

Mummies of Aseki Adventure

Papua New Guinea

Journey to one of the most remote parts of PNG to discover a fascinating mummy culture!

Papua New Guinea's ancient cultures are famed around the world. Yet in this stunning land, there is a unique custom of preserving the dead in cliff-side sites as guardians of nearby villages. From their lofty graves, the Aseki mummies are believed to watch and protect their descendants.

In many remote villages across PNG, first contact with the outside world is within living memory and visiting today is like stepping back in time to witness cultures that defined native peoples for millennia.

The aim of this expedition is to travel back in time to witness fascinating, ancient cultures little-changed by the outside world. These unique cultures are precious examples of fading beliefs and customs.

We first travel to the remote Trobriand Islands to experience ancient circle dances, meet ebony carvers, traditional shark callers and unique intricately carved yam houses! The subsistence yam-farmers of the Trobriand Islands have arguably one of the most intact cultures of anywhere in the Pacific region. It is a place where locals still believe (vehemently) in magic, and spirit stones stand guard over villages.

We then travel to Lae to venture by four-wheel-drive vehicles to the extremely remote Aseki District to see the Anga people's mummies (smoked bodies arranged on bamboo scaffolding in life-like positions, often inside baskets along cliffsides). The mummies have fascinated travellers, anthropologists and writers for more than a century! The origins of the mummies is partly lost in the mists of time, but it is known that the red clay-covered bodies were preserved by smoking over a period of several months in local Spirit Houses.

We then travel to Madang, and have the opportunity to see birdwing butterflies, beautiful cold-water sulphur springs (home to giant eels and turtles which we can feed), and the remains of a World War 2 Japanese bomber. **This expedition is a unique journey into the most fascinating corners of Papua New Guinea!**

COST: US \$3,950 per person (= approx. £3,150 British Pounds or 3,485 Euros) all inclusive from Port Moresby, back to Port Moresby).

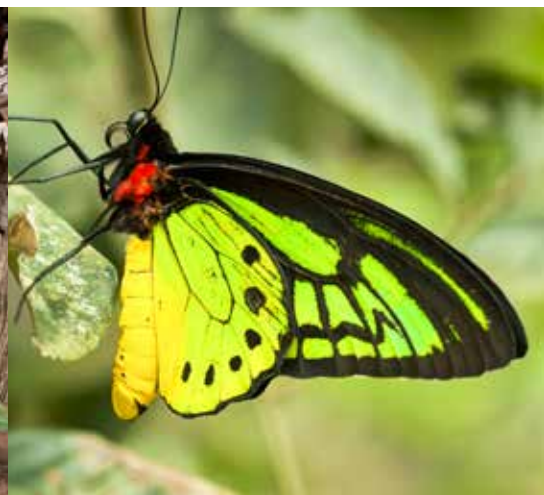
START POINT: Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea.

END POINT: Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea.

DATES: Friday October 18th to Monday October 28th, 2019.

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

Optional post- expedition extensions: This trip is designed to complement our PNG Islands and Highlands Adventure, which takes place immediately before this trip (see our website). We welcome you to join part or all of that trip. A popular option is for participants to join the last part of our PNG Islands and Highlands Adventure, to explore the highlands of PNG, to meet five amazing tribes, birds of paradise and more!



MUMMIES OF ASEKI ADVENTURE ITINERARY

This trip is designed to start on Friday (October 18th) to coincide with flights to the Trobriand Islands.

Day 1: We meet in Port Moresby, and fly to the Trobriand Islands. After lunch at Butia Lodge, we visit “the Station” (the only place on the Trobriand Islands with shops), pay our respects to the Paramount Chief (who rules over the islands) and we visit his colourful and impressive yam house. We witness the complex magic- and spirit-based belief system. Magic is still vehemently believed in across the islands, and we hear local legends and stories. Dinner and overnight at Butia Lodge.

Day 2: We walk (approx 45 mins) to Luya Village, the most traditional village in the Trobriand Islands to photograph the traditional yam houses and unique carved houses. We walk to two villages nearby and observe a traditional circle dance. We enjoy a Mumu feast (traditional cooking on red hot rocks in an earth oven), before venturing to a sacred cave with crystal clear, cool water to join the locals for a refreshing swim. We transfer to the north of the island, to the stunning Kaibola coral beach, where we have a lobster BBQ dinner on the white beach. Overnight in a basic (but comfortable) beach lodge.

Day 3: Early morning, we venture in a motorised boat, joining local “shark callers” in traditional canoes. The shark callers use an ancient practise of coconut rattles to attract sharks, which they have caught for hundreds (possibly thousands) of years. We return to Kaibola beach, and have a grilled fish lunch, before visiting a village where we view a traditional rattle dance, and meet artefact carvers (particularly skilled in carving stunning ebony figures and masks). We witness the making of traditional doba (banana leaf money) - an ancient currency still used today. Dinner and overnight at Butia Lodge.

Day 4: We catch a flight to Port Moresby, today. Dinner and overnight in a hotel close to airport.

