

## 9th Festival of Pacific Arts – Republic of Palau

The Festival of Pacific Arts will be held in the Republic of Palau 22 July to 1 August 2004.

The Festival theme for 2004 is Oltobed a Malt: Nurture, Regenerate and Celebrate. Art forms on display include traditional and contemporary visual arts, weaving, wood, bone and stone carving, tapa making, tattooing, jewellery, clay work – pottery, photography, film, costume and fashion design, floral arts, traditional medicine and healing arts, traditional canoe building and navigational craft, literary arts, oratory and storytelling, song, dance, theatre.

There is also a series of symposium, debates and workshops.

### About the Festival

The Festival of Pacific Arts has been held every four years since 1972. It is well-established and recognised as a premier event and instrument for regional relations and the preservation of the Pacific's cultural heritage. The Council of Pacific Arts, established after the first festival.

Twenty-seven Pacific Island countries and territories participate in the festival. They are: American Samoa, Aotearoa New Zealand, Australia, Belau (Palau), Cook Islands, Easter Island, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji Islands, French Polynesia, Guam, Hawaii, Kanaky (New Caledonia), Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Norfolk Island, Northern Mariana Islands, Papua New Guinea, Pitcairn Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, Wallis and Futuna.

Artists involved benefit through the exchange of ideas; and the sharing of knowledge, skills, techniques, and the uses of different media and materials with artists from throughout the Pacific. Approximately 2,000 artists participated in the festival in New Caledonia in 2000, showcasing the best of each country.

### About Palau

The Republic of Palau is an archipelago 458 square kilometres in area. It is located south-east of the Philippines, south of Guam and north of Papua New Guinea. The indigenous name for the islands is "Beluu er a Belau" but the short form of this name, "Belau", is commonly used.

Belau's population is approximately 19,700. Most of the population inhabits about eight of the 300 islands. There are three main islands: Babeldoab, the biggest island stretching 44 kilometres in length and 24 kilometres in width; Koror, the capital; and the Rock Islands, renowned for snorkelling, diving and other water recreation activities. The population of Koror is 12,300.

The average temperature in Palau during July is 27 degrees, with the average maximum 31 and the average minimum 24. The temperature is quite humid and when it rains (an average of 12 days per month in July) the rain is quite heavy.

Palau has a constitutional government in free association with the USA: the Compact of Free Association entered into force 1 October 1994. The President, since January 2001, is Tommy Esang Remengesau Jr. Note: The President is both head of government and chief of state. The vice president, since January 2001, is Sandra Pierantozzi. The Minister of Community and Cultural Affairs is Alexander Merep.