DEWI NUSANTARA

Ambon, Historic Banda, the Forgotten Islands and Alor

Ambon to Kalabahi | Laha (Ambon), Nusa Laut, The Historic Banda Islands: A Timeless Treasure in the Banda Sea and more

The Banda Sea plunges to staggering depths, and the Banda Islands sit on an underwater mountain range, with the elusive and dazzling mandarin fish around the volcano of Gunung Api.

On the remote outcrop beyond, dramatic drop-offs, sheer walls and vibrant coral gardens flourish in crystal-clear water, with majestic hammerhead sharks.

The Lease Islands have steep slopes lined with soft corals, giant sea fans and towering sponges, with reef sharks and turtles gliding by.

In the Forgotten Islands there are vast schools of bumphead parrotfish and swirling clouds of big-eye trevallies, and even whale sharks make ghostly appearances.

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







Your route

THE TRIP

About this trip

This is more than a diving trip - it's an expedition into the unknown, a chance to witness Indonesia's most iconic and hidden treasures in one seamless voyage.

Sitting below the vast landmass of Ceram, in the deep waters of the Banda Sea, the Lease Islands - Haruku, Saparua, Nusa Laut, and Molana - offer a spectacular and diverse scuba diving experience. Located in Indonesia's Central Maluku province, these islands are known for their stunning coral gardens, dramatic underwater topography, and thriving marine ecosystems, making them a top destination for divers seeking adventure and beauty beneath the waves.

These islands feature an array of dive sites with breathtaking coral gardens, steep drop-offs, and vibrant marine biodiversity. Schools of colourful reef fish, turtles, and even reef sharks can often be spotted gliding through the crystal-clear waters. The reefs here are adorned with impressive steep slopes lined with cup corals, soft corals, giant sea fans, and towering sponges. The sheer diversity of coral formations creates a dazzling marine seascape.

One favourite site is the reef at Ameth, on the north-east tip of Nusa Laut, considered one of the finest dive spots in the area. Its pristine condition and extraordinary biodiversity make it a must-visit for serious divers.

When combined with the stellar critter or muck diving at Laha, diving in the Lease Islands promises an exciting array of marine life encounters. Divers can expect to see reef sharks patrolling the depths, graceful sea turtles drifting through the currents, and a whole host of smaller critters hiding among the corals and rubble. The nutrient-rich waters also support an incredible variety of reef fish, adding to the vibrancy of this underwater paradise.

THE REGIONS

Historic Banda

Rising majestically from the depths of the Banda Sea, the legendary Banda Islands exude an irresistible allure, unmatched by any other destination in the Indonesian archipelago. While their rich and tumultuous history as the epicentre of the global spice trade is well known, it is their extraordinary marine environment that is now taking centre stage.

The Banda Sea plunges to staggering depths, and within this vast expanse lies a secluded chain of islands perched atop an underwater mountain range. At the heart of this cluster are Banda Neira, Lontar, and the awe-inspiring Gunung Api volcano. These three islands form the core of the Bandas, offering world-class critter diving, particularly for those eager to spot the elusive and dazzling Mandarin fish.

Venturing beyond lie the islands of Run, Ai, Hatta, and the stunning Skaru Reef. Further still, the remote outcrop of Suangi stands as a beacon for marine life. Here, dramatic drop-offs, sheer walls, and vibrant coral gardens flourish in crystal-clear waters, teeming with a kaleidoscope of reef fish and frequented by larger pelagic species, including majestic hammerhead sharks.

Diving in the Banda Islands is nothing short of spectacular, offering a rare blend of macro and pelagic encounters. Beneath the waves, every dive promises a discovery - whether it’s the intricate beauty of a tiny nudibranch or the exhilarating presence of schooling barracuda. Above the surface, the islands’ historical charm adds yet another layer of magic to the experience, making every moment in this remote paradise truly unforgettable.

