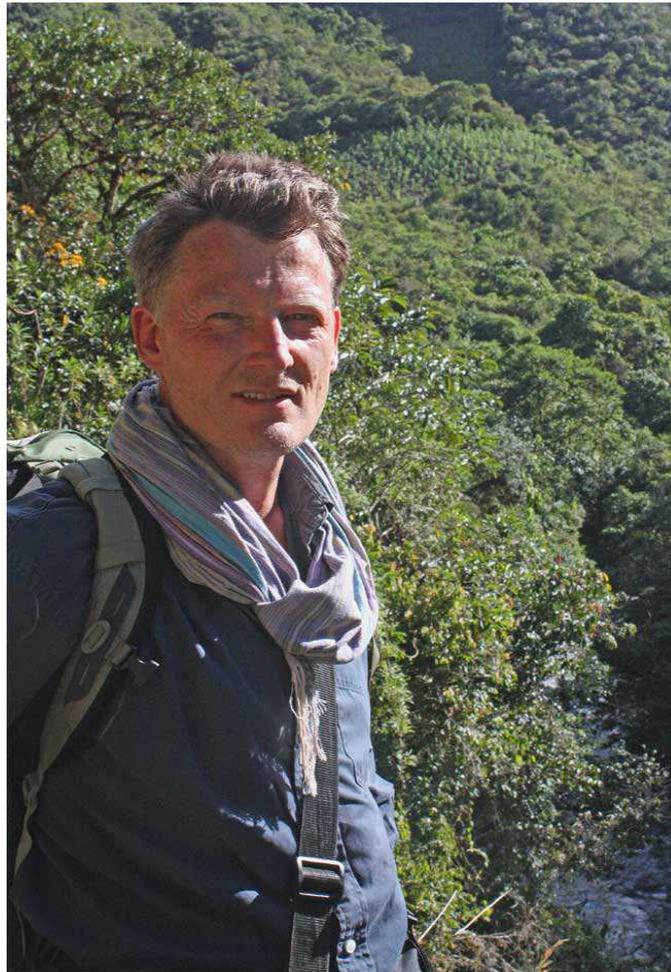




Reef & Rainforest



A Truly Adventurous Exploration of Papua New Guinea

Accompanied by the explorer Benedict Allen

Led by various expert local guides

10th to 25th October 2017

Accompanied by Author, Film-Maker, BBC TV Presenter and Renowned Explorer and Adventurer:

Benedict Allen

The son of a pioneering test pilot and a graduate of Environmental Science, Benedict Allen represents the real face of adventure and exploration.

The author and BBC broadcaster has notched up an impressive list of achievements: In his 20s he narrowly survived an epic 600-mile crossing of the northeast Amazon basin, then followed that with a seven months' crossing of the Amazon at its widest point, a dangerous solo journey of 3,600 miles which left him with malaria.



Benedict completed the first recorded traverse of Papua New Guinea's Central Mountain Range and then continued by canoe to Australia, surviving a shipwreck en route. At 24, he endured the "man strong as a crocodile" initiation rite of a Sepik River (Papua New Guinea) village during which he endured six weeks of scarification, intense physical pain and discomfort. He is the only outsider ever to have done that.

Benedict journeyed with camels for 1000 miles both across the Namib Desert of Namibia and through the scorching sands of the Central Asia's Gobi Desert, and travelled by dog sled for 1000km through Siberia's "worst winter in living memory".

The Royal Geographical Society (of which he is a former trustee) described Benedict thus: "As one of today's most well-known and inspirational explorers, Benedict has undertaken some of the greatest explorations on earth."

Benedict's initial modus operandi was to immerse himself in a culture and landscape solo and without support or sponsorship, returning home to write a book recounting his experiences. Before one such journey, he was given a new hand-held Hi-8 camcorder by the BBC, eventually giving rise to the first authentic, non-scripted adventure reportage without use of film crew. He left behind the trappings of the modern world (eg GPS, satellite phone) and travelled without support in order to learn from the region's inhabitants, and maximise his physical achievement and exposure to the land. Indeed, in 2012 Benedict was named by the Daily Telegraph as one of the two greatest living British explorers.

Benedict's BBC presenting includes Mombasa to the Mountains of the Moon, Ice Dogs and Adventure for Boys: he has also worked for Channel 5 and The History Channel.

