

# Dive Charter to Tubbataba, Philippines

1-6 May 2011

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## Tubbataha Reef Dive Charter, Philippines May 1 – 6, 2011

Measuring 99,600 hectares in size, the Tubbataha Reef National Marine Park is made up of 2 atolls rising in the middle of Measuring 99,600 hectares in size; the Tubbataha Reef National Marine Park is made up of 2 atolls rising in the middle of the Sulu Sea. A recent Study just finished by Conservation International has just confirmed what Scientists long theorized--that it is the nursery for fish and coral larvae that populates the Sulu-Sulawesi Triangle an area that not only covers the most important and productive fishing grounds of the Philippines but extends as far south as Malaysia and Indonesia. So important is this submerged structure in the balance of the underwater eco- system that UNESCO declared it a world heritage site as far back as 1993. In 1998, Former Philippine President Fidel Ramos, a keen diver himself, created Task Force Tubbataha and a station equipped with radar and manned by zealous rangers was established and now guards the park 24/7. Several factors are responsible for the almost virgin conditions of this underwater jewel. The convergence of currents constantly brings in a barrage of the nutrients and clean water a healthy reef and its inhabitants demand. Being the largest and almost lone structure in the middle of a vast expanse of ocean guarantees a healthy influx of pelagic visitors looking for a meal and other services an underwater community provides. Being almost a hundred nautical miles from the nearest port, access is only through Live-aboard vessels and voyages to the park are determined by the weather. A small window-from late March to early June when calm seas and clear skies are the best and only times for divers to visit. The strong winds and rough swells the rest of the year deters both authorized and un-authorized incursions into the park and permits the reef to settle back into its natural state of regeneration of regeneration.



# Itinerary

## Day One - Manila / Puerto Princesa

- Flight to Manila and onward to Puerto Princesa by Philippines Airline - 11am - 5:25pm. Arrival in Puerto Princesa City. Transfer to port.
- Briefing of Boat Manager / Dive Master
- Afternoon at leisure
- 1800H Life anchor for departure to Bird Is., North Tubbataha (11 hours)
- Accommodation & meals onboard Explorer

## Day Two - North Tubbataha

- Arrive at Bird Island, North Tubbataha
- Dive Sites: Shark Airport, Washing machine (Larry's reef), Seafan alley
- Whole day diving at North Tubbataha
- Night Dive

## Day Three - North Tubbataha

- Whole day diving at North Tubbataha
- Dive Sites: Rangers Station, Amos Rock
- Night Dive
- Early morning departure for Light House, South Tubbataha

## Day Four - South Tubbataha

- Arrive Lighthouse, South Tubbataha
- Whole day diving at South Tubbataha
- Dive Sites: Black Rock, North wall of south Atoll
- Night Dive

## Day Five - South Tubbataha

- Whole day diving at South Tubbataha
- Dive Sites: Lighthouse, Delsan Wreck, Staghorn Point
- Departure for Puerto Princesa City

## Day Six - Puerto Princesa / Manila

- 0600H. Estimated arrival in Puerto Princesa City
- Breakfast onboard
- Farewell program
- 0800H - Transfer to airport/hotel
- Departure by Philippines Airline. Manila and international connection at 10:20am - 5:00pm



Participants will go on board MV PACIFIC EXPLORER II which is a large, well-equipped and fully air-conditioned cruiser. This vessel offers comfortable rooms with ensuite restroom facilities. This liveaboard is quite similar to the Big Blue Explorer but you will enjoy bigger rooms with bigger head room for a more cozy stay on board. There is also a spacious tanning area for sun worshippers as well.

