



Planning Guide

Dancer Fleet

Liveaboard Excellence

15291 N.W. 60th Ave., Suite 201 • Miami Lakes, FL 33014 USA
800-9-DANCER • 305-669-9391 Tel • 305-669-9475 fax • www.DancerFleet.com • dancer@DancerFleet.com



Tropic Dancer

Palau

EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBERS

Dancer Fleet Emergency Cell (USA) 305-778-8004

Contact Numbers While in Palau:
Neco Marine: 680-488-1755 / 2009 phone;
680-488-5245 fax

Thank you for choosing M/Y Tropic Dancer for your live-aboard dive vacation. Our crew looks forward to your visit.

All information contained here is correct at the time of printing, however is subject to change without notice.

Dream, Dive, Discover

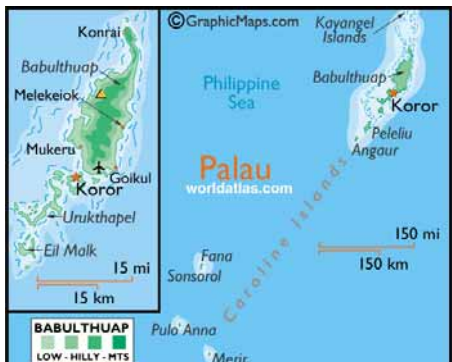
Rev. 10-Dec-2010



OVERVIEW

WHERE IS PALAU?

The Republic of Palau is located in the Southwestern corner of Micronesia and consists of 328 islands. Located in the western Pacific, just north of the equator, Palau is approximately 800 miles southwest of Guam and 600 miles east of the Philippines.



WHAT KIND OF DIVING IS FOUND IN PALAU?

Palau has been described as one of the Seven Underwater Wonders of the World, with 700 species of coral and 1,500 species of fish identified. Palau provides some of the best diving to be found in Micronesia and is ideally suited for the more adventurous diver. From M/Y Tropic Dancer, we will dive the spectacular walls along the barrier reef, including such favorites as Blue Corner, Ngemelis Drop-Off and many other sensational dive sites yet to be charted. You can expect mostly wall and drift diving with visibility ranging from 60 feet to in excess of 150 feet, depending on existing conditions.

Aboard M/Y Tropic Dancer generally a schedule of four dives per day is offered. On some days, however, five dives are possible. Night diving may be possible on most nights of the charter, depending on weather conditions. On some dive sites, such as Blue Corner in particular, a "reef hook" is a very useful tool for maintaining proper buoyancy control and positioning against very strong currents. It protects the reef while adding to your enjoyment of the experience. You may bring your own reef hook or one will be provided for your use while on board.

IN WHAT TIME ZONE IS PALAU LOCATED?

Palau's time zone is PWT or Palau Time and is UTC +09.

WHAT LANGUAGES ARE SPOKEN ON BOARD?

English is the official language in all of Palau's 16 states. However, Palauan, a Malayo-Polynesian language related to Indonesian, is the most commonly spoken language.

WHAT CURRENCY IS USED?

Although the Republic of Palau is no longer a US Trust Territory (It gained independence in 1995), the local currency is the US Dollar.

WHAT WEATHER CONDITIONS CAN I EXPECT IN PALAU?

Air temperatures range from 75F (24C) to 88F (31C) year round with water temperatures remaining above 82F (27C) year round. The wet season is between May and September. February to April is considered the dry season, but typically it rains about one day each week.

WHAT DOES MY TROPIC DANCER PACKAGE INCLUDE?

All staterooms are air-conditioned and fitted with private toilets, showers and sinks. Breakfast (cooked to order), buffet lunch and an elegant meal at dinner with table side service are served daily in addition to fresh mid-morning and mid-afternoon snacks. Beverages (alcoholic and non-alcoholic) are complimentary while onboard. Bathrobes and some toiletries are available for your use onboard. The Tropic Dancer is equipped with hairdryers in each stateroom. Linens are changed mid-week and fresh towels are placed in each stateroom daily as needed. Guests have the opportunity to dive up to four or five times a day including a night dive on several days. Filled tanks, weights and weight belts are included. Round trip airport transfers are provided for guests arriving on the day of embarkation and departing on the day of disembarkation.

