



Underwater Paradise

An Account of Diving Adventure in Bali

Arief Suhardiman The Jakarta Post/ANN

When divers see calm waters on a sunny day, it is as if they are being called forth to heaven to enjoy the marine paradise below.

When we arrived at Tulamben, one of Bali's most frequented diving spots, the water was calm and there was a light breeze of refreshing wind.

Nature's beautiful welcome more than made up for our 2.5 hour drive from Sanur, where we had spent the night. Getting out of the car, there was a strong buzz of excitement among us.

Our diving guide from Bali Scuba, Chris, seemed to sense our mounting enthusiasm and tried to speed up preparations for our adventure. But he still needed to stick to the procedure. He explained the diving plan after the usual dos and don'ts briefing.

We are going to dive at the following spots: the US Liberty Shipwreck, Coral Garden and the Drop Off, he said, pointing to the underwater map.

US Liberty shipwreck

We walked some loam along the sandy beach from the Paradise Resort, our base camp, to begin our adventure, diving to the entry point site.

Chris reminded us to walk carefully when we were

approaching the edge of the beach, which was full of volcanic stones as big as adult's fist.

At least 50 divers visit the diving site daily. They usually come in groups and the must-see spot was the shipwreck location.

The US Liberty shipwreck, which was torpedoed by the Japanese army during World War II, attracts divers to Tulamben. Those who prefer snorkeling can enjoy the ship stein for it is only located some 6 meters under the water surface with average visibility of 12m to 30m.

History has it the ship, which sunk in Lombok waters, was about to be towed to Singaraja port in North Bali but as Singaraja was already occupied by Japan army, the shipwreck was rerouted to Tulamben beach.

Mount Agung's powerful volcanic eruption in 1963 pulled the shipwreck deeper to the seabed - its present home where it is heavily covered with anemone, gorgonian and coral.

When we reached the shipwreck, two schools of bright, silver trevally fish swam past us as if patrolling the site. They perfectly contrasted with the dark sand.

Hundreds of trevally moved in circles. They swam around the shipwreck and did not seem afraid of us.

Locally known as kuwe, the trevally even approached some divers. Chris got an amazing welcome from surgeonfish that swammed him, as if performing their welcome

ing dance. Fishes in Tulamben are indeed friendly and recognise no fear - unlike in other less visited diving spots.

I remembered when I got a similar warm welcome from a school of small fishes in Bunaken, North Sulawesi. It was a priceless moment. The fishes not only danced around me but they also kissed my diving mask.

So when I saw what happened to Chris, I lifted my underwater camera and began pressing its shutter release to capture the precious moment and other beauties nearby.

If we observed carefully enough, we could spot ikan sebelah (flounders) and blue-spotted stingrays that hid beneath the sand, waiting for their lunch.

Not far from the shipwreck, I saw dozen of garden eels, eating floating planktons. Their bodies danced to the gentle sea currents that moved gently in this site. Many others rested with half of their bodies submerged in the seabed.

Our second destination was the Coral Garden, which was located right in front of the Paradise Resort. This garden is 2m to 15m deep, making it the perfect destination for snorkeling.

This spot has both soft and hard coral with light density. Yet, they were rich with marine life, including Napoleon fish, pipefish, parrot fish and clownfish. Even barracudas, which had sharp teeth, were seen swimming nearby. Chris

said divers could come across blacktip sharks if they were lucky.

Columns between the soft and hard corals were the perfect hideout for shrimps. Local divers called them cleaner shrimps. One type was red and white but there was also one with combinations of red, white and green.

Fellow diver Emily Douglas was intrigued to find out if the shrimps were natural vacuum cleaners. She extended her hands to the shrimps, which immediately swarmed her hands and performed their famous duties.

Because of its average depth and generous light, this spot was also known as a perfect site for night-diving and heaven for hunting objects for macrophotography.

Our last destination was the Drop Off, located on the right side of Coral Garden. We walked to go to the side and had to go through the rocky beach.

The Drop Off site was formed naturally by a volcanic eruption. Our adventure began on a sandy slope, which was the starting point of the standard dive at Tulamben. At the end of the slope we could see the Drop Off's topography in the form of vertical walls whose depth could reach tens of meters.

The wall was heavily decorated with sponges and black coral. The marine life at this site is not very different to the Shipwreck site. There were butterfly fish, angelfish, Moorish idols and many other small fish with striking colours. Coral fish like groupers and anthias can also be seen at this site. Lucky divers can spot bigger fishes like whitetip and hammerhead sharks.

In general, Tulamben waters have relatively good visibility ranging between 12m and 30m. Its subtle currents make this place suitable for divers of any level.

Visiting Tulamben is a must for divers whenever they are in Bali. Dive operators usually offer transport and accommodation, as well as alternatives to diving and snorkeling.

Tulamben has been included among spots recommended by nearly all diving operators, and is one of the best places to begin your underwater adventures.

