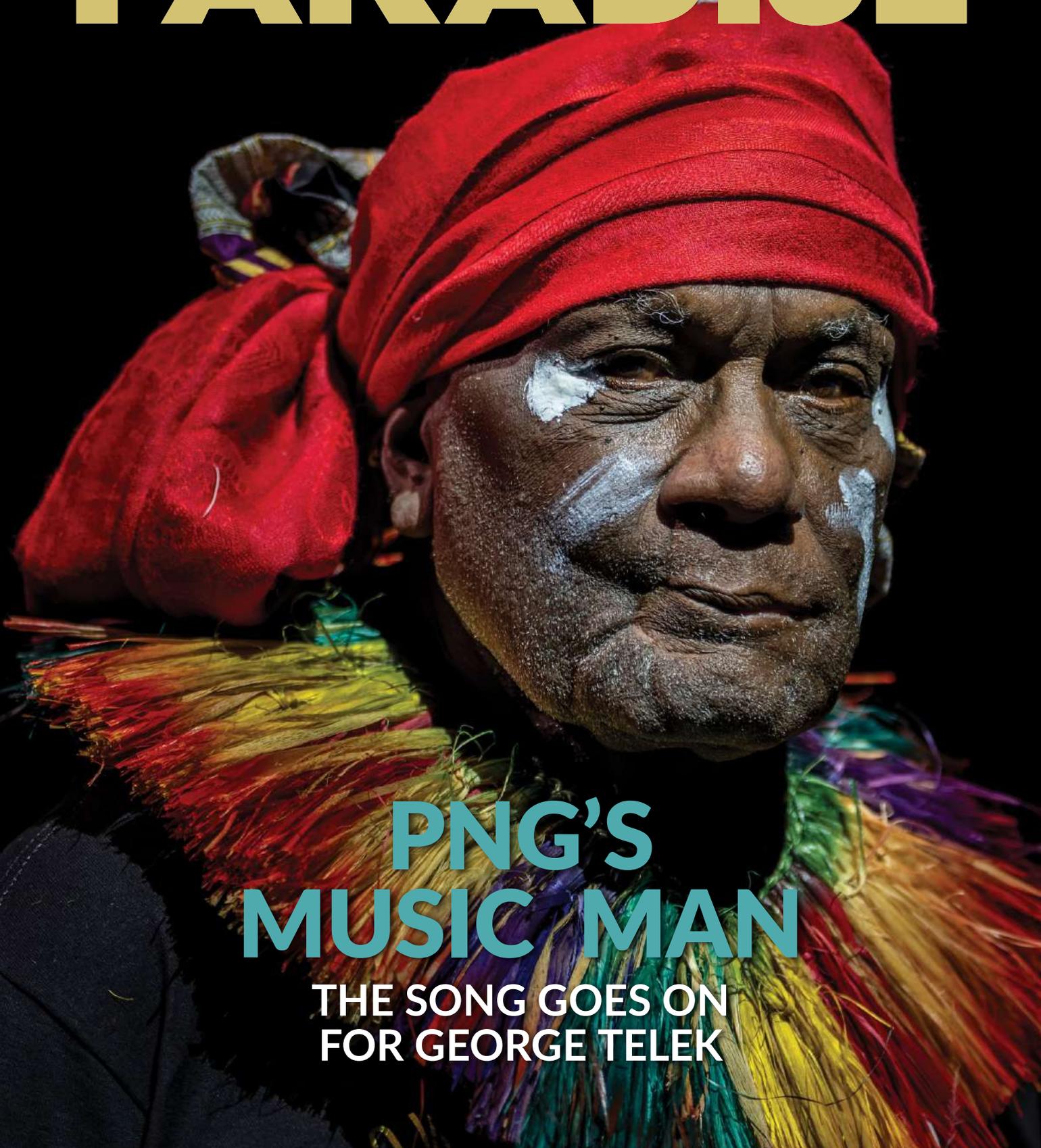


THE IN-FLIGHT MAGAZINE OF AIR NIUGINI VOLUME 1 FEBRUARY - APRIL 2026



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PUBLISHING DIRECTOR
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CORRESPONDENCE TO THE AIRLINE

The Chief Executive Officer
Air Niugini
PO Box 7186, Boroko, NCD, Papua New Guinea
Tel +675 327 3498 Fax +675 327 3550

EDITOR
Robert Upe

STAFF WRITERS

Charlotte Armstrong, Nadav Shemer Shlezinger

CONTRIBUTORS

Richard Andrews, John Brooksbank, Paul Chai, Roderick Eime, Doug Gimesy, Bronwen Gora, Peter Hanlon, Belinda Jackson, Leonie Jarrett, Norman Ketan, Lemach Lavari, Lennox Matainaho, Claire Nathan, Mary Tao, Paige Turner, Kate Webster

AIR NIUGINI EDITORIAL CONSULTANT

Illan Kaprangji

DESIGN

Alicia Freile, Jodie Horne

PROOFREADER

Sally Woollett

Editorial inquiries

paradise@businessadvantageinternational.com

airniuginiparadise.com

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IN PARADISE

CONTENTS

DEPARTURE LOUNGE

NEWS, BRIEFINGS, LOCAL KNOWLEDGE

A message from Air Niugini 8

Paradise Q&A:
Broadcaster Maureen Orea 10

World title for PNG dance squad 12

New chef and menu at Loloata 14

12



14



Orchid garden opens at Nature Park 16

PNG's rugby league team gets a name 18

Air Niugini hosts aviation conference 20

Big Picture 22

TRAVELLER

OUR COUNTRY, OUR REGION, OUR WORLD

Tide and tradition
A pictorial cruise journey of PNG 24

Lae unveiled
Four things to see and do 34

A day at the museum
The National Museum and Art Gallery 38

Business travel
A guide to Sydney 40

Singapore's Marina Bay Sands
A look inside one of the world's great hotels 48

Time Traveller 54

HOTELS SPECIAL REPORT

At the ready
PNG hotels prepare for influx 56

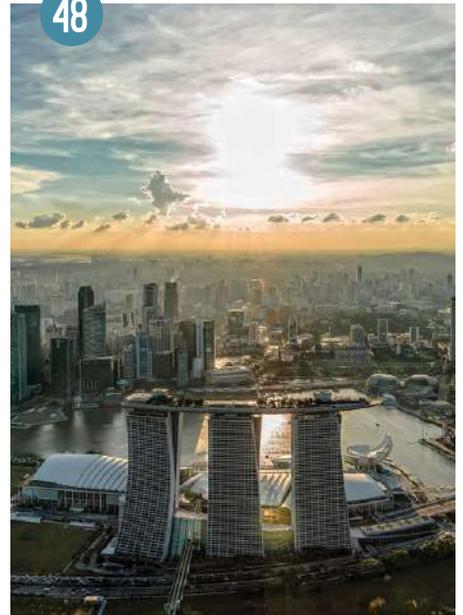
INNOVATION SPECIAL

Embracing technology
PNG's steep learning curve 62

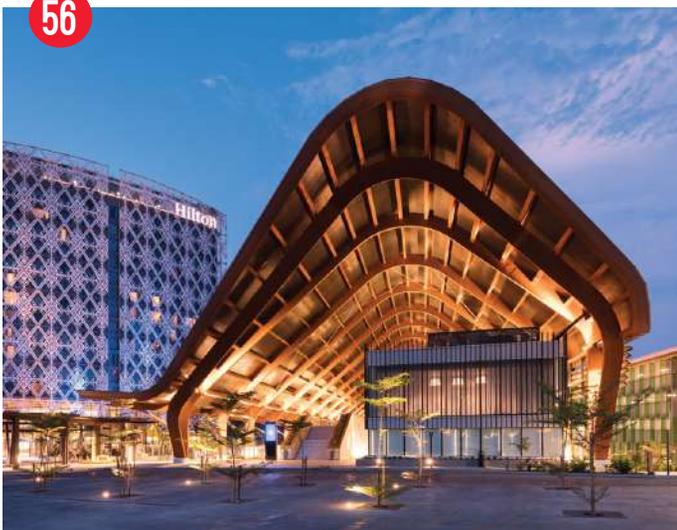
24



48



56



74



LIVING

LIFESTYLE, CULTURE, SPORT, ENTERTAINMENT



66

PNG's music man
The song goes on for George Telek 66

Almanac 2026
The big events in the region this year 74

Kick off
PNG in new Pacific soccer league 84

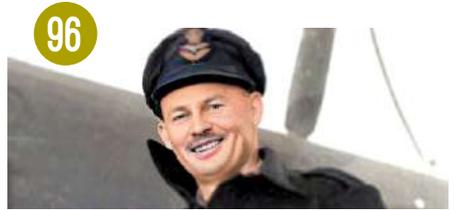
Full steam ahead
How PNG's new rugby league team is shaping up 86

Cricket flashback
The day the West Indies came to town 90

Remembering a war hero
The legend of John Francis Jackson 96

Restaurant review
Sidaam, Port Moresby 102

A taste of Thai
Celebrity chef releases new book 104



96

Wine guru
All you need to know about fortified wine 106

Wellness
Study into jet lag 108

Gadgets and travel accessories 110

Book reviews
The story of Sir Mahesh Patel, soccer star bears all, a billionaire who gave away a fortune, and PNG war photos 112

STRICTLY BUSINESS

PEOPLE, COMPANIES, INDUSTRIES

Gearing up
PNG businesses get ready for resources projects 114

An expert's view
PNG's top five areas for investment 117

Portside Business Park
Steamships breaks new ground 118

Entrepreneurship
A supply chain for cocoa and seafood 120



104

BRAIN GYM

QUIZ, PUZZLES, CROSSWORD

Crosswords, Sudoku, Wordsearch and quiz 122

Puzzle and quiz answers 124

ARRIVALS LOUNGE

Advice for visitors, plus where to stay, eat and drink 126

AIRLINE NEWS

THE LATEST FROM AIR NIUGINI

First commercial flight of Air Niugini A220 134

Health discounts for Kumul Club members 135

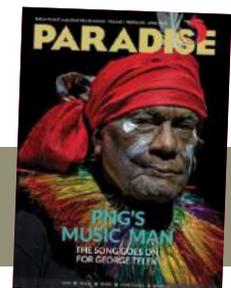
Jet flights return to Alotau 135

Air Niugini darts team wins grand final 135

AIR NIUGINI PASSENGER INFORMATION 136

ADVERTISING DIRECTORY 145

COVER PHOTO: PNG musician George Telek at a recent concert in Australia. See our story starting on page 66. Photo taken by Doug Gimesy.



From Inclusion to Innovation: How TISA Bank is shaping the Future of Banking in Papua New Guinea



Mr. Michael O. Koisen, OBE ML
Group Chief Executive Officer, TISA

Papua New Guinea is a nation of remarkable diversity, resilience, and opportunity. With its vast geography, strong community values and a rapidly evolving economic landscape, the country presents both unique challenges and immense promise for financial services. At TISA Bank, our purpose is clear and unwavering: to ensure that every Papua New Guinean has access to safe, reliable, and modern banking – delivered in a way that is simple, inclusive, and empowering.

As a home-grown bank, TISA Bank was founded on the belief that financial inclusion is not merely a social responsibility, but a national imperative. For too long, distance, limited infrastructure and complexity have kept many individuals, micro-entrepreneurs, and communities outside the formal financial system. Our endeavors have been to bridge this gap by designing banking solutions that are practical, affordable and relevant to the everyday lives of our people.

Digital innovation sits at the heart of this mission. Technology allows us to leapfrog traditional barriers and bring banking closer to where people live and work. Through our digital platforms, particularly the Yumi Pei Mobile Wallet, we are redefining access to banking in Papua New Guinea. With a mobile phone in hand, customers can open accounts, make payments, transfer funds, receive salaries or benefits,

pay utility bills and participate in the digital economy – without the need to travel long distances or navigate complex processes.

Our vision is to develop Yumi Pei into a true super wallet for Papua New Guinea – one that integrates financial and non-financial services into a single, secure, and intuitive marketplace. In the coming phases, the platform will enable customer to not only transact but also access a broad range of value-added digital services. By bringing these capabilities together within one trusted platform, Yumi Pei will simplify daily life, empower small businesses, and accelerate participation in the digital economy.

However, digital transformation at TISA Bank is not about technology alone; it is about thoughtful innovation with purpose. Every product we introduce is guided by a simple question: does this make banking easier, safer, and more accessible for our customers? From simplified account structures and intuitive user interfaces to multilingual support and agent banking networks, our focus remains on removing friction and building trust.

Financial inclusion also means enabling opportunity. Access to banking opens doors to savings, credit, insurance, and investment-tools that help individuals and businesses plan, grow and build resilience. By extending these services to small traders, women-led enterprises, rural communities, and first-time bank users, we are contributing to broader economic participation and long-term national development.

Equally important is our commitment to responsible and sustainable banking. As a member of the Global Alliance for Banking on Values (GABV), TISA Bank aligns profitability with positive social impact. We believe that a strong bank is one that grows alongside its communities, supports local enterprise and acts as a trusted partner in nation-building.

Looking ahead, our vision is bold yet grounded. We will continue to invest in digital capabilities, expand our physical and agent presence, and collaborate with partners across sectors to deepen financial access. Our ambition is not simply to be a bank of choice, but a bank of progress- one that empowers people, connects communities, and supports Papua New Guinea's journey into a more inclusive and digitally enabled future.

At TISA Bank, we remain committed to making banking simpler, closer, and more human. Because when banking works for everyone, the nation moves forward together.

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Message from the Chairman

Welcome aboard



Warm greetings and welcome on board Air Niugini. Whether you are travelling for business, leisure, or returning home to loved ones, thank you for choosing to fly with our national airline. Every journey we operate is ultimately about connection – between families and communities, between provinces and markets, and between Papua New Guinea and the wider world.

That spirit of connection runs through this edition of *Paradise*. It is a celebration of PNG's talent, character and ambition – seen in our arts and culture, our natural environment, our sporting momentum, and in the energy of people building businesses and opportunities across the country.

We begin with a powerful reminder that PNG's creativity can compete with – and lead – the world. Our congratulations go to Wan Squad, who have once again proven themselves world beaters by defending their World Hip Hop Dance Championship title in Phoenix, Arizona, in the US, against elite crews from dozens of countries. Their discipline, confidence and pride reflect the best of our young people and the unique cultural strength that PNG brings to the global stage.

Culture and heritage are threads that run deeply through this issue. If you are in Port Moresby, a visit to the newly refurbished National Museum and Art Gallery is a meaningful way to reconnect with the stories that shape us. And for those drawn to PNG's extraordinary natural heritage, the new orchid garden at the Port Moresby Nature Park is a vivid showcase of biodiversity – an invitation to appreciate the richness of a country that still holds discoveries waiting to be made.

Sport continues to unite PNG and command international attention, and this edition captures that momentum. The official unveiling of the name for our new NRL team, the PNG Chiefs, speaks to identity, leadership and national unity. With preparations accelerating for entry into the competition, *Paradise* explores what it will take to turn the dream into reality, and what it could mean for communities, young athletes and the country's profile. Beyond rugby league, the launch of Oceania's first professional football league – featuring PNG's own Hekari United – opens a new pathway for regional talent and international competition. And for lovers of sporting history, we revisit a remarkable moment from 1975 when the mighty West Indies, led by Clive Lloyd, came to PNG and played matches that are still remembered with pride.

Travel should always offer more than a change of scenery – it should deepen understanding. In 'Tide and Tradition', photojournalist Kate Webster takes readers on an expedition cruise through Samarai, Kwato,

Deboyne Lagoon, Tuam, Tufi, the Tami Islands and Madang – places where ocean routes remain the lifeline between island communities and where tradition is carried forward with quiet resilience. For those passing through Morobe, our guide to Lae offers four worthwhile stops that reveal the city beyond its role as an industrial hub, from gardens and markets to places of reflection and community.

A great journey is also shaped by hospitality, and it is encouraging to see investment and innovation across the sector. Port Moresby's hotel operators are expanding and upgrading in anticipation of increased visitor demand driven by major events. At the same time, new dining experiences continue to raise the standard for visitors and locals alike – whether through the refreshed culinary offering at Loloata Island Resort, led by an experienced Pacific chef, or through the growing reputation of Port Moresby's Sidaam Restaurant and Bar, bringing authentic Thai flavours to the capital.

PNG is also moving quickly in the world of ideas and technology. In this issue, leaders in the tech sector reflect on how far we have come – from first contact to the rise of artificial intelligence within a single generation – and what it will take to unlock the next stage of innovation. These changes are reshaping how we learn, trade, and communicate, and they will be central to PNG's future competitiveness.

Business confidence and national development are also in focus. With a new resources wave on the horizon, companies are preparing for the opportunities that may follow future investment decisions. Major infrastructure and commercial developments, such as the Portside Business Park, signal long-term commitment and the practical work of building capacity for growth. And perhaps most inspiring are the stories of individuals creating solutions where they are needed most: in West New Britain, one entrepreneur's initiative to establish a reliable sea supply chain is reducing freight barriers and creating a lifeline for remote cocoa farmers and fishermen – proof that enterprise, when paired with purpose, can transform livelihoods.

As a national airline, Air Niugini is proud to support this broader story of national progress by connecting people to opportunity, enabling tourism and trade, and helping share PNG with the world. We also recognise the importance of safety, reliability and service, and we remain committed to continual improvement in the experience we provide every time you fly with us.

I hope this edition of *Paradise* informs you, inspires you, and invites you to explore more of PNG and our region. Thank you again for travelling with Air Niugini. I wish you a safe, comfortable and enjoyable journey.

Karl Yalo
Chairman, Air Niugini Board



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PARADISE Q&A

MAUREEN OREA

The broadcaster and producer has worked with the NBC for more than 10 years and presents a radio breakfast show on Tribe 92FM. Her latest project is a documentary that chronicles the history, spirit and traditions of PNG. *Lemach Lavari* reports.

Q: What is *Wan Kantri: The Next 50 Years* about?

A: It's a co-production between the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC) and the Australian Broadcasting Commission (ABC), made for Papua New Guinea's 50th independence anniversary. The documentary is adapted for television and radio. It shares the voices and stories of PNG's independence journey while looking at what PNG's future might hold. It looks into different aspects of PNG life, from sport and craft to culture and medicine, and showcases the spirit and traditions of PNG, while offering an inspiring look at the people driving progress and innovation.

Q: Who are some of the people featured?

A: Apart from highlighting the work of past visionary leaders, it focuses on a new generation of changemakers, redefining what it means to be a Papua New Guinean in the 21st century. These stories feature Andy Abel, a surf tourism pioneer whose work brings sustainable income to village communities; Florence Jakaue Kamel, who's grown an international market for traditional weaving that supports women across the country; and Dr Noah Tapaua, who founded PNG's first cardiothoracic ward. We travelled to some really amazing places across the country and met incredible people who are contributing to nation-building in their communities. The off-camera conversations with the *bilum* weavers in Goroka, the Asaro Mudmen, surfers in Kavieng and the women of Karau village in East Sepik will be experiences that will stay with me.



PICTURE: NORMAN KETAN

Radio personality and documentary maker Maureen Orea.

Q: What's something that stood out for you in the making of *Wan Kantri*?

A: The resilience of the people we met and spoke with was inspirational. It was amazing to see people across the country, from different social settings, who are making a positive impact in their communities despite many challenges. We have a lot of challenges but, no matter what life throws at us, our people can still make it.

Q: Have the NBC and ABC previously collaborated on projects?

A: This co-production marked the first time the national broadcasters of PNG and Australia have partnered at this level. Moreover, it is important to note that the

NBC was birthed from the ABC. Before independence, the ABC serviced the PNG territory. When PNG gained independence in 1975, all the ABC infrastructure across the country was converted into NBC services. We put all our skills together into trying to tell the PNG story in this documentary. It was an 18-month project, however the north star for the production was only realised after filming had finished, when cameraman Norman Terry said, "I just want people to see the heart of Papua New Guinea when they watch the documentary".

Q: Where can *Wan Kantri: The Next 50 Years* be accessed?

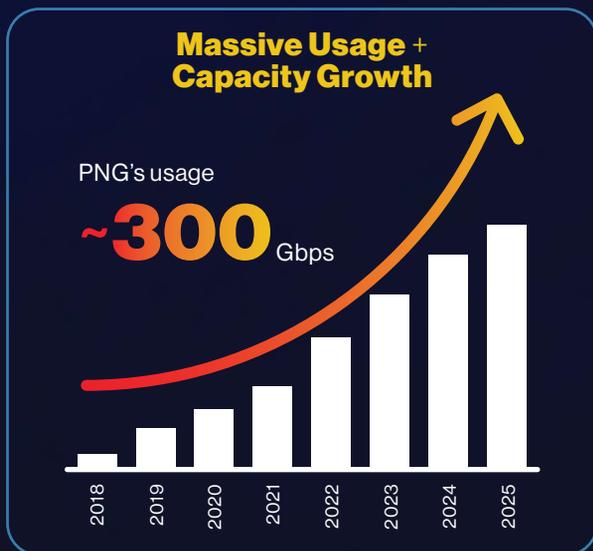
A: It's on NBC and ABC platforms. ■



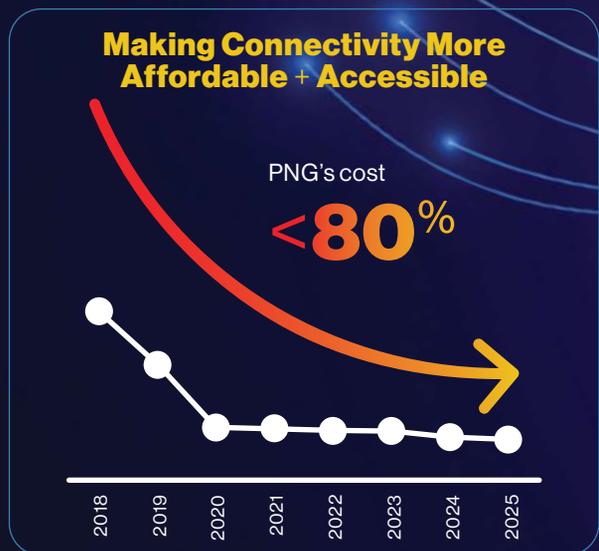


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The PNG dancers who are world beaters

Papua New Guinea’s all-male dance crew Wan Squad has won the 2025 World Hip Hop Dance Championship, successfully defending the title they won in 2024.

They competed against 4000 dancers from 55 countries in Phoenix, Arizona, last year, with a powerful, high-energy routine.

Wan Squad first entered the competition in 2019 when they finished 10th, and followed up with 12th in 2022 and fourth in 2023. They have also won five Australian Hip Hop Championships.

With no formal training, no dance schools and no professional studios, the dancers have taught themselves everything they know, training in open markets, on the streets and anywhere space allows.

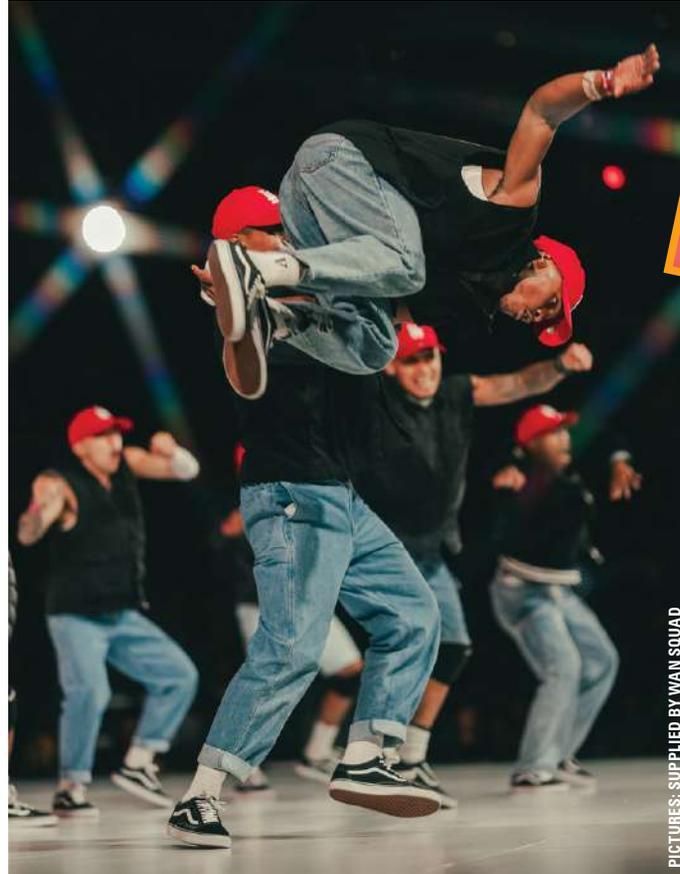
They were founded in 2018 by David Chee and Pyan Ng.

Ng says: “We have come from nothing – no resources, no spotlight, no backing. But we have belief. And against all odds, we are world champions. Our motto is simple: hard work beats talent.”

Wan Squad dancers include Fredrick Mathew, Joel Vene, Ajay Ravu, Nigel Noel and Jeremiah Kingsley.

Ng says their performances are a fusion of athleticism, precision choreography and Pacific pride – blending global hip-hop with local cultural identity. Each routine tells a story, and each movement represents the people and places that shaped them.

“Every time we perform, we represent our communities, our country and the South Pacific,” he



PNG dance group Wan Squad in action on the stage (main); after winning the World Hip Hop Championship in the US (above right); and chilling out (right).

says. “We dance for every kid with a dream and no resources. We want them to see us and know it’s possible.”

Chee says: “It means the world to represent PNG. It inspires not only us but our entire community. Every time we step on that stage, we know we’re



PICTURES: SUPPLIED BY WAN SQUAD

carrying the flag, the pride and the dreams of our people.”

Beyond their success on stage, Wan Squad is deeply rooted in community development. They are PNG’s only professional dance company, organising national dance competitions, youth workshops and community events to grow the next generation of performers.

Recently, they launched a junior dance team, a ‘Mini Wan Squad’, to nurture young talent. “We’re starting small with our junior team,” says Ng. “It’s about creating opportunities we never had.”

Wan Squad has mostly been self-funded, with backers including JBL, Samsung, Motorola, Mountain Dew and Indomie.

“We’ve done fundraisers, events – whatever it takes to get our team overseas. We hope more sponsors will join us as we build the next generation,” Chee says. ■





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Loloata unveils new food offering

Loloata Island Resort has introduced new menus with the arrival of Fijian executive chef Neori Mokotavanua. Many of the dishes utilise fresh local ingredients and Pacific influences.

Among the new dishes is a seafood platter that includes seared salmon and chilli, and garlic spiced mussels served with cassava chips, tartare sauce, coconut and tomato pineapple salsa. There's also surf or turf cooked on hot Hawaiian lava stones.

Chef Mokotavanua has created the dishes, but he credits his kitchen staff for executing the new recipes to perfection.



Chef Neori Mokotavanua (in white) with his crew (this picture); Loloata's new dishes include a seafood platter, *kokoda*, grilled lobster tail with chickpea ragout, and crackling pork belly with *kaukau* mash (opposite).

PICTURES: SUPPLIED BY LOLOATA PRIVATE ISLAND RESORT

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“

The dishes utilise fresh local ingredients and Pacific influences.

”

Mokotanavanua has come to the resort’s Sea Breeze restaurant with 20 years of experience – from learning the basics as a kitchenhand from his late chef father to working at some of the top hotels in Fiji.

He decided it was time for a menu change after a month of observation at Loloata, trialling new dishes on guests and reading past reviews by diners.

