

Maluku - Banda Sea – Komodo Program
Ambon to Labuanbajo or Labuanbajo to Ambon

Day 1: The crew will transfer the Guests from the Airport or Hotel to the ship. After a nice Welcome briefing by our Cruise Director, cabin allocation and ship orientation will take place - before embarking from the port. Guests can familiarize themselves with the vessel, set up equipment, and get comfortable.

Day 2-13: We offer 3-4 dives daily, including a night dive if possible. When crossing only 2 dives a day can be scheduled.

Day 14: Final day of diving with 1-2 scheduled dives - sailing back to the harbor.

Day 15: After breakfast and check-out, we start preparing for disembarkation. We say goodbye to our guests and wish them farewell! The crew will organize the transfer to the Airport and assist at check-in for onward flights.

DIVE AREAS:

Ambon, the capital of the Maluku's province. It is the most populated city in the area and its phenomenal muck diving is considered as one of the best in the world. The city is spit by an enormous Bay, that since recently is connected by a bridge.

Cuttlefish, seahorses, octopus and many other critters find their home in this deep Bay. It is muck diving in its purest state. One of the most famous dive site is Twilight in Laha village.

As the name says it feels like twilight even in broad daylight. You may first wonder why your guide brought you here, but than a whole new world opens to you.

Creatures that you have never seen before or even knew existed. Here we can find such critters as a harlequin shrimp or hairy frogfish, flamboyant cuttlefish, seahorses, mototi, hairy, starry wonderpus are just a few of the many different species of octopus you can find here.

Biggest highlights are rhinopias or the elusive psychedelic frog fish, other than in Bali it is never found anywhere else in the world. We also have a wreck in the bay, the Duke of Sparta. A steel English cargo that sunk as it was stuck by a Douglas B-26 bomb in 1958.

Don't forget the beautiful coral gardens found outside the Bay. There is a huge natural rock bridge, called, Pintu Kota. It is covered in beautiful and colourful soft corals, with great marine life.

Nusa Laut incredible diving as Ahmed the small village that protects the area against illegal fishing does a great job conserving this area. Big schools of jacks, rainbow runners, tuna, spanish mackerel, but there is also the chance for big pelagics.

The Banda Sea is spectacular as it is very remote due to its location and possibility of rougher seas. Crystal clear waters, bottomless dropoffs, colorful coral pinnacles and so much more. After the eruption (1988) of Gunung Api close to Banda Neira, the lava flowed into the sea covering and over throwing the coral below.

You will be amazed by the fast recovery of the hard-coral garden that grew in its place. For the night/dusk dive we can see the mating dance of the very colorful mandarin fish, search for frogfish, seahorses, razorfish and octopus.

We offer you the opportunity to visit the old historic town of Banda Neira. Here you will find many remains of the Dutch and English spice trade. We will visit an old nutmeg plantation and have a little taste of how you can make great use of this famous spice that once was believed to cure the plague.

The fort Belgica offers great views of the port and Gunung Api.

Manuk is another active volcano with many seabirds and sea snakes, very similar to Gunung Api only a little smaller. Hundreds of sea snakes will accompany you on this dive while you enjoy the lava ridges covered in coral. Keep your eyes open for big pelagic.

KOMODO Is known for some of its cooler waters, beautiful corals, impressive fish life and fast currents.

Komodo National Marine Park, because of its location, it is one of the best places in the world where you can find an amazing biodiversity. It is part of the famous CORAL TRIANGLE and is declared a UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE site.

In the north of Komodo NMP we have the Flores Sea where after few miles from the coast reaches depths of 5000 meters, or even more towards Banda Sea.

At the south, we have the Indian Ocean with also great depths a few miles out. Komodo NMP has an average depth of about 150 meters, so when we have tidal movement of 2 meters rising or falling tide, the water comes from very deep and needs to rush through Flores and Komodo Island where only shallow water is found.

The consequences are that the water has to pass between islands at high speed, forming currents that provide nutrients and oxygen rich waters to the fish and the coral reef. Currents are for the underwater world like the logistics in any big city. Having strong currents equals to have more shipments of supplies for the city. Plenty of nutrients arrive to these waters and makes a spectacle of life wherever you look. The big difference of characteristics between Flores Sea and Indian Ocean gives a more variety of marine life at different islands.

The environment below and above water at the Northern Komodo has nothing in common with the South.

North Komodo National Park the water temperature is usually nice and warm from the Flores Sea (27^a-29^a). There is an abundance of fish on these underwater pinnacles, schooling surgeons, big eye jacks, snapper or barracudas and pelagic are a common site. The further South we travel the water temperature will drop (18^a-24^a). Padar island has some beautiful sites where we can start to feel the influence of the Indian Ocean. More nutrients in the water is giving the corals a different look, colours are sharper, fish life is about to change. Even further South, we have Nusa Kode this horseshoe shaped bay has stunning corals. Not only in a rainbow of colours but also the size. Fish live in abundance and creatures you may have never seen before in your life, they may remind you the monsters that live under your bed as a child.

There is muck diving in places you least expect and under water pinnacles attract big schools of snapper, big eye jacks, surgeon fish, barracuda's and Spanish mackerel. You feel like you fly over beautiful coral gardens that you can barely see because of the amount of fish darting in the currents. Manta rays have their own cleaning stations, that we can visit. Here we can observe them getting cleaned but if the currents bring in the right nutrients and krill, they will start to feed, shooting to the surface to dive down while with their mouths wide open, filtering the water.

Your trip is not complete without meeting the last living dinosaurs, the Komodo Dragons. you will get a chance to see them up close at the National Park. With a bit

of luck, you will also see the macaque monkeys, some deer's, wild pig and wild horse.

Included

VAT, Airport Transfer, Drinking Water, Tea & Coffee, Welcome Cocktails, Full-Board Meal Plan (All meals), Snacks, Diving Package, Extra Dives, Land Excursions, Cabin Towels, Complimentary Toiletries, Deck Towels.

Obligatory surcharges

Trip fees (Incl fuel charge, Port fees, eco projects, etc...) : 30 EUR per day, to be paid on board

Marine Park Fee Banda Sea : 60 EUR per trip, to be paid on board

Marine Park Fee Komodo : 110 EUR per trip, to be paid on board

Extra cost

Dive Insurance, Travel Insurance, Gratuities, Local Flights, Alcoholic Beverages, Soft drinks, Nitrox, Private Dive Guide, Rental Gear, Laundry / Pressing Services, Massage.