

EPICA LIVEBOARD

10D/9N Southern Showdown (Dampier / Misool)

27 dives 1990 USD

Summary

Epica takes you on a 10-day journey through the Dampier Strait and the Southern part of Raja Ampat – the heart of the world's coral reef biodiversity.

With a total of **27 dives** and **5 land excursions** we show you the best Raja Ampat has to offer. **3 night dives** – one in each area we visit – give us a chance to observe the nocturnal marine life. In *Batanta* we trek to a spectacular **waterfall**, in *Misool* you get to swim in one of the world's few **Jellyfish lakes** and in *central Raja Ampat* we take the 341 steps to admire the breath-taking view of the Bintang Lagoon at **Piaynemo**.

Starting in the Dampier Strait we introduce you to the variations of dive site topographies and how the current affects them. We then move further south to Batanta for some muck diving where you get to admire colourful critters like blue ringed octopus or flamboyant cuttlefish.

After an overnight crossing south, we spend 3 days diving around the scattering of islands south-east of Misool. Dive sites we visit include *Shadow Reef (Magic Mountain)*, *Boo Windows* and *Four Kings*.

Back north we dive around Piaynemo, where *Melissa's Garden* and *My Reef* will take your breath away. Finally, back on our way through the Dampier Strait we explore the reefs around Kri, Mensuar, Arborek and Gam.

Raja Ampat lies in the middle of the Indonesian Throughflow, channelling a gigantic volume of water from the Pacific Ocean to the Indian Ocean and back. These currents carry with them millions of eggs and larvae that supply the region with both genetic diversity and food. A buffet for sea creatures of all sorts!

Almost 75% of the world's known hard coral species, 1400 species of reef fish, 17 types of mollusc, 13 marine mammal species and five of the world's seven sea turtle species can be found in the area.

While this is the description of a typical dive trip, actual trips may vary due to wind and sea conditions, weather or guest's preference.

We do not guarantee dive sites as we cannot guarantee conditions of that dive site.

However, we ensure to meet our guest's needs as much as it is in our power to do so.

Day 1 (1 dive): OFF TO NEW ADVENTURES

- We meet up in front of the tourist information centre in **Waisai** at 11am where we will board the Epica. If you would like to be picked up in **Sorong** (VIP transfer), we meet you between 7.30 and 8.00 in the morning at the Je Meridien Hotel just next to the airport.
- Once on board, we make sure all the necessary paperwork is in order, allocate your cabins, set up dive equipment and brief you on boat and dive safety procedures.
- After lunch we depart to our first dive site in central Raja Ampat. The check dive is usually at *Friwen Bonda*, a beautiful reef teeming with colourful fish.

Day 2 (3 dives): MAIDEN CONQUEST

- We start the day with a drift dive at *Sardine* or *Chicken Reef*. Both sites are seamounts with a shallow top that gently slopes down to about 30m. Schools of snappers, fusiliers and surgeonfish provide a snack for pelagic predators such as barracuda, giant trevallies or reef sharks.
- A little bit further west in the Dampier Strait on the eastern tip of Pulau Mensuar lies *Yenbuba*, a local village with a rugged jetty that provides shelter for schools of sergeant majors, snappers and sweetlips.
- Our third and last dive of the day is at *Mioskon*, also called “Bat Island” because of its residential fruit bat population. At dusk they fly to the bigger islands to snack on fruit and return at dusk to settle in the trees for the day.
- After our last dive we head south to Batanta.

Day 3 (3 dives (incl. sunset dive) & waterfall visit): NYMPH'S TALE

Batanta, one of the four kings and southern border of the Dampier Strait, is a lush jungle paradise. An enchanted path leads up to a dramatic waterfall where we stop for a dip in fresh, clear water.

- For the first dive of the day we have something special in store. On the southern side of Pulau Wai is the last resting place of a U.S. Air Force P47. This Fighter Aircraft from WW2 is overgrown with beautiful coral and a joy to dive.
- After a big breakfast we go on a little hike to admire a stunning waterfall embedded in the lush jungle near Arefi Village.
- Now that we have dispensed of our energy, we are ready for some calm muck diving! On the southwestern side of Batanta are several bays and inlets crawling with alien critters like blue ringed and mimic octopus, ornate ghost pipe fish and flamboyant cuttlefish. We like to do a day dive and a sunset dive in this area to give all creatures an equal chance to show off. Some of our favourite sites are *Black Beauty* and *Happy Ending*.
- After our last dive we start our 12-15h crossing south to Misool.

Day 4 (3 dives & jellyfish lake visit): ARIEL'S PLAYGROUND

Our first day in Misool we spend in the *Goa Farondi region*. Unusual topography, clouds of fish and enchanted coral gardens give you a warm welcome to the south. Also – what little mermaid wouldn't want to play with (non-stinging) jelly fish!

