

QUICK KNOWLEGDE...

A must-read for anyone heading to Palau and/or Solitude One for the first time

- The official **languages** of Palau are English and Palauan
- **Time Zone:** GMT +9
- **Climate:** Tropical Climate with an annual mean temperature of 27°C (82°F). Rain is frequent between the months of July and October. However, Palau is not referred to the Land of Rainbows for nothing. Periodic flash rain showers are frequent throughout the year.
- **Water Temperature**, like most tropical countries, varies between 27°C and 29°C (81°F to 84°F) with thermoclines due to the ocean trenches that surround Palau.
- **Currency is in US dollars.** Credit cards are widely accepted in Palau (except AMEX and Diners). Solitude One does have **credit card** facilities (located in our office on land) to accept payments on board for any incidentals incurred during your stay. However, please inform the cruise directors at least one night before your disembarkation that you would like to pay these expenses with a credit card, as the credit card machine is in our office in Koror and you will need to be transported there to transact.
- On land, **electricity and plug sockets** are the same as in the USA (Single phase 60 cycles, 115/230 volts AC). However, universal sockets (EU, USA, AUS, UK, CN, etc) are used on board Solitude One including USB charging outlets (1Amp) – see image.
- **Duty-Free Allowance** – 1 litre of alcohol and no more than 20 sticks of cigarettes or 170g (6 ounces) of tobacco. No fresh or thawed food (such as fruit, meat, vegetables or seafood) is allowed to be brought into Palau. You might be charged with a fee for such items to be disposed of if you are found to have them with you when you enter Palau.
- **Postal service** is provided by USPS (United States Postal Services). All postages originating from the US to Palau are considered local service. State code for Palau is PW and the zip code is 96940. If you are planning to send something to Solitude, please go to the [contact us page](#) for our delivery address.



On your **Palau Immigration arrival form**, indicate “MV Solitude One” as your address in Palau (*section 9*)

What Do I Need To Pay On Board?

Your cruise package essentially excludes Equipment Rentals, Satellite Communications, EANitrox, Alcohol, Laundry Service, Marine Park Fees and Local Barangay (district administration) permits. Marine Park Fees and Local Barangay permits will be collected on check-in. You will pay the other incidental expenses at check-out.

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- ⚡ State Cabin/Room Tax of 10USD per Day (i.e. 8D7N = 80USD, 11D10N = 110USD)
(Definitely, pay on board at welcome briefing)
- ⚡ Peleliu Diving Permit 30USD + Koror Diving Permit 50USD = 80USD (pay on board at welcome briefing. You can use an existing permit if it is still valid till the last day of your itinerary)
- ⚡ Jelly Fish Lake and Rock Island Permit = 50USD (only if you want to go on this tour)
- ⚡ Palau Departure Airport Tax = 50USD (Definitely, pay at the airport on your departure)

Do we have WIFI? Is there internet? *Yes We DO!*

Solitude One provides internet access on board via Satellite using FELCOM500 Fleet Broadband Services. To access the internet, our guests will pre-purchase data packages and log in via our WIFI Network on board.

Available Data Packages are US \$25/50Mb, US \$50/100Mb and US \$75/200Mb. You are strongly recommended to manage your device settings (our crew will be able to assist) whilst using satellite internet to ensure that you do not waste precious data traffic, as you can already expect that the charges for satellite internet are significantly costlier than what you would be accustomed to paying for the internet.

As connectivity can be affected by weather and is also reliant on a 3rd party service provider (Inmarsat), Solitude One, her crew and management are NOT responsible for any inconveniences and/or loss of income, data, information which may arise due to the lack of the service, partially or completely.

Buy a Local Sim Card? *Yes, You Can*



Yes, you can. We don't sell them on board any more as the feedback from our guests was that it is expensive to call overseas (incoming/outgoing) and, more importantly, you are out of signal range to actually use it for the majority of the trip.

You would have to spend US \$30 for a SIM card with no credit, add US \$10 for credit to use = US \$40, then most of the time you have no signal to use it; on top of that, the reliability of receiving or sending SMS to overseas numbers is not 100%. That is why we encourage our guests to use the satellite phone for calls and messaging as it will work even without GSM signals and the cost is much less.

Even with the recent 3G introduction (US \$0.15 per Megabyte), you still need to have proper mobile signal for the connectivity.

Currently, Palau does not have support for international roaming excepting, to our knowledge, USA or Taiwan.

