



# The coast is clear

Set sail on an adventure through the unspoilt waters of the Indonesian archipelago and discover one of the hottest yachting destinations on the world cruising map

By Miriam Cain







From Buddhist and Hindu dynasties to the rich trade routes of the Dutch, Portuguese and English traders, the Indonesian archipelago has always been inextricably linked with sea exploration. Today Indonesia is firmly on the bucket list of the adventurous yachting fraternity, attracting many superyachts taking in the exotic waters as part of their round-the-world tour.

The country is well suited to yachting, being made up of over 17,000 islands stretching over 3,000 miles (4,828km), of which about 4,000 are populated. Wending your way in and out of the archipelagos you can discover attractions ranging from the well-known tourist island of Bali full of bustling nightlife and 5 star resorts, to the secluded coves of the majestic Raja Ampat archipelago, and along the way even make the acquaintance of the infamous Komodo dragon in the archipelago of the same name.

Only a decade ago chartering a vessel in these waters would have been impossible in anything but a fishing smack or junk that would have seen you roughing it, and coming across even those would have been a rarity for the traveller. Today however there are a number of luxury vessels cruising these waters and available for charter. While different from the Mediterranean or Caribbean yachting experience these vessels are still extremely comfortable and feel more at home in their environment than a traditional “white” yacht might. Locally built and manned by Indonesian crew they offer all the modern conveniences the seasoned traveller has come to expect but with a local flavour that is entirely unique. The cruising grounds themselves still remain beautiful and unspoilt, but with the larger numbers of vessels now in circulation achieving a degree of solitude now requires a guide with good local knowledge, something these “local” vessels provide in spades. Aboard the 50m (164') Indonesian Phinisi schooner *Silolona* and her sister-ship the 40m (131') *Si Datu Bua* you are ensured access well beyond the norm, and of course serious comfort and fantastic food. And wherever you choose to go these waters are blessed with year round warm temperatures, world-class dive sites and ideal sailing conditions.

### **The Raja Ampat archipelago**

The majestic Raja Ampat archipelago comprises four main islands and thousands of small islets. Lying off the northwestern coast of New Guinea, these largely uninhabited waters provide ample opportunities to find peaceful anchorages where you will see few signs of life, except for your own party and perhaps a few local rangers. Under the water, however, is a very different story, since these waters are home to the country's largest marine national park, a huge number of world-class dive sites, and the highest recorded marine biodiversity on



earth. Scientists have catalogued more than six times as many coral species in just a few acres as live in the entire Caribbean and the diversity in marine life is such that much still remains unclassified by scientists.

West Papua is the ideal gateway to the Raja Ampat archipelago. Embark in Sorong and cruise through the Dampier Straits, jumping in for an occasional swim with the manta rays that soar through these plankton rich waters. Cruise alongside the limestone pinnacles of these uninhabited islands to the Wayag archipelago, and spend a few days exploring both above and beneath the water. Kayak through the lagoons, or through the shallow waters that lap the white sandy beaches ashore; climb the Wayag Peaks for





spectacular sunset views, and jump in to snorkel or dive the varied coral gardens below them.

The islands are made up of limestone pinnacles and cliffs that tower over secluded inlets that are perfect for peaceful anchorages. Located in the South Raja Ampat archipelago, this is where you will find pygmy seahorses playing amongst vibrant coloured coral. After a few days exploring these remote anchorages cruise back to Sorong for disembarkation.

#### **The Komodo archipelago**

For an alternative or longer cruise the Komodo archipelago is another Indonesian gem and should give you plenty of stories to take back home. A week's cruise should take in the islands

#### **Clockwise from top left**

— Delve into the remote and crystal clear waters of Indonesia that are world renowned for their spectacular dive sites. The underwater wilderness and haunting shipwrecks teem with marine life, providing the ultimate diving experience



#### **Silolona**

— The 50m (164') Silolona is a unique vessel that charts through Indonesia year-round. Hand-built by the Sulawesi Konjo people in 2004, Silolona is a traditional handcrafted wooden schooner with beautiful oiled teak decks. Welcoming 10 guests, she has fantastic deck spaces on which to enjoy the Indonesian sunshine, along with a lounge, outside dining areas and cabins that are cosy and elegant. Her dark woods, earthy colour schemes and local artefacts add an intriguing design touch. Her crew includes two chefs, a dive master and a massage therapist, all of whom have grown up in the area and have an excellent knowledge of the region, culture and language.

