

# IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR TRAVELLERS TO PAPUA NEW GUINEA

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Dear Traveller,

You are about to undertake a journey to the beautiful and fascinating country of PAPUA NEW GUINEA. You are about to embark on a rewarding travel adventure in which a world of the utmost natural beauty and vibrant cultures will be explored. To add to the enjoyment of your holiday and to ensure you have a smooth running trip, we provide the following advice and tips. Unlike many travel purveyors, we provide you with a "warts and all" scenario to fully prepare you for your journey and make your experience as enjoyable as possible!

Please carefully read all of the information that this booklet provides you and take note of all the information before arriving in Papua New Guinea, also referred to as PNG.

Please also keep in mind while preparing for your visit and while travelling in Papua New Guinea, that although PNG is situated relatively close to other well developed South Pacific and Asian nations such as Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, Tahiti, Indonesia and Singapore, PNG is somewhat isolated and as a result, most services and facilities, including transportation and tourism, are relatively underdeveloped by comparison. Unlike these countries and Africa, you are visiting a country where tourism could hardly be described as an industry and as a result you may encounter different situations along the way that you would not normally expect in other destinations. PNG also has an extremely wide variety of cultures, which are very unique – and to be an ethical tourist requires certain sensitivity to the local customs and traditions.

Although these factors make for a unique experience, they may, at times conspire to create circumstances which may become frustrating. So it is important that visitors to PNG remain patient and keep an open mind. If you come to Papua New Guinea with a spirit of adventure and a positive and flexible attitude, you will surely have only good memories to take home with you. We look forward to welcoming you in PNG!

## **PEOPLE AND POPULATION**

At the 2001 census, Papua New Guinea had a population 5,190,786, of which over 75% of households were residing in traditional dwellings, indicating that over three quarters of the population still live a largely traditional life. There is still a considerable expatriate population of approximately 25,000. Western residents are almost always referred to as "expats". The indigenous people are Papua New Guineans and are never referred to as natives. Tribal or regional names, such as Papuan, Tolai, Southern Highlander, Simbu, Huli, are also acceptable.

## **CLIMATE**

The climate in Papua New Guinea is tropical and pleasant. You will experience two distinct types of climate in PNG. The first is in the lowland and coastal areas being hot and having a temperature range of 24-35°C (75-95°F) with high humidity. The second is the highlands regions being cooler, having a temperature range of 12-28°C (54-82°F) and with less humidity. In both areas, the days are generally fine, but often there are clouds in the afternoon resulting in rain late afternoon and evening. Although there are said to be dry and wet seasons in various areas of PNG, it is often difficult to distinguish between these seasons. On the one hand, it can rain for several consecutive days during the dry season and on the other, there may occur lengthy dry spells during the wet season. Although it may be locally dry in the Sepik region, if it is raining heavily in the highlands, the river levels in the Sepik will rise. Weather in PNG is generally very localized and PNG does not experience frontal weather as is common in more temperate areas or a monsoon season as is common in other tropical areas.

## **WILDERNESS LODGES**

KARAWARI LODGE is situated atop a ridge amidst a vast expanse of dense tropical lowland rainforest, overlooking the Karawari River 300 feet below. It is truly remote with the only means of transport in and out by charter air. Consisting of twenty rooms, a large main building which houses the dining room, lounge and bar, Karawari is arguably the most authentic jungle lodge in PNG. The main building and each accommodation unit is traditionally built from local materials giving an authentic and rustic air. A concession to western needs is a spacious and modern bathroom. Ceiling fans, mosquito-netted beds and a breezy veranda complete the ambience. There are two adjoining but separate and self-contained rooms per building. A diesel generator provides power and is turned off at approximately 10:30 pm each evening. Power is turned on again at

6:00 am each morning. The rooms are built of materials gathered from the rainforest and the roof is made from sago palm leaves. Small geckos don't discriminate between the sago palm and your roof and may rustle around during the night, so there is no need for alarm. During the dry season beautiful green tree frogs sometimes take a bath in the toilet bowls! Please advise our staff and they will carefully remove any small visitor in your room and send it back off to its jungle home. Lights attract moths and insects. Turn off the veranda and room lights whilst you are at dinner. A small jet boat, river trucks with outboard motors and motorised dugout canoes are used in the river touring programs. Banks can be steep, muddy and slippery - old footwear is advisable. Driver/guides are always there to help.