As mentioned, Palau's remoteness also makes voice calls much costlier than usual which is the reason why most people in Palau opt to use SMS instead. Making overseas calls from your local

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Palau number is also very costly. For more current information on internet and telecommunication services in Palau, visit the PNCC website - www.palaunet.com

Phone Calls, SMS and Emails

If you are just concerned with sending important messages to someone and otherwise want to just be “disconnected” – we can take care of that as well with our Inmarsat satellite communications, the cost is minimal.

See the next section for more information.

Satellite Communications – Phone, SMS or Email

When out of local GSM coverage, Solitude One's onboard Inmarsat communication system will be your only option if the need to make or receive calls/messages/emails is urgently required.

Guests will be charged for all calls and messages received and/or calls and messages made or sent: US \$3 per 60 seconds block, US \$2 per SMS/email (140 characters limit).



Voice Call OR SMS: +8707 7399 2644 (non-standard IDD charges, please check with your Telco provider for calls and SMS to Iridium numbers)



Email: 870773992644@message.inmarsat.com (this of course will not cost you anything more than what you are using to connect to the internet to send your email. For more information, please visit www.inmarsat.com)



Tips on using satellite Simple Email/Messaging

Keep your messages short within 140 characters. Use short hand, or acronyms. Messages longer than 140 characters will be split into multiple messages. ie. 145 chars will be sent as 2 messages (1 of 140 chars + 1 of 5 chars). More messages = more cost.

Please note that the satellite communications are an additional facility provided by an external source. Solitude is not responsible for any consequences resulting from the use or the lack of use of satellite communications including hardware failure.

Entertainment

Our WIFI SSID on board is also used for our media entertainment library (Powered by PLEX Media Server) from which you will be able to stream/download what we have in our library to watch/listen to. Install PLEX app (RECOMMENDED: Android, Windows or IOs) or [any popular UPNP media player](#) app that will read/discover DLNA devices and you are all set!



Do you have Nitrox? Yes, We Have!

Although the standard mix for EAN is 32%, on most dives we have made an educated decision to provide in the proximity of EAN30 instead, to allow a safer M.O.D. EAN 30% would provide some degree of depth buffer if you are caught especially in a down current, but will still allow ample extended length of bottom time (compared to normal air). EANitrox prices are as follows: US \$8 per dive OR US \$135 for 8 days/7 nights Palau itinerary, with subsequent additional use US \$20 per day.



Travelling to Palau – Special Mention: Manila Airport

Updated on 19 Dec 2015

On our web page we listed the various ways to get to Palau, we now share with you some tips to prepare yourselves to have a smoother journey, especially when transiting through Manila.

The Ninoy Aquino International Airport is the most challenging airport to transit. Unlike most international airports, ease of moving between terminals is non-existent in Manila. The flight to Palau from Manila with United Airlines leaves from Terminal 1. You are encouraged to choose an airline that arrives into Manila at Terminal 1 if Manila is your choice to transit to get to Palau.

If you find yourself arriving in terminal 2 or 3, assuming there are no delays in your arrival, you MUST leave yourself at least 3 hours (4 if possible) of transit time (the traffic in Manila is really special). Also, you will have NO alternative but to collect your luggage and go through immigration/customs. There are two ways to get to Terminal 1:

1. **RECOMMENDED** – There is a NEW service call the Terminal Transfer Service (Bus). Please ask for directions if you do not see the sign to where you should go to take that transfer bus which is free of charge. This bus though not a short frequent service (30mins interval) is your best way to get to your terminal. Do queue because the bus is limited space missing one will mean a 30 minutes wait. Make sure you ask the warden or bus driver to
2. Taxi. Look for the yellow taxi (metered & airport accredited) counter and inform the counter staff that you are going to Terminal 1. Terminal 3 is the furthest from Terminal 1 and, depending on traffic, it can take you between 60mins to 90mins (for

PHILIPPINE AIRCRAFT AUTHORITY
 Airport Ground Operations and Safety Division
 Aerodrome Transport Service Section

SCHEDULE DEPARTURE TIME OF FREE TRANSFER BUS

T1 / T3 BUS
 (Via T2 going to T4 and T3)

03:30H	05:30H	15:30H	21:30H
04:00H	10:00H	16:00H	22:00H
04:30H	10:30H	16:30H	22:30H
05:00H	11:00H	17:00H	23:00H
05:30H	11:30H	17:30H	23:30H
06:00H	12:00H	18:00H	00:00H
06:30H	12:30H	18:30H	00:30H
07:00H	13:00H	19:00H	01:00H
07:30H	13:30H	19:30H	01:30H
08:00H	14:00H	20:00H	
08:30H	14:30H	20:30H	
09:00H	15:00H	21:00H	

T1 / T2 BUS
 (Come to T1)

