



Dewi Nusantara

CRUISING ITINERARY 11

THE EASTERN FORGOTTEN ISLANDS, THE BANDA ISLANDS,
CENTRAL MALUKU & AMBON

THE KEI ISLANDS - WATUBELA - KOON - BANDA - NUSA LAUT - LAHA
(TUAL TO AMBON)



THE KEI ISLANDS - WATUBELA - KOON - BANDA - NUSA LAUT - LAHA

DEWI NUSANTARA ITINERARIES

THE EASTERN FORGOTTEN ISLANDS, THE BANDA ISLANDS, CENTRAL MALUKU & AMBON

THE KEI ISLANDS - WATUBELA - KOON - BANDA - NUSA LAUT - LAHA

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The Indonesian Archipelago

THE KEI ISLANDS - WATUBELA - KOON - BANDA - NUSA LAUT - LAHA



THE EASTERN FORGOTTEN ISLANDS, THE BANDA ISLANDS, CENTRAL MALUKU & AMBON

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THE KEI ISLANDS - WATUBELA - KOON - BANDA - NUSA LAUT - LAHA

The Eastern Forgotten Islands, Banda Islands, Central Maluku & Ambon

Dewi Nusantara presents a brand new itinerary that combines some exciting new areas for our guests on the Goddess of the Archipelago to discover. Starting at Tual, the capital of the Kei Islands our route runs north along the East Forgotten Islands line of Kur and Watubela before reaching the outpost of Koon on the south-eastern corner of Ceram. We then make our way south-west and visit the historic Banda Islands. After exploring Banda it is on the Lease Islands of Nusa Laut, Saparua, Haruku and finally Ambon.

The scuba diving highlights along the route take in the whole spectrum of Indonesia's world-famous underwater world.

The Eastern Forgotten Islands

The programme starts out heading north from Tual along a seldom visited archipelago that runs along the eastern border of the Banda Sea, the Eastern Forgotten Islands. The islands in this chain feature some wonderful dive sites where the marine life has rarely seen scuba divers. These islands also offer idyllic topside scenery to go along with their underwater treasures.

The Banda Islands

Now firmly on any tropical diver's wish list, the remote Banda Islands are a sparkling oasis that rises out of the deep blue Banda Sea. Aside from a remarkable topside history, this region boasts some of the world's finest diving, ranging from critter havens in the harbour to the magnificent walls and reefs of the outer islands of the group.



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THE KEI ISLANDS - WATUBELA - KOON - BANDA - NUSA LAUT - LAHA



The Lease Islands (Central Maluku)

In addition to having a rich history of the spice trade, the islands of Ambon, Haruku, and Saparua are also home to some of Indonesia's best diving. Their southern shores, as well as the smaller island of Nusa Laut, offer a wide range of wonderful sites.

Laha (Ambon)

Laha's sublime critter diving is a well-known hotspot for underwater image makers. The sand and gravel slopes, piers, and coral heads of Laha are home to some of the planet's most sought-after photographic subjects. On these sites, the weird and wonderful psychedelic frog fish was discovered. Who knows what other cryptic wonders these sites might hide?

Get On-Board with Dewi Nusantara

For selected expeditions during her busy cruising season, Dewi Nusantara will depart on this ground-breaking new itinerary. Begin your next scuba adventure on board the Indonesian archipelago's premier liveaboard and experience the best that Indonesia has to offer, along with Dewi Nusantara's outstanding service, exceptional facilities, and her highly experienced crew.

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THE KEI ISLANDS - WATUBELA - KOON - BANDA - NUSA LAUT - LAHA

Destinations: The Eastern Forgotten Islands, The Banda Islands, Central Maluku & Ambon

[Cruise Route ➡](#)

[Bui ➡](#)

[The Watubela Islands ➡](#)

[The Koon Archipelago ➡](#)

[The Historic Banda Islands ➡](#)

[Hatta & Skaru Reef ➡](#)

[Banda Neira ➡](#)

[Run & Suanggi ➡](#)

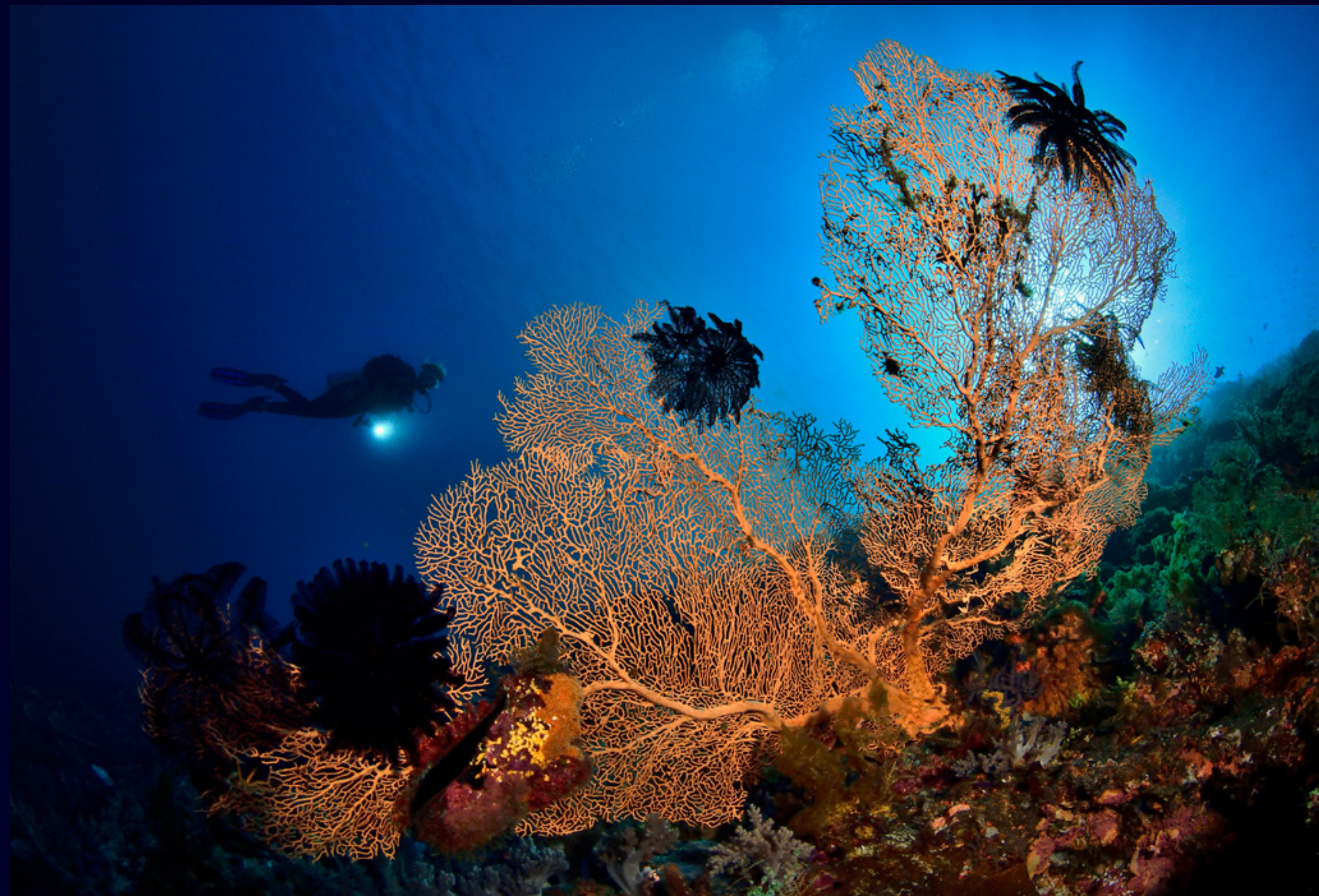
[Nusa Laut ➡](#)

