

Indonesian Explorer Cruise Itinerary

[Link: Indonesian Explorer Cruise](#)

Tour Overview

Discover paradise on an authentic expedition through Indonesia's remote and little known tropical islands. Swim with the Whale Sharks in Kwatisore Bay, visit Komodo National Park, home to the famed Komodo Dragon, discover Jacques Cousteau's "underwater nirvana" Wakatobi National Park and explore the turquoise waters and rainbow corals of Raja Ampat as we traverse powdery white sand beaches and untamed jungles. During our voyage from Bali to Madang, including post cruise flight to Cairns, we have the opportunity to see Birds-of-paradise and many more endemic species, World War II relics and visit remote tribes and villages.

A true expedition voyage in every sense, our journey will explore Indonesia's rarely visited and little known biodiverse-rich jungle-capped islands scattered across pristine pellucid waters well beyond traditional tourist routes. Join us and discover a true paradise where untouched dense jungles home to some of the rarest flora and fauna on the planet meet crystalline tropical waters teeming with exotic marine life and some of the world's best coral reefs all wrapped in a land steeped in history and rich in culture and tradition.

Comprised of some 18,000 islands, this Southeast Asian archipelago's fascinating human history dates back almost 2 million years. European arrival saw Portuguese spice traders chasing the fragrant bounty of nutmeg and cloves in the 16th Century, this was followed by Dutch colonisation then Japanese occupation during World War II before Indonesia regained its independence in 1949.

While still a heavy hitter on the spice trading scene, Indonesia is now attracting attention for having one of the richest concentrations of flora and fauna on the planet. One of the world's 17 mega diverse countries, Indonesia is home to 2 of the planet's 25 biodiversity hotspots, 18 of the World Wildlife Fund's Global 200 ecoregions and 24 of BirdLife International's Endemic Bird Areas. Its dense forests, jungles, oceans and waterways we will be exploring boast more than 25,000 species of flowering plants (40 per cent of which are endemic), 1,592 bird species (430 of which are endemic and 114 considered extremely threatened), 1,051 reptile and amphibian species, 515 species of mammal and half of the world's fish species. There will be opportunities to see some of these species on this expedition.

For botanists, birders and nature lovers alike, this expedition offers numerous opportunities to spot once-in-a-lifetime species and experience rare wildlife encounters on remote and unknown islands. This expedition includes the option to join a sea kayaking excursion with an expert guide. Kayakers are rewarded with tranquil, tropical settings and are a source of fascination to the locals who often paddle their canoes out to join them, and invite them back to their villages.

An optional birding program is available on this departure. Book early, as it will fill up. Itinerary

Itinerary

Day 1: Denpasar, Bali

For centuries Bali has captivated the imagination of artists, writers, and travellers with its landscapes of emerald terraced rice fields back-dropped by the sacred volcano of Mt. Agung. Make your way to the hotel where our group will spend the first night of the expedition. This evening meet your fellow voyagers and expedition guides over dinner at the hotel.

Day 2: Denpasar



Enjoy breakfast followed by time to explore the cultural and historical delights of Bali's capital. This afternoon transfer to Heritage Adventurer where your Captain and Expedition Team will welcome you aboard as we set sail for Sumbawa Island.

Day 3: Sumbawa Island



East of its more famous sibling Lombok, mountainous Sumbawa Island blends laid back island life with spectacular volcanic ridges, terraced rice fields, tangled jungles and beautiful sandy beaches replete with stunning coral reefs and remote bays awaiting exploration. Historically divided between east (Bimanese speakers) and west (Sumbawanese speakers), this isolated island that time almost forgot juxtaposes luxurious mansions alongside old wooden huts, remote wilderness and traditional Adat law and lore. Today we will experience a number of time-honoured traditions and cultural encounters including meeting the creators of the famed intricate hand-woven ikat fabric, observing martial arts displays and ancient tribal rites for a truly authentic immersion in the local culture.

