WHAT'S HAPPENING

TOURISM INFORMATION FOR NORTH SULAWESI
Welcome to North Sulawesi,

Well certainly many things have happened since our last issue; the horrific events of Bali, Iraq War and of course last but not least, SARS. It must be said that you our guests have a belief in the people of North Sulawesi. We thank you for believing!!

But putting this aside and hoping for the best for the coming season and for years to come we want you, our guests to enjoy your stay while you are visiting our Province. In the event you choose to return in the coming months or next year, we want you to rest assured that our province, the people and the Provincial Government are doing there best to develop and maintain the harmony that exists in North Sulawesi.

So if the world gets a blip on the stability chart, we want you to take the time to really investigate what’s going on here-

DO NOT EXCEPT THE REPORTS OF TRAVEL ADVISORIES ISSUED BY ALL FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS, DO NOT EXCEPT THE WORD OF CNN, AND LAST OF ALL DO NOT LISTEN TO PEOPLE THAT HAVE NEVER BEEN TO INDONESIA.

Be a responsible traveler; visit a few websites, which provide real time and up-to-date information, and then make you decision. Here are two websites that offer information on the tourism situation in North Sulawesi-

www.north-sulawesi.com
www.north-sulawesi.org

We know you will enjoy, have fun, climb a volcano, snorkel at Bunaken or just relax by the pool.

Warm regards,

Ninny Ruata Barnes
Editor: “What’s Happening”

Safari Tours
Website: www.manadosafaris.com
Email: info@manadosafaris.com
Tel: 62 431 857637
Planning on diving or snorkeling during your vacation in North Sulawesi? Keep a sharp eye out for unusual beasts, as the spectacularly diverse reefs of Bunaken National Park, Lembeh Strait and the Bangka/Talise Archipelago continue to yield new species on a regular basis! Though you may have thought the days of biological discovery faded after Charles Darwin and Alfred Russell Wallace, the past five years have seen a host of new discoveries from North Sulawesi’s reefs – ranging from a 2m-long ancient fish to tiny pygmy seahorses.

Perhaps the most celebrated discovery from North Sulawesi in the recent past was the Manado coelacanth, *Latimeria menadoensis*, in 1998. This ancient denizen of the deep was thought to have gone extinct 79 million years ago, and made headlines around the world when a living specimen was found in South Africa in 1938. For 60 years, the fish with lobed fins (thought to be an evolutionary precursor to four-legged land animals) was known only from the Western Indian Ocean. The discovery of a new species of coelacanth from Manado Tua Island in Bunaken National Park – over 10,000 km from the closest previous known population in the Comoros Islands – shocked the scientific world and again made headlines in magazines, newspapers and television documentaries in over 40 countries. While you won’t be able to swim with the Manado coelacanths without the use of technical diving equipment (they live below 100m depth in volcanic caves), just knowing these ancient beasts are hunting on the same reefs you are enjoying adds a thrill of the mysterious.

On the other end of the fish size spectrum, two new species of pygmy seahorse have recently been discovered in Lembeh Strait and Bunaken. While you may be familiar with the perennially sought-after, red or pinkish *Hippocampus bargibanti* that lives on *Muricella* seafans, just this year a smaller, thinner orange species, *Hippocampus denise* Lourie and Randall 2003, was named after Denise Tackett – a professional photographer...
with a long-time base at Kungkungan Bay Resort in Lembeh Strait. \textit{H. Denise} is reportedly much more active than \textit{H. bargibanti}, and is found on a range of different yellow and orange seafans. An additional pygmy seahorse species discovered by Hence Pontoh (a dive guide from Froggies Divers) on Bunaken Island is currently being described as well. This species is also smaller, thinner and more active than \textit{H. bargibanti}, has been seen in a range of colors (white, green, and yellow), and is found primarily on hydroids and bryozoans.

