DEWI NUSANTARA

Ambon, the Banda Islands, Koon and Misool

Ambon to Sorong | Laha (Ambon), Nusa Laut, The Historic Banda Islands: A Timeless Treasure and more

Laha's sand and gravel slopes, piers and coral heads are home to some of the planet's most sought-after photographic subjects, and it was here that the psychedelic frogfish was first found.

Nusa Laut has spectacular walls and a vibrant reef, and schools of majestic hammerhead sharks sometimes appear in the deep blue beyond.

The remote Banda Islands are a sparkling oasis rising out of the deep blue Banda Sea, with critter havens in the harbour and magnificent walls.

The route closes in Misool and Central Raja Ampat, with enormous schools of fish and wonderful critter sites.

LENGTH	DEPARTURE PORT	ARRIVAL PORT	EXPERIENCE
12 days / 11 nights	Ambon	Sorong	Certified divers







Your route

THE TRIP

About this trip

Now firmly on any tropical diver’s wish list, the remote Banda Islands are a sparkling oasis that rises out of the deep blue Banda Sea. Aside from a

remarkable topside history, this region boasts some of the world’s finest diving, ranging from critter havens in the harbour to the magnificent walls and reefs of the outer islands of the group.

After a stop at the south-west corner of Ceram Island to visit the remote dive sites of Koon, we now enter the mythical dive destination of Misool, the most southerly of the famed Raja Ampat islands. As many of our guests already know,

Misool is overflowing with some of the world's most iconic and well-known dive sites.

Our sojourn of exploration has taken in some of the best that eastern Indonesia has to offer, both under the water and over the islands. The dive sites in Central Raja Ampat don't let up on the marine excitement. With world-class reefs, enormous schools of fish, and some wonderful critter sites, this region finishes this exciting itinerary with a bang.

THE ROUTE

Your route, anchorage by anchorage

Areas are shown in the order visited. Sites and dives change with weather, sea conditions and the captain's decisions.

LAHA (AMBON)

Not far from Ambon airport, along the northern shore of the Ambon Inlet, the village of Laha is renowned for hosting some of the most extraordinary muck diving sites in the world. Most of the dive points are clustered fairly close together, with names such as Middle Point, Mandarin City, Rhino City, and the one that started it all, the aptly named Twilight Zone. This legendary dive site, located close to as well as underneath the fishing boat piers, is a haven for macro photographers and critter enthusiasts seeking rare and unusual marine life.

What makes The Twilight Zone so exceptional is the unique interplay of natural and human elements. Over time, local fishing activities have contributed organic debris to the sandy, silty, and gravel-strewn seabed, inadvertently creating an ideal microhabitat for an astonishing variety of marine species. Divers venturing into these waters are rewarded with encounters with some of the ocean's most bizarre and captivating creatures,

In recent years, the discovery of additional dive sites a little further afield along this thriving stretch of shoreline has further cemented Ambon's reputation as a world-class muck diving destination. Notably, it was here that the psychedelic frogfish, one of the rarest and most visually striking marine species, was first documented - an extraordinary testament to the area's biodiversity. With ongoing exploration, there is no doubt that more ground breaking discoveries await.

For those seeking a contrasting yet equally thrilling dive experience, the Duke of Sparta shipwreck offers an entirely different underwater adventure. Resting in deeper waters further into the bay, closer to the city, this massive and remarkably intact wreck invites divers to explore its hauntingly beautiful remains - a striking juxtaposition to the critter-filled world of The Twilight Zone.

Dive sites: Duke of Sparta, Ambon City, Ambon Airport.

NUSA LAUT

Nusa Laut, the easternmost jewel in the Lease Islands archipelago - which also includes Saparua, Haruku, and Ambon - offers an unspoiled paradise both above and below the sea's surface. The island's landscape is lush with a high-rising interior, fringed by picturesque bays and dotted with small fishing villages that exude charm and tranquillity. The northern bays, in particular, provide a sanctuary for dugongs - the elusive Southeast Asian relatives of the manatee - adding to the island's natural allure.

A testament to the power of community-led conservation, the villages of Ameth and Akon on Nusa Laut's northeast coast stand as shining examples of grassroots environmental stewardship. Captains of visiting yachts are required to report to the village head in Ameth, a minor formality in exchange for experiencing one of the region's most well-protected marine environments. The vigilant efforts of the local community in safeguarding their coastline from

illegal fishing have resulted in thriving fish populations and pristine coral reefs, making the waters of Nusa Laut a paradise for visiting divers.

