

MSY Aurora

Cruise 12 nights Banda Sea

(Ambon – Alor – Maumere)

Starting with muck dives, crossing the Banda Sea, and tracing the perimeter of islands. Let our experienced crew show you those almost untouched locations with wonderful reefs and stunning drop-offs. Marine life is in abundance from critters, sea snakes, manta rays, sharks and much more. Frequently whales might be spotted from the surface.

Day 1: Ambon

Our staff will pick you up at the airport for immediate boarding. Depending on the arrival time, we might do the check dive around Laha or Tulehu Bay and maybe even a night dive. Laha or Tulehu Bay: area known for its fabulous muck dives, probably among the best in the world for the macro dive. Only the Lembeh Strait in Indonesia can compete.

Day 2: Nusa Laut & Molana

South of Seram, fantastic diving experiences on the reefs of Molana and Nusa Laut. These rather picturesque islands of Maluku are popular dive destinations due to their diversity of reef fish species, ghost pipefish, frogfish and the variety of well-preserved hard corals. **Flash News:** we have seen sperm whales in the area on previous trips, so keep your eyes wide open.

Day 3-4: Banda Islands, outer reefs

You will now arrive at the northern end of the outer reefs of the Banda Sea: Pulau Suanggi. The waters here are full of fish, reef sharks and tuna. As a small bonus for bird lovers, many species can be observed around the island: brown boobies, red-footed boobies and frigate birds. Pulau hatta / Karang hatta: We will dive both sloping reefs and vertical walls. The current attracts many fish: fusiliers, dogtooth tuna, eagle rays, barracudas and sometimes sharks. On the reef: soft corals, leather corals, big eye trevallies and turtles.

Day 5: Manuk, Snake Island

Manuk, the 'Snake Island', a volcanic island with lower interest on land. It takes its nickname from the large amount of sea snakes found there. You will surely see a lot! The drop-offs here are amazing and sharks, mackerels, tunas and barracudas are often observed.

Day 6: Serua, Nil Desperandum, Nila

Nil Desperandum ('no despair') takes its name from a ship, stranded on the reef. This atoll is sometimes called 'the forgotten islands'. You may be lucky enough to come across hammerhead sharks.

Day 7: Damar

Terbang Utara / Terbang Selatan, two small islands located south of Damar. Usually, we can expect easy but very fast drifts along marvelous coral drop-offs. Nuss Leur: several pinnacles with all the colorful life of coral reefs.

Day 8: Nyata

Nyata, northeast of Romang Island, offers stunning landscapes. Crystal clear waters and reefs on different levels, like in a theatre, with hard and soft coral gardens. Keep your eyes open: pelagic encounters are to be expected!

Day 9: Reong and Wetar, last step of the Banda Sea

Wetar is a large island north of Timor. Untouched landscapes with lush vegetation, the dives are not to be missed. Stunning drop-offs and pelagic life are waiting for you. Reong Island: white sand beaches and turquoise water. Steep walls are all around the south side of this little island. Covered in soft corals and gorgeous table corals, these reefs attract a big number of reef fish. Overhangs and small caves make the dive exciting and interesting.

Day 10: Alor Strait

Nusa Tenggara area, Timor. An incredibly rich biodiversity on land and underwater. The place offers all types of dives, from superb muck dives to magnificent drop-offs with sweeping currents. Pulau Pura and Pulau Ternate: clear and warm water with nice coral gardens and a huge marine wildlife. Superb macro to observe, especially the shy mandarin fish. An unusual and excellent bonus of diving here is the possibility of spotting pilot whales and dolphins from the surface. We will take you on a land excursion to see a forgotten tribe in a local village. An unforgettable cultural experience!

Day 11: Komba

We will dive around Komba, an active volcano. The sandy slopes are home to various fish species. On the rocks, nudibranchs and shells. After the dives, a guaranteed thrill with a tour close to the volcano. Eruptions occur every 20 to 30 minutes!

Day 12: East Flores

Tanjung Gedong: northeast Flores. The reef slopes down into a sandy area with large coral heads. The beautiful deep sections are decorated with soft corals and large table corals. Reef sharks, groupers and other encounters are to be expected. We will cruise to Maumere in the afternoon.

Day 13: Maumere

After a nice breakfast on board, our Aurora crew will organize, according to your flight schedules, your transfer to the airport of Maumere. Unfortunately our trip will arrive at an end and we have to say goodbye but we hope to see you again on board.

Please note that this itinerary is a diving program, and can be changed depending on many factors!

In addition, we want to emphasize that this route, because of its great distance, is more than the others depending on weather conditions. In this area, the weather is rather uncertain and it may happen that there are big waves and a strong wind.

Number of dives: 32-36 dives including the night dives

Dive Experience: experienced Advanced Open Water Diver or level 2 (minimum 50 logged dives)

When to go: March to May or October to November