

Papua New Guinea Mt. Hagen Show

Itinerary dates: August 12 - 24, 2023

Trip Leader: Beth Whitman

HIGHLIGHTS

- Experience the **Mt. Hagen SingSing**, which attracts approximately 75 tribes from around the country
- Attend the **Paiya Mini-Show** where a small number of tribes perform in advance of the Mt. Hagen SingSing
- Boat down the **impressive Sepik River**, known for its vast bird life, including birds of paradise
- Experience a **homestay in a small village** along the Sepik River
- Visit the Goroka region, the home of the **Asaro Mudmen**

The adventure starts in Port Moresby on August 12, 2023. Nearly all flights arrive via Brisbane, Cairns, Sydney, Singapore or Tokyo. We encourage you to arrive on the 12th and no earlier as there are few things to do in Port Moresby.

You might consider overnighing in Australia (or wherever your entry point is) on the night of the 11th to ensure your on-time arrival on the 12th in Port Moresby. This will also help you get over jet lag.

ITINERARY

Day 1

Saturday, August 12, 2023 – Port Moresby

Meals: Dinner



On this first day, you'll be welcomed upon landing at the Port Moresby airport and head to the hotel. Depending on arrival times, there may be a chance for the group to have a brief tour of Port Moresby, including a **village on stilts** and the **local fish market**.

Dinner and overnight at [Holiday Inn Express](#) or similar in Port Moresby.

Day 2

Sunday, August 13, 2023 – Port Moresby – Wewak

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Following breakfast, we'll head to the airport for the **flight to Wewak**. We'll be met by a local guide and taken to the hotel where we'll check in and have lunch. This is the starting point for the **tour of the Sepik region**. Depending on our arrival time, we may have a chance to visit some **small markets** and sights around Wewak. Overnight at [In Wewak Boutique Hotel](#) or similar in Wewak.

Day 3

Monday, August 14, 2023 – Wewak – Sepik River

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Today we'll enjoy an early breakfast and then drive about four hours to the river, stopping at roadside markets along the way. We'll then take a **motorized canoe to a nearby village, Kanganamun**, where we'll be welcomed by a singsing. We'll then visit the **village's haus tambaran** (spirit house).

Overnight at homestay in Kanganamun.

NOTE – This accommodation is **quite basic** and likely will consist of a thin mattress on matted floors, an outside pit toilet and bucket baths. Expect that we will all be sleeping in one large room. Meals will also be simple (taro, sago and chicken). There is no electricity in this community except for a few hours via a generator in the evening. A mosquito net is a must although it may be available at the home (we'll let you know a couple of months prior to departure whether this will be provided by our hosts).



★ **HIGHLIGHT!** Arriving in the **rural Sepik region** and meandering through the many waterways are highlights all on their own. Numerous tribes reside in this region. While boating along the Sepik River and its tributaries, we'll see many of the local people who still maintain their **age-old traditions**, including **crocodile hunting**.

Day 4

Tuesday, August 15, 2023 – Sepik River

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Today, we'll visit nearby villages while experiencing the **tranquility of the Sepik River**. At these villages, we'll visit spirit houses and be able to see (and purchase) fine handicrafts and artifacts. We'll also see how the locals **cook sago** (a plant starch), **carve wood**, **paint on bark** and other materials, and **weave baskets**. Watching these kinds of activities will give us some insight into exactly how the people in this area live. We may also see different kinds of birds that inhabit the area and, if we're lucky, a crocodile.



Overnight at homestay in Kanganamun.

★ **HIGHLIGHT!** These villages, located on the banks of the river, are known for their wide variety of **carvings and crafts**. We'll have a chance to meet and **visit with the carvers** and bring home some authentic handicrafts from this very remote area.

Day 5

Wednesday, August 16, 2023 – Sepik River – Wewak

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

After a leisurely breakfast, we'll head back out on the river to our original boat launching point. Here, the group will board the bus and return to Wewak.

Overnight at [In Wewak Boutique Hotel](#) or similar in Wewak.

Day 6

Thursday, August 17, 2023 – Wewak – Port Moresby – Mt. Hagen

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

In the early morning, we'll go to the airport for our **flight to Port Moresby** and then onward to **Mt. Hagen**. Because our layover from Wewak and the journey to Mt. Hagen will be during lunch, we'll make do with snacks and a light meal at the airport.

Upon arrival in Mt. Hagen, the group will be met by a local guide and taken to a beautiful lodge in the mountains. Take note that it will likely be **cold here at night**.

Dinner and overnight at Magic Mountain (private lodge) in the Mt. Hagen area.



