



INSIGHTS NEW CALEDONIA

Friday 11th July to Tuesday 22nd July, 2008

New Caledonia is a French overseas territory with a population of 230,000 people, 40% of whom live in Noumea. The main island of Grande Terre, 400 kms long and 50 kms wide, is surrounded by a 1600 km coral reef forming the largest lagoon in the world. The central chain of mountains combines to provide a spectacular contrast between the lush tropical forests of the east coast and the dry farming and mining area of the west coast.

As well as coinciding with the Bastille celebrations in Noumea, the tour incorporates an overnight visit to the Isle of Pines, regarded by many as a paradise. A comprehensive tour of Grande Terre follows travelling in our chartered 19 seat coach with our own expert bilingual guide and staying in first class hotels and resorts.

During our visits to sites of significant cultural, historical and natural beauty you will experience the French language, colonial architecture and cuisine. The tour will encompass memorable experiences of the depth and breadth of the melange of cultures of New Caledonia.



Anse Vata Bay, Noumea

DAY 1 Friday 11th July Sydney to Noumea (L,D)

Mid morning departure from Sydney flying Air Calin to Noumea. Upon arrival we meet our guide and transfer in our private coach to the city of Noumea and the Ramada Plaza Hotel where we will be staying for the next 4 nights. Dinner tonight is in the Oasis restaurant located poolside on the ground floor of the hotel. The hotel is located just a few minutes walk from the beach and Anse Vata Bay where Noumeans like to promenade.

Accom: Ramada Plaza, Noumea

DAY 2 Saturday 12th July Noumea (B,L)

Morning city tour with a visit to the Noumea market which is held daily - a colourful affair with fresh fish, herbs, flowers, tropical fruit and arts and craft. Then we drive to the summit of Mt Ouen Toro for an expansive view over Noumea and the islets of the lagoon.

At the Maritime Museum we see several relics from La Perouse's ship and expositions of Noumea's maritime history and in central Noumea we see Place des Cocotiers (Coconut Square). Then we attend the first hour of the women's cricket final whilst enjoying a picnic lunch. Womens' cricket is a vestige of the early English missionary influence and is widely played in New Caledonia.

This afternoon we visit the Tjibaou cultural centre for a guided tour. Tjibaou with its unmistakable architecture by Renzo Piano displays the richness of the Kanak and Pacific Islands cultures and is a testimony to their vitality. The centre is named after Jean Marie Tjibaou the murdered independence fighter.

Accom: Ramada Plaza Noumea

DAY 3 Sunday 13th July Parc Riviere Bleue (B,L,D)

Sixty kilometres south east of Noumea lies Parc de la Riviere Bleue (Blue River National Park), 9045 hectares of wild scenery where many of the endemic flora and fauna are protected including the cagou, a flightless bird endemic to New Caledonia which is often seen here. The massive kauri trees which were once common are still represented by some huge specimens which we will see. A BBQ lunch will be served before returning to Noumea in time to refresh prior to the Bastille Eve celebrations.

This evening we witness the traditional torch light procession through central Noumea and the fireworks display. Dinner is at the Ramada's revolving Le Roof restaurant affording a bird's eye view of the lights of Noumea.

Accom: Ramada Plaza Noumea

DAY 4 Monday 14th July Bastille Day (B,L,D)

Mid morning we see the traditional Bastille Day pomp and ceremony of the military procession before boarding our private catamaran at Baie de la Moselle for a luncheon cruise on the lagoon. At the conclusion of the cruise we transfer to the Ramada. This evening we have a gourmet dinner at La Couple restaurant featuring a traditional Bastille menu.

DAY 5 Tuesday 15th July Noumea to Isle of Pines (B,L,D)



Baie de Kanumera

A morning flight to Isle of Pines, then we transfer directly to St Joseph's Bay and board our outrigger motorized canoe and sail the glorious Upi Bay. A relaxing walk through the native forest brings us to a lobster lunch at Chez Regis, a café situated on Baie d'Oro.

After lunch we transfer to the Oure Hotel magnificently situated on Kanumera Bay and ideal for a relaxing afternoon. This evening dinner will be served in the hotel restaurant.

Accom: Oure Hotel, Isle of Pines

DAY 6 Wednesday 16th July Isle of Pines to Sarramea (B,L,D)

This morning we fly to Noumea where we commence our tour of Grande Terre – the main island of New Caledonia. At Boulouparis we visit the Niaouli Distillery to see the distilling process and some of the products made from the essence which is used in perfumes, medicinal cremes and some alcoholic liquors.

