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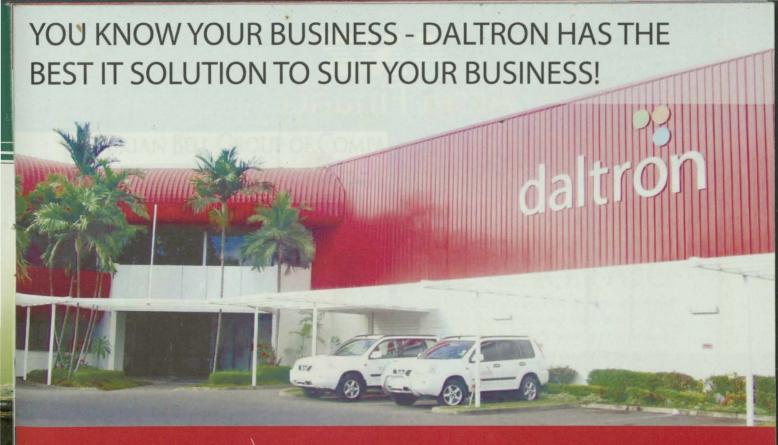
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Chairman's Message

WELCOME ABOARD.

I am pleased to share with you and other readers of *Parabise* of Air Niugini's exceptional performance in 2008 with a 30.9 percent growth in passenger uplift compared to the last three years.

The airline reached in excess of one million passengers at the end of December 2008 and is confident it will experience a similar growth in passenger numbers over the next few years.

In early December (2008), the unprecedented attendance of delegates from around the globe to the 10th PNG Mining and Petroleum Investment Conference in Sydney clearly expressed the potential investors' confidence in the future of Papua New Guinea's resource sector developments.

With the current downturn throughout the world, there are various opinions on how this will impact Papua New Guinea. These are times to be cautious although there is a view the LNG and other resource development projects will create a very positive economic environment for long-term business opportunities.

Air Niugini is monitoring these developments closely. One of the areas for commercial consideration is the growing executive jet charter market which the airline is keen to enter once customer demand is firmed up.

The airline is also looking at future aircraft needs beyond the current B767 and B757, as well as the maintenance lease arrangements.

Air Niugini remains optimistic of its capabilities to meet the challenges ahead and continue to play a vital role in the country's future developments.

With the exit of the Embraer 145 at the end of January from the Port Moresby-Cairns route and the abrupt suspension of the Embraer 190 from the operating fleet, the F100s have extra flying requirements to maintain schedule integrity. A mix fleet of F100s and Dash 8-300s are servicing the Port Moresby-Cairns route and the F100 is back on the Port Moresby-Honiara-Nadi route.

As a result of the recent drop in the world's crude oil price, Air Niugini joined other regional airlines to reduce fuel surcharge on all its 18 domestic and 10 international routes.

The airline management will continue to monitor the situation and should there be further falls in oil prices, we will pass on the reduction to the travelling public.

New holiday packages for domestic and international destinations (Sydney, Brisbane, Cairns, Manila, Singapore, Hong Kong, and Kuala Lumpur and Fiji) will be available by April.

The current packages are available until the end of March and you can find the details of these well priced packages in the Airline News section of *Paradise*.

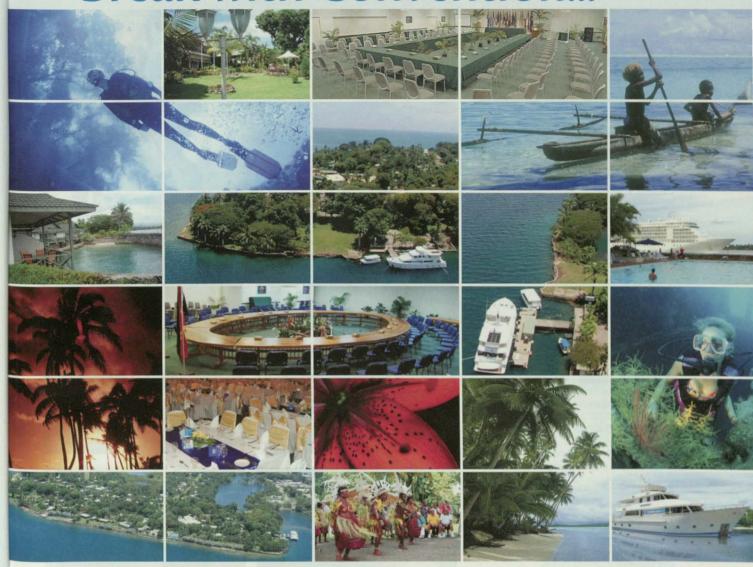
Visitors to our shores can also take advantage of the domestic products to experience destinations such as Rabaul, Madang, Alotau and the Highlands' towns of Mt Hagen and Goroka.

In this *Parabise* issue, we feature just a glimpse of the magnificent diving experiences our visitors can enjoy in the country. Teeming with remarkable marine species and a great diversity of dive sites, the waters of PNG are truly a diver's Mecca.

We thank you for your continued patronage with us and wish you a pleasant journey on your Bird of Paradise service.

Sir James N. Tjoeng, KBE Chairman

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Volume 2, 2009

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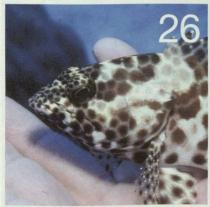
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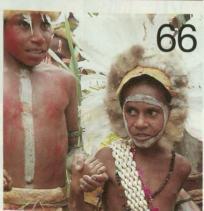
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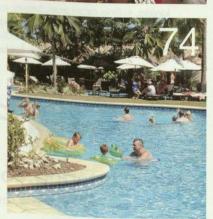


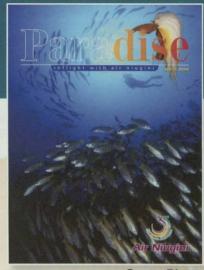




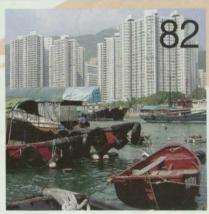








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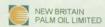
















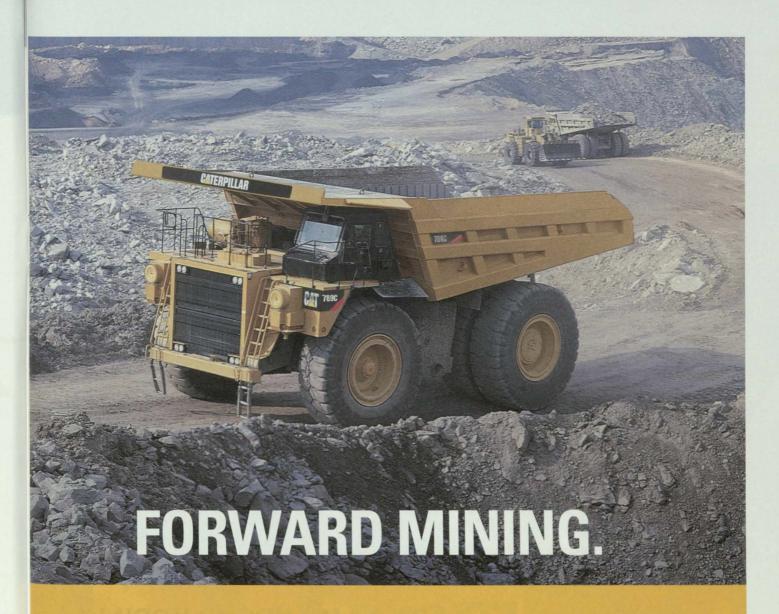














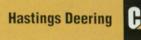




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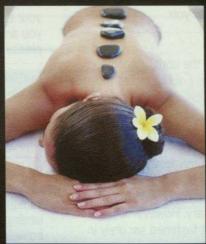


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Please ask us

If there is anything our cabin crew can assist you with during your flight, please do no hesitate to ask them.

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

Electronic equipment

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

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 inflight 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.

In-flight Duty Free

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

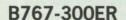
During your flight, our cabin crew will distribute Immigration and Customs forms before each landing point. Ensure that you carefully read and complete these documents and have them ready for inspection with your passport at the Immigration and Customs arrival counters.

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.









Aircraft type B767-300ER

Length 59.94m Wing Span 47.57m

Power Plant 2 PW4000

Cruising Speed 857kph

Normal Altitude 11,000-12,000m

Std Seating Capacity 214 + bags

Range 8100km

F100



Aircraft type F100

Length 35.528m Wing Span

Power Plant 28.076m 2 Rolls Roys Tay 650

Cruising Speed 780kph

Normal Altitude 11,000m

Std Seating Capacity 98 + bags

Range 3000km

DASH 8-Q315



Aircraft type DASH 8-Q315

Length 25.7m

Wing Span Power Plant 24.4m 2 Pratt & Whitney PW123

Cruising Speed 440kph

Normal Altitude 7,500m

Std Seating Capacity 50 + Bags

Range 1,800km

DHC-8-202



Aircraft type DHC-8-202

Length 22.25m Wing Span 25.89m

Power Plant 2 Pratt & Whitney **Cruising Speed** 550kph

Normal Altitude 7,600m

Std Seating Capacity 36 + bags

Range 1700km

















IN-FLIGHT EXERCISES

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

Foot

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.



toes, simultaneously moving one foot clockwise and the other foot counter clockwise. Reverse circles. Do each direction for 15 seconds. Repeat if



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



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



angle - elbows down, hands out in front. Raise hands up to chest and back down alternating arms. Do these exercise in 30



1. Start with both heels on the floor and point feet upward as



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



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 and 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 toward 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 Repeat 5 times





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YOUR HEALTH IN-FLIGHT

At Air Niugini we care about your comfort and safety. We have included the following information about your health in-flight that we hope you will find helpful and useful.

When you are flying you can be seated and 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
- Recent major surgery or injury, especially to lower limbs or abdomen
- Oestrogen hormone therapy, including oral contraceptives
- Immobilisation for a day or more
- Dehydration Heart Failure
- Trauma
- Varicose veins
- Obesity
- Tobacco smoking

Recommendations

- If you fall into any of these categories or you have any concern about your health and flying, Air Niugini recommends you seek medical advice before travelling.
- Follow our in-flight execises programme

Jetlag

The main cause of jetlag is traveling 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.
- Fly direct to minimise flight time. This allows you to relax more upon arrival.
- Leave your watch on home time if you're staying at your destination less than 48 hours. Also try to eat and sleep according to your home time.
- Change your watch to the local time if your stay is longer than 48 hours, and try to eat and sleep in accordance with the local time.

On longer stays, try to prepare in advance, adjust your meal and rest times to be closer to those of your destination.



- Increasing age above 40 years
- Pregnancy

















Try some light exercise - go for a brisk walk, or do some reading if you cant sleep after arrival at your destination. It generally takes the body's biological clock approximately one day to adjust per time zone crossed.

Cabin Humidity/Dehydration

Humidity levels of less than 25 percent are common in the cabin.

This is due to the extremely low humidity levels of outside air supplied to the cabin. The low humidity can cause drying of the nose, throat, eyes and it can irritate contact lens wearers.

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

Eating and Drinking

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

- 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 hayfever, 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 traveling.
- To "clear" your ears try swallowing and/or yawning. These actions help open your eustachian tubes, equalizing pressure between your middle ear chamber and your throat.
- · When flying with an infant, feed or give your baby a dummy during descent. Sucking and swallowing will help infants 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 a non-moving object), motion sickness is less likely to occur.

Recommendations:

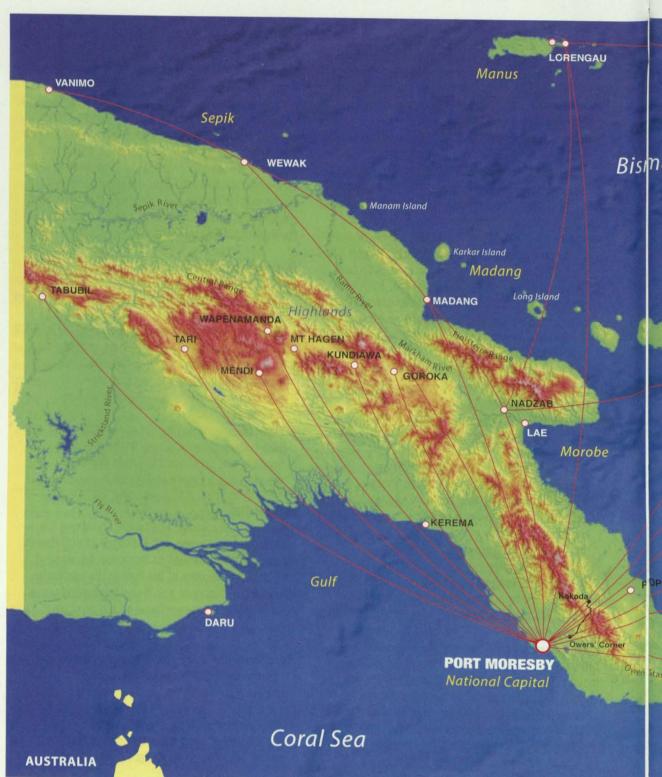
- When weather is clear and you can see the ground, sea or horizon, you are less susceptible to motion sickness.
- You can buy over the counter medications but we recommend that you consult your doctor about the appropriate medications.