MV SEPIK SPIRIT is a large flat bottom boat, specifically designed for inland waterways. It is thirty metres long and has a ten-metre beam, and a draft of one metre. It is powered by caterpillar and water jet engines. Three levels house the lounge, dining room and bar on the first floor, nine rooms each with its private bathroom on the second floor, and the third floor is the staff quarters and large covered observation area. The boat is fully air-conditioned and the air-conditioned areas inside the boat are no smoking areas. Water storage is limited and guests are asked to use water sparingly. Touring is done in a smaller jet boat. A low water level in the river may mean a muddy bank to negotiate from the boat to the top of the riverbank. Shoes worn on tours must be taken off and left on the shoe racks before entering the carpeted interior of the boat. Bring along an extra pair of casual light shoes or sandals for inside. There is no laundry service available on board Sepik Spirit. Published cruises are subject to change without notice due to operating conditions at the time of the cruise, which may be low water levels and floating grass islands.

AMBUA LODGE is an inspired mixture of local architecture, spectacular views and modest luxury. Recipient of the 1991 Pacific Asia Travel Association's "Pacific Heritage Award" which sighted AMBUA LODGE as a "superb example of culturally sensitive and ecologically responsible tourism". Thirty individual units with private bathrooms, a large main building which houses the lounge, bar and dining room set against pristine mountain rainforest in a spectacular mountain setting. Guests can also be accommodated in our two story block of 18 modern hotel rooms. Ambua generates power from its own mini hydroelectric power plants, truly an environmental showpiece. The lodge and units, which, are strung out along a steep ridge are built from bush materials. Every accommodation unit is reached by a series of paths and steps, downhill on the way home to bed and uphill to the main lodge for breakfast.

Remember that Ambua is at an altitude of 7000 feet or 2100 metres, and that along with the gently sloping paths may cause you to breathe heavier than normal. Take your time, enjoy the magnificent mountain air and scenery and the beautiful flower gardens surrounding each accommodation unit and along the paths. You will find rhododendrons, ground orchids and many other exotic plants and flowers. Nature walks and paths through villages are generally wet and may be slippery, old footwear with good gripping soles is recommended. Rooms are tiled and can be cold on the feet for "night wanderings" - a light pair of slippers, thongs or similar would come in handy. Electric blankets and doonas, or continental quilts are provided. It is suggested that your electric blanket is turned on to #1 prior to leaving for dinner. Touring is by 18 seater buses, well sprung to cushion the ride over the roads, which are unsealed and generally in poor condition.

MALOLO PLANTATION LODGE is a picture perfect tropical setting complete with swaying palm trees and the volcanic island of Kar Kar on the distant seaward horizon. Malolo has 14 air-conditioned rooms with private bathroom and balcony facing the ocean. The lounge, bar and dining room are open on all sides to allow in the ocean breezes. A fresh water swimming pool, tennis court, lush tropical gardens and extensive lawns reaching down to the ocean, add to the pleasure. Electricity is drawn from the town power supply and at times can be unreliable. A backup generator is used during these time. Touring is done in mini buses along sealed roads. Snorkelling is supervised by Malolo's experienced snorkel guide and his assistant for the safety of clients and continued preservation of PNG's unique and colourful tropical coral reefs.

RONDON RIDGE LODGE is situated at 7,100 feet above sea level with a magnificent view of the Wahgi Valley and the surrounding mountains. The main Lodge opens out to the stunning view and overlooks beautiful gardens, a patio and fish pond inviting visitors to have a drink while warming by an outdoor fireplace. It also hosts the dining room, bar, lounge and reception.

There is a self guided tour in the Lodge that takes one through an extensive PNG art collection that was gathered over the years by the owners.

