

# Palau Islands, Micronesia

## Itinerary - 6 Nights, 7 Nights, and 10 Nights

- **Embarkation: Sam's Tours, Koror at 18:00**
- **Disembarkation: Sam's Tours, Koror at 10:00**

Transfer to Sam's Tours from Koror airport or local hotels is provided free of charge on embarkation day. Pick-up time from local hotels is usually between 17:00 and 17:30.

Transfer from Sam's Tours to local hotels or Koror Airport is provided free of charge upon disembarkation at 10:00. Guests with evening flights who have made arrangements for day use at local hotels are responsible for arranging their own transfers from the hotel to the airport.

### **Marine & Port Fees:**

- 6/7 nights: 200 USD per person
- 10 nights: 270 USD per person

Marine park fees can be paid in advance, or on board.

### **Minimum dive certification and experience:**

Divers are required to have Advanced Open Water certification\*, or equivalent, with a minimum of 30 logged dives.

\*Advanced Open Water courses can be completed on board.

Guests who do not fulfil the minimum certification and experience requirements may be denied participation in some or all dives.

Guests are required to dive with a guide at all times in Palau. We have 3 permanent dive guides on board to enable small dive groups of 5-6.

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

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

### **Number of scheduled dives:**

- 6 nights: up to 18
- 7 nights: up to 22
- 10 nights: up to 31

Whilst we attempt to ensure the number of dives we have scheduled is fulfilled, bad weather can hinder the yacht's ability to reach a specific dive site.

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 are able to visit. Weather, tides, currents and how many other dive vessels are at a particular site all play a part in the Cruise Director's decision of where the Palau Siren is heading to.

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

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

Day 1: Embarkation from Sam's Tours at 18:00 followed by introductions, boat and safety briefings and dinner. There is no diving on embarkation day.

Day 2: Departure from Malakal Harbour after breakfast followed by a check dive, and up to 3 subsequent dives, as outlined below.

Days 3-5 (6 nights)

Days 3-6 (7 nights)

Days 3-9 (10 nights)

Your Cruise Director 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 & 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 before disembarkation:

For your last full day on board, we are able to schedule 3 dives\* before the boat cruises back to Malakal Harbour, where it will remain at anchor overnight.

Disembarkation day: Following breakfast on board, disembarkation is scheduled for 10:00.

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

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

The safety of our guests is paramount and we always do our best to offer diving at alternate locations, should we be unable to visit those sites listed below.

Guests are welcome to suggest preferred dive sites to the Cruise Director. He/she will be happy to accommodate guests' wishes, providing it is possible and the schedule allows for it.

## Ulong Island

### Ulong Channel

Often considered the best dive in Palau! This exhilarating drift dive has it all; hard & soft coral encrusted walls, schools of sharks and other pelagic action, a beautiful stand of lettuce coral as you drift through the channel, and plenty of groupers just to name a few. Keep your eyes open, seeing just about anything is possible on this dive!

### Siaes Corner

Schools of grey reef sharks, jacks and barracuda can be seen off the corner's edge while butterfly fish, moorish idols, anthias and fusiliers are abundant throughout the reef. Hawksbill and green sea turtles are also among the usual suspects.

### Siaes Tunnel

Siaes Tunnel offers divers an awesome experience as they dive through a naturally lit tunnel with several windows where they can experience endemic species only normally seen in deeper water. Cup corals, soft corals, reef fish and invertebrates inhabit the walls and ceilings of the tunnel. Near the bottom, dart fish, long nose hawk fish, and gobies can be found. White tip reef sharks sleep on the bottom near the tunnel's exit, while big eye trevally circle around.

### Shark City

Southwest of Ulong Island, a wall dive where currents attract many large pelagic fish from grey reef sharks to the occasional sighting of a bull shark or hammerhead. The wall drops to 50m (150ft) and is dotted with gorgonian fans. Shallower, huge lettuce corals host colourful anthias and moorish idols. Bumphead parrotfish are regularly seen here and you might see eagle rays cruising the reef wall.

