

Crociiera a Raja Ampat



The Raja Ampat archipelago consists of some 600 Islands and islets that straddle the equator in the area off the “Birds Head” - the Doberoi Peninsula, the extreme north-western tip of the Papua province of Indonesia. The name Raja Ampat literally means ‘the Four Kings’ and dates back to the time that the islands were ruled from the North Moluccan sultanates of Ternate and Tidore. (In those days each of the four larger islands in the group, Waigeo, Salawati, Batanta and Misool used to have an independent ‘raja’) Most of the islands have rugged and steep coastlines and are covered with virgin rain forest. The larger islands are lightly populated, but most others are uninhabited by humans. Until the turn of the century the name Raja Ampat was still completely absent from Indonesian travel brochures. Trailblazing diving expeditions undertaken by some adventurous souls have put the archipelago on the map and nowadays Raja Ampat has become world famous as one of the most noteworthy ecological niches on the planet, on a par with the Great Barrier Reef and Galapagos. Marine biologists have concluded that Raja Ampat is home to seventy percent of the known coral species on the planet. Many fish, corals and crustaceans that live in these waters are found nowhere else on earth. However, apart from the reefs, this area also has some of the most stunning top-side views in the world. During this 10 day cruise The schooner will take you on a thorough exploration of what is without a doubt one of the least visited but most memorable adventure destinations on our planet. You do not need to be an expert diver to be able to experience that this is the global epicenter of marine diversity. We will take you snorkeling (few people realize that ninety percent of reef life lives in the top 4 meters of water, so snorkelers will not miss out on anything). You do not need to be a seasoned birdwatcher to see the bird life that brought Alfred Russel Wallace to this region over a century ago. We certainly hope to witness the display dance of the dazzling red bird of paradise, to hear the shrieks of the crested cockatoo and the flapping of the wings of passing hornbills....

On day one upon arrival at Sorong airport we immediately transfer you to the harbour where The schooner is waiting. Once you are aboard our cruise director will first give you a general briefing to familiarize you with the vessel and our safety procedures. Then we cast off/raise the anchor and the vessel goes on a Northerly course into the Dampier Strait. Our first destination is Kri, just east of slightly larger Mansuar Island. Here we will enjoy our first experience of white-sand beaches, clear waters, and iridescent reefs with the backdrop of heavy rain forest. We spend the night at anchor.

On day two during the morning we take you snorkeling. It will be a great introduction to the underwater splendor of

Raja Ampat because this very area is considered to have some of the richest reefs in the world. In the afternoon we will proceed to the South coast of the island of Gam. Here we will go ashore and make a trek inland in an attempt to spot the red Bird of Paradise. In the evening we will depart for an overnight passage of some sixty-five miles. Sometime during the night we will cross the equator for a 24 hour foray on to the Northern hemisphere....

On day three, when you come on deck you will encounter a unique phenomenon: a great number of tiny islets whose bases over time have been eroded by the relentless motion of the tides. We have arrived in the Wayag Islands. The landscape is typical of 'karst dissolution' so the chain of islands was cut into a series of coves and lagoons, narrow channels and inlets, caves and jagged rocks as well as countless shaded beaches. In the morning we go hiking to an amazing point of view ashore. In the afternoon we will explore the beaches around the bay, swimming and snorkeling, and in the evening we will have a superb seafood beach barbecue. In the course of the evening we raise the anchor and go on a southerly course again.

On day four, around noontime we first make a landfall on the North Coast of Kofiau Island and we find a sheltered anchorage off the village of Deer, on a small island separated from Kofiau by a clear channel. We go ashore and use our tenders to explore the area. The water around these islands is clear enough to see the bottom everywhere. In the course of the afternoon we proceed to the Boo Islands. This is a group of small islands with extremely rich vegetation and a true birdwatcher's paradise. We drop anchor in between the islands and go snorkeling in the lagoon of Boo Kecil. There are no permanent human settlements on these islands. Apart from parrots many seabirds fly past. We spend the night at anchor.

On day five we leave at sunrise and start our passage towards Misool. This island, also known as Batanme, is located about 40 miles southwest of the Doberai (Vogel Kop) Peninsula. Flat lowlands cover the coastal regions except in the South, which is hilly and mountainous; the hills in the central part of the island reach an elevation of 3,250 feet. The climate is hot, with heavy rainfall; seasonal streams flow seaward from the central highlands, where there are dense hardwood forests. The island is sparsely populated. In the afternoon we reach the village of Lenmolas on the Eastern end of the north coast. We spend the rest of the day ashore to get the feel of this remarkable island and to hear about its long history.

On day six we first round Cape Yamtu and we follow the east coast southward. In the afternoon we reach the east-coast of Misool Island. Few areas in Indonesia can lay claim to such unsurpassed natural beauty as this part of the Misool archipelago. We base ourselves off the Farondi Islands and go swimming and snorkeling in surroundings that are truly magnificent.

On day seven we move again a little further south to the archipelago that extends south from Cape Forongketo. This is another large cluster of uninhabited islands. We will spend another splendid day using our tenders to explore the beaches and the reefs in the neighborhood of Kalig and Fiabacet.

On day eight we move to the Kepulauan Penyu (the Schildpad Islands), 16 miles NNE of Misool for a last day of swimming and snorkeling. These are a group of eight islands covered with high trees and quite different from what we have seen before. In the course of the evening we start our passage to return towards the mainland.

On day nine, in the early morning we make a landfall on the southern coast of Batanta Island. In the course of the day we proceed to Markhesa Bay, close to Sorong and spend some time ashore to meet the people in the local village and listen to their stories. We hope to hear of their adventures in nature and of their secrets of life and death.

On day ten, after breakfast, we take you across the Bay back to the mainland and once you have said farewell to the captain and crew we transfer you to the airport for the return flight to Bali or to any other destination.

Participants should be aware that itinerary and program of our sea voyages occasionally may have to be modified, due to factors beyond our control: unfavorable weather conditions, delay in processing harbour clearances, modified schedules of domestic flights. The cruise director and captain of the Vessel will adjust the program accordingly in the best interest of all. Please note that the domestic flights are not included.

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