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Tropicair

Chairman's Message



Welcome aboard.

Air Niugini like many other national flag carriers is an icon in Papua New Guinea and aspires to meet its "shareholder's" vision in the development of profitable routes as well as spreading its wings to ensure part of the government's aims in bringing tourism, investment and trade initiatives into or from PNG are thoroughly explored.

Air Niugini's aspiration to fly to Nadi was finally realised on the morning of 23rd March 2007 when the first special inaugural flight took off from Port Jackson's Airport.

The initiative to extend our service to Nadi is in keeping with our plans to link the Pacific to Asia more directly, as well as provide better access for the American markets via Nadi to Papua New Guinea and vice versa.

The scheduling of flights has been carefully planned to provide excellent connections to and from Air Niugini's services to Singapore and Tokyo flights in both directions with Port Moresby as the hub.

We are also confident the services to Nadi via Honiara will offer a range of opportunities for tourism to Papua New Guinea and business and leisure travel to Fiji.

Air Niugini is now in a strong financial position to focus on the longer term strategic issues including expansion of services into the Pacific and other Asian markets. This naturally means that the airline is reviewing its fleet capacity to meet the demands and grow the markets to the benefit of its shareholders and stakeholders involved.

Currently, the refueling programme is on track with the addition of two F100 aircraft. There are now five F100 aircraft in the fleet. The introduction of the Dash8-Q300 series is also part of the national airline's aim to operate more modern aircraft that will provide Air Niugini much needed flexibility to service all our domestic and international sector with confidence.

Powered by two powerful Pratt and Whitney PW123E engines that turn out 2,500 horsepower and a cruising speed of 286kt at 25,000ft, the Dash8-Q300 aircraft is the most modern turboprop aircraft in PNG and was selected to meet the airline's domestic requirements.

Our passengers will find the 50-seat class aircraft with a spacious and very quiet cabin, which has been made possible by the superlative Noise and Vibration Suppression (NVS) system. The cabin also provides comfortable four abreast seating. We are confident that the Dash8-Q300 is a sophisticated, modern aircraft offering the ideal combination of economy, efficiency, performance and passenger appeal and we are proud to introduce the aircraft to the airline's operation. There are now six Dash 8 aircraft in the fleet.

In this issue of Paradise, you will enjoy reading about the discovery of exciting new orchid species in the pristine rainforests of the Kikori region, surrounding Lake Kutubu in the South Highlands. As a matter of interest, the world's largest orchid is also found in the Kikori region. Also in this issue, we take you to the destinations of Singapore and Fiji where Air Niugini flies and give you a taste of the adventures awaiting you in Papua New Guinea.

Enjoy your flight with the airline that knows Papua New Guinea.

J. Tjoeng CBE

Chairman



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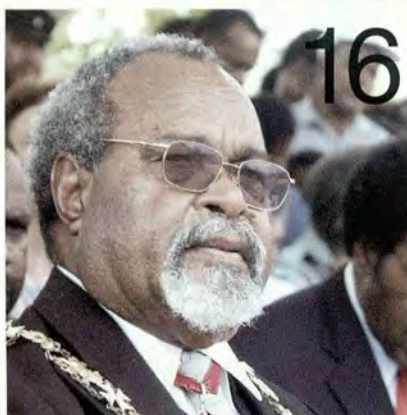
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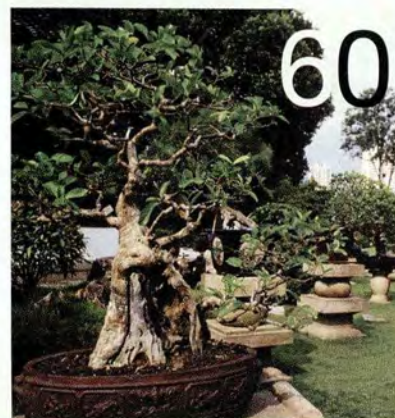
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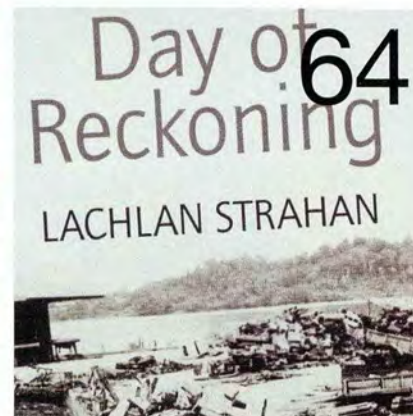
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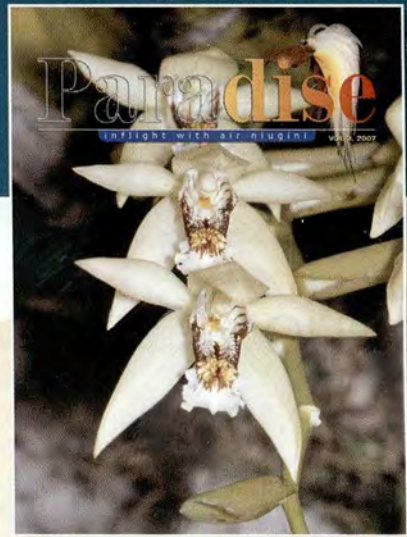
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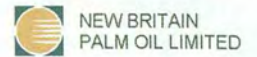
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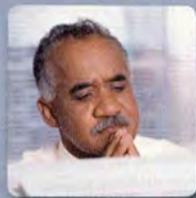
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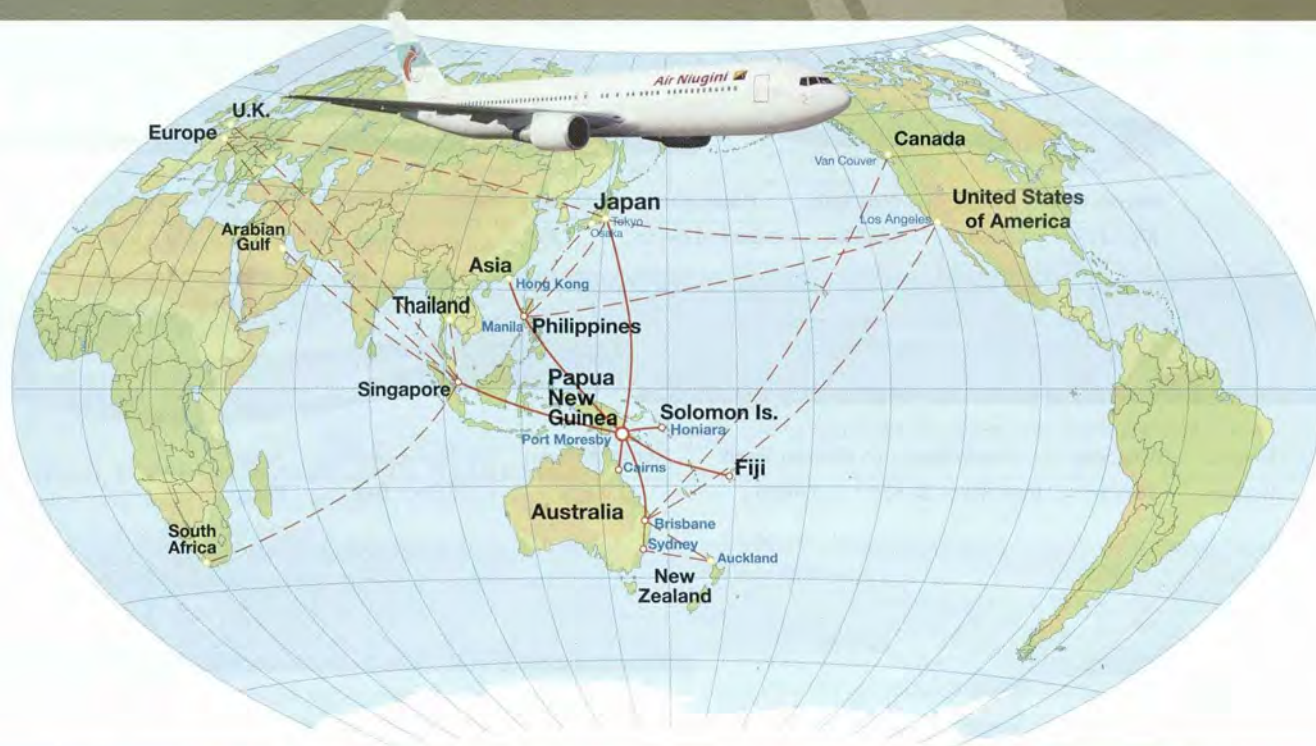
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Air Niugini

Air Niugini Fleet

Nobody Knows Papua New Guinea like Air Niugini!



B767-319ER

Aircraft type	Length	Wing Span	Power Plant	Cruising Speed	Normal Altitude	Std Seating capacity	Range*
B767-319ER	59.94m	47.57m	2 General Electric	857kph	11,000 -12,000m	230 + bags	8100km

F100



Aircraft type	Length	Wing Span	Power Plant	Cruising Speed	Normal Altitude	Std Seating capacity	Range*
F100	35.528m	28.076m	2 Rolls Royce Tay 650	780kph	11,000m	98 Pax + Bags	3000km



F28-4000

Aircraft type	Length	Wing Span	Power Plant	Cruising Speed	Normal Altitude	Std Seating capacity	Range*
F28-4000	29.61m	25.07m	2 Rolls Royce	750kph	9,000m	74 + bags	1600km

DHC-8-202



Aircraft type	Length	Wing Span	Power Plant	Cruising Speed	Normal Altitude	Std Seating capacity	Range*
DHC-8-202	22.25m	25.89m	2 Pratt & Whitney	550kph	7600m	36 Pax + Bags	1700km

Welcome Aboard

We ask that you acquaint yourself with the following features of our service...

Takeoff and landing

Ensure that your seat is in the upright position during takeoff and landing. Folding tables must be returned to their original position in the seat back or the armrest.

Safety first

Your seatbelt must be securely fastened during takeoff and landing or whenever the seatbelt sign is on. When the seatbelt sign is off you may move about the cabin as necessary. However, while seated, keep your seatbelt fastened securely in case of unexpected turbulence.

Smoking

Smoking is not permitted on any Air Niugini flight.

Before you leave

Please check your seat pocket before you disembark to ensure you have not left any items of value.

Entertainment

A movie and a selection of music including classical, modern, country and local are available on international services. Programmes can be found in the inflight entertainment section of this magazine.

Hand luggage

Please ensure that your luggage is placed in the overhead locker or under the seat in front of you.

Pillows and blankets

On international flights, pillows and blankets are available on request from cabin attendants.

Children and babies

Our flight attendants will provide a Paradise Kit that includes a colouring book and pencils, games and puzzles. The flight attendants will also be pleased to assist in preparing your baby's food and bottle. Baby food and diapers are available on international flights.

Electronic equipment

Cellular telephones, TV receivers or radio controlled devices are not to be used at any time on board an aircraft. Electronic devices such as portable computers, compact discs or cassette players and video games can be used only when the seatbelt sign is switched off.



Air Niugini

Medical information

In Flight Health Tips and Exercises

Your Health In-Flight

At Air Niugini we care about your comfort and safety. We have included the following information about your health in-flight that we hope you will find helpful and useful. When you are flying you can be seated and inactive for long periods of time. The environment can be low in humidity and pressurised up to an altitude of 2240 metres above sea level. Unlike other forms of transportation, air travel allows for rapid movement across many time zones, causing a disruption to the body's "biological clock". Although these unique factors do not pose a health or safety threat to most passengers, there are guidelines you can follow that will improve your comfort level, during and after a flight. We hope the following recommendations will help you have a more pleasant flight today and in the future.