### Sand Bar

This shallow sloping reef featuring garden eels and stingrays is also the place where hundreds of thousands of bumphead parrotfish are known to congregate for spawning; this stunning spectacle may only be witnessed at certain times of the month during the right moon phase. Night dives on this site reveal many interesting species including pleurobranchs.

## Malakal Harbour

### Chandelier Cave

A gorgeous cave system, containing four separate chambers with stalactites and stalagmites thus creating a 'chandelier' effect. The opening to the cave is wide and provides plenty of natural light; however, the inner section is quite dark and a torch is necessary. Keep an eye on your buddy and stay near your dive guide.

### Teshio Maru

On her way to seek refuge from the American attacks, the Teshio Maru was bombed and strafed by a passing US fighter north of the Malakal harbor, during "Operation Desecrate One" on March 30th 1944.

This Japanese army cargo ship now rests in 24m (80ft) of water on her starboard side. She measures 100m (330ft) in length and is one of the best dive wrecks in Palau.

### Iro Maru

This Japanese oil supply ship, sunk during 'Operation Desecrate', lays upright in 20m (75ft) of clear blue water. Descend via the mooring line to the bow and the 5 ½ gun mount, which is covered in black coral trees; then explore this coral encrusted wreckage. Schools of bat fish and large groupers hover above the wreck.

### Chuyo Maru

Located just west of Malakal Island, this is a medium sized Japanese coastal freighter that was also sunk during World War II. She lies upright on the seabed at a depth of 40m (120ft) with her deck at 30m (90ft). The guns on her stern deck are clearly visible and inside the bridge you can see the remains of the ship's brass compass and telegraph. The Chuyo is also host to a variety of crustaceans, mollusks, lionfish and well-camouflaged stone fish.

### Jake Seaplane

Jake was a reconnaissance floatplane that is believed to have crashed during take-off. The plane is still in one piece and makes for amazing photographs. There is little current and visibility is usually very good. Numerous mollusks have made their home here and we frequently see octopus, cuttlefish and nudibranchs, whilst the surrounding patch reef provides shelter for many juvenile reef fish.

## Ngemelis Island & the German Channel

### Blue Corner

The most famous dive site in Palau and has been voted #1 dive site of the world! Known for its strong currents, as well as consistent and abundant shark action, World-class diving does not get much better than Blue Corner! Each dive here is action packed where anything can happen! Schools of snapper, barracuda & jacks are regularly spotted and Napoleon wrasses are sometimes very inquisitive; coming close to divers for a perfect photo opportunity! Reef

hooks are needed for this dive. Smaller creatures including pipefish & leaf fish can be found in the channels.

### **Blue Holes**

Just along the reef from Blue Corner, is a large cavern with four “blue holes” at the top allowing natural light to enter from above. These rays of light make diving in the cavern a unique and amazing experience. White tip reef sharks can be seen on the sandy bottom and there are numerous critters, including dart fish and the flaming scallop, lining the cavern walls.

### **New Drop Off**

Located south of Blue Corner on a shallow plateau. The walls are filled with a medley of colourful reef fish including butterfly fish, angel fish, wrasse and triggers. Soft corals, large anemones and sea fans cover the wall while grey reef sharks cruise the blue water. Large Spanish mackerel commonly cruise on by with the sharks, whereas turtles amble about feeding on the soft corals.

### **Big Drop Off**

Another one of Palau’s famous wall dives. This vertical wall is covered with colourful soft corals, sponges, smaller reef fish and sea fans. Sharks patrol along the reef edge, but this is also a fantastic site to see filefish, longnose hawkfish, fairy basslets and schools of surgeonfish, parrotfish and angel fish. Turtles are often found feeding along the wall as well. You can also see WWII remnants here, don’t forget to ask your guide to show you Barnum’s Ball.

