



ALOR

Diving Itinerary 8-10 nights

Please note that this is a sample itinerary. Each cruise will be adapted as necessary based on weather, wind and sea conditions as well as tailored to guests' preferences.

AN ALOR DIVE TRIP IN A NUTSHELL

Alor is arguably a heaven on earth for scuba divers. Insane visibility and the most vibrant colors you will probably ever see underwater. Diving in Alor promises a world of discovery for even the most experienced divers.

- Perfect 20+m visibility
- Astonishing seascape, colors and marine life
- Virgin slopes, walls, scenic rock formations
- Exciting drift dives
- Spectacular macro diversity
- Extremely diverse marine life – from muck to big fish
- Fantastic for UW photographers
- Unspoilt diving, beautiful landscape and unique on-land cultural visits



ABOUT THE REGION

The Alor Archipelago is a group of islands in the Lesser Sunda Islands, a group which also contains Bali and Lombok, among many others. However, in comparison to those tourist hot spots, the Alor Islands are very different. In fact, these islands are the least-visited part of the province of East Nusa Tenggara, and are barely developed for tourists at all. Of course, that also means they are unspoilt, and natural beauty is the star of the show here. Those visitors who do make it this far (and the numbers are increasing) mostly do so for the world-class diving and unique on-land cultural experiences. The region is also great for unique fishing trips.

The unspoiled region of Alor will charm and surprise you by giving you an incredible experience on land as well as underwater. Alor really is a hidden gem and is on the top of our list of the best diving and areas to explore in Indonesia.

In the region of Alor you'll find spectacular coral reefs with great diversity, sometimes strong currents but stunning topside scenery. This volcanic island with a vast macro biodiversity is great for muck diving and has one of the largest anemone fields.

The Alor archipelago has made a great effort to keep the reefs healthy and protect it from overfishing. The local fishermen only use sustainable fishing methods so it would not get polluted by fishing nets. Thus, the dive destination is covered with incredibly colorful healthy reefs and has an extremely diverse marine life. And the fact that it is in a remote area makes the underwater world a divers dream.

The volcanic island gives you great underwater topography and is great for black sand and muck diving. Plus, it offers something for macro and big animal lovers both. Creatures you can spot include scorpionfish, pygmy seahorses, and brightly colored nudibranches, among many others. Bigger inhabitants of these waters include whales, reef sharks, hammerheads, and even the huge sunfish.

Due to its strong currents, though, Alor is generally more suitable for experienced divers.

Aside from diving, rich tribal culture is a highlight of the Alor Islands. Despite there being fewer than 200,000 inhabitants, the islands are home to more than 100 different tribal groups, many of which speak different languages.







DAY 1

Pick up at your hotel or the airport in Maumere. Settling in onboard with a welcome drink and a brief introduction to the boat and safety on board.

About 6 hour cruise to the small island of Serbete, just north-west of Adonara island. This will allow time for you to get acquainted with the ship, set up your dive gear & cameras and to meet and socialize with the other guests and friendly crew.

In Serbete we'll have our first check dive. Spectacular walls covered in soft corals and sponges, where one can spend time looking for tiny critters among the soft corals and sponges, or just drift along the wall looking at the spectacular views of the walls.

An underwater photograph showing a large school of small fish swimming in the upper half of the frame. Below them is a dense coral reef with various colors like yellow, orange, and red. The background is a bright blue sky with sunlight filtering through the water.

DAY 2

We will start the trip by spending the day at Lewaling Bay, in the north of Kawula Island. The scenery of the bay is amazing since there are 2 volcanos in each side of the bay.

Here we will do 4 dives. The diving at Lewaling Bay is very diverse, consisting of walls, slopes and muck dives. With a great combination of large and small critters, from schooling barracudas and lots of schooling fish to pygmy seahorses.

We will finish the day with a muck dive as a night dive in front of the village of Watu Warawutun, which stands at the bottom of one of the volcanos.

