

KOMODO AMBON, DRAGONS AND VOLCANOES



THIS JOURNEY LEAVES BEHIND THE HASTINESS OF THE MODERN WORLD TO GET IN A UNIVERSE WHERE EVERY THING IS DICTATED BY NATURE'S RHYTHMS. AFTER VISITING THE STUNNING KOMODO NATIONAL PARK AND ITS DRAGONS, WE WILL EXPLORE THE LARGE BONERATE ATOLL ON THE FLORES SEA, THE WORLD FAMOUS CORAL REEFS OF WAKATOBI IN SOUTHWEST SULAWESI AND DISCOVERY THE LIFE AND DESTINIES OF THE BAJAO PEOPLE (SEA GYPSIES). THEN CROSSING OVER THE FATHOMLESS DEPTHS OF THE BANDA SEA, WE'LL SET FOOT ASHORE BARREN ROCKS WHERE COUNTLESS GANNETS AND FRIGATE BIRDS FEROCIOUSLY DEFEND THEIR NESTING GROUNDS. FINALLY, THE FADED, THOUGH STILL IMPRESSIVE TRACES OF GLORY OF THE BANDA ISLANDS.

The **Komodo National Park** will be the opportunity to catch a glimpse of the last representative of the Jurassic Park on earth, the infamous Komodo dragon. But Komodo is not only dragons. The so-called 'Red Beach' is red-colored by pulverized red coral. In **Gili Lawa** to hike the local summit and enjoy a splendid panorama over the moonscape islands of the Komodo archipelago and the mainland of **Flores**.

Rinca Island, the second biggest in the Komodo archipelago, is also the richest in terms of fauna. We will go trekking and looking for wild horses, water buffalo, wild boar, monkeys, and of course the famous Komodo dragon in spectacular scenery of savannah and emerald coves. We'll discover **Sabolon** a famous reef with a huge variety of live coral and beautiful fish. Full snorkeling and beach-exploration.

The islands of **Taka Bonerate** are cut off from the modern world and have not been influenced by western materialism. There is no electricity and none of the luxuries which urban dwellers take for granted. Time in the villages of the **Kalaotoa**, **Karompa** and **Madu** islands seems to have stood still. Most of the villagers are direct descendants of the Bajao (sea nomads) and their dialect has a lyrical nature, characterized by frequent tongue clicks. These islands are also a real 'land of smiles'. The villagers are very friendly and also very curious, which indicates that you are possibly the first tourist from your country to visit them. Curious villagers will besiege you, observe you with astonished eyes and try to touch you. Some of the children will try to imitate your language, while the shier ones will pluck at your clothes or touch your skin before running away to hide behind a tree.

The water of the **Taka Bonerate Atoll** is so crystal-clear that it could be the water of an aquarium. The visibility of up to 50m on good days makes the area ideal for snorkeling and diving. The water depth is about six meters over the reef but this can suddenly drop to a 1000m or more. These drop-offs make it an excellent place for wall dives. Such a terrain is simply the dream of every diver.



TRIP ADVISOR	
Airport	Arrival airport Labuanbajo or Bima. Departure airport Ambon. International flights reach Bali or Jakarta, then domestic flight to Labuanbajo. From Ambon domestic flight to Bali or Jakarta connecting international flight.
Best season	March-April and October-December.
Rainy season	January-February and June-August.
Temperature	27°-32°C
Water temperature	25°-30°C
Recommended length of stay	10-14 nights liveaboard cruise
Highlights	Komodo National Park. Snorkeling in Takabonerate, Wakatobi, Lucipara e Penyu. Tour of Ambon historic capital of the overseas colonies. Bajo stilts villages.
Supplementary Tours	Bali, island of gods. Visit Tanah Toraja and discover Torajan people, the animist highlanders of Sulawesi, a distinct ethnic group with ancestral traditions. Inland excursion Trans Flores. Trekking in Kelimutu.

THE LIVEBOARDS OF KOMODO AMBON, DRAGONS AND VOLCANOES

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The name of **Batuata** means "Big Rock", and effectively is a mountain emerging isolated from the sea. The west coast with big rocks formations and a beautiful beach is a perfect south sea setting with interesting small villages whose people live completely isolated from the outside world.