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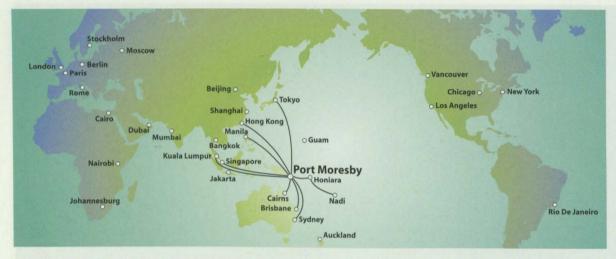








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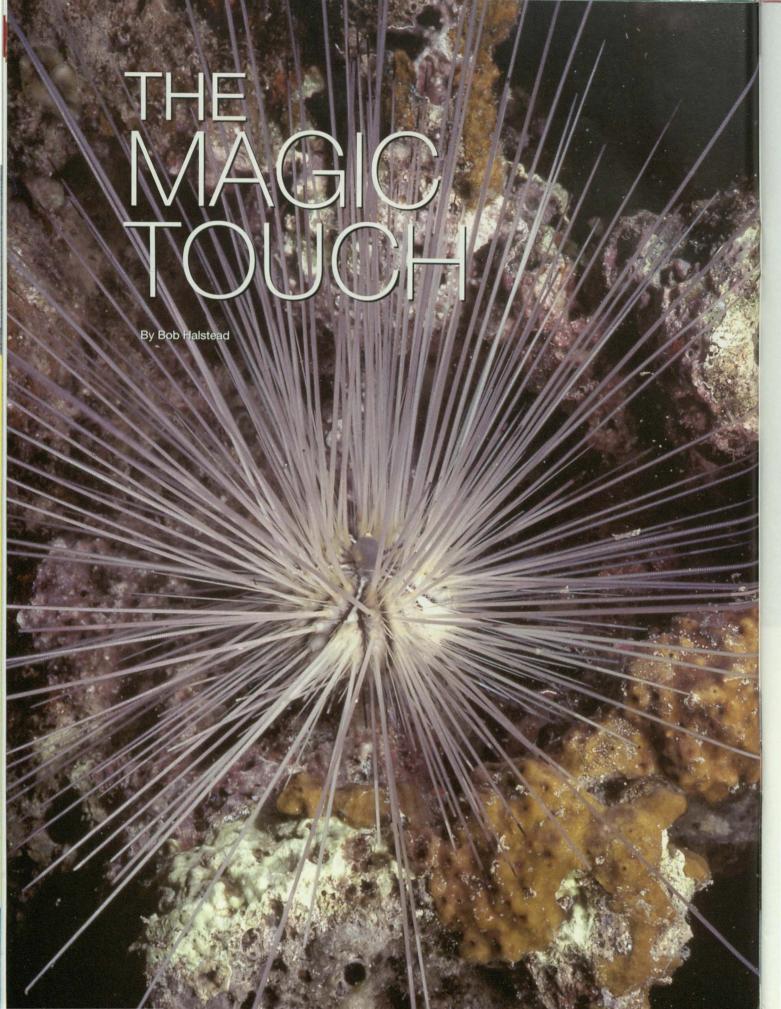
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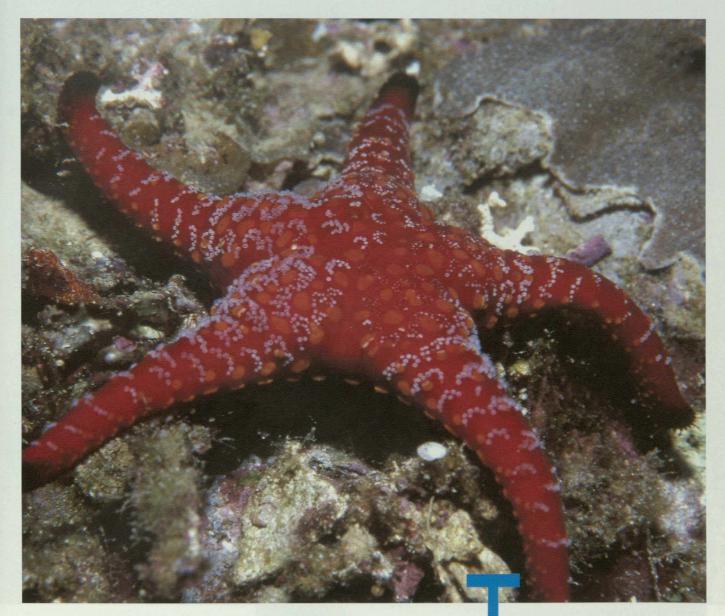
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I am going to start this story where it hurts.

On a deep dive to search for a rare fish, I spotted an unusual sea star. I picked it up and carried it to the shallow waters so that I could leisurely take photographs. It had no spines, but I soon realised it was stinging me. The stinging cells were able to penetrate the tough skin on my hands. I have never been able to get the sea star identified, but that sting hurts and the pain lasted nearly a week.

here is no controversy about touching marine creatures that possess sharp spines. We all agree; you definitely should not do it. Sea urchins and the Crown of Thorns Sea Star can inflict nasty wounds.

The risk from other creatures is not so obvious. Once (and only once!) I picked up a giant nudibranch on a night dive and, feeling nothing, brought it back to the boat in my hands, to show my fellow divers.

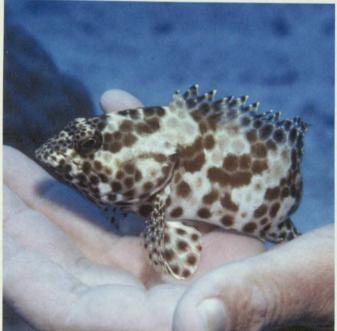
After transferring the nudibranch to a bucket of seawater, I foolishly lifted my mask and wiped my face. Ouch! It stung like fire! Some nudibranches eat hydroids, and can transfer the stinging cells to their surface. I had wiped the cells onto my hands, and then my tender face.

I was not expecting to be stung by the sea star and the nudibranch, in fact I had never heard of a stinging sea star other than the obviously evil Crown of Thorns. But fire corals, hydroids and corallimorpharians have also stung me. Thus I discovered that divers just have to learn what creatures may be touched, and which are dangerous. I mostly learnt the hard way.

Above: The venomous sea star that stung me, unknown species. Left: Sharp spines on this sea urchin warn "Do Not Touch".



A group of Crown of Thorn Sea Stars, Acanthaster planci.



A diver demonstrates the gentle touch.

Reading this may save you a lot of pain!

Beginning divers were, and maybe still are, told not to touch anything. To enforce this, divers may be forbidden to wear gloves. But what started as a sensible caution rapidly turned into paranoia. Fear of marine animals became rife.

To counter this, a wonderful lady, Dee Scar, started to run "Touch the Sea" classes for divers at Bonaire in the Caribbean. She also wrote two charming books Touch the Sea (1987) and The Gentle Sea (1990).

She taught many divers that gentle interactions with marine critters could be safe and include touching. Dee, whom I was fortunate to meet and dive with, inspired many with a love of all marine life. She replaced fear with respect. Around the same time, Australian diving legend and marine life lecturer, Reg Lipson, started his own "Feel the Sea" programmes.

All these encouraged me to start my own "Eat the Sea" and "Poke the Sea" dive adventures.



Not really, they were jokes, but had some truth to them. I do love eating seafood, but I hope I do so responsibly from sustainable fisheries. I never eat shark fin soup for example, and prefer pelagic fish to reef fish just in case I inadvertently eat one of my friends.

We all "Poke the Sea" when we dive and by that I mean that we inevitably change what we go to see underwater by the act of diving. The art of diving well includes minimising this underwater "finprint".

We should try to be in harmony and not blundering invaders. We should not damage corals through bad buoyancy control; we should not keep pursuing or poking critters that do not like it.

If you try to touch fishes, some will dart away and hide, or swim off. Others do appear to like, or at least accept, interactions with divers. Empathy, and Dee Scar's gentle approach, is the key.

At the same time, we should not be precious about it. For a while, an extremist promoted

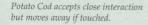


"Touch Me And I Die" referring to coral. This is rubbish. Touching a coral will not kill it. Parrotfish eat corals by biting huge chunks out of them, but corals are resilient and re-grow quickly.

In Port Moresby, we had made friends with a large moray eel. We even had a name for it, "Nessie", and I admit it did look like a monster. When we dived, it got so excited it would swim from its lair in an old ship I had sunk,

meet us on the way down, and allow itself to be cuddled. My wife Dinah was its favourite, but it would allow any diver to handle it, and it never bit anyone.

Eel skin, by the way, is silky smooth underwater, and not at all slimy. Unfortunately another group of divers visited the site and were alarmed when Nessie swam out to greet them. One grabbed his dive knife and slashed Nessie across the head. The wound healed eventually and Nessie became friends with us





Telita rides a turtle in the early 1980's.

again. The diver told bold stories of his attack by a moray, what ignorance!

In the Eastern Pacific, manta rays are known to approach divers and offer themselves for a ride. They actually seem to enjoy themselves but I have never experienced that with mantas

If you stay still, they will approach within millimetres - but if you try to touch, then they will take off. At the famous Cod Hole on the Great Barrier Reef, a Potato Cod will allow a very close approach, but slides away if touched.

In the bad old days, divers would sometimes grab a sleeping turtle and go for a forced ride. The gentle approach is much better, and turtles that have been treated well become fascinated by divers and approach them.

I recently visited the resident Green Turtle at Lighthouse Bommie on the Great Barrier Reef. She was quite happy to have my model Leigh





Leigh Paine gently guides an Olive Sea Snake.

Paine swim right next to her, and even came back for more, though it seemed to me that the turtle was actually interested in Leigh's long blond hair, perhaps confusing it with the delicious tentacles of a sea jelly.

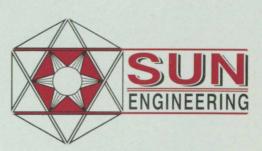
On another dive at this great site, the climax was an encounter with an Olive Sea Snake. Using a gentle caress, without gripping the snake, Leigh was able to guide the snake and I was able to get some spectacular photos.

These snakes are highly venomous, but are more curious than aggressive, and I have never heard of one biting a diver. But there is always a first time, so I do not recommend you try touching them. They have certainly bitten fishermen who have tangled them in nets and treated them roughly. The fishermen should have tried a little tenderness.

I should also remind you not to suddenly touch your dive buddy. You might think it fun to watch him/her jump, but, armed with a dive knife, a dive buddy is incredibly dangerous.



Bob Halstead is author of the "Coral Sea Reef Guide" with underwater photo identification of over 1000 marine animals found in PNG and the Coral Sea region.



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A trekker on the way to Haveve Fall.

It's a laid-back place with a strong sense of community, and it's the starting point for the two-hour trek through lush tropical jungle to the area's waterfall. "We could do the walk in one and half hours if we move fast and don't stop. But you'll miss out on all the beautiful spots on the way," explains our guide, Geha.

Within a few minutes and it's easy to see what Geha means as we traverse the first of five wooden bridges which cross the fast-flowing river. Each crossing is a picture postcard moment, with the bridges framed by trees which are hundreds of years old with the water cascading over moss-covered rocks and boulders.

"These are the trees we use to build the foundations of our houses, and a little further up we have the grass we use for our roofs and the bamboo which we wrap around the houses," says Geha.

By PNG highlands standards, the walk is relatively easy and it means that we can listen and understand how local people live off the land in this part of the world and how they revere their natural environment. The houses are usually round to retain the heat at night as fires are lit inside to provide warmth. Traditionally, they don't have windows but more and more homes are now being built with them.

