

OCEAN ROVER CRUISES

NORTH SULAWESI INDONESIA DIVING CRUISES

A 19th century Dutch writer once described Indonesia as “wrapped around the Equator like an emerald band”. Ever since, this island nation has captured the imagination of everyone who visited there. Those who have explored the underwater world of Indonesia’s agree that it has one of the most diverse marine environments on the planet.

Northern Sulawesi, the area around Manado, is one of the best-known diving destinations in the country. It is easily accessible by air from Singapore with Silk Air, and Jakarta and Bali with Garuda Airlines. The topside scenery is dramatic with jungle clad mountains and volcanoes dominating the landscape. Unlike most of Indonesia, Northern Sulawesi’s inhabitants are devout Christians and a pleasant sense of calm and peacefulness prevails.

Commencing June 2008 Ocean Rover will be based in this unique area offering our guests the opportunity to enjoy Northern Sulawesi diving in comfortable and familiar on-board surroundings. The key words, as always will be variety and quality and our crew is looking forward to the challenge.

Ocean Rover’s departure point in Manado is the deep-sea port of Bitung in the Lembeh Straits. Each cruise will start and finish with a full day of diving in this location of choice for underwater photographers in search of unique macro subjects.

Our divers will also spend time enjoying the world-class diving around Bunaken National Marine Park and Bangka Island. Here divers will encounter spectacular walls and reefs of hard and soft corals, an underwater environment that has enchanted divers from all over the globe.

Ocean Rover then journeys further north to a chain of volcanic islands, the Sangihe Archipelago: dozens of islands, some of which are over fifteen hundred meters high and densely covered by coconut palms. This area has some of the deepest and clearest water on the planet.

Some of the highlights include an underwater lava flow, a natural hot spring jacuzzi and a dive at Mahangatang, an underwater volcano which releases silver bubbles into the sea, an unforgettable sight. Conditions permitting, we also do a spectacular

pinnacle dive at Para Island. And because a Sulawesi cruise is not complete without a day at

Minahasa and Popo

(a.k.a. Bethlehem), we visit these newly discovered critter sites as well.