Join Benedict Allen on this epic adventure and benefit from vivid tales of his fascinating exploits and his unique insight into the people and landscapes of the fascinating island of New Guinea, one of travel's last frontiers. It will be a journey to remember and inspire.



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INTRODUCTION TO THE ITINERARY

Vast and mysterious, Papua New Guinea (PNG) is one of the most diverse countries on Earth, with over 700 languages spoken and many different, exotic cultural groups, each one separated from the other by geographical and linguistic barriers.

Led by various local regional guides and accompanied throughout by the celebrated British explorer, Benedict Allen, the group will explore the cool highlands and then some seldom-visited villages along the Sepik River by motorised canoe, with overnight stays in two river settlements for a truly authentic taste of village life and culture. Benedict's knowledge and experience of the Sepik area is certain to enhance your visit.

Apart from the colourful cultural side, the other main attraction of Papua New Guinea is the impressive birdlife, most notably the extraordinary birds of paradise, proclaimed by Sir David Attenborough as his all-time avian favourites. While at Kumul Lodge you will have the chance to see four species of birds of paradise within the lodge grounds: crested satinbird, ribbon-tailed astrapia, Princess Stephanie's astrapia and brown sicklebill. In other sites visited by the group near the lodge, there will be excellent chances to spot Loria's satinbird, King of Saxony bird of paradise, superb bird of paradise and the blue bird of paradise. In the Sepik River region, the chances of seeing the lesser bird of paradise, perhaps even displaying, are certainly very high.



After an adventurous time in PNG's highlands and riverine lowlands, the tour will finish by the sea in Tufi, famous for its magnificent fjords formed by ancient volcanic eruptions. It is also home to the largest butterfly in the world, the Queen Alexandra birdwing (though sightings are rare). The blue Ulysses butterfly and the bright green Priam's birdwing are common visitors to the resort, attracted by the variety of nectar bearing tropical plants such as hibiscus, poinsettia and frangipani. Also at Tufi spectacular underwater coral reefs will be explored on a guided boat excursion to Cyclone Reef with its small coral island surrounded by a pristine atoll. There will also be time to relax and admire the scenery, and perhaps opt for further snorkelling, including off the resort's jetty: diving is also possible as an option.

Whatever culture, scenery and wildlife you do see on this unique group journey, it will undoubtedly all be varied, exotic, colourful, bizarre and fascinating. Led by knowledgeable local guides and accompanied by Benedict Allen, you will learn so much more about PNG than on a normal tour. Reef & Rainforest has used all its 25 years of operating in PNG to produce this exceptional group tour and is proud that Benedict has agreed to lead it. Call now for more details on 01803 866965 as places are limited to only twelve participants.



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Papua New Guinea with Benedict Allen

- 10 Oct Depart LONDON HEATHROW on BRITISH AIRWAYS flight to SINGAPORE.
- 11 Oct Arrive SINGAPORE. On arrival, connect with AIR NIUGINI flight to PORT MORESBY.
- 12 Oct Arrive PORT MORESBY. Met on arrival at the airport and assisted to connect with AIR NIUGINI flight to MOUNT HAGEN. Mount Hagen Town is in the upper Wahgi Valley which displays some of the oldest evidence of agriculture in the world. Met on arrival at the airport and transfer (c.45 mins) to the lodge. Afternoon nature walk on the trails surrounding the lodge.

O/n KUMUL LODGE, (BD) "Kumul" means bird of paradise in Pidgin English, and there are not many places in PNG where you can see wild birds of paradise inside the lodge yard, sometimes even from your own room. More than 70 species of birds have been recorded in the lodge grounds alone and more can be found at nearby sites. The lodge is locally run and was designed and built with mostly local materials. Accommodation is in simple rooms with private bathroom. There is also a stove to keep the room warm in the cool evenings.



- 13 Oct Morning visit to Tonga birding site with a local guide. The site is located at 1817m above sea level and approximately 15km from the lodge. The blue bird of paradise can be seen in this area. Afternoon visit to Kopia or Anji & Walya birding sites. NB: Choice of site to be discussed with your guide and will depend on the conditions pertaining at the time. The best available sites at the time of visit will be selected by your guide. O/n KUMUL LODGE, (BLD).
- 14 Oct Morning visit to Pigsties, located approximately 5km from the lodge at 2566 metres, with a local guide in search of birds of paradise and other avian species. Afternoon visit to Anji Village for a cultural experience. O/n KUMUL LODGE, (BLD).