[Molana & Saparua ➡](#)

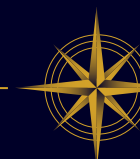
[Laha \(Ambon\) ➡](#)

[Cruise Notes ➡](#)

Key: ➡= To destination. ⬅= Back to this page



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THE KEI ISLANDS - WATUBELA - KOON - BANDA - NUSA LAUT - LAHA

THE
CERAM SEA

BURU

AMBON

LAHA

MOLANA & SAPARUA

NUSA LAUT

CERAM

THE
CERAM SEA

THE
BOMBERAI
PENINSULA

KOON

SUANGGI

BANDA NEIRA

PULAU RUN

PULAU HATTA

THE
WATUBELA
ISLANDS

BUI

THE KEI
ISLANDS

TUAL

THE
BANDA
SEA

LUCIPARA
ATOLL

Cruise Route: The Eastern Forgotten Islands,
The Banda Islands, Central Maluku & Ambon

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THE TANIMBAR
ISLANDS





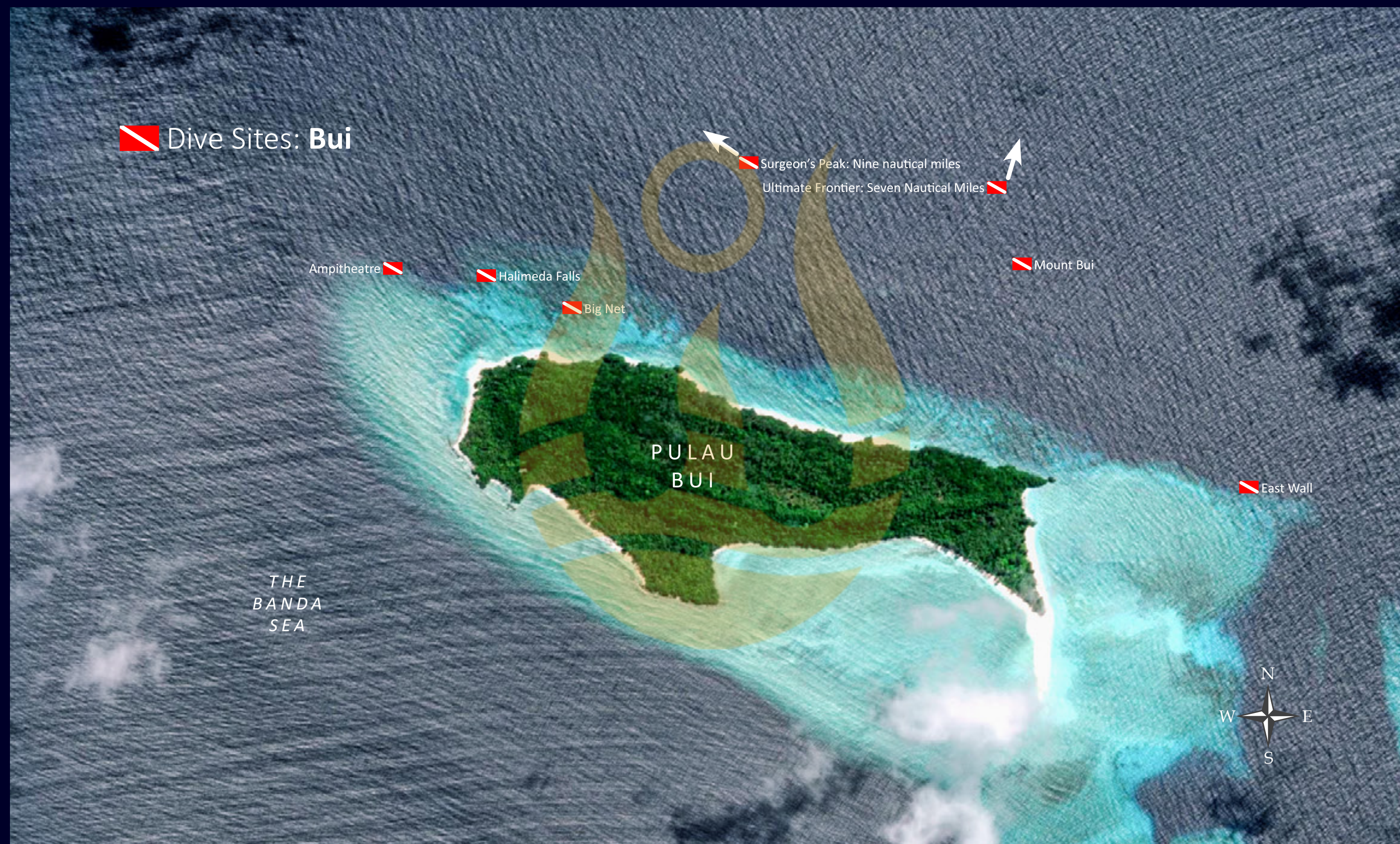
THE KEI ISLANDS - WATUBELA - KOON - BANDA - NUSA LAUT - LAHA

Bui

Bui is the name of a small outpost island at the northern end of the stunning Kei Island collection. This palm-fringed group of flat sandy islands boasts some of the best beaches in Indonesia, and Bui is no exception.

Most of the dive sites are located on the north side of the island and feature an intriguing collection of reefs, slopes, and deep walls, along with plenty of critters, both large and small. To add to the excitement, just a few nautical miles further north, there are two huge seamounts that rise from the depths of the Banda Sea. These are both magnificent sites to dive. Just a few metres under the surface, huge schools of pelagic fish drift in the crystal-clear water, and both seamounts are generously populated with pretty coral heads.

The currents that flow over the tops of these marine mountains also attract some of the sea's larger animals. There are manta ray cleaning stations over the reefs, and huge marlin have been spotted while divers are hanging out on an SMB line while completing safety stops.





THE KEI ISLANDS - WATUBELA - KOON - BANDA - NUSA LAUT - LAHA

The Watubela Islands

Stretching for 30 nautical miles from north to south, the Watubela Islands, an enchanting archipelago in Indonesia's Maluku Province, offer an unparalleled diving experience for adventurers and marine enthusiasts. This remote group of islands boasts pristine waters teeming with vibrant marine life and stunning underwater landscapes.

The coral reefs feature a kaleidoscope of colours and intricate formations, providing a habitat for an array of marine species, from tiny, delicate nudibranchs to larger creatures such as reef sharks and manta rays. The biodiversity is astounding.

The remoteness of the Watubela Islands has ensured that the dive sites are unspoiled, far from the crowds found at more popular destinations. This tranquility, combined with the rich marine diversity and stunning underwater vistas, makes diving in the Watubela Islands an excellent waypoint along this new itinerary for Dewi's guests to discover.



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THE KEI ISLANDS - WATUBELA - KOON - BANDA - NUSA LAUT - LAHA

The Koon Archipelago

The remote, sandy isles of the Koon Archipelago are dotted with sparse vegetation and just a handful of small villages, offering a secluded and untouched paradise for nature lovers and adventure seekers alike.

