



Ken Hoppen Photography

PALAU MAY 2026!

Leaving Sunday 3rd May 2026 ex Melbourne at 9.50pm, arriving in

Koror, Palau on Monday 4th May 2026 at 2.35pm.

Leaving Palau on Sat 16th May 2026 at 6.20pm and

arriving in Melbourne on Sunday 17th May 2026 at 10.40am.

The Details First!

Divers \$7,199 based on a twin room

Non-Divers \$4,563 based on a twin room.

(For our non-Australian divers who might join us, the land cost is \$5,879. Remember that this is in Australian Dollars.)

Non-refundable Deposit of \$750 need, with the balance 60 days prior. The price of the trip is based on a cheap early airfare, so if you are late in booking the price may go up. Allways will book and pay for your flight on your paying the deposit.

Room upgrades and single supp. available on request. If you're coming on your own I'll make every effort to find a suitable roommate, but this cannot be guaranteed.

Includes:

Airfares ex-Melbourne

Airport transfers in Palau

12 nights accommodation at the Cove Resort, including breakfast. Price quoted is for standard rooms, twin share, upgrades and single supp are available on request.

<https://www.coveresortpalau.com/>

12 dives per diver at Sam's Tours, about a two minute walk from our accommodation.

[Sam's Tours Palau](#)

For groups of 8+ add a free Cathedral Cave Dive, Free jetty dives, and a free Jellyfish Lake snorkel (does not include the \$50 permit for Jellyfish Lake) More info below.

Plus two days Unique Diving Tours trips to see the spawning Bumphead parrotfish, four dives in total. (13th and 14th May) (can be found on Sam's website)

Half day kayak tour of the rock islands on the last day of the trip.

Please note that 11th and 12th of May will be non-diving days as Sam's is fully booked already on these days.

Details!

When we have settled in to the resort, we'll take all of our gear down to Sam's Tours, sign in and be ready to dive the following day. Sam's will give us a dive bin, and has lock up storage where we will keep the gear during our stay. The gear will be on the boat as we arrive in the morning!

The first day of diving! The first day is always at a couple of easy sites so that the divemasters can appraise the group, and you get a day to ensure that your gear is right and that all is well before going to the main sites. We will have a boat driver and two divemasters.

The next days will be diving!!

We'll be doing a lot of them! I want to do multiple dives at Blue Holes, Blue Corner, German Channel and Sais Tunnel for a start. If you're coming, make sure you have an idea of what you want to see! Ulong Channel, Siaes Channel, Siaes Wall, Big Dropoff, and a wreck or two. I have two articles up on my website blog, Must See and Should See dives in Palau, please have an idea of which dives you most want to see. I also have some shots from the last trip we did here in the portfolio section.

<https://kenhoppenphotography.com.au/blog>

We may do more than the 12 dives paid for, how many is up to you though. We have six diving days (not including the Unique days), and have two morning dives on each day. We can do an afternoon one too if we want. Jellyfish Lake and Chandelier Cave will be afternoon dives foc, leaving us four extra dives if we want to do them.

I want to get 8-12 divers. At 8 divers we get our own boat. This is a good thing, because then we can choose where we want to go. If you are travelling with less the boats get filled with whoever is there. That's fine, but if it is your last day you get to choose where the boat goes, and strangely enough last day people tend to pick less popular dive sites. If you string a row of these together all of a sudden you haven't done the main sites enough. This has happened to me! Much better to have some control over the boat destination.

Unique Dive Trips!

These trips require around 50 dives experience and Advanced OW qualifications. If you are a bit under the 50 don't worry. These days will be at the end of the trip, and the divemasters will know if you are capable of doing it by then. If you don't want to do this we can take it off the cost of your trip, or transfer it to other dives. The bumphead parrotfish spawning is not a difficult dive though.

Unique Dive Tours run out of Sam's. They have found some spawning events! Last time we did a day on a Sailfin Snapper spawning event where we had 800,000+ fish in the school! Simply amazing! This year we will be there during the bumphead parrotfish spawning! Expect a massive school of these

fish, with individuals rushing to the surface spawning, and potentially a lot of pelagics around! Once the school is nearly ready to spawn, we will drop into the water and hover at between 5 and 10m under the surface, above the school of fish. When they are ready to spawn the female rushes towards the surface followed by 20-50 males and releases her eggs. The males then all release the sperm and it sort of becomes a starburst of fish and eggs just below you. This is Nat Geo sort of stuff.

Not included in the trip are the **Black water dives** run by Sam's. We go out at night into the depths and hang a large light over the side for half an hour or so, then jump in. We are roped to the boat so you cannot go far. This dive is to see the strange small pelagic life that comes to the surface at night. Hoping for squid, argonauts, crazy crustaceans, larval fish and the like. Not everyone's cup of tea, and I haven't done this before, but there might be a few of us willing to try! We didn't do this last time as we were pretty tired at the end of the day anyway, but we could organise this once we are there. As long as we have four divers we can go any time we like.

Other things we plan to do! (Not included in cost.) We have two non-diving days which we can fill easily.

Plane flight over the islands: This is spectacular and we did it on the last trip. I'll organise this when we get there and work out a day and prices. If the weather is right this will be on!

Things you might do! (Not included in cost.)

Pelilieu Island Day Trip exploring the WWII sites there.

Hiking Trip to a German Lighthouse

Hire a car and explore the island – waterfall walk!

A few details to consider!

- Palau operates in US\$. It is a very modern country with good amenities. I tend to take about US\$300 with me for cash, have a few hundred AUD with me to change if I need to, and use credit card for the most when I can.
- We will need to pay for dive permits. Different areas of Palau have a different permit. They are not too expensive (US\$50 from memory on average) and now only last for five days, not the week and a half they used to. We must pay these in cash when we are at Sam's, as they must forward it to the relevant departments as cash.
- There are several excellent restaurants in Koror, with an Indian restaurant being my favourite! There are also Chinese, Thai and resort restaurants, and some cheap café type options too. Aside of breakfast meals are not included in the cost. There is a very nice and relatively cheap restaurant/café next to the resort called 'The Drop Off' where I think we will do a lot of meals, and Kramer's Bar and Restaurant is about a three-minute walk away.
- Sam's Tours has a café/bar located at the dock. Great for a wind down after the dives.
- Sam's has free nitrox for those qualified to use it. For those that don't have this, or know too much about it, it gives the diver longer bottom times and less chance of the bends, and is good to around 32m. A couple of dives here we will do on air (looking at you Siaes Tunnel), but nitrox does give you more time on most dives. It is not mandatory, you can dive on air all of the time if you want, but it is there if you'd like it. You can do the course during the week if you'd like that option.

I'm sure I've forgotten something in this start, please message or contact me if you have any questions.

Please get back to me asap if you are interested!

Best wishes

Ken Hoppen

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