After departing Saumlaki, Dewi Nusantara navigates towards the our first destinations in the Forgotten Islands. Spreading across the southern borders of the deep blue Banda Sea, the Forgotten Islands form an extensive chain stretching over 1,000 kilometres between Timor and West Papua

Officially known as Maluku Tenggara (the south-east Maluku), this remote and largely uncharted region remains one of the country’s most pristine natural frontiers. Isolated from major settlements and untouched by mainstream tourism, these islands offer a rare glimpse into a world where nature and tradition thrive undisturbed.

The geography of this vast archipelago is strikingly diverse. Towering volcanic peaks, dense rainforests, and rugged limestone terraces define the Inner and Outer Banda Arcs, while the distant Aru and Kei islands feature sprawling savannah, mangrove forests, and flat, open landscapes. The interplay of land and sea has shaped a breathtaking environment where each island tells its own geological story.

As part of the Wallacea biogeographical region, this area serves as a bridge between Asia and Australia-New Guinea, fostering an extraordinary mix of wildlife. The easternmost islands, in particular, share remarkable ecological similarities with New Guinea, making them a haven for unique species found nowhere else on Earth.

Culturally, the people of Maluku Tenggara are deeply connected to their Austronesian heritage. Across the islands, ancient traditions endure through masterful wood carvings, striking ikat textiles, and woven bamboo crafts. Mythology, ancestral worship, and storytelling remain integral to local communities, preserving a rich and enduring

legacy.

Beneath the waves, the Forgotten Islands boast some of the most spectacular diving in the Indonesian archipelago. The marine environment is a paradise for explorers, featuring sheer coral walls, vibrant reef systems, and deep ocean drop-offs teeming with life. Divers have encountered vast schools of bumphead parrotfish, swirling clouds of big-eye trevallies, powerful giant trevallies, sleek Spanish mackerel, and formidable barracudas. In these waters, even hammerhead and whale sharks make their ghostly appearances, adding to the sense of unspoiled wonder.

For divers seeking adventure in its purest form, the Forgotten Islands offer an unparalleled journey into Indonesia's last great wilderness - where land, sea, and culture remain as they have for centuries.

Sitting at the far eastern end of the Nusa Tenggara archipelago, Alor is a land of striking contrasts and raw natural beauty. Towering peaks rise from the deep blue sea, their rugged slopes draped in lush forests surrounded by wild and wonderful current-swept waterways. This breathtaking destination offers an untamed paradise for explorers and nature enthusiasts alike.

For avid divers, Alor is an underwater sanctuary unlike any other. This secluded corner of Indonesia remains refreshingly untouched compared to more famous diving destinations, offering an exclusive and exhilarating experience. The crystal-clear waters boast extraordinary visibility - sometimes exceeding 40 meters - providing a window into a vibrant marine world teeming with life. From delicate macro critters to awe-inspiring pelagics such as thresher sharks, mola mola (sunfish), and even migrating blue whales, Alor's biodiversity is truly exceptional.

One of Alor's defining underwater features is its powerful currents, which channel nutrient-rich waters through the region, sustaining thriving coral reefs and vast schools of fish. Dive sites like "The Dream" and "Cathedral" offer dramatic underwater topography and heart-pounding drift dives. The famed Alor-Pantar Strait is a diver's playground, home to vibrant coral gardens, mesmerising walls, and world-class muck diving, where elusive creatures like frogfish, rhinopias, and mimic octopuses await discovery.

Beyond its world-class diving, Alor is a living tapestry of cultures and traditions, shaped by centuries of seafaring trade and ancestral heritage. The island is home to a diverse mix of ethnic groups, each with its own distinct language, customs, and rituals. Visitors can immerse themselves in this rich cultural landscape - witnessing time-honoured ceremonies, tasting authentic local cuisine, and engaging

with the island's warm, welcoming communities. Traditional fishing villages dot the coastline, offering glimpses into a way of life that has remained largely unchanged for generations.

Whether you're plunging into the depths of Alor's pristine waters, trekking through verdant rainforests, or simply savouring the island's tranquil beauty, this hidden paradise promises an experience unlike any other. Alor is more than just a destination - its a journey into the heart of Indonesia's most spectacular natural and cultural wonders.