After dinner we will cruise overnight to the Alor Islands, which are about 7 to 8 hours away.

DAY 3

3 day and 1 night dive at Pulau Komba.

What makes this dive destination so unique and the reason why it is one of the world's best dive sites in the world, is not because of the stunning corals or amazing topography or even the wide variety of unusual marine life that inhabits this excellent dive destination, but because Pulau Komba is an active volcano.

This tiny volcanic island located in the middle of the Flores sea erupts every 20 minutes, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Spewing forth molten hot rocks and billowing pillars of smoke it makes for a stunning spectacle, especially at night.

The diving itself is an exciting mixture of unusual topography, vivid corals and strange little critters. Huge sea fans and brightly coloured soft corals cling to ridges of black rock.

The combination of excellent diving, the spectacle of watching a volcano erupting and the fact that you are one of only a few people in the world to enjoy this unique experience makes visiting Pulau Komba an exceptional event on your Alor trip.

An underwater photograph showing a vibrant coral reef. In the foreground, there are large, branching coral structures in shades of orange and brown. The background is filled with various other coral species and a diver is visible in the upper left corner, partially obscured by the reef. The water is clear and blue.

DAY 4 - 6

The next days we will spend diving around the Pantar Strait, which is the strait between the 2 major islands of Alor and Pantar Island. There are 4 islands in the Pantar Strait, Ternate in the north, Reta and Pura in the middle and Treweg in the south.

Between these 4 islands plus the islands of Pantar and Alor, there are several dozen dive sites with an incredible variety of diving sceneries: walls with huge overhangs and hard coral gardens in the shallows, fringing reefs covered with pristine hard and soft corals and all kind of sponges surrounded by zillions of anthias and damsels, black sandy slopes covered with thousands of anemones, and muck dives where we can find rhinophias, fire sea urchins with coleman's shrimps and zebra crabs, channels between the islands where you just drift with some strong currents and look out for pelagic fish passing by.

The water temperature can vary greatly in this area. In the northern and middle area, the temperature is usually around 27 C. And in the south, it can vary from 21C to 25C. Currents can be extremely strong in the Pantar Strait, which usually makes for 30m plus visibility.

A TASTER OF SOME SPECIFIC DIVE SITES

Kel's Dream: Alor's signature dive site, this dreamy site promises a wealth of big pelagics and large schools of fish. Because currents buffet its submerged pinnacle (starting at five meters) for most of the day, local knowledge is absolutely crucial.

When the currents are ripping, the waters surrounding the pinnacle resemble a bubbling cauldron. However, when conditions are right, pelagics are abundant and when you hit the jackpot Kel's Dream could really be the best dive of your life! Huge napoleons, massive tuna, more corals than you can count, giant trevallies, and schooling fish all combine to block out the tropical sun!

The Cathedral: One of the most southerly dive sites in the Pantar Strait, it features a swim-through at 35 meters that exits at 20 meters. Entering it at the right time means the sun dominates the view at the exit, lighting up the reef similar to a giant cathedral's stained-glass window. The reef scape here is unique in Alor: covered in kelp and dense coral cover and fish life so rich that at times the anthias block the view. Mola Mola are fairly common at The Cathedral, and there is an estimated population of slightly over 100 Mola Mola that inhabit its deep waters. So, prepare your thickest wetsuit, as thermoclines can be very chilly and unpredictable here!

Pink Forest: Muck diving sites are normally lacking in coral but Pink Coral promises to change that! A gentle slope that evens out at 20 meters, this site is chock-a-block with pink soft corals. Fight the temptation to just swim along enjoying the corals: take time searching for critters, species like the Harlequin Swimming Crab and the Yellow Sea Cucumber. Rare nudibranchs are often found as they come out to bask in the sun and crustaceans lurk in almost any crevice you care to look in.

