Ancient Villages, Textiles, Dragons, And Vibrant Coral Reefs (Ende-Alor)

A Journey by Land and Sea

15 Days/14 Nights
Your Time With Us

Ende-Alor
Ports of Call

CRUISE HIGHLIGHTS

This 15-day trip combines the rich biodiversity and cultures of the Lesser Sunda Island with an added bonus of five days travelling across Flores Island, where guests can explore the rich textile culture of Indonesia at a much deeper level.

Sail with us through the Komodo National Park, a World Heritage Site renowned for its rich marine biodiversity in Indonesia's Lesser Sunda Islands, to the Alor Archipelago, an undisturbed realm of white-sand beaches and mountainous landscapes, and rich, authentic culture. We've created an exclusive itinerary that explores the natural wonders and rich cultural traditions of these stunning islands in Indonesia's spectacular Pacific Ring of Fire where you will awaken to volcanic peaks jutting dramatically from the land and sea, seek out the famed Komodo dragon in the wild, snorkel in kaleidoscopic underwater seascapes specially chosen for their marine life, and explore ancient villages and their traditional crafts. Relaxing evenings will perfectly complement our active days as we enjoy the ship's exceptional level of service, fabulous onboard presentations, and tropical sunsets dipping below the horizon.

This part of Indonesia is famed for its traditional tribal groups where ikat textile production still lies at the heart of their cultures. On this journey, we have the pleasure of visiting multiple villages, each with very distinct practices and beliefs, to gain a glimpse of how textiles play an important part in their daily lives and to witness the ancient spinning, binding, weaving and dyeing techniques that they have practiced for generations. Using all natural fibres and colours, including around 200 different natural dyes, using ingredients such as sea sponges, sea anemones and the ink of sea hares, these finished items are a wonder to behold, and we will have the opportunity to purchase some of the finished textiles as souvenirs of our journey.

SNORKELLING WITH SEATREK

Whether it's swimming with whale sharks & mantas rays, or leisurely gliding along a stunning tropical reef surrounded by myriad fish and corals, snorkelling lies at the very heart of what we do at SeaTrek. We do it well and we do it often - usually twice a day for an hour or more at a time. No matter if you are a novice or a seasoned pro, our tour leaders will ensure that you have everything you need to have some of the best underwater experiences of your life.

BE PREPARED TO BE FLEXIBLE

Our mission is to provide the best experience possible for our guests given the current conditions and when unexpected opportunities for adventure may present themselves along our cruise routes. Sometimes weather conditions, tides or other local factors dictate that we need to vary from the published route, and at times there are special opportunities to explore and discover new locations, events and activities. These explorations will always be a definite enhancement to the published itinerary and will be undertaken after discussion and agreement among guests. Ultimately, the boat captains and your tour leader will make decisions to maximize trip safety and your overall enjoyment, so please come prepared to be flexible!

THE MORE YOU KNOW THE MORE YOU SEE

Our tour leaders are a wealth of information on the regions we visit and will prepare you for each activity with on board talks and presentations to give you a greater understanding of the different experiences you will have each day. They will also act as your cross-cultural bridges to all the people we meet along the way, so feel free to ask them to translate when talking to local Indonesian people on your travels.

ITINERARY

DAY 1

- Arriving in Ende airport in the early afternoon in Central Flores, you will be met by your SeaTrek tour leader and taken to visit a group of weavers in Ndona, an area famed for its natural dyeing process. You will meet the 'Musalaki', the lord of the land and be shown a wide array of their ikats as you take in the breathtaking views.

- Tonight is spent at a hotel in Ende with dinner at in a popular local restaurant.

DAY 2

- Departing after an early breakfast, depart for Moni and visit Nggela village, a beautifully traditional village where we will meet with the weavers and see their beautiful yet very unique ikats.

- Late morning, check in at the Kelimutu Ecolodge, have lunch and relax. This will be followed by a trip to Waturajo village, a mixed Muslim & Christian village that produce a particularly rare motif in their ikat cloths.

