

## AT LAST: THE GUIDE TO DIVING THE RAJA AMPAT ISLANDS

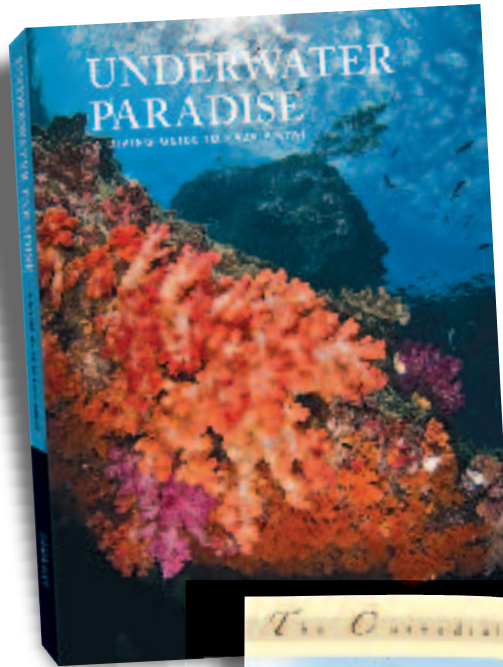
Imagine this: 50,000 square kilometres of islands and reefs which, according to scientists, support 580 kinds of corals, 1,397 fish species including 23 endemics. The islands are also a cetacean highway – several species of whales and dolphins are commonly seen.

First described by Sir Alfred Russell Wallace after several months spent on Waiego in 1846, his studies revealed two distinct areas in Indonesia. Each one had different flora and fauna belonging to Asia and Australia, and this division later became known as the Wallace Line.

In 112 pages containing 154 images, 30 maps and 24 dive sites, Ricard Buxó's book encapsulates Raja Ampat's stunning and unique beauty. Everything dive travellers need to know about the region is fully covered in the first section. Dive sites are grouped into North, Central and South areas of the archipelago, and are expertly described and the superb illustrations show terrain, depths, orientation.

Most photographs in this book have been taken in Raja Ampat over the past seven years. The equipment used was a Nikon D70s (recently upgraded to D90) armed with a Nikon 18-200 mm VR for topside. For underwater photography another D70 (recently upgraded to D80 as well) on a Sea&Sea housing was used, with a Tokina 10-17 mm fisheye, a Nikon 18-70 mm and a 60 mm micro Nikkor. Strobes Inon Z-220 and Ultralight arms.

**AUTHOR RICARD BUXÓ** studied technical drawing for construction and worked in architecture for 12 years in Spain and abroad before he moved to the Red Sea in 1993. He spent five years there working professionally in diving at the end of which he self-published the *Miniguide to the Southern Egyptian Red Sea*, sponsored by Scubapro. The past 10 years he's lived in Indonesia, where he came in 2000 to supervise construction of the liveboard S.M.Y. *Ondina*. Since then he's been successfully running this operation, logging close to 3,000 dives in the archipelago, nearly half of them in the reefs of Raja Ampat.



Ricard currently lives in Bali, combining the business with writing stories for the diving and yachting magazines in Spain.

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