

MV AMBAI

# Ring Of Fire - Forgotten Islands

*Ambon to Saumlaki | Banda Islands, Serua and Babar*

A chain of volcanic islands rises along the Ring of Fire, and below them the Banda Sea is full of life.

Around Manuk, a small volcanic island, sulphur traces can be seen underwater, and the diving signature is the abundance of sea snakes.

At the Banda Islands a dive along the lava flow of the fire mountain shows how corals and sponges have grown back since the last eruption in 1988.

Serua, two small islands lost in the middle of the sea, is where schooling hammerhead sharks often show up on the drop offs.

Tunas, giant trevallies and barracudas add to the show.

| LENGTH | DEPARTURE PORT | ARRIVAL PORT | EXPERIENCE |
|---|---|---|---|
| 13 days / 12 nights | Ambon | Saumlaki | Advanced Open Water, 30 dives |







## Your route

STOP 1

### Check dive in Ambon

On the arrival day, we will have a check dive in the bay of Ambon.

STOP 2

## Banda Islands

Our first destination are the Banda islands.
The diving around those islands is very rewarding.
One of the highlight is a dive along the lava flow of the “Gunung Api” (the fire mountain); the last eruption was in 1988 and we can see how the corals and huge sponges did grow back since then.
We will stop in Banda Neira, for a land visit.

STOP 3

## Suanggi

The island of Suanggi, about 20 NM from Banda, is another hot spot for hammerheads schools.



STOP 4

## Manuk

Overnight navigation to Manuk island, a small volcanic island, where a lot of seabirds comes for nesting.
Underwater the sulphur traces of volcanic activity can be seen.
The diving signature is the abundance of sea snakes, both Aipysurus sp. and Laticauda.
Hammerheads are also roaming around, but generally only individuals or small groups.

STOP 5

## Serua

Going South we will reach Serua, which consists in two small islands.
Two days of fabulous diving around those islands lost in the middle of the Banda Sea.
One drop off offers high chances to find the schooling hammerheads.
In order to maximise the chances of encounter, we dive very early in the morning and a bit late in the afternoon.

STOP 6

## Nil Desperandum

At the West of Serua lays a big reef without any land, with the attractive name of “Nil desperandum”.
This is another spot for hammerheads and a fantastic drop off.

STOP 7

## Dai

Our last day of diving is on Dai island.
This granite island, part of the Babar island group, offers fantastic dive sites with great fish life.

ROUTE MAP

# Route map




THE DIVING

# Diving and snorkelling

The Banda Sea is one of the best Indonesian dive destinations. It offers a great variety of dive sites among beautiful tiny islands and large reefs. Many of the dive sites are steep drops off with impressive hard corals, huge sponges of all kinds, pastel black coral bushes and an intense fish life. Tunas, Spanish mackerel, giant trevallies schools of trevallies and barracudas and other pelagic fish are part of the show, together with the occurrence of the hammerheads, either in small groups or in big shoals. Other types of dive sites include great critters, especially in the Bay of Ambon and beautiful fringing reefs.

The hammerheads The hammerheads are in the Banda Sea from September to the end of November. Their presence is related to the upwellings that cool the upper layers of the Banda Sea. Those upwellings themselves depend on the SE winds that occur in Indonesia from June to September. Therefore the best chances to see the Hammerheads is when the water is the coolest, mid-September to mid-October. But the September rich nutrients cold waters also mean more turbid waters due to plankton, and eventually remaining winds for the S.E.monsoon creating a choppy sea. The more we get off September, the more chances to get a flat sea and good visibility are high, but also the chances to see the schooling hammerheads diminish.

A minimum of 36 dives (3 dives per day) is offered during the trip, including at least 6 night dives. The last dive is the Penultimate day at 8 am.

### SNORKELLING

Our trips are open to snorkelers. Most of the dive sites offer great snorkeling opportunities with a lot to see in shallow waters, and we offer specific guidance for snorkelers.





