

Seaseacher II, March 2005, Greg Swager (gswager@yucca.net), Portales, NM. Experience: 51-100 dives. Vis: 50 to 70 Feet. Water: 69 to 70 F., choppy, currents. Since Flower Gardens is about 100 miles south of Freeport (Houston), TX, only way to check for sea conditions is buoy. Dive operation called dive shop at noon on the day of departure and gave us a "Go" though we were already on the road, 10 2 hours drive. Bad weather was forecasted on the day of arrival. Currents is strong on top. Rope is lead from the stern to the moor about 20' underwater in front of boat. Dive down where the moor is anchored. Currents is weak on the bottom. Advanced divers due to depth and currents. Saw a part of hammerhead shark, plenty of fishes such as parrotfish, grunts, a moray eel, remains of shells, numerous brain corals. Most of corals are huge! Did dive under oil rig. Lots of "young" fishes. Night dive is offered but was cancelled due to bad weather. Winds picked up speed an afternoon before the last day of dive, earlier than we expected. Since seas were too rough, we had to head back to port 12 hours earlier. Did 3 out of 7 dives (1 2 days) due to bad weather. Website is <http://www.seaseacherii.com>. UW Photography Comments: Liveboard boat provides two fresh water tanks for underwater cameras. Has bench with flat carpet to lay camera. I have compact camera with a roll of film. Forgot to turn it on for oil rig dive. Only way is to take waterproof case apart and turn the camera on. Learned a lesson and plan to buy a camera that can be controlled everything by buttons outside while underwater, even if you forget to turn it on. Recommend to have a flasher from

side to avoid backscatter by water particles. You'll also need macro for corals and anemones.

VIRGIN ISLANDS, BRITISH

Cuan Law, May 2005, Terry Gee, El Paso, TX. Experience: 1000+ dives Vis: 40 to 100 Feet. Water: 85 to 87 F., choppy, no currents. My seventh charter of the Cuan Law. I always charter the entire boat and that gives us the freedom to dictate when and where we will dive, sail, etc. The crew is accommodating; they will make suggestions, offer in depth pre-dive briefings and always have one of their divemaster/instructors in the water with the divers. They will lead if asked but otherwise divers are allowed to set their own profiles, depths, times, etc. The Cuan Law is the most spacious and luxurious liveboard that I have been on, including the Truk Odyssey. The rooms are large and spacious with large private bathrooms. The food is exceptional and the chef, Dan, is incredible. Steve, the British captain, is well trained yacht captain and is friendly, knowledgeable. The entire crew makes it a point to let you know that they are there to make sure that you have a wonderful experience and will do anything within their power to assure that happens. This particular charter started at St Maarten, took in St Barts, St Kitts and Nevis, Saba, Sombrero and ended in the BVIs with two dives there and the beach picnic at Virgin Gordo- the Baths- our final day. I would rate the Cuan Law and this trip a five star excellent dive vacation. UW Photography Comments: No designated camera area but a large

fresh water rinse area reserved for cameras. Crew knowledgeable concerning photography and helpful. Areas on dive deck that were easily used for camera maintenance, reloading, battery changes, etc.

Juliet, December 2004, Lisa Strickland, Washington, IL. Experience: 26-50 dives. Vis: 50 to 90 Feet. Water: 78 to 81 F. A wonderful trip. Crew was attentive to everyone's needs — beginner to experienced. Complete dive briefings; divemaster John Skey would always check out the site for current, surge, before each dive. He would dive with us if we asked, otherwise we could dive our own plan. Chris Finatti is a marine biologist and offered certification as naturalist. Class was excellent and she took us on several dives for fish and creature ID, then reviewed sightings and IDs after the dive. Rusty is a great cook. Jimmy and Jen kept things running smoothly. Captain John runs a good ship and dove with us, as well. Rooms are nice

with lots of storage space and a sink with running water. Some with two bunks and some with a large bed. Three toilets and two showers in the berthing area. One shower on deck that is the one used most. Always plenty of hot water and fresh water. Big coolers of fresh water and Gatorade always available. Dive site favorites include Rhone and Black Forest. 3 night dives available. Large turtles, lots of rays, fish and critters. A few small sharks. Chris and divemaster John made a picture CD of the trip for us to purchase. Topside and underwater pictures as well as pictures of the ship and crew are included on it. You do need to bring your own deck towels. Nitrox available. 4 dives a day. Shore excursion to the Baths on Virgin Gorda, New Years Eve on Jost VanDyke. The only extra money really necessary is taxi fare from and to the airport, port fee, entry fee to the Baths, of course, trinkets. UW Photography Comments: dedicated tubs of freshwater for cameras.

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