

EXPEDITION DOSSIER

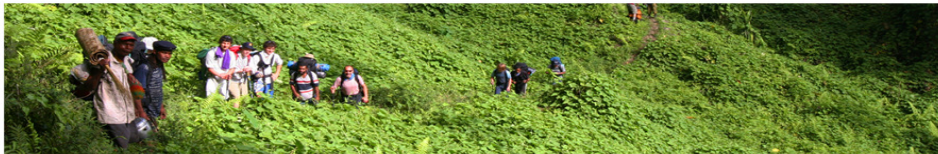
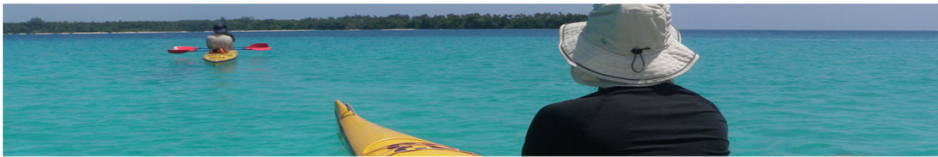
**SPARROW FORCE TIMOR LESTE
AUSTRALIAN LED**

XPD200

11 DAYS

GRADE – MODERATE TO DIFFICULT

ITINERARY – COSTS – INCLUSIONS



**FOR ANY MORE DETAILS OF EXPEDITIONS IN NEPAL, BHUTAN,
INDONESIA, TANZANIA, TIMOR LESTE AND PAPUA NEW GUINEA
CALL US ON (03) 9598 8581 OR VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT
WWW.NOROADS.COM.AU**

EXPEDITION OVERVIEW

The Sparrow Force Expedition takes us into many of the areas in which Australian commando forces operated during WWII, as well as providing an opportunity to experience first hand the progress of one of the newest countries on earth. The expedition also gives us insights into the struggle between Fretelin and the Indonesian occupying forces after 1975.

Sparrow Force crosses Timor Leste from the North coast to the South coast, covering approximately 130km, through rugged terrain with spectacular landscapes and views. The expedition will cross the highest point of Timor Leste, Mt Ramelau (aka Mt Tatamailau) which peaks at 2963 m ASL.

We will cross ridges, massive river beds, valleys and forests. You will also see traditional villages that have barely changed in centuries. The trekking segment of the expedition ends at a large river crossing near the south coast where we will be transferred to Betano Bay. This expedition will give you a great insight into the difficult terrain Australian forces had to endure during WWII as well as life in remote villages of one of the newest nations on the planet.

After returning to Dili we will then head out to Balibo to visit the site of murdered Australian reporters at this historical and strategically important town.

The people of Timor Leste are some of the friendliest and warmest in the world. Their sense of humour is infectious. You will be amazed at what a wonderfully welcoming country Timor Leste is.

EXPEDITION GRADE

This expedition is considered difficult as there are long walks over elevated terrain and along roads developed by the Portuguese, Japanese and Indonesians which represent the long colonial occupation of this country.

There is also a trek up Timor Leste's highest peak Mt Ramelau.

Some days are long hauls of 7 to 10 hours through humid and hot terrain.

THE EXPERIENCE.

The expedition provides a real sense of what Australian Diggers had to deal with during WWII. It also presents members of the group with an opportunity to learn first hand about the Portuguese and Indonesian presence in Timor.

Following the trek, the group will visit Balibo, a small town which has become a part of Australian history post WW2.

Accommodation.

Trekking accommodation is in twin share tents and standard Hotel accommodation in Dili (Hotel Esplanade on the waterfront)

ITINERARY

Australian Led Expeditions

There is a real need for all trekkers visiting Timor Leste with No Roads Expeditions to have a genuine spirit of adventure and to be aware that they are part of the early development of tourism in this country. As such the daily itinerary may need to be altered to address unforeseen circumstances and challenges.

Walking times are estimates and include breaks and lunches. Weather, track



conditions and trekker fitness will impact on these times.

Day 1.

Arrive in the capital of Timor Leste, Dili where you will meet your Australian Guide and our local team.

You will transfer to your hotel where you will have time to settle in. A tour of Dili by bus will follow during which you will have an opportunity to visit markets, historic locations, monuments and witness first hand the vibrant redevelopment of Dili from the destruction that preceded this country's independence.

On return to the hotel you will receive a detailed briefing from your Australian Guide. During this briefing you will be provided with ample opportunity to ask questions about the trek or any other matters.

In the evening you will enjoy a sensational meal with the group at a local seafront restaurant.

That night you will pack and be ready to depart the following morning to commence your trekking adventure.

