

Banda Sea & Misool, Indonesia

Indo Master - Ambon-Sorong 12 Nights Itinerary

- **Embarkation:** Jembatan Amerika Negeri Laha, Ambon at 13:00*
- **Disembarkation:** Sorong Harbour, West Papua at 10:00

Flights and Transfers

Domestic flights to Ambon and from Sorong are not included in the liveboard price.

- **Domestic Arrival airport:** Pattimura International Airport Ambon (AMQ)
- **Domestic Departure airport:** Sorong Airport (SOQ)

We strongly recommend arriving in Ambon the day before embarkation and arranging a hotel for the night. (Please refer to [domestic flight information](#) below).

For your convenience, a free transfer* will be provided from Ambon Airport or your hotel in Ambon to the harbour on embarkation day, and to Sorong Airport or hotels on the day of disembarkation.

*Please note that the complimentary shared transfer is from hotels along the route between Ambon Airport and the Swiss-Belhotel in Ambon City. Charges apply for pick-ups from hotels outside of this area.

Pick-up time will be confirmed by the local operations team the night before embarkation.

Advice on International Flights

We recommend booking your international flights into and out of Jakarta International Airport (CGK) for the easiest domestic connections to Ambon and from Sorong. We advise you to spend at least one day in Jakarta either side of your liveboard dates to ensure you are on time for your flight connections and to allow for any possible changes to flight schedules.

The Master Liveboards reservations team can help to arrange hotel accommodations and domestic flight connections between your international arrival and departure and [Indo Master](#)'s embarkation and disembarkation locations.

Domestic Flights

Check-in time for domestic flights in Indonesia is usually 2 hours before departure. Please bear this in mind when booking your outbound flights.

IMPORTANT: As domestic flight schedule changes, delays and cancellations, which can result in missed connections, are common occurrences in Indonesia, we strongly recommend making allowances for this when arranging domestic flights.

Inbound to Ambon

We strongly recommend arranging flights to **arrive in Ambon the day before embarkation** and booking a hotel for the night. This not only ensures that you are well-rested before the start of your liveaboard itinerary but will also allow time to make alternative flight arrangements should there be any changes to the ones you have booked.

Should you choose to arrive in Ambon on the day of embarkation, you should **book a flight that arrives before 12:00 (midday)**. An Indo Master representative will meet you near the baggage claim area (or near the exit) to assist with your luggage and arrange transfer to the harbour and liveaboard.

We are unable to delay the liveaboard's departure for individual late arrivals as this disrupts other guests and impacts the itinerary schedule and diving possibilities. Please be advised that, if your delayed arrival is after the liveaboard has departed, you may be charged the cost of arranging a speedboat transfer, or additional fuel consumption related to Indo Master having to return to port.

Outbound from Sorong

As disembarkation needs to be 2 and a half hours before the flight departure time, we respectfully ask guests not to book flights departing from Sorong earlier than 08:30 a.m as we can not guarantee the boat will be back in port in time.

Diving Information

Some of the diving on this itinerary is not suitable for inexperienced divers due to depths and strong currents. Your Cruise Director will be able to advise you whilst on board and may recommend that guests with insufficient experience sit out certain dives.

Water Temperature and Exposure Suits

The warm tropical waters of South Raja Ampat are pleasant throughout the year with little variation in temperatures, which average around 27° to 29°C (80° to 84°F). In the Banda Sea, water temperatures across the area range from 26°C (78°F) to 30°C (86°F).

For the majority of divers, a 3mm wetsuit will suffice, while others find they are comfortable diving with just swimwear and a hooded vest or rashguard. However, those who are prone to feeling cold after prolonged or multiple dives may prefer a 5mm wetsuit or to use additional layers.

Mandatory minimum dive certification and experience:

Divers joining Indo Master's Banda Sea and Misool itinerary must have **PADI Advanced Open Water certification, or equivalent**, with a **minimum of 50 logged dives**. We also recommend experience diving in currents, as many of the locations included on this itinerary are exposed, and currents can often be strong.

Guests who do not fulfil the minimum certification and experience requirements, or who our crew feel have insufficient skills for certain conditions, may be denied participation in some or all dives.

