

# IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR TRAVELLERS TO PAPUA NEW GUINEA

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Dear Traveller,

You are about to embark on your journey to Papua New Guinea. We look forward to welcoming you. To add to the enjoyment of your travels, we provide the following information. Please read it before arriving in PNG.

We endeavour to keep this information up to date but facts, regulations and situations do change from time to time.

Unlike many travel purveyors, we take a "warts and all" approach in our pre-trip information. Being aware of the realities of travel in PNG will enhance your overall travel experience.

PNG's undeveloped infrastructure, small scale tourism industry and wide range of cultures, while always fascinating, can sometimes result in potentially frustrating circumstances. It is important that visitors realize this and are prepared, understanding and respectful.

PNG is located relatively near highly developed tourist destinations including Australia, New Zealand, Indonesia and Singapore. For historical, cultural and geographic reasons, PNG's services and facilities, including transportation and tourism, are underdeveloped by comparison.

Unlike those countries and others you may have visited, including those in Africa, PNG is a country where tourism could hardly be described as an industry. As a result, you may encounter situations along the way that you would not normally expect.

PNG's undeveloped tourism industry and the range of cultures make for a unique travel experience. While usually fascinating, sometimes circumstances can conspire to become frustrating. It is important that visitors to PNG remain patient and keep an open mind.

If you come to Papua New Guinea with a spirit of adventure and a positive and flexible attitude, you will surely take only good memories home with you.

## **PEOPLE AND POPULATION**

The most recent census shows the population of Papua New Guinea to be just over seven million people. Nearly 75% of households reside in traditional dwellings, indicating that the majority of the people live a largely traditional life. The people of Papua New Guinea are referred to as Papua New Guineans, never as natives. Tribal or regional names, such as Papuan, Tolai, Highlander or Huli, are also acceptable.

## **CLIMATE**

The weather in PNG is tropical and pleasant. You will likely travel in two distinct climatic zones. One is the hot lowland area. The temperature range is 24-35°C (75-95°F) with high humidity. The second is the cooler highlands region. The temperature range is 12-28°C (54-82°F) with less humidity. In both areas, most of the day is generally clear. Clouds tend to develop in the afternoon resulting in late afternoon or evening rain. Although there are said to be dry and wet seasons, it is often difficult to distinguish between them. On the one hand, it can rain for several consecutive days during the dry season and on the other, lengthy dry spells may occur during the wet season. Even though it may be locally dry in the Sepik region, if it is raining heavily in the highlands, the level of the Sepik River will rise. Weather is generally very localized. PNG does not experience frontal weather in common in more temperate areas nor a monsoon season common in other tropical areas.

## **WILDERNESS LODGES**

KARAWARI LODGE is situated atop a ridge amidst a vast expanse of dense tropical lowland rainforest overlooking the Karawari River 300 feet below. It is truly remote. The only means of transport in and out is charter air. Consisting of twenty rooms, a large main building which houses the dining room, lounge and bar, Karawari is arguably the most authentic jungle lodge in PNG. The main building and each accommodation unit is traditionally built from local materials giving it an authentic and rustic air. The bathrooms are spacious and modern. Ceiling fans, mosquito-netted beds and a breezy veranda complete the tropical ambience. There are two adjoining but separate and self-contained rooms per building. A diesel generator provides power and is turned off at approximately 10:30 pm each evening. Power is turned on again at 6:00 am each morning. Battery powered night lights help guests navigate to their bathroom while the power is off. The rooms are built of materials gathered from the rainforest and the roof is made from sago palm leaves. Small geckos don't discriminate between the sago palm and your roof and may rustle around during the night, so there is no need for

alarm. During the dry season beautiful green tree frogs sometimes take a bath in the toilet bowls! Please advise our staff and they will carefully remove any small visitor in your room and send it back off to its jungle home. Lights attract moths and insects. Turn off the veranda and room lights while you are at dinner. A small jet boat is used in the river touring programs. Banks can be steep, muddy and slippery. Footwear with good treads is recommended. Drivers and guides are always there to help.

