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Rugged Beauty Itinerary

Date	2010 Itinerary
Day 1	<p>Arrive Port Moresby airport, meet and greet and transferred to your flight. A morning flight brings you to Mount Hagen, the wild frontier of Papua New Guinea's Highlands. Upon arrival in Mount Hagen, you will be met and transferred the newest lodge in Papua New Guinea, the Rondon Ridge, situated at 7100 feet above sea level and boasts magnificent views of the incredible Waghi Valley.</p> <p>The rooms at Rondon Ridge offer luxury in a rural setting and have been tastefully furnished with modern bathrooms, warmed beds and quilts for those chilly highlands nights. As an interesting aside, Rondon Ridge Lodge generates power from its own hydroelectric plant.</p> <p>Located a mere 30 minutes drive from the major centre of Mount Hagen, the Rondon Ridge Lodge is close to all of the unique and unforgettable ecological and cultural experiences Papua New Guinea has to offer. After having a chance to settle in, you have the opportunity to enjoy a nature walk before dinner this evening. Overnight: RONDON RIDGE</p>
Day 2	<p>Your first introduction to Papua New Guinea begins in the Mount Hagen area-home of the Melpa people – a strong culture living traditional subsistence lifestyles in the face of modernity. Until 1933 (when Europeans first arrived in the highlands) the highlanders had never before seen people who lived beyond their mountain valleys and plains. The first contact between these two groups was recorded on film. It provides a fascinating record of this monumental time of discovery for both groups. The Melpa speak a Papuan language of their own, however there are a portion of the population that speaks Tok Pisin (an English-based pidgin language) as a second language. Most Melpa children still grow up speaking Melpa as their first language. Traditional education consisted of socialising young boys and girls to become competent members of adult Melpa society.</p> <p>Although this is still true today, Western-style schools and education have been integrated with traditional ways of life to produce individuals who seem to exist in two very different worlds at the same time. Myths relating the origins of the clans (group of people with common descent) were and still are told within Melpa society. Sacred objects or living beings associated with these myths and clans are called <i>mi</i>. Extended speeches and epic stories are performed to tell the deeds of clan heroes and ancestors. The Melpa have religious experts who are responsible for curing the sick and act as intermediaries (go-betweens) between the human world and the spirit world. Women are not allowed to be curers but can be possessed by spirits and can also foretell the future. Ghosts of dead family and clan members are the focal point of traditional religious practice among the Melpa and sacrifices of pigs are often made to keep these ghosts happy. These sacrifices are generally made when illness occurs within the village or before any dangerous task begins.</p> <p>Christianity has also been common in the Melpa region since the founding of Mount Hagen as an administrative, trade, and missionary centre in the 1930s and a number of the Melpa are now practicing Christians and attend the local churches on a regular</p>