03:30H	05:30H	15:30H	21:30H
04:00H	10:00H	16:00H	22:00H
04:30H	10:30H	16:30H	22:30H
05:00H	11:00H	17:00H	23:00H
05:30H	11:30H	17:30H	23:30H
06:00H	12:00H	18:00H	00:00H
06:30H	12:30H	18:30H	00:30H
07:00H	13:00H	19:00H	01:00H
07:30H	13:30H	19:30H	01:30H
08:00H	14:00H	20:00H	
08:30H	14:30H	20:30H	

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what should be a 30minute drive). Terminal 2 is the closest but can also take 30mins to 60mins due to traffic. Depending on traffic and which terminal you are travelling from, your taxi fares can vary (yellow taxi meters are a little more expensive than the regular white taxis) but generally it should not be more than 250PHP - make sure they have their meter ON! If you are travelling in groups, be prepared to only fit 2 of you in one taxi with your

If you are arriving into Terminal 1,

1. do give yourself at least 2 hours of transit time
2. do go to the transfer desk on your arrival and inform them that you are transiting. Once you do that, there is a chance you do not need to go through immigration and customs in Manila, they will assist you to collect your bags at the arrival baggage carousel and check you in for your flight to Palau at the transfer desk.

If you don't find yourself in this fortunate situation, you will then need to proceed to clear immigration (write "transit" on your immigration form), collect your baggage, go through customs, head to the departure hall on the top floor and go through the usual check-in process.

Customs – Transiting

If the customs authority for any reason want to tax you for bringing any item that you are going to Palau with, do insist to them that you are only transiting, you will need to show them your outbound ticket. If they somehow make it difficult for you, just inform the customs that you can leave it with them in their office and collect it back when you come back into the departure concourse.

Checking In (Manila Airport)

Do not be shy to stand in the queue even before the counters are opened for check-in. Queues will start to form as early as 45mins before the counters are scheduled to open (Same as the other airlines in Terminal 1). You'd be better off waiting in the departure concourse with a drink then standing in a very long line waiting to check in. Please note that there are no rest rooms in the departure check-in hall (there are 2 outside of the departure check in hall but you will need to re-enter the hall via the security checks again).



United Airlines check-in is very strict with a weight limit of 50lbs/23kg per bag, so pack your bags right the first time! The hand luggage policy is a little more generous with the weight. Do make sure you get the most current information prior to your departure with the airline.

Airline/airport security in Manila can sometimes make things difficult when it comes to check-in/hand luggage items. Ensure that you review United Airlines' policies and in fact, have a printed copy to show proof that you have checked and your items are not restricted. From hearing our guests' experiences, common items that may bring about a debate are batteries for recreational drones and scrubbers for rebreathers. Remember, the liquids, aerosols, etc

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restrictions are in force. If you have bought duty free liquids, you must remember to check it in with your luggage as you will not be allowed to bring it across the security check when entering the departure concourse. We recommend any liquid purchases be made in Manila's duty free shops while waiting for your flight to Palau.

Do go to the boarding gate slightly ahead of the boarding time printed on your boarding pass. There is an additional security check done before you enter the boarding gate's waiting room.



This check is all by hand. You may find yourself standing in the queue for 15 to 20mins if you go during the time where most people would go to the boarding gate. By going slightly ahead of the stipulated time, you may find yourself not having to wait in a queue uncomfortably - many regular passengers flying United Airlines from Manila know this tip too!

The security check is extensive and by hand. They will go through all compartments and pockets in your bag, so pack wisely in the way that it can easily be repacked again. After the bag search, a full body search and finally a shoe inspection – all by hand. Yes, only in Manila and not just because it is the airline's specific requirement to have the check by hand.

For More Information

- ⚡ [Solitude One Vessel Data Sheet](#) - More details about the vessel, cabins, facilities and amenities.
- ⚡ [Solitude One Quick Fact Sheet](#) - Just the technical and summarised specs.
- ⚡ [Solitude One General Arrangement](#) - Basic layout where you can see what is located where on Solitude One.
- ⚡ [Solitude One Cabin Types](#) - Which cabin is where on Solitude One.
- ⚡ [Palau Dive Site Itinerary and a little common sense](#) - Where we plan to dive and your understanding...



Forms

- ⚡ [Registration Form \(English\)](#) - Also known as Form A - Compulsory for all guests
- ⚡ [General Liability Release Form \(English\)](#) - Also known as Form C - Compulsory for all guests

... With these tips, we hope we have helped you better prepare yourself to travel more comfortably. If you have any other questions, please feel free to

emailus@solitude-liveboards.com

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