The SEPIK SPIRIT is our "floating lodge". It once travelled along the Sepik River and is now permanently moored in the mid Sepik area. It is thirty metres long and has a ten-metre beam. There are three levels. The lounge, dining room and bar are on the first floor. Nine rooms, each with private bathroom, are on the second floor. On the third floor are the staff quarters and a screened in observation area. The boat is fully air-conditioned. Water storage is limited and guests are asked to use water sparingly. Touring is done in a smaller jet boat. A low water level in the river may mean a muddy bank to negotiate from the touring boat to the top of the riverbank. Shoes worn on tours must be taken off and left on the shoe racks before entering the interior of the boat. Bring along an extra pair of casual light shoes or sandals for inside. There is no laundry service available.

AMBUA LODGE is an inspired mixture of local architecture, spectacular views and modest luxury. It was a recipient of Pacific Asia Travel Association's "Pacific Heritage Award" which cited Ambua Lodge as a "superb example of culturally sensitive and ecologically responsible tourism". Guests are accommodated in thirty round houses, set amongst landscaped gardens and built almost exclusively from natural materials. Each unit features 180 degree picture windows and en-suite bathrooms. Guests can also be accommodated in our new two story block of 18 modern hotel style rooms. The main lodge building houses the lounge, bar and dining room. Ambua generates power from its own mini hydroelectric power plants. The lodge and units are reached by a series of paths and steps. You head downhill on the way home to bed and uphill to the main lodge for breakfast. Ambua is at an altitude of 7000 feet or 2100 metres and that, along with the gently sloping , may cause you to breathe heavier than normal. Take your time, enjoy the mountain air, the scenery and the gardens. Nature walks and paths through villages are generally wet and may be slippery, footwear with good gripping soles is recommended. Rooms are tiled and can be cold on the feet at night. A light pair of slippers, thongs or similar would come in handy. Electric blankets and doonas, or continental quilts, are provided. It is suggested that your electric blanket is turned on to #1 prior to leaving for dinner. Touring is by

small buses, well sprung to cushion the ride over the roads, which are unsealed and generally in poor condition.

RONDON RIDGE is situated at 7,100 feet or 2,200 meters above sea level. The lodge has a magnificent view of the Wahgi Valley and surrounding mountains. The main lodge building contains the dining room, bar, lounge, reception and conference room. It opens to the view, gardens, a fish pond and patio. There is a self guided tour of the PNG art collection displayed in the main lodge building. Rondon Ridge has twelve large and tastefully furnished rooms with modern bathrooms, warmed beds and quilts for chilly highland nights. The rooms are set below the main lodge with access down a central outdoor staircase. Rondon Ridge has 24 hour electricity supplied by its own hydro system. Nature walks lead past orchids and provide opportunities to spot elusive Birds of Paradise. Trails may be slippery and wet so good walking shoes are needed. Cultural tours from Rondon Ridge guide the visitor through traditions and customs of the Melpa people of the area. Touring is by coach and a local guide accompanies to explain the various areas visited.

LAKE MURRAY LODGE is our newest lodge. Nestled among the trees on an island spit , it overlooks remote Lake Murray, the largest lake in Papua New Guinea. During the wet season the lake spreads to occupy an area of about 2000 square kilometers or 770 square miles. An estimated 5,000 people live in small villages scattered through the lake region. A government station on the opposite side of the island from the lodge was established in the pre-independence area. A school and small hospital make this the population centre of the surrounding area. An airstrip on the station provides air access to the area for small aircraft. Lake Murray Lodge arranges excursions around the lake in 8-seat river boats to visit local villages, birding sites and fishing spots. Guests are accommodated in 12 individual cabins. They are furnished with king twin or double beds, ceiling fans, modern en-suite bathrooms, a veranda and view of the lake. The main lodge building with a wraparound veranda houses a dining room, lounge, bar and reception. All of the buildings have made use of local sago woven matting and timber providing a natural setting to fit with the location. The lodge is powered with the latest technology in solar power. It provides 24 hour electricity with 240 volt power, a luxury in this remote location.

MALOLO PLANTATION LODGE is located in a sea side tropical setting complete with swaying palm trees and a volcanic island on the

distant horizon. Malolo has 14 air-conditioned rooms with private bathroom and balcony facing the ocean. The lounge, bar and dining room are open on all sides to allow in the ocean breezes. There is a fresh water swimming pool. Gardens and lawns reach down to the ocean. Electricity is drawn from the public power supply and at times can be unreliable. A backup generator is used during those times. Touring is done in mini buses along sealed roads.