But fish aren’t the only new species being described from North Sulawesi. In the past three years, two large species of yellow and orange mantis shrimp, \textit{Lysiosquillina lisa} Ahyong and Randall 2001 and \textit{Lysiosquilloides mapia} Erdmann and Boyer 2003, have been described from Lembeh Strait and Bunaken. Two additional new species of mantis shrimp from North Sulawesi are currently being described as well, including the first known sponge-dwelling mantis. As for cephalopods, the waters of North Sulawesi are rich in new and undescribed species – including the well-known (but still undescribed) mimic octopus and “wonderpus”, as well as the so-called “blandopus”. Scientists are working with dive centers in the area to properly describe these species in the near future. Even Bunaken’s corals harbor surprises – in 1997, a new species of table coral, \textit{Acropora batunai} Wallace 1997, was named after one of the fathers of Manado diving and the founder of MUREX Dive Resort, Dr. Hanny Batuna.

While many of these new species have also been found elsewhere in the “Coral Triangle” comprising Indonesia, Papua New Guinea and the Philippines, many were first photographed in our area – a tribute to North Sulawesi’s position in the Center of Marine Biodiversity.

Even those who don’t dive should stay alert for new species – the coelacanth discovery was the product of an early morning stroll through Manado’s fish market (a highly recommended side excursion for those who like fish and lots of action – but get there before 7:30am or after 4:30pm for both the best fish selection and selling action as well as the best lighting for pictures and video). Happy hunting!

Dr. MV Erdmann, Marine Protected Areas Advisor, NRM III North Sulawesi
Kids Grow Up Fast

Kids grow up fast these days. There was a time when you’d give your son a toy airplane for his 8th birthday, but those days have definitely passed - my 8-year-old son, Malcolm, became a fish for his 8th birthday present – by going Scuba Diving!!

That’s right, now his new nickname’s “Nemo” and can’t wait to get back underwater, all thanks to the people at the Eco Divers Dive Centre. For a surprise birthday present, I had arranged for him a “Bubblemaker” try-dive in Eco Divers’ training pool.

Being a diver myself, who had trained quite a while back, if I’m honest I was a little nervous about what was in store for Malcolm. You see, back when I learned to dive, the only people doing the sport were considered either very adventurous or just plain nuts. You dived if you were also ready to throw yourself out of planes or climb mountains. The people were tough, the equipment was basic, the training was demanding. Oh, how things have changed since those days!

Take the equipment. Malcolm, being a small Indonesian child, is not exactly of massive proportions, but that was not a problem for Eco Divers, who had a complete set of child-size scuba diving equipment which looked as if it had been specially made for him! Everything, including the tiny fins and jacket, fit well. Even the mouthpiece was made for a small mouth and he was able to easily breathe from it without effort. This stuff is ultra-modern and designed to make diving as easy as breathing.....and by the way, each set even had an extra mouthpiece, so you could share with your ‘buddy’ in the unlikely case your own air...
tank ran dry! Wow, this was easier than I thought. The proof was that Malcolm never hesitated to take to this sport, he became a natural diver within minutes.

Then there was the instruction, my instructor had been an ex-military man with a tough, nasty training routine designed to sort out the men from the boys. Nowadays it seems that scuba instructors are happy enough with boys being, well, boys. For a start, Malcolm’s instructor wasn’t even a man, she was a lady! Her name was Cary and I reckon if they’d had a few more like her back in my day (1979) there would have been a few more women diving (not to mention, a lot more men!)

Cary was clearly very experienced at training young people. Whilst constantly joking with Malcolm, she was also ready to remind him, who was going to be boss underwater. She was great at applying just the right balance between the fun and the serious stuff. Malcolm responded very well - he never lost interest and never failed to listen to what she wanted him to hear. It didn’t matter that Cary didn’t speak Indonesian, a little basic translation was given by an Indonesian staff. Underwater, they communicated together using a system of signals made with their hands. So, scuba diving even brings people together by ‘speaking’ the same language!

