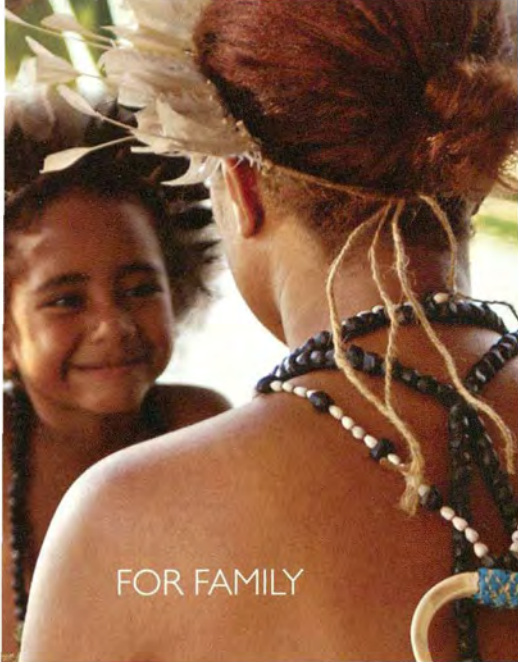


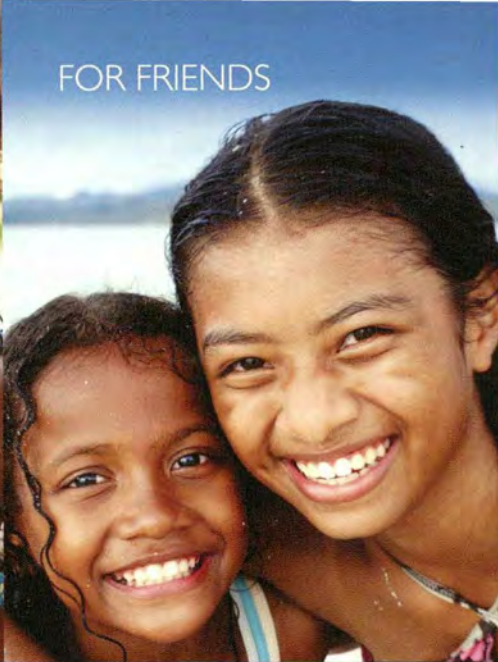
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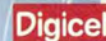
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Message from the Chief Executive Officer



Welcome aboard

Air Niugini was launched 38 years ago on 1st November 1973, two years before our nation's independence and to this day remains a key member of the airline industry in Papua New Guinea's social and economic development.

As with any other airline, Air Niugini over its 38 years of existence has experienced both good and bad times. In spite of these challenges, the national flag carrier has remained focused on its primary responsibility of providing safe air travel to the nation.

Thirty eight years on, the national carrier continues to play a significant role in the country's economy and the air transport needs as well as linking Papua New Guinea with international destinations. Few airlines in the world have played such a vital role in the development and growth of a country known for its immense distances and challenging terrain.

The current fleet of twenty one aircraft comprises (3) Boeing 767, (6) Fokker 100, (3) Dash 8-Q400 NextGen, (3) Dash8-Q315, (3) DHC8-202 and (2) DHC8-100. The airline is particularly pleased with the introduction of the Q400 turbo prop aircraft into its domestic schedule as the aircraft is well suited to the country's topography and existing airports.

Air Niugini now uplifts over a million passengers and more than 11,000 tonnes of freight through its domestic and international routes in Australia, South East Asia and the Pacific.

Our customers are very important to us so the airline continuously seeks to improve its service by ensuring that the staff are trained to deliver a professional service to the travelling public in their respective fields.

Current improvements to Papua New Guinea's economy are indicative of extraordinary growth in sectors such as gas, oil, mining and such comparatively new industries as oil palm and tuna canning. These are windows of opportunities in our passenger and cargo business potential and with that will come investment in equipment, the workforce and expansion in our operations.

A very important industry with enormous growth potential is tourism. In over three decades, Air Niugini has supported the various tourism products or adventures that Papua New Guinea is renowned for - diving, trekking, game fishing and cultural attractions.

To our visitors, I hope you will enjoy the sights and sounds of this exotic country during your visit. On behalf of Air Niugini, I would like to thank our loyal customers for your continued patronage.

Let us celebrate Air Niugini's 38th anniversary together on 1st November 2011.

Enjoy your flight.

Wasantha Kumarasiri OBE
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

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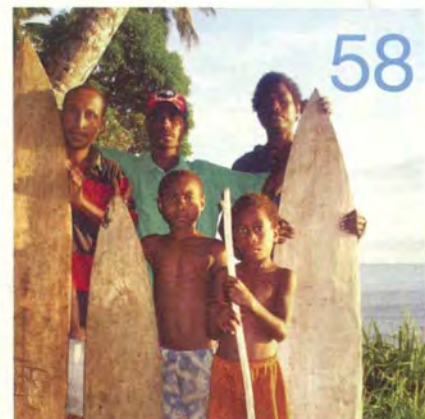
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Contents





Vows in the Sun

Saying 'I do' in Kokopo

30-35

Undiscovered Paradise

22 islands, untouched and flourishing coral reefs

36-40

The Smoked Bodies of Aseki

Why they're attracting scientists there

44-48

In Pursuit of Papuan Black Bass

The hardest pulling freshwater fish

52-56

Kairuku Island

Pristine, little-known and undiscovered waves

58-63

Kutubu

The jewel of the highlands

68-73

The New Finds

Over 1000 new species found in New Guinea

78-83

Kavieng Adventures

A destination for adventurers of many kinds

86-89

The UK-PNG Connection

Growing stronger

94-96

Megical Macau

The Las Vegas of the east

100-106

Tantalised by Tokyo

A weird mixture of Japanese and western cultures

112-115

The Lure of Cairns

Why Papua New Guineans are flocking there

116-119

Getting Pampered in the Philippines

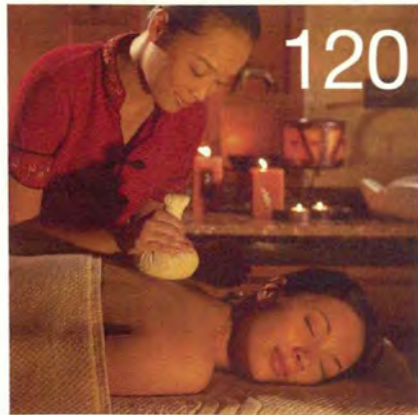
The ultimate spa treat

120-123

Champagne and Caves

Venturing into one of Fiji's remotest resorts

124-127





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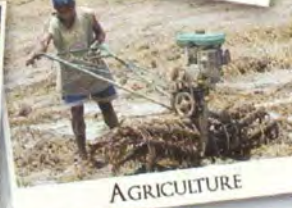
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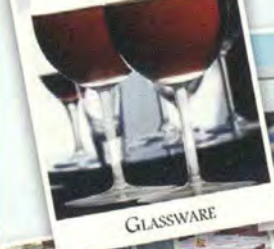
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Please ask us

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Hand luggage

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

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

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 seat belt sign is switched off.

Children and babies

The cabin crew will also be pleased to assist in preparing your baby's food and bottle. Baby food and diapers are also available. Please do not hesitate to ask our friendly cabin crew.

Smoking

Smoking is not permitted on any Air Niugini flight.

Entertainment

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

Pillows and blankets

On International flights, pillows and blankets are available on request from our cabin crew.

Cuisine

Our in-flight* meals have been specially prepared for your enjoyment. If you require a vegetarian meal or you are on a special diet, child or baby food, please inform us when making your reservation.

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During the flight take some time to look through our In-flight Duty Free brochure located in your seat pocket. Duty free purchases can be made after Meal Service. All major credit cards are accepted.

Immigration and Customs Forms

During your flight, our cabin crew will distribute Immigration and Custom forms before each landing point. Ensure that you carefully read and complete these documents and have them ready for inspection with your passport at the Immigration and Customs arrival counters.

Before you leave

Please check your seat pocket and overhead lockers before you disembark to ensure you have not left any items of value. We look forward to seeing you when you next fly with us on our Bird of Paradise Service.



Air Niugini fleet

B767-300ER

Boeing

Length: 59.94m
 Wing span: 47.57m
 Range: 8100km
 Cruising speed: 857kph

Power plant: 2 x PW4000
 Normal altitude: 11000 - 12000m
 Standard seating capacity: 214
 Number of aircraft in fleet: 3



F100

Fokker

Length: 35.528m
 Wing span: 28.076m
 Range: 3000km
 Cruising speed: 780kph

Power plant: 2 x Rolls Royce Tay 650
 Normal altitude: 11,000 m
 Standard seating capacity: 98
 Number of aircraft in fleet: 6



DASH 8-Q400 NextGen

Bombardier

Length: 32.8m
 Wing span: 28.4m
 Range: 3000km
 Cruising speed: 670kph

Power plant: 2 x Pratt & Whitney PW150 A
 Normal altitude: 7500m
 Standard seating capacity: 74
 Number of aircraft in fleet: 3



DASH 8-Q315

Bombardier

Length: 25.7m
 Wing span: 24.4m
 Range: 1700km
 Cruising speed: 510kph

Power plant: 2 x Pratt & Whitney PW123E
 Normal altitude: 7500m
 Standard seating capacity: 50
 Number of aircraft in fleet: 3



DHC-8-202

Bombardier

Length: 22.25m
 Wing span: 25.89m
 Range: 1800km
 Cruising speed: 550kph

Power plant: 2 x Pratt & Whitney PW123D
 Normal altitude: 7600m
 Standard seating capacity: 36
 Number of aircraft in fleet: 3



DHC-8-100

Bombardier

Length: 22.25m
 Wing span: 25.89m
 Range: 1800km
 Cruising speed: 500kph

Power plant: 2 x Pratt & Whitney PW121
 Normal altitude: 7600m
 Standard seating capacity: 36
 Number of aircraft in fleet: 2

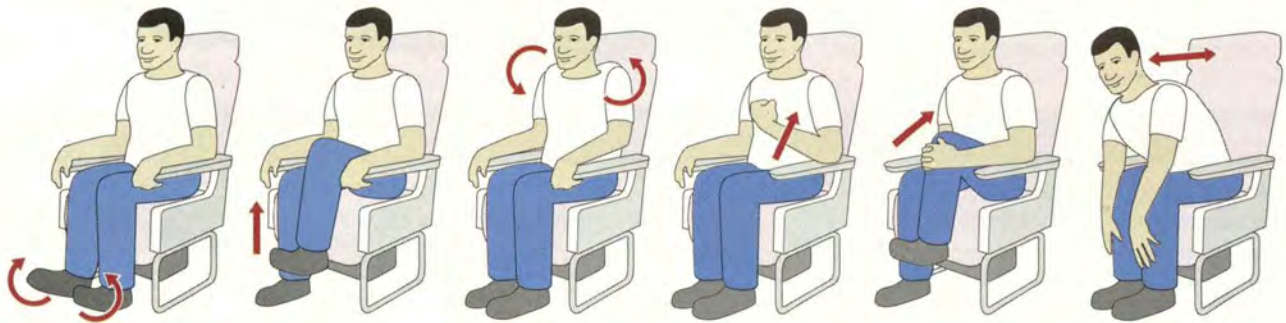


Your wellbeing



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 of sitting. They may be effective in increasing the body's 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.



ANKLE CIRCLES

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

KNEE LIFTS

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

SHOULDER ROLL

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

ARM CURL

Start with arms held high at 90° angle - elbows down, hands out in front. Raise hands up to chest and back down alternating arms. Do these exercises in 30 second intervals.

KNEE TO CHEST

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

FORWARD FLEX

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



OVERHEAD STRETCH

Raise both arms straight up and over your head. With one hand grasp the wrist of the opposite hand and gently pull to one side. Hold stretch for 15 seconds. Repeat other side.

SHOULDER STRETCH

Reach right hand over left shoulder. Place left hand behind right elbow and gently press elbow towards shoulder. Hold stretch for 15 seconds. Repeat other side.

NECK ROLL

With shoulders relaxed, drop ear to shoulder and gently roll neck forward and to the other side, holding each position about 5 seconds. Repeat 5 times.

FOOT PUMPS

Foot motion is in three stages.
1. Start with both heels on the floor and point feet upwards as high as you can.

2. Put both feet flat on the floor.

3. Lift heels high, keeping balls of feet on floor. Continue these three stages with continuous motion in 30 second intervals.

Innovation. From the ground up.



Air Niugini has invested in state of the art information technology to enhance customer relationships through its innovative **Destinations** Loyalty Program.

Air Niugini's **Destinations** Loyalty Program is powered by Mercator, the IT solutions arm of the highly successful Emirates Airlines. While new to Papua New Guinea, the Loyalty Program is in fact built on an engine that has 40 person years of investment and over 10 years of loyalty program experience.

There is an additional 150 person years of investment over an 8 year period of development.

The system has been implemented by airlines all over the world and is available at more than 90 global offices with over 2,000 on-line users, and a support team of 50 highly skilled loyalty systems business and technical professionals.



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Your health inflight

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 be 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:

- ◆ Former or current malignant disease
- ◆ Blood disorders leading to increased clotting tendency
- ◆ Personal or family history of DVT
- ◆ Immobilisation for a day or more

- ◆ Increasing age above 40 years
- ◆ Pregnancy
- ◆ Recent major surgery or injury, especially to lower limbs or abdomen
- ◆ Oestrogen hormone therapy, including oral contraceptives
- ◆ 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.
- ◆ Follow our in-flight exercises programme.

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.

Recommendations

- ◆ Get a good night's rest before your flight.
- ◆ Arrive at your destination a day or two early, to give your body a chance to become more acclimatised to the new time zone.
- ◆ Leave your watch on home time if you're staying at a 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, adjust your meal and rest times to be closer to those of your destination.
- ◆ 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. Fly direct to minimise flight time. This allows you to relax more upon arrival.

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.

Recommendations

- ◆ Drink water or juices frequently during the flight
- ◆ Drink coffee, tea and alcohol in moderation. These drinks acts 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.

Recommendations

- ◆ 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 or flu or hay fever your sinuses could be impaired. Swollen membranes in your nose could block your eustachian tubes-the tiny channels between 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, equalizing pressure between your 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 equalize 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 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.



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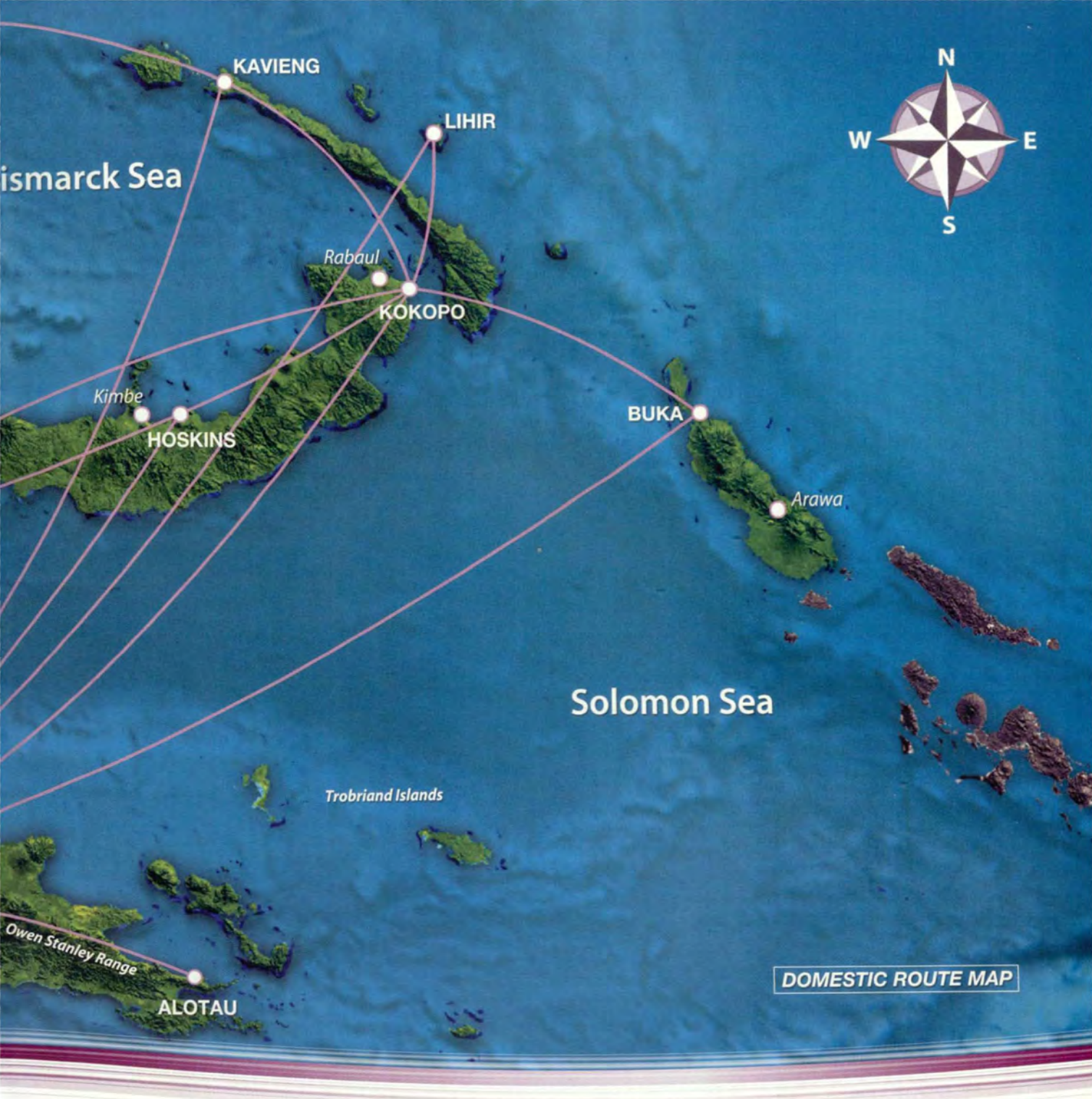
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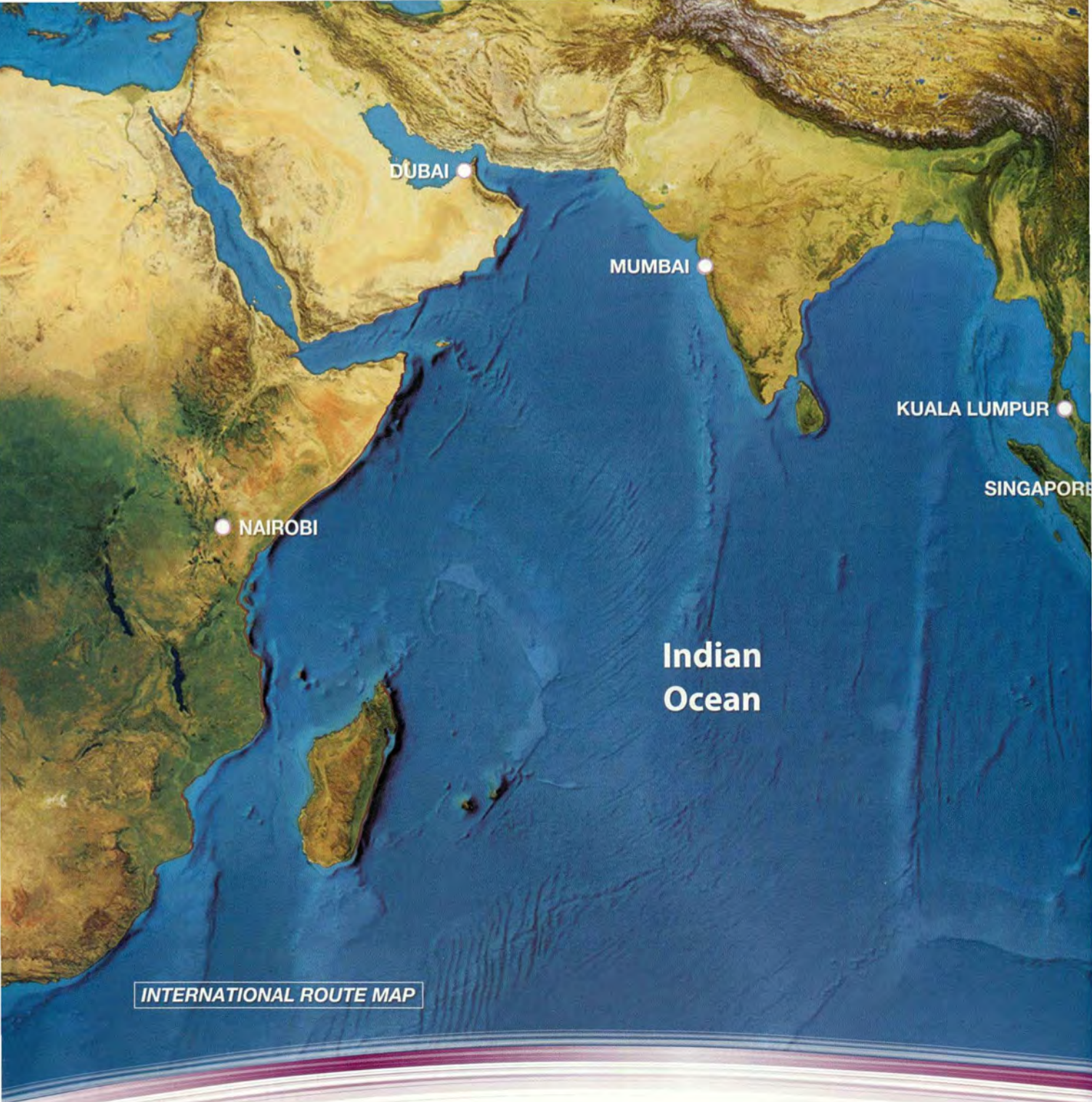
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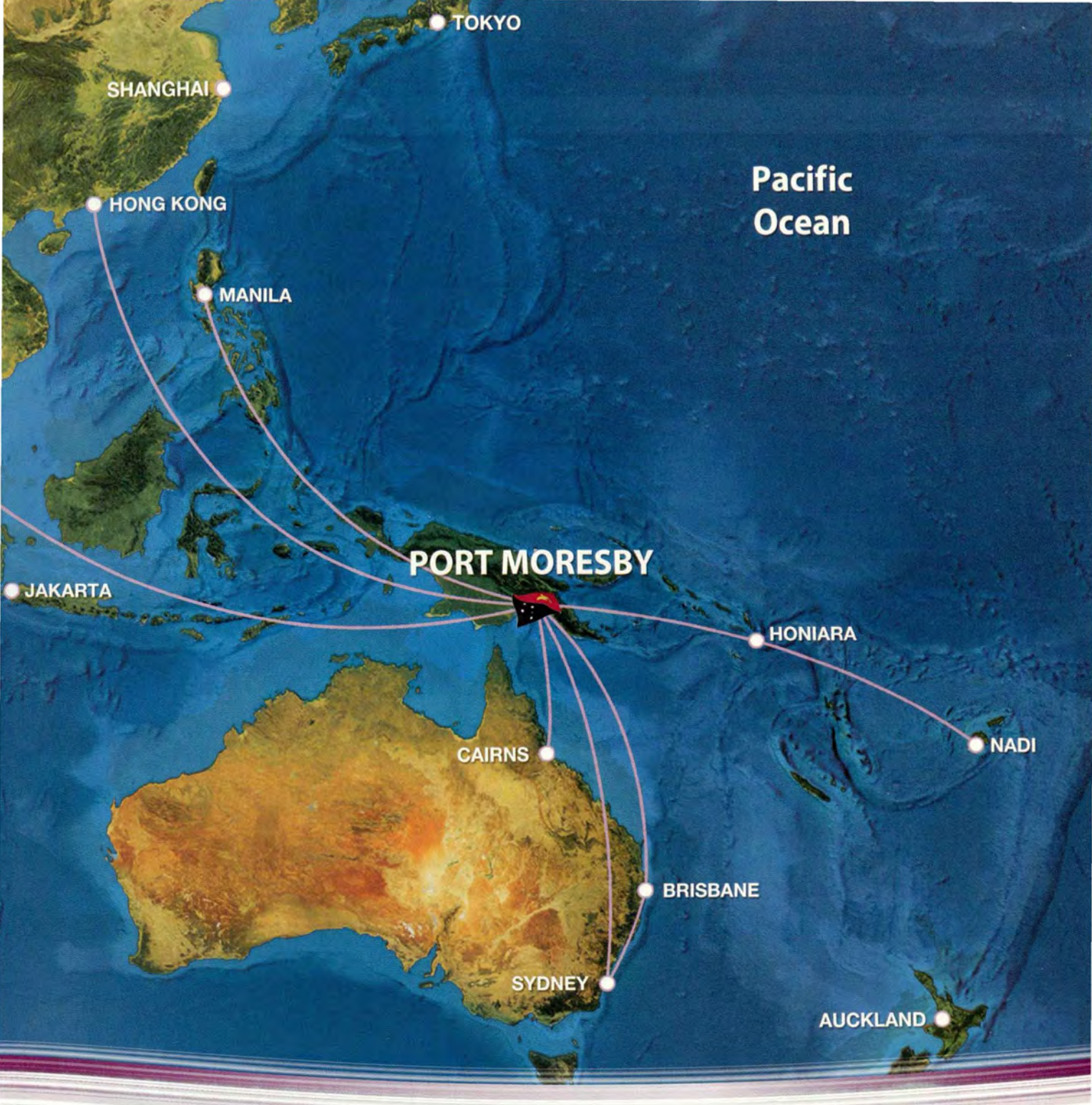
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SAYING 'I DO' IN KOKOPO

