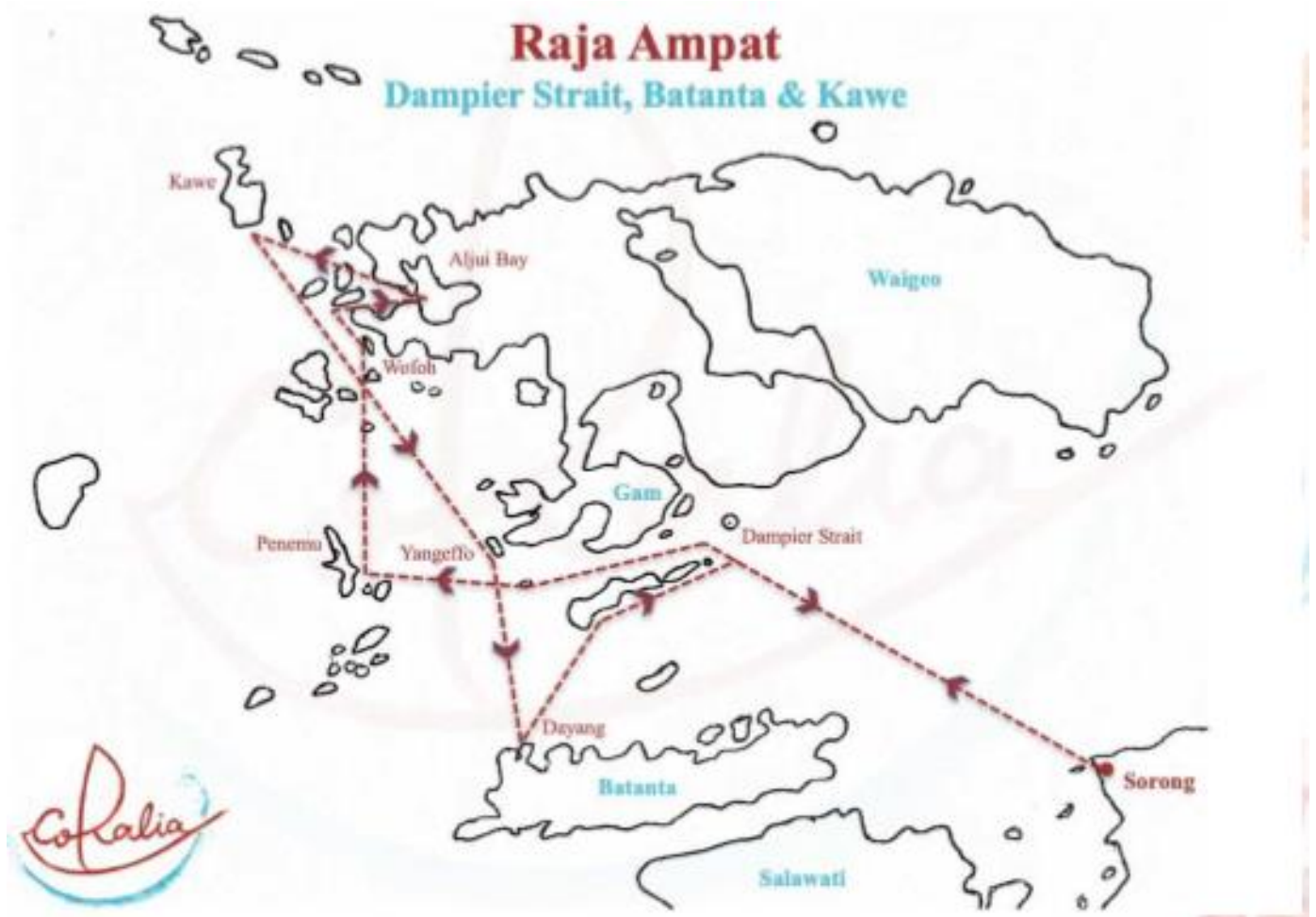


Raja Ampat (Dampier Strait, Batanta & Kawe)

from: Sorong, to: Sorong

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



Raja Ampat is right in the heart of the Coral Triangle and has over 1,500 islands. Many scientists believe Raja Ampat has the most coral and fish diversity in the world! Raja means King and Ampat means Four – Four Kings. The four kings are the main islands in Raja Ampat – Waigeo, Batanta, Salawati and Misool.