TV GUIDE



DERANA

A.M.	10.00	Mix Songs	12.30	Sathulu Wila	Meevittha	
05.55	10.30	Teledrama	01.30	Mix Songs	07.30	Pinbindu
06.00	11.00	Sithi Gimana Hala	04.00	Dragon Tales	08.00	Ada Derana
07.00	P.M.	04.30	Cartoon	08.30	Sara	
08.00	12.00	Ada Derana	06.00	Mumbai Masala	09.30	Adaranyia Poornima
08.30	12.15	Sinhala Songs	07.00	Lanka Soy Rasa	09.30	Vaada Piliya

CHANNEL EYE

A.M.	01.45	Tamil Film
06.29	04.30	Cartoon Programme (English)
06.30	05.30	Salamath
06.45	06.00	Musical Programme
07.00	06.30	Dancing Programme
07.15	07.00	News & Weather Report
07.30	07.30	Tele Drama
08.00	08.00	Kana Kanum Kanangal
08.30	08.30	Tele Drama
09.30	09.00	Vasana Sampatha
11.00	09.15	Jayoda Lottery
11.30	09.30	News & Weather Report
Noon	09.55	Insight (English)
12.00	10.00	Janajaya Lottery
P.M.	10.15	Top Score
01.00	10.45	End of Transmission
01.30		Afternoon News

RUPAVAHINI

A.M.	Noon	
04.18	12.00	Chandra Vinsathi
04.20	P.M.	
04.30	12.30	News
05.00	01.00	Hiru Viyana
05.55	01.55	News
06.00	02.00	Tele Drama
06.05	02.30	A Documentary
06.30	02.55	News
06.55	03.00	A Documentary (Contd.)
07.00	03.30	Tele Drama
07.55	03.55	News
08.00	04.00	Cartoon
08.55	04.30	Tele Drama
09.00	04.55	News
09.55	05.00	Havasa Paya
10.00	05.55	Defence News
10.55	06.00	Pariganaka
11.00	06.30	Paradesaya
	06.30	Ranaviru Gi



ART TV

A.M.	01.00	World Business Today
12.30	01.30	World News
01.30	01.57	State of Business
02.00	02.00	World Report
02.30	02.30	Larry King Live
03.00	03.30	World News
03.30	04.00	World Sport
04.30	04.30	3 Friends & Jerry
06.30	04.57	State of Business
	05.00	Adventure of Professor Th.
07.00	05.30	World News Asia
07.30	05.57	State of Business
08.00	06.00	Telescreen Marketing
08.30	06.30	World Business Today
09.00	06.57	State of Business
09.30	07.00	Top 10 Hits
09.57	07.45	World News
10.00	08.15	The State of Business
10.30	08.30	Business Class
10.57	08.57	State of Business
11.00	09.00	Fashion House
11.30	09.57	State of Business
11.57	10.00	Larry King Live
Noon	11.00	The State of Business
12.00	11.30	World Report
12.30		
12.57		

ITN

A.M.	04.00	Peyen Peya Puwath
04.30	04.03	Kekulu Kodewa
04.35	04.30	Dodunu Hendewa
04.42	05.00	Peyen Peya Puwath
04.46	05.03	Dedunu Hendewa (Contd.)
05.00	05.30	Lama Puwath
06.00	05.45	Therawan Namadimu
06.15	05.50	Jaya Piritha
07.00	06.00	News - Tamil
08.00	06.30	Denumal Vasanavai
08.05	06.30	News and Current Affairs (Sinhala)
08.30	07.30	Muthu Kirilli
09.00	08.00	Paba
09.05	08.30	Ithin Eela Passe
10.00	09.00	Api Api Wage
10.05	09.30	News - Sinhala
11.00	09.55	Biz News
Noon	10.00	News - English
12.00	10.10	Thulawa
P.M.		
12.30		Diya Gini Silu
01.00	12.00	News - Sinhala
02.00	00.20	Pirith Deshanaya
02.03	00.30	Close
03.00		
03.03		

SWARNAVAHINI

A.M.	03.00	Avanka
06.00	04.00	Joevithaya Lissanai
06.30	05.00	Ganga Addara Kele
07.00	05.30	Mini Toons
07.30	06.00	Musik
08.00	07.00	Sports Hitz
10.30	07.30	Gaja Muthu
11.00	08.00	Live @ 8
Noon	08.30	Abhimaan
12.00	09.00	Rosa Kalu
P.M.	09.30	Loving Star
12.30	10.00	Hathdimath Tharu
01.00		M.N.
02.00	01.00	Close of Transmission

ETV

A.M.	02.00	Chanel News Asia
06.00	04.30	Telemarketing
06.45	05.00	Chanel News Asia
06.55	05.30	Prehistoric Park
07.01	06.00	Chanel News Asia
07.30	07.00	Sound Gallery
07.55	07.45	Debrief
09.00	07.55	Lanka Business Online
09.30	08.01	American Idol Season 8
10.00	08.55	Lanka Business Online
10.30	09.01	The Bold & The Beautiful
12.00	09.45	Debrief
P.M.	09.55	Lanka Business Online
12.30	10.00	Chanel News Asia
01.00	10.30	A Place of Our Own