HIGHLIGHT! We'll be staying outside the city of Hagen in the **verdant and tropical mountain range of PNG**. Here, we will be welcomed by **fresh air, wild flowers** and **lush greenery**. We'll be staying in **private cabins** located on a beautiful hillside. The cabins are simple but have private bathrooms with showers.

Day 7

Friday, August 18, 2023 – Mt. Hagen

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

The group will depart in the morning for a local village where we'll experience an extraordinary mini-singsing. The **Paiya Mini-Show** is a private event that includes **roughly 10 tribal groups**, who will also be taking part in the Mt. Hagen Show. Viewing the performers in a smaller venue is a great opportunity to **photograph them up close** while they are adorned with paint, bird feathers, shells and other items (man-made and natural!).

The performers will be donning outfits typical of the Mt. Hagen Show, yet each is completely unique with personalized **feathered plumes from birds of paradise, pig tusks, shells** and spectacular **body paintings**. During this mini-show, we will see a demonstration of **traditional fighting** utilizing bows and arrows, as well as a **marriage ceremony**.

The group will also visit a cultural center where ancient objects such as **skeletons and spirit stones** are exhibited. These are maintained by the tribal chief and his five wives.

Dinner and overnight at Magic Mountain (private lodge) in the Mt. Hagen area.



HIGHLIGHT! The mini-show is an extraordinary chance to observe the **tribes practicing for the Mt. Hagen SingSing**. We will see them **painting their bodies and faces, donning their feathers** and adding various **adornments to their outfits**. We'll then watch the actual performance at the main showgrounds. The **tribespeople are really friendly** and welcome having their photographs taken. We will have the opportunity to observe the show up close, mix with the performers and take plenty of photos.

Day 8

Saturday, August 19, 2023 – Mt. Hagen

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

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



This day will be a full one as we'll watch performers from around the country. Be prepared to **see anywhere from 75-90 very different tribes**. Late in the day, the group will return to the lodge.

Dinner and overnight at Magic Mountain (private lodge) in the Mt. Hagen area.



HIGHLIGHT! This particular show is unlike anything you will ever experience. Ever. We'll have the opportunity to **wander among these tribes** while they are singing and dancing—**all tribes performing simultaneously**.

Count on each group trying to outshine the others.

Day 9

Sunday, August 20, 2023 – Mt. Hagen

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Following breakfast, the group will return to the Mt. Hagen Show for an **additional half day of performances**. There will be much to experience and photograph. In the afternoon, the group will return to the lodge to **take it easy and recover** from a lively couple of festival days.

Dinner and overnight at Magic Mountain (private lodge) in the Mt. Hagen area.

Day 10

Monday, August 21, 2023 – Mt. Hagen – Goroka

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

For those interested, today we'll depart very early (around 4 a.m.) for the 45-minute drive to Nebilyer to seek out the **elusive bird of paradise**. Depending on the nesting cycle when we're there, we might see a few types of these beautiful birds—**Raggiana, King of Saxony and Stephanie's Astrapia**.



* It's likely the birding area will be muddy. Wear shoes that are OK for tromping through mud/wetlands.

Whether you go birding or not, everyone will have breakfast together in town before making our way to Goroka (approximately a four-hour drive). Along the way, we'll stop at a village to learn about their local traditions, have lunch at a local restaurant and stop at a coffee factory before arriving in Goroka.

Dinner and overnight at [Pacific Gardens Hotel](#) or similar in Goroka.

Day 11
Tuesday, August 22, 2023 – Goroka
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Today we'll tour some sights around Goroka including the **JK McCarthy Museum**, which has displays of **pottery, weapons, clothes, jewelry** and art.



We'll also visit the famous **Asaro Mudmen** and learn about how they make **masks, bamboo flutes** and **weavings**. We'll also see performances by both the **local men and women** as they present traditional dances.

Dinner and overnight at [Pacific Gardens Hotel](#) or similar in Goroka.

★ **HIGHLIGHT!** Though small, the **JK McCarthy Museum** is literally a treasure trove of **history** and **information** about PNG and its culture. You could well find yourself wanting to spend hours here!

Day 12
Wednesday, August 23, 2023 – Goroka – Port Moresby
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Today after breakfast, we'll depart for the airport for our morning flight to Port Moresby. Depending upon our arrival time, we may have time to visit the **National Museum, Parliament Haus** or other sights.

We'll have one final dinner together near the beach before we overnight at [Holiday Inn Express](#) or similar in Port Moresby.

Day 13
Thursday, August 24, 2023 – Port Moresby – Departure Home
Meals: Breakfast

After breakfast, we'll transfer to the Port Moresby airport **to catch our international flights**.

**** Itinerary subject to change without notice.**