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LAYANG LAYANG & THE SPRATLY ISLANDS 10 NIGHTS MALAYSIA

The following is a sample itinerary of where you might dive during your holiday with us. We wish to show you the very best diving but a number of factors can determine where we visit. Weather, tides, how busy a site is with other dive vessels all play a part in the Cruise Director's decision of which route the yacht takes. The safety of all on board is paramount and we always do our best in offering diving at alternate locations. The Cruise Director is happy to listen to requests from guests to visit or remain at certain sites and providing it is possible and the schedule allows, then guest's requests are respected.

Layang Layang and the Spratly Islands- 10 nights- Labuan to Labuan Up to 32 Dives including 5 night dives

- **Day 1- Arrive Labuan – 1 dive**

Meet a member of the Worldwide Dive and Sail crew at the Labuan Airport, transfer to the port and board the SY Oriental Siren. After boarding settle into your cabin and assemble your equipment with help from our friendly crew. The boat briefing is followed by a dive briefing as we cruise for a short while to our first dive site.

Check Dive- Pulau Rusukan Besar, one of the smaller islands close to Labuan. The gentle reef slopes are ideal for a late afternoon check dive

- **Day 2- Wrecks of Labuan – 3 dives**

Labuan has four shipwrecks lying in the 30m/100ft depth range which are suitable for recreational divers of all levels.

The Mabini Padre, a large Philippine fishing trawler, sank off northeast of Kuraman Island in 1981 after catching fire. She lays at 35m on her port side and is easily penetrated for divers with wreck experience. The outside of the wreckage is covered with soft corals.

The Tung Huang, a Japanese freighter from Brunei hit the Samarang Bank and sank whilst trying to reach Labuan. The vessel, 92 meters long, 15 meters wide and 7.5 meters deep sits vertically on the seabed at 30 meters. It is the easiest wreck to navigate and has plenty of hard and soft coral growth attracting lionfish, turtles, barracuda and many reef fish species.

The USS Salute, A US Navy minesweeper, struck a mine in Brunei in 1945; nine US sailors lost their lives when she sank. The stern section is relatively intact and penetration possible, however the wreckage has become fairly unstable.

SS De Klerk. Scuttled by the Dutch in 1942 but salvaged by the Japanese and renamed Imabari Maru, she hit a mine and sank in 1944; 339 passengers lost their lives, mostly workers and prisoners of war. Her metal skeleton remains and with a blast hole in the starboard side the wreck is extremely easy to explore.

We will dive three of these wrecks before departing to Layang Layang Island – some 15 hours away.

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- **Day 3- Layang Layang Island – 3 dives**

Also known as Swallow Reef, Layang Layang is one of the Malaysian governed Spratly Islands, laying 300km from the coast of Sabah. After registering with the Malaysian Navy we are free to dive the many interesting sites dotted around the atoll. The number of dives we make is dependent on the speed of the check in process.

Dive 1- Gorgonian Forest. The wall here drops from 15 m down to 40 m and then beyond. A current runs parallel to the wall and huge red, yellow and green gorgonians can be seen feeding in it. The visibility here can be awesome as a result of the horizontal current. It is also one of the better places to spot hammerhead sharks and big schooling pelagics such as jacks off the reef wall.

Dive 2- The Tunnel. This spot offers a differing topography to the earlier dives with a gently sloping hard coral terrain down to around 40 meters. A huge variety of hard corals can be found here with brain, stag horn, plate and cabbage coral all in abundance, creating channels or “tunnels” within the reef structure. Turtles are often spotted here and the shallow waters are the best place to look for a wide variety of crustaceans including pink squat lobsters & mantis shrimps.

Dive 3- Night dive in the shallow lagoon.

- **Day 4- Layang Layang Island – 4 dives**

Starting our day on the western point we visit Sharks Cave where leopard sharks, nurse sharks and white tips can often be seen resting. Provided you approach them slowly and carefully you can get quite close to them. The cave itself is at 25m whilst the wall drops to 40m+ and has an interesting display of soft corals and sea fans

Dive 2- Crack Reef. On the northern shore is open to strong currents and fantastic spot to drift along the sheer wall and out into the blue for the opportunity for seeing devil rays and many hammerheads. Schools of barracuda and jacks are common, whilst the black coral bushes along the wall, host shrimps and other microscopic species. The coral garden in 5-15m is an ideal place to make your safety stop

Dive 3- Dogtooth Lair. The name comes from the large schools of dogtooth tuna that can be found cruising along the drop off. The reef consists of coral gardens, walls, overhangs and ledges down to around 40 meters before it plunges into the abyss. These ledges are great places to spot resting white tip reef sharks and there are several cleaning stations to be found. The elusive sunfish (mola mola) has been known to put in an appearance here.

