



Ecotourism Melanesia

Discover Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands

EM204 2013 **NATIONAL MASK FESTIVAL TOUR** 16-25 JULY 2013

9 nights Rabaul, Kavieng, Tsoi Island

(sign-up escorted small group tour maximum 8 people)

The National Mask Festival is an annual event mounted by the PNG National Cultural Commission and always hosted in Rabaul. The festival showcases Papua New Guinea's mask culture and attracts displays and performers from all over the country, providing opportunities to see both common and rare masks. The three major genres of mask on display are the ancestor masks, spirit masks, and tumbuan masks. Ancestor masks are designed to resemble or represent humans and often have holes in the eyes as a distinguishing feature. Small masks can be worn on the head during dances or ceremonies while other are mounted in homes and men's houses to represent ancestors. Spirit masks represent non-human beings and are often designed to be mounted on walls and gables to protect the occupants of a home. Tumbuan are also a type of spirit mask but are larger in size and designed to be worn over the head and shoulders, or the whole body, during performances of dances and mime that illustrate goings-on in the spirit world. There is no other occasion on PNG's cultural calendar where such a wide range of masks can be seen in one place, along with their accompanying dances and dramas. There will also be many stalls and displays with local artifacts, handicrafts and foods available for sale.

This tour attends the mask festival daily for three consecutive mornings, with afternoon sightseeing excursions around Rabaul. After the mask festival the tour group continues on to beautiful Kavieng to sample the sights and activities available in exotic Kavieng Harbour, a huge crucible of pristine tropical islands and reefs. The highlight of the tour is an excursion to idyllic Tsoi Island off the coast of New Hanover, to sample some village culture and experience the rainforest, reefs and white beaches of this relatively unknown island that very few tourists visit. Unlimited snorkelling, beach combing, canoeing, local style fishing and friendly forays into native villages are a feature of the visit to Tsoi Island.

The group travels with our experienced tour leader who handles all arrangements en route and provides insightful views to augment and interpret the commentaries of local guides at each destination on the tour.

Before or after the escorted group tour, non-escorted tour extensions to other parts of the country are available from our Independent Touring menu.

TOUR COST: PGK 14,000 per person, twin-share, 9 nights, includes internal air

Single supplement is PGK 2800 surcharge (guaranteed single room for 3 nights Rabaul, 4 nights Kavieng, 2 nights Tsoi Island)

Truncated tour option

3 nights Rabaul only 16 - 19 July (Mask Festival and tours) PGK 7500 per person, twin share

Single supplement PGK 1500

To convert the tour cost to other currencies, use the current exchange rate listed on our website home page or contact us for a quote. The tour price is subject to change. However tours paid-in-full are protected against any price rises. Earlybird (advance purchase) discounts are available - please enquire.

TOUR INCLUSIONS:

