

# Eastern Banda Sea, Indonesia

## 12 Nights Itinerary

- **Embarkation:** Saumlaki Harbour, Yamdena Island at 12:00
- **Disembarkation:** Kaimana Harbour, West Papua at 10:00

### Flights and transfers information

- **Domestic Arrival airport:** Mathilda Batlayeri Airport, Saumlaki (SXX)
- **Domestic Departure airport:** Kaimana Airport (KNG)

Domestic flights to Saumlaki and from Kaimana are not included in the liveboard price.

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

Transfers between local hotels (or the domestic airport) and the harbour are provided free of charge on the day of embarkation and disembarkation only.

Pick-up time from local hotels in Saumlaki is usually around 11:30-12:00 and will be confirmed by the local operations team the night before embarkation.

Transfer from Saumlaki Airport to Saumlaki Harbour, and from Kaimana Harbour to Kaimana Airport takes approximately 30 minutes.

### International Arrival & Departure

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

Check-in time for domestic flights in Indonesia is usually 2 hours before departure.

Our reservations team can help to arrange hotel accommodations, airport transfers and domestic flight connections between your international arrival and departure and the liveboard embarkation and disembarkation points.

## Domestic flights

There are no direct flights from Jakarta or Bali to Saumlaki, or from Kaimana to Jakarta or Bali. Additionally, there is only one flight per day to Saumlaki and one per day from Kaimana.

**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 Saumlaki

- Jakarta to Saumlaki involves either an overnight or very tight *connection in Ambon*.
- From Bali to Saumlaki is also via Ambon but involves an additional flight connection:
  - Bali-Makassar-Ambon-Saumlaki, or
  - Bali-Jakarta-Ambon-Saumlaki.

**PLEASE NOTE:** There is *only 1 flight per day to Saumlaki from Ambon*

*We strongly recommend arranging flights to arrive in Saumlaki the day before embarkation.* This will not only ensure that you make your flight connection and are well-rested before the start of your liveboard itinerary but will also allow time to make alternative flight arrangements should there be any changes to the ones you have booked.

Although we do not recommend it, should you choose to arrange flights to arrive in Saumlaki on the day of embarkation, we advise *booking ones that involve an overnight stop in Ambon* to ensure you make the connection.

We are unable to delay the liveboard departure for individual late arrivals as this disrupts other guests and impacts the itinerary schedule and diving possibilities.

*Guests arriving after the boat has departed may be charged for the cost of arranging a speedboat transfer from the harbour to the liveboard, or for the extra fuel required for Indo Master to return to port to pick them up.*

### Outbound from Kaimana

- From Kaimana to Jakarta involves a connection in Sorong.
- From Kaimana to Bali requires two flight changes (either Sorong and Makassar or Sorong and Jakarta)

*There is only 1 flight per day from Kaimana to Sorong.*

## Diving Information

*It is mandatory for all divers to have diving-specific insurance (e.g. DiveAssure, DAN, etc.) which covers all scuba diving activities, emergency evacuation and recompression chamber costs.* Diving insurance will only cover accidents within the depth limit dictated by your certification level so you are required to remain well within those at all times.

*The use of a dive computer is compulsory on all dives.*

Due to the exposed nature and location of many of the areas covered on this itinerary, most of the diving is not suitable for inexperienced divers due to depths and strong currents.

### Minimum dive certification and experience:

Divers joining an Eastern Banda Sea itinerary on Indo Master are **required** to have **PADI Advanced Open Water**, or equivalent certification, and a **minimum of 50 logged dives**. It is also strongly recommended that divers have *previous experience and are comfortable diving in currents*.

*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.*

### Diving Emergencies

The route on this itinerary covers many remote and isolated diving locations. In the event of a diving accident or suspected DCI incident, transfer from Indo Master to a hospital or recompression chamber is likely to require a private speedboat, emergency air evacuation or both. Recompression chambers are located in Manado (North Sulawesi), Labuan Bajo (Komodo), Bali, Makassar and Jakarta.

*It is your responsibility to ensure that your insurance will fully cover and reimburse all evacuation costs as well as recompression chamber and hospital treatment.*

### Water Temperature and Exposure Suits

We will be diving in two seas on this itinerary: The Banda Sea and the Arafura Sea, with water temperatures ranging from 26°C to 29°C (79°F - 84°F) across the area covered.

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

### Itinerary Details

Participation in this liveaboard itinerary is subject to acceptance of our Terms & Conditions as outlined here: [www.masterliveaboards.com/terms-conditions](http://www.masterliveaboards.com/terms-conditions).

**Marine Park & Port Fees:** 230 USD per person (to be paid on board).

**PLEASE NOTE:** *Marine park and port 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 before disembarkation.

**Number of scheduled dives:** Up to 34

This itinerary involves some long-distance travel and, while we endeavour to ensure the number of scheduled dives is fulfilled, bad weather and sea conditions can hinder the vessel's ability to reach or remain at specific dive sites and may impact the number of dives possible.

