

TROPICAL WONDERS: MANILA TO RAJA AMPAT EXPEDITION

Sail south from Manila through the warm, island-scattered waters of the Philippines, then cross open ocean to one of the most extraordinary places on earth. Raja Ampat is remote, breathtakingly beautiful, and home to the richest marine ecosystems ever recorded -- a destination that rewards every day spent exploring its hidden bays, ancient atolls and luminous lagoons. Few expedition ships reach it. Fewer still spend four days among its islands



ITINERARY

Days 0 - 1 Manila

Charter flights to the port of embarkation/disembarkation (Longyearbyen, Ushuaia, Kangerlussuaq, Nuuk, Honiara, Jayapura and Sorong)

One night pre-cruise accommodation with breakfast in a 4/5-star hotel (exemptions apply)

Arrive in Manila today. The capital of the Philippines is a teeming, sprawling metropolis. Its flaws are no match for its creative, exciting energy, which infused everything from its art to food. There's so much to see and do here: the city's museums, Fort Santiago, San Agustin Church and the Chinese Cemetery are some of the highlights. Intramuros - the old Spanish walled town at the heart of the city - is unmissable. Explore if timings allow and be sure to sample some Filipino cuisine in all its bold sour, sweet and tangy glory. Alternatively, head straight to your home for the next several days. After a seamless check-in, settle



into your cabin or stateroom and take time to explore your ship's luxurious facilities

Day 2 At Sea

Sea days are rarely dull. Take the time to sit back and let the world go by. The ship's observation decks provide stunning views of the passing ocean. A day at sea gives you the opportunity to mingle with other passengers and share your experiences of this incredible trip or head to our library which is stocked full of reference books. Get an expert's view in one of our on-board lectures or perhaps perfect your photography skills with invaluable advice from our onboard professional photographers

Day 3 Bohol Island, Baclayon

After crossing the Bohol Sea, you arrive at tiny Balicasag Island, about six kilometres southwest of Panglao. The sea drops away into deep submarine cliffs. Soft and hard corals surround the reef, with multicoloured shoals moving through the water. Afterwards, head to Tagbilaran, a gateway to Bohol's jungly interior. Tarsiers live here, nocturnal primates less than 16 cm tall with disproportionately large eyes. These adorable animals can be seen at the conservation centre and sanctuary. Bohol is also famous for the Chocolate Hills, a striking quirk of geology

Day 4 Casulian Island

Casulian Island (or Corregidor Island) lies off Siargao's southern coast. Rolling palm-covered hills lead to a summit with sweeping Pacific Ocean views. Pristine white-sand beaches and secluded turquoise coves ring the shoreline, while vibrant coral reefs thrive in the surrounding waters. Visitors flock here to hike the scenic hilltop trails and snorkel among the colourful marine life, making it one of Siargao's most sought-after destinations

Days 5-6 Days at sea

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Day 7 Sorong

The bustling port city of Sorong in West Papua is known as the gateway to the crystalline waters of Raja Ampat, the world's most biodiverse marine habitat, home to over 1,500 species of fish and 75 percent of the world's known coral species. In town, the Buddhist pagoda of Sapta Ratna stands tall on a hilltop overlooking the harbour. Local fishing boats come in with their catch at the bustling Pasar Jembutan Puri fish market

Day 7 Kabui Bay, Raja Ampat

Kabui Bay is one of Raja Ampat's most scenic areas, shaped by a narrow waterway between the limestone islands of Gam and Waigeo known as The Passage. Cruise this natural corridor via Zodiac, following in the footsteps of naturalist Alfred Russel Wallace, who travelled this route in 1860 and described its scenery as one of the most picturesque in the region. The mix of calm water, dramatic rock formations, and abundant marine life makes this area outstanding for snorkeling. Nearby, well-known dive sites such as Mioskon, Mayhem, and The Passage offer opportunities for those who want to explore deeper

Day 8 Ayu Atoll, Raja Ampat, Papua



Pulau Ayu, the main island in the Ayu Atoll, is a remote jewel of Raja Ampat. Fringed by ivory beaches and lush rainforest, and surrounded by vibrant coral reefs, it's a sanctuary for nesting leatherback turtles. Beneath its clear waters, tropical marine life flourishes, while the villages of Ayu and Imbik Kuan welcome visitors with warm Papuan hospitality. Once a WWII outpost, its isolation made it a key strategic base for Japanese forces

Day 9 Wayag Island, Raja Ampat

One of Raja Ampat's most remote islands, Wayag offers spectacular limestone karst formations surrounded by sapphire sea. Steps lead up to the panoramic Wayag Viewpoint overlooking the bullet-shaped stacks erupting from the ocean. Wayag's unusual landscape exists both above and below the surface with deserted white-sand beaches and underwater gardens packed with soft corals, darting tropical fish and black-tipped reef sharks

Day 10 Pulau Misool

One of the most remote islands in Raja Ampat, Pulau Misool captivates with its untouched nature. White-sand beaches, emerald hills, and labyrinths of karst limestone cliffs create truly cinematic scenery. The island is surrounded by some of the richest coral reefs on the planet and lies within the protected Misool Marine Reserve, celebrated for extraordinary biodiversity. One of the region's great natural treasures is the Yap Islands lagoon, hidden among towering karst formations. With turquoise water and a soft sandy bottom, it is an ideal spot for swimming and snorkeling. You can also swim in Lake Lenmakana among rare freshwater jellyfish that have no stinging tentacles, and explore reefs and limestone shorelines where manta rays, reef sharks, vivid mollusks, shrimp, and a wide variety of tropical fish are often seen. Nearby lies Balbulol Lagoon, home to the famous heart-shaped "Love Lake," a hidden gem set among the dramatic karst formations of Misool. The surrounding landscape is defined by towering limestone spires rising directly from the turquoise sea, creating a maze of narrow passages and peaceful, sheltered coves

Day 11 Sorong, Papua

Arrive in Sorong in the early morning for disembarkation, with the reefs and islands of Raja Ampat still fresh in mind. Take a last look at the water and the jungle edged coastline as you step ashore, then continue onward with the sense of having reached one of the most biodiverse corners of the planet

Please note:

Itineraries are subject to change.



YOUR SHIP: MINERVA

YOUR SHIP: **Minerva**

VESSEL TYPE:

LENGTH:

PASSENGER CAPACITY:

BUILT/REFURBISHED:

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surroundings.

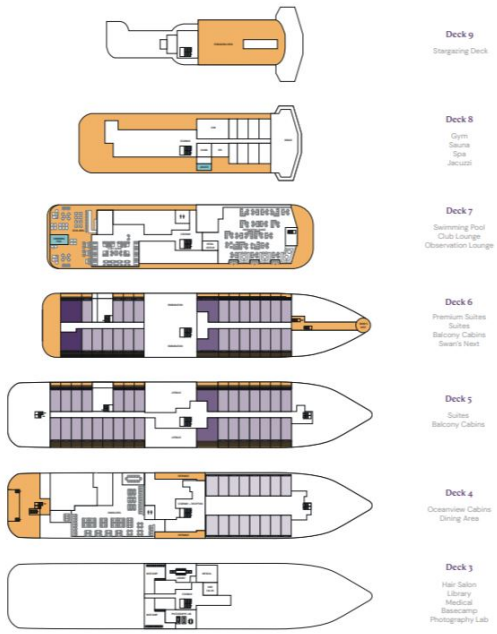
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