Cary is a “Master Instructor” licensed by PADI (Professional Association of Diving Instructors) and Eco Divers is PADI 5 Star Dive Resort. PADI is the largest scuba diver training agency in the world and its Bubblemaker program has been developed to be very easy to follow and very safety-oriented. Before going anywhere near the pool, Cary first took Malcolm through an explanation of what they were going to do once underwater, using a flipchart with simple diagrams even a young person of 8 could quickly understand. After that, they jumped into the shallow end of the pool, where she helped him put on his scuba gear. The whole experience took place in less than 2m of water and Cary was by his side and holding onto him throughout. At first, they just kneeled in the shallow end of the pool, until she was satisfied that Malcolm was in control and relaxed. When she was satisfied, she allowed him to swim and they managed to do a few laps of the whole pool together. By the end of the 30 minutes dive, they were happily playing with underwater toys and Malcolm looked as if he’d never walked on land! Well, we could hardly get him out of the pool and he can’t wait for his next dive. I know what his 10th birthday present must now surely be – a complete PADI Junior Open Water Diver course, which will certify him to dive on the reefs of Bunaken……Nemo, indeed.

I guess in the meantime I’d better go and find out where I stored my diving equipment – if he’s going to have all that fun, I want to make sure I’m there with him!

PADI Bubblemaker is available from most PADI Dive Centres (or where you have a PADI Instructor). Special prices are generally offered for Indonesians and foreign residents, please enquire directly with your local dive centre.

Story and photos: Jeremy H. Barnes
After living here for six years, I needed to find out!! Even now I am not sure…. I searched the Internet and found nothing, but…. Folklore explains- in the beginning, (not sure when) several generations ago, Figura Carnivals took places throughout the villages of Minahassa & Manado. It was a time when all people in the village from the very young to the “orang tua” (old people) dressed up in bizarre costumes and if not bizarre then confusing, in that the men, wear womens’ clothes and visa versa. Another twist is to dress up in animal costumes. Moving from house to house or from store to store in the town, they would be offered drinks or small money for their efforts- and at the end the party would continue………..

This legend, which is religiously based, suggests that this festival, albeit small, was a time to thank God and the good spirits for providing a bountiful harvest and for protecting the village and its people from all the evil that besets the world. The use of the opposite sex’s clothes and costumes would certainly confuse the evil spirits and disorient this same evil from identifying participants, hence the coming year would also bring good harvests and happiness to all in the “kampung” (village).

Unfortunately, as we move further into the 21st century it appears that this is a dying part of the local culture. But there is hope, as the local government has kept this festival alive. Every year in the month of January you can find the Figura Carnival being reenacted in Manado!!

By: BHJ
MT. Soputan - THE CHALLENGE

If mountain climbing, trekking or hiking is something that interests you, then mt. Soputan could be just the challenge you might want to tackle while visiting North Sulawesi.

As a resident in Manado, I’ve had the opportunity to tackle both Mt. Lokon and Mt. Klabat which left just Soputan on my list of the big “3”. Mt. Mahawu is also in the vicinity, but with a gentler incline and lower height, it figures more in my “leisurely stroll” category.

Out of the big “3” Mt. Soputan was to prove to be the most challenging, for a start, just getting to the bottom of the mountain, or base camp, was an arduous 3 hour hike in itself involving a half hour walk through a stream. Having left the small town of Desa Toure at 11 pm, it was 2am when we reached base camp, if you have a tent you can camp there as well, which we didn’t. The mountain itself loomed large above us in the dark, as yet, unconquered.

We had to wait 2.5 hours until the first glimmer of light before setting out again. Due to the oppressive heat of the day, most hikers prefer to tackle the hard climbing at the creak of dawn. I, however was not totally prepared for how cold it actually is on the mountain, being more aclimatised to the sowing temperature of Manado city.

The actual ascent up the slope went slowly into vegetative to tackle and then once that had thinned out, the final climb was to be made on hands and knees in the stony volcanic gravel. Due to the mixed abilities of those climbing in our group, we only tackled the side peak of Soputan. As the sun rises fully...
the higher peak of Soputan came in to view and 2 of the group climbed on hands and knees to the very top.

The stunning view afforded from our vantage point more than made up for the bitter wind whipping around. As the sun peeked over the lip of the mountain, the entire valley was bathed in early morning light, it was a sight to behold.

Soputan certainly isn’t for the faint-hearted. It is a long, long trip from when you park the car until you make it back again. In our case it was 12 hours in total. But the sensational scenery in the area surrounding the mountain more than makes up for the aching joints the next day.