At Oua Tom we meet the traditional custodians of this area and have lunch with them. During the afternoon we continue to Sarramea which lies in a narrow verdant valley surrounded by mountains. It has always been a place of encounter and exchange between Melanesian coastal and mountain villages. We visit one of the few remaining coffee plantations which were established at the beginning of the 20th century by settlers from the north of France.

The Evasion Hotel comprises 10 luxurious bungalows positioned in a serene garden setting nestled beside a brook on the edge of the village.

Accom: Evasion Hotel, Sarramea

DAY 7 Thursday 17th July Sarramea to Koné (B,L,D)

First we visit Fort Teremba dating from 1871, it was one of the earliest military and penal settlements of New Caledonia. We have a guided tour of the fort and associated buildings including the jail. Between Moindoi and Bourail we see the Arab cemetery and visit the Commonwealth War Graves cemetery where over 200 New Zealanders are interred. Lunch will be at the La Nera hotel situated in a delightful position overlooking the La Nera river.

At Bourail, New Caledonia's second largest town, we will have a guided tour of the Bourail Museum by the curator. The museum's artefacts and displays are very well presented and include the guillotine last used in New Caledonia in 1940. On the coast a few kilometres from Bourail we visit La Roche Percée - a famous natural geological formation where the sea has created a spectacular tunnel.

At Pouembout we see the Pigeon House and arrive at Koné, one of the major nickel mining areas in the late afternoon.

Accom: Koniambo Hotel, Kone

DAY 8 Friday 18th July Koné to Hienghene (B,L,D)

At Voh we inspect a shrimp breeding enterprise then continue to Balade. As we cross Grande Terre the countryside makes a sudden transition from the dry savannah of the west coast to the sub tropical rainforest of the east. Today we have a picnic lunch due to the relative remoteness of this area.

At Balade we visit the site near where Captain Cook landed and named New Caledonia in 1774 and the place atop a small knoll where a commemorative obelisk marks the annexation of New Caledonia for France by Admiral Despointes. Also in Balade we visit the church of St Denis where the first French missionaries landed in 1874.

The route to Hienghene includes many spectacular views of the coastline and the waterfalls of the coastal mountains. At the Ouaième River the crossing of this wide river is via a quaint punt. Arrival at Hienghene will be in the late afternoon.

Accom: Koulnoue Resort, Hienghene

DAY 9 Saturday 19th July Hienghene (B,L,D)

This morning we are guided on an easy, short bushwalk with explanations of the different species of flora. The track leads to the Linderalique Lagoon where we board a motorised canoe for a close up view of the famous limestone rock formations known as the Hen and Sphinx and hear their associated legends. Late morning we join members of the Werap tribe for an immersion into Melanesian culture and a traditional bougna lunch. Mid afternoon we have a guided visit of Hienghene, the village of Jean Marie Tjibaou. We then visit a lookout where the views over the bay and rock formations can be admired. On the return to the resort we will visit the grotte de Linderalique - a cavernous natural cave where concerts are occasionally held.

Accom: Koulnoue Resort, Hienghene



Linderalique Lagoon, Hienghene

Photo: JohnTuckerman

DAY 10 Sunday 20th July Hienghene to Sarramea (B,D)

We travel south along the east coast to Touho where we take the cross island "Transversal Route" to Pouembout making a stop at a lookout enroute. Then to Bourail for the experience of a regional Caledonian race day. Bourail is in the heart of West Coast Cowboy Country where Brouusards - French settlers and former convicts - have established a rural lifestyle where horses and riding skills are highly respected. Afternoon transfer to Saramea.

Accom: Evasion Hotel, Sarramea

DAY 11 Monday 21st July Sarramea to Noumea (B,L)

This morning we travel southbound towards Noumea with a site inspection of the petroglyphs enroute to Monts Koghi – a series of mountains up to 1079 metres. The Auberge du Mont Koghi is a small hotel 476 metres in altitude and set in a rainforest environment. The auberge is noted for its French Alps style architecture and cool climate which in winter sometimes sees a roaring log fire. It serves Savoyard specialities from the Savoy region in the French Alps. After lunch we descend to the city of Noumea for the afternoon. You will be at liberty to investigate some of the exquisite French boutiques or any other place in central Noumea which you desire. Late afternoon our coach will transfer us to the Ramada.

