KATHARINA

The East Indies: a Spice Island Exploration aboard Katharina

Maumere to Ambon | Flores, the Banda Islands and the Spice Islands

A massive live volcano called Ile Api, the Island of Fire, watches over a bay on Lembata, where villagers welcome visitors with singing and dancing.

Further east are remote villages, ceremonial war dances and ikat fabrics woven and dyed with age old techniques.

The route passes four spectacular volcanic sea mounts, one home to tens of thousands of sea birds that circle in great numbers.

Then come the fabled Spice Islands of Banda, the original home of the nutmeg, with a 600 metre volcano over the anchorage, and vibrant reefs where the multi-hued mandarin fish comes out at dusk.

LENGTH	DEPARTURE PORT	ARRIVAL PORT	HIGHLIGHTS
12 days / 11 nights	Maumere	Ambon	Ile Api, Banda Islands, Flores







Your route

STOP 1

Day 1

After arriving in the early afternoon from Bali, you will be met at Maumere airport by our us tour leader and be taken directly to the boat, where you will meet your fellow passengers and your crew.

STOP 1

Day 1 (continued)

We will cruise out of the harbour and head off to the east giving you a chance to become familiar with your new home for the next 12 days, stopping for a snorkel and a swim along the way, before sunset cocktails and dinner as we cruise on into the night.

STOP 2

Day 2

The morning will find us moored offshore of the capital town of Flores - a Christian dominated island as a result of Portuguese influence - where we will go ashore and see the five Catholic churches and the 'Stations of the Cross' along the waterfront.
During lunch we will cross to a neighbouring island where we will visit a small local village and the ruins of an old Portuguese fort dating back to the 16th Century.
Later in the afternoon we will get out our snorkelling gear and explore one of the richly vibrant nearby reefs.

STOP 3

Day 3

We will wake up on Lembata Island in a bite-shaped bay under the gaze of a massive live volcano called Ile Api – Island of Fire.
We will be welcomed ashore in a local village with singing and dancing, and be witness to the production of their famous local textiles.
After lunch on the boat, we will sail across the bay to snorkel on a vibrant local reef and to swim and paddle on a local beach.
This evening, the crew will set up for a beach BBQ and party under the stars before heading off that night for our overnight cruise to our next destination.

STOP 4

Day 4

Today we visit a traditional village up in the mountains, where we will be welcomed by the chief and be witness to a ceremonial war dance in honour of our visit. .
We will see their traditional 'Moko' war drums and intricately designed 'Ikat' fabrics, which have been woven and dyed using age old techniques, and used in local bridal dowries for centuries.
We will weigh anchor and cruise east as we enjoy lunch on board, stopping in the late afternoon at a picturesque tropical island to snorkel and swim on a coral reef.

STOP 5

Day 5

We will wake up in a lovely bay on Wetar Island and go ashore to a local fishing village to meet the locals and see their way of life as they dry their catch on the beach.
Spend the day swimming and beaching, snorkelling and exploring, and indulge in a bit of local culture by way of 'sopi', a strong alcoholic drink made from a local palm tree.
Later in the afternoon we will weigh anchor and continue our journey east.

STOP 6

Day 6

This morning we will go ashore on a small island and be welcomed into a remote village where the locals will share with us their way of life as farmers and fishermen.
After lunch we will continue cruising, stopping off at another tiny island, this one deserted, to swim, kayak, snorkel over the reef and relax on the sand.
This evening the crew will set up for a beach BBQ and we will dance and sing our way into the night before heading off again for an overnight cruise to our next destination.

STOP 7

Day 7

Today is another day of cruising and exploring in one of the remotest parts of Indonesia.
We will visit a very simple village where the people's houses are made using the products of the sago palm, the staple crop in this part of the world.
The villagers will demonstrate for us how they process the heart of the sago palm into the edible product that sustains them.
After lunch we will cruise around the island and stop off to explore the beaches and reefs, where we will snorkel along the way.

STOP 8

Day 8

Today will be a day at sea where we will pass four spectacular volcanic sea mounts, explicit examples of Indonesia's place along the Ring of Fire.- One of these islands is uninhabited by people, and is home to tens of thousands of sea birds, (brown and red-footed boobies, and frigate birds), who will likely come out to encircle the boat in great numbers on our approach.
If the tide allows, we will go ashore and investigate, and surely have a snorkel.
In the late afternoon we will proceed north to the fabled Spice Islands.

STOP 9

Day 9

By dawn we should have the Banda Archipelago 'Spice Islands' in our sights, original home of the nutmeg and the scene of much bloodshed between the colonial powers of Europe in the 15th and 16th centuries over control of the spice trade.

STOP 9

Day 9 (continued)

We will go ashore and go ashore and visit Fort Revenge, built by the Dutch, before snorkelling on the local reef.
Later we will head across to the main island group, and the main town, and anchor in the beautiful enclosed anchorage under the imposing gaze of a 600-metre-high volcano.
If we get there in enough time before nightfall, we will go ashore and explore the town.

STOP 10

Day 10

Today is a day of exploring the history and beauty of the Spice Islands with a visit to the main town of the Spice Islands and its fort overlooking the harbour.
We will wander through the streets and markets of this bustling town and meet the local people.
After lunch on the boat we will take a local boat over to the biggest of the islands, where we will walk among the vast nutmeg plantations, visit another Dutch fort, talk with the locals and visit one of the last 'perkineers', the farmers who still run the larger plantations on the island who will tell us about life on the islands.
Later in the afternoon we can snorkel on a local reef and have a chance to see the rare and multi-hued Mandarin fish, who only comes out at dusk to mate.
Dinner will be had ashore at a local restaurant that offers traditional and delicious local dishes.

STOP 11

Day 11

This morning we have time for a final stroll around the town or a last snorkel before we say farewell to the Spice islands around lunchtime and head north.
We will have lunch on the way, passing another major seabird island, before settling in for a relaxing afternoon on board as we scour the horizon for migrating whales.

STOP 12

Day 12

We will wake up just south of our final destination and our last few hours will be spent enjoying the majesty of the ocean, and we may very well see more whales along the way.
As we drop anchor in the harbour, we will say farewell to our crew and tour leaders and be taken to the airport for our onward journeys, ending a magical 12 days of exploration and adventure.






































