



Ten Days - Raja Ampat

Sorong - Raja Ampat - Sorong

The Raja Ampat archipelago lies to the west of the Bird's Head Peninsula, straddling the equator off the extreme northwestern tip of the Papua province of Indonesia. Comprising 610 – 1,500 islands (depending on the accepted distinction between an island and a rocky outcrop), the region has been described as the 'Last Paradise on Earth.' The name Raja Ampat literally means 'the Four Kings' and dates back to the time when the islands were ruled by 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 bow to an independent 'raja.' The islands are distinguished by their rugged and steep limestone coastlines, covered with virgin rainforest extending right down to the water's edge. The larger islands are lightly populated, but most are uninhabited. Until the millennium, the name Raja Ampat was completely absent from Indonesian travel brochures. Trailblazing diving expeditions, undertaken

by modern-day explorers and adventurers, have since put the archipelago on the map, and today Raja Ampat is world famous as one of the most noteworthy ecological niches on the planet, on a par with the Great Barrier Reef and the Galápagos.

Marine biologists have established that Raja Ampat is home to 70 percent of the known coral species on the planet. Many of the fish, corals and crustaceans that live in these waters are found nowhere else on Earth. Yet, while the below-surface world is reminiscent of a living kaleidoscope, the above-surface views are among the most stunning that you are likely to behold in a lifetime.

During this ten-day cruise, we will take you on a far-reaching 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 a diver to be able to experience this global epicentre of marine diversity.

Nor do you need to be a seasoned birdwatcher to see and appreciate the dazzling birdlife that brought Alfred Russel Wallace to this region over a century ago. We certainly hope to witness the curious bobbing, flapping and weaving display dance of the red bird of paradise, to hear the shrieks of the crested cockatoo and the loud whooshing wing beats of the hornbills in flight.

Note: Guests will meet the Katharina in Sorong, West Papua. As we would like to make a punctual start, we recommend that you to fly to Makassar (Sulawesi) one day in advance of the start date, and then take an early morning flight from Makassar to Sorong. Please note that airfares to and from Sorong are not included in the tour package. Our SeaTrek office will be happy to assist you with any information and flight reservations.





Day to Day Itinerary

Day 1

Your flight will arrive in the West Papuan port town of Sorong, the gateway to Raja Ampat. From the airport we will transfer you to the harbour where the Katharina will be waiting at anchor. Once settled into your cabin, your cruise director will familiarise you with the vessel's facilities and safety procedures. Ready to start our adventure, we will weigh anchor and set a southerly course for the Misool archipelago, stopping for a refreshing swim along the way. We will then dine alfresco on the main deck while meeting



the other passengers and crew and watching the sun set on our first day at sea.

Day 2

This morning we will wake to see the sun rise over the picturesque chain of islands that makes up the Misool archipelago. The topography is typical of 'karst dissolution,' featuring a great number of tiny islets whose bases have been eroded over time by the relentless motion of the tides. We will spend the day maximising everything that this fascinating area has to offer by marvelling at both the marine wonderland under the water and the magnificent landscape above the surface. We can test out our paddling skills in the sea kayaks, watch for birds perched on the rocks, or just sit back and take in the glorious

scenery. After a full day of island hopping through this archipelago, the Katharina Putih will spend a quiet night at anchor in Misool's Tomolol Bay.

Day 3

A swim through Tomolol's mysterious dome-topped cave is undoubtedly one of Raja Ampat's most memorable activities. After an early breakfast, our tenders will take us into the heart of the bay to see this partially submerged cave where it is possible to swim, snorkel or simply float while gazing up at the cavernous grotto adorned with astonishing stalactites. The more adventurous can swim or paddle through the dark waters to the other mouth of the cave. After returning to the ship, we will use our tenders to explore more of this impressive maze of karst islands, both above and below the surface, complete with mysterious skull cairns in sea-cave cemeteries, and prehistoric 'petroglyph' cave paintings, estimated to be anything between 3,000 to 5,000 years old and depicting various human figures and huge human palms, fish, flowers and plants, tools and vessels. Overnight, our boat will cruise north to the island of Batanta.

Day 4

After our days of marine exploration, the jungle-clad island of Batanta offers us a change of scenery and a chance to stretch our legs on an adventurous trek into the island's

interior. We anchor at the foot of Arefi Village, nestled on the north coast of the island, where we will find local guides to escort us through the mangrove waters to the start point of our trek. A short walk along the riverbed brings us to the first of two jungle waterfalls complete with a refreshing pool for cooling off. The fit and adventurous may choose to continue the uphill climb along the rocks to where a second, larger cascade awaits. After leaving the wilderness behind us, we will find a nearby spot to swim and snorkel before moving north to the island of Waigeo.