Koon Island is the easternmost of a collection of three small, sandy coral cays - along with Nukus and Grogus - that stretch nearly eight nautical miles from west to east. Extending into the depths of the Ceram Sea, these islands boast an astonishing mix of shallow reefs, deep drop-offs, and sandy terra firma. The crystal-clear waters surrounding them create the perfect playground for snorkelling and swimming, with vibrant coral reefs teeming with marine life just beneath the surface. Kayakers and paddleboarders can glide through tranquil blue lagoons, exploring hidden coves and winding waterways. On land, the islands offer opportunities for beachcombing and birdwatching, with stretches of soft sand, swaying coconut palms, and flocks of seabirds soaring overhead.



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THE KEI ISLANDS - WATUBELA - KOON - BANDA - NUSA LAUT - LAHA



Although the entire group is ideal for various watersports, Koon is best known for scuba diving. The focal point is a site called “Too Many Fish” - a name that perfectly captures what awaits beneath the surface. Located at the eastern tip of the mini-archipelago, this site plunges into much deeper water. Centred around a ridge with a deep wall on the north side and a steeply sloping reef on the south, it offers multiple entry points for divers.

It is not uncommon to spot zebra and hammerhead sharks on the reef and along the north wall, along with the countless fish that give the site its name. Additionally, there is great potential for exploration along the deep-water drop-offs and sparkling reefs surrounding the three islands.

Whether above or below the waterline, the Koon Archipelago promises a serene and immersive escape into nature’s untouched beauty.





THE KEI ISLANDS - WATUBELA - KOON - BANDA - NUSA LAUT - LAHA

The Historic Banda Islands: *A Timeless Treasure*

Far out in the remote, shimmering expanse of the Banda Sea - nestled to the south of the great island of Ceram - lies a small but remarkable cluster of islands: the Banda Islands. Scattered like emeralds across the deep blue waters, this archipelago once stood at the very heart of the global spice trade, fiercely contested by empires for its precious nutmeg and mace. Today, the Banda Islands resonate with echoes of their extraordinary past, where crumbling colonial fortresses and ancient plantations reveal stories of ambition, exploration, and cultural exchange. Set against a dramatic backdrop of a soaring volcanic peak, vibrant coral reefs, and lush tropical forests, the Banda Islands offer a rare and captivating blend of history and breathtaking natural beauty - a destination as unforgettable as it is remote.

A Window into a Distant Past

The principal island, Banda Neira, transports visitors back in time to an era when these islands were among the most significant in the world. European remnants of this bygone age still grace the streets - quaint churches, a charming post



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THE KEI ISLANDS - WATUBELA - KOON - BANDA - NUSA LAUT - LAHA

The Banda Islands



office, a rustic museum, and street lamps (though no longer in operation) stand as echoes of colonial influence. Towering above it all is Fort Belgica, an imposing 17th-century stronghold that offers panoramic views and a fascinating glimpse into the region's tumultuous history. Wandering through Banda Neira's narrow streets and alleyways is nothing short of spellbinding.