Rondon has 24 large and tastefully furnished rooms with modern bathrooms, warmed beds and quilts for chilly Highland nights. All rooms are at one level and are set below the Main Lodge with access down a central outdoor staircase. Power is supplied by its own hydro system, providing 24 hour electricity.

Rondon has hours of nature walks leading to a lovely orchid garden, bird feeding station and further to try to find the elusive Birds of Paradise in the unique ecology of the area. Trails may be slippery and wet so good walking shoes are needed. Walking sticks are provided at the Lodge. A Nature guide is available to accompany visitors on early birding walks and afternoon nature treks.

Cultural tours from Rondon guide the visitor through traditions and customs of the Melpa people of the area. Touring is by coach and a local guide accompanies to explain the various areas visited.

## **CURRENCY, CREDIT CARDS AND EXCHANGE**

The unit of currency in PNG is the Kina, pronounced "kee-nah", and sub-units of 100 are called Toea, pronounced "toy-ya". Note denominations are available in K2, K5, K10, K20 and K50.

International credit cards are accepted at most major hotels. American Express, Mastercard and Visa credit cards are accepted at the Wilderness Lodges, AMBUA LODGE, KARAWARI LODGE, MALOLO PLANTATION LODGE, RONDON RIDGE, and the SEPIK SPIRIT. It should be noted that at the Wilderness Lodges, all credit cards attract a 4% administration fee.

Kina cash can be acquired at the Foreign Exchange counters of most international ports of departure to PNG. It is strongly recommended you acquire your Kina cash prior to departing for PNG. As it has been known for Foreign Exchange counters at airports to run out of Kina, so **it is recommended that you order Kina from your local Foreign Exchange or from your local bank well in advance of departure.** When ordering Kina, it is highly recommended that you get mainly small denominations, such as K2, K5 and K10. Small denominations are preferred by villagers should you choose to make purchases in a village. There is a bank at the Port Moresby international airport, but if you are arriving in PNG outside of normal banking hours it may not be open. In addition, the Bank at Port Moresby airport generally gives out large notes. If your connection time in Port Moresby to your next domestic flight is short, you may not have time for banking. There are also banks in most major centres in PNG, but tour schedules do not usually allow time for banking. Most hotels and the Wilderness Lodges have some cash but this is greatly limited and exchange rates are not as good as the banks. Banking hours in PNG are generally from 9:00 am - 4:00 pm Monday through to Friday.

Banks in PNG do not accept traveller's cheques or most foreign currencies. American and Australian Dollars are the best foreign

cash to bring to PNG, but please note that only Kina is accepted when purchasing art and crafts in villages.

## **PASSPORT, VISA AND IMMIGRATION PROCEDURES**

Tourists need to a visa to enter PNG. Visa regulations change from time to time. Currently a 60-day tourist visa is available upon arrival in PNG for nationals of many countries including USA, Canada and other countries in the Americas, the UK and other Western European countries, Israel, Australia, New Zealand, Japan and other Pacific countries. To acquire a visa upon arrival, eligible tourists need a passport valid for at least six months past their arrival date, proof of sufficient funds for their stay and an onward airline ticket with confirmed bookings. At this time there is no fee for a tourist visa on arrival. Tourist visas are not extendable.

Tourists eligible for visas on arrival have the option of acquiring their visa prior to leaving home through either the nearest PNG, or in some cases an Australian, Embassy or Consulate. Contact the relevant diplomatic mission directly if you choose this option. The process may take several weeks.

Visitors from most other countries, are not eligible for a visa on arrival. Tourists from countries not eligible for a visa on arrival need to check with the PNG Embassy or Consulate in their region. If there is no PNG diplomatic office, check with the Australian Embassy or Consulate.

Always check with the PNG or Australian Embassies for current visa requirements prior to leaving home.

