DEWI NUSANTARA

Maluku - The Spice Islands: Halmahera and Ambon

Ternate to Ambon | Makian Volcano, The Goraici Archipelago, The Pantinti Strait and more

Halmahera has some of the best coral gardens in Indonesia, in waters few boats have ever visited.

Around the volcano island of Makian, dark volcanic sand is the backdrop for flamboyant cuttlefish, mimic octopuses and hairy frogfish.

Coral-covered walls in the Goraici Archipelago bring manta ray cleaning stations and seamount drifts, where reef sharks patrol and vast schools of tuna, wahoo and fusiliers swirl in the current.

The Pantinti Strait is a mini Komodo or Alor, and Laha finishes as one of the ultimate critter destinations.

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







Your route

THE TRIP

About this trip

ever explored - a true frontier of adventure. With curiosity as our compass, our seasoned dive team is thrilled to rise to the challenge, ready to uncover hidden gems and share the excitement of discovery at every turn.

The Manipa Strait, the wide channel dividing the islands of Buru and Ambon, is a passage steeped in both natural beauty and mystery. Dotted along this stretch of water lie four smaller gems - Boano, Kelang, Manipa, and Ambelau - each surrounded by seas that remain largely unexplored. These islands offer a fascinating mix of landscapes, cultures, and marine environments, making them a true frontier for discovery.

Beneath the surface, divers can expect to encounter relatively new and seldom-visited dive sites, where untouched coral reefs, thriving marine life, and the promise of hidden treasures await. With so much still to be charted, the Manipa Strait holds the allure of genuine exploration - an invitation to venture where few have gone before and to uncover the secrets of these intriguing islands.

Laha has earned a worldwide reputation as one of the ultimate destinations for critter diving, drawing underwater photographers and marine enthusiasts from across the globe. Its sandy slopes, gravel

patches, weathered piers, and scattered coral heads form an extraordinary habitat where rare and unusual creatures thrive. This is a place where patience and a keen eye are rewarded with encounters that feel almost otherworldly.

Among Laha's many claims to fame is the discovery of the psychedelic frogfish, a bizarre and mesmerizing species that instantly captured the imagination of the diving world. Yet this is just one chapter in Laha's story. With every dive, there is the tantalizing possibility of uncovering new and hidden treasures - cryptic creatures so well camouflaged they often escape even the most seasoned divers. From flamboyant cuttlefish and ghost pipefish to an endless array of colourful nudibranchs, Laha continues to surprise and inspire, offering not just dives, but true journeys of discovery. Who knows what strange and spectacular wonders await in these mysterious waters?

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.

MAKIAN VOLCANO

Critter diving at the volcano island of Makian, located on the western seaboard of Halmahera Island, offers an incredible experience for macro photography enthusiasts and underwater explorers. Unlike traditional coral reef diving, critter (or muck) diving focuses on the sandy, silty, or rubble-strewn seabed, where bizarre and cryptic marine creatures thrive.

The island is actually a volcano, and along with it's nutrient-rich waters, a little current, and some patchy habitat, creates an ideal environment for rare critters to flourish. Divers exploring Makian's muck sites can expect to encounter a stunning variety of macro life, including flamboyant cuttlefish, mimic octopuses, hairy frogfish, and an array of colourful nudibranchs.

The island's dark volcanic sand provides the perfect backdrop for spotting these elusive creatures, many of which rely on camouflage to blend into their surroundings. Pipefish, mantis

shrimp, and ghost pipefish are also commonly sighted, making every dive a treasure hunt for marine oddities.

What makes muck diving at Makian Island even more special is its relatively untouched and less-visited dive sites. Unlike more famous muck diving destinations such as the Lembeh Strait and Ambon, Makian remains under the radar. With the keen eyes of Dewi Nusantara's expert critter spotters, divers can uncover some of the ocean's most fascinating and peculiar inhabitants, making every dive an adventure filled with unexpected discoveries.

Dive sites: Hot Spring Slope, New Beginning, Mailoa Rhino.

THE GORAICI ARCHIPELAGO

The Goraici Archipelago, a secluded island group 30 nautical miles west of Halmahera, boasts crystal-clear waters, pristine beaches, and vibrant coral reefs. Straddling the equator, this remote diver's paradise offers an unparalleled mix of adventure, conservation, and biodiversity.