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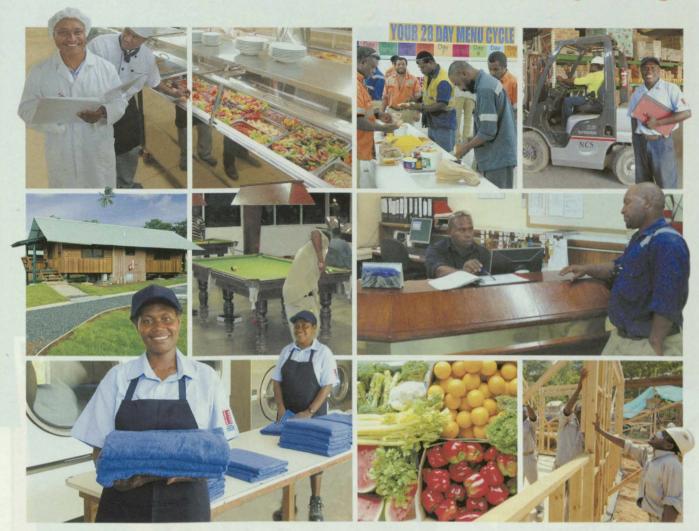


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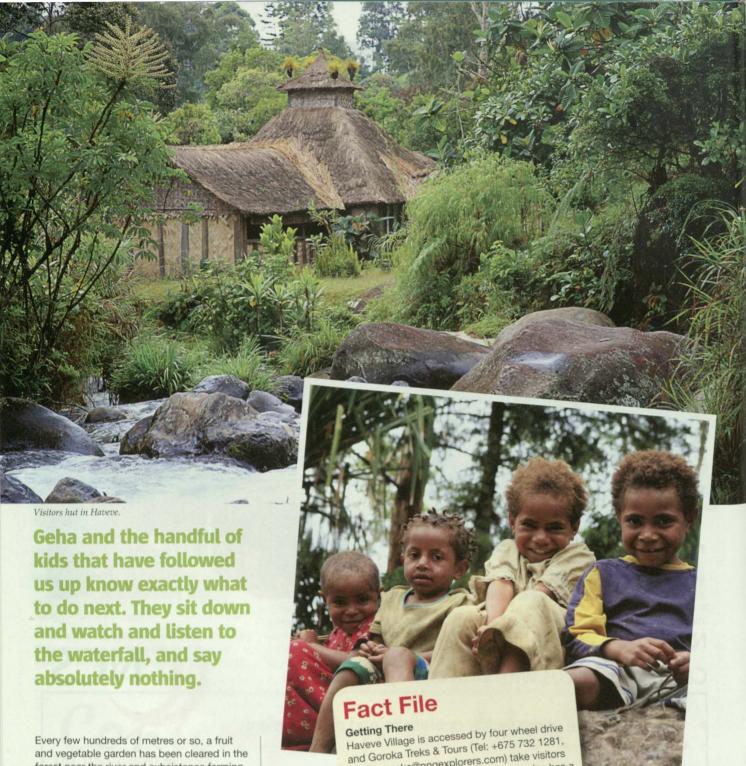
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Every few hundreds of metres or so, a fruit and vegetable garden has been cleared in the forest near the river and subsistence farming is still the mainstay of the area's economy (although they're getting more and more visitors like us) and the soil in this area is so fertile they can pretty much grow what they

Broccoli, cabbage, breadfruit, yam, bananas, papaya and pineapple are the staples and the ladies of the village also sell and trade their produce at the many markets down in Goroka. Trout also make their way upstream for much of the year.

"We can catch them really easily in the shallow water and then we cook him on a fire right beside the river straight away. It's a beautiful fish and you know it's fresh!" says Geha.

And as for the pigs in the area, like the one that trotted past us earlier, they're kept as pets and are revered in this part of the world. It's not uncommon to see locals petting and grooming their pigs. Like dogs, they often roll onto their backs to encourage their owners to give them a tummy rub.

email: goroka@pngexplorers.com) take visitors

to the Haveve Waterfall track. Haveve also has a

guest hut for visitors who wish to overnight and

do other treks in the area.

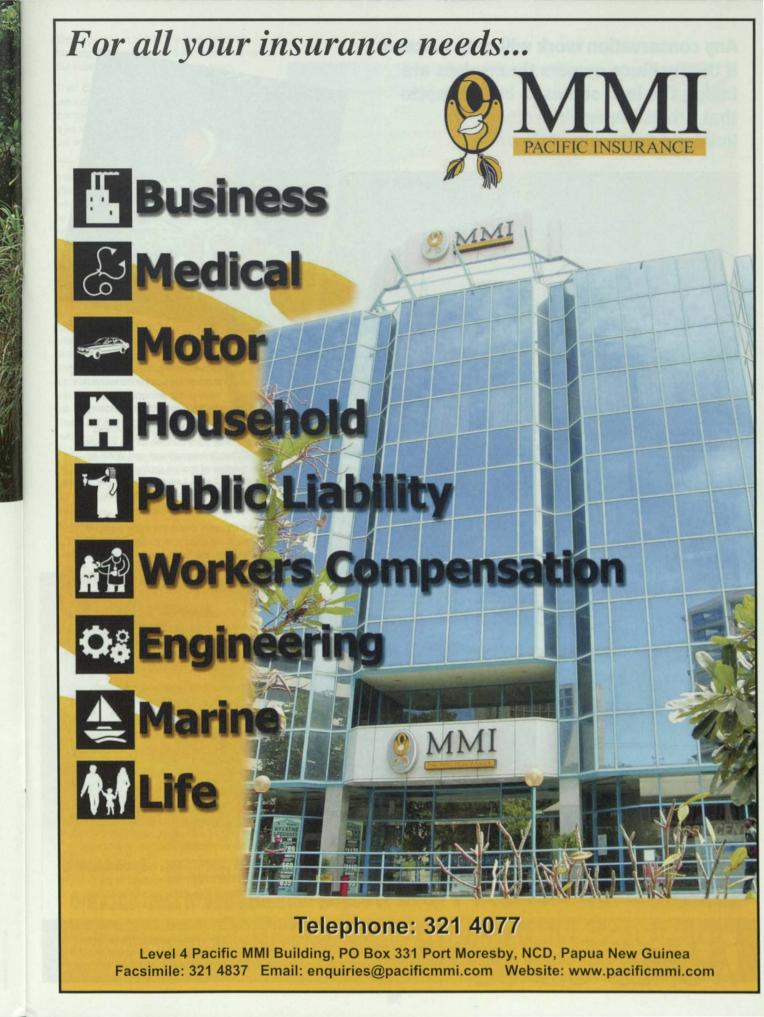
After two hours, we cross the final bridge and walk along the river bank and we can hear the waterfall ahead. As we approach, the noise

becomes louder and louder and as we round a bend, we finally see what we've come to discover, Haveve Waterfall.

All smiles for the camera...

village kids in Haveve.

With good recent rain, the waterfall is in full flow and it's easy to see why the Haveve people have claimed this as their special place. Geha and the handful of kids that have followed us up know exactly what to do next. They sit down and watch and listen to the waterfall, and say absolutely nothing.



Any conservation work will only succeed if the resource owners themselves are taking the lead seems to be the motto that drives the work of divers Tim Rowland and Lesley Schoon.



DIVING: UNQUESTIONABLY WORLD CLASS riginally from Australia, Tim and Lesley have got a groundswell of support for marine conservation work going amongst the coastal dwellers of northern Madang.

"Initially, we began to be more involved with the local communities as we worked with Wetlands International and WWF to get a number of marine protected areas established," says Lesley who met her partner Tim when she was posted to Madang as an Australian volunteer in 1995.

"Ten or so years down the track we have become more and more involved with the communities. We bring divers to the village to watch sing sings, learn how bilums and grass skirts are made, eat traditional meals, visit local schools, etc.

"We are currently working with Mama Graun and have trained a number of the ladies in marine awareness. Together with the ladies we have put together a programme which we are taking to all the local schools in the area.

"We have also been involved in training local villagers to dive and monitor their reefs through the 'reef check' programme."

No need for the couple divers to blow their own trumpets as PADI, in recognition of their work on marine conservation with the local communities, awarded its 'Environmental Achievement Award' to Tim and Lesley in 2007.

Working with the communities to increase their capacity to generate their own income through tourism and effectively manage their own reefs has been the couple's motives in all these.

"We have been here for a long time and worked hard to earn the respect of the local communities. Now we enjoy a close relationship with the people in our area," Lesley adds.

Adventure Dive is the name of the couple's dive shop. After running the dive shop at Jas Aben Resort for a number of years, Tim and Lesley moved down the road to run their own.

They now live in one of the best spots on Madang Lagoon, about 15 minutes drive up the northern coast from Madang town.

Their dive boats are tied to the timber verandah of their house, which also acts as a pontoon. Amongst the three fibreglass boats is a jet ski, put to good use by the couple's boys, Jai and Tai.

"I'm not sure where to begin as there are so many reasons that we feel Madang is a great place to bring up our boys," explains Lesley when asked by PARADISE about their decision to stay and bring up their children in this northern PNG seaside town.

"I could start with the environment; lots of space, clean air, beautiful reefs and islands. Jai and Taj spend most of their time outdoors, there is so much to do and I have never heard them say "I'm bored".

"There is no need for TVs, computers, play stations and battery-operated toys. Although they have these, they are rarely used. Instead, they swim, dive, ride bikes, go canoeing, play sports, make things using local materials, explore their surrounds, climb trees, ride their iet-ski, help drive and even fix dive boats. There is no shortage of stuff for kids to play with and they make their own fun.

"They also have a great sense of belonging. The village communities are their extended families and they feel both welcome and safe. As a mother, I may not see them for hours, but I know they will be safe wherever they are in the village.



"They are also developing a sense of social responsibility. They are aware that kids in Australia have a lot more material goods than the people in the village. They also have access to better education and medical help than the locals. They are grateful for what they have and want to share what they have with

the locals."

What helps with the interaction with the local village is the family home's location. The house is on a waterfront property adjacent to Nitul, which is part of Riwo village. Through the support of international marine conservation NGO Wetlands International.



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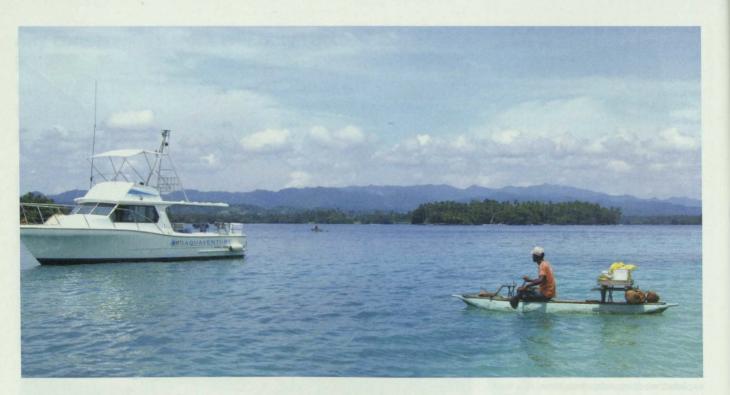
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Tim and Lesley have been assisting with the declaration of marine protected areas on some islands in Madang Lagoon.

"Madang currently has four marine protected areas with a number of other communities working through the process to have their

areas gazetted as marine protected areas. The driving force for most communities is the desire to protect their resources for future generations."

Tim has been a diver for almost 30 years and as a PADI course director, he is PNG's most qualified diving instructor and knows Madang's great dive sites like the back of his hands.

"Madang has spectacular diving, but the same can be said for all of PNG. Madang offers diversity with wrecks, wall and muck diving

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and Madang's dive sites are very close which makes for short boat trips to dive sites."

So what sets PNG and indeed Madang apart from other dive destinations to the east or west of the country?

Lesley offers this: "PNG is geographically spectacular and has maintained its cultural integrity. Cultural interactions are real, not just displays to meet the perceived needs of tourists.

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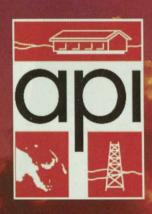
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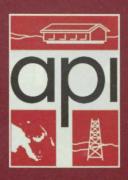
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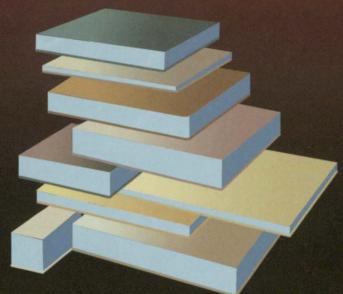
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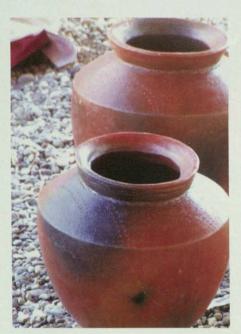
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Out in Bilbil village are a bunch of hardworking creators.

Women like Dorcas Kana, who with a fair bit of clay and a lot of imagination, turn dirt into jars and pots.

This they do with their bare hands, never with the help of a wheel or any other ceramic making devices.



POTTERY MAKERS OF BILBIL



orcas prefers to create ornamental pieces; miniature mugs and pots.

I couldn't resist picking up two as

souvenirs.

One was quite neat in design as it had stands

like a three-legged stool.

Inscribed on it was 'Noah'.

"Is that Noah, the Bible character?" I asked.

Dorcas smiled. "No, Noah is my son."

For miniatures like these, Dorcas says it usually takes a fortnight to complete.

Like other potters in Bilbil, she fetches her wet clay from a swamp inland.

This is mixed with sand from the beach on the village's waterfront and water, and beaten into the desired shape.