He shares his Fijian heritage through items on the menu such as *kokoda* (diced tuna fillet marinated in lemon, island salsa, coriander and coconut cream) and *wacipoki* (lamb fillets wrapped in taro leaves).

“Everywhere that I have worked I get connected to farmers, to the local people supplying the hotel; and that is the backbone of this menu – farm to table,” he says.

Western and Asian classics are included in the menus, and vegetarian and vegan options are available.

The new menus have been rolled out for all-day a la carte dining, room service and the daily buffet.

See loloata.com. ■

– MARY TAO

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PNG orchids on show in new garden

Papua New Guinea is home to over 2500 orchid species and experts believe there are more to discover. Visitors to the Port Moresby Nature Park can now see some of them in a new multipurpose garden that has orchids indigenous to the four regions of the country, including high-altitude orchids from the Highlands.

Named the Santos 50th Anniversary Orchid Garden, it was launched by the Duke of Edinburgh, Prince Edward, during the 50th independence week,

and opened to the public in November.

Artefacts such as intricately carved totem poles from East Sepik's Momase region and a replica of a *lagatoi* from Central's Southern region are displayed around the garden with information boards, allowing visitors to learn about orchids and the culture of a region in tandem. Within the garden are vegetable patches, which serve as a real-time look into sustainable living.

But it's not all learning. The one-hectare garden has a pond



PICTURE: FRANOLYN YUARUFU

Francis Gundu, the Wildlife Manager at Port Moresby Nature Park, leads a tour at the park's orchid garden.

and benches, and is a peaceful place to rest.

Members of the park recently had an exclusive tour of the gardens with park staff, including Chief Executive Officer Johnpaul Houston.

The park is open daily from 9am to 4pm.

See portmoresbynaturepark.com.pg. ■

– MARY TAO

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Name announced for PNG's new NRL team

The Prime Minister James Marape has announced that Papua New Guinea's team in the Australian National Rugby League (NRL) will be officially known as the PNG Chiefs.

He described the name as a powerful reflection of the country's deep cultural roots, ancient governance systems and enduring unity.

"We are a nation of a thousand tribes," the Prime Minister said. "Before there was a modern state called Papua New Guinea in 1975, our people lived for thousands of years under tribal structures led by chiefs – both men and women – who governed, protected, and held our communities together."

The Prime Minister noted that in regions such as Milne Bay, Bougainville, New Ireland and East New Britain, women were

“
Every game they play
will showcase the
strength, resilience, and
talent of our people.
”

traditionally chiefs or clan heads under matrilineal systems, while in other areas male chiefs led patrilineal clans. In many communities, authority was balanced: men acted as public chiefs, while women were the custodians of land, lineage and clan identity, exercising decisive influence over leadership and resource inheritance.

The Chiefs, expected to enter the NRL in 2028, will be based in Port Moresby but carry a national identity, drawing players from all provinces.

Prime Minister Marape said the Chiefs' inclusion in the NRL was not only a sporting achievement but also a nation-building milestone, symbolising PNG's growing partnership with Australia and the Pacific region.

"Our Chiefs will represent the unity and pride of our nation on the world stage," he said. "Every game they play will showcase the strength, resilience, and talent of our people. This is more than sport – it is nationhood expressed through rugby league."

How the new team is shaping up, see page 86.

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Airline leaders meet in Port Moresby

Air Niugini recently helped deliver a major aviation conference in Port Moresby with more than 100 participants from airlines, regulators and service partners, such as Airbus, attending from across the Pacific and Europe.

The two-day Association of South Pacific Airlines (ASPA) General Session, in November, was officially opened by the Prime Minister, James Marape, who highlighted the critical role aviation plays in connecting the country's vast and diverse country.

"Without strong and reliable air transport, our country cannot move forward. Aviation remains the key to unlocking economic opportunity, business, sports, and the unity of our people," he said.

Air Niugini's Officer in Charge and Acting Chief Operating Officer, Captain Samiu Taufa, made a presentation about Air Niugini's 50 years in aviation.

He outlined how the airline began, the milestones over five decades, and its future direction as it transitions into a digitally empowered, next-generation carrier aligning with the National Government's Vision 2030, which focuses on digital transformation.

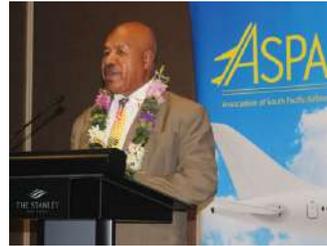
“

Aviation remains the key to unlocking economic opportunity, business, sports, and the unity of our people.

”

He also spoke about the airline's fleet modernisation and transformation program, including the introduction of the Airbus A220 and preparation for the Boeing 787 Dreamliner.

"What is most exciting is how we've embraced transformation. We are modernising every aspect of our operations



– from digital flight planning and predictive maintenance, to data-driven decision-making in customer service and logistics."

Delegates were welcomed with performances during an island-themed buffet dinner featuring the Vabukori cultural group, the Bougainville bamboo band and the Manus Garamut dancers.

National Capital District (NCD) Governor Powes Parkop welcomed delegates at an earlier pre-conference reception, highlighting Port Moresby's rapid transformation.

"Port Moresby is becoming a modern, vibrant, and forward-looking city. Those who were here five or 10 years ago will see how much has changed – new roads, hotels, developments, and improved public spaces. Our city is not defined by its challenges but by its spirit, diversity, and ambition."

Delegates also took part in city tours to Ela Beach, APEC Haus, Vision City, the Port Moresby Nature Park and Parliament House.

Air Niugini acknowledges the Papua New Guinea Tourism Promotion Authority and NCD Commission for their support towards the event. ■

More airline news, see page 134.

Participants at the aviation conference (top and above left); NCD Governor Powes Parkop (above middle); Air Niugini's Officer in Charge and Acting Chief Operating Officer, Captain Samiu Taufa (above right); conference participants and Air Niugini staff in traditional attire (below); the Prime Minister James Marape (bottom).



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BIG PICTURE

TAKEN BY MICHAEL MOND

Junior Opai takes a cooling dip at 14 Mile, a popular swimming spot behind Port Moresby Adventure Park. The photographer had gone there for a swim with friends when he spotted Junior. "It was a sunny afternoon last October with lots of kids swimming and enjoying the water," he says.





If you have a photo of Papua New Guinea that you'd like published in Paradise, email your submission to paradise@businessadvantageinternational.com. Photos should be at least 1.5mb and 300dpi.



1



TIDE TRADITION

TEXT & PICTURES BY KATE WEBSTER





1 A paddler glides through the mangroves in Tufi, following the same ancient water routes that have connected coastal and island communities for generations.

2 Preparing sago the traditional way, a village woman in Tufi works with quiet skill to sustain her family from the land.

3 The *Paspaley Pearl* anchors offshore in Tobriand Islands, linking remote islands through the same blue pathways locals navigate every day.



Photojournalist Kate Webster is a seasoned Papua New Guinea traveller who recently captured these images during an expedition cruise that included Samarai, Kwato Island, Deboyne Lagoon, Tuam, Tufi, the Tami Islands and Madang. “On this journey aboard the *Paspaley Pearl*, the ship becomes a gentle thread between islands where the sea remains the only pathway – villages with no roads, no terminals, no scheduled ferries,” she says. “Here, boats are more than transport; they are a lifeline. They connect families, move food, carry stories and, for generations, have linked cultures across vast stretches of open

water. By following these ancient waterways, the routes of visiting expedition ships uncover coastal communities normally seen only by those who live there, revealing a world shaped entirely by tides and tradition.” Webster says travelling by expedition ship mirrors the way local islanders navigate their world. While villagers paddle between neighbouring islands in outrigger canoes, guests journey on a boutique vessel that can anchor in hidden bays and slip gently into remote channels. Step by step, landing by Zodiac, visitors trace the same blue routes that bind the islands together, gaining insight into lives lived at the water’s edge. ■





4



5

4 Dancers in Mou village emerge from the earth-covered *dukduk* mound, honouring ancestral spirits in a ritual of renewal and protection.

5 Mou villagers welcome guests on the shoreline, symbolising unity and the deep connection between people, ancestors and land.

6 A coastal dance performed by women in Mou village, where dancers are draped in painted *tapa* cloth and wear exquisite headaddresses.

7 Hand-crafted shell and bead necklaces, known as *mwali*, hang on display, each one a treasure imbued with stories of trade, ceremony and artistry.





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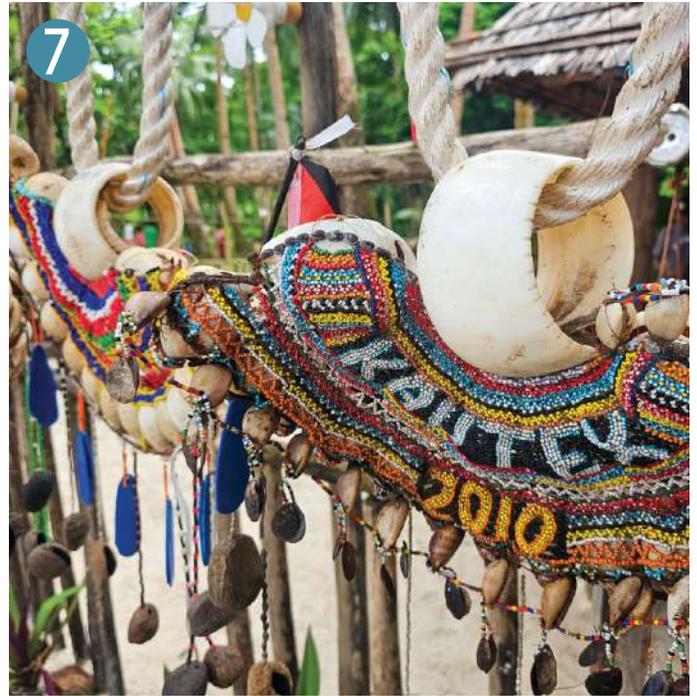
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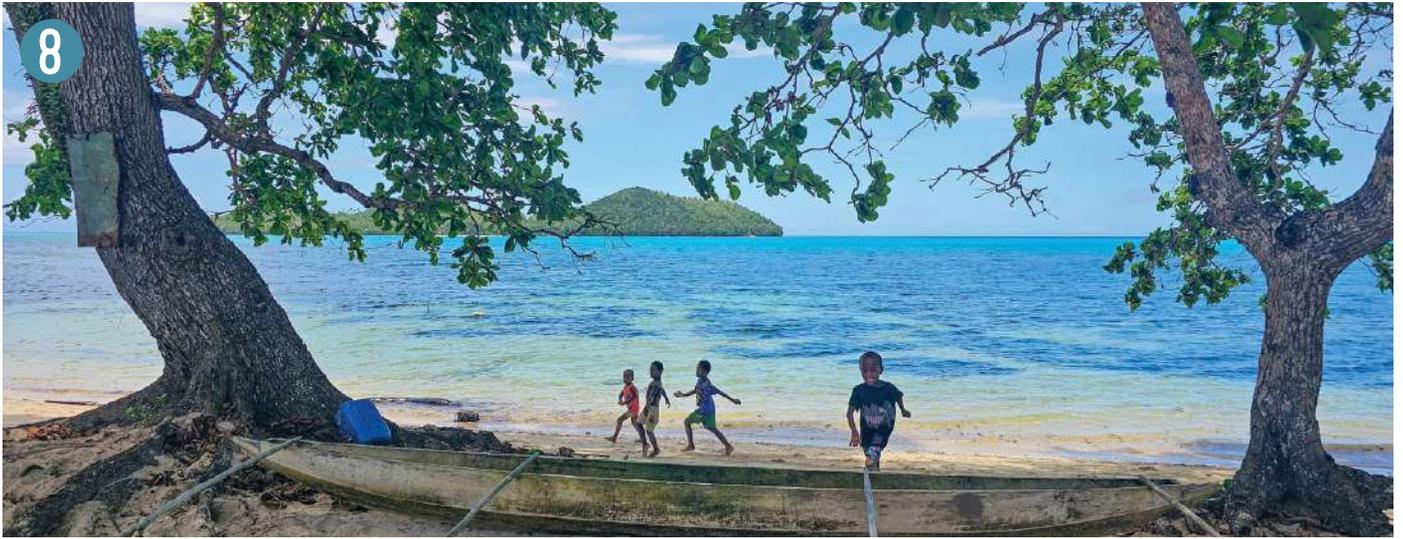
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8 Children race past an old outrigger canoe in Deboyne Lagoon, home to master canoe builders who carve a seaworthy *sailau* from mature beach calophyllum.

9 Masked dancers move in unison through the village on Tami Island, performing a ritual that bridges the human world and the spirit realm.

10 The community on Tuam Island gathers proudly beneath a welcome banner, celebrating togetherness and the richness of local culture with cruise passengers.

11 A child in Morobe Harbour peeks playfully from a wooden canoe, offering a glimpse into daily life lived along the water's edge.



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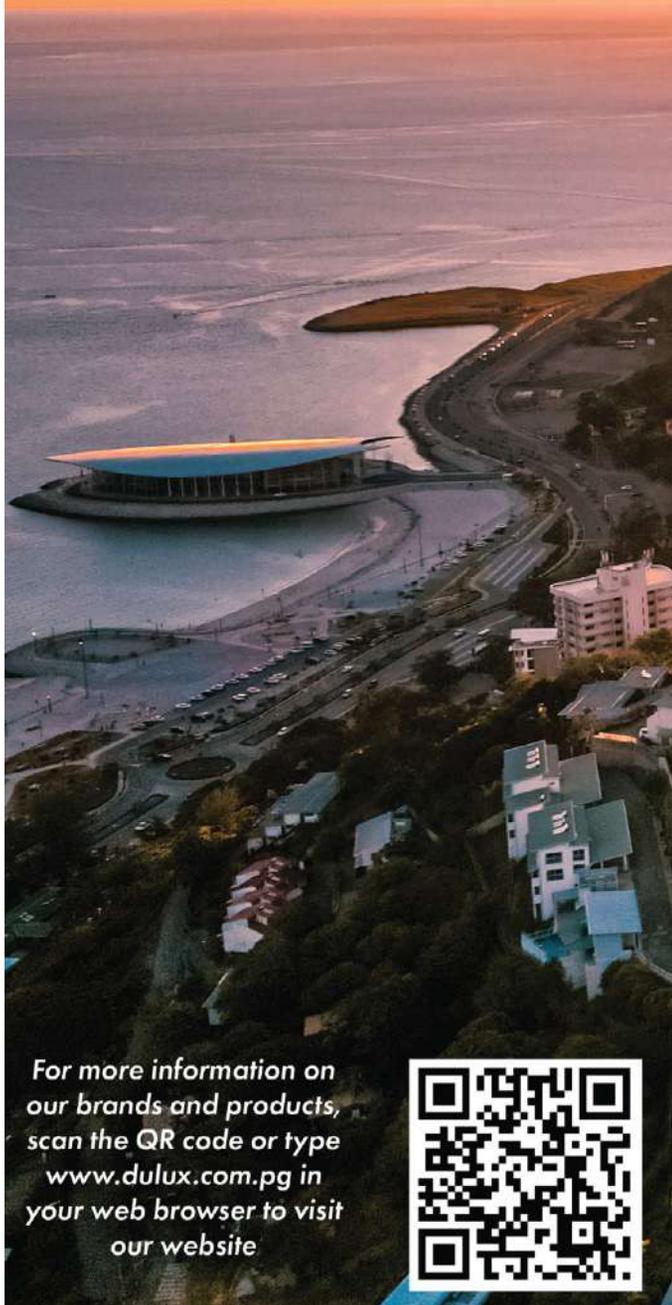
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12



13

12 A strikingly painted elder on Tuam Island stands proudly in full traditional adornment, representing clan identity and cultural pride.

13 A fisherman balances effortlessly on his outrigger canoe, reading the ocean as his ancestors have for thousands of years.





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4 THINGS TO SEE & DO IN LAE

Lae is the industrial and manufacturing capital of PNG and the gateway to the densely populated Highlands region. *Nadav Shemer Shlezinger* shares a few top places to go for sightseeing in the coastal city.

1 NATIONAL BOTANIC GARDENS

First established in 1949 but later going through periods of neglect, the National Botanic Gardens were revived and reopened in 2015 as part of the Lae National Botanic Garden Advancement Program.

The 57-hectare gardens contain around 500 species of native and exotic plants, many of them rare and endangered. The first-time visitor to the gardens (and indeed to Lae itself) can't help but notice the impressive height of many of the trees, as well as the birdlife that can be heard (but not easily seen) high in the canopy.

A highlight is the old Royal Australian Air Force DC-3 plane located to the right of the main entrance. The RAAF purchased the Dakota A65-112 from the US Army in 1945, just six weeks before the end of World War 2 in the Pacific, and used it for several decades for transport and missions. In 1980, it donated the plane to the Papua New Guinea Defence Force (PNGDF) for use in training. In 1999, the PNGDF decommissioned the aircraft and donated it to the National Botanic Garden Management Committee, which restored it and moved it to its current location.

Entrance fees: Adults PGK5, students PGK2, children PGK1, infants free.



PICTURES: NADAV SHEMER SLEZINGER

2 LAE WAR CEMETERY

The Lae War Cemetery, located adjacent to the botanic gardens, is the final resting place of 2817 Commonwealth casualties from World War 2. Most of the graves belong to Australian soldiers (including some Papua New Guineans serving under the Australian flag), alongside some soldiers from British India and the United Kingdom.

Notably, the cemetery also contains the remains of one soldier who died while serving in World War 1: Sergeant Frank Alfred Tibbey of the 1st Battalion, Australian Naval and Military Expeditionary Force.

The Lae Memorial, located inside the cemetery, commemorates more than 300 Australian war dead whose remains were never found.

The cemetery sits in a beautiful location, with the botanic gardens providing a fitting backdrop to this hallowed ground, and is very well maintained. An ANZAC Day dawn service is held at the cemetery annually on April 25, although it is open year-round to the public. ➤



The National Botanic Gardens and the DC-3 at the main entrance (above); the Lae War Cemetery (top right).



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3 LAE MARKET

The Lae Main Market is currently being redeveloped with funding from the Australian and New Zealand governments and the Lae City Authority, and is expected to reopen by the end of 2026.

In the meantime, the Lae Temporary Market is the perfect place to go for fresh produce from the fertile Morobe and Madang provinces and from the Highlands region, considered the breadbasket of PNG.

An impressive range of fruit and vegetables can be found at the market, including many

types of bananas (there are hundreds of varieties in PNG!) and sako, a wild green vegetable that is a staple for many Papua New Guineans but would be unfamiliar to most foreign visitors.

A somewhat-neglected memorial to the famous American aviator Amelia Earhart sits directly across the road from the market's car park. Lae was the last place that Earhart and her navigator Fred Noonan were seen before they went missing over the Pacific Ocean during their attempt to circumnavigate the globe. A new memorial to Earhart was recently unveiled by the US Embassy in PNG, with plans to move it to a permanent location at the PNG University of Technology in Lae.

4 LAE YACHT CLUB

A favourite of the business community, the Lae Yacht Club contains a restaurant, bar and marina located inside a secure, guarded compound.



Lae Yacht Club's marina.

Visitors to Lae Yacht Club can enjoy superb views of the Huon Gulf and of Morobe's rugged, mountainous coastline to the south – best enjoyed over a drink at sunset.

The Lae Yacht Club is also the ideal location for watching ships call into the nearby Lae Port, PNG's largest and busiest port, handling more than 60 per cent of all the country's international and coastal trade. ■

 **Air Niugini has 29 flights between Port Moresby and Lae weekly.**
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A DAY AT THE MUSEUM

PICTURES: KATE WEBSTER



The National Museum and Art Gallery has reopened after extensive renovations.

Kate Webster reports that recent renovations have revived a cultural heartbeat.

Walking through the grand entrance of Port Moresby’s National Museum and Art Gallery (NMAG), I felt a rush of pride, colour, and connection. The scent of timber carvings blended with the cool air from the renovated halls, while the rhythmic sounds of traditional drumming echoed faintly from the courtyard. This was more than a museum reopening; it was the revival of Papua New Guinea’s spirit.

First opened in 1977, the museum officially reopened on October 12, 2025, after extensive renovations. NMAG’s transformation is stunning. After decades of minimal change, the museum now stands as a modern cultural hub. It is one of the best museums I have seen.

This achievement comes from the PNG–Australia partnership, Architectus’ thoughtful redesign, and the dedication of NMAG’s curatorial team.

The renovation has revitalised the museum’s architecture, preserving Martin Fowler’s sweeping roof and concrete design while adding warmth and accessibility through new lighting, ramps, and digital displays.

The five updated galleries – Tumbuna, Susan Karike, Bernard Narokobi, Ian Saem Majnep, and Be Jijimo – each tell a distinctive story, weaving together the narrative of a nation. From the anthropological treasures of ancient highland cultures to the shining shells and woven art of coastal provinces, every piece resonates with history.

Curators selected 450 items from more than 30,000 artifacts, representing all 22 provinces of PNG. Towering ancestral carvings seem to breathe next to contemporary canvases, while delicate textiles hang beside bold totems.

The layout encourages you to meander slowly and listen. It serves as both a museum and a space for reflection.

Kurt Diercke, who has been residing in PNG for the last eight years, says: “The collection is carefully exhibited and allows visitors to gain an in-depth understanding into the diversity of culture throughout PNG, without being overwhelming. It is a great introduction for those visiting PNG for the first time and is still a fascinating place to visit for those who have ventured here on multiple occasions.”

One of the most moving exhibits is *Voices from the War*, a multimedia presentation created with Deakin University and local

“

The five updated galleries each tell a distinctive story, weaving together the narrative of a nation.

”

institutions. Standing before an old field radio, listen to a veteran’s voice fill the room – his story connecting the past with the present. This blend of oral history and technology ensures that future generations hear, see, and feel the real experiences of Papua New Guineans. Accessibility is central to NMAG’s new chapter. The addition of ramps and modern facilities guarantees that everyone – locals, tourists, and schoolchildren – can enjoy the museum’s treasures.

NMAG is now a key part of PNG’s cultural tourism landscape, and a visit is a must before venturing off into the country to see the living culture and history for yourself. It grasps the essence of the Pacific. The museum stands as a symbol of teamwork, creativity, and cultural pride, receiving acclaim and recognition across the region for its thoughtful design and inclusive vision. ■

Plan your visit to explore the stories that shape PNG’s past present, and future at museum.gov.pg.





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A GUIDE TO SYDNEY FOR CORPORATE TRAVELLERS

Paul Chai reports on how to get the most out of the Harbour City on a business trip, with a bit of leisure thrown in.

PICTURE: CROWN TOWERS



Sydney is one of the best cities in the world to find yourself on a business trip because it has business and pleasure within easy reach. It is compact but packed full of great places to do business (co-working spaces and after-work drinks) and unwind (park runs and famous swims).

It has ground-breaking chefs heading up some of the best restaurants in Australia, and even in the CBD you are never far from a stunning harbour beach or epic green space.

THE COMMUTE

Sydney International Airport is about half an hour's drive from the city centre and will cost about A\$50/PGK140 one way in a taxi or rideshare (though it can surge at peak times).

The Airport Link train not only offers better value (about A\$20/PGK56) but also gets you there in about 15 minutes, so it should be considered if your destination is near one of the city rail stations. You can purchase an Opal travel card to use while you are there or simply tap your credit card when you enter and leave the station.

At the airport, Air Niugini business class passengers and Air Niugini Kumul Club Gold Members who are travelling on Air Niugini-operated services can access the Qantas international business lounge.

Located above the concourse near gates 9 and 10, the lounge offers two comfortable wings, comprehensive buffet meals in each wing, and bathroom and shower facilities – but the space does fill up quickly.

CHECK-IN

If you are mixing business with pleasure, Crown Sydney (crownhotels.com.au) located at Barangaroo is an excellent choice with the sort of Sydney Harbour views that most travellers come to the city for. Crown also has a variety of meeting spaces from the grand Pearl Ballroom to the outside Pavilion; drinking and dining options include Sydney classic Chinese at Golden Century (a family-run institution), fine dining at Oncore by Clare Smyth and the rooftop Cirq Bar for drinks. ➤



PICTURE: ISTOCK



PICTURES: SOFITEL SYDNEY WENTWORTH

An executive suite at Crown Towers with the iconic Sydney Harbour Bridge dominating the view (opposite); a window into corporate life (top); self check-in at the Sofitel Sydney Wentworth (above left); a club lounge at the Sofitel (above right).



PICTURES: 20 CHAPEL



PICTURES: 20 CHAPEL

Sydney's 20 Chapel, recommended for business dinners (left); a fire-cooked steak at 20 Chapel (above); Crown Towers (below); the recently opened Gran Torino (opposite top); Bar Tilda (opposite middle left); King Clarence, recommended for lunch (opposite middle right); San Marzano at the Adina (opposite bottom).

The new Adina Sydney Town Hall (adinahotels.com) is an 'apart-hotel' with rooms that are perfectly tailored to a longer business stay, with breakout lounge space and a position so central that it is just around the corner from the historic Town Hall. The hotel has flexible meeting spaces that can cater to large functions, intimate chats or seminars and has the new retro-Italian diner San Marzano on the ground floor for dinner and drinks.

Another fabulously located hotel with all the meetings bells and whistles is the Sofitel Sydney Wentworth (sofitel.accor.com) fresh from a multi-million-dollar refurbishment. Originally this was a hotel created for Qantas staff during the jetset 1960s. Now the Sofitel Sydney Wentworth has had a huge multi-million-dollar rebirth, and it has inviting rooms (many with additional lounge area), fantastic food and beverage at the outside Wentworth Bar, Vietnamese diner Delta Rue and Tilda, celebrating Australian produce.

RESTAURANTS

Breakfast: Chef Bill Granger may not have invented the Sydney brunch but – to a generation who sat in the pale morning sunlight with a plate of his fluffy ricotta hotcakes in front of them, piled high with

banana and topped with honeycomb – he may well have perfected it. There is no better place to have a breakfast meeting or a long brunch than bills (bills.com.au), which has outlets across Sydney at Bondi Beach, Darlinghurst, Double Bay and Surry Hills.

Lunch: King Clarence (bentleyrestaurantgroup.com.au/kingclarence) in the centre of the city on Clarence Street, is doing fun, delicious spins on Asian classics. It's a great sharing menu for work colleagues with finger food like fish finger baos with chunky pieces of barramundi served with cheese, pickled chilli and salmon caviar or the signature duck *tsukune*, a sausage glazed with hoisin sauce and served on bread with charred onions and peanut-butter-and-mustard sauce, then dipped in confit egg yolk and soy sauce.

Networking dinner: Some of the best business dinners involve fire-cooked steaks, and 20 Chapel (20chapel.com.au) from chefs Corey Costelloe and Dave Allison is at the top of the food chain. Aged onsite, the wagyu cuts are the stars here and the produce comes from Allison's Hawkesbury Stix organic farm. Don't leave without trying the Fijian-inspired raw fish kokoda or the garlic prawn pot. ➤



PICTURE: CROWN TOWERS





PICTURE: YUSUKE OBA



PICTURE: STEVEN WOODBURN



PICTURE: KING CLARENCE



PICTURE: NICHOLAS GRAHAM



Solo dinner: Keep it simple and delicious with a New York-style pizza slice at MMC (My Mother's Cousin) Slice Shoppe (sliceshoppe.mymotherscousin.com.au) in Marrickville. The team spent a long time in New York getting their slices just right so you can enjoy their Hot Honey Pepperoni on a sesame crust topped with whipped ricotta and fresh basil or the Proper Prawn XL with spicy nduja and black garlic. Keen for an after-dinner drink? Walk across the road to the buzzing beer garden of veteran Sydney pub The Vic on the Park.