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, making every expedition a true treasure hunt for the weird and wonderful.

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 in the Banda Sea.

Far out in the remote reaches of the vast Banda Sea, south of the huge landmass of Ceram, lies a small island group steeped in history and natural wonder - the Banda Islands. These islands, once the epicentre of the global spice trade,

still whisper stories of their storied past, offering a rare blend of cultural intrigue and breathtaking landscapes.

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

RUN AND SUANGGI

Diving around the breathtaking island of Run and its smaller, remote neighbour, Suanggi, offers an extraordinary underwater adventure that seamlessly blends history, natural beauty, and exhilarating marine encounters.

Located in the northern reaches of the Banda Sea over 100 nautical miles south-east of Ambon, Suanggi is a rugged, rocky outpost that stands as a gateway to the Banda Islands. Despite its small size and isolated position, this hidden gem is rapidly making a name for itself as one of the Indonesian archipelago's top diving destinations. It is one of the few places where divers have the thrilling opportunity to witness the awe-inspiring spectacle of schooling hammerhead sharks - a bucket-list experience for any underwater enthusiast.

Meanwhile, the dive sites surrounding Run Island boast an astonishing variety of marine life and topographical wonders. Vibrant coral gardens flourish alongside sheer, dramatic drop-offs, creating an awe-inspiring seascape teeming with

biodiversity. Schools of brilliantly coloured reef fish dart through the reefs, while graceful pelagic species glide effortlessly through the crystal-clear waters. And, just like Suanggi, Run offers divers the exhilarating chance to encounter the elusive hammerhead sharks in their natural habitat.

With visibility often exceeding 40 metres, the waters surrounding Run and Suanggi provide an exceptional environment for underwater photography, allowing divers to capture the rich marine life in stunning detail. Adding to

the allure of this extraordinary diving destination is Run Island's fascinating history. Once a crucial hub in the global spice trade, the island's past is intertwined with tales of explorers, merchants, and colonial powers, lending an intriguing cultural dimension to every dive.

Whether you are a seasoned diver seeking new thrills or a beginner eager to explore an untouched marine paradise, the waters of Run and Suanggi promise an unforgettable experience - one where history, adventure, and the wonders of the deep come together in perfect harmony.

Dive sites: Lailaka Wall, Suanggi Seamount, Suanggi Ridge, Suanggi Slope, Run Village, Tanjung Noret, Hammer Time.





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.

HATTA AND SKARU REEF

Located just over 10 nautical miles south-east of the central harbour of the Banda Islands at Banda Neira, Hatta Island offers scuba divers an unparalleled underwater adventure. With its crystal-clear waters and an abundance of marine life, the island is a haven for divers seeking both beauty and biodiversity beneath the surface.

From dramatic drop-offs and thriving coral gardens to arches and mysterious underwater caves, Hatta Island's seascape is as diverse as it is stunning. The vibrant ecosystem teems with colourful tropical fish, graceful turtles, reef sharks, and even occasional encounters with majestic manta rays and playful dolphins. For those seeking a truly exhilarating experience, the deeper waters around the island are known to attract schools of hammerhead sharks, offering an unforgettable and rare diving spectacle.

Just two nautical miles south, the awe-inspiring Skaru Reef (Karang Hatta) awaits. This towering marine mountain, that barely breaks the ocean's

surface at low tide, features a network of shimmering shallows that plunge into the deep, creating thrilling big fish

dive sites. The reef's unique topography and nutrient-rich waters attract pelagic species, making it a must-visit for those hoping to encounter sharks, barracudas, and other ocean giants in their natural habitat.

Whether you're an adventurous diver chasing adrenaline-fuelled drift dives or a nature enthusiast eager to witness marine life in its pristine habitat, Hatta Island promises an extraordinary diving experience like no other.

Dive sites: Ha! a Arch, Hammers Head, Skaru Ridge, Skaru Wall, Barat Corner, Hammer Point.