Once the potter is satisfied, the ceramic is heated in a kiln to harden and settle its shape.

Some of Dorcas' neighbours do bigger pots which can be used for household cooking.

"It can be a very good business," she explains.

"At least with me, money from my pottery helps towards sending my two older pikinini (children) to school."



• For interest on Bilbil Village pottery, enquire with Bumble Bee

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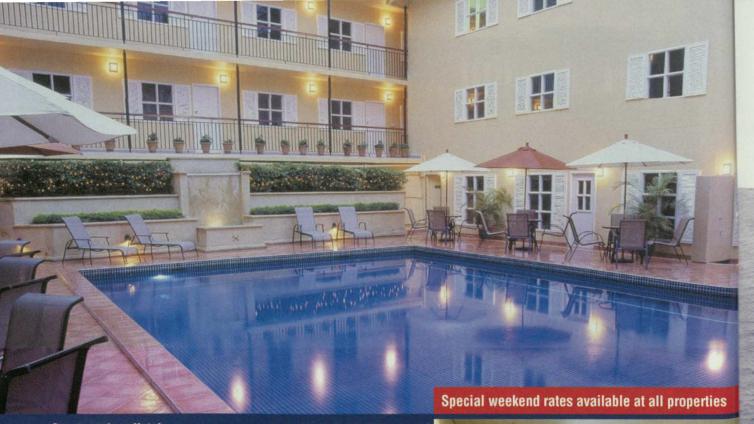
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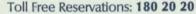


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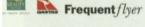
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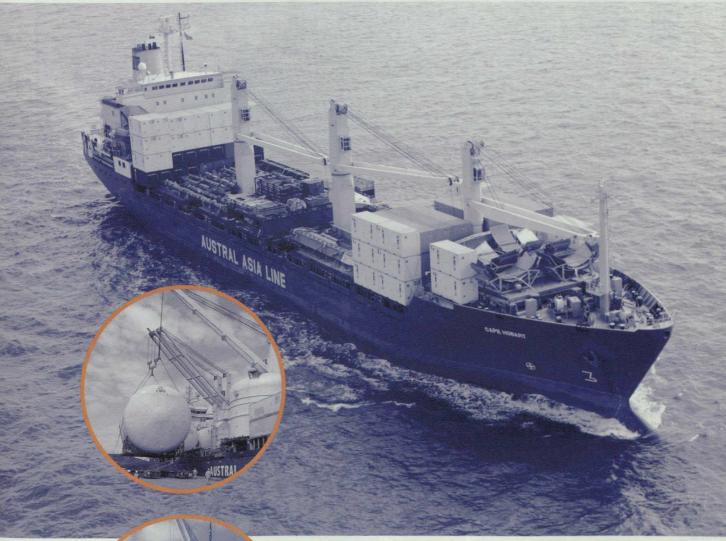
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Did you know?

World's Biggest Tree Kangaroo

By John Brooksbank

ine of the eleven species of tree kangaroo in the world live on the island of New Guinea, which of course includes Papua New Guinea. The largest of these is Doria's Tree Kangaroo, Dendrolagus dorianus, named in 1883 after the Marquis of Doria, a well known ornithologist of the time.

They may be nice, big, cuddly and friendly but the skin of certain tree kangaroos is also particularly favoured as the preferred head covering for certain Highlands clans - to whom the cream and gold fur of some species is an integral part of their traditional dress. To be part of a headdress unfortunately also means that the tree kangaroo has to be dead!

Tree kangaroos are marsupial macropods (that is they have big feet!) and arboreal - in other words they have taken to the trees, unlike their ground hugging wallaby and true kangaroo cousins of the Papuan grasslands.

On the ground they appear slow and clumsy but once up in the



branches they are agile, using their powerful limbs to climb and jump from tree to tree with ease. As climbing aids, their feet have long claws and rubbery soles.

Up in the forest canopy the tree kangaroos long tails are used to help them balance whilst moving around. They have been recorded as leaping more than nine metres between trees and apparently have the ability to jump to the ground from as high as 18 metres without being hurt.

Doria's Tree Kangaroo - this teddy bear of the tree tops - is classified as Vulnerable by the IUCN due to the gradual destruction of its lowland habitat, its size, small family group lifestyle and susceptibility to hunting, particularly now that the use of shotguns is common.

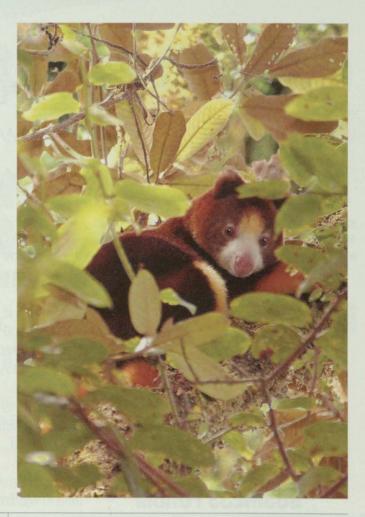
Although first found by Europeans in the hills of the Astrolabe Range near Port Moresby, where Variarata National Park now is, this tree kangaroo is now known to live in a number of parts of Papua New Guinea at altitudes between 600 to 3,600 metres.

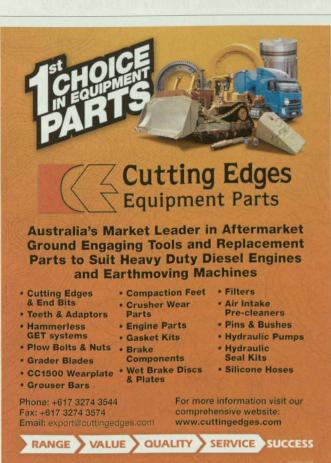
Adult males, who are usually larger than their female counterparts, weigh in at about 14 kilogrammes.

Their bodies can be up to 70 centimtres long, with a tail of the same length. Tree kangaroos eat leaves and fruit and, whilst not ruminants, have large stomachs which act as fermentation vats where bacteria assist in breaking food down.

Tree kangaroos are naturally shy creatures that are notoriously difficult to find in the bush and new species are still being found. Well-known mammologist Dr Tim Flannery has spent much time in Papua New Guinea and across the border in West Papua studying these animals and has discovered a number of previously undescribed species, some of which are sub-species of Doria's Tree Kangaroo.

For the sake of helping Papua New Guinea's diversity, we would all prefer that in future tree kangaroos are shot by camera rather than gun and therefore adorn photograph albums rather than headdresses!







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The Forum is arranged jointly by the Australia Papua New Guinea Business Council and the Business Council of Papua New Guinea.

The 25th Australia Papua New Guinea Business Forum will be held in Madang, Papua New Guinea, from 17 to 19 May 2009.

Participants at the Forum include government ministers and officials, and senior business people from both countries.

Post-Forum participant surveys conducted by a market research company have shown that networking opportunities created by the Forum are as important a factor in the attendance of participants as gathering the information provided by speakers.

At the end of the Forum each year a Communiqué is produced identifying key issues to be pursued by government and business over the following year, and beyond. By attending the Forum you can contribute to the identification of issues important to business.

The Australia Papua New Guinea Business Council and the Business Council of Papua New Guinea continue to work closely in partnership to make the 2009 Business Forum an even more valuable tool in promoting the bilateral business relationship and economic growth in Papua New Guinea.

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AUSTRALIAN VOLUNTEERS IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Australian volunteers play an important role in Papua New Guinea's development. From nurse educators through to drama teachers, the Australian Government has provided support to over 11,500 Australian volunteers overseas since the 1960s.

In Papua New Guinea there are four Australian Government programs matching volunteers with PNG public and private sector organisations:

Australian Business Volunteers provides volunteers to facilitate business development and skills transfer, usually within the private sector. Volunteers also work in government and some NGOs in organisational management with placements varying from one to six months.

Australian Youth Ambassadors for Development places young Australians between 18 and 30 years of age on short-term assignments (3-12 months) in areas such as education, health and child protection. UNICEF, the PNG Ombudsman and the Milne Bay Church Development Fund are currently hosting volunteers.

Volunteering for International Development for Australia volunteers work with local counterparts to reduce poverty and achieve sustainable development in the communities in which they work, through skills and knowledge exchange, institutional strengthening and capacity building.

Australian Volunteers International implement management and administration systems, train staff in new technologies and project management, supporting income generation and farming projects and youth development and sport. There are more than 30 partners in PNG including the Institute of Medical Research, Sisters of Mercy, the Anglican Church of PNG and Port Moresby City Mission.

Nursing manual a lasting legacy

Rewarding, but at times incredibly frustrating is how Darwin's Kylee St George describes her nine months working at the Alotau General Hospital through the Australian Youth Ambassadors for Development program.

"It can tear your heart out when you see people dying of preventable and treatable illnesses like tuberculosis and malaria," said Darwin-based Kylee.

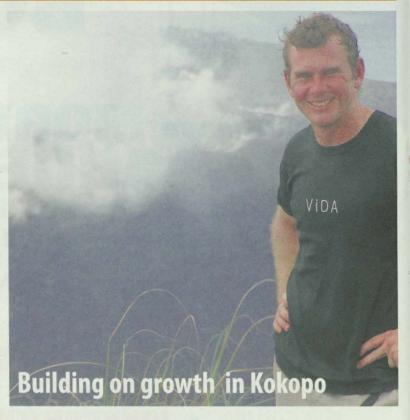
Her main role was teaching and supervising ward rounds but Kylee also worked hard to improve facilities for the students, successfully applying for grants to set up a clinical laboratory and obtain computers.

"The lab will provide somewhere to practice skills and Internet access will make a huge difference because the students have such limited resources."

Kylee has also developed a step-by-step guide to basic nursing techniques.

"I decided to make a procedures manual my priority because I wanted to be able to leave something behind that would continue to be useful."

Australian nurse educator Kylee St George with student nurses at St Barnabas School of Nursing in Alotau.



Town planner James Burford at Mt. Tavurvur. As an Australian volunteer James was welcomed into the community and made the most of his weekends including some breathtaking bushwalks around East New Britain.

The aim of Australian volunteer programs is skills and knowledge exchange.

James Burford's 18-month placement as a town planner with the East New Britain Division of Physical Planning is a good example of a long-lasting contribution by a volunteer.

"With some 200 planning applications coming through the division in a year, one important project was to develop guidelines to use as a checklist to say yes or no to a building, sub-division or development," explained James.

"I didn't see the point of me, writing the manual, filling it with my technical jargon, when I was not the one going to say yes or no." Two trainees were mentored by James in setting up checklists.

"I guess if asked about the success of the placement, I can say these trainees are now running their own planning division and contributing to the growth of one of the fastest growing towns in the Pacific. That is ultimate success."

The experience gained has also had a spin-off for James who has recently taken up a new position as environmental planner with the Sydney Ports Corporation.



YUMI WOK WANTAIM LONG PNG



Does your organisation need a volunteer?

What does it cost?

Volunteers are paid a living allowance equivalent to a local salary. In some cases host will have to assist with this as well as finding and perhaps contributing to accommodation costs. Contributions for some may also include offering a return airfare to Australia. Discuss your financial situation with the in-country manager to work out a solution. The contribution made by the host organisation demonstrates a commitment to supporting the project outcome.

How do I know if my organisation is eligible?

Predominantly non government not-for-profit organisations host volunteers, however in some cases private business may be eligible as well as government departments. Contact the in-country manager, they will look closely at your organisation's needs and may make a recommendation.

My organisation is in a remote part of the province - will someone still come?

was

own

That

Volunteers are interested in a variety of placements across Papua New Guinea in rural and urban areas.

How soon can a volunteer arrive?

It can take up to six months to match a volunteer with your needs as well as processing visas and finding accommodation. For VIDA for example there are two major mobilisations each year March/April and September/October.

What sort of work can a volunteer do?

Volunteers perform a variety of roles from professional advice on how to write a business plan to providing vocational training in areas such as carpentry and water and sanitation.

There are no restrictions on what kinds of work an Australian volunteer can do. It is important to note volunteer placements do not replace local staff and where possible pass on the knowledge for the activity to continue.



Mosquito nets are one step in prevention campaigns against the lymphatic filariasis virus which attack the lymphatic system, causing organ damage, and can lead to painful swelling. Based in the port town of Kiunga with husband David, Margaret Bruffell helped distribute 9,500 bed nets to families in remote Western Province.

Malaria nets for North Fly

"If I can measure my success I suppose as well as malaria prevention, additional achievements like teaching field staff how to use computers, even drive manual cars are all skills not here before," said the Victorian primary school teacher Margaret Bruffell.

Through Australian Volunteers International, Margaret was the Australian Doctors International Field Coordinator in Kiunga, among her roles to help distribute insecticide-impregnated mosquito nets.