If stopping at or even just passing through another country on the way to PNG, please check with the nearest Embassy of that country before departing your home country to ensure you have all the required visas and documents. Currently Australia allows citizens of many countries including USA, Canada, Japan, and most Western European countries to stop in transit for less than 8 hours without a visa. But if you are stopping for 8 hours or more, changing airports within Australia, or leaving the transit lounge, you will be required to have a tourist visa, which you must acquire prior to arrival in Australia. Note that there is no smoking allowed in any transit lounge in Australia. If you have long waiting hours and need to leave the transit lounge for any reason, you will require a visa. Visa requirements do change from time to time, so always check with the nearest Embassy of the country in question for current details.

Be certain your baggage claim checks are clearly marked "POM" for Port Moresby on your international flight into PNG. Allow plenty of time to arrive at the airport to conduct immigration, security, and check-in procedures. On arrival in Port Moresby, the procedure is quite orderly but can take up to one hour. If you have a tight connection, be sure you go to the head of the line in immigration at Jackson's Airport in Port Moresby and request special assistance. Important: The Air Niugini domestic transit counter at Jackson's Airport in Port Moresby is located at the international check-in counter – in the same building as the international arrivals hall. For those with domestic connections, check in at the transit counter before leaving the Customs Hall.

## **CANCELLATION POLICY**

Cancellations received prior to the client's arrival in PNG are entitled to full refund less a cancellation fee. Cancellations must be confirmed in writing as soon as practicable. The cancellation fees are based on the following range of notification: 21 to 29 days 10% per person of the land cost, 7-20 days 25% per person of the land cost, and under 7 days 50% per person of the land cost. No refund is available after the tour has commenced or in respect of any tour, accommodation, meals or any other service not utilised during the tour. Cancellation policies for show programs are different and will be advised upon booking.

Please note that cancellation fees for facilities other than the Wilderness Lodges may vary to those stated above. Programs that include other facilities will have a different cancellation schedule to that stated above – which will vary from case to case.

## **INSURANCE AND MEDICAL FACILITIES**

All travellers to PNG are strongly recommended to acquire Travellers Insurance for trip cancellation and delays, for baggage loss and damage, and for illness, accident and medical evacuation. Government owned general hospitals, church affiliated hospitals, private doctors and pharmacies are available in all major centres of the country. Services at both public and private medical facilities in PNG are not to the same standard as those found in western European countries, USA, Canada, Japan, or Australia. Medical aid posts are found in remote areas such as the Karawari and Sepik Rivers, although services are limited to very basic first aid and medication. We recommend you bring a personal first aid kit including ample supply of medication, and pack this in your carry-on baggage.



## **HEALTH REGULATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The only health requirement is a certificate of vaccination against yellow fever or cholera if arriving from or travelling through infected areas prior to arrival in PNG. Visitors are advised to take malaria precautions, but only your doctor can recommend and prescribe the appropriate medication for you. As a precaution, most travellers keep their tetanus, typhoid, hepatitis, and polio inoculations current. Although the problem of diarrhoea and dysentery does not seem to be nearly as severe in PNG as in some of the neighbouring Asian countries, it is possible you will get some kind of diarrhoea at some stage of your trip. This is normal for travellers whose bodies are adapting to strange food and water. In most cases the problem is short term, not severe and is easily treated.

## **TIME ZONE**

PNG is 10 hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time and is on the same time as Sydney wintertime, Australia, or Australian Eastern Standard Time.

## **TELEPHONES/COMMUNICATIONS**

PNG has a telephone system in all the main towns. AMBUA LODGE, KARAWARI LODGE, MALOLO PLANTATION LODGE and the MV SEPIK SPIRIT are in remote areas and communication is by two-way radio or cellphones but have limited coverage. If relatives or friends need to contact you while you are at the Wilderness Lodges, the quickest way is a fax sent to +675 542 2470. The fax should clearly state your name and location, eg. "message for Mr. John Citizen, guest AMBUA LODGE". This message will be sent onto the lodge by aircraft or if time does not permit, will be passed on via two-way radio. The published number of + 675 542 1438 for Wilderness Lodges is a Mount Hagen booking office number and guests cannot be reached on this number. **It is important that you notify family prior to departure that while staying at the wilderness lodges, you will not be able to call them and they will not be able to call you.**

## **TIPPING**

When you arrive in Papua New Guinea, you will be given a "Travel Pack" which, amongst other things, contains guidelines for tipping.

