

PNG Highlands and Islands

Dates: *Thursday, 24th May to Wednesday, 6th June, 2007* **14 days**
Cost: \$6600 ** **Style:** *Live aboard* **Start and Finish:** *Brisbane*

Explore stunning coral reefs, Morobe highlands, as well as the fabled Trobriand islands the fabled islands of love and a plethora of other islands in the Solomon and Coral Seas as well as gaining an appreciation of the diverse and rich cultures of the people in this sector of Papua New Guinea. Experience sing-sings, rich traditional Melanesian culture, thermal geysers, and more while cruising from Lae to Alotau aboard the comfortable and ever safe "Miss Rankin".

Day 1, Thursday, 24th May: Join Air Nuigini flight PX004 to Port Moresby departing Brisbane @ 10.40 a.m. Arrive Port Moresby 1.40 pm Clear Customs and depart Port Moresby PX108 3.20 pm. At Lae (while main personal luggage goes on to "Miss Rankin") board a bus for the former gold-mining town, Bulolo in the Morobe Highlands at 1300 metres surrounded by the endemic klinki pines. Overnight at Pine Lodge Hotel.

Day 2, Friday, 25th May: Explore some Bululo gold-mining relics and visit Butterfly Farm and Wau Ecology Institute to see tree kangaroos before returning to Lae for part of the *Biang Ngayam* Festival before Happy Hour at the Yatch Club and dinner aboard "Miss Rankin".

Day 3, Saturday, 26th May: Discover Lae, PNG's second largest city. Seer more of the fauna from around at the excellently presented Rainforest Habitat. Visit the War Memorial and the interesting top town market. Finish the day at the *Biang Ngayam* Festival with dozens of traditional dancing troupes and other presentations.

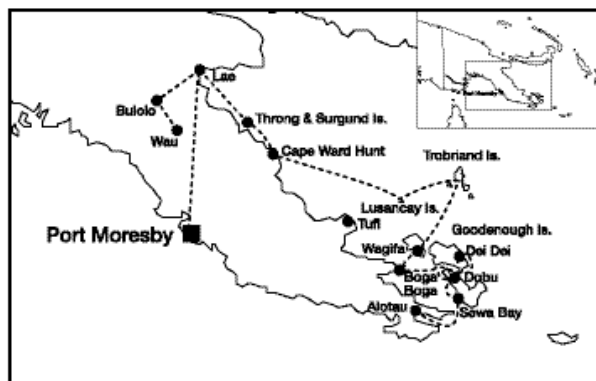
Day 4, Sunday, 27th May: Visit the magical, uninhabited coral cay Thong (Surgund) Island for superb snorkelling before crossing over to scenic Baden Bay to land at Kuwi village where local villagers will help to seek out Birds of Paradise regularly seen in the wild in late afternoons.

Day 5, Monday, 28th May: Cape Ward Hunt and Douglas Harbour just east of here were important in Allied planning in WWII. Visit one of the coastal villages, snorkel the coral reefs & explore for local wildlife. 70 nm

Day 6, Tuesday, 29th May: To Lusancay Islands, an archipelago of absolutely spectacular snorkelling along reefs surrounding mainly uninhabited islands. These are part of the Milne Bay Province which boasts more than 435 islands — some volcanic, and some coral the next 8 days of this safari are spent in this province.

Wednesday, 30th May and Thursday, 31st May: Discovering some of the rich culture, reefs and scenery of the fabled Trobriand Islands. Trobriand Islanders have amongst the least westernised cultures. It is their cultural intactness and their anthropological interest as the "Islands" of Love" made famous by Margaret Mead and Bronislaw Malinowski are what arouses most interest in them. These low lying coral coral islands are intensely cultivated with yams being the staple food. The spirit of free love is most heightened during the second week of July at the time of the Milamala (Yam) Festival. The Trobriands are part of the famous *kula* ring, a trade route running through most Milne Bay district communities.

Day 9, Friday, 1st June: Travel in daylight following a series of coral reefs down from the Trobriand Islands to Goodenough Island in the D'Entecasteaux Group stop at cays and reefs along the way for snorkelling and observations.



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Day 10, Saturday 2nd June: The D'Entecasteaux Group is an assembly of volcanic islands. Goodenough is one of the most steeply sided islands on earth rising to 2,566m. Visit Wagifa a collection of small very neat, traditional small villages spread over three islands for a sing sing and to observe local culture. Move on to the neatly laid out Boga Boga village at Cape Vogel for a welcome 'sing sing' then a chance to stroll through the village to buy artefacts and see how the villagers live.

Day 11, Sunday, 3rd June: Visit the amazing undeveloped hot springs at Dei Dei (like Roturua but without the smell), then on to Dobu Island and a snorkel in the bubbling sea water from undersea vents. Move on to Sewa Bay for birdwatching or snorkeling.

Day 12, Monday, 4th June: Spend the morning visiting Sewa Bay where local conservationists have campaigned against logging of this beautiful Harbour. After lunch cruise on to Boia Boia Waga for an afternoon snorkel, or go ashore and explore the dense jungle on this small idyllic island.

Day 13, Tuesday, 5th June: Cruise into Alotau the Capital of the beautiful Milne Bay Province which has been the main focus of this safari. Ashore explore this friendly secure and laid back town near the site of one of the most decisive WWII Battles. Celebrate the end of the cruise with a party on board.

Day 14, Wednesday, 6th June: Catch PX 955, 7.20 am flight from Alotau to Port Moresby to connect with return flights to Brisbane via Cairns arriving 4.00 p.m.

**** "Miss Rankin" is not a luxury vessel. It is air-conditioned throughout and everyone uses the very pleasant saloon on the upper deck. It has four deluxe cabins with ensuites for which an extra \$500 is charged. Other passengers sleep in inside cabins bunk beds and used shared facilities.**

A deposit of \$600 is required and a non refundable instalment of \$2000 to cover air fares must paid by 30th January.