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15 Oct

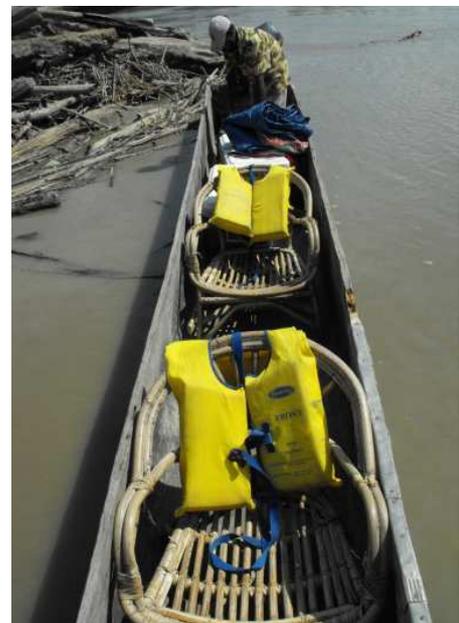
Morning pick up from the lodge and transfer to the airport at MOUNT HAGEN. Catch AIR NIUGINI flight to PORT MORESBY. Met and transfer to restaurant for lunch. Later, return to the airport and catch AIR NIUGINI flight to WEWAK. Met on arrival at the airport and transfer to the hotel.



O/n WEWAK BOUTIQUE HOTEL, (B). Situated on Wewak Hill overlooking the beautiful Bismarck Sea. Accommodation in room with private bathroom, air conditioning and satellite TV. Facilities at the hotel include resort style pool, Cocoa Cafe & Vanilla Room Restaurants for meals.

16 Oct

After Breakfast, depart Wewak by private vehicle to Pagwi. The drive will take the group over the Prince Alexander Ranges through to Passam, Kubalia, Yangoru, Hayfield, Maprik and Wosera to reach Pagwi. Most of the road is sealed, but one hour of the drive is on a dirt road. From Pagwi station you will enjoy a motorised canoe trip to Palimbe. There is a cluster of three villages – Palimbe, Yenchan and Kanganamun – which have stood firmly against conversion to Christianity. They still have their Haus Tambarans (Spirit Houses) and practice their traditional customs including the initiation or scarification on young boys that depict the crocodile as symbol of power and strength. Benedict can talk about this. The villages also hold excellent artists who make spirit carvings with bird heads



O/n PALIMBE GUEST HOUSE, (BLD). Accommodation is very basic in simple huts made out of local materials. There is a pit toilet outside the hut; no shower, no electricity but light will be provided by lamp. Mattresses with mosquito nets are provided. NB: Torch and spare batteries are essential items to bring with you. NB: The Sepik River itinerary is susceptible to change due to local factors.



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17 Oct

Continue up the SEPIK RIVER in simple motorised canoe. Visit Yenchen village and witness their Crocodile Dance. After Yenchen, you motor upriver to Yessan village to enjoy a Sepik-style *sing sing* performance, and then continue to Wagu. As you canoe further into the tributary, the majestic Hunstein Range of mountains approaches rapidly until you reach the foothills at Wagu village to overnight in the village guest house. Wagu Lake is the gateway to the Hunstein Range Wildlife Management Area: WWF is making an effort to preserve the region. In the evening visit a vast lake full of herons, cormorants, ducks, egrets, kites, jacanas and other water birds.

O/n WAGU GUEST HOUSE, (BLD). Accommodation is in a basic village hut with common toilet and cold water shower adjacent to the main accommodation building. For a humid night, a battery operated personal fan is recommended to bring.



18 Oct

Early morning visit to the nearby forest to see the lesser bird of paradise. Next you will head to the Wasukuk villages and visit the *haus tambaran* in Meno, where you will be treated to a traditional sing sing. Finally visit Tongjamb village with the best *haus tambaran* in the area. The last visit will be to the small government station of Ambunti where you will be transferred to the rustic lodge, a step up from the homestays.