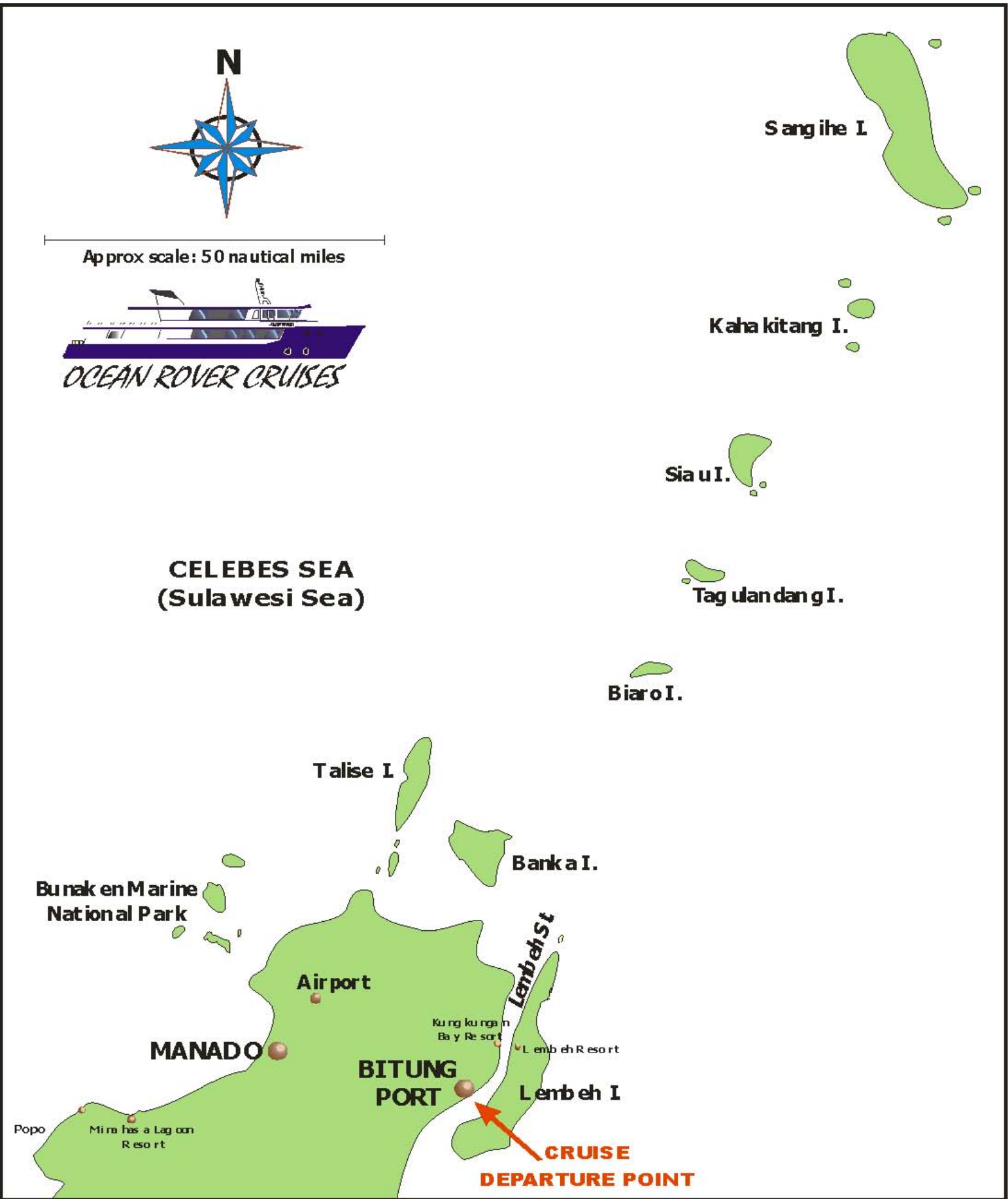
Overall, Ocean Rover offers the most comfortable way of experiencing all that North Sulawesi has to offer in one single cruise. For more details about these great trips contact our reservations department.

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The cruises visit three main areas: Bunaken and Banka Islands, Lembeh Strait and the Sangihe Archipelago. We spend roughly one third of the cruise in each area but we always remain flexible to take advantage of favorable weather conditions, special marine life encounters and customer preference.

Departure Day: Passengers welcome on board after 1300hrs. Welcome aboard briefing approx 1800hrs. **Day 1** - Lembeh Strait (big success with the critter photographers) **Day 2** - Bangka Island (our favorite site here: "Batu Gosoh") **Day 3** - Biaro Island (pinnacle dive) & Ruang Island (active volcano, dive on lava flow) **Day 4** - Makalehi Island (two wall dives) & Siau Islands (beautiful volcano, wall dives) **Day 5** - Para Islands & Mahengetang (U.W. volcano) **Day 6** - Kahakitang Island ("Bumphead Rocks") & Para Islands. **Day 7** - Bunaken Marine National Park **Day 8** - Minahasa and Popo (a.k.a. Bethlehem) Reefs (new critter sites) **Day 9** - Lembeh Strait (for a critter finale) **Return Day:** Guests welcome to remain on board until airport or hotel transfer time. For all practical purposes this means until around noon time. Passengers staying at Kungkungan Bay Resort or Lembeh Resort before and/or after the cruise will be pickup and dropped off at their docks in Lembeh Strait.

A typical 9 day itinerary will do 36-40 dives. (Night dives only when location is suitable)



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Bangka Island "Sahaong 1" and "Sahaong 2"

Series of rocky pinnacles rising up to the surface. Diving Depth: 0-120ft / 0-36m. Healthy colourful reef with variety of small soft corals, fans, hard and leather corals.

