

KUDANIL EXPLORER

IMAGINE | EXPLORE | DISCOVER

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HISTORY, HAMMERHEAD SHARKS & THE BLUE MAGIC

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19 - 29 OCTOBER 2024

An expedition to the Spice Islands & Raja Ampat



AMBON - SPICE ISLANDS - RAJA AMPAT - SORONG 10N

The 'spiceries' were for centuries the most sought-after islands in the world, capturing the European imagination and inspiring Columbus to undertake his famous journey westward. Relive the Spice Island voyages of adventurers throughout history and discover the best of Wallacea, a region that is a key contributor to the mega biodiversity of the Indonesian archipelago, a waypoint for migratory birds and marine life such as blue and sperm whales, and home of schooling hammerhead sharks.

Snorkel in remote waters and set anchor at the legendary Banda Islands, the original source of nutmeg and mace and now home to some of the most resilient coral and breathtaking underwater worlds. Travel back in time among nutmeg and cinnamon plantations and colonial architecture. One of the smallest of the Banda Islands, Pulau Rhun, was 'exchanged' by the British in the 17th century for another island on the other side of the world, a place known today as Manhattan.

The unique, endemic flora and fauna of Papua were key to Wallace's understanding of the evolution of species - he proposed the theory of natural selection at the same time as Darwin, who was motivated to publish after rewarding Wallace's reports from Indonesia. This fascinating biodiversity that holds the secret to our existence can still be witnessed today - both marine and terrestrial.

Experience spectacular diving among pristine coral, magnificent marine life, and fascinating historical wrecks. From Ambon to Sorong, discover awe-inspiring and undisturbed nature, underwater caves, rainforest, beachcombing, mangroves, and fjords.



The Yacht & Founder



Despite being born and raised in the landlocked city of Paris, Thibaud Epstein has been at sea for a good part of his life. Hailing from a family of passionate sailors, he spent as much time as he could on his parents' boat in the seafarers' hotspot Brittany, sailing the coasts from Ireland to Portugal.

After studies took him to Australia where he completed an MBA in Finance, he eventually settled in Singapore and Jakarta to join his uncle Remi Epstein, majority owner of the Kudanil Explorer, when the ship was still operating in the oil industry as a safety-standby vessel.

In 2016, Remi and Thibaud decided to convert the ship into a luxury expedition yacht, providing the perfect platform to explore the Indonesian archipelago. A 5* boutique hotel inside the robust shell of an ocean-going vessel, it is this unique mix of safety, space, and comfort that makes the journeys aboard the Kudanil Explorer so exciting; a fine combination of indulgence and expedition alike, paired with Thibaud's sense for adventure and discovering new treasures amongst the 17,000+ islands Indonesia has to offer.

Thibaud leads every cruise and, together with his crew of 21, he can't wait to show you the true beauty of Eastern Indonesia.





Your Co-Host: Sabine Templeton

Fish geek, Underwater Naturalist & Conservation Biologist

Sabine is a marine scientist and conservation biologist with a passion for exploring and protecting the world's oceans. She graduated from the University of Maryland with a Bachelor of Science degree, majoring in Marine Science and Conservation Biology.

Sabine's work experience spans across various exotic locations, including the Hawaiian Islands, the Caribbean, Fiji, and the Indonesian Archipelago. Over the past 10 years, she has specialized in luxury dive and snorkel experiences.. Notably, she spent six years as the Dive Center Manager at the Misool Resort in Raja Ampat, a renowned conservation-focused resort.

During her tenure, Sabine also served as the Director of the Misool Manta Project, contributing critical data and co-authoring a scientific paper on population demographics. Aside from her work in marine science, Sabine is also a talented underwater photographer.