BY JOHN BROOKSBANK

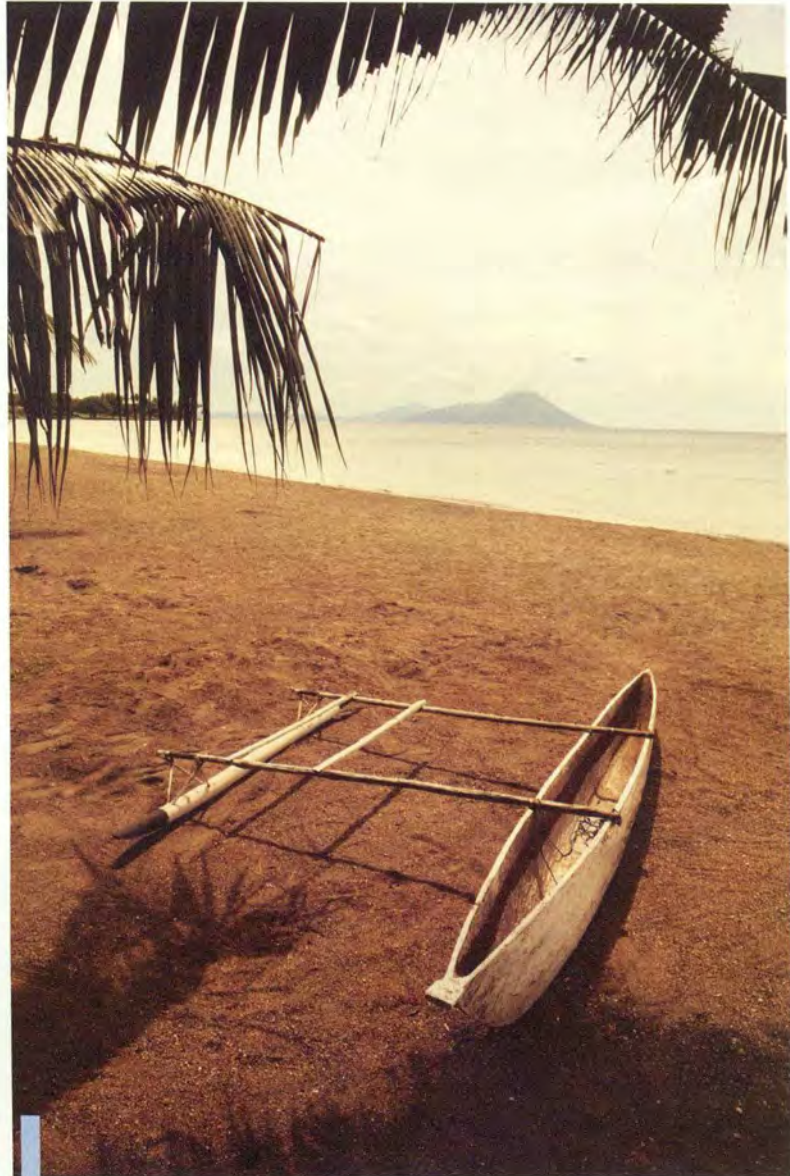


The Caribbean, a Mediterranean island, Mustique, Seychelles or Copacabana Beach in Brazil...these are just some of the tropical beauty spots one might choose as being suitably exotic, warm, sandy and scenic to be a backdrop for one of those 'damn the expense' moments in life that just has to be perfect - like a wedding!





A recent wedding in Kokopo brought together people from all over the globe - including England, Singapore, Australia, New Zealand, Hong Kong, United States and Portugal - to witness Lyndsay and Dylan Foo pledge their vows of matrimony.



Until recently, Papua New Guinea probably wasn't on the shortlist of the jet-setting beautiful people, but that may well change. A recent wedding in Kokopo brought together people from all over the globe - including England, Singapore, Australia, New Zealand, Hong Kong, United States and Portugal - to witness Lyndsay and Dylan Foo pledge their vows of matrimony.

Perched atop a bluff over a coconut fringed sandy beach, the resort is a truly beautiful spot. Cooled by sea breezes blowing off Blanche Bay, one can just see the Rabaul

volcanoes lazily smoking away on the horizon - a very postcard pretty picture until one remembers the devastation caused in 1994 when they erupted and effectively wiping that town off the map.

Admittedly, parents of the groom, Simon and Evelyn Foo, are the owners of Kokopo Beach Bungalow Resort but it is a real testament to the management and staff of that establishment that this large and complicated ceremony and associated guest activities was such a success.



Grand and lavish affair

As the wedding photos on these pages - just some of the more than 3000 taken by Port Moresby-based photographer Rocky Roe - attest, this was a grand and lavish affair.

It was the sort of almost bohemian event that would doubtless have been attended and definitely approved of, were they alive, by the famed Queen Emma and her sister Phebe. In the 1890s, they lived luxuriously at Gunantambu, just a short distance up the coast, but the only remains of the colonial mansion of the almost legendary colonial mixed race trading and copra entrepreneur are the steps now preserved within the grounds of the newly-built Gazelle International Hotel.

Donna Lucker, the Australian manager of



the 80-bed Kokopo Beach Bungalow Resort, recounts the hectic days of organisation - sorting out the innumerable tasks involved in such a complex event.

"We had 80 people fly in, a large number, 10 days before the actual wedding for whom we tried to provide a unique personalised experience, as well as ensuring a constantly changing menu to keep their taste buds tingling," she says. "But I am proud that our 70 local staff were up to the task which included airport transfers, decorating the resort and organising local tours."

Although the resort organised most guest activities, diving and helicopter aerial tours were arranged with local experts.

Wine for the reception came from France and

masses of orchids imported from Singapore - courtesy of the PNG Gardener - were made into buttonholes, bridal bouquets and complemented other decorations assembled from local flowers.

Benches for the wedding guests were put together and planted in the sand, literally hours before the ceremony, by Dylan and his groomsmen, mostly old friends from rowing and rugby teams they were previously members of.

A choir from Navunaram, Dylan's grandmother's village, entertained the wedding guests with hymns and gospel songs as the bride was escorted down the steps to the beach.

Many guests had never been to Papua New

Guinea before and were impressed by the friendliness of the East New Britain people as well as the surroundings.

Clara Kann, who travelled all the way from Portugal to be at the wedding, said, "I have travelled to many beautiful countries but never have I been to a place of such raw, untouched, natural beauty - snorkelling in turquoise clear waters off a deserted island in the middle of the ocean, being on a boat surrounded by a pod of over 50 dolphins, visiting an active volcano - these are unique experiences I will treasure forever."

More than 85 people attended the wedding ceremony. After having hors d'oeuvres and pre-dinner cocktails on the beach, they feasted on a three-course meal at the formal reception held at the resort.





Some of the more adventurous wedding guests trekked up the still smoking volcanoes while others enjoyed fishing, island hopping, swimming, snorkelling or diving off one of the nearby beaches. Certain individuals even tried chewing betel nut, or 'buai' in pidgin, but it's not clear whether this was an enjoyable experience!

There was, of course, the obligatory multi-tier wedding cake, freshly made and decorated on the premises, whilst late night entertainment was mixed by DJ Allan Kedeia, a musician more popularly known as AK47.

The resort arranged tours to local places of interest such as the beautifully manicured Bitapaka war cemetery and the rusting remains of World War Two that are still to be found in many parts of East New Britain - evidence of when Rabaul was the Pacific headquarters for the Japanese air and sea forces.

The Japanese established Rabaul in anticipation of a long stay. At the time, it was the most heavily fortified stronghold south of the equator. They constructed roads, radar installations, diesel power stations and many kilometres of tunnels, warehousing, an underground hospital and a submarine base; they even started brewing sake rice wine at Vunairima.



The town was a garrison for at least 100,000 troops, defended with almost 400 anti-aircraft guns that supplemented the up to 350 fighter and bomber aircraft that flew out of Lakunai, Rapopo, Vunakanau, Tobera and Keravat strips.

The Rabaul eruption removed many of the reminders of this past conflict but visitors can still see the inside of some of the tunnels and get a panoramic view of the caldera that is Simpson's Harbour from the gun emplacement at the Malmaluan ridge top.

The floor of the harbour is still littered with the

remains of many of the ships sunk in the area during World War II.

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Kokopo Beach Bungalow Resort is not the only place to stay in town. There are several others - Taklam Lodge, also owned by Beach

Bungalow, the new Gazelle International, Rapopo Plantation, Queen Emma Lodge and Kokopo Village Resort.

So whether it is just a tropical beach setting for a wedding, a leisurely sunbake on the beach, trolling around on a game fishing boat or perhaps a more active holiday that one hankers for, East New Britain is the place to go.

After a 'tiring' day fishing, snorkelling, trekking or sightseeing, one is certain to find one of the hotels, resorts or guest houses at Kokopo ready to pamper you with soft fluffy towels, hot showers and cool drinks.



UNDISCOVERED PARADISE

BY JAMES DALZIEL

Start with one perfect untouched atoll and divide it into twenty-two islands and sand cays, strategically place flourishing coral reefs, infused with turquoise waters and add a sprinkle of barefoot luxury; thankfully, this isn't something from an 80's cocktail menu but the emerging destination of the Conflict Islands.

I watch a bead of condensation slowly roll down the shoulders of the bottle, gathering pace until it silently meets its end at the hand of the polished rosewood table.

The sun is heading towards the horizon and the late afternoon breeze is keeping the temperature somewhere between blissful and very pleasant, only the gentle lapping of the waves and the dappled light through the gently swaying palm trees distract my attention.

Ahhh...life is tough, very tough. Having spent a good part of the day doing my very own impression of Jacques Cousteau at nowhere near a thousand leagues under the sea, a beer at sunset seems like a perfect way to unwind before the task of eating a spectacular dinner with good friends at the clubhouse.

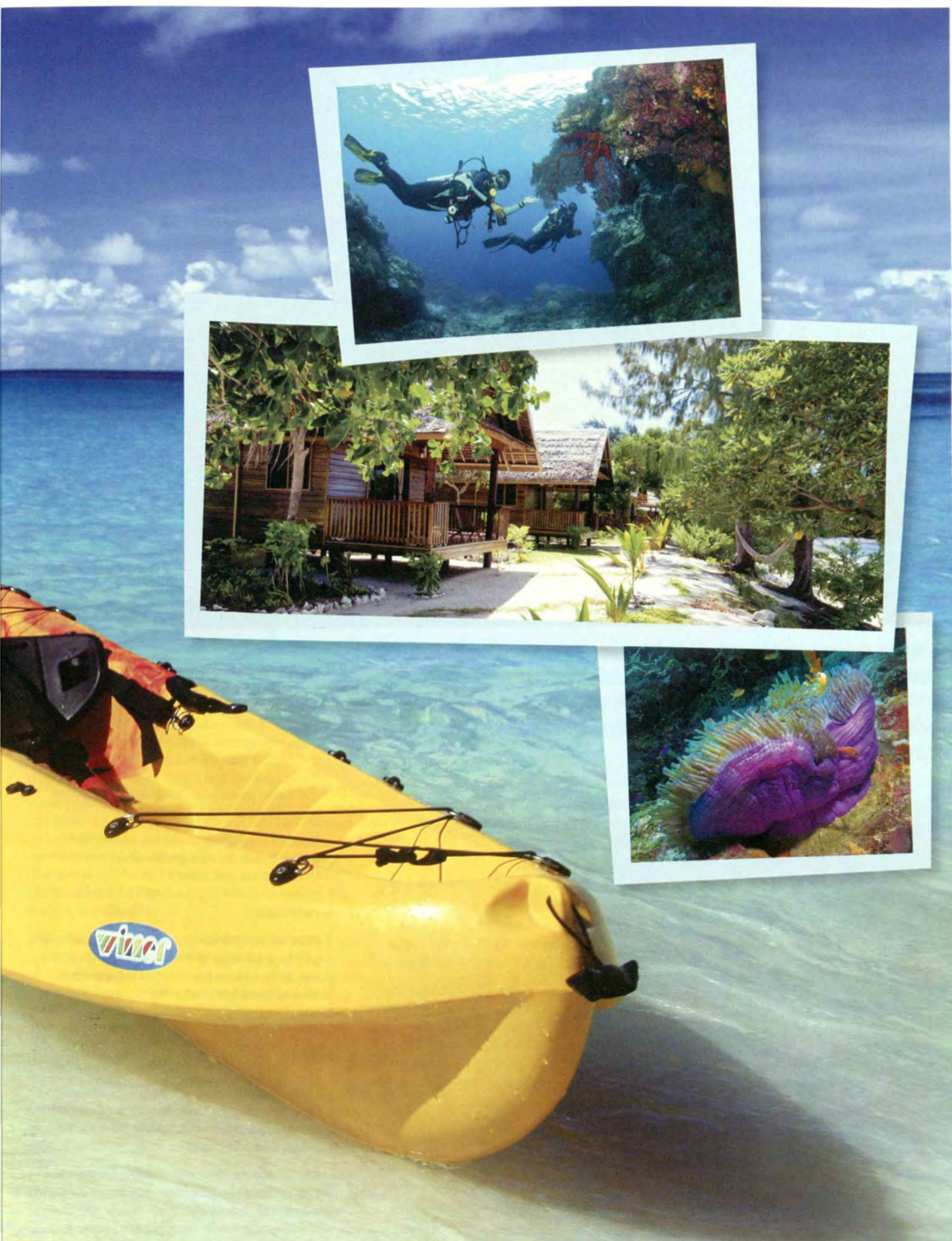
A short flight from Port Moresby, this privately owned stretch of paradise, complete with a landing strip, calls itself the Conflict Islands, after its discovery by HMS Conflict in 1886.

Nestled at the edge of Milne Bay, it is some 85 miles east of Alotau in the Coral Sea. If you hadn't worked it out yet, the best use of your blackberry out here will be as paperweight. Twenty-two islands and sand cays make up the chain with a central lagoon and fringing coral reefs making a 20-kilometre long atoll.

With no continental shelf in the vicinity, the islands are truly a unique geological location as warm upwelling currents allow microscopic life to bloom, giving rise to the unprecedented amount of biodiversity - above and below the sea waters.

Previously not open to the public, these islands were developed as a private hideaway for international businessman Ian Gowrie-Smith, who fell in love with its natural charm. "The undersea environment is extraordinary and when I found out that the UN had found more species in a single dive off one of the islands than anywhere else in the world, I knew I had to have them, preserve them and love them," he said.





viner



Kicking down to the reef, it became clear this is not just another dive spot in the brochure. It is simply world class. Shaun, the resident dive master, points out two-metre wide gorgonian sea fans, marking the start of the dive in stunning details.

traditional furnishings implies the knowledge and experience behind the resort operation. There is everything here you need and nothing you don't. The nearby clubhouse holds the main dining area. Netted balconies overlook the lagoon with the lounge area complete with music, games and library to entertain wherever the mood takes you - making it the perfect place to relax and socialise.

To ease myself back into the underwater world, this morning's gentle dive took place at Beluga West - an easy 10-20-metre dive spot, a few minutes from the resort's main island of Panesasa.

After letting guests who are more comfortable just to snorkel jump in with one of the guides, the more serious business of tooling up to take to the depths begins. Holding on to my mask and pitching myself over the side into the azure blue seas was like entering another world. The remote location of the islands has kept destructive human hands away and everything is just as nature intended.

Kicking down to the reef, it became clear this is not just another dive spot in the brochure. It is simply world class.

Shaun, the resident dive master, points out two-metre wide gorgonian sea fans - marking the start of the dive in stunning details. Corals of every hue - warm red, golden yellow and deep purple add to the cacophony of colours.

Gowrie-Smith has now opened his personal paradise to a limited quantity of clients who share his passion for diving, fishing and environmental conservation.

A gentle pace of life, attentive staff and a myriad of activities are establishing these islands as a serious alternative to the more crowded and mainstream tropical heavyweights of Fiji and the Maldives.

Catering for guests who understand that escaping the nine to five schedule doesn't mean they want to leave the modern world to do so, the Conflict Islands encourage guests to switch off, unwind, and return home refreshed; whilst enjoying one of life's most divine luxuries.

Accommodation consists of six beachfront traditional timber and thatched bungalows, each with its own en-suite bathroom, iPod dock, mini bar and private beachfront balcony facing the atoll.

The use of rustic rosewood timber and polished floorboards, combined with





The usual suspects of maori wrasse, parrotfish and clownfish go about their daily lives as we lazily kick past. Giant barrel and vase sponges appear in a small chasm on the reef. Looking down on to the sandy bottom, three leopard sharks are having a morning nap at a small undercut at the bottom of the wall.