Dive 4 – Night dive at Snapper Ledge.

- **Day 5 – Investigator Shoal – 3 dives**

Departing in the early morning for the furthest reef in the Malaysian Spratly chain, Investigator Shoal, we will make 3 dives here. Much of the diving we do here will be exploratory as the reef is only accessible by liveaboard. The shallow reef shelf slopes down to 40m+ and then onwards for approximately 2000m. The water is extremely clear and large pelagics are to be expected. This pristine and previously inaccessible reef awaits our discovery.

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- **Day 6 – Mariveles Reef – 4 dives**

Shaped like an hour glass, Mariveles reef has a rich growth of hard corals and attracts many reef fish species. The reefs here start in the 5-10m range and slope down in to the depths, sponges and sea fans are the norm, whilst in some parts the slope becomes a sheerer wall. Expect to see devil rays and schools of jacks, whilst in the shallow coral gardens echinoderms, such as sea- cucumbers, are a common sight.

Spend the night in anchorage at Mariveles reef and depart in the early morning to Dallas reef.

- **Day 7 – Dallas Reef & Ardesier Breaker – 4 dives**

Dallas Reef & Ardesier Breaker lay very close to each other and we are able to move in between the two sites dependent on currents. Similar to Mariveles Reef, here we see many hard corals, sea fans and sponges. Colourful reef fish species including butterfly, angel, damsel and trigger fish are all to be seen here, along with many types of nudibranchs. Marble rays can be found resting amongst the bommies and spinner & bottlenose dolphins can be seen cruising about in the channels formed by the two reefs.

We make 3 day and 1 sunset dive before an early evening cruise back to Layang Layang.

- **Day 8 & 9- Layang Layang Island – 8 dives**

Rising early we start the day with our first dive at the Point. The eastern tip of the island is a fantastic spot to look out for hammerhead sharks, eagle rays and devil rays. The following dives will be chosen from a number of sites around the reef dependent on th conditions and where we have the most hammerhead sightings during the trip. Night dives will be in the lagoon or along the shallower reef slopes of the southern side of the island. Sites include:-

Wrasse Strip: This is a seriously impressive dive with coral gardens absolutely jam packed with every variety of hard and soft coral competing for the light above. Coral bommies with their territorial fish inhabitants are abound, the sheer concentration of corals and smaller fish is breath-taking. Towards the deeper waters eagle or manta rays may be spotted, look out for white tip sharks too.

The Valley has a gentle slope with some sandy patches and is a haven for surgeonfish, sweetlips and groupers. There are overhangs and crevices to explore and turtles are common here. Anemone patches are abundant with even a rare golden anemone in the area. Macro life here is also superb with frogfish, filefish and numerous crustaceans.

Wreck Point, which despite its name does not actually have a wreck anymore, just a few remnants remain! The topography here is a shallow reef with coral gardens, many varieties of hard corals and smaller reef fish can be found.

D Wall. This sheer vertical drop off starts at a meter depth and doesn't finish until it hits the bottom 2 kilometres later. A small ledge can be found at 40 meters where leopard sharks are often seen. The wall itself is covered in soft corals, sponges and gorgonians with large schooling fish present and always the chance of hammerhead and other sharks.

Snapper Ledge, as the name suggests, is where we see large schools of snapper, but also many other reef fishes. Whale sharks have been known to make the occasional appearance here.

- **Day 10- Layang Layang – 2 dives**

After a final two dives and the naval check out we wave good bye to Layang Layang for this

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time and cruise back to Labuan. In the evening enjoy a bbq on board and begin planning your next adventure with Worldwide Dive and Sail and the Siren Fleet.

- **Day 11- Disembark in Labuan**

After breakfast say your farewells and disembark the SY Oriental Siren at approximately 9am, dependent on your onward flight schedule.

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