FOR WHAT ADDITIONAL EXPENSES WILL I BE RESPONSIBLE?

No air transportation is included in the Tropic Dancer package. There is an airport departure tax of \$20 plus a \$15 "Green Tax" payable upon departure at the airport. Taxes are subject to change so please inquire before your departure. Dinner on Saturday evening is not included and will be on your own in town. Dive instruction, dive and photo equipment rentals and "Boatique" purchases must be settled onboard prior to departure. Acceptable methods of payment include: US Dollars, Traveler's Checks, or Credit Cards (Visa or MasterCard). Personal checks are not accepted. Crew gratuities are not included.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF PALAU

It is still a mystery as to exactly when the first people arrived on Palau but some artifacts show civilization there as far back as 1,000 BC.

There is an account that an English boat shipwrecked near

Ulong in the 1700s and brought the first foreigner to Palau. Spain was actually the first to claim seeing the islands of Palau in the 1500's so they claimed it in 1686. Spain was the first country to exert rulership over Palau – what they called the Caroline Islands. In 1885 they kicked the English out of Palau and became active rulers.



Spain sold Palau to Germany in 1899 and the Germans began exploiting Palau's natural resources. The Germans named it Palau and Germany stayed in charge until their defeat in WWI when the islands were passed to the Japanese.

A lot of WWII battles were fought around the islands of Palau. Some of the bloodiest were fought down on Peleliu. When the Japanese were defeated, Palau, along with some of the other neighboring island groups became UN Trust Territories under US administration. The US slowly helped Palau move toward becoming a self-sufficient nation which finally took place in 1994 when Palau became its own nation.

TRAVEL INFORMATION

HOW DO I GET TO PALAU?

All passengers arrive into Palau by Air. Roman Tmetuchl International Airport (airport code ROR) is open daily.

If you need assistance with your flight arrangements, be sure to contact Liveaboard Vacations, Dancer Fleet's travel specialist; at 1-800-9DANCER or 305-669-9391 for the most competitive airfares.

WHAT TRAVEL DOCUMENTS WILL I NEED?

Visitors must have a current passport valid for the next 6 months, adequate funds to support themselves, and a return airline ticket to travel to Palau. It is the travelers' responsibility to ensure they have the proper documentation to travel to the destination and return to their country. Please check with the appropriate consulate to ensure you have the proper documentation. Always check your passport and visa requirements. US citizens may go to the US Department of State website at www.travel.state.gov for more information. **The Dancer Fleet cannot assume responsibility for passengers not having correct documentation.**

WHAT SHOULD I KNOW ABOUT CUSTOMS AND IMMIGRATION?

At the airport, customs formalities are usually quick and trouble free. Tourists are allowed articles for use during their stay. These include items of personal adornment, wearing apparel, toilet requisites and any portable articles which someone can reasonably be expected to use during their stay.

WHAT ARE THE EMBARKATION AND DISEMBARKATION TIMES?

Passengers may board M/Y Tropic Dancer at any time after 5:00 pm. M/Y Tropic Dancer usually leaves the government dock at Malakal Harbor in the evening with the exact time varying due to flight schedules. Formal disembarkation follows checkout which is between 7:00 and 8:00 a.m. Sunday morning, however an early disembarkation is available on Saturday night.

HOW DO I GET FROM THE AIRPORT TO TROPIC DANCER?

Round Trip airport transfers are included in the Tropic Dancer package when you arrive and depart on the charter dates (excluding CO #935 arriving at 1:00am). Should you arrive at any time other than Sunday (or on CO #935), it is your responsibility to arrange transportation to your hotel at your own expense.

If you arrive on embarkation day, once you have claimed your luggage and cleared customs and immigrations, please look for a uniformed crew member holding a Tropic Dancer sign. Please note advance arrangements are required. There are no phones or taxi's at this small airport.

HOW DO I GET FROM THE HOTEL TO TROPIC DANCER IF I ARRIVE EARLY?

