

Cruise Information Package

INFORMATION FOR YOUR TRIP TO INDONESIA AND FOR CRUISING ON
MSY MUTIARA LAUT



MUTIARA LAUT

Last update: 1 September 2018

Introduction

While many of our guests are seasoned travellers, some may be unfamiliar with the unique ways and means of travelling on a liveaboard in the often extremely remote regions we visit.

Cruising through eastern Indonesia on a traditional wooden schooner can be a brave new world for many. With that in mind, we have compiled this information package to try and make your journey with us as enjoyable and hassle-free as possible.

On the next few pages, you will find the following chapters:

- **What to bring?** : tips on items to prepare and pack;
- Some **CHECKLISTS** to tick off suggested items to pack, and add your own;
- **Know Before You Go:** some more general information on travel in Indonesia and answers to some frequently asked questions in relation to our cruises.

If you don't find the answer to your own particular questions in these chapters, please don't hesitate to [send us your question](#) by email.

Useful contact details

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What to bring?

PREPARATION AND PACKING TIPS FOR YOUR CRUISE ON MSY MUTIARA LAUT

When packing for a liveaboard cruise, it is always good to bear in mind that space on any sailing vessel is always limited. Even though the cabins on Mutiara Laut are quite large as compared to the industry standard and offer quite a lot of cabinet storage space, large suitcases will not be easy to get out of the way: [foldable travel bags](#) are much more easy to store away.

At the same time, it's important that you don't forget to bring everything you think you'll need, as we will often be travelling for extended periods of time in areas where there are simply no shops, no convenience stores and no pharmacies whatsoever.

THE ESSENTIALS

Passports & Visas

All travellers to Indonesia must be in possession of a [passport](#) that is valid for at least six (6) months from **the date of DEPARTURE from Indonesia**, and have proof (tickets) of onward or return passage.

Since 2015, Indonesia offers short stay Visa Free facilities, also called Visa Exemption, for tourists who are nationals of more than 160 countries, including most Asian and European countries, Canada & the USA, and Australia & New Zealand. The tourist free visa stamp is valid for 30 days, it is non-extendable and it cannot be transferred to any other type of stay permit.

Citizens of a small number of countries, however, do not enjoy this privilege and have to apply for a visa in their country of origin prior to arrival. If you are not sure whether your passport entitles you to a free visa stamp, or if you wish to stay longer than 30 days, we recommend you consult the following Indonesian governmental website for more information:

<http://www.indonesia.travel/gb/en/before-you-go/visa-immigration>

Please assume full responsibility for checking and verifying any and all requirements in regards to a passport, visa, vaccination, or any other entry requirements before travelling to Indonesia. We only provide information and advice on such general matters as climate and clothing in good faith and as a courtesy to you.

Insurance: diving

Scuba divers are well advised to update their [dive insurance policy](#) before travelling.

ALL PASSENGERS WISHING TO TAKE PART IN SCUBA DIVING ACTIVITIES ORGANISED BY MSY MUTIARA LAUT ARE REQUIRED TO HAVE A VALID DIVE INSURANCE POLICY!

We require all diving passengers aboard MSY Mutiara Laut to submit proof of a valid dive insurance policy, including membership card and policy number, before being allowed to take part in any diving activities.

Exotic Yacht Charter Bali and Mutiara Laut do not provide cover nor do we have a preferred broker.

Insurance: travel & medical

Our cruise price does not include travel, medical or dive insurance. We strongly urge you to purchase a comprehensive [travel insurance](#) that covers trip cancellation. We also strongly advise you to obtain a comprehensive policy with [medical insurance](#), including an emergency evacuation policy (Medivac).

First Aid & Medication

Mutiara Laut carries a comprehensive first aid kit to treat all kinds of minor ailments and injuries. However, it is always advisable to bring your own [first aid and medical kit](#) and to bring an ample supply of any [prescribed medications](#) you may need.

Never leave even the tiniest cut or coral bruise untreated as it can quickly get infected in the tropical climate. We have the means to treat such cuts and abrasions on board, but it is advisable to bring your own antiseptic ointments and basic first aid materials.