Looking out into the big blue, occasional turtle shaped silhouettes hazily come in and out of sight and I know that tomorrow's dive will hold more natural treasures. Returning topside, we learn that the natural lagoons and sandy beaches of the islands make it ideal for Green and Hawksbill turtles to nest, rest and feed, and they are often spotted whilst snorkelling off the resort's back beach.

Enjoying refreshments on the boat and cruising back to Panesasa, guests swap excited tales of having been in their own aquatic nirvana of clams, corals and clownfish. These islands have stunning sceneries at depths that don't require scuba gear too.

The resort boasts fulltime dive masters catering for all levels of experience and the dive hut is chock full of brand new Italian-made Cressi dive gear. Alongside this, comes the chance to achieve your dive certification and in a setting like this, with small groups and considerate staff, there could be fewer better places in the world to do it.

The all-inclusive price means that tomorrow I have a choice of 12 different dive sites to explore, more than 50 brand new sites to name, and a choice of eight alternative islands to picnic at - did I mention life was tough?

The all-inclusive price means that tomorrow I have a choice of 12 different dive sites to explore, more than 50 brand new sites to name, and a choice of eight alternative islands to picnic at - did I mention life was tough?



As we make ready to return home, our local skipper Kai sights pilot whales close by. We motor slowly towards them whilst maintaining a respectable distance.

The whales match our speed and move in for a closer look, but the playful youngsters of the pod move swiftly in and out of the shadows of the larger streamlined adults. After 15 minutes of playtime with a chorus of tail flukes, they disappear into the deep and the boat remains alive with the chatter of excited guests having enjoyed the experience of seeing these amazing creatures totally relaxed in their own environment.

The Conflict Islands boast a diverse range of terrestrial, aerial and aquatic life. The resort, however, is especially proud of its turtles, specifically Green turtles. The back beach of the main island is a natural laying haunt of these gentle giants and you may be lucky to see the life altering spectacle of a 250-kg mother dragging her cumbersome body up the beach to lay hundreds of eggs.

This is not an effort she makes once, rather numerous times over several days to confuse any predators that may harm her tiny offsprings. Turtles have a natural homing instinct, with the females returning every year to where they were born to lay their eggs.

Over dinner, Shaun explains that as well as being a diving paradise, the fishing holds its own. Yellow fin and dog-tooth tuna, Spanish mackerel and coral trout are regularly caught here.

When your guides are locals who have grown up in these waters, taught by their fathers, who were taught by their fathers, their local knowledge is far more valuable than any GPS system out here.

After a successful afternoon on the water and having impressed the group with your competition worthy catch, hand it over to your personal chef and request exactly how you wish for it to be cooked. It is, after all, you're feeding the group tonight.

If after all this you're still seeking to stay active, take out the sailboats, paddle boards or kayaks into the main lagoon and set off on your own adventure and make it your own island for the afternoon.

The Conflict Islands really are an undiscovered paradise, but they won't stay that way forever.



• *The author was a guest of the Conflict Islands. For further information: info@conflictislands.com or visit www.conflictislands.com*

FACT BOX

About the island

The Conflict Islands are located in Milne Bay, south-east of Papua New Guinea at the top of the Coral Sea. There are 22 pristine, uninhabited islands in an atoll configuration with numerous natural lagoons and coral reefs forming a unique chain of islands.

Accommodation

The private retreat on Panasesa Island accommodates up to 12 guests in 6 airconditioned en-suite waterfront bungalows.

What to do

The islands are sensational for diving, snorkelling, fishing, sailing, kayaking and generally relaxing in an unspoiled marine wilderness. The Islands have ample power and abundant clear water, and Island Joe provides great meals from mostly locally caught fish and lobster and home-grown fruit and vegetables.

Getting there

The islands are five to six hours from Brisbane/Sydney via Port Moresby to Panasesa's new airstrip. Air Niugini has daily flights to Brisbane and flies to Sydney two times a week.



Stap isi... enjoy!

Relax; take it easy; time-out; getaway; escape; stap isi... however you say it, Kokopo Beach Bungalow Resort is perfect to do just that and enjoy island hospitality in modern facilities.

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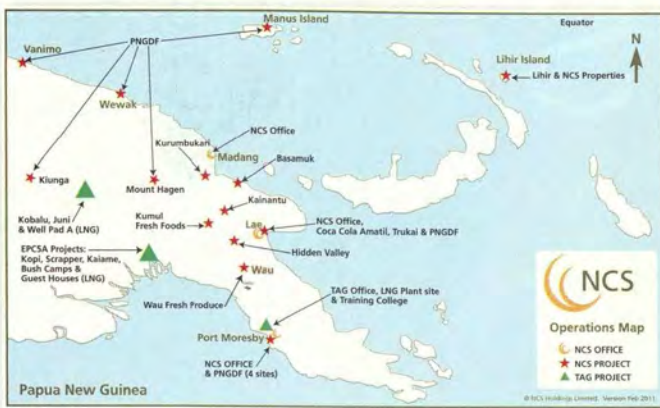
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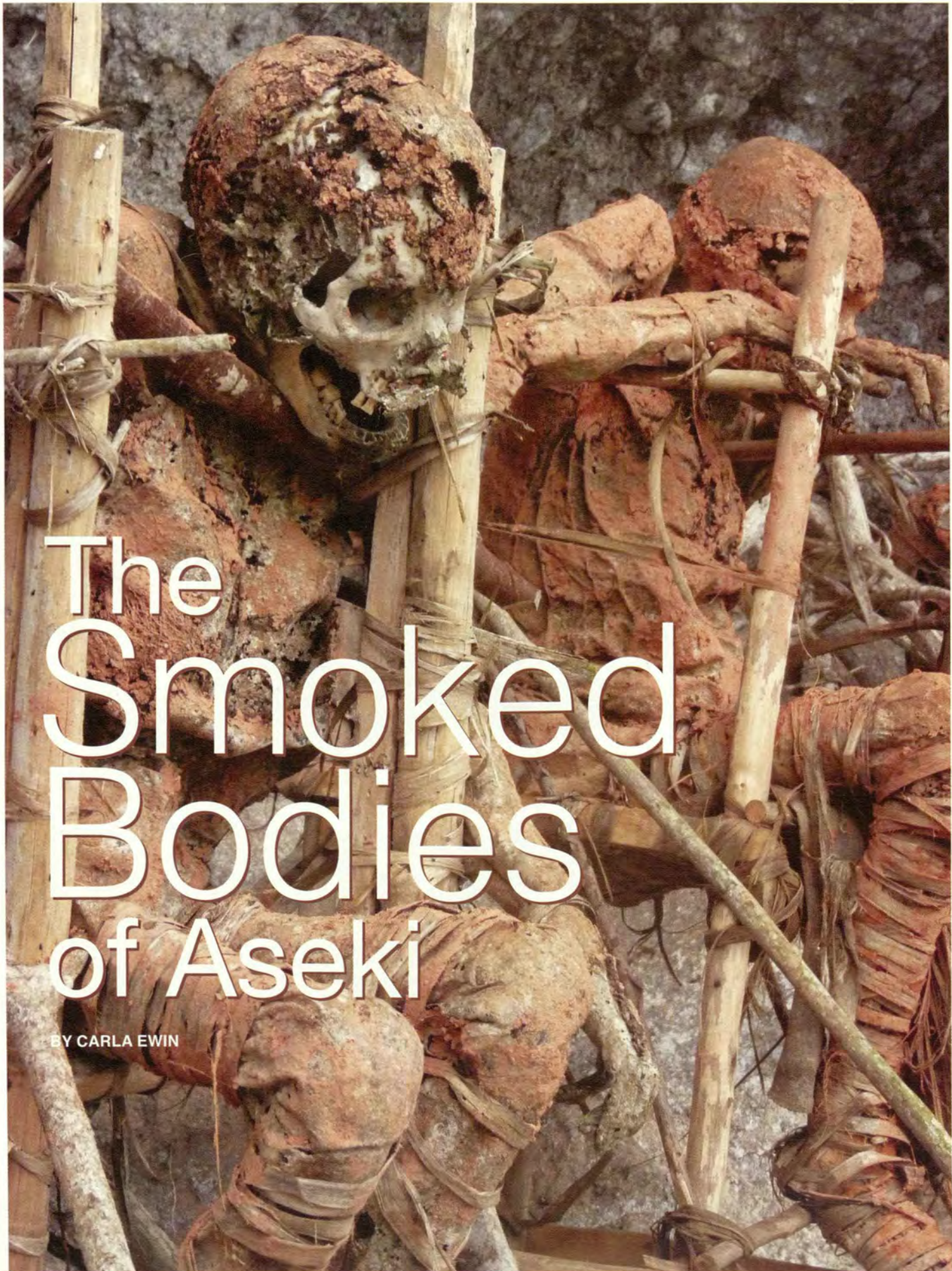
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The Smoked Bodies of Aseki

BY CARLA EWIN



A split second before we sped over the log bridge, I considered whether a Land cruiser was heavier than a truck laden with coffee bags. It turns out, the Land cruiser was heavier this afternoon.

Our journey to see the revered smoked bodies of the ancestors of the Kukukukus had hit an unexpected snag.

In the darkening glow of twilight, we descended from the Land cruiser, gingerly crossed the rest of the bridge and observed the situation. It did not look good. I silently contemplated our options with our driver Lyn, Morobe Tourism Board representative Priscilla, and Awateng, our local guide and an elder of the Kukukuku village of Koke.

One front wheel of the Land cruiser had slipped off the bridge and the other wedged between broken planks. Where would we go to get a tow truck in the middle of the Menyama district at night, and at least 30 minutes past Aseki station?

A few moments later, Awateng who was unperturbed by the predicament, flashed me his betel nut smile and told me not to worry. The 'boys' would be able to get the car out.

As fireflies started to flicker around me, it was obvious not much could be done about the car until the morning. So at Awateng's urging, we trudged off into the darkness towards his

village. In an effort to distract me from the unfortunate turn of events, Awateng happily chatted about the recent visits of scientists and documentary filmmakers to his village.

He proudly noted that the scientists concluded the techniques used by his people to preserve his ancestors were superior to those used to preserve the famous Egyptian mummies.

To reinforce his statement, Awateng vividly retold how one scientist had stuck a camera inside the preserved body of Awateng's grandfather and was amazed to find that the internal organs were intact, a major difference in technique from those used by the Egyptians.

While Awateng's stories were conjuring up some amazing scenes in my head about the sites to behold the following day, my mood turned for the worse when, in response to my question, Awateng advised that the remaining distance to his village was "longwe liklik". Anyone who's travelled in PNG and heard this phrase will understand why this was not good news.



However, my mood improved as I absorbed my surroundings; fireflies, full moon, the soft trickling of a nearby creek, and the various giggling children who took it upon themselves to escort us to Awateng's village.

We trundled into Awateng's village within what seemed like no time at all. After filling up on a pre-bedtime snack of hot kaukau and bully beef, I quickly nodded off to sleep, enveloped in a warm blanket that smelt of fresh mountain air and soap suds.

Sipping a hot cup of tea and staring at the limestone cliffs dominating Awateng's village was a serene start to the morning, compared to the dramas of the previous night.

However, the serenity was soon interrupted when Awateng approached me to help convince a group of German tourists to pay an entrance fee to the burial site.

Surprisingly, there was a group of 12 German

tourists camped outside the main house of the village. The tourists had been brought in by a German anthropologist who had been living with the Kukukukus over the past few months.

While I respected Awateng's right to ask for an entrance fee to the sacred cultural site, I handballed the request to Priscilla, who was best placed to handle the sensitive issue of balancing the village's entitlement to revenue and ensuring the end charge to the tourists was reasonable.

As the tourism industry grows in PNG, it will be a continuing challenge for custodians of cultural heritage and other industry participants to manage and preserve traditional ways of life, without falling into the trap of over commercialising a product.

It was a steep 30-minute ascent to the cave where the smoked bodies rested. From time to time, I looked back at the valley and Awateng's village eerily cloaked in mist; it

definitely felt like we were entering another realm. When we reached the cave, the bodies were arranged as in a royal court, some were seated on bamboo thrones keeping watch over their relatives below.

Awateng proudly pointed out his grandfather, a figure coated in red clay, with fingernails, teeth and most skin intact. He was the last of the Kukukukus to be buried in this way before Christian missionaries banned the practice. However, the custom is set to be revived with Awateng's father electing in his will, to be preserved in the traditional fashion.

The process of smoking the bodies takes months. The level of preservation in this cool and moist environment was impressive. It was easy to see why these preserved bodies were the subject of such intense examination by scientists.



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Awateng also explained that some of his people often asked the ancestors for guidance or favours. Thinking about the predicament with the car and the timing of my next connecting flight from Lae, I silently asked Awateng's grandfather for safe passage. Not being an overly superstitious person, this was a strange request on my part, but I have to say when the mist that had crept into the valley suddenly cleared, I was a little unnerved.

When we returned to the car, 'the boys' had erected an elaborate timber support system to slowly jack up the car and free it. However, our passage back to Lae was not completely event free as the vehicle was bogged twice and there were large rivers to be crossed. But perhaps with the blessing of Awateng's grandfather, we eventually made it back to Lae, safe and sound.

Although we spent an hour maximum at the cave and a combined 12 hours return trip, it is a journey I would gladly make again. What I learnt from this trip is that it is not only the destination but also the journey to your destination that makes your 'adventure' worth retelling.



FACT BOX

Kukukuku: Who are they?

The Kukukuku people - although typically small in stature - are revered as some of the most formidable warrior tribes in PNG. They are infamous for their archery skills and delivering of swift fatal blows with a swing of their stone clubs. The Kukukukus are also adept at blending into their environment of windswept mountains and grass valleys, obtaining the advantage of surprise in raids and instilling fear in neighbouring tribes.



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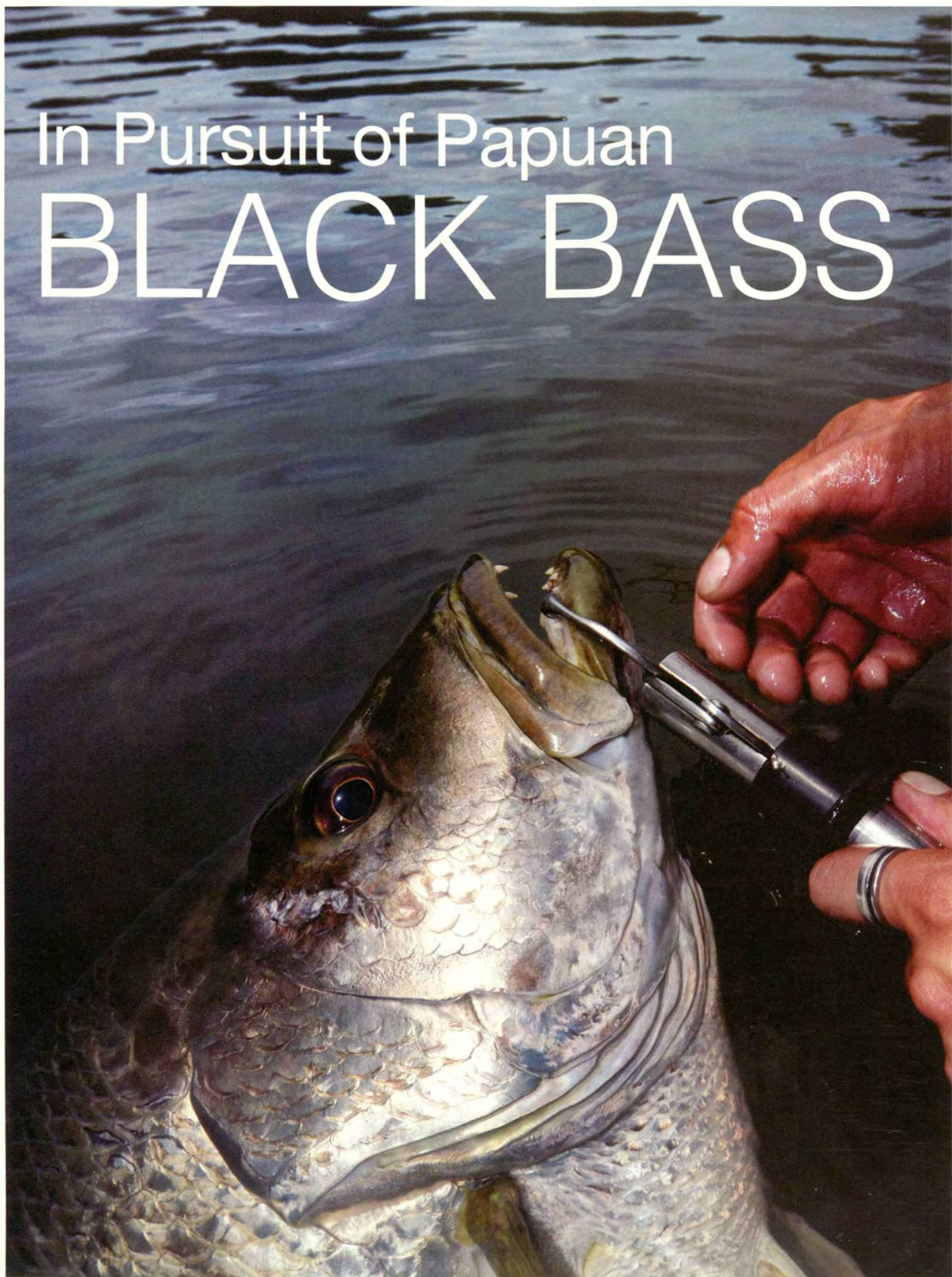
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In Pursuit of Papuan BLACK BASS





Ask any true sport or adventure angler, travelling to Papua New Guinea to chase any number of fish species is high on their “bucket list”. For me, it was no different but I had a focus on the much sought after Papuan Black Bass. The Papuan Black Bass is regarded as “pound for pound, the hardest pulling fresh water species on the planet”, and I can certainly vouch for that claim.

Spending two weeks in PNG wasn't only about fishing as the country holds an important place in my heritage, although I had not visited prior to this trip. A quick look back through my ancestry shows a significant portion of my family had spent time in this pristine country.

My family's distinct heritage in PNG started well before I was born when my paternal grandfather started a business there in the 1930s and this business continues today. Still run by my family, Seeto Kui is a prominent operation and remains a successful enterprise.

During World War II, a group of men including a 16-year old boy, were forced to evacuate PNG along a notoriously difficult trail called the Black Cat and one of those men, was my paternal grandfather while the boy was my maternal grandfather. They wouldn't have known at the time that they would later on have a common grandson and the significance of this event would shape my desire to experience the PNG life. During that trek, both my grandfathers; my maternal great grandfather and two of my great uncles took the arduous journey to escape the Japanese army.

Growing up, hearing my family recount stories of their PNG life had me convinced to visit at some stage but the attraction of the Papuan Black Bass sealed my final decision. Coming from Australia, where there is an abundance of available sport fishing species, the call of the Black Bass was far too great.





Visiting, talking and even eating with local villagers and experiencing a small aspect of their lives, will stay with me for some time. Their friendly nature was evident from the first meeting to our final goodbyes.

My trip to PNG provided more than I could possibly have hoped for, including a fishing and cultural experience of a lifetime. Visiting, talking and even eating with the villagers and experiencing a small aspect of their lives, will stay with me for some time. Their friendly nature was evident from the first meeting to our final goodbyes at the end of our trip.

Experiencing and seeing their way of life, watching them go about their own fishing techniques and seeing the importance of their family and village unit reminded me of my own life. I was fortunate enough to have the opportunity to eat a traditional meal at a particular village, where without any notice; they welcomed me into the village and allowed me to share a meal with them. This is an experience I would never encounter in Australia.

The fishing experience topped off my PNG pilgrimage, with the opportunity to fish some virtually untouched river systems while targeting many species, besides the mighty Black Bass. With the experience and knowledge provided by the local guides, the



fishing experience was both a pleasure and a challenge that would suit any skill level even for an outright novice through to the more experienced anglers.

Arriving at the river system full of anticipation and a touch of anxiety, the challenge for the Black Bass didn't disappoint. My initial concern of the sheer power of the Papuan Black Bass was not unwarranted and the challenge and opportunity that faced me drove me to cast, hook, land and handle one of these beasts. With the expert guidance of Jason Yip and Kori Chan from Sport Fishing PNG, the earlier apprehension turned to pure exhilaration as I landed my first Black Bass, albeit a small specimen that left plenty of room and plenty of days to improve.

The Black Bass experience provided by Sport Fishing PNG catered for the sport angler, adventure angler, trophy hunter, novice and photographer rolled into one experience. Not only targeting the Black Bass, the guides were also able to provide an experience that included barramundi, trevally, cod, mangrove jack, fingermark and even the giant gourami

Not only targeting Black Bass, the guides were able to provide an experience that included barramundi, trevally, cod, mangrove jack, fingermark and even the giant gourami.

and the fishing expedition took me to some of the most beautiful parts of the world that I would never likely to see.