It is a mandatory requirement for all divers to have insurance which covers scuba diving activities, including emergency evacuation and recompression chamber costs.

Itinerary Details

Participation in this liveboard itinerary is subject to acceptance of our Terms & Conditions as outlined here: www.masterliveboards.com/terms-conditions.

Marine Park & Port Fees: 260 USD per person (payable onboard only).

Marine park fees are subject to change without notice. The applicable amount at the time of departure will be added to your onboard extras to be paid prior to disembarkation.

The fees for this itinerary cover the cost of Raja Ampat entry permits* and other local charges and taxes for the areas visited during the liveboard itinerary.

*If you already have a Raja Ampat entry card the cost may be deducted from the amount payable on board, if the period of validity covers the entire duration of the time spent in Raja Ampat. You will need to send us a copy of the card no less than 4 days before the start of your liveboard and also bring it with you for additional verification on board.

Number of scheduled dives: Up to 34

This itinerary involves some long-distance travel and, whilst we attempt to ensure the number of dives we have scheduled is fulfilled, bad weather and sea conditions can hinder the yacht's ability to reach a specific area or dive site in good time.

Included land visits

Due to the distances covered on this itinerary, land visit(s) will generally only be offered when the vessel is in the Banda Islands and North Misool. You will have the opportunity to visit the nutmeg plantations in Banda, as well as see the influence of colonialism from the days of the Dutch settlers and traders and, in Misool, either a Jellyfish Lake or the Tomolol Cave system.

The following is an example of the day-to-day itinerary.

Safety and dive briefings are conducted in English. If you or any of your group do not speak or fully understand English, please contact us.

Day 1: Embarkation is followed by introductions and boat and safety briefings, after which you can settle into your cabin and assemble your equipment with help from the friendly crew, then relax before dinner is served.

Day 2: Breakfast followed by a check dive, and up to 3 subsequent dives, as outlined below.

Days 3-11: Your Cruise Manager will schedule up to 4 dives per day; 3 day dives and either a sunset or a night dive. A typical diving day is scheduled as follows:

- Light Breakfast, followed by a briefing and dive 1
- Full Breakfast and relaxation, followed by a briefing and dive 2
- Lunch and relaxation period
- Briefing and dive 3
- Snacks and relaxation period
- Briefing for Sunset or Night dive (where possible)
- Dinner

Day 12: For your last full day on board, we usually schedule 2 morning dives* before Indo Master cruises back to port, where she will remain at anchor overnight.

Day 13: Following breakfast on board, disembarkation and transfer to the airport is scheduled between 8:00 and 10:00.

*We kindly request that guests check their flight departure times to ensure that they leave a minimum of 18 hours and ideally 24 hours between their final dive and their flight home.

Following is an overview of the general itinerary route, and a sample of some of the dive sites we may visit during your time aboard Indo Master. Please note that ***the inclusion of any of the named dive sites is not guaranteed, and there may be dives at other locations that are not listed.***

While we wish to show you the best diving possible, various factors determine the exact route the boat follows and which dive sites we visit. *Weather, tides, currents and sea conditions are just some of the considerations that play a part in the Cruise Director's decision of which sites are chosen to dive at any particular time.*

The safety of our guests is paramount, and we always do our best to offer diving at alternative locations, should we be unable to visit any of the sites listed below, for any reason.

Ambon

In the heart of the Moluccas, the famous dive sites of Ambon offer world-class muck diving, diverse marine ecosystems and dramatic seascapes. Sites we might dive at around Ambon include:

Twilight Zone

This renowned muck diving spot near Laha Harbour is great to explore at any time. Amongst the detritus, countless species of nudibranchs, shrimps, crabs and bottom-dwelling fish wait to be discovered, including the endemic psychedelic frogfish (*Histiophryne psychedelica*). Other delights you may encounter include flamboyant cuttlefish, ornate ghost pipefish, Donald Duck shrimps, tiger shrimps and starry octopuses.

Rhino City

So named for the number and variety of Rhinopias found here, Rhino City lies southwest of Twilight Zone and is an extension of the same sandy slope. Across the site, carpet, bulb-tip and long tentacle anemones play host to Clarke's anemonefish and a plethora of commensal shrimps, porcelain crabs and hairy crabs. Ribbon eels and jawfish can be spotted in their sandy burrows, while short-snout and ornate ghost pipefish hide amidst the seagrass.

