



# THE MAGIC OF IMAJICA

A yacht charter  
with a difference

*By Briar Jensen*

*Jesse Martin and his Imajica (below).*



Looking for something different in a PNG holiday? Want to design your own itinerary combined with an adventure on the high seas? Then Imajica Charters could be just what you're looking for.

Based in Kavieng Harbour, New Ireland Province, Imajica is a yacht charter with a difference. Established in late 2004, the business is the brainchild of Australian Jesse Martin, who in 1999, at the age of 18, became the youngest person to sail solo, non-stop and unassisted around the world.

Jesse likes to do things differently, and his first commercial venture is no exception. This is not your typical luxury yacht charter in a well-known cruising ground. It's an adventure charter for which Jesse has chosen an older, traditional style catamaran and based it in the lesser-visited cruising waters of New Ireland.

"I'm taking people on a holiday, but I'm taking them on a holiday that I would love to go on myself," says Jesse.

The key feature of Imajica Charters is the opportunity to design your own eight-day adventure cruise. You can choose from the aquatic activities of sailing, diving, snorkelling, surfing and fishing, as well as shore-based adventures incorporating the local people, their village life and cultural heritage.

Trips can focus exclusively on one activity, or Jesse can help you prepare an itinerary incorporating a variety of pursuits. However, it's important to remain flexible as the opportunity to sail to certain locations is weather-dependent.

Jesse has been fascinated with PNG since reading about it in the National Geographic magazine as a child. He made his first trip here as a 16-year-old when, together with his younger brother Beau, he kayaked for two-and-a-half weeks, covering 150 miles from Rabaul in East New Britain Province to Kavieng.

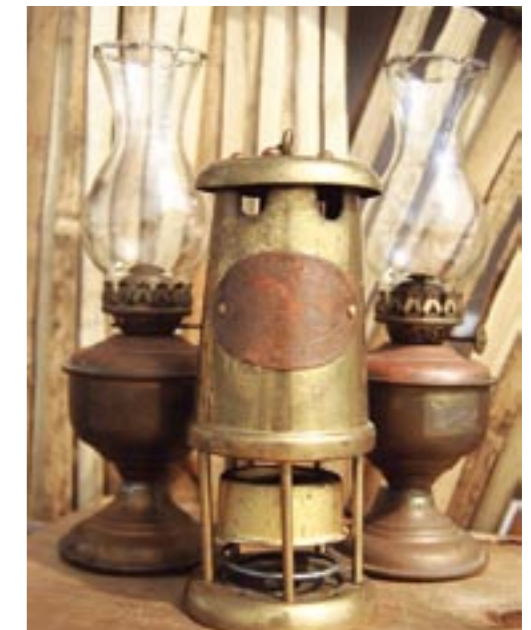
"I'd chosen New Ireland, which was part of the Bismarck Archipelago, as it was one of the most remote places we could

actually travel to in the PNG circle of islands."

So it was his location of choice for his new business. "It's a beautiful place. I'm fascinated by the culture and history here. I love the 'wildness' of it; it still has an element of danger. I hope it will attract the intrepid travellers."

The catamaran is a Wharram Tiki 38, whose double canoe-like hulls are tied to the deck in the style of Polynesian outrigger canoes. Jesse has made a few modifications to the yacht, including relocating the stove on deck, adding refrigeration and a new motor. He has also added some Melanesian touches with new decking made from local timber and a wheelhouse roof of woven sago palm leaves.

Imajica can take up to four guests at a time and is ideally suited to groups of friends with similar interests. The cat has one single and two double cabins for sleeping and storage of gear, which are



Imajica lamps.

accessed individually from the expansive deck, as is the toilet. All cooking, washing-up and showering is done on deck, which makes it a bit like camping on the water. But as Jesse says, you can't experience true adventure without a little hardship. However, there is no hardship



Sunset aboard Imajica.





*Mansava Island.*

where meals are concerned. With an abundant supply of fresh seafood, vegetables and fruits available at Kavieng market, meals onboard are innovative culinary experiences.

Jesse gives guests an idea of what it

would have been like for the sailors of old without modern technology and conveniences. "The charter is for sailors, cruisers and adventurers who want to see PNG the old style way, by using the wind," he says. Consequently, there are no modern instruments to be found in the wheelhouse, just a compass. Jesse will even teach you the art of celestial navigation, if desired. It includes an overnight passage in the itinerary. However, there is a hand-held GPS onboard for those times when visual or celestial navigation is impossible.