*Silolona 50m (164'), 10 guests,*

*Prices from US\$140,000 per week*



#### **Si Datu Bua**

— Sister-ship to Silolona, the 40m (131') Si Datu Bua was launched in 2012. As with Silolona, her build was inspired by the famed Indonesian trading vessels of the Spice Island Trade Routes known as Phinisi. She was superbly crafted by local, Konjo boat builders of Ara in collaboration with Seery Yacht Design to International Germanischer Lloyds standards. Sleeping six guests, she has a crew of 12 who are the perfect guides to the Indonesian archipelago and the culture and traditions of its people.

Beyond the cruising grounds of Indonesia, Silolona and Si Datu Bua also charter in Malaysia and the Andaman Sea.

*Si Datu Bua 40m (131'), 6 guests,*

*Prices from US\$100,000 per week*





## Itinerary

### Days 01 + 02

—

**Sorong, West Papua to the Wayag Archipelago**  
106 nautical miles

### Days 03

—

**Wayag Archipelago**

### Days 04

—

**Wayag Archipelago to Fam, Penemu & the Yeben Islands**  
52 nautical miles

### Days 05 + 06

—

**Wayag Archipelago to Misool**  
144 nautical miles

### Days 07

—

**Selat Sele, Misool to Sorong**  
77 nautical miles

## Indonesian Archipelagos

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From the islands of Bali or Lombok the best way to transfer to your yacht in one of Indonesia's remote archipelagos is by private plane, but there are also regional airlines that will take you across the vast expanse of waters should you prefer. Spend a few days ashore at one of the many boutique hotel properties on either of these main islands and acclimatise to an unhurried pace of life before you step aboard for your yachting adventure.





**Main image**

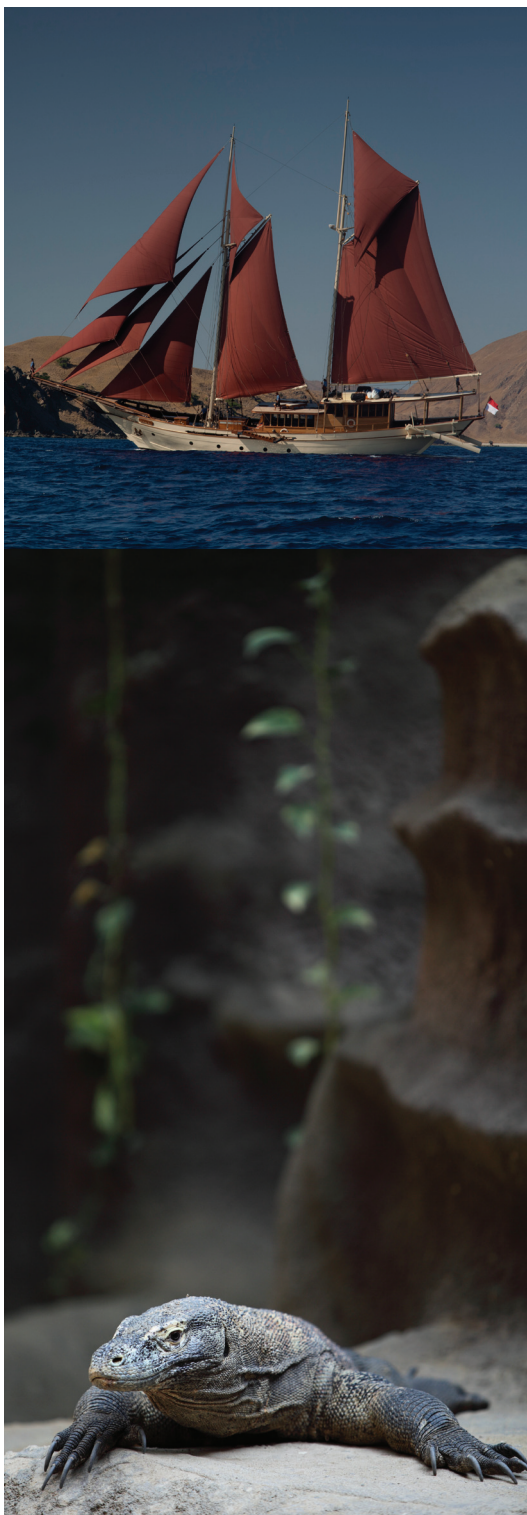
—  
Top diving spot, Raja Ampat, or the Four Kings, is a beautiful archipelago comprising over 1,500 small islands, cays, and shoals surrounding the four main islands