SS Duke of Sparta

The SS Duke of Sparta was a huge cargo ship built in West Hartlepool, England in 1940. In 1951 she was sold to the Italian Grimaldi Brothers and renamed SS Aquilo. In May 1958, while anchored near Ambon City, she was bombed by an unmarked Douglas B-26 Invader aircraft during a clandestine CIA operation conducted as part of the US initiative to quash perceived communist threats in Indonesia. The Aquilo eventually sank one month later, coming to rest almost completely intact on the seabed with her stern approximately 13 metres below the surface and her bow at 35-40 metres. She remains in great condition with her deck and masts covered with colourful soft corals and sponges. Across and around the whole wreck there is plenty of fish life, and her cargo holds offer some easy penetration possibilities.

Pintu Kota

This area boasts incredible underwater architecture, with a massive archway decorated with colourful soft corals hanging from its walls to ceilings. Many white and red polyp sea fans are dotted along the bottom, whilst shoals of fusiliers, bannerfish, and surgeonfish feed along the steep walls covered with huge barrel sponges.

Hukurila

Located in the Hukurila Coast region on the eastern side of Ambon Island, this underwater cave is a treasure trove of aquatic delights. Featuring a chimney, several canyons and caverns and other interesting geographical formations, marine life includes colourful corals, sponges, giant gorgonians and plenty of critters waiting to be discovered in their hidey-holes.

Pulau Suanggi

Suanggi, also known as Pulau Manukan, is a small uninhabited island about 12 nautical miles (22 kilometres) northwest of the Banda Islands. This tiny island, surrounded by open ocean, has an incredibly rich micro-ecosystem with pristine reefs brimming with copious numbers and varieties of fish.

Two parallel ridges and seamounts on the west side of Suanggi Island form a dramatic dive site with sandy channels between them, known for seasonal hammerhead cleaning stations, particularly in cooler water conditions. The reef features beautiful hard corals, large barrel sponges, and abundant schooling fish, with frequent sightings of bumpheads, Napoleon wrasse, trevallies, tuna, barracuda, and turtles, along with the occasional silvertip sharks and rays.

For experienced divers, this deep, exhilarating location, with its outstanding big-fish potential, is one well worth diving several times.

The Banda Islands

Sometimes referred to as the Spice Islands due to their historical significance, this group of small volcanic islands boast fantastic diving, with visibility usually ranging from 40-50 metres, and some spectacular landscapes above and below the surface.

On land, from the top of Fort Belgica, built by the Dutch in 1611 and located in the historical town of Banda Neira, enjoy the view of Gunung Api, a 640-metre-high active volcano. Clove, nutmeg, mace and cinnamon, which the islands originally became known for, are still the main spices grown on the islands.

Dive sites vary from deep walls and current-swept pinnacles to shallow reefs and sheltered bays. Currents can be strong, so the dive sites will be chosen based on the best daily conditions from the following options: There are numerous dive sites that we may visit, including:

Syahrir Timor

This lively reef features a hard coral plateau teeming with fish life, leading to a steep slope decorated with vibrant orange soft corals, sponges, and sea fans. Marine life can be impressive, with sightings of giant trevallies, large groupers, schools of surgeonfish and pyramid butterflyfish, and the occasional hammerhead passing through. A colourful and action-filled dive with strong big-fish potential.

Batu Kapal

Named for its boat-like shape, Batu Kapal is considered one of the top dive sites in the Banda Islands, offering exhilarating diving with strong currents and visibility that can range from 30 metres to 40+.

Starting at a depth of 8 metres, a series of pinnacles with steep walls form valleys that are 45-50+ metres deep. The walls are decorated with vibrant yellow soft corals; curtains of red tooth triggerfish, pyramid butterflyfish, fusiliers and surgeonfish merge into a multicoloured fish soup. On the rocky and sandy bottom, you can spot large groups of long-nose emperor fish hunting alongside bluefin trevallies and opportunistic Napoleon wrasses. Look in the blue for grey reef sharks, while blackfin barracudas hover above the reef.

