TOUR CODE

QIA

ADVENTURESABROAD

INDONESIA DISCOVERY

with Martin Charlton

21 days

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Day 1 *Arrival in Medan (Sumatra)*

Welcome to Indonesia!

Indonesia is a vast equatorial archipelago of 17,000 islands extending 5150 kilometers (3,200 miles) east to west, between the Indian and Pacific Oceans in Southeast Asia. On this tour we will explore the largest of the Indonesian islands, including: Sumatra, Java, Kalimantan (Indonesian Borneo), Sulawesi, and the Indonesian part of New Guinea (known as Papua or Irian Jaya). This vast archipelago between Asia and Australia harbours a highly diverse people speaking more than 300 languages. This mosaic of cultures and languages presents a landscape of stunning beauty, and has something to offer even the most seasoned traveller. The people of Indonesia range from urban professionals in Jakarta to village farmers and fishermen on most of the islands to stone-age tribal people in West Papua.

Today we arrive in Medan, the main city in northern Sumatra. Stretching from the Indian Ocean in the north to the Straits of Sunda in the south, Sumatra is a land of virgin tropical rain forests, volcanoes, high plateaus, waterfalls, lakes, terraced rice fields and endless plantations.

Much of Sumatra's population today descends from Malay people; the largest ethnic groups are Acehnese, Batak, Minangkabau, Gayo and some other, smaller indigenous groups. In the larger cities much of the population are from Chinese, Arab and Indian descent.

Overnight in Medan. Grand Swiss-Belhotel. Meal plan: Dinner, if required.

Day 2 *Medan - Lake Toba*

After breakfast we will depart for a brief city tour of Medan. Based on the diary of a Portuguese merchant in early 16th century, it is noted that the name of Medan was actually derived from the holy city of Medina in Saudi Arabia. Other sources have indicated that the name Medan may have come from the Hindi word "Maidan" meaning "ground" or "land". This region did not experience significant development until the 1860s, when the Dutch colonialists began clearing the land for tobacco plantations.

Our sightseeing will include a stop to see the Maimoon Palace. Having recently been renovated, the Maimoon Palace stands as grand as ever. Built by the Sultan of Deli in the late 1800s, the 30-room palace features Malay, Mogul and Italian influences. We will also see Tjong A Fie Mansion, the former residence of a famous Chinese merchant. His home mixes Victorian and Chinese styles of architecture and design. Across the street is Tip Top Restaurant, a historic spot for sipping colonial nostalgia. Further north is Lapangan Merdeka, a former parade ground surrounded by handsome Art Deco buildings.

We will also stop to see the 'Moroccan style' Grand Mosque located just around the corner from the palace. With it’s ornate carvings, Italian marble and stained glass from China this unusual black-domed mosque was commissioned by the sultan in 1906.

After our morning city tour we will travel southwards by road from Medan to Lake Toba. For many Medan is simply the gateway to the beautiful Lake Toba region. Our drive will take us along palm tree, rubber and cacao plantations and in the afternoon we will arrive in Parapat from where we cross Lake Toba to the island of Samosir. The Samosir peninsula and the huge lake are one of the most spectacular sights on Sumatra.

At 630 sq km, Samosir is the largest island within an island, and the fifth largest lake island in the world. The island is the centre of the Batak culture, and was originally connected to the surrounding caldera's wall by a small isthmus, which was cut through to aid navigation.

Overnight on Samosir Island. Tabo Cottages Hotel. Meal plan: Breakfast and dinner.

Day 3 *Lake Toba & Samosir Island*

The centerpiece of Sumatra is the gigantic lake and supervolcano of Lake Toba. This is the largest lake in Southeast Asia, and a region that offers natural beauty, a cool climate and the rich culture of the Batak people. This is the site of a supervolcanic eruption that is believed to have been a massive, climate-changing event occurring approximately 100,000 years ago.

