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✉ concierge@pearlexpeditions.com

☎ +61 2 7235 9999



Papua New Guinea: *Sepik Traditions and Island Mysteries*

MADANG / Kopar, Sepik River / Murik Lakes / Ali Island / Schouten Islands / Watam Village / Hansa Bay / KarKar Island / Nip Island / Tuam Island / **MADANG**

EXPEDITION DATES

2025	2026
19 October 2025	29 October 2026
8 November 2025	18 November 2026
28 November 2025	

PASPALEY PEARL



Your 11-Day Journey Through Papua New Guinea's Extraordinary Cultural Heartland.

Welcome to your North Coast expedition—where the mighty Sepik River meets traditional island cultures, and every village preserves customs unchanged for millennia.

Over the next 11 days, you'll navigate from the mouth of Papua New Guinea's greatest river to volcanic islands where ancient traditions thrive in communities largely untouched by outside influence. This isn't cultural observation—you'll participate in the famous dragon dance at Kopar village where crocodiles are worshipped as water spirits, witness elaborate bilum weaving on fertile Karkar Island, and join vibrant sing-sing ceremonies on remote islands speaking languages found nowhere else on Earth.

Each morning brings new cultural immersion as we explore coastlines where islanders maintain traditional practices across dramatically different environments. You'll paddle dugout canoes through maze-like wetland systems, snorkel above Japanese shipwrecks from WWII

battles, and join traditional welcome ceremonies featuring impressive dragon-like figures crafted from pandanus branches and shells.

From tracking through traditional stilt villages where boys become men through ancient ceremonies to swimming pristine waters around islands where indigenous languages blend ancient customs with contemporary aspirations, every encounter connects you with communities whose genuine warmth transforms strangers into extended family.

Our small expedition community of just 30 guests ensures authentic cultural exchanges rather than staged performances, whether you're sharing meals in village houses or learning traditional fishing techniques passed through countless generations.

This is cultural immersion where ancient rivers meet modern adventure: respectful, genuine, and utterly transformative. Your North Coast cultural journey begins the moment we depart Madang.

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ITINERARY

The itinerary below is provided as an example only, mother nature will be our guide. Our voyages are true expeditions, where each day's activities will be determined by the Expedition Leader and Captain taking into account the tide, weather, sea conditions and chance encounters.

Day 1: Madang

Board *Paspaley Pearl* in the "Pearl of the South Pacific," where volcanic islands dot the natural harbour. Meet fellow adventurers while our expedition team prepares you for cultural encounters along Papua New Guinea's dynamic northern coastline featuring traditional communities maintaining ancient customs.

Day 2: Kopar Village, Sepik River

Experience daily life at the mouth of Papua New Guinea's mightiest river, where traditional stilt houses stand over water and crocodiles are worshipped as water spirits. Witness the famous "dragon dance" and observe village life in this important trading point between river communities and coastal regions.

Day 3: Murik Lakes

Navigate maze-like wetland systems by traditional dugout canoes where the Murik people developed unique cultural practices centred around their aquatic environment. Participate in traditional fishing methods while learning how community identities reflect intimate relationships with distinctive wetland environments.

Day 4: Ali Island

Connect with rarely visited island communities where the indigenous Yakamul language is spoken. Experience vibrant sing-sing ceremonies featuring traditional costumes and rhythmic dances, participating in daily activities while learning how isolated communities balance cultural preservation with contemporary aspirations.

Day 5: Tarawai/Walis Islands

Experience traditional welcome ceremonies on neighbouring islands where 1,500 predominantly Catholic Melanesian residents maintain distinctive cultural practices in an environment of lush evergreen forests. Join coastal exploration walks, participate in fishing activities, and enjoy swimming opportunities in pristine waters surrounding these friendly communities.

Day 6: Watam Village

Witness one of Papua New Guinea's most elaborate welcome ceremonies featuring impressive dragon-like figures made from pandanus branches, feathers, and shells. Learn how the Watam people maintain distinctive traditions while adapting Protestant Christianity, creating fascinating examples of cultural continuity and adaptation.

