

Papua New Guinea Mt Hagen Cultural Show Tour 2011

Itinerary dates: August 5 – August 19, 2011

Tour Leader – Beth Whitman

This unique 15-day **cultural journey** to Papua New Guinea includes the extraordinary chance to experience the **Mt. Hagen Festival** held each year in August. 2011 is the **50th anniversary** of this **singsing** that will certainly draw an increased number of tribes from all over Papua New Guinea.

The tour features the private **Paiya Tours mini-show** on Magic Mountain where a small number of tribes sing and dance **in preparation for the Mt. Hagen Festival**. You will have the rare chance to **meander amongst the tribes** while they are applying their makeup, getting dressed and adorning themselves with body art just prior to performing. Simply put, this can be described as a **photographer's dream**.

Additionally, this unique tour features **boating down the impressive Sepik River** in the north, where you will experience a **homestay**. The group will also go to the **seaside community of Madang** for **snorkeling, scuba diving** (if you like), **unwinding** and **cultural activities** with the local people (such as demos of **basket weaving** and **food preparation**).

Day 1

August 5, 2011

On this day of the trip, you'll be welcomed upon landing at the Port Moresby Airport and head to the hotel. Depending on arrival times, there may be time for the group to have a **brief tour of Port Moresby** including the **National Parliament Haus** the **National Museum** and the **Botanical Gardens**. Overnight in Port Moresby.

Day 2

August 6, 2011

Following breakfast, the group will go to the airport for the **flight to Wewak**, where we will be met by the local guide and taken to the hotel. This is going to be the starting point for the **tour of the Sepik region**. Overnight in Wewak.

Day 3

August 7, 2011 (L, D)

Today we will have an early breakfast and travel around 3 hours to **Pagwi**. We'll then go by **motorized canoe to the village of Korogu**. We'll have the opportunity to **visit the village, examine artifacts** on exhibit and connect with the local people. We'll then continue to **Kanganamun** where we'll stay overnight at Kanganamun Guesthouse.

NOTE - This accommodation is **quite basic** and likely will consist of bedding on bare floors, an outside pit toilet and bucket baths. Meals will also be simple (taro, sago and chicken) and the accommodations may possibly only possess a hurricane lamp or power supplied by an electrical generator.



HIGHLIGHT! Arriving in the **rural Sepik region** will be a highlight in and of itself. This particular location is inhabited by **numerous tribes**. Boating along the Sepik River, we will see lots of the tribes that maintain **traditional lifestyles** that go back thousands of years.

Day 4

August 8, 2011 (B, L, D)

On this day, we'll have a half day together with the **community at Kanganamun Village**. Following lunch, we will proceed to **Yajaim Village** and on to **Palimbe**, while experiencing the **peacefulness of the Sepik River**. During the journey, we'll witness an **authentic singsing** and also see how the locals **cook sago, carve wood, paint** with typical materials and **weave baskets**. Watching these kinds of activities will provide you with insight into exactly how the river people live. Be prepared to see a **great deal of wildlife** and birds as they capture fish in the water. Overnight at Kanganamun Guesthouse.



HIGHLIGHT! As well as seeing the typical arts and crafts produced today, the group will go to a **traditional Sepik Spirit House** known as a Haus Tamburan.

Day 5

August 9, 2011 (B, L)

On this day, we will have an early breakfast and next will set out to **Terence, Urther Maringe** and **Aibom** villages. As we head down the river, we might find locals doing some **fishing in dugout canoes**. We'll also see more bird and wildlife (possibly crocodiles) alongside the river bank. We will continue on along the waterway passing **Kambige Village**, where we will stop for a brief time prior to continuing on to **Cambri** and **Pagwi**, and after that back to our vehicle to return to Wewak. Overnight in Wewak.

Day 6

August 10, 2011

In the morning, the group will go to the airport for our **flight to Port Moresby**. (Returning to POM will be the only way to get to the next location, Hagen). Upon arrival at the airport, we will be greeted by a guide and transferred to our hotel. If we have time, the group might be able to do some **more sightseeing in Port Moresby**.