### ACTIVITIES

## Activities

Banda islands were at the centre of the spices trades during the XVI century. They were the original Spice Islands and the most coveted destination on earth, particularly by the Dutch and Portuguese who colonized the islands and exported the indigenous nutmeg and cloves. We will stop on the island of Banda Neira and visit the village, the fort and the museum for a glimpse of the Banda history.

We will also visit some other small villages on the islands. The guests are always welcome to use the dinghies (with a boatman) to go on shore at any time, as long as the schedule allows it.

Our four complementary kayaks and paddles are also available to go on shore or in the lagoons whenever the boat is anchored.

All these activities are subject to weather conditions as well as the planned daily schedule and itinerary.





### CONDITIONS

## Weather, visibility, temperature and currents

### Weather

End September marks the end of the South east monsoon, but we may experience some remaining SE winds. As we are very close to the equator, a few showers are always probable.

### Visibility

Banda Sea: Average to good

## Temperature

The sea temperature will be 26° to 28°C (80 to 84°F) in the Band Sea.

## Currents

On this itinerary the currents are generally moderate on most of the dive sites, but yes there will be some consistent currents in some occasions. the crew has a long experience diving these dive sites and always pays attention to dive in the right places at the right time to avoid difficult or dangerous currents. Before each dive, our guides conduct current checks so that our briefings will always inform you about the up-to-the-minute diving conditions.



DIVE ORGANISATION

# How the diving is organised on Ambai

- Due to the large number of dives performed during the trip and the remoteness of the location, we urge divers to stay within no-deco limits, to not exceed a maximum depth of 35 meters, and to perform a safety stop at the end of every dive.
- Depending on the guests' dive experience, interests (photography, macro, etc), and use of Nitrox (free for certified divers), the Cruise Director will arrange the diving groups. These groups are made of up to four divers maximum and a dive guide. The dive guides are rotating on a daily basis. Each diver is given a dive tank (DIN & INT available, no need for adapters) and their own dive station for the duration of the cruise.
- A briefing will be conducted by the Cruise Director or one of the guides before each dive. It will describe the site topography, depths, currents, and potential hazards, as well as the marine life we expect to encounter.
- The staff carries your tank between the MV Ambai and the dinghies. Onboard the dinghies, the tanks are placed into slots and the guide will help you to gear up just before you back-roll into the water.
- Identification books of flora and local fauna are available on board, and the dive guides will always help you identify the animals you have seen during the dives.
- Some dive equipment are available for rent on board. However, all sizes are not necessarily available, so please book it prior to the cruise.
- Our cruises are open to divers with a Padi Advanced Open Water or equivalent with at least 30 logged dives. Less experienced divers can also participate with special supervision that needs to be arranged before the cruise.
- Insurance covering medical evacuation and diving accidents is highly recommended. Divers will be filling out a statement of medical fitness for dive activities onboard.

ON BOARD

# Service and cuisine

## SERVICE

Behind the MV Ambai's success, there is a professional, discreet, smiling, and very friendly crew. Our team will treat you with special attention, assist you with whatever you need, and of course carry your tank & gear. Most of our crew have been working with us for many years.

## THE CUISINE

Mixing eastern and western specialties, our cuisine is a "fusion" of the best of both that will never let you go hungry.

Should you have specific requests, or a particular dietary need, (vegetarian or allergy, for example), our chefs will adapt the meals for your greatest pleasure.

## THE TEAM AT YOUR SERVICE

- 1 cruise director / diving instructor
- 17 crew members including 4 dive guides