- Port Moresby - arrival meet and greet, assist with connection
- Port Moresby - welcome folder with maps and destination information
- Port Moresby - complimentary city tour on arrival day or departure day as time allows between flights
- Port Moresby - domestic airfares Port Moresby-Rabaul-Kavieng-Port Moresby with 16kg checked baggage allowance + 5kg carry-on
- Rabaul - meet and greet, transfer to hotel
- Rabaul - 3 nights 3-star hotel accommodation (Rapopo Plantation Resort, Kokopo Village Resort or better, as available) - room only, twin share (pay as you go by cash or card for breakfasts, lunches and dinners, bar drinks and snacks)
- Rabaul - dawn excursion to the Kinawai spirit arrival on Kokopo beach
- Rabaul - 3 half days attendance at the National Mask Festival including transfers, entry pass, local guides
- Rabaul - 2 afternoon tours of Rabaul and Kokopo
- Rabaul - 1 night excursion to Baining Fire Dance performance
- Kavieng - 4 nights 3-star accommodation at Malagan Beach Resort (or equivalent if unavailable) - room only, twin share (pay as you go by cash or card for breakfasts, lunches and dinners)
- Kavieng - 1 day leisure activities / local sightseeing including your choice of local walking guide, bicycle hire or kayak hire (lunch not included)
- Kavieng - 1 day Kavieng Lagoon excursion including snorkelling, freedom of the island and seafood lunch at Lissenung Island Resort, desert island stop and Nusa Lik Island WW2 relics
- Kavieng - return motor boat transfers to Tsoi Island
- Tsoi Island - 2 nights 1.5 star accommodation at Mansava Adventure Lodge (or Tsoilik Lagoon Guesthouse if Mansava is unavailable) including all meals from arrival day lunch to departure day lunch, and boiled local spring water for drinking
- Tsoi Island - two days island based activities including village culture tours and sing-sing, unlimited snorkelling, beach walking, rainforest hiking, outrigger canoeing, local style fishing
- Port Moresby - airport assistance and farewell
- Throughout the tour - company tour leader or leaders to escort the group
- Throughout the tour - bottled water on all excursions and transfers
- Throughout the tour - first aid kit and emergency satellite phone carried by tour leader
- Throughout the tour - life jackets supplied for all boat excursions
- Throughout the tour - daily tour coordination and monitoring by our office in Port Moresby
- Throughout the tour - 24-hour emergency support from our office in Port Moresby

EXCLUSIONS:

- international airfares and visa fees
- hotel meals and bar drinks
- bottled water (except where stated)
- tips (not essential, but appreciated for exceptional service)
- souvenirs and items of a personal nature
- other meals and activities designated PAYG (Pay As You Go) or not otherwise specified as included
- excess baggage charges (your free allowance is 16kg + 5 kg)
- personal items: bring your own favourite munchies, favourite bath soap, favourite toilet paper, small quick-dry towel, personal medications and first aid kit, personal hygiene requirements, brimmed hat or cap, "amphibious footwear" (sandals or quick-dry canvas shoes), insect repellent, sunscreen, personal flashlight, battery-operated personal fan. Note that aerosol pressure cans are not permitted on board domestic flights in PNG so bring roll-on or pump-action insect repellent and deodorant.

ITINERARY

DAY 1: TUE 16 JULY 2013

PORT MORESBY / RABAU

Arrive Port Moresby and connect through to Rabaul.

See www.airniugini.com.pg www.apng.com or www.qantas.com.au for details of international flights arriving today from Brisbane, Cairns or Singapore (flights from Asian cities depart the day before and arrive early morning in Port Moresby).

On arrival in Port Moresby Ecotourism Melanesia staff will greet you with a welcome gift ☺ and you will be transferred to check in for your connecting flight to Rabaul.

NB Your domestic air tickets are provided by Ecotourism Melanesia as part of the tour package and will be delivered to you on arrival or e-mailed in advance.

To avoid possible travel disruptions you will be booked on the first available flight to Rabaul after the arrival of your international flight.

If time allows between flights, our staff will take you on a short tour of Port Moresby.

At Rabaul's Tokua airport you will be greeted by your tour escort who has gone ahead to finalise arrangements, and transfer via scenic 30 minute drive to Kokopo town (New Rabaul) where you will check in at your accommodation.

In the evening over dinner at the hotel, the tour group will coalesce for the first time after arriving on different flights during the day. After a little socialising we suggest an early night tonight as tomorrow will be an early start for the Kinawai excursion.

Overnight 3-star hotel accommodation, Kokopo (to be confirmed)

Pay-as-you-go (PAYG) for meals today. Lunch and snacks are available from various outlets in Port Moresby and at the upstairs café in the international airport terminal. Lunch and dinner are available at the hotel in Kokopo, pay by cash or credit card.

The weather in Port Moresby and Rabaul will be warm tropical (maximum 30 degrees Celcius and humid) with some possibility of rain.

