DAY	ITINERARY WITH MV MERMAID I RAJA AMPAT – BANDA SEA – AMBON	DIVES
DAY 1	Embark in Sorong. Check in on board MV Mermaid I. As guest arrivals take place from 06:00-14:00, depending on flights, you are welcome to board when you arrive and spend some time looking around Sorong, gearing up, etc. Following the boat and safety briefing, it's overnight cruising to the Strait of Dampier. Cruise overnight to the Dampier Strait (40nm).	dives -
DAY 2-3	Dampier Strait – Raja Ampat. Diving around the Dampier Strait, Yangeffo, Penemu, and the northern reaches of Raja Ampat offers the full spectrum of the region's legendary biodiversity. The Dampier Strait is the centrepiece, where nutrient-charged currents fuel dense clouds of fusiliers, snappers, and trevallies around sites like Blue Magic, Sardine Reef, Cape Kri, and Mioskon. Wobbegong sharks hide beneath coral heads, reef sharks patrol the slopes, and manta rays sweep through cleaning stations. Yangeffo adds a unique twist with its mangrove–reef fusion at Mangrove Ridge, where hard corals flourish beneath arching mangrove roots lit by dancing sunbeams. Westward, Penemu offers coral gardens shaped by lively currents, with Melissa's Garden standing out as a sweeping hard-coral amphitheatre buzzing with chromis, batfish, sweetlips, and swirling barracuda. To the northwest, Aljui Bay contrasts this with calm, sheltered walls perfect for macro and night diving—frogfish, nudibranchs, ghost pipefish, and critters tucked into sea fans and sponges—alongside the famed pearl farm set in dramatic limestone fjords. Diving around Kawe offers dramatic underwater topography, vibrant coral gardens, and nutrient-rich currents that attract schooling fish, reef sharks, and the occasional manta. In the afternoon, between dives, we can visit several traditional Papuan villages, meet the locals and walk on white sandy beaches. Cruise overnight to Misool (90nm).	dives 7
DAY 4-6	Misool – Raja Ampat. The next 3 days will be spent around the island of Misool. Diving in Misool is a paradise—truly heaven for wide-angle photographers—where towering coral bommies, manta cleaning stations, and fish-rich ridges explode with colour and motion. Sites offer sweeping seascapes filled with soft corals, swirling schools of fusiliers, and graceful reef sharks. Above the surface, Misool is just as enchanting: a quiet walk along its powder-white beaches reveals jungle-covered limestone cliffs and shallow turquoise lagoons alive with baby reef fish. A gentle dinghy tour through the hidden lagoons and narrow karst passages brings you into glassy, jade-colored pools surrounded by soaring rock walls. Cruise overnight to Pulau Koon, Ceram (110nm).	dives 11

DAY 7

Pulau Koon – Ceram. Pulau Koon is a small island southeast of Ceram, halfway between Raja Ampat and the Banda Islands. The diving around Pulau Koon is exceptional. Its signature site, "Too Many Fish", truly lives up to the name: immense schools of fusiliers, surgeonfish, snappers, and batfish move like living clouds as predators—giant trevallies, dogtooth tunas, and rainbow runners. The walls and ridges around the island drop into deep blue water, covered in healthy hard corals, soft coral fans, and sponges. Cruise overnight to Pulau Manuk (110 nm).

dives

3

DAY 8

Manuk – Banda Sea. Manuk, often called "Snake Island" is a remote, bird-covered volcanic outpost rising abruptly from the Banda Sea. From above, the island appears as a steep, jungle-green cone topped with the dark rim of an active volcano, its cliffs streaked white by thousands of seabirds. Boobies, frigatebirds, terns, and tropicbirds circle endlessly overhead, filling the sky with calls and giving the island an unmistakable wild, untouched atmosphere. The slopes plunge straight into deep blue water, and from the surface, you can often see clouds of birds diving for fish around the island's rocky perimeter. The volcano continues underwater as sheer walls, ridges, and terraces coated in hard corals, sponges, and sea fans. Large schools of fusiliers, trevallies, and surgeonfish pulse along the drop-offs. Sea snakes—mostly olive sea snakes—are famously abundant. The island's deep, current-swept points can also offer seasonal encounters with hammerhead sharks, especially during cooler upwelling periods, when groups of scalloped hammerheads may rise from the depths along the walls. Cruise overnight to the Bandas Islands (55nm).

dives

3

DAY 9-10	Banda Islands. The next two days will be spent in the Banda Islands, also known as the Spice Islands. Diving in the Banda Islands is an unforgettable experience, with crystal-clear waters, dramatic underwater walls, and vibrant marine life shaped by the region's volcanic forces and deep-sea currents. This remote archipelago includes Pulau Run, known for its pristine reefs and abundant fish life; Pulau Suanggi, the northern frontier famous for strong currents and the chance to encounter schooling pelagics; Banda Neira, the cultural heart with mellow reefs set against centuries of history; Banda Besar, offering long coral walls rich in biodiversity; and Gunung Api, the active volcano whose past lava flows have created uniquely regenerated coral landscapes. In the deep channels surrounding these islands, particularly during the right season, divers may even enjoy the thrilling possibility of hammerhead shark sightings. The Banda Islands are much more than diving. It is also a cultural and historical experience. We will spend one morning walking around the village of Banda Naira with a local guide, and visit the local museum, the Old Dutch fort, the old colonial governor's house, the local fish market, and we will have breakfast at a nutmeg plantation. Cruise overnight to Ambon (110 nm).	dives 6
DAY 11	The last diving day of the trip will be around either the island of Nusa Laut or in Ambon Bay. Nusa Laut is a small island, next to the island of Saparua, which has some beautiful hard coral fringing reefs as well as walls similar to those of the Banda Islands. Or, you will spend the day around Ambon, where there are several options such as wrecks, caves or some really interesting muck dives looking for Rhinopias, frogfish (including the psychedelic frogfish), harlequin shrimps and many other critters. Total 2 dives Or, you will spend the day around Ambon, where there are several options such as wrecks, caves or some really interesting muck dives looking for Rhinopias, frogfish (including the psychedelic frogfish), harlequin shrimps and many other critters.	dives 2
DAY 12	Disembark at 8am. Mermaid I staff will transfer you to the airport or local hotel in Ambon. **This is a sample itinerary and is subject to changes beyond the operator's control. The exact itinerary, route and amount of dives for your cruise may be adapted to best suit the weather conditions, tides and currents, season and other prevailing events.**	dives -

TOTAL DIVES : 32