"Sixteen of my thirty years school teaching was spent at the same school in a small country town in central Victoria so camping out, driving hours up mud highways and intermittent electricity, phone, internet and limited fresh food pushed me far beyond my comfort zone and I loved all of it."

Margaret coordinated survey teams to map previously unrecorded information about villages, such as walking time, family numbers and ages, and travel data to assist with distribution.

One hundred bed nets weigh about 45 kilograms and can only be delivered using a combination of plane, boat, 4WD and long days of trekking through dense jungle.

Results already speak for themselves: Since 2003, 45,000 bed nets have been distributed to North Fly. Malaria cases at Tabubil Hospital have dropped from 9,026 in 2006 to 4,892 in 2007, a decrease of 46 percent.

Focus on ability creates work options for youth

One of the biggest challenges for employees of Port Moresby General Hospital's Sheltered Workshop was having the skill and confidence to use heavy equipment and tools.

This meant the range of products was limited. Shelves, tables, trunks, and furniture are now being made, with Peter Dorman teaching staff how to adapt and use a wide range of tools designed for able-bodied people.

Ross Tito, Manager of the Sheltered Workshop, says Peter's five week placement through Australian Business Volunteers has been a blessing.

"Whenever any of the boys said they couldn't make something or hold one of the bigger tools, he'd pick it up, put it in their hands and steady them. Now they don't even think twice. And there's so much more quality in the work they do," he said.

Peter Dorman's placement with Port Moresby General Hospital's Sheltered Workshop also included a four-day training workshop for young people living with disabilities from the Cheshire Homes and St John Association for the Blind.



Who do I contact in PNG if I want to know more?



volunteers

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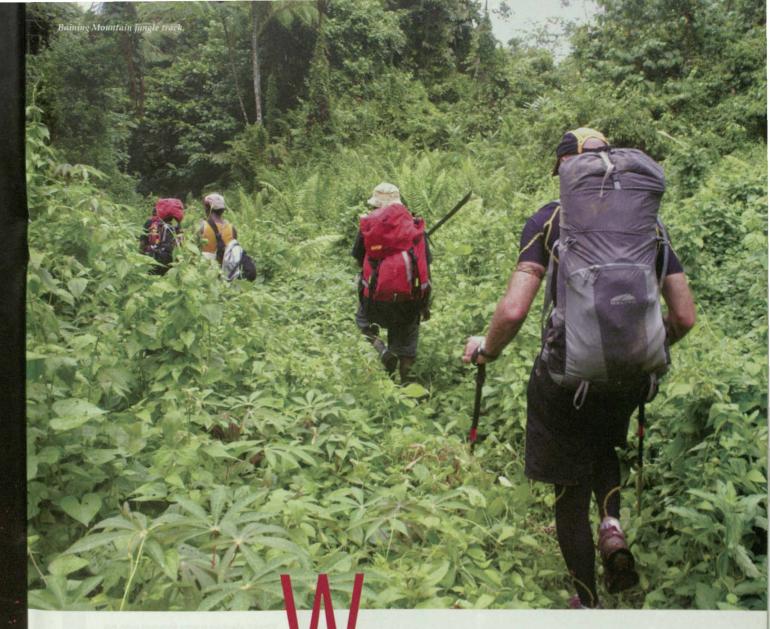
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STONE AGE MEETS PHONE AGE



By John Borthwick

The Baining tribesmen dancing around the raging bonfire are almost naked but for their huge white face-masks.

One by one they leap into the fire, staying there as long as possible. Gyrating amid the flames, they seem made of asbestos.

e have spent days slashing our way through some of Papua New Guinea's thickest jungle, crossing the Baining Mountains of East New Britain Province to reach the remote village of Mondrabat.

On our arrival, the villagers build a huge bonfire in their clearing. With nightfall, the spectacular fire dance begins, then continues into the small hours.

I awake next morning in this jungle plateau settlement so remote that its people still barely use items made of metal.

The first spectacle I see is almost as extraordinary as last night's fire dance - our trek leader talking on a satellite phone while a tribesman holds up a thin aerial.

Neither of these extremes matches the experience of the Australian soldiers who dragged their starving bodies through these jungles in early 1942.

Retreating from Rabaul ahead of 15,000 Japanese invaders, they were attempting to reach evacuation points on the south coast of the Gazelle Peninsula. Of the 1600 men, barely 300 made it back to Australia.

Our adventure starts with meeting our Baining guide, Weekli and four porters and our leader, 35-year old Peter Gosling, a lanky, Brisbane-based adventurer.

Soon we're slogging through the green crush of jungle, summiting one ridge after another. Below us, it's all mulch and boot-sucking mush; above us, stained-glass sunlight filters through the tree-top canopy.

Following a track southwest across the Baining Mountains that the "Diggers" took, we have the luxury of tents, rations and bug repellent.

They had little but the clothes they walked in as they traversed the 120 kilometres of merciless, crocodile-infested terrain.

"We had a quinine tablet for breakfast, a fag (cigarette) for lunch and quinine for tea," wrote one survivor.







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no nets. Boots began to give out. Those who could, marched on foot, tattered skeletons of men who often staggered and fell as they forced themselves westward."

Many died of malaria and dysentery while the survivors fought off hostile Molkolkol natives.

Camped for the night beside a river, I fall asleep to the industrial shrill of insects, the rattle and thrum of rain.

With morning, the porters spot puk-puk (crocodile) tracks but seem unconcerned. We press on through the jungle, wading as though at the bottom of a green ocean.

Late on day three, rain has made the trail treacherous, with the steep descents becoming real knee-cappers.

Such are the joys of the jungle. I would never swap these soaring, unlogged forests, the avenues of bamboo or even those hitch-hiking little bludgers, the leeches between my toes, for a month of natter and lattes back in the Comfort Zone Café.

We reach the Mondrabat "men's house" where they are preparing huge white masks for the fire dance. Made of tapa-like cloth, then moulded into giant heads with enormous eyes, these creations - and not much else - will be worn by the men. Barefoot, their only protection from the heat will be palm fronds bound around their shins.









clearing, wreathed in long white fronds and wearing bug-eyed masks.

They circulate slowly around the fire, shuffling to the beat of hollow poles and men chanting.

After the women, the bonfire is re-stoked. Suddenly, a glistening, near-naked jester leaps into the clearing, followed by six masked young men. The drummers quicken their pace. The dancers circle.

One plunges into the bonfire and prances there as long as super-humanly possible, until twenty, perhaps thirty seconds later, he can stand it no longer.

Another asbestos-soled warrior leaps into the

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inferno, followed by another and another.

Hours later, and long after I've fallen asleep, the dancers, singers and drummers succumb to sheer exhaustion.

In the early hours, I wake for a moment - in a darkened village on a high plateau deep in another human era. The next time I awake, it is daylight and a lanky young whiteskin is dialling tomorrow via a satellite. Stone Age meets Phone Age.











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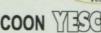
















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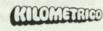








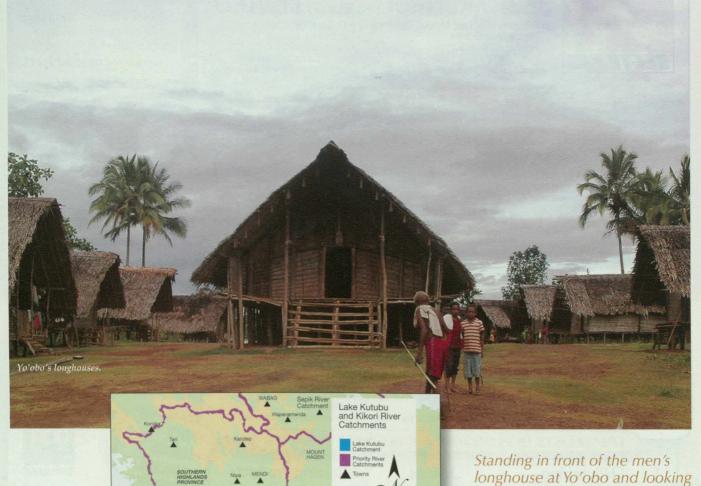












YO'OBO

Little has changed despite developments

By John Brooksbank

Standing in front of the men's longhouse at Yo'obo and looking out over the glassy smooth waters of Lake Kutubu glinting in the afternoon sunshine, it was hard to believe that the village was on the very doorstep of the hub of Papua New Guinea's petroleum industry.

espite being close to the Oil Search Limited's Moro airstrip, camps, central processing facility, innumerable well heads and associated pipelines, some just a ridgeline away - the small footprint of these petroleum developments that have been so important to the economy of Papua New Guinea for more than 16 years - Yo'obo and the surrounding countryside is little changed.

The traditional village structure, with houses for women and children flanking the imposing men's longhouse, is unchanged, although now there are also school buildings, a church, a generator, outboard motors and some store bought dinghies.

Yo'obo is the venue for the celebration of World Wetlands Day 2009. It is held annually around the globe on February 2. Local community leaders and representatives of



Canoes racing to the finish line.

This year the theme is "Upstream and Downstream - Wetlands Connect Us All", which has particular relevance to the Lake Kutubu environment.

Oil Search, CDI Foundation - a community development organisation supported by the oil company, WWF and hundreds of villagers have descended on this small village to mark this important event.

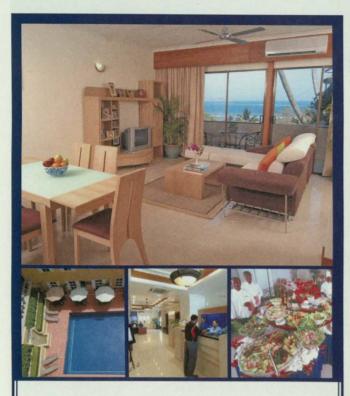
This year, the theme is "Upstream and Downstream - Wetlands Connect Us All", which has particular relevance to the Lake Kutubu environment.

Many streams feed into the lake from the surrounding ridges and valleys but only one - Soro Creek - drains from it, which makes its proper management of concern to everyone in this part of Southern Highlands Province.

Maintaining the lake environment relies on understanding by the villagers who live along its shores and in nearby hamlets of the risks the area faces.

WWF has been working with communities in Kutubu since 1994, focusing on education and training - another reason why the Wetlands Day celebrations this year revolve around activities for the next generation - children from five local elementary schools.





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The whole event was well organised, with canoe loads of young participants and their teachers arriving early to prepare themselves for the traditional dancing displays.

In fact, almost unbelievably, the whole day went like clockwork and was in line with the timetable circulated to all attendees.

Activities for the participating elementary schools included a poster competition, a canoe race, drama presentations and traditional dancing by the children.

The canoe race, from halfway across the lake to the shore, was entered enthusiastically by each team of two girls and two boys, although after a few capsizes some teams ended up at the finish line minus a paddler!

The time taken to dress the children paid handsome dividends - they were resplendent in black cassowary feathers, kina shell necklaces and traditional skin diwai tapa cloth rain capes.

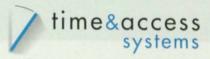
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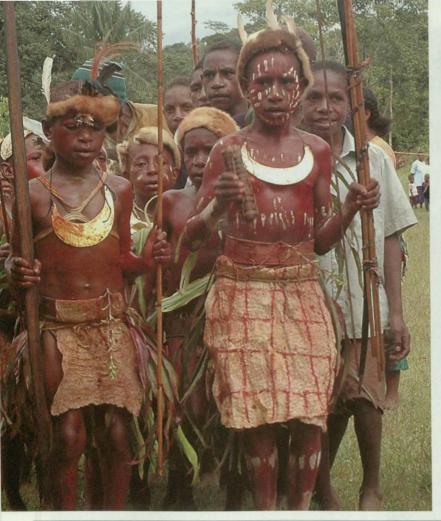


When you're not at the coalface everyday, it can be hard to keep track of your staff and even harder to know who's doing the actual work. Time theft is a major issue for PNG organisations and businesses (costing millions of kina every year) and occurs when staff are paid even when they're in

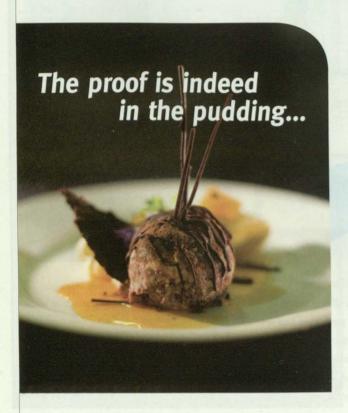
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19158_HOTCHOC,MC





The tapa cloth and red ochre typical of the Foe people of the lake villages contrasted in some school groups with the white cockatoo feathers of the neighbouring Fasu people and cuscus fur from other Highlands areas, reflecting inter-marriage with surrounding language groups.

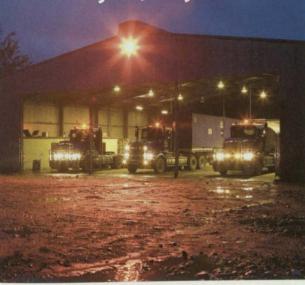
After some initial shyness the children got into the swing of things with encouragement from parents and teachers and the air was soon filled with the rhythmic cadence of wellpracticed traditional chants.