MANUK VOLCANO

The BBC wildlife documentary "Island of the Snakes" brought global attention to Manuk's mysterious volcanic island, a place as captivating as it is remote. As dawn breaks and a yacht approaches its rugged shores, the air grows thick with the unmistakable scent of sulphur, a tell-tale sign of the island's ongoing geothermal activity. Though modest in height - rising just under 300 meters - Manuk plays host to an extraordinary array of seabirds. Frigates and boobies dominate the skies, creating a breathtaking spectacle of avian life.

Encircled by a jagged, rocky coastline devoid of beaches, Manuk presents a strikingly raw and untamed landscape. The sparse vegetation struggles to cling to life above the short tree line, leaving much of the terrain exposed in its stark volcanic glory. Scattered across the island, sulphur-encrusted fumaroles vent wisps of steam, adding an ethereal quality to the scenery. For those with an adventurous spirit, a handful of

rugged entry points may offer the chance to step ashore for an exploratory trek, though the island remains largely untouched and inhospitable.

Beneath the waves, Manuk offers one of the most unique diving experiences in the region. Its geothermal activity is believed to attract a thriving population of sea snakes, with the olive sea snake being the most prevalent. Divers exploring the island's waters are often treated to close encounters with these sleek, enigmatic creatures.

Manuk Ridge, the island's signature dive site on the south-eastern corner, is a favourite among underwater explorers - and, on occasion, schooling hammerhead sharks. Meanwhile, the island's western side features gently sloping reefs adorned with vibrant coral gardens, creating a haven for marine life. Here, sea snakes gather in such remarkable numbers that even the most seasoned divers may find the experience both exhilarating and somewhat unnerving.

From its dramatic volcanic landscapes to its teeming underwater world, Manuk is a destination that few will ever visit - but those who do will never forget.

Dive sites: Coconut Point, Snake Pit, Eigth Wonder, Warm Sand, Twin Ridge, Bubble Reef.

SERUA AND KEKEH

Serua Island, sometimes marked as Legatala on maritime charts, rises dramatically from the depths of the Banda Sea near the eastern tip of the Damar Ridge. This remote volcanic island, standing over 600 meters tall, is a captivating fusion of rugged terrain, verdant forests, and deep sapphire waters. With its steep slopes cloaked in lush greenery and its shores kissed by the waves of the open sea, Serua exudes an air of both mystery and raw, untamed beauty.

A scattering of small villages and seasonal fishing camps dot the island's coastline, where the rhythms of life remain deeply intertwined with nature. Dominated by its towering active volcano, Serua's dramatic landscape tells a story of fire and water, past eruptions having shaped its jagged cliffs and black-sand shores. Steam vents and hot springs dot the island, hinting at the geothermal forces simmering beneath its surface.

Just off Serua's north-western coast, the satellite islands of Kekeh and Kekeh Kecil rise from the

ocean like emerald jewels set in a sea of blue. These secluded isles, blanketed in dense tropical foliage, are surrounded by coral reefs bursting with life. Beneath the waves, an astonishing underwater world awaits - where sprawling coral gardens, steep drop-offs, and intricate reef systems create an aquatic paradise. The Kekeh Islands offer a blank canvas for marine explorers, promising a kaleidoscope of colours and an ecosystem teeming with biodiversity.

For those who venture deeper into the sea, Serua's waters unveil a realm of extraordinary beauty. Pristine coral formations slope to the ocean floor, while towering underwater cliffs plummet into the abyss, providing shelter for an astonishing array of marine life. The island's nutrient-rich currents attract huge schools of barracuda and jackfish and, for the fortunate few, the awe-inspiring spectacle of hammerhead sharks moving in synchronised formation. Renowned among divers for its untouched reefs and thrilling encounters, Serua's submerged landscapes are a marine explorer's dream.

Remote, untouched, and brimming with natural wonders, Serua Island remains a destination for those who seek the extraordinary, a place where adventure and discovery go hand in hand. For those willing to journey beyond the familiar, this isolated paradise offers a rare and unforgettable escape into the wild.