Remember that medical care beyond basic first aid, due to the sometimes remote regions visited, is not always immediately available. Therefore, if you have a physical, dietary, or any other condition for which you may require special attention, please inform us in writing when the booking is made. If you require medicines such as insulin, or hardware such as asthma inhalers or epi-pens, please make sure you have a sufficient amount at hand.

While our crew are trained in first aid and will do our very best to take action, we assume no responsibility for any medical care provided to you.

Seasickness

Most of the time the waters in our sailing areas are pretty calm. However, even if you think that your stomach is rock-solid, a squall could turn up and make you feel sick. If you are prone to seasickness we advise you to consult with your pharmacist or doctor at home to advise the best [seasickness tablets](#) for your specific condition.

Locally-produced seasickness pills are available on board. These are most effective, and it is best to take them at least one hour before departure and to keep taking them for at least the first couple of days of the trip. For most people, seasickness usually passes after a day or two once they get used to the motion of the ship.

Malaria

Malaria has very little incidence offshore and you will spend the better part of the voyage on board, where mosquitoes do not venture at all. Still, on quite a few of our itineraries, we do visit areas on land that are prone to malaria infection.

Overall, the best remedy against malaria is to avoid being bitten, so if you have the experience of easily attracting mosquitoes, we advise you to wear long trousers and shirts that cover up the skin during island visits and treks. Apart from that, you should bring enough stock of a good quality [mosquito repellent](#) and use it before each trek and shore visit, especially in the early morning and the late afternoon.

If you want stronger protection you can take malaria prophylactics in tablet form. We recommend you check with your local doctor at home what they recommend and what is best suited for you.

PACKING YOUR BAGS

Bags

A **day backpack** is essential for day hikes to carry things such as your water bottle, insect repellent, and rain jacket. A **waterproof wet/dry bag** is a good idea for your phone, camera etc.

We provide each guest with a Mutiara Laut-branded **METAL WATER BOTTLE**, which can re-filled on board with fresh drinking water as often as required, and which you will be welcome to take home after the cruise as a souvenir.

Clothing

The short version is: less is more! The everyday dress on Mutiara Laut is very casual and the tropical climate of Indonesia means you can safely leave all of your warm weather gear at home.

In general, pack clothes that are comfortable for walking/trekking and suitable for wearing on the boat, such as **cool cottons, T-shirts and shorts**, and choose fabrics that dry easily. In respect of the local cultures and customs, bring some clothes that cover your shoulders and knees for village visits.

Ladies: **beach throw-overs, kaftans and sarongs** are always useful. Also, bring a **lightweight sundress** or two – the boat offers a great setting for a photo shoot, live it up!

No matter what the season, rain is always a possibility in the tropics, so bring a **lightweight waterproof jacket**; it can sometimes be a bit windy on the boat and this will also help keep you warm. Likewise, a **lightweight fleece** could be useful for pre-dawn trekking or if there is a cool wind on the boat – even if you don't need it onboard, it will surely be useful on the plane.

Finally, you might want to bring at least **one smart-casual outfit** for a sunset cocktail, a festive evening meal on the ship or the unexpected formal occasion.

Note: we offer **FREE LAUNDRY SERVICE** on board, which helps to reduce the need for large amounts of spare clothing. The cabinets in your cabin also come with **CLOTHES HANGERS**.

Footwear

Pack **comfortable trainers, trekking sandals or walking shoes** for hikes and walks. Bring **socks** to wear inside your walking shoes to avoid getting blisters.

You might also want **waterproof sandals or reef shoes** for wet landings and water activities. **Flip-flops** (aka thongs or sandals) are great for the beach.

Note: standard practice for everyone is to go **BAREFOOT WHENEVER ON THE BOAT**.



Swimwear

Don't forget your [swimsuit/bikini/shorts/trunks/Speedos](#) —and preferably more than just one swimsuit, so that one or two can be drying while you are wearing another.

Snorkels, masks & fins in many sizes are provided complimentary. However, if you are an avid snorkeler, you may prefer to bring your own [fins, mask & snorkel](#).

If you're new to snorkelling, you might want to try our Subea Easybreath full-face snorkel masks: it's an easier option for beginners and you're welcome to use ours at no charge (available in small/medium and medium/large sizes).