## **CURRENCY, CREDIT CARDS AND EXCHANGE**

The unit of currency in PNG is the Kina, pronounced "kee-nah". There is a 1K coin and there are notes in K2, K5, K10, K20, K50 and K100 denominations. The sub-unit of the Kina is the Toea, pronounced "toy-ya". 100 Toea equals 1 Kina. There are Toea coins in various denominations.

Kina cash can usually be ordered through your home bank and acquired at the foreign exchange counters of most international ports of departure to Papua New Guinea.

It is also available at the international airport terminal In Port Moresby. Banking there is provided by the Bank of South Pacific. They have a staffed banking window and a banking machine. The staffed banking window is usually open to service passengers arriving on international flights. It is important to have small denominations of kina notes for making purchases in the villages. Villagers cannot change larger notes. The banking window at the international airport is usually able to supply smaller denominations.

Beyond the international airport terminal, you will have limited or no other access to banks or banking machines. There is at least one banking machine in the domestic terminal but this terminal can be a bit disorganized and crowded. While there are banks in major urban areas, queues tend to be long and slow moving. Touring schedules do not usually allow time to use them. Most hotels and the Wilderness Lodges have some cash but this is very limited and exchange rates are not as good as the banks.

Banks in PNG do not accept traveller's cheques or most foreign currencies. American and Australian dollars are the best foreign cash to bring to PNG. Remember that only kina is accepted when purchasing art and crafts in villages. American Express, Mastercard and Visa cards are accepted at our wilderness lodges. A 4% administration fee is applied to credit card payments

## **PASSPORT, VISA AND IMMIGRATION PROCEDURES**

Tourists need a visa to enter PNG. Visa regulations change from time to time. Currently a 60-day tourist visa is available upon arrival in PNG for nationals of many countries including USA, Canada and other countries in the Americas, the UK and other Western European countries, Israel, New Zealand, Japan and other Pacific countries. To acquire a visa upon arrival, eligible tourists need a passport valid for at least six months past their arrival date, proof of sufficient funds for their stay and an onward airline ticket with confirmed bookings. At this time there is no fee for a tourist visa on arrival. Tourist visas are not extendable.

Tourists eligible for visas on arrival have the option of acquiring their visa prior to leaving home through either the nearest PNG, or in some cases an Australian, Embassy or Consulate. Contact the relevant diplomatic mission directly if you choose this option. The process may take several weeks.

Visitors from most other countries, including Australia, are not eligible for a visa on arrival. Tourists from countries not eligible for a visa on arrival need to check with the PNG Embassy or Consulate in their region. If there is no PNG diplomatic office, check with the Australian Embassy or Consulate.

Always check with the PNG or Australian Embassies for current visa requirements prior to leaving home.

If stopping at or even just passing through another country on the way to PNG, please check with the nearest Embassy of that country before departing your home country to ensure you have all the required visas and documents. Currently Australia allows citizens of many countries including USA, Canada, Japan, and most Western European countries to stop in transit for less than 8 hours without a visa. But if you are stopping for 8 hours or more, changing airports within Australia, or leaving the transit lounge, you will be required to have a tourist visa, which you must acquire prior to arrival in Australia. Note that there is no smoking allowed in any transit lounge in Australia. If you have long waiting hours and need to leave the transit lounge for any reason, you will require a visa. Visa requirements do change from time to time, so always check with the nearest Embassy of the country in question for current details.

Be certain your baggage claim checks are clearly marked "POM" for Port Moresby on your international flight into PNG. Allow plenty of time to arrive at the airport to conduct immigration, security, and

check-in procedures. On arrival in Port Moresby, the procedure is quite orderly but can take up to one hour. If you have a tight connection, be sure you go to the head of the line in immigration at Jackson's Airport in Port Moresby and request special assistance

## **CANCELLATION POLICY**

Cancellations received prior to your arrival in PNG are entitled to full refund less a cancellation fee. Cancellations must be confirmed in writing as soon as practicable. The cancellation fees are based on the following range of notification: 21 to 29 days 10% per person of the land cost, 7-20 days 25% per person of the land cost, and under 7 days 50% per person of the land cost. No refund is available after the tour has commenced or in respect of any tour, accommodation, meals or any other service not utilised during the tour.