Blood Circulation/Muscle Relaxation

When you're sitting upright in a stationary position for a long period of time, several things can happen:

- The central blood vessels in your legs can be compressed, making it more difficult for the blood to get back to your heart.
- The long inactivity of your body muscles in this position can result in muscle tension, back aches or a feeling of excessive fatigue during, or even after, your flight.
- A stationary position inhibits the normal body mechanism for returning fluid to your heart, and gravity can cause the fluid to collect in your feet. This results in swollen feet after a long flight.
- Studies have concluded that prolonged immobility may be a risk factor in the formation of clots in the legs (DVT - deep vein thrombosis). Particular medication and medical conditions may increase the risk of formation of clots if associated with prolonged immobility. Medical research indicates that factors which may give you an increased risk of blood clots in the legs include:
 - Increasing age above 40 years
 - Pregnancy
 - Former or current malignant disease
 - Blood disorders leading to increased clotting tendency
 - Personal or family history of DVT
 - Recent major surgery or injury, especially to lower limbs or abdomen
 - Oestrogen hormone therapy, including oral contraceptives
 - Immobilisation for a day or more

- Dehydration
- Heart failure
- Trauma
- Varicose veins
- Obesity
- Tobacco smoking

Recommendations:

- If you fall into any of these categories or you have any concern about your health and flying, Air Niugini recommends you seek medical advice before travelling.
- While in flight, move your legs and feet for three to four minutes per hour while seated and move about the cabin occasionally, if conditions allow.
- Doing light exercises as depicted in the sketches below may be effective in increasing the body's blood circulation and massaging the muscles.

Jetlag

The main cause of jetlag is travelling to different time zones without giving the body a chance to adjust to new night-day cycles. In general, the more time zones you cross during your flight, the more your biological clock is disturbed. The common symptoms are sleeplessness, tiredness, loss of appetite or appetite at odd hours.

We recommend that you:

- Get a good night's rest before your flight.
- Arrive at your destination a day or two early, if possible, to give your body a chance to become more acclimatised to the new time zone.
- Fly direct to minimise flight time, when possible. This allows you to relax more upon arrival.
- Leave your watch on home time if you're staying at your destination less than 48 hours. Also try to eat and sleep according to your home time.
- Change your watch to the local time if your stay is longer than 48 hours, and try to eat and sleep in accordance with the local time.

On longer stays, try to prepare in advance for your destination with its different time zone; adjust your meal and rest times to be closer to those of your destination.

In Flight Workout

These exercises are designed to encourage a safe way to enjoy movement and stretch certain muscle groups that can become stiff as a result of long periods sitting. They may be effective in increasing the body's blood circulation and massaging the muscles. We recommend you do these exercises for three or four minutes every hour and occasionally get out of your seat and walk down the aisles if conditions allow. Each exercise should be done with minimal disturbance to other passengers. None of the following should be performed if they cause pain or cannot be done with ease.

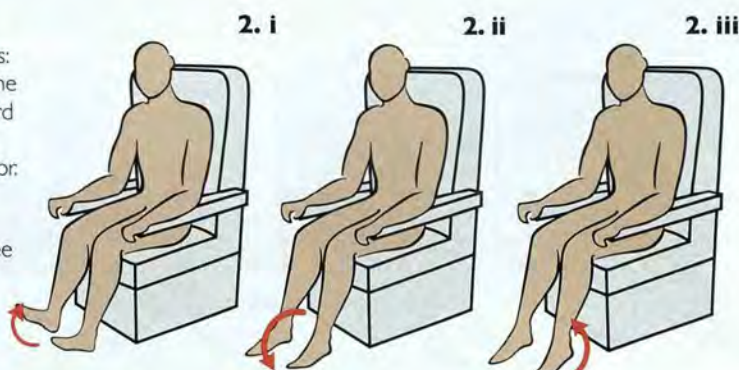
1. Ankle Circles

Lift feet off the floor. Draw a circle with the toes, simultaneously moving one foot clockwise and the other foot counter clockwise. Reverse circles. Do each direction for 15 seconds. Repeat if desired.



2. Foot Pumps

This exercise is in three stages:
(i) Start with both heels on the floor and point feet upward as high as you can.
(ii) Put both feet flat on the floor.
(iii) Lift heels high, keeping balls of feet on the floor. Continue these three stages with continuous motion at 30-second intervals.



Medical information

In Flight Health Tips and Exercises

- Try some light exercise - go for a brisk walk, or do some reading if you can't sleep after arrival at your destination. It generally takes the body's biological clock approximately one day to adjust per time zone crossed.

Cabin Humidity/Dehydration

Humidity levels of less than 25 percent are common in the cabin. This is due to the extremely low humidity levels of outside air supplied to the cabin. The low humidity can cause drying of the nose, throat, eyes and it can irritate contact lens wearers.

We recommend that you:

- Drink water or juices frequently during the flight
- Drink coffee, tea and alcohol in moderation. These drinks act as diuretics, increasing the body's dehydration.
- Remove contact lenses and wear glasses if your eyes are irritated.
- Use a skin moisturiser to refresh the skin.

Eating and Drinking

Proper eating and drinking will enhance your comfort both during and after your flight.

We recommend that you:

- Avoid overeating just prior to and during the flight. It is difficult to digest too much food when the body is inactive.
- Drink coffee, tea and alcohol in moderation. These drinks act as diuretics, increasing the body's dehydration.

Cabin Pressurisation

It is necessary to pressurise the outside air drawn into the cabin to a sufficient density for your comfort and health. Cabins are pressurised to a maximum cabin altitude of 2440 metres. It is the same air pressure as if you were at an elevation of 2440 metres above sea level. The cabin pressure and normal rates of change in cabin pressure during climb and descent do not pose a problem for most passengers. However, if you suffer from upper respiratory or sinus infections, obstructive pulmonary diseases, anaemias or certain cardiovascular conditions, you could experience discomfort. Children and infants might experience some discomfort because of pressure change during climb and descent.

If you are suffering from nasal congestion or allergies, use nasal sprays, decongestants and antihistamines 30 minutes prior to descent to help open up your ear and sinus passages. If you have a cold, flu or hayfever, your sinuses could be impaired. Swollen membranes in your nose could block your eustachian tubes - the tiny channels between your nasal passages and your middle ear chamber. This can cause discomfort during changes in cabin pressure, particularly during descent.

Recommendations:

- If you have a pre-existing medical condition that warrants supplemental oxygen, you can order from us. Please give at least seven days notice before travelling.
- To "clear" your ears try swallowing and/or yawning. These actions help open your eustachian tubes, equalising pressure between your middle ear chamber and your throat.
- When flying with an infant, feed or give your baby a dummy during descent. Sucking and swallowing will help infants equalise the pressure in their ears.

Motion Sickness

This ailment is caused by a conflict between the body's sense of vision and its sense of equilibrium. Air turbulence increases its likelihood because it can cause movement of the fluid in the vestibular apparatus of the inner ear. If you have good visual cues (keeping your eyes fixed on a non-moving object), motion sickness is less likely to occur.

Recommendations:

- When weather is clear and you can see the ground, sea or horizon, you are less susceptible to motion sickness.
- You can buy over the counter medications but we recommend that you consult your doctor about the appropriate medications.

With thanks to Qantas and the Boeing Corporation for allowing us to reproduce this material.

3. Knee Lifts

Lift leg with knee bent while contracting your thigh muscle. Alternate legs. Repeat 20-30 times for each leg.

4. Neck Roll

With shoulders relaxed, drop ear to shoulder and gently roll neck forward and back holding each position about five seconds. Repeat five times.

5. Knee to Chest

Bend forward slightly. Clasp hands around the left knee and hug it to your chest. Hold stretch for 15 seconds. Keeping hands around the knee, slowly let it down. Alternate legs. Repeat 10 times.

6. Forward Flex

With both feet on the floor and stomach held in, slowly bend forward and walk your hands down the front of your legs toward your ankles. Hold stretch for 15 seconds and slowly sit back up.

7. Shoulder Roll

Hunch shoulders forward, then upward, then backward, then downward, using a gentle circular motion.



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PNG

BACK ON TRACK

*As Papua New Guinea heads towards its eighth parliament as an independent nation, it is entering uncharted - but mostly calm - economic waters. The government led by Sir Michael Somare is the first to survive an entire five-year parliament. As **ROWAN CALLICK** reports, the economy is in increasingly sound shape - at least at the macro level - and the government appears to have avoided indulging in the usual big spend-up in the months leading up to an election.*

The June election will be the first under a new preferential voting system rather than first past the post. This will place a premium not on attacking opponents but on building alliances with them, so that their supporters' preferences will shift to you at the next round of counting.

Even the biggest black spot - the oil-and-gas-rich Texas of PNG, the Southern Highlands - which imploded in anarchic warfare at the last election, with utes converted into armoured cars for warlord-style candidates - has been brought back under direct control by Port Moresby.

The economic question that still looms largest, is what to do with PNG's immense gas resource. The long discussed gas pipeline from the Southern Highlands across the Coral Sea and down the Queensland, Australia, coast to Brisbane is still stuck on the drawing

board. It appeared to offer PNG its best platform yet for long-term growth.

But a massive blow-out in the cost of the Australian section of the pipeline, as a result of a serious shortage of skilled labour and of the China-driven rise in the costs of most basic materials, led to a crucial customer, AGL, re-thinking its involvement.

The owner of most of the gas, PNG company Oil Search Ltd, says it has sound alternatives which involve adding more value inside PNG.

Petroleum and Gas Minister, Sir Moi Avei, remains optimistic. He has pursued the development of the gas reserves with a persistence and focus probably unrivalled in PNG's political story so far.

The story of PNG as an independent nation began with Sir Michael Somare, the founding prime minister. And more than 30 years later,

the political story is not so different.

Over the last five years, no one has emerged with a compelling case in the broad public perception to replace him.

But every former prime minister except the late Sir Bill Skate is preparing to enter the election campaign. There are new party leaders such as Bart Philemon, the former Finance Minister and Treasurer, who did so much to stabilise the economy under Sir Michael, also set to challenge for the top job after June.

The state of parliament then is impossible to predict - with 80 percent of MPs losing their seats the last time.

Among the former prime ministers contesting from inside parliament will be Sir Mekere Morauta and Paias Wingti, with Sir Julius Chan seeking to regain a seat.



Grand Chief Sir Michael Somare...Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea.

Opposition leader Peter O'Neill from the Southern Highlands has provided a largely responsible and coherent critique of government policies and practice.

But he has failed to topple Sir Michael during the current parliament, but made a strong impact with his critique of the government's new resources holding company, Petromin.

Another former prime minister, Sir Rabbie Namaliu, was shifted from Foreign Minister to Treasurer, a role in which he handed down, last August 1, a mini budget.

This has become something of a tradition in PNG, one which enables those concerned about sound policies to ensure cabinets do not waste windfalls from increased tax and aid receipts that have accumulated since January, before the full Budget can be brought down in early November.

In his speech introducing the 2006 mini budget, Sir Rabbie - now the undisputed leader of the Pangu Party that Sir Michael founded - said economic growth had reached 3.7 percent, faster than the 3.5 percent projected in the budget, chiefly because of higher prices for PNG's main mineral and petroleum exports.

Bank of PNG governor, Wilson Kamit forecast early in 2007 that the pace of economic growth would increase again in 2007 to 4.5 percent - still not significantly above the country's 2.7 percent population growth, but starting to allow for some real progress in development again.

This would be the fifth consecutive year in which economic growth has outpaced population growth.

Among the immediate rewards of the

government's fiscal discipline for the minority of Papua New Guineans who pay income tax, is that the top rate fell from 47 percent to 45 percent in 2006 and is falling again to 42 percent, handily, in election year.

Formal employment outside mining rose 8.1 percent in the year to March 31 2006 - although Sir Rabbie concedes "we still have a relatively low proportion of the population in formal employment".

This may in part be attributable to the lack of micro-economic development in recent years, resulting in continued criticism from the business sector of the quality and cost of telecommunications and other services.

Inflation, forecast at 4 percent in 2007, is starting to cause modest concern. But interest rates are at historically low levels with high liquidity in the banking system providing a big



Aerial view...Lihir Mine.



Sir Michael...at the Pacific Islands Forum meeting in Nadi in 2006.

incentive for private investment.

Mr Kamit said: "The main risks to price stability are imprudent fiscal management by the government and a loss in public confidence associated with the 2007 national elections."

The other risks for the medium-term outlined by the governor are big fluctuations in exchange rates of PNG's major trading partners, a fall in commodity prices, over-spending by the government for the election and oil price rises.

The balance of payments was in surplus by K1.9 billion for 2006, more than six times the K296 million surplus for 2005. The central bank forecasts a lower surplus for 2007, at K954.5 million.

The kina has recently stayed stable,

appreciating steadily in 2006 against the \$US while depreciating against the \$A.

And foreign exchange reserves reached US\$1.45 billion (K4.4 billion) by the start of 2007, "sufficient to comfortably perform their role of appropriately managing short-term exchange rate volatility," said Sir Rabbie - providing 9.2 months of total import cover.