It takes approximately 1.5 hours from Manado to reach the village of Desa Toure, where you can park your vehicle and arrange for a guide to accompany you up Mt. Soputan.

Story & Photos: Ruben Simon, GM Hotel Ritzy
A long trip can be physically challenging and with a country the size of Indonesia, journeys from A to B can be arduous on the fittest amongst us. If you feel in the need of a tone-up or a spot of exercise, then gym enthusiasts are well catered for in Manado.

The recently opened Bodyfit Gymsports Health and Fitness is located on Jalan Sudirman on the left had side after Gelael and before Texas Chicken. This professionally run operation has brand new equipment of an international standard and all the main workout machines you would expect. Aerobics classes are held on the third floor. Despite construction underway on the ground floor, the 2nd floor gym is most definitely up and running.

At the opposite end of town, just off the Boulevard, and within the Bahu Mall complex, is Fay Studio. This venue has also recently opened and the equipment and facilities are new and clean. Unfortunately the main weight machine isn’t a “universal” type so you may need to wait your turn to connect up your weights. The room does have air-conditioning but it might pay to remind the staff to turn it on. There is also an aerobics room on the 3rd floor.

The 2 pioneers of gym facilities in Manado are Bugar and President. Bugar is centrally located on Jalan Sam Ratulangi and runs quite popular aerobics classes. Unfortunately the gym equipment is looking a bit tired now.

The President gym in Pasar 45 (in the centre of town) maintains a group of loyal members and even the Manado Soccer team works out there. While the equipment and weights are aging, they have been maintained and are certainly sufficient for a good workout. Early evenings can be busy with aerobics classes held in the same room as the weights area.

Given the choice of venues to workout in Manado now, there’s no excuse for letting those extra holiday kilos hit the waistline.
In 1939, my father left Holland for Indonesia. As a graduate from a Teacher’s College, he couldn’t even earn enough money for dry bread in Holland. He was already engaged to my mother for five years and that was long enough for him. He decided to try Indonesia and start making a living. Once that happened he would return to Holland, marry his fiancee, and then return to Indonesia together. But the reality became quite different.

Soon after leaving Holland, the war broke out and he too was interned in a camp in Bandung. For five years there was no contact between my father and his fiancee. After his release they searched for each other by letter and eventually re-established contact. My mother married my father in absentia and forthwith she left for Indonesia.

In the meantime, my father had found a job at the ‘MULO’, Junior High School in Tondano on the Island of Sulawesi. My parents lived there from July 1945 until the end of 1948. My brother was born in August 1947 at a hospital in Tomohon. Due to medical complications with my brother, my parents decided that the second child should be born in the Netherlands. In 1948 they left Indonesia, and I was born in January 1949 in the Netherlands, hence MADE IN INDONESIA, BORN IN HOLLAND.

The political situation changed, and therefore my parents never returned to Indonesia. It would remain a memory as a sort of paradise, beautiful environment, a good life and a togetherness that they would continually talk about and always remembered.

Over 50 years later, on 9 May 2003 we stood in front of the office of “Safari Tours” in Manado, ready to make the trip to Tomohon. As my brother was born in a Catholic hospital we first needed to find that hospital. Ninny, the owner of Safari Tours, parked the car in front of the hospital “Gunung Maria”. We got out of the car and as we walked to the entrance Ninny made contact with an older nurse. I had a few small size pictures on which a group of nurses were lined up like a soccer team including my mother, father and another tall expatriate and a boy of about 3. I gave the photos to the nun. She asked when they were taken and I told her about the birth of my older brother in August 1947. She slowly came to life, stating that she was a nurse-in-training at that time. She looked again and again at the photos and slowly she pointed to the nurses, and called out their names. Suddenly her trembling finger pointed to a lone nurse half kneeling, she shouted, “that’s me, that’s me”. She was in the picture, taken some 50 years earlier and she was there in 2003. What a miracle!

She guided us through the hospital to Room #8 where my brother was born and to the chapel where my brother was baptized. In the meantime, a considerable group of people had formed around us wanting to know what the commotion was all about. At a certain moment, I asked, “my father was a teacher at the MULO in Tondano, does anyone know where that school is”? Someone in the crowd took a piece of paper and wrote down the location of the school and gave it to Ninny.