O/n AMBUNTI LODGE, (BLD). A basic lodge, air-conditioned with en suite toilet and cold water shower in each room. The power is supplied by generator and runs until 2200hrs and starts again in the morning. NB: A torch and spare batteries are useful for the dark nights, as well as a battery operated personal fan for use after the power goes off at night.



19 Oct

Depart by canoe from the lodge to Pagwi. Change to road transfer and visit Apangai village. The village has distinctive Maprik style Haus Tambarn and you will enjoy a mini culture show there. Continue by road to Wewak and transfer to the hotel. O/n IN WEWAK BOUTIQUE HOTEL, (BL).

20 Oct

Early morning pick up from the hotel and transfer to the airport. Catch AIR NIUGINI flight to PORT MORESBY. Met on arrival at the airport and visit the Adventure Park to see the botanical gardens and birds of paradise. Later, return to the airport and catch PNG AIR flight to TUFU. Met on arrival at the airport and transfer to the resort.

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O/n TUFU RESORT, (BLD). Located on the mainland slopes of Mount Trafalgar with stunning views of the fjords below, Tufi Resort offers good quality accommodation in comfortable bungalows traditionally constructed from local bush materials and decorated with tribal carvings and artefacts.



The rooms are screened and have air-conditioning, hot water, en suite bathrooms, coffee and tea facilities and mini fridge. Many units have verandahs overlooking the fjord or Coral Sea. The main attractions of the area are scuba diving and snorkelling. In addition, the local tribal villages give the opportunity to experience authentic indigenous culture first hand, whilst the bird life and butterflies in the forest surrounding the resort are spectacular. The world's largest species of butterfly, the Queen Alexandra birdwing, can be seen in the area (if you are lucky).



A jetty offering good "muck" diving is just steps from the resort and any one of 30 excellent open water diving spots is a mere 15-minute boat trip away. The reefs in this part of the Solomon Sea are among the best in the world and some have not yet been fully explored. The coral communities support hundreds of colourful reef fish, moray eels and black- and white-tipped reef sharks, and turtles are common sightings. In deeper water, manta and eagle rays, hammerheads and the rare white hammerhead can be seen alongside schools of tuna, mackerel and barracuda.



21 Oct

Morning snorkelling excursion to Cyclone Reef. During the 1972 cyclone, a small island was formed from broken coral. This is now an important breeding ground for a variety of seabirds. It also provides a sheltered lee side where the coral reefs have the opportunity to grow undisturbed by wave action during the Trade Winds season. This is one of the prettiest coral reefs in the area and a great spot for snorkellers.

Afternoon at leisure. OPTIONAL activities are available and can be arranged at the resort. These include canoe or kayak on the fjord, hiking the Tufi Fjord and Mt Trafalgar, snorkelling and scuba diving. O/n TUFU RESORT (BLD).



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22 Oct Early morning walk up to the butterfly garden and Suicide Lookout for spectacular views and the chance to look for cocoons and butterflies. See the local villages and meet the locals while perhaps enjoying a coconut with them. Afternoon at leisure to relax before the journey home. OPTIONAL activities are of course available. O/n TUFU RESORT, (BLD).



23 Oct Morning transfer to the airstrip and catch PNG AIR flight to PORT MORESBY. Met on arrival and enjoy an afternoon excursion to Varirata National Park for birdwatching. Depart the city and head for the Sogeri Plateaux, located approximately 600 metres above sea level. Keep your fingers crossed for a sighting of the raggiana bird of paradise which can be seen here. Return to PORT MORESBY and transfer to the hotel.



O/n AIRWAYS HOTEL (B). The hotel is very near the airport, and provides good facilities, including an open air bar, restaurant and swimming pool. NOTE: It is advisable to keep to the hotel compound, and not to venture into town at any time without an escort.

24 Oct Morning pick up from the lodge and transfer to the airport. AIR NIUGINI flight to SINGAPORE. On arrival, connect with BRITISH AIRWAYS flight to LONDON HEATHROW.

25 Oct Arrive LONDON HEATHROW.

Number of Participants: Maximum 12 / Minimum 8

*Price: £6,980 per person

*Single Supplement: £585 per person

NB: Single Supplement is for a single room EXCEPT during the Sepik Village stays where rooms will be shared and could be dormitory style. Single rooms are subject to availability.