The black bass experience in itself is best summed up by Jason as "a fish of a thousand casts" and sometimes "casting a lure in front of a freight train". The immense power and speed of these fish regularly had the fish, lure and most of my line back into a snag or fallen tree before I could even contemplate applying more pressure or even start winding in line. The last bass I caught on the trip, resulted in me spending most of the fight with my feet firmly planted against the side of the boat, while in a seated position on the front deck, just to gain the slightest amount of leverage and advantage over the fish. Now, fighting from a seated position or chair is usually reserved for Blue water monsters like the marlin and sail fish.



LOCAL DESTINATIONS

The fishing experience that I had, covered both Sport Fishing in PNG's wild river experience as well as the multi day trips on offer. The advantage of seeing so many river systems, allowed me to travel much of the Gulf region, meeting locals and experiencing more of Papua New Guinea.

Like many anglers, the bug has bitten. I may have experienced the Papuan black bass and Papua New Guinea, and no doubt tick many new fish species off my "bucket list" but I'm not quite done yet. I will make the trip back; hopefully within the next 12 months to fish with the guys from Sport Fishing PNG and also visit the villages and people I had spent time with on my first trip.

My trip would not have been possible without the support and guidance of Sport Fishing PNG. Jason, Kori and the local guides provided an experience I can only describe as reflecting true Papua New Guinea hospitality. The fishing and cultural experience is by far worth the journey. 

• For more galleries, video and information on Papuan Black Bass and my adventure to PNG, visit www.lureandfly.com

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FACT BOX

Papuan Black Bass

PAPUAN BLACK BASS (*Lutjanus goldiei*) is also called 'Papuan black snapper' or Niugini bass. Black bass inhabit brackish and fresh waters, they are opportunistic and omnivorous in their diet. They consume crabs, fish (including catfish, smaller bass, small crocodiles and mammals). In common with many large riverine fish, Black Bass are territorial. In areas where there is little tidal influence they remain in the one general area, but where there are large tides they move with the tides and changing river flows and water levels.

SPOT-TAIL BASS (*Lutjanus fuscescens*) also known as "Freshwater snapper" generally inhabit the more upper reaches of the river systems. Spot-Tail bass are also opportunistic and omnivorous in their diet and territorial like their relatives the Black Bass.

Black Bass are caught in conjunction with mangrove jack and Spot-Tail bass (in New Britain) and are the prime target of recreational (sports) fishers.



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KAIRURU ISLAND

Pristine, little-known art,
& undiscovered waves

WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHY: MICHAEL FRENCH SMITH*

Kairuru Island is less than 25 kilometres from Wewak, on the coast of the East Sepik Province, but only if you can ride on the back of one of the sea eagles that frequent the coastal skies.

Without wings, you have to go by boat, circling around the nearer island of Mushu as lush green but not as lofty as Kairuru.

Many visitors to Papua New Guinea know of Kairuru because during World War II, it was occupied by Japanese military forces and caught up in the fierce fighting that led to the Japanese surrender to Allied forces at Cape Wom, just west of Wewak.

A visitor today, however, will also find extraordinary natural beauty, a distinctive tradition of wood carving and good surfing.

A highlight of the island's beauty and a true luxury of life are the mountain streams that provide pure drinking water as well as vistas of rapids and waterfalls mottled by forest sunlight that no artist could arrange more deftly.

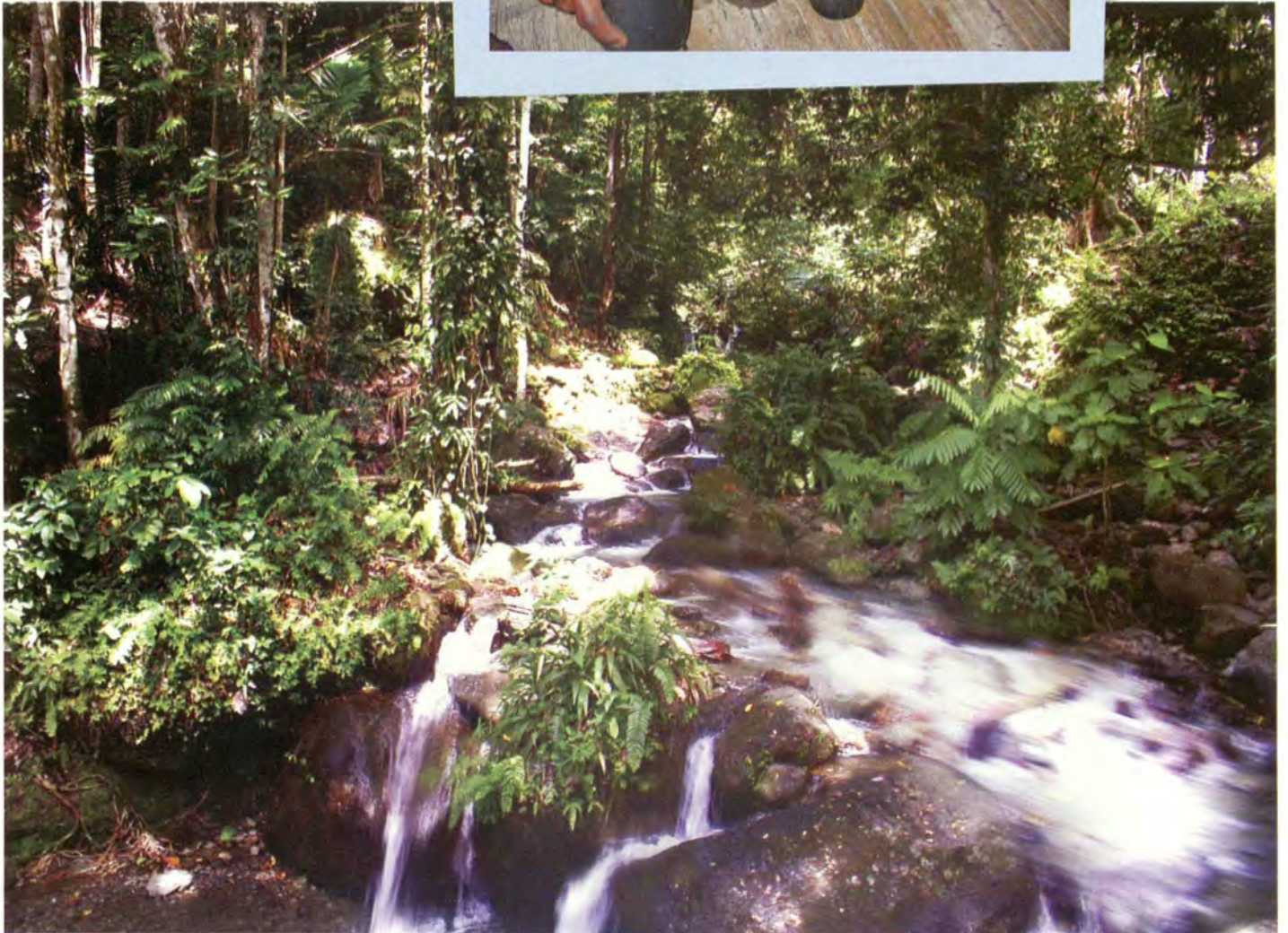
A study conducted in 2002 suggests that the island's largely volcanic geological structure catches and concentrates the rainwater that feeds the streams, some of which continue to flow even in times of severe drought.

The water's tumbling descent over rocky beds from the heights of the island helps purify it, and the islanders are careful to avoid polluting this priceless resource.

Kairuru Island wood carving styles are distinct from the Sepik mainland styles and are popular among collectors and visitors to Papua New Guinea see in artifact shops or decorating hotels and restaurants all over the country.

One seldom sees Kairuru artifacts for sale. They are also extremely scarce in major museum collections in Europe and America, perhaps because museum collecting expeditions in the colonial era tended to follow the routes established by traders and planters, who often avoided Kairuru's steep shores - especially its north coast, which offers virtually no anchorage for large vessels.

Nonetheless, Kairuru's craft traditions thrive. Although Kairuru villagers today usually eat from enamelled metal dishes, for special occasions, they prepare a smooth mixture of taro and cooking bananas on broad, hand-hewn wooden plates using taro pounders ornamented with carvings of human and animal beings.





Hour-glass shaped, hand-held drums (*kundu*), with heads of Kairuru monitor lizard skin, and large *garamut* drums are also still part of village life, and artisans still lavish care on shaping them inside and out, perfecting their sound, and on decorating their surfaces with fine carving.

When I go to Kairuru, to continue my anthropological research or visit old friends, I usually go straight to Kairuru's north coast, where the villages look out over the Bismarck Sea. I make my home in Kragur Village, but I often visit the nearby villages of Baru, Bou, and Shagur, in all of which one finds many skilled wood carvers.

Shagur carvers have made special efforts to find ways of selling their work, sometimes accumulating quantities of masks, walking sticks, ancestral and spirit figures, and other artifacts to offer to wholesale buyers in Wewak or to the occasional buyers who make their way to Kairuru's north coast.

Kragur carvers are no less adept in creating traditional forms. Some of them also apply their skills in new ways. Stephen Kilibop Umari provides Kragur's young men with smooth wooden stocks for spear guns powered by surgical tubing, which is sold in Wewak especially for this purpose. Umari also carves graceful surfboards.

North coast Kairuru's surfing opportunities



are as little known to the larger world as is Kairuru's art. Village young people are naturals in the water, but without the money to purchase surfboards they practice on home-made equipment.

Members of the Kragur Surf Club take out their one or two patched and dented factory-made boards only when they have the rare opportunity to take part in surfing contests in Wewak or Vanimo (in neighbouring Sandaun Province).

Most visitors to Kairuru make only day trips from Wewak, and few come to the north coast at all. But interest in hosting visitors for short or long stays is growing among north coast village entrepreneurs.

Wolfy Kalem runs the Polen Guest House in Shagur Village, often working with Ecotourism Melanesia, a founding member of the Community Based Tourism Foundation of Papua New Guinea.

The Polen Guest House offers clean and comfortable rooms in village-style houses set on high posts to catch the sea breeze; a choice of historical and nature excursions by land and sea; entertainment, including a Kragur group performing both traditional Kairuru singsing and modern Papua New Guinea string band music; opportunities to buy the works of local artisans; and, a rich variety of local garden produce, tropical fruits, and seafood.

Members of the Kragur Surf Club take out their one or two patched and dented factory-made boards only when they have the rare opportunity to take part in surfing contests in Wewak or Vanimo



Members of the Kragur Surf Club are also happy to accommodate visiting surfers and show them where to find the best waves off Kragur's Maratak Point.



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Members of the Kragur Surf Club are also happy to accommodate visiting surfers and show them where to find the best waves off Kragur's Maratak Point.

One can usually find boats going to Kairuru at the Wewak beach (across the coastal road from the Telikom building). Boats most often come and go between Wewak and Kragur or Shagur on Tuesdays and Fridays. They will usually take passengers for a very modest price, with no extra charge for sharing the route with dolphins and flying fish.



- *Michael French Smith is a cultural anthropologist who has published two books about life in Kragur Village, Kairuru Island, since Papua New Guinea became independent in 1975 (Hard Times on Kairuru Island & Village on the Edge). His forthcoming book follows Kragur's story up through 2011.*



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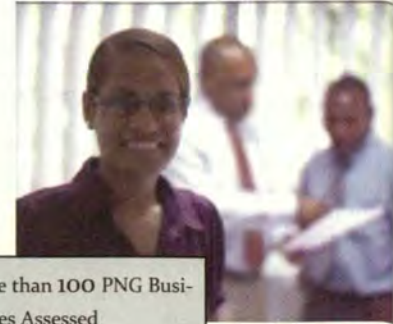


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KUTUBU

BY JOHN BROOKSBANK



The Highlands Jewel

FLYING ACROSS THE HIGHLANDS, one's eyes become inured to the seemingly endless waves of vegetation-clad ridges and mountains of green with the occasional patch of land cleared for gardens and villages. And then suddenly, one comes across the blueness of Lake Kutubu, a huge patch of inland water - it's almost as if it shouldn't be there.

But here it is and has been for millennia, ever since geological movements blocked this Highlands valley in the aptly named Papuan Fold Belt, a region of parallel ridges that direct the rivers that separate them.

It was this surface morphology and its similarity to that of Persia, now Iran, that in 1955 initially attracted petroleum geologists such as Zehnder and Llewellyn of the Australasian Petroleum Company (APC), a consortium that included Oil Search Limited.

The small Soro River is the only waterway to drain the lake. It joins the Digimu River, that in turn joins the Mubi River, which when it joins the Hegigio River becomes the much larger Kikori River.

The Foe and Fasu people of Lake Kutubu have been involved in the production and trading of oil for many centuries. They produced ira tigasoo or digasoo tree oil - one of the commodities that sustained trading networks within the Highlands and between the Highlands and the coast. Digasoo is an oil that separates out from the collected sap of trees related to *Campospermum brevipetiolata*, used principally as a rather 'odd' smelling body oil during traditional sing-sings.

The exceptionally clear waters of this Highlands freshwater lake are home to many fish which, together with sago palms that

make up the surrounding swamp lands, provide a sustainable subsistence lifestyle for the relatively small population of local people who live on its shores.

Kutubu is in fact the second largest inland lake in the country, the largest being Lake Murray in Western Province. This Highlands jewel sits at just over 800 metres above sea level, is 19 kilometres long, four kilometres at its widest point, covers 7000 hectares, is 70 metres deep at its deepest, has a catchment of about 26,000 hectares and is home to 11 endemic species of fish that are found nowhere else in the world.

When first seen from the air by Jack Hides in 1936, he called it Lake Margeurite, after his wife. Then, it was part of the Highlands and its one million inhabitants that at the time were almost totally unknown to the outside world.

LOCAL DESTINATIONS

The colonial Papuan administration established a police post at the lake in 1937, now officially termed Kutubu, following the local name for the area. It was the local people's first introduction to the outside world.



In the Junkers W34 aircraft with Hides was Ivan Champion, who would be walking into the area on foot later in the year with Charles Adamson in their famous Bamu-Purari patrol. Anthropologist F E Williams would also later spend some time studying the people of the lake.

The colonial Papuan administration established a police post at the lake in 1937, now officially termed Kutubu, following the local name for the area. It was the local people's first introduction to the outside world.

This post was a base for further exploration of the Highlands, serviced by a Guinea Airways Junkers seaplane that moored at a jetty off Tage Point below the rough buildings established by the patrol whose only other communication was by radio.

Links with the rest of the world were interrupted by the second World War, but the patrol post was re-opened in 1949, this time using a Catalina flying boat. As usual in PNG, hot on the heels of the administrators came the missionaries, eager to save souls.

For the people of Lake Kutubu, it was the somewhat 'thunderbolts from heaven' evangelical rhetoric of the Unevangelised Field Mission, later known as the Asia Pacific Christian Mission. This religious outpost was managed by the dedicated Murray Rule, who established his base at Inu village, just along the lake shore from the early patrol post.

He stayed in the area for more than 26 years until 1977 and wrote an authoritative book on the people, their language and culture. The mission later moved their headquarters to Orokana, a little further from the lake,



and eventually became incorporated into the Evangelical Church of Papua New Guinea.

The administration meanwhile moved to Pimaga, where it was serviced by a small airstrip, now the district administrative centre, on the road from Mendi.

Despite these outsiders in their midst, life remained much the same for the people of Lake Kutubu.

With no road access, forests remained unlogged, outrigger dugout canoes were paddled, populations remained small, few individuals attended schools, ladies pounded sago meal and the bones of the dead were placed in sacred open air ossuaries.

With the development of high altitude, heavy lift helicopters and increasing demand for and price of oil, petroleum explorers started casting their eyes to those areas in PNG, first identified by APC geologists decades before.

The traditional subsistence lifestyles of the Lake Kutubu people changed however, when commercial oil was discovered by the lagifu 2X exploration well in 1986. A consortium of companies, led by Chevron Niugini, subsequently drilled more than 30 wells, leading to the issue of a production licence by the government, construction of processing facilities and the historic shipment of the first oil from PNG in 1992.



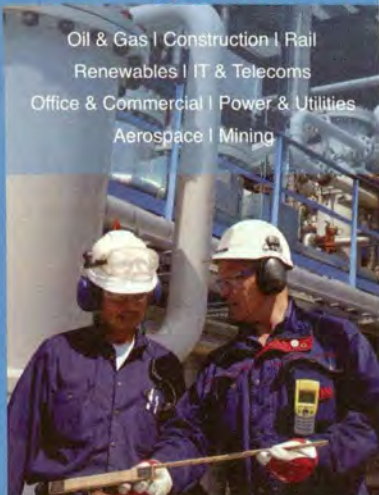
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Initial oil production was 140,000 barrels per day and this Kutubu commercialisation led to the discovery of, and production from, the Moran and Gobe oil fields along with further huge reserves of gas, also in Southern Highlands.

Production today is just over 30,000 barrels per day and the ExxonMobil-led LNG Project currently under construction will ensure ongoing wealth from petroleum developments in the country for decades to come.

Now, 25 years after the first oil, the lake appears to have been unaffected by the petroleum production that has taken place almost on its shores.

Oil exports have been beneficial to the nation and to other stakeholders who have an interest in the land where the oilfields are situated.

The National Government earned more than K9 billion between 1992 and 2010 whilst other stakeholders such as the affected provincial governments and landowners have also received considerable financial and non-cash benefits as a direct result of oil developments in the Southern Highlands.

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Many people have an interest in the lake. The area was gazetted by the National Government as a Wildlife Management Area in 1992 and as a Wetland of International Importance under the Ramsar Convention in 1998.

Studies have shown that rainfall and stream inflows cannot account for the balance of Lake Kutubu's 'water equation' so that it must also be fed from subterranean water inflows, not surprising considering the amount of porous limestone in the area.

Like all inland lakes, Kutubu occasionally experiences what is known as eutrophic turnover events, during which deoxygenated water comes to the surface causing short term and localised fish kills.

A number of independent studies of the flora and fauna of the lake in recent years have clearly demonstrated its environmental good health. It would seem that the main threat to the sustainability of the Lake Kutubu environment is humans.

No matter how well the physical aspects are cared for in terms of international regimes and conventions, or how conscientiously petroleum companies manage their impacts, the fact remains that the increased wealth that oil and gas brings will continue to change the lifestyles of the people around the lake.

Cash incomes, better health and education

services have led to increasing population and changes to traditional ways of living, including burial of the dead and decreasing importance and use of traditional men's longhouses.

Incrementally, the use of outboard motors, soaps, detergents and other introduced products along with increased gardening will all have an impact on the Lake Kutubu ecosystem.

Many people have an interest in the lake. The area was gazetted by the National Government as a Wildlife Management Area in 1992 and as a Wetland of International Importance under the Ramsar Convention in 1998.

In partnership with the oilfield operator Chevron Niugini and now Oil Search, WWF has managed a project working on many environmental aspects in the Lake Kutubu catchment since the early 1990s.

As important as other stakeholders are, the traditional landowners who live along the shores of the lake want to continue to enjoy the benefits that oil developments have brought whilst maintaining their traditional

fishing practices and use of natural resources in the area.

Local interests are increasingly about more than maintaining subsistence lifestyles - certain individuals operate small mobile sawmills, guest houses, grow orchids, coffee, rice and market garden vegetables.

Tubo Lodge, owned by the people of nearby Tugiri village, sits on a peninsula that juts out in to the lake and attracts bird watchers and other hardy travellers. So, for the time being, all is well with Lake Kutubu from an environmental point of view.

Oil Search has been instrumental in facilitating meetings of all relevant stakeholders with an interest in working together to maintain the unique lake environment, continued petroleum production and orderly development of the local communities in the area in a manner that is sustainable in years to come.

This corporate, community and environmental conservation cooperation should ensure Lake Kutubu remains a very special part of Papua New Guinea - a jewel of the Highlands!



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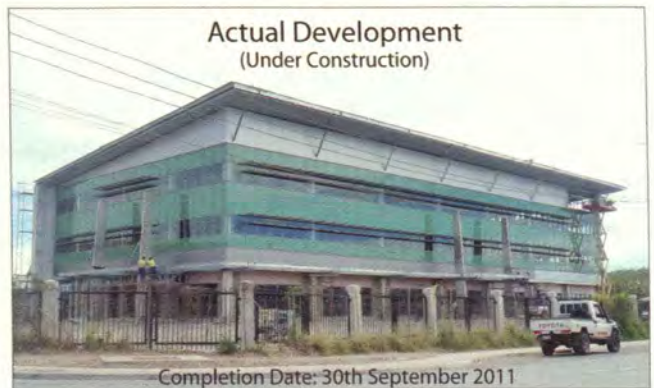
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THE NEW FINDS

Over 1000 new species found in New Guinea

BY RON TOFT | PHOTOGRAPHS: WWF

A NEW WWF REPORT, *Final Frontier: Newly Discovered Species of New Guinea (1998-2008)*, reveals that scientists found at least 1,060 previously unknown life forms on what is the world's biggest tropical island during the 10-year period - 218 plants, 580 invertebrates, 71 fish, 134 amphibians, 43 reptiles, 12 mammals and 2 birds.