Day 5

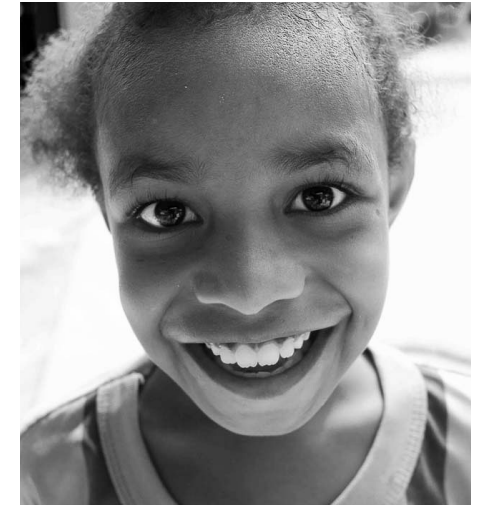
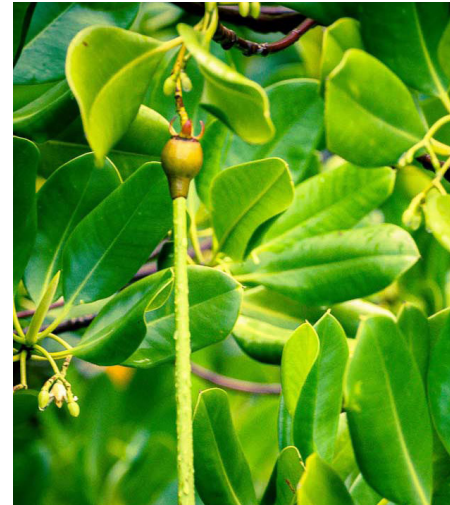
We will wake up in the south of Mayalibit Bay – the huge and wild bay at the heart of Waigeo, Raja Ampat's biggest island. The bay, which almost splits the island in two, is entered via a narrow fjord-like channel that meets the ocean just east of Waisai on Waigeo's south coast. When the tide is running, the huge volumes of water flowing into or out of Mayalibit make the channel look like a swift and powerful river. After breakfast, we will take the dinghies to Lopintol Village where we will find one of the villagers

to guide us on a morning spelunking expedition. We hope to visit two very dramatic and contrasting caves that highlight the fascinating underground formations of the karst landscape. After lunch, we will freshen up with a well-earned swim and snorkel before heading to Sapokren Village on the southwest tip of Waigeo Island to meet with a local NGO leader to discuss illegal logging,

community development and (hopefully) details of a new FFI (Flora & Fauna International) project in these areas.

Day 6

After waking up, before sunrise, we will follow in the footsteps of the famous naturalist Alfred Russel Wallace in a pre-dawn quest to spot the remarkable Red Bird of Paradise, one of the species that



Wallace was most anxious to collect. We hope that the efforts of our trek through the forest will pay off, enabling us to catch a rare and privileged sight of the bird's elaborate courtship dance as the day breaks over the forest canopy. Whether we spot the birds or not, for sure we will experience a wonderful trek. Afterwards, we will turn our attention from the sky to the sea as the Katharina makes its way through the Dampier strait, home to some of Raja Ampat's premier reefs. With a bit of luck, we hope to snorkel among some of the larger specimens of marine life attracted to the strait's nutrient-rich currents. We will end our day by mooring off Pulau Arborek in front Arborek Village. Here, we can easily circumnavigate the tiny island by foot and gain a sense of the Asai culture, which is still kept alive by the villagers living in this isolated place.

Day 7

Another full day of adventure awaits us along the convoluted western coast of Waigeo. We will begin the morning by

exploring Wofoh, three island gems linked together by stretches of pristine coral reef. You can use the tenders or kayaks to navigate the islands, or put your newly-acquired fish identification skills to use in exploring this vibrant reef. Or you may prefer to simply just relax on the beach. In the afternoon we will move northwards to Aljui Bay, home to the Cendanda Pearl Farm, one of the larger producers of high quality seawater pearls in the region. Pearluring is an important industry throughout Indonesia and a number of farms can be seen in the waters of Raja Ampat, where the farmers may grant us permission to visit their facilities and receive an explanation of the pearling processes that we have seen during our voyage. In the evening we will make our way across the equator to the northern hemisphere on our journey to the islands of Wayag.



Day 8

Few areas in Indonesia can lay claim to such unsurpassed natural splendour as Raja Ampat's Wayag islands. The beauty of these picturesque karst spires is perhaps only equalled by the brilliant colours and vibrancy of the reefs and the marine life that flourishes below. Nature has carved these islands into a series of coves and lagoons, narrow channels and inlets, caves, jagged

rocks and shaded, sandy beaches. For those who dare, there are some spectacular but nearly vertical climbs that are rewarded with magnificent panoramas. We will spend a quiet night here at anchor.

