

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

'EXPEDITION SOLOMON SEA'

Aboard the RV Akademik Shokalskiy

Expedition 1: Departing Lae, PNG - Arriving Kimbe, PNG (14th April – 28th April 2007)

Expedition 2: Departing Kimbe, PNG – Arriving Lae, PNG (27th April – 11th May 2007)

Deep Ocean Expeditions, brainchild of renowned Australian explorer Mike McDowell, has been offering dive expeditions to remote and exciting dive locations for over twenty years. Our dive destinations have always strived to seek out new and adventurous dive sites from throughout the Pacific 'Oceania' region. Our 2007 expedition itinerary continues to build on this theme as we head to the unique, exciting and unbelievably diverse, Papua New Guinea; 'land of the unexpected'. Join us for a world class diving experience against a beautiful tropical backdrop as we venture into remote areas to explore both the underwater and above water delights of the Solomon Sea region.

The world's second largest island, Papua New Guinea (PNG) has incredible biological diversity. It is thought to contain over 5% of the world's total number of species within just 1% of the world's land area. This rich morass of life continues into the underwater realm and ensures both divers and snorkelers receive an unparalleled diving experience. With more marine species than any other place on Earth, it is estimated that the waters surrounding this young nation have five times the number of species found in the Caribbean.

Timed to coincide with the start of the dry season, our expeditions will traverse the warm seductive waters of the Solomon Sea and the coastline of the island of New Britain, the largest of PNG's 600 named islands. This expedition will explore island walls, underwater pinnacles and undisturbed reefs as we get to know the incredible range of species that make this ecosystem their home. The enchanting coral gardens, dynamic wildlife, varied bathymetry and historic wrecks of this region combine to promise divers a veritable smorgasbord of diving opportunities.

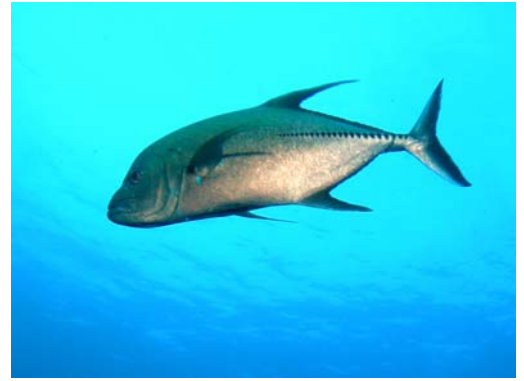
Our expedition vessel, the Akademik Shokalskiy will provide a spacious and comfortable base for our expedition. The fleet of nimble Zodiacs will allow us to explore the reefs in detail while back on our ship; our Master Chefs prepare another meal featuring excellent international cuisine. For those who want to experience above water adventures we will offer daily sightseeing shore excursions to view wildlife, meet local villagers, purchase handicrafts and watch traditional local cultural performances.

PNG is a stunning destination. With 4.3 million inhabitants hailing from over 5000 different clans and speaking over 750 separate languages, Papua New Guinea is easily the most culturally diverse nation on Earth. Diverse landscapes stretch from the deep oceanic trenches to the living reefs that surround the coast line, from broad fertile plains to the towering snow clad peaks that rise proudly to 15,000 feet. The biodiversity, both above and below the water, is in quantities unequalled anywhere, and contains many unique species that have existed here for millennia. Papua New Guinea is vibrant, exciting, enchanting and truly is 'the land of the unexpected'. We hope that you can come and join us on a diving adventure that explores some of PNG's delights.



ITINERARY

Please use this itinerary as a guide only. We will take the opportunity to dive in the true spirit of exploration and investigate new sites, recommended reefs and famous wrecks. Weather/sea conditions will dictate our final itinerary. Please note that the second expedition is the reverse order of the first and that the approximate voyage track will remain the same.



Day 1: Arrive in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea

Today we will all arrive in Port Moresby, capital city of Papua New Guinea. Upon arrival in Port Moresby you will transfer to the nearby Airways Hotel. The remainder of the day is at your leisure to relax around the bar and pool or get over your jetlag. Also the Airways hotel can arrange day tours if you're feeling more adventurous.



Day 2: Depart Port Moresby / Embark RV Shokalskiy

A transfer will be organized early afternoon from the Airways Hotel to the local airport where your Air Niugini flight will depart for Lae. Lae, PNG's 2nd largest city is a 45-minute flight over the 13,500 ft mountainous spine of the PNG mainland. In the port of Lae we join our ship and settle in to the vessel that will be our home for the entire expedition. We will cast off the lines early evening and set sail to the south west, into the Solomon Sea.



