

Sample Itinerary: Forgotten Islands, Banda Islands & Ambon

from: Saumlaki, to: Ambon

Please note: this is a sample itinerary. Itineraries may change without further notice due to weather conditions or other unforeseen circumstances.



The Forgotten Islands are an arc of islands that are part of a very remote archipelago in the east of the Banda Sea. These islands are accessible only by liveaboard and offer a truly exciting adventure! The Banda Sea is famous for its deep walls, healthy reefs, giant sponges all in crystal clear blue water. This area is also now known for the chance to see schooling Hammerhead Sharks!

Forgotten Island trips are not just about the 'big stuff'. If you want to look for macro critters we can find things like Leaf Fish, Moray Eels, lots of different Nudibranchs, Ribbon Eels, Mantis Shrimps, as well the very special Dragon Shrimps and Leopard Shrimps.

Starting from Saumlaki on the island of Tanimbar, we will head straight to our first stop Dawera. You can dive just about anywhere around this island to find a fantastic dive site! At one point there are so many soft corals we are reminded of the glorious reefs of Raja Ampat. A huge school of Barracuda hang out on one point of the island. There is a hidden pinnacle out from the island where the reef really is untouched. The village of Dawera does not fish here because there are so many fish around their island, they have plenty to eat! At the pinnacle the reef is a profusion of colour and each and every rock is



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covered in every type of coral! Big schools of jacks and batfish, schooling pyramid fish and triggerfish and hundreds of fusiliers all try to avoid the hunting reef sharks and jacks.

North and South Terbang there are dramatic walls with large overhangs dripping with soft corals. Damar is close by and has a great hard coral garden perfect for an afternoon and night dive.

Close to the island of Nila are the sea mounts of Dusborgh and Nil Desparandum. They are surrounded by very deep water so there is a chance to see large pelagics. Here we will look out for now famous Banda Sea schooling hammerhead sharks. Absolutely massive barrel sponges and expanses of hard corals make these reefs very impressive.

On trips from Saumlaki to Ambon we will visit Manuk. This is the most easterly volcano in Indonesia and is home to lots of sea snakes. They are very curious and divers will be approached by many snakes during the dives. But don't worry they won't bite, they just take a look and keep on swimming! The dramatic rocky dive sites here can be very fishy and there is a chance to spot hammerhead sharks. Above the water frigate birds and brown boobies soar over the volcano.

This cruise will also include a few days in the Banda Islands. Also known as the Spice Islands, the land excursion here is fascinating. Visit the museum, an old Dutch fort and a nutmeg plantation to learn about the incredible history of these remote islands. The diving here includes the typical deep walls of the Banda Sea, as well as sea mounts and drift dive along fish packed reefs. At Batu Kapal the whole pinnacle is covered in schooling Pyramid Butterfly Fish and Red-tooth Triggerfish which mix in with hundreds of fusiliers, creating a myriad of colour. Hammerhead sharks have to been known to visit some of the reefs here, as well as turtles, bumphead parrotfish, eagle rays and napoleon wrasse.

Nusa Laut is a small island close to Ambon and the village here protects the fantastic dive site of Amet Reef. Eagle rays, a huge school of jacks, hammerhead sharks and even a Dugong have all been seen here. The reef is very healthy and it is common to see bumphead parrotfish feeding in the shallows.

Ambon is a world class muck diving destination. Inside the bay there are numerous dive sites full of critters galore! The holy grail of fish Rhinopias can be seen here along with Frogfish, Ghost Pipefish, Nudibranchs, Leaf Fish, Zebra crabs, cuttlefish, all sorts of Pipefish, Mandarin Fish, Ribbon Eels, all sort of Eels and cute juveniles like the Barramundi Cod, Batfish and Harlequin Sweetlips. Our eagle-eyed dive guides will be looking out for different types of shrimps such as Bumblebee Shrimp, Harlequin Shrimp, Tiger Shrimp and Coleman shrimps. In the octopus family, we might see the very special Wunderpus or Mimic and at night the Coconut, Starry Night, White-V and Long Arm Octopus come out to hunt. An excellent way to start or finish a trip!

On the last full day on board we will do two dives in Ambon Bay and enjoy our goodbye dinner inside the harbour.