Dive sites: Hammer Ridge, Paisley Park, Dive Site Right, Rockface, Chasm, Mamas Rock, Kekeh Kecil.







NILA ISLAND AND OFFSHORE REEFS

Perched majestically atop the Damar Ridge, Nila is a breathtaking volcanic island in the heart of the Forgotten Islands. Its rugged picturesque coastline is a haven for adventure-seekers, offering pristine shallow coral reefs perfect for snorkelling and diving. These vibrant reefs teem with marine life, providing an underwater spectacle of dazzling corals and tropical fish. On the island's southern side, an inviting lagoon awaits, ideal for exploration by kayak or paddleboard, allowing visitors to immerse themselves in the island's tranquil beauty.

Just a short journey to the north-west of Nila, the stunning Dusborgh Reef emerges from the depths - a vast, surface-breaking atoll ringed by an explosion of colourful corals, dramatic walls, and sloping reefs. This remote reef boasts multiple dive sites, each offering unique encounters with the region's diverse marine life. Known as a hotspot for big fish action, Dusborgh is one of those rare places in the Forgotten Islands where anything can

Further to the northeast, the legendary Griffin Reef rises from the depths of the Banda Sea, mirroring the striking features of Dusborgh. At its heart lies the intriguingly named Nil Desperandum - Latin for Do Not Despair - a site that captivates even the most seasoned divers. Here, the north-western drop-off and sloping reef showcase some of Indonesia's most spectacular coral growth, forming a thriving marine metropolis. Swirling schools of pelagic fish roam the blue, and, for those with patience and a keen eye, hammerhead sharks frequently grace the site, making it one of Indonesia's premier locations for encounters with these awe-inspiring predators.

Exploring these remote reefs is the very definition of frontier diving - venturing into uncharted waters where few have ever descended. Each dive promises thrill, mystery, and discovery, set against the backdrop of one of the world's last true underwater wildernesses.

Dive sites: Nil Desperandum, Griffi n East, Desperado, Dusborgh East, Dusborgh Lagoon, Due South, Karang Nila, Tanjung Kaliatutnu, Sandy Canyon, Oriental Wall, South Nila.

THE DAMAR GROUP

The Damar Island Group, the next stop on Dewi Nusantara's exploration of the remote Forgotten Islands, offers scuba divers an unparalleled opportunity to explore some of the world's most pristine marine ecosystems. Its isolation has preserved vast, thriving coral formations, creating an underwater paradise teeming with marine life. Divers can encounter vibrant butterflyfish, parrotfish, and surgeonfish, alongside vast, undulating schools of barracudas, tunas, and mackerels.

Beyond its breathtaking underwater scenery, this collection of islands is a fascinating geographical wonder. It consists of three distinct areas: the expansive Nusleur reef system, the twin islands of Terbang Utara and Terbang Seletan, and the dominant volcanic island of Damar. Spanning approximately 17 kilometres from north to south and 19 kilometres from west to east, Damar rises to an average elevation of 400 meters, with its active volcano soaring beyond 700 meters on the eastern side. While much of the island remains wild and untouched, settlements are concentrated along its eastern half, with the largest village, Kenili, tucked within a sheltered inlet on the eastern shore.

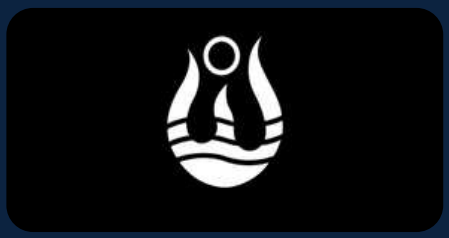
The surrounding islands of Nusleur, Terbang Utara, and Terbang Seletan are premier locations for underwater exploration, each offering distinct underwater landscapes and exceptional biodiversity. Due to the region's remoteness and limited diving activity, marine species here tend to be more curious and less accustomed to human presence, allowing for closer, more intimate encounters.