## Included land visits

Due to the distances covered on the Eastern Banda Sea itinerary, land visit(s) will generally only be offered when the vessel is in the Banda Islands. Here you will have the opportunity to visit the nutmeg plantations and see the influence of colonialism from the days of the Dutch settlers and traders.

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

**Day 1:** Embarkation is followed by introductions and boat and safety briefings. After this, you can assemble your equipment with help from the friendly crew and settle into your cabin before dinner is served. There is no diving on this day.

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

**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, typically scheduled as follows:

- Light Breakfast followed by a briefing & Dive 1
- Full Breakfast, relaxation followed by briefing & Dive 2
- Lunch, relaxation followed by briefing & Dive 3
- Snack
- Briefing for Sunset or Night dive
- Dinner

**Day 12:** For your last full day on board, we usually schedule 2 morning dives\* before the boat cruises to Kaimana Harbour, where it will remain at anchor overnight.

**Day 13:** Breakfast on board followed by disembarkation between 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m.

\*We kindly request that guests check their flight times to ensure 24 hours between their final dive and their departure from Kaimana.

While we wish to show you the very best diving possible, a number of factors determine which route the yacht takes and which dive sites we visit. *Weather, tides, currents, sea conditions and how many other vessels are in a particular location all play a part in the Cruise Manager's decision of where the Indo Master is heading, and which sites are chosen to dive.*

Following is a sample of dive sites which we may visit during your time aboard Indo Master. 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.

## Dai & Dawera

These two islands have plenty to offer from gorgeous shallow hard coral gardens to deep walls and rocky slopes covered with massive sponges. The seamounts are swarming with curtains of pyramid butterflyfishes and the friendliest longfin batfishes we have ever encountered. Spiny lobsters hide in the numerous cracks and overhangs in Dai, while shoals of snappers, unicorn fishes and rivers of fusiliers inhabit the pristine reefs.

## Nil Desperandum & Serua

Upwelling and currents around these islands bring nutrient-rich waters and with them an abundance of marine life. We see many larger fish species in these little visited waters. Tunas, Napoleon wrasse and groupers are among the most common sightings while hammerhead sharks are also known to make an occasional appearance. Schooling surgeonfish, bannerfish and barracuda give divers a spectacular display.

## Pulau Manuk

This tiny volcanic island offers stunning underwater topography covered with an amazing amount of soft and hard coral. This remote location in the middle of the Banda Sea is famed for being home to a multitude of sea snakes. Larger fish pass by on the outer walls including large numbers of barracuda, tunas and jacks with plenty of smaller creatures to be found amidst the pristine corals.

## The Spice (Banda) Islands

This group of islands boasts fantastic diving, with up to 40 metres of visibility. On land, enjoy the view of Gunung Api, a 640-metre-high active volcano, from the top of Fort Belgica, built by the Dutch in 1611 and located in the historical town of Banda Neira. Clove, nutmeg, mace and cinnamon are still the main spices grown here.

Currents can be strong around these small islands so the dive sites will be chosen based on the best daily conditions from the following options:

### Karang Hatta

A spectacular submerged reef with steep slopes surrounded by deep waters. Masses of red-tooth triggerfish, alongside fusiliers, Napoleon wrasse and hawksbill turtles populate this long reef. You might also be lucky enough to spot a few rare creatures like devil rays or even a scalloped hammerhead shark during your dive. Keep your fingers crossed before you enter this wonderful dive site.

### Hatta Blue Hole

This site is formed by a widespread hard coral shallow plateau extending away from the island to a majestic drop-off. A large opening on top of the reef opens to a swim through densely covered with huge vibrant Gorgonian fans. Also, massive barrel sponges inhabited by tiny hairy squat lobsters decorate the wall.

## Pohon Miring

Stunningly covered with colourful soft corals and gorgonian fans, a swim-through will take you through a sheer wall covered in Leather corals. Numerous big Napoleon wrasses inhabit the reef and dogtooth tuna patrol the blue waters.

## Batu Kapal

Named for its boat-like shape, this island is an exhilarating dive where curtains of red-tooth triggerfish, pyramid butterflyfish, fusiliers and surgeonfish merge into a multicolour fish soup. The walls are decorated with vibrant yellow soft corals and, on the rocky and sandy bottom, you can spot large groups of long-nose emperor fish hunting alongside bluefin trevallies and opportunistic Napoleon wrasses. Grey reef sharks patrol the surrounding blue while blackfin barracudas hover above the reef.

## Laval Flow

In 1998 the volcano on Naira Island 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 40 metres, an extensive hard coral garden completely blankets the solidified lava flow.