Many guests find it very desirable to arrive a day early and relax in a hotel from their long travels before boarding and beginning a dive itinerary. Guests that arrive a day or more early can make arrangements through Liveaboard Vacations at our preferred hotels—the Palau Pacific Resort or the Cliffside Hotel. A bus along with a uniformed crew member will then pick guests up from any hotel on the island for transfers to the Tropic Dancer between 4:15 and 5:00 pm.



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WHAT DO WE DO ON THE DAY BEFORE WE DISMEBARK?

Saturday afternoon, the Tropic Dancer returns to port at 12:00 p.m. to provision and refuel for the following week's charter. After lunch you'll have an opportunity to stroll through town, shop, sightsee or visit the Museum. The Tropic Dancer hosts a beverage cocktail party Saturday evening. Dinner is not served onboard which is the only meal not provided with the cruise. The crew can recommend a restaurant and arrange transportation to a local restaurant of your choice.

An early disembarkation is available at 10pm Saturday night for guests who desire to catch the Sunday morning (ie: 1:-30 to 2:30 am) flight out.

WHAT DO WE DO ON THE DAY WE DISMEBARK?

Disembarkation follows checkout which is between 7:00 and 8:00 a.m. Sunday morning. If you are traveling on the early (1:30 to 2:30 am) Monday morning flight, you may want to consider a room at a local Hotel. If you are extending your stay or are traveling Monday morning the crew will transport you to your hotel.

HOW DO I ARRANGE FOR PRE AND POST CHARTER HOTELS AND TRANSFERS?

Liveaboard Vacations, Dancer Fleet's in-house travel agency has already done the legwork for you and created several packages that will fit most of the needs for Tropic Dancer guests who wish to extend their stay in Palau or perhaps visit Manta Ray Bay Resort on the Island of Yap. Please inquire with us if your schedule will permit.

DO I NEED TRIP INSURANCE?

We strongly recommend that each guest purchase comprehensive accident, medical, baggage and trip cancellation and interruption insurance when space is reserved. Trip insurance will protect you from financial disappointment if you are prevented from making your scheduled trip due to illness or family illness, or in the event that unforeseen circumstances prevent the airline or yacht from making its scheduled trip. In an event where it is necessary to cancel or interrupt a charter due to weather or any matter beyond the control of Dancer Fleet, Inc., there will be no refund or credit issued. We also recommend diving accident insurance. Please inquire with our reservation office for assistance.

ON-BOARD

IF I AM TRAVELING AS A SINGLE, WILL I HAVE A ROOMMATE?

All rates are quoted on a share basis; therefore, unless you require a guaranteed single room and pay an additional supplement, it is very likely you will be sharing your stateroom with one other guest of the same gender.

WHAT TYPE OF FOOD IS PREPARED?

Meals prepared by our onboard chef consist of an international mix with a local flair. A "Palauan Night" is usually offered at some point throughout the charter. If you have any special dietary requirements, please advise our US office as soon as possible so we can adequately prepare to meet your needs. Certain special dietary and beverage requests may not be available on a consistent basis due to the remote nature of this location.

WHAT KINDS OF BEVERAGES ARE AVAILABLE?

The Tropic Dancer's selection includes fruit juices, soft drinks, plenty of iced water, tea and coffee and a limited selection of local beer, wine and alcoholic beverages. Fresh milk may not be available, although UHT long life milk is provided on board. Herbal teas are not always available. We recommend that you purchase any special brands of alcoholic beverages that you may want to consume on board Tropic Dancer at the Duty Free Shop at any airport. We encourage you to consume lots of non-alcoholic liquids during the week to avoid dehydration. REMEMBER: ALCOHOL AND DIVING DO NOT MIX. For your safety, we recommend that the consumption of any alcoholic beverage be delayed until your dive day is complete. FRIENDS DON'T LET FRIENDS DRINK AND DIVE!

WHAT ELECTRICAL CURRENT IS AVAILABLE?

The electrical current on Tropic Dancer is 110 volts (American standards) and in Palau is 110/220.

HOW MUCH SHALL I PACK?