Please note that cancellation fees for facilities other than the Wilderness Lodges may vary from those stated above. Programs that include other facilities will have a different cancellation schedule to that stated above. They will vary from case to case.

## **INSURANCE AND MEDICAL FACILITIES**

All travellers to PNG are strongly recommended to acquire Travellers Insurance for trip cancellation and delays, for baggage loss and damage, and for illness, accident and medical evacuation. Government owned general hospitals, church affiliated hospitals, private doctors and pharmacies are available in major centres of the country. Services at both public and private medical facilities in PNG are not to the same standard as those found in western European countries, USA, Canada, Japan, or Australia. Medical aid posts are found in some remote areas. Their services are limited to very basic first aid and medication. We recommend you bring a personal first aid kit including ample supply of medication, and pack this in your carry-on baggage.

## **HEALTH REGULATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The only health requirement is a certificate of vaccination against yellow fever or cholera if arriving from or travelling through infected areas prior to arrival in PNG. Visitors are advised to take malaria precautions. Only your doctor can recommend and prescribe the appropriate medication for you. As a precaution, most travellers

keep their tetanus, typhoid, hepatitis, and polio inoculations current. Although the problem of diarrhoea and dysentery does not seem to be nearly as severe in PNG as in some of the neighbouring Asian countries, it is possible you will get some kind of diarrhoea at some stage of your trip. This is normal for travellers whose bodies are adapting to unaccustomed food and water. In most cases the problem is short term, not severe and easily treated.

## **TIME ZONE**

PNG is 10 hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time and is on the same time as Sydney wintertime, Australia, or Australian Eastern Standard Time.

## **TELEPHONES/COMMUNICATIONS**

PNG has landline and cell phone systems in all main towns. Cell phone service has been expanding into the rural areas. With all the variables in cell phone plans and services, it is difficult to accurately advise travellers just where cell service might be available to them.

There is a two-way radio system connecting the remote wilderness lodges. If relatives or friends need to contact you while you are at the Wilderness Lodges, the quickest way is a fax sent to +675 542 2470. The fax should clearly state your name and location, eg. "message for Mr. John Citizen, guest AMBUA LODGE". This message will be sent onto the lodge by aircraft or if time does not permit, will be passed on via the two-way radio. The published number of +675 542 1438 for Wilderness Lodges is a Mount Hagen booking office number and guests cannot be reached on this number. It is important that you notify family prior to departure that while staying at the Wilderness Lodges, you will not be able to call them and they will not be able to call you on a landline and your cell service will be limited.

The wilderness lodges do not offer internet service.

## **TIPPING**

The custom of tipping has become more widespread in recent years. As a result, Guidelines for Tipping will be one of the items in the "Travel Pack" you receive upon arrival in PNG. If you wish to tip, please follow the guidelines in order not to offend, disrupt or cause jealousies.

Please do not give gifts to individuals in the lodges. If you wish to give a gift in a village, please discuss this with the lodge manager who will advise you about the correct way of doing so. Your understanding of this will help prevent turning the people and in particular the children of PNG into beggars who are often found in other countries. If you would like to bring gifts for villages, basic school supplies, such as exercise books and pens are much more useful and appreciated than trinkets, balloons or candy.

## **ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES**

The electrical system in PNG is 240 Volts AC, 50Hz. Some hotels provide 110 Volts outlets in guest rooms. PNG uses the same electrical plug outlets as Australia. Travellers planning to charge electrical items should be aware that electricity at Karawari Lodge is not available between about 10:30pm and 6:00am nor while guests are on day tours. The Sepik Spirit has power, and air-conditioning, when guests are on board including throughout the night. The Sepik Spirit's power is turned off while guests are out touring.

## **CLOTHING AND CHECK LIST**

Pack lightly. This will most certainly add to the enjoyment of your trip. The climate at Karawari Lodge, Malolo Plantation Lodge, the Sepik Spirit and Lake Murray Lodge is hot and humid. Lightweight, casual and modest clothing is appropriate. Bring a jacket for the cool mornings at Ambua Lodge and Rondon Ridge. Mosquitoes are drawn to dark colours so khaki, camel, bone or similar are preferable colours to wear. Walking shoes with good treads are essential. They will likely get wet and muddy. Malolo Plantation Lodge has a swimming pool, so don't forget your swim suit. Throughout Papua New Guinea, short, tight or skimpy clothing is not advisable out of respect for the local culture.