After all this excitement we stopped for a great lunch on the shores of Lake Tondano, a beautiful location with a spectacular view and delicious food, fresh fish right from the lake.

After lunch, I showed Ninny the small photos I had from my parents’ life in Tondano. They are nice snapshots Ninny agreed, but there was not so much in view, as a reference. My wife Anke and I had already come to the same conclusion. We had come here with the idea of experiencing the atmosphere in Tondano, perhaps to feel why my parents talked...
with such nostalgia about this area.

After arriving in Tondano, Ninny stopped the car after about 300 meters and jumped out speaking to an old woman. Ninny asks if she knows anybody her age (70’s) around there and involved with schooling. The woman points to a house a bit further down the road. We arrive at the house and are invited in, where our host examined the photos one by one with a magnifying glass. The man selects one and thoroughly scrutinizes it. Then it happens, he points sideways across the street and says modestly that the photo of my father taken against a background of part of a house was possibly taken there.

Ninny is the first across the street and then Anke and myself photo in hand, incredible, the house in the photo is this house, the wooden railing with the carvings, the planter on the ground, even the cornerstone is the same, unbelievable! We are at the house where my father must have lived prior to his wife’s arrival. Anke took a photo of me standing in front of the house with the original in my hand; exactly on the spot where my father had stood.

On the second day we returned to visit the house where I was conceived, we met one of my father’s students and he still remembered the lessons. He also remembers, “your father was strict” and he reminisces about my mother, “she always wore beautiful white dresses and the people respected and loved her because she was so nice”. She was, in his eyes, a beautiful women. A pity that my parents had died already, and that I couldn’t share these special moments with them.

We ate fruit from the same tree in front of the house, photographed the house and all rooms including the bedroom. The front of the house had been renovated but from certain stones we could see, that this in fact was the house where my parents lived.

We came here to get a feeling of the place where my parents spend their early years, and we uncovered most of it. We now know why they spoke about that time with a certain nostalgia. Everything radiates a certain calm and peace. The world here is intrinsically beautiful and life simple and pleasant.

Ninny was our guide, without her we would never have found what we did. A trip never to forget.

Jan en Anke de Geus - j.de.geus05@freeler.nl
(translated and edited by Harry Loijens)
Announcing the Bunaken 2004 Entrance Tag Design Contest!

Do you have the perfect Bunaken photo or drawing? One that truly captures the excitement and beauty of Bunaken diving? Want to see it printed 15,000 times and attached to BCD’s the world over?

If so, then enter the Bunaken National Park 2004 entrance tag design contest. Simply enter up to 3 photos or graphic designs to the Bunaken National Park Management Advisory Board (DPTNB) before 1 September 2003:

- Slides, photographic prints, digital images, or drawings on A4 sized paper are acceptable media.
- For digital images, please send a medium resolution image (100-300 dpi, no more than 300 Kb) in jpeg, tif or gif formats to the following email addresses: dptnb@indosat.net.id & nswa@bunaken.info
- All submissions become the property of the DPTNB for use in non-profit park management activities (village posters, calendars, management presentations, etc). Any such use of submitted photos will include accreditation of photographer/designer’s name. All entries must be accompanied by a signed waiver which grants the DPTNB non-exclusive rights to the images/designs. Copies of the waiver can be obtained from your dive operator or online at: www.bunaken.info or www.bunaken.or.id
- Entries can be submitted to the DPTNB via your dive operator or directly to the DPTNB at the following address:
  Bunaken National Park Management Advisory Board
  Jl. Santo Joseph No. 39
  Manado, Sulawesi 95116  Indonesia
  Phone: (62) 431-827387; FAX: (62) 431-842321
  Email: dptnb@indosat.net.id & nswa@bunaken.info

The panel of judges for the contest will be comprised of representatives from SilkAir, the North Sulawesi Tourism Promotion Board, the Bunaken National Park Management Board, and the North Sulawesi and Manado Tourism Departments.

