SCUBASPA ZEN

# Christmas Raja Ampat

*Sorong to Sorong | Dampier Strait, Fam and Misool*

Christmas comes with tropical sand and clear water in Raja Ampat, in the heart of the Coral Triangle where the reefs are the most diverse on earth.

Pinnacles rise from the depths full of movement and colour, with a good chance of oceanic mantas, and a submerged ridge has mantas circling cleaning stations while schools gather in the current.

Towering pinnacles swarming with life, a natural window carved in the reef and a coral garden of clouds of anthias make some of the most photogenic diving in Indonesia.

Back on board, gingerbread houses and film marathons under the stars add traditional cheer.

| LENGTH | DEPARTURE PORT | ARRIVAL PORT | EXPERIENCE |
|---|---|---|---|
| 8 days / 7 nights | Sorong | Sorong | Intermediate to advanced |







## Your itinerary

DAY 1

### Arrive in Sorong

Guests are greeted in Sorong and taken to the harbour, about 15 minutes away, to board.
After settling in the yacht sails to the first destination.
In the evening the spa team helps with treatment bookings, the Cruise Managers introduce the crew and give the boat briefing, and a welcome dinner is served on the top deck at sunset over central Raja Ampat.

DAY 2

## Dampier Strait

3 dives and a night dive

The first full day of diving, in the Dampier Strait, brings three dives on hard coral gardens teeming with aquarium like life, graceful turtles, wobbegong sharks and the chance of passing pelagics.
In the evening a night dive on the critter filled sandy slopes near Tapokren village.
Early risers can hike to see the endemic red bird of paradise.

DAY 3

## Manta cleaning stations

Up to 4 dives

A day devoted to megafauna, with dives at manta cleaning stations where the mantas clean and feed above sandy bottomed coral patches.
Sightings cannot be guaranteed, but the chances are high.
Other highlights include Mayhem, named for the constant chaos of fish swirling through it.

DAY 4

## Fam Islands and sail south

Up to 4 dives

Halfway through the cruise the yacht stays on the western edge of central Raja Ampat to explore the Fam islands above and below the surface, with the famous Piaynemo viewpoint over its karst limestone cliffs and Melissa's Garden, arguably the most beautiful and pristine coral garden in Raja Ampat.
In the afternoon and evening a sunset sail heads south to Misool, with some of the most vibrant soft corals in the world.

DAY 5

## Daram Islands

Up to 4 dives

The yacht arrives early at the eastern edge of Misool, in the remote and rarely visited Daram Islands, where you may have the whole area to yourselves.
Dramatic underwater landscapes bring frequent mantas and dense schools of shimmering fish, and silversides can be so thick that your buddy disappears in the silver swirl.
The day ends on a pristine sandy beach with a sunset bar, water sports and a beach dinner.

DAY 6

## Central Misool

Up to 4 dives

The central Misool area is full of world famous sites, and the yacht explores as many as possible. Highlights include Nudi Rock, with soft coral walls and a name taken from the shape of the island above water, Boo Window, with a good chance of pelagics and a shallow swim through full of fish, and Magic Mountain, perhaps the most famous of all, for its regular mantas and big groups of barracuda, groupers, trevallies and sharks.

DAY 7

### Last day of diving

2 dives

Two morning dives in the Misool area give a last chance to meet bigger fish and enjoy the colours of the reef before lunch.
The afternoon holds activities for everyone while the yacht returns to Sorong harbour.

DAY 8

### Departure

After a final breakfast and farewells to the crew, guests are escorted to the Sorong airport and helped with check in.

THE TRIP

## Raja Ampat by liveaboard

Raja Ampat is one of the richest marine ecosystems on earth, with kaleidoscopic reefs, dramatic pinnacles, manta rays, wobbegong sharks, turtles and pygmy seahorses below the surface, and emerald islands, towering limestone karsts and turquoise lagoons above. This cruise explores the Dampier Strait and the Fam islands in the north, then Misool in the south.

THE EVENT

## Christmas in Raja Ampat

Leave the snowy scenes of the usual Christmas story for tropical sand and clear water. The chefs bake and decorate gingerbread houses, there are Christmas film marathons under the stars, and the festive meals and decorations on board bring traditional cheer to a tropical setting, for divers and non divers alike. Alongside the festivities the dive programme explores the thriving ecosystems of Raja Ampat, from mantas to turtles.