Day 2.

Start location: 5 km out of Dili at Comoro River. (Depicted below) Transport provided by four wheel drive vehicle.

Altitude: 5m

Departure time: 8.30am

Lunch: At large tree on old Japanese road.

Camp location: Bushcamp Daurudu River

Arrival time: 2.30pm

Duration of day: 6 hrs

Altitude: 650m

Net ascent/descent: 645m net ascent

General comments:

Today is a great introduction to the terrain and early in the morning we will trek past the Four Spurs location, where Australian troops in WWII maintained an observation post on Dili and Japanese movements in the harbour.

Trekking today can be described as easy to moderate over rocky terrain and through areas thickly covered in gum trees. There is then a steep climb to our camp site beside a local school building.



Trek start point, Comoro River, Dili.

Day 3.

Start location: River Daurudu

Altitude: 650m

Departure time: 8 am

Camp location: On bank of Dirhati River in close proximity to the town of Suco-Liurrai (Depicted)

Arrival time: 3pm

Altitude: 950m

Net ascent/descent: 300m net ascent

Duration of day: 7 hrs

General comments: We leave the River and trek across open shale hills and onto a road which provides scenic views of rice paddies prior to passing through a small town. This will be your first full day of walking and you will start to feel what rural life is like in Timor Leste and experience the warm greeting of the local farmers.

We will trek along a ridge with views of Aemere and Villa Maria (2 spots important during WWII)



We will then proceed to a river camping spot along the road through the town of Suco-Liurai. A swing bridge across the river in front of the store can be used to cross the river should the river be too deep to wade across. Fresh bread rolls can be purchased here for \$1 for 20 rolls!!



Camp beside the Nanolane river at Suco-Liurai.

Day 4.

Start location: Dirhati River at town of Suco-Liurai.

Altitude: 950m

Departure time: 8.00am

Camp location: Bush camp beside stream located at Mt.Tatamaila between the towns of Bertai and Mamude

Arrival time: 4pm

Altitude: 2050 m

Net days ascent/descent: 940 m net ascent

Duration of day: 8.5 hrs.

General comments: Today is a magnificent feast for the eyes. The initial walk is along ridges of medium difficulty which provide spectacular views.

We will then move off the road into bush land which is not unlike Australia with heavily covered gum trees. Fascinating ancient rock walls built hundreds of years ago, are used as animal pens that are worth a short break to examine, then onto camp.

That night's bush camp is made in a beautiful valley beside a swiftly flowing stream. Herds of Timor ponies are often seen grazing close to the camp.



Bush camp beside stream located at Mt.Tatamaila between the towns of Bertai and Mamude

Day 5.

Start location: Bush camp

Altitude: 2050m

Departure time: 8am

Camp location: Mt.Ramelau camp near open air chapel in sheltered location amongst stunted gums.approx.150 below the peak (depicted below).

Arrival time: 5pm

Altitude: 2788m

Net ascent/descent: 773m net ascent

Duration of day: 9 hrs

General comments: Today is a big day. We will be trekking to the highest point in Timor-Leste, the Sacred Mt Ramelau. Initially we will be trekking through treed hills very similar to Victoria's High Country. Herds of Timorese Ponies, ancient stone walls and fabulous views are experienced this day. There is also trekking in open grasslands and over hills with traditional Timorese farms with their unique thatched conical roofs. If you are lucky, we will see one of the famous Timorese "cowboys" riding the iconic Timorese Pony. We will then trek down to a road where our support vehicle will wait with supplies.

Lunch will be at Mausoro Mata before a



support vehicle will shuttle us to the base of Mt Ramelau which has a recently constructed huge gateway and stone steps.

The initial walk up the mountain will be via the stone steps and then a walking track along the side of the mountain. Camping that night in a sheltered location amongst stunted gum trees approximately 150m below the peak of Mt. Ramelau. There is a thatched cooking hut and chapel at this scenic location.

Trekkers can walk to the peak where there is a substantial religious statue of the Virgin Mary. In fine weather a spectacular view is available. This will be the coldest night of the trek due to the altitude getting down to 0c.



Camp located near open air chapel in sheltered location approximately 150m below the peak of Mt Ramelau.

Day 6.

Start location: Mt Ramelau

Altitude: 2788m

Departure time: 8am

Camp location: In the town of Soro.

Arrival time: 5pm

Altitude: 834m

Net ascent/descent: 1154m net descent

Duration of day: 9 hrs

General comments: This morning we descend Mt Ramelau along a slippery track through beautiful bush land. We then emerge into rolling fields which

provide scenic views of traditional Timorese farms. We continue on a cobbled road and at around 12 noon we will be provided with a panoramic view of the Timor Sea.