Beneath the surface, the island boasts spectacular wall and reef dives, but the true highlight lies in the vibrant reef on its north-western coast. Here, stunning coral formations and abundant marine life create a mesmerising underwater landscape. Adding to the thrill, divers sometimes encounter schools of majestic hammerhead sharks in the deep blue beyond the reef - an unforgettable sight for any underwater explorer. For those seeking even more adventure, a

breathtaking underwater arch at Akon on the island's eastern side awaits, just beneath the surface, offering a glimpse into the raw beauty of Nusa Laut's marine wonders.

With its thriving ecosystems, dedicated local guardians, and world-class diving opportunities, Nusa Laut is a hidden treasure in the heart of Indonesia's Maluku region, inviting travellers to experience nature at its most pristine.

Dive sites: Ameth Slope, Nahalia Slope, Amed, Nahalia Village, Ameth Village, Akon Arch, Akon Village.





THE HISTORIC BANDA ISLANDS

A Timeless Treasure.

Far out in the remote, shimmering expanse of the Banda Sea - nestled to the south of the great island of Ceram - lies a small but remarkable cluster of islands: the Banda Islands. Scattered like emeralds across the deep blue waters, this archipelago once stood at the very heart of the global spice trade, fiercely contested by empires for its precious nutmeg and mace. Today, the Banda Islands resonate with echoes of their extraordinary past, where crumbling colonial fortresses and ancient plantations reveal stories of ambition, exploration, and cultural exchange. Set against a dramatic backdrop of a soaring volcanic peak, vibrant coral reefs, and lush tropical forests, the Banda Islands offer a rare and captivating blend of history and breathtaking natural beauty - a destination as unforgettable as it is remote.

The principal island, Banda Neira, transports visitors back in time to an era when these islands were among the most significant in the world. European remnants of this bygone age still grace the streets - quaint churches, a charming post

office, a rustic museum, and street lamps (though no longer in operation) stand as echoes of colonial influence. Towering above it all is Fort Belgica, an imposing 17th-century stronghold that offers panoramic views and a fascinating glimpse into the region's tumultuous history. Wandering through Banda Neira's narrow streets and alleyways is nothing short of spellbinding.

Just across from Banda Neira's bustling harbour, the striking 600-metre-high volcano island, Banda Api, looms over the seascape. Though its last eruption was in May 1988, the rugged terrain continues to captivate adventurers who take on the demanding trek to its summit, guided by seasoned locals. For those seeking a more leisurely experience, a tranquil stroll through the fragrant nutmeg groves of Lontar Island offers a peaceful alternative.

While the inner islands boast pleasant snorkelling spots, the real thrill for visiting yachts comes in the form of a friendly yet fierce rowing competition between islanders and crew members. Racing in traditional kora-kora longboats, the islanders almost always claim victory, leaving visitors with an unforgettable experience and their rowing crews exhausted.

Beneath the waves, the Banda Sea reveals its true magic. These islands, the peaks of an immense underwater mountain range, are surrounded by deep, pristine blue waters teeming with marine life. From vibrant coral walls to rare critter dives, the Banda Islands offer some of the most exhilarating scuba diving experiences in the world, making them a dream destination for underwater explorers.

For visiting yachts, the most favoured anchorage lies in the sheltered waterway between Banda Neira harbour and the towering Banda Api volcano. Here, amidst the serene beauty of the islands, sailors find a perfect haven to rest, explore, and immerse themselves in the extraordinary blend of history, adventure, and natural splendour that defines the Banda Islands.

Whether you're a history enthusiast, an adventurer, or a diver seeking untouched underwater realms, the Banda Islands promise an experience unlike any other - an enchanting journey through time and nature in one of the world's most remote and captivating destinations.

Dive sites: The Banda Islands, A Land of Contrasts, Adventures on Land and Sea, Safe Haven in a Remote Paradise.

BANDA NEIRA

During our time in the Banda Islands, Dewi Nusantara has explored the outer island of Hatta and the magnificent reef plateau of Skaru. Now, it's time to venture into the heart of this stunning archipelago. A variety of diverse dive sites await, beginning with the remarkable critter dive at Mandarin Hotel.

