

SEATREK | KATHARINA

Frequently asked questions

Questions and answers | Cruising on Katharina

Cruising the remoter parts of eastern Indonesia on a traditional wooden pinisi can be a new experience for some guests. These are the answers to the questions guests most often ask before sailing on Katharina.

BOAT Katharina	CREW 14	CRUISING All year round	SEASONS Dry season in each region
FOOD Buffet lunch and dinner	CHILDREN Welcome, from age four on private cruises	INTERNET None on board	TOUR LEADERS All Indonesian

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Before you sail

The questions guests ask most often, answered for Katharina.

WHAT TO EXPECT

What can I expect to experience?

On Katharina you see a wide variety of cultures, landscapes, plants and animals, many of them found nowhere else on earth, all from the decks of a traditional wooden Indonesian pinisi, a type of ship listed by UNESCO.

Think Komodo dragons, whale sharks, sea turtles, amazing corals and underwater life, dolphins and whales, monkeys, giant bats and orangutans. You also meet many of the cultures of Indonesia and learn about their ways of life and traditions.

There are books on board on the history, culture and wildlife of the places you visit. SeaTrek's website blogs cover cultural events, daily island adventures, historical accounts, animal encounters and even recipes to take home, and there are short video clips of the journeys on its YouTube channel.





WHERE AND WHEN

Where and when do we cruise?

The cruises run all year round. The boats come out of the water for three weeks in March for their annual safety inspections.

April to October is the dry season in the central and southern parts of Indonesia, and the weather and seas are settled and relatively calm. From April to August the routes cover Bali, Komodo and the islands out to Alor in the east, where the ships can sail in the lee of the islands and are protected from wind and swell.

In September and October, as the trade winds and monsoons turn, the boats head to the north and east of the archipelago and into the Maluku and Papua regions, home to the Spice Islands and the biodiverse waters of Raja Ampat. This is the time of year for the 10 day Raja Ampat cruises, and for the 12 to 16 day expert led cruises, which are longer and cover much more ground.

CREW AND TOUR LEADERS

The crew and the tour leaders

All the on-board staff are Indonesian and come from a wide range of the cultures and ethnic groups of the archipelago. Katharina has a crew of 14: the captain, first and second officers, engineers, steering hands, chefs, galley staff and stewards. The crew live on the boat all year round, so it is their home, and guests and crew are encouraged to mix whenever they can.

The crew are friendly and helpful, they are great with children, and they are highly musical, so the band sings folk songs of their homeland at least a couple of times during the trip, often with dancing into the night.

The tour leaders are experienced in the ways of the sea and the islands you visit, speak English very well and look after you throughout. SeaTrek's motto is Indonesia through Indonesian Eyes, and the crew and tour leaders together give you an immersive Indonesian experience.





FOOD AND DRINK

What is the food and drink like?

The chefs and their galley teams cook a wide range of dishes from around the world, including Asian, Western and Indonesian cuisine. Lunch and dinner are served buffet style, and breakfast is à la carte, with cereals, pastries, eggs any style, pancakes, sausage and bacon.

Drinks are in the fridge in the salon, with soft drinks and juices, a range of teas, instant coffee and an espresso machine serving as much free coffee as you can drink. Alcohol is charged for at basically cost price, self-service on the honesty system: you take what you need and put a mark in the book next to your cabin number. For cocktails, ask a steward.

Special diets such as vegetarian, halal, kosher, children's food, low fat and allergies can be catered for, provided the crew are told in advance.







ON THE WATER

Snorkelling and water toys

Snorkels, masks and fins in all sizes are on board, including for children, and there are paddle boards and kayaks for guests to use whenever the boat is at anchor. Rash guards are also available on board in a range of sizes.

INCLUDED

What is included

- Full board, with all meals, soft drinks, tea, coffee and snacks, starting and ending with lunch on the first and last days
- All-Indonesian tour leaders
- All park fees, cultural performances, local guides and off-boat activities
- A welcome drink and cold towel on boarding on the first day, and each time guests return from an off-boat excursion
- Daily room cleaning, two pieces of laundry each day, towels and linens
- A complimentary cotton backpack, luggage tag, fan and stainless steel water bottle to take home
- A first aid kit with all the major medicines, soaps, shampoo and conditioner
- A beach barbecue with free wine, beer and selected cocktails, and selected wines at the farewell dinner
- All port fees
- On-board TV and multimedia facilities, a library of books, children's games and TV documentaries
- Snorkelling gear, paddle boards, kayaks and board games, and sleeping bags for sleeping on deck
- All transfers to and from the boats outside Bali

NOT INCLUDED

What is not included

- Domestic flights, except on the Orangutans and Dragons cruise
- Transit hotels
- Alcoholic drinks other than at the special dinners and the beach barbecue
- Tips for the crew and the tour leaders, which are given at the end of the trip and are entirely up to you
- Incidental expenses on land, such as souvenirs and private purchases

TIPPING

Tipping the crew and tour leaders

It is a time-honoured tradition on sailing vessels to tip the crew at the end of a voyage, if you have been satisfied with their service. Tipping envelopes, one marked Crew and one marked Tour Leader, are in your cruise bag, and on your final night on board you can discreetly add them to the collection. The amount is up to you, and tips can be paid in cash in any currency or by debit card.

CHILDREN

Are children welcome on board?

Katharina welcomes families, and many children have enjoyed the cruises, especially the shorter trips of seven days. During the northern hemisphere school holidays in July and August there are family-themed cruises with conservation and education programmes for children, teenagers and their parents.

The boats are not big, so guests are asked to talk to their children about keeping noise and energy down on board, and to watch them at all times, as these are working ships with potential hazards, especially the steep stairs to the cabins. The side railings are higher than on a normal traditional Bugis schooner, and the boats have a clean record of accident-free cruises.

Children under four are not allowed on the FIT cruises. Each boat has two triple cabins, with a double bed below and a full size single bunk above, which are kept for families with one child or three children, and the third child pays half the fare. The child must be 12 or under, and each case is looked at individually. There are many games and activities on board, but no electronic games and no internet.

INTERNET

Is there internet on board?

No. The boats are digital-free places where you can switch off and enjoy the natural world around you. You can use a local SIM card with a 3G or 4G connection for very occasional texts and short emails when the boat comes into range of a mobile tower, but this is not guaranteed, and the boat can be out of range for up to a week at a time, particularly in the far east and north of Indonesia. A SeaTrek cruise may not suit guests who have to be online all the time.