The day will end at Soro where the group will spend the night camped near an interesting religious grotto.



Camp site beside grotto at the town of Soro.

Day 7

Start location: Town of Soro.

Altitude: 1154 m

Departure time: 8am

Lunch: Large river crossing near south coast

Camp location: Betano

Arrival time: 4pm

Altitude: 6m

Net ascent/descent: 1148m net descent

Duration of day: 8 hours

General comments: Much of this days trek is along small roads where we will pass through numerous small villages and beautiful forests. On passing through the village of Lima we will see an interesting ruined Portuguese villa and also a small roadside shop where soft drinks and snacks can be purchased.

We will continue on for lunch at a large river crossing before being picked up for our transfer to Betano.



We then continue to the town of Betano, passing through a number of small villages.

The camp site is located in sand dunes close to the beach, a short walk from the town.

An engine block of the WW2 destroyer HMAS Voyager (1), which was involved in resupplying Sparrow Force can be seen at low tide close to our camp.

There is an interesting memorial at crossroads in village, a remnant of the Indonesian presence as well as an impressive ruined Portuguese Customs building.

The beach itself is beautiful with sweeping golden sands where you can have a well deserved swim. Afterwards we will enjoy dinner at a local restaurant.



Camp in the sand dunes on Betano Beach in close proximity to the town of Betano.

Day 08.

Start location: Betano Beach

Departure time: Depart in support vehicle at 8.45am

Accommodation: Old Portuguese Guest house and fort above the town of Maubisse

Arrival time: 12noon.

Duration of day: 3.5 hours

General comments: This is an interesting day travelling in our support vehicle, through towns on our journey back to Dili. We will visit the town of Same in the morning which was a centre point of fighting in WWII. There will be ample time to walk around town and enjoy the locally grown coffee.



We will also visit the remains of a building blown up by Sparrow Force when munitions had to be left behind.

We will then drive to the town of Maubisse where you will stay at an old Portuguese guest house constructed within the walls of an old Portuguese fort which provides fantastic 360 degree views of rolling hills and distant mountains.

Accommodation is provided in twin share cottages.

We will have a chance to walk down into the town below the guest house. This location provides an excellent opportunity to rest and in the evening enjoy a great meal, cold beer and some more wonderful Timorese coffee!!

Day 09.

Start location: Maubisse guest house

Departure time: 8am

Accommodation: Hotel in Dili

Arrival time: 1.30pm

Duration of day: 5.5 hrs

General comments: Today we return to Dili in our support vehicle along winding roads through coffee plantations, primary forest and small villages. There will be several stops in towns to look at monuments and enjoy more coffee. This journey provides an opportunity to observe first hand daily life in numerous small towns that you we pass through.

At Dare, located above Dili we will attend the Sparrow Force memorial. There is a very informative display at the memorial building detailing the WW2 history. We will then return to Dili and our hotel.

That afternoon we are free to shop in Dili or relax by the hotel pool. That evening the group will enjoy a fantastic meal at

one of the beach side restaurants.

Day 10.

This morning we will travel to the town of Balibo which has become infamous in Australian history. It was here where five Australian journalists were massacred by Indonesian Special Forces during the invasion on 1975.

At this location you will visit the iconic "Australia House" in which the journalists lived. The front of the building still displays the rough Australia flag that was painted there in the hope that its presence would protect the journalists. Nearby here is a fine example of an old Portuguese Fort which can be visited.

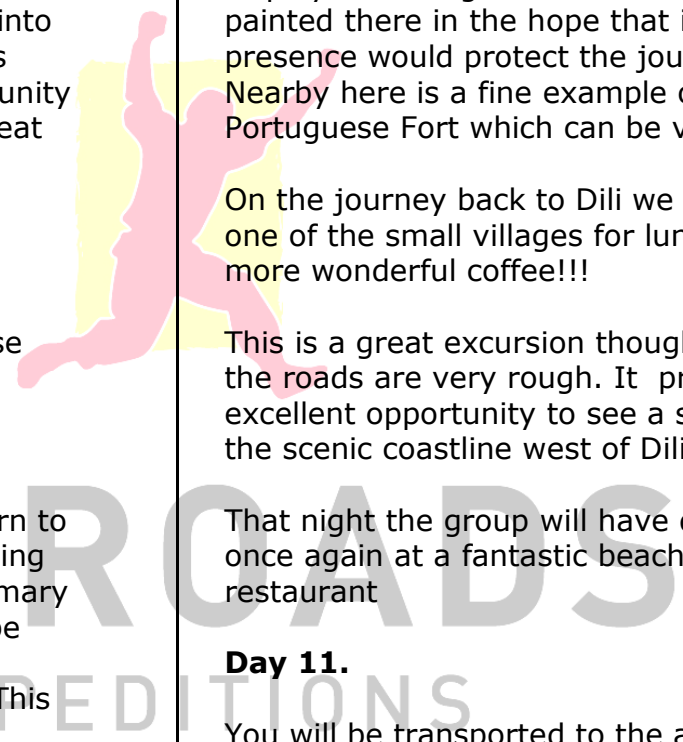
On the journey back to Dili we will stop in one of the small villages for lunch and more wonderful coffee!!!