At first glance, this stretch of rocks and sand - nestled along the border of the colonial Molana Hotel's picturesque gardens - may seem unassuming. However, beneath the surface, it reveals an extraordinary spectacle. In the shallow waters, a vibrant population of mandarin fish, some impressively large, engage in their intricate mating displays at dusk. Unlike in coral-rich environments, these mesmerising creatures must perform their ritual in the open, making them exceptionally photogenic for underwater photographers.

the skyline of Banda Neira, the principal island. Its most recent eruption in 1988 sent a dramatic lava flow cascading into the sea on the mountain's northeast side. In the years since, this once-barren expanse has transformed into a thriving coral garden, a breathtaking testament to nature's resilience and the rapid regrowth of marine ecosystems. This dive site is a must-visit, offering a rare opportunity to witness the astonishing speed at which coral reefs can recover after a volcanic eruption.

Beyond the protective embrace of Banda's natural harbour, even more exhilarating dive sites beckon. One standout is Batu Kapal, an offshore seamount teeming with marine life. Here, honeycomb moray eels weave through the reef, while immense schools of fish move in perfect synchronicity - a truly unforgettable underwater experience.

Dive sites: Batu Kapal, Lava Flow, Pohon Miring.





THE KOON ARCHIPELAGO

The remote, sandy isles of the Koon Archipelago are dotted with sparse vegetation and just a handful of small villages, offering a secluded and untouched paradise for nature lovers and adventure seekers alike.

Koon Island is the easternmost of a collection of three small, sandy coral cays - along with Nukus and Grogus - that stretch nearly eight nautical miles from west to east. Extending into the depths of the Ceram Sea, these islands boast an astonishing mix of shallow reefs, deep drop-offs, and sandy terra firma. The crystal-clear waters surrounding them create the perfect playground for snorkelling and swimming, with vibrant coral reefs teeming with marine life just beneath the surface. Kayakers and paddleboarders can glide through tranquil blue lagoons, exploring hidden coves and winding waterways. On land, the islands offer opportunities for beachcombing and birdwatching, with stretches of soft sand, swaying coconut palms, and flocks of seabirds soaring overhead.

Although the entire group is ideal for various watersports, Koon is best known for scuba diving. The focal point is a site called "Too Many Fish" - a name that perfectly captures what awaits beneath the surface. Located at the eastern tip of the mini-archipelago, this site plunges into much deeper water. Centred around a ridge with a deep wall on the north side and a steeply sloping reef on the south, it offers multiple entry points for divers.

It is not uncommon to spot zebra and hammerhead sharks on the reef and along the north wall, along with the

countless fish that give the site its name. Additionally, there is great potential for exploration along the deep-water drop-offs and sparkling reefs surrounding the three islands.

Whether above or below the waterline, the Koon Archipelago promises a serene and immersive escape into nature's untouched beauty.

Dive sites: Koon Wall, Too Many Fish.

FIABACET AND BOO

The dive sites in and around Fiabacet and Boo are, without exaggeration, among the most exceptional not only in Raja Ampat and Indonesia, but arguably across the entire planet. This remote corner of the Coral Triangle offers a truly world-class underwater experience that continues to captivate even the most seasoned divers.

Beneath the surface, the southern region's deep ocean floor rises dramatically into a stunning marine landscape - an intricate maze of ridges, seamounts, and channels. This unique topography acts as a natural funnel for the nutrient-rich currents flowing in from the open ocean. As these currents surge over and around the rock and reef formations, they feed the vibrant coral ecosystems, igniting an explosion of life and colour that is nothing short of breathtaking.

Each dive site here offers its own distinct wonders, but they all share an extraordinary level of biodiversity. Divers are treated to scenes of immense beauty: clouds of schooling fish so thick

they can obscure the reef behind them, kaleidoscopic coral gardens teeming with life, and an ever-present sense of awe. It's not uncommon to spot grey, white-tip, and black-tip reef sharks weaving through the masses, accompanied by formidable pelagic predators like dogtooth tuna, Spanish mackerel, giant trevally, and the graceful, sweeping forms of mobula rays as they hunt amid the chaos of baitfish.

Many of the most celebrated sites cluster around striking karst limestone outcrops and along the rugged shores of Boo and Kalig Islands. Here, the dynamic currents and nutrient-rich upwellings from the Ceram Sea to the south nourish the reefs, sustaining an ecosystem of remarkable abundance and resilience, as well as a magnet for marine life.

