

Asmat Tribes and Cultures Expedition

Papua, Indonesia

Over the last fifteen years, the Redfern Team has organised more than twenty expeditions to the amazing island of New Guinea. For years, we have hoped to visit the incredible Asmat region of Papua Province (formerly Irian Jaya) on the Indonesian half of New Guinea. This region remains one of the **least explored and least known corners of our world**.

The fascinating tribes of the Asmat region, including the Korowai (also spelt Koroway) are famed for building defensive tree houses up to 50 m in the canopy. They were also some of the last cultures to be contacted by the modern world, with first contact taking place as recently as the 1980s, 1990s and (in the most remote headwaters) even more recently.

After years of research and planning, and building excellent relationships in Indonesia, we are proud to launch the Asmat Tribes and Cultures Expedition, which offers participants the opportunity to ethically visit the Asmat region, with the permission and blessing of elders in key villages.

This is a really special trip for those that want to journey off the map - we can only offer once!

This expedition is for those that want to journey off the map (literally) and have the privilege of living amongst some of the most fascinating and pristine tribal cultures on Earth. This is not a trip with comfort or luxury - conditions will be basic - but you will see and experience the tribes and cultures of the Asmat region up close and personal.

COST: £3,650 (British Pounds). All inclusive - **including** flights within Papua which total approx US \$1,000

START POINT: Jayapura, Indonesia

END POINT: Timika, Indonesia

GROUP SIZE: 6-10 (on double/twin room basis - single room supplement available).

DATES: Redfern Adventures aims to run this trip during September-November. We will finalise the group of participants, then finalise the exact dates for each trip to best fit everyone's schedules.

Email sales@redfernadventures.com for more information and to make bookings.



ITINERARY

DAY 1 : JAYAPURA - DEKAI

Meet in Jayapura and fly to Dekai It takes us about 50 minutes flight. Dekai is a new developed village, home of the Manimo tribe. Explore Dekai. Dinner in a local restaurant and accommodation in a local hotel.

DAY 2 : DEKAI - LOKBON - SEPANA

Transfer by motorcycle to the small traditional harbour on Lupon village, about 1 hour of rough ride along the unpaved road. From Lupon, we will sail down to the south to Braza river, one of the largest river flowing to the south joining other river to Asmat area. All the way along the river you will see the dense forest. On the way we may stop at the small villages which are belong to Citak Mitak tribe. This tribe built their houses on the riverside make of wood shape, with grass roof. As recently as the 1980's, the tribe were still naked, however, the opening of the access to their village has changed their way of clothing. Now they wear short pants, but mostly wearing no shirt. There are 2 or 3 small villages. Most of them still work as food gather, such as fishing and hunting animals. We will sail down to the south to a mid size village called Sepana. 6-7 hours required from this boat ride. Overnight and inner at Sepana Village

DAY 3 : SEPANAP – MABUL - MARKUS VILLAGE

After breakfast, together with local porters, we motor for about one hour to reach Mabul village and from Mabul we start walk to Markus village with the local porter team. Our walk will be passing through the swampy land, crossing river, some thick forest, as well as sago forest. We spend about 2-3 hrs to reach Markus Village, the first village of the Stone Korowai. There is single tree house with 2 families in this village. Lunch will served in the village. After lunch we have the honour of understanding how the Korowai tribe hunt with dogs. Hunting remains one of the main livelihoods of the Korowai tribe, especially wild pigs, ground rats, birds and bats. Lunch and Dinner will served in the village. Overnight at Markus Village

DAY 4 : MARKUS – HALIGATUN

After breakfast, we have another 2 hours walk along the river bank, through swamps and sago forest. We reach another tree house where 3 families currently live. If we are lucky, we may meet the hunting Stone Korowai peoples on this trek. The people here live mainly as hunter and gatherers, but also have small garden areas. We arrive in Haligatun Village around midday. Dinner and overnight in Haligatun Village





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DAY 5 : STAY AT HALIGATUN

Today we witness the fascinating local practices of how to catch fish. We observe how the Korowai use a root that is crushed and dipped into the water. It is poisonous for the fishes which allows them to catch the fish easily. Sometimes they also block two sections of small river and dry it up. Fishes and other water creatures will become a great prize of today team work. We will get all muddy and dirty, and catch the fishes or frogs by bare hand with the Korowai. Children and elderly peoples will come to the river to work. After such great work, the locals will cook the catch of today (fishes, frogs, or worms) on the open fire. Together with sago balls, we join in a Korowai feast. After lunch, we see how the Korowai mend their tree houses.

The Korowai build land and tree house. The land house is built direct on the ground, while the tree house is built on the tree top. Both needs regular maintenance to make sure that they are in good shape. Among the crucial item to maintain is the ladder of the tree house. Today, they will show us how the villages perform the maintenance of the ladder. Sometimes, they will maintain not only the ladder, but, other part of the tree house as well. In time of peace, the tree house is not so high from the ground level. It can be 8 - 10 meter only. But, in times of war, the tree houses are built more than 10 m from the ground level. The higher tree house allows them to have better surveillance on any incoming foe, and better protection too. Overnight and dinner in Haligatun Village.

DAY 6 : HALIGATUN – MABUL – JINAK

After breakfast, we walk to Mabul village about 2 -3 hours away. We then continue by motor boat down to Asmat territory on the way we stop over in Suator Village for having lunch after that we continue to Jinak Village for over night stay. Overnight and dinner in Jinak Village.

DAY 7 : JINAK - YASAKOR

After breakfast we travel by boat to Yasakor Village. We pass diverse mangrove forests, sago trees and remote villages. We may also meet the locals paddling their boat down or up river, fishing or move from one village to the other. The river we are sailing through is the main “highway” in the hinterland. Arrival in the afternoon at Asmat village, and stay at their long house.



ITINERARY

DAY 8 : YASAKOR / ASMAT CEREMONIES

The climax of our trip - we witness a spectacular Asmat ceremony with ritual songs, drum dances and canoe racing. Overnight at Asmat village (in a longhouse).

DAY 9 : YASAKOR – AMBOREP - PER

We journey from Yasakor to Per Village via the open sea. Per Village lies on the southern coast of Asmat, facing to Arafuru Sea. On the way, make a visit to Amborep traditional village (often good for buying artefacts).

We pass the Sirets River, the “main highway” from outside to the hinterland of Asmat and deep into the Korowai region. We overnight and have dinner in Pet Vilage.

DAY 10 : PER - AGATS

We set sail to the north, to Agats Town, the capital of Asmat regency, and return to ‘civilisation’. We will spend about 2 hours on motorised canoe to reach Agats.

In the afternoon, we explore Agats, and visit a fascinating local museum. Dinner and overnight in Agats.

DAY 11 : AGATS - EWER - TIMIKA

We journey to Ewer airstrip, then fly to Timika by regular flight and stay overnight at Komorotame Resort in Timika.

DAY 12 : DEPARTURE

After breakfast, we transfer to Timika airport to catch departing flights. End of tour.

THIS IS A REALLY SPECIAL TRIP

JOIN REDFERN TO DISCOVER THE FASCINATING TRIBES AND CULTURES OF ASMAT!