Day 4: Komodo National Park



A sanctuary for the giant monitor lizard, the Komodo Dragon, walk along a forested pathway to a viewing area for a closer look at these prehistoric reptiles which can grow up to 3 metres (10 ft) in length and weigh up to 135 kilograms (300 lbs). The surrounding forest is home to Timor Deer, the favourite prey of the dragons, as well as elegant Yellow-crested Cockatoos. Enjoy our first snorkelling excursion off splendid Pink Beach, with world-class experience often described as “swimming in an aquarium”.

Day 5: Kodia Island



This morning we are warmly welcomed by the locals to the stunning white sand beaches and turquoise waters of coral reef fringed Kodia Island. While excellent snorkelling and beachcombing are a given, there are also excellent birding opportunities and unforgettable cultural encounters. Observe traditional ikat weaving and learn about the island’s community-driven mangrove conservation and restoration project.

Day 6: Wakatobi National Park



Famously described by legendary underwater explorer and conservationist Jacques Cousteau as an “underwater nirvana”, Wakatobi is a cetacean highway and home to breathtaking coral walls. Today’s snorkel excursions reveal an incredible array of marine reef inhabitants; underwater photographers will appreciate a bizarre macro world among corals as shallow as 20 feet. Highlights include colourful frogfish, octopus, marbled snake eels, cockatoo wasp fish, flying gurnards, multitudes of crab species, and dazzling anemones.

Day 7: Buru Island



Fascinating and seldom visited, Buru Island is located at the boundary between the biogeographic zones of Australia and Asia. A high proportion of the species of birds and mammals that occur here are found nowhere else with 10 endemic bird species and 4 endemic mammals as well as a number of near-endemic species. This morning we will explore these remote shores together with our expert naturalists and guides. Enjoy opportunities to explore the forests in search of wildlife and many of the endemic species and enjoy the hospitality of local communities during village visits.

Day 8: Seram Island

One of Indonesia's relatively undiscovered gems, Seram Island seamlessly blends stunning tropical island aesthetics with biologically rich and rare flora and fauna of the Wallacea region at the crossroads of Asia and Australasia. In addition to having Indonesia's deepest cave, Hatu Saka, and the world's longest underground river, Sapalewa, 6 of Seram Island's 28 mammals and 33 of its more than 213 bird species are endemic or near endemic. Our explorations here could include venturing into the jungle to look for the endemic Salmon-crested/Seram or Moluccan Cockatoo (the largest of the white cockatoos), Thrush, Oriole, Honeyeater, Myzomela and Friarbird, and visiting a stilt house village where life continues unchanged. Though headhunting is no longer practised, traditional weapons including bow and arrow are still used for hunting.

Day 9: Misool Island



Part of the Sultanate of Tidore during the spice trade wars, Misool Island is the second largest island in the aquatic wonderland that is Raja Ampat (aka Four Kings Islands, named after its four main islands) and our introduction to this stunning marine environment. Rich in heritage, it was colonised by the Dutch, however still maintains its cultural essence and traditional ways of life with indigenous constructions, folk dance and respect for nature prevailing. On land, discover caves hidden among verdant forests featuring rock art dating back more than 5,000 years, while under its protected waters Dugong, Bumphead Parrotfish, Clownfish, Manta Rays, Ghost Pipefish, Harlequin Shrimp, Pygmy Seahorse and more can be found among spectacular coral gardens and sea-cave cemeteries. Over the course of the day we aim to explore the labyrinth of caves and passages, and hike up to the viewing platforms to enjoy the spectacular vistas Raja Ampat is rightly famous for.

Days 10-11: Raja Ampat



Lapped by stunning turquoise waters, Raja Ampat's collection of 1,500 tiny, jungle-cloaked islands are among Indonesia's most beautiful. We plan to spend two days exploring the bounty of rainbow corals, shoals of multicoloured fish, intriguing ocean-carved limestone formations and jungles of this tropical paradise of forgotten islands. Believed to contain the most biodiverse marine habitat on the planet, the waters surrounding Raja Ampat are home to 600 species of hard coral and 1,200 types of reef fish and make for exceptional snorkelling and Zodiac cruising. On land, spotting the brilliant Wilson's Bird-of-paradise and Red Bird-of-paradise will be high on our agenda here, with early morning visits planned ensuring the very best opportunity for all to see these remarkable birds in their natural habitat and, hopefully, witness their rarely-seen mating dance around their 'lekking' trees. Other activities could include beachcombing, visiting villages and engaging in cultural exchanges with locals and forest walks.

