

OCEANIA · DIVING · ISLANDS · HISTORY · CULTURE · OFF THE BEATEN PATH



Micronesia

The Federated States of Micronesia scatter 607 islands across the western Pacific in four very different states. Dive the Japanese fleet sunk in Chuuk Lagoon, explore the basalt city of Nan Madol on Pohnpei, see Yap's giant stone money and resident manta rays, and wander Kosrae's quiet reefs and ruins. Getting there takes effort; crowds are almost non-existent.

 Before you go, read the UK government's travel advice for Micronesia and entry requirements (visas, passport validity). Last updated by FCDO 19 March 2026.

 CAPITAL Palikir	 CURRENCY US dollar (USD) £1 ≈ US\$1.34	 LANGUAGE English, Chuukese Pohnpeian	 BEST TIME Dec–Apr
 DAILY BUDGET £80–£330 £££ Expensive	 PLUGS Type A, B 120V · adapter needed	 FLIGHT FROM LONDON 32h via Tokyo or Manila, then Guam ~£1,800–£3,000 return	 TIME ZONE UTC+10, UTC+11 standard time

Micronesia's four states (Yap, Chuuk, Pohnpei and Kosrae) stretch about 2,700 km from west to east, each with its own language and customs, and most travellers choose one or two rather than all four. Route logic is set by United Airlines' Island Hopper, which runs between Guam and Honolulu via Chuuk, Pohnpei, Kosrae and the Marshall Islands, while Yap is reached from Guam. Divers head for Chuuk's wrecks and Yap's mantas; history lovers for Nan Madol and Kosrae's Lelu ruins; hikers for Pohnpei's waterfalls and rainforest.

Travel here runs on island time. Flights are infrequent and expensive, accommodation is mostly small hotels and dive resorts, and restaurants are limited outside Kolonia and Weno. Diving packages account for much of the cost, but village life, evening sakau sessions and empty roads come free. Visitors are often surprised by how traditional Yap remains, with chiefs, village paths and dress codes still observed, and by Pohnpei's rainfall, among the highest on Earth. It suits divers, history enthusiasts and patient travellers who want genuine remoteness.

Top 5 highlights

1

ADVENTURE

Chuuk Lagoon wrecks

Dozens of Japanese ships and hundreds of aircraft sunk by American air raids in February 1944 rest in clear water around Tonoas and Fefan. The Fujikawa Maru and Shinkoku Maru, encrusted with coral, rank among the world's great wreck dives.

2

HISTORY

Nan Madol

Nearly 100 artificial islets built from stacked basalt columns off Pohnpei's east coast, once the ceremonial centre of the Saudeleur dynasty. Visit by boat at high tide to reach Nandauwas, the great walled royal mortuary.

3

CULTURE

Yap's stone money

Giant limestone discs called rai, quarried in Palau and carried home by canoe, still change ownership in Yapese villages without ever moving. See 'stone money banks' lining village paths, such as Balabat in Colonia.

4

WILDLIFE

Yap's manta rays

Yap's resident reef mantas visit cleaning stations in the Mi'l and Goofnuw channels year-round, giving some of the most reliable manta encounters anywhere. Courtship 'trains' are often seen from December to April.

5

HISTORY

Lelu Ruins, Kosrae

The basalt-walled remains of Kosrae's royal capital on Lelu Island, with high walls, canals and tombs swallowed by jungle. Kosrae itself is quiet and mountainous, with excellent reef snorkelling and very few visitors.

Biggest cities

LARGEST CITY

Weno

≈ 14,000 people

Chuuk's state capital and commercial hub, with the airport and most hotels. It is a practical base rather than an attraction: the reason to come is the lagoon and its wrecks, reached by dive boat.

2ND LARGEST CITY

Kolonia

≈ 6,100 people

Pohnpei's main town and the country's most comfortable base, with guesthouses, restaurants and sakau bars, and easy day trips to Nan Madol, Kepirohi Falls and Sokehs Rock.

3RD LARGEST CITY

Palikir

≈ 4,600 people

The purpose-built federal capital, a quiet government complex in the hills about 8 km south-west of Kolonia. There is little to see beyond the national government buildings.

Micronesia has no cities in the usual sense: these are its three largest towns, using 2010 census figures (Palikir's is for the town rather than the wider Sokehs municipality). Yap's Colonia and Kosrae's Tofol are smaller still.

When to go to Micronesia

Best time: **Dec–Apr.**

Jan

Feb

Mar

Apr

May

Jun

Jul

Aug

Sep

Oct

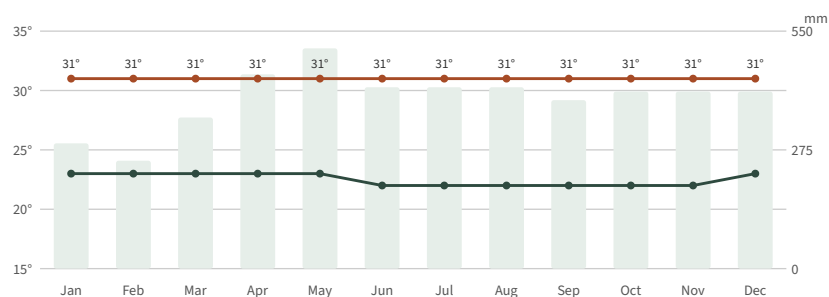
Nov

Dec

■ Best ■ Good ■ Mixed ■ Poor

Average climate in Kolonia (Pohnpei)

— High °C — Low °C ■ Rain (mm)



Festivals & events

Feb–Mar	Yap Day Yap's cultural festival, culminating on 1 March, showcases traditional dances in grass skirts, stone-money presentations, canoe-building and village crafts, with remarkably few outside visitors.
Nov	FSM Independence Day On 3 November, each state marks the 1986 start of self-government in free association with the United States with parades, sports contests, traditional dancing and food stalls.