Crucially, the government's disciplined economic management has enabled substantial amounts of public debt to be repaid, thus allowing more revenue to be used not for paying off interest on such debts, but on development.

At its peak at the end of 2002, said Sir Rabbie, public debt comprised 72 percent of the country's gross domestic product. About a year ago, by March 31 2006, it had been

brought down to 50 percent of GDP - though Sir Rabbie has warned that such debt "is still at a high level".

The tax take for 2006 was about K700 million above the budgeted figure and the non-tax revenue up about K140 million, chiefly from extra earnings from the state's ownership in the Ok Tedi copper mine.

Instead of using this money to repay debt, however, virtually all of it was spent, as Sir Rabbie put it, "on those areas where many years of neglect have seen some of our essential economic and social infrastructure become rundown and no longer operate."

This enabled PNG's previously unfunded Medium-Term Development Strategy to be put into action, and 60 percent of the new spending goes on transport, health and law



Peter O'Neill...Leader of Opposition.

and order - which has kept the MPs happy too.

Their more direct interests were served by an extra K3.7 million being used to replenish the MPs' retirement benefits fund.

Bougainville remains largely peaceful - although it is failing so far to attract the investment it needs in order to secure the jobs and development that will guarantee it will stay that way.

The leaders of the largely autonomous province are still working through the challenging issues involved, before deciding finally whether to open the doors to mining - or to exploration - again.

The Chinese government, which is anxious to secure reliable access to the resources it needs to maintain its own blistering economic



Inspecting a guard of honour at Nadi, Fiji, last year.

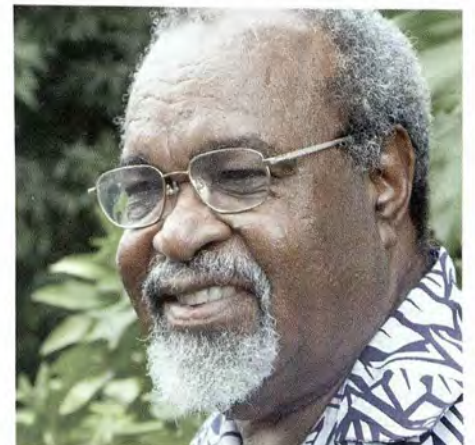
growth, has begun developing its A\$1 billion Ramu nickel mine in the Madang province, though inevitable teething troubles arose as it learns how to operate in a Western-style jurisdiction over how the workers are managed and rewarded.

The W R Carpenters Group, one of the oldest conglomerates in the Pacific, has announced it will spend up to K200 million to expand over the next three years its operations in PNG - where it runs plantations in the Highlands and has bought out the country's leading computer and internet company, Daltron, from founder Bruce Dahlenburg.

And the government announced at the Australia Papua New Guinea Business Forum in Cairns a new agricultural policy with US\$26 million to be spent every year for 10 years, with the focus on improving production

techniques and developing export markets.

There's still a long way to go before PNG meets its early expectations. But overall, as a nation, it is back on track.



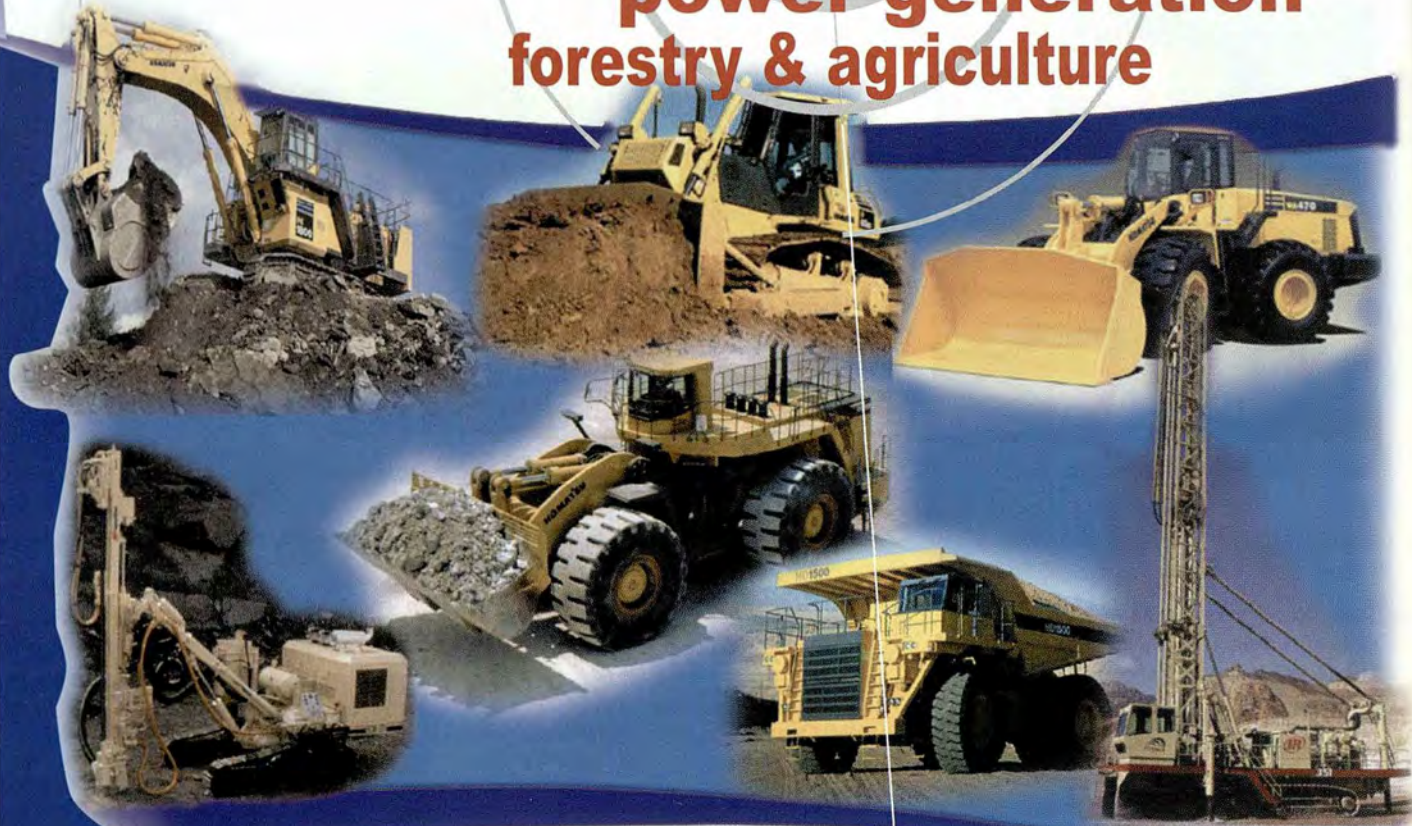
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Natives believe that magic controls everything in the Trobriand Islands' 120 coral atolls sprinkled in the remote Solomon Sea. **TONY KARACSONYI** falls under their spell.



The Trobriands were named after Denis de Trobriand, an officer with the French d'Entrecasteaux expedition which explored the islands in the early 1790s. I was lucky to join a scuba diving expedition to the Trobriands and the culture and diving in these enchanted isles surpassed my wildest expectations.

The Trobriands is home to a unique people made famous by Polish anthropologist, Bronislaw Malinowski, who in 1914, took part in an expedition to New Guinea and Melanesia, spending four years studying the Trobriand Islanders.

He wrote the books: *Coral Gardens and their Magic* (1935), *The Sexual Lives of Savages and Argonauts of the South Pacific*.

Their rich, distinct culture sets them apart from other islanders in the region. It was the promise of superb coral reef diving and a chance to meet the Trobrianders that drew me to these islands, off Papua New Guinea. My adventure started at Madang.



KAILEUNA ISLAND

Kaileuna Island was our first deep wall dive, where we saw lots of yellow-margin trigger fish building nests. I was mighty glad they weren't the titan species as with so many around I had visions of being bitten to pieces.

The titan triggerfish are quite aggressive during nesting time. Other tropical fishes we saw were fire gobies, teira batfish, blue-band gobies, male striped boxfish, yellowtail coris, whaler sharks, sleeping nurse sharks, dogtooth tuna, eagle rays and blue-fin trevally.

KITAVA ISLAND

At Kitava Island, we enjoyed a 30-metre wall dive in lovely 30-metre visibility. Dozens of enormous sea fans decorated with vividly coloured featherstars made for excellent wide

angle photography. We found some very unusual starfish whose surface looked like bubble wrap. Chunky dogtooth tuna, Spanish mackerel and a few barracuda topped off this dive nicely.

We later enjoyed a beachside barbecue on the tiny island of Nuratu, close to Kitava, where a flotilla of Trobrianders paddled across by canoe and armed with ghetto-blasters put on an exciting dance night.

At Kaibola, Trobrianders swarmed around, offering exquisite carvings and, at Kitava, we were treated to a dance by the community school kids. Walking through the hibiscus-lined villages, we ended up at the chief's yam house, a sacred place where huge yam tubers are kept.

The Trobrianders are excellent farmers and most of their time is spent growing yams,

which is their staple food. Yams symbolise power and wealth and some Trobrianders grow them to four metres long, so big that they have to be strapped to timber planks and carried by several men.

A yam harvest festival is held each year, a celebration of growth and fertility. It's this festival that largely earned the Trobriands the somewhat unwanted reputation as the 'Islands of Love'. The festival reflects the abundance and fertility of a successful yam harvest.

At Malai, in the Siassi Islands, stilt houses were decorated with chambered nautilus shells and fishing nets. A pet hornbill hopped about the village chasing a young boy who looked terrified at its great bill. The bird was almost as big as the child.

We enjoyed a deep wall dive with coronation trout, a Chinese footballer, hordes of three-



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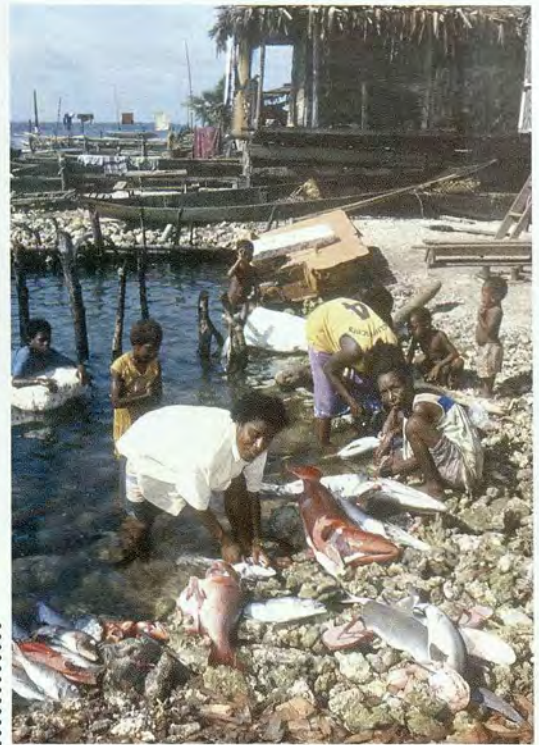

spot butterfly fish, unicorn fish and the grand-daddy of green sea turtles.

Big hump-headed maori wrasse fossicked in the coral. At Aromat Island, the little Hong Kong of the Siassis, a flotilla of canoes and kids paddling out on chunks of foam greet us. Pigs wandered freely in the village and fishermen cleaned their bright orange coral trout catch.

Our travelling friend Sergio sang the classic Italian song, Marina Marina, to the islanders. Everyone, especially the children, followed him around like kids after the pied piper.

The mysterious d'Entrecasteaux Islands, lying off the south-eastern coast of Papua New Guinea, are riddled with extinct volcanoes.

Hot springs splutter and spew boiling water several metres into the air. The



mountainous islands are like French Polynesia, rising 2255 metres into the sky. The people who live there are wild, like the islands. Even Jacques Cousteau mounted an expedition to this area!

The d'Entrecasteaux Islands were named by French admiral and explorer Antoine de Bruni, chevalier d'Entrecasteaux. D'Entrecasteaux discovered and explored the islands in the early 1790s while searching for the missing Comte de la Perouse, who had last reported from Botany Bay in 1788.