DAY 3

- Get ready for an early start to witness the stunning sunrise from the top of Kelimutu volcano and see the three-crater lakes changing colors throughout the day.

- Driving back to Ende for lunch, stop on the blue pebble beach at Nanga Panda, and then head to Soa hot spring to unwind before driving to Bajawa for the night.

DAY 4

- After breakfast, visit the ancient Ngada villages Gurusina to learn about their traditions and see their ikat weaving process. We drive to Ruteng, stopping by Aimere village to see the local distillery where they produce 'arak', an alcoholic spirit brewed from rice or palm.

- Before reaching Ruteng, enjoy the stunning view of Rana Mese crater lake and waterfall. We will also visit the local market to see the colorful spices and vegetables and stay overnight.

DAY 5

- We will start the day with a visit to the now legendary Liang Bua cave, where the remains of Homo floresiensis (the legendary 'Hobbits") were discovered in 2003, an extinct species of early humans that inhabited the island of Flores until the arrival of modern humans about 50,000 years ago.

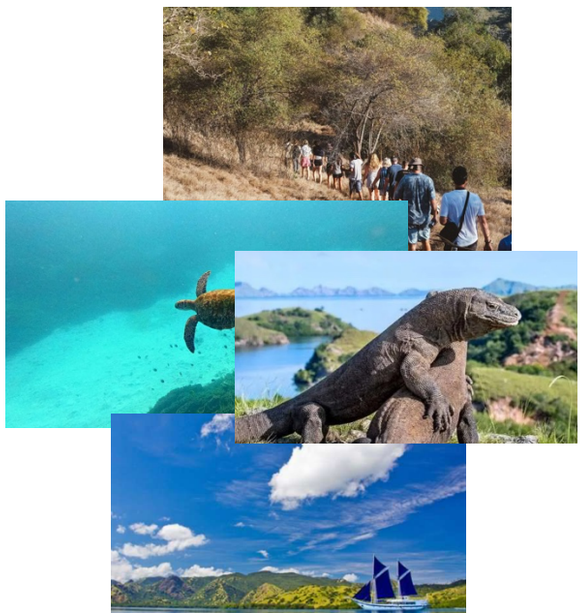
- As we continue on, we will see the spider web-shaped rice fields in Cancar village, then head to Todo village to meet the head of the village and learn about the history of the Manggarai people. Here, we will also see the Manggarai ikat weaving called Songket. After a stop for lunch in Lembor, it's a short drive to Labuan Bajo where we will stay the night.

DAY 6

- After breakfast, our driver will collect you from your hotel and take your straight to the boat where you will meet your crew and fellow guests.

- After settling in and receiving a safety briefing and orientation, we head out to sea in the direction of Kalong Island for our first snorkel of the trip.

- At dusk, gather on the back deck at cocktail hour to witness a spectacular event: the evening departure of tens of thousands of fruit bats that fill the skies as they leave their forest homes to forage on the mainland.



DAY 7

- After an early breakfast, it's time to go ashore to Rinca Island for one of the main highlights of trip – searching for the ancient and fearsome Komodo dragon. We will go for a ranger-led walk through the savannah and will hopefully spot dragons in the wild along with buffalo, deer, monkeys and many different kinds of birds.

- Back on the boat, cruise to the richly diverse reefs of Siaba Besar Island, where we will snorkel with thousands of fish and sea turtles that congregate in the area.

DAY 8

- Visiting the island of Gili Lawa Darat in the very north of the park, climb to the top of the island for majestic sweeping views of the park and all the surrounding islands. A spectacular drift snorkel in the narrow channel between the islands is not to be missed.

- After lunch, it's tie to search for manta rays and then visit Hatamin Island, where a local NGO is running a reef restoration programme, and we will create our very own coral racks to place in the sea. The island is home to many fish and is a nursery ground for black-tipped reef sharks.

DAY 9

- Today we explore the beaches and the underwater world of the 17-island, Riung Conservation

Area, home to many species of coral and lots of underwater life which we will snorkel through. Moving between islands, it's time to enjoy some great beach time along the way with the kayaks and paddle boards.

