

“Empress” Captain’s log *3–7 August 2016

*Air Temp. 28 C

*Water Temp. 26 C - 28 C

CREW:

Captain: Mapeare

Cruise Director: Michal

Chief Officer: Saepudin

Chief Engineer: Ruslan

2nd Engineer: Basri

Chef: Jus

Divemaster: Pii

DIVE SITES:

Th: Sea Fan Coral Garden, Trawangan Slope – Gili Trawangan

Fr: Usat Liberty, Jemeluk Wall & Bay, Gili Tepekong, Blue Lagoon - Bali

Sa: Crystal Bay, Manta Point, Lembongan drift, Barbecue on the beach

Su: Ped, Secret Garden, The Sand, The Sand night dive

GUESTS: Peter, Bianca, Kristina, Felix, Rune and Ellen.

Wednesday August 3rd

We picked up our guest from Senggigi and brought them to the boat in the late morning. We accommodated the guests in their cabins, set all the gear and made our way to Gili Islands. We picked up 2 of our guests in Gili Trawangan and after diving briefing we started our first dive.

We started our first dive of our trip at Sea Fan Coral Garden. During this dive we found 2 cuttle fish, commensal shrimp, tiny crinoid crab and schooling of neon fusiliers. From place to place we saw nice big gorgonian sea fans. During the second part of the dive we stayed at shallow reef and spotted swimming moray eel. Visibility was reaching 15 m. and there was a mild current.

Our chef prepared lunch and moved to south of Gili Trawangan where we dove at Trawangan Slope. This time swell raised and we jumped away on 15 m. depth. At the very beginning we spotted a turtle and red mantis shrimp. At the second part of the dive we saw puffer fish, sweet lips fish and many bat fish. At the sandy bottom around 25 m. we spotted white tip sharks. Visibility still was around 15 m. and we had average strength of current.

After the dive we moved our boat to Lombok where we stayed until morning in a bay protected from waves. We had a dinner and celebrated our first day on board with our guests. In the early morning we moved the boat to Bali Island.

Thursday August 4th

In the early morning we arrived to Tulamben area, which is north east part of Bali. We had our continental breakfast and started 1st dive.

USAT Liberty Wreck is one of the top dive sites in Bali. Situated close to the shore it attracts all level divers from all over the world. In 1942 it was on the way from Australia to Philippines and got

torpedoed by Japanese submarine between Lombok and Bali Islands. Captain saved the crew and the cargo putting it on shallows in Tulamben. Wreck is underwater after Agung Volcano eruption in 1963 r. Small fishing village changed into a diving tourism destination.

We explored wreck during 1 dive. Starting from the stern and moving slowly to the bow we reached 27 m. of depth. On the way we spotted giant grouper, sweetlips fish, midnight snappers and blue spotted sting rays. We went shallower and started coming back to the stern area exploring the shallow part of the wreck. We spotted: scorpion fish, leaf fish and big moray eel. Our guests were really impressed. We had great visibility reaching 30 m. and no current.

After dive we started hot breakfast and moved our boat to Amed. In Amed we dove at Jemeluk Bay & Wall. We jumped from dingy and went down to 15 m. where sloping reef starts to get more steep and forms a wall going down to 40 m. All area is covered with beautiful colourful reef with many sea fans. During this dive we saw: bumphead parrotfish, schooling of neon fusiliers and some small stuff like: nudibranch, emperor shrimp on a sea-cucumber and scorpion fish. We had little current and good visibility reaching 20 m.

When we came back to the boat lunch was waiting for our guests and we were on the way to Candidasa. In this area we dove at small rock called Gili Tepekong. Its famous dive site called shark point. Water here was not so clear reaching 10 m but still we spotted a few big white tips. One shark was reaching 1,5 m. During this dive we had stronger current but we found our way to reach the sharks sleeping on a sandy bottom.

After our dive we had tasty snacks – Indonesian favourite: fried bananas in chocolate. After some rest and sunset when the sky got darker we jumped for a night dive in Blue Lagoon. During this dive we spotted: decorator crabs, lobsters, couple of nudibranch and blue spotted sting rays.

We stayed for a night in Padangbai and early in the morning moved Empress to Nusa Penida.

Friday August 5th

In the morning we reached Penida Island and dove at famous Crystal Bay. After 5 minute of our dive we spotted thresher shark!!! It must have got interested with us as it approached closely. On our way down the sloping reef we also saw bumphead parrotfish, scorpion fish, sea snake and group of sweetlips fish. On the way back we went to flat shallower part which is a beautiful coral garden full with small fish and big coral formations. Visibility was good reaching 20 m and there was average strength of current.

After breakfast we went to Manta Point for our 2nd dive. When we went down we spotted 2 mantas swimming together. We also saw a nurse shark and sea snake. Water was a bit cold reaching 25 degrees of C. Visibility 15 m and an average current with swell which made us move slowly around the dive site.

Our afternoon dive was at Lembongan Island where we made a drift dive. Drift was amazing, we could feel as if we flying as current was reaching 4 miles. During this dive we saw giant barracuda, many big puffer fish and 4 different kinds of angel fish.

For our evening entertainment we organized barbecue on the beach on Lembongan Island. We prepared tasty meals, set lanterns and comfortable seats for our guests.

Saturday August 6th

In the morning we started a dive in North Nusa Penida in the steep slope of SD dive spot. It was a drift dive next to very colourful steep slope covered with beautiful soft and hard corals. During this dive we saw: hawksbill turtle, orang-utan crab, schooling of neon fusiliers and hundreds of different small reef fish.

After our dive and breakfast we were on the way to South of Lombok. We started our dive in Sekatong Area called Secret Garden. During this dive we went down to the sloping reef full with macro creatures. We found: orang-utan crab, 3 different types of nudibranch, lobsters, mushroom shrimp, emperor shrimp, crinoid shrimp and many others.

We had lunch and 3rd dive at "The Sand". Mostly for macro lovers. We saw many different species of crabs and shrimps. The same story was during our night dive. Dive site was booming with all bunch of different creatures: squad shrimps, nudibranch, crinoid crabs, devil fish, scorpion fish and many others.

Our dinner was ready and our chef prepared very tasty meals for our last supper on board and ice cream as a dessert.

Sunday August 7th

Last day started and we went for a morning dive to Sanken Island. During this dive we saw: stone fish, robust pipe fish, orang-utan crab and turtles.

After our dive we had a breakfast and we sent our guests to Sheraton Hotel in Lombok. Said our farewells and headed back to Marina. It was a great 5 day trip and we made new friends and had a very good time. We hope to see you again!