The islands stand as a model for sustainable marine stewardship. Local communities have successfully safeguarded their reefs, creating a thriving ecosystem untouched by destructive fishing practices. Divers can explore vibrant coral gardens teeming with marine life, from colourful reef fish to majestic pelagics.

The diverse sites offer world-class diving, from stunning wall dives to manta ray cleaning stations. Whether by day or

night, these sites reveal an astonishing underwater world, promising encounters with everything from vibrant macro critters to thrilling pelagic encounters.

can spot pygmy seahorses, colourful shrimp, and elusive crabs hidden among coral formations. After sunset, the reef transforms into a mesmerising nocturnal spectacle.

Beyond macro life, Goraici's coral-covered walls provide dramatic settings for encounters with schooling barracuda, jacks, and reef fish. Whitetip and blacktip sharks cruise the depths, while manta rays occasionally visit as they glide through their natural cleaning stations.

Goraici's seamounts offer thrilling drift dives, where reef sharks patrol and vast schools of tuna, wahoo, snapper, and fusiliers swirl in the currents. Hooking into the reef, divers can watch this high-energy spectacle unfold in a constantly shifting marine ballet.

The Goraici Archipelago offers more than just world-class diving - they provide an escape to an unspoiled marine sanctuary. Whether you seek thrilling underwater encounters or a tranquil retreat, this hidden gem of the Coral Triangle promises an unforgettable experience.

From stunning coral formations and abundant marine life to exhilarating drift dives, every descent unveils something extraordinary.

Dive sites: Pulau Adu, Goweba Pinnacle Siko Ridge, Kayoa Point, Tamo Tamo, Gumergo Rock Crystal Ball, Blue Flash, Talimao, Talimao Mantas, Geript, Lelai Pier, Pulau Defo, Tanjung Pagi.





THE PANTINTI STRAIT

Diving in the Pantinti Strait, Indonesia, is an extraordinary experience for those seeking vibrant marine biodiversity, strong currents, and dramatic underwater landscapes. Located in North Maluku, the strait separates the islands of Halmahera and Bacan, creating a dynamic marine environment shaped by the powerful flow of nutrient-rich waters. These currents bring an abundance of marine life, making the Pantinti Strait an exciting destination for divers who enjoy high-voltage dives and pelagic encounters. With a collection of islands blocking and confusing the currents in the middle, the strait is always going to produce absolutely stellar dive sites, much like a mini Komodo or Alor.

The underwater topography at Pantinti is incredible, featuring steep walls, coral-covered pinnacles, canyons, passages, and sloping reefs teeming with marine life. Divers can expect to see large schools of barracuda, tuna, and trevallies patrolling the deep blue, while reef

sharks and rays glide effortlessly through the currents. There are also quiet coves and corners around the complex coastline of the islands featuring healthy and vibrant coral formations. These support an array of smaller creatures such as nudibranchs, ghost pipefish, and pygmy seahorses.

The remoteness of the region means fewer divers, providing an exclusive and pristine underwater experience. Whether you are seeking adrenaline-filled drift dives or mesmerising marine encounters, the Pantinti Strait offers some of the best diving in Indonesia.

Dive sites: Semola Bay, Batu Mangga, Proco, Pulau Nanas, Proco Pinnacle, Saleh Kecil, Lighthouse.

GANONE

Tucked away on the north-western edge of the Orang Kaya island group, near the south-eastern tip of Halmahera, lies the tiny but captivating island of Ganone. Deep, pristine waters surround Ganone, despite its small size, providing some of the region's most memorable diving experiences.

The island's dive sites present a stunning variety of underwater scenery - from lush coral gardens and dramatic walls that plunge into the blue to sandy slopes alive with hidden treasures. Schools of fusiliers, snapper, and batfish create dazzling displays as they swirl around the reefs, while closer inspection reveals a vibrant world of moray eels, cuttlefish, and brilliantly patterned nudibranchs. For those seeking bigger encounters, Ganone does not disappoint. Reef sharks and eagle rays are frequent visitors, and with a little luck, divers may even spot a majestic manta ray gliding gracefully through the currents.