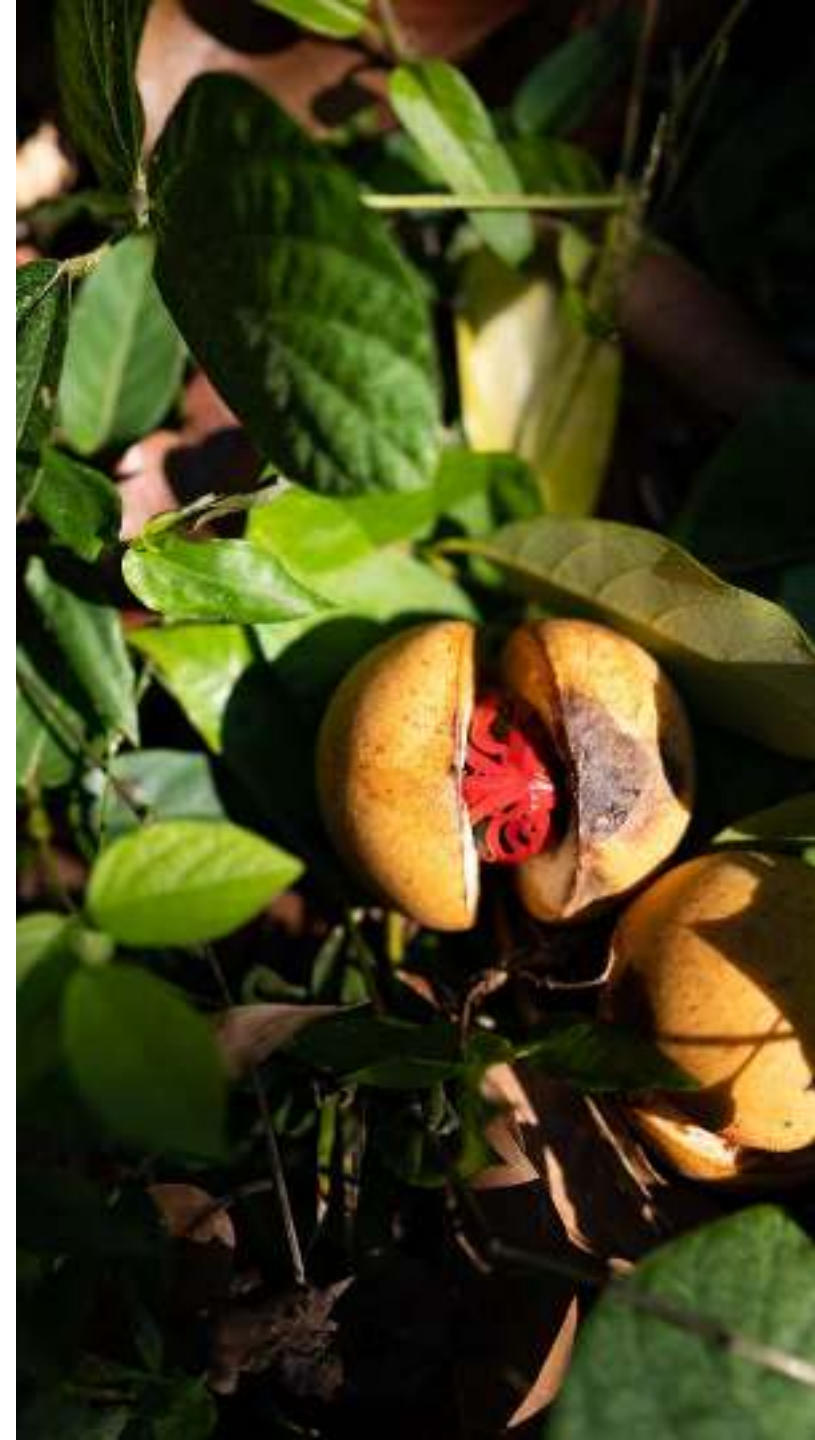
DAY 1 | WELCOME ABOARD

After arrival at Ambon Airport and a 15-min ride to the boat, we depart from Laha Bay which is one of the world's most famous muck diving sites known as the "twilight zone" with some of the rarest and most unique marine life anywhere in the world. As we leave the harbor and enter the Banda Sea, keep a lookout for whales as well as schools of dolphins who traverse the Banda Sea

DAY 2 | INTRODUCTION TO THE SPICE ISLANDS

Wake up in Pulau Rhun, the island that was once famously traded for another island called "New Amsterdam", today much better known as Manhattan. Snorkel and dive on the northwest corner of the island, enjoy the beautiful coral, and look out for hammerhead sharks.

In the afternoon, when the tide is high enough, we find our way above the reef and explore the village. Our charismatic local guide Pak Purhan will introduce us to the treasures as well as the way of life of the Spice Islands and what once made these islands the most valuable part of the world: nutmeg and mace. Soak in the hilltop views and get acquainted with this stunning part of the Indonesian archipelago.







DAY 3 | ENTERING BANDA NEIRA HARBOR

We spend the morning at Pulau Ai where divers will enjoy a wall dive offering another opportunity to look for hammerhead sharks. We will also visit the local village with its beautiful church, built more than 400 years ago.

During lunch, enjoy the amazing views as we enter the iconic Banda Neira harbor at the foot of the volcano Gunung Api. Our local guides who lead the way as we jump on their motorcycles and explore their slice of paradise, whether it's their local way of life or an excursion to a nutmeg plantation.