Tragically, though, many of these barely known 'new' species are at risk from poorly planned and unsustainable development - especially logging and forest conversion to agriculture - according to WWF.

"This report shows that New Guinea's forests and rivers are among the richest in the world," said Dr Neil Stronach, programme representative for WWF Western Melanesia. "But it also shows that unchecked human demand can push even the wealthiest environments to bankruptcy."

He went on: "If you look at New Guinea in terms of biological diversity, it is much more like a continent than an island." On average, scientists had found two new species every single week from 1998 to 2008 - "something nearly unheard of in this day and age".



A river shark, a snub-fin dolphin, an enormous bat, three monitor lizards, vividly coloured rainbow fish, butterflies and other diverse insects, a honeyeater bird, a tree frog with striking red and black mottled eyes, a rare kind of mahogany and 100 different orchids are among more than 1,000 new species of animals and plants discovered in New Guinea between 1998 and 2008.



Despite covering less than 0.5% of the Earth's landmass, New Guinea supports a staggering 6 to 8% of all known species, many of which are found nowhere else.

New Guinea is home to the world's third biggest tract of rainforest and Asia's most pristine rivers and wetlands. And it lies at the heart of the Coral Triangle, which boasts the Earth's biggest concentration of coral and reef fish.

The diversity of New Guinea's mammals is "astonishing," says *Final Frontier*, on average one new species having been discovered every year during the past 10 years.

New Guinea is especially noted for the diversity of its tree-dwelling marsupials, of which there are 38 different kinds. One of these previously unknown creatures, the blue-eyed spotted cuscus - a small possum endemic to PNG - was discovered in 2004.

Another new species found only in PNG is Sir David's long-beaked echidna - a heavily clawed spiny anteater named after world famous TV wildlife presenter and naturalist Sir David Attenborough.

PNG harbours, too, a 1.4 kg woolly giant rat - five times bigger than a common rat! It is also thought to be a new species, but further studies are needed before its status can be confirmed.

The New Guinea region "is certainly the final frontier for mammal discoveries," says the report. "Some scientists have even suggested that a large proportion of New Guinea mammals might yet remain undiscovered."

Two new bat species were found in 2005, the fruit-eating greater monkey-faced bat, also a PNG endemic.

Another unexpected discovery that year was the snub-fin dolphin - the first new dolphin species recorded for at least 30 years. The snub-fin is thought to inhabit the coastal waters of Australia and PNG.

The New Guinea region "is certainly the final frontier for mammal discoveries," says the report. "Some scientists have even suggested that a large proportion of New Guinea mammals might yet remain undiscovered."

Among the dozens of new fish caught in New Guinea between 1998 and 2008 were seven previously unknown kinds of rainbow fish, including the zig-zag rainbow fish, the males of which have a pattern of red-orange stripes running along their body. Such stripes are especially prominent during courtship displays.

What *Final Frontier* describes as "the most extraordinary" freshwater discovery of the

decade was a northern river shark, the largest specimen of which was 2.5 metres long. "Despite its large size, the species is seldom seen and remains rare."

The "most striking" new reptiles discovered were three monitor lizard species, one of which - found on Batana island - "is one of the most spectacular reptile discoveries anywhere". Up to a metre long, "this beautiful species is black with a mesmerising pattern of turquoise and blue."

A new type of sea krait - a sea snake - was found on an island close to Port Moresby. "Despite its name, it returns to land to mate and lay eggs, making it particularly remarkable that it remained hidden until now."

A staggering 134 hitherto unknown frog species were found during the survey period. Many more have been discovered but have yet to be officially described.

Males of one frog recorded for the first time in 2000 are just 1cm long, while another appears



Classified as critically endangered, the mahogany was identified as a result of sharp-eyed Dr Andrew Mack finding an unidentified seed in the cassowary's droppings! He successfully germinated the seed and earned his place in botanical history.

to sport fangs.

Very little is known about New Guinea's invertebrates - creepy-crawlies and related creatures. The WWF report describes these as "an exciting area for further scientific research and discovery. It is thought there could be as many as 400,000 different invertebrates on the island - everything from stick insects and horned beetles to a huge range of butterflies and giant moths.

No fewer than 580 new invertebrate species were described between 1998 and 2008, including two "extraordinarily coloured" snails - one bright yellow and the other bright yellow and green - various butterflies and the New Guinea apricot crayfish.

Two new birds were found during the 10-year period - the delightfully named wattled smoky honeyeater and odedi or Bougainville bush-warbler.

The honeyeater was found in 2005 within minutes of a team of researchers landing by helicopter deep in the forests of the sacred summits of the Foja Mountains in Indonesia's Papua Province.

The bush-warbler, whose existence had been suspected by birdwatchers, was recently described and named after Bougainville, PNG.

These discoveries, says Final Frontiers, "are particularly significant because they represent the first new bird species to be sighted on the island since 1939."

New Guinea is well known for the number and variety of its birds, not least its 38 different birds of paradise. Two-thirds of the world's bowerbirds and one-third of its kingfishers are found only on the island.

A previously unknown type of mahogany tree was one of 218 new plant species discovered in New Guinea between 1998 and 2008. Found in PNG's Eastern Highlands Province in 1998, it was immediately placed on the IUCN Red List of Endangered Species.

Classified as critically endangered, the mahogany was identified as a result of sharp-eyed Dr Andrew Mack finding an unidentified seed in the cassowary's droppings! He successfully germinated the seed and earned his place in botanical history.



No fewer than 100 new orchid species were found during the 10-year period, including a "magnificent pink" specimen discovered in PNG in 2003. More than 3,000 orchid species are known to occur in PNG - second only to Ecuador's 3,700 species.

Final Frontiers spotlights the fact that although New Guinea's diverse natural habitats largely remain intact at present, "many are being lost at an alarming rate and others are threatened."

New Guinea, says the report, has become "a new frontier" for exploiting natural resources. "Industrial exploration and extraction and infrastructure development are expanding. This allows easy access to formerly remote regions. Often there is little interest in sound environmental practices."

A staggering 15% of PNG's rainforests were cleared and 8.8% degraded through logging between 1972 and 2002. "Studies estimate that the clearance rate for forests accessible to industrial logging is 1.1 to 3.4% annually - much higher than previously reported.

"The major drivers of forest change in PNG during that period were logging in



Final Frontiers concludes by saying that "an immense opportunity" exists in New Guinea. The future of the island's flora and fauna depends, it says, on resources being managed sustainably.



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the lowlands and subsistence agriculture throughout the country."

Although forest fires and mining are comparatively minor issues, the establishment of plantations, especially for oil palm, "is increasingly significant."

Clearance rates could be even higher in neighbouring Papua.

Although there are "encouraging signs" that PNG oil palm producers are "keen to pursue" certification through the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil, "the expansion of the industry in Indonesian Papua and an increasing number of unregulated new oil palm companies in PNG pose a growing threat".

Final Frontiers concludes by saying that "an immense opportunity" exists in New Guinea. The future of the island's flora and fauna depends, it says, on resources being managed sustainably.

"Economic development and environmental protection can and must be mutually supportive.

"Managing these resources sustainably will allow the people of New Guinea and its islands to maintain their extraordinary natural and cultural heritage while improving their livelihoods and developing the economy."



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KAVIENG ADVENTURES

BY KEN HOPPEN



A hornbill inspects our group at Nusa Island Retreat.

Located on the north-west corner of New Ireland, Kavieng is a destination for adventurers of many kinds.

Kavieng is rife with history - both recent and ancient.

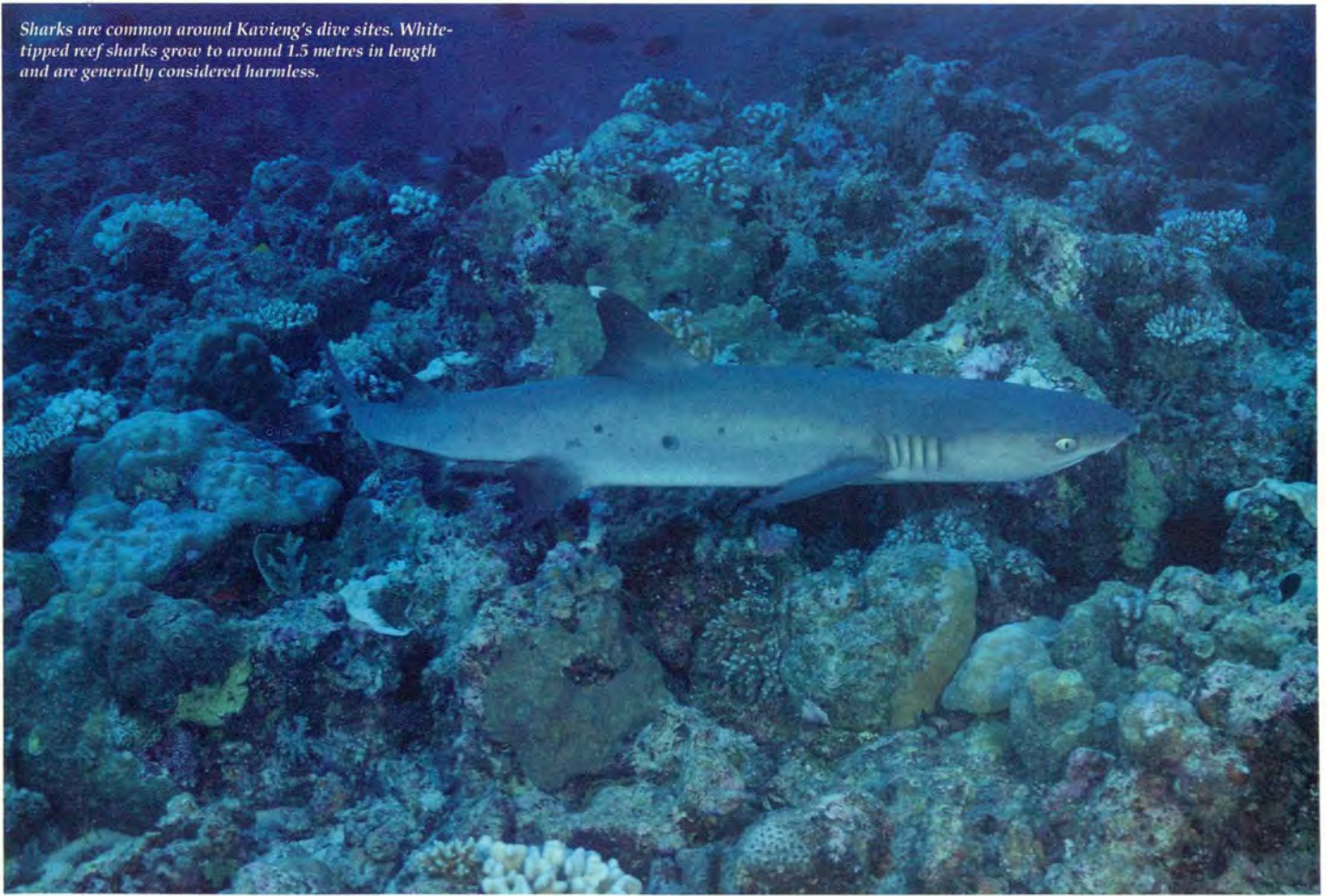
From the ancient traditions of its people, to the fierce reminders of Japanese occupation and the battles fought in the area, there is a lot to see in this tropical destination.

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Long known for its surfing and fishing trips, dive groups are now staying on this picturesque location that also offers kayaking, village tours, and a walk around the neighbouring island that takes in Japanese

Sharks are common around Kavieng's dive sites. White-tipped reef sharks grow to around 1.5 metres in length and are generally considered harmless.



The current flow attracts large pelagic fish and sharks, making the dive truly spectacular.

war relics.

The diving around Kavieng is world class. Scuba Ventures picks you up from your accommodation and takes you out to see the best that the area has to offer.

Albatross Passage is a famous dive site, some 40 minutes by boat from Nusa Island. Located in a narrow opening between two islands, this passage provides a major outlet for water passing from north to south, and vice-versa.

The current flow attracts large pelagic fish and sharks, making the dive truly spectacular. The dropoff starts at around six metres and the strong current pushes you along until you dip under the lip and start going down the wall, where it becomes quite mild.

Several sharks are always within sight during the dive, mainly grey reef whalers and white-tip reef sharks, but you never know what might stroll past here.

The wall is covered with life, moray eels, schools of fish, small shells, shrimp and crabs hiding in amongst the corals - and then there are the special encounters.

A pygmy manta ray cruises past just under us during the dive, and towards the end a large giant grouper, over two metres long, checks us out from a distance.

Reef hooks are used to keep you on the one spot during the deco stop. The memories from dives such as this last a lifetime.

There are many other reefs around Kavieng that are just as memorable, the pygmy seahorse that can be found on the gorgonian corals, the twin spot gobies, just the mass of life that can be seen here.

On top of that are the wrecks. Whilst there are many shipwrecks in the area to dive, it was the WWII plane wrecks that fascinated me. Three 'Jake' seaplanes are found in the waters between Nusa Island and the main island.

These range in depth from around eight metres to 15 metres and are suitable for the most inexperienced divers. They lie near the reef in silty water, so the viz here is not always what you expect from a tropical location.

There is one that is special however. A 'Pete' reconnaissance bi-plane sits in 40 metres of water a couple of minutes by boat from Nusa

Many host gobies zip up and down local sea whips.





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The "Deep Pete" biplane wreck is on the ocean side of Nusa Island Retreat at a depth of 40 metres. It sits on a sandy bottom, and is a haven for local marine life.

This Tree House Resort is about a half hour's drive east of Kavieng and could be the first stop of a tour of the island.



Island. Known as the 'Deep Pete,' this wreck is spectacular. Located in the middle of a large sand tract, it serves as an attraction to the local fish life; and usually several schools of fish can be observed around it.

It is packed with fish and colour, lionfish can be observed stalking the smaller fish schools, and larger snapper and emperor sometimes need to be brushed away to see the wreck.

This plane is upside down, and the fuselage is now broken, but this doesn't detract in any way to the look of the wreck, or the experience in diving it.

Located on the ocean side of the island, the visibility here is superb and you can expect well over 30 metres when you dive here.

For those with more time, bicycle tours of the island are becoming very popular with international visitors, and these can be tailored to your needs.

There are several basic lodgings along this long route, but one deserves special mention.

About 30 minutes drive from Kavieng, there is a tree house resort simply out of 'The Swiss Family Robinson'.

On this trip, it is possible to see freshwater eels, shark calling when the time of the year is right, and village life on New Ireland.

Whatever brings you to this remote location, you will find that there is more to do here than you thought, and that the time spent here is never enough.

HANDCRAFTED IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA

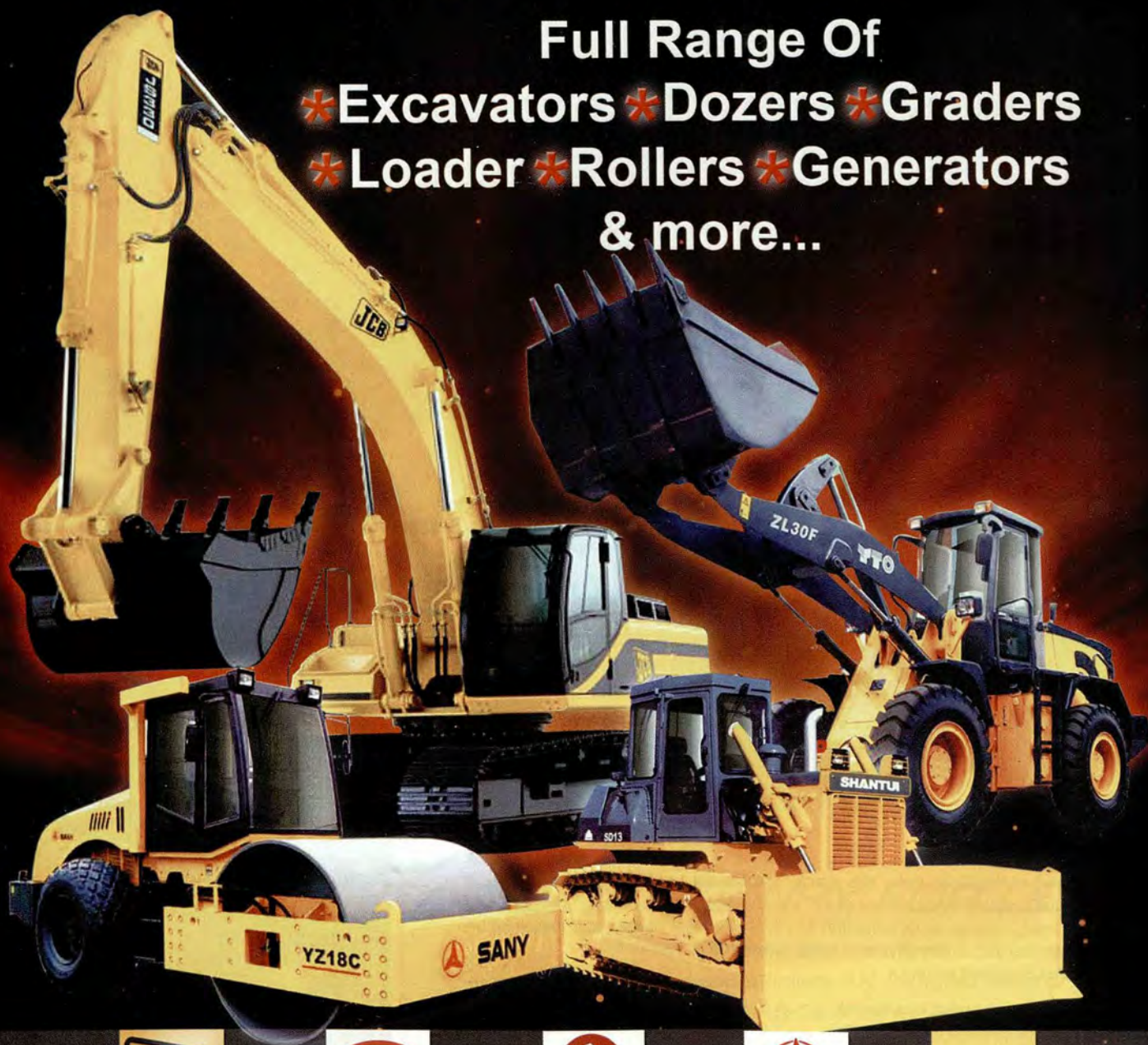


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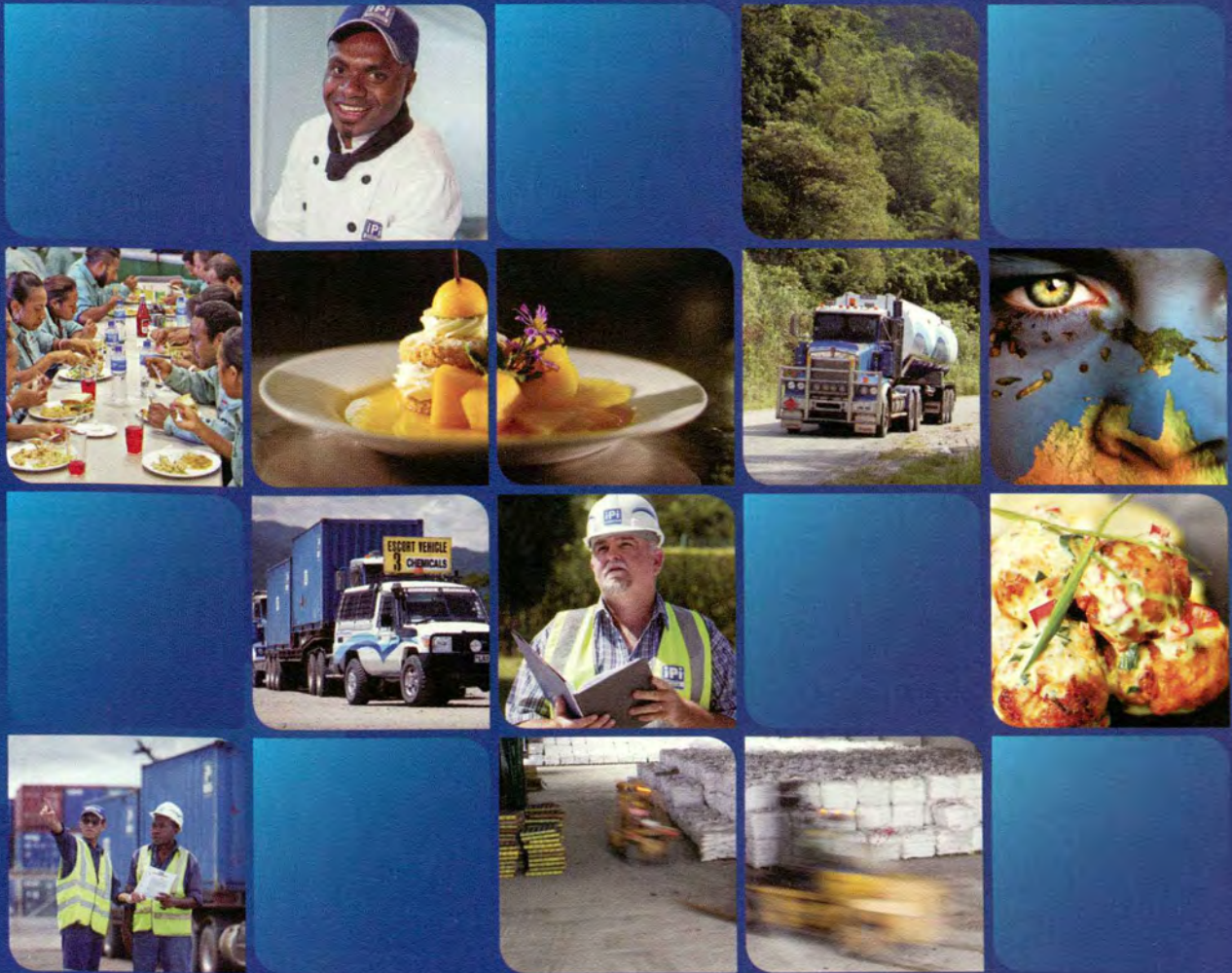
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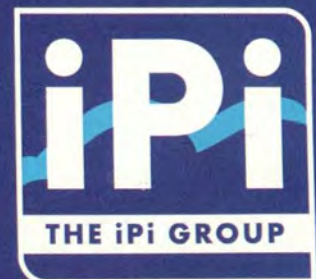
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The UK-PNG Connection

BY JOHN BROOKSBANK

ONCE UPON A TIME, almost no one in Great Britain had ever heard of Papua New Guinea - perhaps just a few government officers or zealous members of the London Missionary Society such as the Reverend Benjamin Butcher, who in the early 1900s, had travelled from England to Ero village, near Aird Hills in the Kikori River delta, where he spent many years evangelising.

