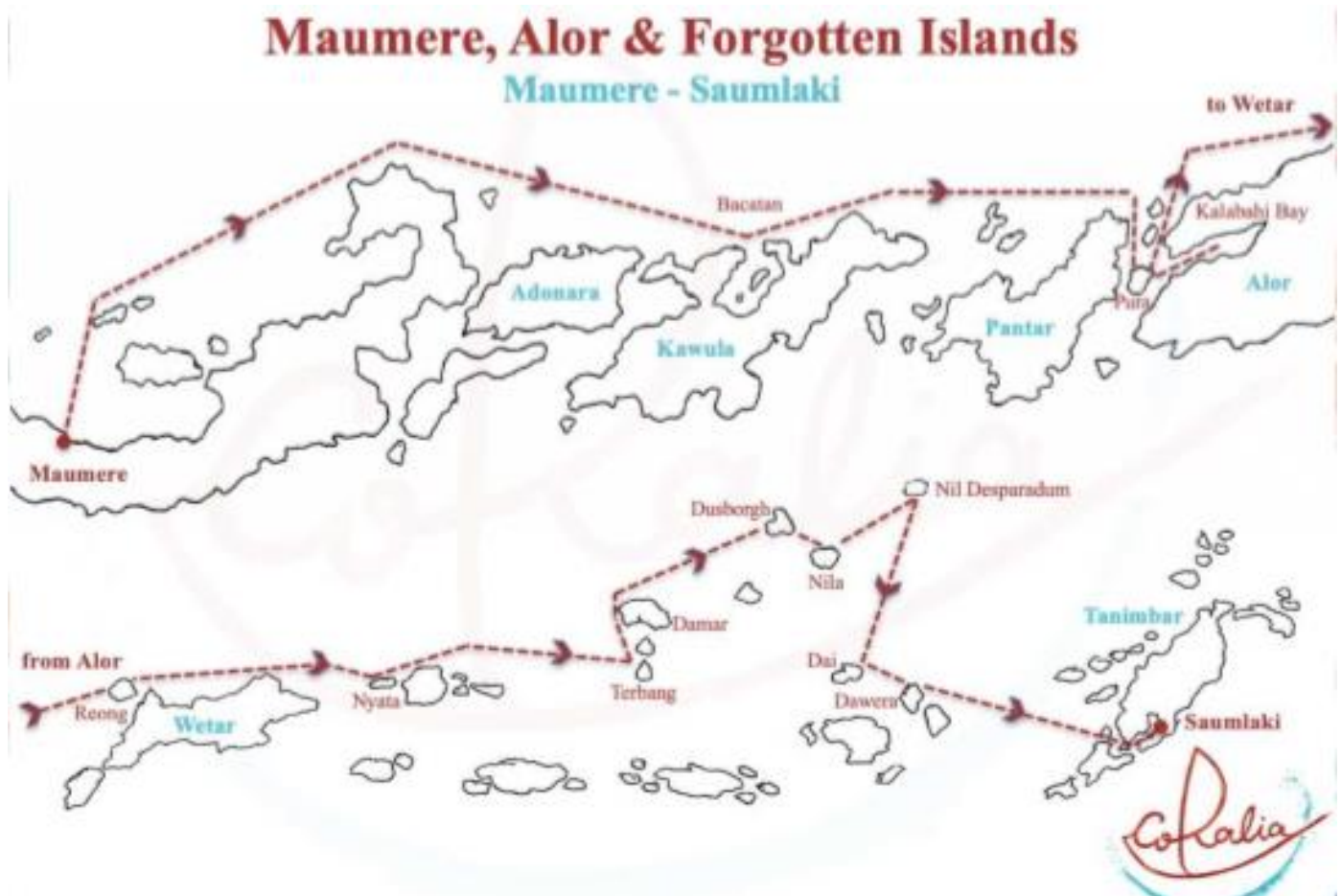


## Maumere, Alor & Forgotten Islands

from: Maumere, to: Saumlaki

Please note: this is a sample itinerary. Itineraries may change without further notice due to weather conditions or other unforeseen circumstances.