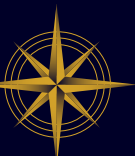
A Land of Contrasts

Just across from Banda Neira's bustling harbour, the striking 600-metre-high volcano island, Banda Api, looms over the seascape. Though its last eruption was in May 1988, the rugged terrain continues to captivate adventurers who take on the demanding trek to its summit, guided by seasoned locals. For those seeking a more leisurely experience, a tranquil stroll through the fragrant nutmeg groves of Lontar Island offers a peaceful alternative.

Adventures on Land and Sea

While the inner islands boast pleasant snorkelling spots, the real thrill for visiting yachts comes in the form of a friendly yet fierce rowing competition between islanders and crew members. Racing in traditional kora-kora longboats, the islanders almost always claim victory, leaving visitors with an unforgettable experience and their rowing crews exhausted.

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THE KEI ISLANDS - WATUBELA - KOON - BANDA - NUSA LAUT - LAHA

Beneath the waves, the Banda Sea reveals its true magic. These islands, the peaks of an immense underwater mountain range, are surrounded by deep, pristine blue waters teeming with marine life. From vibrant coral walls to rare critter dives, the Banda Islands offer some of the most exhilarating scuba diving experiences in the world, making them a dream destination for underwater explorers.

Safe Haven in a Remote Paradise

For visiting yachts, the most favoured anchorage lies in the sheltered waterway between Banda Neira harbour and the towering Banda Api volcano. Here, amidst the serene beauty of the islands, sailors find a perfect haven to rest, explore, and immerse themselves in the extraordinary blend of history, adventure, and natural splendour that defines the Banda Islands.

Whether you're a history enthusiast, an adventurer, or a diver seeking untouched underwater realms, the Banda Islands promise an experience unlike any other - an enchanting journey through time and nature in one of the world's most remote and captivating destinations.



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THE KEI ISLANDS - WATUBELA - KOON - BANDA - NUSA LAUT - LAHA

Hatta & Skaru Reef

Located just over 10 nautical miles south-east of the central harbour of the Banda Islands at Banda Neira, Hatta Island offers scuba divers an unparalleled underwater adventure. With its crystal-clear waters and an abundance of marine life, the island is a haven for divers seeking both beauty and biodiversity beneath the surface.

From dramatic drop-offs and thriving coral gardens to arches and mysterious underwater caves, Hatta Island's seascape is as diverse as it is stunning. The vibrant ecosystem teems with colourful tropical fish, graceful turtles, reef sharks, and even occasional encounters with majestic manta rays and playful dolphins. For those seeking a truly exhilarating experience, the deeper waters around the island are known to attract schools of hammerhead sharks, offering an unforgettable and rare diving spectacle.

Just two nautical miles south, the awe-inspiring Skaru Reef (Karang Hatta) awaits. This towering marine mountain, that barely breaks the ocean's



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THE KEI ISLANDS - WATUBELA - KOON - BANDA - NUSA LAUT - LAHA



surface at low tide, features a network of shimmering shallows that plunge into the deep, creating thrilling big fish dive sites. The reef's unique topography and nutrient-rich waters attract pelagic species, making it a must-visit for those hoping to encounter sharks, barracudas, and other ocean giants in their natural habitat.

Whether you're an adventurous diver chasing adrenaline-fuelled drift dives or a nature enthusiast eager to witness marine life in its pristine habitat, Hatta Island promises an extraordinary diving experience like no other.

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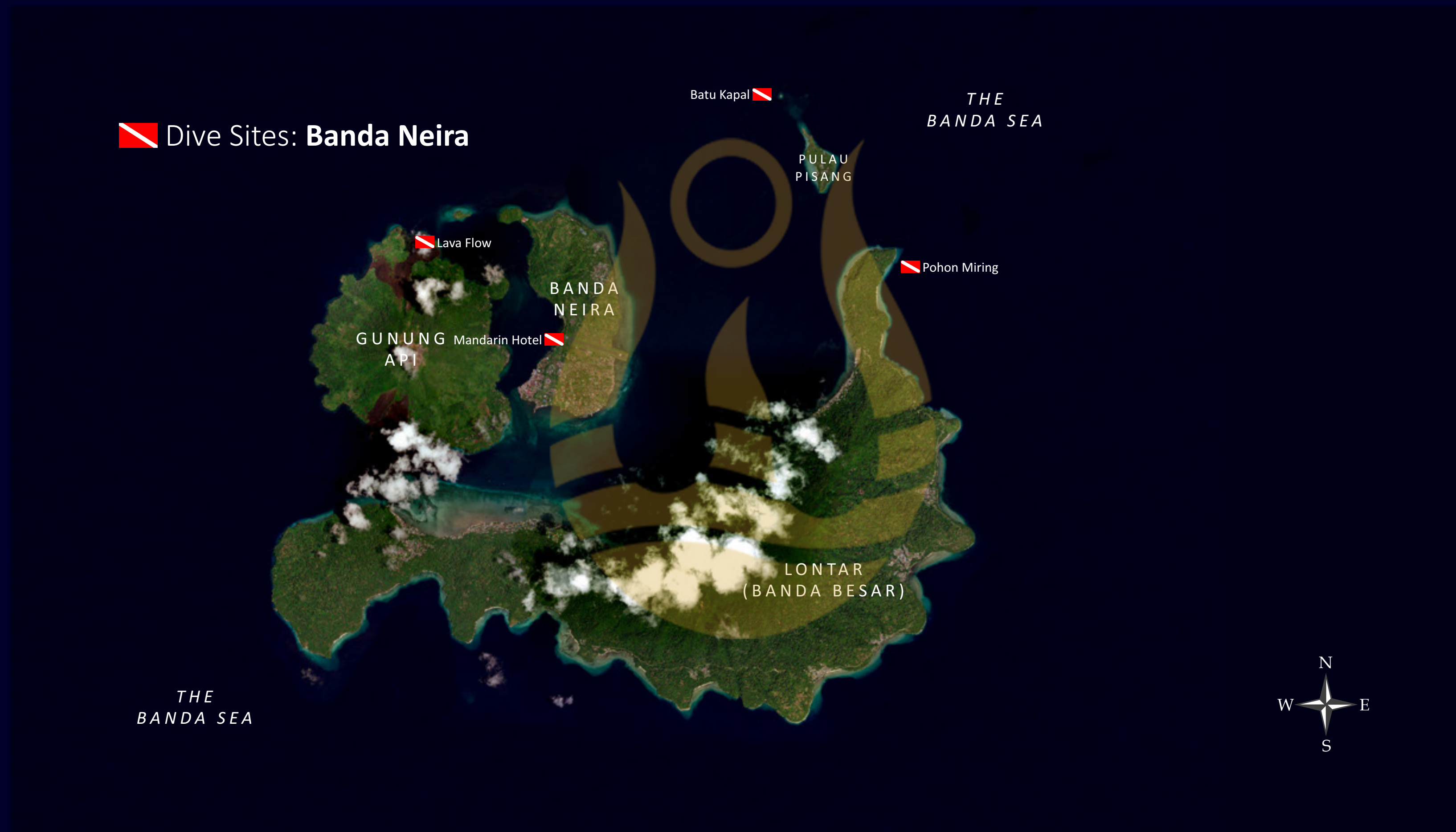
THE KEI ISLANDS - WATUBELA - KOON - BANDA - NUSA LAUT - LAHA

