

seemed quite healthy with little bleaching or dying coral to be seen. Lots of fish life. Maitai in Bora Bora quite nice. clean A/C room with ocean view. Great staff, nice beach with decent snorkeling and great lagoon views. Hibiscus on Moorea a bit more economical and rustic. A bit of a bug problem and although owners were friendly and the grounds nicely kept, I would stay elsewhere. Food extremely expensive so we walked to local groceries and stocked up on French cheeses and baguettes and did our own breakfast and lunches. Tahitian and French cuisine very good with The Mayflower in Moorea and The Bounty in Bora Bora being stand-outs. Both islands' topside sites are as impressive as the underwater sites. My nondiving wife took a ferry to Tahiti to see Papeete and do some shopping and had a great time all around exploring the islands.

## GUAM

Guam is largely a stopover for flights to Micronesia and the reefs aren't up to a dedicated dive vacation.

**MDA, Holiday Inn, February 2005, Jeanne & Bill Downey (downdive@comcast.net), Baden, PA.** Experience: Over 1000 dives. Vis: 80 to 150 Feet. Water: 82 F., calm. We've been through Guam so many times, we decided to see what Guam's all about. We contacted MDA via email and they arranged everything, including our room at the Holiday Inn at a good price, including buffet breakfasts. We spent 5 days driving around, seeing ev-

erything and did 6 dives. The two MDA dive boats we were on were well run, with adequate space. The crew seemed friendly and professional. Four of the dives were done with most of the passengers being Japanese; they brought their own gear and divemasters, and did their own thing. Two of the dives were mainly locals and a few soldiers off an aircraft carrier. We did not have a guide, but no problem, as we kept the repeat customers in sight. The underwater terrain is volcanic with not much coral. We dove their blue hole twice, saw the Atlantis submarine underwater, and did 3 easy drift dives. A beginning diver would have fun, as the diving is easy and there's enough to see. An experienced diver would probably get bored after a few dives. Guam doesn't have that "exotic island" feel, but it makes a decent alternative to Hawaii for stopping off and getting rid of jet lag. The water is warmer than Hawaii, but the diving is not as good. It's a big shopping area for the Japanese, and not as pricey as Hawaii. It's a lovely island with a lot of history.

## HAWAII

Hawaiian guides have developed great skill in finding the unique. On the big island of Hawaii, Spanish dancers, rare juveniles, and lionfish are regulars. Diving is mostly on lava flow with little coral cover, but the tropical fish are colorful, unique, and generally plentiful. There's also good shore diving. Kauai reef diving is passable, but unique trips are available in the summer. Maui's diving is often to