Tufi - Papua New Guinea

Itinerary

The following is a sample itinerary of dive sites and wrecks we may visit during your liveaboard safari with Master Liveaboards in Papua New Guinea. We wish to show you the very best diving possible but a number of factors can determine where we visit. Weather, tides, currents and how busy a site is with other dive vessels all play a part in the Cruise Director's decision of which route the yacht takes. 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 specified dive site in good time. The safety of all on board is paramount and we always do our best in offering diving at alternate locations should we be unable to visit those sites listed below.

Your Cruise Director will schedule up to 4 dives per day; 3 day dives and either a sunset or a night dive. The diving day has a typical schedule 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, relaxation
- Briefing for Sunset or Night dive
- Dinner

Dive sites may include but are not limited to:

Tufi

Tufi - also known as "Norway of the Pacific' - provides spectacular scenery with "fjords" that were created by the ancient eruption of 3 volcanoes, plunging over 90 metres deep and rising over 150 metres vertically above the water. Tufi offers amazing marine diversity and a variety of diving experiences including fjord, reef and wreck diving. Visibility exceeds 30m with average year-round water temperatures of 26°C to 30°C.

Mulloway

Undoubtedly one of Tufi's signature dive sites! A classic sea-mount, that rises up from the deep (200m) sea bed to 5m at the reef top. You are taken to the far point where the reef drops off to beyond 200 m. Generally the current is strong, bringing plankton and bountiful food for thousands of fish. The place literally 'explodes'. Great hammerheads, reef sharks, rays and schools of jacks and barracudas are in frantic search of food. You can 'hang on' a protruding rock or a submerged mooring rope and watch the show. Mulloway is named after a guest who visits often from Mulloway near Coffs Harbour in Australia. Great visibility caused by the ocean's current upwelling. A spectacular giant clam lives at the safety stop.

B17 Bomber 'Blackjack'

The B17 Bomber "Blackjack" wreckage site is one of the world's greatest aircraft wreck dives. The historic B17 lies on a white sandy bottom in near-perfect condition at a depth of 45 metres. Nearby Cape Vogel is the village of Boga Boga, where you can seize the opportunity to marvel at its beautiful golden beaches and meet the village elders, who still tell stories of how they rescued the crew from the sinking plane. Blackjack can be dived between the months of November to April only. Bottom time is brief whilst diving and a special dive profile with compulsory safety stops is required, followed by a minimum surface interval of 4 hrs. Please note: that the B17 Blackjack is an Advanced dive and will be limited to those guests with appropriate experience. For those not qualified or comfortable participating in this dive, there is a stunning reef nearby and the plane can be viewed from shallower depths.

Pistoff B25 Mitchell Bomber

In 1943 this aircraft was one of 12 conducting raids on ships in the Lae area when 5 Japanese Zero planes intercepted them. Pistoff's right engine was hit badly and damaged but her pilot 1st Lt. Lett managed to escape from the attacking Zeros and head south. Rather than attempting the treacherous climb over the Owen Stanley ranges to Port Moresby with a damaged aircraft Lett determined a ditching near Wanigela, south of Tufi, was a better option. The aircraft ditched safely with only one minor injury. The entire crew were rescued by local villagers and later evacuated to Port Moresby. The aircraft is in good condition with most things still intact.

Humman's Colour Book

This dive is a consistent crowd pleaser. Discovered by, and named for Paul Humman, author and photographer of the extraordinary Fish, Critter and Coral series of ID books, this site has it all. Schools of oceanic triggerfish, titan triggerfish (by the dozens), golden spadefish, blackspine surgeonfish, pacific sailfin tangs, sleek unicornfish, scissortail sergeants, blue-spotted ribbontail ray, oriental sweetlips, many-spotted sweetlips, scalefin anthias, wide-band fusiliers, great barracuda, and more.

