MERMAID I

Biodiversity Super Special - Maumere - Alor - Banda Sea - Raja Ampat

Maumere to Sorong | Flores, Alor, the Banda Sea and Raja Ampat

Schooling hammerhead sharks are the draw of the Banda Sea, with one island among its most emblematic spots to see them.

In the Banda Islands, spectacular walls drop thousands of metres, with swim-throughs large enough for several people at once.

Raja Ampat then delivers the prettiest soft coral reefs in the world at Misool, with pinnacles surrounded by masses of schooling fish.

The Dampier Strait is known for giant mantas, mangroves, bumphead parrotfish and lots of wobbegong sharks, and big schools of fish and glorious corals are simply amazing.

LENGTH	DEPARTURE PORT	ARRIVAL PORT	EXPERIENCE
16 days / 15 nights	Maumere	Sorong	Open Water, 4 training dives







Your itinerary

DAY 1

Maumere

Check in

Check-in on board Mermaid I.
We recommend all guests to arrive the day before the cruise departure.
After all the guests have settle into the cabins and set up: the diving equipment, we will start cruising overnight to our first destination at Kawula Island, 90 nautical miles.

DAY 2

Kawula Island

3 dives + night dive

Dive Cape Bacatan and Lewaling Bay at the island of Kawula.
Three dives along walls and ledges covered in sea fans and soft corals – chance for pygmy seahorse and critters here as well.
Cape Bacatan is a good place to spot whitetips, blacktips and occasionally, grey reef sharks.
Also a popular spot for eagle rays and Napoleon wrasse with loads of schooling fish.
A great muck night dive will be done in front of a traditional fishing village.
Cruise overnight to Alor, 70 nautical miles.

DAY 3

Alor

Dives

Alor is a favourite dive spot for divers coming to dive Indonesia year after year due to its variety of dive sites.
Healthy reefs, pinnacles, walls, great muck dives, cold water, warm water, strong currents and protected areas.
Alor has it all.
Cruise overnight to Wetar, 95 nautical miles.

DAY 4

Wetar

Dives

In Wetar you will dive at the small island of Reong and at Cape Nunukae.
Pulau Reong is a small island on the northwest coast of Wetar and separated by a small channel only 700 metres wide.
More walls, like many of the dive sites in the Banda Sea, covered in small soft corals but of a great variety of colours, with zillions of triggerfish of every species.
Cape Nunukae, about 6 nautical miles southwest of Pulau Reong, is a large ridge with slopes on both sides, covered with a hard coral reef on the shallow area of the ridge, with soft corals on the slopes in the deeper areas.
There can be strong currents at the end of the ridge, where large aggregations of schooling fish can be found.
Cruise overnight to the Damar Islands, 150 nautical miles.



DAY 5

Damar Islands

Dives

Today you will dive several small islands – Nus Leur, Terbang Selatan and Terbang Utara.
The island of Damar and its three surrounding small islands have spectacular diving.
Like many dives in the Banda Sea, there is crystal clear water and beautiful walls covered in massive sponges and beautiful soft corals.
Cruise overnight to Nila Island, 90 nautical miles.

DAY 6

Nila atolls

Dives

Surrounding Nila Island there are two atolls, Dusborgh and Nil Desperandum.
It's at these two atolls that there is a good chance of seeing hammerhead sharks.
Even without the hammerheads, the reefs are fabulous, with healthy walls and big schools of fish.
Cruise to Serua Island, 20 nautical miles.

DAY 7

Serua

Dives

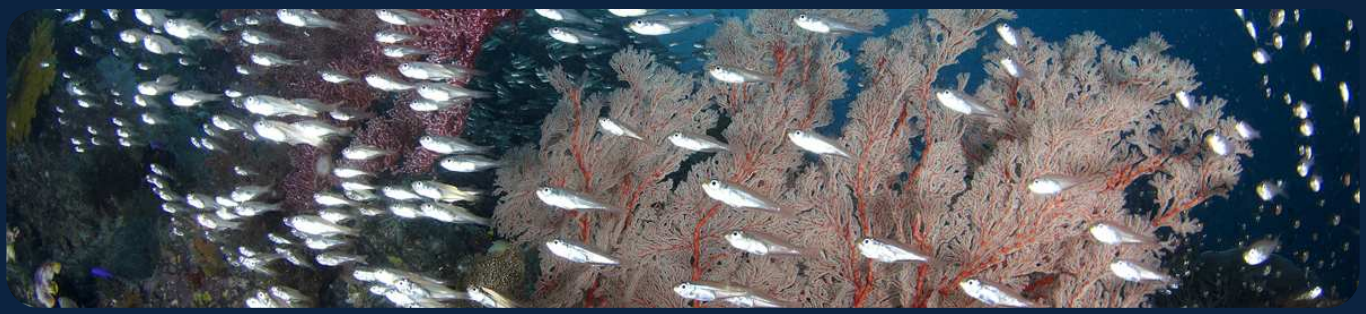
Serua Island is probably one of the most emblematic spots in the Banda Sea to see schooling hammerhead sharks.
Also an amazing side to see schooling fish such as big eye trevallies, pinjalo snappers and others.
Cruise to Manuk, 55 nautical miles.