Submerged pinnacles rise steeply from the depths, cloaked in soft corals and gorgonian fans, providing refuge for pygmy seahorses and an abundance of reef fish. Beyond these, sandy slopes dotted with bommies reveal countless macro subjects - from ornate ghost pipefish to flamboyant cuttlefish, rewarding divers with endless surprises.

Venturing a little further from Ganone, divers will find an equally captivating collection of sites. Tuna and trevally patrol the sweeping coral plateaus of the offshore islands and reefs, their silver flanks flashing in the sunlight. At certain points, currents sweep through narrow channels, drawing in pelagic species and creating thrilling drift dives.

This diversity of marine life, paired with the island's varied underwater terrain and the richness of the surrounding region, makes Ganone and its neighbouring sites an ideal destination for photographers of every style. Whether capturing intricate macro details, dramatic wide-angle seascapes, or the fleeting shadow of a passing pelagic, the area offers endless opportunities to frame the beauty of the marine world.

Dive sites: Loleojaha Besar, Pulau Tapa, Joronga Nine, Ganone, Joronga Seven.





ORANG KAYA

Scuba diving at the Orang Kaya island collection, is a rare and exhilarating experience for divers looking to explore untouched waters filled with vibrant marine life. Located close to the south-eastern corner of Halmahera, this group of islands and reefs remain largely undiscovered, making it an ideal destination for those seeking pristine underwater environments. The island's surrounding waters boast excellent visibility, healthy coral reefs, and a diverse range of marine species, making it a dream destination for underwater adventurers.

The dive sites around Orang Kaya feature a mix of dramatic drop-offs, coral-covered slopes, and sandy seabeds rich with macro life. The thriving reefs are home to an abundance of tropical fish, including schools of fusiliers, sweetlips, and angelfish. Larger pelagic species such as reef sharks, barracudas, and eagle rays are also commonly sighted, while macro enthusiasts can find nudibranchs, seahorses, and cuttlefish

TA N J U N G D O M O R O M AT O D O

hiding among the corals. The island's nutrient-rich currents attract migratory species, offering divers a chance to encounter rare marine life in its natural habitat.

For divers interested in adventure and exploration, a short distance to the south-east of Orang Kaya is Karang Batu Anyer. At first glance this looks much like any other remote offshore reef in the seas of Indonesia. However, on closer inspection of satellite imagery, it becomes quite apparent that the elongated, surface-breaking, curved reef is in fact

part of the caldera of a long-extinct volcano. Completely circular, and with a diameter of 600 metres, this looks to be a location that definitely warrants further attention.

The Orang Kaya region's isolation means fewer divers and a more exclusive experience, allowing for uninterrupted exploration of its underwater treasures. Whether you are a seasoned diver looking for thrilling drift dives or a photographer in search of stunning reefscapes, Orang Kaya offers an unparalleled diving adventure in one of Indonesia's most untouched marine environments.

Dive sites: Damoromatodo Wall, Tadoku, Telor Point, Jikula Point, Karang Batu Anyer.

PISANG

Surrounded by crystal-clear waters teeming with marine life, Pisang Island is located out in the Halmahera Sea midway between Misool and Orang Kaya. The island has a circumference of nearly five nautical miles and rises steeply from deep water to an elevation of nearly 400 metres. It is richly coated in dense forest, uninhabited, and features a few small, isolated sandy coves.

This remote and pristine location is a hidden gem for scuba diving enthusiasts and renowned for its vibrant marine biodiversity and unspoiled coral reefs. The underwater world around Pisang Island offers a kaleidoscope of colours, with healthy coral reefs forming the backbone of its ecosystem. The island's dive sites are home to an impressive array of marine species, including reef sharks, turtles, barracudas, dogtooth tunas, Spanish mackerel, humphead parrotfish, Napoleon wrasse, rainbow runners, and schools of vibrant fish such as butterflyfish, angelfish, and anthias. However, it is the sites around the

On the south-east side, there is Small Banana, also known as Pisang Kecil. Marked with a lighthouse, this site comprises a very fishy reef that runs to a current-swept point that attracts a lot of schooling fish and some bigger visitors too.