**Opposite**

—  
Indonesia's size, tropical climate, and archipelagic geography, support the world's second highest level of biodiversity







#### Main image

—  
Breath-taking views are to be enjoyed from the sea and land alike



of Sabolon, Rinca, Pantai Merah, Padar, Batu Muncul, Banta and the island of Komodo itself. Begin your cruise in the Flores and discover the islands and islets of the Komodo National Park. The waters surrounding all the islands in the Komodo archipelago offer spectacular diving. Jump in and discover sea turtles, dolphins and manta rays. Ashore, a hike will afford 360-degree views over the Komodo Park.

Spend a day discovering Mount Kelimutu and its three crater lakes. Back on board, cruise past the north-eastern coastline of Komodo

#### Above left

—  
Forests cover approximately 60% of the country and with it comes the most incredible species to include reptiles like the Komodo dragon

to Sabolon Island and step ashore to the deserted beaches that line the shore. The water temperature and currents in this area make for great pearl growing grounds and there are a number of pearl farms here that welcome visitors.

Take advantage of the crystal clear waters that lap Padar Island with a morning of kayaking, water-skiing, diving and snorkelling before cruising on to Rinca Island for your first encounter with a Komodo dragon. Hike through rainforest with local guides to see them in their native habitat





along with wild boars, monkeys and all manner of exotic birdlife. It is as well to note here that despite being an endangered species, there are over 5,000 Komodo dragons on these islands and, measuring up to 11-feet in length, these beasts are carnivorous and can eat up to 80 percent of their body weight; to avoid becoming their dinner an experienced guide is therefore essential!

The nearby island of Batu Muncul has calm waters for swimming, and ample underwater marine life for more diving and snorkelling. Those wishing to explore above the waterline

can kayak or water-ski the bays that lap the stunning crescent-shaped beaches. Lying outside of the National Park boundaries of the Komodo Archipelago, the waters surrounding Banta Island teem with giant turtles and manta rays and are worth a visit. Back on board, jump in for a swim at Pulau Sebayor before cruising towards Flores for disembarkation.

*For further information on chartering a yacht in Indonesia, contact your nearest Camper & Nicholsons charter broker, see page 10.*

## Traditional Indonesia

Itineraries through the Indonesian archipelago can be custom made to include visiting the markets for traditional Indonesian 'ikat' textiles, visiting native fishing villages, or discovering the underwater world. Both Silolona and Si Datu Bua have full dive centres on board and qualified dive masters amongst their crew.

## Itinerary

### Days 01

—  
**Labuhanbajo, Flores to Sabolon Island**

### Days 02

—  
**Sabolon Island to Gili Lawah Darat and Gili Lawah Laut**  
17 nautical miles

### Days 03

—  
**Gili Lawah Laut to Komodo Island**  
19 nautical miles

### Days 04

—  
**Komodo Island to Padar Island (East)**  
11 nautical miles

### Days 05

—  
**Padar Island to Rinca Island**  
31 nautical miles

### Days 6

—  
**Rinca Island to Batu Muncul**  
12 nautical miles

### Days 7

—  
**Batu Muncul to Banta Island**  
12 nautical miles

### Days 8

—  
**Banta Island to Labuhanbajo, Flores**  
37 nautical miles