



Return charter flights ex Darwin ARE INCLUDED in the cruise tariff.

This itinerary is provided as example only – prevailing conditions and local arrangements may cause variation.

Helicopter flights can be purchased as a package or individually.

West Papua Discoverer

Darwin/West Papua/Darwin

An expedition for the true adventurer!

Day One

Your adventure begins amidst the tropical charm of Darwin; however this morning embarkation proceedings will be a little different! One of our crew members will escort you aboard North Star's chartered aircraft for your flight to Ambon – gateway

to the world's last frontier, West Papua! Ambon is also where we will welcome you aboard the magnificent **TRUE NORTH**. Enjoy a welcome aboard cocktail as we cruise to Pulau Pisang. See the sun set in a different land before indulging in an equally stunning dining experience!



Day Two

Spend the entire day exploring Pulau Pisang and Palau Lawin. For a different perspective - there will be ample opportunity to don mask and snorkel. Consider this - the whole of the Caribbean is home to fewer than 70 species of coral whilst over 450 confirmed species plus countless yet to be discovered species are sure to be found in the Raja Ampats - an archipelago comprising over 1,500 islands, cays and shoals. The snorkelling and diving here promises to be the best that we have ever encountered! Then it's back to the ship for a scrumptious lunch before a spot of fishing in the expedition boats. Or why not take a scenic flight in the ship's helicopter over the picturesque atolls, islands and lagoons that make up the archipelago.

Day Three

It's an early start this morning for those keen on joining Dr Mark Erdmann, senior advisor to Conservation International, on a walk through the forests of Gam Island. Mark is a renowned expert on West Papua and he will be joining us onboard for the entire cruise. This morning he will try to locate the rare and beautiful Wilson's Bird of Paradise. After lunch we'll make our way north to Gam Bay for a snorkel like no other - a blue-water mangrove snorkel. There will also be opportunity to experience another local phenomenon - snorkelling amidst clouds of harmless jellyfish. Enjoy a cocktail on the observation deck and marvel at yet another stunning sunset before recounting day's adventures over an equally memorable dining experience!

Day Four

Join all onboard for a visit to one of the local villages. Sample a morning-tea of 'local fare' and be entertained by traditional dancing. After lunch, snorkel and dive "The Big Blue" or join a fishing tender. Then grab the hiking boots for a stroll along

one of the area's pristine rivers. Take a scenic ride in the expedition boats or join not to be missed heli-flights over beautiful Majalibit Bay.

Day Five

Start the day with a refreshing snorkel amongst the stunning coral of the Fam Group of Island or try your hand at catching breakfast! The morning is yours to explore Fam's breathtaking beauty. After lunch we'll make our way north to Gam Bay and then it's everyone in for another unique snorkelling experience. Surrounding currents converge to create a ½ mile long 'drift' channel. Slip from the expedition boats and the current will guide you over stunning orange cup corals, seahorses and clownfish - the vibrant water movement is one of the reasons why the area is so rich in coral and fish life! At the end of the channel the ship's expedition boats will be waiting - you may just want to do it all over again! Enjoy a cocktail on the observation deck and marvel at yet another stunning sunset before recounting day's adventures over an equally memorable dining experience!

Day Six

Another day of unique experiences! We cross the equator today as we continue north to Wayag Island. These small beehive atolls are totally uninhabited and quite spectacular. Take a stroll along a pristine beach or for the more adventurous, climb to the island summit and enjoy spectacular views of the surrounding islands. Join a scenic heli flight over the island or hop in an expedition boat for an afternoon of fishing - but make sure you're back in time for the infamous 'Captains Party'!

Day Seven

Awake this morning in beautiful Aljui Bay. After breakfast it's time to take part in a manta ray convention! Plankton rich currents attract large numbers of manta ray to the aptly named Manta



Point - a shallow coral ridge surrounded by crystal clear oceanic waters. As many as 20 mantas line up on the ridge to be cleaned by schools of colourful wrasse. Jump in and have a swim with these gentle giants of the sea. This afternoon we visit a pearl farm and we'll also fish for the revered mangrove jack – a great fighter and one of the best tasting fish you can catch!

Day Eight

This morning we arrive at Misool Island. The waters surrounding this island are teeming with fish life and the huge sea fans are equally impressive. Snorkel through Tomolol Cave or dive on the outer reef. Fishing and sightseeing are also on the agenda. In the afternoon join your favourite expedition boat for a 'drinks and nibbles' cruise through the beautiful Karst Islands.

Day Nine

A day devoted to swimming, snorkelling and diving off South East Misool, Wayibatan, Kalig and Fiabacet Islands. Spend a lazy day on a palm fringed beach or take an expedition boat out for a spot of fishing - it's entirely up to you! In the afternoon we will visit the Misool Eco Resort.

Day Ten

Today is set aside for exploring the intriguing Fakfak Coast. Start the day with a scenic cruise in the expedition boats and discover the water-filled caves of Sebakor Bay. Don't forget your snorkel – the area is also renowned for its aquarium like qualities. Diving and fishing opportunities will also present. After lunch join the hike to Mommom Waterfall. Enjoy a swim or perhaps hike on to the top of the falls. Diving and snorkelling is also possible.

Day Eleven

Wake to another beautiful day in paradise! Today is a fun filled day of snorkelling and diving off Watubela

Island. This was one of the first barrier reefs in the Archipelago to be discovered by Charles Darwin and Alfred Wallace in 1869 and is one of the few surviving areas of primary tropical rainforest with a rich natural history. Take a guided walk through the jungle, or a snorkel on the outer reef - the choice is yours! Return to the **TRUE NORTH** for a sunset cocktail as we cruise to Banda Island.

Day Twelve

Today we'll explore Banda Island and all that she has to offer. Steeped in history, the Maluku Islands or 'Spice Islands' were an important and highly sought after route for the European spice trade until the early 1800's. We'll learn more about Banda's rich history on a guided tour, then head off in the expedition boats for a scenic cruise or a spot of fishing. Back onboard, Dr Erdmann will present an interesting lecture on this vast and wild destination. Then join us in the dining room for a farewell dinner before we head up to the lounge for one last time - this time to enjoy a photo essay of the most intriguing holiday of your life!

Day Thirteen

You'll enjoy breakfast together this morning before clearing customs onboard. A private car transfer will escort you to Ambon airport where you'll board the plane for a chartered flight back to Darwin.