Banda Neira

During our time in the Banda Islands, Dewi Nusantara has explored the outer island of Hatta and the magnificent reef plateau of Skaru. Now, it's time to venture into the heart of this stunning archipelago. A variety of diverse dive sites await, beginning with the remarkable critter dive at Mandarin Hotel.

At first glance, this stretch of rocks and sand - nestled along the border of the colonial Molana Hotel's picturesque gardens - may seem unassuming. However, beneath the surface, it reveals an extraordinary spectacle. In the shallow waters, a vibrant population of mandarin fish, some impressively large, engage in their intricate mating displays at dusk. Unlike in coral-rich environments, these mesmerising creatures must perform their ritual in the open, making them exceptionally photogenic for underwater photographers.

Towering 600 meters above the surrounding waters, the volcanic Gunung Api dominates



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THE KEI ISLANDS - WATUBELA - KOON - BANDA - NUSA LAUT - LAHA



the skyline of Banda Neira, the principal island. Its most recent eruption in 1988 sent a dramatic lava flow cascading into the sea on the mountain's northeast side. In the years since, this once-barren expanse has transformed into a thriving coral garden, a breathtaking testament to nature's resilience and the rapid regrowth of marine ecosystems. This dive site is a must-visit, offering a rare opportunity to witness the astonishing speed at which coral reefs can recover after a volcanic eruption.

Beyond the protective embrace of Banda's natural harbour, even more exhilarating dive sites beckon. One standout is Batu Kapal, an offshore seamount teeming with marine life. Here, honeycomb moray eels weave through the reef, while immense schools of fish move in perfect synchronicity - a truly unforgettable underwater experience.





THE KEI ISLANDS - WATUBELA - KOON - BANDA - NUSA LAUT - LAHA

Run & Suanggi

Diving around the breathtaking island of Run and its smaller, remote neighbour, Suanggi, offers an extraordinary underwater adventure that seamlessly blends history, natural beauty, and exhilarating marine encounters.

Located in the northern reaches of the Banda Sea over 100 nautical miles south-east of Ambon, Suanggi is a rugged, rocky outpost that stands as a gateway to the Banda Islands. Despite its small size and isolated position, this hidden gem is rapidly making a name for itself as one of the Indonesian archipelago's top diving destinations. It is one of the few places where divers have the thrilling opportunity to witness the awe-inspiring spectacle of schooling hammerhead sharks - a bucket-list experience for any underwater enthusiast.

Meanwhile, the dive sites surrounding Run Island boast an astonishing variety of marine life and topographical wonders. Vibrant coral gardens flourish alongside sheer, dramatic drop-offs, creating an awe-inspiring seascape teeming with





THE KEI ISLANDS - WATUBELA - KOON - BANDA - NUSA LAUT - LAHA



biodiversity. Schools of brilliantly coloured reef fish dart through the reefs, while graceful pelagic species glide effortlessly through the crystal-clear waters. And, just like Suanggi, Run offers divers the exhilarating chance to encounter the elusive hammerhead sharks in their natural habitat.

With visibility often exceeding 40 metres, the waters surrounding Run and Suanggi provide an exceptional environment for underwater photography, allowing divers to capture the rich marine life in stunning detail. Adding to the allure of this extraordinary diving destination is Run Island's fascinating history. Once a crucial hub in the global spice trade, the island's past is intertwined with tales of explorers, merchants, and colonial powers, lending an intriguing cultural dimension to every dive.

Whether you are a seasoned diver seeking new thrills or a beginner eager to explore an untouched marine paradise, the waters of Run and Suanggi promise an unforgettable experience - one where history, adventure, and the wonders of the deep come together in perfect harmony.