DAY 4 | THE HEART OF THE SPICE ISLANDS

Ascend the summit of volcano Gunung Api in the cooler early morning for spectacular views of the Banda chain, or dive and snorkel the sites around Banda Neira such as "Lava Flow" or "Batu Kapal". At "Lava Flow", a volcanic eruption destroyed the reef only for it to regrow on the fertile grounds to an even prettier underwater experience, now arguably amongst the prettiest hard coral sites in the world.

Walk through Banda Neira in the afternoon to immerse yourself in the rich history. No less than five European powerhouses fought over the immense treasures (namely nutmeg and mace) these islands held. The remains of the ancient times are ever-present and Banda Neira breathes this "Zeitgeist" until today: European-built forts, colonial mansions, the Dutch church, and the Chinese temple. We finish the day with drinks at the majestic Fort Belgica as the sun begins to set behind the volcano.



DAY 5 | PULAU HATTA

A short early morning sail leads us to Pulau Hatta. The North of Hatta boasts a wall dive where hammerheads can frequently be seen, whereas the South of the island is more sheltered, with coral gardens and beautiful beaches.

The island was renamed 'Hatta', to commemorate the first Vice President, Mohammad Hatta, who was exiled to the Banda Islands by the Dutch in 1936 for his political activities where he remained until the eve of the Japanese invasion in World War II in 1942.

DAY 6 | PULAU KOON

Pulau Koon is located right on the “border” of the Spice Islands and Papua and is home to a dive site called - for good reason - “Too Many Fish”. As the tide comes in, we can find our way on kayaks through the coral and get to enjoy the picture-perfect white sandy beach of Pulau Koon, with its powder sand, turquoise waters, and palm trees.

In the afternoon, we will also have the chance to visit a nearby island with very welcoming locals, excited to escort us to their inland lakes. For those who dare, it offers a chance to go rock jumping of the surround cliffs. As the sun sets, we will embark on our crossing to Misool, the heart of Southern Raja Ampat.







DAY 7 & 8 | WAYILBATAN

In Wayilbatan, we snorkel and dive through the world-class Neptune Passage to discover the most impressive sea fans and hike up a trail leading to the famous heart-shaped “Love Lagoon”.

In the afternoon, hop on our tenders for a lagoon tour. Divers will have the opportunity to tick a few world-class dives sites around Wayilbatan Island off their bucket lists.

The following morning, we venture further East to explore the Four Kings dive site, another underwater highlight in the area. Non-divers can explore the lagoon: either by snorkeling or hiking for impressive bird’s views and - if conditions align - to a unique jellyfish lake.

After lunch, the Kudanil Explorer Beach Club will be ready for you: Think daybeds in the sand, relaxed tunes, fresh drinks, and watersports toys, it gets better and better as the sun sets over the equator.

DAY 9 | BALBULOL

We spend this day in Balbulol, where we niche the boat amid impressive karstic rock formations, surrounded by beautiful reefs, crystal clear water, and more great diving. Take a Kayak or SUP and explore the lagoon, discover the two iconic Karsts, and soak in the tranquility of this little maze.



DAY 10 | 1000 TEMPLES

On our second-last morning, we visit the bagans, traditional fishing platforms/structures as the local fishermen pick up their nets which often attracts dolphins and other marine life. After that, we spend all day in this area called “1000 Temples”. A non-diving day, we will have the chance to peek into caves, witness the pre-historical prints on the walls or hike up to sunset view points. As the sun sets, we will toast to and reminisce one last time the good times had as we set sail for our overnight crossing to Sorong harbor.

DAY 11 | DISEMBARKATION

After breakfast, pack and prepare to disembark from Sorong Airport.

** Please note that itineraries may be adjusted due to weather or other unforeseen reasons.*





PRICING

Double / Twin Cabin: USD 17,100 + 11% VAT per person (Early Bird Rate)
Single Cabin: USD 26,650 + 11% VAT per person (Early Bird Rate)

Double / Twin Cabin: USD 19,000 + 11% VAT per person
Single Cabin: USD 28,500 + 11% VAT per person

- Early Bird rates are for bookings confirmed before 19th April 2024
- 50% deposit required at time of booking, remaining balance due 90 days prior to departure
- Price includes all accommodation, experiences, meals, and transfers
- Price does *not* include flights, spa treatments or alcoholic beverages





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SPICE ISLANDS & RAJA AMPAT

An aerial photograph of Kudanil Island, showing a small, crescent-shaped white sand beach nestled between dark, rocky cliffs. The water is a vibrant turquoise color, indicating shallow depths, and transitions to a deep blue as it extends into the distance. The text "KUDANIL" and "EXPLORER" is overlaid in white, serif font in the center of the image.

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