## 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 fishes 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.

## Koon Island

The area around Koon Island, which lies in between the Ceram and Banda Seas, is projected to be the biggest coral fish breeding spot in eastern Indonesia. Its position between a shallow sea and a deep sea attracts a variety of pelagic such as pompanos, Spanish mackerel, dogtooth tuna, and rainbow runners. The reef boasts great topographical diversity with white sandy bottoms, walls, steep slopes and a long plateau. We will have a full day of diving in this area, with three dives in this huge site.

## Sanggala Bay

Situated at the southern end of West Papua's Fakfak Regency, Sanggala offers both great diving and breathtaking landscapes. Cool water from the Papuan mountains flows through dense primary jungle to end up in the turquoise waters of the Ceram Sea. It is not uncommon to see local ships refilling their water tanks at the foot of the waterfall. An hour's upriver trek reveals a beautiful turquoise lake hidden in the forest where tree kangaroos occupy the trees.

There are two special dive sites to explore:

## Mike's Mount

Hundreds of metres long, this seamount attracts large pelagics such as oceanic manta rays, grey reef sharks, and big dogtooth tuna. Large shoals of fusiliers and surgeonfish drift above extensive hard coral fields, such as staghorn and cabbage corals, down to 40 metres. Masses of anthias and damselfish inhabit these vibrant coral gardens.

## Mikado

Years ago during a storm, a ship transporting tree trunks had to release its cargo to avoid running aground the shallow seamount in the centre of the bay. As a result, dozens of these trunks have formed a huge "Mikado" structure on the grey sand. This is a good place to look for twinspace gobies and upside-down jellyfish between the trunks. The seamount slopes are covered by hard corals where bumphead parrotfish and crocodile fish are some of the usual suspects.

## South Aiduma & Dramai Islands

The strait between Aiduma and Papua is the heart of Triton Bay, where the nutrient-rich current feeds some of Indonesia's most diverse colourful soft coral reefs. Because of this, we usually experience lower visibility than other areas, but it is worth it. The sites we dive here depend on sea conditions but may include the following.

### 7th Heaven

Undoubtedly a well-earned name, the walls are covered with pastel-coloured and purple soft corals. When there is a current, the corals are pumped with water creating a fantastic purple carpet over the rocks. You can also expect to see large schools of snapper, barracuda, and fusiliers cruising around.

### Batu Jeruk

The name of this site means 'orange rock' in Indonesian, which is not overstated. The dive is over a shallow rocky plateau and slope carpeted with orange-coloured soft corals where sweetlips, snappers, and fusiliers hover. The numerous rocks also create small overhangs where wobbegongs and giant groupers often rest.

### Tim's Rock

Expect to see an array of boulders decorated with black corals, a resting spot for Sweetlips, snappers, and glassfish. The white sand in between hosts numerous species of gobies and jawfish. Rocky slopes are densely covered with vibrant gorgonian fans, fully grown colourful soft corals, and whip corals. There are even a few yellow gorgonians in which the eagle-eyed may find the elusive yellow bargibanti seahorse.

### La Ultima Frontera

This small island is pierced by a large swim-through near the surface. Large schools of red snapper, surgeonfish, and fusiliers are regularly seen, creating a real fish soup, where giant trevallies cruise eagerly. Boulder clusters, adorned with hanging soft corals create a playground for wobbegong sharks, giant moray eels and honeycomb morays.

## Pintu Arus, Saruneus Island

Also located in the channel between Aiduma Island and Papua, this small island locally nicknamed 'Pintu Arus' or 'Pulau Arus', meaning current island, is best known for two specific dive sites: Little Komodo and Aquarium (also known as Larry's Heaven).

The area boasts a varied topography, including walls, rocky and sandy slopes, plateaus and boulders with a huge diversity and density of soft corals of all colours and forms.

**Little Komodo** boasts shallow boulders blanketed in massive colourful soft corals, a true photographer's paradise. When the current hits the boulders, huge colonies of orange-cup corals extend their polyps to feed on the nutrients carried within the water. On the walls, a large black coral forest with large gorgonian fans meets the sandy bottom at 25 metres. On top of this fantastic array of colours and shapes, wobbeongs, spiny lobsters and pipefishes hide beneath large table corals.

**Aquarium** is a small dive site adjacent to Little Komodo. Similarly adorned with large black and soft coral bushes, the volume of fish and usually good visibility make diving here akin to being inside an aquarium. Bumphead parrotfish and schools of Yellowfin barracuda, anchovies, fusiliers, surgeonfish, rabbitfish and more create a smorgasbord of photogenic delights.

## Bitsyara Bay

Not far from Kaimana is this large shallow bay which contains bagans (local fishing platforms). Whale sharks, drawn in by the smell of deceased fish from the fishing boats, are often spotted in this area although their presence is not guaranteed.

## Mauwera & Pelican Bay

Triton Bay also offers spectacular sights above the surface that can be explored, including white sand beaches, turquoise lagoons, mangroves, mushroom-shaped islands, and even some pelicans for patient eyes.

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