Dive sites: Nudi Rock, Tank Rock Boo West, Whale Rock (Fiabacet), Heart of Glass, Boo Rocks (Boo Windows), Boo East, Boo Gap, Shallow Seamount, Eagles Nest, Warakaraket Rocks, Magic Mountain.







JEF PELE, LILI AND KEPOTSOL

The large island of Jef Pele, as well as the nearby Lili and Kepotsol groups, do not suffer from the concentration of divers and yachts that now visit the anchorages and marine attractions further east. However, they do feature some excellent diving opportunities.

The north-western edge of Jef Pele is home to Kaleidoscope Ridge, the anchorage's signature site. This is a fine example of Raja Ampat's underwater world, with a dizzying array of corals and marine life, both large and small. This impressive coral-covered ridge's incredible underwater architecture combines with a deeper seamount, attracting some of the larger animals that inhabit the abundant reefs and seas of the Misool region. Jef Pele's complex coastline, as well as the numerous offshore islands further south, allow for more dive site exploration.

The sites at Lili and Kepotsol, just under two nautical miles north of the Jef Pele shoreline, share the same amazing marine life and coral characteristics as those around the more well-known anchorages. The scope for new discoveries is considerable, especially in the Kofani group, situated between Lili and Kepotsol.

THE LILI, KO FA N I & K E P OT S O L ISLAND GROUPS

Dive sites: Lili, Toblerone, Kaleidoscope Ridge, Ne! ed Corner, Blue Hole.

WAYIL

The Wayil dive sites are mostly clustered around the western end of Wayilbatan Island. Comprising multi-peaked seamounts, karst island ridges, and exciting passages, they all feature abundant coral growth and a wealth of both pelagic and reef-dwelling marine life.

At Wayil, there is something for every level of diver. These include easy and pretty reef sites, majestic open-water seamounts, and gentle drift dives that flow down some of the most otherworldly marine seascapes imaginable.

One of the most popular sites is “The Four Kings.” This incredible underwater experience takes place in open water, west of the anchorages, where an astonishing four-peaked seamount rises from the deep sea floor. This massive rocky marine structure acts as a magnet for all manner of marine life, large and small.

Dive sites: Dogleg Ridge, Barracuda Rock, Layer Cake, Elephant Wall, The Four Kings, Gamechanger, Ghost Reef, Glasshouse, Orange Peel.

DARAM

The large island of Daram marks the easternmost boundary of the Misool region. The vast majority of the dive sites are not located around the island itself, but rather a short distance to the north-west. They are undoubtedly some of the most astonishing and colourful in the entire area.

Small collections of karst islets, located along the eastern end of a long island line that extends away from the east side of Misool, are the focal point for most of the site. Many of them boast incredibly abundant coral reefs and jaw-dropping topography. They are also home to so much marine life that, at times, it defies description.

The anchorages and sites are vulnerable to adverse sea and weather conditions due to their remote location. However, if the weather and sea conditions are favourable, the diving here is some of the very best that Raja Ampat has to offer. In addition, there are numerous opportunities to find many more new sites around these iconic rocky islands and ridges.

Dive sites: Andiamo, Warna Berwarna, Candy Store, Fish Finger.

PENEMU

Lying just under 15 nautical miles west of Arborek Island, the Penemu Group is a big favourite with visiting yachts. With numerous exciting land and watersports activities, this island collection has a lot to offer.

Penemu’s varied dive sites all feature dazzling, colourful reefs teeming with marine life. There are awesome offshore ridges and seamounts, exciting drift dives, and one of the most talked about and photographed reefs in Indonesia: the mesmerising shallow corals of Melissa’s Garden.

As well as diving Penemu’s well-known sites, there is a good deal of scope for open-water exploration too. The deep seamounts, a few nautical miles to the west of the islands, give marine adventurers the chance to make their own discoveries and dive where few have ever dived before.

An added attraction at Penemu is a beautifully constructed walkway that takes visitors up to the peaks of the karst islands in the lagoon. This affords spectacular views over the seascape.

Dive sites: Barracuda Ridge, Galaxy, Batu Rufus, Melissa's Garden, Keruo Channel, Rocky Mountain Way.