The d'Entrecasteaux group of islands contains Goodenough, Fergusson, Dobu and Normanby Islands. The channels in between are bathed in nutrient-rich waters giving life to coral reefs and thousands of dainty tropical fish called anthias.

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sharply from the sea. We dived at a reef where thousands of colourful anthias swarmed and a sea turtle rested nonchalantly on delicate corals. At Nabwegeta Island, famous for its upside down pottery, we checked out a big kula canoe with decorated splash-boards and woven sails.

With high sides for sea voyages, they're reinforced and painted with murals. It takes several people to heave these huge outriggers ashore while chanting magic.

Kula is a traditional exchange route, which involves the passing of shell ornaments, armbands and necklaces round a circle of

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islands known as the 'Kula Ring'. In the past, Kula chiefs sailed for months in these highly decorated canoes, navigating by the stars to exchange the prized items.

At Fergusson Island, hot volcanic vents spewed boiling water several metres into the air. Standing on the edge, I was one step away from being boiled. Sweating, the sulphuric odour made breathing hard. We searched for bones as the islanders, in the past, used to boil their victims in these very pools.

Through the steam flew a pair of vibrant eclectus parrots and later we saw a large

black bird of paradise, manucodia chalybata, flying with a weird bobbing action of its tail. The grandeur of these islands is matched only by the intense marine life.

On a dive near Goodenough Island, thousands of crimson anthias swarmed over the pristine coral heads. Virtually every Papua New Guinean fish species weaved, ducked and dived like aquatic butterflies.

The walls of the reefs were adorned in huge sponges, sea fans, and enormous purple vase sponges on which tiny sponge gobies lay. Surfacing into flat, sheltered waters

surrounded by steep jungle clad islands, I felt like I was in 'diver heaven'.

The area's richness is thanks to the tidal currents, which push the deep ocean water back and forth, at either end of the major channels between the islands. This carries plankton for the corals and hordes of fish.

At Fergusson Island, we walked to the Budoya Mission, where we were given a warm welcome by the children, who took great pleasure in trying on my sunglasses. "Hey man. That's really cool", we touted to the kids, who had a great big smile on their brown faces. These are things I've grown to love about Papua New Guinea, the friendly, smiling faces, breathtaking scenery and superb diving.

Observation Point is a special place to see bizarre marine life. Many fascinating





discoveries have been recorded here. Some of the rare and unusual animals found are striped octopus, flamboyant cuttlefish, ghost pipefish, flying gurnards, razorfish, spiky devilfish and silver moonfish.

A rich and unusual dive spot is at Normanby Island near the Bunama Mission Station.

The seagrass beds around Normanby are home to a wonderful biodiversity of marine creatures, such as double-ended pipefish, seahorses, frogfish, squid and venus-comb murex shells. It's a great night dive with unusual marine animals scuttling around.

With a combination of pristine coral scuba diving and unique cultural experiences, I can highly recommend a dive trip exploring the Trobriands and d'Entrecasteaux Islands.



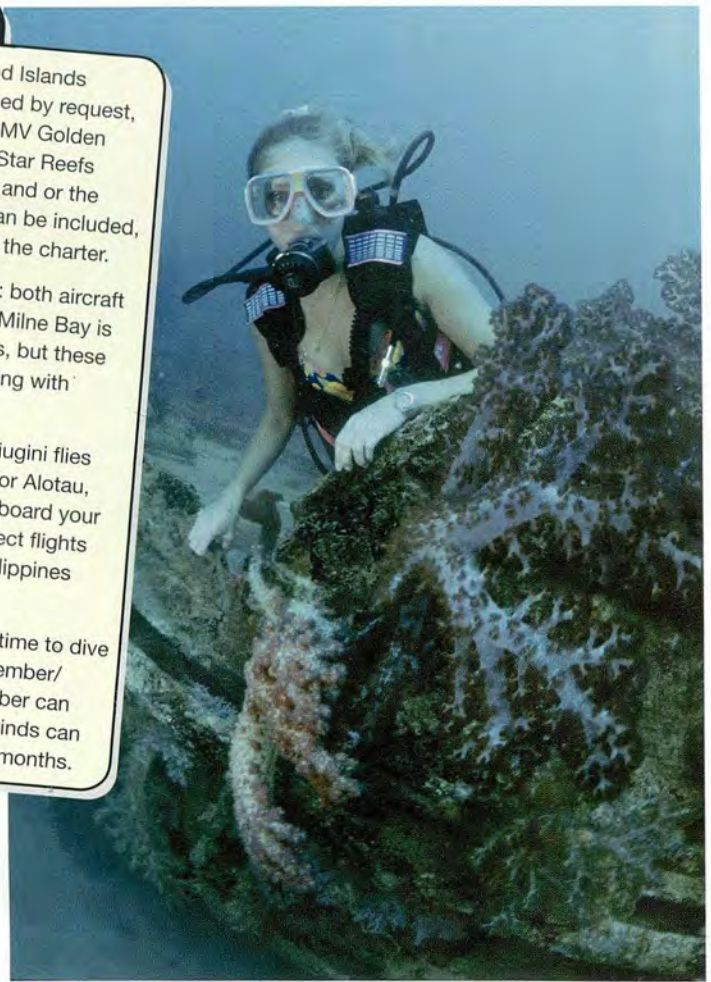
FACT FILE

HOW TO BOOK Trobriand Islands expeditions can be arranged by request, on the diving liveaboards: MV Golden Dawn, and MV Telita. The Star Reefs adjacent of Tufi Peninsular and or the d'Entrecasteaux Islands, can be included, depending on the length of the charter.

Some historic WWII wrecks: both aircraft and ship, are in this region. Milne Bay is famous for its marine critters, but these outer reef systems are teeming with pelagic marine life.

HOW TO GET THERE Air Niugini flies via Port Moresby to Madang or Alotau, depending on where you will board your liveaboard. Air Niugini has direct flights from Australia, Singapore, Philippines (Manila) and Hong Kong.

BEST TIME TO GO The best time to dive the Trobriand Islands is in November/December and April/May. October can be good in some years. Tradewinds can adversely affect diving in other months.



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Kokoda Trail Map – Poster Size (800 x 300mm)

This impressive wall map of the Kokoda Trail was developed from wartime sketches held by the Australian War Memorial, data from army survey maps, satellite images and GPS readings. The Australian Army rising sun badge and an image of the Isurava War Memorial are embedded in the mountains. The words etched in the granite pillars of the memorial: "Courage – Mateship – Sacrifice – Endurance" are watermarked in the sky as a solemn reminder of the qualities displayed by our diggers and the "fuzzy-wuzzy" angels during the Kokoda campaign in 1942.

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You can make a contribution to the future of the kids you met along the track by helping with a village school sponsorship of \$20.00 a month or consider a Kokoda Bursary in your name for a PNG student at the Port Moresby Grammar School for \$175.00 per month. For further information on our village school sponsorships and our Kokoda Bursary Program, email charlie.lynn@adventurekokoda.com.au

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BECAUSE I SAID SO



Daphne is a mother whose love knows no bounds...or boundaries. She is the proud mother of three girls, the youngest of whom is the insecure, adorable Millie who when it comes to men, she is a magnet for psychotics. In an effort to find the perfect man for Millie, Daphne places an ad in the online personals and comic mayhem ensues as she continues to do all the wrong things for the right reasons...in the name of love.

Genre: Comedy/Romance

Rated: PG-13

Duration: 91 mins

Cast: Diane Keaton, Mandy Moore, Lauren Graham, Piper Perabo



May

BRIDGE TO TERABITHIA



The story begins with Jess Aarons, a young outsider on a quest to become the fastest kid in his school. But when the new girl in town, Leslie Burke, leaves Jess and everyone else in her dust, Jess's frustration with her ultimately leads to them becoming fast friends.

Genre: Family/Fantasy

Rated: PG

Duration: 95 mins

Cast: Josh Hutchinson, Anna Sophia Robb, Zooey Deschanel, Robert Patrick



June

THE PURSUIT OF HAPPYNESS



Chris Gardner is a bright and talented, but marginally employed salesman. Struggling to make ends meet, Gardner finds himself and his five-year-old son evicted from their San Francisco apartment with nowhere to go. When Gardner lands an internship position at a prestigious stock brokerage firm, he and his son endure many hardships, including living in shelters, in pursuit of his dream for a better life for the two of them.

Genre: Drama

Rated: PG-13

Duration: 117 mins

Cast: Will Smith, Jaden Christopher Syre Smith, Dan Castellaneta, Kurt Fuller



May

MUSIC AND LYRICS



The romantic comedy MUSIC & LYRICS follows Alex Fletcher, a washed-up 80s pop star who's been reduced to working the nostalgia circuit at county fairs and amusement parks. The charismatic and talented musician gets a chance at a comeback when reigning diva Cora Corman invites him to write and record a duet with her. But there's a problem – Alex hasn't written a song in years, he's never written lyrics and he has to come up with a hit in a matter of days. Enter Sophie Fisher, Alex's beguilingly quirky plant lady, whose flair for words strikes a chord with the struggling songwriter.

Genre: Comedy/Romance

Rated: PG-13

Duration: 96 mins

Cast: Hugh Grant, Drew Barrymore, Brad Garrett



June

FREEDOM WRITERS



Based on a true story of Erin Gruwell, this feel good drama tells how a dedicated California teacher finds a way to unify her disadvantaged, racially divided students, and to improve their grasp of academics, partly by having them keep journals about their violent, troubled lives.

Genre: *Drama*

Rated: *PG-13*

Duration: *123 mins*

Cast: *Hilary Swank, Patrick Dempsey, John Benjamin Hickey, Kristin Herrera*



May/June

CATCH AND RELEASE



After the death of her fiancé, Gray Wheeler finds comfort in the company of his friend's lighthearted and comic Sam, hyper-responsible Dennis, and, oddly enough, his old childhood buddy Fritz, an irresponsible playboy whom she'd previously pegged as one of the least reliable people in the world. As secrets about her supposedly perfect fiancé emerge, Gray comes to see new sides of the man she thought she knew, and at the same time, finds herself drawn to the last man she expected to fall for.

Genre: *Comedy/Drama/Romance*

Rated: *PG-13*

Duration: *112 mins*

Cast: *Jennifer Garner, Timothy Olyphant, Juliette Lewis, Joshua Friessen, Sam Jaeger, Tina Lifford, Fiona Shaw, Kevin Smith*



May/June

THE PAINTED VEIL



Based on the classic novel by Somerset Maugham, *THE PAINTED VEIL* is a love story set in the 1920s that tells the tale of a young English couple, Walter, a middle class doctor and Kitty, an upper-class woman, who gets married for the wrong reasons and relocates to Shanghai, where she falls in love with someone else. When he uncovers her infidelity, in an act of vengeance, he accepts a job in a remote village in China ravaged by a deadly epidemic, and takes her along. Their journey brings meaning to their relationship and gives them purpose in one of the most remote and beautiful places on earth.

Genre: *Drama/Romance*

Rated: *PG-13*

Duration: *124 mins*

Cast: *Naomi Watts, Edward Norton, Live Schreiber, Toby Jones*



May/June

BREAKING AND ENTERING



This ensemble drama about theft, both criminal and emotional, follows ethnically diverse contemporary Londoners interacting in seedy inner-city Kings Cross.

Genre: *Drama*

Rated: *R*

Duration: *118 mins*

Cast: *Jude Law, Juliette Binoche, Robin Wright-Penn, Ray Winstone, Martin Freeman Farminga*



May/June

THE GOOD GERMAN



The Good German takes place in the ruins of post-WWII Berlin, where U.S. Army war correspondent Jake Geismar becomes embroiled with Lena Brandt, a former lover who is trying to escape her past in the aftermath of the war. Intrigue mounts as Jake tries to uncover the secrets Lena may be hiding in her desperation to get out of Berlin.

Genre: *Drama*

Rated: *R*

Duration: *108 mins*

Cast: *George Clooney, Cate Blanchett, Tobey Maguire*



May/June

THE HOLIDAY



After bad bouts of man trouble just before the holidays, Amanda Woods and Iris Simpkins are desperate for a change of scene. Travelling in opposite directions, each finds herself alone in an unfamiliar town, but neither remains a stranger in their new surroundings for long.

