

**PAPUA NEW GUINEA-LOST IN PARADISE
SPECIAL COMMEMORATIVE VOYAGE
14 April – 26 April 2012**

KAYAK EXPEDITION NOTES AND ITINERARY

This voyage commemorates the 70th anniversary of Australia's entry into the Pacific war and Papua New Guinea's entry into World War II. As well as visiting historical sites, we will explore pristine landscapes and remote villages. **We stress that this is an expedition style cruise. Our adventures and daily program may be influenced by the changeable weather and local conditions of the region.** We'll delight in taking advantage of spontaneous opportunities and there is always an element of the unexpected. We ask you to join us in the spirit of expedition cruising as we discover this extraordinary country with you.

Our journey is a ship-based exploration from Alotau to Rabaul, culminating with ANZAC day in Rabaul. Papua New Guinea's spectacular terrain combined with a lack of suitable infrastructure makes travel to most areas difficult except by air and sea. We believe travel by expedition ship is the safest, most efficient and enjoyable way to unlock the secrets of one of the world's last wilderness frontiers.

Using our mother ship as a floating base camp, we hope to paddle twice a day, spending as much time on the water as possible. We will normally leave the ship immediately after breakfast for the first paddle of the day, and then often after lunch we will have time for a second paddle before returning to the ship for dinner. Most paddles range from two to four hours. We endeavour to have at least one extended paddle where we are away from the ship for most of the day. The flexibility of kayaking with a small private group ensures our own unique experiences, quite different from those encountered by the other passengers on board. However, we have the option to forego paddling and join the other passengers for shore excursions or zodiac cruises on any given day.

A largely undiscovered paradise, Papua New Guinea is slowly opening its arms to the world. Travellers who are privileged enough to visit will discover a wealth of magnificent tropical scenery and cultural diversity. We'll aim to visit active volcanic islands and walk through pristine rainforest alive with unique wildlife. Our fleet of kayaks and zodiacs will enable us to search out the myriad of hidden bays and striking coral reefs that abound in this area. Papua New Guinea's warm waters hold more aquatic species than anywhere on the planet – snorkeling magical reefs off white sandy beaches and isolated atolls will give us the chance to learn more about this incredibly diverse marine ecosystem.

With over 800 languages and 1,000 distinct cultures, Papua New Guinea is the most culturally diverse country on earth. Our visits to remote coastal and island villages will give us a genuine insight into a traditional lifestyle that has changed little in centuries. From visiting the small villages on the mighty Sepik River to being greeted by a flotilla of outrigger canoes, our experiences with the smiling people of Papua New Guinea are sure to be rewarding.

EXPERIENCE REQUIRED

To ensure you have safe, enjoyable paddles you should be comfortable with swimming and have an adventurous attitude. Ideally this should not be your first sea kayaking experience. The trip is suitable for beginners to experts and conducted in warm water. However, we have very little opportunity for instruction before we commence paddling, therefore, we highly recommend that you have done some kayaking recently or receive some tuition.

Try to rent a kayak locally before leaving home if you would like some additional experience, or seek out a local operator for some paddling tuition. We often begin our first paddling session from the shore and after that will be launching directly from the ship. You should be comfortable paddling on seas that could have up to a 1/2 metre swell and some current. The water surface will vary from calm to wind chop. Your guide will assess your ability on the initial paddle and, if you have insufficient experience, he or she may not allow you to participate in rougher conditions. Our paddling excursions will not involve camping out.

We'd be happy to talk to you about your ability and may be able to advise you on how to obtain the necessary experience before your trip. Paddling numbers are limited and berths fill fast so it is essential you book early.

Please Note: Along with your voyage booking form we require all participants to complete our "Sea Kayak Booking and Experience Form" and return it to us immediately to secure your spot in the sea kayaking group.

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ITINERARY –ALOTAU TO RABAU

14 April – Embark Alotau

Flanked by mountain ranges on each side, *Akademik Shokalskiy*, steams out of the peaceful harbour town of Alotau into picturesque Milne Bay to begin our adventure. The tranquil isles of Milne Bay province are made up of dramatic volcanoes and coral atolls where ancient traditions flourish. Kayakers will attend a briefing on board and set up their kayaks.

15 April – Milne Bay and Samarai

The spectacular and tranquil isles of Milne Bay, is the home of the allies first land victory against the Japanese. Samarai Island's wharves and town were partially destroyed by Australians in 1942 to keep them from the Japanese. Stroll through faded rebuilt colonial buildings and climb a small hill to a spectacular view of China Strait.

16 April – Dobu and Fergusson Islands

We are greeted by a flotilla of canoes as we approach our Dobu anchorage. Our Anthropologist will share with you the history of the Kula Ring where Dobu Island was the pivotal link between the north and south Kula trade routes. After lunch we explore Dei Dei Hot Springs on Ferguson Island where the landowner shares the mythical and spiritual tale of these hot water and mud springs.

17 April – Egum Atoll and Gawa Island

Experience the pristine beauty of this coral atoll on and below the water. We visit the beautiful island village of Gawa.

18 April – Trobriands and Kitava Island

Historically known as the 'Islands of Love', the Trobriands offer a glimpse of traditional culture largely unspoilt by outside influence. Witness the traditional Trobriand yam harvest dances performed in traditional costumes. Fringing reefs, easily reached from sandy beaches, delight snorkelers of all ages.