Please do not give gifts to individuals in villages. If you wish to do so, please discuss this with the Lodge Managers who will either distribute the gifts evenly amongst the people or they will help you contact a community leader. Your understanding of this will help prevent turning the people and in particular the children of PNG into annoying beggars who are often found in other countries. If you would like to take gifts for villages, items like basic school supplies, such as exercise books and pens are much more useful and appreciated, rather than trinkets, such as balloons or candy.

## **ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES**

The electrical system in PNG is 240 Volts AC, 50Hz. Some hotels provide 110 Volts outlets in guest rooms. PNG uses the same electrical plug outlets as Australia. It is important to note that if staying at KARAWARI LODGE, electricity is not available between about 10:30pm and 6:00am, or while guests are out on tour, so it is important to not rely on electrical items charging overnight or during the day.

## **CLOTHING AND CHECK LIST**

Please pack lightly! This will most certainly add to the enjoyment of your trip. The climate at KARAWARI LODGE, MALOLO PLANTATION LODGE, and the MV SEPIK SPIRIT is hot and humid, thus lightweight long sleeved (preferably cotton) casual and modest clothing is appropriate for all occasions. Mosquitoes are drawn to dark colours so khaki, camel, bone or similar are preferable colours to wear. A sweater is needed for cool highlands evenings and good walking shoes are essential. MALOLO PLANTATION LODGE has a swimming pool, so don't forget your swim suit. Bikinis or tight, skimpy clothing are not advisable in respect of the local culture.

Checklist:

- Sun hat
- Insect repellent
- Flashlight (power is turned off at night at Karawari Lodge)
- Sunscreen lotion
- Rain jacket
- Extra pair comfortable walking shoes (the first pair may get wet or muddy at some point in your PNG travels)
- Binoculars
- Camera
- Plenty of film
- Malaria medication prescribed by your physician

## **LAUNDRY SERVICE**

Laundry service is available at AMBUA LODGE, KARAWARI LODGE, RONDON RIDGE and MALOLO PLANTATION LODGE. Keep in mind that all laundry is line dried and thus sufficient time is required for drying. Generally plan 24 hours for this service. There is no laundry service or facilities available on the MV SEPIK SPIRIT. Hotels in main centres have daily laundry services.

## **FLYING IN PNG**

The majority of flying in PNG is conducted under visual flight rules. The mainland of PNG contains numerous mountain ranges rising up to 14,800 ft (4,500 metres). A large number of flights are conducted in small un-pressurised aircraft, making it difficult to fly above these mountains and the towering clouds. Therefore if you can't see where the mountains are and you can't go over them, then you can't go into cloud.

Due to the challenging topographical conditions of PNG, the navigational aids that allow aircraft to land in bad weather cannot be used at the vast majority of airports in PNG, this even applies to the larger aerodromes such as Mount Hagen. It goes without saying, that smaller aerodromes such as those that service AMBUA LODGE, KARAWARI LODGE and the MV SEPIK SPIRIT are very basic and operations of light aircraft in and out of these aerodromes are very weather dependant.

The weather in Papua New Guinea can change very quickly (for the better or worse!). This unpredictable and changeable is caused by the interaction of the high mountains with the generally hot and humid tropical conditions. All you can do is relax, read a book and listen to your pilot. The pilots in Papua New Guinea are very experienced with these conditions and know best when to go and to stay.