The water is warm but [a rash guard \(or a wetsuit\)](#) will protect you from the sun, abrasions and stings when swimming or snorkelling.

Sun Protection

You'll be spending plenty of time out in the scorching tropical sun, so be sure to pack plenty of [sunscreen](#) with a high enough SPF to protect your skin from the sun's damaging rays, all the more so because of the additional exposure due to the sea breezes and the reflection of the sea.

[Cover-ups, sarongs, sun shirts](#), and other such clothing will ensure that you come back from your trip with just happy memories and photographs – and not sunburn. Just in case you fail to avoid getting sunburnt, bring [an aloe-based lotion](#) to soothe burned skin.

[A good hat](#) is essential; a wide-brimmed hat or cap will keep the strong equatorial sun off your face and neck.

[Sunglasses](#) keep your eyes protected and [a strap to hold your glasses](#) can be a good idea for more active adventures.

Note: avid sunbathers will be happy to find comfortable lounge chairs with plenty of large **POOL TOWELS** available on our deck. **BATH TOWELS** in your cabin are replaced daily and we provide **BEACH TOWELS** after every water activity as well, so there's no need to bring your own towels.

Skin & Hair Protection

Ladies, it's important that you take good care of your skin and hair. The sun, seawater and salty air may be beautiful to experience but it can be tough on your body and will wreak havoc on your locks.

Bring [moisturising lotion](#) to soothe skin parched by the sun and the saltwater; bring a [leave-in conditioner](#) to de-tangle your hair with ease because the water, mask, and hair-ties will leave it in knots.

Also, consider bringing [a scarf or headband](#) to hold back unruly hair, or [hair-ties/pins](#) to keep your hair off your face and therefore prevent water seeping into your mask when diving or snorkelling.

Note: Your cabin is outfitted with **SHOWER GEL, SHAMPOO AND BODY LOTION**, as well as a **HAIRDRYER**.

Camera Equipment

If you are a photo enthusiast bring all of the [camera and video equipment](#) that you will use as you can expect exceptional opportunities for photography. If you prefer the ease of a point & shoot, bring that. Stunning aerial footage can be made with your [drone](#).

If you want to take underwater photos you might want to invest in [a waterproof camera/GoPro or waterproof housing](#) to capture photos of the incredible marine life.

It's a good idea to bring [spare memory cards](#); our cruises explore remote regions where memory cards cannot be purchased. The same goes for [spare batteries](#) for all your electronic equipment.

Chargers

Make sure to bring the fitting [chargers](#) for all your electronic devices. The voltage on board is 220 volts. There are several electric sockets in each cabin suitable for European type plugs, so you may need to bring [adaptors for non-European type plugs](#). Additional sockets are located in the saloon/dining lounge and in a few locations on deck.

Entertainment

You'll find a library with reference books and paperback novels on board. However, [books of your choice or an e-reader](#) will come in handy for down hours. We have a sound system on board, but you can bring [your own music](#) as well if you wish, plus a lightweight portable speaker so you can listen to the sounds of your choice in your cabin or in a private corner of the boat.

SCUBA Diving

Aside from your diving equipment, please bring [proof of your internationally recognised dive certification](#) and experience level, as well as documentation for any [dive insurance](#) policies you may have.

We carry a substantial selection of standard dive equipment on board, which is available for rent or often made available for free use. However, our stock is limited and most items only come in the most common sizes, colours and makes. If you require items in specific sizes, colours, or from specific brands, it is best to bring them yourself or at least inquire first whether or not we have them available for you.

We mostly dive in tropical waters with temperatures averaging between 27 and 29°C (80 to 84°F), but occasionally we'll visit dive sites that can be much colder, sometimes down to 23°C (72°C). On board, we only carry 3 mm wetsuits. If you are chilly easily, it may be wise to bring a 5 mm wetsuit or a vest, with or without hood.



General Packing Advice

Essential items and valuables should be packed in your carry-on luggage. Documents, medications, cameras, and even some spare underwear should not be checked in case your bag does not arrive with you. We suggest you make copies of your tickets and the photo page of your passport, just in case.