This is a great excursion though be aware the roads are very rough. It provides an excellent opportunity to see a section of the scenic coastline west of Dili.

That night the group will have dinner, once again at a fantastic beachfront restaurant

Day 11.

You will be transported to the airport for your flight home.





INCLUSIONS

- An **Australian and/or Local Guide** for the entire expedition
- Electrolyte supplement** such as Endura for expedition portion
- All meals during trekking expedition. (meals at restaurants in Dili are at trekkers expense)
- All transfers including those from Betano
- Day tour of Dili and Balibo
- Food for Porters** including rice, pasta, noodles, biscuits, milo and vegetables
- Tour to Balibo
- All accommodation outside of Dili
- Guides and porters (who carry all group equipment, food, set up tents etc)
- 1 to 1 Porter-Client ratio**
- A **Rubbish Porter** that takes all our rubbish and other operators rubbish from bush camp areas.
- Tent hire and floor mats.** Twin share.
- 3 nights accommodation in Dili
- Snack Pack for each expedition day to get you through between meals

EXCLUSIONS

- Travel insurance (appropriate insurance can be purchased on our website)
- Items of a personal nature (i.e. art, drinks etc.)
- International airfares to and from Dili
- Charges incurred as a result of delays beyond the control of No Roads.

Note:

- Travel insurance including medical evacuation is mandatory to take part in this expedition.

The No Roads Expeditions Melbourne office will require a copy of your Travel Insurance Policy. Can you also ensure that you take with you to Timor Leste, two copies of the Policy for your Guide.

Visas are available from the nearest Timor Leste Embassy or a visa can be obtained upon arrival.

EXPEDITION DATES

Please check our website for the latest expedition dates and availability.

Closed Private Expeditions are not included in this schedule.

PRICE

**Australian Led Expeditions in 2012
XPD200 AUD\$2790 ex Dili**

PRIVATE EXPEDITIONS MINIMUM 10 PEOPLE

We are able to organize private expeditions for those that want familiar people to join them or our scheduled departures don't suit.

SPARROW FORCE HISTORY

On the 12th December 1941 the 2/2nd Independent Company (WWII Commandos) landed in Timor to form a barrier between the Japanese advance on Australia. During the next year these 327 men of all ranks were to tie up over 21,000 crack Japanese troops and inflict 1,500 deaths with the loss of only 40 Australians killed in action.

On the 19th February 1942, the 2/2nd took to the hills and carried out the most successful guerrilla warfare of any units in WWII against the Japanese. With loss of communications with Australia, these troops were thought to have either surrendered or been captured. It was not until 20th April 1942 that contact was re-established with Australia. In that time the men of the 2/2nd Independent Company lived off the land with the help of the people of Portuguese Timor and their Portuguese administrators, and with the great help of the Creados, the men and boys of Timor who personally supported the Australian soldiers.

The story of the 2/2nd Independent Company is one of great leadership, steadfastness and courage in the face of overwhelming odds. Under-supplied in every sense these men showed what a determined unit can achieve in the most difficult circumstances. The exploits of the 2/2nd Independent Company are without doubt some of the most inspiring of any unit in the Australian Army during the 2nd World War. Their story is an inspiration to all Australians as an example of the determination, resourcefulness, courage and mateship that Australian soldiers have shown in every conflict from the Boer War until the current involvement today in Iraq and Afghanistan.

TIMOR LESTE, A RICH HISTORY!!

Timor Leste, known previously as East Timor has a history of over 500 years of Portuguese colonisation which was followed by 25 years of Indonesian occupation.

The culture of the country continues to reflect this history through its food, language and architecture.

PREDEPARTURE INFORMATION

Once your expedition is confirmed we will send you detailed Pre Departure Information which includes a list of recommended clothing and personal equipment, along with other relevant information to help you prepare for your trip.