Please plan to travel light, as on all live-aboard dive vessels, space is limited. We recommend that you pack your gear in soft luggage such as duffel bags for easy stowage and to add to your comfort in your cabin, leave those large, rigid suitcases at home. For guests who plan an extended stay on land, it is advised to pack separately the gear you will require on board. Tropic Dancer has storage facilities on shore for items you will not require on board or for large suitcases once you have removed the necessary items for your trip. Clothing should be lightweight, comfortable sportswear and bathing suits are a must. A light sweater or jacket is ideal for the evenings. Dress aboard Tropic Dancer is always casual. Evening dress is informal. Additional items you may want to bring are sunscreen, sunglasses, GOOD WALKING SHOES, A HAT OR VISOR AND BUG SPRAY OR LOTION IS STRONGLY RECOMMENDED FOR YOUR TIME ON SHORE. Hairdryers are provided in each cabin. You may wish to pack your regulator, dive computer, mask, bathing suit and change of clothes and essential items in your carry-on bag. This will make it easier in the event your luggage is delayed. Please check with your airline as to what weight restrictions will apply to your carry-on and checked luggage.



WILL THERE BE ANY OPPORTUNITIES TO GO ASHORE DURING THE CRUISE?

When the location is suitable, there is swimming, snorkeling and beach combing.

WHAT IF I AM PRONE TO SEA SICKNESS?

Strong currents and winds may cause moderate movement of the vessel at times. If you have a tendency toward seasickness we strongly urge you to bring some sort of over-the-counter motion sickness medication or consult your doctor about prescription brands, such as the trans-dermal patch. Chewable ginger tablets or capsules of powdered ginger have also proved to be very effective. The Tropic Dancer carries its own stock of anti motion sickness medication.

WHAT IF THERE IS AN EMERGENCY ON BOARD?

The M/Y Tropic Dancer crew is trained in first aid and diving accident management. The boat is equipped with a complete first aid kit and a high capacity oxygen system. The nearest recompression chamber is located on Palau. If this chamber is unavailable or more comprehensive treatment is required, air evacuation to Guam or Hawaii may need to be arranged. Since emergency transportation and treatment cost is the responsibility of each guest, we strongly recommend that you dive conservatively and obtain special insurance for divers from Divers Alert Network, Dive Assure or similarly ranked company.

HOW CAN MY FAMILY CONTACT ME IN THE EVENT OF AN EMERGENCY AT HOME?

Your family may contact you in the case of a medical emergency by calling our Miami office at 1-800-932-6237 or (305) 669-9391 during business hours. If outside of our operating hours, you may call our emergency cell phone number, 305-778-8004. Please reserve calling this number for emergencies only.

Our local agent in Koror is Neco Marine. Their contact numbers can be found on the front cover of this guide.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS, MAIL, AND E-MAIL

Check with your local cell phone provider for service while visiting the Dancer yacht and its destination. Each Dancer is equipped with Satellite based phone and email for emergency communications.

IS SMOKING PERMITTED?

No cigarette, cigar or smoking of any kind is permitted on the Tropic Dancer, except in the designated outdoor smoking area. Smoking is not permitted in any area where all guests must be assembled for any reason, for example, at dive briefings.

IS THERE ENTERTAINMENT ON BOARD?

The Tropic Dancer has a multi-system TV/VCR unit for videotape and video camera playback, a compact disc player, a DVD player and stereo in the main salon. If you have a favorite movie, slide show or a video to share, we encourage you to bring it along! You may also bring your own favorite music CD's or DVD's. A small library of "books for exchange" is maintained on board, as well as fish identification books for reference.

HOW CAN I CELEBRATE A SPECIAL OCCASION?

Our crew is delighted to help you celebrate any special occasion on board including birthdays, anniversaries, honeymoons or weddings. Kindly advise our US office at least 30 days prior to departure so that we can adequately prepare.

IS IT CUSTOMARY TO OFFER A GRATUITY TO THE CREW?

Aboard the Tropic Dancer, gratuities are not included. We prefer that our guests reward our crew based on performance. If the crew performs to your expectations, we suggest that a gratuity of approximately 10% of the published package price be considered normal aboard a live aboard dive boat. Payment of gratuities is entirely at the discretion of the guest. It is the policy on Dancer Fleet yachts to pool any collected gratuities and divide these among the crew, since we believe no one crew member has the opportunity to give exceptional service without the assistance and support of all other crew members. Payment of gratuities can be cash, traveler's checks, or credit card.

