

# Fergusson Island

## Gomwa Guest House

Gomwa Guest House lies within mangrove habitat on Fergusson Island. This is a good opportunity to experience local life amid streams, forests, and friendly villagers. The guest house – with a view to the mangroves – is a haven of peace. Surprisingly, mosquitoes are not a problem. This is an excellent area to view crocodiles, but don't worry they don't eat people here. An early morning canoe paddle into the bay may deliver sightings of dugongs feeding on seagrass. One of the highlights is a walk to a waterfall where you can jump into the cool, calm waters. Be inspired by the physical and intellectual prowess of the people working the land. On your return, you will be treated to a meal of local fruits and culinary specialities like yam in coconut milk.



### Accommodation

The Guest House is an elevated thatched hut with two large rooms and an extended elevated balcony. Mosquito netting is available upon request; pillows and traditional pandanus mats are provided, but not mattresses. At ground level, you can relax in the aptly named rest house, which overlooks the mangroves. The eating area is a large and open thatched hut. There is a separate pit toilet and bucket shower for washing. Gomwa is a large town, with about 2000 people, so food and transport are more easily organised in Gomwa than elsewhere. Maximum Group Size: 10. (Accommodation described from 2010.)



### Experiences

Hike across the landscape and wade through streams to a stunning highland waterfall. Along the way, view local gardens and try climbing coconut and betel nut trees. Visit a local agricultural school that is growing new crops, which you can try. You will gain an insight into local life in a larger village, while remaining on the outskirts of mangrove habitat. An interesting side trip from Gomwa is to visit the island of Dobu, which is a very historical site and where Dr Bromilow landed in 1891 as a missionary.



#### Experiences include;

- ❖ Waterfall Hike
- ❖ Mangrove viewing
- ❖ Fire making
- ❖ Traditional Canoe paddles
- ❖ Crocodile and dugong watching
- ❖ Local string band
- ❖ Local markets
- ❖ Traditional dancing
- ❖ Historical sites



## How to get there

1.5 hr PMV bus ride from Alotau to East Cape; 3 hr dingy ride to Gomwa. You should book your dingy travel two days in advance. It is also advisable to bring 60 litres of petrol for your return trip.

Refer to the 'Visitor Information Guide' for more information about travel in remote areas, what to bring, and how to organise your trip.

It is best to have a booking through Napatana Lodge or Milne Bay Tourism Bureau at least 2 days in advance.

## What to bring

In addition to insect repellent, first aid and medical kit, don't forget toilet paper, tea bags, spices (salt, pepper), and waterproof bags for all of your gear! Epoxy resin and a small tool kit are also very useful.



## Health, safety & cultural tips

These village experiences are authentic and therefore can be a bit challenging for people used to a sedentary lifestyle. Milne Bay Province is safe for tourists due to the mainly matrilineal culture. The culture is very polite to guests and you will be well cared for. However, time frames will be different to what you are used to and the general amenities more sparse. Sundays are a day of rest so travel and activities are restricted.

Remember that your financial contribution will protect biodiversity and support local conservation and local values, but not western style accommodation.

Make sure to ask how much your stay will cost you so that there are no surprises (each activity has a cost). Although prices are standardised, managers feel it is rude to mention money upon your arrival.

## Travel combinations with other villages

Gomwa Guest House is close to DeiDei Guest House and Waluma Guest House. The three village experiences can be easily combined. It is recommended that you first travel by boat to Waluma Village; walk from Waluma to DeiDei Village; then organise a canoe from DeiDei to Gomwa Village. Waluma Village is the most remote location, and it is easier to organise return travel from Gomwa to Alotau.