Day 7

August 11, 2011 (L, D)

Following breakfast, we will return to the airport for the trip to Mt. Hagen. There, we'll be met by another guide and taken to Magic Mountain Nature Lodge where, at night, we'll see a **courting ceremony** with a young man and woman. Overnight at Magic Mountain Nature Lodge.



HIGHLIGHT! Magic Mountain is situated outside the city of Hagen and in the **verdant and tropical mountain range of PNG**. You will be welcomed by **fresh air, wild flowers** and **vast greenery**.

Day 8

August 12, 2011 (B, L, D)

The group will depart in the morning to **Paiya Village** for the extraordinary **Paiya mini-show**. This private event is hosted by the owner of Magic Mountain Nature Lodge and involves **roughly 10 tribal groups**. The performers will be donning typical (yet completely different) outfits that will include **plumes of birds of paradise, pigs' tusks, shells** and spectacular **body paintings**. During the Mini Show, you will see a **courting ceremony**, a demonstration of **traditional fighting** utilizing bows and arrows, plus a **marriage ceremony**.

The group will also visit the **Paiya Cultural Center** where ancient objects including **skeletons and spirit stones** are exhibited. These are maintained by the tribal chief and his 5 wives. During the latter part of the day, the group will take the short stroll back to Magic Mountain Nature Lodge.



HIGHLIGHT! The Paiya Tours Mini-Show is an extraordinary chance to observe the **tribes getting ready for the singing**. You will see them **painting their bodies and faces, donning their feathers** and adding various **adornments to their outfits**. You'll then watch the actual performance in the main grounds. The **tribespeople are really friendly** and encourage you to take photographs. You will have the opportunity to observe the show up close, mix with the performers and take plenty of photos.

Day 9

August 13, 2011 (B, L, D)

Following breakfast, the group will leave for the **Mt. Hagen Show**, which is held about 18 miles from Magic Mountain. Weather depending, the group will depart early enough to see the singing from the beginning (**performers preparing for the show**) to finish (**final singing and dancing**).

This day will be a full one as you watch performers from throughout the country. It will provide you with the opportunity to learn about the various practices and customs of PNG. Be prepared to **see about 100 very different tribes**. Late in the day, the group will return to Magic Mountain Nature Lodge where we will overnight.



HIGHLIGHT! This particular show is unlike anything you will ever experience. Ever. You'll have the opportunity to **wander among these 100 tribes** while they are singing and dancing (**all tribes simultaneously**) and while each group tries to outshine the others.

Day 10

August 14, 2011 (B, L, D)

Following breakfast, the group will go back to the Mt. Hagen singing for an **additional half-day of performances** by the groups. There'll still be lots of things to see on this day. During the early afternoon, the group returns to Magic Mountain Nature Lodge to **take it easy and recover** from a lively couple of festival days.

Day 11

August 15, 2011 (B)

We'll start **the drive to Madang** on the Highlands Highway in the morning. It's a lovely drive (about 8 hours) and we will get the chance to view **brehtaking and rich scenery**, with many opportunities to stop for pictures.

We'll have a short bus tour of **Goroka town** and will stop for photos at **Daulo Pass** (which overlooks the Asaro Valley) and **Kasam Pass** (overlooking Makahm Valley). Much of this land is occupied by cash crops including sugar and cocoa.

Overnight in Madang.



HIGHLIGHT! The highlight today is the **countryside along the route** seldom utilized by visitors. The road will likely be rough and slow going, nonetheless it will be worthwhile.

Day 12

August 16, 2011

After breakfast in Madang (located along PNG's north coast), we will visit some nearby sights such as the **Madang Cultural Center** as well as some local villages. We'll see the tribes taking part in common activities including **basket weaving** and **cooking**. Overnight in Madang.

Day 13

August 17, 2011

Today, we will relax and relish the **stunning coastline** and take part in either **river or sea activities**, like **snorkeling** and/or **diving**. Overnight in Madang.

Day 14

August 18, 2011

Following breakfast, we'll transfer to the airport for the trip **back to Port Moresby** where we will overnight.

Day 15

August 19, 2011

Following breakfast, the group will transfer back to the airport to catch our **international flights**.