CHECKLIST - GENERAL

ESSENTIALS

- Passport
- Visa, if required for your nationality
- Travel insurance
- Medical insurance
- Dive insurance
- Cash currency & Credit cards

CLOTHING

- Travel outfit
- T-shirts - Tanktops
- Shorts
- Beach throw-over - Kaftan - Sarongs
- Sundress
- Slacks - Cargo pants
- Casual cotton shirt
- Waterproof jacket
- Fleece

SWIMWEAR

- Swimsuit - Bikini - Trunks - Speedos
- Snorkel & mask
- Rash guard - Wetsuit

SKIN & HAIR PROTECTION

- Moisturising lotion
- Hair conditioner
- Scarf - Headband - Bandana
- Hair-ties/pins

CAMERA & ELECTRONICS

- Camera
- GoPro
- Drone
- Waterproof housings
- Memory cards
- Spare batteries
- Chargers
- Adaptors

FIRST AID KIT

- Prescription medication
- Personal medication
- Seasickness tablets
- Mosquito repellent

SUN PROTECTION

- Sunscreen lotion
- Aloe based lotion
- Cover-ups - Sun shirts
- Hat - Cap
- Sunglasses & Strap

FOOTWEAR

- Trainers - Trekking sandals - Walking shoes
- Socks
- Waterproof sandals - Reef shoes
- Flip-flops (Thongs - Sandals)

BAGS

- Day backpack
- Waterproof wet/dry bag
- Travel bags

PERSONAL HYGIENE PRODUCTS

- Dental hygiene products
- Feminine hygiene products
- Shaving kit
- Soap - Shower gel - Shampoo

ENTERTAINMENT

- Books or e-reader
- Music collection
- Portable speaker

OTHERS

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CHECKLIST – SCUBA DIVING

DOCUMENTS

- Dive insurance membership card
- Dive qualifications
- Logbook (last 2 years)

Rental equipment is available on board in limited sizes and quantities. Please let us know any specific requests and sizes well in advance. Without prior reservation, we cannot guarantee availability for any item.

ESSENTIALS

- BCD
- Regulator set
- Wetsuit
- Fins
- Booties
- Mask & snorkel

RENTALS

- for rent on board at US\$ 8 per day
- for rent on board at US\$ 8 per day
- for rent on board at US\$ 8 per day
- for rent on board at US\$ 8 per day
- for rent on board at US\$ 8 per day
- available on board for free use

SAFETY EQUIPMENT

- Nautilus Lifeline
- Dive torch
- SMB - Surface Marker Buoy
- Reefhook & reel/line
- Dive knife

- for rent on board at US\$ 8 per day or US\$ 25 per trip
- for rent on board at US\$ 5 per day or US\$ 20 per trip
- available on board against warranty*
- available on board against warranty*

COMFORT - OPTIONAL

- Snorkel
- Wetsuit - full body - 5 mm
- Vest
- Hood
- Gloves
- Defogger Spray
- Mask lenses
- Scarf/headband/bandana

ELECTRONICS

- Dive computer
- Underwater camera
- Underwater strobes
- Waterproof camera housing
- Memory cards
- Spare batteries
- Chargers
- Adaptors

AVAILABLE ON BOARD FOR FREE

- Oxygen Analyzer for EAN diving
- Weightbelt & weight stoppers
- Weights (1 kg and 2 kg)
- Spare Masks & Snorkels
- Spare SMB's (based on availability)
- Spare reefhooks (based on availability)

OTHERS

- Repair kit incl. O-rings & spare parts
- Fin buckles & straps
- Ear drops
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*Warranties: for rental equipment and for equipment that is free to use, a Rental Agreement will have to be signed at the start of the trip. All equipment will have to be returned to us in good working condition at the end of the trip. Any lost or damaged equipment will incur charges based on the replacement value of the lost or damaged item as indicated on the Rental Agreement.

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS IN RELATION TO YOUR CRUISE

LOCAL TIME & CLIMATE

Indonesia does not have Daylight Saving Time. This vast country covers three time zones, with our cruises navigating through two of them.

Sulawesi and the Lesser Sunda Islands (Bali, Lombok, Komodo, Flores etc) maintain Central Indonesian Time, which is 7 hours ahead of GMT in summer, and 8 hours in winter (just like Singapore and Hong Kong).