Day 3: Reefs of the Solomon Sea

First charted by the French explorer D'Entrecasteaux, these waters have long been regarded as treacherous by early mariners and were only begun to be surveyed by the HMS Dart in 1885. Literally hundreds of undersea pinnacles or 'bommies' rise over 1000 feet from the depths of the Solomon Sea to provide divers with an idyllic playground of clear sparkling waters giving way to endless shades of blue. Located up to 40 miles from the mainland and its associated rainfall runoff, the visibility in these waters can be spectacular, and affords excellent viewing of the pelagic species that frequent these areas: manta rays, eagle rays, dolphins, tuna, barracuda, Spanish mackerel and perhaps even the rare white hammerhead shark.



Day 4-5: Tufi Fiords and Reefs

This morning we continue diving on bommies as we head for Cape Nelson and the unique Tufi Fiords. At Tufi, we have the opportunity to head ashore to stretch our legs and perhaps view some of the local birds and butterflies, as well as the friendly local villagers. However, if the 'pull of the deep' remains strong and you may wish to keep diving; this time on the wartime wrecks in the enclosed fiord, or perhaps on one of the excellent 'muck dives' that are found in these gentle waters. As the evening draws in, we take the opportunity to partake in 'sundowner' cocktails in the peaceful grounds of the local 'Tufi Dive Resort' before returning to Shokalskiy for a BBQ as the full moon rises above the sparkling sea.



Day 6: Star Reefs

Today we plan to explore the complex Star Reef system which spans 30 miles from north to south. We begin the day in the vicinity of Rothwell Reef and will finish near Kanapu Island toward the late afternoon. The day is filled with the spirit of true exploration as our divemasters assess both wind and tide, then invite us to explore the reefs in the order that they appear before us. In the evening we set course for the huge island of New Britain some 120 miles due north and during the night we will traverse the width of the Solomon Sea under a curtain of stars.

Day 7-8: Gasmata/Lindenhaven (South Coast New Britain)

Over 250 miles long, New Britain is PNG's largest island by far. The broad south coast, which lies in the rain-shadow created by the interior high country, provides an exciting range of dives that our local guides will be introduce us too. We will spend a full day at our arrival point, the Gasmata/Lindenhaven area, and the location of an idyllic island-studded lagoon that contains many underwater remnant of the WWII Japanese floatplane base. The sea here positively teems with life as the waters of the Solomon Trench provide an upwelling of cooler nutrient-rich waters to support an abundance of species. In the evening we will begin our eastwards journey and enjoy 'sundowner' refreshments as we steam adjacent to this magical coast.

Day 9: Waterfall Bay

As dawn breaks we will drop anchor at this enchanting bay on a coast that is punctuated with magical waterfalls and clear cool rivers flowing from the jungle interior. Here we hope to start our day with a morning dive into the 'Blue Hole' a crystal clear, 180 feet deep fresh water spring the size of a swimming pool. After a full day of diving we will weigh anchor and sail around Crater Point as we turn northward towards the active volcanoes of Rabaul.

Day 10: Rabaul

In September 1994 the volcanoes surrounding Rabaul exploded, burying this once tranquil South Seas town and destroying it forever. As we approach the area we will observe firsthand a living volcanic spectacle. Our diving theme for today is 'critter dives' with our local guides providing us with a diving extravaganza that will "blow your fins off". In addition we will chose between a harbor dive, muck dives, wreck dives or a tour of the Duke of York Islands. It is here that in 1914, Australia's first submarine sank, and still lies awaiting discovery. This evening we head westward as we reach the top of New Britain and our northernmost point just 4° from the equator.

Day 11: Father Reef

Famous for the large creatures that visit this area despite the relative absent of current, Father Reef is destined to become a favorite site for everyone that dives here. The reef marks the outer limits of Kimbe Bay, our general location for the next few days, and home to over 350 species of coral and over 900 species of fish. Father Reef will offer us shark action, large pelagic fish and the chance to encounter dolphins. This evening we sail westward for the Witu Islands, some 80 miles towards the sunset.....

Day 12: Witu Islands

At dawn we complete our final approach to this chain of beautiful volcanic islands. Our divemasters will assess weather and tide conditions to ensure we make best use of our day in this aquatic paradise. Centre stage is the incredibly scenic landscape of the flooded caldera of Garove Island. Today we'll meet the locals; barracudas, trevally, dogtooth tuna, Spanish mackerel, and sharks. The reefs here are covered with gorgonian fans, black corals, different species of soft corals and hydroids. There will also be the opportunity to go and view tailed sea slugs, nudibranchs, razor fish and much more.