The Bullet: This is a channel that lies between the pinnacle at Kel's Dream and Alor Island itself. It is called The Bullet because the flow of water compressed between the pinnacle and the landmass can get very swift, bringing along a spectacular range of big photo subjects. The Bullet is a good backup if Kel's Dream is not dive-able, with reliable hammerhead shark sightings and a constant flow of large black tips and turtles that drift along the coral-covered slopes. Although it's hard not to spend the whole dive scanning the blue water looking for hammerheads, try looking behind you at arguably one of the prettiest reefs anywhere on earth. Hard and soft corals with so much fish life it might literally take your breath away...



DAY 7

In the morning you will visit the traditional village Takpala at Alor Island, around 30 minutes from the harbor. The people here belong to the Abui tribe, and are very welcoming. They will perform a local dance and guests will be able to buy locally made handicrafts.

In the afternoon we will then head to Pantai Mali where you can snorkel or dive with the famous dugong. The dugong is a mammal that is friendly to humans, dugong, also called mawar, has a length of approximately three meters.



DAY 8

We start cruising early in the morning in order to get to a small bay at the south tip of the Pantar Strait called Beang Abang, where we will spend the whole day.

Optional 1 or 2 dives at Treweg Island and then move to Beang Abang. The dive sites at Treweg island consist of rocky slopes covered in all sorts of soft corals, and where one can just drift looking for all kind of pelagic fish such as dogtooth tunas and giant trevallies.

The diving at Beang Abang Bay and village is very different from the rest of Alor. It consists mainly of blackish and grayish sand which is the perfect environment to find all kinds of different critters such as frogfish, ghost pipefish and different species of octopus.

There is also a jetty at the village with large schools of scads and batfish. And it is also a great place to find more critters and all kind of nudibranches.

Be prepared: The water temperature in the south of the Alor Islands can vary from 21C to 25C.



DAY 9

We start the day doing a dive at Solar Strait, south of Adonara Island. An amazing location for muck diving.

We'll plan a second dive at the fringing reef in front of the whaling village of Lamalera. Optional cultural visit of the village where the traditional whale hunting sights are reported dating back to 1643.

After we'll move to the small island of Suangi, in the south of Kawula Island, for another dive. The waters surrounding Suangi are streaming with schooling fish, pelagic fish and at this spot there is also the opportunity to spot sharks.

THE TRADITIONAL WHALE HUNT OF LAMALERA

Around the world, the village of Lamalera on the island of Lembata on Flores is known as the home of traditional whale hunting which is reported back to 1643 by the Portuguese.

The Lamalera whale hunts are until this day exempt from the international ban on whaling, considering the traditional way this is still done and the fact that hunting these giant ocean creatures help villagers support their subsistence economy.

Annually, whales migrate between the Indian Ocean and the Pacific during May through October, when these giant sea animals pass the Savu sea right at the doorstep of the island of Lembata.

When a whale hunt is decided, a number of boats parked on the beach are released from their simple shelters, cheered on by the entire village, and a troupe of boats will set sail together to catch their harvest.

Before that, however, everyone gathers to attend a dedicated mass led by the local priest to pray for a successful and safe expedition.

The actual whaling is still done on traditionally flimsy wooden boats, called peledang. These are manned by between 7 – 14 men.

When a whale or manta is sighted, the harpooner throws his harpoon into the animal jumping down on the harpoon itself so as to give it his additional weight. When the target is a huge sperm whale and it is a hit, other team members throw more harpoons on the prey. And when it is finally disabled, together all team members heave up the heavy body onto the boat. During one season, islanders may catch between 15 to 20 whales.

There are taboos for the Lamaleras when it comes to whale hunting. For example, it is forbidden to hunt pregnant whales, young whales, and mating whales. This capacity to recognize these specific taboos can only be learnt through extensive periods of experience.



DAY 10

After a farewell breakfast and de briefing customers leave the boat with memories that will last a lifetime!

Drop-off at the airport or your hotel in Maumere.



FENIDES

LIVEBOARD