DRINKS

The views are about as Sydney as you can get at Cafe Sydney, with its rooftop location on Customs House at Circular Quay. The Lounge offers Golden Hour deals midweek with discounted cocktails, beers and wines and the must-have Sydney rock oysters, but the Sydney Harbour vista is good any day of the week.

Packed and buzzy after the end-of-work siren goes off is JAM Record Bar (merivale.com/venues/jam-record-bar) an intimate,

L-shaped listening bar bathed in pink hues and featuring a vintage JBL speaker system. All the better to play some of the 15,000 vinyls that line the walls of this bar while you sip on a Japanese-inspired highball or sake.

The dimly lit basement bar The Caterpillar Club (swillhouse.com/venues/the-caterpillar-club) has plush red booths for couples across from the busy bar or larger groups at the back of the club. This is also a music-loving joint and is known for its impromptu dance floor as the night gets later. ➤

PICTURE: STEVE WOODBURN



PICTURE: SOFITEL SYDNEY WENTWORTH



Mixed drinks at Bar Tilda (left); the lobby lounge at the Sofitel (above).



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For a co-working space that is designed to impress, Paramount by the Office Space (theofficespace.com.au) is on the upper ground level of the old Paramount Studios building in Surry Hills. The space offers 22 suites of various sizes and the woody, artisan design, honouring the heritage nature of the building will wow any visiting clients.

With a variety of very centrally located spaces, The Commons (thecommons.com.au) gives you access to co-working spots in George Street, Martin Place, York Street,

Surry Hills and more. Across the group, The Commons offers meeting rooms, event spaces, photography studios and even podcast studios.

In Marrickville, Level One (levelone.community) is a creative space in the warehouse of furniture brand Timbermill. The decor includes handmade furniture throughout and there are offices, dedicated desks and a communal hangout zone.

LATEST

Just out of the CBD, Neil Perry recently launched Gran Torino (themargaretfamily.com/venue/gran-torino) in Double Bay

(see our mini Q&A) where his Italian menu celebrates local produce from trusted suppliers like Brent's Wollemi ducks, single line-caught fish from Ben Collison and Anthony Heselwood and Bruce Collis' southern calamari.

Expect dishes like finely sliced Mishima bresaola with Reggiano and extra virgin olive oil as well as fritto misto di mare with king prawns, squid, scallops and coral trout. Meat lovers will adore the bistecca alla Fiorentina, a one-kilogram dry-aged T-bone served with a selection of salsa, horseradish and mustards. Dessert simply has to be the tiramisu and bomboloni filled with vanilla cream and raspberry conserve.

ON THE RUN

One of the best runs easily located from city accommodation is to enter the Royal Botanic Gardens from Macquarie Street, follow the winding pathways to Mrs Macquarie's chair with an unrivalled view back to the Sydney Opera House and then follow the harbour path back to the Opera House and the city.

Sydney also has a number of Parkruns (parkrun.com.au), community-organised five-kilometre walks or runs, the closest to the CBD being the beautiful Centennial Parkland, the more urban Sydney Park in St Peters or North Sydney just across the Sydney Harbour Bridge.

 **Air Niugini flies from Port Moresby to Sydney twice weekly. See airniugini.com.pg.**

PICTURE: YUSUKE OBA



Classic service at Italian-style Gran Torino at Double Bay.

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“

For guests into wellness I recommend Slow House Bondi spa (slowhousebondi.com), which has a range of treatments like infra-red saunas and massages. Then you can walk along Bondi Beach, head across to Bondi Icebergs where you can have a swim or lunch and then do the 2.5-kilometre walk from Bondi to Bronte and back, which goes along the coast and where you can sometimes see whales and dolphins in the distance.

”

**RAUL POBLETE,
ASSISTANT CONCIERGE,
SOFITEL SYDNEY
WENTWORTH**



MY TOWN

**NEIL PERRY, chef and owner,
Margaret, Gran Torino, Next Door
and Baker Blue**

Q: What must a visitor to Sydney do?

A: Sydney has the most beautiful harbour in the world, so I love a trip across to Manly on the ferry. Then once in Manly you can grab a bite to eat at Felons Seafood, which has amazing oysters and mud crab, and it is heaven having that sitting on Manly Wharf in the sun.

Q: What makes Sydney great?

A: It's all the amazing places you have to eat. Ester in Chippendale is world class and there is Peter Gilmore's Quay if you want to go through the full tasting menu. You have the guys up at Porcine in Paddington where Nicholas Hill is doing fine bistro cooking.

My son-in-law Michael Clift and his partners have got some great restaurants like Clam Bar and Neptune's Grotto, and they have just opened Grandfather's.

Q: Where would you go for a coffee meeting?

A: I would head across to Room 10 in Potts Point; it has great coffee and there is a fantastic array of sandwiches. I love the lamb wrap; it's done Middle Eastern-style with tabouli and harissa, and that is a delicious lunch.

Q: What about an after-work drink?

A: The local pub in Double Bay, the Royal Oak, is a bit of an institution. I am also looking forward to checking out Barons, which has an incredible British dining room fit-out. And we have set up Gran Torino's new bar as a great casual place to pop in and have a drink in the afternoon. ■



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A LOOK INSIDE ONE OF THE **WORLD'S GREAT HOTELS**





PICTURES: MARINA BAY SANDS

The famous infinity pool at Marina Bay Sands at night (left); a room at the hotel with views of the Gardens by The Bay urban park, which includes Avatar-like tree sculptures (above).

Leonie Jarrett checks into Singapore's Marina Bay Sands Hotel, where the indulgence starts as soon as you are picked up at the airport.

I arrive at Changi Airport in Singapore and see my name on a Marina Bay Sands Hotel signboard. I am ushered outside to a waiting car, a near-new luxurious Mercedes Maybach. OK, Marina Bay Sands, you have won me over already.

The Marina Bay Sands Hotel opened in 2010. It has already become synonymous with Singapore, an iconic symbol of the city. So popular that its owner, Las Vegas Sands, has just invested more than PGK7 billion to refurbish every room in the 1850-room hotel, across all three 57-storey hotel towers.

Marina Bay Sands Hotel was designed by Safdie Architects, led by Moshe Safdie. This firm has also designed the fourth, 55-storey tower which is being built (and is set to open in 2031). This will be a 570 all-suite hotel plus a 15,000-seat arena designed to be the leading live entertainment venue in Asia. There'll also be more event space.

Too soon, my Mercedes ride ends and I am welcomed and ushered to my Sands premier room. At about 45-square metres, this room exudes luxury. From the marble floor tiles and counter tops to the deep bath to the decorative polished metals to the buffed calf leather encasing everything from the wastepaper bin to the TV remote holder, there are thoughtful, stylish touches everywhere.

My room has a balcony with seating and garden. Overlooking the South China Sea, the view is endless. Rooms on the other side of the tower facing the city are more expensive but I love the sea view. ➤

“

The infinity pool is the standout attraction of the hotel. I had seen it on TV but, in reality, it exceeds my expectations. It is on the rooftop and spans three towers.

”





The room is not just beautiful but packed with technology too. There is a 75-inch SMART TV and a Bang & Olufsen Bluetooth speaker plus smart lighting. The thick curtains are blackout and open automatically when the door to the room opens. A little bit of theatre every time I come home.

The bathroom is lavish – dual vanities, a bath and a separate shower (both hand-held and rainfall). This room lacks nothing, but what I really want to see is THAT POOL. I change hurriedly and take the ultra-quick, ultra-quiet lift to the 57th-floor floor SkyPark.

For me, the SkyPark infinity pool is the standout attraction of the hotel. I had seen it on TV but, in reality, it exceeds my expectations. It is on the rooftop and spans three towers. This marvel of engineering is the longest pool at this height in the world at 150 metres long with incredible views across the Singapore skyline.

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It's so warm that you don't need to leave the pool. Towels, drinking water and sunscreen are supplied, and you can order food from the comfort of the padded sun lounges. Or you can wander over to one of the restaurants and bars.

When the sun sets, the pool and the views take on a different identity as the city's skyscrapers twinkle with colourful lights, and the heat dissipates (a little). I pinch myself that I am here in this magnificent pool.

Within the hotel and the adjacent shopping complex, The Shoppes, there are about 80 restaurants offering all types of dining experiences. From burgers to Michelin stars and restaurants by acclaimed chefs like Gordon Ramsay, Wolfgang Puck and Tetsuya.

I wander across to The Shoppes, a 93,000-square metre complex of over 270 stores and food outlets. The Marina Bay Sands Fitness Centre is there, too, plus a convention centre, cinema and casino.



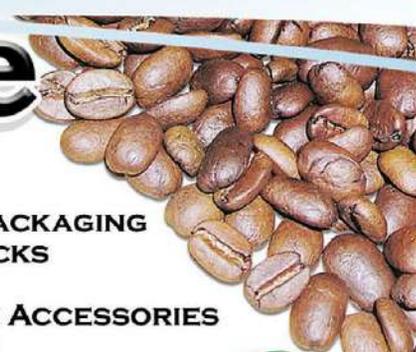
The Marina Bay Sands is an icon of Singapore's skyline (opposite); the infinity pool during the day (above).

There are also the neighbouring ArtScience Museum and the Gardens by the Bay.

The Art Science Museum, also designed by Moshe Safdie, is shaped like a lotus flower and is a museum illustrating the intersection of science and art.

The Gardens by the Bay is home to a collection of over 1.5 million plants from every continent except Antarctica. There is a wonderful nightly free light and sound show where Supertrees are illuminated to a changing, themed musical soundtrack. ➤

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There is also a nightly, free Light and Water Show called Spectra. Fountain jets over the water dance to classical music alongside colourful visual projections and light effects.

If you don't want to, there is no need to venture out of the Marina Bay Sands precinct for dining or shopping. With the network of underpasses and overpasses, you don't even need to cross a road. If you do want to access wider Singapore, you can do this easily via the MRT (subway) station in The Shoppes. ■



Rates start from PGK2253 a night in a premier room. Guests in the Sands Collection receive a complimentary one-way arrival transfer. Guests in the more expensive Paiza Collection receive two-way transfers. Airport transfers are in one of the hotel's 40 prestige vehicles. See marinbaysands.com.



Air Niugini flies from Port Moresby to Singapore daily. See airniugini.com.pg.

The hotel's three towers dominate the landscape (far left); the Spago terrace lounge (left); The Shoppes, which includes 80 restaurants and 270 stores (opposite).

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TIME TRAVELLER

South Pacific Games mascot, Port Moresby, 1991

A *kapul*, otherwise known as a cuscus, is a common tropical tree-living marsupial, and it was chosen as the official mascot for the ninth South Pacific Games in 1991. The Games ran in Port Moresby and Lae on September 7–21 and were opened by the then Prince Andrew, Duke of York. Here, Kapul is pictured with renowned lawyer, public servant and politician the late Sir Anthony Siaguru, who was visiting from London, where he was a Deputy Secretary-General in the Commonwealth Secretariat at the time. This regional event was transformational for Port Moresby and Lae sporting infrastructure thanks to international donations. China funded the Sir John Guise Sports Complex in Port Moresby while Japan funded the Sir Ignatius Kilage Sports Complex in Lae, facilities that are still in use today. The Games, involving 16 Pacific nations, cost PGK46 million. Papua New Guinea prevailed by winning the most medals, ahead of French Polynesia and New Caledonia.

If you have a photo that may be suitable for Time Traveller, email paradise@businessadvantageinternational.com.



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HOTELS

A SPECIAL REPORT

Arrivals into Port Moresby are expected to grow substantially in the coming years, with the country set to join the National Rugby League and to host other major events. *Paul Chai* provides a round-up of the big investments being made by PNG's hotel operators in anticipation of this growth.

Excitement is in the air in Papua New Guinea, as the country prepares to join Australia's National Rugby League (NRL) in 2028 and to host major international events such as the APEC Leaders' Summit in 2033 and the UN Oceans Conference in 2030. Moreover, there is growing optimism around TotalEnergies reaching a final investment decision on its Papua LNG project.



PICTURES: SUPPLIED BY HILTON & GRAND PAPIUA

The Hilton is preparing for a visitor influx (above); the Grand Papua is undergoing a modernisation project (below).

With all this activity on the horizon, it is no surprise that Port Moresby's major hotel operators are investing in upgrades.

PNG's largest hotel operator, Coral Sea Hotels (Steamships Hospitality) is in the process of upgrading six of its eight properties.

"The renovation program for most of our hotels is on the track to success, as we all witnessed with the reopening of the Gateway lobby, which is simply stunning," Simon Martin, Chief Operating Officer of Coral Sea Hotels, says.

"We are very confident that the designs, which value PNG, will please our business travellers and a developing leisure market, including lots of PNG residents and nationals."

Coral Sea Hotels is also modernising the Grand Papua Hotel with a two-year project that includes a redesigned lobby, bar, a restaurant with show kitchen, upgraded guest rooms and a reimagined 15th-floor featuring an executive lounge, sky bar and presidential board rooms. Down the road, it is in the process of refurbishing the Ela Beach Hotel & Apartments.

Outside of the capital, the Steamships division is planning upgrades to the Highlander Hotel (Mount Hagen), Bird of Paradise Hotel (Goroka) and Huon Gulf Hotel (Lae).

Ryan Mikkelson, General Manager at Hilton Port Moresby Hotel & Residences, says new retail stores will open at the Hilton Residences in early 2026 which will add additional services for the influx of visitors.

Mikkelson says the Hilton had a positive year in 2025, assisted by a jump in traffic from Kokoda trekking groups and international sporting groups. He expects the upcoming NRL inclusion will further ramp things up.

"You will have those die-hard fans that travel for every game; what that number looks like will vary between clubs but there will be a lot of people coming from media, and officials as well," he says.

Stage three of the Star Mountain Plaza – which is being developed by the Mineral Resources Development Company (MRDC), ▶

“We are confident that the (new) designs will please our business travellers and a developing leisure market.”







PICTURE: BAI

Stage three of construction has started at the Star Mountain Plaza.

and which incorporates the Hilton – is under construction, including an office tower.

Outside of Port Moresby, the MRDC is also set to open a group of ‘Heritage’ hotels in Kikori and Kerema (Gulf Province) and Kutubu (Hela Province) this year, followed by an additional hotel in Hela Province next year.

Anne Busfield, portfolio manager at IHG, operator of Port Moresby’s Holiday Inn, Holiday Inn Express and Crowne Plaza, is also excited for the impending NRL influx.

“Our focus as a business is unlocking the potential of each asset, and for Holiday Inn we’ve got the beer garden, we’ve got the Gecko Bar,” she says. “There’s a lot of outdoor spaces there and from a strategy point of view we want those to be NRL-ready by 2028.”

Other wins at IHG include the recent refurbishment of the Faya Haus restaurant at the Holiday Inn and the ongoing success of Port Terrace at the Crowne Plaza, as well

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as the company’s external catering service at APEC Haus.

“The growth for us as a company is very much linked to our credibility and reputation in the local market,” Busfield says. “We also have very distinct brands here, so we have the ability to meet the demands and the needs of different market segments, which I think is quite unusual.”

At the time of writing, the Stanley Hotel & Suites in Port Moresby was scheduled to start trading as the Sheraton Port Moresby Stanley Hotel & Suites at the end of March under a deal with Sheraton parent company Marriott International.

The hotel is in the middle of a PGK30 million upgrade that will see it have 378 rooms, two restaurants, a bar and cafe, an infinity swimming pool and a conference facility.

The renovation of the lobby and the Rainforest Bar began last November, but the hotel says “normal hotel operations continue”. ➤



PICTURE: LENNOX MATAINAHO

The Holiday Inn’s refurbished Faya Haus.



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Meanwhile, Port Moresby's Airways Hotel is also undergoing a huge renovation of the existing rooms, beginning with the Dakota wing, starting in the next year.

The hotel's owner, the Constantinou Group of Companies, is also focusing on the Jacksons Heights development next door, where it intends to construct more than 2000 residential lots and a new shopping mall.

Airways is also doing something innovative with its classic Douglas propeller plane – part of PNG's aviation history – by turning it into a special hotel room.

"The Airways plane is a local icon for PNG and one of the many features that makes our hotel unique," George Constantinou, Group Chairman and Governing Director of the Constantinou Group, says.

"We're pleased to be able to turn our plane into a unique guest experience in PNG."

Staying overnight in a historic aeroplane is not only a good business idea but might serve as a metaphor for PNG's hotel sector as a whole, which looks set to take off this year. ■





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FROM FIRST CONTACT TO AI

PNG'S STEEP INNOVATION LEARNING CURVE

PNG has seen rapid technological change in a short time, with some communities going from no contact with the outside world to having access to digital tools in the space of a generation. *Nadav Shemer Shlezinger* speaks with tech sector leaders about the progress being made, and what's next for PNG to fulfill its innovation potential.



Founder of PNG ICT Cluster Priscilla Kevin.

Digital infrastructure is “a crucial prerequisite” for the creation and adoption of digital technologies, according to the World Bank’s 2023 *Digital Progress and Trends Report*.

This principle is clearly understood in Papua New Guinea, where state-owned PNG DataCo has invested heavily in expanding the National Transmission Network.

The Coral Sea Cable System, a 4700-kilometre fibre-optic cable built in 2019 that connects PNG to Australia and the Solomon Islands, and that was partially funded by PNG DataCo, was “our most significant investment in terms of international connectivity,” according to Chief Executive Paul Komboi.

Investments in terrestrial infrastructure, including thousands of kilometres of fibre cables and data centres in Port Moresby and Madang, have been equally important in driving down wholesale bandwidth prices from PGK1250/Mbps in 2018 to PGK209/Mbps in August 2025, in Komboi’s opinion.

“That is the main driver. It’s the connectivity that drove down the price and created a much more resilient backbone network for the country,” Komboi says.

Towers built by PNG’s telecommunications providers have brought widespread internet access into rural areas, according to Russell Tato, Acting CEO of Datec, a state-owned provider of ICT solutions. ➤



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“That’s opening up the market. We are seeing demand,” Tato says, adding that, “with the ISP (internet service provider) and satellite bandwidth opening up the market, a lot of the corporates are now investing in on-premises infrastructure”.

Vodafone has built more than 800 towers nationwide in PNG since becoming PNG’s third telco in 2022.

According to Regional Chief Executive Officer, Pradeep Lal, every one of these sites is 4G-plus enabled, underscoring the company’s focus on a data-centric network.

“The real difference we’ve made is affordability. By offering plans that people can genuinely access, we now carry 55 per cent of the country’s data usage. The demand has always been there, we can see that the people want to use it if you make it affordable.”

In a recent speech, Prime Minister James Marape observed that many communities in PNG have gone from having no contact with the outside world to having access to the digital world within one generation.

“I am a living example,” the PM said, recalling his childhood in Huli country in the Highlands region in the 1970s, when shells were still used as currency and communication with the outside world meant walking for days. Today, he noted, he can complete all his office work using ICT tools, including tools powered by artificial intelligence (AI).

So far, the development of high-powered digital applications in PNG has been largely



NiuPay founder James Inglis.

restricted to large corporations or government institutions, although they are increasingly being made available to regular consumers.

For example, PNG’s largest private superannuation fund, Nasfund, recently developed an AI tool to streamline its accounts payable process.

In November, the government introduced a Digital ID known as SevisPass, which citizens will be able to use to be instantly verified for a range of services online.

Earlier in 2025, the government’s Immigration and Citizenship Services Authority launched an AI solution to streamline assessments of visa applications.

“It was the first use of generative AI for government workload in the Pacific, but not the last,” says James Inglis, founder of NiuPay, the Port Moresby firm that developed the solution.

In October, Kina Securities agreed to pay US\$5 million to acquire a 17 per cent share in NiuPay, in what is believed to be the first equity deal for a tech company in PNG.

“
Towers built by PNG’s
telecommunications
providers have brought
widespread internet access
into rural areas.
”

“This is a new type of investment for this market, and hopefully it can provide opportunities for other startups in this region,” Inglis says. “We see a lot of guys with great ideas that don’t have access to the same capital markets because of the scale of what we do.”

The next frontier for PNG is investing not just in technological infrastructure, but also in its human infrastructure – equipping budding entrepreneurs with the skills and spaces to innovate.

NiuPay is in discussions with a local university to help redesign its curriculum to educate students in the use of cutting-edge technologies.



PNG DataCo Chief Executive Paul Komboi.

The PNG Digital ICT Cluster is another organisation dedicated to this mission. Established in 2014, it has supported the development of the innovation ecosystem by promoting various initiatives, including innovation hubs for micro, small and medium enterprises (mSMEs), providing them with access to features such as internet services, Wi-Fi, IT tools, training programs, and business and e-government services.

Recently, it announced a partnership with the National Information and Communications Technology Authority to roll out and support three pilot digital mSME business hubs in PNG.

For Priscilla Kevin, co-founder of the PNG Digital ICT Cluster, these hubs are as much about connecting entrepreneurs with each other as they are about skills and training.

Currently, “the conversations are happening in siloed spaces and are very disconnected and fragmented,” says Kevin.

“When you create hubs, then the conversations get bigger and louder because there’s more activities happening in those spaces.” ■

Nominations for the 2026 Innovation Awards open in early March. Categories include Corporate, SME, Digital Government and Outstanding Individual. The awards are presented by Business Advantage International and Port Moresby Chamber of Commerce & Industry, thanks to sponsorship from Kina Bank, Moni Plus and Vodafone PNG. See innovationpng.com.

PICTURES: STEFAN DANILJCHENKO & BAI





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“

You have to listen to the wind, you have to listen to the birds, or the movement of the trees, and you can write a song.

All my songs come from the heart.

– GEORGE TELEK

”

Belinda Jackson goes behind the scenes at a concert rehearsal with PNG's famed musician George Telek, who has collaborated for more than 40 years with Australian musician David Bridie.

There's barely an inch of space on the floors of the rehearsal studio in inner-city Melbourne, Australia. Guitars, keyboards, a cello, *mambu* (bamboo flutes) and drums of all varieties, from the standard rock kit to hourglass-shaped *kundus*; there are nearly 50 instruments in total. All are dwarfed by a 150-kilogram *garamut*, a vast log drum, black-and-red motifs running down its side.

In between the instruments are cables snaking like vines, foot pedals and microphones, ready to trap the unwary.

Yet the musicians – 11 in total – navigate their way through the room with ease.

Each has their own place. Many on today's rehearsal floor found their footing in the first iteration of this coalition, nearly three decades ago, when the Australian band Not Drowning, Waving collaborated with musicians in Rabaul to create *Tabaran*, a landmark album that merges rhythms, melodies, politics and humanity.

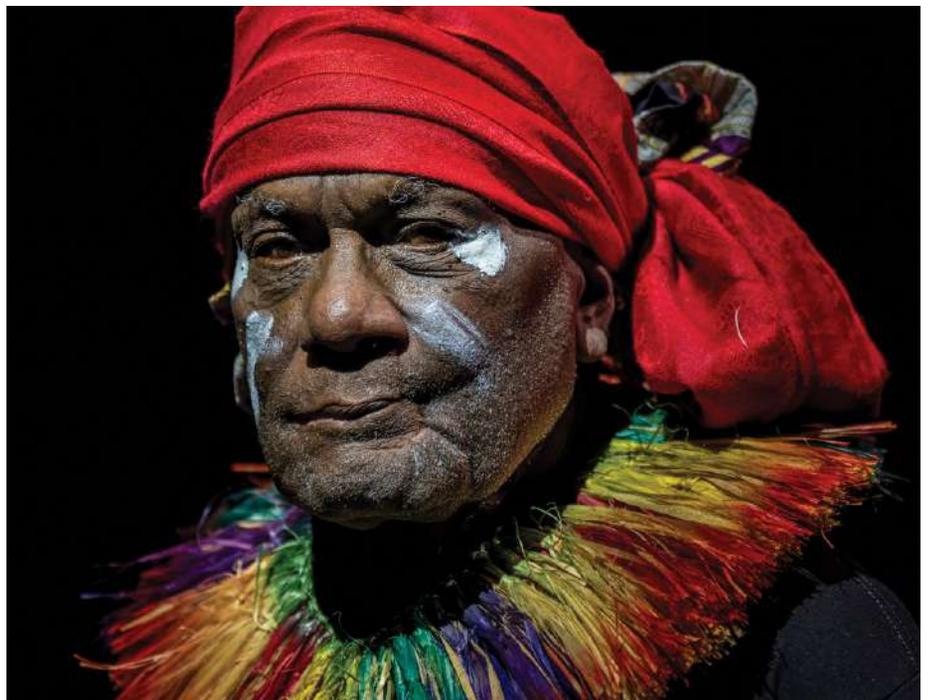
Neither of them are at the centre, but the two linchpins of this supergroup don't need to be up front; everyone knows the connection between feted Tolai singer George Telek and David Bridie, the Australian songwriter, composer and co-founder of Not Drowning, Waving.

Together, Telek and Bridie have been making music since a chance meeting at a barbecue in Rabaul, East New Britain, in 1986.

Forty years on, here in the rehearsal studios, the musicians around them are in their own world, tuning instruments or fine-tuning melodies on viola, on *kundu*, on bass, guitars or flutes. It's discordant, it's out of kilter, it's an unstructured clash of sound.

A deep pause.

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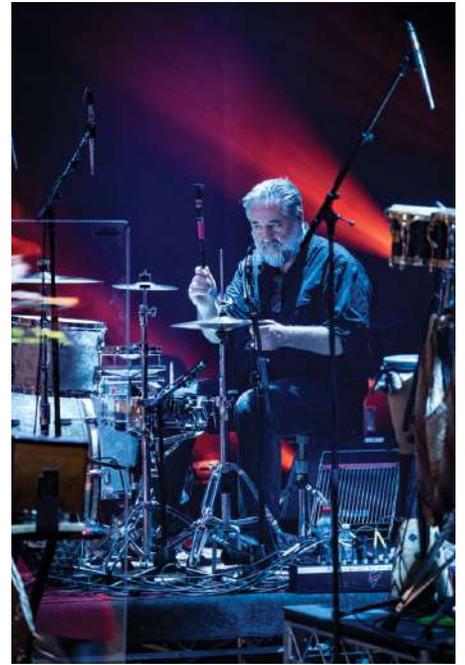
PICTURES: DOUG GIMESY

PNG musician George Telek (opposite and right) recently played to a packed-out audience at Melbourne's Recital Centre.





PNG drummer Emmanuel Hakalitz with David Bridie on keyboards at the Melbourne Recital Centre concert (left); Not Drowning, Waving drummer Russel Bradley (right).



the old wooden floorboards, and into the bloodstream of all of us standing upon them.

Dial back to 1986. It was a sweet spot for the country; just over a decade since Papua New Guinea had unshackled itself as an Australian colony, and eight years before Rabaul, ‘the pearl of the Pacific’, would be buried and lost in a powerful, devastating volcanic eruption.

Bridie was 24, had founded Not Drowning, Waving with guitarist John Phillips and was ready to look past the sensible Melbourne suburbs he’d grown up in, when his Australian friend Mark told him: “You can go to London, go to France, go to America; they’re just the same as here. A little bit different. But go to PNG. As a musician and an artist, it’ll blow your mind.”