The children's short drama presentations all

related in some way to the theme of the day the traditional myth about the creation of Lake Kutubu, the effects that pollution could have on the lake and the need to have no-fishing zones around the lake at certain times.

Lake Kutubu is part of the ecologically diverse

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Kikori River catchment and is one of the largest lakes in Papua New Guinea, second only to Lake Murray in Western Province. With its greatest depth at about 75 metres and sitting at 800 metres above sea level, the lake is the only home for 12 particular species of

fish, some which are a food source for the lake communities. These include a tandan, a grunter, two rainbow fish and five mogurndas. Such unique endemic species are exposed to a number of risks, including over-fishing by local villagers, pollution and predation by

introduced fish species.

The presence of these endemic species was one of the factors that led to the lake being declared a 'Wetland of International Importance' under the Ramsar Convention in

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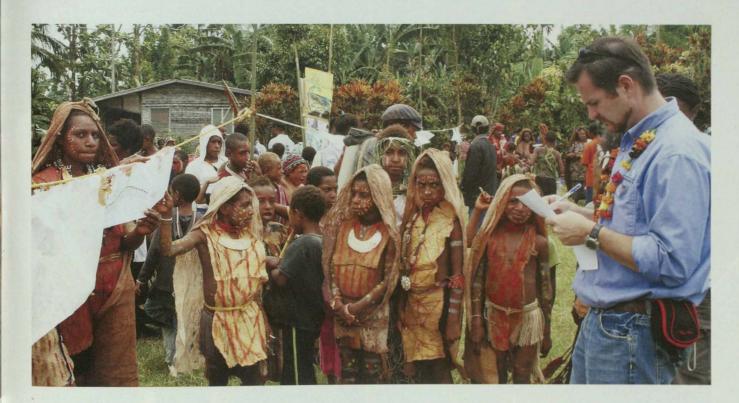
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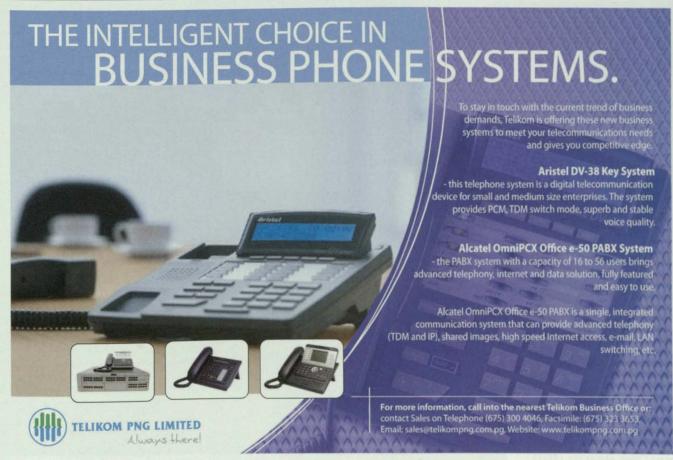
1998. Lake Kutubu and its environs is also a Wildlife Management Area, recognised by the Department of Environment and Conservation.

The day's events ended with the award of prizes to the winners, and almost all runners up, of the various competitions and the

distribution of more educational posters by the WWF team - a fun day that also reinforced some important environmental messages.

It is a testament to the petroleum developers, the activities of the WWF project officers who have been in the area since the start of oil production and attitude of the local villagers themselves that the environment of Lake Kutubu is almost as pristine today as when it was first discovered by the outside world in the 1930s.

Let's hope it stays that way!







Telikom's powerful new communications tool, the VSAT (Very Small Aperture Terminal) system offers a wide range of satellite solutions to deliver voice, internet, and other solutions to different array of users' nation wide. It is the perfect technology platform to deliver vital communications link within the reach of isolated PNG communities. VSAT is smaller, less expensive, less power-dependent and is a simple modern technology creating communications revolution in Papua New Guinea.

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The hotel offers our family - first time Fiji visitors - a welcome introduction to Fijian culture. Broadly smiling staff offer a friendly "Bula" at every turn, local musicians play throughout the resort and Fijian artefacts adorn the buildings.

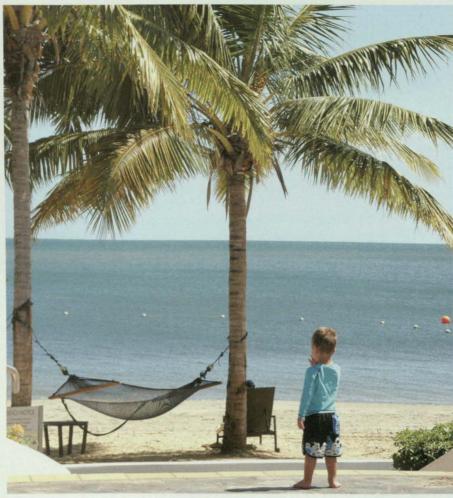
My favourite is a collection of tapa cloth clothing, including an elaborate wedding dress. Lessons in weaving, pottery and dance are offered throughout the week for those wanting to learn local skills.

The resort includes the usual five-star facilities, such as enormous lagoon-style pool, private beachfront, sophisticated spa, kids club and a selection of shops.

Water activities of jet skiing, sailing, kayaking and parasailing ensure there's plenty of variety for an extended stay.

In fact I'm wishing we were here for longer than our four days, as we're having trouble fitting everything in.

The pool is our favourite spot. A shallow end allows littlies to splash about safely, while a spiral slide entertains older kids, but there's room for swimming and general water fun too, including aqua aerobics under the tutelage of Kolinio Temo, activities supervisor and recent recipient of the tourism 'Frontliner of the Year' award.





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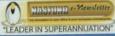
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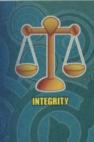
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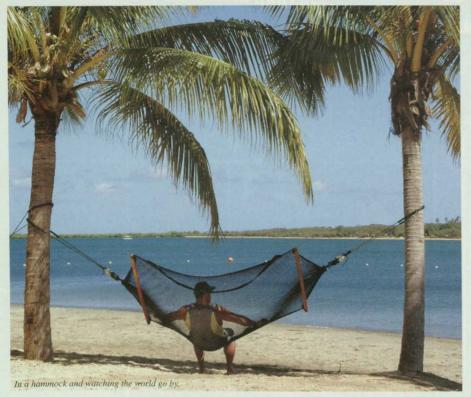
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MEMBER

With imported sand, it's not the South Pacific idyll but it is a sandy beach with hammocks under the palm trees and sun loungers facing the water.



While there's plenty of pool space, it's the deck chairs that garner competition, with many guests selfishly claiming one with their towel before they head off to breakfast.

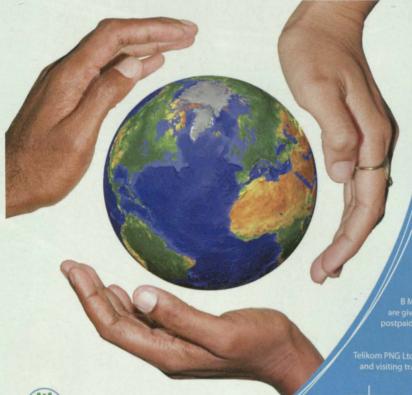
My girlfriend persuaded me to bring my sports clothes to try out the hotel's gym, but we never made it.

She and her husband walk the perimeter of the adjacent golf course each morning, but my exercise is limited to the pool and walking along the beachfront.

With imported sand, it's not the South Pacific idyll, but it is a sandy beach, with hammocks under the palm trees and sun loungers facing the water.

While three years old, the Sofitel still holds its own against the newer hotels on Denarau Island. All 296 rooms, with beach or garden views, have a balcony or ground floor terrace.

Innovative family rooms combine a queen bed with partitioned corner for the kids with bunks and a Sony PlayStation, and include a bath as well as a shower. Location on the ground floor means the kids can run around the extensive gardens while you relax on the terrace with a drink. But if you want time alone, local nannies and babysitters are available too.



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The GSM Mobile International Roaming is a premium service complimenting the B Mobile Postpaid Service. The service facilitates both Outbound and Inbound Roamers. The services include voice, SMS, supplementary services and possibly data services.

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Mobility Sales on Telephone (675) 323 5555, Facsimile: (675) 323 2554, Email: mobility@telikompng.com.pg, Website: www.telikompng.com.pg As our children are older, 12 and 16, we have gone for adjoining rooms with interconnecting door - perfect for nipping through to wake them up or when they require us to sunscreen their backs.

Our room, with its king size bed, includes a sofa and table with two chairs. Additional chairs on the balconies mean there's plenty of seating when we all get together.

The children's room has two double beds and both rooms feature walk-in wardrobes with plenty of storage space for luggage and awkward items like snorkelling gear.

The bathrooms are cleverly designed with toilet and shower behind a closed door, with a separate vanity area overlooking the room, allowing the flow of natural light, although shutters offer privacy if required.

While many hotel bathrooms don't have room for a single toiletry bag, this vanity area, almost the width of the room, has the luxury of extensive shelf space for the myriad bags of toiletries, sunscreens and medicines most families travel with.

Unfortunately, one of our friends finds himself locked out of his room when the battery in his electronic key lock fails, which takes an inordinate amount of time to fix.

But the only problem with our rooms, apart from a shortage of face cloths and hand towels, is the specially designed 'Sofitel MyBeds'.



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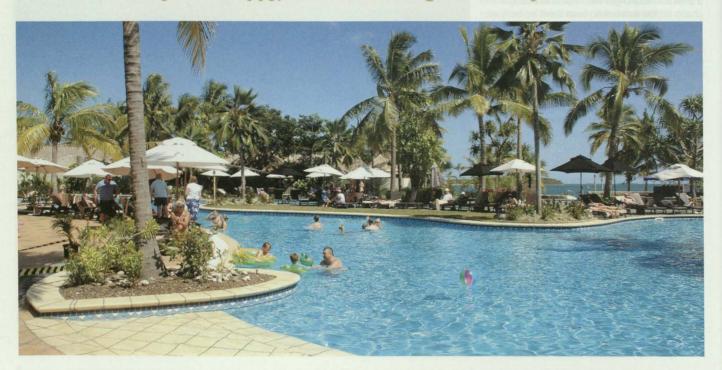
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As I suck on oysters, savour prawns and sip Sauvignon Blanc at the Lagoon with seafood lovers amongst our group, our daughter is across the pool dining with our friends in Salt Restaurant - and everyone's happy, which makes a great holiday.





They are too cosy and comfortable; I don't want to get up in the mornings and neither does our daughter, who actually sleeps until lunchtime the first three days.

But my husband drags me off to the buffet breakfast, which I'm thrilled to find, includes complimentary French Champagne.

Nothing like bubbles in the morning to kick start your day. The buffet is kept full, despite some large conference groups, and we're given a takeaway continental breakfast box for our sleepyhead daughter.

Although we're inclined not to leave the resort. we do manage a few excursions. Taking the free open-sided 'Bula Bus' that stops at the hotel, we explore nearby Denarau Marina precinct and on a damp afternoon we catch a taxi into Nadi to visit the town market.

We also take a half-day tour to South Sea Island for swimming, snorkelling and generally lazing on the beach.

Unfortunately, I run out of time to indulge at Sofitel's Mandara Spa, and our son misses out on his parasail, because it's too windy.

With a choice of three restaurants and three bars, as well as numerous comfy nooks for a relaxing drink, we don't have to leave the Sofitel to dine or get bored with a single restaurant. (Though it's a bit of a worry when I find my husband is on a first name basis with all the barmen.)

ELECTRICAL PARTS

We miss dining in sophisticated V Restaurant, but enjoy an Asian buffet at Lagoon and a variety of dishes at award-winning Salt, overlooking the beach. And now, on our last night we're doing both.

As I suck on oysters, savour prawns and sip Sauvignon Blanc at Lagoon, with the seafood lovers amongst our group, our daughter is across the pool dining with our friends in Salt restaurant - and everyone's happy. which makes a great holiday.

Air Niugini flies to Fiji two times a week - on Friday and Sunday.

Fact File

The Sofitel Fiji Resort and Spa, set in 26 acres of garden, is located on Denarau Island, 20 minutes drive from Nadi International Airport. A broad selection of king and queen-size rooms with resort or ocean view options, family rooms, and suites are available. Prices range from FJ399 (including Tax) for a resort view room and from FJ\$549 for a studio suite.

