



Sample Itinerary: Raja Ampat (Misool, Dampier Strait & Wayag)

11 nights - from: Sorong, to: Sorong

Starting from Sorong in West Papua, we do a nice check dive in the eastern part of the Dampier Strait, after which we set out to Batanta. At Dayang, a beautiful small sandy island and home to a population of Coconut Crabs, lying just at the entrance to one of Batanta's many scenic bays, colorful reefs with Wobbegong Sharks, schooling Yellow Snappers and great macro-life, including Pygmy Seahorses and unusual Nudibranchs, await us. Dayang island also offers a great chance to encounter Manta rays, the gentle giants, at their cleaning stations.

After Dayang, we head further southeast to the soft-coral-paradise of Misool and its smaller surrounding islands. With its abundance of stunning dive sites this area invites to linger several days, indulging in the natural beauty of karst limestone, jungle clad islands.

Diving around the small islands Daram and Yelliet we admire large coral heads covered in soft corals, maybe spotting the famous Santa Clause Pygmy Seahorse, while schools of Barracudas and Batfish might pass by. Here it is worth visiting the ranger station with a nice snorkeling opportunity and plenty of small Black Tip Reef Sharks. Our eagle-eyed dive masters may well find the fascinating Pom Pom Crab or the 'Walking Shark' (Epaulette Shark) on a night dive at Romeo Rock.

In Boo area we look through the iconic Boo Windows, with tons of fish surrounding us. We explore fabulous dive sites like Magic Mountain, Nudibranch Rock and Yelliet Kecil. And if we are lucky, we see the majestic Oceanic and Reef Manta rays again around here.

Wagmab, Farondi and No Contest offer us stunning underwater walls, overhangs and cave structures plus amazing macro, such as Nudibranchs, Flatworms, Anemone Crabs, all kinds of shrimps, and Electric File Clams. In this area we have the opportunity to visit the wonderful Balbulol Lagoon, a must-see place, with its iconic bee-hive-shaped karst limestone formations and hard coral colonies at the bases of these amazing geological structures. If the tide is high enough our crew will take you to the secret bay right at the back of Balbulol.

Next, we make our way north to Penemu. Famous Melissa's Garden awaits us with its spectacular, healthy and wide-spread hard coral plateau in the shallows. At Fam Wall we can admire large Gorgonian Seafans and lovely reef tops, and we might also explore Fam Wall and My Reef. A short hike to viewpoint of Penemu offers a spectacular view of the lagoon and its surrounding islands.

An even more stunning panorama can be indulged at world-famous Wayag, which is our next destination. Uninhabited and incredibly picturesque, Wayag Island is an icon of Raja Ampat. Covering a total area of 155,000 hectares it is known for its beautiful atolls and extraordinary underwater life. Breathtaking at every turn, in Wayag you will find pristine beaches and the unique Karst islands that resemble mushrooms sprouting from the sea.

The dives at Far Out Rock and Figure of 8 are characterized by pelagics like Giant Trevally, schools of Big Eye Trevally, Reef Sharks, and if we are lucky small schools of Mobula Ray. Then we let the day unwind with a night dive at the ranger station or a beach barbeque.



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After Wayag we move on to Kawe, visiting Eagle Rock among others, named for the majestic eagles circling above the small, rocky islands. Underwater, divers can encounter creatures like Wobbegong Sharks, Sweetlips, Sardines, Barracudas, Tuna, Bumphead Parrotfish and Reef Sharks, even the occasional Manta ray!

Black Rock, where soft corals bloom in a variety of colors from the rocky outcrops, amazes us as Raja Ampat's full abundance comes to life in a most vibrant display. One Tree Island and Weka's Wow make for splendid day dives, too. Our night dive we might enjoy at Aljui Bay, where will be on a critter hunt. It is not unusual to find macro favorites like Frogfish and Ghost Pipefish.

In this area we could take a little detour to visit the pearl farm close by.

After a short crossing south to the western tip of Gam island, we head to an island called Yengefo, which protects a sheltered bay. This small area has multiple world class dive sites. Famous ones like Citrus Ridge and Mayhem always amaze divers with their vibrancy and biodiversity. The area here is probably so abundant due to the surrounding mangroves. Beautiful hard and soft corals grow under and among the roots of the trees, so a dive at Mangrove Ridge is truly enjoyable. And our crew will be happy to take you out in the dingy to snorkel in the mangroves in between dives. Sunsets and sunrises are very special at our mooring point at Yengefo: as the sun drops, the surrounding forested hills become alive with flocks of Sulphur Crested Cockatoo's and Blyths Hornbills emerge to return to their roosting places.

The remainder of our adventure we spend diving in the adrenalin-packed Dampier Strait. We can choose from world-class sites like Cape Kri, Chicken Reef, Mikes Point, Sardines Reef, Mios Kon and Blue Magic. Our guides can take you to places where the current meets the reef head on, where we can witness predatory fish (like for example Black Tip, White Tip and Grey Reef sharks, Giant Trevally, Spanish Mackerel and Dog Tooth Tuna) hunting huge schools of smaller fish like Fusiliers and Big Eye Jacks.

Our last day will offer 2 more action-packed dives in the Dampier Strait and we can arrange for a bird watching trip on the last morning to see the enigmatic and endemic Red Bird of Paradise. Eventually we make our way back to Sorong for hearty goodbyes.

For booking inquiries please contact us at info@coralia-liveaboard.com.