

BLUE INDULGENCE

By Kamila Delart

Enjoying a dreamlike view of the Andaman Sea while sipping a cocktail in a beach bar, I watch the white sails against a crimson sunset, swelling up with wind, carrying fairytale boats towards the horizon. And suddenly I realize that despite having spent nearly a year on this beautiful island, I never really took the time to explore the magical archipelago.

The minute I arrive home, I turn on the computer to book a cruise. Having worked quite a lot lately, I find I deserve a real treat☺ So when I come across **DAMAI INDAH CRUISES**, there is no need to look any further. Luxury and style? Just what I need!



Docking at the Royal Langkawi Yacht Club, the Damai Indah is easy to spot. The love and pride of Eva, the German owner and only female captain on the island, the charming wooden boat is beautifully restored, with the white hull sparkling against the richly varnished teakwood. Barely seated, I receive a welcome drink: Refreshing and - matching the theme of a cruise - bright blue! Savoring the light citrusy taste, I look around, and everything is just the way I envisioned it! Inviting cushions in royal maroon, crystal glasses, vases with delicate orchids, bar stocked with an exquisite selection of wines and spirits... And in the center a small sculpture of Ganesha - a Hindu God supposed to bring a good fortune on a journey.

The sophisticated ambiance seems to attract the right clientele. No loud crowd keen to party. Instead, there is a lovely Australian Family, a British couple, and a few business people from Singapore and KL, enjoying a relaxing weekend break. All of us looking forward to a tranquil afternoon on the Andaman Sea.



The boat glides with ease through the emerald green water, gently cradled by the soft waves, as we listen to a quiet music in the background, taking in the breathtaking beauty of the surroundings. There are spectacular lime-stone cliffs, myriad of tiny islands overgrown with lush foliage, ruled by prehistoric reptiles and monkeys. And on the right - emerging from the sea as if trying to catch a shrimp - there is an island resembling a sea turtle. How adorable!

Close to Pulau Timun, on a secluded spot famous for its sheer, translucent water, we anchor to enjoy a light delicious lunch. The love-struck couple swims to a near idyllic beach, leaving behind only a trace of footprints in the sand as they seek a romantic hideaway. The family explores the surroundings on kayaks, while the rest of us enjoys a siesta in the shade of the boat, exchanging fun stories, daydreaming...

When we resume our journey, Eva, the Captain, looks out for a fisher boat. And as soon as we spot one, I join the Damai Indah's helmsmen, Agus, on a dinghy to catch up with them. After a short, rather wild ride, we reach the small boat, and the fisherman proudly show us the catch of the day. Having engaged in the entertaining game of negotiating a price, we return with fresh red snapper.



Just in time - as Eva already begun to prepare her famous dinner buffet. A passionate chef, she insists on utilizing the best ingredients available, starting her day early to buy together with her made Mary seafood and vegetables on the wet market, and to marinate the halal meat prior to joining the cruise. With all meals being prepared directly on the board, the deck is soon filled with a mouth-watering aroma.



The buffet is beautifully presented, on raffia-trays, covered with palm leaves, and since Eva clarified the preferences and dietary restrictions of each guest, everybody happily fills their plates: scrumptious prawns marinated with red chili, garlic and wild honey, spicy curry chicken, red snapper, and a variety of delicious salads. An unforgettable experience!

The sunset sets slowly in, we sip on a twelve year old whiskey, admiring the the colourful spectacle on the sky, refusing the acknowledge the marina that appears in front of us.

Days like this should never end...