DAY 2: WED 17 JULY 2013

RABAU

05:00 This morning we rise early and we have an orange juice on board our tour bus for the short drive to Kokopo Beach to witness the "Kinawai" - the arrival of the "spirits" that will preside over the mask festival. At 05:30 as the sun rises, we will witness canoes carrying the *dukduk* and *tumbuan* "spirits" arrive on the shore. The figures dance on the beach and "disappear". They will reappear at the festival later in the morning.

06:30 Return to the hotel for breakfast (PAYG).

08:00 We transfer to the festival venue at Kokopo and settle into our seats for the first day of the National Mask Festival. The first day is usually a bit slow to get started due to opening speeches by officials and grandstanding by politicians, so you will need to be patient because if we skip the speeches and get there late we may not get good seats.

Spirit masks and ancestor masks from all over Papua New Guinea will be featured

at the festival: a combination of static displays and dance performances. There will also be many stalls and displays with local foods and handicrafts available for sale. Our local guides will be available to accompany you around the festival grounds and explain local culture and foods to you.

12:00 We transfer back to hotel for lunch (PAYG).

13:00 This afternoon we take a half day tour of the **Kokopo district** including the Kokopo Museum, the Bitapaka War Cemetery, the ruins of "Queen Emma's" homestead, and the inland foothills of the Baining range, as far as the Warangoi River if time allows.

18:00 Dinner at hotel or other venue (PAYG)

Overnight 3-star hotel accommodation, Kokopo (to be confirmed)

DAY 3: THU 18 JULY 2013

RABAUL

06:30 Breakfast

07:00 We transfer to the second day of the National Mask Festival.

12:00 We depart from the festival grounds and drive back to the hotel for lunch (or an alternative venue such as Ralum Country Club)

13:00 We commence a half day tour of Rabaul district including the volcanic caldera of Simpson Harbour and some of the relics left by the Japanese garrison in World War 2.

17:00 We arrive back at the hotel. Dinner tonight can be at the hotel or another restaurant according to the group's preference.

19:00 Transfer to Gaulim village to witness the Baining Fire Dance (included)

23:00 Arrive back at hotel and retire.

Overnight 3-star hotel accommodation, Kokopo (to be confirmed)

DAY 4: FRI 19 JULY 2013

RABAUL / KAVIENG

06:30 Breakfast

07:00 We transfer to the third day of the National Mask Festival.

12:00 We depart from the festival grounds and drive back to the hotel for lunch and check-out.

15:00 Check in at Rabaul airport.

17:20 Air Niugini flight PX274 departs Rabaul for Kavieng (aircraft: Fokker F100 jet with 98 seats)

17:55 On arrival in Kavieng after the short flight from Rabaul we are met by our hotel shuttle bus and transfer to our accommodation.

Overnight Malagan Beach Resort, Kavieng (3 star, room only, pay as you go for meals). The menu here is extensive and the local seafood dishes are very good.

DAY 5: SAT 20 JULY 2013

KAVIENG (leisure day)

Today is a flexi day to relax and enjoy some leisure activities around the quiet South Sea town of Kavieng. The group will split up so that you can move around independently if you wish:

- sit on the lovely beach at the resort, or have a swim in the warm sea water
- enjoy leisurely drinks at the beach-side bar with the best view in PNG
- take a walk along the waterfront to the Kavieng market and return via the town shops and Chinatown
- ride hire-bicycles out past the airport and down the first few kilometres of the Buluminski Highway
- paddle hire-kayaks or canoes (if available) on the calm waters of the harbour

near the resort

Overnight Malagan Beach Resort, Kavieng (3 star, room only, pay as you go for meals)

NB If the Malagan Culture Show happens to take place this weekend our tour itinerary may be modified to include some of the Show program.

DAY 6: SUN 21 JULY 2013

KAVIENG (Lissenung Island and Kavieng Lagoon day trip)

08:00 After breakfast we board an open motor boat for a 30-minute ride to Lissenung Island, one of the jewels of Kavieng Lagoon. The house reef here is excellent for snorkelling and the whole morning is available for you to launch yourself off the white sandy beach into the turquoise waters over the colourful reef which lies in shallow waters easy to snorkel. Snorkelling gear is supplied. Kayaks are also available here.