Day 7: Awar Village, Hansa Bay

Experience traditional village ceremonies before snorkelling Japanese shipwrecks from WWII naval operations. Discover how communities maintaining Awar language traditions balance cultural heritage with historical influences. Explore approximately 35 Japanese WWII wrecks scattered throughout this historically significant coastal inlet.

Day 8: Karkar Island

Witness traditional bilum weaving on this fertile volcanic island where local people live among nested summit calderas. Learn how bilum-making represents cultural initiation for young women, with traditional patterns representing garden plots and pathways while understanding the volcanic soil's agricultural significance.

Day 9: Nip Island, Cape Gloucester

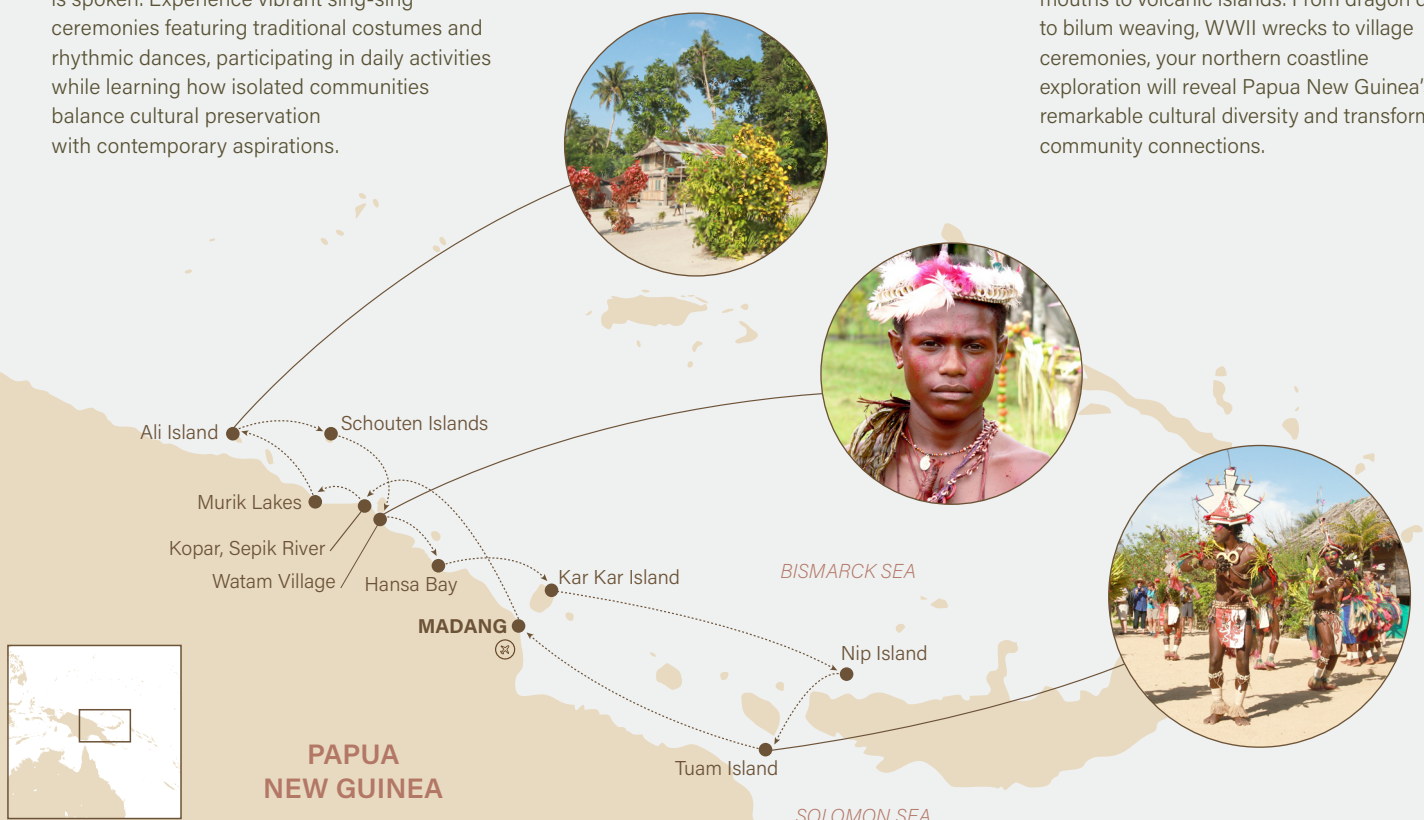
Explore uninhabited islands offshore from this historic WWII battlefield where American forces landed in 1943. Swim and snorkel pristine beaches and coral reefs while learning how this remote rainforest-covered peninsula became a crucial Pacific War strategic position during Operation Cartwheel.