Located about eight nautical miles west of Damar, Nusleur is an atoll surrounded by coral reefs, while the Terbang Islands, positioned to the south, are nearly identical in size, fringed by vibrant reefs and dramatic drop-offs. Terbang Seletan also features a secluded inner lagoon, which can be explored by kayak when tidal conditions allow.

These dive sites are characterised by sprawling hard coral reefs that extend from the shoreline before plunging into the depths. Towering sea fans cling to the reef walls, offering shelter to an extraordinary array of marine life, including elusive pygmy seahorses and the rare leopard anemone shrimp—both prized discoveries for macro enthusiasts.

Beyond the intricate coral formations, these remote islands also attract an abundance of pelagic species. Schools of fish swirl in the open water, while powerful dogtooth tunas patrol the depths. Nusleur, in particular, is renowned for its exhilarating encounters with hammerhead sharks, making it a must-visit destination for divers seeking awe-inspiring marine life.

Dive sites: Harbour Hook, West Bay, East Nusleur, Bomb Ridge, Coral Stack, West Wall, Garden Terrace, Def Leppard, East Wall.







THE TELANG ISLAND GROUP

Just east of Romang lies a stunning cluster of islands known as the Telang Group, a wonderfully scenic stop along Dewi Nusantara's navigation of the Forgotten Islands. This picturesque archipelago - comprising Telang, Pulau Laut, Limtutu, and Kital - encircles a serene anchorage seascape, offering a perfect blend of watersports, astonishing white-sand beaches, and world-class scuba diving. The diverse marine landscapes here cater to divers of all skill levels, from gentle reef explorations to exhilarating drift dives through current-swept channels.

The coral reefs surrounding Kital and Telang Islands are a diver's paradise, boasting vibrant, unspoiled marine ecosystems teeming with life. These sites provide a first-class diving experience, where explorers can immerse themselves in dazzling coral gardens and discover an abundance of marine species. For those seeking more dynamic encounters, the channels weaving between the islands present an entirely different

spectacle. Stronger currents here attract a wide range of pelagic life, adding an element of excitement to the dives.

One particular site close to the sandbanks on the south side of Pulau Laut has become a hotspot for shark enthusiasts. On several occasions, divers drifting along its sandy slopes have encountered juvenile silver-tip sharks - an exceptionally rare sight in most parts of Indonesia. These agile young predators exhibit playful, acrobatic movements, curiously buzzing past divers before vanishing into the vast blue as they mature into open-ocean hunters.

Shark sightings don't end there. The reefs and channels around Telang are also a favoured resting ground for nurse sharks, with some truly impressive specimens spotted nestled beneath massive coral formations or resting on the sandy seabed of the breathtaking Kital Beach Reef. This pristine marine environment, rich in biodiversity and dramatic underwater topography, makes the Telang Group a must-visit destination for adventurous divers looking to experience Indonesia's wild and untouched underwater world.

Dive sites: Crystal Palace, Silver Banks, Tanjung Limtutu, Saddleback, Beach Reef, Maopura Utara.

NYATA

The relatively small island of Nyata, situated just under four nautical miles from the north-west coastline of the much larger Romang Island, is one of the most exhilarating diving destinations in the region. Offering some spectacular scuba diving experiences, this hidden gem rises nearly 300 metres above sea level. Its coastline is a striking blend of rocky points and pristine white sand beaches that give way to thriving coral reefs teeming with marine life. Beyond the reefs, the true adventure begins - sheer, current-washed walls, swimthroughs, and ledges terrace down into the deep blue depths of the Banda Sea, providing an unforgettable underwater playground for divers.

Nyata's dive sites feature an extraordinary mix of vibrant coral gardens, dramatic drop-offs, and intriguing caves. The crystal-clear waters, with visibility often exceeding 30 meters, offer breathtaking views of the island's diverse marine ecosystem. Towering barrel sponges and enormous, vividly coloured gorgonian sea fans cling to the

island's dramatic underwater landscape, creating a visually stunning backdrop. Larger marine species are frequently spotted patrolling these waters, including Napoleon wrasses, huge groupers, and numerous tuna species. Occasionally, the unmistakable silhouette of a hammerhead shark gliding through the blue injects an extra dose of excitement into the dive.