Genre: *Romance/Comedy*

Rated: *PG-13*

Duration: *135 mins*

Cast: *Cameron Diaz, Kate Winslet, Jude Law, Jack Black, Eli Wallach, Rufus Sewell, Edward Burns*



May/June

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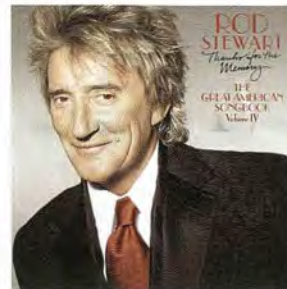
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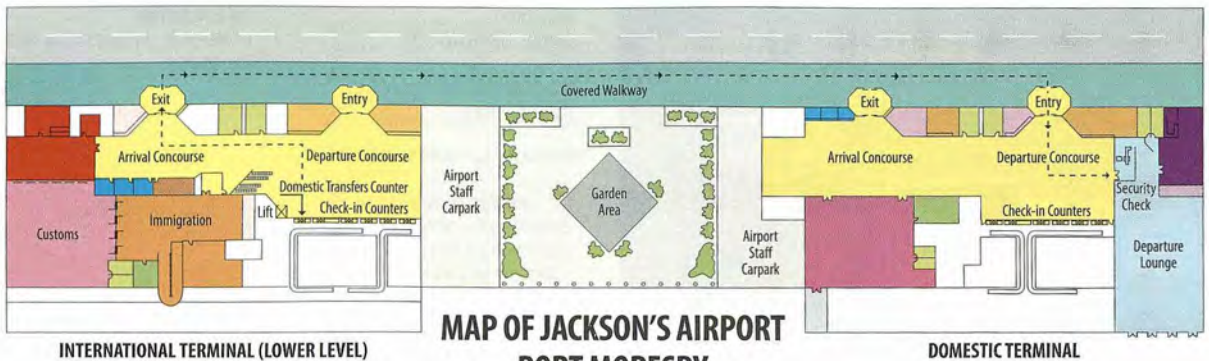


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Air Niugini's special flight to Nadi, Fiji, on Friday 23 March 2007 paved the way for a unique "Melanesian Bridge" across the Pacific.

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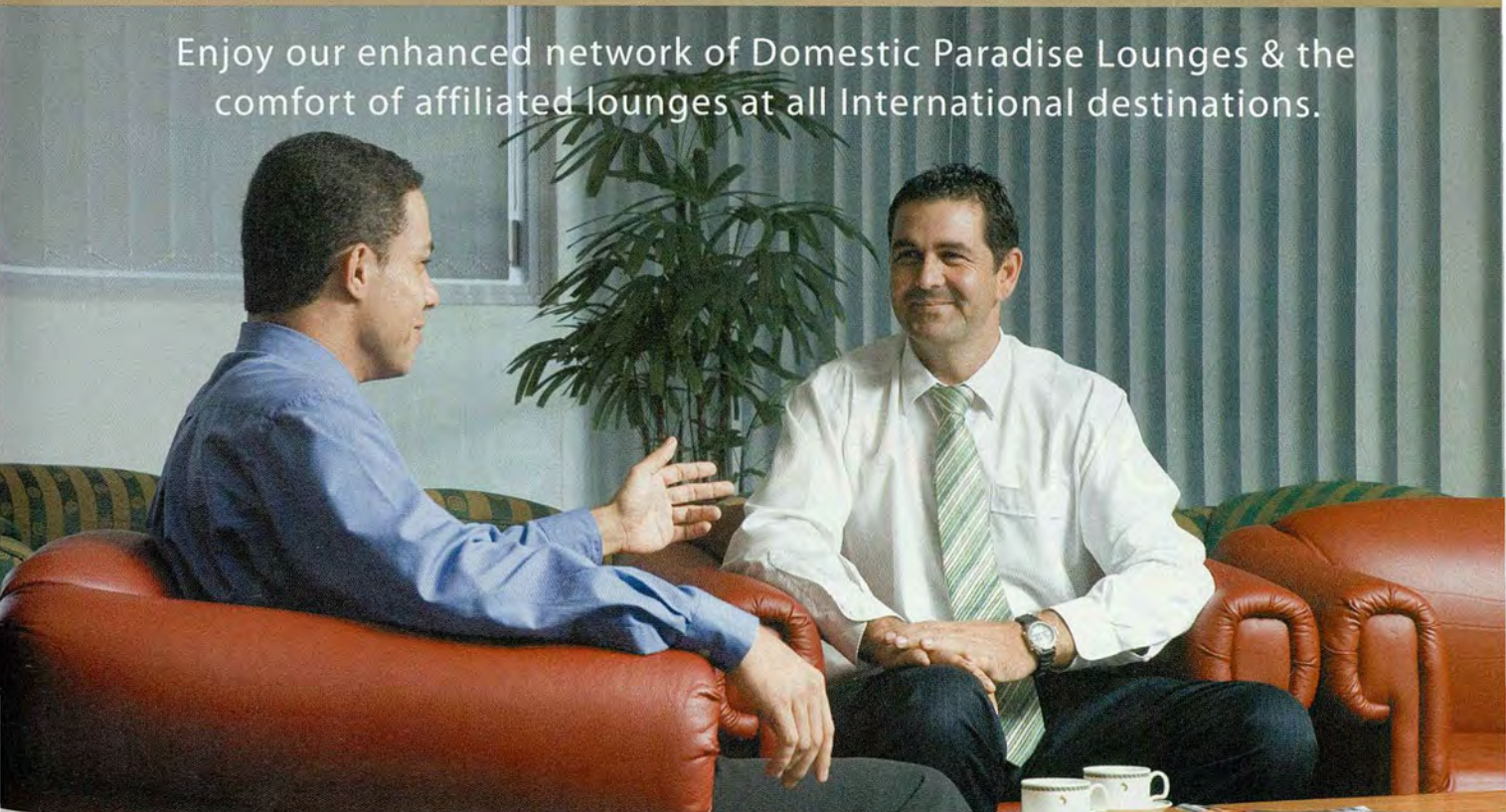
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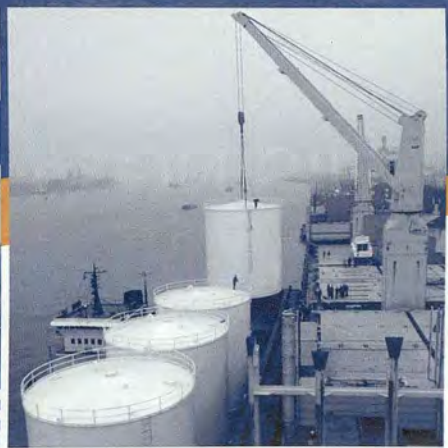
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CRUISING in STYLE with ORION

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WORDS & PHOTOGRAPHY MICHAEL CORBETT

It has been three days since our visit to remote Watam near the mouth of the Sepik, yet many of Orion's guests still spot a daub of vermilion on their left cheek, the now-fading vegetable dye identification that marked a warm welcome by friendly villagers.

We wear our vermilion proudly for, remarkably, we have been part of the first significant group of outsiders to visit Watam village.

Other than the arrival of an occasional missionary or coastal trader, village life continues much as it always has; that is to say with no electricity, telephones, motor vehicles, shops, refrigeration or television.

A place where, for us, it appeared as though

time had stood still, our visit being as much a novelty to the villagers as they were to us.

Muscled bodies glistening with oil, the throb of drums and a display of energetic dancing is a powerful statement to remind us we are there only because they have invited us. Then, suddenly, we are all mingling, welcome friends.

Digital cameras attract groups of inquisitive adults and shy children alike. Photos are taken and in-an-instant results shown.

Shrieks of laughter follow at the sight of friends and family caught on screen. White man's magic. Orion's passengers are taken by the hand and shown (or are free to wander)

around their well maintained village. Exquisite timber carvings are proffered and eagerly bought. The dancing continues unabated.

Back onboard the luxury expedition ship Orion and although the faces of fellow guests are familiar by now (for many are enjoying back-to-back PNG itineraries), this visit to Watam acts as a further bond - one of many shared experiences on this amazing voyage to PNG and nearby Melanesian islands.

No wonder, internationally, there are signs of a resurgence of interest in visiting PNG; a growing awareness that here is a country of extraordinary beauty and diversity, both cultural and geographic.



This interest is especially apparent in Australia where recent promotion has led to a small, but growing influx of tourists.

Actually the word 'tourist' is not an accurate description, for most are more travellers than tourists.

Two groups in particular are especially attracted to PNG - young adventure seekers lured by world class scuba diving and new, unspoilt surfing destinations; while the other group, larger and more affluent, is generally 50 plus years of age.

These are well educated, self-employed or senior managers and self-funded retirees visiting PNG as part of a boom sector of the





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travel industry, expedition cruising, a cruise sub-category that now spans the globe.

The most recent arrival is Orion Expedition Cruises, with Australia's only purpose-built five-star expedition cruise ship, Orion.

Constructed in Germany, launched in late 2003, Orion was custom-designed from the start.

Purpose-built for strength and stability, with design features that include oversized stabilisers, shallow draft and bow/stern thrusters to help her access places larger ships simply could not attempt to reach. Orion is the perfect base for those seeking adventures in this paradise and nearby tropical islands.

Some guests on Orion have ties to World War II through parents or grandparents, others historic trading links. Many are beguiled by the region's mysteries - unlike any other, yet so close to Australia.

The common magnet for all is the first-hand experience - to discover or, in some instances, re-discover the attractions of Australia's closest neighbour.

Already a veteran of the Antarctic, Kimberley and Arnhem Land, Orion returns to PNG and the Solomon Islands again in November 2007 and March 2008 with two extensive itineraries offering engaging experiences that include visits to Alotau, Deboyne Lagoon, Kitava Island, Gizo and Kennedy Islands, Marovo Lagoon, Rabaul, Sepik River, Madang, Tami



Island, Tufi Island, Fergusson Island, Samarai and Kwato Islands.

Scattered islands, dense tropical rainforests and rugged terrain conspire to make PNG difficult to explore yet attractive to visit. There is good news for PNG. Expedition ships such as Orion bring visitors who otherwise would not have come - and the ship, being self-contained, provides much of the transport and accommodation infrastructure that currently does not exist in PNG.

Far from being a one-sided exercise, there have been close relationships developing and on return trips both Orion Expedition Cruises and her guests make a point of providing practical needs wherever possible - writing and drawing paper, pencils, school books, clothing, mosquito nets, even assistance for hospitals and community

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groups.

In some instances the ship's doctor and expedition team hold clinics ashore to assist in assessing medical needs and carrying out health checks. A rewarding experience for Orion's guests and locals as well.

Word-of-mouth combats negative impressions and builds a feeling of positive identity to help raise the profile of PNG. These travellers are learning about the real PNG, becoming strong advocates when they return to their homelands.

Increased interest from other parts of the world beyond Australia will help develop PNG as an end destination in its own right or as a side-trip for visitors to Australia and New Zealand seeking another dimension to their travel experiences. Apart from the benefits of mainstream tourism, these ships are also attractive to commercial markets, especially those companies and corporations seeking a private venue with a difference for meetings or as a unique incentive reward for top achievers.

Is it any wonder then that companies are now looking to expedition cruising as providing a unique venue for corporate meetings, team-building or attractive incentives for top employees? Additional monies benefit PNG at local level through the use of existing infrastructure, notably local transport such as taxis and buses, local dance groups, tour guides, fishing and scuba diving operations

as well as purchases made in markets on artworks and carvings. Even air transport is utilised - for example, Air Niugini transports Orion's guests between Rabaul and Cairns to commence (or return from) a voyage.

Onboard, lecturers form an important and integral part of Orion's expeditions. Each evening we gather to hear a recap of the day's highlights and receive a brief on what to expect tomorrow.

Typically these expedition leaders and lecturers include marine biologists, anthropologists, botanists and historians - onboard specialists and guest presenters who provide in-depth information about aspects of the destinations to help enhance the experience and broaden the mind.

One evening we are told that the following morning Orion will be entering the deep volcanic fjords of Tufi. An early rise is essential. Discussions revolve around who will be doing some game fishing, others have opted to scuba dive and some are walking to Suicide Point.

At dinner that night, we hear exciting tales by guests met by Tufi villagers, imposing in local costume, then transported upstream in traditional dug-out canoes to the village. The photos only tell part of the story. But from the animated conversations over a bottle of wine, it is certain this has been yet another outstanding day to remember in PNG.