How much does Micronesia cost?

SHOESTRING £80 per person / day ≈ US\$107 hostels, street food, buses	MID-RANGE £170 per person / day ≈ US\$227 3-star hotels, restaurants, some taxis	COMFORTABLE £330 per person / day ≈ US\$441 4-star+, guided trips, private transfers
---	--	--

Estimates per person per day, excluding flights. Prices vary by season and city.

Food to try

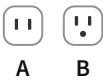
Breadfruit with coconut Breadfruit, the islands' staple, roasted or boiled and served with fresh coconut milk or cream; Pohnpei alone grows dozens of varieties.	Sakau Pohnpei's kava, pounded from pepper-plant roots on a basalt stone and wrung through hibiscus bark. Sakau bars open in the evening; expect numb lips and slow conversation.	Tuna sashimi A legacy of Japanese rule: plates of freshly caught yellowfin or skipjack served raw with soy sauce and wasabi are cheap and on most menus.
--	--	--

Getting around

United Airlines' Island Hopper links Chuuk, Pohnpei and Kosrae with Guam and Honolulu a few times a week, and Yap is reached via Guam; every sector is costly, so plan the route carefully. On the islands, shared taxis charge low flat fares, Pohnpei and Kosrae have car hire, and boats to outer islands and dive sites are arranged through hotels.

Practical information

PLUGS & VOLTAGE



120V — bring a UK-to-A/B adapter

DIALLING CODE

+691

TAP WATER

Not safe — drink bottled or treated water

TIPPING

Tipping is not traditional, though around 10% is appreciated in hotel restaurants, and dive guides and boat crews welcome a tip at the end of a trip.

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

Telephone: **911** (ambulance, fire, police)

Source: FCDO “Getting help”

TIME ZONES

UTC+10, UTC+11 (standard time)

DRIVING

On the right

ETIQUETTE

Dress modestly: women should keep thighs covered, especially in Yap. Ask before entering a village or photographing people or stone money, and remember that land, beaches and reefs all have owners.

MAIN AIRPORTS

Pohnpei International Airport (PNI), Kolonia; Chuuk International Airport (TKK), Weno; Yap International Airport (YAP), Colonia

Visas & entry for Micronesia

Shown for a British passport.

Check the entry requirements

A visa is not required for visits of 30 days or less. If you do not hold a valid entry permit you must complete “Customs, Immigration & Quarantine Form (CIQ Form)” on arrival. If you are visiting for a period exceeding 30 days you must apply for an entry permit. See Entry requirements and contact the Federated States of Micronesia Immigration Office.

From the UK government's FCDO entry requirements for British passport holders — read the full page for passport validity, permits and exceptions.

Health & vaccinations

 See a travel health nurse, GP or travel clinic **6–8 weeks before you go**. Make sure routine UK vaccinations (such as MMR and diphtheria-tetanus-polio) are up to date.

RECOMMENDED FOR MOST TRAVELLERS

- Hepatitis A
- Tetanus
- Typhoid

SOMETIMES ADVISED — DEPENDS ON YOUR TRIP, ACTIVITIES AND HEALTH

- Dengue
- Hepatitis B
- Bat Lyssavirus
- Tuberculosis

YELLOW FEVER CERTIFICATE

No yellow fever certificate is required to enter.

MALARIA

No malaria risk

Source: TravelHealthPro (National Travel Health Network and Centre), checked 21 October 2026. This is a summary, not medical advice.

Public holidays in Micronesia

The next 12 months. Banks, offices and some sights may close, and transport and hotels get busy around these dates.

Fri 23 Oct 2026	United Nations Day (observed)
Sat 24 Oct 2026	United Nations Day
Tue 3 Nov 2026	Independence Day
Wed 11 Nov 2026	FSM Veterans of Foreign Wars Day
Mon 23 Nov 2026	Presidents Day
Fri 25 Dec 2026	Christmas Day
Fri 1 Jan 2027	New Year's Day

Wed 31 Mar 2027	Micronesian Culture and Tradition Day
Mon 10 May 2027	Federated States of Micronesia Day

National holidays only. Dates based on lunar calendars can move by a day or two depending on official announcements.

Know before you go

Bring US dollars in cash: there are ATMs in the main towns, but cards are accepted mainly at larger hotels and dive shops, and outages happen.

Book dives and hotels before you fly, and allow a spare day either side of Island Hopper flights, which are infrequent and occasionally delayed or cancelled.

Chuuk's wrecks are war graves and protected by law: never remove artefacts, dive with a licensed local operator, and note that the deeper wrecks need advanced training.

Visa, health and safety rules change. Before you book or travel, check the FCDO travel advice (gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice) and TravelHealthPro (travelhealthpro.org.uk). Costs are estimates. © 2026 Pick My Trip.