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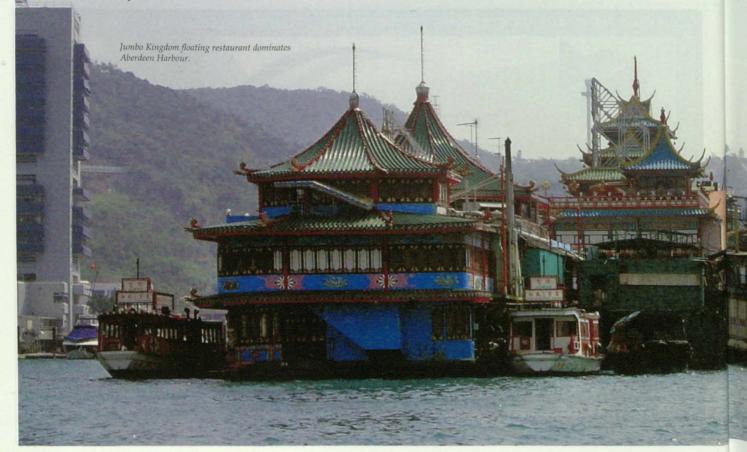
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Sampans stand out in contrast to the high-rise buildings of Hong Kong.

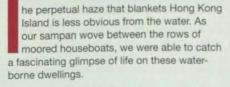
ISLAND OF CONTRASTS

By Susan Eames





Extra platforms tethered to tanka houseboats.



Families had expanded their sampans and junks to include small floating platforms; some loaded with potted plants.

These extra platforms were tethered to the backs of their boats. I marvelled at the ingenuity and human desire for a little patch of greenery.

We were on a boat trip in Aberdeen Harbour, located half an hour from the central business district of Hong Kong, known simply as Central.

Hong Kong's remaining fisherfolk - the tanka - live in a substantial community of up to 3,000 boats in Aberdeen Harbour.

Formerly a pirate refuge, Aberdeen Harbour was commercialised by the boat people with floating restaurants after World War II.

Arguably the most famous floating restaurant - and certainly the most visible - is Jumbo

Kingdom. The restaurant dominates a wide area of water and looks like a pile of decorative Chinese homes that someone has tumbled together.

The juxtaposition of the raggedy houseboats with the high-rise buildings and yachts in the Marina Club and Aberdeen Boat Club encapsulated the contrasts and extremes of Hong Kong.

Hong Kong is called Xianggang in Mandarin, meaning 'fragrant harbour'. The Cantonese pronunciation of Xianggang sounds like Hong Kong and since the people in Hong Kong are mostly Cantonese speakers, it was their pronunciation of Xianggang that was interpreted and the name 'Hong Kong' was born.

More commonly known as Victoria Peak, Tai Ping Shan means Mountain of Great Peace. In 1880, the world's steepest funicular railway was opened to transport visitors up to The Peak.

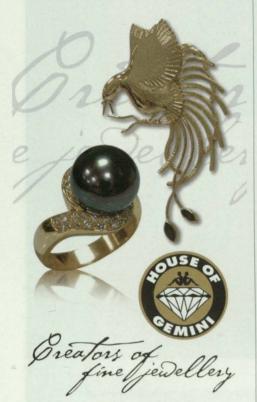
The ride to the top from Central in the quaint old trams takes seven minutes. Cables



attached to electric enotors pull the trams up and down the track. Parts of the route are so steep as to be almost vertical and I found myself involuntarily clutching my seat.

The upper terminal leads visitors into The Peak Tower, 1805 feet above sea level.

We ignored the shops, restaurants and even Madame Tussaud's wax museum and headed straight to the viewing platform on the mall's



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Passengers wait for The Peak Tram, the world's steepest funicular railway.

The skyscrapers of Hong Kong spread below us. Beyond the skyscrapers the harbour waters glittered and we could see tiny dots zipping back and forth across the water.

Across the harbour, bustling Kowloon and her eight distant mountains faded into the haze

like a mirage. The view was stunning, but we wanted more.

A bus ride past the Happy Valley Racecourse took us high above the city. We disembarked at one of Hong Kong's 23 parks and continued on foot up a narrow, winding track.



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Hong Kong from near the top looks like a watercolour.

A panorama of emerald green mountains, forests and islands lay before us. Clouds diffused the sun's rays. The gauzy light softened the distant landmarks, painting the scene like a watercolour.

The skyscrapers of Central were still evident, but we felt remote and disembodied from the city. With nothing but the birds for company, we drank in a view that lent Hong Kong an atmospheric aura entirely different to the view from The Peak.

The ferry pier to take people back and forth between Hong Kong Island and Kowloon has been in operation since 1898.

The distinctive old green and white Star Ferries that ply the harbour waters are a mustdo for first time visitors to Hong Kong.

We bought our tickets and joined the throng of people as they jostled and hurried along the gangplank onto the ferry.

The ferries don't turn around and I was

delighted by the ingenious way the rows of seats could be flipped around so that you can always face the direction of travel.

Kowloon has a different flavour to Hong Kong Island.

Awash with shopping opportunities, it nevertheless doesn't have the feeling of wealth and striking modernity of Hong Kong's Central. We were immediately hustled by would-be tailors offering to make my husband a suit.





View of Hong Kong from The Peak.

Star Ferries ply back and forth between Hong Kong and Kowloon.

A long walk up to Temple Street Night Market proved a disappointment. I had cajoled my husband to visit Temple Street because I was hoping to find some irresistible bargains in a traditional Chinese market. Instead we found stall upon stall of touristy souvenirs.

However the trip to Kowloon was worth it for the evening return journey to Hong Kong Island.

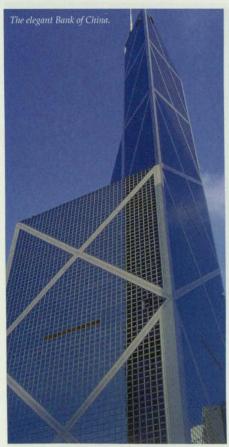
Apart from the wonderful neon-lit buildings, Hong Kong dazzles every night under a synchronized laser show called Symphony of Lights.

Viewed from the water as we crossed back from Kowloon, the show was spectacular.

Many of the skyscrapers of Central are eye









Temple Street Night Market in Kowloon.

catching, but for me, none more so than the Bank of China tower. Chinese American architect, I.M. Pei designed the building which was opened in 1990.

It is an elegant piece of architecture with a geometric pattern running across the facades inspired by 'the elegant stature of bamboo'. At a height of 367.4 metres including its 50 metre masts, the building was the tallest in Hong Kong when it was completed in 1989 and remains one of the tallest to this day.

As we wandered the streets I was struck by the high and low-tech contrasts in this city. Modern buildings and expensive designer



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Old fashioned trams traverse Hong Kong's modern streets.

malls towered above roads with old fashioned transportation in the form of trams.

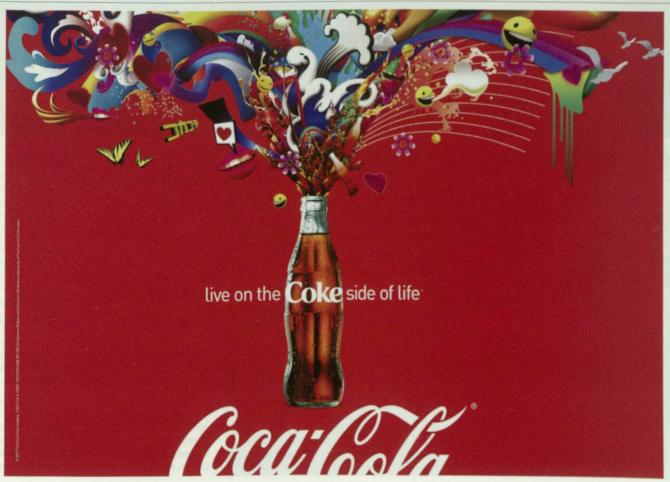
The spotlessly clean city streets sometimes carried the reek of drains. A building under renovation was clad in simple bamboo scaffolding. A short walk from Central and we were immersed in a very Chinese area of open-fronted shops selling barrel loads of pungent smelling dried seafood products.

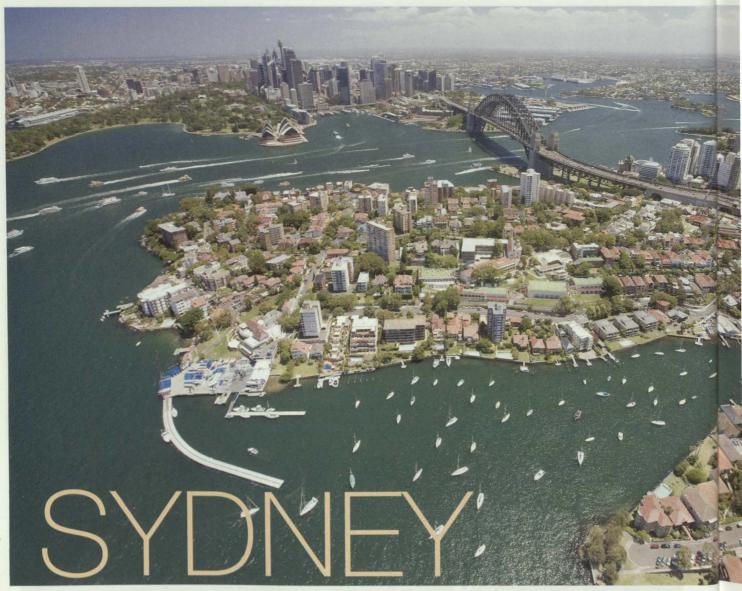
We ate delicious breakfast dumplings for a dollar in a sidewalk café and drank outrageously expensive coffee in the Mandarin Oriental Hotel after lunch. We ate fancy smoked trout salad in one restaurant and narrowly avoided 'sour

vegetable and pig's hand soup' in another.

From its antiquated forms of transport to its high-tech skyscrapers, Hong Kong is a vibrant, fascinating island of contrasts.

Air Niugini flies once a week - on Monday - to Hong Kong.





GLINTS LIKE AN EMERALD

By Julie Ihle

rom the moment dawn breaks on the harbour, highlighting the billowing Opera House sails and polishing the Harbour Bridge, Sydney glints like an emerald.

We have started early, on a weekend break from Sydney's suburban outskirts, and are keen to experience as much of our city as possible, even though we'll only skim the surface of Sydney's attractions.

We kick off with pancakes and a round of bacon washed down with a heart-starter espresso at the Opera House forecourt. With reasonable prices and a million dollar view, we feel like we've won the jackpot but we don't want to be late for our Opera House behind-the-scenes tour, so there's no ordering another round.

We meet our group for the Opera House backstage tour and follow guide Peter Salina to discover the inner workings of Australia's most famous structure.

Peter leads us down a labyrinth of secret corridors and dark alleyways where we see row upon row of costumes and sets in storage; as well as sound rooms, orchestra pits and loading docks. We take a peek inside a dressing room



The behind-the-scenes tours of the Opera House are nearly as popular as the front-ofthe-house tours and I know I'll never look at a performance the same way again.

and can almost smell the nerves mingled with anticipation, and then get to check out a live rehearsal. The behind-the-scenes tours of the Opera House are nearly as popular as the frontof-the-house tours, and I know I'll never look at a performance the same way again.

From the Opera House, it's a short and scenic stroll around Circular Quay to The Rocks for our BridgeClimb. The BridgeClimb walks are one of Sydney's most popular activities, after founder, Paul Cave, took ten years of working through red tape to finally establish. We don our very unflattering slate grey overalls and release our valuables to the locker, but any fashion faux pas are worth the wraparound view of the city from on high, and leave us busy planning a night climb next time.

From The Rocks, there's a myriad of eateries to tempt us: from a German beer hall to modern Australian, Italian or Japanese. We choose modern Australian and chow down in a bistro garden courtyard where the dappled sun makes it very hard to leave.







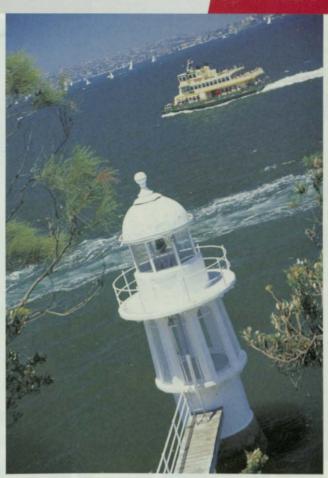
At Circular Quay you can catch a ferry to just about anywhere, and it is still the best and cheapest way to feel like a local.

As the scene of Australia's oldest European settlement, The Rocks is a fascinating maze of convict hewn stone buildings and alleyways. It houses Australia's oldest pub - The Fortune of War - and at night ghost tours of The Rocks are said to be genuinely scary. Looking up the jumble of rough sandstone alleyways, it's easy to believe there might be a few tales to tell.

At Circular Quay you can catch a ferry to just about anywhere, and it is still the best and cheapest way to feel like a local. Ferries head to Parramatta, Hunters Hill, Watson's Bay (for Doyles famous fish and chips) and Manly. We take the iconic Manly ferry and once we reach the heads that mark the harbour's entrance, as if on queue, the ferry rocks up and down before chugging into the calm waters of Manly Cove.

