MERMAID II

Ambon - Banda Sea - Raja Ampat

Ambon to Sorong | Ambon, the Banda Islands, Manuk and Raja Ampat

From the muck of Ambon across the Banda Sea to Raja Ampat, this route runs through the old Spice Islands and ends among the prettiest soft coral reefs in the world.

At the Manuk volcano, huge aggregations of sea snakes surround you on all sides, over black sand slopes and gorgonian-covered ridges with zillions of fusiliers.

The Banda Islands have walls of massive gorgonians, soft corals and barrel sponges, and pinnacles of schooling pyramid butterflyfish.

Ambon has muck dives for rhinopias and the psychedelic frogfish, and Misool is a heaven for wide angle photographers.

On land, Banda Neira has an old Dutch fort and breakfast at a nutmeg plantation.

LENGTH	DEPARTURE PORT	ARRIVAL PORT	EXPERIENCE
12 days / 11 nights	Ambon	Sorong	Open Water, 4 training dives







Your itinerary

DAY 1

Ambon

Check in + extra dives

Check-in on board Mermaid II.
Once all guests are on board a safety briefing will be given.
If all the guests are on board by 12.00 hours, you have the chance to do two extra dives at Ambon Bay in some fabulous muck dives with critters galore.

DAY 1

Ambon (continued)

Check in + extra dives

This area is known for many rare and unusual species including the psychedelic frogfish and Rhinopias.

DAY 2

Ambon

3 dives

We will spend the day around Ambon, where there are several options such as a wreck, or doing some really interesting muck dives looking for rhynophias, frogfish (including the psychedelic frogfish), harlequin shrimps, and many other critters.
Cruise overnight to the Banda Islands, 110 nautical miles.

DAY 3-4

Banda Islands

Dives + cultural visit

The next two days will be spent in the Banda Islands, also known in the old days as the Spice Islands.
Many of the dive sites around the Bandas are wall dives.
Walls covered in massive gorgonians, soft corals, barrel sponges and some very interesting swim throughs.
But there are other attractive dive sites such as pinnacles with enormous groups of schooling pyramid butterflyfish, triggerfish and pelagic fishes such as tunas passing through, spectacular hard coral reefs next to the volcano, and great muck dives with lots of mandarin fish in the local jetty.
The Banda Islands are much more than diving.
It is also a cultural and historical experience.
We will spend one morning walking around the village of Banda Naira with a local guide, and visit the local museum, the Old Dutch fort, the old colonial governor's house, the local fish market, and we will have breakfast at a nutmeg plantation.
Cruise overnight to Manuk, 55 nautical miles



DAY 5

Manuk

Dives

Manuk, an active volcano about 55 nm south of the Banda Islands, is one of two places in Indonesia where there are huge aggregations of sea snakes, Chinese sea snakes and banded sea kraits.

DAY 5

Manuk (continued)

Dives

It is an incredible experience to dive surrounded on all sides by sea snakes.
The island is surrounded 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.
Cruise overnight to the Pulau Koon, 108 nautical miles.

DAY 6

Pulau Koon

Dives

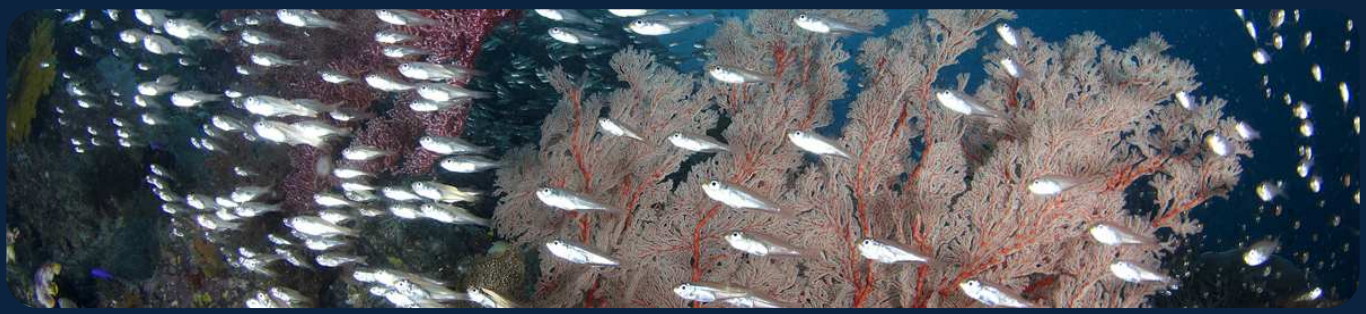
Pulau Koon is a small island on the southeast of Ceram, half way between Raja Ampat and the Banda Islands.
Walls covered in soft corals, and sandy slopes with hard coral bommies.
But the most interesting feature of this island is the amount of schooling fish and pelagic, barracudas, bigeye trevallies,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

DAY 7-9

Misool

Dives + tender excursions

The next 3 days will be around the island of Misool, where there 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, as well as having 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, fantastic scenery and wild life sightings.
Cruise overnight to the Dampier Strait, 90 nautical miles



DAY 10

Dampier Strait

Dives

Dampier Strait is located between Waigeo and the Bird's Head Peninsula.
Along with Misool, it is the most famous area for diving in Raja Ampat.
All of the dive sites around the Dampier Strait are known for a huge amount of schooling fish: barracudas, schools of bigeye trevallies, oceanic triggerfish, spadefish, surgeonfish and snappers.

DAY 10

Dampier Strait (continued)

Dives

Besides the schooling fish, it is also an area where you get to see black and whitetip reef sharks and wobbegong sharks.
Some of the best manta dives are also located in the Dampier Strait.
Blue Magic is a small pinnacle where the giant mantas congregate and get cleaned as well.
Some of the best mangrove dives are also located in the Dampier Strait, around the islands of Yanggefo and Gam.
And of course, one cannot forget the dive sites at some of the jetties in front of local villages, where the pillars are covered in soft corals and are home to a plethora of small critters.
Other fantastic dive sites in this area include Cape Kri, Sardine Reef, Chicken Reef, Mioskon, Mike's Point, Mangrove Ridge and Citrus Ridge.
Cruise to Sorong, 40 nautical miles

DAY 12

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.

Banda Neira

Fort, museum and a nutmeg plantation.

Pulau Koon

Schooling fish and pelagics.

Ambon

Muck diving with rare critters.

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 Ambon to Sorong