



# CENTRAL FORGOTTEN ISLANDS

## 9 Days/8 Nights Saumlaki – Saumlaki Cruise Itinerary

### Quick Info :

 ARRIVAL/ DEPARTURE: SAUMLAKI

 DIVING DEPTH 5 - 30 mt

 SEA CONDITIONS generally calm

 VISIBILITY 10 - 40 mt

 WETSUIT: 5mm Recommended

 CAMERA: Gopro, 60&100mm macro, 10mm & strobe/lamp

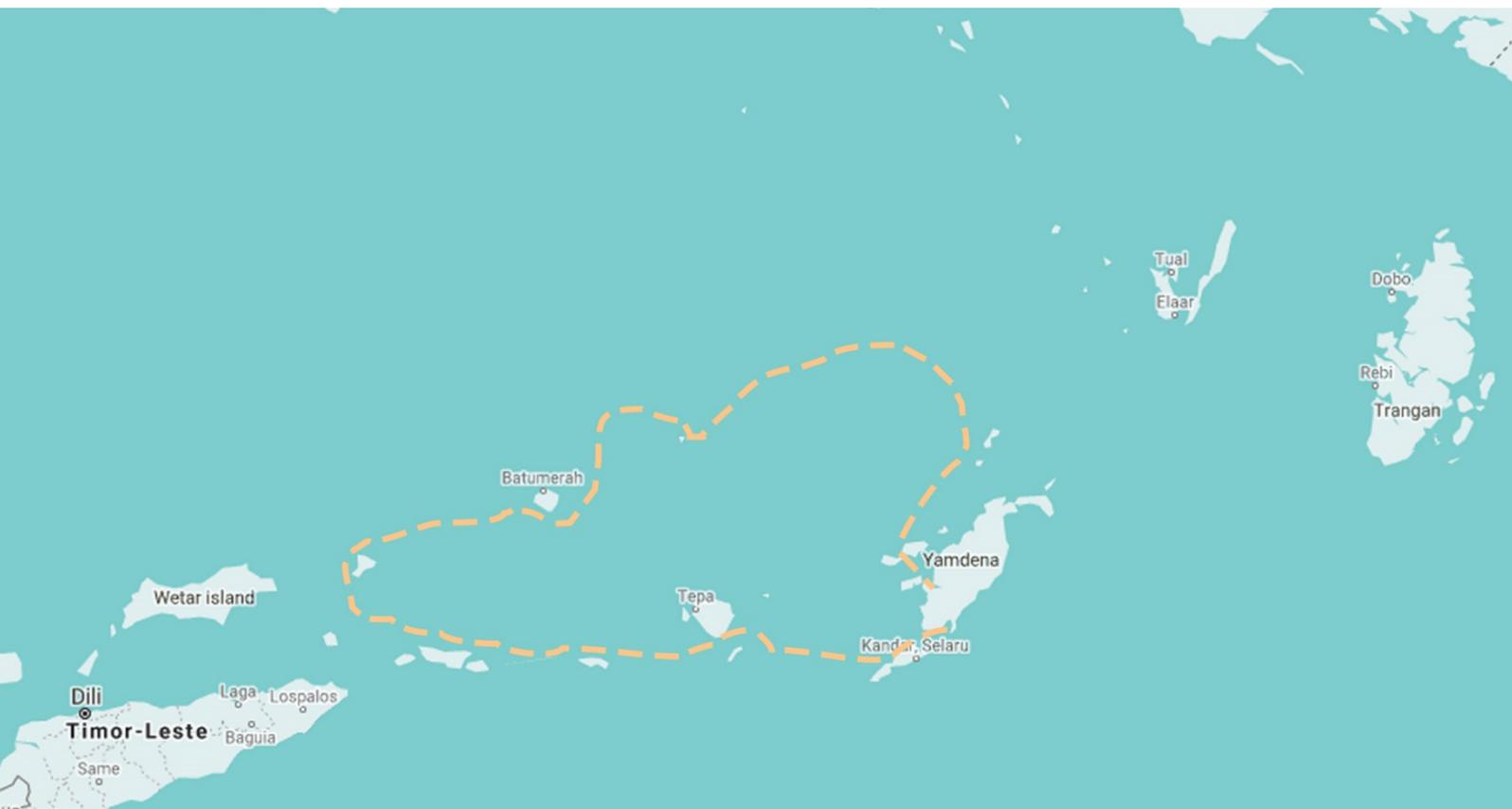
 CURRENT gentle to Strong

 NUMBER OF DIVE SITES + 40

 intermediate-advanced

 WATER TEMP. 24-29°C

 LAMP: recommended





### *Day 1 Embarkation in Saumlaki (2 dives)*

The Forgotten Islands are part of a remote archipelago in the southeast corner of the Moluccas (Maluku Tenggara). Despite the remote feeling in other parts of Indonesia (such as Alor or Banda), the Forgotten Islands are isolated even by Indonesian standards, covering a 1,000 km long chain of islands starting at Timor and extending up to West Papua. The Tanimbar group of around 65 islands that separate the Banda Sea from the Arafura Sea include the island of Yamdena where the capital Saumlaki is where this cruise begins.

There are many groups of islands in this area and the Forgotten Islands are relatively undiscovered and still being explored. The exact itinerary around these islands will depend exclusively on the weather and current conditions. Also due to the big distances between island groups some of the days will include three day dives before heading off in the afternoon and travelling overnight. When the next location is closer and there are anchorage spots in sheltered bays we will offer a fourth dive, usually a night dive.

Dive sites in the Forgotten Islands are characterised by endless reefs and spectacular deep walls covered in soft corals, sea fans and huge sponges. These islands usually experience amazing visibility and warm water around 27-30C (81-86F). Here are the names of the islands we may visit (weather permitting) during your cruise:

### *Days 2-4 Serua/Teun/Nila/Nil Desperandum*

Teun, Nila and Serua, often referred to as TNS, are all small, very remote volcanic islands only accessible by liveboard, located just east of Damar. You will feel as if you have reached the ends of the earth and that may be why there is a growing interest in diving in this zone. Although the sites here remain relatively unexplored, experiences so far have revealed tremendous diving potential and splendid coral reefs.

Close to the small island of Nila are two atolls Dusborgh and Nil Desperandum. Weather permitting, we will spend two days in this area, making a small bay on the east side of the island of Nila our base. There is also a night dive opportunity here.

