Cruise Details

Name:	Expedition Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands And Palau: Island Hopping To Hidden Pacific Gems
Reference:	HAPAGSPI2706
Operator:	Hapag-Lloyd Cruises
Cruise Type:	Ocean
Cruise Rating:	Expedition
Ship:	HANSEATIC spirit
Regions:	Pacific
Departs On:	25 Apr 27
Departs From:	Nouméa
Arrives On:	14 May 27
Arrives At:	Koror
Cruise Nights:	19
Total Vacation Days:	20

Itinerary

Day 1: Nouméa (New Caledonia)

Arrives On: 25 Apr 27

Day 4: Solomon Islands (Solomon Islands)

With lectures and travel reports, your team of experts on board will get you in the mood for an exotic wonderland: the Solomon Islands. The islands were named by the Spanish explorer Alvaro de Mendana de Neira: in 1568, he believed he had discovered the land of the biblical King Solomon’s gold and named the islands after him. The real treasure these days is the idyllic natural scenery.You will be given the honour of being welcomed to Nendo by the village elder. Perhaps you will recognise the patterns in traditional dances that were once used to tell stories and legends. Your experts will be happy to act as a liaison for you and explain the often mysterious rituals.On a

Zodiac landing on the beach of Santa Ana Island, you will be treated to an impressive welcome ceremony by “warriors” with spears. The islanders’ traditions are also reflected in their villages, which you will explore alongside your experts. Discover what life is like below sea level when snorkelling in the colourful coral reefs. The diverse wonders of creation are also on show in the lush jungle.In Roderick Bay, set out by Zodiac to see the wreck of the World Discoverer, which ran aground on a coral reef in 2000 and lies stranded – where it is slowly being taken over by plants.At over 2,300 m (7,546 ft), Mount Popomanaseu dominates the island of Guadalcanal. At its foot lies Honiara, the capital of the Solomon Islands, which has impressive displays of delicate inlay work on its eaves, gables and canoes. The town was also the location of a historic battle between the US and Japan during the Second World War.

Arrives On: 28 Apr 27

Day 8: Louisiade Archipelago (Papua New Guinea)

Papua New Guinea is one of the most heterogeneous countries in the world. Hundreds of indigenous peoples live here, some with cultures going back thousands of years. Impenetrable rainforests, deep valleys and mountains rising up to 4,500 m (14,764 ft) kept the different tribes largely apart. And so, more than 800 languages and dialects are spoken in Papua New Guinea today.You will be lost for words when you see the beauty of the Louisiade Archipelago. Bramble Haven, an uninhabited atoll, is on the eastern end of an impressive chain of atolls, reefs and small islands that stretch from the western end of the Great Barrier Reef to Papua New Guinea. Enjoy a real South Seas feeling after a Zodiac ride to a small beach on Bramble Haven, which is a great place for swimming and snorkelling in clear turquoise waters.Feel like one of the discoverers of Fergusson Island as your expedition ship approaches the island, with its mountains, rainforest and three big volcanoes. A walk with local guides and your on-board experts will take you to the hot springs. This is a traditional site, where for generations the locals have been cooking food wrapped in palm leaves in the hot water.

Arrives On: 02 May 27

Day 10: Trobriand Islands (Papua New Guinea)

The Trobriand Islands welcome you with their traditional customs and idyllic underwater gardens: famous for the traditional masks, grass skirts and feathers worn by their inhabitants – but also ideal for swimming and snorkelling. Many of the islands are untouched and virtually unexplored. The typical village structure centres around a meeting place, with small family houses built on stilts and isolated yam houses. The inhabitants often still feed off the land and fishing, eating mainly local products such as sweet potatoes, yams, taro, coconuts or fruit instead of processed foods.Kitawa Island has preserved its rituals, dances and traditional crafts. The custom of exchanging rings continues to this day here, with bracelets and necklaces made from shells. They also swap food for other things without any money changing hands – with your insights into the

lives of the hospitable islanders, you can swap your previous ideas of the South Seas for authentic impressions. As a makatea island, Kitawa was lifted out of the water by tectonic movements, as can be seen by the now exposed reefs in the form of terraces – it has idyllic white beaches and amazing snorkelling opportunities.One of the seldom-visited islands in the Trobriand archipelago is Kaileuna. The settlements along the densely forested coast are still built in the traditional style, mostly from natural materials. The local boats are also made predominantly from wood. The welcome ceremonies here have a romantic and quite unusual origin, with the women's dance greeting the men returning home from fishing with singing. The cricket dance, on the other hand, was performed during games when your team scored points.

Arrives On: 04 May 27

Day 12: Tufi (Papua New Guinea)

Active Mount Victory near Tufi displays untamed volcanic power. Rugged stretches of land and lush green fjord landscapes – a spectacular region where the Zodiacs will be in their element. A traditional – if perhaps a little unsteady – experience is being picked up by locals in outrigger canoes. They will take you to a little village, where you will be welcomed with dancing and traditional ceremonies.The Zodiacs will also take you to visit the remote coral atoll of Tuam Island. Once again, you will be given a warm welcome to a pretty village, surrounded by the unspoilt scenery of the island. The nearby beach and its reef offer great snorkelling opportunities and time to relax.

Arrives On: 06 May 27

Day 14: Madang (Papua New Guinea)

The comparatively modern town of Madang lies on the north coast of Papua New Guinea. Until the 19th century, the area was made of up wetlands, which the German colonial authorities wanted to transform into an administrative centre. It took years of work to drain the terrain so that the beautiful town, then known as Friedrich-Wilhelmshaven, could be built here. During the Second World War, Madang was between the front lines. The torch-like monument next to the entrance to the harbour in honour of the Coastwatchers, the Australian military coastguard operating behind Japanese lines, stands as a reminder of this time. Immerse yourself in the rhythm of the town on an independent visit. With a population of around 29,000, Madang is now the sixth largest town in Papua New Guinea. This lively provincial capital is a stark contrast to the unspoilt islands your ship has stopped at on the way here.

Arrives On: 08 May 27

Day 15: Kopar Village, Sepik River (Papua New Guinea)

The longest river on the island of New Guinea, the Sepik River is perfect for adventures with its practically untouched natural scenery. On an exciting Zodiac ride, explore the many lateral channels and penetrate deep into the lush green forests. Accompanied by the noises of the jungle, you will land at the small village of Kopar. Here you will encounter one of the many tribes that live along the river and are famous for their artistic wood carvings. Take part in the life of the locals for a while and feel the rhythm of the tropics during the colourful displays of the dance groups.The settlement of Vanimo cannot be reached by land. Situated close to the border with Indonesia, beaches and wide lagoons line the coast. Vanimo served as a colonial trading post for the Germans and as a base for the Japanese during the Second World War. The region was strategically important during the Pacific War, particularly due to its proximity to Indonesia and Japanese movements in the region. Despite its rich history, the authentic site is a blank slate in terms of tourism. The stay is part of a technical stop. Swimming is possible - subject to official approval and local conditions.

Arrives On: 09 May 27

Day 19: Koror (Palau)

In the treasure trove of the Pacific, the island gems of Palau will also sparkle in your explorer's eyes. The island state is made of more than 300 separate islands. Welcome to a picture-book world of dazzling images both above and below the water. Swim, snorkel and let your spirits soar: enjoy daydreaming on Koror and soak in this paradise. The Rock Islands of Palau rise up out of the sea like mushrooms – covered in dense jungle flora, the comparison with "floating gardens" is very apt.

Arrives On: 13 May 27

Day 20: Koror (Palau)

Arrives On: 14 May 27

For more information on this cruise, please call +44 (0)1202 767926.
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