Deeper areas good schooling action with 5 lined snappers, banner fish, rainbow runners, red tooth triggerfish and fusiliers. Marine Life: ribbon eels, leaf scorpion fish, yellow margin and giant moray eels, egg cowries, crocodile flat heads, white tip reef sharks, juvenile emperor angel fishes, many nudibranchs, hairy squat lobsters, arrow crabs.

Bangka Island "Batu Gosoh"

Series of steep rocky pinnacles coming all the way up to the surface. Diving Depth: 0-130ft / 0-40m. Very healthy and colorful reef with lots of tunicates, small soft corals, fans, leather and hard corals. Marine Life: Schooling midnight snappers, sweetlips, fusiliers and red tooth trigger fish, ribbon eels, many nudibranchs, yellow mask / semi circle and majestic angelfish, bump head parrot fish, egg and tiger cowries, clown trigger fish, pigmy sea horses, Napoleon wrasse and possibly dugong!

Ruang Island "Lava Flow"

Fringing sloping lava rock reef with short walls. Diving Depth: 0-120ft / 0-36m. Healthy reef with lots of crinoids, fans, black corals and impressive barrel sponges. Marine Life: schooling pyramid butterfly fishes, fire dart gobies, shrimp gobies, Napoleon wrasse, dogtooth tuna, notodoris minor and other nudibranchs, hairy squat lobsters, porcelain crabs, bubble coral shrimps, ribbon eels and cuttlefish. Melon headed whales have been seen here.

Ruang Island "Lucky Dip"

Fringing gently sloping reef with rocky, hard coral, sandy and sea grass patches. Some areas covered with both yellow and purple elephant ear sponges. Diving Depth: 10-80ft / 3-24m. Marine Life: razor fish, estuarine stone fish, scorpion fishes, mantis shrimps, white eye moray eels, cuttlefish, squid, sand divers, longhorn cow fish, juvenile groupers, bearded and 6-lined soap fish, ribbon eels, ocellated lion fish, inimicus (spiny devil fish), snake eels, striped cat fish, nudibranchs and spine cheek anemone fishes.

Siau Island "Eddy's Point"

Straight wall with many encrusting and barrel sponges. Diving depth: 10-130ft / 3-40m. Big schools of pyramid butterfly fishes, fusiliers, snappers and banner fish. Marine Life: square spot anthias, blue head tilefish, Napoleon wrasse, scorpion leaf fish, octopus, eggshell shrimps, yellow edge moray eels, black tip reef shark, devil scorpion fish, garden eels, convict blennies and reptilian snake eel. Special Feature: rumbling sounds of active volcano!

Mahengetang Island "Underwater Volcano"

Top of active volcano coming up all the way to the surface, surrounded by deep water. Immense barrel sponge formation that has to be seen to be believed. Beautiful hard coral reef patches. Diving Depth: 10-XXXft / 3-XXXm. Big schools of pyramid butterfly fishes, fusiliers and big eye jacks along steep slope. Marine Life: Napoleon wrasse, green and hawksbill turtles, black tip reef shark, bumphead parrot fishes, giant clams, clown trigger fish, rainbow runners, great barracuda, square spot anthias, emperor and bi-color angel fishes. Special: listen underwater for rumbling sounds of active volcano and visit the hot water gas vents in the shallows.

Bunaken National Park "Mandolin", "Lekuan 1/2/3", "Mike's Point", "Muka Kampung", "Pangalisang" and "Bunaken Timur"

Impressive wall dives with colorful reef tops. Diving Depth: 10-XXXft / 3-XXm. Huge schools of red tooth triggerfish, pyramid butterfly fish, fusiliers and banner fish. Marine Life: pigmy sea horses, leaf scorpion fishes, ribbon eels, orangutan crabs, Napoleon wrasse, bump head parrot fish, clown trigger fish, crinoid cling fish, (hairy) squat lobsters, bubble coral shrimps, green and hawksbill turtles, black tip and white tip reef sharks, king mackerel, dogtooth tuna, blue fin trevallies, chevron barracudas, notodoris minor and many other nudibranchs, long nose hawk fish, mantis shrimps, banded sea kraits, mandarin fish, blue spotted sting rays, eagle rays, painted spiny lobsters, variety of angel and butterfly fishes, etc.

