



Raja Ampat

- INDONESIA -

8 - 17
February 2020
(9 nights)

3,780 USD*
per person



© Fabrice Dudenhofer



THE EXPEDITION

Raja Ampat, which translates to “Four Kings” in Indonesian. With their sublime scenery of steep, jungle-covered islands, scorching white-sand beaches, hidden lagoons, spooky caves, weird mushroom-shaped islets and pellucid turquoise waters, Raja Ampat is undoubtedly one of the most beautiful island chains in Southeast Asia. The region is home to over 1500 species of fish ranging from tiny gobies to magnificent manta rays and is known to be the marine area with the **highest recorded diversity of fish and invertebrate species in the world!**

During this expedition we will explore both the northern and the remote southern Raja Ampat offering you a stunning variety of dives, wildlife and especially the chance to dive world famous manta sites such as Blue Magic, Manta Sandy and Magic Mountain, the latest being a special site where you will have the unique chance of seeing **both species of manta rays at once** - the giant oceanic manta, *Manta birostris*, that grows up to 7m wide in wingspan, and the smaller reef manta, *Manta alfredi*. You might also see both colour variations of manta here, the chevron and the black morph.

Raja Ampat is particularly famous for its **untouched reefs** festooned with wildly colourful soft corals, hard coral gardens, massive gorgonian sea fans, and an extremely rich reef life. Wobbegong and bamboo sharks, pigmy sea horses and harlequin shrimps are just a few of other incredible creatures you will have the chance to encounter on this once in a lifetime expedition!



RAJA AMPAT

TRIP LEADER

NIV FROMAN

Niv has been passionate about nature for as long as he can remember. His dream has always been to live in close contact with the world's wild places and to try to understand their fascinating mysteries.



After graduating summa cum laude with a degree in Natural Sciences from the University of Milan, Niv completed a Masters degree in Environmental Management, focusing primarily on animal behaviour and evolution.

In 2010, Niv started working as a marine biologist in the Maldives, an experience that brought him closer to marine life and developed his passion for the underwater world. Building on his background as a professional swimmer, Niv quickly became a proficient freediver and qualified as a Dive Master.

Following his first encounters with the Maldivian manta rays, their complex and poorly understood behaviour drove his desire to learn more about these majestic animals and work to aid in their conservation. It was this drive that brought Niv to the Manta Trust, with whom he worked as the Project Leader for the Maldivian Manta Ray Project from 2013 to 2017.

In 2017 Niv moved on to lead a new research project and conduct his PhD on the reef manta population in the Chagos archipelago – a part of the British Indian Ocean Territory. In his new role Niv will collaborate with many biologists and research institutions to further our understanding of manta foraging ecology and movements in this super-sized marine protected area. This information will be critical to further the species' conservation measures both in Chagos and on a global scale.

Throughout the expedition, Niv will be providing lectures and informal talks on manta ray and whale shark research and conservation. In addition, Niv will conduct general presentations on marine biology, with a focus on the diverse and productive marine ecosystems of Raja Ampat.



CITIZEN SCIENCE - GET INVOLVED!

On this expedition, you'll have the opportunity to experience and participate in **cuttingedge conservation** research to protect one of the ocean's most majestic animals. Manta Trust scientists will be collecting photographic identification images of all mantas encountered throughout the expedition - a task that guests are welcome and encouraged to participate in. All new manta rays will be added to the database and guests will be invited to name these new mantas.

THE MANTA TRUST

A UK registered charity, the Trust's mission is to advance the worldwide conservation of manta rays and their habitat through robust science and research, by raising awareness and providing education, influence and action. The Manta Trust was formed in 2011 to co-ordinate global research and conservation efforts for these amazing animals, their close relatives and their habitat.

Data Collection: The Manta Trust has a number of research projects worldwide, incorporating population data, research on manta movements, and genetic analyses - to name a few - in order to better understand the general ecology of manta and mobula rays.



© Michael W. Ishak



THE BOAT | MSY AURORA

Aurora is a spacious, double masted, teak motor-sail yacht, built according to the 'traditional Pinisi style' and designed for a discerning dive clientele. As a guest aboard, you will experience modern comfort combined with the charm of a traditional boat. Aurora has been built in Sulawesi following modern and environmentally friendly principles and gives us the opportunity to explore remote areas which only a few – if any – have seen.

The yacht has 8 double cabins each with private bathroom, A/C and daily room service to make your cruise enjoyable and comfortable. A crew of 17 members will welcome you on-board and will be dedicated to making your Indonesian experience a memory you will never forget.

BOOKING

To reserve your place on this Indonesia Manta Expedition, please send an email to Conny Bretz via info@mantaexpeditions.com referring to "Raja Ampat Manta Expedition 2020".

Payment and booking for this Manta Expedition will be handled by our trip partners, **DUNE Indonesia**. Trip costs for this 9-night expedition includes transfers from Sorong, full board in twin or double shared accommodation, and 4 dives / snorkelling excursions per day.

* Not included: National park fees and contribution to villages (130USD/pers), fuel surcharge (200 USD/pers), rental of dive gear, Nitrox and crew tip.