Day 10: Tuam Island

Experience traditional music and dance performances showcasing exchanges between mainland and archipelago traditions. Despite its modest 5-kilometre length, this culturally rich island reflects Papua New Guinea's extraordinary diversity through ceremonies and stories shared by welcoming families maintaining distinct cultural identities.

Day 11: Madang

Conclude your cultural journey carrying memories of diverse encounters from river mouths to volcanic islands. From dragon dances to bilum weaving, WWII wrecks to village ceremonies, your northern coastline exploration will reveal Papua New Guinea's remarkable cultural diversity and transformative community connections.





SUN DECK



OCEAN LOUNGE



SUNDECK - JACUZZI



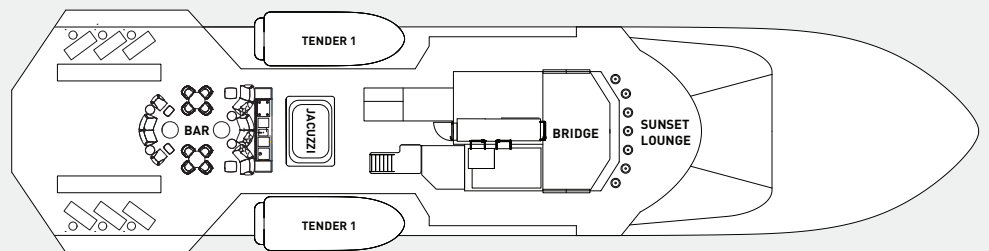
HORIZON GRILL, LOUNGE & BAR



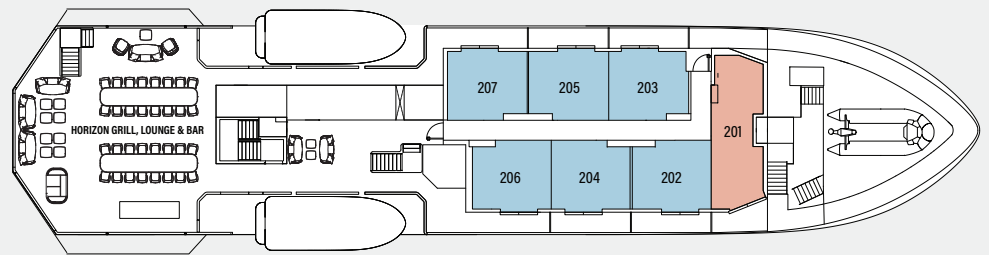
FINE DINING



PASPALY PEARL AT DUSK



SUN DECK



HORIZON DECK



OCEAN DECK

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	PRICING 2025	PRICING 2026
NIGHTS	11	11
Ocean Double Stateroom*	\$17,495	\$18,495
Ocean Twin Stateroom	\$18,495	\$19,995
Ocean Stateroom	\$19,995	\$20,995
Horizon Suite	\$23,995	\$25,995
Pearl Suite	\$28,995	\$30,995

Prices are in AUD\$ per person based on twin share. Single supplement pricing is available on application. *Sole occupancy of stateroom #107 attracts no single surcharge.

- Ocean Double Stateroom*
14sqm / Double Bed
- Ocean Twin Stateroom
16sqm / Twin Bed
- Ocean Stateroom
17.5, 18sqm / Queen Bed
- Horizon Suite
20sqm inc. balcony / Queen Bed
- Pearl Suite
27sqm inc. balcony / Queen Bed

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Details of destinations, life onboard, accommodation options, expedition dates and itineraries for 2025 and 2026 will progressively be updated on our website.

www.pearlexpeditions.com



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