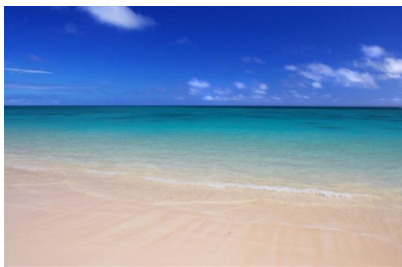


AMBON: TOURISTS CAN VISIT AGAIN



The island of Ambon in Indonesia is trying to regain tourists again after it lost appeal for them during the religious violence that started 10 years ago. It has number of attractions but perhaps the most interesting are the empty pristine beaches.

Wonderful rainforests, empty pristine beaches, beautiful coral reefs and friendly people, all that can be found on the island of Ambon in Indonesia. **It is not affected by mass tourism and can satisfy many travelers' dreams.** Nevertheless, the reputation of the region was damaged by religious conflict that started ten years ago. The violence between Christians and Muslims made the island rather unattractive for tourists. Attacks stopped only in 2005.

Now locals are trying to rebuild tourism industry. As the server Ihned.cz reported, some 28 thousand foreign tourists were coming to the island by plane every year before the violence broke out. In 2000, when the clashes were escalating, only 100 visitors came. The situation, however, is improving as 6 000 tourists visited the island last year. **Local authorities want to make the streets a vibrant place once again and also to attract foreign tourists to the currently empty beaches.** They certainly have something to offer there. Tourists can swim, dive or visit the rainforest.

So far the island has still remained rather empty. Most of the inhabitants work in agriculture or they fish. No International chains of any kind have established themselves on Ambon so far. Now, **the island needs to invest in the tourism infrastructure**, which was destroyed during the conflict. The island has been promoted through TV and press advertising but also by the Sail Banda race. **The intention is to show the world that the island is safe for tourists again.** Visitors can go to hot springs of Talang Haha that are approximately 30 km north east off the capital Ambon. However, the main attraction for foreign tourists are the empty pristine beaches of the island.

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