Whilst these folk were concerned about either the expansive colonial ambitions of the other European superpowers in the South Pacific, Holland and Germany, or the desire to save souls in the name of the Lord, most of the British population knew or cared little about

Papua or New Guinea. Thankfully, much has changed since those days as a result of faster more effective travel, worldwide broadcast media, international relations and trade. Papua New Guinea is now on the map and many are familiar with the country.

A David Attenborough documentary in the 1960s featured birds of paradise in the Highlands of PNG.

Since that time French filmmaker Jacques Cousteau and many other international notables, not the least of which being the British Broadcasting Corporation- better known as the BBC, have through film brought

many aspects of the country into the living rooms of people in the United Kingdom.

The last time the United Kingdom had any colonial or territorial interest in this country was over a hundred years ago, when it handed over the administration of British New Guinea to the newly established commonwealth of Australia in 1906. There are, however, still strong links between the two countries, for example, much of PNG's legislation is based on English common law.

Papua New Guinea is a member of the British Commonwealth and as such still recognises the Queen as head of state, through her representative, the Governor-General.

High Commissioner to the United Kingdom, Ms Jean Kekedo recently reminisced about her nine years as representative of the Papua New Guinea Government, on the eve of her departure home and replacement by another long-serving public servant, Ms. Winnie Kiap.

"I think the moment I will remember the most is when, at the request of the Commonwealth Secretariat, I read the address at St. Paul's Cathedral on the event of the Queen's diamond (80th) birthday," says Jean.

One of the main functions of Jean and her staff is to promote agricultural and other exports of the country.

Assisted by Minister Dr John Balavu, Jean has during her tenure as PNG High Commissioner,

been particularly keen to promote agricultural products that ultimately benefit village smallholder farmers in the country, such as coffee and cocoa. Assisted by a greater interest in what is termed Fairtrade by some of the major supermarket chains, both these commodities can be found in products on the shelves of suburban shops all over the country.

In the very prestigious and up-market Fortnum & Mason flagship store, purveyors of fine foods and gifts, located in Piccadilly in central London since 1707, a bar of chocolate containing PNG cocoa costs 5 pounds sterling and elsewhere in the store PNG coffee can also be purchased at an equally extortionate price in a fancy wooden thermidor.

In contrast, a similar sized chocolate bar manufactured from PNG cocoa costs an affordable 65p in any Lidl's supermarket, where there are also racks of coffee from the Highlands of the country.

In addition to the government and commercial links between the two nations, there are many informal connections between people from the two countries through marriage, education or friendship.

The recent three part series 'Exploration PNG - Land of the Lost Volcano' produced by the BBC Natural History Unit, featuring intrepid international scientists researching wildlife in the wilds of Southern Highlands and West

New Britain provinces, was hugely popular when it was released on British television in 2010.

Of course the mineral wealth of the country has also attracted the interest of mining and petroleum companies, some of which are domiciled in the United Kingdom.

The construction of the US\$16 billion LNG project in Papua New Guinea has resulted in a huge increase in the number of business and corporate British travellers to the country, according to Vikki Joyce, head of sales and marketing for Flight Directors, the General Sales Agent for Air Niugini, which covers the United Kingdom and the rest of Europe.

Vikki travels to Papua New Guinea once or twice a year with a group of travel agents in order to familiarise herself with the varied destinations and tourist activities that the country has to offer, and also to gradually educate subsidiary agencies about these same attractions.

The Flight Directors office is located in a somewhat nondescript building near London's Gatwick airport, but since it is not a retail operation this isn't particularly important.

Here the company's staff have direct access to the Air Niugini reservations computer system and handle any enquiry and booking for travel on the national airline, as well as other related tourism operations in the country.

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So although British New Guinea became the Territory of Papua 105 years ago, later to be absorbed into the independent nation of Papua New Guinea, there are still important links with the 'mother country'.



Gradually, the efforts of the PNG Department of Foreign Affairs, Air Niugini, BBC and other media organisations and the various commercial businesshouses with an interest in the country have resulted in raising the profile of Papua New Guinea in the United Kingdom and internationally.

So although British New Guinea became the Territory of Papua 105

years ago, later to be absorbed into the independent nation of Papua New Guinea, there are still important links with the 'mother country'.

As the economy of the country expands on the back of burgeoning mining, petroleum and agricultural developments, these links are set to grow even stronger in the years to come.



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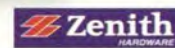

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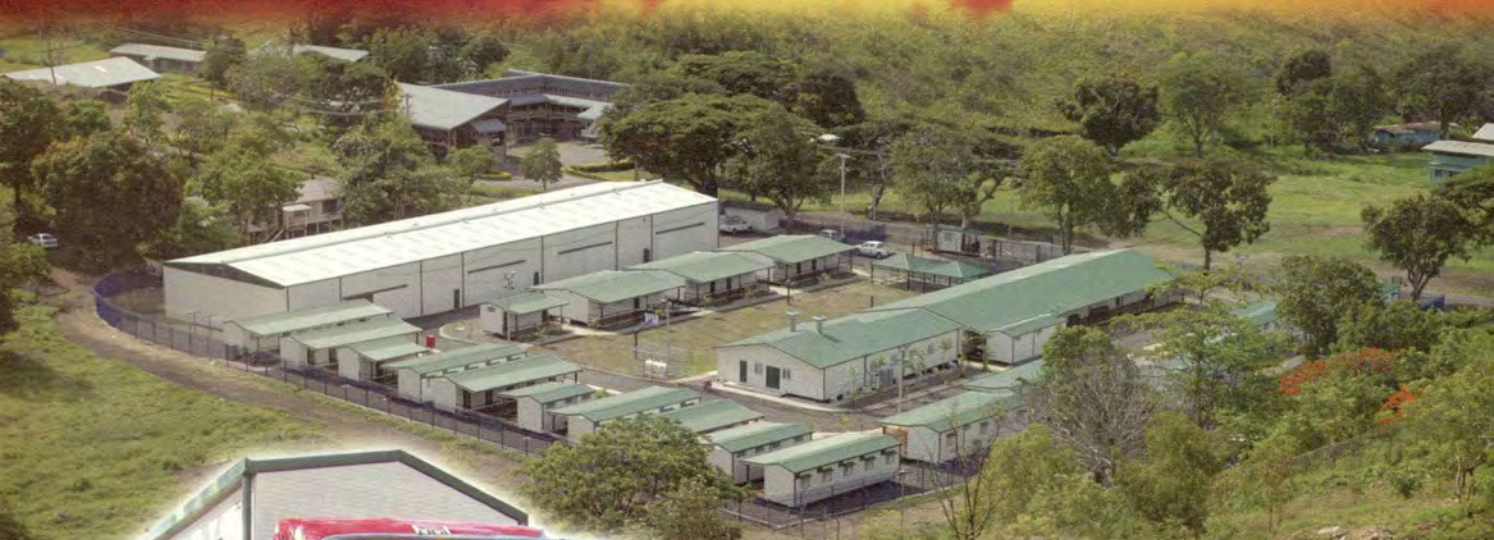
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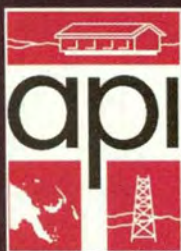
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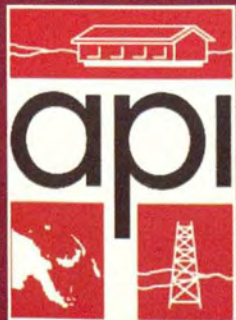


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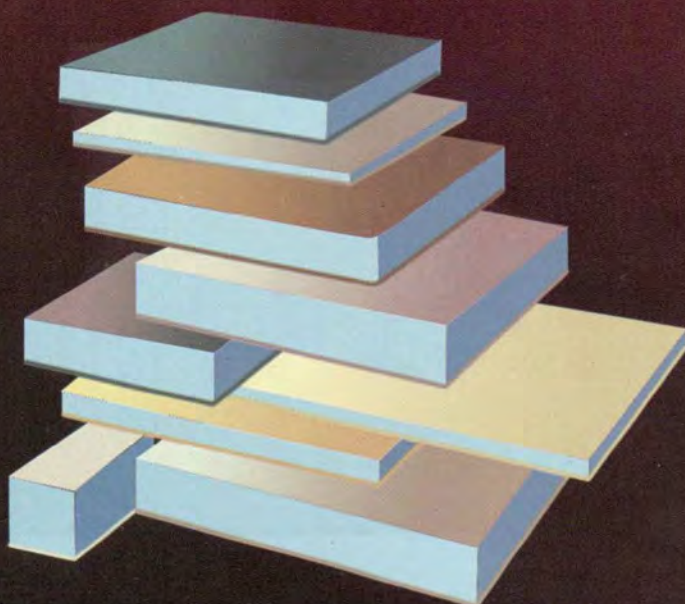
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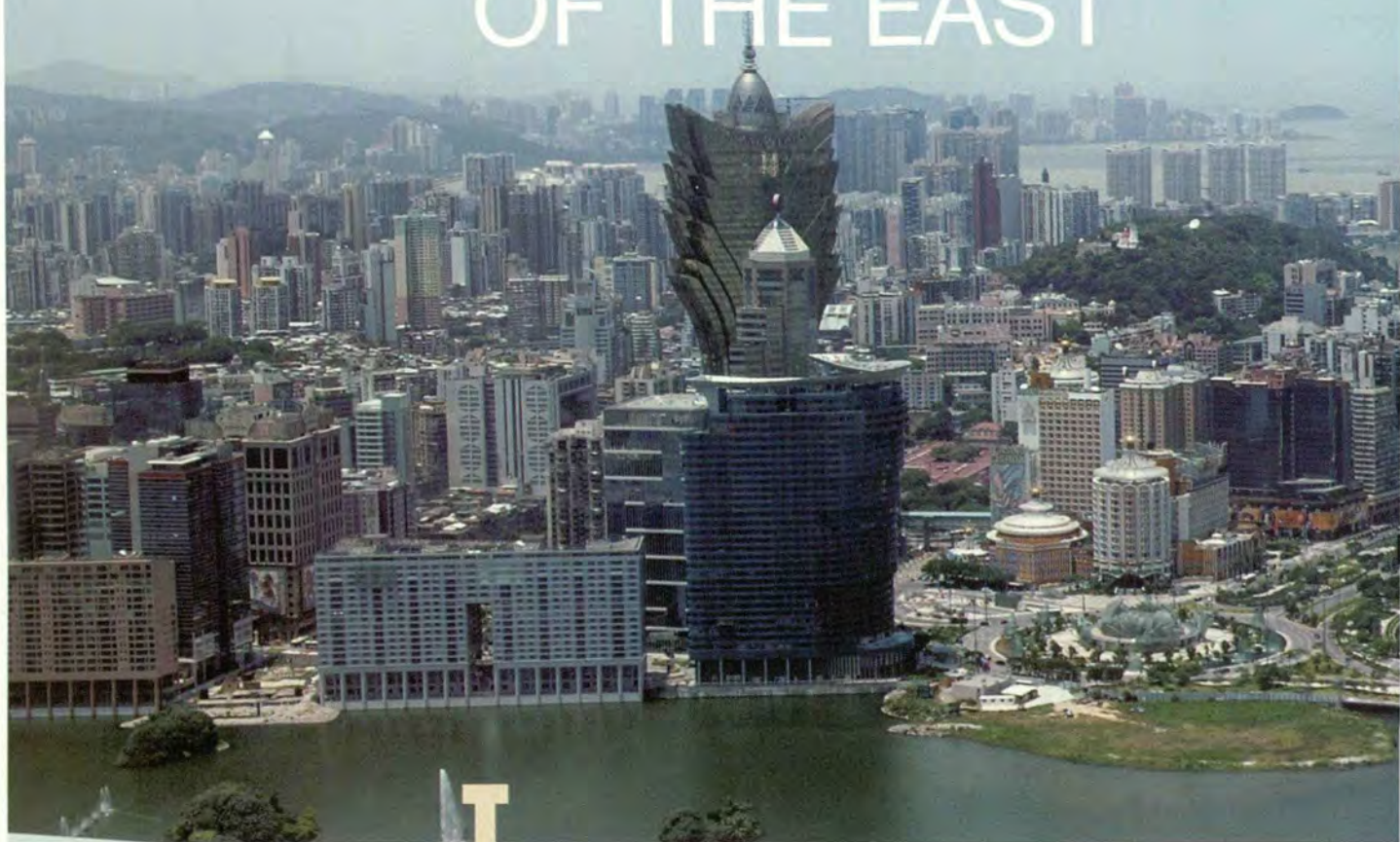
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It is where, in many ways, east meets west and is often referred to as the Las Vegas of the East and with very good reason – Macau government earnings from casinos alone in 2010 outpaced Las Vegas four-fold, totalling US\$23 billion.

If anyone ever doubted the Asian proclivity for gambling, a visit to Macau, which like Hong Kong is a special administrative region of China, should dispel such notions. In the 1980s there were just three casinos headed by the ornate Lisboa - today there are 37.

After deregulation of the gaming industry in 2002, corporate brinkmanship of casino owners as they strived to outdo each other resulted in ever larger and more ornate establishments. Many of the larger internationally recognised casinos have created their particular edifices to greed including the Venetian, The Sands, Hard Rock, Wynn, Galaxy, Crowne's City of Dreams and the MGM Grand. Jackie Chan is reputed to be a shareholder in the Grand Emperor casino.

When the old Lisboa was eclipsed status-wise, owner Dr Stanley Ho, who now owns 12 casinos, purchased a nearby soccer field and constructed the huge, unmissable and gaudily gold Grand Lisboa that crassly glitters above downtown Macau and its now, in comparison, miserably small predecessor. On the heels of the casino builders, came a bevy of well-known international hotels such as the Shangri-La and Sheraton, also clamouring for patronage of the punters.

Macau is where Chinese mainland and Hong Kong residents go to gamble since casinos are not allowed in their parts of China. Macau is, after all, only a one-hour fast ferry ride away or a bit less by the faster jet foils, which still look futuristic speeding along above the water on their skis.

Macau



The journey across the green silted waters of the Pearl River delta and South China Sea passes somewhat barren, rocky islands being steadily excavated away as fill for the never ending land reclamation.

There is a steady flow of laden container vessels from the Shenzhen industrial zone in nearby China and the nutrient rich waters are also patrolled by fishing trawlers, their booms outstretched to harvest the shallow seas.

With ferries every half hour, 24 hours a day, servicing the many people wanting to travel to and from the casinos that drive the Macau economy, there is little chance of 'missing the bus'. These other ferries speed past with their white tails of frothy flume.

Gamblers are whisked away from the airport and ferry terminals by sleek air conditioned buses direct to the gaming tables.

It is said that housewives make up a large percentage of daytime casino clients, having a flutter on the tables whilst husbands are at work. Conversely of course, "Darling I have a late business meeting", could well account for the greater percentage of male players in the evening hours!

About 86% of Macau government income is derived from the gaming industry, the only other significant contributors to the economy being tourism and textile manufacture, although the latter has been exported to the nearby Zhuhai special economic area.



Gaming revenues have allowed Macau to build more bridges, an extensive road network and continue the land reclamation that started soon after the Portuguese were granted the then three small islands as the first European settlement in the Far East in the 16th century.

Macau is now a peninsula joined to the mainland and the islands of Taipa and Coloane are connected by a number of bridges and have all been enlarged through land reclamation, including an airport and a five-square kilometre area known as the Cotai strip. From having an area of 12 square kilometres in 1912, the islands now cover 29 square kilometres.

The last decade has fuelled urban development built on the profits of casinos. There is, however, much more to Macau than the glitz, glamour and garish architecture of the gaming houses, since some of this windfall revenue has been applied to preserving its colonial heritage.

The Portuguese established Macau as a trading station in the 1550s between the estuaries of the Pearl and West rivers, just downstream from the city of Canton, now known as Guangzhou. The place had been inhabited for some centuries by people from Fijian and Guangdong, and known as Ou Mun, or "trading gate", as its strategic location made it an important node along the Silk Road between China and Europe.



The historic old town of Macau with its crumbling old city walls, cobbled streets and distinctive Portuguese era buildings was granted UNESCO World Heritage status in 2005 and is thus preserved for future generations.

The streets and other historic locations are labelled in both Portuguese and Chinese

language. The area contains 25 temples, churches, mansions, squares and remains of the Portuguese fortress. World Heritage status has however not stopped the residents squeezing as much profit as possible from visitors - the small lanes, thankfully a pedestrian precinct, are crammed with stalls of all varieties, international franchises and include bakeries that sell a sweet local delicacy - Portuguese custard tart.



On a small rise in the middle of old Macau at the top of 66 stone steps is the stone southern façade - the remains of the cathedral of St. Paul's, built between 1582 and 1602 by the Jesuits. In its time, it was the largest Catholic church in Asia and is interesting in that the stone statues and adornment, carved by exiled Japanese Christians under the supervision of an Italian Jesuit have many oriental themes - an early fusion of the cultures of East and West. The façade is all that remains of the church after it was destroyed during a post-typhoon fire in 1835.

One of the oldest buildings is the temple of A-Ma, goddess of seafarers. The island was known as the place of the temple, 'A Ma Gao', which when adapted into Portuguese became known as Macau. This once waterfront temple, full of the smoke of incense candles bought by believers, is a popular stop for all Asian visitors.

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'A Ma Gao', which when adapted into Portuguese became known as Macau. This once waterfront temple, full of the smoke of incense candles bought by believers, is a popular stop for all Asian visitors.



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The colonial buildings and shop fronts of old Macau city have been used as the backdrop for a number of movies, including one of the Indiana Jones epics, due to their similarity to colonial era Shanghai.

In the middle of the colonial laneways in Senado Square is the bright yellow coloured St Dominic's, originally built in wood in 1587 by Spanish Dominican friars and rebuilt in stone in 1828, still reflecting Spanish and Portuguese styles.

It has been restored as a beautiful building and is a quiet sanctuary away from the bustle of commerce that is busily underway all around it. Other distinctive colonial era buildings include more Catholic churches and the Moorish Barracks.

Macau diminished in importance after the Opium Wars of the 1800s that resulted in the granting of concessions elsewhere in China to the

various colonial powers. Trading houses that until that time had resided in Macau moved to Hong Kong, Shanghai and elsewhere, leaving the residents to concentrate on fishing and small scale manufacturing until the advent of casinos.

Macau was the last colonial outpost of the Portuguese after the takeover of Goa and Malacca by India and Malaysia respectively. Absorbed into China in 1999, like Hong Kong it maintains a certain autonomy and separate status within the "one country, two systems" principle. To reinforce this difference, there are a series of sentry boxes visible all along the border of the Chinese mainland, in some places just a few metres away across the water. Their reputation for shooting anything seen in the water is apparently sufficient to ensure that all visitors are official and travel through the border post on the isthmus that separates the peninsula of Macau from the mainland.