His friend was filmmaker Mark Worth, born on the Australian naval base on Manus Island and ready to coax anyone who’d listen back to his remote birthplace. So, instead of stepping onto the timeworn backpacker route, Bridie and percussionist James Southall found themselves in Wewak, Madang, New Ireland, Manus and in the thick of the Rabaul music scene. It was here that Bridie first listened to a cassette of George

Telek and the Moab Stringband’s song Abebe (Butterfly).

“*Uuu raura bebaik mutar, Pukai Loop Mara Tulungei Dir, Abebe Warpi Lan Eie,*” sings Telek on the track. “Two butterflies representing spirits of my ancestors fly over me the magic man.”

“When we met, George was the singer of a successful band, I was a singer of a band ... not as successful – we were both singers,” Bridie says, during a rehearsal break with Telek and renowned woodwind instrumentalist Pius Wasi. It was the first flicker of a connection that has endured four decades.

Two years later, in 1988, the six members of Not Drowning, Waving would touch down in PNG with no brief other than to be influenced by the music around them, and to create an album with PNG musicians.

In Rabaul’s busy Pacific Gold Studios, the PNG and Australian musicians began to knit their sound together. “It was all great, we were really enthusiastic, we were young, and we were all just thinking ‘how exciting is this,’” says Bridie.

“There was lots of energy,” adds Pius Wasi, who hails from the Chambri Lakes

region in the East Sepik Province. Like Bougainville-born brothers and drummers Ben and Emmanuel Hakalitz in the rehearsal rooms today, he was part of that pivotal collaboration nearly four decades ago.

“I was with my group Tambaran Culture, but I thought I’d like to move on,” says Wasi. “I used to listen to Not Drowning, Waving’s music, and I had the album *Claim* and I was struck by their atmospheric sound, but I never knew who they were.”

He didn’t expect that they were the guys showing up in the Rabaul studios.

Footage shot at the time and later compiled into the 2023 film *Abebe: Butterfly Song*, by filmmaker Rosie Jones, shows string bands and synthesisers in the studios, and Telek, bringing his homeland into the studio.

“You have to listen to the wind, you have to listen to the birds, or the movement of the trees, and you can write a song,” says Telek. “All my songs come from the heart.”

Not Drowning, Waving, together with The Musicians of Rabaul, would release the groundbreaking world-music album *Tabaran* to global acclaim in 1990.

There’s barely a spare seat in the Melbourne Recital Centre, and ahead of the concert ►





In concert at the Melbourne Recital Centre (top and right); Penny Hewson – one of the early members of Not Drowning, Waving – returned to the stage for the concert (above).





David Bridie (above); singer and proud Wiradjuri woman Dyagula provided vocals for the concert (opposite).

the foyer is a mix of PNG and Australian faces, accents, languages. The crowd is patient: it has to be; it's been a long, 35-year wait for a follow-up album and, even then, it was never planned.

So, the new album, *Malira*, was an accidental record?

"Yes, we didn't set out to do a record," says Bridie. "We were just mucking around because we had to do a Sydney gig (to perform *Tabaran* for the 50th anniversary of PNG's independence celebrations) and everyone started bringing ideas to the studio. "Halfway through it, and we're thinking, 'oh, this is good'."

"*Tabaran* is such an important record, and we only wanted to do another record if it was going to be as good as the first," he says.

"We're very proud of this project, and proud of doing it in the 50th anniversary.

"And with George, Pius, the Not Drowning, Waving guys John (Phillips) and Russel

(Bradley), it was seamless; we know each other so well. Not just spending time together, but the musical ideas – George and I have done six records together, Pius has worked with me on film soundtracks, Ben and I have done shows and big projects in Bougainville, and then there's a project in the Sepik with Pius.

"It's balanced: it is very equal, all the musicians are all equal," says Bridie, as Telek nods slowly in agreement, refusing to name his favourite track. "I like them all," he affirms quietly.

"George sang half the record; I sang the other half of the record. Ben played half the drums, Russel played the other half of the drums," says Bridie.

The resulting album, *Malira*, was recorded in Port Moresby, Rabaul and in Bridie's home in Apollo Bay, 200 kilometres west of Melbourne by the Otway National Park, and released in September 2025.

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Now in their early 60s, Telek and Bridie have weathered four decades of life's challenges together and apart: record deals and no-deals, family deaths and musical accolades, the fight for West Papua, the volcano. On different sides of the Torres Strait, Bridie sang about the devastation with his new band My Friend the Chocolate Cake, Telek sang about the loss of his home, studio and livelihood from his village of Raluana, near the destroyed capital.

Telek also survived mouth cancer, a result of chewing betel nut. "It nearly killed him," says Bridie. "And for a singer ..." He leaves unsaid what everyone was thinking.

Charity events and benefit concerts followed, even the reprisal of Not Drowning, Waving, which re-formed in 2018 to raise money for Telek to undergo surgery in Australia.

In that time, Bridie also founded the Wantok Musik Foundation, a record label for

Melanesian and indigenous artists, to help bring their music to the world stage, and for them to make an income from it. And he also became an initiated man in the Tolai clan.

"Rabaul is my second home; Melbourne is George's second home," says Bridie. "George's family is my family."

On stage, Telek wears his red *lap lap*, a black Tabaran band T-shirt and feathered

headdress, Bridie at the grand piano on one side. With the *mamba* and *kundu* calling through the packed hall, the Tolai's masked tubuan dancing on the screens behind him, Telek calls us to his homeland, a fascinating, otherworldly journey through music.

Telek, Bridie, Wasi; what all three musicians agree, as they sit around the table, is that this story has a different narrative to ➤



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those of the negative stories coming out of PNG. Instead, the songs, the melodies, the wildlife recordings woven throughout – all are PNG’s good news story.

“They give you a strong view of grassroots PNG, of life in the village, the ancestral beliefs,” says Bridie.

“It’s been a long journey,” says Wasi. “When we started, we were young, we were excited, but not knowing how things would turn out, musically. We grew out of the music. And keeping this relationship, between PNG and Australia, nobody knew how important it was for us.”

“Australia’s got an interesting relationship with PNG,” adds Bridie. “A lot of it’s good, a lot of it’s problematic, like any colonial thing.”

“We’ve always been proud to showcase this as a really good relationship between two countries, this is a metaphor for how it could be.” ■



Percussionist Emmanuel Hakalitz and woodwind master Pius Wasi (in headdress), of East Sepik Province.

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*Membership numbers updated as of November 2025.



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ALMANAC 2026

From arts festivals to fashion parades and the Rugby League World Cup, 2026 is a great year to be travelling around Air Niugini's network, writes *Belinda Jackson*.

FEBRUARY

HONG KONG CHINESE NEW YEAR

February 17

It's the Year of the Fire Horse according to the Chinese zodiac, and it all kicks off with a bang in Hong Kong. Hong Kong's biggest festival sees spectacular fireworks over Victoria Harbour, float parades through Tsim Sha Sui, lion dances and lucky dumplings, and an annual horseracing meet at Sha Tin racecourse.

discoverhongkong.com

PNG OFC PRO LEAGUE

January 17–May 24

The 2026 season for the Oceania Football Confederation's league boots in a big year of fixtures that sees rounds of soccer played in Port Moresby, Honiara, and Suva and Ba in Fiji, before the finals in Auckland in May. The eight-team league includes PNG Hekari, Tahiti United and South Island United from Christchurch, New Zealand, and will play in Port Moresby between January 31 and February 8.

oceaniafootball.com



SYDNEY SAILGP

February 28–March 1

Sydney’s dazzling harbour is the racetrack for a line-up of hydrofoiling F50 catamarans helmed by teams from around the world, including Italy, the US and Denmark. Now in its seventh year, 2026 launches new Sunday twilight races to the event.

sailgp.com

**PNG & SOLOMON ISLANDS
FIFA WOMEN’S WORLD CUP
QUALIFIERS**

February 26–March 3

Port Moresby’s Churchill Park and the National Stadium in soccer-mad Honiara host the qualifiers for the women’s FIFA World Cup 2027, with the regional round including rivals from Samoa, New Zealand, Fiji and New Caledonia.

oceaniafootball.com



MARCH

CAIRNS FEAST OF THE SENSES

March 26–29

An hour south of Cairns, Australia, the art deco town of Innisfail showcases the extraordinary tropical fruit of North Queensland. Walking trails, cooking displays, live music and free tastings of rare and exotic fruit are all part of a tasty weekend.

feastofthesenses.com.au

**PNG NATIONAL GAME FISHING
TITLES**

March 30–April 5

PNG’s top sport fishing competition sees more than 250 anglers fishing for the title, this year held in in Kimbe, West New Britain. In 2025, the heaviest billfish landed was a 134-kilogram blue marlin, with male, mixed, all-female and junior teams all casting off.

gfapng.org

PNG HIRI MOALE

Late March to early April

Celebrating the Hiri trade voyages between the Motu-speaking peoples, the festival is a three-day event of dance, music and food, with Motuan culture at its core: the Hiri Moale Queen is crowned for her *bilas* (traditional dress) and traditional knowledge.

papuanewguinea.travel



- 1 Chinese New Year in Hong Kong.
- 2 F50 sailing action on Sydney Harbour.
- 3 PNG’s colourful Kenu and Kudu Festival.
- 4 The Cairns ironman competition is run along the coast.
- 5 The Innisfail Feast of Senses near Cairns.





6

APRIL

VANUATU NAGHOL
April 3 until late June

The end of the wet season and the beginning of the yam harvest are marked by *naghol*, also known as land diving, on Vanuatu's Pentecost Island. The daring spectacle – the ancestor of bungee jumping – is a test of faith that takes place every Saturday from April until the last week of June.

vanuatu.travel

FIJI FIJI FRINGE FESTIVAL
April 10–18

Nine days of creativity and culture take over sites across Suva and Nadi, with a cast of Fijian and international performers bringing their visual and literary arts, comedy, dance and music to the festival.

thefestivalscompany.com.fj

HONG KONG HONG KONG SEVENS
April 17–19

It's the world's biggest rugby party, with 30 teams, 72 games and more than 100,000 cheering fans for the 50th anniversary of this epic competition, which started in 1976. The arena is the 50,000-seat Kai Tak Sports Park, with a Fan Village inside and post-match party precinct outside.

hksevns.com



7



8



9

BRISBANE THE LAST SHIP**April 9–May 3**

The Last Ship is a musical written, composed and starring renowned musician Sting in the lead role. The storyline, about a community losing its shipyard, is inspired by the artist's childhood on England's north-east coast, performed at the Queensland Performing Arts Centre.

qpac.com.au

MAY

PNG TUMBUNA SING-SING**May 7–17**

The word *tumbuna* means 'ancestors' in Tok Pisin, and this *sing-sing* at Rondon Ridge, on Mount Kuta, lets visitors meet the performers as they prepare their extravagant *bilas* for a day of drumming and singing at this intimate performance.

pngtours.com

BRISBANE NRL MAGIC ROUND**May 14–17**

Eels, bulldogs, dolphins, and tigers clash as Suncorp Stadium again hosts this four-day fiesta, featuring all eight NRL matches in round 11 and the second match of the Ampol Women's State of Origin Series.

nrl.com

HONG KONG INTERNATIONAL DRAGON BOAT RACE**May 22–23**

Now in its 50th year, these races are held on the fifth day of the fifth month of the lunar calendar, as Victoria Harbour fills with duelling dragon boats while, on land, the Tsim Sha Tsui promenade turns into a carnival serving the traditional *zongzi* (rice dumplings).

discoverhongkong.com



PICTURE: DESTINATION NSW



10



11

- 6 Game fishing in PNG.
- 7 Land divers in Vanuatu.
- 8 Hong Kong Sevens rugby.
- 9 Sting stars in the production of *The Last Ship*.
- 10 Sydney lights up with Vivid.
- 11 Dragon boat racing in Hong Kong.
- 12 Festival-goers at Malasimbo in Manila.
- 13 Wogasia in the Solomon Islands.



12

SYDNEY VIVID SYDNEY
May 22–June 13

Sydney is the canvas for this light festival, which encompasses the entire city for 23 days with not only light performances, but also music, ideas and food. International chefs, thinkers, entrepreneurs, adventurers, musicians and kids’ performances are included in the line-up.

vividssydney.com

PHILIPPINES MALASIMBO MUSIC & ARTS FESTIVAL
May 23

Puerta Real Gardens inside Manila’s historic walled city, Intramuros, come alive with the world music festival Malasimbo, now in its 12th year. The family, friendly festival, which lures some of the best Filipino acts, is guided by its four pillars: music, art, culture and environment.

facebook.com/Malasimbofestival

JUNE

SOLOMON ISLANDS WOGASIA
June 13–14

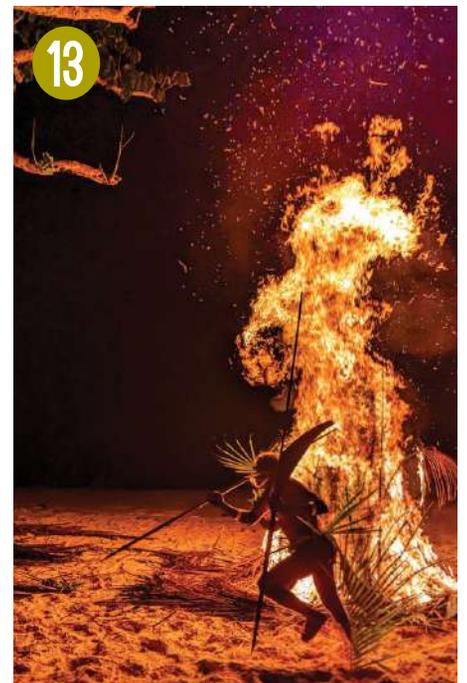
A festival of the new year and the yam harvest festival, *wogasia* means to offer sacrifice, or to worship. The spear-throwing festival takes place at Santa Catalina Island, off Makira, in the country’s east.

visitsolomons.com.sb

CAIRNS CAIRNS AIRPORT IRONMAN
June 11–15

Billed as the race in paradise, this is possibly the world’s most beautiful ironman course. The flat bike course along the coastline runs from Cairns to Port Douglas, the swim is in the ocean off the Great Barrier Reef, and the rolling run ends among the palm trees and white-sand beaches.

ironman.com ➤



13



JULY

FIJI FIJI WORLD MASTERS GOLF CHAMPIONSHIPS

July 12–18

The inaugural event of the Fiji World Masters sees four rounds of championship golf at the Natadola Bay and Denarau golf club; both courses are par-72 and absolute waterfront.

fiji.travel

CAIRNS CAIRNS INDIGENOUS ART FAIR

July 9–12

The Tanks Art Centre is Australia's top First Nations-led art fair, held on Gimuy Walubara Yidinji Country. Opening doors for indigenous artists, it brings visual art, music, fashion and performance together to assert First Nations people's place in Australian cultural identity.

ciaf.com.au



14

PNG SHARK CALLING FESTIVAL

July 16–18

Kono village in New Ireland is the site of this ancient festival, where men undertake ritual purification before they embark on the shark hunt. With one man in each canoe, they call the animals to the sacrifice, and the festival culminates in a communal feast back on land.

newirelandtourism.org

PNG NATIONAL REMEMBRANCE DAY

July 23

This day commemorates those Papua New Guineans who have died in military service and is marked by prayer ceremonies across the country.

papuanewguinea.travel



15

PICTURE: REINHARD MINONG

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16:25	JAPAN	D2	P726
17:15	ITALY	A1	P319
20:25	UK	B2	P417
21:35	N. CALEDONIA	C2	P175

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AUGUST

SOLOMON ISLANDS SHELL MONEY FESTIVAL

August

Two days of festivities on the west coast of Malaita remember when the Solomons used shell money as its currency; provinces still use shell money today, as gifts, in bride price negotiations and for settling disputes.

visitsolomons.com.sb

PNG SEPIK RIVER CROCODILE FESTIVAL

August 5–7

Held in the first week of August in Ambunti in the East Sepik Province, this landmark three-day festival celebrates the cultures of the Sepik River, including the so-called crocodile men of Palembi village, whose initiation includes ritual scarring to honour the crocodile.

papuanewguinea.travel

SINGAPORE HUNGRY GHOST FESTIVAL

August 27

Singapore's Chinatown remembers its dead in a festival that has its roots in Buddhism and Taoism. Expect street theatre, offerings of food and 'ghost money', and lantern-lined streets to guide restless or lost ghosts home.

visitsingapore.com

PNG ENGA SHOW

August 7–9

A vibrant display of traditional culture and rituals, the iconic Enga Show includes ancient crafts and spell casting, as well as a *sing-sing* showcasing song and dance.

engashow.com

- 14 The Indigenous Art Fair in Cairns.
- 15 Shark calling in New Ireland, PNG.
- 16 Shell money in the Solomon Islands.



BRISBANE 2026 BUSINESS ADVANTAGE PNG INVESTMENT CONFERENCE

August 10–11

This annual business conference, curated by PNG's leading business media, will once again bring investors and financiers to Brisbane's Convention and Exhibition Centre to discuss business and investment opportunities in both PNG and our region.

pnginvestmentconference.com ➤



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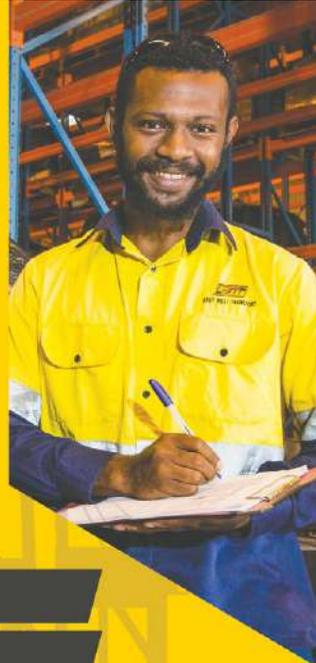
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17

PNG PAIYA SHOW

August 15

Held the day before the famous Mount Hagen Show, the far smaller Paiya Show lets visitors get up close and personal at this *sing-sing* in Paiya village, 40 kilometres from Mount Hagen town. Its drawcards include the Asaro Mudmen and *Chimbu Omo Masalai* (skeleton spirit) dancers.

papuanewguinea.travel

PNG MOUNT HAGEN SHOW

August 16–17

One of PNG’s most famous cultural extravaganzas, the Mount Hagen Show sees *sing-sing* groups from around the country meet in the Western Highlands in an astonishing display of tribal headdresses and costumes, body paint, drumming and singing.

papuanewguinea.travel



18

SEPTEMBER

BRISBANE BRISBANE FESTIVAL
September 4–26

Australia’s largest international arts festival includes the explosive Riverfire fireworks on the opening weekend. Walk through outdoor galleries, visit a late-night supper club, join a First Nations talk or hit the dancefloor and embody the festival spirit.

brisbanefestival.com.au

SINGAPORE SINGAPORE
TENNIS OPEN

September 21–27

The OCBC Arena plays host to the Singapore Open, which is now one of the 18 Women’s Tennis Association’s 500 tournaments around the world. The event brings top-ranked female players to Singapore for a week of world-class tennis.

sportshub.com.sg

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PICTURE: SINGAPORE TENNIS OPEN



19

PNG BOUGAINVILLE CHOCOLATE FESTIVAL

September

Bougainville produces some of the world's finest cocoa, and this festival is all about the delicious chocolates made in the region. Taste your way around the festival, attend seminars for growers, compete in the baking competition and enjoy local music. Date still to be confirmed at time of going to press.

facebook.com/bougainvillechocolatefestival

PICTURE: SINGAPORE TENNIS OPEN



20

17 The Paiya Show near Mount Hagen.

18 Traditional dress at the Mount Hagen Show.

19 The Singapore Tennis Open.

20 The Singapore Tennis Open.

PNG PNG INDEPENDENCE DAY

September 16

PNG's national day is a public holiday that commemorates the country's independence from Australia in 1975. The day is marked with gatherings across the nation, festivals and traditional dances.

papuanewguinea.travel

PNG RABAU FRANGIPANI FESTIVAL

September 12-13

Held the weekend before Independence Day, the two-day event marks new growth after the town was devastated by volcanic eruptions in 1994. Rabaul celebrates with a float parade, and the Tolai people's sacred Kinavai ritual at dawn.

papuanewguinea.travel ➤



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21

PNG GOROKA SHOW
September 19–20

PNG’s oldest and largest *sing-sing* sees over 100 clans and tribes bring their costumes, songs and chants to this East Highlands site. The *sing-sing* was established as a peace mission, to unite tribes through traditional dances, customs and traditions.

papuanewguinea.travel

OCTOBER

HONG KONG HONG KONG WINE & DINE FESTIVAL

October

Get to grips with Hong Kong’s superb food scene at this four-day festival on the city’s waterfront. From snacks on the street to masterclasses with Michelin maestros, whatever the experience it will always be delicious. Date still to be confirmed at time of going to press.

discoverhongkong.com



22

SINGAPORE SINGAPORE GRAND PRIX

October 9–11

Singapore’s centre turns into a racetrack as the circuit for the Formula 1 wends through the city, between historic hotels and the Singapore Flyer, Marina Bay and its cathedrals. From the grandstands to the F1 village, the GP features an epic line-up of major musical talent and fireworks off-track.

singaporegp.sg

VANUATU FEST’NAPUAN

October

Vanuatu’s biggest music festival is an annual event in Port Vila. Free to all, it offers a line-up of Vanuatuan and international artists, with its aim to nurture the local music industry. Date still to be confirmed at time of going to press.

festnapuan.vu

VANUATU PORT VILA RODEO

October 3–4

Two days of bucking bulls, wild horses and skilled riders, the Port Vila Rodeo is now drawing international competitors to join local riders in competing in the ring.

facebook.com/PortVilaRodeo

BRISBANE RUGBY LEAGUE WORLD CUP 2026

October 15–November 15

The fight is on as 26 teams from 14 countries compete in 51 matches for three World Cups – men’s, women’s and wheelchair. Matches are played throughout the Pacific and in Australia, including in PNG (see below).

rlwc2026.com



23

PICTURE: SINGAPORE GP



24

PICTURE: VANUATU TOURISM OFFICE





PNG RUGBY LEAGUE WORLD CUP 2026

October 17 & 24

The PNG Kumuls come head-to-head with Lebanon at the Santos National Football Stadium in Port Moresby, and then the Kumuls take on Samoa on October 24. In the women's round, the PNG Orchids face France on October 17, and then Fiji plays the Orchids on October 24.

rlwc2026.com

PNG MOROBE SHOW

October 24–25

One of the highlights of PNG's cultural calendar, the Morobe Show is held by the light of the October full moon at the Lae Showgrounds. Since 1959, the volunteer-run agricultural show's highlights have included traditional dance, cowboy and livestock displays.

morobeshow.org.pg

NOVEMBER

FIJI DIWALI

November 8

Fiji lights up with this Hindu festival of light, celebrating the victory of light over dark, good over evil. The national holiday is one of Fiji's most colourful.

fiji.travel

CAIRNS CAIRNS FASHION WEEK

November

From cocktail gowns to men's streetwear, this fashion week draws inspiration from established and emerging talent throughout Australia and the Pacific, celebrating creativity, inclusivity and diversity. Date still to be confirmed at time of going to press.

cairnsfashionweek.com

SYDNEY RLWC WHEELCHAIR ROUND

November 13

An hour south of Sydney, at Wollongong's WIN Entertainment Centre, it's the final of the wheelchair league of the Rugby League World Cup. Among the eight-country line-up are Australia, France, the US and Wales.

rlwc2026.com

BRISBANE RUGBY LEAGUE WORLD CUP FINAL

November 15

The stage is set at Suncorp Stadium for the showdown between the two finalists of the Rugby League World Cup 2026. After a thrilling series of matches played across PNG, Australia and New Zealand it all comes down to this match.

rlwc2026.com

PNG KENU & KUNDU FESTIVAL

November 2–4

Alotau, in Milne Bay Province, comes alive with the *kundu* (drums) in this signature PNG festival, which is heralded by a flotilla of *kenu* (canoes), ready to race. See war canoes and trading canoes in fierce competition, with song, dance, *bilas* (traditional dress) and food on display.

papuanewguinea.travel

DECEMBER

SYDNEY SYDNEY TO HOBART

December 26–31

Australia's most widely watched yacht race starts on Boxing Day with the crack of a cannon on Sydney Harbour and ends 600 nautical miles south, in Hobart. Watched on land or on spectator craft, the race is now in its 81st year; will the 2017 record of one day, nine hours and 15 minutes still stand?

rolexsydneyhobart.com ■



21 The Goroka Show in the Highlands.

22 PNG will be in action in the Rugby League World Cup.

23 Formula 1 action in Singapore.

24 The Port Vila rodeo.

25 PNG's Hiri Moale includes crowning of the Hiri Moale Queen.

26 The Sydney to Hobart yacht race.



PICTURES: OFC MEDIA VIA PHOTOTEK



NEW SOCCER LEAGUE KICKS OFF IN PACIFIC

PNG is among the countries fielding a team in the OFC Professional League. *Richard Andrews reports.*



Hekari United players (top); OFC General Secretary Franck Castillo (above left); the logos of the eight teams (above right).

Oceania's first-ever professional football league has kicked off with eight soccer clubs, including one from Papua New Guinea, competing across the Pacific.

Organised by the Oceania Football Confederation, the OFC Professional League will also serve as the qualifier for the FIFA Club World Cup 2029, providing a direct pathway for the region's clubs onto the global stage.

"This is a historic moment for Oceania football," says OFC General Secretary Franck Castillo. "For the first time, our region will have a professional league that provides a





Fiji, one of the teams in the new league, in action recently against New Caledonia.

pathway for players, coaches and clubs to compete at the highest level within the Pacific.”

Teams from seven nations are currently represented in the League: Hekari United FC (PNG), Bula Boys FC (Fiji), Solomon Kings, Tahiti United FC and Vanuatu FC. They're joined by Auckland FC and Christchurch United FC from New Zealand, with South Melbourne FC representing Australia as the sole team from outside the OFC region.

Castillo predicts the number of teams will increase as other Pacific clubs compete to join the league.

“OFC has a development program to ensure that the clubs and the league itself are sustainable,” he says. “We also began promoting women’s football four years ago and a women’s professional league is in the pipeline.”

Originally from France, Castillo is now based in Auckland and has spent many years in the Pacific. Fully committed to the region, he says organising a professional Pacific league has been a labour of love.

“We started eight years ago. It’s taken hundreds of meetings discussing the logistics. We knew we would have only one shot.”

The league was initially expected to begin play in 2021. However, the COVID-19 pandemic delayed progress. A 2025 launch was then targeted, which was later postponed to January 2026, to allow clubs time to transition to fully professional status.

“

We have seen great potential of PNG players.

I expect to see PNG achieving great results at international level.

”



To be a top football player you need to “go professional”, argues Castillo. “You can’t get best results if you play as an amateur. You’re working, you cannot attend the training. It’s a different game.

“But when you’re employed as a professional, you have a contract and are obliged to comply with the rules. You have a proper diet and regular training. Some amateurs have a huge capacity when you put them in a professional environment.”

As an example of the Pacific’s ability to produce great players, Castillo cites the legendary Christian Karembeu from New Caledonia, who lifted the World Cup with France in 1998 and won many other awards.

“We have also seen the great potential of PNG players,” says Castillo. “And I expect to see PNG achieving great results at the international level.

“It’s our wish that players from the Pacific can move from club to club. Especially in places that don’t have a professional club,” he says. “It’s a way to strengthen the sporting links between Pacific countries and develop football players all around the region.”