INFORMATION AND SUPPORT

If you have any comments, questions or want more information, please let us know. We are here to support you with all information to help you prepare for your travels in Timor Leste.



WHAT DO OUR TIMOR LESTE EXPEDITIONS INCLUDE?

SERVICES OF AN EXPERIENCED AUSTRALIAN AND LOCAL GUIDE

Our lead guides are both an Australian and a local and they form one of the most experienced Timor Leste teams. All our trek guides have been carefully selected for their ability and temperament. Each guide has training and proven abilities in eco-friendly methods, safety and, careful trek operations, keeping the health and happiness of the trekkers as well as his crew, uppermost. Our guides are committed to making sure that all our trekkers have an enjoyable trek, come back safe and are overwhelmed by their experience. Your guide will be a friend and companion, who takes pleasure in showing you his country's specialties and, perhaps, meet his home and family too.

The Australian guide is trained in first aid and has experienced the Sparrow Force trek before. He/She will liaise with the porter team and make your trek as comfortable as possible.

SERVICES OF PORTERS TO CARRY CAMP EQUIPMENT

Wherever possible we employ porters that live in the areas you will visit. These porters have intimate knowledge of the environment and are a great resource of information. Porters who prove themselves are chosen for training as trek helpers, cooks and guides, thus giving them an avenue to improve the quality of their life.

You can employ a Personal Porter who will carry your backpack for you and look after you along the Track. You will need to provide the Backpack for the porter.

The cost is \$350 (2012). This fee includes their wage, food, and accommodation. This is a very good option for people who wish to enjoy themselves that little bit more.

Should you employ a Personal Porter, you will need to bring a good quality day pack in which to carry personal items such as water, snacks, your first aid etc.

ACCOMMODATION

Includes three (3) nights hotel accommodation in Dili and all accommodation during the trek. Currently we use Hotel Esplanada in Dili.

SNACK PACKS

We also provide you with 6 days of electrolyte replacements, to replace fluids and essential electrolytes. This process helps prevent muscle seizures and cramps.

Finally, we provide you with 6 days of snacks that will help you from meal to meal. These consist of muesli bars, sweets and soups.

WATER

Drinking water during the trek is collected from a variety of water sources. Some of the creeks you pass through may be crystal-clear and free flowing. Other water sources are close to or in towns.

However, most water during the trek will be sourced from bottled water supplied by the Support Vehicle. Timor Leste is very dry during the dry season and as such we must supply much of the water through bottles.



In cases where water is sourced from a natural source water purification tablets must be used.

SAFETY

The Sparrow Force expedition is no picnic and there is always a possibility that you may suffer a form of injury during your trek.

Your guide will brief you on preventive safety and your porters will support and assist you with traversing difficult parts of the trek, especially when crossing rivers.

You may also suffer a gastric reaction to something you eat or drink. If you fall ill or have an accident while on the Sparrow Force Trek we have a contingency plan in place. An emergency radio and satellite phone is carried by your Guide which can be used to arrange an evacuation. As detailed earlier it is our company policy that all trekkers must have comprehensive travel insurance that includes medivac service (this is available on our website).

We recommend that you have a medical check-up with your doctor before leaving home to confirm that you are in fit condition to undertake this strenuous walk. If you suffer an accident or you fall so ill that you need to be evacuated, we will contact your medical insurer who will then coordinate the assistance you require. A medical doctor will first have to talk to you over the radio to confirm that you need to be evacuated and then if you are able to walk to the nearest airstrip your insurer will organize a chartered aircraft to fly in to pick you up. If you are unable to walk any further you will be carried to the nearest airstrip and flown out from there or picked up by helicopter from your current position. You will then be flown to Dili initially and onwards to Darwin if your condition dictates.

EXPEDITION GRADE (EXPEDITION DIFFICULTY)

GRADE 1 - EASY

Very little walking involved and when there is, it is usually for a short distance.

GRADE 2 - MODERATE

Moderate trekking 900m/3,000ft. and 2,000m/10,000ft. but possibly involving side trips to higher elevations.

GRADE 3 - DIFFICULT

Reasonably demanding trekking at altitudes up to 4,000m/13,000ft. Some expeditions included here will, in part, be well away from villages on ill-defined mountain trails.

GRADE 4 - STRENUOUS

Expeditions of a demanding nature, requiring all participants to be fit and in excellent health, often in remote alpine areas and sometimes reaching altitudes in excess of 5000m/18,000ft.

BOOKINGS

If you would like to discuss this or any other matter with us please feel free to call us on **(03) 9598 8581** or email us at info@noroads.com.au