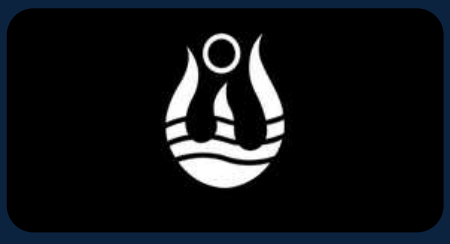
The islands of Ayu Intan and Lampu Mata, on the north-west side and also known as Bananarama, are a great favourite with divers. Underwater, these two are connected by a deep ridge reef that is covered with extremely vibrant hard and soft corals. Lampu Mata features a deep wall on the east side that leads to a stunning underwater rock feature and a pretty hard coral garden. In between are two shallow canyon swim-throughs, and extending to the west is a rocky shallow reef that attracts a lot of schooling fish.

Over on the big island, macro enthusiasts will also find plenty to marvel at. The fringing reefs and points provide habitats for nudibranchs, pygmy seahorses, and other fascinating animals. On the north-facing shoreline there is a large bay that is certainly worth exploring. This has a watercourse flowing into it from the island's high peaks, one of the essential criteria for a stellar critter dive site.

Dive sites: Lampu Mala, Ayu Intan, Big Banana Bay, Small Banana, Lighthouse.







THE LAWIN ISLANDS

The Lawin Islands are a remote group set deep in the Halmahera Sea, between Halmahera and the island of Ceram. The group includes Kekeh, Waringer, the smaller shallow reef islands of Lawin Sendiri and Laliolo, and Lawin itself. Like many of the island clusters scattered across the Halmahera Sea, they are encircled by extensive coral reefs, creating a beautiful and convenient waypoint when transiting between the two North Maluku provinces. Their isolation has preserved both their natural charm above the water and their extraordinary richness below.

Divers exploring the Lawin Islands are rewarded with healthy, thriving reefs that remain largely untouched. The region is home to an impressive diversity of marine life, including the rare Halmahera walking shark, along with whitetip, blacktip, and grey reef sharks. Schools of trevally, barracuda, and fusiliers sweep past in large numbers, while turtles are frequently seen grazing on the reefs. Reef fish such as angelfish,

Macro enthusiasts will also find plenty to explore. Pygmy seahorses cling to sea fans, ghost pipefish drift among the soft corals, and a wide variety of nudibranchs, crabs, and shrimps inhabit the reef. The underwater topography is varied, with sloping reefs, shallow coral gardens, and sandy patches, each providing different habitats and rewarding divers with diverse encounters.

With their remoteness, healthy coral systems, and abundant biodiversity, the Lawin Islands stand out as one of the Halmahera Sea's most captivating destinations. Whether as a stopover during a wider journey through North Maluku or as a dedicated diving location, they offer a rare opportunity to experience unspoiled reefs in a spectacular setting.

Dive sites: Lonely Rock, Kekeh Reef, Lawin Utara, Blow Hole, Waringer North Point, Laliola Point, Lighthouse.

GOMUMU

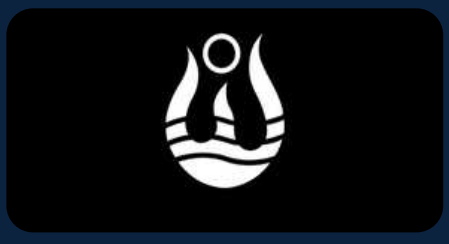
Measuring just five nautical miles from west to east, Gomumu Island is a remote outpost in the Buru Sea, lying directly south of the larger island of Obi. Isolated and little-visited, it invites a sense of discovery from the moment you arrive. With only two villages and long stretches of untouched coastline, its southern shores unfold into pale curved beaches, secluded bays, and winding inlets that seem made for wandering and exploration.

Beneath the surface, the reefs offer a living labyrinth. Near shore, shallow coral flats invite careful inspection, while further out, dramatic drop-offs plunge into the deep. Hard and soft corals create intricate structures, with vast sea fans and sponges forming hidden corners to peer into. Schools of fusiliers, wrasse, and anthias sweep past like shifting clouds, while turtles glide through the passages and reef sharks patrol the blue edges. In cracks and ledges, divers uncover small wonders - nudibranchs, cryptic

Nightfall transforms the reef into an entirely new frontier. Nocturnal species emerge, colours change under torchlight, and flashes of bioluminescence hint at mysteries that lie beyond the reach of daylight. For explorers at heart, Gomumu's remoteness means marine life thrives largely undisturbed, rewarding those willing to venture further. From calm shallows to challenging offshore terrain, each dive feels like setting out into the unknown.