- We will visit a local village and meet some of the locals and see how they live their lives, and around sunset we will weigh anchor and head east in the direction of Maumere.

DAY 10

- We wake up at anchor in Maumere Bay against the backdrop of an extinct volcano and enjoy a leisurely breakfast before the day's activities begin.

- A fleet of cars awaits us on the dock to take us on a short drive to the scenic Iwang Gete highlands to visit a small village of Watublapi, where we will be met with singing and dancing by the local people. Famed for their unique textiles, we will be shown first-hand their ancient techniques of spinning, dyeing, and weaving their famous fabrics. Here we will have the chance to view (and purchase) some of the local textiles, try their betel nut, and brave their locally produced liquor.

- In the late afternoon, we will have a chance to take a dip on a nearby island before heading off for an overnight cruise to Solor Island

DAY 11

- On Solor, we visit the local village and the ruins of a 16th-century Portuguese fort which used to guard this vital waypoint of the ancient spice trade. As we have lunch, we will sail through the Adonara channel enjoying the beautiful views of the volcanos and islands as we head through this stunning inland passage between islands.

- We will go for a snorkel on the island's southern point then we spend some time on a beautiful white-sandy shoal where we will get out the paddle boards and umbrellas and spend some time on the beach.

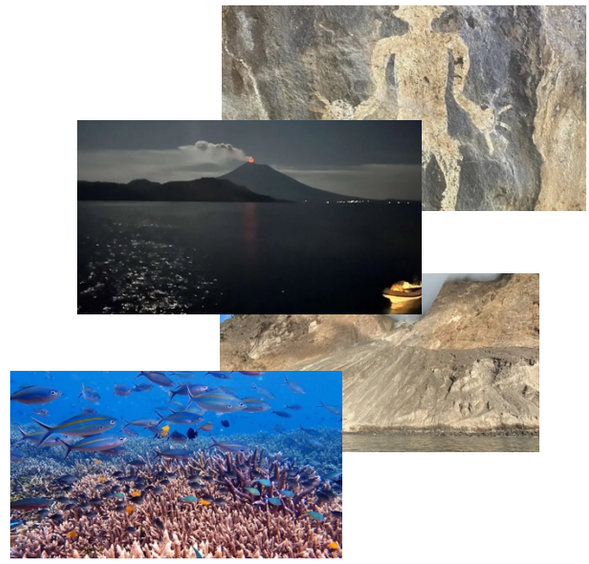
- We will then raise anchor and head north in the direction of the uninhabited, active volcanic island of Komba.

DAY 12

- Waking up just off the active volcano of Komba, we explore the (hopefully) belching volcano with our dinghies and then circumnavigate the island. We will then go for a snorkel on the island's southern point.

- After lunch, go ashore and drive to a local village to see some prehistoric 500-year-old rock art and maybe get to try some of the locally brewed arak alcohol with the villagers.

- Later that afternoon it's time to snorkel and then at dusk it's time for cocktails on the back deck as we see the sunset over the active Ile Apé. After dark, and if the mountain activity is strong, we will be able to see the lava erupting from the top against the night sky.



DAY 13

- Start the day with a splendid snorkel on Buaya island, a location with a beautiful drop off and lots of fish.

- Visit the Muslim village of Uma Pura, which well known for their creation of ikat textiles using many local materials including sea sponges for the dyeing of their textiles. We will stroll around, meet the friendly local people, and witness the full production process and have the chance to view many of their finished textiles.

DAY 14

- We depart the boat and travel by local boat out into the bay to look for the resident dugong named Mawar, who is looked after by a local man dedicated to Mawar's well-being. Sightings are common, so hopefully we will be in luck.

- After lunch, visit the very traditional village of Takpala, where we will be greeted by the head man and his warriors for a fascinating cultural performance.

- Tonight, it's a quiet night at anchor and have a celebratory dinner with the captain and crew and then have some live music and dancing with the ship's band.

DAY 15

- On our final morning, it's an early wake up for a final breakfast