AMBAI

Forgotten Islands, Ring of Fire and Raja Ampat

Saumlaki to Sorong | Banda Sea, Ring of Fire and Raja Ampat



This multi-destination trip, from the south to the north-east of Indonesia, visits the best of the Banda Sea and Misool in the south of Raja Ampat.

It offers outstanding diving and is a perfect itinerary for encounters with the schooling hammerhead sharks that roam the Banda Sea during this season.

Tunas, Spanish mackerel, giant trevallies and schools of barracudas are part of the show, over steep walls of hard corals and huge sponges.

Around the volcanic island of Manuk sea snakes are everywhere, and sulphur traces of volcanic activity can be seen underwater.

At the Banda Islands a dive along the lava flow of the fire mountain shows how corals and sponges have grown back since its last eruption in 1988.

The trip ends in Misool, with forests of gorgonians, soft corals and intense fish life.

LENGTH	DEPARTURE PORT	ARRIVAL PORT	EXPERIENCE
12 nights	Saumlaki	Sorong	30 dives, Advanced







Your route

STOP 1

Saumlaki to Banda

Starting from Saumlaki on the Tanimbar island, we will reach first the island of Dai.
This granite island, part of the Babar island group, offers fantastic dive sites with great fish life.
Going North we will reach Serua which consists in two small islands lost in the middle of the Banda Sea.
We will spend two fabulous diving days around those islands where the schooling hammerheads often show up on the drop offs.
In order to maximise the chances of encounter, we dive very early in the morning and a bit late in the afternoon.
The depth is about 35 meters max.
At the West of Serua lays a big reef without any land, with the attractive name of “Nil desperandum”.
This is another spot for hammerheads and a fantastic drop off.

STOP 2

Manuk

North is Manuk island, a small volcanic island where a lot of sea birds come for nesting.
Underwater the sulphur traces of volcanic activity can be seen.
The diving signature is the abundance of sea snakes, both Aipysurus sp and Laticauda.
Hammerheads are also roaming around, but generally in small groups only.
Our next step are the Banda islands, where the diving is very rewarding.
One of the highlight is a dive along the lava flow of the “Gunung Api” (the fire mountain); the last eruption was in 1988 and we can see how the corals and huge sponges did grow back since then.
We will stop in Banda Neira, for a land visit.
The island of Suanggi, about 20 NM from Banda, is another hot spot for hammerheads schools.

STOP 3

Banda to Sorong

From Banda to Sorong We’ll then head for the East tip of Seram islands, where is the famous dive site named “too many fish”.
This long drop off is well known for its fish life: schools of barracudas, trevallies, large tunas passing by, and eventually schooling hammerheads.
The shallower part, a sandy slope with bommies, is home to many huge groupers and schools of batfish.



STOP 4

Misool

We then reach the island of Misool at the Southern part of Raja Ampat.
We spend the last 2 days of the trip there and dive all the best spots.
Gorgonian forests, lot of soft corals, and an intense fish life are the signature of this fantastic area.







GOOD TO KNOW

On land and on the way

Ashore

The Banda Islands were the original Spice Islands, and you stop on Banda Neira to visit the village, the fort and the museum. In Misool you visit the ranger's station and snorkel in a natural shark nursery, where small blacktips swim in one metre of crystal clear water, and a short hike leads to the viewpoint of a lagoon in the shape of a heart.

Dive count

A minimum of 36 dives, which is 3 dives per day, is offered, including at least 7 night dives.

How the diving works

Divers go in groups of up to four with a dive guide, with a briefing before every dive. Nitrox is free for certified divers, and divers are asked to stay within no deco limits, to a maximum depth of 35 metres.

Snorkelling

The trip is open to snorkellers, with a lot to see in shallow water at most dive sites, and specific guidance for snorkellers.

Visibility and water

Average to good in the Banda Sea and in Misool. The water is 27 to 29°C in the Banda Sea, and closer to 29°C in Misool.

Currents

Currents are generally moderate on most dive sites, with some consistent currents on occasion. The guides check the current before each dive and brief you on the conditions, and the crew picks the right place at the right time.

Check in

You are welcome on board in Saumlaki before 12 noon, and the boat leaves at 1 pm. Ambai can arrange pick up from the airport or your hotel.

Check out

The cruise ends in Sorong and you disembark before 12 noon. Ambai can arrange the drop off at the airport or your hotel. The last dive is at 8 am on the penultimate day.

Airports

Saumlaki (SXK) at the start and Sorong (SOQ) at the end of the trip.

INCLUDED

What your trip covers

INCLUDED IN THE TRIP PRICE

- Transfers between the boat and the closest airport
- Accommodation in a shared twin or double bed cabin
- All meals and snacks, drinking water, soft drinks and hot drinks
- All guided dives, with one guide for up to four divers
- Aluminium 12 litre tank, weights and belts
- Free nitrox for certified divers
- Four complimentary kayaks on board

NOT INCLUDED

- Park and port fees and fuel surcharge, paid in cash on board
- International and domestic flights
- Alcoholic beverages, which you can bring yourself
- Diving equipment rental and 100 cf (15 litre) tank
- Crew tips, which are customary
- Massages and laundry

BEFORE YOU GO

What to bring

ESSENTIALS

- Dive certification card and logbook (PADI Advanced Open Water or equivalent with at least 30 logged dives)
- Dive insurance covering medical evacuation and diving accidents, which is highly recommended

AND ALSO

- Your own dive equipment, or rental booked before the cruise, as not all sizes are on board
- Cash for park and port fees, fuel surcharge, tips and extras, as credit cards are not accepted on board

WORTH KNOWING

Key notes

Good to know

The route can vary slightly with weather, currents, visibility and tides

Good to know

Payments on board are in cash only, in euros, US dollars, Australian dollars, Swiss francs or Indonesian rupiah, and prepayment by wire transfer can be arranged

Good to know

Divers with less experience can join with special supervision, arranged before the cruise

Good to know

Prices and trip dates are shown on our trip listings





