

EPICA LIVEBOARD

10D/9N A Clash of Kings (Central Raja / Batanta)

27 dives **1990 USD**

Summary

The name Raja Ampat translates to *Four Kings* and originates in local mythology where four kings hatched from dragon eggs and went on to rule the four main islands of Misool, Salawati, Batanta and Waigeo.

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

Navigating the waters of the Four Kings we take you to **27 dive sites** and **4 land excursions. 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 and in *central Raja Ampat* we take the 341 steps to be wowed by 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.

Moving slowly north we dive around the Fam Islands, Aljui Bay and Kawe with famous sites such as *Eagle Rock*, the *Pearl Farm* and *Melissa's Garden*.

On our way back south, we get some action at Yanggefo. At *Citrus Ridge* and *Mayhem*, visibility is often limited by the number of fish in your field of vision. Back in the centre of the Dampier Strait we explore the reefs around Kri and Mansuar.

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 worlds 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 (incl. sunset dive) & land visit): SOUTHERN FRONTIER

Batanta, one of the four kings and southern border of the Dampier Strait is a lush jungle paradise. Surrounded by mangroves and black sandy bottoms crawling with macro life, this makes for fantastic muck diving.

- 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.
- On the way to Batanta 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 lunch 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**.

Day 3 (4 dives (incl. night dive)): GARDEN OF EDEN

Gentle slopes and endless fields of soft coral accompany us on our way north. Play with blue spotted stingrays and stick your head through glassfish clouds in search of resting wobbegongs.

- Today's wakeup call is a gentle one. We dip in to get a last glimpse at all the odd, colourful bottom dwellers and blow them a kiss goodbye.
- Moving to the northern side of Batanta, **Palau Dayang** features several possible dive sites. A colourful array of soft corals is waiting to be explored, step-towns and overhangs hiding the charismatic tasselled wobbegong shark.
- On our way north to Piaynemo we visit **Karang bata** for some gentle slopes littered with coral bommies.
- Before dinner we whet our appetite with a **night dive** at Piaynemo.

Day 4 (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.

- 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.
- Next on the agenda is **Melissa's Garden**, a famous dive site named after the pioneer Max Ammer's daughter.
- **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 5 (3 dives): SENSORY OVERLOAD

This day has it all. Currents, walls, big fish, small fish, odd fish.

- On the northside of Piaynemo lies **Barracuda Point**, where we stop for our first dive of the day. After a delicious breakfast we start our 3h crossing north to Aljui Bay.
- **Chanel No. 5** is as lovely as its namesake, the perfume. A stunning wall with undercuts and ledges mimicking large soft coral covered steps descending into the deep.
- We conclude our day at **Eagle Rock** just south of Pulau Kawe where we will spend the night. It 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.

Day 6 (3 dives): 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.

- The opening dive of the day is **Black Rock** featuring schools of butterflyfish, angel fish, batfish and barracudas.
- And because **Eagle Rock** consists of more than one dive site, we'll go take our chances again to find mantas.
- Moving back to Aljui Bay, we conclude our day with a sunset dive under the **Pearl Farm Pier**.

Day 7 (3 dives & Arborek visit): FISH FRENZY

On our seventh 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 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.
- We follow up with **Mayhem** where the name of the dive site says it all.
- Heading towards Arborek we stop at **Lalosi** for dive number three.
- 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 8 (3 dives & Beach BBQ): POSEIDON'S BOUNTY

This day is spent in search of the local manta population. Although they can make an appearance anywhere in the park, some dive sites have a higher probability of encountering them than others.

- For the first dive we visit well known **Manta Sandy**, a cleaning station for reef mantas.
- Close by 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 another chance to swim eye-to-eye with one of the majestic giants.
- 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 9 (4 dives (incl. night dive)): ALICE IN WONDERLAND

Plunge down the rabbit hole with us! On your last full day of diving we would like to take you on a tour through the magical wonderland that is the Dampier Strait. From enchanted jetties to dramatic walls and world record holding reefs – we make sure you go out on a high.

- Mistaking **Mike's Point** for a camouflaged Japanese ship, this island was repeatedly bombed by the US air forces during WWII, creating a spectacular topography.
- Raja Ampat is littered with tiny villages like **Yenbuba**, 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.
- On the eastern tip of Pulau Kri lies the famous **Cape Kri**, record holder for the most fish species found in one dive.
- We will one last time spend our evening browsing through seagrass and sand looking for small creatures. The muck dive at **Saporkren** is full of surprises. From seahorses, to flamboyant cuttlefish, to swimming wobbegongs – a spectacular dive is almost guaranteed.

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).