The **Wakatobi National Park** is a small island group in the south-east of **Sulawesi**, host some of the healthiest coral fields you are likely to see. It is a tropical paradise with beautiful beaches and pristine reefs. The southeastern atolls have been visited by very few travelers, and still offer the remote pioneer feeling. Inhabited by tribes of daring seafarers, shipbuilders and maritime traders and in **Binongko** by skill iron workers it is possible to see them making traditional Indonesian *kriss* or *keris*, the curved blades knives

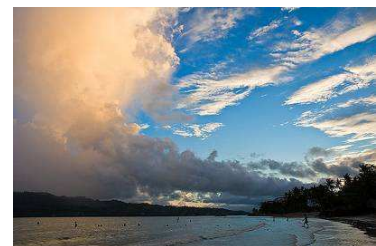
Gunung Api is a towering volcano in the middle of the Banda Sea. Its name means "mountain of fire". This Island hosts colony of frigate birds, stern and others tropical sea birds. The waters are famous between divers for the huge amount of sea snakes.

Lucipara and Penyau: Like grains of sand throwing in the immensity of the Banda Sea this group of small atolls is a dream for beach lovers. Unspoiled fantastic white deserted beaches and the real out of the world feeling.

Banda archipelago is famous for its natural beauty and its cultural heritage since the time the Spice Islands were the target of the European colonizers. We will tie the bow to a palm-tree in the garden of a hacienda style hotel in **Bandanaira** the only (small) city of Banda. We will stroll through the city, visit old fortresses and admire the planters' mansions from the old days.

Then we will visit a few of the other island of the archipelago, **Ai, Revenge** and **Hatta** and will see what remains of the ancient plantations, churches and cemeteries. We will breathe the atmosphere of the time that the Banda youth was sent to the most expensive boarding schools of Europe and dream about the splendid, but short-lived glory.

Our journey ends in the beautiful **Ambon Bay**.

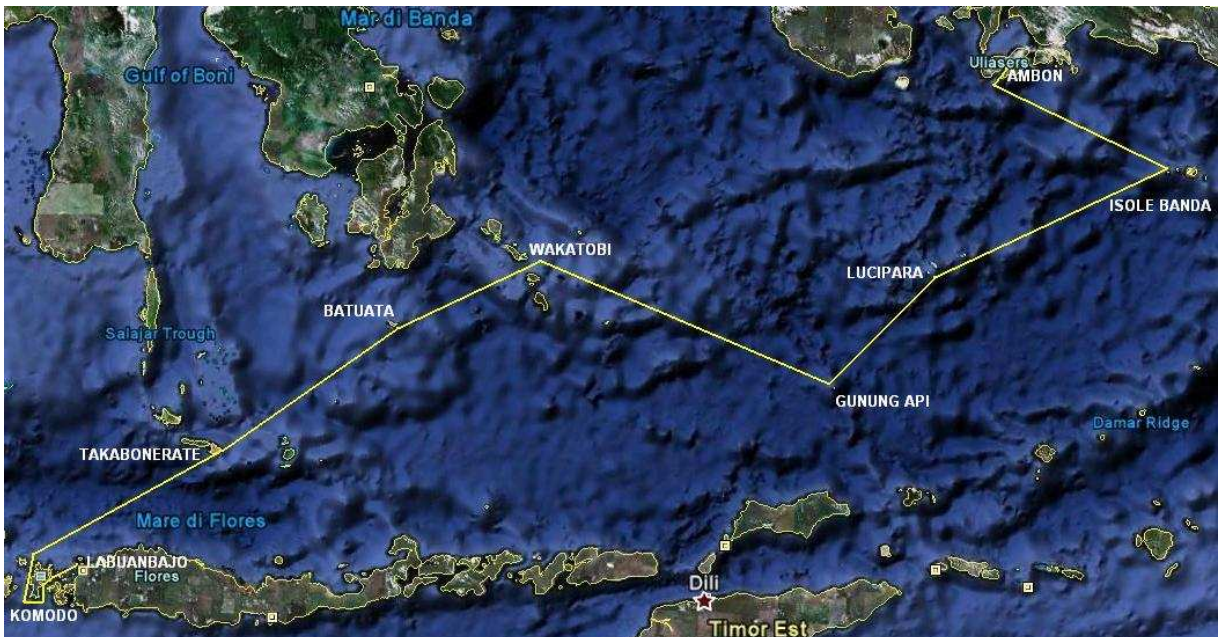


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