“Football transcends borders,” agrees Bill Papastergiadis, co-president of South Melbourne FC, who sees the OFC Professional League as the leading competition for footballers in Oceania.

“South being one of the largest clubs in Australia will no doubt help generate significant interest in this new league and transform football in the region,” he says.

“Our club’s participation in the competition will galvanise interest in sport and also help highlight the important cultural relationships that exist between us. Football will bring out the best in us in every sense.”

Castillo also believes the OFC Professional League will have an important social impact on Pacific communities, for generations to come.

“In the past, children could only dream to become professional football players. What we’re doing now is helping them realise their dreams. It’s an inspiration for me to make someone’s dreams come true.” ■

The first OFC Professional League season is scheduled for January to May, with each club playing a minimum of 17 matches. See oceaniafootball.com.



Kumuls halfback Lachlan Lam has been one of the top performers in the English Super League in recent years and could be on the PNG Chiefs' target list.

FULL STEAM AHEAD

HOW THE NEW PNG RUGBY LEAGUE TEAM IS SHAPING UP

Claire Nathan reports on the countdown to the most significant moment in PNG's sporting history.

A Papua New Guinea franchise in the world's premier rugby league competition, the Australia-based National Rugby League (NRL), was confirmed in an announcement by the prime ministers of both countries in December 2024. With around two years to go until kick-off, we take a look at the state of play.

FROM BID TO CHIEFS

Many Papua New Guineans have long aspired for a team of their own to support in the NRL, and the stars began to align in 2022 when the PNG government formally launched a bid to achieve this. In 2023 the





PICTURES: NORMAN KETON (STADIUM); DAVE BULLER (RHYSE MARTIN)

Port Moresby’s Santos National Football Stadium (above); Kumuls captain and record-breaking goalkicker Rhyse Martin, who is currently playing in England, would be a valuable signing for the Chiefs (below).

Australian government committed to working together to explore its feasibility. With the NRL motivated to access a new rugby league supporter base of more than 10 million people and an established pool of talented players, by the time the news was confirmed in late 2024, it seemed almost a formality.

In October 2025, following a public call-out for suggestions, the PNG NRL team’s name was confirmed as the Chiefs by Prime Minister James Marape, beating off other contenders including the Wantoks, Kundus and Pythons.

Upon announcing the name, the PM explained: “We are a nation of a thousand tribes. Before there was a modern state called PNG in 1975, our people lived for thousands of years under tribal structures led by chiefs – both men and women – who governed, protected, and held our communities together.

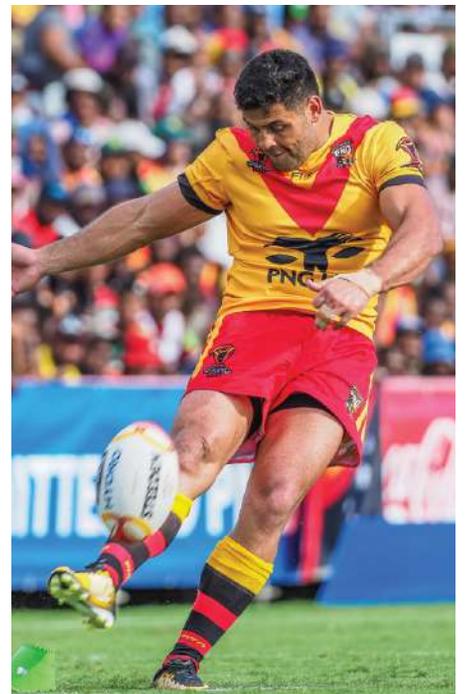
“Our forefathers and mothers were chiefs

who kept order, peace, and balance among our tribes. As we play on the world stage, the PNG Chiefs will carry that same spirit – the strength of unity in diversity. Every game they play will showcase the strength, resilience, and talent of our people. This is more than sport – it is nationhood expressed through rugby league.”

Millions of PNG rugby league fans who currently support other NRL teams will have two years to adjust to the Chiefs while they wait for the team logo, colours and other elements to be revealed.

IT TAKES A VILLAGE

Chiefs players, staff and their families will live together in a ‘team village’ setting. The NRL has confirmed that several locations are being considered, including the Airways Hotel and Residences complex overlooking Jacksons International Airport. Airways has pledged to build 80 new apartments for ►



PICTURES: DAVE BULLER (FANS); NRL PHOTOS (ALEX JOHNSTON)



PNG fans will have plenty to cheer about when the Chiefs start playing in the NRL (above and below) ; Kumuls winger Alex Johnston (right).



the Chiefs, and to allow players and their families to access Loloata Island Resort.

In June 2025, the PNG NRL team unveiled a board comprising PNG and Australian commercial and sporting expertise including Chair Ray Dib (who previously chaired another NRL club, the Canterbury-Bankstown Bulldogs) and one of PNG’s most famous and respected retired rugby league players, Marcus Bai. The board is working with the Australian Rugby League Commission (ARLC) to prepare the franchise, and necessary infrastructure, to begin pre-season in November 2027.

The team will play its home matches at the Santos National Football Stadium in Port Moresby, with a new high-performance training centre to be built nearby. The stadium, which has a capacity of around 15,000 and boasts impressive corporate

facilities, is around a decade old and located on the site of the spiritual home of rugby league in PNG’s capital, the former Lloyd Robson Oval.

The PNG NRL team and its infrastructure requirements will be funded by the Australian government, the PNG government and corporate sponsors. The project has been described as a “world first sports diplomacy partnership”.

Australia’s Minister for Pacific Island Affairs, Pat Conroy, said: “The Australian Government is proud to stand shoulder to shoulder with PNG in supporting this once-in-a-generation opportunity. The PNG NRL team will be a catalyst for economic growth, creating jobs and boosting tourism.”

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BUILDING THE TEAM

The Chiefs men's team will take to the field in 2028, and a women's team is expected to follow soon afterwards.

The first major signing for the Chiefs (expected in 2026) will be its head coach – a figurehead required to attract star players. ARLC Chair Peter V'landys has spoken of his desire to lure one of Australian rugby league's most successful coaches, Wayne Bennett, to the club. Although Bennett would be 78 by the time the Chiefs run out, his involvement would continue the legacy of his brother Bob, a former PNG-based police officer and rugby league coach who guided the PNG Kumuls (national men's team) in one of their most successful eras, including the 2000 World Cup.

There is no requirement for the Chiefs to field primarily PNG players, and the new club will be seeking to attract a mix of stars to be

competitive. The 2028 squad is expected to comprise young homegrown talent, Papua New Guineans who currently play for other clubs in Australia and England, and other top-quality NRL players. The promise of tax-free salaries is expected to be a drawcard for players and staff from other top-flight clubs.

While some current and former players in Australia have expressed doubt about relocating to PNG, others are already putting their hands up. South Sydney Rabbitohs and PNG Kumuls winger Alex Johnston, whose grandmother is from PNG, told *The National* newspaper "it would be pretty cool to be player number 1" for the PNG NRL franchise.

STARS OF THE FUTURE

The Chiefs will also be able to draw on a new junior pathways system that was established in 2024, the PNG NRL Academy. Now in its third season and led by experienced Australian coach Joe Grima, the academy is identifying and training talented young male and female players in eight regions of the country. The academy requires players to attend school in order to be considered for selection, enforcing a link between rugby league and education.

"A key reason why we are doing this (franchise), and it is a big motivating factor, is driving educational outcomes for young people in PNG to complete their education and get all of the positive attributes of a team sport like rugby league," NRL Chief Executive Officer Andrew Abdo said following a recent visit to PNG.

Players who have graduated from the academy have already represented PNG in junior and senior international matches, and earned trial opportunities with the PNG Hunters, who play in the Queensland competition. With a further two years of development to go, the academy may produce several of the Chiefs' first stars.

BEAR WITH US

While expectation and scrutiny around PNG's entry to the NRL has attracted much attention, particularly on either side of the Torres Strait, the Chiefs' arrival will be preceded by that of another franchise in 2027: the Perth Bears. Formed by a new entity in the West Australian capital joining forces with the long-demoted but much-loved North Sydney Bears foundation club, Perth will become the 18th team in the NRL before PNG becomes the 19th.

And, in a surprise move that appears to contradict those casting doubt on PNG's own talent pathways, one of Perth's first signings (on a train-and-trial contract) in late 2025 was Papua New Guinean hooker Judah Rimbu.

V'landys has made clear that the NRL intends to round out the competition to 20 clubs in the near future, with a possible second franchise from New Zealand mooted as the most likely to follow the PNG Chiefs into the competition, as Australia's NRL takes on an increasingly international feel. ■



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THE TIME THE

MIGHTY WINDIES

CAME TO TOWN

ARTWORK: ARESNA VILLANUEVA, THE AGE



In 1975, Clive Lloyd's West Indies cricket team were about to become kings of world cricket. An October stopover in PNG showed they were leaders, too, writes *Peter Hanlon*.

“
Clive Lloyd hit
a six that went
into the sea.
We never
recovered that
ball.
”

A funny thing happened 50 years ago, before cricket's calendar was drafted by the dollar. Clive Lloyd's West Indies team stopped off in Papua New Guinea on the way to Australia and played two games against the PNG national team, on canvas pitches stretched over concrete.

"I can't tell you how wonderful it was," Lloyd, now 81, says from his London home. "Although it's all those years ago, I still remember it like yesterday. Wonderful country, wonderful people. They made us feel thoroughly at home."

The timing was exquisite. Four months earlier, Lloyd's team had defeated Australia at Lord's to win cricket's inaugural World Cup.

The upcoming 1975–76 summer – a world Test championship before it had a name – didn't go well for the West Indies. "But it was a learning curve," Lloyd reflects.

Indeed. Other than a 1–0 glitch in India when weakened by Kerry Packer's breakaway World Series, the rampant West Indies didn't lose another Test series until 1995.

For cricket fans in PNG, the October stopover crowned a party that began on September 16, when independence was achieved after decades of being governed as a territory of Australia.

The significance was not lost on Lloyd, whose native Guyana experienced a similar cutting of the apron strings – from Great Britain in 1966, the year he played the first of his 110 Tests.

"You could see the Australians and the locals were very together – they were helping them in trying to move forward as a nation. We were the first people to celebrate with them. We found it a very special occasion."

Games were played on consecutive days, in Lae and Port Moresby. Snippets of footage show the squad arriving at the airport, Lloyd interviewed on the tarmac by famed commentator Richie Benaud (wearing a big-collared '70s shirt unbuttoned to the sternum).

There is some action from the Lae game (see it on YouTube) and delightful footage of kids in the crowd, agog as the West Indians do some catching practice next to buai

(betelnut) trees with Mount Herzog in the distance.

Gordon Greenidge wears the same pale blue terry-towelling hat he'd donned in the World Cup final. At a drinks break, he takes a glass from a tray, swigs something too sweet, and promptly spits it on the ground.

Viv Richards, 23, and about to become the most destructive batsman in the game, hams it up for the camera as he accepts a gong for highest score.

Broad smiles and hoots of laughter are constants.

At a formal reception, PNG Governor-General John Guise presents the tourists' team manager Esmond Kentish with a wooden bird of paradise carving as a gift.

Kentish tells the gathering the West Indies have visited "as a gesture to show ourselves as potential leaders in world cricket".

Lloyd's most vivid memory is enjoying a *mumu*, a traditional meal of meat and vegetables wrapped in banana leaves and cooked in coals in the earth. "It's something people used to do in the West Indies years ago. And the meat was so soft, it was wonderful."

He remembers "some very good cricketers" playing for PNG, too.

Among them in the Port Moresby game was Ilinome Tarua, who had much to celebrate. Growing up on Kwato Island, at PNG's south-eastern tip, Tarua absorbed his fast-bowling father's love of cricket.

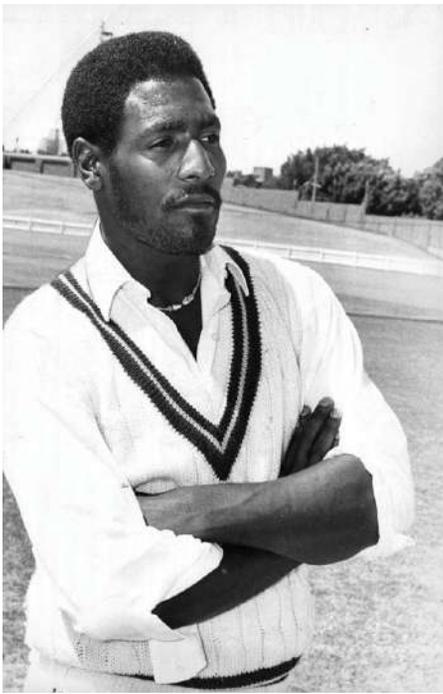
"We had a radio. When overseas cricket was on, we put the radio on wherever we go. My father was a great supporter of the West Indies."

In 1972, he was one of the first two law graduates from the University of Papua New Guinea (UPNG), where he also captained the cricket team. The next year he had an oversight role in PNG's self-governance transition and, by the time the Windies came calling, he was Prime Minister Michael Somare's legal adviser.

Now 83 and living in Sydney, he's excited to revisit everything about that time, not least the cricket. "I still have a feeling about the wonderful experience I had playing against them, even though it was overwhelming." Five decades on, the ➤



PICTURE: THE AGE ARCHIVE



sense of opportunity lost in his innings of nine runs remains. “Viv Richards was bowling and I misread him, I was really annoyed with myself,” Tarua says. “I was looking for the spin, and it was a straight ball!”

High Commission postings took him to London and New Zealand; Tarua was also PNG’s ambassador to the United Nations, Germany, Italy, Israel and Greece. He and wife Susan, who met at university, moved to Sydney in 1991 after his last diplomatic service role, as consul general.

He played cricket throughout, captaining teams and making runs, including an unbeaten hundred.

West Indies star batsman Viv Richards top scored in the match against PNG in Lae in 1975 and hammed it up for the cameras when he accepted his gong for most runs. The video footage can be seen on YouTube.

And after playing against the mighty West Indies, he bowled part-time spin – just like Viv. “I tried to copy him!”

Taunao Vai observed a more high-octane impact on young locals who saw the West Indies win by 70 runs in the 25-over Lae game, and 86 runs in a 40-over contest the next day at Port Moresby’s Sir Hubert Murray Stadium.

“The young generation, the teenagers, they started to copy the fast bowlers,” Vai says. “They thought, yeah, fast bowling was it! Everyone started taking the long run-ups.”

An opening batter who was studying economics at UPNG, Vai credits the dean of the law faculty – a well-connected West Indian named Professor James – with making the quirky micro-tour happen. Lloyd’s recall runs no deeper than simple good manners – sensing an unforgettable independence celebration opportunity, Cricket PNG

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proffered an invitation and the Windies said sure, why not?

Mark Davis, originally from Melbourne, was working as a journalist with the *Post Courier*. He had met local woman Olive when he stopped in PNG at the start of a planned 'grand tour' of the world and stayed put. He played cricket with Olive's brothers, and remembers the Port Moresby competition being strong, the Lae one competitive, and smaller comps in Rabaul, Mount Hagen and Goroka.

"When I first went there in 1974 there were a lot of expats playing," Davis says. "The main Moresby competition was a pretty high standard – there were some damn good players who'd played district cricket in Australia. In the next few years, they became fundamentally PNG sides with locals playing.

"As independence moved along, a fair whack of the expatriate community left, and the PNG community became more and more important in both cricket and footy." ➤



PICTURE: ALAMY

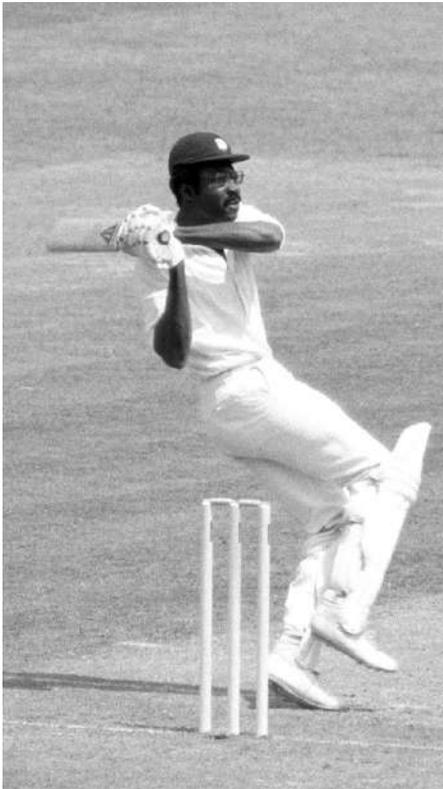
After touring PNG, the West Indies dominated world cricket for decades. Clive Lloyd (in middle) holds aloft the Prudential Cup won by the team against England at Lord's in 1979.

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PICTURE: ALAMY



Clive Lloyd in action at Lord's in 1975.

PNG became an associate member of the International Cricket Council (ICC) in 1973, and has competed in the ICC Trophy since 1979.

Vai played a dozen times for his country, including three tours to England. He remains a Cricket PNG board member.

The West Indies coming to town remains an untouchable memory.

"I faced the first ball of the match, bowled by Andy Roberts," Vai says. "I can remember that very, very well. Quite hesitant, but I thought it was a very exciting occasion, so I took the punt. And it was a short one too!" He made one before lunging forward to Bernard Julien and popping a catch to Greenidge in his blue hat.

His opening partner, Nigel Agonia, played in both games, carrying his bat for an unbeaten 36 in Lae and backing up with 14. An average of 50 against the West Indies puts him in rare company. His all-round talents were such that commentator Jim Maxwell, when asked

about the scariest bowler he'd seen, recalled that Agonia "frightened the hell out of everyone" during his school days in Sydney.

Outside six Tests and a single one-day international, the West Indies played 10 tour matches in their 1975–76 summer – and two in PNG.

"Their visit did open the eyes of Papua New Guineans that they can think about a future playing international matches," Tarua says. "That was a great encouragement to a lot of young people all over the country."

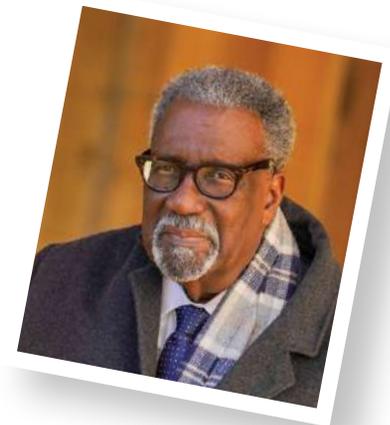
Vai adds: "It came at a milestone of our country's development, so we were very, very happy they were here. Happy also because at that time they were a top cricketing nation, that really added to the celebrations we had started when our independence came.

"That was quite a year. We were looking forward to being on our own politically at least. It was a timely celebration, especially for cricket as a sport."

Told that Lloyd recalls it fondly too, a stunning snippet comes back to him.

"Clive Lloyd hit a six that went into the sea. The (Hubert Murray) stadium is close to the seashore, he hit one right into the sea, a huge six! We never recovered that ball."

Lloyd top-scored with 88 in that Port Moresby game, and is disappointed the moment is lost among a lifetime of cricket memories. "How many did I make? 88? Oh dear, I must go back again!" ■



Clive Lloyd, now 81, lives in London.

PICTURE: ALAMY

SCOREBOARD

PNG Combined XI v West Indies / Lae, October 22, 1975 (25 overs) / Balls per over: 8

PNG INNINGS:

Day b Roberts 4
Agonia not out 36
Unsworth c Richards b Gibbs 23
Salmon lbw b Richards 28
Malum not out 8
Extras 8

TOTAL 3-107

DID NOT BAT: Amos, Chalk, Connell, Love, Tuboora, Wagner

FALL OF WICKET: 1-4, 2-43, 3-83

BOWLING: Roberts 1-4, Julien 0-13, Boyce 0-7, Gibb 1-20, Fredericks 0-32, Richards 1-13, Greenidge 0-10

WEST INDIES INNINGS:

Fredericks c Love b Malum 31
Greenidge c Chalk b Amos 0
Rowe b Malum 15
Kallicharran c Salmon b Tuboora 38
Lloyd c Wagner b Love 8
Richards c Amos b Unsworth 45
Julien c Love b Connell 21
Roberts c sub (Taugard) b Malum 2
Murray not out 3
Boyce not out 8 Extras 6

TOTAL 8-177

DID NOT BAT: Gibbs

FALL OF WICKET: 1-5, 2-51, 3-51, 4-70, 5-111, 6-140, 7-160, 8-167

BOWLING: Amos 1-14, Connell 1-42, Malum 3-36, Love 1-31, Tuboora 1-18, Wagner 0-20, Unsworth 1-10

RESULT:

West Indies won and batted on.





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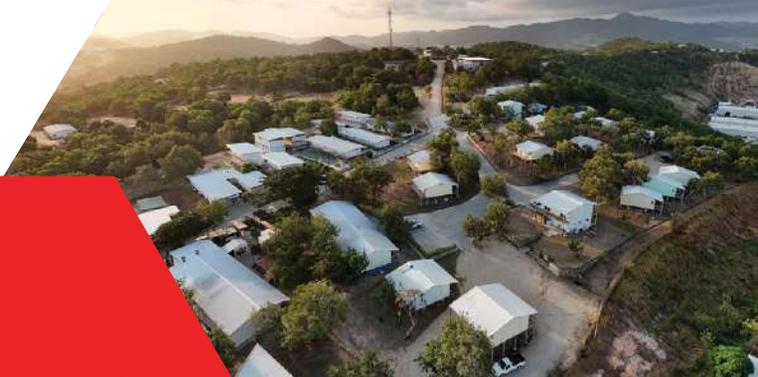
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IN REMEMBRANCE OF A WAR HERO

Roderick Eime profiles RAAF pilot John Francis Jackson, after whom Port Moresby's international airport is named.

Flying around the South Pacific is like a history lesson. At almost every landing, you're introduced to some historical figure, often a World War 2 airman who gave his life in heroic circumstances. Charles Gurney, Lofton Henderson, Charles Kingsford Smith and Frank Bauer are four names which readily come to mind. But who was the Jackson after whom Port Moresby's Jackson International Airport is named?

John Francis Jackson was born in Brisbane on February 23, 1908, to a well-to-do agricultural family. The eldest of four boys, his younger brother, Les, would also become a combat pilot and fly alongside him. A third brother, Edward, was also a fighter pilot.

A private pilot in the 1930s flying around outback Queensland, Jackson was 31 when

war was declared in 1939. The RAAF quickly snapped him up, as it was desperately short of experienced pilots, and he was promptly sent off to the Middle East with 3 Squadron to fly against the Germans, Italians and Vichy French, arriving in late 1940.

Initially equipped with obsolete Gloster Gladiator biplanes, their fortunes improved significantly when they upgraded to new Hawker Hurricanes.

Despite his pre-war experience and proficiency as a pilot, Jackson admitted that his combat skills were "practically nil". However, Jackson was a quick learner and demonstrated this by shooting down three German Stuka dive bombers on a single sortie in February 1941.

By the time of his departure from the



A colourised version of Squadron Leader John Francis Jackson (above left); Jackson sitting next to his brother Squadron Leader Edward Hamilton Bell Jackson (above).

Middle East in November 1941, Jackson was an 'ace', having shot down the required five aircraft to attain the status. He had been promoted to flight lieutenant the previous July and was awarded a Distinguished Flying Cross (DFC) for his "marked keenness and determination". ➤



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Squadron Leader John Francis Jackson
(second from left) with fellow pilots in PNG in August 1942.

“

Jackson was jumped by a trio of Zeros and shot down, forcing him to ditch in the sea. Avoiding the strafing Zeros, he swam to shore and returned to base after a two-week jungle trek.

”

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The RAAF authorities deemed him too old and showing signs of combat stress to return to active service and posted him to Point Cook in Victoria as a flight instructor, an assignment he loathed.

In one of his many letters to his wife, Betty, Jackson wrote: "I just loathe this joint. This training is a tough job, and I take my hat off to the boys who have been doing it since war broke out ... every one of these instructors is longing to be sent overseas, but I doubt if they have any chance of ever getting there – they are so valuable here."

Following the attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, the Japanese forces ran riot through Southeast Asia and the Pacific. Having conquered French Indochina, the Philippines, Singapore and the Dutch East Indies by February 1942, landings were made in New Guinea in March, following the massive earlier bombing raid on Darwin.

This earth-shattering wake-up call finally ➤



Squadron Leader John Francis Jackson confers with others in PNG.

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jolted Australian military leaders into action, and three squadrons were hurriedly formed to defend Australia against the seemingly unstoppable Japanese war machine. Young, barely trained pilots were mustered into action and – fortuitously – equipped with 25 US-supplied P-40 Kittyhawk fighters.

Based at what was known then as Seven Mile Strip, on a scrubby plain along the Rouna Road north of Port Moresby, 75 Squadron set up base and prepared to face the inevitable onslaught of enemy aircraft determined to batter Port Moresby and Darwin into submission.

Thus began the dire 44 days that these young men were the sole defenders of the front line until reinforced by the US Army Air Force under the command of Squadron Leader 'Old John' Jackson.

Jackson would often conduct solo reconnaissance missions over enemy targets and on one occasion on April 10 over Lae, he was jumped by a trio of Zeros and shot down, forcing him to ditch in the sea. Avoiding the strafing Zeros, he swam to shore and eventually returned to base after a two-week jungle trek.

Such was the ferocity of this period that by the time US aircraft and personnel arrived at the end of April, 75 Squadron was down to just three aircraft. Casualties were high among the young fighters, but under Jackson's command, they had achieved the almost impossible feat of stemming the enemy tide by destroying or damaging more than 80 Japanese aircraft.

Sadly, on April 28, while intercepting an incoming force of bombers and escorting fighters, he was shot down and killed, his Kittyhawk crashing heavily into the side of nearby Mount Lawes. His younger brother Les, himself an ace, took over as commanding officer the next day. That December, Seven Mile became Jackson's Strip in his honour.

Described as 'rugged, simple' and 'true as steel', Jackson proved to be precisely the inspirational leader required at that time of utmost urgency. He is buried in Port Moresby's Bomana War Cemetery. ■

Further reading: 44 Days – 75 Squadron and the Fight for Australia by Michael Veitch (Hachette).



Bomb damage at the Seven Mile Strip after a Japanese bombing raid.



Kittyhawks flying over PNG during the war.





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SIDAAM, PORT MORESBY REVIEW

Sidaam Restaurant and Bar opened for business in August last year and positive word of mouth has spread quickly since.

Like its sister, the Kuro Haus Japanese restaurant in Town, Sidaam also has a single focus to its menu. In Sidaam's case, that means authentic Thai food with plenty of variations: soups, curries, noodle and rice dishes, stir-fries and more besides.

I started with a Highland Moon Rise, one of Sidaam's signature alcoholic and non-alcoholic cocktails, which was a feast for both the eyes and the tastebuds.

A helpful staff member guided me and my guest through the selection of appetisers, from which we chose some classic Thai fish cakes and some crispy fried chicken wings in fish sauce. The latter was particularly good.

For our main course, there were even more extensive options, from some enticing Thai salads to classics like massaman mutton curry and fried whole fish.

We chose a green curry with rice and Thai stir-fried noodles. In both cases, we had our choice of chicken, beef, pork, vegetables, prawn or seafood but (perhaps unadventurously) both opted for chicken, which did not disappoint.

My guest offered the opinion it was the best Thai food they had enjoyed outside of Thailand.