Day 12: Manokwari & Arfak Mountains



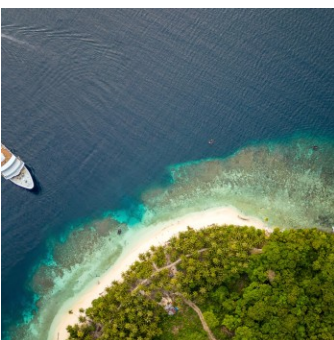
Located at the top of the Bird's Head Peninsula and surrounded by lush rolling hills and impressive spine of the Arfak Mountains, Manokwari is the capital of West Papua. Options here include an early rise travelling high into the Arfak Mountains to the Pegunungan Arfak Nature Reserve exploring the higher elevations and misty tropical montane rainforests with their exceptional suite of endemic plants, animals and birds. During our journey we will be on the lookout for the Western Parotia and Vogelkop Bowerbird, and visit the viewing hides for a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to observe the Magnificent Bird-of-paradise, among the region's 320 bird species. Alternatively enjoy a sleep in and explore the fascinating town of Manokwari, home to more than 24 different tribal groups.

Day 13: Cenderawasih Marine Park



Enjoy the unforgettable experience of swimming with the iconic Whale Sharks of Kwatisore Bay in Cenderawasih Marine Park. One of the best places in the world to snorkel with these gentle giants, we aim to visit the local fishermen's Bagans (handmade floating platforms) where these mega-fish (known to grow more than 12-metres in length), hopeful of catching some of the smaller fish escaping fishermen's nets, are known to congregate. This spectacular 15,000-square-kilometre marine park is also home to some of the finest coral reef examples in the world and 18 tropical islands, which we will explore, where 209 species of fish and 4 species of turtle can be seen. We also plan to visit a village where the locals live by a unique mix of traditional, Dutch and modern influences.

Day 14: Biak & Rusbasbedas Islands



The seldom-visited Biak Island in the Schouten Islands archipelago of Cenderawasih Bay boasts the highest endemic biodiversity in Papua including 17 endemic birds. Among the species we may encounter are the Long-tailed Honey-buzzard, Red-capped Flowerpecker, Yellow-bibbed Fruit-dove, Geelvink Imperial-pigeon, Biak Black Flycatcher and Numfor Paradise-kingfisher and Leaf Warbler. In the afternoon we plan to sail to the pristine and isolated Rusbasbedas Island with its white sand beaches, sheer drop-offs and enormous corals teeming with brightly coloured fish, making it paradise for snorkellers and beachcombers.

Day 15: Liki Island

Enjoy a warm welcome on Liki Island, part of the Koemamba Islands in formerly Dutch New Guinea, where villagers share local customs and traditions along with some of the island's culinary delights. Explore the forest looking for wildlife on a nature walk, or snorkel along the edge of the abundant coral reef on this charming and rarely visited island.

Day 16: Jayapura

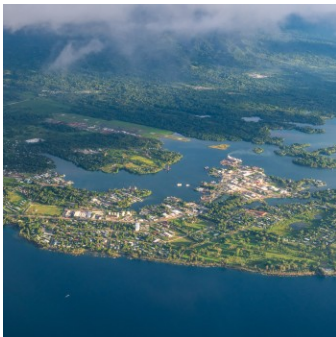
The peaceful paradise of Lake Sentani, the glittering freshwater lake reflecting the steep, verdant mountains in the Cyclops Strict Nature Reserve of Papua's capital Jayapura, is renowned for its famous artifacts, traditional motifs, pottery, woodworking and bark paintings, and is our destination following an early morning arrival. We will journey to the lake's edge and experience local culture in the form of dance and artists at work making bark paintings and bride money. Return to the ship for lunch and sailing towards Vanimo and Papua New Guinea for our International arrival into Papua New Guinea.