Lava Flow

In 1988, the Gunung Api volcano erupted, and the lava flow destroyed the jungle and reefs in its wake. While only a few trees have grown on the basaltic rock, underwater it's a different story. From 3 metres to almost 40 metres, an extensive hard coral garden completely blankets the solidified lava flow and features some of the largest colonies of staghorn and table corals in the country. Adding colour to the scene, masses of anthias and damselfish dart amongst the corals; cuttlefish are also a common sighting and, if the mood is right, they may even put on a special display for you.

Banda Jetty

Famed for the mandarin fish that can be observed at sunset, which can be seen just by looking from the jetty. In many places, these fish are elusive, small and shy; Here, it's the opposite.

When they have done with their mating rituals, a wide array of critters await discovery on the black sand, including colourful nudibranchs, octopus, cockatoo waspfish and frogfish.

Ai Island

West of Banda Neira and Gunggung Api, **Ai Island** is an isolated, low-lying island featuring steep limestone walls, surrounded by deep water. Currents can be strong, but these attract large pelagic species; Large numbers of barracuda, trevally and tuna all school here.

On the south side of Ai Island **Batu Udang**, also known as Shrimp Rock, the reef slopes gently to 13 metres, then becomes a very steep decline to a depth of around 55 metres. Red-toothed and black triggerfish swarm across the entire reef while Hawksbill Turtles rest on the ledges and feed on sponges. Longfin Batfish, Black and White Snapper and Napoleon Wrasse are just some of the larger fish that reside here.

Along the north-western shore, **Batu Payung**, which translates as Umbrella Rock, features a steep wall with lots of cracks and overhangs down to around 60 metres. The shallow parts of the reef are covered in barrel and vase sponges, gorgonians and a variety of corals, which are awash with a vast array of colourful fish.

Run Island

Measuring just 3 km in length and less than 1 km wide, Run Island is one of the smallest in the Banda group and has an interesting history, including being the first British overseas colony.

Run Island offers exceptional dives on deep walls decorated with huge Gorgonian sea fans and unspoilt reefs rich with fish life, which, like Pulau Ai, are exposed to strong currents. A gently sloping reef transitions into a dramatic wall, which features several overhangs. Covered in beautiful corals and resplendent with colourful reef fish, schools of snapper, fusiliers, sweetlips, blue-spotted stingrays, and eagle rays are just a few examples of marine life that can be seen here.

Koon Island

Lying between the Ceram and Banda Seas, the area surrounding Koon Island is one of the largest coral fish breeding location in eastern Indonesia. As a WWF conservation area, it is a designated 'no take' zone enabling fish populations to flourish. Its position between shallow and deep seas attracts a variety of pelagics such as pompanos, Spanish mackerel, dogtooth tuna, and rainbow runners. The surrounding reef boasts a great diversity of topographies with white sandy bottoms, coral covered walls, steep slopes and a long plateau. Crevices provide refuge for a wide range of shy reef dwellers including giant and spotted moray eels.

Currents are to be expected and can vary from moderate in some areas and strong in others. We will have a full day of diving in this area, with three dives in this huge site.

Misool

Misool Island is one of the four largest islands in the Raja Ampat region and is surrounded by numerous small islands and outcrops. Collectively called 'The Misool Marine Reserve', diving areas include Daram, Farondi, Boo, Wayilbatan, Kalig and Warakaraket, to name just a few. Each offers some of the most dramatic underwater scenery of the region, from steep walls with huge gorgonian fans to gentler slopes with abundant hard and soft corals.

Some of the sites listed below depend on sea and weather conditions, and there are other equally impressive sites that may also be included. We spend 3 - 4 days diving around Misool to maximise the possibilities:

Candy Store

Situated in the Daram Archipelago of the Misool region, we see colourful soft corals and yellow sponges, sea whips and black coral, which hide creatures such as ghost pipefish and coral shrimps. Schools of batfish, fusiliers, snapper, butterfly fish and bumphead parrotfish can all be seen here, as well as barramundi and Napoleon wrasse. There is so much to see, you truly will feel like a kid in a candy store.

Mas Mas

Located in a narrow tidal channel in northern Misool, Mas Mas is characterised by steep limestone walls cut with overhangs, fissures and small cavern systems. Its position within a natural passage means currents can run strongly on peak exchanges, delivering nutrient-rich water that sustains dense reef growth.