### *Nila/Dusborgh (4-5 dives)*

Dusborgh is a submerged atoll with a surrounding reef that reaches all the way up to the surface. The reef then slopes steeply to deep walls. As with all of the Forgotten Islands the walls are covered in huge sponges and sea fans. With the amazing visibility keep an eye into the deep for passing pelagics. A small bay on the east side of the island of Nila has a night dive opportunity.

### *Nil Desperandum (4-5 dives)*

Nil Desperandum means "don't despair" possibly referring to a ship wrecked here centuries ago. It is a big atoll with very deep drop offs. Schooling sharks have been spotted in the deep here with a chance to see hammerhead, silky and grey reef sharks.

### *Days 5 Pulau Damar/Nusleur/Terbang (3 dives)*

Close to the big island of Damar the small islands of Nusleur, Terbang Utara and Terbang Selatan are surrounded by pristine beaches that stretch out to coral reefs that then drop down to the most



beautiful, untouched walls. From top to bottom, the reef is an explosion of different colours and forms and seems to be in constant motion from the swarms of fish darting about. You may find yourself floating in the midst of a huge school of fish as the sea creatures here appear quite curious, perhaps because they are generally not used to seeing many divers. Another unique attraction in this area is the wall of sulphur formed as a result of its proximity to the volcano on Damar. There is a possibility to visit a village on Damar where there is also a black sand night dive.

#### *Days 6 Dai Island (3-4 dives)*

The villagers on this island still practice traditional hunting with bow and arrow. Steep slopes provide hunting grounds for schooling barracuda and trevally. Large sea fans on the reef are surrounded by very healthy reef fish life. The shallows here are full of hard corals decorated with anthias.

#### *Days 7-8 Dawera Island (6-7 dives)*

This small island is in the northern part of the Babar group of islands. There is a seamount where the reef is untouched and so full of fish you won't know where to look! Along the north side of the islands there are numerous wonderful dive sites ranging from Tanjung Raja where there are stunning soft corals to Sponge Delight where there is a huge resident school of barracudas and even a chance to see hammerhead sharks.

#### *Days 9 Disembarkation in Saumlaki*