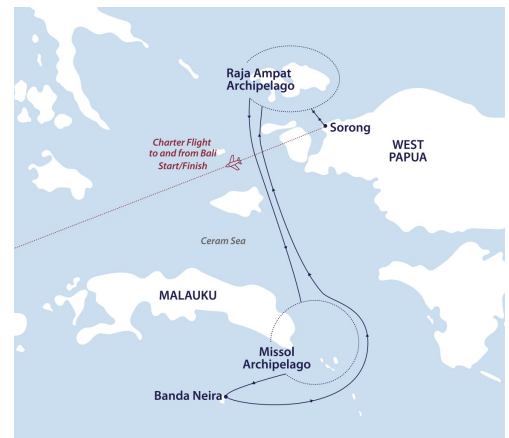


# Living Treasures of Raja Ampat & the Spice Islands

Starts and Ends in **Denpasar, Indonesia, Asia** (PAP)

## Day 1 Arrive in Denpasar

Having made your way to Denpasar, you will be met by a representative of Aurora Expeditions and transferred to our group hotel. Upon arrival at your included hotel, please visit the welcome desk where you can collect your luggage cabin tags and speak with our ground operations team, who may have information to share with you about pre-embarkation or to provide you with information about where to dine, withdraw cash or purchase last minute items from a local pharmacy or supermarket. The remainder of your time is at leisure. All meals today are at your own expense. Accommodation: Bali Hotel (to be confirmed)



## Day 2 Fly to Sorong, embarkation

This morning, please ensure your cabin luggage is fitted with cabin tags clearly labelled with your name and cabin number. Any valuables or personal items should be kept on you throughout the day. After breakfast at the hotel, we board a morning charter flight to Sorong, where our vessel the Greg Mortimer awaits. Transfer to the port for embarkation. You will have time to settle into your cabin before our important briefings begin. Enjoy the thrill of departure as we 'throw the lines' and set sail for Raja Ampat. Meet your Expedition Team and crew at the Captain's Welcome Dinner.

## Days 3-6 Raja Ampat, the epicentre of the Coral

## Triangle

Located in the 'Coral Triangle,' Raja Ampat archipelago has been described as a marine 'species factory,' and a Mission Blue Hope Spot. Believed to contain the most biodiverse marine habitat on the planet, the waters surrounding Raja Ampat are home to 600 species of hard coral and 1,500 types of fish – more than anywhere else in the world – which makes for exceptional diving and snorkelling experience. We plan to spend four days exploring the coral reefs and shoals, limestone formations and rainforests of this hidden gem. Some of the islands we plan to explore include Wayag, Waigeo, Wofoh Island and Misool Marine Reserve, another Mission Blue Hope Spot. Waigeo, the largest island in the Raja Ampat archipelago, is a birder's dream. Its rugged coastline, framed by towering cliffs, gives way to a vast, largely unexplored interior. This dense jungle is home to an incredible array of wildlife, including the iconic Wilson's Bird-of-Paradise and the Red Bird-of-Paradise. Opossums, snakes, tortoises, and monitor lizards also thrive in this pristine environment. Our early morning birding expedition takes us through diverse habitats, from regenerating to primary forest. This rich ecosystem supports a thriving bird population, with a chance to spot a variety of species, including hornbills, parrots, and pigeons as they emerge from their roosts. We'll be on the lookout for elusive nocturnal creatures like the Papuan Boobook owl, Frogmouth, and Large-tailed Nightjar. Wayag Island is a quintessential postcard image of paradise. Its iconic mushroom-shaped limestone formations, rising dramatically from emerald waters, are a photographer's dream. This World Heritage-listed island offers a multitude of activities for every adventurer. Explore the stunning Wayag Lagoon by Zodiac, surrounded by lush vegetation and exotic birdlife. Discover hidden white-sand beaches and the labyrinth of limestone karst islands, adorned with vibrant orchids and pitcher plants. For the adventurous, the challenging climb to the summit of Mount Pindito is rewarded with breathtaking panoramic views. Snorkelers and divers will be captivated by the underwater world, teeming with colourful fish and pristine coral reefs. Kayakers can paddle through the enchanting lagoon, surrounded by the island's breathtaking beauty. Straddling the equator, Wofoh Island is a jewel in the heart of Raja Ampat. Two idyllic islands connected by a vibrant coral reef create a stunning natural haven. Lush vegetation, pristine beaches, and a thriving underwater world make this a tropical paradise. Immerse yourself in the crystal-clear waters, teeming with colourful marine life and surrounded by breathtaking scenery. Explore the island's pristine beaches, surrounded by dense coastal forests. Discover hidden coves and lagoons, perfect for snorkelling, diving, or simply relaxing. Misool, a pristine corner of Raja Ampat, is renowned for its breathtaking natural beauty and extraordinary

marine biodiversity. Established in 2005, the Msool Marine Reserve safeguards a vast 300,000-acre expanse, protecting it from destructive fishing practices. This pioneering conservation effort has yielded remarkable results. A scientific study between 2007 and 2013 revealed a staggering 250% increase in fish biomass within the reserve, with some areas experiencing a phenomenal 600% recovery. This extraordinary transformation underscores the power of effective marine conservation. Beyond its ecological significance, Msool offers unparalleled opportunities for exploration and adventure. Relax in the crystal-clear waters, teeming with vibrant coral reefs and diverse marine life. Hike to the summit of Dafalen Peak for breathtaking panoramic views or discover the island's rich cultural heritage through ancient rock art sites. Subject to change due to pending regulatory and permitting approvals.