Some items for your packing list:

- Sun hat
- Insect repellent
- Flashlight
- Sunscreen
- Rain jacket
- Collapsible umbrella
- Binoculars
- Camera with plenty of memory
- Malaria medication prescribed by your physician

## **LAUNDRY SERVICE**

Laundry service is available at Ambua Lodge, Karawari Lodge, Rondon Ridge, Lake Murray Lodge and Malolo Plantation Lodge. Keep in mind that in most locations laundry is line dried and thus sufficient time is required for drying. Generally plan on 24 hours for this service. There is no laundry service or facilities available on the Sepik Spirit.

## **FLYING IN PNG**

The majority of flying in PNG is conducted under visual flight rules. The mainland of PNG contains numerous mountain ranges rising up to 14,800 ft (4,500 metres). A large number of flights are conducted in small un-pressurised aircraft, making it difficult to fly above these mountains and the towering clouds. Therefore if you can't see where the mountains are and you can't go over them, then you can't go into cloud.

Due to the challenging topographical conditions of PNG, the navigational aids that allow aircraft to land in bad weather cannot be used at the vast majority of airports in PNG. This even applies to the larger aerodromes such as Mount Hagen. It goes without saying, that smaller aerodromes such as those that service Ambua Lodge, Karawari Lodge, the Sepik Spirit and Lake Murray Lodge are very basic and operations of light aircraft in and out of these aerodromes is very weather dependant.

The weather in Papua New Guinea can change very quickly (for the better or worse!). This unpredictable and changeable weather is caused by the interaction of the high mountains with the generally hot and humid tropical conditions. All you can do is relax, read a book and listen to your pilot. The pilots in Papua New Guinea are very experienced with these conditions and know best when to go and to stay.

## **BAGGAGE REGULATIONS**

For those travelling on only Air Niugini domestic flights baggage allowance is usually restricted to 16kg or 35lb plus a carry-on bag. You will likely be travelling on other small regional airlines to the Wilderness Lodges. Flights between these lodges operate in small 5 or 8 seat aircraft with limited weight and space for baggage. On these flights you must restrict your baggage to 10kgs maximum per person plus a small carry-on bag or camera bag. Large and hard-sided suitcases are not suitable on these aircraft. The small regional airlines are strict and if you come with inappropriate or excess baggage your bags will likely be off loaded and you will be required to re-pack, thus causing undue stress on yourself, the pilot, ground operational staff and your fellow travellers. If taking a long trip, you

many find it convenient to leave excess baggage at the hotel in the country stopped at just before coming to PNG and will be returning to on the way home. If this is not possible, excess baggage can be stored in Port Moresby. Please ensure that your stored baggage is clearly tagged with your name, address, and return date.

## **SECURITY**

Unfortunately, on the rare occasion when Papua New Guinea does get featured in the international media, it is usually a sensationalist report depicting PNG in a negative light. As a result, PNG often and unjustifiably is described as a dangerous and high-risk country to visit. You may get your first indication of this attitude from either your friends at home before you leave or from people you meet en route to PNG. Even the local foreign residents have their own share of gruesome stories, which are usually hearsay and exaggerated. Do not let this discourage you. If you take reasonable care and common sense, you are most unlikely to experience only friendliness and hospitality.

Of course, you should take sensible precautions. Do not carry valuables such as passport, airline tickets, money, credit cards or jewellery while walking around town or on sightseeing tours. Do not leave valuables unattended in your room. Follow the lodge manager's direction about where you should keep valuables. There is seldom any place to go in the evenings, but in any case it is advisable not to leave the hotel at night. Crime is a factor everywhere these days, so take all precautions possible. There is no need to be paranoid about security, however, as is the case virtually everywhere in the world – situational awareness is the key to keeping you and your belongings safe.

## **LANGUAGE**

There is an estimate of 800 traditional languages in PNG. English is one of the three official languages. The two most commonly used languages are Hiri Motu and Melanesian Pidgin.