FACT FILE

Orion's PNG and Melanesian expeditions:
November, 2007 and March 2008

10-night PNG and Solomon Islands voyages: CAIRNS, Alotau (Milne Bay), Deboyne Lagoon, Kitava Island, Gizo & Kennedy Islands, Marovo lagoon, RABAUL. Fares begin from A\$7,200 per person, twin occupancy, ocean view stateroom.

11-night PNG Highland Cultures voyages: RABAUL, Sepik River, Madang, Tami Island, Tufi Island, Fergusson Island, Samarai & Kwato Islands, Alotau (Milne Bay), CAIRNS Fares begin from A\$7,920 per person, twin occupancy, ocean view stateroom.

• Further information on Orion Expedition Cruises can be obtained by visiting the website www.orioncruises.com.au

For reservations or to obtain a brochure call Orion Expedition Cruises: 61-2 9033 8777 (Sydney callers) 1300 361 012 (regional and interstate) or your travel agent. Email: info@orioncruises.com.au



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FLORAL DELIGHT

More new orchid finds in PNG

WORDS RON TOFT | PHOTOGRAPHY QUEENSLAND HERBARIUM

Just like Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's fictional Lost World, Papua New Guinea is making headlines around the world and setting scientific pulses racing.

Why? Because yet more 'new' orchid species have been discovered in the pristine and biologically breathtaking rainforests of the Kikori region surrounding Lake Kutubu.

At least eight previously unknown orchids were found in July and August 2006 during the latest in a series of WWF expeditions stretching back to 1998.

Another 20 species may also be new to science, although this has yet to be confirmed.

"Previous expeditions have turned up something like 300 orchid species in the Kikori area," said orchid specialist Wayne Harris, of Queensland Herbarium in Toowong, Queensland, "and we estimate that 10 percent of these will turn out to be new to science."

The orchids collected by Harris and other scientists vary enormously in size, shape and colour. "We found tiny orchids whose flowers are only a couple of millimetres in diameter to quite large species with flowers several centimetres across."

Flower colours ranged from white and green to vibrant purples, yellows and oranges.

"The orchids were of all shapes and sizes. Some were very, very small plants just a few centimetres high, while others were giants by comparison."

The world's largest orchid also grows in the Kikori region, and Harris was fortunate enough to spot a specimen growing in the mangroves. "It was taller than a man."

Collecting orchids in dense, primary rainforest is slow, laborious, but immensely rewarding work.

Dendrobium Cuthbertsonii.



Bulbophyllum.



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Coelogyne Asperata.



Cadetia.

Most orchids grow high up in the tree canopy and are normally out of reach, so Harris and his colleagues make a point of looking for branches that have broken off and plummeted to the ground or trees that have become unstable and fallen over.

“Rainforest trees are not deeply rooted and are constantly falling over for one reason or another, especially during the rainy season.

“Some trees, for example, support so many epiphytes - plants that grow on other plants but are not parasitic - that the combined weight of these make them unstable and over they go. Boughs also come tumbling down as a result of being overburdened with epiphytes.”

When Harris and fellow scientists find such trees and branches, “we scamper all over them collecting samples of any orchids we find.”

Also targeted are trees overhanging forest streams. “A few orchid grow on the forest floor, so we look there, too.”

In situ photographs are taken of all orchids collected. It is only later, following detailed laboratory study of the plants and a search of the

Dendrobium Bifalce.



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scientific literature to see if the plants collected match the descriptions of any of those previously described, that botanists are able to state with a high degree of certainty whether a particular kind of orchid is new to science.

More orchid species grow in Papua New Guinea than in any other country. "The whole island of New Guinea is an incredible goldmine of orchids," continued Harris.

"There are over 3,000 known species with countless others undoubtedly waiting to be discovered."

Harris has visited Papua New Guinea seven or eight times during the past decade. Although he has been to other parts of the island, most of his work has been in the Kikori catchment area.

The Kikori area is noted not just for its orchids but also for a wide range of other plants, as well as animals. "On a couple of expeditions, I worked alongside frog, mammal, bat, moth, bird and other specialists," continued Harris.

"Around 23 new frog species were found in an area that no-one had been



Dendrobium Macrophyllum.

Dendrobium Spectabile.



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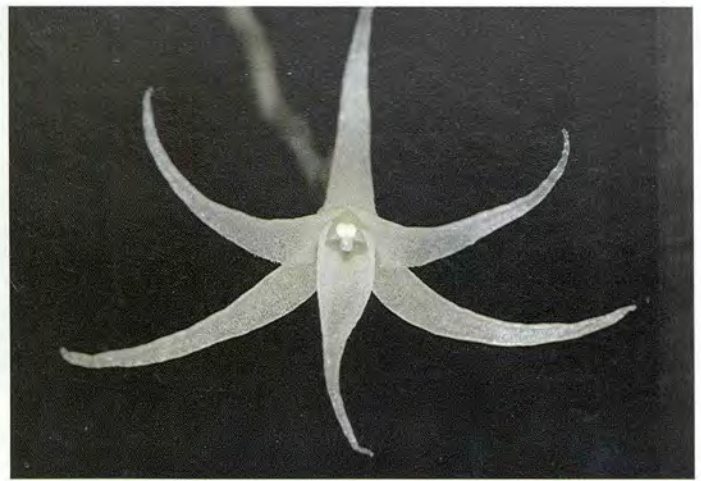
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Spathoglottis Plicat.



Taeniophyllum.

Kikori River to cloud forests at an altitude of 3,000 or so metres.

The high altitude terrain is dominated by heavily weathered limestone karst and volcanic topography with deep, craggy gullies where trees don't grow any taller than three or four metres.

"Moving around in that sort of area is very, very difficult."

WWF and the Kutubu Joint Venture Partnership (a consortium of companies managing oil and gas fields in the Kikori Basin) are jointly working towards the long-term conservation of the Kikori region and the amazing diversity of plants and animals it supports.

More than 20,000 indigenous people in 12 different ethnic groups live in the Kikori region. All rely on the rainforest for their food and raw materials.

"Working with villagers in their own environment is a fantastic

in for 30-odd years."

The Kikori rainforests are home to a wealth of creatures, including birds of paradise, giant cassowaries and tree kangaroos.

The biological richness of the region is due mainly to the range of habitats - everything from mangrove forests in the delta region of the

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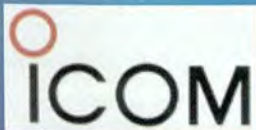
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Trichoglottis Papuana.

experience," said Harris.

English is spoken quite widely - not the Queen's English but a pidgin variety.

"Once I told a couple of young villagers that I wanted to learn their pidgin language, only to be told, 'no, no, no - we want you to talk in English so we can learn it'. Needless to say, I didn't learn much pidgin!"

When Harris first explored the Kikori region, he was "probably surprised" at the number of orchid species he found.

"Nowadays, I am no longer surprised when I visit Papua New Guinea. I expect to find these species - as does, I think, every other scientist who goes there. The biodiversity is almost



Grastidium.

endless. There is so much more to be done in New Guinea generally as far as orchids and other forms of life are concerned."

Harris said that exploring the Kikori region was like opening a Pandora's Box.

"I just can't get up there often enough to find something different and increase my knowledge of what's there."

Not surprisingly, Harris plans to return to Papua New Guinea soon.

"I'm planning a trip to Lake Kutubu in June-July. It's one of the most beautiful places you could ever wish to find. It's a great privilege to be involved in something like this."



Diplocaulobium Mekynosepalum.



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GREEN SINGAPORE

Parks and gardens, sure, but genuine rainforest is what you don't expect to find in Singapore. But it is there in some abundance - in public spaces like Sungei Buloh Wetlands, Labrador Park and MacRitchie Reservoir as Tom Cockrem writes.

In fact, my last two days in Singapore had been nothing but green. And I'm horticulturally inspired.

It was the allure of orchids mainly that drew me to the gardens. Singapore is famous for them. It boasts some 900 species and over 2000 hybrids. They are grown both for the market and the delight of every eye.

The main commercial centre is at Mandai Orchid Garden in the island's centre north. The orchids simply thrive here with spectacular

sprays ballooning out of numerous rows of robust stands.

A highlight is the Vanda Miss Joaquim. It is a hybrid that Miss Agnes Joaquim discovered in her garden back in the late 19th century. This mauve and white beauty has since become the island's National Flower.

If Mandai's patent is profusion, then that of the National Orchid Garden is pure horticultural art. Established within the Botanic Gardens in 1995, it is three hectares of lush orchid-friendly forest



The piece de resistance is the "Tan Hoon Siang Mist House". Here a tropically moist atmosphere is maintained in utter stillness. It spawns some dazzling blooms. Among them is the phalaenopsis hybrid, whose deep pink linear markings would seem to be the work of a graphic artist's hand.

Chilly mountain top climes are likewise reproduced in the recently opened "Cool House". Tropical montane orchids bloom here in profusion and the unacclimatised visitor gets blissfully refreshed with a light cool misty spray.

Endowed with three impressive ornamental lakes, the Botanic Gardens proper cover 52 hectares.

They were established back in 1859, and have since been a favourite with Singapore's nature lovers, early morning joggers and exponents of tai chi.

They serve also as a proving ground for the

many new plant species that are introduced to Singapore from other parts of Asia, as well as Europe and Australia.

A perennial drawcard for Singapore's regular visitors is the resort island of Sentosa. It has the theme park for kids, a fabulous aquarium and plenty of rainforest to explore. And there is the spectacular approach.

This begins at Mount Faber in Singapore's far south. From here you catch a cable car. It swoops dramatically downwards, traversing Keppel Harbour and tiny Brani Island. Mount Faber too has been copiously greened.

The cable car station is set within a verdant garden park. It is draped for some strange reason with strands of artificial autumn leaves. Oh well, we can forgive one aberration!

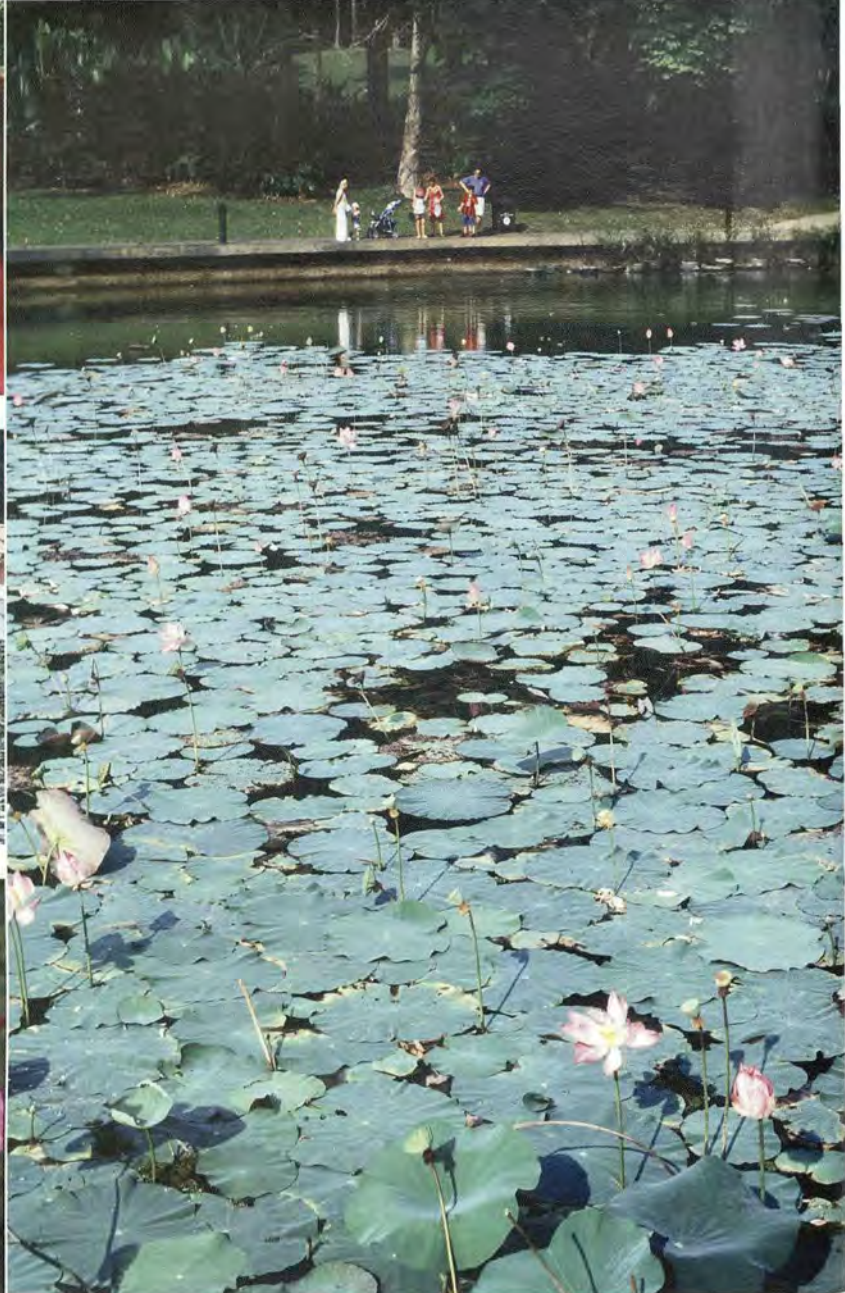
Singaporeans, a taxi driver told me, don't go much to the parks. They don't need to. For there is garden park all around. This may explain why I had the magnificent Chinese

Garden to myself. A little on the kitsch side, some might say, but it's nonetheless a green thumb's delight. It is modelled on a Sung Dynasty imperial garden, complete with a nine-tiered pagoda, open-sided tea pavilions, imperial-style buildings and waterside pagodas. And of these are all fastidiously maintained.