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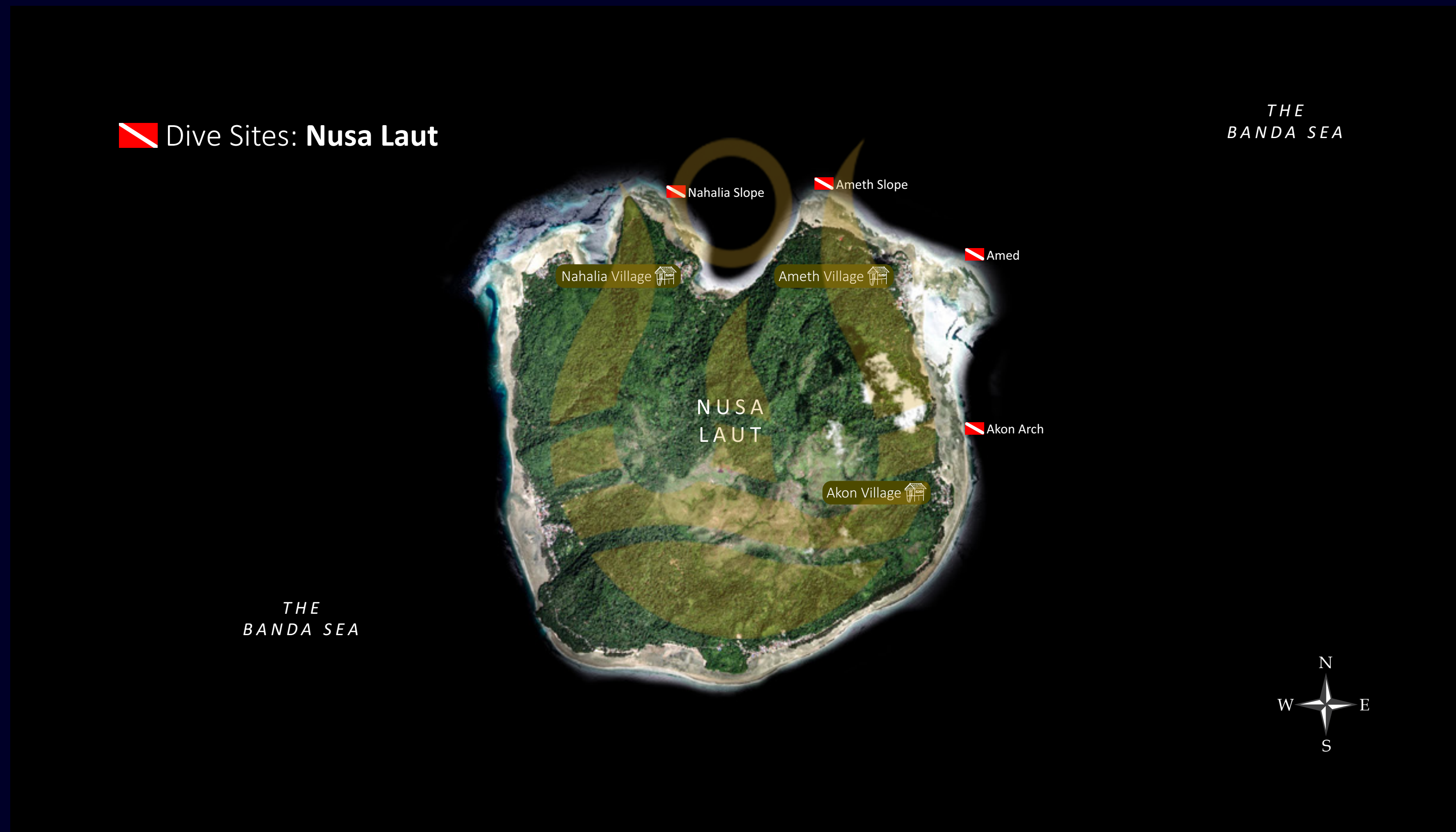


THE KEI ISLANDS - WATUBELA - KOON - BANDA - NUSA LAUT - LAHA

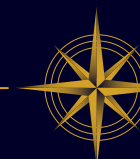
Nusa Laut

Nusa Laut, the easternmost jewel in the Lease Islands archipelago - which also includes Saparua, Haruku, and Ambon - offers an unspoiled paradise both above and below the sea's surface. The island's landscape is lush with a high-rising interior, fringed by picturesque bays and dotted with small fishing villages that exude charm and tranquillity. The northern bays, in particular, provide a sanctuary for dugongs - the elusive Southeast Asian relatives of the manatee - adding to the island's natural allure.

A testament to the power of community-led conservation, the villages of Ameth and Akon on Nusa Laut's northeast coast stand as shining examples of grassroots environmental stewardship. Captains of visiting yachts are required to report to the village head in Ameth, a minor formality in exchange for experiencing one of the region's most well-protected marine environments. The vigilant efforts of the local community in safeguarding their coastline from



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THE KEI ISLANDS - WATUBELA - KOON - BANDA - NUSA LAUT - LAHA



illegal fishing have resulted in thriving fish populations and pristine coral reefs, making the waters of Nusa Laut a paradise for visiting divers.

Beneath the surface, the island boasts spectacular wall and reef dives, but the true highlight lies in the vibrant reef on its north-western coast. Here, stunning coral formations and abundant marine life create a mesmerising underwater landscape. Adding to the thrill, divers sometimes encounter schools of majestic hammerhead sharks in the deep blue beyond the reef - an unforgettable sight for any underwater explorer. For those seeking even more adventure, a breathtaking underwater arch at Akon on the island's eastern side awaits, just beneath the surface, offering a glimpse into the raw beauty of Nusa Laut's marine wonders.

With its thriving ecosystems, dedicated local guardians, and world-class diving opportunities, Nusa Laut is a hidden treasure in the heart of Indonesia's Maluku region, inviting travellers to experience nature at its most pristine.