- The opening dive will most likely be at *Farondi Cave* for some light cavern diving where we navigate through a few swim throughs in search of the local bumphead parrotfish population.
- As a second dive we love the spectacular *Three Rocks*, a collection of submerged pinnacles busy with barracuda and trevallies.
- If weather permits, a truly unique island visit waits for you. Close by lies the *Lenmakana lake*, home to a multitude of stingless jellyfish. And guess what – you get to swim with them!
- We end the day with a dive at *No Contest* - if there is enough daylight left. If time has gotten away from us, we jump at one of the surrounding sites for a night dive, like *Love Potion* or *Number 9*.

Day 5 (4 dives (incl. night dive)): SUNKEN CORNUCOPIA

On our second day in Misool we explore the *Fiabacet chain*. Conditions and logistics with Misool Eco Resort will decide which of the sites are dived and in which order. We hope you are well rested, because this is going to be a spectacular day.

- Good morning! This is the dive site you all came here for. *Shadow Reef*, also called *Magic Mountain* is one of the signature sites of southern Raja Ampat. This offshore pinnacle with a long ridge boasts everything you could possibly wish for. Coral encrusted reef teeming with butterfly fish and yellow snappers, persistently hunted by giant trevallies and reef sharks. Massive schools of fusiliers and bannerfish make it hard to spot the passing napoleon wrasses and barracudas. But what we really hope to see here are the gentle giants – the site is a cleaning station for reef and oceanic mantas.
- Another signature dive site is *Boo Window*. The reef features picturesque, window like swim-throughs, ideal for some wide-angle photos and a magnificent reef draped in soft corals.
- West of Pulau Boo a rock protrudes out of the water that looks like a nudibranch from a distance, hence the name *Nudi Rock*. The dive site delivers what was promised, lurking among the soft corals we usually find an abundance of nudis.
- For the night we retire to Yilliet. But before we go to bed, we take a peek at the underwater action at *Yilliet Kecil*.

Day 6 (3 dives): A REGAL AFFAIR

For our third and last day in Misool we venture further west to Pulau Wayilbatan.

- We start the day at *Four Kings*, a dive site that is made up of four underwater pinnacles. Enjoy a kaleidoscope of colours, abundant fish life and coral munching turtles diving from one rock to the next.
- Up next is *Barracuda Rock* with large schools of predatory pelagic species.
- We'll do our final dive in Misool at *Wedding Cake*, home to part of Misool's pygmy seahorse community.
- Exhausted from the sensory overload we can now rest for a while. The Epica starts her 15-18h journey back to central Raja Ampat, where new adventures await.

Day 7 (3 dives & Piaynemo viewpoint): STAIRWAY TO HEAVEN

Whether you climb on top of a hill to admire the stunning view of Piaynemo or plunge into the depths of the underwater realm, it's not just the destination, but also the journey that changes your perspective of the world.

- Early in the morning we dive *Melissa's Garden*, named after the pioneer Max Ammer's daughter.
- Moving on to *Kerou Channel* we hope for current! The spectacular drift dive rushes us past a rich, coral covered reef where huge sea fans hold on for dear life feeding on the current. But don't worry – there are also some sheltered areas where we can search for pygmy seahorses, nudibranchs and other colourful reef critters.
- *Batu Rufas* - dive site number three - is on the east side of Piaynemo and features a very photogenic submerged arch.
- We conclude our day with a trip to the iconic viewpoint at Piaynemo. 341 steps lead to a platform where we can observe one of nature's most artistic designs. The spectacular view is composed of turquoise sea framed by jungle where a handful of karst islets jut dramatically out from the calm surface of the lagoon.

Day 8 (3 dives (incl. night dive) & land visit): FISH FRENZY

On our eighth day we swim side by side with massive aggregations of fish gathering around completely submerged reefs. One of our favourite pastimes is watching them hunt.

- We start our day at *My Reef* where we play with massive aggregations of schooling fishes like fusiliers, jacks and snappers. The top of the seamount lies at 12m and is a popular chillout place for the tasselled Wobbegong shark.
- Heading east, deeper into the Dampier Strait, we follow up with *Mayhem* where the name of the dive site says it all.
- A land visit at Arborek gives you a chance to meander through the picturesque village and watch a fiery sunset on the white sandy beach. We conclude the day with a night dive at *Arborek jetty*.

Day 9 (3 dives & beach BBQ): POSEIDON'S BOUNTY

This is the last full day to show off the biodiversity in Raja Ampat. We chose lush, healthy reefs in the Dampier Strait, that foster a large number of species. From pygmy seahorses to mantis shrimp to sharks and Mantas – chances are we see them all.

- A morning dive at *Citrus Ridge* is a sure way to put a smile on your face. Teeming with fish the reef is coated in yellow and orange soft coral creating a fresh and happy backdrop for large schools of barracudas, playful sharks and hungry tunas.
- Heading further east we stop for an adrenaline rush. *Manta Ridge* is prone to very strong currents, but it is also a cleaning station for reef mantas where you have a chance to swim eye-to-eye with one of the majestic giants.
- On the eastern tip of Pulau Kri lies the famous *Cape Kri*, record holder for the most fish species found in one dive.
- The sunset can be enjoyed on the white sandy beach of Mioskon with a cold beer in your hand. If you're lucky and weather permits – there will be a beach BBQ later on!