## **Days 7-10 The Moluccas – the Spice Islands**

The Moluccas, or Spice Islands, are an archipelago of breathtaking beauty and rich history. Nestled in eastern Indonesia, these islands have captivated explorers and traders for centuries. Renowned for their production of precious spices like nutmeg and cloves, they once ignited a fierce competition among European powers. Beyond their historical significance, the Moluccas offer a diverse landscape of volcanic peaks, pristine beaches, and lush rainforests. From the bustling city of Banda Neira to the secluded islands of Banda Sea, this archipelago promises an unforgettable adventure for those seeking natural wonders, cultural immersion, and a taste of the exotic. We plan to visit Seram, the largest island in the Maluku province. Revered by locals as 'Nusa Ina', or Mother Island, it is believed to be the ancestral home of Central Maluku's people. Nestled at the foot of towering limestone cliffs on Seram's northern coast is the ancient village of Sawai. Said to predate the arrival of European explorers, Sawai is one of the region's oldest settlements. Perched on stilts above the clear tropical waters of the Ceram Sea, the village offers a unique glimpse into a bygone era. For over four centuries, Banda Neira held a coveted position as the global epicentre of the nutmeg trade. This small island, once the focus of intense colonial rivalry, offers a captivating glimpse into a bygone era. Join a guided walking tour to uncover the island's rich history. Explore the ruins of Dutch and Portuguese forts, silent sentinels of a time when empires clashed over this precious spice. Stand in the footsteps of Christopher Cole, the British captain who liberated the Bandanese from the oppressive Dutch regime. Beyond its historical significance, Banda Neira boasts a unique charm. Wander through its quaint streets, lined with colonial-era buildings, and experience the warm

hospitality of its people. Soak up in the island's vibrant culture and relax on pristine beaches. Banda Neira is more than just a historical site; it's a journey back in time and a chance to experience the heart of Indonesia's spice trade heritage. Subject to change due to pending regulatory and permitting approvals.

## **Day 11 Boo Islands**

Tucked away in the far reaches of Raja Ampat, the Boo Islands are a secluded archipelago offering an unparalleled underwater adventure. These pristine islands, shielded from the crowds, promise a truly immersive experience for the intrepid expeditioner. Beneath the crystal-clear waters surrounding the smaller Boo Island lies a hidden lagoon, a secluded aquatic oasis teeming with exotic marine life. This untouched ecosystem is a diver's dream, boasting a gentle slope that descends into a vibrant underwater world. Here, the delicate balance of nature is on full display, as a complex food chain unfolds before your eyes. From apex predators like sharks and groupers to the colourful Napoleon wrasse, the Boo Islands offer a front-row seat to the ocean's intricate web of life. Renowned for their exceptional marine biodiversity, the Boo Islands are a testament to the raw beauty of Raja Ampat. As you explore these underwater wonders, you'll encounter a kaleidoscope of corals, fish species, and other aquatic creatures. Subject to change due to pending regulatory and permitting approvals.

## **Day 12 Aljui Bay & Penemu Island, Raja Ampat**

Aljuy Island, a secluded bay on Waigeo, offers a unique blend of stunning scenery and exceptional marine life. This sheltered haven is renowned for its vibrant coral gardens, teeming with a diverse array of underwater creatures. Spend your morning exploring the bay's pristine beaches and snorkelling in crystal-clear waters. Discover a thriving underwater ecosystem, home to an abundance of colourful fish, intricate coral formations, and fascinating marine life. For the adventurous, a leisurely cruise up the channel offers opportunities for birdwatching and exploring the bay's hidden coves. In the afternoon, venture to the iconic Piaynemo Peak, part of the Fam Islands. Hike to the summit for breathtaking panoramic views of the surrounding islands and lagoons. Afterward, snorkel or kayak in the crystal-clear waters, surrounded by lush limestone formations. Aljuy and Piaynemo offer an unforgettable experience for nature

lovers and adventure seekers alike. Subject to change due to pending regulatory and permitting approvals.

## **Day 13 Disembark in Sorong**

During the early morning, we cruise back into Sorong. Farewell your Expedition Team upon disembarkation and transfer to the airport for our charter flight back to Denpasar, Bali. Note: the arrival time in Bali is contingent on the approved allocated slot for our charter flight to and from Sorong, which we expect to receive in February 2026.