The serves of both dishes were generous, too, and could easily be shared if you're not ravenously hungry.

We declined dessert on this occasion, but I suspect we will be back again before too long to try it. With so many Thai classics on



The Highland Moon Rise cocktail (top left); Sidaam's seating area (above left); crispy fried chicken wings (left); mussels Thai style (above).

WHERE:

Kwalimu Haus, Somare Circuit, Waigani

PHONE:

+675 7310 5825

ONLINE:

(Facebook)/@sidaam (Instagram)

OPEN:

Open Tuesday to Sunday, 11am to 2pm (lunch) and 5pm to 10pm (dinner). Closed Mondays.

STYLE:

Restaurant and bar.

PRICES:

Starters PGK39–42; salads PGK49–99; red and green curries PGK49–79; stir-fries PGK38–42; mains PGK49–189; desserts PGK28–30.

OUR FAVOURITE DISH:

Crispy fried chicken wings in fish sauce.

IN A PHRASE:

Authentic Thai.

the menu, Sidaam is one restaurant that requires more than one visit to truly appreciate.

You'll find it on the ground floor of the recently completed Kwalimu Haus, between Vision City and Parliament Haus. It's well worth a detour. ■



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A taste of Thai

If you like what you try at Port Moresby's Sidaam restaurant (see review page 102) here's a Thai recipe to try at home. The recipe is extracted from *Thai: Anywhere and Everywhere*, by Nat Thaipun, who won the 2025 series of the Australian TV cooking show *Master Chef*.

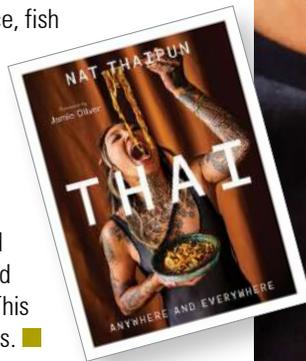
Laarb is hands-down my favourite Thai dish and probably the one I eat most often.

The simplest way to describe laarb would be as a traditional Thai meat salad, but it doesn't sound quite right when you say that.

Originally from Laos, in Thailand laarb is associated with the north-east (Isaan). It's a dish known for bold, spicy and tangy flavours and is made with various minced meats or even fish, tofu or mushroom, and it doesn't even necessarily have to be minced.

Combined with fresh herbs, lime or lemon juice, fish sauce and the crunch of *khao khua* (ground toasted rice), laarb is often served with sticky rice and cooling fresh greens like cucumber and wedges of cabbage or lettuce.

Toss the basic dressing with cooked minced or thinly sliced meat, fish, tofu, mushrooms or whatever you like, add fresh herbs like mint and coriander and finish with thinly sliced onions and a sprinkling of ground toasted rice for texture. This dish is also so good to eat with lettuce leaf cups. ■



Thai: Anywhere and Everywhere, published by Hardie Grant Books (hardiegrant.com), by Nat Thaipun.



Author and cooking show winner Nat Thaipun bites into a laarb in lettuce leaf (main); the cover of her new book released by Hardie Grant (inset); laarb can be dished up with various minced meats (below).

PICTURES: DAVID LOFTUS

BASE LARB

SERVES 2-4 • PREP: 20 MINUTES

3 tablespoons stock (optional)
 300g minced (ground) chicken (or pork, fish, tofu or mushroom)
 2 Asian shallots, thinly sliced
 2 tablespoons chopped coriander leaves
 2 tablespoons chopped mint
 2 spring onions (scallions), finely sliced
 1 tablespoon *khao khua* (ground toasted rice)
 sticky rice to serve
 raw vegetables (cabbage, snake or green beans, cucumber) to serve
 Thai basil to serve

DRESSING

3 tablespoons fish sauce (or soy sauce)
 3 tablespoons lime juice (or lemon)
 2 teaspoons *prik pon* (toasted chilli flakes)
 1 tablespoon sugar

COOK THE MEAT

Heat a frying pan over a medium heat. Add about 3 tablespoons of water or stock and cook the minced meat until browned, breaking it up as it cooks. Remove from the heat and set aside to cool slightly.

PREPARE THE DRESSING

In a bowl, mix the fish sauce, lime juice, toasted chilli flakes and sugar. Adjust to taste, balancing the saltiness, tanginess and spiciness.

COMBINE

Add the cooked meat to the dressing along with the shallots, coriander, mint and spring onions. Mix well. Sprinkle the ground toasted rice over the mixture and toss to combine evenly.

SERVE

Serve warm or at room temperature with sticky rice, raw vegetables such as cabbage, snake or green beans, cucumber and Thai basil.

VARIATIONS

Laarb hed (mushroom laarb): Substitute 200g roughly chopped mushrooms for the protein.



Laarb pla (fish laarb): Steam or gently poach 200g of white fish fillets, finely chop and use in place of the minced meat.

Laarb tofu (tofu laarb): Use 200g firm tofu, crumbled, in place of the meat. Cook the crumbled tofu with a bit of stock or water until slightly browned.



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WINE GURU

Q: What is fortified wine?

A: The name alone makes fortified wine sound scary and unapproachable, but this type of wine has a centuries-old tradition. In short, fortified wine is just wine that has had spirit added to it, most often brandy but any neutral spirit will do.

The history of these wines goes back to the 16th century when winemakers would add a dash of brandy so that the wine did not spoil on long voyages by sea or land. Though it is thought to have been invented in Greece, the most famous fortified wines come from Portugal (port) and Spain (sherry). There is also marsala from Italy and madeira from Portugal.

Traditionally, fortified wines are enjoyed as a digestif, or after-dinner drink, so they tend to pair very well with sweet desserts. There is a natural sweetness to port so it can go well with a sugary end to a meal, but it also matches very well with cheese as the sweetness of the port complements the saltiness of a brie, cheddar or blue cheese.



Sherry can be a bit more versatile as it tends to have more variety, ranging from sweet to dry and even briny or acidic. So, a very rich and syrupy Pedro Ximenez from Spain goes great with dessert but a fino sherry, a paler, drier drop made from Palomino grapes, can often start a meal and pairs very well with seafood and cured meats.

An important point to note is that fortified wines are usually higher in alcohol content than their unfortified siblings because of the addition of the spirits, sometimes getting as high as 23 per cent ABV (alcohol by volume), whereas wines are around 10–15 per cent.

Some of the higher-alcohol fortified wines can be left at room temperature after they have been opened but lighter, drier types like fino should be refrigerated once started and consumed within a few days.

Do you have a wine question? Email us at paradise@businessadvantageinternational.com.

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WELLNESS

A new study into jet lag has discovered why we still feel groggy even when we manage a few good night sleep after a long-haul flight to a different time zone.

Basically, researchers found that while those few good nights of kip following a long flight make us *think* we should be well rested, we still may be having trouble getting ‘back to normal’ simply because our internal body clocks are still adjusting.

The study was carried out by the Centre for Sleep and Cognition at Singapore’s NUS Yong Lin School of Medicine in conjunction with data collected from Oura ring wearers (a smart ring used to track sleep and physical activity). The team analysed 1.5 million nights of sleep from over 57,000 Oura members and then tracked how their sleep patterns shifted before and after nearly 65,000 long-distance trips.

Main findings were that while sleep duration recovered fast, sleep timing and sleep architecture (REM, deep, light sleep and

wake after sleep onset) took significantly longer to realign with a new time zone.

Another interesting revelation answered the often-asked question of which direction most disrupted sleep: travelling eastward was the worst, delaying sleep onset the most, along with causing fragmented rest and decreasing the duration of deep and REM sleep cycles.

Interestingly, regardless of distance flown, total sleep times recovered to within 12 minutes of baseline by two days post-travel. But the clincher was that sleeping timing – or bedtime and wake time – remained misaligned even after 15 days – and especially on eastward trips.

“These findings can be used to develop practical strategies for minimising the impact of travel on sleep and promoting better well-being,” said Dr Raphael Valat, a study researcher and scientist at Oura. ■



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Stylish wallet security

This RFID-blocking wallet was designed to replace the typical leather bi-fold styles that often end up like a mini version of a messy suitcase. The main cardholder of the Ridge Wallet is elasticised so it can expand and hold up to 12 IDs and credit cards. The dozens of different cover designs include the Kintsugi Black in aluminium (pictured) in the style of Japanese Kintsugi artists who turned broken pottery into gold-lined masterpieces. Both wallets and key cases in the new Kintsugi Collection feature gold oil-filled engravings in either black or white, with eight unique patterns distributed at random. It's scratch resistant, and the elastic and screws are replaceable. PGK360; ridgeau.com



Gear-tracking tech

The Chipolo POP bluetooth tracker comes in a range of bright colours that make it extra easy to see while you keep track of your keys, bag, luggage and whatever else you don't want to lose. It is also extra loud, dust-and water-resistant, and uses a standard CR2032 battery. The Chipolo POP works with the Apple Find My network or the Find Hub network on Android. Download the free Chipolo companion app and get extra features, like Call Your Phone. PGK139; chipolo.net



Noise-free sleep

The Ozlo sleep buds are such nifty little devices that they made it onto *Time* magazine's list of Best Inventions of 2025. Not only do they track slumber, but they also adjust to your sleep cycle, meaning that even if you drift off while listening to music or audiobooks, the device will detect that you've fallen asleep and start masking noise and logging how you sleep. PGK1281; ozlosleep.com



Underwater photo fun

With a pastel-patterned cover, the retro Sunnylife Pool Side Underwater Camera (pictured in gelato) is a fun addition to your time at the beach and pool. The detachable waterproof casing means you can use the camera in the water or as a regular camera. Easy to use, focus free, and uses vintage-inspired 35mm film (not included). PGK80; sunnylife.com.au





Solar-powered security

Designed for large homes, small businesses, rural properties, farms and more, Swann's MaxRanger4K Solar Security System delivers longer, stronger and more reliable wireless security, equipped with a super long-range and maximum-strength wireless signal able to provide 20 times the coverage of most Wi-Fi security systems. The 4K day/night cameras can be mounted anywhere outside up to 600 metres (in the open air) and 200 metres (for typical use) from the included hub. The cameras have built-in solar panels, sensor lights, sirens, two-way talk, colour night vision, True Detect+ for heat, motion, people- and vehicle-triggered alerts and recording to the hub's 64GB local memory (to store up to 12 months of rolling clips) and the cloud with no monthly fees. View and control on the Swann Security app. PGK1390; au.swann.com



Functional fashion

This necklace-like phone chain is one of the most stylish ways to keep your smartphone safe and secure while elevating your outfit at the same time. Louve's Isla Sol chain features natural stone beads in a mix of ocean-inspired colours, blending functionality and fashion via the strap that keeps your phone secure. PGK96; louvecollection.com

Colourful cooling

The Gulaki Neck Fan nestles around your neck, directing air not only onto your neck but up to your face as well. What's more, this design comes with 64 auto-changing lights so you can program it to match your outfit. The Gulaki has three wind speeds, is low noise and made of soft, breathable material. PGK136; amazon.com



Snappy dressing

As the manufacturers of these eye-catching cufflinks point out, many modern gentlemen still see cufflinks as an asset to their wardrobe, even in tropical climes. The bright Hoi An cufflinks from Singaporean jeweller Forbidden Hill are named after the colours and reflections of the charming lanterns that grace the historic Vietnamese port town of Hoi An, where they float in rivers and hang decoratively in the streets. Cufflinks work well for both business and formal occasions too, adding polish to presentation in client-facing roles and a dashing touch when attending events like black-tie balls or weddings. The Hoi An cufflinks are made from rhodium-plated metal with crystalline resin insets available in six brilliant colours. PGK490 a pair; forbiddenhill.com



Passport protection

Step up your travel game with the sleek-looking Tusk Siam passport cover. Designed for those who appreciate the finer things in life, it is elegant and minimalist while being functional and built to last. The creator's aim was to produce a passport cover with "just the right balance of practicality and artistry", hence its two card slots for such essentials as your frequent-flyer card and emergency credit card. Made to fit the majority of international passports. PGK351; tusk.com



Nourishing sleep

The Salad Camellia Oil Silk Pillowcase is made from luscious 19 momme charmeuse silk infused with nourishing camellia oil, which is said by the maker to give you a great night's sleep as well as fabulous skin and stronger hair thanks to the oil's antioxidative and regenerative properties. The silk is responsibly crafted using a unique weaving technique that creates a smooth and lustrous pearl-like gloss on one side of the fabric and a matte finish on the reverse. PGK248; lily silk.com



BIOGRAPHY

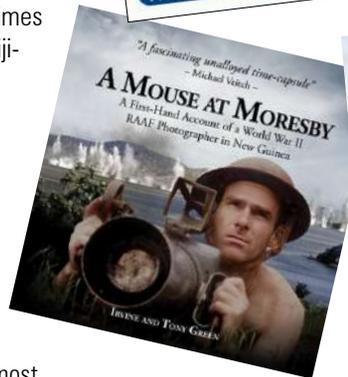
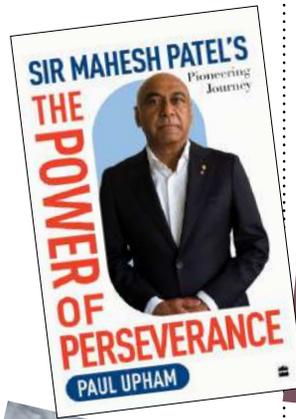
The Power of Perseverance: Sir Mahesh Patel's Pioneering Journey**By Paul Upham (HarperCollins India)**

The City Pharmacy Limited (CPL) Group is one of Papua New Guinea's most recognised companies, a retail conglomerate that specialises in pharmaceuticals, hardware and fashion.

The Power of Perseverance is about the group's founder Sir Mahesh Patel. It follows him through his business triumphs, philanthropic endeavours and personal struggles.

Author Paul Upham, who previously penned the authorised biography of boxing world champion Kostya Tszyu, writes about Sir Mahesh building multi-million dollar companies, as well as his deep sense of social concern and how he has helped improve the lives of women, children and communities in PNG through the CPL Group Foundation.

His personal and professional achievements include receiving honours from Queen Elizabeth II and King Charles III, but the author also touches on times of hardship – and regret – for the Fiji-born entrepreneur.



WAR PHOTOGRAPHY

A Mouse at Moresby**By Irvine and Tony Green (Big Sky Publishing)**

War photography has, over the decades, provided some of the most memorable and compelling photos imaginable. Just think of the five Marines raising the American flag at Iwo Jima in 1945, the terrified South Vietnamese girl running down a road after a napalm attack in Vietnam in 1972, and a Fuzzy Wuzzy Angel helping a wounded Australian soldier walk down a bush track in PNG in 1942.

The recently released *A Mouse at Moresby* provides a further fascinating insight into World War 2 in PNG, including many images that have never been publicly seen.

Irvine Green's collection of diaries, letters and images offers a first-hand view of the war from 1941 to 1943. He was posted to Port Moresby as a Royal Australian Air Force photographer during those years and documented air raids by the Japanese forces, the resulting destruction, as well as general life.

Irvine Green died in 1997, leaving behind hundreds of photos and letters, and the book was compiled by his son, Dr Tony Green.

SELF-HELP & PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Bloom, Creating a Life I Love**By Mary Fowler (Penguin)****Available as an audiobook**

Mary Fowler, aged just 22, is a global soccer superstar with Papua New Guinean heritage who shot to fame playing with the Australian women's soccer team the Matildas and Manchester City in the English Women's Super League.

In this revealing story she shares behind-the-scenes moments playing professional soccer, and personal anecdotes about creating the life that she loves.

She writes about surrounding herself with people she trusts, turning off social media and connecting with nature, accepting herself for who she is, and practising gratitude.

Her journey hasn't always been easy. She reveals there have been mental health struggles but counsels that it's important to be brave enough to ask for help in the darkest moments.



BIOGRAPHY

Dirtbag Billionaire**By David Gelles (Text Publishing)****Available as an audiobook**

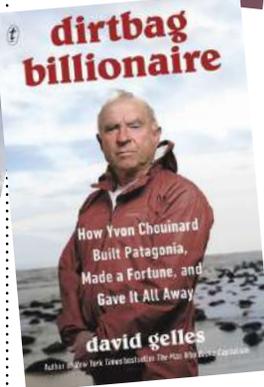
The full title of this book – *Dirtbag Billionaire: How Yvon Chouinard Built Patagonia, Made a Fortune, and Gave It All Away* – pretty much summarises the story.

Chouinard was a rock climber and adventurer who was so poor that he lived out of his car before founding the outdoor clothing and gear company Patagonia in 1973. By 2022, the company was worth US\$3 billion and that's when he relinquished ownership and gave it away to a trust and a non-profit organisation that he set up to defend nature.

Each year, the money Patagonia makes after reinvesting in the business is distributed as a dividend to help the environment and fight climate change.

The book not only chronicles his outdoor adventures but provides a case study of value-based leadership. It tells how Chouinard became a global leader in ethical business practices before the momentous decision to give away his source of wealth.

And if you're wondering why he's called a *Dirtbag* in the title, it's because this is an affectionate term for someone happy to sleep outdoors. ■



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PNG businesses gear up for long-awaited resources projects

While the timing of a final investment decision on Papua LNG remains uncertain, PNG businesses are busy preparing for an announcement. *Nadav Shemer Shlezinger* reports.

Almost 16 years after a final investment decision (FID) was made on PNG LNG, hopes are high for green lights to be given to the next wave of major Papua New Guinean resources projects, beginning with the TotalEnergies-led Papua LNG project.

While the timing remains uncertain, PNG business leaders say they are already cautiously preparing for the day after FID.

“Once these projects are announced, there will be an expectation for things to happen almost overnight,” says Ronald Prasad, Chief Strategy Officer of Vodafone PNG.

The telecommunications provider is actively preparing for Papua LNG and remains confident in its ability to support the nation’s growth through expansion of robust telecommunications infrastructure and investment in building capacity and innovative business solutions.

“We’re managing the balance carefully. Our outlook remains bright, and we’re excited about the possibilities ahead,” Prasad says.

The impact of Papua LNG is likely to be felt well beyond the resources sector itself.

As Justin Kieseker, Chief Executive Officer of the Remington Group – which has interests across information and communication technology, retail and manufacturing – notes, the opportunity to work with “the services businesses that serve all of these projects is just as important as the project itself.”

Rajeev Sharma, Chief Executive Officer of Nasfund, PNG’s largest private-sector superannuation fund, says that Papua LNG



Susil Nelson-Kongoi, CEO, IBBM (right) speaks alongside Rio Fiocco, President, Port Moresby Chamber of Commerce and Industry (left) and Rajeev Sharma, CEO, Nasfund (centre) at the 2025 Business Advantage PNG Investment Conference.

could create not one but two major “liquidity events” for the fund.

The first positive event will come in the project’s construction phase, when up to 12,000 project workers start to receive their compulsory superannuation contributions. A second, less-positive event could come after the construction phase, when that workforce is expected to drastically decline in size, and laid-off workers start to draw down their super balances.

Sharma hopes that another major resources project – such as Wafi-Golpu or the ExxonMobil-led P’nyang gas project – begins construction straight after Papua LNG, thus warding off the second liquidity event.

But he says that Nasfund must be prepared, including upskilling its own staff so they can educate fund members about the importance of maintaining super balances for retirement.

One theme that came up repeatedly in interviews conducted for this report was the importance of training enough locals to meet the labour requirements of the upcoming resources projects.

PNG’s Institute of Banking and Business Management (IBBM) was established to play a key role in training local suppliers to work with the big engineering, procurement and construction contractors to the PNG LNG project. It is currently preparing for a similar role with Papua LNG, according to Chief Executive Officer Susil Nelson-Kongoi.

IBBM already offers bachelor programs and diplomas for a variety of management roles. Nelson-Kongoi says the next step is to offer technical and vocational education and training (TVET).

“I’ve had a lot of discussions with TVET institutions,” she says. “I know that the ➤

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Australian government has given funding to look at TVET institutions around PNG and how to revamp them from being supply-driven to demand-driven.”

Like Prasad and Sharma, Nelson-Kongoi is conscious of timing. She says TotalEnergies’ April 2024 decision to postpone a Papua LNG FID to early 2026 gave the industry more time to train Papua New Guineans.

“But then the threat is that you develop them and then they take their skills offshore,” she says. “It’s really about making sure that we know the timeline (for FID) so that we can actually train people.”

Skills and recruitment are also front of mind for the likes of Andrew Candelet, PNG Country Manager for health services provider International SOS; and Fintan Lalor, General Manager at OM Holdings, parent company of Oilmin.

Candelet says his firm aspires to employ locally and in the lead-up to FID will begin recruiting and training additional Papua New

“
Our outlook remains bright, and we’re excited about the possibilities ahead.”

Guinean doctors, nurses and health extension officers.

“We need to make sure we can meet the demand when it does come,” he says.

Oilmin has been providing field services to PNG oil and gas projects since 1992, and Lalor believes its strategic joint venture (JV) with Jerilai Pujari Holding Limited, the landowner company representing all the clans in the Papua LNG project area (Petroleum

Retention Licence 15) in Gulf Province, puts it in a strong position.

“It’s the first joint venture that Oilmin has formed in 33 years. We see the value of joint ventures with strategic partners as the best approach to position for these big resource projects, enabling the JV to draw on the resources and strengths of both parties,” he says.

When *Paradise* went to press, Oilmin was in the final stages of talks with a registered training organisation to provide courses for skills such as construction, scaffolding and steel fixing.

“We see a gap in the market for Australian-certified training being delivered by Papua New Guinean-certified trainers in PNG,” he says.

Meanwhile, in Central Province, location of the ExxonMobil-operated LNG plant that will process the gas from Papua LNG, Steamships Trading Company has launched a transport and logistics joint venture with Laba Holdings Limited. ■

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PNG's top five areas for investment

PNG's Mineral Resources Development Company is one of the country's largest institutional investors, with more than PGK12 billion in assets under management. Its Chief Investment Officer John Tuaim, speaking at the 2025 Business Advantage PNG Investment Conference, revealed five areas where more investment is needed. *Charlotte Armstrong reports.*

1 EDUCATION AND TECHNICAL SKILLS

"Investments into education needs to be 'targeted' to capture skills gaps in PNG's young workforce," Tuaim told the conference. He said investments in local labour and technical skills should align with PNG's wider vision of increasing manufacturing and downstream processing locally to reduce raw exports.

2 HOSPITALITY AND RETAIL

With PNG's team due to commence playing in Australia's National Rugby League in 2028, Tuaim said it is time to invest in PNG's hospitality industry – particularly in branded hotels to entice international visitors. "The demand for tourism and hospitality is going to grow in the next couple of years." The focus on branded properties extends into PNG's retail space, he said. For example, he noted that MRDC's flagship Star Mountain Plaza, which includes the Hilton Port Moresby Hotel and Residences – is expanding to include fast food chains KFC and McDonald's as well as other recognisable international brands.

3 AGRICULTURE

As PNG looks to reduce its reliance on imports, Tuaim flagged agriculture as a sector to watch. "We can replace imports, but we also have 10 million people that have to eat." Tuaim highlighted the growth of cash crops,



MRDC's John Tuaim at the 2025 Business Advantage PNG Investment Conference.

PICTURE: STEFAN DANILICHENKO

including cocoa and coffee, emphasising the potential return on investment for providing key agricultural knowledge to PNG. "We've got land. We just need people to come in and help Papua New Guineans to develop and build these things."

4 MINING AND PETROLEUM

MRDC has a 50 per cent stake in Twinza's Pasca A offshore gas project through its Hevehe Petroleum subsidiary and has a legislated mandate to invest on behalf of landowner groups across the country that host resources projects.

The pipeline of major mining and oil and gas projects waiting to be developed represent a massive opportunity, as long as

PNG embraces it effectively, according to Tuaim. He also emphasised the benefits of exploration activity, noting that "PNG is under explored – there's still a lot out there waiting to be discovered."

5 ENERGY AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

PNG's rapid digitisation will come with massive energy demand, representing a great opportunity to move into renewable energy, according to Tuaim. He said AI will depend on data, on storage facilities and data centres, which require a lot of energy. "We've got lots of sunshine, lots of hydro, lots of wind. All of this we can use." ■



Portside Business Park set to open

Steamships broke ground on the Portside Business Park to great fanfare in 2024. Alan Heyns, General Manager of the company's property division, shares its progress so far with *Charlotte Armstrong*.

The first phase of Steamships' Portside Business Park was due to open when *Paradise* went to press early in the year. The 38-hectare park is strategically located: adjacent to the Motukea international port and on the road between Port Moresby and ExxonMobil's LNG plant at Caution Bay.

Pacific Palms, which manages the development under the Steamships banner, is spending close to PGK100 million on infrastructure upgrades to the site, with the goal of offering a "value-creating asset for the whole (commercial) ecosystem," says General Manager of Pacific Palms Property, Alan Heyns.



PICTURES: PACIFIC PALMS PROPERTY

The Portside Business Park development in Port Moresby in August 2025 (above); Alan Heyns (below).

"We're very much considering what is required to build value for businesses," he says. "In any emerging economy, infrastructure is key."

Infrastructure at Portside will include water, sewerage, waste disposal, power generators and provision for data connectivity. The site will be a secure facility, including access control and double fencing around the perimeter.

“

In any emerging economy, infrastructure is key.

”

The first four warehouses and a logistics hub have been completed, as well as 20 management-level one-bedroom apartments. A wharf with barge access is in the planning phases, with tenders under adjudication by Pacific.

While Portside will be open for a variety of commercial enterprises, Heyns sees a particular opportunity for it to support second- and third-tier contractors to major resources projects.

While delays to a final investment decision (FID) on Papua LNG have impacted tenancies, Heyns says the outlook is positive.

"Before the postponement of the Papua LNG FID in 2024, anticipation surrounding the project was tangible across the market. Pacific Palms Property recorded a notable surge in demand across its residential, office, and industrial portfolios, as prospective tenants moved quickly to secure top-tier accommodation, premium office space, and secure industrial properties in a market constrained by limited quality supply." ■



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A lifeline for remote cocoa farmers and fishermen

Lemach Lavari reports on a business-woman who has set up a supply chain for cocoa and seafood.

Building a business in Papua New Guinea as a woman can be challenging. “People just don’t take you seriously,” says Susan Hulo, an entrepreneur now successfully working in the cocoa sector.

“My husband John Hulo had to do all initial meetings and the follow-ups for us to get things going,” she says.

Hulo’s company, South Coast Commodities, provides market access to more than 2000 cocoa farmers and their families in the remote coastal village of Amulut in the Kandrian District of West New Britain Province.

The company buys cocoa beans from the farmers and sells them to exporters in Lae, a two-day boat journey away.

When Hulo started her business, there was no network to buy and sell cocoa from her village.

In 2010, she was on holiday in Amulut and noticed a very faded PGK5 note that was handed to her as change for a purchase she made. She then realised most of the money bills were old as well, indicating that these bills were in circulation for a long time in the community.

“How can I start cashflow and bring in new money here?” she thought.

Hulo’s immediate challenge was freight. There was no



PICTURES: LEMACH LAVARI

Entrepreneur Susa Hulo (above and below) with the vessel she acquired to transport produce.

“

We now see that people have money to pay for school fees, build new homes and have money to travel.

”

existing shipping route on the Solomon Sea that passed by Amulut’s shores. She had to negotiate with shipping companies in the region to service her people as well. Soon after, other island communities brought in seafood to sell to Hulo as well.

Despite her efforts, the ships would come only once a month, or not at all, and that was not good for business. She was losing money from the start. But her conviction to create wealth for her people and the potential for agriculture to change her people’s lives kept her motivated.