	<p>basis.</p> <p>There are two types of traditional Melpa houses; men's and women's. Men's houses are round with cone-shaped roofs. This is where men live and where adolescent boys live once they have been separated from their mothers (around the age of eight). Women and their unmarried daughters live in the rectangular-shaped women's house. The women's house also contains pig stalls to keep the pigs from wandering off at night or being stolen.</p> <p>A village consists of at least one men's house and one women's house. Members of a clan traditionally resided in the same area, which was linked by paths to nearby gardening areas. Some more modern Melpa have adopted a new form of residence in which entire families live together in the same house. Overnight: RONDON RIDGE</p>
Day 3	<p>This morning you will be transferred to Kagamuga airport where you board your charter flight to Karawari, located in a flood plain surrounded by lush tropical jungle.</p> <p>On arrival at Karawari Airstrip, you will be met and transferred by riverboat to Karawari Lodge. Situated on a ridge overlooking the Karawari River, in the Sepik region, Karawari Lodge is a time-warped mixture of pre-technological and technological architecture - the perfect base for some old-fashioned jungle, river and village exploration. Here you find yourself in the middle of Arambak country, where locals' pole dug-out canoes, the drums throb, the wild birds call, and, traditional village lifestyles continue largely unchanged.</p> <p>After having a chance to settle in and enjoy lunch, you embark on an afternoon visit to Kundiman Village for a "Sago" making demonstrations.</p> <p>Sago is a powdery starch made from the processed pulp found inside the trunks of the Sago Palm tree and forms a major staple food for the locals. The process involves peeling the bark off of a Sago Palm trunk, extracting the central pulp, pounding it into smaller pieces, placing it in a rough bag, and pouring water through it to extract the flour. Once the flour is dry, it is fried like a pancake or mixed with hot water to form a thick, paste-like porridge.</p> <p>Your day ends as you watch the sunset over the Karawari Valley before returning to the lodge. There will be time to freshen-up before this evening's dinner. Overnight: KARAWARI LODGE</p>
Day 4	<p>A full day tour is made by small riverboats to nearby villages for exploring and experiencing the lifestyle along the Karawari River and its tributaries. Overnight: KARAWARI LODGE</p>
Day 5	<p>Scheduled transfer from Karawari lodge to airstrip for charter flight TNAIR Karawari/Ambua. The first outsiders to visit the Tari Basin (in the 1930's) found a spectacular diversity of tribal peoples living 'Stone Age' lives, convinced that theirs was the only human society on earth! Upon arrival, you take a short 10-minute walk through the high-altitude forest en-route to your lodge.</p> <p>Ambua Lodge is an inspired mixture of local architecture, spectacular views and modest luxury. Recipient of the 1991 Pacific Asia Travel Association's "Pacific Heritage Award", the lodge was sighted as a "superb example of culturally sensitive and ecologically responsible tourism".</p> <p>Located in the Tari Gap area, Ambua Lodge borders on pristine mid-montane rainforest, at the beginning of the valley grasslands. This location promises the visitor eternal spring weather and magnificent views of the Tari Valley.</p> <p>The lodge and units (which are strung out along a steep ridge) are built from indigenous bush materials. Each unit is set in a sea of flowers, featuring 180-degree picture windows, modern bathroom, and electric blankets (it is suggested that your electric blanket is turned on to #1 prior to leaving for dinner) and continental quilts for the cool highland evenings. As with Rondon Ridge Lodge, Ambua generates electricity from its own mini hydroelectric power plant.</p> <p>Every accommodation unit is reached by a series of paths and steps, downhill on the way home to bed and uphill to the main lodge for breakfast. Take your time, enjoy the magnificent mountain air and scenery and the beautiful flower gardens surrounding</p>