Papua (Raja Ampat), the Bandas and the Moluccas have Eastern Indonesian Time, which in summer is 8 and in winter 9 hours ahead of GMT.

This immense archipelago of more than 17,000 islands is spread out along the equator and all year long the sun rises between 6 and 7 am, and sets between 6 and 7 pm. No matter what time of year, temperatures at sea level on average rarely drop below 25°C (77°F) and seldom exceed 35°C (95°F).



April to September is the 'dry season', although rain showers and thunderstorms can be expected all year around. During this season the weather and seas are settled and relatively calm and we sail mostly north of the islands in the central part of Indonesia, like Komodo, where ships can operate in the lee of the islands and enjoy protection from wind and swell.

Come October as the trade winds and monsoons turn, the rains will come more regularly and we head to the general dryer north and east of the archipelago and into the Maluku and Papua regions – home to the Spice Islands and the wondrous, mind-boggling biodiverse region of Raja Ampat.

LOCAL CURRENCY & CURRENCY EXCHANGE

Indonesia's national currency is called **RUPIAH**, usually abbreviated as Rp or IDR.

Exchange rates are very variable and fluctuate on a daily basis. Since the beginning of 2018, the rate has been hovering around Rp 14,500 to the US Dollar, Rp 17,000 to the Euro or Rp 19,000 to the Pound Sterling, with fluctuations commonly ranging Rp 1,000 in either direction.

The best exchange rates are offered for **CASH EURO, US DOLLAR or POUND STERLING** at the ubiquitous **AUTHORISED MONEY CHANGERS**.

Please note that you won't be able to exchange or pay with old, torn, dirty, smudged, damaged, marked or stamped bills in any currency anywhere: make sure to bring **ONLY NEW, CRISP BILLS IN PERFECT CONDITION!** On board, we can also only accept major foreign currency in perfect bills.



Wherever prices are marked in Rupiah, you should try and pay with local currency rather than with foreign currency, in order to avoid unfavourable exchange rates. Therefore it is best to buy a certain amount of Rupia from an authorised money changer at the airport upon arrival.

The largest notes are Rp 100,000 so you shouldn't be surprised to become a Rupiah millionaire instantly when you exchange a hundred bill in a foreign currency... You'll be well advised to carefully count and recount your change, as swap tricks are known to happen. Banks and hotel cashiers will offer less attractive exchange rates, but arguably they are safer.

PAYMENT BY CREDIT CARD

Paying by credit card with PIN code is possible on board of Mutiara Laut and in most hotels, shops and restaurants. It is a safe and advantageous mode of payment, even though there's often a 2,5 to 3 % surcharge applied.

Mutiara Laut does not apply any surcharges for payment by credit card. Your bill for incidental expenses (such as the consumption of alcoholic beverages) and Variable Surcharges will be in US\$ and will be converted to Indonesian Rupiah at the exchange rate of the day.

Sometimes for payment by credit card, you'll be asked to show your passport or a photocopy thereof.

With credit cards of major brands like VISA, American Express & Master Card you can collect limited amounts of cash Rupiah from countless ATM's (automated teller machines), but banking fees can be high so better check first with your bank at home.



EMBARKATION & DEBARKATION TIMES

EMBARKATION TIME on Mutiara Laut is BEFORE 12 noon.

Please make sure to schedule flight arrival times that allow us to arrange embarkation before 12 o'clock in order to avoid delays in our schedule and discomfort for our other guests. If you cannot obtain a flight arriving early enough, then the best solution is to come a day early and stay overnight in a hotel near the harbour where we can come and pick you up for your transfer to the ship in the morning. Your cabin will be available on the day of departure from 7 am onwards.

DEBARKATION TIME: the check-out time on the last day of the trip is 11 am.

All cabins need to be vacated before 11 am and the latest debarkation time is 12 noon.

Passengers with an (early) morning departure flight will be taken to the airport well in time to make their flight. For passengers with a (late) afternoon departure flight, we will organise a transfer to a hotel or a location of their choice near the harbour or the airport.

Our first and last day programmes rely on strict time scheduling, so please confirm with us to ensure that you arrive and depart at your destination with plenty of time to spare and to avoid disruption to other guests' schedules.