Hulo’s business eventually acquired a shipping vessel named *Khawaii*, which means, ‘to travel’. This eased the burden of freight and generated the supply of more seafood and cocoa from neighbouring villages.

“We now see that people have money to pay for school fees, build new homes and have money to travel. We’ve worked with them to start up spin-off businesses like trade stores and retail fuel. Also to expand their farms to commercial sizes,” says Hulo.

Her next aim is to seek partnerships in government and the private sector to build a commercial wharf in Amulut so that cocoa from the region can be exported directly to overseas markets. Also on her wish list is to have a runway for small aircraft. ■



INVESTING IN PNG'S RICE FUTURE

In 2022, Trukai Industries launched the Smart Farmers Program to equip local farmers with essential rice farming skills. Participants graduate with a Certificate in Irrigated Rice Farming, gaining the knowledge needed for commercial rice farming. The program, in partnership with the PNG University of Technology and the Pacific Adventist University has successfully trained thousands of farmers across all provinces, including two from the Solomon Islands.

To further support the transition into commercial rice farming, Trukai introduced a paid Internship Program in 2024, offering three months of commercial rice farming exposure at the Trukai Erap farm in Morobe Province. Participants gain practical skills in large-scale rice production, from farm machinery operation to post-harvest techniques..

For more information, please email us at: Enquires@trukai.com.pg



The Paradise Quiz

HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW THE REGION?

1. What piece of music did Thomas Shacklady write and compose?
2. Who is Papua New Guinea's Minister for State Owned Enterprises: William Duma, Ted Durma or John Dume?
3. What is significant about 96 kilometres?
4. Is Lae or Madang further north?
5. Papua New Guinean Johnny Aba rose to prominence in which sport?
6. What is the name of PNG's first Saint?
7. What happens on Singapore's streets every October?
8. What is the currency used in the Philippines?
9. True or false: the Solomon Islands have won one gold medal at the Olympics.
10. Cairns, Australia, is a sister city with which PNG city?
11. How many litres of paint does it take to cover the Sydney Harbour Bridge with one coat: 30,000, 55,000, or 70,000?

12. Who was the well-known PNG-born Australian broadcaster who died in Sydney in November, aged 90?

13. AJ Hackett commercialised bungee jumping in New Zealand, but where did it originate?

14. Hong Kong has more skyscrapers than any city in the world, but which floor is often left out of buildings?

15. Who is pictured walking with PNG Prime Minister James Marape?



Sudoku

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the numbers 1 to 9.

Rating: ★ ★ ☆ ☆ ☆

7		1						6
					5		1	
			7	6			5	2
	3	4	9				7	1
5			6	1	7			9
1	7				8	2	6	
8	1			4	6			
	2		5					
3						6		8

For solutions to the quiz and puzzles, see page 124.



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A		U		S		T	R	I	E	S
I		N		H		O		M		
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E		E		S		S		N		N
D	E	F	E	C	T		C	A	P	E
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C	A	N	O	E		F		E		I
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P	E	D	E	S	T	R	I	A	N	S

Wheel Words

Ache, Arch, Chap, Char, Chat, Each, Etch, Hare, Harp, Hart, Hate, Heap, Hear, Heat, Hurt, Path, Rhea, Tech, Chart, Cheap, Cheat, Chute, Earth, Hater, Heart, Parch, Patch, Peach, Perch, Reach, Retch, Ruche, Teach, Theca, Preach, Chapter, Chateau, Trachea.

9-letter word: PARACHUTE.

7	5	1	3	2	4	9	8	6
2	6	3	8	9	5	7	1	4
4	9	8	7	6	1	3	5	2
6	3	4	9	5	2	8	7	1
5	8	2	6	1	7	4	3	9
1	7	9	4	3	8	2	6	5
8	1	7	2	4	6	5	9	3
9	2	6	5	8	3	1	4	7
3	4	5	1	7	9	6	2	8

The Paradise Quiz

1. PNG's national anthem *O Arise All You Sons of This Land*.
2. William Duma.
3. It is the length of the Kokoda Trail.
4. Madang.
5. Boxing. He challenged for the World Boxing Association featherweight title in 1979.
6. Peter To Rot.
7. Formula 1 Grand Prix.
8. Peso.
9. False. The country has not won any medals since first competing in 1984.
10. Lae.
11. 30,000.
12. John Laws, nicknamed the 'Golden Tonsils'.
13. Vanuatu.
14. The fourth floor, because it sounds like the word 'death' in Cantonese.
15. French President Emmanuel Macron at Varirata National Park in 2023.



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PAPUA NEW GUINEA VISITOR GUIDE

Out and about

A quick guide to Papua New Guinea, from catching a taxi to making a phone call.



PICTURE: DAVID KIRKLAND

Port Moresby from the air ... the capital city has a population of 756,754 according to the National Statistical Office's 2024 Census.

CLIMATE

Except for the Highlands, Papua New Guinea has a warm tropical climate. The wet season in Port Moresby is from December to April.

COMMUNICATIONS

Internet: Web access in Port Moresby has improved immensely in recent years. Complimentary Wi-Fi is available at hotels and at Jacksons International Airport.

Phone: International phone roaming is possible in PNG, but it can be costly. A cheaper option is to buy a local SIM card and pre-

paid credit (including data packs for smartphones). Major mobile networks are Digicel, Telikom PNG and Vodafone. Mobile data is available in cities and towns but may not be available in rural areas.

ELECTRICITY

The current in PNG is 240V AC 50Hz, using Australian-style plugs.

ARRIVING AND GETTING AROUND

Arrival card: PNG launched the PNG Digital Arrival Card (PNG DAC) on October 1. It has replaced the traditional paper-based

passenger card for all travellers entering the country. The PNG DAC can be completed online at pngdac.ica.gov.pg up to three days before travel.

Airport transfers: For arrival/ departure in Port Moresby, hotels provide a complimentary transfer.

Car hire: Major companies include Hertz Car Rental (+675 325 4999/+675 7235 2442) with a self-drive rate of PGK270–485 a day. With a driver it is PGK612–868. Avis Car Rental (+675 324 9400) day rate is PGK315–435 with a PGK4600 bond. With a driver it's an additional PGK15

per hour. WB Transport Systems (+675 341 3541) day rate is PGK300–1500. With the poor state of roads, especially in Lae, 4WDs/SUVs are recommended.

Domestic flights: Travelling within PNG often means taking an internal flight (for instance, you cannot drive between Port Moresby and Lae). Air Niugini offers passengers the chance to book (and, for some flights, also to check-in) online, but make sure you print out a copy of your receipt to show at check-in. Aircraft and helicopter charters are available for travel to remote locations.

Taxis: Recommended firms are City Loop (+675 7715 9338) and Comfort (+675 7615 5663); Expedient Limited (+675 7232 9990) provides shuttle services. ODESH (+675 7981 8832/+675 7408 6270) is Port Moresby's first taxi and chauffeur on-demand booking service. See odesh.net or download the app.

HEALTH

Serious medical conditions can be treated in Port Moresby at the Pacific International Hospital, Paradise Private Hospital and Port Moresby General Hospital, which have emergency services. Some conditions may require treatment outside the country. Travellers should ensure they have adequate health cover. The cost of medical evacuation can be high. Visitors should also note that malaria is prevalent in PNG and there have been cases of measles and tuberculosis.

MEDICAL EMERGENCY

For St John Ambulance phone 111 or 7111 1234. St John provides a 24-hour ambulance service in Port Moresby.



MONEY

PNG's currency is the kina (PGK). Banks and ATMs are located around Port Moresby, Lae and almost all urban centres.

SHOPPING

BNBM Home Centre: Located at Gordons, sells everything from building materials to homeware and tech items. See facebook.com/BNBMPNG.

Brian Bell Home Centre: Sells a wide range of white and brown goods as well as sportswear and manchester. There are outlets at Boroko and Gordons with a smaller shop at Vision City. See facebook.com/brianbellgroup.

Foodworld: Has two outlets – Waterfront and Gordons. Considered the best grocery shops by many. The Waterfront outlet has a home centre, salon, eye care, clothing and tech shops. There is a Popi's cafe at both locations.

Rangeview Plaza: Opposite Vision City, the plaza has a big grocery shop, clothing stores and a salon. The spacious dining area upstairs has multiple food vendors and a playground. There are stalls outside where local artisans sell their crafts, paintings and toana wear. See facebook.com/RangeviewPlaza.

Stop & Shop: It has outlets all over the city, but recommended locations are at Harbour City and Waigani Central (also home to Jack's of PNG, Prouds and Hardware Haus). Small businesses are set up in the car park selling *meri* blouses as well as local art and crafts. An outlet has opened at 8 Mile. See cpl.com.pg.

Unity Mall & Supermarket: This complex at the Steamships compound in Waigani has small

businesses selling PNG-designed outfits, crafts and accessories. You can also find a pharmacy and several hair stations. The eateries offer local cuisine, snacks and coffee. The supermarket sells fresh local vegetables sourced from all over the country. See unitygroup.com.pg.

Vision City: Centrally located in Waigani, the mall has everything from groceries to clothing stores, pharmacies, salons and even a carwash service. The only cinema (Paradise Cinema) in the country is on level 2. You can also find a night club (The Cosmopolitan). Take your pick from the many restaurants and food vendors at the Food Junction. See visioncitypng.com.

MARKETS

Banana Market: Located within the secure Adventure Park premises at 14 Mile, 30 minutes outside the city. Despite its name, you can find a wide range of fresh fruit and vegetables sourced from the gardens of surrounding communities. Open 7am–5.30pm.

Boroko Market: Next to Santos Stadium, this popular market has a great range of local produce. There is limited parking but there is a general understanding to park along the side street with caution. Open 7.30am–5pm.

Ela Beach Craft Market: At the IEA TAFE campus opposite the beach. Held on the last Saturday of each month. Support artisans from nearby Motuan villages and small businesses that sell paintings, *bilums*, as well as woven baskets, mats and *tapa* (tree bark) cloth sourced from rural parts of the country. Organised by the Ela Murray International School. Tel. +675 302 3800. Open 7.30am–midday.

Gordons Market: Next to the Gordons police station, it's the biggest market in Port Moresby with two levels. Well organised, you can find everything from various greens, root crops and seasonal fruit. There is ample parking and security. Open 7am–6.30pm.

Holiday Inn Craft Market: Held on the third Saturday of each month in Cassowary Park. Paintings, wooden carvings and pandanus mats are just a few of the items on sale. Proceeds from the vendor fees (PGK20) and the craft market's sausage sizzle go to charity. Open 8am–1pm. See facebook.com/holidayinnandsuitesportmoresby.

Koki Fish Market: Built over the sea, this fish market is the biggest

one-stop shop for seafood. Fish like tuna and red emperor caught by local villagers can be cleaned and cut for you. Open 6am–6pm.

Moresby Arts Theatre Craft Market: Located at Waigani (next to Parliament House) find local art, carvings, pottery and jewellery. Enjoy the barbecue, live music and movies for kids. Some craft days have cultural dances and performance art shows. Held on the first Saturday of each month. Entry PGK2. Open 8am–1pm.

PAU Sunday Market: Pacific Adventist University, 30 minutes outside the city, has a market every Sunday, starting at 5am. There's produce from the school's farm, including cucumber, watermelon and corn, as well as cooked food from the Pacific. ➤





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POM City Markets: If you're after traditional crafts as well as a whole range of novelty products from small business owners, they regularly set up at the Vision City amphitheatre, National Museum & Art Gallery and Food Republic PNG carpark. They also host the Harbourside Night Markets at the Harbourside Precinct, which includes live music and food. See facebook.com/pomcitymarkets for upcoming dates. Tel. +675 7007 3046.

Some of these locations (as well as all food markets in general) are known for crime so it isn't recommended that you go alone, or without your own security.

HOTELS

PORT MORESBY

Airways Hotel: Airways is within a large, secure compound next to Jacksons International Airport. An inspiring setting, luxurious rooms, excellent service and very good food options. See airways.com.pg. Tel. +675 324 5200.

Citi Boutique Hotel: The Citi Boutique Hotel is a three-star property in Boroko. It has 60 deluxe queen and twin rooms, a business centre, cable TV and free Wi-Fi. There's also a day spa and beauty salon, restaurant,

bar, karaoke room, and a rooftop terrace. The hotel provides free airport transfers. See facebook.com/citiboutiquehotel. Tel. +675 300 1300.

Citi Serviced Apartments and Motel: There are two Citi Serviced Apartments and Motel properties, one block located at East Boroko and the other at Manu. They are set in safe and secure grounds. The apartments are fully kitted out. They include cable TV, free Wi-Fi, washing machines, dryers, fridges, fans and air conditioning. Housekeeping is also provided. See facebook.com/citiboutiquehotel. Tel. +675 300 1300.

Crown Hotel: Upmarket rooms and suites in the heart of the CBD. Decent gym, business centre, undercover parking, thriving cafe and Mediterranean restaurant. See crownhotel.com.pg. Tel. +675 309 3329.

Ela Beach Hotel and Apartments: On the fringe of the CBD, this constantly expanding hotel/apartment complex is part of the Coral Sea Hotels group. See coralseahotels.com.pg. Tel. +675 321 2100.

Gateway Hotel: Conveniently located just minutes from Jacksons International Airport, the

hotel has a range of dining options, conference facilities, modern gym and two swimming pools. Free airport shuttles are available for guests. See coralseahotels.com.pg. Tel. +675 327 8100.

Grand Papua: This premium hotel is now part of the Raddison group and features 156 suite rooms (short and long stay), an executive floor, gym and conference facilities. The separate restaurant and bar areas are popular for business meetings. Centrally located. See coralseahotels.com.pg/grand-papua-hotel. Tel. +675 304 0000.

Hilton Port Moresby: The capital city's newest luxury hotel opened in late 2018 and is in the government district 10 minutes from the airport. There are five restaurants, an executive lounge, six meeting rooms, a convention centre, swimming pool and fitness centre. All rooms in the 15-storey hotel include floor-to-ceiling windows. The accommodation includes standard rooms, executive rooms and suites. See hiltonportmoresby.hilton.com. Tel. +675 7501 8000.

Holiday Inn & Suites: Located in Waigani, the large grounds include a walking track in a tropical garden setting, outdoor restaurant

and bar area, business centre and gym. Includes three-star Holiday Inn Express hotel. See ihg.com. Tel. +675 303 2000.

Lamana Hotel: In Waigani, the hotel has 24-hour free airport transfers, free in-room Wi-Fi, a conference centre, restaurants, and the famous Gold Club. See lamanahotel.com.pg. Tel. +675 323 2333.

Loloata Island Resort: This island resort, 40 minutes from Port Moresby, opened in late 2019. There are 68 rooms (including some overwater suites and villas), a day spa and two restaurants. Day passes are available for visitors who aren't staying overnight, and shuttles are provided from Port Moresby. The island is perfect for swimming, snorkelling, diving, walking or just lounging beside the pool. See loloataislandresort.com. Tel. +675 7108 8000.

Sanctuary Hotel Resort & Spa: The hotel is an oasis in the city, located 10 minutes from the airport in North Waigani. There is a lot of greenery in the hotel grounds and a large aviary, which includes the bird of paradise. The hotel, close to government offices, has a business centre, a day spa, swimming pool and a restaurant



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with a traditional PNG menu with a contemporary edge. It also has rooms and facilities with ramps for people with disabilities. Tel. +675 303 7400.

Shady Rest Hotel: Located at Three Mile, seven minutes from the airport, this affordable hotel has 74 rooms, including newly built executive rooms, conference facilities, a day spa and salon, a small gaming lounge, a tapas lounge, the Indian-inspired Cellar Restaurant and Mr Mike's Pizza Company. See shadyrest.com.pg. Tel. +675 323 0000.

Stanley Hotel and Suites: One of Port Moresby's newest hotels, this is a luxurious 429-room property in Waigani, close to government offices and embassies. It has 95 long-stay apartments, gym, pool, cafe, restaurants and an executive lounge. Connected to Vision City Mega Mall. See thestanleypng.com. Tel. +675 302 8888.

LAE

Crossroads Hotel: A 45-room facility at Nine Mile. The hotel has a Japanese-themed teppanyaki restaurant with Asian/Western fusion menus, full bar service, a well-equipped gym, Wi-Fi and complimentary transfers to both Lae City and the airport. Tel. +675 475 1124.

Hotel Morobe: A centrally located boutique with 38 elegantly decorated rooms. See hotelmorobe.com. Tel. +675 4790 100.

Huon Gulf Hotel & Apartments: Has comfortable rooms, conference rooms and a pool, located in the industrial part of town. The restaurant offers Italian cuisine and there are two bars. See coralseahotels.com.pg/huon-

gulf-hotel-apartments. Tel. +675 7999 0100.

Lae City Hotel: Located in the main Top Town area, this hotel has 24-hour concierge, gym and an excellent cafe and restaurant with Western and Asian cuisine. See laecityhotel.com. Tel. +675 472 0138.

Lae International Hotel: The city's premier hotel has a range of rooms, including deluxe executive suites, full bar service, conference and banquet halls, a gym and pool. See laeinterhotel.com. Tel. +675 472 2000.

Lae Travellers Inn: An affordable option, offering clean and comfortable rooms. There is a car rental service on the inn's premises and their restaurant offers curry takeaway. See laetravellersinn.com. Tel. +675 479 0411.

EATING & DRINKING

PORT MORESBY

Airways Hotel: Port Moresby's ritziest hotel has several places to eat. If you're after fine dining, Bacchus is the place to go. For something more casual, go poolside to Deli KC or 7C's past reception. The Vue Restaurant has a buffet each morning, lunch and evening. The Filipino-themed buffet is a winner. There is also an a la carte menu and stunning views. The tandoori dishes come highly recommended. If you're after a drink, have cocktails and beers at the Balus Bar. For an exclusive experience, head to the Havanaba Bar to enjoy a cigar with your pick of top-shelf wines and spirits. See airways.com.pg. Tel. +675 324 5200 and +675 7373 2600.

Akura: An elegant dining and lounge bar at Harbourside that is a

popular spot for after-work drinks. Try their beef vermicelli salad or pop in for Taco Tuesday. Tel. +675 7320 7777. See instagram.com/akurapng.

Alibi Bar & Grill: At the Harbourside precinct, open for lunch and dinner daily. There's a kid's playground if you're making it a family day. Fridays and Saturdays bring in a big night crowd and the bar stays open until late. Try their platters: the Surf & Turf, Meat Lovers and the Fisherman's Basket with a view of the harbour. See facebook.com/alibipng. Tel. +675 7320 7777.

Ang's Restaurant: No-frills Chinese hidden away in an industrial block opposite Brian Bell's Gordons Plaza shopping centre. Roast duck is the signature dish. Tel. +675 323 0863.

Asia Aromas: Offering Chinese and Thai food by the water at Harbourside, this eatery has consistently good reviews on social media. Outdoor seating is available. A good spot for sunset drinks. Tel. +675 321 4780.

Aviat Port Moresby Club: The club is open for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Home-style meals include stir-fries, toasted sandwiches, salt-and-pepper prawns and a pizza menu. This is a great spot to sit at lunchtime under the shady mango trees, or in the air-conditioned bar. See facebook.com/Aviat-Club.

Crown Hotel: For fine dining, choose Rapala Restaurant, its menu a mix of Western and Middle Eastern dishes. It's open 6pm to 10pm. All-day dining is available at The Cafe, opens at 6am. Every Saturday night, the hotel hosts an International Street Food Festival, featuring popular

dishes from around the world. See crownhotel.com.pg. Tel. +675 309 3000.

Crowne Plaza Residences:

The Port Terrace Restaurant & Bar has views of Fairfax Harbour, and all-day dining. It's open 6.30am to 10pm. Try a power juice for breakfast, chicken parmy for lunch or chilli lobster for dinner. The extensive menu also includes burgers and steaks, as well as share plates. Great spot to watch the sunset with a beverage, with wine, beer, spirits and cocktails on offer. See portrestaurant.com.pg. Tel. +675 308 3100.

Cuppa Cafe: Has a rustic setting with great breakfast options, pasta dishes, burgers and salads. The snack bucket – a large bowl of fried chicken, onion rings, prawns, battered fish, spring rolls and chips – is perfect for sharing. Try their coffee or a range of healthy smoothie combos. Tel. +675 302 8666.

Daikoku: The extensive Japanese menu has teppanyaki, donburi bowls and a large range of sushi. 'All-You-Can-Eat' grilled skewers available every Thursday night. You can find them at Stop & Shop Harbour City (first floor) and the Harbourside Precinct. See daikokupng.com. Tel. +675 7375 3130.

Duffy Cafe: Known for excellent coffee and homemade cafe-style food and bakery items, Duffy has three locations: at Harbourside, Gordons and Jacksons International Airport. You can order your breakfast ahead of time for those busy work mornings. You can also find their bread on sale at Waterfront Foodworld. See duffypng.com. Tel. +675 325 8528. ►



Dynasty at Vision City: This may be the biggest restaurant in Port Moresby. Its size, its chandeliers and its gold decor make it a favourite for balls, dinners and parties. The menu is huge, too, with pages of Asian dishes. The crispy lemon chicken is a favourite. See facebook.com/100064086213057. Tel. +675 302 8538.

Edge by the Sea: The Edge cafe has alfresco dining with a wonderful marina outlook from the ground floor at the Edge Apartments in Harbour City. Eggs benedict, burrito bowls, pork burgers and grilled snapper are among the breakfast and lunch menu favourites. Try their Turkish lahmacun. There's a mist water system in the alfresco area that can reduce the ambient air temperature by up to 10 degrees, perfect for those blistering-hot days. See facebook.com/edgebythesea/. Tel. +675 7995 5263.

Ela Beach Hotel: Drop in to Salt Restaurant for casual all-day dining, including curry, burgers and wok dishes, or pizza at Enzo's. The Beachside Bakery has a great range of sweet treats and coffee that you can enjoy in outdoor seating. See

coralseahotels.com.pg. Tel +675 7998 6510.

Fusion Bistro: A fusion of flavours from China, Thailand and Vietnam. Located in ENB Haus, Harbour City. Takeaway available. Tel. +675 7196 6666.

Gateway Hotel: The hotel's dining options include the Wild Orchard for breakfast and dinner buffet daily, Jackson's Gaming—Restaurant—Bar, which has a rooftop bar with views of the airport, as well as claims to the best lamb rack in town, Sizzler's Family Restaurant for value dining (PGK60 buffet), while Enzo's Express does quick lunches, coffee and pizza. Deli Cafe serves excellent milkshakes and the hotel's own range of bread and pastries. See coralseahotels.com.pg. Tel. +675 7999 0200.

Grand Papua Hotel: The elegant Grand Brasserie has an a la carte menu of modern European cuisine, as well as buffet options – Asian on Tuesday and seafood on Friday. The Grand Cafe, on Douglas Street, has barista-made Goroka coffee, fruit juices, freshly made salads and sandwiches. The Grand Bar – with stylish marble, high ceilings, timber floors and window shutters – has a light menu and is a popular place to wind down

after work. See coralseahotels.com.pg/grand-papua-hotel. Tel. +675 7999 0000.

Hilton Port Moresby: The hotel has five eating areas including Mumu, which is named after the traditional earthen oven of PNG, and serves traditionally inspired dishes. There's also a top-floor lounge bar called Summit, cafe-style dining in Copper on the lobby level, all-day dining and a breakfast buffet at Feast, including a Southeast Asian buffet every Wednesday night, and quick bites, such as sandwiches and coffee, at Halo in the convention centre foyer. See hiltonportmoresby.hilton.com. Tel. +675 7501 8000.

Hilton Residences: The Host Deli, Bistro & Bar on level two has a relaxed modern vibe with ample seating options. The Super Bowl (roasted cauliflower, falafel, poached egg, chickpeas with hummus, labneh and haloumi) comes highly recommended. If you're on the go, the delicatessen bar offers fresh fruit, pastries, sandwiches and desserts. Opens at 6.30am and stays open till late for drinks. See hiltonportmoresby.hilton.com. Tel. +675 7501 8000.

Holiday Inn & Suites: The Kopi Haus Restaurant has breakfast

from 6am, lunch and dinner. It has a la carte as well as a buffet, with the cuisine including PNG flavours. Expect themed buffets (such as barbecue and flavours of Asia) from Wednesday to Friday. The poolside Gekko Bar opens at midday and includes a big screen for sports telecasts and tasty bites to go with a range of wines, cocktails and local and international beers. See ihg.com. Tel. +675 303 2000.

Hosi Ramen: As the name suggests, this Japanese restaurant at Vision City specialises in ramen (noodles served in broth with meat and vegetables). A party of up to 15 people can opt for a hotpot session. Tel.+675 302 8555.

Jeanz Cafe: A family-friendly cafe with ample seating that proudly serves PNG Arabica coffee. Located in Gordons Plaza, it has a great range of salads, pastries and sandwiches. See gordonsplaza.com.

Kofi "N" Kai: A cafe located in BNBM Home Centre with ample lounge seating. Try the ham and cheese croissant or indulge in dessert options like Oreo cheesecake, carrot cake or the almond and pecan tart. Tel. +675 775 74399.



KAVIENG HOTEL

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Korean Garden: An affordable menu at Vision City that includes a do-it-yourself barbecue, as well as traditional favourites such as kimchi and gimbap. See facebook.com/koreangardenpng. Tel. +675 302 8534.

Lamana Hotel: Choose from options including Spices Restaurant (Indian), the Italian Restaurant, Cafe Palazzo and PNG's biggest nightclub, The Gold Club. The 360 Bar has great night views, and exclusive birthday fireworks can be organised. See lamanahotel.com.pg. Tel +675 7373 0600.

Loloata Island Resort: The private island has two restaurants. Bootless Bay is spacious with high ceilings and an open-plan style that provides a panoramic view of the sea. They serve a highly recommended breakfast and lunch buffet. The vibe at night makes it the perfect spot for a dinner date. The Beach Club upstairs is a great spot for special events like corporate dinners, birthdays and weddings. See loloataislandresort.com. Tel. +675 7108 8000.

Lucky Lucky: Informal but classy Thai cuisine at the Nambawan Super Plaza. Town and harbour views, alfresco dining. Go-to dishes include pad Thai noodles

and the charcoal-grilled pepper beef sirloin. Tel. +675 7995 5264.

Mojo Social: This casual Mediterranean-inspired bar and restaurant is on the ground floor of PWC Haus at Harbour City. Tapas-style dishes, risotto and pizza are among the offerings. Try the new Mexican dishes during a regular Taco Tuesday. See mojofood.co. Tel. +675 7995 5264.

Pentagon Entertainment: On the former Laguna Hotel premises. Guests can enjoy indoor and outdoor seating. There is also a family-friendly pool area. Try some of the signature dishes like biryani stuffed roasted chicken, crispy pork sisig, and salmon in an orange glaze. Tel. +675 325 1068.

PGO!: PNG's first online delivery service. Their vendors include Burrito Central (Port Moresby's first Mexican takeaway), Port Terrace, The Dirty Kitchen, Abus na Kumu (translates to 'meat and greens'), Fusion, Kopibin, Mr Mike's Pizza, The Cellar, Juice Bar and Marcus Kitchenette and Catering and many more. See phipax.com.

Port Terrace: Fast becoming a popular lunch and dinner spot, the restaurant and bar is in the Crowne Plaza Residences. There are grilled

dishes, share plates like a seafood or sticky pork ribs platter, and homemade pasta dishes. There's a new cocktail to try every month. See portrestaurant.com.pg. Tel. +675 308 3100.