*Prices are provisional and are subject to change before departure.

To include: international flights, domestic flights, accommodation, transfers, nearly all meals, all tours and excursions as stated, reserve entrance fees, private transportation with experienced driver, services of Benedict Allen and various expert local guides, government taxes, service charges.

Please call Jonathan Morris or Claire Pote for more details on 01803 866965 or email us at mail@reefandrainforest.co.uk

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IMPORTANT NOTES TO ACCOMPANY THE ABOVE ITINERARY

NB: This tour is sold subject to the understanding that all guests accept that, if Benedict Allen is unable to accompany the group, a suitable replacement will be found. If Benedict Allen is unable to accompany the group, no refunds will be given should any guest then decide to cancel the tour.

NB: Visas are required for travel. If you wish to arrange your visa before arrival, please contact the PNG High Commission. It is currently possible to obtain a visa on arrival, free of charge.

NB: Baggage Restrictions – Baggage allowance on Airlines PNG flights is limited. Clients must restrict their luggage to 16kgs plus a small carry-on hand or camera bag. The airline is strict and will charge for excess weight.

NB: All itineraries are subject to change without notice to take into account possible airline flight schedule changes which can take place before departure date or during the tour, and other operational factors. The Sepik River region itinerary is particularly susceptible to change.

NB: The quoted price for the above itinerary is based on current airline fares (both international and domestic), fuel surcharges and flight taxes. These (and other tour costs) may be subject to unanticipated increases beyond our control at short notice, either before or after you have booked the tour, in which case the price would need to be revised accordingly.

NB: This tour involves some travel in remote areas. This adds to the adventure and increases the opportunity to enjoy a true wildlife and wilderness experience. However, due to terrain, weather, road conditions, and other factors beyond our control, some elements of the tour may have to be altered. Times of some activities may need to be changed or even cancelled due to the conditions. If an activity is cancelled it will usually be replaced with an alternative activity that is more appropriate for the conditions. Advance notice will be given for any changes where possible, although at times changes may need to be made whilst the tour is in progress.

NB: Prices are based on a specific airlines and specific economy seating classes. Flights are booked on an ad hoc basis and so early booking is recommended to take advantage of the cheapest fare availability. Prices may rise if a more expensive seat class needs to be booked. Please call for information on price variations for using alternative airlines or for seat upgrades.

NB: It is a condition of booking that full travel insurance including Emergency Medical Repatriation is taken out by each person travelling. Your insurance cover must also include Missed Departure and/or Missed Flight Connection for both outbound and return flight sectors (such cover might be subject to a small additional premium – please confirm with your insurers). We ask that you send us a photo/fax/electronic copy of your policy document together with the 24hr medical assistance telephone number issued by your insurer.

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NB: Clients must be aware that hotels, lodges and resorts as well as suppliers of tours and excursions used in this itinerary might not comply with European standards of health and safety. For instance, balconies may not be entirely child-safe or may be low in height, so always ensure children are kept away from balconies and do not go near them when intoxicated or unwell; swimming pools may not display depths, so never dive into a pool without checking depth first; vehicles may not always have safety belts fitted - contact our representatives if so, and refuse to travel; public areas might not be well lit, so take extra care and use a torch. Clients must be vigilant and take extra care for their own safety, as they may well be travelling to remote and primitive locations where high quality standards of safety may not be present.

NB: Places on this tour is sold subject to the understanding that all guests accept that, if Benedict Allen is unable to accompany the group, a suitable replacement will be found. If Benedict Allen is eventually unable to accompany the group, no refunds will be given should any guest then decide to cancel the tour.

NB: Before and after booking, clients must familiarise themselves with current UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) travel advisories so as to satisfy themselves as to the suitability of the destination(s) to be visited in this itinerary. All decisions relating to the tour will be based on UK FCO advisories, and not those of any other countries' governments. In the event of any emergency or other problem encountered in the destination, it is advisable if appropriate to contact the local UK Embassy, High Commission or Consulate for assistance. The FCO in London also has dedicated telephone call centres: Crisis Management Dept - 0207 008 5335 (during UK office hours), and Global Response Centre - 0207 008 1500 (out of UK office hours).



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