



Ultimate Indonesian Yachts

14-DAY / 13-NIGHT ITINERARY – AMBON, THE BANDAS & RAJA AMPAT



Embark on a 14-day sailing sojourn taking you from Ambon to the Banda Islands and onwards to Raja Ampat onboard a private yacht. This journey will begin in Ambon and end in Sorong.

AMBON & THE BANDA ISLANDS

Cloaked in tropical rainforest, Ambon Island is a fertile, mountainous island that lies off the southwest coast of Seram Island on the north side of the Banda Sea. It makes up part of a chain of volcanic islands on the northern side of the renowned Banda Islands. Back in the 16th century, the Banda Islands were the only place in the world where nutmeg could be found, which at that time was the most expensive spice on the markets in Europe. For many years, the isles were known for their significance in the spice trade. Today, they are known not only for their history but also for their breathtaking landscape, both above and below water. With a mix of history and natural beauty, these islands are the perfect place to enjoy diving, snorkelling, beach barbecues and time ashore exploring forgotten forts reclaimed by the jungle and nutmeg plantations dotted with ancient almond trees.

RAJA AMPAT

Raja Ampat is as remote as you get - closer to West Papua than anywhere else. The name translates as 'Four Kings' referring to the four main islands of Salawati, Batanta, Waigeo and Misool, which are in turn surrounded by approximately 1,500 wild islands with pristine beaches and sheer limestone cliffs plunging into aqua seas. Above water, the islands' cultural heritage is diverse, with prehistoric cave paintings and relics from the era of the Four Kings who once ruled here. Intrepid visitors can trek through the jungle, learn about traditional kampong life in local villages, visit a sea turtle rookery and explore the coastal mangroves by sea kayak. Resounding with bird calls, the Raja Ampat archipelago houses the largest number of freshwater bird species in the region; parrots, hornbills, lorikeets, marbled frogmouths and birds of paradise to name a few. Beneath the surface, Raja Ampat is recognised as the world's most bio-diverse marine ecosystem with 1,200 species of fish and 550 species of hard and soft coral, a shelter for 6 of the world's 7 species of sea turtle.



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SAMPLE ITINERARY

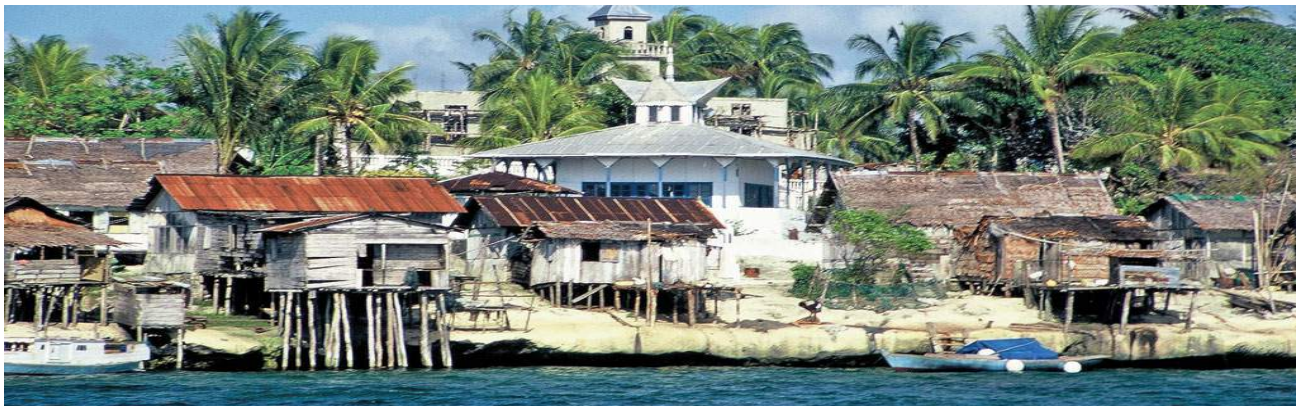
DAY 1: AMBON

You will be met by the crew at Ambon airport and transferred to the harbour to board your private yacht. After you have settled in and been briefed by the crew, the afternoon will be at your leisure, and we can enjoy a snorkel at one of Indonesia's most spectacular sites in Ambon harbour.

DAY 2 & 3: BANDA ISLANDS

Early this morning, the Banda Islands will emerge on the horizon - think of all the European explorers and sailors hundreds of years ago who would travel across the world hoping to see the very same view. Over the next two days, you'll find plenty of interesting sights to explore. Head ashore on Banda Neira, where every building could be a museum, with cannons in front of colonial houses and 17th century inscriptions on the walls. There's the impressive Fort Belgica and a former governor's palace to see, among fascinating local museums. Then there are the historical nutmeg plantations of Banda Besar and the ruins of Fort Revenge hidden in the jungle on Ai Island. You can also visit Rhun Island – the first British overseas colony ever. This tiny piece of land was once the subject of a long conflict between European colonial powers, and was transferred to the Dutch after the English came to an agreement that it would be swapped for Manhattan! Diving and snorkelling in the Bandas is magnificent, with walls covered in massive gorgonians, soft corals, barrel sponges and some very interesting swim-throughs. And, at the end of each day, you can pitch up on a dazzling white beach in the shadow of an active volcano and enjoy sunset cocktails.