The garden's central lake is spanned by two arched bridges. One of these leads you through palatial Chinese gates to the Suzhou Penjing Garden. Here some 2000 penjing, or "bonsai", are artistically displayed in a series of walled courtyards which interconnect through traditional-style moon-gates and archways.

A soporific retreat most times in the year, the Chinese Garden is shaken rudely from its slumbers in the year's eighth lunar month. Its job then is to host the popular Chinese Lantern Festival. Night time sees the huge novelty-shaped lanterns all perfectly reflected in the still waters of the lake.





The Okavanga Delta in Botswana! You might almost think that's where you have fetched up as you trek the paths and boardwalks of the Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve in Singapore's northwest.

Such is the sensation of wilderness that you get and the profusion of birdlife that's on show - egrets, striated and purple heron, white-breasted water hens and pink-necked pigeons.

The reserve is also home to countless critters of the mangroves - monitor lizards, giant mudskippers, mangrove crabs and lobster crabs among them. And nor has Singapore's rustic human habitats entirely disappeared. They still exist on Pulau Ubin. This is an island that lies in the narrow strait dividing Singapore from the Malay Peninsular.

Most visitors come here to cycle or to hike. There is plenty to explore. "Street Centre" is a Malay-style portside town, with its timeworn

clapboard coffee shops, opera house and temples. And Kampung Melayu is the last authentic rural village in Singapore.

But the main attraction is the forest. It is not exactly primary, but it's big, and does harbour 145 species of birds, a troupe of long-tailed macaques, wild pigs, and the red jungle fowl from which all domesticated chickens are said to have descended.

Singapore's city centrepiece is Fort Canning Hill. It's where the colony's founder, Sir Stamford Raffles, built his first bungalow.

The herb garden he established here still thrives. In fact, the entire hill is akin to a huge Botanical Garden, so elegantly swathed it is in shrubbery and trees.

And it has plenty of old military ruins to explore - relics from the British who had their headquarters here until the 1970s.

Singapore, I concluded, can now rightfully

claim to be "green". The process to make it so was initiated by Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew back in 1967. And it was pursued with customary zeal. The 700 hectares then devoted to parklands have since been expanded to 4000. But that is not all. The ambition to create a true "Garden City" has been realised in full.

Every major highway on the island is now lined with glorious shade trees - yellow and red flame trees, rain trees and mahoganies. Median strips have come to resemble giant nurseries, so overwhelmed they are with potted flowering shrubs and cordylines. Almost every man-made structure - foot-bridge, tunnel entrance and lamp post - has been swathed in flowering vines and bougainvilleas.

Recreational facilities abound. Cycling and jogging tracks have been installed all along the eastern foreshore.

Even busy city streets have been copiously

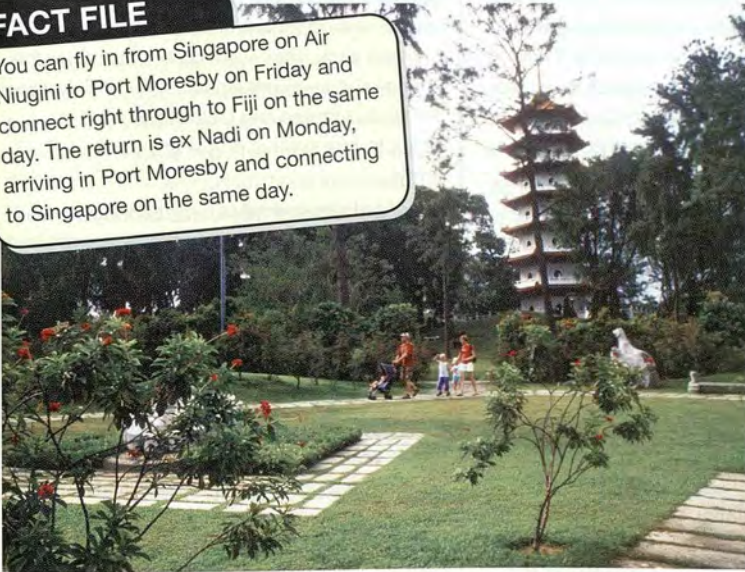
greened. Orchard Road shoppers stroll in the generous shade afforded by the enormous Angsana trees. Palms and ornamentals grace pocket parks and squares throughout the CBD.

I had intended on my three-day stay in Singapore to cover every green space on the island. This, I soon realised, would take the best part of a week. Awaiting me still are the Bukit Timah Nature Reserve (with its 70 hectares of primary growth rainforest), Toa Payoh Park, and Sembawang Park.

A mere two hundred years ago Singapore was just a jungle. What is now the "Lion City" was then the habitat of tigers. The big cats may have gone, but not the climes and soils that spawned their habitat. And it's great to see the island's forests fighting back and ironically expanding with the habitats of man.

FACT FILE

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Day of Reckoning

LACHLAN STRAHAN



Reviewed by Patrick Matbob

The author had picked these seemingly isolated incidents and woven them into an intriguing tale showing how the cases actually affected each other. The same Australian judicial and administrative officials were involved in three of the four cases covered and the account provides an insight into how their decisions were influenced by a host of events beyond their control.

On January 25, 1948, a teenage Manus islander, Pondranei, visited the American military base near his village at Lugos to barter some pineapples for cigarettes.

His customers were a contingent of Chinese and American army workers living at the base. However, things turned nasty for the young boy when four Chinese workers accused him of stealing cigarette. They grabbed him and tied his hands on to the rafters of one of the military Quonset huts and beat him until he lost consciousness. This form of punishment, cruel as it was, was not uncommon in the colonial days and could have gone unnoticed had it been treated differently.

However, the Australian District Officer on Manus was determined to enforce the law and started investigating the incident with the aim to bring to justice the perpetrators. His actions however, sparked a long legal, political and cultural drama that pitted the governments of Australia, United States and China against each other.

Pondranei's case is one of four featured in

a book titled *Day of Reckoning* by Lachlan Strahan and published last year. Three of the four cases happened in the then territory of Papua and New Guinea, while the fourth happened in Dutch New Guinea (West Papua).

Pondranei's case was complicated by the fact that the Chinese people who had beaten him up were labourers employed by the Chinese army. They were on Manus under the Shanghai Agreement signed in 1946 between the United States and China that allowed China to buy surplus property from the US Army.

Manus, in October 1944, was built by the US Army into one of the world's greatest naval bases as a launch pad for MacArthur's reconquest of the Philippines.

However, four years later, the US army had moved on, and the UN had placed PNG under the trusteeship of Australia. On Manus though, Australia's control was still not clearly visible and was enforced by four overworked Government officers and their 10 native policemen at Inrim plantation.

At around the same time, another crime was committed in Lae. This time, several Filipino

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scouts who were members of the US Army and deployed in Lae as part of a US War Graves Registration unit were involved in a scuffle with a group of Australians.

Lae, then a 'hard-drinking, hard-playing frontier town', was celebrating the New Year at the old Hotel Cecil and the Filipino scouts had tried to gain entry to the party. However, the colonial racial rule in the territory did not allow local people and those of other races to mix with the white race and that led to the Filipinos being unceremoniously ejected from the party.

During the scuffle that followed, an Australian miner from the goldfields was injured and later died from complications arising from the injury.

The Australian government officials in Lae tried to investigate the case to punish the culprit - believed to be one of the Filipinos. However, the case became complicated by the nationalities and jurisdictions involved. While it was clear to the Australians that they had the authority to investigate and punish the offender, the Americans believed otherwise.

They argued that the Filipino scouts were members of the American army and therefore subject to the American military court.

The author had picked on these seemingly isolated incidents and woven them into an intriguing tale showing how the cases actually affected each other. The same Australian judicial and administrative officials were

involved in three of the four cases covered and the account provides an insight into how their decisions were influenced by a host of events beyond their control.

Race relationship between Papua New Guineans and their colonising power, Australia, as well as Americans and Asians were also at stake here.

Of the case in Lae, the author wrote: "Scott's death triggered a protracted legal and political imbroglio, which dragged in members of three ethnic groups - Australians, Filipinos and Americans - and generated considerable tensions between Canberra, Manila and Washington. This messy drama was played out before the local Melanesian and Chinese communities."

While the Australians were trying to enforce their control in the territory over foreign wrongdoers, how did they deal with their own?

Lachlan also answers this question in one of the cases involving two Australian government patrol officers - kiaps - and the local people in the Markham Valley. The kiaps abused their powers when, in their capacity as officers of the court, ordered some accused local people appearing before them to be indecently assaulted and to have sex in public.

The dark deeds of the kiaps shocked the administration and raised serious questions about the enormous powers given to kiaps and the quality of men being tasked with the

responsibilities. The Australian authorities had to deal with their own in such a way that showed no bias. Yet they did not find it easy to apply the same law on foreigners accused of committing crimes in the territory. They were continuously frustrated by interference from foreign governments.

Day of Reckoning is a story of historical interest where the past is brought to life in such vivid and powerful narrative and skilfully explores the complexities of international relations.

It weaves together scenes of tough diplomatic negotiations, courtroom sessions and cultural misapprehensions that make for interesting reading.

Many of the characters involved are familiar names in PNG's history - Murray, Ward, Justice Philips, Scragg, Grimshaw, Gunter - and it is interesting to see the roles they played in these little known historical events.

One wonders whether Pondranei's trials are still remembered today by his people on Manus or if the Markham people can recall the dark deeds of the Australian kiaps.

Even if they don't, *Day of Reckoning* has immortalised the characters and their stories and popularised yet another fascinating piece of PNG history.



• *Day of Reckoning* is published by Pandanus Books, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, The Australian National University, Canberra.

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A Taste of Italy in Port Moresby

WORDS & PHOTOGRAPHY DIANA MCMANUS



La Dolce Vita (the good life!) is an Italian phrase which comes to mind when one dines at Jepello's in Port Moresby, situated just off Waigani Drive, virtually opposite Theodist. The moment you drive into the gravelled ante courtyard and see the terracotta tiles and pots



The cooks hard at work in the kitchen.

at the glass panelled front door entrance, you know you're in for a treat. Until recently, the courtyard basil gardens with their fragrant, distinctive aromas, supported that impression.

Step inside and you find yourself surrounded by vibrant walls which are reminiscent of the gaily coloured streets and skies of the Mediterranean. An archway in one wall affords a tantalising glimpse of a traditional, tiled Italian pizza oven. Add to that, some tasteful paintings and furniture and an Italian operatic duo singing quietly in the background. You would be forgiven if you thought for a moment that you were in Italy. Only for a moment that is, because the restaurant is staffed by very friendly and efficient Papua New Guineans.

The owner/chef, David Richardson, grew up

in Port Moresby and is well acquainted with what his clientele desires in the way of food, service and surroundings. In fact he says quite often art students will come to the restaurant simply to observe the different shapes, colours and layout which all work so well. Selected paintings by local artists also hang on the walls since the owner believes in promoting local talent.

