

An aerial photograph of a tropical island. The island is covered in dense green vegetation and rocky terrain. A large, irregularly shaped lagoon with clear, turquoise water is the central feature. A small white boat is visible in the deep blue ocean to the right of the lagoon. The word 'ECCO' is written in large, white, serif capital letters across the top of the image, with 'TRIPS' written vertically inside the second 'O'.

From glacial ice fields to kaleidoscopic coral reefs, superyachts allow us to experience the ocean's most diverse ecosystems, but they also create opportunities to help protect them. Francisca Kellett reveals the best ways to add eco projects to your adventures

Above: Shark Lagoon on Cocks Comb Island, Mergui Archipelago, Myanmar

BEST FOR
DOLPHIN PODS AND
WHITE BEACHES

Where: Zanzibar and Pemba Island offer an extraordinary mix of culture and watery wonderlands, from the Arabian history of Stone Town in Zanzibar to the practice of voodoo on Pemba, with a good smattering of brilliantly white beaches washed by startlingly turquoise waters. The area is crammed with diverse marine life, but of particular interest are the schools of humpback whales and pods of dolphins that congregate off the shores. A marine biologist can join a yacht to accompany the journey, providing laser-sharp insight into the area.

How: The Explorations Company, which specialises in matching clients with philanthropic adventures, organises exclusive yacht charters on an Ocean 750 catamaran with an onboard marine biologist. Dr Gill Braulik, based in Zanzibar, will join guests sailing around these beautiful archipelagos to spot and research whales and dolphins. Her organisation is connected to the Zanzibari government, and an additional donation of €5,000 goes towards future research and conservation. Days are spent diving in areas such as the tiny, uninhabited Misali Island, where the reefs are filled with hard and soft corals, while on land are sunbirds, flying foxes, endangered coconut crabs and caves, rumoured still to be used for voodoo. Excursions inland explore Pemba's ancient forests, and afternoons might be spent snorkelling around the pristine Mnemba Island atoll, kayaking with cavorting pods of dolphins just south of Tambatu, or visiting Fundu Lagoon for beachside cocktails.

When: October and November are peak season for whales and dolphins in the region, and this is also when wind and sea conditions are calm. explorationscompany.com

