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Asia Pacific Superyachts Indonesia Luxury Yacht Charter & Superyacht News

## [Superyacht agent's adventurous journey to the stunning charter location – Papua New Guinea](#)

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An epic adventure seen through the eyes of a roaming superyacht agent Richard Lofthouse. His Mission is to cross three countries and 2000 miles to be charter-ready in the amazing and remote Papua New Guinea – in less than 10 days! During his adventurous journey he encounters many interesting challenges and a lot more ...



Image from the stunning Papua New Guinea yacht charter destination - welder-dancers

### ***“Reverse-angle Superyachting – an epic adventure seen through the eyes of a roaming superyacht agent”***

In less than 10 days I was going to Papua. Not Indonesian Papua or Irian Jaya, but Papua New Guinea. The Mission: Cross 3 countries and 2000 miles to be charter-ready in remote PNG.

I got to work. From my Asia Pacific Superyachts Indonesia office in Bali I emailed every Captain I knew who had been through PNG and came up with a Cruising Plan for [Papua New Guinea](#).

First off, the reality was the boat was in Borneo; meaning it had to cover about 2500nm, clear in and out of three countries, and take fuel twice to be sitting charter-ready in PNG in 14 days.

Luckily, APSY in Kota Kinabalu had the Borneo end under control. It is two to three days steam from Kota Kinabalu to Bitung.



Dancers-mthagen in the beautiful and remote luxury yacht charter destination Papua New Guinea

#### **KOTA KINABALU TO BITUNG, N SULAWESI**

This area alone is becoming an increasingly popular superyacht trail. Off the North-Western tip of Sulawesi you have Bunaken National Park, a true Indonesian treasure and some of the best diving around. Due North are the (almost) deserted islands of Biru and Banka which are the stuff of lazy cruising dreams for many of our charter clients – crystal clear waters, white sand beaches, lush volcanic vegetation – there's a lot to love.

Finally, to the East, right where Bitung Harbour is, you find Lembeh with iconic diving, rare species and true natural beauty. Combine this with a good airport and friendly local people and it's easy to see why this is fast becoming the jumping-off point to the riches of North Eastern [Indonesia](#).

Our final destination – Madang. This small town is centrally located along the northern coast of PNG. It is a natural harbour and houses the largest tuna cannery in the Pacific so commercial shipping lines operate out of her main port. But don't let that distract you from the central point: Madang is stunning and the perfect jumping off point for any PNG exploration.

Madang Resort was built out of a historic colonial resort by Sir Peter Barter, an Australian expat who has contributed in a multitude of ways to PNG's emergence into the modern world. A former Governor of Madang Province, he served in the first Independent PNG government for many years and remains a close government aide. He is also a pilot and a ticketed ship's captain. His 30m Motor Yacht [Kalibobo](#) sits majestically in her custom built dock at the resort. This provides the infrastructure any boat needs for a start point in PNG.



Papua New Guinea arrow-shooting-asaro

#### **MADANG AND THE CRUISE**

The boat arrived at dawn and moved to anchor in the channel where we quickly got on board with all the local officials and a clearance was executed quickly and without unnecessary fuss. We were able to have the vessel cleared and fueled within three hours of arrival and ready for the boss.

Due to some mechanical issues, we were forced to limit the trip to a much shorter range. However, Madang and surrounds provide amazing cruising, diving, snorkeling and exploration within a 100 mile radius.

Day one was a short trip out of Madang to an anchorage behind the small island NW of the harbour. The waters are clear and the snorkeling is amazing. At sunset giant bats (or flying foxes) take to the sky. With a wingspan of almost 2m, it is like a scene from "Jurassic Park" and truly awesome against the blood-red sky.

Day two saw us drop the guests back to Madang airport where we flew them in an Australian operated prop plane from Airways PNG up to Goroka, an attractive town 1600m up in the highlands. This volcanic land is fertile and inhabited by the Asaro people, famous for their mask dancing (pictured).



Papua New Guinea luxury yacht charter location - Asaro - Mudmen

From here we journeyed to Mt Hagen. Set in the large Waghi Valley, with its near villages, gardens, coffee plantations and groves of casuarinas, this busy town has a wild-west feel. The colourful Moge tribespeople showed us amazing dance and traditional living, including a beginner course in archery with their handmade bows [pictured]. This section of the trip took only two days and could have held interest for a week or more. But we'd brought the boat here and there were islands to see back on the coast so we got onto our small plane and flew back as the sun set behind the huge Mount Giluwe (4368m).

On day four and the guests are back on board and fresh. We head out at breakfast to nearby Karkar Island. Trade winds blow from the SE at this time of year but the lea side is nicely protected. There are fish everywhere and they are as easy to catch as to buy. White sand beaches in the shade of the central volcano make for perfect beach barbecues for guests when they have finished exploring the beautiful reefs around the island.

On day five we find the most idealistic 'tropical island', the aptly named Christmas Bay on Bagabag Island. We anchored 30m off the beach on sand bottom, surrounded by palm fringed beach with a couple of houses built on stilts at the back of the beach. It was absolutely idyllic and we were able to enjoy a lazy day enjoying the natural beauty.

After an overnight run north, day six dawned with us at Boisa Island where we drifted off while the dive took place as there was, unusually, no good anchorage. We had to pay the local tribe 100 Kina (approx 50USD) for the dive. Although we did get lots of direction and help lots of help from the locals, others were heavily armed with ammo boxes full of stones ready to hurl at us if we stepped out of line! It was actually a bit intimidating in places but ultimately not a rock was thrown.

From here we discovered one of the best surprises of the trip. After going up to the Sepik River, anchoring in mud 100 meters south of the river outfall to avoid the current, tree trunks and other flotsam coming down at 5 knots (the water is still discolored 12 miles offshore from the strength of the outflow), we sent the tender up the river with the guests. At the first village, they got to see the locals carving shields and masks and also enjoyed a visit to the crocodile / alligator farm. None of this was planned and its a great example of the amazing natural experiences PNG has to offer.

Hansa Bay 20 miles south is 'uncharted' but we went in and found a three mile wide bay with sandy bottom and good holding. A coral and sand island in the middle of the bay offered a bit of shelter from the predominant SE trade winds, which never let up. The other benefit was a telephone mast giving us internet and phone signal to organise supplies. Landing was possible once a passage was found through the reef off the beach.

The diving here is sensational with many Japanese wrecks in less than 10m of water. Near Bogia we saw the 6000ton 'Shishi Maru' in just 6m of water, complete with two fire engines in her hold which were being unloaded the day she was sunk.

On the final day (Day eight), we stopped at Manam Island. The south side had a very good anchorage 50 meters off the beach on a sand/ coral spit of 30 meters depth. The boss took off with his family and spent the evening having a huge driftwood bonfire and baking potatoes – a nice laid-back end to a very good trip. Everything ran incredibly smoothly and any pre-trip stresses were certainly eclipsed by the quality of this wonderful trip arranged by APSY.

Captain Andy Baxter, a man with many sea miles under his belt summed it up best when he said 'What we pulled off was nothing short of remarkable from start to finish. What we did in 8 days you could spend a month doing and not get bored. And this represents only about 1% of what [Papua New Guinea](#) has to offer. Imagine what else is out there!' The answer undoubtedly awaits those who dare.

**Credits: Asia Pacific Superyachts Indonesia, Madang Resort, Niugini Eco Tourism**