OVERNIGHT STAYS BEFORE AND AFTER THE CRUISE

There are many reasons why it is highly recommended to plan at least one overnight stay near the points of embarkation and debarkation before and after the cruise.

On the inbound leg, long-haul international flights with plane changes in hubs along the way always pose the risk of luggage (dive gear!) not making it through the layover, and domestic flights in Indonesia regularly suffer severe delays.

Quite often it will be a challenge to simply find flights that get you to the point of embarkation in time to make our 12 o'clock departure time and, besides that, it is never fun to arrive on the boat in warm winter clothing: an overnight stay before the cruise will give you a margin to cover delays and a chance to freshen up after the long journey inbound.

On the other hand, an overnight stay in a hotel after debarkation allows for ample surface interval time after your last dive and before your departure flight; please note we do not allow any dives within 24 hours of your flight departure time. Furthermore, you'll be able to enjoy the services on board for a maximum time, without having to worry about making a flight.

WHERE TO STAY?

While there is a vast choice of hotels to stay at in places like Bali, much more often we'll be bunkering in very remote places where it may not be so easy to find decent accommodation. You can always contact us to get our advice on where to stay (or where not to stay), but we are not in a position to book any accommodation for you.

When choosing accommodation, please consider the distance from the harbour: we provide free transfers only for locations within approx. 30 minutes' drive from the ship's anchorage (except for Bitung, where we'll come and pick you up as far as Manado airport).

ITINERARIES

When touring at sea, weather, currents, and even harbour masters and shahbandars don't always cooperate with our planned itinerary, which sometimes makes our planned schedules challenging or even impossible to carry out. For that reason, our written itineraries must be approached with reasonable flexibility.

Every effort will be made to carry out our cruise itinerary as planned; however, our itineraries are subject to change at any time and for any reason and always at the Captain's discretion.

We reserve the right to make alterations at any time due to circumstances beyond our control and/or other factors, in the best interests of all. It's all part of the adventure.

SCUBA DIVING

Before diving, we require all divers fill out a standard Boat Travel & Scuba Diving Liability Release Form. Enriched air divers are required to also fill out a Nitrox Liability Release Form.

We offer the opportunity to do up to 3 and often 4 dives per day, including several night-dives per cruise (depending on weather and sea conditions). The number of dives per day depends heavily on the weather conditions and the availability of suitable dive sites near the location of the vessel in relation to other dives and activities that are planned in the schedule. In general, there is no diving scheduled on the arrival and departure days.

Our tanks are 12 litres (80 cuft) Aluminium-S80's with YOKE valves and spin out DIN converters and we also have some 15 litres (100 cuft) tanks for rent. We provide Nitrox-ready tanks and filling for Nitrox certified divers at US\$ 6 per dive or US\$ 12 per day (except otherwise mentioned in your reservation).



Our diving team of professional local dive guides will accompany no more than 4 diving guests per dive guide. For less experienced divers or for divers who'd like to do speciality courses, we can provide the services of our licensed PADI Dive Instructor at a reasonable additional charge.

If during the cruise you'd like to do a Nitrox Certification Course or any other diving speciality certification, then please let us know well before your trip so we can prepare the necessary licensed course instructors and materials.

ACTIVITIES

Besides scuba diving, we offer a wide range of other activities, which are all included in your package.

While the underwater world in Indonesia is truly magical, this vast archipelago has a lot of beautiful sights and wondrous experiences to offer above the water as well. We'll organise trips on shore to enjoy some beach time or to explore the islands and go inland with short or long walks, treks, and even hikes, depending on the preferences and capabilities of our guests and whenever time permits.

Furthermore, there will never be a dull moment between relaxing and surface intervals when we put the sea kayaks and paddle boards in the water. Outside of conservation areas, where motorised watersports are allowed, you can have a go at waterskiing or wakeboarding behind our speedboats. And while many areas we visit are designated no-take zones, we will often find spots where angling is allowed and where we can put out the fishing rods.

INTERNET ON BOARD



While we do provide internet connection with free wifi on board whenever and wherever possible, the reality is that there are **severe** limitations to any meaningful access to the digital highway.

Considering the remote regions we navigate, having any kind of onboard capacity for speedy internet access is a near impossibility. Our itineraries often put us way beyond the reach of any consistent land-based signal, and with the prices of satellite internet being what they are, this is just something we cannot offer (count on US\$ 35 per Mb being the norm).