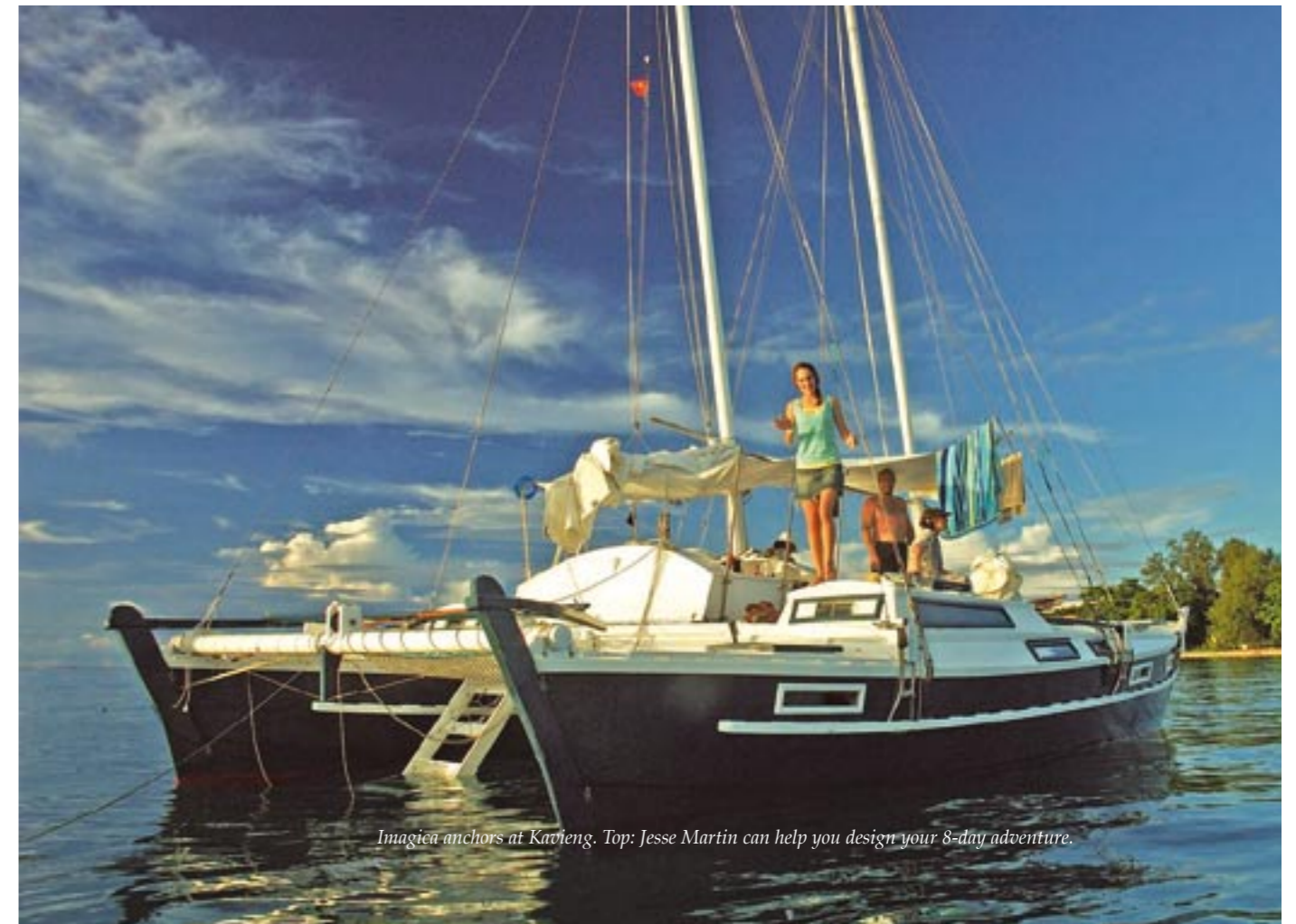
The charters are 'hands-on' and guests are expected to participate in all aspects of the trip, so you'll find yourself pulling in the anchor, hoisting the sails and taking a watch at the helm, as well as buying fresh produce at the local market, preparing meals and washing dishes. But in the relaxed atmosphere Jesse cultivates onboard, nothing feels like a chore.

Imajica's home is on the leeward side of Nusa Island, whose majestic coconut

palms provide a tropical green backdrop to her dark blue hulls. It's also the perfect place to start your adventure, with excellent snorkelling, diving and surfing within a few minutes dinghy ride. In fact, Piccinniny Point, Kavieng's most well-known surf break, is visible from Imajica's mooring.

Kavieng is becoming recognised in diving circles as one of the best places to see wild pelagics, with huge schools of barracuda, trevally, grouper and silvertip sharks. Relic diving is also excellent as there are numerous World War Two wrecks in the area. Imajica offers a great platform for diving as she carries a compressor onboard, six dive tanks, weight belts, weights and flippers of various sizes. There are also snorkels, masks and vests, as well as two surfboards.


Papua New Guineans have always intrigued Jesse and he is keen for guests to develop an appreciation of their culture. Traditional ceremonies of the



*Imajica anchors at Kavieng. Top: Jesse Martin can help you design your 8-day adventure.*

surrounding areas include fire dancers, shark calling and dukduk (spirit) dances, and when possible, Jesse will organise trips around these rituals.

“We can head in any direction,” he says. “We can head down to New Britain to see the fire dancers in Rabaul, or across to Manus and New Hanover. Even down the East Coast to the Tabar Islands.”

Kavieng has heaps of little islands dotted around. So gather your friends together, design your ideal holiday, board Imajica and sail away for a truly magical adventure in stunning New Ireland. 



*Kavieng kids enjoying themselves.*

**For more information:** Imajica Charters: [www.jessemartin.net/sailing](http://www.jessemartin.net/sailing)  
• Email: [office@imajicamedia.com](mailto:office@imajicamedia.com) • Phone: PNG Office 675 984 1599  
Australian Office 61 (0) 400 182 122

Jesse will meet you at Kavieng airport and arrange transfer to Imajica.

*The writer was a guest aboard Imajica and travelled to Kavieng with the assistance of Air Niugini.*