.

To include: International flights from Singapore, domestic flights, accommodation, transfers, meals as described, all tours and excursions as stated, reserve entrance fees, private transportation with experienced driver, services of various local English speaking guides, Goroka Show tourist pass, government taxes, service charges.

Excludes: International flights to Singapore, meals not described and personal costs such as drinks, laundry, telephone, Visa fees (if applicable)

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## IMPORTANT NOTES TO ACCOMPANY THE ABOVE ITINERARY

NB: Visas are required for travel. Visa on arrival is currently suspended. You must apply for an e-visa prior to arrival in PNG. Applications via the e-Visa portal cost US\$50. Visas are valid for a period of 30 or 60 days. <https://evisa.ica.gov.pg/evisa/account/Apply?ReturnUrl=%2fevisa%2f>

NB: Baggage Restrictions – Baggage allowance on Airlines PNG flights is limited. Clients must restrict their luggage to 16kgs plus a small carry-on hand or camera bag. The airline is strict and will charge for excess weight.

NB: All itineraries are subject to change without notice to take into account possible airline flight schedule changes which can take place before departure date or during the tour, and other operational factors.

NB: The quoted price for the above itinerary is based on current airline fares (both international and domestic), fuel surcharges and flight taxes. These (and other tour costs) may be subject to unanticipated increases beyond our control at short notice, either before or after you have booked the tour, in which case the price would need to be revised accordingly.

NB: This tour involves some travel in remote areas. This adds to the adventure and increases the opportunity to enjoy a true wildlife experience. However, due to terrain, weather, road conditions, and other factors beyond our control, some elements of the tour may have to be altered. Times of some activities may need to be changed or even cancelled due to the conditions. If an activity is cancelled it will usually be replaced with an alternative activity that is more appropriate for the conditions. Advance notice will be given for any changes where possible, although at times changes may need to be made whilst the tour is in progress.

NB: Prices are based on a specific airlines and specific economy seating classes. Flights are booked on an ad hoc basis and so early booking is recommended to take advantage of the cheapest fare availability. Prices may rise if a more expensive seat class needs to be booked. Please call for information on price variations for using alternative airlines or for seat upgrades.

NB: It is a condition of booking that full travel insurance including Emergency Medical Repatriation is taken out by each person travelling. Your insurance cover must also include Missed Departure and/or Missed Flight Connection for both outbound and return flight sectors (such cover might be subject to a small additional premium – please confirm with your insurers). We ask that you send us a photo/fax/electronic copy of your policy document together with the 24hr medical assistance telephone number issued by your insurer.

NB: Clients must be aware that hotels, lodges and resorts as well as suppliers of tours and excursions used in this itinerary might not comply with European standards of health and safety. For instance, balconies may not be entirely child-safe or may be low in height, so always ensure children are kept away from balconies and do not go near them when intoxicated or unwell; swimming pools may not display depths, so never dive into a pool without checking depth first; vehicles may not always have safety belts fitted - contact our representatives if so, and refuse to travel; public areas might not be well lit, so take extra care and use a torch. Clients must be vigilant and take extra care for their own safety, as they may well be travelling to remote and primitive locations where high quality standards of safety may not be present.

NB: Before and after booking, clients must familiarise themselves with current UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) travel advisories so as to satisfy themselves as to the suitability of the destination(s) to be visited in this itinerary. All decisions relating to the tour will be based on UK FCO advisories, and not those of any other countries' governments. In the event of any emergency or other problem encountered in the destination, it is advisable if appropriate to contact the local UK Embassy, High Commission or Consulate for assistance. The FCO in London also has dedicated telephone call centres: Crisis Management Dept - 0207 008 5335 (during UK office hours), and Global Response Centre - 0207 008 1500 (out of UK office hours).