## **BAGGAGE REGULATIONS**

For those travelling on only Air Niugini domestic flights baggage allowance is restricted to 16kg or 35lbs and carry-on bag. But you will likely be travelling on other small regional airlines to the Wilderness Lodges, and the MV SEPIK SPIRIT. Flights between these lodges operate in small 5 or 8 seat aircraft with limited weight and space for baggage. On these flights you must restrict your baggage to 10kgs maximum per person plus a small carry-on bag or camera bag. In addition, large hard or soft-sided suitcases are not permitted on these aircraft. The small regional airlines are strict and if you come with inappropriate or excess baggage when boarding these small aircraft for the Wilderness Lodges, your bags

will be off loaded and you will be required to re-pack, thus causing undue stress on yourself, the pilot, ground operational staff and your fellow travellers. If taking a long trip, you may find it convenient to leave excess baggage at the hotel in the country stopped at just before coming to PNG and will be returning to on the way home. If this is not possible, excess baggage can be stored in Port Moresby. Please ensure that all your stored baggage is clearly tagged with your name, address, and return date. Tags are provided with travel documents upon arrival in PNG. Please always personally make sure that your baggage is properly tagged to the correct destination at time of check-in.

## **SECURITY**

Unfortunately, on the rare occasion when Papua New Guinea does get featured in the international media, it is usually a sensationalist report, which depicts PNG only in a negative light. As a result, PNG often and unjustifiably is described as a dangerous and high-risk country to visit. You may get your first indication of this attitude from either your friends at home before you leave or from people you meet en route to PNG. Even the local foreign residents have their own share of gruesome stories, which are usually hearsay and exaggerated. Do not let this discourage you. If you take reasonable care and common sense, you are most unlikely to experience anything other than friendliness and hospitality.

As a precaution do not carry valuables such as passport, airline tickets, money, credit cards or jewellery while walking around town or on sightseeing tours. Never leave valuables unattended in your room. There is seldom any place to go in the evenings, but in any case it is advisable not to leave the hotel at night. Crime is a factor everywhere these days, so take all precautions possible. There is no need to be paranoid about security, however, as is the case virtually everywhere in the world – situational awareness is the key to keeping you and your belongings safe.

## **LANGUAGE**

There is an estimate of 800 traditional languages in PNG. The official national language is English. The two most commonly used languages are Hiri Motu and Melanesian Pidgin.

## **FOOD**

Meats, fish, vegetables, and tropical fruits are served Australian style. Some of the world's best coffee and tea is grown in the Highlands of PNG. An excellent beer is locally produced and a good

variety of imported wines are plentiful. At the Wilderness Lodges, apart from vegetarian meals, special meal requests are not available as the meals are table d'hote and set menus. If vegetarian meals are required, this should be advised to the Manager at the time of check-in. Local food is made up of bland starchy foods with very little protein and to a western palate is not particularly appetising. There is no national cuisine such as can be found in Thailand and Indonesia. At the Wilderness Lodges dinner may include one "local" vegetable for you to try.

## **WATER SUPPLY**

In most major centres, the public water supply is treated and is comparable to World Organisation standards. At the Wilderness Lodges, water sources vary. At AMBUA LODGE, the water comes from a stream in which the source is run-off from the surrounding high altitude moss and rainforest having no human or domestic animal inhabitants. At KARAWARI LODGE, the water source is a nearby natural spring. The water source at MALOLO PLANTATION LODGE is a stream running from nearby lowland lakes and swamps. And on the MV SEPIK SPIRIT, the water source is the Sepik River and is filtered on board. At MALOLO PLANTATION LODGE and the MV SEPIK SPIRIT, drinking water is boiled before serving. While on adventure tours, again, water also boiled before serving. Some choose to bring and use their own personal water purification system while in PNG, however this is not really necessary. Bottled water is sold at the Wilderness Lodges.

## **SMOKING**

Smoking is not allowed on any of the vehicles. There are usually frequent stops during a tour at which time a smoking break can be taken. Smoking inside the air-conditioned area of the MV Sepik Spirit is not allowed. There are ample outside areas for smokers including a covered observation deck with comfortable seating.

## **TOURING**

During your trip the driver/guides will make every effort to be of assistance. They are proud of their record and the contact and compliments from visitors. Remember, they are speaking in their third language, after their local language and Pidgin-English. Do ask them questions but try using an uncomplicated vocabulary and do not speak too quickly. They need not be treated patronisingly. You will find them friendly and helpful - refreshing and innocent compared to most places in the world.