DAY 4: KOON

The tiny island of Koon is a veritable aquarium for underwater aficionados. Coconut palms dot the island, which is encircled by a blindingly white beach melting into turquoise seas. The coral reef fringing the island is well protected and acts as a haven for fish.

DAY 5 & 6: MISOOL

This morning, the yacht will reach the southeast end of Misool. You'll awake to a shimmering pastel sunrise and enjoy a decadent breakfast on deck, with tea and coffee served by your crew. This chain of tiny islands carves the area into hundreds of narrow channels concealing lagoons, coves, cliffs and limestone overhang, caves and endless pristine beaches. Here in Raja Ampat's southernmost island, you'll spend two days exploring Misool's treasures. The surrounding dive and snorkel sites have been voted some of the best in the world: *Boo Windows*, *Magic Mountain* and more, a myriad of exhilarating and relaxing underwater pursuits. Above water, you can explore the ethereal "Gua Sacral" ancestral caves of Tomolol, a former burial site of indigenous Papuans. Swim through a cathedral-like cave coated in orchids and discover ancient cave paintings edging the crystal blue surface. There's a pearl farm nearby where you can see how the local's forge a living in these remote parts. Powder sand beaches await your footprints, and you can claim one as your own for as long as you like, hunting for shells or picnicking in the shallows.





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DAY 7: THE PASSAGE, WAIGEO

Rise at the crack of dawn for the best chance of sighting a rare Red Bird of Paradise. Your cruise director will accompany you to the island of Gam, where the curious local children will wander with you to the foot of a jungle-clad hill. Hike around 45-minutes to reach the bird-watching platform and keep your eyes and ears open for signs of this elusive, beautiful bird. Return to your yacht for a well-earned breakfast and take in the statuesque mushroom islands of Kabui Bay, marking the entrance to a narrow channel of water through which strong currents run with each tide – the famous Passage. The channel is framed by limestone cliffs and green vegetation and below, offers a rare glimpse at what is effectively a “salt water river”, shrouded with soft corals, fans and sponges. Nearby, the southern edge of Gam has quiet waterways leading through mangroves where you can glide through narrow inlets in the tender, exploring the jungle. You may be lucky and see a bloom of stingless moon jellyfish, making for an enigmatic swimming experience.





DAY 8 & 9: WAYAG ISLANDS, NORTH RAJA AMPAT

For the next two days, the yacht will cruise the interminable green island maze that comprises the most visually stunning scene in Raja Ampat – the Wayag Islands. This postcard worthy tropical paradise proves a magnificent backdrop for watersports. Kayak, paddleboard or cruise at water level on the tender, exploring hidden coves in the shadow of Wayag's sheer limestone peaks. You can climb the renowned island peak behind the anchorage for a full panoramic view of the azure waterways through the rock formations, and finish the hike with a swim at the dazzling white sand beach below. One evening, you will be treated to a magnificent fresh grill on a deserted stretch of beach at sunset, complete with a blazing campfire, comfortable cushions and cocktails.

DAY 10: KRI, DAMPIER STRAIT

This morning, you'll awake to the sound of tropical birds calling from the depths of the jungle. Mioskon Bay is a spectacular anchorage where you can spend the morning snorkelling in the mangroves, or kayaking across mirror still waters, hugging the verdant coastline. Famed for its abundant fish-life and vibrant coral slopes, the Kri peninsula offers some of the most exquisite underwater vistas in Raja Ampat. Here, you can snorkel over vibrant soft and hard coral reefs through veils of colorful reef fish, and encounter turtles, sharks and even manta rays. Nearby, the island of Mansuar is home to an interesting church, and you can head ashore for a glimpse of local culture.





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DAY 11: ARBOREK

In the 1700s William Dampier reached the northwestern tip of Papua and travelled with the rising tide into the great channel that now bears his name. The Dampier Strait conveys massive quantities of seawater, forcing currents to flow parallel to the equator where most currents flow north and south. Dampier's tidal surges carry planktonic feasts that attract hundreds of Manta rays at this time of year near Arborek Island. Spend time diving or snorkelling over the shallow sandy bottom and wait for the giant mantas to pass, swooping past with curious eyes in an elegant underwater ballet. After lunch onboard, head to shore to Arborek village. Arborek has a population of under 200, with very hospitable people creating handicrafts from sea pandan leaves including hats, string bags and carvings. Another beautiful day in Raja Ampat ends with cocktails on deck as the sun melts into the horizon.

DAY 12: SORONG

The yacht will set sail early this morning towards Sorong. After a farewell breakfast, you will be escorted to the harbour by your yacht's crew, and onwards to the local airport to catch your flight home.

Please note that all itineraries are subject to change, depending on weather conditions, progressing harbor clearances, changes to domestic flights and other deciding factors. Please contact Ultimate Indonesian Yachts to discuss your requirements. info@u-i-y.com