Samosir Island has several villages of historical interest. Here, traditional houses are made of wood with high roofs. The main posts, walls, and gable ends often carry carved decorations of buffalo horns. The island is known for the Batak houses, which are still used as family homes today. The unusual graves and tombstones found here are equally remarkable. We will visit some of these traditional villages and typical Batak houses in order to get an idea of how the local people live. Tomok is one of the most important villages on the island that we will visit, and our sightseeing here will include a visit to the King Sidabutar Tomb. We will also visit Ambarita Village.

We will learn about the animist culture of the Batak people with visits to the cultural center. The Batak were formerly headhunters and cannibals, and due to their isolation in the high mountains, they have retained many of the ancient proto-Malay cultural traditions. According to tradition, all Bataks are descendants of Si Raja Batak, a hero-ancestor of super-natural parentage born on a holy mountain adjacent to Lake Toba. Today they maintain a tight-knit and distinctive culture.

We will also explore the museum at Simanindo, converted from a traditional house once lived in by Rajah Simalungun, a Batak king.

After our day of sightseeing we will continue back to our hotel for the night.

Overnight on Samosir Island. Tabo Cottages Hotel. Meal plan: Breakfast and dinner.

Day 4 *Samosir Island - Berastagi*

This morning we will head across the narrow land bridge that connects the "island" to the mainland as we drive towards Berastagi. This region of North Sumatra is volcanic in nature and many sulfurous hot springs are to be found. At the northern end of Lake Toba we stop to see the impressive 120 m (394 ft) high Si Piso Piso Waterfalls. From the viewpoint at the top of the falls there is a 360-degree panoramic view over Lake Toba and the surrounding countryside.

The area to the north of Lake Toba is known as Karoland, or the Karo Highlands, as it is where the Karo Batak tribal people live. The five Karo Batak clans and 83 subclans inhabit a high, lush plateau of mountain slopes and rich volcanic valleys in the area between Lake Toba and Medan. There are many volcanoes in the area, some of them still steaming. Gunung Sibayak at 2070 m (6,790 ft) and Gunung Sinabung at 2417 m (7,930 ft) are the highest and can be seen from

many locations as we explore the area. We will have the opportunity to stop in Lingga, a Karo Batak village.

Berastagi village rose to significance when Dutch settlers in Sumatra opened a boarding school there in the 1920s. Today the main economic activities in Berastagi center around the colourful fruit and vegetable market. Berestagi is famous for its passion fruit! Cool and mountainous, the area is surrounded by the lush green fields of the Karo Highlands.

Overnight in Berastagi. Hotel Grand Mutiara. Meal plan: Breakfast and dinner.

Day 5 *Berastagi - Medan (Sumatra) - Jakarta (Java)*

Today we leave Berastagi and drive back to Medan in order to fly to Jakarta, the capital and largest city of Indonesia.

With its busy streets, the capital is a lively adventure for any traveller. This city, one of the world's biggest, is a contrast of modern western architecture and traditional Indonesian culture. Its rapid growth into a metropolitan city, however, is a reflection of the economic, political, social and industrial development of the nation. Established in the fourth century, the city became an important trading port for the Kingdom of Sunda. It was the de facto capital of the Dutch East Indes and continued being the capital city of Indonesia, after its independence in 1945.

Depending on the flight schedule for today there may be time on arrival for an orientation tour of Jakarta by bus.

Overnight in Jakarta. Alila Jakarta Hotel.

Day 6 *Jakarta (Java) - Pangkalan Bun (Borneo) - Tanjung Puting National Park*

This morning we will fly from Jakarta (Java) to the island of Borneo. Our arrival point in Kalimantan is Pangkalan Bun. Upon arrival we will drive to the Kumai River harbor where we board our klotoks (traditional flat-bottomed wooden river boats), and head for our lodge which can only be reached by boat! The klotok is about 6m by 2m with a roof that forms the upper deck where you can view the rain forest as it glides by. The boat's name refers to the noise it makes, "klok tok tok tok".