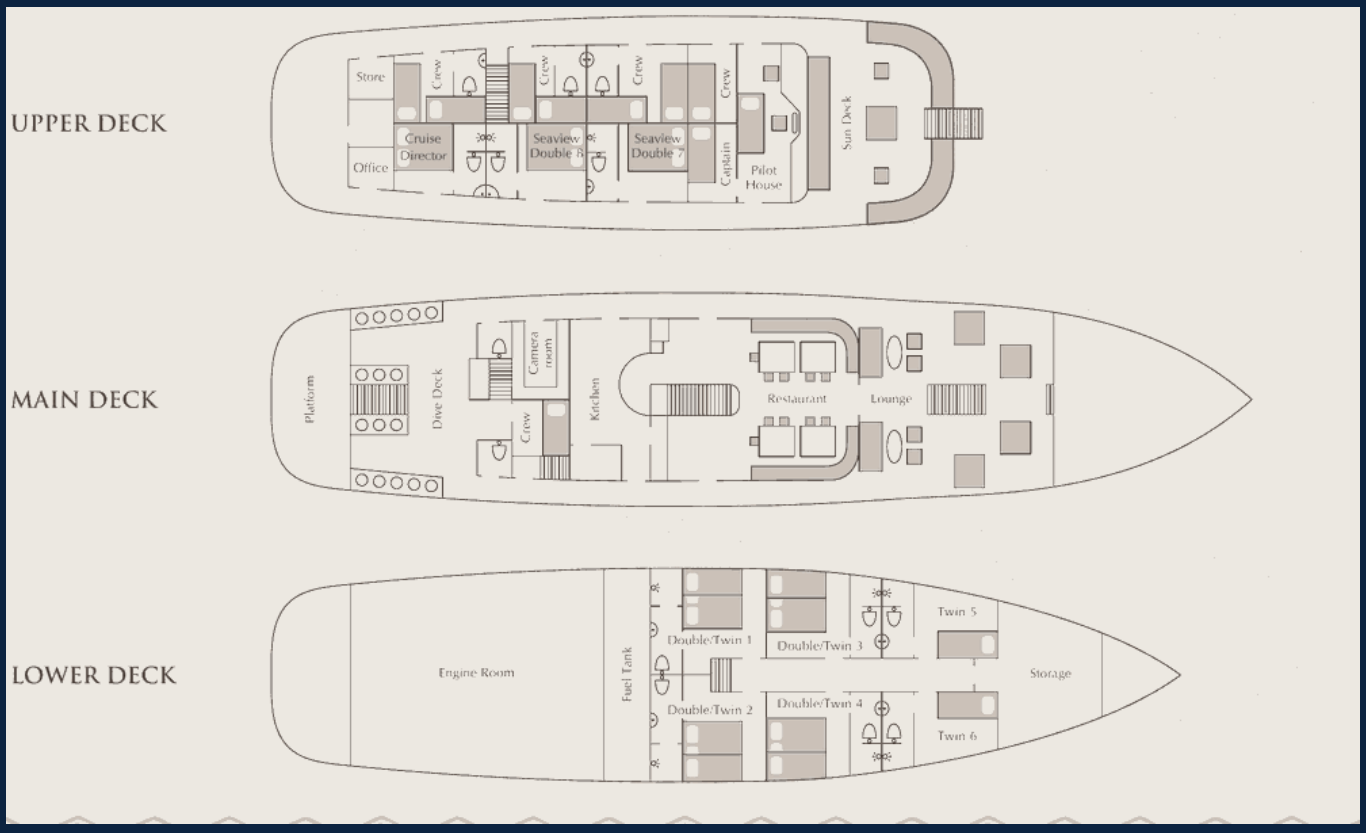






DECK PLANS

# Deck plans




PAYMENTS

# Payments on board

All payments on board are made in cash, as credit cards cannot be accepted. All major currencies are accepted (EUR, USD, AUD, CHF and IDR), and prepayment by wire transfer can be arranged.

The park and port fees and the fuel surcharge are mandatory and are paid on board.

Tips: tipping should reflect your level of satisfaction with the service on board. The usual amount in the industry is 10% or more of the cruise rate.

INCLUDED

# What your trip covers

## INCLUDED IN THE TRIP PRICE

- Transfers between the boat and the closest airport
- Accommodation in a shared twin or double bed cabin
- All meals & snacks, drinking water, soft drinks and hot drinks
- All guided dives (1 guide /4 divers maximum)
- Aluminium tank (12 liters), weights, and belts
- Free Nitrox

## NOT INCLUDED

- Park & port fees, fuel surcharge
- International and domestic flights
- Alcoholic beverages (you can bring your own)
- Diving equipment rental, 100 cf (15 L) tank
- Crew gratuities
- Massages
- Laundry