

Truk Lagoon - Federated States of Micronesia

Itinerary

The following is a sample itinerary of dive sites we may visit during your liveaboard safari on Truk Master. We wish to show you the very best diving possible, however, a number of factors can determine which sites we visit. Weather, tides, currents and many other factors determine the Cruise Director's decision of which route the yacht takes and which sites are selected for diving. The schedule comprises 4 day dives or 3 day dives and 1 twilight dive. Whilst we attempt to ensure the number of dives we have scheduled is fulfilled, bad weather can hinder the yacht's ability to reach a specified dive site in good time. The safety of all on board is paramount and we always do our best in offering diving at alternate locations should we be unable to visit those sites listed below.

The diving day aboard Truk Master has a typical schedule as follows:

Light Breakfast followed by a briefing & Dive 1
Full Breakfast, relaxation period, briefing & Dive 2
Lunch, relaxation period, briefing & Dive 3
Snack, relaxation period, briefing & Dive 4
Dinner

For your final full day aboard, we schedule 2 morning dives to allow plenty of time for off-gassing before disembarkation the following morning and your flight home. 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.

Truk Lagoon

During World War II, Truk Lagoon was the Empire of Japan's main base in the South Pacific theatre. The whole lagoon was a heavily fortified base for Japanese naval operations against Allied forces in New Guinea and the Solomon Islands, serving as the forward anchorage for the Japanese Imperial Fleet. In February of 1944, Truk was devastated in one of the most important naval attacks of the war, "Operation Hailstone", which resulted in the loss of 61 ships, mostly "Maru" or merchant vessels that had been left at anchor, whilst some 200 other vessels were safely evacuated to Palau. The result of this attack is a collection of shipwrecks of closely packed into a coral lagoon, many of which lie at depths easily reached by recreational divers.

Over the course of our liveaboard safari we will explore many of the wrecks detailed below.

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Dive sites we visit include but are not limited to:

Fujikawa Maru – a signature dive of Truk Lagoon, this 132m (436ft) armed cargo ship sits perfectly upright on the sandy bottom at a depth of 37m (121ft) whilst the forward king post reaches up to 5m (15ft). The “Fuji” offers 6 holds, 4 of which are open, in which can be found parts of Zero Fighter Aircraft including engine parts, propeller blades and fuel cells. Deeper inside the wreck, Mitsubishi A5m Claude & A6M parts can be discovered. The bow gun is encrusted with corals and the outer wreck supports sea fans, soft corals & anemones. Exploring the “Fuji” is possible for divers of all levels however deeper penetration into the engine room will only be permitted to certified tec / wreck divers. Throughout the 10-night cruise we will offer several dives on this famous wreck to allow our guests to explore in full and take photographs at different times of day.

Fumitsuki – A 97m (300ft) long Japanese Destroyer. She sits upright in 39m (128ft) of water rising up to 27m (89ft). Covered in marine life she is a pleasure to dive.

Submarine I.169 – Quickly submerging during the attack to avoid damage, the submarine unfortunately failed to close her valves, allowing for water to enter and as she descended she came to rest on her port side at a depth of 42m (138ft).

Yamigari Maru – Resting on her port side, though almost completely intact despite repeated bombings, the Yamigari freighter still contains many artillery shells and ammunition.

Shinkoku Maru – A large oil tanker, now rests upright on the bottom encrusted with corals, sponges & hydroids. Highlights include the telegraph room on the bridge, a spacious engine room and a galley that still features many utensils on the large stove. Small guns, mounted fore and aft are also covered with corals making this one of the most colourful and spectacular wrecks to be found in Truk.

Nippo Maru – With a depth range of 21m – 47m (69ft-154ft) the Nippo is an intriguing dive site for recreational divers and tec divers alike. With a tank and howitzer guns on deck, and 5-inch guns in the holds, the Nippo is not to be missed.

Heian Maru – The largest ship in the lagoon, the Heian, originally used as a cargo ship, is 165m (510ft) in length and lies on her port side in 35m (115ft) of water. Within her holds divers may find torpedoes, shells and even the occasional periscope.

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San Francisco Maru – The passenger & cargo ship, weighing 5,831 tons, lays upright at a depth of 62m (203ft). Here divers can check out the remains of many well preserved war-relics including three large tanks which rest on the deck at 50m (164ft). *NOTE: Due to the depth of the San Francisco Maru, this dive will be offered only to those divers possessing the necessary training and experience to plan and safely execute technical dives.*

Hoki Maru – This 30m (100ft) long freighter lies upright from 50m (165ft) and is only partially intact. The aft hold carries trucks and road supplies whilst sake bottles can be found here too. The superstructure is awe-inspiring and covered with brightly coloured sponges.

Gosei Maru – A submarine tender carrying torpedoes starts in just 3m (10ft) and drops to 35m (115ft) within which can be found many personal artifacts, serving as a reminder of those who lost their lives during the battle.

Rio de Janeiro Maru – 140m (430ft) long she lays on her port side in 35m (115ft). Once a luxury passenger vessel she was converted to a cargo vessel in wartime. Exploration of her holds turns up a range of supplies from beer bottles to guns. The upper deck reaches to an easily diveable depth of 9m (30ft).

Betty Bomber – A Mitsubishi G4M “Betty” Bomber aircraft lies on the seabed at 18m (60ft) and is surrounded by schooling fish. Nicknamed: “The Flying Cigar” for its shape but also because the aircraft lit up when shot, as the fuel tanks were unprotected.

The majority of shipwrecks within Truk Lagoon is deemed suitable for recreational divers and offer varying depths for multi-level profiles. However, some sites do lie beyond, or have interesting features deeper than the recognised recreational diving depth limit of 40m (130ft). As such they may not be suitable for divers without with deep diver or technical diving qualifications.

Our Cruise Director and dive guides will offer guided dives, with simple wreck penetration, within the bounds of their own training and experience. Prior to each dive our guides will give an in-depth briefing for all our guests which will include a detailed site map with entries/exits, points of interest, hazardous objects and special considerations for the dive to enable you to plan appropriately.

Guests are responsible for their own dive profiles and for obtaining suitable dive insurance to cover deeper diving. We respectfully request our divers stay within the bounds of their training, follow dive computer guidelines and make decompression stops where necessary. When planning deep dives or dives with extended bottom times, please bear in mind that recompression facilities in the region are limited, therefore we recommend you dive conservatively.

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Truk Master provides equipment and facilities for deep, technical and rebreather diving with a "Deco-bar" situated under the yacht for your convenience. All divers who wish to go beyond recognised recreational depth limits, plan to make deep wreck penetration or decompression dives must show proof of qualification and experience upon boarding and will be requested to sign an additional liability waiver.

Should you have any questions or queries concerning the dive sites or whether this itinerary is suitable for your experience level, please contact our reservations team info@masterliveboards.com who will be pleased to assist and advise you.

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