HOW CAN I PAY FOR MY EXPENSES AND PURCHASES ON BOARD?

The Tropic Dancer has a small, on board "Boatique" which sells a selection of logo clothing, custom jewelry, sundries, diving accessories, batteries, logbooks, etc. A crew member will gladly assist you with your purchases at any time during the week. The US Dollar, Traveler's Checks or credit cards (MasterCard, AMEX, or Visa) are accepted onboard. Personal checks are not accepted.



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DIVING OPERATIONS

HOW MANY DIVES WILL WE DO EACH DAY?

We will offer up to four or five dives per day, including a night dive on several days and 2 dives on the last day (weather and sea conditions permitting).

WHAT PAPERWORK WILL I NEED FOR DIVING?

Please bring your certification card and log book(s) for verification of your dive training and experience. Prior to departing for your cruise all guests are required to complete a Cruise Application and Waiver Agreement. Please remember that you alone are responsible for determining your medical and physical fitness to dive or to take part in any other activities during this trip. **DIVING ACTIVITIES ARE CONDUCTED AT YOUR OWN RISK.** We take no responsibility with respect to your determination. If you have any questions concerning your medical or physical fitness to dive or take part in any such activities, please consult your personal physician.

WHAT IS THE GENERAL SKILL / EXPERIENCE LEVEL OF DIVING REQUIRED FOR THIS DESTINATION?

Please be aware that Palau's diving might be considered a bit challenging on one or two sites and that tender diving is the rule rather than the exception. Therefore, you should be comfortable getting in/out of a dive tender, you should have open water experience and be able to maintain Perfect Buoyancy Control.

WHAT IS THE WATER TEMPERATURE – SHOULD I WEAR A WETSUIT?

Water temperature is warm and remains above 82F (27C). A light wetsuit is necessary, though some people choose more thermal protection (a 3mm suit) to ensure continued core temperature warmth throughout their visit.

HOW WILL WE DIVE FROM THE TROPIC DANCER?

TENDER DIVING IS THE RULE RATHER THAN THE EXCEPTION. The M/Y Tropic Dancer has a custom built high speed, outboard tender capable of carrying 18 guests for quick access to even the most remote dive sites. The tender returns to the mother ship after each dive. You'll have your own tank rack, locker and spacious seating area. Very little diving will be done directly from the Tropic Dancer. In between dives, you may snorkel, explore secluded beaches, or just relax with a cold drink and mid-morning snack.

For your safety, it is mandatory for each diver to carry an emergency SMB (safety sausage), Dive Alert (personal air horn) and mini-strobe light on all dives. If you do not bring any one of these devices with you they are available for rent on board, however, quantities may be limited. If you do not possess these items, please notify our office prior to departure.

ARE THERE ANY LIMITATIONS OR RESTRICTIONS ON THE DIVING?

All diving on board the Tropic Dancer should be within the limits and standards of the training agency you received your certification from. All dives should be planned no-decompression dives.

Solo diving and Rebreather diving is not permitted.

CAN I EARN ADVANCED DIVING CERTIFICATIONS OR SPECIALTIES ON BOARD?

Several diving specialty courses are offered on the Tropic Dancer, but it is necessary to give at least one month notice to the Dancer Fleet in advance of your charter date to ensure that an instructor will have the time available and that all required paperwork is complete. **IMPORTANT:** If you intend to receive diving instruction onboard, you must complete a medical statement in advance and return it to the Dancer Fleet office prior to the departure date. A doctor's note will be required if you answer yes to any of the questions on the medical statement. A list of available courses and prices is located on our website.

ARE NITROX FILLS AVAILABLE?

The Tropic Dancer is equipped with Nitrox facilities. Nitrox fills of up to 32% are normally available to all certified Nitrox divers for an additional charge. Nitrox Dive Profiles must be planned and executed with a Nitrox compatible computer. It is recommended that the planned PO₂ level be set within the limits of your certifying agency. All Nitrox fills must be analyzed by the divers using the mix and logged prior to each and every dive. Oxygen analyzers available for use by guests while onboard will be calibrated a minimum of one time per day by a crew member. Nitrox certifications are usually available onboard to all certified open water divers for an additional charge.

