

# The Spice Islands, Indonesia

## 13 Nights Itinerary

- **Embarkation:** Jembatan Amerika Negeri Laha, Ambon at 13:00
- **Disembarkation:** Kalabahi Harbour, Alor at 10:00

*\*We strongly recommend making arrangements to arrive in Ambon the day before embarkation and arranging a hotel for the night.* Should you choose to fly into Ambon on embarkation day, it is advisable to book a flight that is scheduled to arrive before 12:00, noon\*\*.

For your convenience, a free transfer will be provided on embarkation day from Ambon Airport or hotels in the Laha area to the embarkation point, and from Indo Siren to Alor Island Airport or local hotel on the day of disembarkation.

- Transfer time from Ambon Airport to Jembatan Amerika Negeri Laha is approximately 10 minutes.
- Transfer from Kalabahi Harbour to Alor Airport takes approximately 40 minutes.

**\*\*PLEASE NOTE:** *Flight delays, schedule changes and cancellations are common occurrences on domestic routes, which can result in missed connections and arriving after the designated embarkation time, or day. In such events, if your delayed arrival is after the vessel has departed, you may be charged for the cost of arranging a speedboat transfer or for additional fuel required for Indo Siren to return to port.*

**Marine Park & Port Fees:** 200 USD\* per person (to be paid on board).

*\*Marine park fees are subject to change without notice.* The applicable amount at the time of departure will be added to your onboard extras to be paid prior to disembarkation.

### Minimum dive certification and experience:

Divers are required to have **PADI Advanced Open Water certification\***, or equivalent, with a **minimum of 50 logged dives**.

\*Advanced Open Water courses can usually be completed on board (pre-booking required).

Guests who do not fulfil the minimum certification and experience requirements may be denied participation in some or all dives.

It is a mandatory requirement for all divers to have insurance which covers scuba diving activities, including emergency evacuation and recompression chamber costs.

## Itinerary Details

Participation in this liveboard itinerary is subject to acceptance of our Terms & Conditions as outlined here: [www.masterliveboards.com/terms-conditions](http://www.masterliveboards.com/terms-conditions).

**Number of scheduled dives:** Up to 38

This itinerary involves some long distance travel, some of which may include the boat motoring overnight. Whilst we attempt to ensure the number of dives we have scheduled is fulfilled, bad weather and sea conditions can hinder the yacht's ability to reach a specific location in good time.

### Included land visits

Due to the distances covered on the The Spice Islands itinerary, land visit(s) are generally only possible when the vessel is in the Banda Islands and at Alor. You will have the opportunity to visit the nutmeg plantations of the Banda Islands, as well as see the influence of colonialism from the days of the Dutch settlers and traders; when the vessel is in Alor you will be able to visit Lativui Village where you can witness a traditional dance.

The following is an example of the day-to-day itinerary.

**Day 1:** Embarkation is followed by introductions and boat and safety briefings. After this you can settle into your cabin and assemble your equipment with help from the friendly crew. The vessel will depart port while you relax and enjoy snacks and dinner.

*Safety and dive briefings are conducted in English. If you, or any of your group do not speak or understand English, please contact us.*

**Day 2:** Breakfast followed by a check dive, and up to 3 subsequent dives, as outlined below.

**Days 3-11:** Your Cruise Manager will schedule up to 4 dives per day; 3 day dives and either a sunset or a night dive. A typical diving day is scheduled as follows:

- Light Breakfast followed by a briefing & Dive 1
- Full Breakfast, relaxation followed by briefing & Dive 2
- Lunch, relaxation followed by briefing & Dive 3
- Snack
- Briefing for Sunset or Night dive
- Dinner

**Day 12:** For your last full day on board, we usually schedule 2 morning dives\* before Indo Siren cruises back to port, where she will remain at anchor overnight.

**Day 13:** Following breakfast on board, disembarkation is scheduled between 8:00 and 10:00.

\*We kindly request that guests check their flight departure times to ensure that they leave a minimum of 24 hours between their final dive and their flight home.

While we wish to show you the very best diving possible, a number of factors determine which route the yacht takes and which dive sites we are able to visit. *Weather, tides, currents, sea conditions and how many other vessels are in a particular location all play a part in the Cruise Manager's decision of where the Indo Siren is heading, and which sites are chosen to dive.*

Following is a sample of dive sites which we may visit during your time aboard Indo Siren. The safety of our guests is paramount and we always do our best to offer diving at alternate locations, should we be unable to visit those sites listed below.

Guests are welcome to suggest preferred dive sites to the Cruise Manager who will be happy to accommodate those wishes where possible, and if the schedule allows for it. Dive sites we visit include but are not limited to:

## Ambon Island

Situated 7 miles off the southwestern coast of the island of Ceram, in the heart of the Moluccas, are the famous dive sites of Ambon, which will be our first stop. It offers world class muck diving, diverse marine ecosystems and dramatic seascapes.

### Pintu Kota

This area boasts incredible underwater architecture, with a massive archway decorated with colourful soft corals hanging from its walls to ceilings. Many white and red polyps red sea fans are dotted along the bottom, whilst shoals of fusiliers, bannerfish, and surgeonfish feed along the steep walls covered with huge barrel sponges.

### Twilight Zone

This renowned muck diving spot in the harbour of Laha is great to explore at night, or during the day. Amongst the detritus, countless species of nudibranchs, shrimps, crabs, and dwelling fish are waiting to be discovered. During your treasure hunt, you may come across flamboyant cuttlefish, ornate ghost pipefish, donald duck shrimps, tiger shrimps, starry octopus, and even rhinopias.