DAY 8

Manuk

4 dives

Manuk, also known as the Snake Volcano.
Don't need to be afraid!
The site also offers a black sand reef dive with loads of fish and pretty hard and soft corals.
We will spend the whole day here doing four day dives, then cruising to the Banda Islands, 60 nautical miles.



DAY 9-10

Banda Islands

Dives + cultural visit

Banda Islands for the next 2 days!
Walls, swim throughs, sponges and sea fans – good diving and great for wide angle.
Several sites have swim throughs large enough for several people to go through at the same time and is especially nice for wide angle shots, as they are covered in soft corals and sponges.
Dive sites in the Banda Islands drop down thousands of metres, offering spectacular walls and stunning reef tops, with visibility usually in the 40-50 metre range.
The sunset dive is at the pier in front of an old colonial hotel!
Black sand and volcanic rocks with an unusual amount of large and not shy mandarin fish – also great for critters.
For the second day here, in addition to great diving, you will go on land for an excursion on the island of Banda Neira visiting the local museum, Dutch fort, nutmeg plantation and local market.
You will even get to have breakfast at the nutmeg plantation!
Cruise overnight to Koon Island, 80 nautical miles.

DAY 11

Pulau Koon

Dives

Pulau Koon is a small island on the southeast of Ceram, half way between Raja Ampat and the Banda Islands.
Here you will find walls covered in soft corals and sandy slopes with hard coral bommies.
But the most interesting feature of this island is the amount of schooling fish and pelagics, including barracudas, bigeye trevallies, aggregations of red snappers, pompanos, batfish and giant groupers.
Cruise overnight to Misool, 100 nautical miles

DAY 12-13

Misool

Dives + tender excursions

The next two days will be spent around the island of Misool, Raja Ampat, where there are literally hundreds of dive sites.
Misool is a heaven for wide angle photographers.
The prettiest soft corals reefs in the world are located in Misool.
In addition, there are multiple pinnacles surrounded by masses of schooling fish, barracudas, jacks and snappers.
There will be some excursions with the tenders through some amazing inner lagoons, with fantastic scenery and wildlife sightings.
Cruise overnight to the Dampier Strait, 90 nautical miles.

DAY 14

Dampier Strait

Dives

The Dampier Strait is known for a huge variety of diving, from giant mantas to mangroves, beautiful reefs, many pinnacles and sea mounts covered in schooling fish, aggregations of sweetlips, schooling barracudas, bumphead parrotfish, fusiliers and lots of wobbegong sharks.



DAY 14

Dampier Strait (continued)

Dives

It is also a great location for critters and macro subjects, with several species of pygmy seahorses and a large variety of nudibranchs.
There are also several jetties to do a great night dive, where you can see the Raja epaulette shark, toadfish, frogfish and crocodile fish.

DAY 15

Dampier Strait

Last dives

The last two dives of your cruise will be done in the Dampier Strait area.
Where big schools of fish and glorious corals are simply amazing!
After the second dive Mermaid I must go back to Sorong.
The crew will take care of rinsing your equipment and there's time to pack during this 5-6 hour run.

DAY 16

Disembark in Sorong

After breakfast there is a transfer to the airport or your hotel.
Disembark is at 8 am.

GOOD TO KNOW

On land and on the way

Manuk

Aggregations of sea snakes.

Serua and Nila

Schooling hammerhead sharks.

Banda Neira

Fort, museum and a nutmeg plantation.

Alor

Reefs, walls and muck diving.

Check in

Check in on board is on the day of departure. We recommend arriving the day before the cruise, so you can settle into your cabin and set up your equipment before the boat leaves.

Check out

Disembark after breakfast at 8 am, with a transfer to the airport or your hotel.

Last dive

Divers should wait at least 24 hours after their last dive before flying, so please keep to the no-flying rule when you book your flight home.

INCLUDED

What your trip covers

INCLUDED IN THE TRIP PRICE

- Transfers to and from the boat: anywhere in southern Bali on Komodo trips, and Sorong airport on Raja Ampat trips
- All meals and snacks, fruit, coffee, tea, hot chocolate, soft drinks and drinking water
- All dives, with tanks, weights and weight belts
- Diving with experienced divemasters and instructors
- Land visits to villages, beaches, viewpoints and wildlife where the plan includes them
- 3 GB of Starlink internet on board

NOT INCLUDED

- Flights, including any domestic flight
- Nitrox fills
- Rental equipment and on board courses
- Alcoholic drinks
- Marine park fees, port and national park fees (subject to change with government regulation)
- Dive and travel insurance

BEFORE YOU GO

What to bring

ESSENTIALS

- Dive certification card and logbook
- Completed diver medical questionnaire
- Details of your dive and travel insurance
- Dive computer and surface marker buoy
- Torch for night dives

AND ALSO

- Reef-safe sunscreen
- Swimwear, hat and sunglasses
- Light clothing and sandals
- Personal medication and toiletries
- Passport

WORTH KNOWING

Key notes

Good to know

Itineraries are a sample and can be changed because of the weather, tides, currents, season and other events beyond our control

Good to know

Divers should wait at least 24 hours after their last dive before flying

Insurance

Please arrange dive and travel insurance before you travel

Good to know

This itinerary runs from Maumere to Sorong