Mas Mas is particularly known for its macro life, with nudibranchs and flatworms residing amongst the corals and sponges. Blue dragons (*Pteraeolidia ianthina*) are often encountered here, sometimes in notable numbers during favourable conditions. Careful, slow exploration also reveals a range of cryptic invertebrates tucked into cracks and shaded ledges. The combination of dramatic karst topography, multi-coloured reef life, and exceptional macro makes Mas Mas especially rewarding for keen-eyed divers and underwater photographers.

Andiamo

A diverse, exposed, two-island reef with walls adorned with giant gorgonian sea fans, overhangs, pinnacles, ridges and a shallow plateau. With a wide variety of marine life, it is no wonder Andiamo is one of the most famous dive sites in Misool. Thick schools of fusiliers cruise over the colourful hard and soft corals, where we often find wobbegong and epaulette sharks hiding. Pickhandle barracuda and blackfin batfish form large schools along the reef, while octopuses hide in the crevices along the walls.

Boo Windows

Boo Windows is one of the most iconic and visually striking dive sites in the Misool Marine Reserve. Comprised of two rocks protruding from the eastern edge of Boo Island with a saddle formation between them, this is a coral garden paradise, renowned for its unique underwater topography and vibrant marine biodiversity.

Just below the surface, natural erosion has carved window-like holes (hence the name) in the reef, resulting in beautifully photogenic swim-throughs and shallow rocky formations. These create a surreal diving experience as sunlight filters through the water, illuminating the vibrant coral gardens below. The surrounding boulder formations and pinnacles are encrusted with a variety of soft corals, sea squirts, and sponges, adding to the photographic appeal.

Normal encounters include schools of trevally, Spanish mackerel and dogtooth tuna. Pickhandle barracuda, snapper, grouper, Napoleon wrasse, turtles, batfish and rabbitfish are also often seen in the waters surrounding the islands.

Karang Bayangan a.k.a. Magic Mountain

Karang Bayangan, or Magic Mountain, rises abruptly from deep water on the southern edge of Misool. Its exposed position and sloping dome structure create a natural aggregation point for pelagic species in favourable conditions. The reef crest is vibrant with coral growth, but much of the action takes place in the surrounding blue water. Hunting tuna and giant trevally are commonly seen in the current, grey and white-tip reef sharks patrol the perimeter, and manta rays may visit cleaning stations when sea conditions allow. Due to its offshore location, dives here are planned carefully around current strength and surface conditions.

Nudi Rock

A nudibranch-shaped island and an iconic dive site, part of a 1.3km (0.8 mile) ridge with walls, pinnacles and sandy plateaus. Marine species vary from macro to large pelagics, which can all be seen at this stunning site. Blacktips, whitetips, grey reef sharks, and schooling blackfin barracuda can be spotted cruising by, whilst hiding amongst the corals are crocodile fish, nudibranchs, porcelain crabs, and the elusive soft coral pipefish.

Barracuda Rock

This is another very fishy site with schools of Big-Eye Trevally and hundreds of Yellowtail and Chevron Barracudas. An overhang on the southeast side is a good place to find Sweetlips, moray eels and lionfish during the day. With its shallow reef top, it is also one of our favourite night diving spots. All manner of crustaceans can be found hiding amongst the corals, from decorator crabs and arrow crabs to Durban dancing shrimp and pink squat lobster, as well as octopus, yellow margined morays and pygmy seahorses.

Four Kings

Four Kings is one of Misool's signature dive sites, comprising four steep pinnacles rising from deeper water and arranged along a submerged ridge. Each "king" is coated in soft corals and gorgonian sea fans that flourish in the tidal flows, with reef slopes and saddles between them creating multiple levels to explore. Schools of fusiliers, snapper and surgeonfish gather around the pinnacles, while trevally and reef sharks are often seen cruising the blue on stronger currents. The combination of layered topography, dense coral cover and consistent fish life makes Four Kings a dynamic, multi-faceted dive that rewards both wide-angle photography and careful observation.

Should you have questions concerning the dive sites or whether this itinerary is suitable for your experience level, please contact the Master Liveboards reservations team, who will be pleased to assist and advise you: dive@masterliveboards.com