Days 13-14: Kimbe Bay

The next two days give us a unique opportunity to relax and enjoy world class diving from our own 'giant liveaboard' as we make our way lazily into the heart of Kimbe Bay, the Walindi Plantation Resort. This area is world renowned as a prime Pacific dive site as over 70% of all coral species in the Indo/Pacific region can be found in Walindi's waters; no other dive area in the world can boast such



diversity. World famous dive locations abound with more than 200 reefs and dive sites that dot this majestic bay. We will ensure that the level of diving we offer maximizes your opportunity to sample the delights of the deep. The program will feature 5 dives a day so that you can select a pace that suits you.

As we anchor off Walindi Plantation resort, we will have access to other activities in this tropical playground; enjoy the tranquil surroundings of the resort, explore WWII remains, take a fishing charter, go bird watching on a guided trek, or just simply relax by the pool and sample the local cocktails. The calm lagoon and peaceful setting offer the perfect backdrop for sunset drinks. A traditional Shokalskiy expedition barbeque will be held on the bow during our final evening, providing us with a chance to reminisce on an unforgettable diving adventure shared together.

Day 15: Hoskins. Disembark RV Akademik Shokalskiy

Breakfast will be served on board before we say our farewells to the crew of the Shokalskiy and transfer ashore. The friendly staff at the Walindi Plantation Resort will assist us as we drive inland to catch our outbound aircraft from Hoskins Airport to Port Moresby and onward to our home destinations. For those not wishing to depart today, Walindi Plantation Resort offers an excellent starting point for your extended stay in Papua New Guinea; land of the unexpected.



If you require more information or wish to confirm your participation please contact;
belinda@deepoceanexpeditions.com

LECTURERS / EXPEDITION STAFF

All Deep Ocean Expedition voyages provide a team of experienced staff to offer their knowledge and assistance. Our staff will comprise of a team of experienced divemasters, zodiac drivers and experienced Australian divers Ron and Valerie Taylor who will offer a series of on-board lectures.

Master Chefs and catering staff will serve international cuisine using quality fresh provisions.

A Western Doctor experienced in dive medicine will also join the expedition team.

CRUISE PRICE

Prices quoted in US Dollars on a per person share basis. Single occupancy 1.4 times twin rate except for the Suite that is unavailable as a single. Airfare is not included.

- Deck 3 Twin with shared bath US \$4850.00
- Deck 4/5 Twin with bath US \$5450.00
- Deck 5 Superior US \$5900.00 (one cabin only)
- Deck 5 Suite US \$6300.00 (one cabin only)

NOTE: THESE FARES INCLUDE ALL PAPUA NEW GUINEA GOVERNMENT AND LOCAL PASSENGER TAXES

CABIN CATEGORIES

Cabins on Deck 3 have a porthole and two lower berths with shared facilities.

Cabins on Decks 4 & 5 have windows, upper and lower berths and private facilities.
The Suite and Superior cabins have windows, lower berths, a sitting area and private facilities.

INCLUDED IN CRUISE COST:

- All meals, services of expedition staff and access to normal facilities on board *Akademik Shokalskiy*.
- Any miscellaneous taxes and port charges incurred throughout the cruise.
- One hotel night in Airways Hotel, Port Moresby including breakfast prior to embarkation.
- Group transfers from the hotel to airport for disembarkation and from the vessel to the airport on disembarkation.

NOT INCLUDED IN CRUISE COST:

- Airfares to and from the ports of embarkation/disembarkation. Any meals or arrangements before or after the voyage not specified above.
- Dive equipment such as regulators, computers, weight belts (weights are available on board), wet suits, flippers, masks, buoyancy compensators -- *All items must be brought by each individual.*
- Personal insurance or medical costs.
- Items of a personal nature such as drinks; communications; gratuities to ship's crew; overweight baggage charges; any visas required to travel to countries visited on this itinerary; airport arrival/departure or government taxes.

VISAS

Tourist visas to Papua New Guinea are available on arrival in Port Moresby for Kina 100 (approx \$USD30). Thirty day visas are automatic but can be upgraded to 60 days (at no cost) on request. All visitors must hold a valid passport and possess an onward air or sea ticket.

THE VESSEL – RV AKADEMIK SHOKALSKIY

The *Akademik Shokalskiy* is an ideal floating hotel and dive/snorkel support vessel. Built in 1982 she was designed as a Russian oceanographic research vessel but is now used for expedition travel predominantly in the Polar Regions.

Akademik Shokalskiy has a very large open aft deck area which is close to the waterline. This is used as the dive “kit up” and storage area. Lots of other open deck space allows comfortable “sun bathing” and viewing. As usual, the vessel is equipped with three Bauer Marine dive compressors, dive tanks and other necessary support equipment. The vessel will carry five Mark V heavy duty Zodiacs for ferrying divers to the dive sites.