Above the waves, the island itself remains quiet and largely unexplored, its palm groves, seabird colonies, and hilltop vistas waiting to be discovered by those who wander inland. Striking sunsets paint the horizon, but it is the spirit of exploration - of tracing coastlines, uncovering untouched reefs, and diving where few, if any, have been before - that makes Gomumu a true frontier for adventurous travellers.

Dive sites: Explora on Point.







BOANO

Just off the north-western tip of Ceram lies Boano, a remote island that has quickly become one of the most captivating new destinations for adventurous divers. Far from the bustle of more familiar tourist spots, Boano offers a rare combination of pristine reefs, remarkable visibility, and a sense of seclusion that makes every dive feel like a personal discovery.

Beneath the surface, Boano reveals an extraordinary underwater world. Visibility often stretches beyond 30 metres,

giving divers a clear view of thriving coral gardens and dramatic drop-offs that plunge into the deep. Vibrant walls adorned with sponges and soft corals teem with life, while sandy slopes provide a haven for fascinating critters perfect for macro photography. Schools of reef fish swirl above, while eagle rays, reef sharks, and other pelagic visitors occasionally glide past in the blue.

What makes Boano truly special is the atmosphere of untouched wilderness. Its remoteness means fewer boats, fewer divers, and a more intimate connection with the marine environment. Each dive is both exhilarating and serene - a chance to explore one of the healthiest coral reef systems in the region without distraction.

Boano's dive sites cater to all levels of experience, offering everything from calm, gentle conditions ideal for beginners to more challenging currents that reward seasoned divers with spectacular encounters. For underwater photographers, the island provides endless opportunities - from capturing minute details of rare macro life to sweeping wide-angle shots of expansive reef walls.

With its unrivalled biodiversity, striking underwater landscapes, and peaceful setting, Boano is more than just another dive destination - it's a hidden treasure waiting to be explored. For Dewi Nusantara's guests, it promises not just a dive, but an unforgettable experience in one of Indonesia's most pristine marine environments.

Dive sites: Tanjung Hatanua, Sunken Reef, West Pua, Marsegu Utara, Serani Wall, Tanjung Hanapu h.

AMBELAU

Embark on an unforgettable journey to Ambelau Island, the newest addition to Dewi Nusantara's pioneering collection of dive destinations. Hidden away in Indonesia's Maluku province, just off the south-eastern coast of Buru, Ambelau is a place where time seems to stand still. With its sparkling waters, lush green slopes rising from the sea, and an underwater world untouched by tourism, it offers divers and adventurers a rare chance to step into a destination few have ever laid eyes upon.

When we first set sail for Ambelau in early 2024, it felt like entering uncharted waters. As we dropped anchor, the local community greeted us with warmth and genuine curiosity—our yacht was the very first dive vessel ever to visit their island. It was a moment of connection and discovery, setting the tone for everything that followed. Guided by this pioneering spirit, our dive team soon uncovered a series of outstanding sites, each with its own character and allure, which now proudly form part of our expanding Dewi Nusantara itinerary.

Beneath the surface, Ambelau unveils a striking underwater landscape. Sheer drop-offs disappear into the blue, coral gardens bloom in a kaleidoscope of colours, and ledges and caverns create a sense of mystery and adventure.

The remarkable clarity of the water allows every detail to shine, while the tranquillity of diving without crowds makes each descent feel deeply personal and immersive. Whether you are drawn to the thrill of discovery, the artistry of underwater photography, or simply the serenity of exploring a pristine marine environment, Ambelau offers an experience that will stay with you long after you surface.

What makes Ambelau truly remarkable is its sense of exclusivity. This is not just another stop on a dive cruise— it is a place still in its infancy as a dive destination, where every dive feels like a first. With no other yachts or divers in sight, you have the rare privilege of experiencing the ocean in its purest form, untouched and undisturbed. It is the perfect choice for those who crave something beyond the ordinary: an intimate journey into one of Indonesia's last hidden jewels.

Join Dewi Nusantara in writing the first chapter of Ambelau's diving story. Be among the very first to explore this remarkable island, and discover for yourself the magic of Maluku's newest frontier.

Dive sites: Ambelau Harbour, Dive Site, Waesi, Pulame.





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.

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.