Para Island "Para One" (a.k.a. "Spot X")

High-adrenaline pinnacle dive with never a dull moment. Diving Depth: 10-130ft / 340m. Big schools, pelagics, turtles & wicked currents. Warning: often cannot be dived due to wind and sea conditions.

Kahakatang Island "Crescent Peaks"

Series of pinnacles that come up to within 20 feet / 6 meter of the surface. Diving Depth: 20-120ft / 6-36m. Very healthy coral reef with lots of small soft corals, fan corals, tunicates and hard corals. Big schools of fusiliers, banner fish, pyramid butterfly fish, surgeonfish, black and midnight snappers. Marine Life: yellow mask/ 6-banded/ regal/ semi circle/majestic/blue ringed and emperor angel fishes, footballer groupers, Napoleon wrasse, bumphead parrot fishes, many flatworms and nudibranchs, dogtooth tunas, white tip and grey reef shark, leaf scorpion fish, golden wenteltrap snails, Moyers dragonet and scorpion fishes.

Kahakatang Island "The Vineyard"

Sloping fringing mainly hard coral reef with lots of sea grapes, sponges and sea grass in the very shallows. Diving Depth: 0-100ft / 0-30m. Marine Life: pajama cardinal fish, spine cheek anemone fish, crocodile flat head, winged pipefish, many nudibranchs, juvenile bi-color parrotfish, many small shrimps on mushroom corals. Possibly hawksbill turtles.

Minahasa Lagoon Area "PoPo 1" and "PoPo 2"

Gently sloping reef with sea grass beds and hard coral patches in the shallows and a black sand/mud bottom. This is muck diving at its VERY best! Diving Depth: 10100ft / 3-30m. Marine Life: common and thorny sea horses, mimic octopus, leaf scorpion fish, snake eels, harlequin ghost pipe fishes, flamboyant cuttlefish, razor fish, long snout pipe fish, frog fish, cuttlefish, lion and scorpion fish, ribbon eels, strapweed file fish, giant shrimp gobies, cuttlefish, reef squid, emperor shrimps, juvenile Batavia spade fish, finger dragonets, etc. We found a yellow Rhinopias here and a dugong was seen by one of our divers.

Minahasa Lagoon Area "Minahasa Resort House Reef"

Gently sloping black sand/mud bottom with mainly hard coral patches. Diving Depth: 10-80ft / 3-24m. Marine Life: black, blue and yellow ribbon eels, reef stone fish, leaf scorpion fishes, giant shrimp gobies, mimic octopus, nudibranchs, striped cat fish, blue spotted sting rays, flounders, mullets, bar-tail/giant and white eye moray eels, juvenile sweet lips, many scorpion and lion fishes, razor fish and juvenile angel fishes. Dugongs a possibility.

Lembeh Straits "Hairball One", "Hairball Too!" and "Retak Larry"

Gently sloping black sand/mud bottom with hair-like algae and hard coral patches. Dive Depth: 0-100ft / 0-30m. A journey to the weird and wonderful! Marine Life: flying gurnards, giant angler fish, (hairy) frog fish, finger dragonets, juvenile round and zebra bat fish, sand divers, snake eels, (cockatoo) wasp fishes, many scorpion and lion fishes, longhorn cow fish, common and thorny sea horses, cuttlefish, squid, halimeda and harlequin ghost pipe fishes, soles and flounders, variety of snake eels and moray eels, inimicus (spiny devil fish), Ambon scorpion fish, ribbon eels, striped cat fish, banded toad fish, mullets, decorator crabs, fire urchins, nudibranchs and flat worms, halimeda and harlequin ghost pipe fishes, etc.