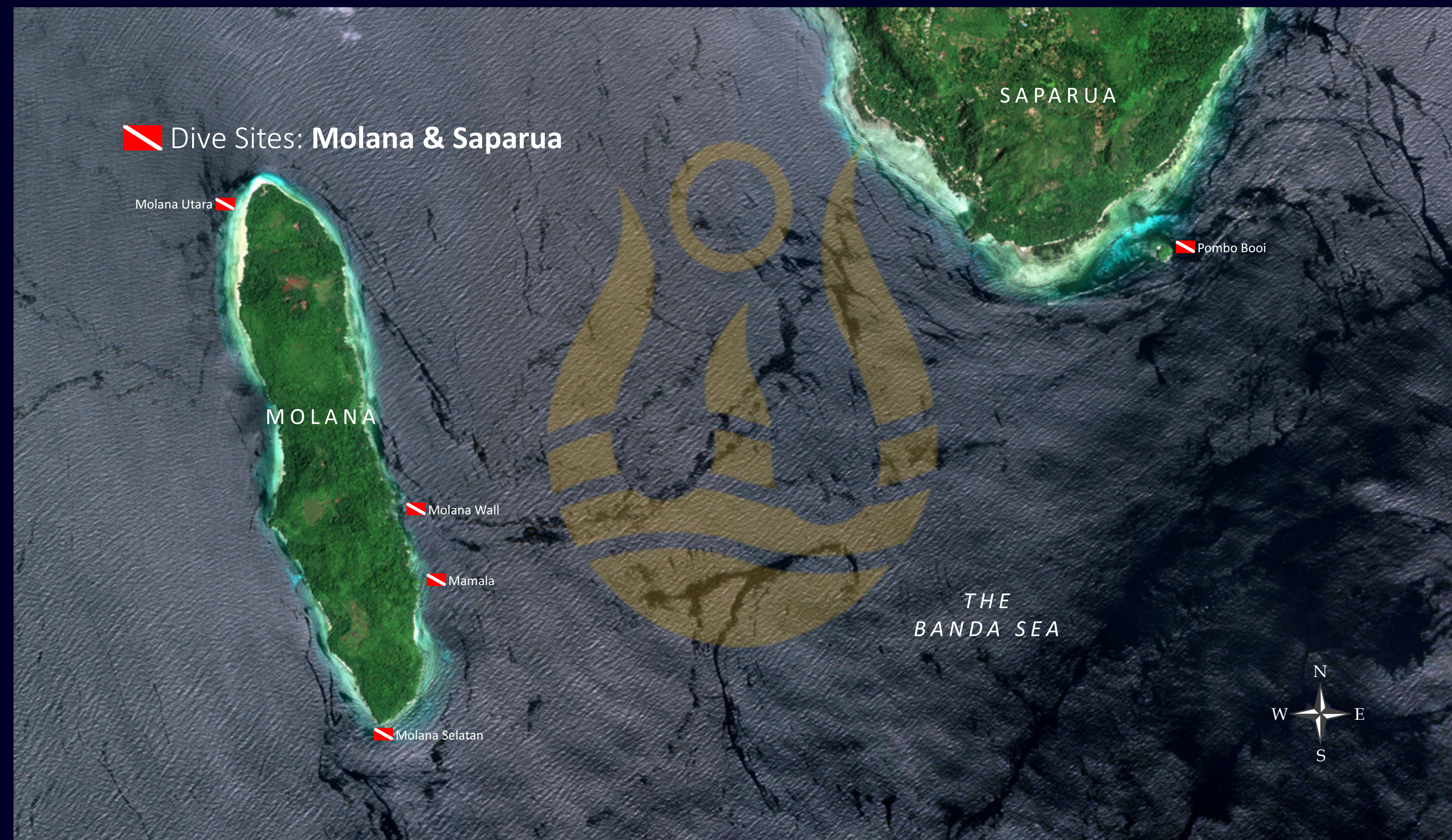


THE KEI ISLANDS - WATUBELA - KOON - BANDA - NUSA LAUT - LAHA

Molana & Saparua

Molana and the larger island of Saparua are two islands in the Lease Island group. Lying in the northern reaches of the Banda Sea, these islands are renowned for their vibrant coral reefs, diverse marine life, and pristine waters. Molana is particularly famous for its stunning coral gardens and abundant marine biodiversity. Divers can explore a kaleidoscope of corals, sponges, and sea fans, accompanied by a myriad of colourful reef fish, as well as some larger species. The island's underwater terrain includes gentle slopes, drop-offs, and underwater caves, providing varied dive experiences from shallow reef dives to more challenging deep-water explorations.

Saparua's underwater landscape features walls, slopes, and pinnacles, offering divers a chance to experience different underwater topographies. The island's historical significance, with remnants of Dutch colonial forts and artefacts, adds an extra layer of intrigue for divers who are also history enthusiasts.



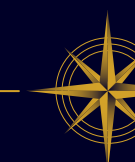


THE KEI ISLANDS - WATUBELA - KOON - BANDA - NUSA LAUT - LAHA

Laha (Ambon)

