SeaTrek With Rare Species, Remote Cultures & Remarkable Corals (Ternate-Bitung)

Sailing the Undiscovered Frontier

14 Days/13 Nights
Your Time With Us

Ternate To Bitung
Ports of Call

CRUISE HIGHLIGHTS

Join us on as epic sailing and snorkelling adventure that crosses from the original clove spice Islands to North Sulawesi and taking some of the remotest and least visited regions on the planet and snorkelling on some of the best reefs that the Coral Triangle has to offer. Starting in Ternate, you will travel south following a long chain of conical active volcanoes to the island of Bacan, where you will see the mohawk clad black-crested macaques and the world's largest butterfly, the Goldenwing. Crossing the Sula Archipelago, you will travel where very few tourists ever venture, visiting local people and experiencing their unique island culture and way of life. Following on, you can look forward to a swim in a lake filled with stingless jellyfish, a visit to a giant clam restoration programme, a one-of-a-kind interaction with maleo birds, a visit with the Bajau 'sea gypsies', and the awesome experience of swimming with whale sharks before reaching your final destination after a glorious 14 days at sea.

** Ending in Bitung, Sulawesi, this trip offers the perfect opportunity to do a post-cruise add on land tour to visit the Tangkoko National Park to see tarsiers, black-crested macaques, and all manner of birds living wild in the rainforest. Contact us for more information.

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.

WANT TO ADD ON A WILDLIFE OR CULTURAL EXCURSION TO YOUR TRIP?

Our four-day orangutan programme that features in our Orangutans & Dragons itinerary can be worked into any
of our SeaTrek cruises throughout the year, regardless of length or location, so just let us know if this is
something you would like to do when visiting Indonesia and we will happily arrange it for you.

For textile enthusiasts, we also have two five-day land tours across Flores Island in June each year that form our
Ancient Villages, Textiles, Dragons, and Vibrant Coral Reefs tour, which will visit many traditional weaving
villages and take you deep inside these unique cultures.

We are also a wealth of information on other great destinations and wildlife and cultural excursions in Indonesia
that can be added on to your SeaTrek cruise.

The possibilities are endless so all you have to do is ask.

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

- Starting your adventure today we will have a tour of Ternate's historical highlights before boarding our SeaTrek ship and meeting the crew and settling into your new home for the next two weeks.

- Over lunch, we will set sail for the short journey to Halmahera Island's Dojinga Village, a pivotal place in scientific history, where the naturalist Alfred Russel Wallace first came up with the Theory of Evolution by Natural Selection.

- Later that afternoon, we will enter the water for the first time and snorkel and swim on our first coral reef before heading south as the sun sets behind the perfectly conical volcanic islands peaks of the northern Moluccas.

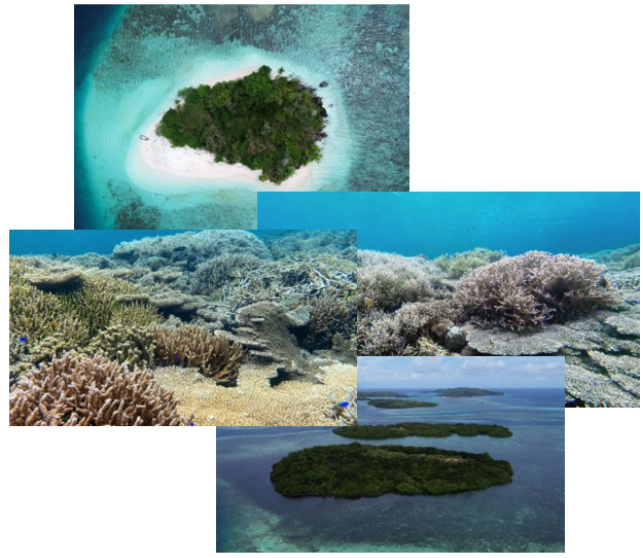
DAY 2

- Today we will visit the Guraici Archipelago, a chain of islands with white sandy beaches, vibrant coral reefs and some lovely local villages. We will spend a full day here snorkelling, swimming and pay a visit to one of the villages to meet the local people.

- The islands are part of a government-controlled conservation area, designed to protect the reefs and the many beautiful marine species that live there.

- These protected waters also provide the perfect location for beginner or rusty snorkellers to become familiar with the water and to home their skills for the many days of snorkelling that lie ahead.

- Late in the evening we will be heading to the island of Bacan.



DAY 3

- Today we will be searching for some very special species of butterfly, some unique birds and some quirky

mammals.

- We will explore the deep forest and rivers of Bacan Island, where Wallace first saw what he called 'the most beautiful butterfly in the world, the Golden Birdwing. During our trek the other species that we might see here include cuscus, the black-crested macaque and some hornbills.

- After lunch we will spend the afternoon snorkelling and swimming on the nearby reef and beaches.

DAY 4

- Culture and spice will fill our day as we find ourselves off the coast of the white sand island of Obi Latu, a place filled with clove and nutmeg plantations.

- Obi Latu's steep hillsides are covered in clove and nutmeg forests, reaching back to the rich and heady days of the spice trade, which saw many a European power vying for control of the East Indies. While the spice trade might not be what it once was, the growers can still make a good living on this remote island in the Banda Sea.

- We will go ashore and walk through the villages and plantations and see the fruits and spices growing on the trees and drying in the sun ready for market, in the same way it has for centuries.

DAY 5

- Today will be a day for snorkelling, culture and history as we find ourselves in the middle of the Banda Sea in the remote and breath-taking Sulu Archipelago.

- We will spend the morning exploring the beaches and reefs of Mangoli Island, where the reefs are teeming with fish and other marine life. True to the desert island locale, we will also kayak, paddle, swim, explore and relax on the white-sand beaches.