SPECIFICATIONS

Delivered:	1982
Length:	71.60 metres
Beam:	12.60 metres
Draught:	4.50 metres
Speed:	Max 12.5 knots
Gross Registered Tonnage:	1,764
Net Registered Tonnage:	529 tonnes
Port of Registry:	Vladivostok
Capacity:	46 pax maximum
Flag:	Russia



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FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT

INFO@DEEPOCEANEXPEDITIONS.COM

Photographs courtesy of Jayne Jenkins jayne@diveadventures.com.au & Deep Ocean Expeditions

TERMS & CONDITIONS

Reservations and Payment. A deposit of US\$1,500 per person is required to confirm a reservation with final payment due 90 days prior to departure. All prices and payments are in US dollars.

Cancellations and Refunds. All requests for cancellations must be received in writing. Cancellations received 90 days prior to departure are fully refunded less an administrative fee of \$500 per person. Please note that within the 90-day limit all deposits and tariffs are forfeited. If cancellation occurs within the 90-day period and full payment has not yet been received, the full penalty will still apply and unpaid monies are due immediately. For these and other reasons mentioned below, you are strongly encouraged to obtain trip cancellation insurance. Prices quoted are based on group participation and no refunds will be made for any part of the program in which you choose not to participate. It is understood that refunds cannot be made to passengers who do not complete the tour for any reason whatsoever.

Itinerary. The itinerary described is subject to change at the discretion of the ship's master. We reserve the right to change the itinerary due to weather conditions, availability of anchorages, political conditions and other factors beyond our control without consulting the participants. It is understood that such decisions will be made in the best interests of all passengers aboard and with regard to the safety of the vessel. Participants have no right to any refund or other considerations in the event of these inevitable itinerary changes.

Rates. Voyage rates are based on tariffs and exchange rates in effect at the time of printing and are subject to change prior to departure. Substantial changes in tariffs, exchange rates and the price of fuel, services and labor sometimes increase the cost of expedition arrangements significantly, and we reserve the right to alter our prices accordingly.

Responsibility. *Please read this important information carefully.* The payment of a deposit of any part or full payment for a reservation on this tour shall constitute consent to all the provisions contained herein.

Quark Expeditions Inc. (QEI), Oceanic Odyssey Cruises (OOC) Deep Ocean Expeditions (DOE) and Supernova Expeditions Ltd. (SEL) act as general sales agents for the vessel and as such exercise every possible care. However, QEI, OOC, DOE, SEL, their subsidiaries and/or associated Agents, shall not be held responsible for property loss or damage and/or any damages resulting from illness, personal injuries or death which may be sustained by reason of, or while engaged on, any tour whether due to the ownership, maintenance, use, operation or control of any aircraft, helicopter, automobile, bicycle, boat, vehicle, hotel, common carrier or any other conveyance used in carrying out these tours. We can assume no liability due to any cause whatsoever whether caused by failure or delay or other irregularity, acts or omissions occurring during a tour under which the means of transportation or other service provided thereby is offered or supplied by owners, operators or public carriers for whom QEI, OOC, DOE and SEL act only as agent.

QEI, OOC, DOE and SEL reserve the right (at their discretion) to alter or omit any part of the itinerary or change any reservation, feature and/or means of conveyance without notice and for any reason whatsoever and without allowance or refund and with extra costs, if any, resulting there from paid by the passengers. We reserve the right to cancel any tour prior to departure, in which case payment will be refunded without further obligation on our part.

QEI, OOC, DOE and SEL shall not be responsible for any injury to person (whether or not resulting in death) or damage to property arising out of any act of war, insurrection, revolt or other civil uprising or military action occurring in the countries of origin, destination or passage. QEI, OOC, DOE and SEL strongly urge individual passengers obtain appropriate insurance coverage. Baggage is at the owner's risk entirely.

In case of a medical problem arising during the voyage, either on board or on shore, which results in costs for evacuation, use of aircraft or repatriation, the responsibility for payment of these costs belongs solely to the passenger. QEI, OOC, DOE and SEL strongly advise that passengers ensure that such eventualities are covered by travel insurance. If not covered by travel insurance the responsibility still remains with the passenger and QEI, OOC, DOE and SEL specifically decline any responsibility whatsoever.

The transportation companies concerned are not to be held responsible for any act, omission or event during the time passengers are not aboard their carriers or conveyances. The passenger contract in use by the carriers concerned (when issued) shall constitute the sole contract between the transportation companies and the purchaser of these tours and/or passage. By accepting the ticket the passenger also agrees to its terms and conditions.

By forwarding of deposit, the passenger certifies that he/she does not have any mental, physical or other condition or disability that would create a hazard for him/herself or other passengers. QEI, OOC, DOE and SEL reserve the right to cancel or withdraw any person as a member of the tour at any time.