### **German Channel**

This artificial channel was created during the German occupation (1899 – 1914) to enable easier transportation of the phosphates they were mining. Today, the mouth of the channel is best known for encounters with manta rays which feed on plankton and visit the cleaning stations. White tip & black tip reef sharks can also be seen along with schools of snapper. We will visit this site several times during your trip.

### **Virgin Blue Holes**

Just south of Blue Corner, this site offers divers swim throughs and caverns to explore, before exiting onto the reef wall.

### **Dexter’s Wall**

A wonderful wall dive filled with soft corals, sea fans, nudibranchs, anemones and sea turtles. The area is well known for leopard shark sightings but also teeming with groupers, snappers, sweetlips and other reef fish.

## Peleliu Island

### Peleliu Cut

A site where we can experience some of the strongest currents of our trip due to converging ocean currents that flow around the archipelago. The cut is full of life; we will see plenty of pelagic species, such as sharks, jacks, barracuda, rainbow runners, snappers, tuna and sweetlips. Reef hooks are a must for this dive!

### Turtle Cove

The dive begins by plunging into a small blue hole on top of the shallow reef. Upon exiting at the bottom divers drift through schools of surgeonfish, butterfly fish and red-tooth triggerfish. Large schools of black snapper enjoy coming right up to divers along the wall. The plateau at near the end of the dive is filled with beautiful anemones, reef fish, sharks and turtles to finish off the dive. Occasionally, a leopard shark or ray will make an appearance.

### Yellow Wall

Named after the golden yellow cup corals (*Tubastraea faulkneri*) that cover the wall along this area of the reef, Yellow Wall is located northeast of Peleliu Express. The top of the reef features many crevices, cut backs and arches, where sweetlips, emperors, eels, and turtles can be found. Along the wall, when the current is running, look for sharks, wahoo, dogtooth tuna and other large pelagics.

During March and April, approaching the new moon, large schools of blue lined sea bream arrive for their annual spawning event. The school can number up to 100,000 and they will aggregate on this site after spawning in the early morning.

### Peleliu Express

Located at the southernmost tip of Peleliu Island, the open ocean currents converge bringing in large schools of pelagic fish. Sharks, giant trevally, dogtooth tuna and many varieties of barracuda, to name a few. Along the wall, hawksbill turtles, schooling snapper, and bumphead parrotfish are all commonly found, with large groupers, palette surgeonfish (Dory!), and many others on the shallow reef top.

The currents here can be extremely strong at times, most notably around the new and full moon phases, with speeds of 4 knots not uncommon. They are also known to pick up and change direction with little to no warning. When the current is running the Peleliu Express is considered one of the ultimate drift dives, however it is not for the faint hearted.

### Barnum's Wall

A favourite spot for a night dive. Turtles, groupers, sweetlips and a variety of sharks can all be seen here, as well as a myriad of nudibranchs, flatworms, sea whips and crinoids.

### Peleliu Wall

Covered with black corals & large sea fans, this huge wall allows for an easy drift dive whilst observing reef sharks, jacks & barracuda. On occasion bull sharks and tiger sharks have been seen here.

## Orange Beach

A soft drift dive along a colorful coral garden. Among the boulders, divers can encounter nurse sharks, turtles, scorpion fish, crocodile fish and nudibranchs. Divers may also come across WWII remains, such as bullets and shells.

## South Dock

A beautiful reef wall where divers can find parrotfish, surgeonfish as well as whitetip reef sharks cruising.

## Optional activities during your liveaboard

### Rock Islands and Jellyfish Lake Tour

During the cruise guests can take a speedboat tour through the Rock Islands, stopping at the world famous Jellyfish Lake and "The Arch" for the classic photo opportunity. You can also see islands shaped like an elephant or whale or just relax and enjoy the beauty of these Palauan islands.

The cost of this tour is included in your cruise price.

### Peleliu Island WWII Land Excursion (additional charges apply)

A local tour guide will escort you around the historic remnants of WWII battles which took place on the island. The tour is approximately 2 hours in duration. Please ask your cruise director to organize this tour for you.

Should you have any questions or queries 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.