Ambon – Banda Sea – Raja Ampat

Start your cruise in the second capital of muck diving Ambon Bay. Dive the famous Banda islands and visit the main port in Banda Neira where there is so much to see, learn and explore. Finish this fantastic trip in Raja Ampat.

Raja Ampat is the seascape's crown jewel. Fittingly, the name means "four kings." The four main islands or "Kings" of the archipelago: Waigeo in the north, Salawati west of Sorong, Batanta north of Salawati, and Misool in the south.

Raja Ampat has been documented as one of the last frontiers of unspoilt diving. The archipelago's pristine reefs are not only rich, but the region also proves to have the greatest coral reef biodiversity for its size in the world. The Bird's Head Seascape holds: 2,500 islands and reefs, 1,320 fish species, 550 coral species and all that is yet to be discovered.

Ambon – Banda Sea – Raja Ampat with

MV Mermaid I

12 days / 11 nights
33 Dives

MV Mermaid II

12 days / 11 nights
33 Dives

DAY	ITINERARY WITH MV MERMAID II AMBON – BANDA SEA – RAJA AMPAT	DIVES
DAY 1	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. This area is known for many rare and unusual species including the psychedelic frogfish and Rhinopias.	Dives –
DAY 2	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.	Dives 3
DAY 3-4	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.	Dives 7
DAY 5	Manuk, an active volcano about 55 nm south of the Banda Islands, is one of 2 places in Indonesia where there are huge aggregations of sea snakes, Chinese sea snakes and banded sea kraits. 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.	Dives 3
DAY 6	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.	Dives 3
DAY 7-9	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	Dives 11
DAY 10-11	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. 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.	Dives 6
DAY 12	Disembark at 8 am after breakfast. Mermaid II staff will transfer you to the airport or local hotel. **This is a sample itinerary and is subject to changes beyond the operator's control. The exact itinerary, route and amount of dives for your cruise may be adapted to best suit the weather conditions, tides and currents, season and other prevailing events.**	Dives –
TOTAL DIVES: 33		