MERMAID I

Raja Ampat, Banda Sea and Ambon

Sorong to Ambon | Raja Ampat, Pulau Koon, Manuk and the Banda Islands

At Manuk, an active volcano, huge aggregations of Chinese sea snakes and banded sea kraits make for an incredible dive, surrounded on all sides.

Raja Ampat comes first, with giant mantas, mangroves and pinnacles covered in schooling fish, and the prettiest soft coral reefs in the world at Misool.

Around Pulau Koon are walls of soft corals and schools of barracuda, bigeye trevally, red snappers, pompano, batfish and giant groupers.

The Banda Islands have walls of massive gorgonians, soft corals and barrel sponges, with spectacular hard coral reefs next to the volcano.

The last day is muck diving for psychedelic frogfish and harlequin shrimp.

LENGTH	DEPARTURE PORT	ARRIVAL PORT	EXPERIENCE
11 nights	Sorong	Ambon	Certified divers







Your itinerary

DAY 1

Sorong

Check in

Check in on board Mermaid I.
Guests arrive all through the day depending on flights, so you are welcome to board when you arrive and spend some time unpacking and setting up your equipment.
After the boat and safety briefing Mermaid I cruises for 5 to 6 hours to the Dampier Strait.

DAY 2-3

Dampier Strait

Dives

The next two days are around the Dampier Strait, between Waigeo, the Bird's Head peninsula and the north of Batanta.
The strait is known for the variety of diving, from giant mantas to mangroves, beautiful reefs, many pinnacles and sea mounts covered in schooling fish, aggregations of sweetlips, schooling barracuda, bumphead parrotfish, fusiliers and lots of wobbegong sharks.
It is also a great place for critters and macro subjects, with several species of pygmy seahorse and a large variety of nudibranchs.
There are several jetties for night dives, where you can see Raja epaulette sharks, toadfish, frogfish and crocodilefish.
Cruise overnight to Misool.

DAY 4-6

Misool

Dives + tender excursions

Three days around Misool, where there are literally hundreds of dive sites and a heaven for wide-angle photographers.
The prettiest soft coral reefs in the world are here, with multiple pinnacles surrounded by masses of schooling fish, barracuda, jacks and snappers.
There are also excursions with the tenders through inner lagoons, with fantastic scenery and wildlife sightings.
Cruise overnight to Pulau Koon.



DAY 7

Pulau Koon

Dives

Pulau Koon is a small island south-east of Ceram, half way between Raja Ampat and the Banda Islands, with walls covered in soft corals and sandy slopes with hard coral bommies.
The most interesting feature is the amount of schooling and pelagic fish: barracuda, bigeye trevally, red snappers, pompano, batfish and giant groupers.
Cruise overnight to Manuk.

DAY 8

Manuk

Dives

Manuk, an active volcano about 55 nautical miles south of the Banda Islands, is one of two places in Indonesia with huge aggregations of sea snakes, Chinese sea snakes and banded sea kraits, and it is an incredible experience to dive surrounded on all sides by them.
The island is surrounded by black sand slopes with hard coral reefs and volcanic ridges covered in gorgonians, with fusiliers and pelagics such as Spanish mackerel and dogtooth tuna passing through.
Cruise overnight to the Banda Islands.

DAY 9-10

Banda Islands

Dives + cultural visit

Two days in the Banda Islands, known in the old days as the Spice Islands.
Many of the dive sites are wall dives, with massive gorgonians, soft corals, barrel sponges and some very interesting swim-throughs, as well as pinnacles with enormous groups of schooling pyramid butterflyfish and triggerfish, spectacular hard coral reefs next to the volcano, and muck dives with lots of mandarinfish at the local jetty.
The Banda Islands are also a cultural and historical experience: one morning you walk around the village of Banda Neira with a local guide and visit the museum, the old Dutch fort, the old colonial governor's house, the fish market, and have breakfast at a nutmeg plantation.
Cruise overnight to Nusa Laut or to Ambon.

DAY 11

Nusa Laut or Ambon

Last diving day

The last diving day is around either Nusa Laut or Ambon Bay.
Nusa Laut is a small island next to Saparua, with beautiful hard coral fringing reefs and walls similar to those of the Banda Islands.
Around Ambon there are options such as a wreck, or interesting muck dives looking for rhinopias, frogfish including the psychedelic frogfish, harlequin shrimp and many other critters.

DAY 12

Disembark in Ambon

After breakfast there is a transfer to the airport or your hotel.
Disembark is at 8 am.

GOOD TO KNOW

On land and on the way

Manuk

Aggregations of sea snakes.

Banda Neira

Fort, museum and a nutmeg plantation.

Pulau Koon

Schooling fish and pelagics.

Ambon

Muck diving with rare critters.

Check in

Check in on board is on the day of departure. Guests arrive at different times depending on flights, so you can board when you arrive, unpack and set up your equipment. A transfer from Sorong airport to the boat is included.

Check out

Disembark after breakfast at 8 am, with a transfer to the airport or your hotel.

Last dive

Divers should wait at least 24 hours after their last dive before flying, so please keep to the no-flying rule when you book your flight home.







INCLUDED

What your trip covers

INCLUDED IN THE TRIP PRICE

- Transfers to and from the boat: anywhere in southern Bali on Komodo trips, and Sorong airport on Raja Ampat trips
- All meals and snacks, fruit, coffee, tea, hot chocolate, soft drinks and drinking water
- All dives, with tanks, weights and weight belts
- Diving with experienced divemasters and instructors
- Land visits to villages, beaches, viewpoints and wildlife where the plan includes them
- 3 GB of Starlink internet on board

NOT INCLUDED

- Flights, including any domestic flight
- Nitrox fills
- Rental equipment and on board courses
- Alcoholic drinks
- Marine park fees, port and national park fees (subject to change with government regulation)
- Dive and travel insurance

BEFORE YOU GO

What to bring

ESSENTIALS

- Dive certification card and logbook
- Completed diver medical questionnaire
- Details of your dive and travel insurance
- Dive computer and surface marker buoy
- Torch for night dives

AND ALSO

- Reef-safe sunscreen
- Swimwear, hat and sunglasses
- Light clothing and sandals
- Personal medication and toiletries
- Passport

WORTH KNOWING

Key notes

Good to know

Itineraries are a sample and can be changed because of the weather, tides, currents, season and other events beyond our control

Good to know

This itinerary runs from Sorong to Ambon