As we pass through this bustling river port we will see the shipyards where Makassar schooners are handcrafted from tropical hardwoods. Along our route we will slowly explore the quiet river by klotok while observing monkeys along the riverside. Birds and monkeys are abundant as we make our way upriver. We will also witness the vibrant life along the riverfront -- women and men scaling fish, washing babies and clothes, fishing, repairing boats, and curious local children waving as we pass.

Our destination is Tanjung Puting National Park. Located in the peninsula on the south coast of the world's third largest tropical rainforest of Borneo, the park started as a game reserve for the protection of orangutans in 1936 and was upgraded to a National Park in 1982. This is the only protected area in South East Asia with vast tracts of wetlands, lowland, mature tropical heath and swamp forests with large rookeries that provide breeding grounds for a wide population of waterfowl. The needs of Orangutans and other primates are also available in the park, such as the 400 species of trees which van be consumed by them.

The next few days of this itinerary will be kept 'flexible' to allow maximum opportunities for viewing wildlife and taking advantage of any special sightings, occurrences, or conditions. During our time here we'll visit the three ranger stations in Tanjung Puting National Park: the orangutan nursery at Tanjung Haraphan, Camp Leakey, and Pondok Tanggui. We'll likely be greeted by several of the resident ex-captive orangutans that roam within the grounds of the research camp. We'll have at least one and perhaps up to three opportunities to see orangutan feedings at various sites. Observing

these intelligent and gentle primates feeding at close-range in their natural habitat will be a highlight for many. We hope to start early each day in order to be on the river at prime wildlife viewing times. We'll see playful proboscis monkeys bounding through the trees. These large primates are found only in isolated areas of Borneo. Other wildlife sightings may include seeing majestic hornbills flying low over the jungle canopy, leaf eating macaques and the occasional wild orangutan. During our time here we will also enjoy a walk into the Kalimantan rainforest -- one of the earth's most biologically diverse areas.

Overnight at the Rimba Orangutan Eco Lodge. Meal plan: Breakfast and dinner.

Day 7 *Orangutan Exploration & Camp Leakey*

Situated on the edge of the Tanjung Puting National Park, our forest lodge on the Sekonyer River provides a great base for seeing up to nine primate species. This is one of the only places in the world where orangutans can be seen in the wild! Here we hope to be able to observe Orangutans, Proboscis Monkeys, Gibbons, Tarsiers and other primate species in their natural habitat.

The excitement continues today as we further our exploration of the area. After breakfast we will board our klotoks and travel upriver for about 2 hours and then up a side creek to Camp Leakey where the older orangutans are reintroduced into the rainforest. At Camp Leakey we will have the opportunity to walk into the rainforest with our guides and forestry rangers to appreciate the flora as well as perhaps sight wild orangutans, gibbons, macaques, and birds.

Camp Leakey was set up in 1971 by Louis Leakey to support research activities in Tanjung Puting Wildlife Reserve. Louis Leakey was both teacher and mentor for three young primatologists who would go on to become well known in their field and beyond. Jane Goodall and Dian Fossey were two who went on to become known worldwide for their work with chimpanzees and gorillas respectively. The third, Birute Galdikas, went on to become the leading authority on orangutans and remains so to this day as president of the Orangutan Foundation International.

This afternoon we will visit the feeding station to see the rehabilitated orangutans and then we will travel back down the river to overnight at our riverside lodge.

Overnight at the Rimba Orangutan Eco Lodge. Meal plan: Breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Day 8 *Orangutan Encounter & Rainforest Exploration*

This morning after breakfast we will travel by boat to Pondok Tanggui (Pondok Tanguy) for the morning feeding program. This is a rehabilitation center for the new ex-captive orangutans. Here we will also have the chance to enjoy a wonderful walk in the heart of tropical rain forest. We later head back to our boat for lunch and then return to our lodge for some free time.

Take a walk from your room along the bird walk, hear the cry of gibbons, and witness the resident Macaque monkey troop from your room, set right on the edge of the gently flowing Sekonyer river. Proboscis monkeys are often visible across the river from this truly remote jungle lodge.

