PALAU

HOME

Palau is an island country in the Western Pacific. The archipelago with 340 islands belongs to the Oceania subregion Micronesia. Its most populous islands are Angaur, Babeldaob, Koror and Peleliu. The latter three are together in the same barrier reef, while Angaur is an oceanic island several miles to the south. About two-thirds of the population live on Koror. You will find most of the dive centers and dive resorts on Korror too.

Palau is volcanic. The islands are made of limestone and form the perfect base for a barrier reef. The islands are surrounded by 3 ocean currents who give an extra boost to the coral growth and the big marine diversity. Be aware that those currents can be very strong. Bringing a reef hook is not a bad idea. Because of its remoteness, Palau doesn’t have that much divers yet but those numbers are rising. In 2009, the Palau government was the first one to create a shark sanctuary. There is no shark fishing allowed in the Palau waters so be ready to see some of these finned friends cruising by.

You can dive Palau the whole year through. You can do day trips or go on a liveaboard. Water temperatures range between 26C/79F in February and March to 30C/86F the rest of the time. Visibility is always really good, often more than 40m/130ft. Only in September it is less because of rain and winds. Palau does not get typhoons as it is located just below the path but the storms over the Philippines can still bring high winds and waves. Generally agreed the best time of diving Palau is between November and May. Mantas and Whale Sharks are around between January and April.

The most famous dive site on Palau is Blue Corner. Some would even rank it as one of the top dive sites of the world! Mostly there is a good amount of current so this dive is not for novices. Hooked in with a reef hook, divers can spend all their time watching all the schools of fish and sharks schooling and cruising along the reef. Jacks, tuna, barracudas, reef fish, hammerheads, white tips and grey tips, sometimes even eagle rays or mantas come to show off.

Close to Blue Corner, you have the Blue Holes. This is a site with some caves and caverns, some only for experienced cave divers. The name comes from 4 holes in the reef who can give splendid lighting. If conditions are right, you can start in Blue Holes and end up in Blue Corner.

The last one is the German Channel, a channel cut by miners in WWII to give the boats a safe passage. Now, after all those years, the channel has filled up with lots of corals and the big currents give them lots of nutrients. Mantas and sharks will swirl through the channel and corals and you’ll be watching them at the channel mouth. In between December and March, the mantas are mating and their numbers will be higher.