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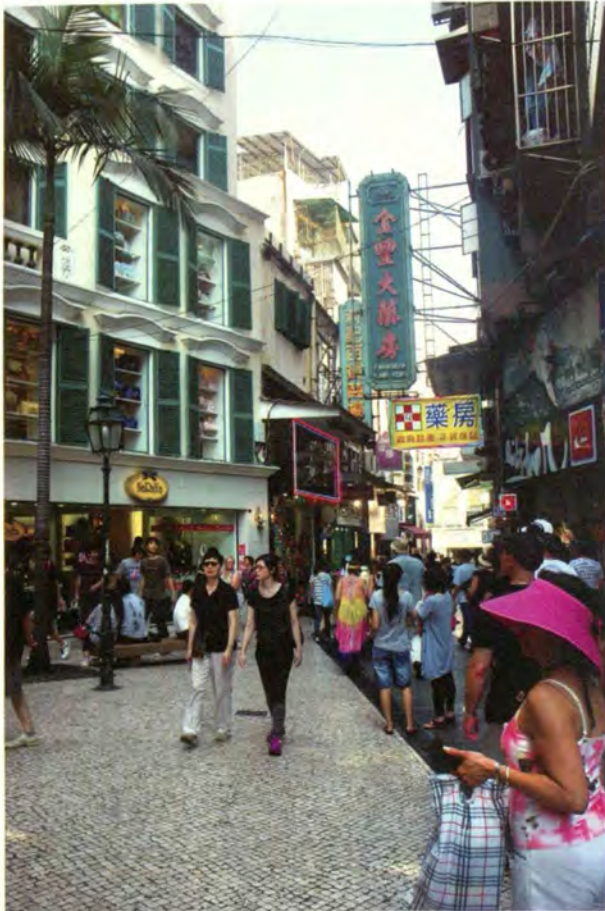
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With a population of just 550,000, Macau was host to more than 27 million visitors in 2007, mainly from mainland China. Although most residents are ethnic Chinese, there is still a small percentage Portuguese and Macanese, people of mixed Portuguese and Chinese blood.

So, if you are a gambling addict or just fancy a 'small investment' on the tables, then you will be spoiled for choice of venue in Macau - there are more than 5,000 gaming tables and 15,000 gaming machines. If however you prefer more leisurely (and cheaper!) pursuits, then this small part of China is also well worth a visit - just a short ferry ride from Hong Kong.



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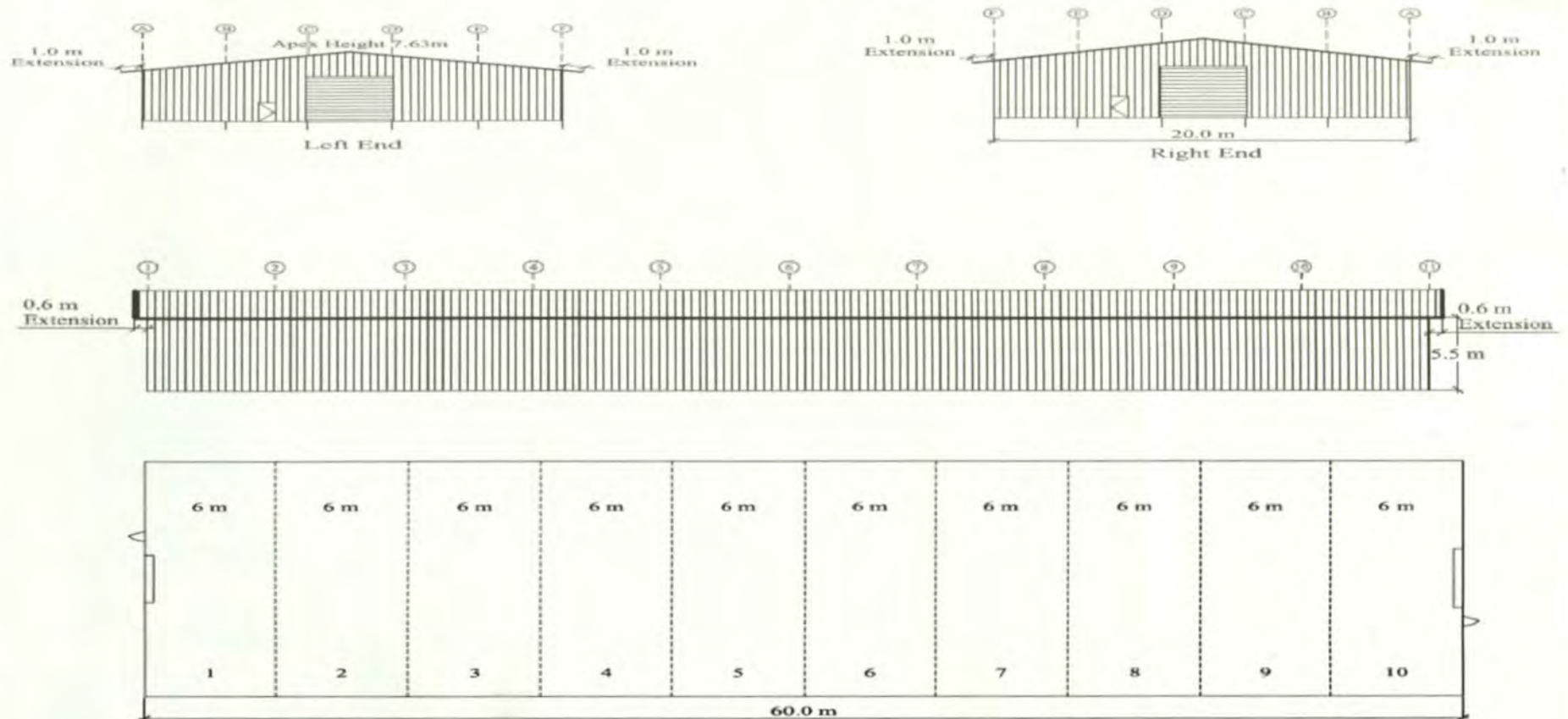
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Tantalised by TOKYO

BY GLENN A. BAKER

Trying to make sense of Tokyo can be a fabulously futile experience, as frustrating as following a master magician's sleight of hand.

The surging engine room of an astonishing nation - with one foot in the 16th century and one in the 22nd, equally at ease with the cherry blossom and the silicone chip - it is a morass of contradictions, paradoxes and challenges. Truly, nothing is as it seems, no matter how many times you take a running leap and hurl yourself into the city's dizzying orbit.

Most of the great cities of the world are busy; some are quite crazy. None, however, can claim the sheer bursting energy of Tokyo, a sprawling metropolis of 12 million that simply has no centre.

You seem to be faced with a Times Square, Piccadilly Circus or a Champs Elysses whenever you emerge from a major subway station, be it Shinjuku, Giza, Shibuya, Akihabara, Harajuku, Akasaka, Roppongi or a half dozen others. Alice never had to face a wonderland as awesome in its scope and as tantalising in its textures.

It's a city that ensnares and sometimes those that are captivated share their fascination with the world.

One of them is Sofia Coppola, the first



American woman to ever be nominated for the Oscar's Best Director award. Described as a "cultural snapshot of Tokyo", Coppola's remarkable *Lost In Translation* followed Bob and Charlotte as they meet in the bar of the lavish Park Hyatt and weave their way through the city's labyrinthine structure. "One of the things I love about Tokyo is this weird mixture of Japanese and western cultures", she explained.

"I spent a bunch of time in Tokyo in my early and mid-20s, doing work and different things and I thought 'I really want to do a movie here someday.' I just loved the mood and the way it looks visually.

"I've never been in another place where I really felt like it's another planet. Friends would take us to little hidden bars and alleyways. That's the fun of Tokyo, if you know someone who lives there. There are little hidden places that change all the time. There's something about going into an office building and going up to

the tenth floor, and all of a sudden, you're in a little bar that you'd never known about.

"I wanted to convey what I love about Tokyo and visiting the city. I wanted to shoot the neon at night, and I wanted to make something romantic - a love story without being nerdy. It's about moments in life that are great but don't last. They don't go on, but you always have the memory and they have an effect on you. That's what I was thinking about."

Slurping on a bowl of noodles with one eye on a televised Sumo wrestling match and the other on a kimono-clad geisha scurrying by to a businessman's gathering, it is easy to be captivated by Nippon ways.

In neon-bathed Tokyo, the cab drivers wear white gloves and peaked caps; the pachinko parlours ring with an hypnotic metallic racket; the toy shops and CD emporiums climb to eight storeys; litter is non-existent, serene Buddhist shrines and temples with wafting

incense are but paces from hip coffee shops, hole in the wall sushi bars and smoky clubs; innumerable vending machines dispense everything from batteries to bottles of whisky; a hotel looms on the horizon in the shape of Christmas tree, there is a public statue erected to the memory of Godzilla; and occasionally truckloads of neo-fascists cruise by, loudspeakers blaring. The traffic can be abominable, the excitement is infectious. There just isn't a city to compare with it.

Tokyo's rail system seems to exhibit and symbolise everything that is startling about the city. It is in the under and above ground stations that you realise there is more to Japan than flower arrangement, sumo wrestling, kabuki theatre and bonsai gardens. There is a mechanical precision, a mastery of technology and a sense of order that is simply breathtaking. In some department stores, you can press basement in the elevator and walk straight out of it into a waiting train carriage. You can move from station to station without



ever seeing the sunshine, using connecting arcades which resemble Roman catacombs in their complexity and middle eastern bazaars in their array of goods on offer. The Japanese shop like the rest of us breathe – effortlessly and ceaselessly.

Using the well-signposted subway network as a main artery system, it is possible to traverse Tokyo swiftly and comprehensively, emerging in the midst of any environment that takes your fancy - be it the ritzy department stores and art galleries of the Ginza, the 600 pulsating electronic appliance stores of Akihabara, the temples and gardens of Asakusa, the international bars and nightclubs of Roppongi, the museums, libraries and zoo of Ueno, or the boutiques of Harajuku (where Tokyo's young trendies, street theatre goths, parade and dance, in closed-off streets on weekends).

Get off at Tokyo Central and you can join a Shinkansen (bullet train) for a day trip down to Kyoto or Osaka, or take a service coach out to Tokyo Disneyland, which is cleaner and more efficient than its California parent park. Even if you don't have a domestic flight to catch, you can take the monorail out and back to Haneda Airport, just to see the city from an



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elevated angle.

Japan has the capacity to astound every soul who sets foot upon it - from the jaded life-long traveller to the tentative neophyte. The sheer scope of its cities and industries, its rugged interior and coastline, the productive determination and genial refinement of the people, the almost ridiculous array and faultless quality of its goods, its architecture of perfected simplicity and its delicate cuisine prepared with exacting attention to aesthetic visual detail all coalesce into a total assault on the senses. And in Japan, whose very essence is in Tokyo, the assault comes in waves.



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The lure of CAIRNS

BY LAISA TAGA

Cairns, located on the northeast coast of Australia in the state of Queensland, is synonymous with adventure.

In fact, it is the 'jewel' in the crown of Australia's natural attractions and is renowned for its World Heritage listed tourist attractions such as the Great Barrier Reef and the Wet Tropics World Heritage Rainforest.

For tourists, it is an ideal base to experience and explore the wider Tropical North Queensland region with front door access to World Heritage listed reef, rainforest and the diverse attractions of the tropical Atherton Tablelands, and the west to the outback plains and gorges of the Gulf Savannah.

In fact, there is something here for every visitor to enjoy...adrenaline charged adventures like diving, white water rafting and bungee jumping or the more gentle pursuits like bird watching, hiking, gourmet



restaurants, or just sitting under a palm tree sipping cocktail.

But mention Cairns to local Papua New Guineans, you'd be surprised at the wide ranging responses you will get.

"It's home away from home, I went to school there, I've got relatives and friends there, it is nice there, the climate is similar to home, it is laid-back and not as intimidating as Brisbane or Sydney, or I'd like to retire there when I finish work." These are some of the many responses you will get when you talk to Papua New Guineans.

One can understand the familiarity. The modern tropical city with a relaxed atmosphere is just under two hours across the Coral Sea from Port Moresby by air. In fact, it is closer to Port Moresby than the two Australian cities - Brisbane and Sydney. It is also a busy route for Air Niugini - the national airline - which flies there daily.



Rosemary Robertson (in black)...*"in the last 20 years, there has been an even greater connection with education, work and medical...as if Port Moresby is part of Queensland."*

Attractions

Because of its proximity, there is now a marked increase in the number of Papua New Guineans living in Cairns - either calling it home, working or studying - and adding to its growing population, now totalling some 130,000 people.

"Cairns has a relaxing atmosphere and its weather and geography are similar to PNG.

"There are also many opportunities available here too such as education, health, and better standards of living, to name a few.

"But some just like to come here for a holiday or somewhere to spend the weekend," says Rosemary Robertson, general manager of Tropical Heritage Cairns, owned by Sir Peter Barter, a prominent hotel operator in PNG.

There is a real connection between PNG and

Cairns, says Robertson, who worked in PNG for 33 years in sales and marketing before being approached by Barter to run his Cairns boutique hotel.

"We're climatically the same, geographically the same, we have airline connections. In fact, the connection to PNG in the early days, was through Cairns to Port Moresby; that was the major connection. But in the last 20 years, there has been an even greater connection with education, work and medical...as if Port Moresby is part of Queensland.

"So when you mention Cairns, Papua New Guineans know it too well, because they come here for shopping, some of their relatives came here for school, friends have visited and relatives are living here," she says.

In addition, what is unique about Cairns is its casualness. "It is laid back...you're not forced into suits and ties and stuff like that. It is a lot like PNG, just better in terms of lifestyle," she says. You notice this laid-back feeling of this North Queensland city when you arrive at the airport. There is no rushing around or long queues going through immigration and customs.

And if you're thinking about missing food from home, don't worry...Rusty's Market has all the food you want. "At Rusty's, you see PNG women selling bilums, buai (betelnut), kaukau, fruits and vegetables, Twisties, Ox and Palm, and many more...it is amazing the number of things they sell and you definitely won't miss home."

"So when you mention Cairns, Papua New Guineans know it too well, because they come here for shopping, some of their relatives came here for school, friends have visited and relatives are living here..."





“PNG people should be proud of their own culture, it is very important. If they know their culture, they will never have a problem because culture unites and provides peace in your heart.”

“It is so important to maintain our culture. That is something that is given to us from birth and I believe very strongly that God gave that to us and if you forget it, who are you? Your culture is what identifies who you are.

Getting along in Cairns

Living in Cairns though can be a bit of a challenge. New environment, new people, unfamiliar surroundings...particularly for the newcomers. And for those already calling Cairns home, there can be testing times too for them and their families - particularly adapting to a totally new lifestyle which can sometimes be culturally challenging.

That is why widower Dorothy Ainui and her group, the Wantok Association, provide moral support to fellow Wantoks. “We act as counsellors and when they are in trouble, we talk to them and try and help them. We don’t help them financially, we only provide moral support.”

Dorothy has been living in Cairns since 2000. She has, as the saying goes, seen it all. She believes wantoks should try and assimilate into their new environment but must also hold on tight to their own culture.

“Some when they come here, they feel embarrassed to continue their culture because they think they will be looked down on, so they want to behave more like Australians. But they aren’t Australians and they cannot be Australians,” Dorothy said.

“PNG people should be proud of their own culture, it is very important. If they know their culture, they will never have a problem because culture unites and provides peace in your heart.”

And that is what Mrs Morea Anderson believes in too. A long-time resident of Cairns, having moved across in the 1970s, she believes culture is important and there is a need to maintain it irrespective of where one lives “because it is what identifies us from the rest of the world”.

She also believes in providing support for the new Papua New Guinean settlers.

As one of the early pioneers, she knows what it is like to settle in a new country and the





Dorothy Ainui...maintaining one's culture is a must.

importance of having a support group to help settle them in.

"There is always a challenge...new environment, everything's new and it can be quite overwhelming and intimidating, so our group tries to help newcomers settle into their new home."

From supporting newcomers, Morea now leads one of the most popular cultural groups



Morea Anderson...support for new settlers is important.

in Cairns called the PNG Logohu Cultural Group.

The group, made up of women from the various provinces in PNG, performs and entertains at various events organised in Cairns to help promote their country of birth.

"You don't have to travel all way to PNG to see the cultural dances, we're here to showcase PNG and its culture."

Mrs Morea Anderson (third from right) with her cultural group.



"Sometimes they ask us if we have travelled to Cairns for the cultural performances, but to their surprise I tell them that we live here and we make our own costumes."

"We're popular here...people love to see us dancing our traditional dances," she says smiling.



FACT BOX

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Get pampered in the PHILIPPINES

BY JOHN BORTHWICK

Trained angels are tap-dancing down my spine. All right, in reality they are two mere mortal but excellent masseuses, each with an angel's touch, and dancing with her fingers not feet. They're giving me that ultimate spa treat, a four-handed massage.

My body is at Panglao Island Nature Resort on the Philippines island of Bohol. My mind is wherever minds might go during such symmetrical bliss.

Healers were laying-on hands in the Philippines for centuries before the term "spa" was invented. Whether or not it's a Latin acronym for *sanitas per aquam* - health through water - is of little concern to traditional Filipino *albularyo* healers or their descendants in today's highly professional spa industry.

All licensed spas here offer traditional local treatments like *ventosa* and *dagdagay*, along with Thai, Swedish and Ayurvedic-style options.

I start my "spa safari" in the capital, Manila, opting for a *hilot* treatment. Igorot healers of the central Cordillera devised this massage centuries ago; back then treatments included resetting dislocated limbs but today's spa practitioners usually avoid "back-cracking," concentrating mainly on massage.

I head to Makati, to the Mandarin Oriental Hotel's beautiful little boutique spa - simply called The Spa - where there's a menu of tempting treatments and just four massage rooms.

My *hilot* masseuse, Aida, has strong, confident hands and works diligently for ninety minutes using elements reminiscent of both Swedish long-muscle technique and Thai oil massage.

She's precise on tendons and tensions, plus neck and cranial zones. Being of the "no pain, no gain" school, I always request a strong massage - and usually find that after five minutes, the pressure drops off to medium (at most) pressure.



No such lazy "pampering" from Aida. She concludes my session with 30 minutes of ventosa, a vacuum or moxibustion technique, in which small, heated cups placed on one's back are said to suck out toxins and stimulate the nervous system.

Having tried modern hilot, several days later, I seek out its traditional form, as maintained by Roberto Nacario, resident albularyo at the popular Sanctuario day spa in Manila.

Roberto, in his early sixties, is an old school healer (no, not one of those infamous "faith healers"), highly intuitive and mostly self-taught, who sees his capacity as something "inborn in my hands."

Now to test it. This is no charm school back-rub with New Age intimations. His hands go for the deep tissue - yes, there is pain, and gain. He works vigorously, exerting himself using elbows and forearms. My torso, legs, neck, shoulders all get their just desserts, then he finishes it all off with an expert back manipulation. Cracking stuff. The real deal.

The Philippines has a regulated spa industry, under the aegis of the Department of Tourism and the Spa Association of the Philippines, that sees some 50 licensed spas operating in various areas, and more emerging.

I fly south to check out several. Just outside Cebu, in the spacious waterfront grounds of the Shangri-La Mactan Island Resort, I find perhaps the largest (10,000 sq metres) and most elaborate spa in the country. Befitting the Shangri-La group's name, their Chi spa complexes and rituals are themed Tibetan-Himalayan.

Some 34 treatments are available, including Water Shiatsu in a purpose-built pool. A consultant suggests I try their signature hilot - every spa does it differently - plus a Tropical Facial Rejuvenation.

The masseuse, Rady, orchestrates a sequence of pleasures that includes foot bath, coconut milk bath, steam room, an extended and precise hilot treatment and finally the facial - whose specifics I can't recall at all because after two and a half hours under her expert hands, I am beyond both care and note-taking.

The only drawback is one common to many Philippines' spas, a sense of unnecessary prudishness.

There's no such prissiness at the extraordinary Farm at San Benito, located at Batangas, about two and a half hours' drive south of Manila.





The Farm, established by German-born Eckhard Rampe, is a medical spa, the place you come to when you're serious about what's wrong with your body, your diet, your dependencies, your life. "Any quest for health that doesn't include a change in lifestyle - including diet - is futile," Rampe asserts as we sit by the resort pool, eating the most delicious vegan dishes I've ever tasted.

Here is a hard-core healing centre with beautifully soft edges. Surrounded by palms, ponds, breadfruit trees and landscaped, enchanted gardens, The Farm's Balinese-style suites are built to the highest standards.

Its "therapists" (in the true sense of the term) include medical doctors, specialists in dermatology, rehabilitation and natural medicine.

Come spa time, my practitioner, Geryllyn is all thumbs, in the very best sense of the term. A Purification Ritual starter segues into ninety minutes of The Farm's own interpretation of hilot: limbs, extremities, entire torso, rib cage, scalp and face, all done deep.

Here is a hard-core healing centre with beautifully soft edges. Surrounded by palms, ponds, breadfruit trees and landscaped, enchanted gardens, The Farm's Balinese-style suites are built to the highest standards.

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Mild stretching, then concluding with extraordinary moments - how many, I can't say - of Reiki "protection" with GERALYN's hands gently cupped over my ears.