Overnight at the Rimba Orangutan Eco Lodge. Meal plan: Breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Day 9 *Tanjung Puting National Park - Pangkalan Bun*

This morning after breakfast we will enjoy a tour of Tanjung Harapan village where our local guide will educate us

about all aspects of life in the village. We later travel by boat back to Kumai where we will make a break for lunch. In the afternoon we will continue with a tour of the Pangkalan Bun surroundings, as well as a trip out to the beach for sunset.

This is a busy little cultural town with plenty of hustle and bustle! The small markets are full of energy, and there are a few places of interest to visit. The Grand Palace of Pangkalan Bun is over 200 years old and constructed of iron-wood. This building is extremely important to the local population as it is the only symbol of the Banjar royal legacy in Central Kalimantan. Banjar people were the ancestors of the Dayak people who migrated to Borneo in 2500 BC.

Overnight in Pangkalan Bun. Blue Kecubung Hotel. Meal plan: Breakfast and dinner.

Day 10 *Pangkalan Bun (Kalimantan) - Yogyakarta (Java)*

This morning we will board our flight to Yogyakarta (Java). Our arrival will be at the Semarang Airport near the north coast of Java, facing the Java Sea. From here we will drive south to Yogyakarta.

Yogyakarta (often also called Jogja, Yogya or Jogja) is located in middle of Java Island. This city, together with its twin city Surakarta (Solo), is the cradle of civilization on Java. The seat of power here produced the magnificent temples of Borobudur and Prambanan in the 8th and 9th century, and the new powerful Mataram Kingdom of the 16th and 17th century. Until today this city continues to produce philosophers, thinkers, master painters and master craftsmen. While steeped in rich tradition and history, Yogyakarta, continues to remain young. This is university town, where students from all over Indonesia from different ethnic backgrounds flock. For this reason, Yogya is both very Javanese and at the same time a melting pot of different Indonesian cultures.

Depending on the morning flight schedule, there may be some time this evening to commence with our Yogyakarta sightseeing. Or, we may have time to wander the famed Malioboro Street, a great, long, bustling, and colorful bazaar. In the evening several open-air streetside restaurants, called lesehan, operate along the street. Less obvious to the tourist, but more for the local population, side streets, lanes and structures that lead on to Malioboro are as important as the street itself.

Overnight in Yogyakarta. Phoenix Hotel. Meal plan: Breakfast and dinner.

Day 11 *Yogyakarta City Tour & Borobodur*

Early this morning we will depart for our tour of the magnificent ancient temple ruins of Borobudur. This is the world's largest Buddhist monument, and a UNESCO World Heritage site. We will explore the site in depth. This colossal Buddhist relic is one of the continent's marvels, and those who climb to the top will enjoy a wonderful view of the Menoreh Mountains.

This 8th-century Mahayana Buddhist monument is both a shrine to the Lord Buddha and a place for Buddhist pilgrimage. Evidence suggests Borobudur was abandoned following the 14th-century decline of Buddhist and Hindu kingdoms in Java, and the Javenese conversion to Islam. Worldwide knowledge of its existence was sparked in 1814 by Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles, then the British ruler of Java, who was advised of its location by native Indonesians. Borobudur has since been preserved through several restorations. The largest restoration project was undertaken between 1975 and 1982 by the Indonesian government and UNESCO, following which the monument was listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Borobudur is still used for pilgrimage, and once a year Buddhists in Indonesia celebrate Vesak (the observance of Buddha's birth, enlightenment and death) at the monument.

We will also visit the two smaller Buddhist monuments of Mendut and Candi Pawon located nearby.

