North Halmahera Exploration Indonesia

Itinerary

The following is a sample itinerary of dive sites we may visit during your liveaboard cruise with Siren Fleet in Indonesia. 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. This itinerary involves some long distance travel. 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
- Briefing for sunset or night dive
- Dinner

For your final day aboard we schedule two morning dives to allow plenty of time for off-gassing before disembarkation and your flight home. The Dive Leader is happy to listen to requests from guests to visit or remain at certain sites and providing it is possible and the schedule allows for it, then guests' requests are respected.

Dive sites we visit include but are not limited to:

Dampier Strait

Dense hard corals reefs and big fish schools characterise the sites in and around the Dampier Strait. Numerous dive sites are clustered together providing a variety of "Big Fish" dives with currents and more relaxed dives where smaller creatures can be found and photographed. Your dive team will check currents and choose sites based on the optimum conditions each day.

Manta Sandy - The 2 large bommies situated in the middle of a sandy bottom at just 18m (60ft) attract many reef manta rays for cleaning, with a variety of shades, even the black ones, nicknamed "Ninja Mantas". Divers rest on the bottom and watch the show. The reef itself has many smaller creatures with dragonets and various pipefishes. Therefore, in case the mantas are not performing their show, there is still plenty to look at and discover.

Blue Magic – A long finger-shaped seamount sloping down at the points with hard and soft corals, where schools of jacks and barracuda hover about. Oceanic & reef mantas can be seen hovering above the cleaning stations, while grey reef sharks are cruising in the blue. While waiting for some action, interesting camouflaged fish can be found such as the wobbegong sharks, and, for the keen eyed, pontohi pygmy seahorses.

Mike's Point – As we approach the tiny island known as Mike's Point, eagles can be seen resting in the tree tops. Underwater, the site offers varied topography with one side full of overhangs and crevices whilst the other has "steps" dropping down to the deep with a field of whip corals adorning the slope. With the right current this site is superb and the island can be circumnavigated in one dive seeing sweetlips, batfish, jacks, Spanish mackerel, grey reef sharks and Wobbegong sharks.

Penemu & Yangeffo Islands

The islands west of Gam, provide a range of dive sites for us to choose from including:

Melissa's Garden – This is one of the most amazing hard coral gardens to be found. Just at 5m (15ft), extensive fields of staghorn corals are inhabited by myriads of damselfish and patrolled by black tip reef sharks. On the slopes, watch the trevallies, Napoleon wrasses and schools of fusiliers. The sandy bottom is a good place to look for mushroom coral pipefish.

Mayhem – A seamount reaching 12m (36ft) below the surface, boasting big bommies with glass fish where wobbegong sharks are often found. With the right current, the tip of the reef is home to large shoals of fusiliers and surgeonfish that agglomerate together while hunters such as blue fin trevallies patrol the area. On the white sand around the seamount you may find resting whitetip reef sharks.

Citrus Ridge – A stunning reef named after the carpet-like orange, pink, yellow and green soft corals that cover the entire area. The up-current side often offers exciting encounters such as patrolling grey and blacktip reef sharks, schooling jacks and a vortex of black fin barracuda. On the lee side, jawfish bob out of their ground holes and wobbegong sharks rest lazily beneath table corals, Twin spot gobies are grazing on the sandy bottom, while crocodilefish await their prey.

Kawe & Wayag Islands

Crossing the Equator, the waters surrounding Kawe are home to exciting dive sites, where the beauty of the soft corals bommies rivals with the swirling shoals of fish.

Eagle Rock – Densely covered with orange soft corals, these bommies are the hangout of large schools of surgeon fish, squirrel fish and groups of sweetlips that hover under the rocky ledges. The current-swept plateau around this area is known to attract mantas who feed here or are in need of a clean.

Black Rocks – Big bommies breaking the surface and covered with soft corals. The large plateau around these rocks is carpeted by gorgonian whip corals and shoals of

fusiliers. Surgeon fish and snappers hover above the bommies, while blacktip reef sharks are regularly spotted.

Wayag Lagoon Tour & Viewpoint – A breathtaking paradise where karsts rise from the turquoise waters. For the adventurous, a steep rocky path leads to the most impressive viewpoint in Raja Ampat.

Northeast Halmahera

This is a new, unexplored area for diving where we will plan 2 exploration dives before heading northwest towards Morotai.

Morotai Island & Northwest Halmahera

An exciting three days of semi-exploration the dive sites in this area we have heard of. Explore with us these remote areas away from the crowds!

Copong Volcano – An active dual crater underwater volcano; both craters vent hot water.

Pintu Dua – With the right current an exciting drift dive in the channel between Negele besar and Ngele kecil, boasting a beautiful wall covered with pastel soft corals and sea fans.

NHR 6 – Densely covered by hard & soft corals, this pinnacle shelters dense schools of damselfishes and surgeon fish among the 'Acropora branches' and 'Bio Rock', an artificial reef building structure.

Cobo Holl Jetty – At night, a multitude of sand dwellers and critters come out of their day shelter. Expect nudibranchs, snake eels and frogfish.

Pulau Hiri – Two small islands exposed to current and open sea. With the right current, dense schools of surgeon fish, jacks & barracuda agglomerate in the blue waters surrounding the islands.

Patantie Strait

Located between Batjan & Halmahera, strong currents nurture the dense soft corals and gorgonian fan gardens that grow in Patantie Strait. Numerous protected bays offer interesting night dive opportunities to look for remarkable critters such has bobtail squids and walking sharks.

Proco – Located in a channel, this pinnacle extends to a plateau around 25m (80ft), densely covered by pastel, yellow, and orange soft corals, a wonderful array of colors contrasted by the schools of fusiliers and surgeon fish.

Batu Jabu – A massive submerged reef where you can drift along rocky slopes covered in beautiful hard and soft corals. There is a large aggregation of unicorn fish, fusiliers, snappers and surgeon fish. The shallows feature a dense bush of staghorn corals packed with anthias.

Goraici & Tamo - Tamo Islands

Renne's Rock – A massive pinnacle surrounded by extensive plateaus and large bommies. This is a good place to look for grey, whitetip & blacktip reef sharks. Grazing bumphead parrotfish are usually found in the shallows.

Akejojaru – A wide shallow plateau which is covered by large bommies extending far from the island, then dropping to a steep slope and a dramatic wall. The white sandy bottom at 60m (180ft) reflects the light onto the colorful soft corals making it great for photographers. A huge dive site with a great variety of seascapes. Usual suspects include blacktip reef sharks, massive Napoleon wrasse and bumphead parrotfish.

Tamo-Tamo Pinnacle – Great fish life along the wall covered of colorful soft corals. Ribbon sweetlips are often hanging around the deeper parts of the wall, where grey reef sharks hunt. Dense shoals of fusiliers and surgeon fish along with giant trevallies inhabit this reef.

Makian Island

We plan a full day of muck diving around this volcanic island.

Ferry Jetty – Sponges fully cover the pillars of the jetty where frogfish, honshu pipefish and nudibranchs find shelter. The shallow plateau with grey sand is home to a variety of critters waiting to be discovered: ghost pipefishes, dragonets, diverse cephalopods such as long-arm octopus, bobtail squid, colourful flatworms. A macro-diver's delight!