Lembeh Straits "Nudi Falls", "Magic Crack" and "Nudi Retreat"

Gently sloping rocky reefs with plenty of soft corals, fans, leather corals, anemones, hard corals and algae with black sandy patches in-between. Dive Depth: 0-100ft / 030m. The

best of both worlds; beautiful healthy coral reef AND lots of critters Marine Life: pigmy sea horses, halimeda and harlequin ghost pipe fishes, Banggai cardinal fishes, Pegasus fish (sea moths), many nudibranchs and flat worms, leaf scorpion fishes, winged pipe fish, long snout pipe fish, banded pipe fish, striped cat fish, juvenile barramundi cod, juvenile sweetlips, snake eels, mantis shrimps, cuttlefish, octopus, squid, egg shell/ Coleman/ emperor and rock shrimps, convict blennies, cockatoo wasp fish, ribbon eels, giant angler fish, frog fish, variety of moray eels, egg and tiger cowries, burr fish, bamboo sharks, fang blennies, comets etc.

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WHAT SHOULD I BRING? Your passport, **diver certification card** and **Dive Injury Insurance details**. Bathing suits, shorts, T-shirts, sunscreen and, perhaps, a light pullover or windbreaker. We provide basic toiletries and hair dryers in the cabins. Please make sure all your bags have nametags.

WHAT DIVING EQUIPMENT DO I NEED? Bring everything except tanks and weights. For those who prefer to travel light, we can arrange for rental equipment including dive lights, wet suits & dive computers.

ARE DIVE COMPUTERS RECOMMENDED? Yes! Due to the multi-level type of diving on our cruises, diving without a computer (using Dive Tables) will restrict your opportunities to see certain special features and creatures. **No sharing; divers must have their own computer.**

ARE WETSUITS NEEDED? The average water temperature is 27°C, (80F) but doing multiple dives each day may make you chillier than you anticipated. We recommend at least a thin shorty or skin but bring a thicker full wetsuit if you get cold easily. If you are not sure, bring both kinds. There is enough space on our divedeck to hang up two wetsuits per diver.

WHAT NOT TO BRING? Our experience is that the less stuff you bring, the more comfortable your stay on board. Any excess luggage can be stored at your hotel during the trip, if you stay at one.

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HOW ABOUT FLYING TO MANADO? Silk Air, (the regional carrier of Singapore Airlines) and Garuda Air Indonesia, all offer regular flights to and from Manado. We strongly recommend that you arrive in Manado at least one day before the boat's departure. This way you have time to rest and acclimatize.

WHERE DOES OCEAN ROVER DEPART FROM? Our departure point in North Sulawesi is the port of **BITUNG** which is located in the Lembeh Strait. The official name in Indonesian is **PELABUHAN SAMUDRA BITUNG**, which means Bitung Deep Sea Port. Once there passengers should go to the **PELNI Passenger Wharf** and proceed to the **WATERFRONT** side of the **TERMINAL**. In most cases Ocean Rover will be tied up to the wharf right there, easy to spot. If we are at anchor there will be crew (wearing Ocean Rover shirts) standing by at the terminal to assist arriving passengers. If you are coming directly from the airport please catch a meter taxi and come directly to the boat, you will be reimbursed for the cost (keep the receipt). Should you decide to stay elsewhere in Manado we will call your hotel to arrange your pick up a few hours before the boat's departure.

COMMUNICATION. We do not have official headquarters in Manado as we do in Phuket but someone from Ocean Rover's management team will be in at the scene to supervise the departure & arrival of the boat. Our Reservations Department will give you the mobile phone number of this person so you can communicate directly. Our representative will assist you with any cruise-related problem you may have while you are in Manado.