My final spa "ordeal" is at the terrific Nature Spa at Tagaytay, an hour south of Manila. Here, Cathy Turvill and her English husband, Dr Mike have established a homely resort (complete with traditional Igorot huts, if you choose) and an excellent destination spa. I sample the vernacular Filipino foot massage known as dagdagay in which two bamboo

sticks are used to gently stimulate the soles of the feet.

In this case, no pain but subtle gain. Then a steaming ritual that's followed by an hour's thorough, gentle Ni-Laib massage, during which heated pads of lemon grass are placed strategically along my back. I float out of there. De-toxed, I find myself no longer looking forward to the city's inevitable re-tox.



Air Niugini flies to Manila, Philippines, on Sunday, Wednesday and Friday.



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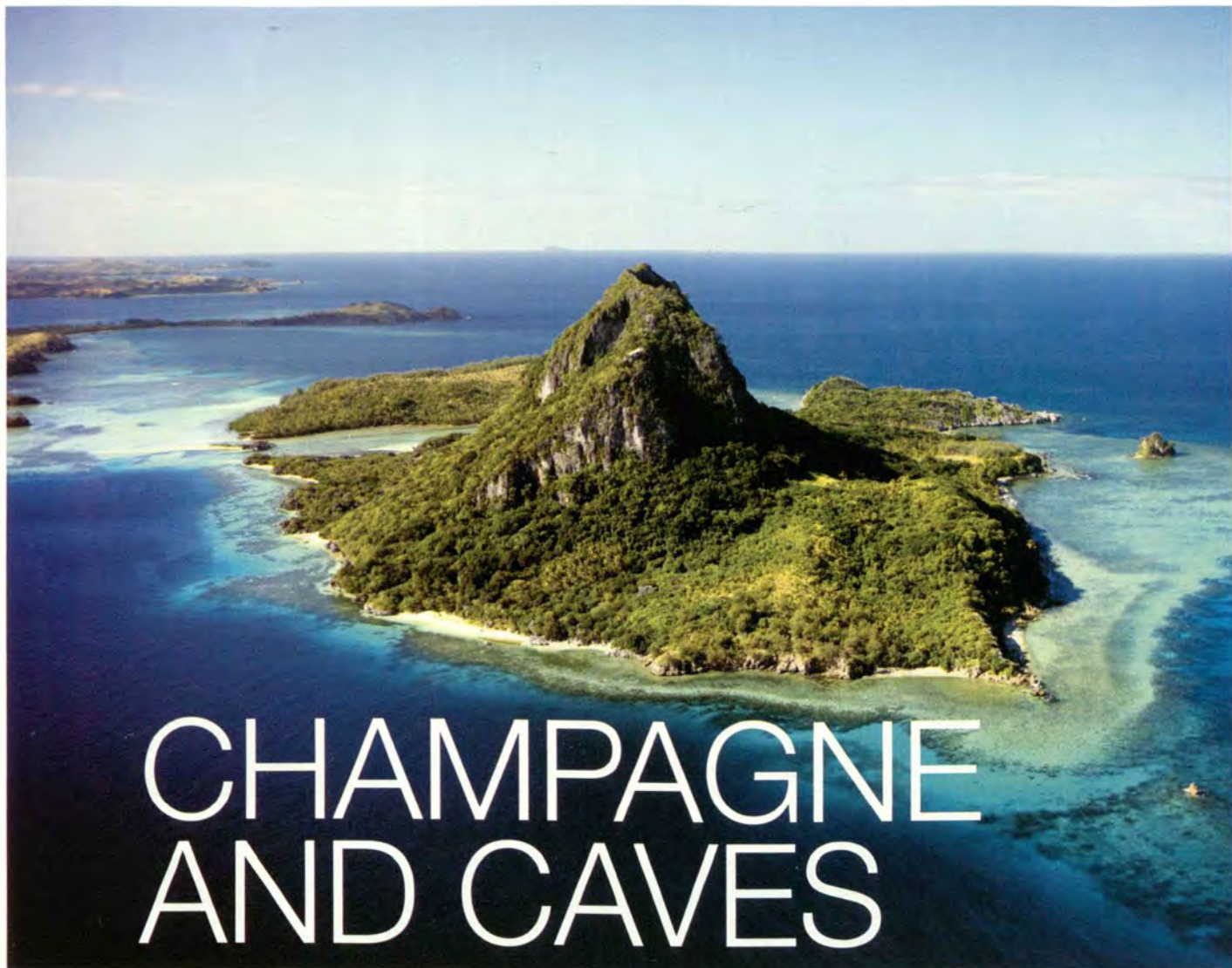
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CHAMPAGNE AND CAVES

BY ANDY PHILLIPS



Best deep in fresh water on a ledge of a cave lit by the single beam of a torch, our Fijian guide held out his hand and grinned.

“Welcome to the heart of the Yasawas,” he said. “If you haven’t been here, you haven’t been to the Yasawas. Now that you are here, you can sing a song for us.”

The guide Vuni and his friend Moses, went quiet and smiled, waiting for us to fill the cave with what they may have hoped would be a marvellous rendition of a noble song from our homeland. Instead, we gave them Jingle Bells.

After labouring through several verses and abruptly giving up, Vuni and Moses clapped and

cheered our limited singing abilities as if we’d won the Pop Idol.

Then it was time to exit the cave: the only way was to swim back through the underwater passage where we had entered.

Vuni went first, disappearing beneath the water for a couple of seconds, before shining his torch back towards us to show the way out.

A deep breath and a couple of underwater strokes later, we surfaced back in the main cave, with sunlight streaming in one side.

We were on a morning trip to Sawa-i-Lau, a cave complex inside the base of a remote island in the far north-west of

the Fijian archipelago. The natural attraction is better known as the Blue Lagoon Caves. It was used as a filming location in the 1979 film, starring Brooke Shields.

Yet by whatever name it was known, we had been told that visiting the caves was a must-do for visits to this far-flung corner of the Pacific.

Arriving by boat beneath the sharp peak rising out of the lagoon was an experience in itself, before we had even descended into the caves.

Once we had re-emerged from the journey into the dark chamber, we lingered in the cool water and watched others climb the inside walls of the cave to jump back into the deep central pool.

Of all of Fiji's underwater adventures, this had to be classed as one of the more unusual.

Once we were cool enough, we headed up the steps and out of the caves and back down to the beach where the women had spread out blankets on the ground and laid out home-made jewellery, featuring shells and shiny stones gathered from the shore.

A short paddle out, past the moored boats of visiting groups, there was a vibrant reef with soft and hard corals and a myriad of fish among them: a much more typical Fijian scene.

Of all of Fiji's underwater adventures, this had to be classed as one of the more unusual.



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It was voted Fiji's leading spa resort at the 14th World Travel Awards in India in 2007, 12 months after being named the 'Most Excellent Romantic Hideaway' in the Condé Nast Johansens Awards in New York.



While a few craft make the journey out to Sawa-i-Lau from the further southerly island resorts, the attraction is much closer - and free - for guests of Yasawa Island Resort.

Offering a complimentary trip to the caves, including the boat journey and the services of local guides, is just one of the drawcards for one of the most remote resorts in the country.

The boat service, which connects island resorts to the mainland, stops and turns around long before reaching Yasawa Island; guests are brought out by light plane which lands on a grassy field on the eastern side of the island.

When inclement weather prevents our plane from taking off for Yasawa Island, the resort did the decent thing and put us in a helicopter instead.

Perhaps it is measures such as this - which has seen tributes flow in for the resort.

It was voted Fiji's leading spa resort at the 14th World Travel Awards in India in 2007, 12 months after being named the 'Most Excellent Romantic Hideaway' in the Condé Nast Johansens Awards in New York.

As well, it was awarded one of the world's top 10 best beaches in 2010 by Expedia.com and was a finalist in Travel & Leisure Magazines 2010 World's Best Awards.

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The resort's seclusion and isolation is marketed more as a feature than a drawback: there are no TVs, no traffic, and the only neighbours are from the Fijian village which provides the majority of the staff.

Under new ownership, Yasawa Island Resort has undergone a major refurbishment with a new main complex built to provide visitors with additional facilities - a new bar, restaurant, library, reception area, private wine cellar/dining room and public bathrooms.


Being out of the way is also a distinct advantage for the in-house dive shop, which can quickly take guests to some of the best spots in the western islands.

Turtles, reef sharks and deep ridges of coral with swim-through tunnels are on offer, and attract divers of all abilities.

On the way back from the caves, the boat captain, Waqa, gave us a toothy smile and offered us some 'Fiji champagne'.

He grinned as he poured out two glasses of chilled water. It was then I knew we had really been to the Yasawas.



 **Air Niugini flies to Nadi on Tuesday, Friday and Sunday.**



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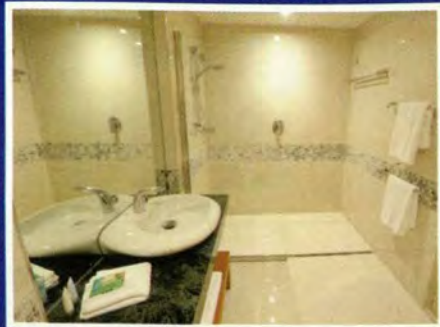
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Air Niugini announces new flight schedules



Air Niugini's B767.

A NEW INTERNATIONAL AND DOMESTIC schedule for Air Niugini came into effect on September 7, 2011. The amended international schedule was made to allow for the increase in frequencies and capacity to the high demand domestic routes.

The domestic schedule sees an increase in capacity on the Port Moresby-Lae route with five daily flights from Monday to Friday and four daily services on Saturday and Sunday. Mount Hagen flights also increased to four daily flights on weekdays and three during the weekend.

The Kiunga and Tabubil service on Monday and Tuesday have combined and the Wednesday service from Tabubil to Mount Hagen is via Kiunga.

Other domestic schedule changes included the reinstatement of the Port Moresby-Rabaul-Kavieng service as reflected in flight numbers

PX272 and PX273; renumbering of the Port Moresby-Popondetta flight to PX852/PX853; Port Moresby-Madang-Manus on Sunday and Manus-Madang-Port Moresby services on Wednesday are replaced by Port Moresby-Rabaul-Manus on Tuesday and Manus-Rabaul-Port Moresby on Thursday. These changes are made to connect with Lae-Port Moresby and Port Moresby-Lae.

The current Q400 services to Goroka, Gurney and Hoskins are now operated by the Dash8 300 series aircraft.

The Air Niugini freighter service is reinstated to provide the airline's corporate clients with efficient cargo movement.

International schedule changes include as advised earlier the suspension of the Wednesday's service to Narita, Japan, leaving only the Saturday flight. The Thursday flight

to Hong Kong will operate on Wednesday while the return flight to Port Moresby will depart Hong Kong on Thursday morning with scheduled arrival into Port Moresby at 3:45pm.

The Brisbane and Sydney combined service on Sunday departs at 1.30pm while the return flight on Monday will operate directly from Sydney. Brisbane services will operate directly to Port Moresby. Thursday afternoon flight to Brisbane will be retimed to depart early at 3.30pm to allow for Australian domestic connections.

The F100 service to Brisbane on Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday have been withdrawn while services to Cairns on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Sunday are now operated by the Q400. Cairns overnight flights on Friday and Sunday will also be operated by the Q400 aircraft.



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Successful Holy Land tour by Air Niugini



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THE FIRST AIR NIUGINI HOLY LAND-organised tour package to Israel was hailed a success by the pioneer group from the Gutnius Lutheran Church from various centers.

The group, comprising nineteen members, left Port Moresby on August 8 for a 10-day visit that took them to a number historically biblical sites in Israel, including Bethlehem and Cana in Galilee.

Their travel to Israel was via Singapore and Colombo in Sri Lanka. The tour package arrangement was done in partnership with Royal Jordanian Airlines, Sri Lanka Airlines and Air Niugini's General Sales Agents Jet Wing Holidays in Colombo.

Deputy General Manager Sales, Dominic Kaumu said it is the first time for Air Niugini to market a product beyond its destinations and the airline was pleased to make it possible for more Papua New Guineans, especially Christians to visit the Holy Land.

According to the group, it was an experience of a lifetime - one they would always remember.



AIR NIUGINI INCREASES BAGGAGE ALLOWANCE

AIR NIUGINI HAS INTRODUCED new economy baggage allowances for its passengers travelling on its Australian routes - Cairns, Brisbane and Sydney.

Effective immediately, passengers travelling in economy will be allowed 23 kilos and for business class, it has been increased to 33 kilos.

Additionally, baggage allowance for Executive Club/Destination Loyalty members has increased as per the following:

- Economy Class/Destinations members - up to 30kg
- Economy Class/Executive Club members - up to 33kg
- Business Class/Destinations members - up to 37kg
- Business Class/Executive Club members - up to 40kg

The new baggage allowance will only apply to Air Niugini's Australian routes but not to destinations beyond Australia on other carriers.

Air Niugini also announced it will soon launch an all-new Destinations website that will have among its features online payment of Executive Club fees, thus reducing waiting time.

Chief Executive Officer Wasantha Kumarasiri said Air Niugini is mindful that it is in a very competitive business and it is important to ensure its travelling customers are recognised for their loyalty.



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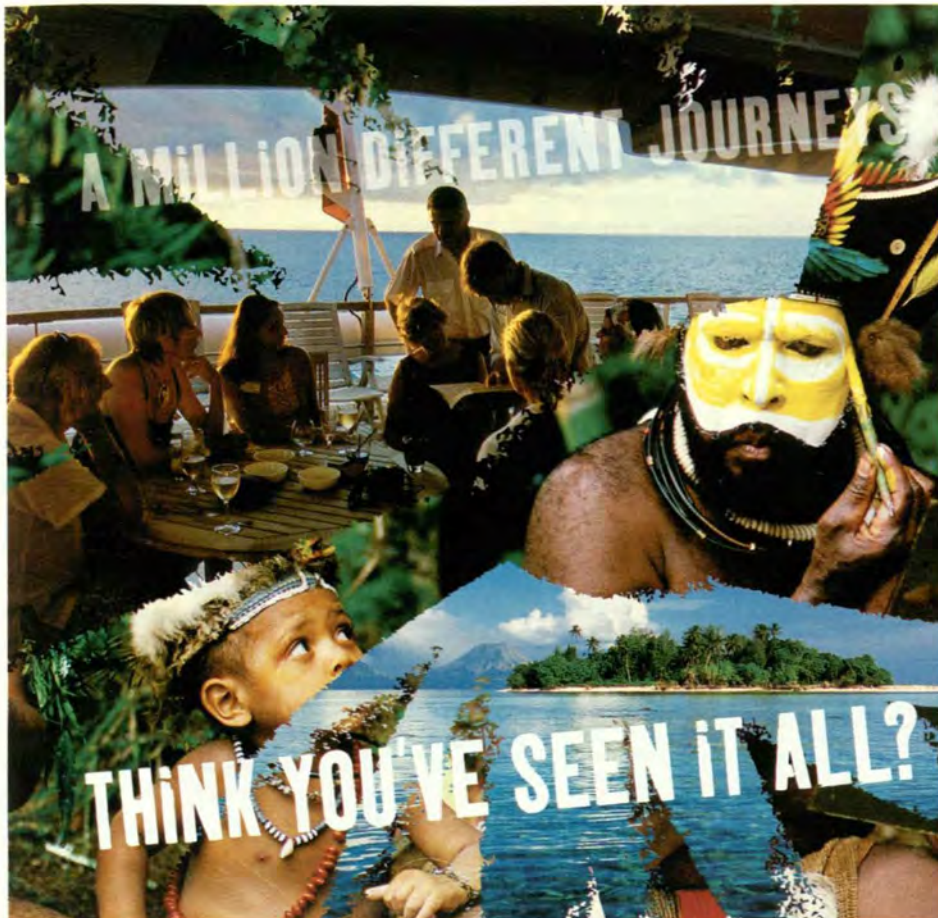


Left to right: Chief Executive Officer Mr Wasantha Kumarasiri, Captain Daniel Varvar, Captain Daniel Wanma, Captain Barry Casupang and Chairman of the Air Niugini Board, Sir James Tjoeng KBE.

THE AIR NIUGINI BOARD recently acknowledged the achievements of Captains Barry Casupang and Daniel Varvar who successfully completed their respective Dash 8 command training and attained their captaincy.

The two pilots join another colleague Captain Taueda Ugava to become the first national pilots in the airline's history to have undertaken and successfully completed their career development path as allowed under the Civil Aviation Rules of January 1, 2004.

Chief Executive of Air Niugini, Wasantha Kumarasiri, said Air Niugini is committed to training its own pilots and has invested millions of kina annually since the resumption of the national cadet pilot programme in 2001.



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General Information

Lying entirely within the tropics, barely south of the Equator and just north of the Australian continent is Papua New Guinea, the second largest island in the world. With a total land mass of 473,189sq.km it is the last of a string of Islands spilling down from South East Asia into the Pacific.

Apart from the mainland, Papua New Guinea comprises a remarkable collection of islands, atolls and coral reefs scattered around its coastline. The mainland is divided by the Owen Stanley Range—a rugged central spine with peaks over 4,000 metres high. Great rivers begin their journey to the sea from these mountains—among them, Fly and Sepik waterways. Below the mountain chain, fertile coastal plains, flooded delta regions and mangrove swamps exist alongside broad sandy beaches, sheltered bays and dense rain forests.

The coastal regions are tropical however in generally the climate is warm to hot and humid all year round. Temperatures on the coast vary between 25-30 degrees throughout the year. The Highlands regions enjoy a temperate climate, ranging from 20 degrees during day to as low as 10 degrees during the evenings. Rainy season varies from province to province, however generally the country is driest from May to December.

Fully independent since September 16, 1975, the country has a freely elected democratic government. PNG became the 142nd member of the United Nations on October 10, 1975 and is also a member of the British Commonwealth.

The population is just over 5 million with over a third in the Highlands region of the country. The people are Melanesian though in

appearance they are quite varied.

There are more than 800 distinct “live” languages with Melanesian pidgin and Hiri Motu being the two most widely used. English is the official language in education, business and government circles.

Papua New Guinea has a vibrant and multifaceted economy with two distinct systems operating side by side.

The vast majority of the people live a traditional, non-monetary barter economy that existed long before European colonization began. Co-existing with this is the modern economic system based on mining, petroleum, fishing, forestry and agriculture.

The main exports are gold, copper, oil, coffee, tea, copra, oil palm and forest products.

What to See and Do



Ideal Cruising Experience

The wonders of Papua New Guinea never cease to impress even the most intrepid traveller. Offering a multitude of ideal experiences, the visitors will find a country rich in culture, ethnic diversity and where little has changed over centuries. Cruising Papua New Guinea is relaxing since island life is slow-paced and informal. Rich in cultural and ethnic diversity PNG promises to reward cruise enthusiasts with unforgettable sights and sounds.

Diving

This is home to some of the world's most spectacular diving, dubbed as ‘underwater photographer's paradise.’ It is said to have twice as many species as the waters of the Red Sea, and up to five times as many as the Caribbean. The waters are a wonderland of elegant reefs, sunken wrecks, brilliantly coloured coral and marine life. The immense diversity of dive sites includes barrier reefs, coral walls (drop-offs), coral gardens, patch reef, fringing reefs, sea grass beds and coral atolls.

Trekking the rugged terrains

Trekking in Papua New Guinea is a challenge which portrays the real meaning of adventure in paradise. An extensive network of walking

tracks covers most mountain areas, and experience bush walkers are well catered for. The most popular is the Kokoda Track which continues to provide challenges and experiences beyond men's imagination. Others include Mt. Wilhelm, Bulolo, Wau and Madang. The Kokoda Trail, so significant to World War II continues to grow in popularity amongst serious trekkers.

Excellent Fishing

The country's reputation for excellent fishing localities and choices of catch is fully boosted by the wonderful climate.

Surfing the waves

Experience an unforgettable wave-riding adventure in the country's wave-breaking shores. From the breath-taking coastline of Vanimo that stretches down Madang, to the sandy beaches of New Ireland Province, where premiere breakpoints and scenic surfing sites are located.

Bird Watching

Bird watching does not only require dead silence, it provides the opportunity for watchers to take in nature's most eerie surroundings and eternal spring whether up in the Highlands or in a typical tropical weather in the coastal areas. Over 700 species of feathered fliers flutter across our island

including 38 of the 43 known species of the exotic Bird of Paradise. Not all the colours of the rainbow have been reserved for our feathered friends as there is an unlimited range of hues and shades to be seen in our 2000 orchids and countless magnificent butterflies including the world's largest, the Queen Alexandra Birdwing.

World War II Relics

Relics of World War II battles are found in most parts of Papua New Guinea's land, underwater, caves and tunnels.

Astounding Volcanoes

Located along the “Pacific Ring of Fire, Papua New Guinea offers distinct views of active volcanoes that captivates a land of tranquility. There exists a number of volcanoes in certain provinces, including the latest ‘basaltic statovolcano on Manam Island, Madang Province. Other recent volcanic location include Rabaul's two volcanic cones-Vulcan and Tavurvur-and West New Britain's Mt Pago.

Visitors to our country are guests and hospitality is an honour in our Melanesian culture. Tipping is neither expected nor encouraged.

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