Day 9

The Wayag islands are Raja Ampat's best, and we will make the most of this unique region for one more morning, navigating

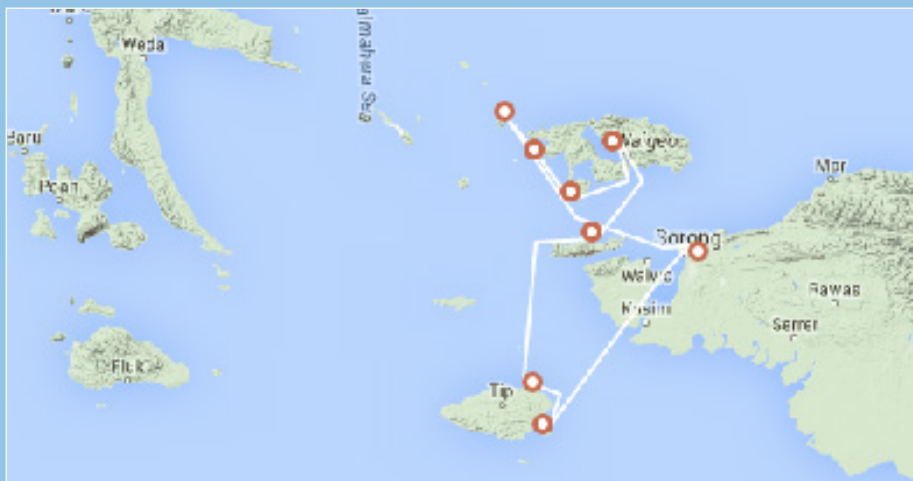


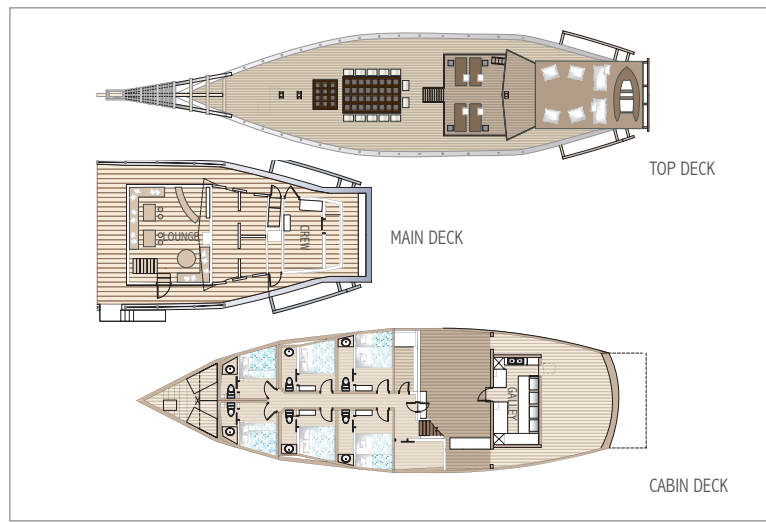
Day 10

the maze of mushroom-shaped islands, and stopping for swimming and snorkelling. In the afternoon, we will set our compasses to return to the southern hemisphere on our way back to mainland West Papua. In the evening we will have our farewell dinner with our captain and crew.

After a quick stop for a final swim and refreshments on one of the nearby islands we will make our way back to the harbour of Sorong, arriving around lunch time. Here we will bid farewell to the Katharina and her crew. Our tenders will take you ashore for your transfer to the airport for your onward travel.

Route Map





KATHARINA

Six superior cabins with en-suite bathrooms.
 Saloon & bar. Outdoor covered dining area. Rooftop lounge area.
 Kayaks. Stand-up-paddle boards (SUP). Snorkelling equipment.
 Fishing gear. Two tender boats.
 Full complement of crew: engineering and service.

Length overall: 35 metres
 Deck length: 26 metres
 Draught: 3.5 metres
 Rig: Gaff-rigged ketch
 Cruising speed: 7-9 Knots
 International standard navigation & safety equipment
 (including radar and satellite phone).

ABOUT SEATREK SAILING ADVENTURES

Based in Bali, SeaTrek is the premier adventure sailing operator in Indonesia, with over 25 years of experience showing guests the distinctive beauty and charm of the archipelago's exotic islands and seas. Our vessels have highly-trained crews and multilingual tour guides and we offer a variety of cruises to suit those looking for the unique natural wonder, history and cultures of this far-flung corner of the world.



Call: +62(0) 361 270 604
 Enquire: info@seatrekbali.com
 Add us on Skype: Seatrekbali
 Browse other itineraries: www.seatrekbali.com