If you are not a water-baby, take a self-guided walk around the island - it only takes an hour - and enjoy the mangrove ecosystem and birds that have been left undisturbed by the developers of the small resort that occupies Lissenung. A wide variety of plant and animal life inhabits this tiny island.

12:30 Lunch at the Lissenung Island Resort's open air dining room with sand floor. Freshly caught fish is of course the main dish on the menu.

14:00 After lunch we board our open motor boat again and continue our exploration of Kavieng's giant harbour lagoon, stopping at one of the uninhabited desert isles for another swim and beachcomb, trailing a trolling line behind our boat to see if we can catch a few mackerel for dinner, and exploring some of the war relics on Nusa Lik island which includes some Big Guns left behind by the Japanese and a couple of wrecks lying in clear shallows which can easily be seen from our boat.

Overnight Malagan Beach Resort, Kavieng (3 star, room only, pay as you go for meals)

DAY 7: MON 22 JULY 2013

KAVIENG / TSOI ISLAND

08:00 After breakfast we check out of our accommodation although extra bags can be stored at reception during the two nights we will be at Tsoi Island.

Boarding our motor boat we head towards New Hanover Island, or more specifically the chain of East Islands off the eastern coast of New Hanover. On picturesque Tsoi Island is the Mansava Adventure Lodge discovered by only a small number of visitors each year. The guesthouse is built from bush materials with 5 rooms, a verandah and a dining area. The Lodge is perfect for swimming, snorkelling, canoeing and fishing. Our hosts Boston and Helen cook delicious local food and arrange visits to the nearby villages.

On arrival today we have a big local-style lunch at the lodge then head for the nearby village to experience a local style sing-sing and learn something of the New Hanover culture which is practised by the East Islanders, including a display of traditional costumes, body decorations, masks and handicrafts.

After some time on the beach in the cool of the late afternoon we will settle in to the guest house and get used to the hum of the generator which will power lights and fans through the evening.

Overnight 1.5 star accommodation at Mansava Adventure Lodge, Tsoi Island (or the equivalent Tsoilik Lagoon Guesthouse if Mansava is unavailable)

DAY 8: TUE 23 JULY 2013

TSOI ISLAND / KAVIENG

Today we enjoy a full day on Tsoi Island Magnificent coral reefs surround this island and high quality snorkelling, fishing and canoeing is available, as well as freedom of the island for enjoying beach walks and rainforest hikes on this beautiful tropical island.

So many things to do and only 12 hours of daylight!

Overnight 1.5 star accommodation at Mansava Adventure Lodge, Tsoi Island

DAY 9: WED 24 JULY 2013

KAVIENG / PORT MORESBY

After a full morning of activities and lunch at Tsoi Island Mid afternoon, we depart Tsoi Island for the 2 hour return boat trip to Kavieng.

The boat will deliver us right onto the beach in front of Malagan Beach Resort.

Overnight Malagan Beach Resort, Kavieng (3 star, room only, pay as you go for meals)

DAY 10: THU 25 JULY 2013

KAVIENG / PORT MORESBY / FLY OUT

04:00 Early breakfast and check-out of your accommodation.

04:45 Shuttle bus departs for Kavieng airport.

06:00 Air Niugini flight PX275 departs Kavieng for Port Moresby via Rabaul (aircraft: Fokker F100 jet with 98 seats)

08:25 On arrival at Port Moresby airport connect with flight PX98 to Cairns departing 09:35 OR take a complimentary half day tour of Port Moresby city with our guide and fly out to Singapore, Brisbane or Cairns on an afternoon flight.

Lunch (pay as you go) is available at the Airport Café in the international terminal or the nearby Foodworld cafeteria.

Tour ends.