One of Nyata Island's greatest draws is its incredible biodiversity. Schools of brightly coloured reef fish dart among the corals, while turtles and graceful rays move effortlessly through the currents. The island's surrounding waters also support healthy populations of blacktip and whitetip reef sharks, adding to the thrill of every dive. The nutrient-rich currents attract various pelagic species, making Nyata a premier location for drift diving. As night falls, the underwater world transforms - bioluminescent plankton twinkle like underwater stars, octopuses emerge to hunt, and an array of nocturnal marine life creates a mesmerising spectacle.

Due to its remote location, Nyata Island remains relatively unknown among diving enthusiasts. Its untouched beauty and abundant marine life offer an unparalleled sense of adventure, making it a popular and exciting stop during Dewi Nusantara's cruises in the region.

Dive sites: Tanjung Utara, Grouper Arch, Lighthouse Wall, Avalanche, Korner Kut, Tanjung Selatan.

REONG

The majestic island of Reong rises dramatically from the sea, positioned just across a current-swept channel off the north-west corner of Wetar Island. Enveloped by breathtaking coral reefs that plunge into deep waters mere meters from the shoreline, its northern cliffs soar over 200 meters, creating a striking natural spectacle. Reong's dive sites are defined by spectacular wall and reef formations, offering everything from serene drift dives to exhilarating current-swept descents. With an abundance of vibrant coral gardens and thriving sponge formations, the island presents exceptional opportunities for wide-angle underwater photography, capturing its rich and diverse marine landscapes.

Reong's most iconic dive site, Crack Cove, wraps around the island's northern tip, unveiling an awe-inspiring

underwater topography. The dive begins along a sheer wall adorned with enormous sea fans before transitioning to a dynamic, current-washed ridge. When the

tide flows south, currents split at the ridge's peak, surging along the island's eastern and western flanks. This natural pressure point attracts astonishing congregations of schooling fish, creating a mesmerising underwater spectacle. As with many sites in the Forgotten Islands, divers may encounter an array of pelagic species, from sleek sharks and powerful dogtooth tunas to vast schools of bumphead parrotfish and barracuda, ensuring each dive is both unpredictable and unforgettable.

Beyond this adrenaline-fuelled experience, Reong offers many more varied dive opportunities, including exhilarating drift dives along its northeast-facing shores and tranquil reef and wall dives that showcase the island's pristine underwater beauty. Macro enthusiasts will find Reong particularly rewarding, as its thriving reefs are home to a dazzling array of marine life, including elusive pygmy seahorses and other rare critters, making it a paradise for underwater photographers and macro lovers alike. Thanks to its remote location and untouched marine ecosystem, divers can explore these exceptional sites in solitude, free from the crowds of more frequented destinations. This unparalleled combination of biodiversity, unspoiled environments, and world-class diving makes Reong Island an essential stop on any Forgotten Islands itinerary.

Dive sites: Crack Cove, Reong Wall, Expresso, West Point, Wetar Beach, Tanjung, Sand Slide, Napar Village.

THE ALOR-PANTAR STRAIT

The strait between Alor and Pantar, the final two islands along the East Nusa Tenggara chain, is a premier destination for experienced scuba divers seeking unspoiled marine biodiversity. This remote and ecologically rich region is home to some of the most pristine dive sites in the world, featuring vibrant coral reefs, dramatic underwater topography, and an exceptional variety of marine life. The powerful currents that course through the strait carry nutrient-dense waters from the deep, attracting large pelagic species and sustaining a thriving marine ecosystem.

Enhancing the region's dynamic underwater environment, the waterway is interspersed with several smaller islands - Buaya, Ternate, Pura, Kumba, and Treweg further south. These landforms influence tidal movements, creating a complex interplay of currents that give rise to a diverse range of dive conditions, from tranquil coral gardens to exhilarating drift dives.