The winner of the tag design contest will receive one complimentary return ticket Singapore-Manado courtesy of SilkAir and a 5-day Bunaken diving package comprised of full room and board and diving at one of 6 Dive Centers in Manado/Bunaken. Send in your entry(s) today!
Sample a taste of
Manado’s Famous Dish

Ask any Indonesian resident what he or she knows about Manado and there’s a good chance they will mention the 4 “B’s”. The “B’s” refer to Burbur, Boulevard, Bunaken and Birbir (literally meaning lips and refers to the Manadonese ladies).

For me, the “B” that I like the best is “Burbur” which refers to Burbur Manado and is also called Tinuntuan. Burbur is basically rice porridge or congee and the specialty associated with Burbur Manado is the addition of water spinach, pumpkin and corn, which makes this dish a vitamin packed meal.

Burbur Manado is traditionally spiced up for the fiery Minahasan taste buds with the addition of “dabu-dabu” which is a concoction of sliced chilies, shallots, and baby tomatoes. An overdose of this side dish can certainly clear sinuses. Fortunately, dabu-dabu and other accompaniments such as kecap manis are served on the side and you can make your burbur as hot or as mild as you like.

A great place to start out on your search for Manado’s famous dish would be on Jalan Wakeke which is a small side road heading towards the Hotel New Queen, and could well be dubbed Burbur Alley. On the corner of this street is a small restaurant which is ALWAYS full of local diners which surely must be a good sign. There are...
Manado can be an excellent place to sample the savory flavors of Asia. If you have the time, try the following for an inexpensive sampling of truly Manadonese cooking.

- Dolphin Donats
  Jl. Sam Ratulangi - Donuts, pastries *Steaks.

- Green Garden
  Jl. Sam Ratulangi - Chinese, Indonesian * Babi Bakar.

- Pizza Ria Kafe
  Great pizza, delivery phone.

- Jysti Gallery Restaurant
  Jl. Achmad 17/#3– Indonesian nice atmosphere & paintings for sale.

- Hooks
  Jl. P. Tendean Blvd. – Indonesian, European- *good band after dinner.

- New Kartini
  Jl. Sudirman 31 – Pastries, Fresh Bread & Indonesian Food.

Please visit the PATA Website www.noth-sulawesi.com for the most up to date information on North Sulawesi.

EATERIES OF THE MONTH

Manado can be an excellent place to sample the savory flavors of Asia. If you have the time, try the following for an inexpensive sampling of truly Manadonese cooking.

Story: Louis Lane

Also a number of smaller places along the street so keep your eyes out for “Tinuntuan” signs.

Another good venue to sample Burbur Manado is at Jysti Restaurant on Jalan Yani, just behind the Boulevard. For an extra twist on the normal dish, try the Tinuntuan Campur which has noodles added and is very filling.

You can also enjoy Tinuntuan at a couple of the eating stalls along the Bay Street Café walk behind the Bahu Mall, at the far end of the Boulevard. These outdoor stalls have a great view out to Manado Bay and a variety of other dishes on offer.

No trip to Manado would be complete without sampling its signature dish so….. Selamat Makan!
Note from the editor:
The contents of this publication were contributed by various persons, neither the individuals nor PT. Usaha Wisata Safaris may be held liable for any information contained herein.

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LE G E N D

1. To Hotel Santika & Thalassa Dive Center
   To Nusantara Dive Center
2. Logam Jaya Gift Shop
3. Blue Banter
   Sunset Cafe
4. Pola Pelita Tour & Travel
   Ritzy Hotel
   Matahari Dept. Store
   Post Office, Internet & ATM’s
5. Hotel New Queen
6. Green Garden Restaurant
7. Dolphin Donats
8. Money Changer
9. Metropole Tour & Travel
10. Star Express Tour & Travel
11. Steiner Salon
12. Sonny’s Gallery
13. Safari Tours & Travel
14. Jysti Restaurant
15. To Murex Resort & Live-Aboards
   To Celebes Diving & Mapia Resort
16. To Lembeh Resort
17. To Kungkungan Bay Resort
18. To Airport Sam Ratulangi
19. To Lumbalumba Diving
   To Tasik Ria Resort & Eco Divers
20. To Gardenia Highland Resort
   To Kali Waterfall
   To Highland Resort