



FORGOTTEN ISLANDS

AMBON - MAUMERE

13 DAYS / 12 NIGHTS

- Itinerary -

Day 1. Departure Ambon

Pick up at your hotel or at Ambon airport by our crew for a short transfer to Teluhu Bay where Mantamae awaits you. Once on board, welcome drink in hand, you will be introduced to the rest of the crew, shown around and immediately start to feel at home. We'll have a check muck dive at Teluhu Bay. The Intensity of marine life here is unrivalled; critters benefit from the nutrient-rich currents pushing into this bay but are still protected by sheltered waters in the many small coves. This unique combination creates conditions that nourish an incredible eco system, making it one of the richest and most interesting places to dive.

Day 2. Pulau Au

Very few divers witness the true nature of Pulau Ai's unspoilt reef – a secret in the middle of the Banda Sea reached by live-aboard only. This area acts as an oasis for pelagics that cruise by these pristine hard coral reefs cloaked in clouds of fish – Napoleon wrasse, green and hawksbill turtle, tuna, rainbow runner, huge schools of barracuda mixing with schools of bannerfish, redtooth triggers and fusiliers. **Batu Payung**, Umbrella Rock, is named for the many overhangs along the island walls, which divers can drift along and enjoy the view of thousands of tiny reef fish darting in and out of the cracks

and crevices. After a night dive at **Mandarine City** we'll set sail for Banda Neira.

Day 3 – 4 Banda Neira

The Banda area offers a good variety of dive sites. Volcanic rocks at **Pulau Pisang** create a deep swim-through which you can drift through and view the sponge-covered wall on the other side, perhaps spotting Moral eels at the top of the wall as well as schools of bumphead parrotfish. We'll also dive at the black sand of **Batu Kapal** in Banda's harbour, a submerged pinnacle, breaking the surface of the water in the shape of a boat which offers muck diving with flying gurnards spreading their electric blue wings, sea moth, nudibranchs and mandarin fish. Various types of fish are present here in vast numbers, along with huge gorgonian fans and some truly monumental sponges.

In Banda Neira you will have the chance to explore the historic and cultural legacies of the fabled islands, center of the former lucrative spice trade. Wandering through the town you'll observe the Dutch colonial architecture which remains to this day, as well as Fort Belgica with its incredible views overlooking the bay.

Day 5. Pulau Manuk

An extinct volcano about 65 nautical miles south of the Bandas will give us an incredible diving experience surrounded on all sides by sea snakes, banded sea kraits and Chinese sea snakes. The island is encircled by black sandy slopes with hard coral reefs, volcanic ridges covered in gorgonians with zillions of fusiliers and pelagic fishes such as Spanish mackerels and dogtooth tunas passing through. Pulau Manuk is also one of the largest shelters for thousands of birds.

Day 6 – 7 Pulau Serua – Pulau Nila

After beaching and diving at the small pristine volcanic island of Pulau Serua, we'll visit **Nil Desperandum**, a submerged reef of walls and steep slopes plunging

several thousand meters deep. The reef top stretches for several miles and is covered with beautiful hard corals, offering fabulous diving and snorkelling.

Five nautical miles east of Pulau Nila is the **Dusborgh atoll** – another great place with similar a topography to Nil Desperandum, where pelagic fish, tunas, mackerels, jacks, and rainbow runners cruise the crystal clear water.

Day 8. Damar

We'll spend the day diving **Neus Leur, Terbang Utara, and Terbang Selatan**, three small islands surrounding Damar Island.

Covered by tropical forests and fringed by white sandy beaches, the trio features some of the prettiest and healthiest reefs in the Banda Sea, with massive barrel sponges and gorgonian sea fans covering walls, reef tops full of soft corals and small tropical reef fishes, and visibility up to 50 meters.

We have the option of visiting a small village on the main island of Damar to stretch our legs.

Day 9. Pulau Romang – Nyata Islands

At Romang and Nyata Islands, gentle slopes cloaked with pristine hard corals slip down into the deep blue of the Banda Sea. You will be able to see huge gorgonians in vivid orange, yellows and reds, carpets of soft corals and massive barrel sponges in all directions. If you can tear your gaze away from this wonderful reef and train it into the blue, you will often be rewarded by the sight of majestic napoleons, reef sharks or tuna. Many of the nearby dive spots show signs of volcanic activity on the seabed and are good spots for night dives.

Day 10. Wetar – Pulau Reong

Wetar Island has several calm bays where interesting critters can be found, while a swift drift dive between Wetar and Reong takes you past a spectacularly colored wall.

The small limestone island of Reong lying off the northwest coast of Wetar presents a change in scenery. Reef sharks, barracuda and trevallies frequently visit these

waters. **Tanjung Nunukae** on Wetar Island is generally characterized by shallows forming a plateau that narrows as it goes deeper until it drops off abruptly, forming a very nice wall swathed in gigantic sea fans, cup corals

and impressive sponges. We have good chances to come across both mobula and manta rays here.

Day 11. Kalahabi Bay & Pulau Pura (Alor) – Reta Island

At some dive spots here the water can get really cool (70-72F, increasing the likelihood of pelagic and riotous marine-life richness). We recommend that you wear a 5-7mm wetsuit here

Mosque and **Rocky Church** are two great muck dives within Kalabahi Bay on Alor Island. The 'holy grail of fish' Rhinopias can be found here, and there is a strong chance you may see both the weedy and paddle flap scorpionfish, ghost pipefish, soft coral crabs, frogfish, various octopus and snake eels. An exceptional dive site on the South side of Pura Island is **Clown Valley**, a reef completely covered in anemones, and possibly the only place in the world where you can see this phenomenon. You will have the chance to enjoy a drift dive here and bask in the abundance of fish.

On Reta Island we'll visit the villages of **Takpala** or **Latevui**, where the old Abui traditions persist. You might catch the villagers there performing the *Lego-Lego* dance wearing traditional clothing and brass anklets that make a wonderful jingling sound as they move. Afterwards there is a chance to purchase handmade *ikat*, woven fabrics of various colours and motifs, as well as jewellery and wooden artifacts. Manta Mae will then sail overnight to Pulau Komba, a distance of about 55 nautical miles

Day 12. Komba island

One of the most spectacular destinations in Indonesia, Pulau Komba is a very active volcano rising from the Flores Sea, with regular eruptions that look rather spectacular at night.

After diving at **Komba Korner**, a landscape of black volcanic ash and topography comprising reefs and walls, you will experience a truly unforgettable evening, watching the last light of the day disappear below the crater. Dinner will be served in front of the greatest fireworks display on earth! The soundtrack of the evening will be thunderous booms with fiery rocks and jets of molten lava lighting up the night sky.

Day 13. Maumere – departure day

MAUMERE - AMBON

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- Itinerary -

Day 1. Maumere

We will meet you at Maumere Airport (Wai Oti Airport), or at your accommodation, and accompany you to Mantamae where our crew will welcome you onboard with refreshments. We will have a check dive in the area and then in the evening we will set sail, cruising through the night to Pulau Komba.

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Day 13. Departure Ambon