Helpful tip when asking a question - to ensure a more accurate response, ask the question in such a way the response is not built into the question. Instead of "Is that a cockatoo?" ask "What kind of bird is that?" or in English or Pidgin, and "What is the name of that bird?" Also should a guide offer you with good intentions, artefacts or heirlooms to be mailed later, it is best to not accept.

## **CULTURAL DISPLAYS AND VILLAGE VISITS**

Daily tours may include nature walks, birding and village visits - most would include walking through the local people's land, gardens and living areas. Sometimes, we may be asked by local people not to visit them or intrude on their land or privacy. Reasons for this may be numerous, but often it is due to a death in the village, or a tribal dispute. We respect their wishes and customs, and we ask that you do likewise. We may not have had any prior notice of their need for privacy, and therefore arrive at the village expecting perhaps a cultural display or similar, only to find we are turned away. Don't become upset or angry with either your driver/guide or the local people. The participants in these displays and cultural events are village people, not professional performers of dance groups; it is this very reason that makes the whole experience so exceptional. The operational person in charge (not your driver/guide) will try to make alternative arrangements wherever time and circumstances permit.

Under the heading of "Tipping" **you are asked not to hand out gifts to individuals in villages**. This is a most important request that we ask you comply with. School supplies, which are always in demand by under-funded schools, particularly in rural areas, are most welcome and are much preferred over cheap plastic jewellery, sweets, balloons, etc.

## **PHOTOGRAPHY**

Like anyone the people of Papua New Guinea resent the intrusion of privacy. So, except in the case of planned performances, always remember to ask before taking a photograph of a particular individual. It is rare but sometimes the individual may request payment prior to agreeing. In this case it is recommended you do not pay for, nor take the photo. Plenty of photo opportunities will come up and at no cost. The paying of photos whether for money or gifts only encourages commercialisation and inhibits spontaneity and hospitality. The local economy is assisted by the payment of a general fee to each village that is visited. In this way the whole community benefits.

## **THINGS TO BUY**

PNG Art and handicrafts are world renowned and one of the most vital industries as such in the South Pacific. The art is extremely varied and reflects the great diversity of cultures in PNG. The Sepik River is well known for its unique art, which comes in many forms including pottery, wooden carved masks and cult hooks. In other areas of the country you will find carved bowls, bilum or string bags, baskets, ceremonial axes, clay and bamboo ornaments, charms and musical instruments, just to name a few of the items you will probably have the opportunity to buy.

Please be advised that it is illegal to export the feathers of the Bird of Paradise. If you buy or even accept as a gift the feathers of these birds, you will encourage the hunting of these rare and beautiful creatures and thus help create an industry, which could possibly lead to their demise. PNG and Australian laws are very strict about the export/import of all endangered species. Please do not buy or accept these feathers and be advised that you will be prosecuted if you are caught trying to take them out of the country.

If you miss the opportunity to buy art in the villages, art and craft are available for purchase at AMBUA LODGE, KARAWARI LODGE and RONDON RIDGE.

## **ART FORWARDING**

Artefacts purchased at the villages or the Lodges can be left with the lodge managers for later packing and shipment. Lodge staff will have a supply of printed forms for you to complete, including address, description of the items and payment details. **Lodge managers cannot estimate the cost of art forwarding, as they are not involved in the packing and shipping of the art** beyond sending it to Mount Hagen for processing.

Your artefacts will be flown at no cost to you to Mount Hagen on a space available basis ie they will travel only when an aircraft operating with sufficient space available to transport the artefacts. In Mount Hagen they will be carefully packed. All care will be taken with the packing but sometimes damage does occur in shipment. We cannot be held responsible for such damage. We strongly suggest that if you purchase any fragile pieces you attempt to carry these with you.

Air Mail is the only method of shipping used. As a result size restrictions apply on what can be packed and posted. Lodge

managers will advise you in their introductory talk as to the maximum dimensions of art that can be shipped. Even though you will be requested to leave a your credit card details to cover postage, packing and handling, we will contact you to advise and reconfirm your instructions if costs exceed K1,000.