Red Rock Bar: Located at Dogura, 6 Mile (along Magi Highway). Be prepared for an uphill drive to the bar but it's worthwhile for the spectacular sunset. Try the Red Rock burger or sizzling lamb and pork with a table in the outdoor area. Tel. +675 8214 7357.

Royal Papua Yacht Club: Relaxed, spacious and open to non-members. Comfort food, draught beer and an open-plan bar area showing sport on large screens. There is a themed cocktail night each Thursday. See rpyc.com.pg. Tel. +675 321 1700.

Seoul House: This restaurant specialises in Korean, Thai and Chinese cuisine, cooked on a hotplate in front of you. The dishes include a seafood platter of coral trout, mussels and shrimp, and Singapore-style chilli crab. Seoul House is tucked away in a garden oasis compound in Five Mile. The owners also have a cafe at the Jacksons International Airport, Hotspot. Try the black forest cake

and croissant sandwich while waiting for your flight. Tel. +675 7823 3075.

Shady Rest Hotel: The Indian dishes at the hotel's Cellar Restaurant draw high praise from reviewers on TripAdvisor. The restaurant also prides itself in its steaks. Mr Mike's Pizza Company is a takeaway located at the hotel and has classic pizzas, such as Hawaiian and margarita, as well as gourmet pizzas such as the Mediterranean, which is packed with feta, olives, mushrooms and more. Bakeology Cafe & Bakery offers alfresco dining surrounded by lush greenery. Enjoy a range of sandwiches, salads, pastries, desserts and freshly baked bread. See shadyrest.com.pg. Tel +675 323 0000.

Stanley Hotel and Suites: This Waigani hotel has several restaurant choices. On the 19th floor, the Silver Leaf offers intimate fine dining with stunning night views. The Executive Lounge (for guests staying on the 14th to 18th floors) offers breakfast, all-day snacks and cocktail canapes. A walk up the stairs from the lounge takes you to the Mezz Bar, which offers premium spirits. There is also a smoking deck. The chic tapas-style Monsoon ►



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Lounge is on the ground floor. Green Haus restaurant has all-day dining, including buffet dinners with live cooking stations. Choose your own combo at the new juice station available at breakfast and lunch. The serene Rainforest Cafe, close to the check-in area, has coffee, desserts and pastries. See thestanleypng.com.

Tandoor on the Harbour: Come here for a curry with great bay views. The butter chicken with garlic nan is classic. See facebook.com/tandoorontheharbour. Tel. +675 3201 910.

Tasty Bites: This cosy traditional Indian restaurant is tucked away in the town centre in Hunter Street near Crowne Plaza (ANG Haus). A great spot for quick and affordable meals. Try the vegetable noodles with chicken strips or the pizza menu. Deliveries available. Tel. +675 321 2222.

Tribes Coffee Club: This cafe has two locations: Oasis building in the Steamships compound, Waigani, and Lawes Road, Ela Beach. All-day dining available. The seafood platter with crab, shrimps and the catch of the day is a dinner favourite. Tel. +675 321 0455.

Tuna Bay Resort: Located in Taurama, just five minutes from Manu. Enjoy battered fish and

chips, char-grilled rump steak and boneless chicken that comes with a side of garden salad and chips. There is indoor and outdoor dining, with bay views. Tel. +675 7920 8777.

LAE

Bulolo Golf and Country Club: Lae's newest restaurant has an a la carte menu with indoor dining and an outdoor deck overlooking the course. The Bulolo T-bone steak is said to be among the best in the country and is sourced locally. Try 'Papa Tony's Pizza', a stone-baked pizza created by the club's chefs. See facebook.com/bulolocountryclub. Tel. +675 7358 7161.

Bunga Raya: This local favourite, serving Malaysian-style Chinese, is located next to the Lae Golf Club. Be sure to try the stuffed lettuce cups, laksa and claypot tofu. They've added boba milk tea and their own range of fruity sodas to the drink's menu. See facebook.com/bungarayarestaurant. Tel. +675 472 7177.

Cafe 411: There's a cosy atmosphere at this casual cafe next to Hotel Morobe on Coronation Drive. The Western-style menu includes finger foods and PNG coffee. Try the T-bone steak with mushroom sauce if

you're after something hearty. Tel. +675 479 0100.

Huon Club: This private members' club offers air-conditioned facilities, comfortable lounge chairs, an expansive deck overlooking the Lae Golf Club, a fully stocked bar and Foxtel to preview all the racing and sporting events. Open on Wednesday and Friday, members can enjoy regular lucky key draws and a barbecue menu. Inquiries to Lae Golf Club. See laegolfclub.com.pg. Tel. +675 472 1363.

The City Cafe: Located in the Lae City Hotel on 3rd Street, the cafe serves Western and Asian cuisine. The signature dishes include ribs and nasi goreng. Tel. +675 472 0138.

Lae Garden Restaurant: The Asian menu includes staples such as crispy chicken, butter prawns and the Malaysian dish nasi lemak. The elegant restaurant, inside Hotel Morobe on Coronation Drive, offers breathtaking views of the city from its balcony. A great venue for big dinner parties. Tel. +675 479 0100.

Lae Golf Club: The club is excellent for a few sundowners as you overlook the stunning green with access to the excellent bar. Apart from golf, you can enjoy the basketball and tennis courts. See

laegolfclub.com.pg. Tel. +675 472 1363.

Lae International Hotel: Home to three restaurants – Luluai's Italian Pizza, Vanda and Kokomo – which serve an array of international cuisine, including Indian and seafood buffets. The Sportsman's Bar (aka Jack's Bar) is a good place for a nightcap. See laeinterhotel.com. Tel. +675 472 2000.

Lae Yacht Club: The perfect place for late-afternoon beers, or just as nice for a relaxing lunch. Serves pub-style food. Try the Cajun grilled fish of the day. See laeyachtclub.com.pg. Tel. +675 472 4091.

Mountain View Restaurant: Located at the Crossroads Hotel at Nine Mile. Try the newly curated menu, which is a mix of Western and Pacific cuisine. Ramu steaks are a favourite. Great spot for cocktails and wine. See crossroads-hotel-lae.mydirectstay.com. Tel. +675 475 1124.

Ocean Restaurant: Located at Aviat Club, it's a popular seafood spot. Offers authentic Asian cuisine and local dishes. See facebook.com/p/Ocean-Restaurant-Lae-100049129045632. Tel. +675 7370 3045. ■

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First commercial flight of Air Niugini A220

Air Niugini marked a new chapter in its history on October 4 with the first commercial flight of its new state-of-the-art Airbus A220-300, known as the People's Balus.

The inaugural flight – PX100 – departed Jacksons International Airport in Port Moresby at 10am and flew to Lae, mirroring the airline's historic first flight on November 1, 1973, aboard a DC-3.

The A220 returned to Port Moresby before operating later in the afternoon to Kavieng and back.

The event signals a significant milestone in Air Niugini's comprehensive fleet transformation program and reflects the airline's commitment to delivering modern, reliable and efficient air travel for Papua New Guinea.

The A220-300, registered P2-PGA, was under the command of Air Niugini's Captain Timothy Narara and Captain Christian Felix Patchlatko from Airbus.

To commemorate the occasion, a brief but symbolic cake- and ribbon-cutting ceremony was held at the domestic terminal in Port Moresby. The event was officiated by Deputy Prime Minister and Lae MP, John Rosso, and the Minister for State-Owned Enterprises, William Duma.

In his remarks, the Deputy PM said: "This is a proud moment not only for Air Niugini but for the entire country. The Marape-Rosso Government remains committed to improving essential services for our people – including air services that connect our communities, support business, and promote national unity. This historic



The Deputy Prime Minister and Lae MP, John Rosso, the Minister for State Owned Enterprises, William Duma, KCH Board Chairman, Moses Maladina, Air Niugini Board Chairman, Karl Yalo, and other dignitaries upon arrival in Lae on Air Niugini's first commercial A220 flight (main); John Rosso cuts a cake with William Duma to mark the occasion.



event comes at the perfect time as we celebrate 50 years of independence. Our people deserve reliable, timely, and safe air travel – and the introduction of this world-class aircraft is a step in the right direction."

“The A220 is not just an aircraft – it is a symbol of progress and pride.”

He also acknowledged that Lae was a fitting destination for the first flight, as one of Air Niugini's busiest and most profitable domestic routes.

Minister Duma echoed similar sentiments: "The government's PGK3 billion investment in Air Niugini's fleet renewal program

underscores our commitment to modernising national infrastructure and delivering long-term value to the people of PNG. The A220 is not just an aircraft – it is a symbol of progress and pride, rightfully called the People's Balus. We are doing everything we can to ensure safe, reliable, and efficient travel for all Papua New Guineans."

The aircraft received a warm welcome in Lae, where Air Niugini staff and public onlookers gathered to witness the occasion. The People's Balus returned to Port Moresby before operating to Kavieng, where it was honoured with a traditional water salute on arrival. Locals hosted a cultural welcome, presenting flight crew with traditional necklaces and baskets in a show of appreciation for the new aircraft and the air service it will bring.

Treasury Minister and Kavieng MP, Ian Ling-Stuckey, was

onboard and extended his gratitude. He thanked Air Niugini for delivering a new aircraft and service to the province.

The A220 is a game-changer for Air Niugini's domestic and regional operations. Its advanced technology, superior fuel efficiency and capability to operate on shorter runways make it perfectly suited to the challenging terrain and diverse conditions across PNG.

Eleven A220 aircraft will be delivered as part of Air Niugini's fleet modernisation program.

The introduction of the A220 fleet will allow the airline to gradually phase out its ageing Fokker aircraft, improving operational efficiency, reducing emissions and enhancing the overall travel experience for passengers. ■



Health discounts for Kumul Club members

Air Niugini has announced a partnership with Pacific International Hospital (PIH), offering Kumul Club and Platinum Frequent Flyer members a 10 per cent discount on selected healthcare services.

This collaboration, part of the airline's Destinations Loyalty Program, highlights Air Niugini's commitment to providing additional value and benefits to its loyal customers.

PIH joins three other corporate partners offering discounts to Kumul Club members, enhancing the benefits of membership beyond travel.

Discounts are available with PIH for daycare admissions, pharmacy and medicines, radiology and laboratory testing, as well as selected sunglasses and prescription glasses.

In addition to these benefits, Kumul Club members will enjoy



Air Niugini's Kumul Club and Platinum Frequent Flyer members can claim discounts on selected healthcare services at the Pacific International Hospital.

a 20 per cent discount on outpatient consultations, and complimentary eye screenings.

Air Niugini Officer in Charge and Acting Chief Operating Officer, Captain Samiu Taufa, welcomed PIH to the program, emphasising the importance of these partnerships in enriching the loyalty experience.

"Our corporate collaborations are designed not only to enable members to earn and redeem loyalty points but also to enjoy additional privileges that enhance their wellbeing."

PIH Chief Executive Officer, Colonel Sandeep Shaligram, said: "At Pacific International Hospital,

we are delighted to join hands with Air Niugini and the Kumul Club in this unique partnership, which enables us to extend access to world-class healthcare for Air Niugini's distinguished members."

Members are advised to present their Kumul Club and Platinum Frequent Flyer membership cards at the time of service to access the discounts.

Air Niugini's Destinations Loyalty Program was launched in August 2009 as PNG's first frequent flyer program and currently has 147,000 active members. ■

JET FLIGHTS RETURN TO ALOTAU

Air Niugini has resumed Boeing 737 operations to Gurney Airport in Alotau.

The return of jet services last November comes after the National Airport Corporation (NAC) completed runway upgrade works.

Scheduled Boeing 737 flights to Gurney operate every Thursday. The B737 also services Lae, Manus and Kavieng as part of Air Niugini's domestic network.

In addition to the Boeing 737, the upgraded runway also accommodates the operation of Air Niugini's Airbus A220 aircraft with scheduled flights to Alotau every Tuesday.

The Boeing 737 last operated into Gurney in 2024, prior to the commencement of the airport improvement program.

Air Niugini thanks NAC for completing the runway improvements and also expresses appreciation to the travelling public for their patience throughout the airport upgrade period. ■

Team Aropa prevails at pointy end of season



The Air Niugini Balus Dart Association has wrapped up an exciting season with Team Aropa (pictured) winning the 2025 grand final, followed by runner-up Team Gurney and Team Kagamuga in third.

The competition featured

12 teams with 217 registered players including Air Niugini employees and their spouses, as well as players from industry partners including the National Airports Corporation, NiuSky Pacific, CASA PNG, PNG Air, Kobio Aviation, Exxon Mobil and Customs. ■





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HAND LUGGAGE

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

TAKEOFF AND LANDING

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

SAFETY FIRST

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

ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT

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

CHILDREN AND BABIES

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

SMOKING

Smoking is not permitted on any Air Niugini flight.

ENTERTAINMENT

A selection of movies and music including classical, modern, country and local are available on international services.

PILLOWS AND BLANKETS

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

CUISINE

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

IMMIGRATION AND CUSTOMS FORMS

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

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



AIR NIUGINI FLEET



B737-800 P2PXB 10J/150Y – Boeing

Length: 39.5M
 Wing Span: 35.79M
 Range: 5000-5500KM
 Cruising Speed: 810-850KPH
 Power Plant: 2 x CFM56-7B27E

Normal Altitude: 11300m
 Standard Seating Capacity: 162
 Business Class: 10
 Economy Class: 150
 Number of Aircraft in Fleet: 01



B767-300ER - Boeing

Length: 59.94m
 Wing Span: 47.57m
 Range: 8100km
 Cruising Speed: 857kph
 Power Plant: 2 x PW4000
 Normal Altitude: 11000 - 12000m
 Standard Seating Capacity: 188
 Business Class: 28
 Economy Class: 160
 Number of Aircraft in Fleet: 2



B737-800 P2PXC 16J/128Y - Boeing

Length: 39.5M
 Wing Span: 35.79M
 Range: 5000-5500KM
 Cruising Speed: 810-850KPH
 Power Plant: 2 x CFM56-7B27E
 Normal Altitude: 11300m
 Standard Seating Capacity: 154
 Business Class: 16
 Economy Class: 128
 Number of Aircraft in Fleet: 1



B737-800 PXA - Boeing

Length: 39.5M
 Wing Span: 35.79M
 Range: 5000-5500KM
 Cruising Speed: 810-850KPH
 Power Plant: 2 x CFM56-7B27E
 Normal Altitude: 11300m
 Standard Seating Capacity: 154
 Business Class: 16
 Economy Class: 138



F70 – Fokker

Length: 30.91m
 Wing Span: 28.08m
 Range: 3410km
 Cruising Speed: 743kph
 Power Plant: 2 x Rolls Royce Tay 650-15 turbo engines
 Normal Altitude: 11000m
 Standard Seating Capacity: 73
 Business Class: 8
 Economy Class: 65
 Number of Aircraft in Fleet: 3



F100 – Fokker

Length: 35.53m
 Wing Span: 22.08m
 Range: 3000km
 Cruising Speed: 780kph
 Power Plant: 2 x Rolls Royce Tay 650-15 turbo engines
 Normal Altitude: 11000m
 Standard Seating Capacity: 101
 Business Class: 8
 Economy Class: 93
 Number of Aircraft in Fleet: 5



DHC8-400 - Bombardier

Length: 32.8M
 Wing Span: 28.4M
 Range: 3000KM
 Cruising Speed: 670KPH
 Power plant: 02 x Pratt & Whitney PW150A
 Normal Altitude: 7600ft
 Standard Seating Capacity: 76
 Number of Aircraft in Fleet: 4



DHC8-202 – Bombardier

Length: 22.25m
 Wing Span: 25.89m
 Range: 1800km
 Cruising Speed: 550kph
 Power plant: 02 x Pratt & Whitney PW123D
 Normal Altitude: 7600m
 Standard Seating Capacity: 37
 Number of Aircraft in Fleet: 2



DHC8-Q315 – Bombardier

Length: 25.7m
 Wing Span: 27.4m
 Range: 1700km
 Cruising Speed: 510kph
 Power Plant: 02 x Pratt & Whitney PW123E
 Normal Altitude: 6100m
 Standard Seating Capacity: 50
 Number of Aircraft in Fleet: 5



Falcon 900EX - Dassault

Length: 20.21M
 Wing Span: 19.33M
 Range: 4500KM
 Cruising Speed: 650KPH
 Power Plant: 3 x Honeywell TFE731
 Maximum Altitude: 7600m
 Standard Seating Capacity: 12
 Number of Aircraft in Fleet: 1

Your health inflight

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

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

Blood Circulation / Muscle Relaxation

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

The central blood vessels in your legs can be compressed, making it more difficult for the blood to get back to your heart.

The long inactivity of your body muscles in this position can result in muscle tension, back aches or a feeling of excessive fatigue during, or even after, your flight.

A stationary position inhibits the normal body mechanism for returning fluid to your heart, and gravity can cause the fluid to collect in your feet. This results in swollen feet after a long flight.

Studies have concluded that prolonged immobility may be a risk factor in the formation of clots in the legs (DVT - deep vein thrombosis). Particular medication and medical conditions may increase the risk of formation of clots if associated with prolonged immobility.

Medical research indicates that factors which may give you an increased risk of blood clots in the legs include:

- Former or current malignant disease
- Blood disorders leading to increased clotting tendency
- Personal or family history of DVT

- Immobilisation for a day or more
- Increasing age above 40 years
- Pregnancy
- Recent major surgery or injury, especially to lower limbs or abdomen
- Oestrogen hormone therapy, including oral contraceptives
- Dehydration
- Heart failure
- Trauma
- Varicose veins
- Obesity
- Tobacco smoking

Recommendations

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

Jetlag

The main cause of jetlag is travelling to different time zones without giving the body a chance to adjust to new night-day cycles. In general, the more time zones you cross during your flight, the more your biological clock is disturbed.

The common symptoms are sleeplessness, tiredness, loss of appetite or appetite at odd hours.

Recommendations

- Get a good night's rest before your flight.
- Arrive at your destination a day or two early, to give your body a chance to become more acclimatised to the new time zone.
- Leave your watch on home time if you're staying at a destination less than 48 hours. Also try to eat and sleep according to your home time.



- Change your watch to the local time if your stay is longer than 48 hours, and try to eat and sleep in accordance with the local time.
- On longer stays, try to prepare in advance, adjust your meal and rest times to be closer to those of your destination.
- Try some light exercise - go for a brisk walk, or do some reading if you can't sleep after arrival at your destination. It generally takes the body's biological clock approximately one day to adjust per time zone crossed.
- Fly direct to minimise flight time. This allows you to relax more upon arrival.

Cabin Humidity / Dehydration

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

Recommendations

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

Eating and Drinking

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

Recommendations

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

Cabin Pressurisation

It is necessary to pressurise the outside air drawn into the cabin to a sufficient density for your comfort and health.

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

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

Recommendations

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

Motion Sickness

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

Recommendations

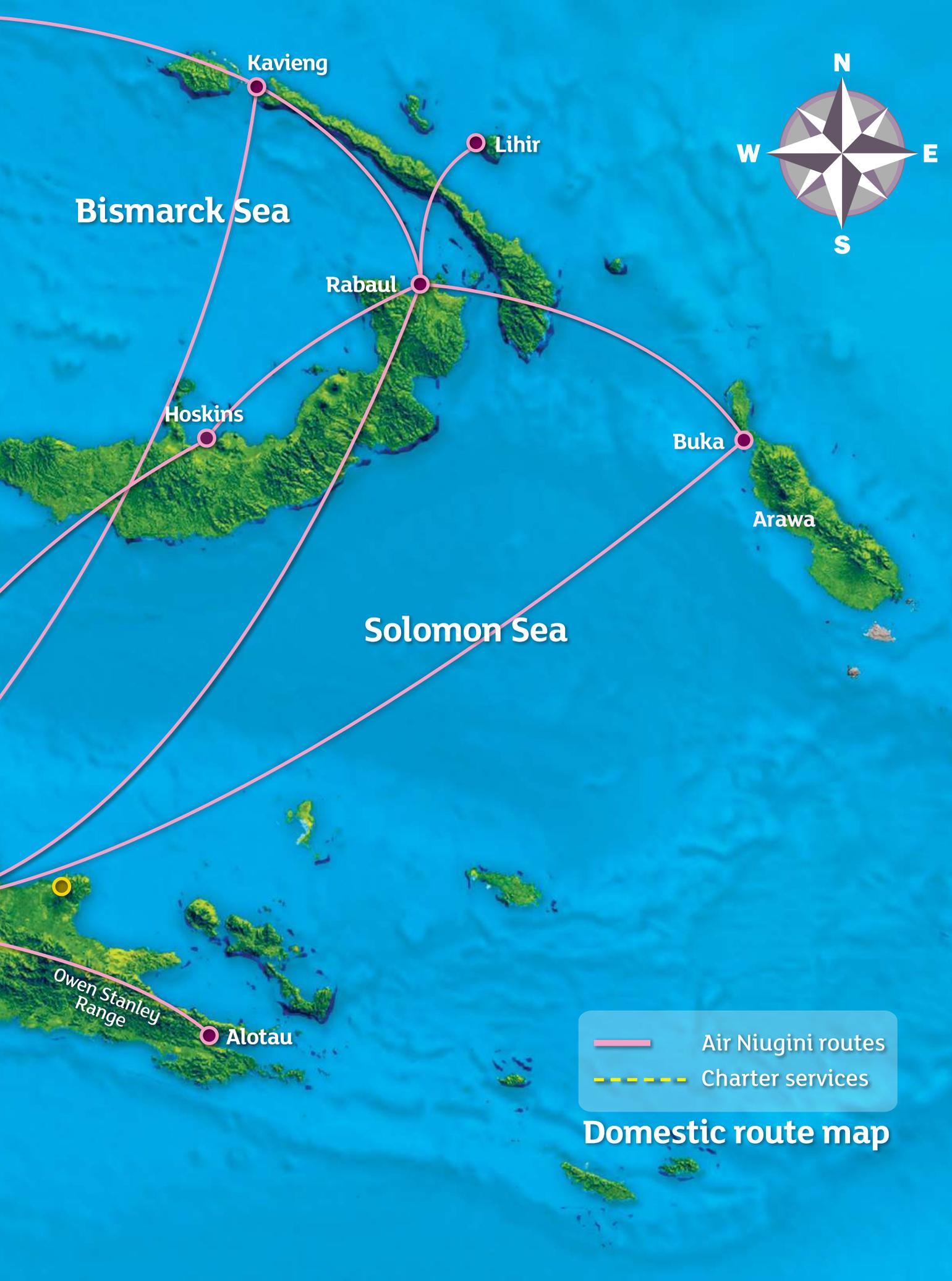
- When weather is clear and you can see the ground, sea or horizon, you are less susceptible to motion sickness.
- You can buy over the counter medications but we recommend that you consult your doctor about the appropriate medications.



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Lihir

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INTERNATIONAL ROUTE MAP



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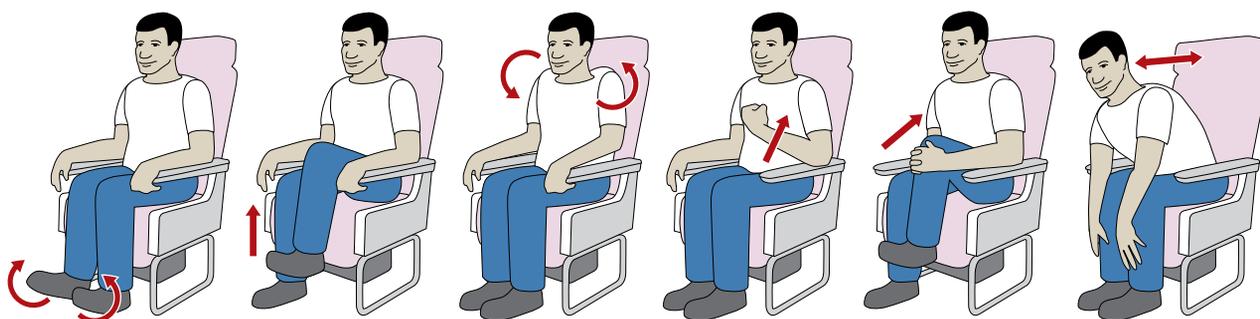


Your wellbeing



These exercises are designed to encourage a safe way to enjoy movement and stretch certain muscle groups that can become stiff as a result of long periods of sitting. They may be effective in increasing the body's circulation and massaging the muscles. We recommend you do these exercises for three or

four minutes every hour and occasionally get out of your seat and walk down the aisles if conditions allow. Each exercise should be done with minimal disturbance to other passengers. None of the following should be performed if they cause pain or cannot be done with ease.



ANKLE CIRCLES

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

KNEE LIFTS

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

SHOULDER ROLL

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

ARM CURL

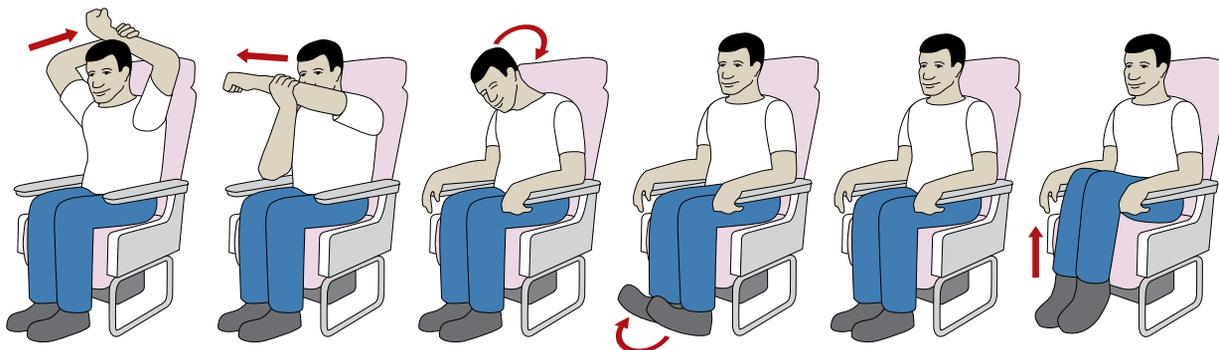
Start with arms held high at 90° angle - elbows down, hands out in front. Raise hands up to chest and back down alternating arms. Do these exercises in 30 second intervals.

KNEE TO CHEST

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

FORWARD FLEX

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



OVERHEAD STRETCH

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

SHOULDER STRETCH

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

NECK ROLL

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

FOOT PUMPS

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

2. Put both feet flat on the floor.

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

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Pg9

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Pg132

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Pg93

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Pg106

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Pg109

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Pg63

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Pg29

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Group
Pg14, 80

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Pg133

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Aviation
Pg52

Pacific Palms
Property
Pg31

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Pg54

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Pg78

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Pg130

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Malagan Resort
Pg131

PNG Core
Pg73

PNG Dataco
Pg11

PNG Embroidery
Pg127

PNG Forest
Products
Pg21

PNG Motors
Pg3

Portside
Business Park
Pg55

Pronto
Pg92

Rapopo Plantation
Resort
Pg72

Remington
Pg65

Royal Papua
Yacht Club
Pg44

Santos
Pg19

Smarthills
Pg46, 47

Steamships
Corporate
Pg39

Swire Shipping
Pg113

TCB Travel
Pg13

Theodist
Pg107

TISA Bank
Pg6, 7

Tropic Air
Pg15

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