WHAT DIVING EQUIPMENT WILL I NEED TO BRING?

Equipment provided aboard the Tropic Dancer includes tanks (80 cu. ft. aluminum with yoke style "K" valves), weights and weight belts. Divers will also need the following equipment:

Basic Required Diving Equipment For Each Diver

- Regulator with alternate air source
- Depth and Pressure Gauge
- Dive Computer
- Buoyancy Compensation Device (BCD)
- Mask / Fins / Snorkel
- Wetsuit / Light Skin
- Night Dives: We require at least two light sources on a night dive.

Recommended (Additional) Dive Equipment

- Chemical (Cyalume) light sticks
- Dive Light with extra batteries or charging source



WHAT SAFETY EQUIPMENT DO I NEED TO HAVE?

We suggest that you bring your own, although the Dancer Fleet yachts do stock a limited supply available for rental by our guests.

Recommended Surface Safety Equipment For Each Diver

- Audible Surface Signaling Device such as a Dive Alert (Air Horn) or Emergency Whistle.
- Visual Surface Signaling Device (Daytime) such as an Inflatable Safety Sausage or similar device.
- Visual Surface Device (Night or Dusk) such as a Personal Mini-Strobe or similar device.

Additional Recommended Surface Safety Equipment

- Emergency Whistle
- Signaling Mirror

ARE DIVE GEAR AND PHOTO/VIDEO GEAR AVAILABLE FOR RENT?

The Tropic Dancer has a limited amount of diving equipment available for rent, so it is critical that you advise our US office staff in advance if you decide you want to rent gear. We offer BCDs with Dive Alerts and regulators. The photo shop offers digital cameras housed in an underwater housing.

I AM A PHOTOGRAPHER – WHAT CAN I EXPECT

Photo opportunities are abundant and no matter what system you have, you will probably experience excellent results. Be sure to pack your photo equipment carefully in a durable carrying case and bring any unique spare parts and back-up equipment with you.

Guests who are shooting digital photography may view their

images on the entertainment center in the salon. Please be sure to bring the appropriate connection cables to fit your particular equipment. No E-6 film processing is available aboard the Tropic Dancer.

Camera Tables: The Tropic Dancer has a camera table built into the dive deck for your use.

Charging Stations: There is a charging station in the salon for you to plug your strobes into. It offers 110 volt outlets for US socket systems. Please see the section on Electricity for details.

Rinse Buckets: There is a “cameras only” rinse bucket on the dive tender for the exclusive use of photographers on board.

All divers are required to have a buddy with them at all times. When on a drift dive, photographers are expected to stay with the body of the group on their tender. You may move away from the group within reason – providing that the divemaster leading the dive is kept in sight at all times. You will not be permitted to separate from the group or carry your own drift line.

CAN I FISH OR SPEARFISH?

Spear Fishing is not allowed from the Tropic Dancer. Guests are prohibited from bringing spear fishing equipment on board the Tropic Dancer. Fishing is not available on Tropic Dancer.

SAMPLE IT INERARY

- SUNDAY:** Most arrivals are at 8:00 p.m. Guests are met at the airport and transferred to the Tropic Dancer.
- Snacks are served onboard followed by the Captain’s briefing. Guests who are already on island may board at 5:00 p.m. and dinner will be served. You must notify the Reservations Center for transfers from your hotel to the vessel. You will be picked up between 4:30 p.m. and 5:00 p.m.
- MONDAY to FRIDAY** Experience the best that Palau has to offer with 4 to 5 dives a day delivered in Dancer Fleet style.
- SATURDAY:** Diving ends Saturday morning. At approximately 12:00 p.m. the Tropic Dancer returns to port. A leisurely afternoon is spent sightseeing and shopping in town. A cocktail party is hosted for you at 6:00 p.m. followed by dinner on your own in town at a local restaurant..
- SUNDAY:** Checkout time is between 7:00 and 8:00 a.m. Sunday morning.