The restaurant opened in December 2005, so it is a relatively new but very popular arrival on the dining out scene. It is licenced but it is also BYO with a small corkage fee. The menu is a la carte and offers predominantly Italian influenced dishes. The restaurant's motto is simple, "pizza, pasta, salad and grill". However, this really understates the quality of food there.

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Octopus starters.

Apart from the a la carte menu, there are usually daily specials; Soup of the Day, Risotto of the Day, Fish of the Day, and, for example, Chilli Octopus Salad. Starters include wonderful bruschettas, innovative garlic bread which has taken Port Moresby by storm and the Polenta Giardinetto (grilled polenta, roasted vegetables and napoli salsa) which the chef highly recommends for its texture.

Now if this description of bruschetta doesn't tempt you, I don't know what will...fresh tomato, basil pesto, roasted capsicum, deep fried eggplant with black olives and shaved

cheese. Mmmm! Perhaps something a little more volcanic? Try the Salada Pompei consisting of charred vegetables buried in molten cheese. Yum!

The restaurant goes to great lengths to ensure freshest and best foods. There is a constant search for quality products. Jepello's has its own herb gardens. Fish is flown in directly from Kavieng. Only PNG export prawns are used. There is a wide variety of imported veal dishes. Even Jepello's wines are especially ordered and imported through local agents.



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Hors d'oeuvres.

Hearty dishes such as Carni de Misto have been recently added to the menu to satisfy clientele with hearty appetites. This is a mixed grill of steak, lamb cutlets, bacon rashers and fried egg. As well, there are more delicate dishes for the discerning palate such as fish dishes served with a simple lemon butter sauce or the Bocconcini veal stuffed with bocconcini mozzarella and basil with white wine sauce. Selections of pizzas are available, cooked in the Italianesque wood fired oven.

Cleansing gelati in three delicious flavours leave you feeling complete and replete. While you are waiting for your meal, artistic and delicious little hors d'oeuvres garnished with mint or basil appear to appease your appetite.

In fact the food on the whole is presented in an extremely artistic manner.

David has over 20 years experience as a chef, encompassing five years working in Europe including stints at London's Covent Garden and Greek Street restaurants.

Prices are very affordable and range from K5 to K15 for starters, K22 to K36 for pizzas, K20 to K35 for the risottos and pastas, and K32 to K52 for the grills and specials served with vegetables and potato.



Veal Parmagiato.

The restaurant serves lunch from Monday to Friday noon to 2pm and dinner in the evenings, including Saturday, from 6pm to 10pm. Sunday is a day of rest.

Management recognises that many guests smoke and has provided a discrete smoking room.

The layout of the restaurant provides an ideal setting for Theatre Restaurant with its little alcove and adjoining private dining area which transform into a stage and dressing room. In collaboration with Moresby Arts Theatre, Jepello's has offered the public some unique dining experiences.

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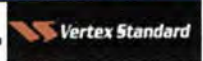
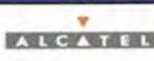
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During 2006, it hosted at least three theatre nights along with four-course set meals. It variously became the interior of a 'Roman' Las Vegas casino with a bit of vaudeville, vice and voluptuous dancing, or the scene of spaghetti westerns with a difference, forum for locally written skit *When the Buai Falls* which is a seduction comedy based on the Roman occupation of PNG, and other snippets of escapist fantasy. The Red Faces night had amused diners booing, hissing and cheering their friends and foes between courses.



The wine rack.

These nights are sold out very rapidly, so if you hear of one, make a booking quickly or you may miss out. In fact most nights Jepello's is very well patronised and it pays to book your table, whether it's for two or a group.

This restaurant has a wonderful Mediterranean ambience guaranteed to transport you into another world, not to mention its delicious food. There's no doubt that after the experience you'll be thinking Arrivederci Roma, oops! I mean Jepello's, which means goodbye but I'll be back.



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BATILUVA... THE ULTIMATE SURFING HOLIDAY



WORDS & PHOTOGRAPHY **SILAS HANSEN**



I pop off the back of yet another bulge of oceanic energy, momentarily mimicking the location's namesake as I glide, not so gracefully, through the air and plunge into the sea. Surfacing, I rest astride my board, aching arms like jelly at my side.

There are not many surf locations left in the world where, in the presence of near perfect surf, you would consider 'calling it a day' due to sheer exhaustion. But then, with only three other surfers in the water, I've caught as many waves this morning as I would in a whole 6 months back in New Zealand.

Frigate Passage is about as difficult to access as a surf break can get, breaking some 14 miles south of Fiji's main island, Viti Levu, and seven miles southeast of the closest island, Yanuca.

Luckily, hidden away on this tiny island in the Beqa Lagoon is a resort which not only caters perfectly to surfers looking for the ultimate surfing holiday, but also to non-surfers looking to escape the ordinary, commercial style resorts that have overrun Fiji's magnificent coastline.



The 35' wooden boat 'Salty Dog' chugs slowly back across the lagoon, whipping up spray from the bow. The southeast trades have ruffled the water's surface into a vast

expanse of white caps, into which large flocks of boobie birds are diving. Ben Chapman, a 28-year-old surfer from Jersey in the English Channel, clutches the fishing pole as it bends wildly, and winds aboard a yellowfin tuna.

The lure is barely back in the water when it is struck again, and with veins ready to burst through his skin, he lands yet another, this time a Walu.

The two biggest catches of his life, all within five minutes.

As we near Yanuca's jungle covered slopes, the ocean calms significantly. Rounding a small rocky point we are greeted with deep turquoise water, fingers of flawless coral, lush tropical forest fringed by a golden sand beach, and burning tiki torches which reveal the small resorts location amongst the coconut palms. As the sun casts its warm golden glow on this whole surreal scene, it seems I've arrived on the original, authentic 'Tropical Island'.

Life is simple at Batiluva. "Eat, sleep, surf," says co-owner Dan Thorn, 58, "and have a beer in between."

Sharen Todd, chef, and Thorns 50-year-old business partner, serves the fruits of Ben's labour in the form of a blackened sashimi appetizer with a sweet soy-ginger sauce.

The two Hawaiians opened Batiluva Resort, which sits on six and a half beachfront acres, in August 2003. Besides the guests at another small resort in a neighbouring bay, the only people on the 800-acre island are the roughly 300 locals on the opposite side of the island.





Constructed from native mahogany, the accommodation is very simple and rustic, with two dorm-style bures and three double bures, all with shared showers and cosy toilets. Thick spongy grass surrounds the resort like shag-pile carpet under your feet.



Coconuts fall often, and bananas and mangoes hang from their respective trees in considerable quantity, and giant bats swoop from the jungle-covered cliffs behind the resort in search of fruit.



After a huge buffet style dinner, shared around a communal table that is perfect for re-living the day's events, I sit against a palm tree and watch the sun draw curtains on the day. The routine at Batiluva is one I could get use to: up at dawn, a cooked breakfast, surf all morning, eat lunch, surf all afternoon, catch a fish, eat an appetizer, have a beer, eat dinner, and do it all again the next day.

Even when we don't surf, our days start early as the dappled light reaches my bure beneath the palms. I laze on the white sand beach, read a book while lounging in a hammock, kayak around the island, and visit the small Fijian village.

And as a special treat for the guests, Sharen arranges a fire walking display with local Fijian firewalkers.



One day I snorkel out at Frigate in between surf sessions. Joined by Ben and his 23-year-old girlfriend, Lauren Burnett, we are greeted by a blanket of coral consisting of over a hundred different varieties, schools of fish which in an instant vanish with a change of direction, a hawksbill turtle, and on several occasions we find ourselves swimming right next to large 6-ft white tip reef sharks - as menacing as they look, they're but docile and curious creatures.

And it seems that's not all that looks menacing at Frigate, for the swell has risen considerably during the day, and as we reach the boat, a solid, triple overhead set rumbles down the reef, breaking several boards and sending their riders on a long rinse cycle through the inside. I'm happy to sit and capture the spectacle from the safety of 'Salty Dog.'



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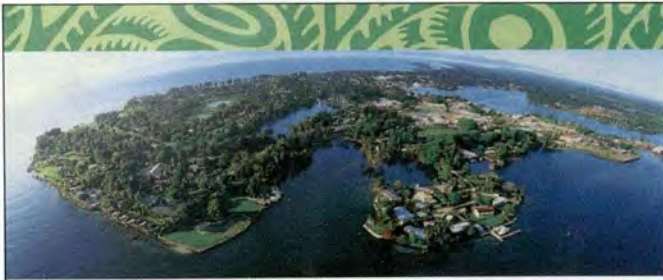






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It takes a special place to tug at your heartstrings after such a short time, but the quality of the surf has astounded me, and the simplicity of the resort with its therapeutic setting has left me with an overwhelming feeling of calm and tranquillity.

Reluctantly I board the punt for the wet boat ride back to the mainland, and with the sweet Fijian farewell song of "Isalei" ringing in my ears, I conclude that this tiny beach resort is one of the most beautiful places I have ever been.



FACT FILE

WHERE Batiluva Resort is located on Yanuca Island in the Beqa Lagoon, off the south coast of Viti Levu, the main island of Fiji.

HOW TO GET THERE Organised transport from Nadi costs approximately F\$100. The round trip boat ride to the island is F\$50.

WHERE TO STAY Batiluva Beach Resort. Accommodation for 16 people is budget but clean and includes three separate dormitory style rooms, and two double rooms. Food is eaten communally, is very good quality, and there is always plenty of it. While the resort caters perfectly to surfers, non-surfers will feel very much at home with plenty to do: scuba diving can be arranged, sunbathing, swimming, kayaking, and arranged cultural events such as fire-walking, kava ceremony, and village tours. F\$150 per person per day including all meals, boats to the reef and most activities. Nanny service costs about F\$15 per day. Website www.batiluva.com/ email batiluvaresort@connect.com

■ Air Niugini flies to Fiji twice a week.



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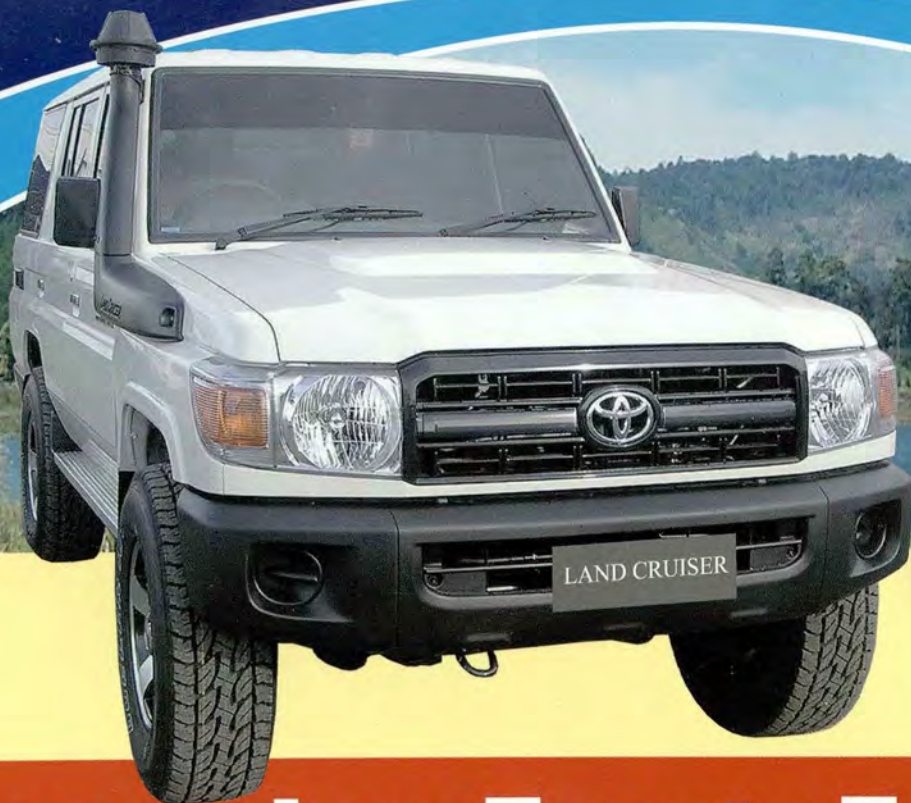
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