YANGELLO

Scuba diving around Yangello is very popular with visiting divers. The coral-covered ridges, reefs, and seamounts around the island create a number of excellent and exciting dive sites.

One of the most popular seamounts to dive at Yangello is called Mayhem, close to the west side of the island. This is a

current-washed, shallow coral reef for experienced divers seeking a little more adventure. Another submerged reef formation, Batu Dalam, is just south-west of Mayhem. Its shallowest depth is 10 metres, and it could prove to be interesting with some exploration and effort.

Inside the waterway separating Yangello from Gam Island, there are a number of ridges that extend into the channel. Extensive mangrove forests grow just above the corals at the shoreline, providing excellent opportunities to shoot under/over images when the conditions are calm, clear, and still. Some of the soft corals growing in the waterway are bright pink or purple in colour, and these too make fabulous photo subjects.

Dive sites: Citrus Ridge, Mayhem, Batu Dalam, Mangrove Ridge.

MIOSKON AND KRI

Mioskon and Kri are just two among the many idyllic islands that lie scattered off the shores of Gam and Waigeo in the heart of the Dampier Strait - one of the most biologically diverse marine environments on Earth. This area is a true highlight of Raja Ampat, offering some of the most awe-inspiring scuba diving experiences found anywhere on the planet.

The underwater landscape surrounding these islands is nothing short of spectacular. Pristine coral gardens stretch as far as the eye can see, punctuated by dramatic seamounts that rise from the depths to form vibrant underwater peaks. These natural structures serve as gathering points for marine life of all shapes and sizes— from dazzling macro critters to powerful pelagic predators. Every dive here offers a thrilling encounter with nature, whether you're gliding alongside swirling schools of fish, marvelling at the intricate beauty of the coral gardens, or catching a glimpse of hunting barracudas or patrolling reef sharks.

The exceptional number and variety of dive sites in this region make it a fantastic destination for coral enthusiasts and fish spotters alike. The Dampier Strait's intricate network of channels, islands, and submerged reefs creates a dynamic marine environment, with strong tidal currents flowing in and out from the surrounding deep waters. These nutrient-rich currents sustain the vibrant coral ecosystems and support an astonishing concentration of marine biodiversity.

This constant movement of water ensures that every dive reveals a seascape bursting with life - colourful coral heads, dense clouds of fusiliers, schools of jackfish and trevally, and even encounters with oceanic manta rays drifting through the blue. Mioskon, Kri, and the neighbouring island of Mansuar are celebrated not just for their beauty but for the diversity of marine life found within such a relatively compact area.

This stretch of the Dampier Strait is simply unmissable. It represents the perfect convergence of ecological richness, underwater drama, and natural beauty – a hotspot for divers of all levels.

Dive sites: Tapokreng Pier, Batu Lima, Frewin Bonda Channel, Mioskon, Lau Lau, Blue Magic, Mike's Point, Sardines, Chicken Reefs, Crossover, Otdima, Cape Kri, Ranciwol Reef & Yenbuba Pier, Sawandarek.

ROUTE MAP

Cruise route



CRUISE NOTES

Cruise notes

- Flexible Itineraries: Our cruise routes are intentionally adaptable. Throughout the journey, the captain and cruise director continuously assess sea conditions, weather, and tides to ensure the best possible experience. Guest preferences for specific dive sites are always considered whenever feasible.
- More Than Is Listed: The locations featured in these itineraries represent only a portion of what's possible. Numerous additional anchorages and activity options are available along the way, making each voyage truly unique.
- Simplified for Clarity: The destinations shown in our presentations are not necessarily listed in the order they will be visited. They are organized for clarity and to help guests visualize the overall routing.
- Extended Stays: If a particular anchorage offers exceptional experiences, guests may opt to linger a bit longer. The captain and cruise director have the flexibility to accommodate such preferences, provided they align with the overall cruise schedule.
- Overnight Passages: To maximize daylight hours at our most spectacular destinations, longer transits between anchorages are typically conducted overnight.
- Escape the Crowds: With the exception of embarkation and disembarkation points, our itineraries are carefully crafted to avoid congested areas and busy commercial ports, allowing for a more tranquil and immersive experience.
- Beyond the Dive: Many of our anchorages offer more than just diving and snorkelling. Guests can enjoy kayaking, stand-up paddleboarding, and occasional visits to local villages and cultural sites — adding even more richness to the journey.