	<p>each accommodation unit and along the paths. You will find rhododendrons, ground orchids and many other exotic plants and flowers.</p> <p>Note: Please be aware that Ambua is at an altitude of 7000 feet, and this fact combined with the gently sloping paths, may cause you to breathe heavier than normal.</p> <p>This afternoon you take a guided-walking tour of the local waterfalls, flora and fauna. Your guide will point out the great variety of plants and animals found in the area, as well as the ways in which the Huli people utilise the abundant natural resources around them. Bird lovers in particular should enjoy the Tari Gap area, as it provides a unique opportunity to observe up to 13 different species of 'Birds of Paradise' alone!</p> <p>Overnight: AMBUA LODGE</p>
Day 6	<p>A full day of touring the Tari area and surroundings. The tour includes visiting tribal villages and experiencing how the local people (Huli people) live their life with the environment. Continue touring Tari sites and surroundings. Overnight: AMBUA LODGE</p>
Day 7	<p>Scheduled transfer from Ambua Lodge to Tari airport for flight PX865, 1100/1230 flight to Port Moresby. Meet and flight to flight transfer from Port Moresby to Madang on the PX 112, 1455/1555. Arrive Madang airport and transfer to Madang Resort.</p> <p>Ideally located at the entrance of Madang Harbour is the Madang Resort, Papua New Guinea's most completely facilitated resort offering guests world class diving, restaurants, accommodation, amenities, reef cruises, water sports and more.</p> <p>The Resort offers comfortable guest rooms, most of which have private balconies overlooking the beautiful harbour or gardens. The facilities include a salt-water swimming pool and a children's wading pool. A Dive shop is located near the marina. The Forum Park provides an excellent venue for cultural events, a tennis court and helipad. In the main complex there are shops, an art gallery, a business centre, hair salon, restaurants, bar and access to the Sana Convention Centre. Overnight: MADANG RESORT</p>
Day 8	<p>Today you have the full-day at your leisure to perhaps to partake of some of the many activities available at your resort, including snorkelling, windsurfing or sailing. Alternatively, you may simply choose to relax and enjoy your surroundings. Madang is a tropical paradise built on a coral promontory. Famous for its turquoise waters, fine sandy beaches, and coconut groves, it offers some of the most beautiful scenery in Papua New Guinea. Overnight: MADANG RESORT</p>
Day 9	<p>Today you will have morning at leisure, and transfer from Madang Resort to the airport for flight PX 111 MAG/POM, 1230/1330. Meet and transfer from airport to Airways Hotel. Enjoy a half-day tour of Port Moresby and surrounds including visit to the PNG Parliament House and PNG Art Gallery. Overnight: AIRWAYS HOTEL</p>
Day 10	<p>Scheduled transfer from hotel to airport for your ongoing flight.</p>

Inclusions

- International and domestic return flights ex Cairns, Brisbane or Sydney
- Internal charter flights in PNG.
- 9 nights twin share accommodation inclusive of all meals
- Travel insurance (Single traveller under 50 yrs with no pre-existing ailments)
- English speaking local guides, entry fees
- All cultural and village tours
- Airport meet and greets and transfers

Exclusions

- Visa fees. For more information go here <http://visalink.com.au/frontpage.aspx>
- Gratuities or items of a personal nature, such as beverages, laundry, phone, email and fax charges.
- Meals pre or post tour; Sunscreen, hats, sunglasses, insect repellent, medical fees and medicines

Total Cost Per Person**	2010	2011
Ex CAIRNS	AU \$7400.00	AU \$7850
Ex BRISBANE	AU \$7450.00	AU \$7900
Ex SYDNEY	AU \$7750.00	AU \$8200
Single Supplement	AU \$1960.00	AU \$2350

** Prices are subject to currency exchange and tax variances. Prices are correct as at 28th April 2010

GENERAL INFORMATION Maximum baggage allowance is 10kg per person and a maximum of 5kg carry on baggage per person. Large, hard sided suitcases are not permitted on charter aircraft. To secure space, a NON REFUNDABLE deposit of AU\$800.00 per person is required to confirm the booking. Full payment is due no less than 90 days prior to departure. We will confirm booking only on receipt of deposits.

CANCELLATION POLICY: Cancellations received between within 60 and 30 days prior to commencement of the tour will attract a 50% fee of the total cost. No refund is available after scheduled arrival in Papua New Guinea or in respect of any tour, accommodation, meals or any other service not utilized during the tour. Any additional costs incurred because of changes made during the itinerary by clients, will be to the client's account.

POLICY ON EXCHANGE OF SERVICES AND SERVICES NOT TAKEN: Please note that we are unable to refund any services which appear in the main itinerary, but are not taken. Services must be taken on the day that they appear in the main itinerary, and cannot be transferred to a different day.

CLIENT INFORMATION: Upon receipt of deposits, you will be sent a confirmation itinerary and Client Information Booklet. We cannot stress enough the importance of reading this information prior to your arrival in Papua New Guinea. The Client Information Booklet has been specifically designed to give you vital information about strict luggage weight limits on the small aircraft used throughout the tours, possible delays in aircraft movements, standards of accommodation, etc. - Information in advance may help you to adjust to situations better as they occur. **(TRAVEL INSURANCE IS MANDATORY).**