Day 17: Sepik River, Papua New Guinea



We have allowed plenty of time to fully appreciate this remarkable river, its birds, wildlife and the people who call it home. The Sepik River, the longest in Papua New Guinea, flows from the highlands to the Bismarck Sea. It is a rich arterial river that has fostered great traditional artists. We plan to explore the river by Zodiac, following tributaries and channels in search of local wildlife. Enjoy a warm welcome at Kopar Village where we will experience village life and their traditional Dragon Dance. The world-renowned artists of the region travel long distances to meet the ship and there is the opportunity to purchase unique carvings and more directly from them.

Day 18: Flight Madang, PNG to Cairns, Australia



The self appointed 'Prettiest Town in the South Pacific', Madang is bound by lush rainforest, calm blue waters studded with volcanic islands, Tupira's supreme surf break, flourishing coral gardens and rich history. For those disembarking, a flight to Cairns will conclude your voyage, OR continue the adventure with us on the Secrets of Melanesia. Note: During our voyage, circumstances may make it necessary or desirable to deviate from the proposed itinerary. This can include poor weather and/or opportunities for making unplanned excursions. Your Expedition Leader will keep you fully informed.

What to Expect

The focus and emphasis of every expedition is getting you ashore as often as possible for as long as possible with maximum safety and comfort. Our Expeditions are accompanied by some of the most experienced naturalists and guides, who have devoted a lifetime to field research in the areas that we visit. This is a general natural history expedition rather than a dedicated birding tour. Travellers can look forward to a mix of wildlife viewing and time to appreciate the region's incredible scenery.

Every day we offer a combination of interesting shore excursions and fun shipboard activities. The number of participants per group may vary as there are a variety of daily activities to choose from, but you can generally expect a group size of maximum 30. For this tour we have a combined focus and most days offers a choice between wildlife adventures or arts and culture experiences, plus opportunities to enjoy local cuisine. Shore excursions range from low-exertion walks to more demanding outings that may involve steep, uneven, or muddy trails. All landings are wet Zodiac

landings, meaning you will step into shallow water before reaching shore and change footwear on dry land. A reasonable level of mobility is required to navigate the gangway and to get in and out of Zodiacs (with assistance).

When the ship is underway, it is a wonderful time to join a naturalist on deck, take photos of the stunning scenery, or get caught up on some reading in the library. In addition, our resource staff will give informative talks at various times throughout the voyage.

Meals in the ship's dining room are a great opportunity to meet new friends and recount the day's adventures. Special diets can be accommodated with advance notice. Safety is also a top priority with Eagle-Eye Tours - our team has extensive experience in the field, and all of our Voyages are run in conjunction with operators with the highest safety standards. The Heritage Adventurer is equipped with a well-stocked hospital and medical doctor on voyages.

We know that everyone travels for different reasons. Over the years, however, we have found one common element among the guest who choose to travel with us - a thirst of knowledge and authentic experience. Knowing this drives us to ensure the highest quality learning experience on our trips, by taking time to carefully design each trip we offer.

We will have an optional birding extension in 2027. You must register for this at the time of booking as space is limited. Clients on the birding programmes will be in small groups of 10 guests with a dedicated birding guide. The birding groups will have the opportunity to disembark the ship early in the mornings for excursions, have birding focussed options on shore landings, evening meetings, and a dedicated birding list. Space is very limited, so sign up early. Please note that the hikes to see the Birds of Paradise are difficult with steep, muddy trails.

What's Included

Tour Price Includes

- Discovery fund
- One night hotel accommodation in a twin share room (including dinner/breakfast)
- Transfer to ship
- All on board ship accommodation
- All on board meals including house beer, wine and soft drinks with lunch and dinner
- All shore excursions and activities
- Programme of lectures by noted naturalists
- Post cruise transfer to airport & flight from Madang to Cairns

Tour Price Does Not Include

- International flights to start/end
 - Visas
 - Extensions
 - Travel Insurance
 - All items of a personal nature
 - Laundry
 - Drinks
 - Optional birding extension \$500 (2027)
 - Optional kayaking
 - Gratuities
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