## Managers

Siosi and Amy

## Booking details and contacts

**Napatana Lodge** (Gretta Kwasnicka, Owner)

[www.napatanalodge.com](http://www.napatanalodge.com)

**Phone:** (675) 6410588

**Email:** [info@napatanalodge.com](mailto:info@napatanalodge.com)

*cc: [gretta@daltron.com](mailto:gretta@daltron.com)*

**Milne Bay Tourism Bureau**

**Phone:** (675) 641 1503

**Fax:** (675) 641 0132

**Email:** [infotourism@milnebay.gov.pg](mailto:infotourism@milnebay.gov.pg)



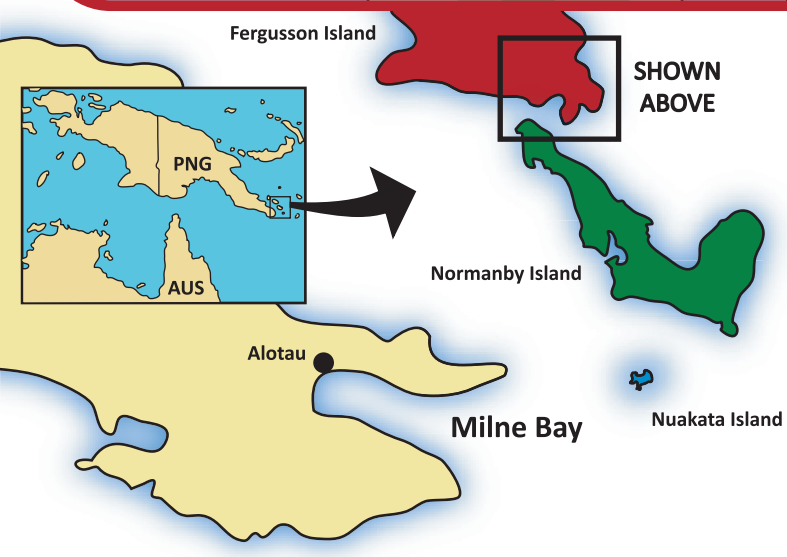
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## KEY ATTRACTIONS

All attractions and activities must be carried out with local guides. This can be arranged through your Guest House.

- 1 Elagege:** 6 hr return; challenging mountain hike from Gomwa Guest House. Very steep inclines and dense jungle. Stunning views of surrounding areas from the top with a cool sea breeze.
- 2 Galubwa:** 7 hr return; moderate to strenuous walk from Gomwa Guest House. The terrain is mostly flat with some undulation and some steep inclines. You will journey through jungle, cross cool streams, and walk past local villages and gardens. The walk to Galubwa village is only moderately difficult; enjoy lunch at Galubwa village. From Galubwa, hike through rainforest to the waterfall (steep ascent) to jump from 6-12m into a cool and deep pool below.
- 3 Hot Springs:** 1hr return; easy and flat walk from DeiDei Guest House through scrub to spurting geysers, hot springs, boiling mud pools and thermal stream. Bathe in the thermal stream and cook food in the hot springs.
- 4 Budoya Market:** 2hr return; easy and flat walk from DeiDei Guest House to Budoya Market. You will pass local villages, schools, and churches and arrive at the local market. A good variety of fresh produce and a great cultural experience.
- 5 DeiDei to Waluma:** 1hr (one way); easy and flat walk from DeiDei Guest House to Waluma Guest House past local villages and gardens.
- 6 Swimming:** Swim from Waluma Guest House along the coast and experience underwater thermal vents and the mouth of a thermal stream coming out to sea. A unique swimming experience in hot sea water.
- 7 Snorkelling:** 3 hr return; travel by traditional war canoe from Waluma Guest House to Elvis Island and Guiya. Jump off the canoe into crystal clear blue waters to snorkel over reefs and around Elvis Island. You will come ashore at Guiya village with stunning white sand beach. Strong current and some wave action.
- 8 Steam vents:** 3hr scenic; moderate to strenuous hike from the Waluma beach to mountain ridge. A few steep inclines followed by a flat walk past hot steam vents and great views. Steep descent back to the beach followed by a canoe ride back to Waluma Guest House.



### LEGEND:

Guesthouse	Market	Hot springs
Hiking trail	Snorkelling	Swimming
Canoe trail	Fishing	Thermal vents
Reef		
Mangrove		
Canoeing		
Waterfall		
Crocodiles		
Traditional entertainment		