- Fully air-conditioned and carpeted interiors
- 12 twin-sharing cabins w/ ensuite toilet and bath

- Hot and cold shower
- 8 open rinse showers on deck
- Entertainment center with TV, VHS, and stereo
- Lounge
- Library of books, magazines, VCR/VCD/DVD and tapes
- Shaded deck
- 11 experienced service crew
- Jacuzzi

### **Boat Specification**

Gross Tonnage/ Weight: 325.67

Loa: 42.6

Breadth: 7.80

Draft: 4.10

Main Engine: Hanshin

Year Built:

Cruising Speed: 10 knots

Hull: Steel

Generators: 2 x 120 KVA Yanmar

1 x 25 KVA Denyo

Water Capacity: 5 tons/day

Electricity: 220-110V- 60 htz

Minimum Capacity- 15 guests

Maximum Capacity- 24 guests

Cabins: Suite - 3; Deluxe - 9

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **1. Where is Tubbataha Reefs?**

Tubbataha Reefs is located in the center of the Sulu Sea between the Island of Palawan and the Visayan islands. The jump off point is Puerto Princesa, Palawan.

### **2. When is the best time to go to Tubbataha Reefs?**

The best time to go to Tubbataha Reefs is during the Philippine Summer season from mid-March to mid June. Days are hot and dry and sea conditions are at their calmest and clearest.

### **3. Do I need a Visa and Passport?**

A valid passport is required. Visas are not required for tourists who will no stay no longer than 21 days provided that they have an onward or return journey tickets and do not belong to restricted nationality. For long staying guests visas are required, you can apply at the nearest Philippine consulate in your country of origin.

### **4. Who will meet me at the airport?**

Upon arrival in the Puerto Princesa Airport please look for members of our Staff holding an Expedition Fleet banner.

### **5. What is the weather in Philippines?**

The Philippines is a tropical country with an average temperature of 32°C (80°F). March to June is hot and dry (36°C); rains and typhoons abound from July to October; November to February is pleasantly cool (around 23°C) and dry. In mountainous regions, temperatures dip to about 15°C.

### **6. Are tender boats used?**

Yes, all of our dives are conducted in small groups from tender boats ensuring quick entry and exit from the water.

### **7. Is there night diving?**

Yes there is, please take a look our sample itinerary.

### **8. Should I be an advanced diver?**

Not necessarily. All dives begin with a back-roll onto the reef top which is usually around 15 meters. After everyone has trimmed their buoyancy and are comfortable, the dive leader will then bring the group to the drop off and down the wall.

Current is usually present in Tubbataha and thus drift diving is the norm. Divers go with the flow of the current and upon surfacing, are picked up by the chase boat.

### **9. When is check-out time on the vessel?**

The check-out time in the vessel is 0800am on the last day.

### **10. What wetsuit should I use in diving?**

The weather is quite warm during the trip because it is the summer season. A 3mm suit is more than adequate.

**11. Are there gear rentals?**

Yes we have gear for rent but we do NOT have torches/flashlights for rent. You need to bring a full 3mm wetsuit. There are torches available for sale on board. Please advise us in ADVANCE what sizes you will need.

**12. Will diving weights be provided?**

Yes diving weights will be provided onboard.

**13. Do I need to bring my own snacks?**

We'd suggest you to bring your own snacks, booze, and comfort foods although main meals and small snacks are there. Otherwise, you may pay for your booze, like beer, on board.

**14. Are there other places I should visit while I am in Puerto Princesa?**

Yes, we usually encourage our guests to avail of the St Paul subterranean River Tour on the day of arrival and spend an additional night in Pto Princesa. This is to allow divers to maximize the last day's dives without violating the NO FLY Period. The St Paul Subterranean River is also a UNESCO World heritage Site just like Tubbataha.

**15. Where else can I go if I want to extend my holiday in the Philippines?**

The Expedition fleet has 2 sister resorts—Bahura which is in Dumaguete, Negros Oriental and Outrigger in Anilao, Batangas. We have special rates and discounts for guests who avail of our live aboard services and want to continue their diving at either of the 2 resorts.

**16. Does the ship have a satellite phone?**

Yes. Rates are 1 USD per minute and parts thereof.

**17. Where is the nearest recompression chamber?**

The nearest Recompression chamber is in Cebu City.

## **Cost & Enrollment**

The costs are \$3,950 USD, not including airfares, which includes a tax-deductible contribution to Outward Bound International.

For further information and to apply please contact: -

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