Day 5: We catch a flight to Lae, and transfer into four-wheel-drive vehicles, and drive to Bulolo. Dinner and overnight in a basic (but comfortable) local hotel.

Day 6: We drive from Bulolo to Aseki and spend the day visiting the mummies at cliffside burial sites. Very few people have the opportunity to visit this extremely remote part of Papua New Guinea, and even fewer see the mummies! Locals ask a fee for photographing the mummies (please bring 350 Kina in cash). We intend to visit a site with fourteen mummies. We return to Bulolo. Dinner and overnight in a basic (but comfortable) local hotel.

Day 7: We return to Lae. Dinner and overnight in a local hotel.

Day 8: We drive approx 280 km to Madang. Dinner and overnight in a local hotel.

Day 9: We visit the Ohu Butterfly habitat for the chance to see Queen Alexandra’s birdwing butterflies (the largest butterfly in the world - with a wing span of almost 30 cm!), and many other butterfly species. We then visit the remains of a Japanese World War 2 bomber (with machine gun bullet holes still visible). We return to Madang. Dinner and overnight in a local hotel.

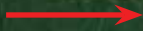
Day 10: We visit the Balek wildlife reserve, and see cold sulphur springs, crystal-clear blue pools, and underwater caves home to giant eels and turtles which we can feed with bananas. We explore the reserve and spot birdlife. We return to Madang. Dinner and overnight in a local hotel.

Day 11: After breakfast, we transfer to Mount Hagen airport and catch a flight back to Port Moresby.



Simplified Itinerary

Vehicle Transfer



Flight Transfer



Papua New Guinea

Madang

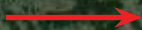
Lae

Trobriand Islands

Port Moresby

Close up of itinerary visiting Aseki

Vehicle Transfer



Flight Transfer



Madang

Lae

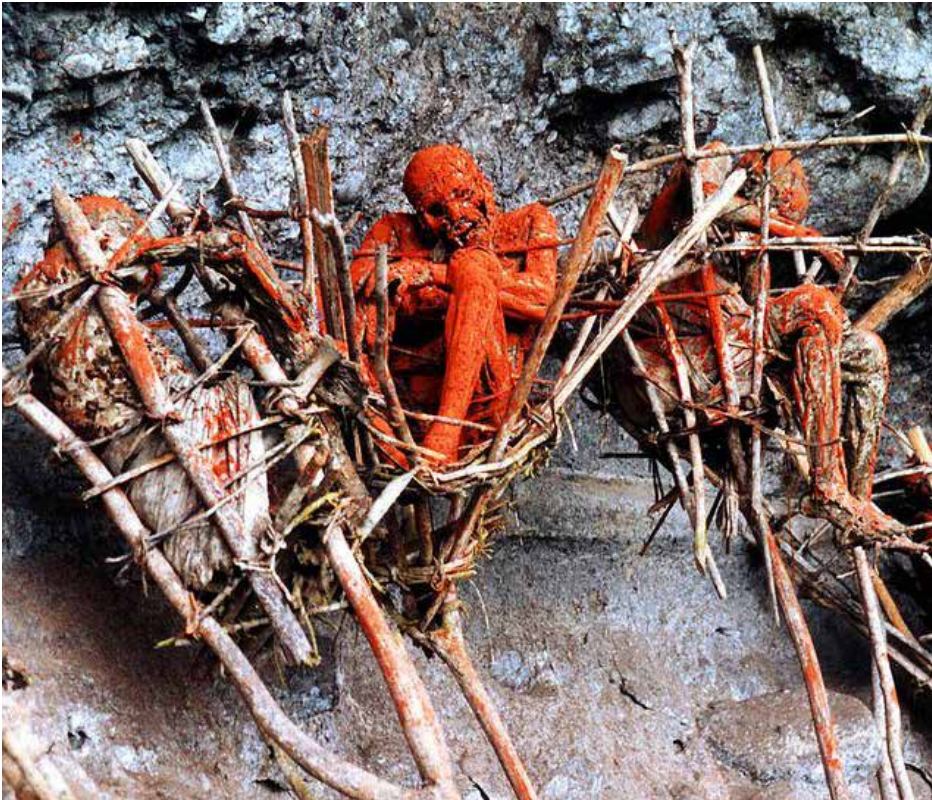
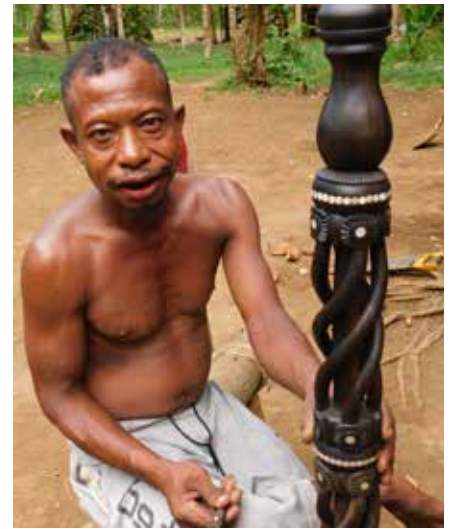
Aseki

Bulolo

Port Moresby



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