## **FOOD**

Meats, fish, vegetables, and tropical fruits are served Australian style. Some of the world's best coffee and tea is grown in the Highlands of PNG. An excellent beer is locally produced and a good variety of imported wines are plentiful. Set menus, often as buffets, are served at the wilderness lodges. Vegetarian options are available with advance notice. It is not always possible to accommodate other special meal requests. If you have a food

allergy please be sure we are advised prior to your arrival. Please confirm your allergy or request for vegetarian meals with the manager at the time of check-in. Local food is made up of bland starchy foods with very little protein and to most traveller's palates is not particularly appetising. There is no national cuisine such as can be found in Thailand and Indonesia. At the Wilderness Lodges dinner may include one "local" vegetable for you to try.

## **WATER SUPPLY**

In most major centres, the public water supply is treated and is comparable to World Organisation standards. Potable water, from various sources, is available at all the Wilderness Lodges. It is supplied in the rooms, in the dining room, at the bar and when on tour. Bottled water is available for purchase.

## **SMOKING**

Smoking is not allowed in any of the Wilderness Lodges' buildings nor on any of the vehicles. planes or boats. There are usually frequent stops during a tour at which time a smoking break can be taken. There are ample outside areas for smokers including the outdoor deck on the Sepik Spirit.

## **TOURING**

During your trip the driver/guides will make every effort to be of assistance. They are proud of their record and the compliments from visitors. Remember, they are speaking in their third language, after their local language and Pidgin-English. Do ask them questions but try using an uncomplicated vocabulary and do not speak too quickly. They need not be treated patronisingly. You will find them friendly and helpful Travellers have commented that they are refreshing and innocent compared to guides in many other places in the world.

Helpful tip when asking a question to ensure a more accurate response: ask the question without building the response into it. Instead of, "Is that a cockatoo?" ask, "What kind of bird is that?" or, "What is the name of that bird?" Should a guide offer you with good intentions, artefacts or heirlooms to be mailed later, it is best to not accept.

## **CULTURAL DISPLAYS AND VILLAGE VISITS**

Daily tours may include nature walks, birding and village visits. Most include walking through the local people's land, gardens and

living areas. Sometimes, we may be asked by local people not to visit them or intrude on their land or privacy. Reasons for this may be numerous, but often it is due to a death in the village or a tribal dispute. We respect their wishes and customs, and we ask that you do likewise. We may not have had any prior notice of their need for privacy and arrive at the village expecting perhaps a cultural display only to find we are turned away. Don't become upset or angry with either your driver/guide or the local people. The participants in these displays and cultural events are village people, not professional performers or dance groups. It is this very reason that makes the whole PNG experience so exceptional and authentic. The operational person in charge (not your driver/guide) will try to make alternative arrangements wherever time and circumstances permit.

Under the heading of "Tipping" you are asked not to hand out gifts to individuals in villages. This is a most important request and we remind you to you comply. As mentioned above, school supplies are always appreciated by under-funded rural schools.

## **PHOTOGRAPHY**

Like anyone anywhere, the people of Papua New Guinea dislike the intrusion of their privacy. So, except in the case of planned visits and events, always remember to ask before taking a photograph of a particular individual. It is rare but sometimes the individual may request payment. In this case it is recommended you do not pay for, nor take the photo. Plenty of photo opportunities will come up and at no cost. The paying of photos whether for money or gifts inhibits spontaneity and hospitality. The local economy is assisted by the payment of a general fee to each village that is visited. In this way, the whole community benefits.

## **THINGS TO BUY**

PNG art and handicrafts are world renowned. The variety of art reflects the diversity of PNG's cultures. The Sepik River is well known for its art, which comes in many forms including pottery, wooden carved masks and cult hooks. In other areas of the country you will find carved bowls, bilum or string bags, baskets, ceremonial axes, clay and bamboo ornaments, charms and musical instruments. That list includes just a few of the items you will probably have the opportunity to buy.

In general, bartering is not part of the purchasing process in PNG. Sellers will set what they consider a fair price. You can request a "second price" and they may or may not agree to it. It is considered impolite to barter or haggle over prices beyond a second price.

