

EPICA LIVEBOARD

10D/9N King of the North (Dampier / North Raja)

27 dives 1990 USD

Summary

Epica takes you on a 10-day journey through the Dampier Strait to the North of Raja Ampat—the heart of the world's coral reef biodiversity.

With a total of **27 dives** and **4 land excursions** we show you the best Raja Ampat has to offer. **2 night dives** give us a chance to observe the nocturnal marine life. In *Wayag* we trek to a spectacular viewpoint and watch the baby sharks on the beach 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 north to *Aljui Bay* for some **muck diving** where you get to admire colourful critters like blue ringed octopus or flamboyant cuttlefish.

We spend 3 days diving around the scattering of islands around *Wayag* and *Kawe*. Dive sites we visit include *Magic Rock*, *Far Out Rock* and *Eagle Rock*.

Back south 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 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): ENCHANTED JETTIES

Raja Ampat is littered with tiny villages that feature rugged wooden jetties. Among the coral encrusted pylons, you find a dazzling amount of sergeant majors, snappers and sweetlips gently swaying in the clear water.

- 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 and reef sharks.
- As we slowly move towards Arborek Island we explore the south side of Pulau Mansuar where two spectacular jetty dives wait for us at **Yenbuba** and **Sawandarek** village. The latter is also a cleaning station for sea turtles.
- 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.

Day 3 (3 dives (incl. sunset dive)): FISH FRENZY

On our third 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.

- A dive at **Lalosi** is an excellent way to start your day. The long, action-packed reef bustles with life as every species eagerly hunts for its breakfast.
- A 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.
- After the 2nd dive we have some time to relax while the Epica cruises north to Aljui Bay – a macro photographers wet dream. We conclude our day with a sunset dive under the **Pearl Farm Pier**.

Day 4 (3 dives): RAINBOW KALEIDOSCOPE

On day four we'd like to show you the colourful side of Raja Ampat, corals and creatures alike. Starting at Aljui Bay and moving north into the vicinity of Wayag.

- The opening dive of the day will take you to sea slug heaven. **White Arrow** is a slow drift dive along a sloping reef where nudibranchs seem to thrive. Look out for the solar-powered nudibranch. This large species can cover up to a fourth of its energy needs through photosynthesis using its cerata essentially as solar panels!
- After a delicious breakfast we move further north to the small islands of Bag and Uranie for our next dive. **Magic Rock** has one of the most interesting topographies northern Raja Ampat has to offer.
- Close by lies **Y-Reef**, named for its shape. Vibrant coral forests tightly packed with gigantic sea fans and masses of damselfish pulsing in and out of staghorn fields await your presence.

Day 5 (3 dives & Wayag Viewpoint): ROCKING THE HOUSE

From karst islands to submerged seamounts, the scenery on and around Wayag will take your breath away.

- Our first dive is either at **Edi's Cave** or **Jendela Cave** where we will explore the numerous caverns and windows.
- Edging towards Wayag, we stop at Pulau Quoy for an early morning dive, where the site name **Ikan Campur** (mixed fish) certainly lives up to its promise.
- On the western side of Wayag gather a few rock islets. All of them exposed to strong, nutrient-rich currents. Weather & sea conditions determine which of them we'll explore.

- Wayag is the background for the postcard pictures you see in every documentary about Raja Ampat. Mushroom shaped karst islets in crystal clear water, surrounded by lush jungle and white sandy beaches. All yours to take in from the famous viewpoint.

Day 6 (4 dives (incl. night dive)): PELAGIC MAGIC

Offshore pinnacles surrounded by the current are a magnet for pelagic predators. Day six is all about observing big fish at Pulau Kawe.

- **Cathedral rock** is a dramatic dive site with caverns and archways, massive boulders and large congregations of fish. We only attempt this dive if the currents are mild and we judge the experience level of our divers sufficient. A beautiful alternative is *The Bommie Bowl* with crystal clear waters, colourful bommies and excellent fish life.
- Our time in the far north is at an end and we slowly move back towards the equator. At Pulau Kawe two spectacular dive sites await us. **Black Rock** features schools of butterflyfish, angel fish, batfish and barracudas.
- **Eagle Rock** is home to a manta cleaning station, where the graceful giants have their parasites removed by eager butterflyfish and moon wrasses. But this site doesn't need to rely on mantas, it also supports some amazing macro life like winged pipefish, several species of dragonets and countless rare nudis.
- Back in Aljui Bay we go for another round of weird critters during a **night dive**.

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.

- **Chanel No. 5** is as lovely as its namesake, the perfume. A stunning wall with undercuts and ledges, mimicking large soft coral covered steps descends into the deep. Completing the dive, we start our 3 hour journey south to Piaynemo.
- On the northside of Piaynemo lies **Barracuda Point**, where we stop for our 2nd dive of the day.
- **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): UNDERWATER EDEN

For day eight we stay in the neighbourhood. Fam provides some awesome, fishy dives that simply cannot be missed.

- 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.
- 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.
- We enjoy our last dive of the day at **Melissa's Garden**, named after the pioneer Max Ammer's daughter, before crossing over to the Yanggefo area for the night.

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 – chances are we see them all.

- This glorious day is introduced with **Mayhem** where the name of the dive site says it all.
- On the eastern tip of Pulau Kri lies the famous **Cape Kri**, record holder for the most fish species found in one dive.
- Depending on the tide we follow up with **Sardine** or **Chicken Reef**.
- The sunset can be enjoyed on the white sandy beach of Mioskon with a cold beer in your hand. If 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 and 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 it all worthwhile.
- 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.
- 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).