Day 10 (1 dive): GENTLE GIANTS

- The last day starts early. Really. But it's worth it, trust us. We try to be the first to jump at *Blue Magic*, a cleaning station for oceanic mantas. The dive site can be a wee bit currenty. But while you cling to a rock and your jaw is locked tightly around your regs while you leave a horizontal stream of bubbles behind you, hundreds of schooling jacks, grey reef sharks, spanish mackerel and hopefully a few graceful mantas will make you forget all about it.
- Back on board, we gently prepare you for your departure. This includes a debriefing, delicious food, a group photo and plenty of time to gather your items while pondering how your belongings ever fit in your backpack when you left home.
- If time permits, we visit Mioskon Island again so you can get a last glance at paradise.
- After lunch we say our tearful goodbyes and drop you off at the harbour – hoping the goodbye is not forever!

Diving will be finished by 10am or earlier. If you are returning to Sorong the same day, you will be ready to board the ferry by 2pm. Expected arrival in Sorong is 4pm.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR ALL TRIPS

Meeting Point

Tourist Information Center at Waisai harbor at 11am.

Itineraries

Our schedule will be determined by conditions such as weather, waves and our best judgement regarding dive sites and suitability for our guests. Raja Ampat is famous for its coral reefs and marine biodiversity so we ensure we select the best variety Raja Ampat has to offer at that point in the season. We do not guarantee dive sites as we cannot guarantee conditions of each dive site. However, we ensure to meet our guests needs as much as it is in our power to do so.

Accommodation

On board Epica, there are 7 twin cabins with bunk beds and 2 shared bathrooms.

Dive groups

Maximum 4 divers per guide

Minimum certification level

Open Water Diver

What's included:

- 3 meals per day, fruit and light snacks
- Drinking water, tea, and coffee
- Fresh towels and linen
- Dive guide
- Weights, weight belts and tanks (DIN tanks available)

What's not included:

- Dive equipment

Full sets of equipment available for rent (excluding computer) at per trip price:

7D/6N	105 USD
10D/9N	150 USD

Or per piece, per day:

BCD:	5 USD
Regulator:	5 USD
Boots & Fins:	4 USD
Wetsuit:	4 USD
Mask:	2 USD
Computer:	10 USD

- Marine Park Fees:
 - Foreign nationals: 1,000,000 IDR per year
 - Indonesian citizens: 500,000 IDR per year
- Crew gratuities (recommendation: approx. 10% of trip cost / person)
- Private guide (inquire for current prices and availability)
- Refresher or course dives (inquire for current prices and availability)
- Soft drinks & alcoholic beverages (available for purchase)

- Flights
- Insurance
- Ferry and transfers between Sorong and Waisai

*VIP transfers to/from the Je Meridien Hotel in Sorong (across from the airport) can be arranged on request for 45 USD one-way. Please arrange when booking.

Payments

We accept

- cash payments of EUR, USD, and IDR
- credit cards (plus 3%)

Additional Info

- We recommend that you plan to arrive in Raja Ampat at least one day before your liveaboard departs
- Taxis from the Sorong airport to the harbor are readily available and usually about 100,000 IDR
- Ferry departure times from Sorong and Waisai are at 9am & 2pm daily

What we need from each guest:

- A filled in online check in form (www.scuba-republic.com/checkin-form/)
- Diver certification level
- Approximate number of dives in personal history
- Any dietary requirements (we will do our best to accommodate)
- Sizes of equipment needed
- A copy of dive insurance policy and passport
- A refresher dive is mandatory if you have less than 30 dives and haven't dived in the last 12 months. If you have 30 dives or more, a refresher is required if more than 24 months have gone without diving.

Boat features

- Leisure deck
- Sun deck
- Dive deck

Food & Drink

- Local food
- Western food
- Buffet Style
- Any specific dietary requirements can be added to special requests on the booking form. We advise limiting these requests to religious beliefs or food allergies.

Languages Spoken

- English
- Indonesian
- German (on request)

Boat Specifications

Year built: 2016
Length: 24 meters
Engines: Mitsubishi 200p
Max guest: 14
Number of cabins: 7
Number of bathrooms: 2
Tender: 7m with 40hp Yamaha
Water capacity: 5000 litres
Electrical outlets: 2-pin European sockets

Boat Navigation and Safety

- GPS
- Radio VHF/DSC/SSB
- Oxygen
- First Aid Kit

Courses Available (please inform us beforehand if you wish to take a course)

Refresher 30 USD

A light review of dive theory, equipment setup, safe diving practices, and a brief skill review on the boat. This may not be a private session. Please inquire if you feel you will need more practice. We highly recommend you take a refresher dive with our land-based dive center before your liveaboard trip. This dive is mandatory if you have less than 30 dives and haven't dived in the last 12 months.

SSI Advanced Adventurer 190 USD

Take your open water diver skills to the next level. Our instructor will help you choose 5 speciality dives to complete during the course of your liveaboard trip to make you a more informed, more experienced diver so that you can take part in night dives, deep dives, exciting current dives, and more.

Adventure Dive 30 USD

Participate in a single adventure dive such as a deep, night, or drift dive. Adventure dives count toward completing your Advanced Adventurer course (see above).