One of the most remarkable aspects of diving in the Alor- Pantar Strait is the extraordinary health and diversity of its coral reefs. These ecosystems host an abundance of marine species, including schools of barracuda, trevallies, and reef sharks. Macro enthusiasts can observe rare and elusive creatures such as frogfish, pygmy seahorses, and rhinopias scorpionfish, all thriving within this biologically rich environment.

Beyond its exceptional reef systems, the strait offers unparalleled opportunities for encounters with larger marine species. Divers frequently witness pods of dolphins, while seasonal migrations bring sightings of orcas and even blue whales, further underscoring the region's significance as a marine biodiversity hotspot.

The Alor-Pantar Strait is also home to a number of renowned dive sites. Locations such as The Cathedral, Kelatetek, Crucifixion Point, Babylon, Cave Point, and Tanjung Muna attract oceanic sunfish, eagle rays, hammerhead sharks, and thresher sharks, providing a world-class diving experience. Among the most unique sites is Clown Valley on Pura Island, where divers can observe an expansive seabed entirely covered by swaying anemones - a rare and mesmerising sight.

In addition to its ecological wonders, the Alor- Pantar region offers a rich cultural experience. Local communities, particularly those on Pura Island, have maintained traditional fishing and boat-building practices for generations. Visitors may have the opportunity to observe skilled freedivers utilising handcrafted wooden goggles, a testament to the enduring maritime traditions of the region.

Combining breathtaking underwater biodiversity with cultural heritage and unspoiled natural beauty, the Alor-Pantar Strait presents an exceptional diving experience. Its remote location and dynamic marine environment make it a truly unparalleled destination for divers seeking adventure beyond conventional dive sites.

Dive sites: Tanjung Muna, Cave Point, Crocodile Rock, Babylon, Frenchman's Window, Pak Yan's Village Backyard/Boardroom, Dream, The Great Wall of Goats, Clown Valley, Crucifi xion Point, The Cathedral, Keletetek.

THE KALABAHI INLET

Indonesia is home to some of the world's most extraordinary muck and critter diving destinations, making it a must-visit for enthusiasts of bizarre and fascinating marine life. While the Lembeh Strait is where muck diving first gained fame, this unique style of diving has since spread across Indonesia, the Philippines, and Papua New Guinea. Among the top locations to encounter the weird and wonderful creatures of the seabed, Alor - and more specifically the Kalabahi Inlet - stands out as one of the very best waiting to be explored.

Stretching over nine nautical miles from the Alor-Pantar Strait to Kalabahi Town, the Kalabahi Inlet is a long, winding waterway that separates the Alor mainland from the northern headland known as Alor Kecil. Along its shores, divers will find an impressive collection of critter-filled dive sites, each offering incredible biodiversity. While visibility tends to decrease deeper into the inlet, the reward is well worth it, as these nutrient-rich waters are teeming with marine life.

The sites here share many of the same characteristics as legendary muck diving spots like Lembeh in Sulawesi and Laha in Ambon - gently sloping gravel or sand bottoms dotted with coral heads, small habitats, a touch of current, and the occasional influx of freshwater from springs, streams, or rivers. These conditions create the perfect environment for an astonishing array of marine life, from the beautiful to the bizarre. Underwater photographers and critter enthusiasts will be thrilled to find an incredible selection of species, and with the help of Dewi's eagle-eyed dive guides - world renowned for their ability to spot even the most elusive creatures - checking off a wish list of must-see critters can happen in just a few dives.

While the well-known sites in Kalabahi Inlet are packed with marine treasures, the adventure doesn't end there. Many more dive spots remain unexplored, offering endless opportunities for discovery. Whether you're a seasoned macro photographer or a curious diver eager to encounter nature's strangest underwater inhabitants, Kalabahi Inlet promises an unforgettable muck diving experience.

Dive sites: Pertamina Pier, Moru Je! y, Has Been, Alami House Reef, Mini Wall, Mucky Mosque, Pancoran, Tri Tops, No Man's Land.

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.