Manly was named by Governor Phillip, Australia's first governor. On an expedition to explore the northern beaches, he thought the aboriginal men there looked very masculine and so Manly was named. Today there is plenty of masculinity on display lying on the beach, surfing waves, paddling kayaks or windsurfing.

Despite the activity, there are ample opportunities for getting away from it all. Walk a short distance to prettily named Fairy Bower which lives up to its name and feels like a secret enclave, though it's only a stone's throw from Manly.



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Sydney is spoiled for dining choice

- there's Vietnamese at Cabramatta,
authentic Chinese at Haymarket,
Portuguese at Petersham and Greek
at Marrickville.



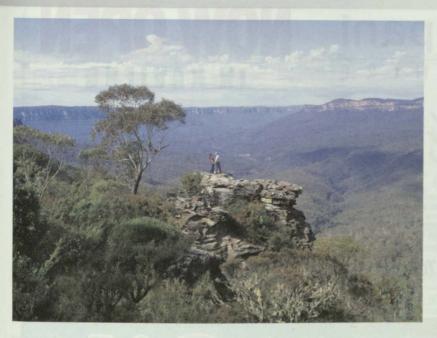
Manly is also the starting point for a great Sydney bushwalk, the Manly to The Spit trail, encompassing coastal and bush views, city look outs and even one of Sydney's nudist beaches!

Having bridge climbed, opera housed and ferried our way through Sydney, we reckon we have earned some good food and wine so we head to Leichhardt, Sydney's Italian precinct, for a sumptuous southern Italian feast at Elio restaurant.

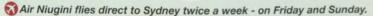
Sydney is spoiled for dining choice – there's Vietnamese at Cabramatta, authentic Chinese at Haymarket, Portuguese at Petersham, Greek at Marrickville, whereas Newtown offers a world tour simply by strolling the restaurant strip.

We set out early the next day with a tour of the fish markets at Pyrmont followed by breakfast and then drive a short distance to Olympic Park. Dusting off its white elephant status following the 2000 Olympics, Olympic Park is now an arts, sports and cultural precinct. We try the new Segway tours, an eco-friendly personal transporter. No experience is required - just willingness to feel like a fool for a few minutes before you get hang of it - then it's great fun for kids and big kids alike.

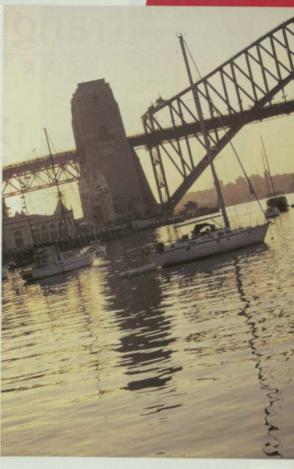
We can take the popular sports lovers tour that shows visitors behind the scenes of Olympic Stadium, but instead hire bikes and explore the 35km of bicycle tracks through mangroves and past rusting shipwrecks in Homebush Bay. Apart from the distant traffic din, it's hard to believe we're in the middle of a metropolis.



From Sydney Olympic Park you can spear west to explore the Blue Mountains but we'll leave it for another day. In one weekend we have barely scratched the surface of everything Sydney has to offer. But as we relax at Bacar restaurant in Olympic Park's boutique hotel, The Pullman, devouring seared scallops and to-die-for ocean trout we have huge smiles on our faces.



· For more information on fares and flight schedules, check www.airniugini.com.pg More: visit www.sydney.com - Sydney's tourist information site.





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My first experience of this was via the humble cheese and cracker chow down; the cream cheese is laced with real gold leaf.

CHAIRMAN KAGA RULES

By Rob Dunlop

m not at all surprised by the foodie shenanigans going on in Kanazawa, central Japan.

It's the home town of Takeshi Kaga, the fabulously eccentric MC, Chairman Kaga, of the cult television program, the Iron Chef.

Yes, he may be a mad-hatter, and I can't help by being framed by his flambovant antics and demands for truly unique food when I visit his birthplace. But I also discover there are too many home truths to think otherwise.

In the show, Chairman Kaga rules his clan of Iron Chefs from his castle. During the Feudal Period, Kanazawa was the capital of the Kaga domain and was ruled from Kanazawa castle by a powerful samurai clan who were partial

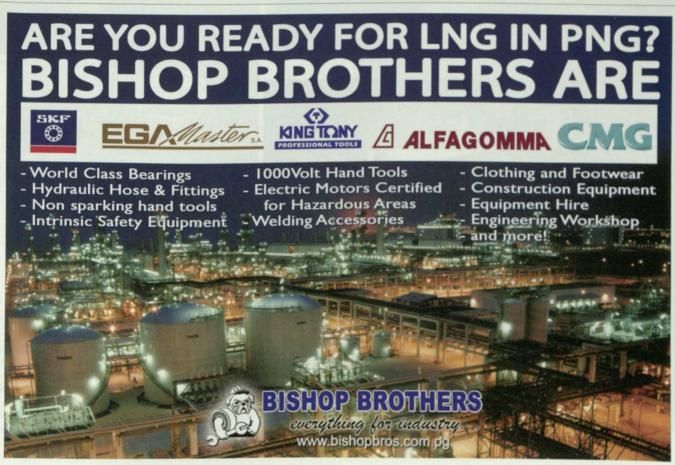
to gardening, the arts and culinary expression, even influencing the development of the tea ceremony and accompanying sweet treats.

According to legend, Kanazawa means golden stream and was named for a potato farmer who discovered gold dust on his potatoes in a marsh. Ever since, the loopy Kanazawans have been sprinkling gold leaf on their food.

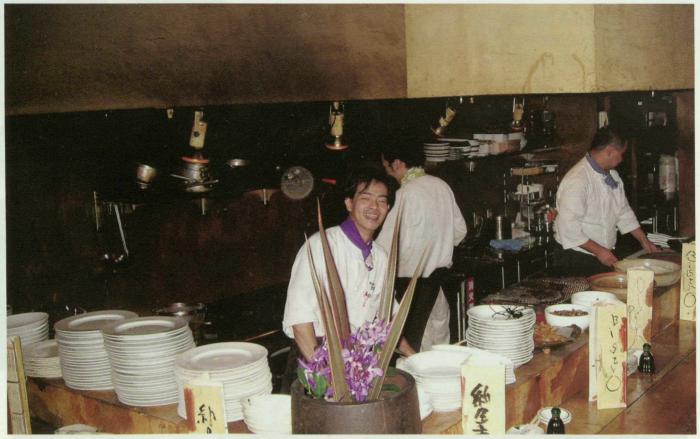
My first experience of this was via the humble cheese and cracker chow down; the cream cheese is laced with real gold leaf. But they're just showing off, Today, Kanazawa accounts for 99% of Japan's gold leaf production.

Here are the best of bizarre foodie experiences in Kanazawa:

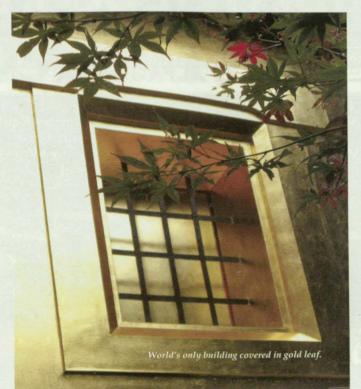




Beautiful timber finishes, low lighting and traditional seating hits the right spot, along with the perfect synchronicity of liquid dispensing: sake, beer and soy sauce. And there's gold leaf aplenty.



Iron Chefs at Bistro Kamiya Ichibe.



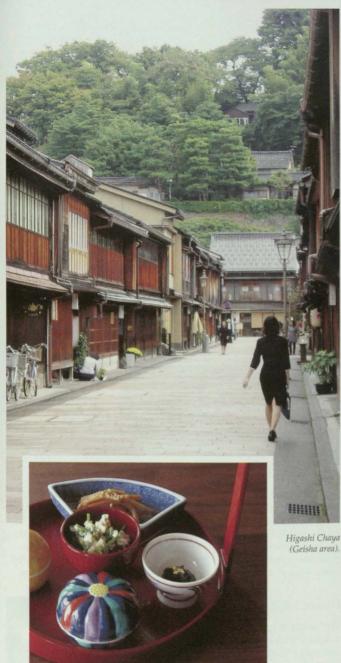
Bistro Kamiya Ichibe

Chairman Kaga would be well impressed by the iron chef serving up a shepherd's pie (yes, shepherd's pie) within the confines of this former 120 year old timber paper storehouse.

The salivating fusion of traditional Japanese and western food makes the bistro one of Kanazawa's hippest restaurants. Beautiful timber finishes, low lighting, and traditional seating hits the right spot, along with the perfect synchronicity of liquid dispensing: sake, beer and soy sauce. And there's gold leaf aplenty. Address is 1-8-21 Katamachi, Kanazawa.

Sweet Potato

You suspect foodies might have taken things too far when the local Mr Whippy has sold out to vegetables. Small white pick-up trucks loaded with local indigenous sweet potato, Gorojima Kintoki, and kitted out with gas cookers in the back cruise the streets at night. Their slow, deep, baratone spruiking from a loudspeaker fails to win me over. "Sweet potato, sweet potato." Head to Canal Street at night to catch their blasphemic larking, then pop into one the many funky cafés for a parfait of ice-cream instead.

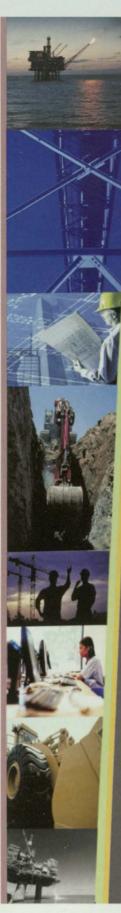


(Geisha area).

Gold leaf sprinkled on food.

Geisha Treats

The Higashi Chaya area is the largest of Kanazawa's remaining geisha districts. The well-preserved, wooden, two-story geisha houses known as chaya are open to the public, and a number have been converted into shops and restaurants. The Hotaruya restaurant offers authentic experiences, like unravelling a creature from a shell similar to that of twisting a corkscrew. But when I request a loo stop, female kimonoclad staff have replaced my smelly runners with wooden thongs and instruct me in how to pee against a window. It is a bizarre and unsettling experience, but tranquil, fresh running water washes all shame away.





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Not fortuitously, the citizens of Kanazawa eat sweets for good luck and roll them out for every occasion and season.



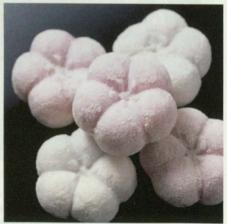
Fresh catch at Ohmi-cho Market.

Ohmi-cho Market

Visit the market where Chairman Kaga would have scored elasticised pants, sweet shrimp and snow crab. This 280 year old market, dubbed the "Kitchen of the Kanazawa," is a colourful array of stalls selling fresh seafood caught in the Sea of Japan, fruit, vegetables and daggy clothing. Look out for the tiny river fish, gori, a local delicacy usually given the complete tempura treatment. The 170-stall market is located in the Aokusa-machi area and is open daily from 8:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m.

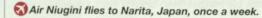
Sweet Treats

You've got to love a people whose cultural activities include confectionary making and tea ceremonies. Not fortuitously, the citizens of Kanazawa eat sweets for good luck and roll them out for every occasion and season. To prepare for summer, the Manju, sweet bean cakes, are eaten to ensure the family's health during the heat. Sweet. Kaikaro



Fukuume (sweets) for New Year's celebrations.

in the Higashi Chaya area is the largest geisha house with a 190 year history. It offers green tea and Japanese sweets. To get down and dirty, sweet-making workshops are held at Ishikawa Confectionery Culture Museum and Ishikawa Kanko Bussankan.



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Airline News



(Above)

Cadetship November 2008. The seven pilot cadets are currently in Coffs Harbour undergoing training. The group is expected to return at the end of this year.

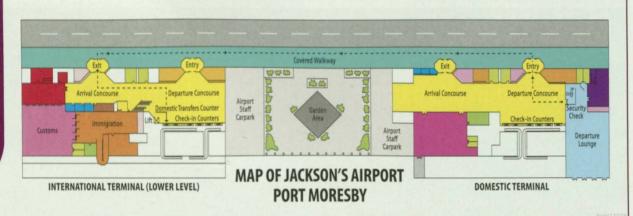


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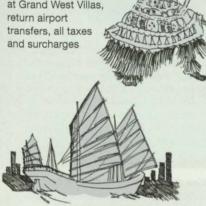
Air Niugini Deputy General Manager Marketing Dominic Kaumu (left) with ANGSL representatives after the signing of the agreement.



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- · Location of this hotel is at main triangle shopping district of Kuala Lumpur.



Welcome to Papua New Guinea

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 exited 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

Trekkinig 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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