The Wilderness Lodges, AMBUA LODGE, KARAWARI LODGE, MALOLO PLANTATION LODGE, BENSBACH WILDLIFE LODGE, RONDON RIDGE and MV SEPIK SPIRIT are located in very isolated parts of PNG. As a result very limited cash is available for exchanges at these lodges. Please bring sufficient cash for your art purchases (most people find they do not bring enough). **Smaller denominations of Kina cash are best for purchasing art** in the villages, ie, K2 K5 and K10 are best. So bring cash in small denominations as the villagers will not be able to make changes for larger notes. The Wilderness Lodges are generally not able to change K50 to smaller denominations.

To give you an idea about costs, Sepik masks cost between K40 and k400. Drums are K80 to K300. Smaller pieces such as key ings, necklaces are K to K100. A Bilum usually cost between K40 and K80 depending where it comes from.

In general, Papua New Guineans do not like to barter with you if you are buying artefacts or other souvenirs. In general, art sellers will set what they consider a fair price, and that is what they expect to receive for it. It is considered impolite to barter or haggle over prices beyond a second price.

## **POSTAGE RATES**

Allow from 10 to 20 days for airmail delivery from North America, Europe or Australia and New Zealand. Your mail can be addressed c/- P.O. Box 371, Mount Hagen, Papua New Guinea. Airmail from PNG to most other countries also takes from 10 to 20 days. The following are airmail postage rates for letter and post cards: Within PNG - 85 toea To Europe and North America – K5.35 To Singapore, Australia and New Zealand – K3.35

## **COMMUNICATING WITH PAPUA NEW GUINEANS**

Most travellers are experienced and sophisticated and find the trip a great one. There are difficulties that even the best planning cannot account for. In PNG, anger, displeasure or irritability do not increase one's chances of obtaining positive results. Such expressions of displeasure often produce the opposite effect. Please be patient as it



is a waste of time complaining about arrangements. When you experience the unexpected, please be patient and avoid dwelling on mishaps, it only worsens the travel experience for yourself and your fellow travellers. It is natural to be agitated or frightened in such a remote, foreign country. Be assured all arrangements are being coordinated to make your trip as smooth as possible. Overall, past clients find PNG one of their best trips ever, but the unexpected can easily occur.

## **PIDGIN**

Pidgin-English known locally as Tok Pisin, is the lingua franca of PNG and is almost universally spoken throughout the country. It is derived from English, German and Indigenous languages, with the occasional Spanish, Dutch and Portuguese words thrown in.

Here are some helpful Tok Pisin phrases:

Monin - Good morning	Lapun- Old man or woman
Apinun- Good afternoon	Balus- Aircraft
Gut nait- Good night	Ples Balus- Airport
Tenk yu- Thank you	Kago- Luggage
Em hamas?- How much is that?	Wantok- Countryman or friend
Mi laik baim- I would like to buy	Bilas- Decoration or uniform
Toilet We?- Where is the toilet?	Wara- Water
Halpim mi plis- Help me please	Yu stap gut?- How are you?
Nogat- No	Mi stap gut- I am fine
Mi no laikim- I do not like it	Inap mi kisim poto?- May I take a photo?
Yumi go we?- Where are we going?	Soim mi- Show me
Kai Kai- Food	Klostu- Near or close by
Ka- Car	Longwe tumas- A very long way or too far
Mani- Money	Wanem nem bilong yu?- What is your name?
Man- Man or male	Ples bilong yu we?- Where are you from?
Meri- Woman or female	Mi no klia gut- I do not understand
Pikinini- Baby or very young child	Mi no save- I don't know
Manki- Older children and teenagers	Tok isi- Speak slowly
Yangpela- Young man or woman	Haus sik- Hospital

## **READING LIST**

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## **VIDEO - SUGGESTED VIEWING**

**Cultural Interest** - First Contact, Pearls & Savages, Voices of the Forest and The Mendi

**Nature Interest** - Oddie in Paradise, Birds of Paradise, New Guinea An Island Apart, Attenborough in Paradise.