WHAT HAPPENS ON DEPARTURE DAY? Departure time is 17:00h. **LUGGAGE:** We prefer to store all luggage on board before boarding time. If you wish, we could pick up your bags at your hotel, just give us a call. Please have nametags on all your bags. **PAPERWORK:** There are some forms to be filled out before departure and it is best not to leave this until the last moment. **Also the Port Fee & Park Fee, in CASH US\$ only,** must be paid at this stage. **Be sure to reconfirm your return flights before boarding the boat. BOARDING TIME: In most cases it is possible to board from 13:00h onwards. A light meal will be served after the welcome aboard briefing at approx 18:00h.**

WHAT IS THE ITINERARY? The cruises visit three main areas: Bunaken and Banka Islands, Lembeh Strait and the Sangihe Archipelago. We spend roughly one third of the cruise in each area but we always remain flexible to take advantage of favorable weather conditions, special marine life encounters and customer preference.

HOW MANY DIVES PER DAY? You chose Ocean Rover for diving and that is what we are going to do, as often as we can. Generally, there are opportunities to do at least four dives per day, with additional night dives when the location is suitable.

WILL THE DIVE CREW GUIDE ME? Each dive is preceded by a detailed briefing, including charts. Anytime you need someone to guide you around the reef, you have but to ask.

CAN I DIVE SOLO? OK if you are very experienced and know what you are doing, if not, please join a buddy of your choice, or one of our dive crew.

WHAT ARE THE MEALS LIKE? We serve three meals a day, buffet style, as well as snacks and fresh fruits. We try to please many different palates so most meals are a combination of Asian and western cuisine. With prior notice we can cater to certain diets as well.

WHAT ABOUT DRINKS? We carry a selection of soft drinks, fruit juices as well as beer and wine. If you prefer hard liquor please bring your own. The refreshments corner is stocked with tea, instant coffee and cookies. Real coffee lovers will appreciate our espresso machine.

WHAT ARE THE CABINS AND SHOWERS LIKE? There are eight cabins, all on the main or upper deck. All cabins have individually controlled air-conditioning and private ensuite bathrooms and showers. We provide bathroom towels, as well as basic toiletries and hair dryers. The six double bed cabins have single berths over the double bed and large panoramic windows. The two twin share cabins on the main deck have upper and lower berths and twin viewing portholes. There is an additional toilet and shower on the dive deck.

WHAT IS THE ELECTRICAL CURRENT? At the camera charging stations both 220 & 110 Volts, 50-60Hz current is available. A selection of adaptors for many plug types is available as well. Standard electrical current in other parts of the boat, including the cabins, is 220V.

WHERE CAN I WORK ON MY CAMERAS? Ocean Rover has several camera worktables -both indoors and on deck- as well as safe places to place your cameras just before or after the dive. There are two large rinse tanks, light tables and a colour TV monitor (NTSC & PAL). NEW: For digital photographers there is a dedicated computer with appropriate software.

NON-DIVING ACTIVITIES? While diving is the priority, there are many other possibilities. When the location is suitable, there is swimming, snorkeling and beach combing. We also have a good selection of music, movies, books, and games. Please bring your own CDs or DVDs if you wish.

CAN I BE CONTACTED IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY? By mail to info@indo-diver.com or by phone 06327960320

DO I NEED INSURANCE? Absolutely! It is **OBLIGATORY** on all Ocean Rover cruises that you have suitable holiday diving injury insurance, such as DAN or similar. All passengers are required to sign a liability waiver before departure, and are on board at their own risk. We also strongly recommend suitable cancellation insurance.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF I HAVE AN ACCIDENT DURING THE CRUISE?

Although Ocean Rover operates in very remote locations, passengers do not need to worry unduly about lack of medical facilities in case of an accident or serious illness. The crew can contact Ocean Rover's management 24 hours a day via satellite communications. Detailed procedures have been drawn up (and tested!) to ensure rapid evacuation from the boat to the nearest recompression chamber. **Please do your part by making sure your DAN insurance (or other) is up to date.** Extensive medical supplies are on board, including plenty of emergency oxygen. The crew is trained in first aid techniques and very experienced. However, do bring any special medications you may need or think may be useful.