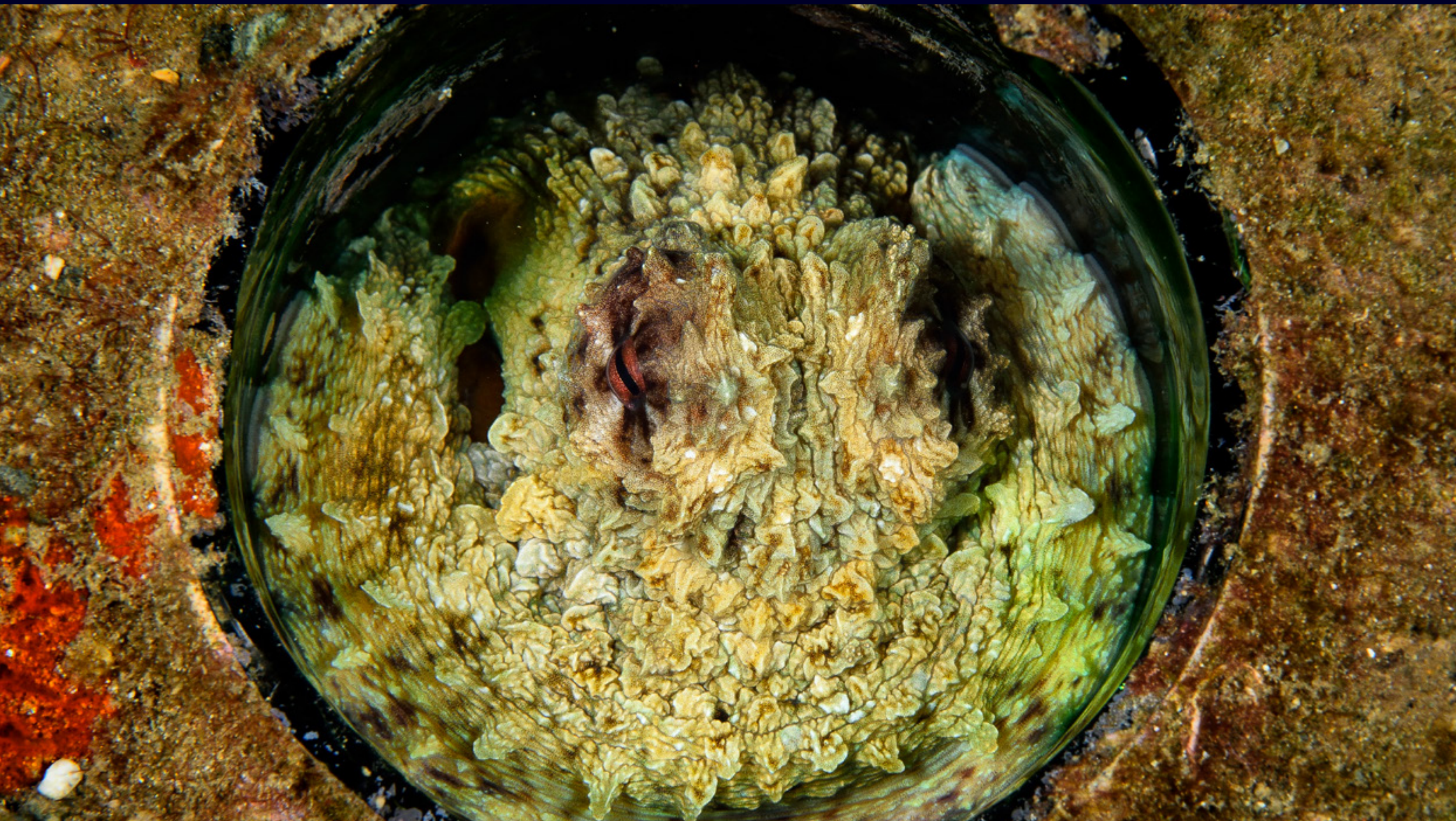
Not far from Ambon airport, along the northern shore of the Ambon Inlet, the village of Laha is renowned for hosting some of the most extraordinary muck diving sites in the world. Most of the dive points are clustered fairly close together, with names such as Middle Point, Mandarin City, Rhino City, and the one that started it all, the aptly named Twilight Zone. This legendary dive site, located close to as well as underneath the fishing boat piers, is a haven for macro photographers and critter enthusiasts seeking rare and unusual marine life.

What makes The Twilight Zone so exceptional is the unique interplay of natural and human elements. Over time, local fishing activities have contributed organic debris to the sandy, silty, and gravel-strewn seabed, inadvertently creating an ideal microhabitat for an astonishing variety of marine species. Divers venturing into these waters are rewarded with encounters with some of the ocean's most bizarre and captivating creatures,





THE KEI ISLANDS - WATUBELA - KOON - BANDA - NUSA LAUT - LAHA



making every expedition a true treasure hunt for the weird and wonderful.

In recent years, the discovery of additional dive sites a little further afield along this thriving stretch of shoreline has further cemented Ambon's reputation as a world-class muck diving destination. Notably, it was here that the psychedelic frogfish, one of the rarest and most visually striking marine species, was first documented - an extraordinary testament to the area's biodiversity. With ongoing exploration, there is no doubt that more ground breaking discoveries await.

For those seeking a contrasting yet equally thrilling dive experience, the Duke of Sparta shipwreck offers an entirely different underwater adventure. Resting in deeper waters further into the bay, closer to the city, this massive and remarkably intact wreck invites divers to explore its hauntingly beautiful remains - a striking juxtaposition to the critter-filled world of The Twilight Zone.





THE KEI ISLANDS - WATUBELA - KOON - BANDA - NUSA LAUT - LAHA

Cruise Notes

- **Flexible Itineraries:** Our cruise routes are intentionally adaptable. Throughout the journey, the captain and cruise director continuously assess sea conditions, weather, and tides to ensure the best possible experience. Guest preferences for specific dive sites are always considered whenever feasible.
- **More Than Is Listed:** The locations featured in these itineraries represent only a portion of what's possible. Numerous additional anchorages and activity options are available along the way, making each voyage truly unique.
- **Simplified for Clarity:** The destinations shown in our presentations are not necessarily listed in the order they will be visited. They are organized for clarity and to help guests visualize the overall routing.
- **Extended Stays:** If a particular anchorage offers exceptional experiences, guests may opt to linger a bit longer. The captain and cruise director have the flexibility to accommodate such preferences, provided they align with the overall cruise schedule.
- **Overnight Passages:** To maximize daylight hours at our most spectacular destinations, longer transits between anchorages are typically conducted overnight.
- **Escape the Crowds:** With the exception of embarkation and disembarkation points, our itineraries are carefully crafted to avoid congested areas and busy commercial ports, allowing for a more tranquil and immersive experience.
- **Beyond the Dive:** Many of our anchorages offer more than just diving and snorkelling. Guests can enjoy kayaking, stand-up paddleboarding, and occasional visits to local villages and cultural sites — adding even more richness to the journey.



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G O D D E S S O F T H E A R C H I P E L A G O

THE EASTERN FORGOTTEN ISLANDS, THE BANDA ISLANDS, CENTRAL MALUKU & AMBON

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Designed, written and produced by Garry Bevan

Dewi Nusantara: The Eastern Forgotten Islands, The Banda Islands, Central Maluku & Ambon. April 2025. (Tual to Ambon)

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