DIVE SITES

## Highlights of Raja Ampat

- Blue Magic, Dampier Strait: a pinnacle rising from 30 metres to 8 metres below the surface, full of movement and colour and a good chance of oceanic mantas.
- Melissa's Garden, Penemu: a coral garden of hard corals and clouds of anthias, one of the most picturesque shallow dives in Raja Ampat.
- Magic Mountain, Misool: a submerged ridge where mantas circle cleaning stations and schools gather in the current.
- Four Kings, Misool: four towering pinnacles covered in coral and swarming with life, with oceanic mantas.
- Boo Windows, Misool: a natural window carved in the reef, with schools of fish and soft corals, one of the most photogenic dives in Misool.

ABOVE THE WATER

## Treks, kayaks and viewpoints

Land excursions are woven into the programme: early bird watching treks for the red bird of paradise, the viewpoints of Piaynemo and Penemu, flying fox watching at dusk in the Dampier Strait, a visit to rock paintings thousands of years old, kayaking through calm bays, and a swim in the stingless jellyfish lake of Misool. The yacht has giant slides on the top deck, and dinners are served on deck or on the beach under the stars.

THE DIVING

## How the diving is organised

The dive centre is a dedicated dive boat with plenty of room, well equipped dive stations, several entry points, a toilet and shower and a sun deck platform. Dives are tailored to each diver's level, with beginners and experienced divers both looked after, and up to four dives a day are possible. Courses run from introductory dives to advanced and Nitrox certification, with multilingual instructors.

Dives are limited to 40 metres. A dive computer is compulsory, diving alone and decompression dives are not allowed, and night dives and dives deeper than 18 metres are for advanced certified divers. Many sites have strong currents, so good buoyancy control is needed.







THE SPA

## Treatments at the quiet end of the boat

The five star spa sits at the stern, the quietest part of the yacht, and welcomes couples as well as solo guests. The menu offers Balinese, Swedish, Shiatsu, sports, hot stone and Hawaiian Lomi Lomi massage, aromatherapy, foot reflexology, a back and shoulder massage, facials, body scrubs and masks, an after sun aloe vera treatment, a foot scrub, and a Dive Delight massage designed for after a dive.

The products are made exclusively in Bali for the boat, from organic ingredients, botanical extracts and essential oils. Yoga is held every morning on the sun deck.







ON THE TABLE

## Food, drink and celebrations

Breakfast and lunch are buffets, and dinner is an à la carte menu served in the al fresco restaurant on the main deck. Live cooking evenings blend Asian, Mediterranean and Continental cuisine, and the chefs share the recipes so you can recreate them at home. Special diets are looked after.

The bar, next to the restaurant with views from the bow, serves wines, champagnes and handcrafted cocktails, with a happy hour every day. Beach barbecues are held on a deserted island, and the team plans birthdays, engagements and anniversaries, from a private dinner under the stars to sunset cocktails.







PACKAGES

## Choose how you spend the cruise

Every guest chooses one of three packages. Dives cannot be swapped for spa treatments, and the dive package is for certified divers only.

### Scuba

Up to 19 dives over the cruise, with spa treatments bookable on board for an extra charge when there is space.

### Scuba and spa

10 dives and 5 spa treatments over the cruise.

### Spa and active wellness

8 spa treatments and guided snorkelling. A Discover Scuba Diving course can be added if you would like to try diving.

CONDITIONS

## Season, water and what to expect

Raja Ampat lies in the heart of the Coral Triangle and is protected as a marine park, with limestone islands, mangroves, bird of paradise treks and the most diverse reefs on earth. Water temperatures run between about 27 and 29 degrees, with strong and fast changing currents on many sites, so the diving suits intermediate to advanced divers. A 5 mm full wetsuit is recommended, because four dives a day can leave you chilled. The main season runs from October to April.

INCLUDED

# What your trip covers

## INCLUDED IN THE TRIP PRICE

- Suite accommodation with three meals a day
- Welcome drink, drinking water, coffee and tea
- Airport transfers at the start and end of the cruise
- Yoga classes every morning
- Snorkelling, with equipment included
- A barbecue on a deserted island and the excursions in the programme
- The diving or spa treatments of the package you choose
- Wi-Fi, with a 1 GB allowance per person

## NOT INCLUDED

- International and domestic flights
- Service and administration charge and the national park and port fees, shown on our trip listings
- Dive and travel insurance
- Dive equipment rental
- Drinks from the bar and extra spa treatments
- Crew gratuities, which are optional