## The Spice (Banda) Islands

This group of islands boasts fantastic diving, with up to 40 metres of visibility. On land, from the top of Fort Belgica, built by the Dutch in 1611 and located in the historical town of Banda Neira, enjoy the view of Gunung Api, a 640-metre-high active volcano. Clove, nutmeg, mace and cinnamon are still the main spices that are grown here.

Currents can be strong around these small islands in the north of the Banda Sea, therefore sites will be chosen on the best daily conditions from the following options:

There are various dive sites that we may visit:

### Karang Hatta

A spectacular submerged reef south of Hatta, which offers steep slopes surrounded by deep waters. Masses of Redtooth Triggerfish, alongside fusiliers, napoleon wrasse and hawkbill

turtles populate this long reef. You might also get the chance to spot a few rare creatures like devil rays or even a scalloped hammerhead shark during your dive. Keep your fingers crossed before you enter this wonderful dive site.

### **Hatta Blue Hole**

This site is formed by a widespread hard coral shallow plateau, which extends away from the island to a majestic drop off. A large opening on top of the reef opens to a swim through densely covered with huge vibrant gorgonian fans. Also, massive barrel sponges inhabited by tiny hairy squat lobsters decorate the wall.

### **Pohon Miring**

Beautifully covered with colourful soft corals and gorgonian fans, a swim through will take you through a sheer wall covered with leather corals. Numerous big napoleon wrasses inhabit the reef and dogtooth tunas patrol the blue waters.

### **Batu Kapal**

This island is named for its boat-like shape and is an exhilarating dive. The walls are decorated with vibrant yellow soft corals. Curtains of redtooth triggerfish, pyramid butterflyfish, fusiliers and surgeonfish merge into a multicolour fish soup.

On the rocky and sandy bottom, you can spot large groups of long nose emperor fish hunting alongside bluefin trevallies and opportunistic napoleon wrasses. Look in the blue for grey reef sharks, while blackfin barracudas hover above the reef.

### **Laval Flow**

In 1998, the volcano on Naira Island erupted and the lava flow destroyed the jungle and reefs in its wake. While only a few trees have grown on the basaltic rock, underwater it's a totally different story. From 3 metres to 40 metres an extensive hard coral garden completely blankets the solidified lava flow.

### **Banda Jetty**

Famous for the mandarin fish that can be observed at sunset, which you can see just by looking from the jetty. In many places, these fishes are elusive, small and shy. Here, it's the opposite. Once they have done their mating business, a wide array of critters awaits to be discovered on the black sand, including colourful nudibranchs, octopus, cockatoo waspfish and frogfish.

### **Pulau Manuk**

This tiny island in the middle of the Banda Sea offers a wide variety of dive topography including walls, coral slopes and sandy areas. Famed as being a home to a multitude of sea snakes and where we can witness the snakes hunting together. Larger fish pass by on the outer walls including tunas and jacks and smaller creatures can be found amidst the pristine corals.

### **Nil Desperandum & Serua**

Upwelling and currents around these islands bring the nutrient rich waters and with them an abundance of marine life. We see many larger fish species in these little visited waters. Hammerhead sharks, tuna, napoleon wrasse and grouper are amongst the most common sightings, Schooling surgeonfish, bannerfish, and barracuda give divers a spectacular display. We usually schedule three dives to explore these rich reefs before moving northwards to Manuk.

## Nyata and Terbang Islands

The islands of Pulau Nyata and Terbang offer unspoiled reefs for a great diving experience. At Nyata, rainbow coloured soft corals and a myriad of hard corals dominate the landscape, whilst at Terbang we find dramatic walls with soft coral reef top gardens and plenty of bumphead parrotfish and schooling reef fish.

## Wetar and Reong Islands

We usually schedule 3 dives here and spend the day exploring a variety of sites that the islands offer. Drop offs and colourful reefs with healthy marine life including sightings of eagle rays and turtles and walls covered with huge sponges and soft corals. However, currents can be fairly robust, particularly in the channel between Reong & Wetar, therefore divers are advised to carry reef hooks and stay within close range of their buddy and/ or the dive guide.

## Pantar Strait

The Pantar Strait is known for both critter diving and stunning reef walls where larger pelagic species can be spotted. Some stronger currents are to be expected but the currents bring the nutrients which feed the reef and the inhabitants of the strait. There are a variety of dive sites here and we chose the optimum sites based on the conditions of the day. The water temperature experienced is often colder than other regions due to the flow of water from the south, expect temperatures of 22°C / 72°F.

## The French Man's Window

A wall dive site in front of Alor Divers Resort covered in a fantastic array of soft corals. Look closely to find a wide variety of nudibranchs; remember to watch in the blue as well as something big might swim past

## Pak Yan's Village

An excellent muck diving spot to find Pegasus sea moths, dragonets, scorpion fish, ghost pipefish and bargibanti seahorses too.

## Clown Valley

Hundreds, if not thousands of anemones cover the shallow reef slope on the south side of Pulau Pura, all hosting the Clark's anemonefish. A stunning site but thermoclines can be expected so be prepared for some chilly water that may attract thresher sharks.

## The Arch

Located at Pulau Reta, The Arch is famous for its overhangs and fissures providing stunning topography, as well as a home to schooling fusiliers and colourful anthias. Larger pelagic fish, including black tip reef sharks have been spotted here too.

## Mucky Mosque

An iconic muck dive at the entrance of Kalabahi Bay where the attentive eye can find paddle-flap & frondosa's rhinopias, as well as ornate, robust and even halimeda and velvet ghost pipefish, frogfish, bobtail squid, long-arm octopus and for the lucky ones: wunderpus.