Around lunchtime we will return to the city, and this afternoon we will explore Yogyakarta by three-wheeled becak (also known as a cyclo or pedicab). Our sightseeing will include a visit to the Kraton (Sultan's Palace / Kings Palace), situated as Yogyakarta's center. Surrounding the kraton is a densely populated residential neighbourhood that occupies land that was formerly the Sultan's sole domain. The Yogya bird market (Ngasem Market) has been operating since 1809. Buying of birds was considered to be a status symbol among the noblemen in Yogyakarta and this is how the Market gained its popularity. We will see the Water Castle, at one time a recreation garden or a resting house for the Sultan and family. As well we will also visit the Sono-Budoyo Museum, a treasure trove of ancient wonders and artifacts. Opened in 1935 and devoted to the study and appreciation of Javanese culture, the building itself reflects traditional Javanese architecture.

Time permitting we will also visit a Batik workshop and the Silversmith workshops of Kota Gede.

Overnight in Yogyakarta. Phoenix Hotel. Meal plan: Breakfast and dinner.

Day 12 *Yogyakarta & Prambanan*

This morning we depart for the UNESCO protected Prambanan Temple, the largest Hindu Temple remains in Indonesia. This is the masterpiece of Hindu culture dating from the 9th century. The slim building soaring up to 47 meters makes its beautiful architecture incomparable. There is no formal written record of the construction of Prambanan. It is thought though to have been built around 850 AD by either King Rakai Pikatan of the second Mataram dynasty or Balitung Maha Sambu of the Sanjaya Dynasty. It is therefore slightly later but more or less contemporaneous with Borobudur. In the 10th century the temple was largely abandoned after the Mataram dynasty moved its court base to East Java.

After our sightseeing at Prambanan we will return to Yogyakarta where you will have some free time before dinner. Tonight we will enjoy a Javanese dinner and classical dance performance.

Overnight in Yogyakarta. Phoenix Hotel. Meal plan: Breakfast and dinner.

Day 13 *Yogyakarta (Java) - Makassar (Sulawesi) - Rantepao / Toraja Highlands*

This morning we will fly from the Yogyakarta Airport to Makassar, our entry point to Sulawesi and the gateway to the Toraja Highlands.

Sulawesi is a true 'off the beaten track' explorer's dream, an island so extensive, so rugged, and so remote that the secrets of its interior have barely been exposed. We probe these hidden treasures with a revealing drive through the heart of the island.

Sulawesi's colourful history is the story of spices and foreign merchants of mariners and sultans and of foreign power wresting control of the spice trade. The first European settlers were the Portuguese sailors. When the Portuguese reached Sulawesi in 1511, they found Makassar a thriving cosmopolitan entre-port where Chinese, Arabs, Indians, Siamese, Javanese, and Malays came to trade their manufactured metal goods and fine textiles for precious pearls, gold, copper, camphor and spices -- nutmeg, cloves and mace imported from the interior and the neighbouring Spice Islands of Maluku.

Upon arrival at Makassar we start our full-day drive north through central mountainous Sulawesi to Toraja. Along our journey we will stop for lunch and photos, capturing the beauty of the landscape and villages.

In the late afternoon we will arrive at Rantepao in Tana Toraja.

Overnight in Tana Toraja. Hotel Misiliana.

Day 14 *Toraja Highlands Exploration*

Tana Toraja is one of the most beautiful regions of Sulawesi, and today we will spend the day exploring many of the cultural highlights.

Sulawesi has a long history of Portuguese, Dutch and English influence, but that traditions of the local peoples, sheltered by the impenetrable topography, have survived this onslaught. As we appreciate the land of the Toraja people, we learn about their fascinating culture -- visiting animistic stone graves in Lemo and Londa, and traditional Torajan boat-shaped houses.

The Toraja are an ethnic group indigenous to this mountainous region South Sulawesi, and they are known for their unique funeral ceremonies. I many cases the bodies of the dead are placed in caves with the same animistic ritual that has been used for centuries. At Ke'te Kesu', Siguntu and Nanggala we will visit traditional Toraja houses -- designed in the shape of a boat or buffalo horn in order to carry the spirit to the afterlife. The unique traditions of Toraja are fascinating, and they are really at their most interesting in this area.

Today we will also see the royal family tombs at Suaya and the baby grave in the huge tree at Kambira.

Overnight in Tana Toraja. Hotel Misiliana. Meal plan: Breakfast and dinner.

