KATHARINA

From the Spice Islands to the Whale Sharks aboard Katharina

Ambon to Kaimana | The Banda Islands, Kei, Aru and Triton Bay

Whale sharks are the climax of this voyage, in Triton Bay, where a couple of hours in the water with these magnificent creatures may be the reward.

Triton Bay is a place of unsurpassed natural splendour, with limestone cliffs, lagoons and narrow channels, and a jungle waterfall pouring into the sea.

Before that come the fabled Banda Islands, the world's only source of nutmeg, with excellent coral reefs and the jewel-like mandarin fish at dusk.

The remote Kei and Aru islands add a sea cave to swim inside, and birds of paradise.

LENGTH	DEPARTURE PORT	ARRIVAL PORT	HIGHLIGHTS
14 days / 13 nights	Ambon	Kaimana	Banda, Gunung Api, whale sharks







Your route

STOP 1

Day 1

On the first day of your adventure, you will be collected from your hotel after breakfast by out tour leaders and taken directly to the boat which will be waiting at anchor in Ambon Harbour. As soon as everyone is settled in and the captain gets clearance from the harbour master, we will raise anchor and head south the open sea crossing to the legendary Banda Archipelago.

STOP 2

Days 2 to 4

We wake up in the Banda Islands.
Famous for their natural beauty and cultural heritage, and the well-preserved remnants of an extraordinary history of imperialist rivalry, these islands are quite simply one of Indonesia's highlights.
Banda was originally the world's only source of nutmeg and mace, valued for their rarity and high cost by aristocrats and elites.
On the main island of Banda Neira, we will stroll through the quaint colonial outpost's characterful streets, inspecting notable residences, a museum, forts, churches and a waterfront market.
Just across the harbour is Banda's perfect, jungle-clad volcanic cone Gunung Api 'Fire Mountain).
We will visit the tiny outlying island of Run was the subject of an unbelievable real estate deal when in 1667, under the Treaty of Breda, it was ceded by the English to the Dutch in exchange for Manhattan.
Yes, the Manhattan where New York stands.
There are some excellent coral reefs nearby and we should see some amazing marine life whilst snorkelling.
At dusk, we have a chance to see arguably the world's most stunning fish, the small but jewel-like Mandarin Fish.

STOP 5

Days 5 and 6

We will wake up off the coast of Ceram, and go ashore to walk through some inland lakes, as well as some trekking, snorkelling, kayaking, stand-up-paddle-boarding and beach activities.
We will do some dinghy exploration through karsts around Bair Island, snorkel, spend time on the beach with the SUPs and kayaks.
Back to the boat, depart to a small chain of islands for an afternoon of snorkelling and water activities.
This is a great location for a beach BBQ, so if the weather is right, it's party time.

STOP 7

Days 7 to 10

Here we have a chance to explore this very remote island chains of Kei and Aru, located in the easternmost corner of Maluku just off the southwest coast of Papua.
We can visit a beautiful white sand beach and a large sea cave which we can swim inside.
Later we can visit Masbait Hill, this hill marks the highest point in Kei Kecil.
It is known for its rotating statue of Christ, which many Catholics visit for pilgrimage.
The Aru islands are rich in Papuan fauna, which includes tree kangaroos, palm cockatoos and four species of birds of paradise.
Marine life is also very rich, and Aru's capital Dobo, situated on the small island of Wamar, has long been a busy regional trading centre for pearls, sea cucumbers, and the like.

STOP 11

Days 11 and 12

We wake up off the coast of Papua to a most serene and primal scene of a jungle waterfall where a roaring river surrounded by virgin rainforest pours into the sea.
Triton Bay is a place of unsurpassed natural splendour, where time and tides have sliced the limestone landscape into tall cliffs and numerous islands separated by lagoons and narrow channels.
It is also home to fishermen who collect baitfish and keep them in nets attached to specially built platforms, also known as 'bagans'.
It is these and their fish that attract whale sharks.
We will head out in the tenders to see if the sharks are around, and if we are lucky, we will spend a couple of hours in the water with these magnificent creatures.
We will explore the bays and limestone outcrops by tender, kayak, and paddle board as well as swim and snorkel from the beautiful white-sand beaches.

STOP 13

Days 13 and 14

Cruise through the undisturbed coves, caves, and lagoons before heading north through the Namatote Passage, where there is an impressive collection of ancient cave paintings high up on the cliffs.
Take a short walk into the forest to see a most spectacular jungle waterfall surrounded by virgin rainforest and take a dip in its cool refreshing waters.
Enjoy more snorkelling, swimming, kayaking and paddling as we relax amidst the beauty of the surrounding jungle covered islands.
We will spend our final evening on the ship resting at anchor and enjoying a farewell dinner with our captain and crew.
On our last day, we will find ourselves at anchor in the harbour of Kaimana, and after an early breakfast our tenders will take you ashore for your transfer to the airport for your onward travel.

THE VOYAGE

About the voyage

After a few days exploring the islands, we will then head east into territory both familiar and new to us, with the Kei and Aru Islands falling into the latter category. After exploring these remote islands, we will then head north towards Papua where we will swim with whale sharks and take you on a journey through Triton Bay where we will swim with whale sharks before heading to the beautiful Namatote region, an incredibly beautiful part of the world. Expect lots of culture, history, beach time, friendly encounters with local people, and lots of snorkelling on pristine coral reefs. All mixed in with the great company that you will certainly have for this voyage.

SNORKELLING

Snorkelling on this trip

Whether it's swimming with whale sharks and manta rays, or leisurely gliding along a stunning tropical reef surrounded by myriad fish and corals, snorkelling lies at the very heart of what we do. We do it well and we do it often - usually twice a day for an hour or more at a time. No matter if you are a novice or a seasoned pro, our tour leaders will ensure that you have everything you need to have some of the best underwater experiences of your life.





FLEXIBILITY

Be prepared to be flexible

Our mission is to provide the best experience possible for our guests given the current conditions and when unexpected opportunities for adventure may present themselves along our cruise routes. Sometimes weather conditions, tides or other local factors dictate that we need to vary from the published route, and at times there are special opportunities to explore and discover new locations, events and activities. These explorations will always be a definite enhancement to the published itinerary and will be undertaken after discussion and agreement among guests. Ultimately, the boat captains and your tour leader will make decisions to maximise trip safety and your overall enjoyment, so please come prepared to be flexible!

THE MORE YOU KNOW, THE MORE YOU SEE

Our tour leaders are a wealth of information on the regions we visit and will prepare you for each activity with on board talks and presentations to give you a greater understanding of the different experiences you will have each day. They will also act as your cross-cultural bridges to all the people we meet along the way, so feel free to ask them to translate when talking to local Indonesian people on your travels.











































