

# Tribal Weavings of the Lesser Sunda Islands

The most exciting textile tour you are ever likely to find – the trip of a lifetime!

The remote ikat-weaving islands of eastern Indonesia have one of the most diverse textile cultures on the planet. Hand-woven cloth plays a pivotal role in the cohesion of all these societies, cementing clan alliances through complex gift exchanges, revealing tribal loyalties and underpinning the annual cycle of rituals. As some islanders emphasise: 'without cloth we cannot marry'.



Sadly the encroachment of the modern world means that the number of communities where women still continue to spin their own cotton, prepare their own natural dyes and weave on traditional back-tension looms is limited. Their numbers are dwindling and within a generation they could be gone.

Join British textile experts David and Sue Richardson for a fantastic, adventurous 14-night voyage, including 7 nights in hotels and 7 nights on a traditionally designed Indonesian schooner (*phinisi*). Custom-built in 2022 by Buginese shipbuilders, our boat has all modern amenities with comfortable en-suite air-conditioned cabins and a maximum group size of 14.



Our itinerary takes us along the coast of Flores and on to the islands of Adonara, Lembata, Ternate, Alor, Savu and Sumba. In village after village we will see every aspect of ikat production and natural dyeing and have the opportunity to purchase fabulous textiles directly from the women who made them. Before each visit guests will be fully briefed so that they completely understand the type of textiles and techniques they will encounter and the role that cloth plays within the local community. Our journey will take us through a dramatic volcanic landscape during which there will be time to write-up journals, relax, swim, snorkel, sunbathe and beachcomb.

Our tour begins at Ende on the island of Flores on 5 May, 2025 and ends at Waingapu on the island of Sumba on 20 May, 2025. Both places are connected to Bali by short domestic flights.

This is going to be a fun trip - we hope that you can join us.



For more information contact David and Sue Richardson at [davidandsue.richardson@gmail.com](mailto:davidandsue.richardson@gmail.com) or visit <http://www.asiantextilestudies.com/tour.html>

David and Sue Richardson have been studying and writing about the textiles of Southeast and Central Asia for twenty-five years, during which time they have visited almost every part of the Indonesian archipelago. They are former committee members of the Oxford Asian Textile Group, which is linked to the Ashmolean and Pitt Rivers Museums. Their website, [www.asiantextilestudies.com](http://www.asiantextilestudies.com) is a fantastic resource for weavers, dyers, and anyone interested in the textiles of Asia.