Starting from Sorong in West Papua we head to the south of Raja Ampat's largest island Waigeo to the famous Dampier Strait. We will select the best dives sites for the experience of the divers and according to the current and weather conditions. Here you can expect to dive at some world class, adrenalinpacked dive sites such as Cape Kri, Chicken Reef, Sleeping Barracuda, Sardine Reef, Mioskon and Blue Magic. Our guides can take you to places where the current meets the reef head on, where you can witness predatory fish like for black tip, white tip and grey reef sharks, giant trevally, Spanish mackerel and dog tooth tuna hunting huge schools of smaller fish like fusiliers and big eye jacks. Sea mounts and long reefs offer this hunting action as well as sightings of bumphead parrotfish, napoleon wrasse, turtles and manta rays.

At the other end of the Dampier Strait is the island of Arborek with a great jetty dive. Lalosi is a drift dive completely full of fusiliers and with a chance to see wobbegong sharks. The well-known manta aggregation sites of Manta Sandy and Manta Ridge are also in this area. Sawandarek is on the island of Mansuar and the dive on the reef and jetty in front of the village is a fantastic dive. You can also visit Papua Explorer's coral restoration project here. For those interested we can take a walk around the village at Sawandarek or Arborek.

After a night dive on our first day of diving we will travel to Penemu. Famous Melissa's Garden awaits us with its spectacular, healthy and wide-spread hard coral plateau in the shallows. At Keruo Wall we can admire large gorgonian sea fans and lovely reef tops, and we might also explore My Reef and Batu Rufus. A short hike to the viewpoint of Penemu offers a spectacular view of the lagoons and its surrounding islands.

Next, we make our way to Wofoh. Wofoh has several unique dive sites easily reachable from one mooring point, allowing us to relax in this incredibly scenic area. On one side, we will have the backdrop of Wofoh and Taman Wofoh, two small islands with pristine white coral sand beaches and on the other side we can take in vistas of the forested mountains and valleys of West Waigeo. The dive sites at Wofoh are famous for stunning black coral forests, where schooling fish are on the constant run from larger predatory fish. The walls are interesting with ledges and shallow caverns where it is not uncommon to find wobbegong sharks. Wofoh has some very healthy hard corals in the shallows, where dense schools of anthias and damsels can be found.

We will do one or two dives at Wofoh before heading into Aljui Bay. Our afternoon and night dive will be at Aljui Bay, where we will be on a critter hunt. Inside this bay, there is also an opportunity to take a little tour to visit the pearl farm and learn all about how pearls are grown. A late afternoon dive at the pearl farm jetty might be possible and it can be full of schooling fish and wobbegong sharks. During the night dive, it is not unusual to find macro favourites like toadfish, octopus and Epaulette walking sharks.

Next day we will dive at the island of Kawe. Here the dive site Black Rock awaits us, soft corals bloom in a variety of colours from the rocky outcrops, amazing us as Raja Ampat's full abundance comes to life in a most vibrant display. Eagle Rock is our next stop and is named for the majestic eagles circling above the small, rocky islands. Underwater, divers can encounter creatures like wobbegong sharks, schools of sweetlips, batfish and barracudas, bumphead parrotfish and reef sharks, even the occasional manta ray! We will go back into Aljui for another magnificent night dive with the critters.

The following day will be spent on the western tip of Gam island, at an island called Yangeffo, which protects a sheltered bay. This small area has multiple world class dive sites. Famous ones like Citrus Ridge and Mayhem always amaze divers with their vibrancy and biodiversity. The area here is probably so abundant due to the surrounding mangroves. Beautiful hard and soft corals grow under and among the roots of the trees, so a dive at Mangrove Ridge is truly enjoyable. And our crew will be happy to take you out in the dingy to snorkel in the mangroves in between dives. Sunsets and sunrises are very special at our mooring point at Yangeffo: as the sun drops, the surrounding forested hills become alive with flocks of Sulphur Crested Cockatoo's and Blyth's Hornbills emerge to return to their roosting places.

At Dayang, on the north-west of Batanta, there is a beautiful small sandy island home to a population of Coconut Crabs. Dayang is just at the entrance to one of Batanta's many scenic bays and has a colourful reef with wobbegong sharks, schooling yellow snappers and great macro-life, including pygmy seahorses and unusual nudibranchs. Dayang island also offers a great chance to encounter manta rays, the gentle giants, at their cleaning stations. In the south of Batanta there are some great macro dives in the sandy slopes.

The remainder of our adventure will be spent diving in the Dampier Strait. Our last day will offer two more action-packed dives in the Dampier Strait. We can also arrange for a bird watching trip on the last morning to see the enigmatic and endemic Red Bird of Paradise. After lunch, we make our way back to Sorong for hearty goodbyes.