Goodenough Island

Cecilia's Reef

This bank, south-west of Goodenough Island, is the tip of a peak rising from a depth of 300 metres to 5 metres below the surface; here it forms a practically oval plateau, about a hundred metres long and thirty wide. The walls descend steeply all around the bank, disappearing into the blue. Although you can dive very deep here, you should not go beyond 25-30 metres as this is where most of the creatures living on this reef can be observed. Visibility is usually quite good and can reach 30-40 metres. On the reef, shoals of fusiliers and red lutjanidae swim in the current seeking food while labridae and surgeonfish dart through the corals. Look carefully to see the skillfully camouflaged shrimps, crabs and gobies in the corals and nudibranchs along the wall. You may even see a Rhinopia perhaps lying close to a splendid crinoid, but you must look very closely because this fish is a true master of disguise.

Fergusson Island

Wongs' Reef

This reef lies east of Fergusson Island, i.e. half a mile west of the small island of Uama. Although the area is partly sheltered from the influx of the open sea, diving here depends on the weather; it cannot be done when there are strong winds. Visibility is nearly always excellent.

The reef plateau starts at 9 metres depth, approximately hundred metres long and about fifty metres wide; one section to the SE rises to just 5 metres below the surface. To the west there is another small bank, separated from the main channel at a depth of 16 metres.

Abounding in coral formations, fish, clams, sweetlips, groupers, anemones, clownfish, parrotfish and surgeonfish, this reef is particularly attractive for its extraordinary variety of fish species. Descending southwards you will reach a vertical wall plunging down to the sea bed, with bushes of black coral; the branches of these conceal numerous hawk fish, waiting immobile for prey to pass by. A bit deeper in the blue you are likely to find a large school of barracuda and blacktip, grey, or whitetip sharks swimming in the current; these guys are curious and may come pretty close. Otherwise, numerous gorgonians and whip corals are on the slightly deeper sandy bed, you can find various dartfish and garden eels here too. The corals growing on the walls include a comprehensive selection of small crabs, shrimps, nudibranchs, including the uncommon Phyllodesmium Longicirra.

Observation Point

In front of a small beach, north-west of Normanby Island is the sheltered Observation Point. You will find three different types of habitat: sandy sea bed descending to 10 metres, a small meadow of seagrass, and a mangrove forest. In the deeper waters you can find large pink alcyonarians, a metre tall, providing a home to small gobies and shellfish; different types of feather worms pop up everywhere. The sea bed is mainly sandy and scattered with seagrass; this is where the most bizarre encounters may occur. Splendid crinoids with their feathery arms concealing harlequin ghost pipefish and unusual black and white clownfish hide in the tentacles of the anemones. Sole, dartfish and several types of scorpionfish are often seen here.

In the seagrass you will frequently spot young fish, batfish and shrimpfish, usually living in groups that resemble clouds and move head downwards. Among the other species are Antennariidae, flying gurnard "Dactyloptena Orientalism" sea horses and a special type of trumpet fish.

Several types of fish, anemones and crabs live in the branches of the mangroves. This is a great place for a night dive.

Normanby Island

Balaban's Bommie

This bank is situated close to the north-west tip of Normanby Island. The top of the oval-shaped reef is between 1.5 and 3 metres. The walls drop quite steeply to 15-20 metres where a ledge forms and blocks of coral are scattered among the sandy parts; it continues down to 50-60 metres where the sandy bed then gradually descends to a depth of 300 metres. The almost vertical walls do not have dense vegetation although you can admire large barrel sponges and crinoids, near which you may be lucky enough to see the famous Rhinopia. You must look very carefully because this species has great powers of camouflage.

Along the walls are various crevices and small caves where different forms of life can be observed: ascidians, blennies, nudibranchs, shrimps, moray and shellfish. Living on the sandy bottom are the fish typical of this habitat, above all small gobies, some in symbiosis with a blind shrimp that looks after the den. Also there are small spotted rays. A few metres below the surface, on the east side of the reef you end up in a magnificent hard coral garden. When the sea is very calm the rays of sunlight penetrating the depths create a beautiful spectacle. This dive is suited to all levels of experience.

Dobu Bubble Bath

Nice bubbles coming out of the seabed at 40+ degrees Celsius. A macro lovers site: white-speckled headshield slugs, blue velvet headshield slugs, brilliant headshield slugs, bus stop chromodoris nudi, flatworm (pseudoceros sp4), cigar wrasses, moorish idols, spagetthi worms, mantis shrimp.

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 divingholidays@wwdas.com who will be pleased to assist and advise you.