Day 15 *Toraja Highlands Exploration*

Today we will have another day of exploration. Before the 20th century, Torajans lived in autonomous villages, where they practiced animism and were relatively untouched by the outside world. In the early 1900s, Dutch missionaries first worked to convert Torajan highlanders to Christianity. The local populations had little notion of themselves as a distinct ethnic group before the 20th century and Dutch colonization. Those who had lived in highland areas identified with their villages and did not share a broad sense of identity.

We will visit many different sights and locations today. Palawa is one of the most interesting villages that we will see. This village is built on a small hill with "Tongkonan" or houses with buffalo horns attached in front. We will stop at the traditional weaving village of Sa'dan, and the ancient megalithic stones of Bori. We will also see the animistic stone graves in Marante.

The slopes of Mount Sesean will provide great views of the terraced rice-fields with a fascinating mountainous view at Batutumonga. This is perhaps the most scenic and culturally rich area in the Torajan highlands. Around 1300 m above the sea level, it offers a fresh cool climate. Batutumonga has an exquisite view over the Torajan Valley.

At Lokomata we will see the 'boulder grave' cave cemetery with it’s tombs chiseled out of the rock. As well, today we will enjoy a nature-walk through the rice-fields and villages.

Overnight in Tana Toraja. Hotel Misiliana. Meal plan: Breakfast and dinner.

Day 16 *Rantepao / Toraja - Makassar*

Today we will enjoy a full day of amazing scenery as we depart from the Toraja region and travel south back to Makassar. We will make a couple of stops along our way, including one at Sengkang, which is about halfway along our route. Sengkang is a small mountainous city in the hinterland of south Sulawesi. This is a bustling market town that overlooks the nearby Lake Tempe and has managed to retain its traditional character over the years.

Danau (Lake) Tempe is the largest lake on Sulawesi. This is a shallow lake fringed by wetlands with traditional floating houses and a large population of wonderful birdlife. We will travel by fantail boat to reach the center of the lake to see the way of life of those who still live on their floating houses. From here we will continue to Makassar, with a stop at Bantimurung to see the beautiful waterfalls. Beginning in the sixteenth century, Makassar was the dominant trading center of eastern Indonesia, and soon became one of the largest cities in island Southeast Asia.

Overnight in Makassar. Hotel Pantai Gapura Makassar. Meal plan: Breakfast and dinner.

Day 17 *Makassar (Sulawesi) - Jayapura (Papua / Irian Jaya) - Wamena*

This morning we will fly from Sulawesi to Jayapura (Papua / Irian Jaya) where we will connect with our flight to Wamena in the heart of this province (flight schedules may require that we spend this day / night in Jayapura, and then fly to Wamena on the morning of Day 18).

Papua forms the western half of the large island widely known as New Guinea. Administratively part of Indonesia, Western Papua is officially known as Irian Jaya. To experience this corner of the world is to embark upon a voyage into one of humanity's deepest mysteries. This far-away and little known island is home to the most ethnologically 'primitive' cultures on Earth. No less than 25% of the world's languages are spoken here, and one quickly finds a vast display of tribes and tribal customs. These are people largely unaffected by the strictures of the modern world as we know it, and they have adapted to daily life solely through their basic survival elements. Papua retains many traditional cultures and is home to some of the richest biodiversity in the world.

With a population of approximately 3 million, this is a region of predominantly dense forest where numerous traditional tribes live such as the Dabi of the Baliem Valley live. Today the majority of the population lives on or near coastal areas. Estimates of the number of tribal languages in the region range from 200 to over 700, and many of these are in threat of disappearing. Bordering Papua New Guinea, West Papua comprises approximately 22% of Indonesia's land mass.

Jayapura is the capital of the Indonesian-administered territory of Irian Jaya, otherwise known as West Papua or Western New Guinea. This is a big, bustling and fascinating city. If you've always wanted to go somewhere in Asia where there are no other tourists, this is the place.