Please be advised that it is illegal to export the feathers of the Bird of Paradise. If you buy or even accept as a gift the feathers of these birds, you will encourage the hunting of these rare and beautiful creatures and thus help create an industry which could possibly lead to their demise. PNG and Australian laws are very strict about the export/import of all endangered species. Please do not buy or accept these feathers and be advised that you will be prosecuted if you are caught trying to take them out of the country. The skin of goanna is similarly prohibited. Your own country or countries you travel through on the way home may have import restrictions on shells, seeds and other natural materials. You should make yourself aware of them.

If you miss the opportunity to buy art in the villages you will find some available for purchase at Ambua Lodge, Karawari Lodge and Rondon Ridge.

## **ART FORWARDING**

Some travellers ship purchases home. It is the option for those who buy items too large or too heavy to be included in their baggage allowance. Without discouraging you from buying and enjoying art and mementoes of your travels, we do want you to be aware of the realities of shipping.

The Wilderness Lodges are not in the shipping business but they do provide a service for travellers who want to ship their purchases home. You will receive details about that service in your "Travel Pack" when you arrive in PNG.

For now, be aware of the following:

- It is impossible to estimate shipping costs until the items are packed, measured and weighed by the shipping company.
- It is impossible to estimate when a shipped item will arrive at its destination.
- Government permits are required for some items. The head office of the Wilderness Lodges arranges those permits but has no control over the processing and timing.
- Items are well packed for shipping by an experienced independent packer. Items usually arrive safely. While reports of damage are very few, breakage is, of course, always a possibility. There is no insurance against damage.
- Travellers are responsible for handling import restriction, customs and duty matters in their home country.

## **POSTAGE RATES**

Mail from PNG to other countries can take anywhere from 10 to 30 days. Stamps for postcards cost to American and European countries are K8.00. For Australian, New Zealand and South Pacific nations the cost is K6.

## **COMMUNICATING WITH PAPUA NEW GUINEANS**

There are sometimes difficulties that even the best planning cannot have anticipated. While most travellers to PNG are experienced and sophisticated, we offer these guidelines for dealing handling the unexpected. In PNG, anger, displeasure or irritability do not increase one's chances of obtaining positive results. Such expressions of displeasure often produce the opposite effect. Please be patient as it is a waste of time complaining about arrangements. When you experience the unexpected, please be understanding and avoid dwelling on mishaps. That only worsens the travel experience for yourself and your fellow travellers. It is natural to be agitated or frightened in such a remote, foreign country. Be assured all arrangements are being coordinated to make your trip as smooth as possible. Overall, past clients find PNG one of their best trips ever, but the unexpected can easily occur.

## **PIDGIN**

Pidgin-English known locally as Tok Pisin, is the lingua franca of PNG and is almost universally spoken throughout the country. It is derived from English, German and Indigenous languages, with the occasional Spanish, Dutch and Portuguese words.

Here are some helpful Tok Pisin phrases:

Monin - Good morning	Lapun- Old man or woman
Apinun- Good afternoon	Balus- Aircraft
Gut nait- Good night	Ples Balus- Airport
Tenk yu- Thank you	Kago- Luggage
Em hamas?- How much is that?	Wantok- Countryman or friend
Mi laik baim- I would like to buy	Bilas- Decoration or uniform
Toilet We?- Where is the toilet?	Wara- Water
Halpim mi plis- Help me please	Yu stap gut?- How are you?
Nogat- No	Mi stap gut- I am fine
Mi no laikim- I do not like it	Inap mi kisim poto?- May I take a photo?
Yumi go we?- Where are we going?	Soim mi- Show me
Kai Kai- Food	Klostu- Near or close by
Ka- Car	Longwe tumas- A very long way or too far
Mani- Money	Wanem nem bilong yu?- What is your name?
Man- Man or male	Ples bilong yu we?- Where are you from?
Meri- Woman or female	Mi no klia gut- I do not understand
Pikinini- Baby or very young child	Mi no save- I don't know

Manki- Older children and teenagers	Tok isi- Speak slowly
Yangpela- Young man or woman	Haus sik- Hospital

## **READING LIST**

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## **VIDEO - SUGGESTED VIEWING**

**Cultural Interest** - First Contact, Pearls & Savages, Voices of the Forest and The Mendi

**Nature Interest** - Oddie in Paradise, Birds of Paradise, New Guinea An Island Apart, Attenborough in Paradise.