Starting from Maumere on the island of Flores, we will head straight to our first stop with an overnight crossing to Bacatan which is encompassed in the large area known as Alor. At the entrance to this big bay, on the island of Kawula, is a dive site called Bacatan Ledges. A drift dive will take you past a wall full of sea fans and sponges with a chance to see schooling jacks and pelagics such as eagle rays, tunas and sharks. Inside the bay is the sea mount of Takat Prau and the reef and sand of Padang Pasir. Takat Prau has a small wooden fishing boat on one side of the pinnacle and in the shallows, are resident leaf fish. During the day, the reef at Padang Pasir holds delights such as pyjama cardinal fish, juvenile barramundi cod and stonefish, and at night star gazers, crocodile flatfish and demon stingers emerge from the sand.

On to the Pantar Strait which is formed between the islands of Alor and Pantar. Here is the island of Pura, right in the middle of the channel. Anemone City is one of the highlights of this area, the reef is entirely covered in anemones, a rare phenomenon. Yan Village is where you will be greeted by ladies selling ikats, the traditional weaving

of this area. The children on Pura make goggles out of wood and bottle tops and they love to greet divers on the surface and underwater.

Alor is also home to the holy grail of fish, Rhinopias. Something about the conditions here make this area one of the top places in the world to see this rare fish. There are several dive sites where there is a good chance to find them. Kalabahi Bay is one such place. This bay is where you will experience the fantastic muck diving of Alor. Alongside Rhinopias we will look for all types of octopus, frogfish, ghost pipefish, squid, cuttlefish, weird and wonderful shrimps and nudibranchs galore! Mucky Mosque, Rocky Church and Pertamina Jetty are the dive sites inside Kalabahi.

Alor is home to an ancient tribe called the Abui. During any cruise to Alor, Coralia will visit a traditional village to watch and take part in dances and ceremonies of these friendly people. An absolute highlight of any tour to Alor and a very unique experience.

After two days in the Pantar Strait we will head to the first of the Forgotten Islands, Wetar. The Forgotten Islands are an arc of islands that are part of a very remote archipelago in the east of the Banda Sea. These islands are accessible only by liveaboard and offer a truly exciting adventure! The Banda Sea is famous for its deep walls, healthy reefs, giant sponges all in crystal clear blue water. This area is also now known for the chance to see schooling Hammerhead Sharks!

Nyata is the next stop. Here the reefs are very healthy, especially the hard-coral formations in the shallows. Incredible fish action is attracted to the dive site here. Nus Leur is a small atoll that has a steep sloping reef with a good chance to see Napoleon Wrasse. The shallow coral garden is a very beautiful spot to do your safety stop. At North and South Terbang there are dramatic walls with large overhangs dripping with soft corals. Damar is close by and has a great hard coral garden perfect for an afternoon and night dive.

Close to the island of Nila are the sea mounts of Dusborgh and Nil Desparandum. They are surrounded by very deep water so there is a chance to see large pelagics. Here we will look out for now famous Banda Sea schooling hammerhead sharks. Absolutely massive barrel sponges and expanses of hard corals make these reefs very impressive.

Dawera is the last stop on a cruise that finishes in Saumlaki. You can dive just about anywhere around this island to find a fantastic dive site! At one point there are so many soft corals we are reminded of the glorious reefs of Raja Ampat. A huge school of Barracuda hang out on one point of the island. There is a hidden pinnacle out from the island where the reef really is untouched. The village of Dawera does not fish here because there are so many fish around their island, they have plenty to eat! At the pinnacle the reef is a profusion of colour and each and every rock is covered in every type of coral! Big schools of jacks and batfish, schooling pyramid fish and triggerfish and hundreds of fusiliers all try to avoid the hunting reef sharks and jacks.

Forgotten Island trips are not just about the 'big stuff'. If you want to look for macro critters we can find things like Leaf Fish, Moray Eels, lots of different Nudibranchs, Ribbon Eels, Mantis Shrimps, as well the very special Dragon Shrimps and Leopard Shrimps.

On the last full day on board we will do two dives on the island of Tanimbar before heading into Saumlaki to enjoy our goodbye dinner inside the harbour.