Accom: Ramada Plaza, Noumea

DAY 12 Tuesday 22nd July Noumea to Sydney (B,L)

After breakfast transfer by private coach to Tontouta International airport for our late morning flight to Sydney arriving about 3pm.

General Information

Cost

The cost of this tour is \$5895

The cost includes:

1. all transportation as shown in the itinerary
2. accommodation on a twin share basis
3. all sightseeing excursions
4. all entrance fees
5. all service charges and taxes
6. all meals shown as B – breakfast, L - lunch and D - dinner except dinner on day 2 and day 11 and lunch on day 10
7. all gratuities
8. guided touring as specified in the itinerary
9. services of Insights Tours escort throughout the tour
10. services of experienced local guides

The additional costs are: drinks, meals not specified and items of a personal nature.

Places on the tour require a \$1000 deposit per person
Balance of \$4895 to be remitted by Monday 12th May, 2008.

To make a booking

Please complete the enclosed booking form and return to Insights Tours with your deposit.

Cancellations prior to Monday 12th May, 2008

Refunds for cancellations will be less any cancellation fees imposed by third parties. This may be up to 100 % of the deposit.

Cancellations after Monday 12th May, 2008

There will be no refunds possible after Monday 12th May, 2008.

Insurance

We strongly recommend considering travel insurance to cover medical expenses and cancellation penalties. Insights Tours can provide information about obtaining insurance.

Acts of God

We are unable to accept liability in contract or in tort for any injury, damage, loss, delay additional expenses or inconvenience caused directly or indirectly by force majeure or other events over which we have no control. These include without limitation or rights: civil strife, terrorist activity, fire, unusually severe weather industrial disputes, acts of government, acts of God.

About the tour

Insights Tours is a tour company operated by Paul and John Tuckerman. Our philosophy is to provide a tour with a spectrum of interesting visits, inspections and conveyances. Each tour is uniquely arranged to encompass the most interesting sights of the regions visited. Insights Tours engages our own guides to ensure that our passengers have the best insight into the location being visited.

Passenger numbers are limited to ensure a comfortable travelling experience and to ensure that visits and guided tours are of maximum benefit. This tour is for a maximum of 16 passengers.

Each of our tours is personally escorted ensuring you can relax in the confidence that all of the pesky administrative details and arrangements are being taken care of. There is always the chance that our itinerary could be delayed or curtailed in some way beyond our control. Except for prolonged or unexpected events, the tour will be conducted as closely as possible to the itinerary stated above.

Coach

Insights Tours will be chartering a modern air conditioned 19 seat coach from our agents in Noumea.

Accommodation

All accommodation is in first class hotels and resorts with ensuite amenities. The cost of the tour is based on twin share accommodation. Limited single accommodation is available. Single supplement upon application.

Airline and Luggage

The tour includes economy class air travel with Air Calin from Sydney to Noumea and return. The flight time is approximately 3 hours. Air Calin has a fleet of Airbus jets which are maintained to European standards. The domestic flights between Noumea and Isle of Pines will be conducted in a modern turbo prop aircraft. Checked luggage is limited to one suit case up to 20 kgs.

Visa and Passport

Australian citizens require a passport with at least 6 months validity. A visa is not required by Australians to enter New Caledonia which is a territory of France.

Health

Insights Tours recommends you consult your medical advisor prior to the tour. Whilst it is a relatively benign location, some of the areas which we are visiting have very limited medical facilities.

Enquiries

If you would like further details or clarification of any matter, please contact Paul at Insights Tours: Tel: 0242 67 2535 or 0242 67 5530 E: paul@insightstours.com.au

BOOKING FORM

“New Caledonia Insights” 11th July to 22nd July, 2008

Insights Tours

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Austinmer NSW 2515
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02 42 672535
Facsimile: 02 42 675530
Email: paul@insightstours.com.au
Travel agents licence no. 2TA5859

Name/s (as on your passport):

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Address:

.....

Telephone:.....

Contact in an emergency:.....

Any special requirements or requests:.....

.....

Room type: please circle your choice: Twin Double Single

*Deposit of \$..... enclosed.
(please make cheques payable to Insights Tours)

OR

*Deposit of \$..... transferred.
for direct transfer our account details are:

- Name of account: Insights Tours client travel account
- BSB: 062 607
- Account number: 1013 1313

Signature/s:

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