HOW MUCH SPENDING MONEY DO I NEED? Bring enough cash to cover the Port & Park Fee (\$100), crew tips, shopping, drinks and souvenirs. On board expenses are settled after the cruise.

CREDIT CARD PAYMENTS POLICY. On board expenses not covered by the cruise price are charged in US Dollars. While in Indonesia it is very difficult for us to accept credit card payments and would appreciate if **all payments could be made in CASH US dollars.** Extras include: Nitrox, your bar bill, souvenir T-shirts, camera rentals and crew tips. We also regret to be **unable to accept Traveller's Cheques** as payment because local banks will not accept "third party" TCs. To obtain cash Indonesian Rupiahs you can exchange your TCs at any exchange booth or bank.

WHAT HAPPENS ON THE LAST CRUISE DAY? We depart the islands after the last afternoon dive, arriving back in Bitung late that evening. We disembark the next morning at 07.00h (7AM). After disembarkation we will transfer you to either the airport or your chosen hotel.

WHAT IS THE CREW TIPPING POLICY? We believe tips should be given voluntary and based upon the quality of the service provided. Once on board, you will notice how hard the crew works and how your safety and enjoyment relies heavily on their professionalism and attitude. Many of our guests give a gratuity based on 10% of the cruise price or more but, again, we stress that this is entirely voluntarily. **Please note that tips can only be paid in cash.**

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GETTING THERE

Northern Sulawesi, the area around Manado, is one of the best-known diving destinations in the country. It is easily accessible by air from Singapore with Silk Air, and Jakarta or Bali with Garuda Air.

VISA

Citizens of most western countries, Americans included, must obtain a visa-on-arrival at Manado Airport. The cost is US\$25 and allows stays up to 30 days. Certain nationalities are required to obtain a visa from an Indonesian embassy in their home countries before travel to Indonesia. Passports must be valid for 6 months from your date of arrival in the country.

CURRENCY

The local currency is the Indonesian Rupiah (IDR). Currently the exchange rate is approx. US\$1.- = Rupiah 9,400.- but due to the strong currency fluctuations now occurring in South East Asia this can change quickly. Hotels, restaurants and shops accept the major credit cards.

TIMEZONE

Local time in North Sulawesi is 8 hours ahead of UTC (GMT). Same time zone as Singapore and Malaysia.

ELECTRICITY

Electrical current in Indonesia is 220 Volts, 50 Hz. On board Ocean Rover current is both 220V / 50Hz and 110V / 60Hz (camera charging area only).

HEALTH

Health services in Indonesia are by no means up to western standards, although there are hospitals in all major towns. Most of North Sulawesi is free of malaria and other serious diseases. However, it is always prudent to check if your vaccinations are still up to date. Normal precautions with food will keep you out of trouble. Be sure to drink only bottled water.

LANGUAGE

Bahasa is the official language but nearly all Indonesians that work in the tourism industry speak English. Speak slowly and clearly without too many colloquialisms and people will understand you just fine.

DRESS CODE

In all the tourist resorts shorts and T-shirts are acceptable attire but women are expected to dress “sensibly”. At night as well, although “smart-casual” is preferred in the better eating places. Jackets and ties are not required anywhere.

RELIGION

Unlike most of Indonesia, Northern Sulawesi’s inhabitants are devout Christians and a pleasant sense of calm and peacefulness prevails.

TEMPERATURE

Air temperature: 20°-35° C, always warm, can get very hot and humid, nights can be cooler.

Water temperature: In the Sulawesi Sea it averages approx 27°C (80F). Pleasant although sometimes thermoclines occur. The type of wetsuit depends on how easily you get cold and how many dives per day you make. We recommend at least a thin shorty or skin but bring a thicker full wetsuit 3-5mm if you get cold easy.

CLIMATE

Indonesia's tropical climate is influenced by the southwest and northeast monsoons. There are three seasons: Dry, Hot and Rainy. Diving is possible all year round, but there are days each year when monsoon winds are too strong for safe recreational diving.

For more information

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