

TRIP REPORT - KAVIENG PNG

There are times when you have the opportunity to reflect on what you are doing with your life and what you have done; to view simplicity and compare it to what we have. The more time we spent at Nusa Island Retreat at Kavieng in PNG the worse our "advanced" lifestyle looked. Watching the kids at play after a day of school, playing football on the beach, swimming, climbing trees and jumping into the lagoon, combined with the serenity of Nusa Island Retreat all indicated to me that we have not got it all right in our lifestyle.

Nusa Island Retreat is simple. Thatched bungalows have verandahs big enough to accommodate 8 people on chairs and some communal duty free, ceiling fans and mosquito nets over comfortable enough beds, hardwood floors and big ventilation windows on all sides of the bungalows. The meals are excellent. Morning coffee is available from 6:30, Breakfast begins at 7:00 and because of limited kitchen equipment can be a little slow, lunch is available from 12.00 - 2.00pm or whenever the divers get back. Dinner is always a buffet meal and is always fantastic. There were some early concerns about the dry composting toilets used at NIR, but these were foundless. and hot shower addicts soon found that late afternoon was the best time for them. These were the extent of the groups' concerns!! Pretty good for a week away!!

We dived with Cara and Dorian (Scuba Ventures) and once again found their service to be of the highest order. Our group of 14 split into Mad Fish divers and Krok Krok divers (the two dive boats) and thoroughly enjoyed the diversity of the diving on offer. We dived the big name sites - Albatross Passage (twice), Der Yang / Echuca Patch and Kaplamann Reef: We dived on wrecked WW2 Japanese aircraft (2 x "Jake" float planes and a brilliant dive on "Deep Pete" - a Mitsubishi Pete float plane in 40 meters) and an American Mitchell B25 bomber. We had a thoroughly engrossing muck dive at the "Bottle Shop" where 4 of us finally dragged ourselves away after 100 minutes. Most of the group clocked up between 60 - 70 minutes here and the cameras ran hot!! If you count the two dives done on residual air we did 17, but at a relaxed pace.

NIR and the diving on offer made this, our second trip here, one where we dived but also relaxed, read, swam and rediscovered the afternoon "combat nap" - or that's what the couples told me!! The diving was superb, the holiday was excellent and Air Nui Guinea even ran on time for every flight!!

As you know Aqua Action does a lot of International dive travel and Kavieng, Nusa Island Retreat and Scuba Ventures are always near the top of the "repeat visit" list. When are we returning?? - tomorrow if our group has anything to do with it!! - but more realistically in 2007. I'll keep you posted!!.