Because of its relatively isolated location, the main form of access to the town of Wamena is by air. Time permitting we may proceed to the Baliem Valley today, or travel there tomorrow.

Overnight in Wamena (or Baliem Valley). Meal plan: Breakfast and dinner.

Day 18 *Baliem Valley*

The Baliem Valley was once dubbed 'Shangri La' and it is easy to see why. The valley, situated in the heart of the Jayawijaya Mountains, is simply stunning. The lush terrain is punctuated with swift rivers, colourful blooms of orchids, and a purple haze of cultivated sweet potato fields. This valley is incredibly lush and fertile, and is surrounded on all sides by towering peaks of 2500 to 3000 meters. The fertility is such that the valley has been farmed for 9,000+ years, but westerners only 'discovered' it in 1938! There are three mains tribes inhabiting the Baliem Valley: The Dani in the

base, the Lani to the west and the Yali in the southeast. Each tribe has its own distinct culture, customs and traditions.

Today we will explore the valley and the surrounding region. At the local market in front of the town we will meet the local Dani who sell their agrarian products every day. Traditional arts and crafts like stone axes, grass nets, bows and arrows are sold here. There is another local market near the Wamena Bridge that we may also visit during our stay. Isolated by 8,000 foot peaks, most of the 5,000-foot-high valley remains as untouched as it was on the day that American explorer Richard Archbold stumbled upon it in 1938. The people here live in palm-shaded, round hut village compounds that have changed little over the millennia. Known for their unique personal decoration, which sometimes includes boar tusks through their noses and headdresses made of bird feathers, the most famous of these adornments is the koteka, traditional penis gourds worn by the elder tribal men. The Dani's inhabit one of the most fertile areas in West Papua and constant war with neighboring tribes earned them a fearsome reputation as prolific headhunters.

A visit to the upper course of the beautiful Wamena River will provide a great opportunity for a lunch break surrounded by the wonderful nature of this region. From here we can drive on to the powerful Baliem River near Wesaput, where a big suspension bridge has to be crossed in order to visit the traditional Dani hamlets on the other side of the river.

Overnight in Baliem Valley. Baliem Valley Resort. Meal plan: Breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Day 19 *Baliem Valley Exploration*

Today is spent doing some further exploration in the Baliem Valley. We will drive to Jiwika in the central Baliem Valley where we will learn more about the way of life of the Dani.

We will enjoy a scenic drive through lushly forested valleys surrounded by towering peaks. Our drive will take us over gentle hills, with spectacular views along the way. We make visits to traditional Dani and Lani villages where we have the opportunity to experience the daily lives of these hill people, visit their traditional straw-capped homes, and see their lush gardens, which illustrate the sophisticated agricultural system developed over generations.

Because of the fertile soil of the region, the farming tribe of the Dani together with the sub-tribes of the Yali and the Lani, are the most populous in Papua. They live scattered in small communities near their gardens among the steep mountain slopes. Today they also cultivate bananas, taro, yams, ginger, tobacco and cucumbers. The men's and women's huts (locally called the honai) have thick thatched roofs, which keep the huts cool during the day and warm during the cold nights.

Overnight in the Baliem Valley. Baliem Valley Resort. Meal plan: Breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Day 20 *Wamena - Jayapura*

This morning we fly back to Jayapura. Our sightseeing this afternoon will include a visit to Lake Sentani by boat. Lake Sentani is a famous primitive arts centre, and bark paintings, sago bowls and small-carved items are amongst the local handicrafts found here. We will have lunch at a restaurant near the lake. On the way back to hotel we will have a chance to stop and admire the skyline of the city.

After lunch we will visit the Anthropology museum, Hamadi market, and the city center.

Overnight in Jayapura. Swiss Bell-Hotel Papua. Meal plan: Breakfast and dinner.

Day 21 *Departure from Jayapura*

Today we must say our goodbyes and start our journey home from Jayapura. Those wanting a bit of relaxation before returning home may consider a stopover in Bali.

BON VOYAGE! Meal plan: Breakfast.