We like to think of this as a positive. With the need to be online 24/7 becoming an all-encompassing factor of modern living, being able to go to places that are off the grid will only become more of a luxury as we march forward into a digital future. With that in mind, MSY Mutiara Laut will be one of those digital-free oases where you can truly switch off and enjoy the natural world around you, free from any outside distraction. For those who don't often get the luxury of switching off, it will be a beautiful experience, we assure you.

However, with the realities of technology being what they are, it's not that simple for some to live offline, and there is the option for a (very) intermittent connection through the purchasing of a local SIM card with a 3G or 4G connection for your phone or device here in Indonesia prior to your cruise from any one of a vast number of cell phone stores at airports and in city centres.

There are cell towers all over the country, and we will come into range of these from time to time, allowing for the sending and receiving of SMS and small emails without attachments. This is by no means guaranteed: often these cell towers operate solely on solar power and we can sometimes be off the grid for up to a week at a time, particularly in the far east or north of the country.

Please note: If you run a business that requires you to be constantly online, or simply cannot be without a regular connection for staying in touch with friends and family, then a cruise on a liveaboard in these remote parts of Indonesia may not be the best match for you.

FOOD & BEVERAGE

Mutiara Laut cruises include all meals and non-alcoholic drinks. Our talented chefs will prepare an array of Western and Asian dishes each day, for breakfast, lunch and dinner, with snacks available throughout the day.

During the cruise, we plan a BBQ on a secluded beach somewhere (weather permitting) and we will sometimes catch fish along the way, or buy it from local fishermen that come alongside the ship, and stop at local markets to procure fresh ingredients.

Special dietary requirements and allergies are no problem: simply let us know the details well before the cruise and our chefs will ensure you are taken care of. We can cater to special requests such as vegetarian or halal, but we must be notified in advance of any special needs so we can make arrangements.

On board of Mutiara Laut, like in star-rated hotels, you can safely use the water from the tap to brush your teeth. In your cabin, you will find metal water bottles which are refilled daily with fresh and safe drinking water.



ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

Our prices for local beer and wine are very reasonable and we try to keep them as low as possible at US\$ 2.50 for a can of beer and US\$ 45 for a bottle of our house wine. However, alcohol taxes in Indonesia are extremely high, so we must charge higher prices for imported wines and spirits.

In the event that you would like us to procure something special, such as French champagne, just let us know beforehand and we will do our best to find it.

Please note that we do not allow anybody to bring on board any bottles of alcoholic beverages that do not have the proper Indonesian customs' duty stamps. Furthermore, a modest corkage fee of US\$ 10 per bottle will be charged to your room account for any bottle of alcoholic beverage that you bring and consume on board.

TIPPING & GRATUITIES

During the cruise, you will enjoy the incomparable service of well-trained, friendly and super-efficient Indonesian crew members, and it is a time-honoured tradition on all cruise vessels of the world to tip the crew at the end of the voyage, provided of course you have been satisfied with their services.

While it is customary in Indonesia for nearly all hotels, restaurants and bars, as well as for most liveaboards, to add up to 15% "Service Charge" (on top of 11% Government Tax) to your bill/invoice, we deliberately choose not to enforce any "hidden" costs upon our guests.

Therefore, on your final night on board, we would encourage you to discretely contribute to a collective 'crew tip fund', which will be distributed by the captain equally among all our crew members and dive staff.

In the liveaboard community, a tip of around 10% of the cabin rate per cruising day is considered an appropriate amount (i.e. +/- 50 \$ per guest per day, for all crew together, including the dive team). However, this is just a suggestion and remains entirely up to your judgment and discretion.

Upon your request, our Cabin Boy will provide you with an envelope which you can use to seal your cash tip and give to the captain. Some guests prefer to add their tip for the crew to the settlement of their drink bill with the Chief Steward, which is acceptable as well, but a cash tip is always preferred in order to prevent the crew getting taxed on tips.

We do ask that you please refrain from offering tips to individual crew members at any time, even in cases of exceptional service, when it should also be arranged via the captain or, better still, through our office.

Thank you for sailing with us!