-Later that day, we will feast on some history and culture as we visit the local village market and visit the ruins of a 17th century Dutch fort, which once protected the spice trade along these routes.

DAY 6

- The cultural experiences ratchet up a notch today with a war dance performed in our honour, while the night time will be filled with Indonesian music.

- We will go ashore on Taliabu Island, where we will be treated to a traditional dance known as the 'cakalale', by local warriors. We will also have a chance to explore the local village and meet the people of this remote isle.

- The afternoon will see us snorkelling on a reef teeming with fish before

moving to another deserted island, where we can swim, kayak and relax. This evening the crew will prepare a beach BBQ for us, and they will regale us with traditional Indonesian folk songs and sea shanties as we party by firelight late into the night.

DAY 7

- The Bokan Islands are an area of unsurpassed beauty and today will be a day of marine exploration and relaxation as we snorkel, swim, paddle and kayak around the glorious reefs, beaches and islands with many caves and snorkelling spots.

- We also have the rare privilege to swim in a small marine lake filled with stingless jellyfish, the exotically named Danau Piasu Botangan, one of only 20 lakes of its kind in the world.

DAY 8

- A trio of unique experiences await us today involving culture, conservation and wildlife.

- We will visit the bustling Indonesian island port town of Bangai, a place filled with activity and commerce. Here on Banggai Island we will visit the local market, explore the neighbourhoods, the sultan's palace and the maleo bird egg 'museum', and all from our fleet of brightly-coloured motor rickshaws, which will be on the dock awaiting our arrival.

- We will pay a hands on visit to LINI, an NGO doing great work with coral restoration on the surrounding reefs, in addition to working with local fishermen in finding sustainable solutions for supplying fish for overseas markets and the live aquarium fishing trade.

- The last of the day's highlights will be a snorkel on a local reef where we will see the most elegant, but very threatened, Banggai Cardinal Fish – a darling of saltwater aquarium lovers worldwide.

DAY 9

- Today you will have the chance to see possibly one of the strangest and most unique flightless birds found in the world - the Maleo.

- After a morning snorkel, we will sail north to visit the endemic Maleo in their beachside environment, the symbol of the province within which it lives. We visit a conservation project on the mainland where scores of Maleo live and breed. Entering in twos, we can watch them at their sandy nesting sites from a camouflaged hide as they go about their business.

- Later that afternoon, we set sail for the Togean Islands National Park, for some island hopping and spectacular snorkelling, wildlife and culture.

DAY 10

- The Bajau sea gypsies of Southeast have a very unique way of life living in harmony with the water, and today you will get to see it up close.

- We will go ashore to Kabalutan Village, where a population of about 2500 Bajau call home, and we will be welcomed into their world to meet and talk with them about their lives.

- In the afternoon we will snorkel and swim on some pristine coral reefs before moving on further into the park.

DAY 11

- Some great wildlife experiences await us today both in the water and the air, with birds, fish and invertebrates as the main features.

- We will enjoy a snorkel on the lush reefs near the island of Malenge,

before taking our snorkels and masks for a rare second swim with stingless jellyfish in nearby Lake Mariona, the second jellyfish lake on our route.

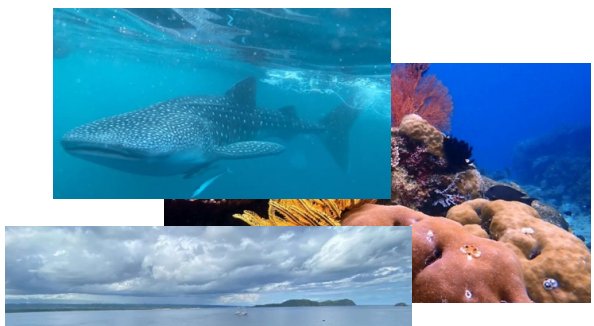
- We will visit a local village and meet the people, and enjoy a late afternoon walk in the local forest before being witness to a most amazing show of nature as flocks of hornbills come flying in to roost in the trees – a once in a lifetime sight only accessible with SeaTrek.

DAY 12

- Waking up in the eastern part of the island chain, we will go snorkelling and visit a local village before setting sail on a long crossing towards the Sulawesi mainland, where we can relax, watch the world go by and take in the beauty of the sea from the decks of our ship.

- In the afternoon, our chef will offer a cooking class for those interested in learning how to prepare some traditional Indonesian dishes. For the rest of us, it's sunbathing, reading, relaxing and reflection.

- To finish the day, cocktails will be served on the back deck before a specially prepared dinner is served, followed by a party with the crew's band providing the music and entertainment as we head North to the Sulawesi mainland.



DAY 13

- This morning a major highlight awaits us as we get in the water with the majestic king of all fishes, the mighty whale shark. A small group of them live close to the shore and we will be in the water at dawn to snorkel with them in what must be one of life's must amazing wildlife experiences.

- After breakfast back on the boat, we will head east, stopping off en-route for another snorkel and a swim towards the end of the day before the crew throw us a final beach BBQ, where we will dance and sing into the night under the stars next to a roaring bonfire.

DAY 14

- Waking up just off the coast near the Tasikoki Rescue Centre, we will go ashore and have a short tour of the impressive facilities at this NGO and hear all about their conservation programme and also have the chance to see orangutan, cockatoos, sun bears, monkeys, and other endangered wildlife.

- After a short sail into Bitung Harbour, we will say a fond farewell to our crew and tour leaders and head to Manado City for either your onwards flights, or to start one of our special SeaTrek add-on programmes. Whatever your schedule, it will have been our pleasure having you on board.