

Sample Banda Sea 10 Night Itinerary

This trip combines the best dive sites of Banda Sea, and South Raja Ampat (Misool). The great highlights are the amazing macro sites in Ambon Bay, large pelagics in Banda Islands, manta cleaning stations near Mansuar and the huge schools of fish near Farondi.

The **Dampier Strait** separates the Birdhead Peninsula from Waigeo and Mansuar. The name comes from the Dutch colonial times. It refers to the shape of the peninsula on the map, but it is also a paradise for many rare bird species.

Here the Pacific Ocean meets the Halmahera Sea, with an explosion of marine life. With regular strong currents, big fish feel especially comfortable. Manta rays, reef sharks, different schools of mackerel, tuna and barracuda are seen again and again.

Diving in the endless maze of the islands of Misool is very special. It is paradise for macro enthusiasts, but encounters with larger fish such as manta rays happens. Misool is one of the most biodiverse regions in the world with fish, corals, sponges, soft corals, shrimps, crabs and countless nudibranchs and other invertebrates. Huge schools of sardines are a definite highlight. Soft corals and sea fans (diameter of 3-4 meters) in all sizes and colors dominate the underwater landscape.

Nusa Laut. Varied reef scapes with beautiful coral gardens and loads of fish. Schools of surgeon fish, big eye jacks, and a variety of reef fish including barracudas sweeten the dive. With some luck you can even see hammerhead sharks. Another highlight is the night dive under the pier, where we "hunt" critters. Angler fish, scorpion fish, pipe fish and many other creatures are on display.

Banda Neira is the main island of "Banda Islands", which are part of the Maluku archipelago. The "Banda Islands" consists of 10 small volcanic islands. Visit the old fortress of the Dutchman on Banda Neira, or climb a volcano is part of our program. Over 20 years ago lava flowed into the sea and formed a hard coral garden which is amazing! Everything a diver could wish for can be seen in this canal which flows towards the Banda Sea. It guarantees a unique spectacle of schooling

fish; giant groupers, large schools of barracudas, snapper, surgeon fish, sweet lips in the midst of beautiful coral. This is an underwater photographers haven, there are so many things to photograph, it becomes confusing. The sometimes violent currents cannot guarantee the best visibility, but there is a big chance to see large fish such as manta rays, sharks and even mobulas.