19 April – Linden Harbour

Idyllic Linden Harbour framed by lofty mountains was a Japanese stronghold after the fall of Rabaul in 1942. Lindenhafen and nearby Gasmata became the focus of an Allied campaign to capture New Britain. War wrecks, stunning waterfalls, natural spring pools and perfect paddling and snorkeling waters.

20 April– Jacquinot Bay

Jacquinot Bay's marine creatures feast on nutrient-rich waters from the Solomon Trench, delighting snorkellers. The bay is the site of the 5th Australian Division amphibious landing during the New Britain campaign of World War II in 1944.

21 April – Karlai

We'll investigate the area around Wide Bay by kayak and zodiac, tour a coconut plantation and for the energetic, trek to an impressive cave system. After lunch, we enjoy a spectacular sing-sing by four tribes from the East Pomio region-the Mengen, Sulka, Baining and Tomoip peoples.

22 April – Toi

In a pre-dawn ceremony at Toi plantation we commemorate members of Lark Force and civilians, massacred here in 1942. In 1987, survivors from Rabaul erected the Toi memorial. We follow with an exploration of Henry Reid Bay.

23 April – Lambon and Lamassa

We spend today exploring the southern tip of the long, narrow tropical island of New Ireland. Mountain ranges and dense rainforest form a spectacular backdrop to our explorations. This morning we aim to visit Lambon Island where the spear-wielding "Msalai" or bush spirits may welcome us, where local villagers re-enact their first encounter with Europeans. Later in the day we'll head to Lamassa, where we hope to explore small fjords and the remnants of the legendary Marquis de Ray's settlement.

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24 April – Duke of York Islands

Explore Bismarck Archipelago's exotic Duke of York islands. The picture-postcard setting of azure blue water and gleaming white beaches are of great spiritual significance to their inhabitants. WWII wrecks litter the surrounding reefs.

25 April – Rabaul

Our voyage culminates in a moving ANZAC Day dawn service, marking the 70th anniversary of New Guinea's entrance into World War II. Visit historic sites and enjoy Rabaul, perched on beautiful Simpson Harbour ringed by active volcanoes.

26 April – Rabaul

Wake to Rabaul's dawn chorus and, after breakfast, bid our fellow travellers, staff and Russian crew farewell.

GENERAL INFORMATION

HIGHLIGHTS OF 'PAPUA NEW GUINEA-LOST IN PARADISE'

- Superb kayaking in one of the most remote and unexplored regions in the world.
- ANZAC day in Rabaul.
- Hot springs, waterfalls and volcanoes.
- Visits to traditional villages where welcoming locals offer a glimpse of their traditional lifestyle.
- Snorkeling crystal clear waters on coral reefs alive with marine life.
- Wildlife opportunities – prolific birdlife (hornbills, parrots, cockatoos, birds of paradise), dolphins, whales and dugongs.

This Tour Includes

- Ship's accommodation. All public areas are open to all passengers.
- All meals on board ship.
- All shore excursions from the ship including Zodiac excursions.
- Lectures, videos, slide and film shows and guide services.
- Medical services, basic infirmary on board.
- Port taxes, port charges and landing fees imposed by government authorities.
- ANZAC day service and tour in Rabaul.
- Kayak guide, kayaks, paddling and rescue equipment.

This Tour Does Not Include

- Air transport and airport transfers before and after the voyage.
- Excess baggage on any air flights.
- Visa, passport and vaccination charges and airport departure taxes.
- Hotels and meals not included in voyage itinerary.
- Optional excursions not included in voyage itinerary.
- Tips on board for crew and service personnel.
- Laundry, postage, personal clothing, medical expenses, personal travel insurance and items of a personal nature such as bar charges, wine and phone calls.
- Emergency evacuation charges.

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SHIP DETAILS

Akademik Shokalskiy was built in Finland in 1985 as an ice-strengthened research vessel. In 1998 she was refurbished to provide comfortable accommodation for 54 passengers.

Akademik Shokalskiy is **not a luxury ship, she is homely and strong**, built to be a working vessel and refitted to a comfortable passenger standard. The accommodation is simple yet comfortable and the meals are wholesome and delicious. The mood on board is definitely casual. A favourite pastime on board is to stand on the deck or in the bridge, watching for wildlife and absorbing the dramatic scenery. A small fleet of Zodiacs, (rubber inflatable boats), with outboard motors enable us to travel from ship to shore.

Length-71.6 metres, beam-12.8 metres, draft-4.5 metres, cruising speed-10 knots.

Chef – European, Australian or New Zealand, Captain & Crew – Russian.

General Facilities:- Bar/lounge/library area, sauna, laundry service, medical services, dining area.

There are six classes of cabins on board the *Akademik Shokalskiy*.

The Captain's Suite: Double bed in separate room, plus foldout couch that can be used as a single bed; forward and port windows; lounge and table area; fridge; TV; video player and private bathroom, with shower, toilet and washbasin.

The Mini Suite: Double bed in a separate room, foldout couch that can be used as a single bed, TV, DVD player, windows, desk, and private bathroom with shower, toilet and washbasin.

Quad Private: Two upper and lower bunks, window and private bathroom with shower, toilet and washbasin. Suitable for a family of four or a group of friends travelling together.

Twin Private: Two bunks, a desk, windows and private bathroom with shower, toilet and washbasin.

Twin Public: Two bunks, desk, small washbasin, ample storage & hanging space, couch and a porthole. Showers and toilets are close by and are shared with other Main Deck cabins.

Triple Public: Two lower bunks and one upper bunk, desk, small washbasin, ample storage and hanging space and portholes. Showers and toilets are close by and shared with other Main Deck cabins.

