

up to dive on the third day Michelle was on the phone with WinAir; they had landed and wanted to know why we weren't at the airport to depart for Saba. My itinerary showed we had reservations on a 3:00PM flight that day not 7:30AM. WinAir informed her that if we didn't get to the airport in 10 minutes, we would not be able to leave until the following day. We packed in 5 and Michelle drove us to the airport. She gave us a hug and we departed, again without luggage, due to a full plane and weight limitations. We made a total of 8 flights on this trip and the only flight that had our luggage when we landed was the return trip to LAX. We dove the Blue Bead dive, which was a muck dive where one of the divers actually found a blue bead. We also dove a large wreck, which was interesting, and the Double Wrecks site. Michael and Lis were not only informative and professional divemasters, but were entertaining and kept things interesting. The island is interesting, with a lot of history. Things commonly found in touristy areas are non-existent. There are good restaurants within walking distance of the Gin House. The Blue Bead was probably the best. Gin House food was good, but overpriced. Old Gin House ocean front rooms are nice, with privacy and a great view. We met two other divers on Saba who had booked Statia as their 2nd island, but never made it due to WinAir's inability to land on Saba for several days. A 1000' runway doesn't allow much room for crosswinds. You might consider "The Edge" which is the ocean ferry that serves Saba and St. Maarten.

ST. KITTS AND NEVIS

These small, intimate islands have lot of "Old Caribbean" charm. Their strong suits are gracious hotels and old inns, verdant, green scenery, and lovely beaches. The diving is ok for newbies.

Pro Divers, Marriott, St. Kitts September 2005, W. Westman, St. Thomas, VI. Experience: 101-250 dives. Vis: 25 to 75 Feet. Water: 86 to 87 F, calm. Pro Divers was friendly and accommodating. We advised them we were experienced divers and they did their best to accommodate us. Water was extremely warm and coral showed signs of bleaching. Dive master stated that this had occurred during the last four weeks. Dive sites near shore had fair to poor visibility. Dive site in deeper water had good visibility. Only saw two angel fish in four dives. Apparently local fishermen have wiped out the larger fish for local consumption.

St. Kitts Diving, Bird Rock Beach Hotel, November 2004, Stanley Ziemkiewicz (stanley.ziemkiewicz@dana.com), Sylvania, OH. Experience: 51-100 dives. Vis: 25 to 50 Feet. Water: 82 to 86 F, choppy. The good the dive operation was conscious of weather conditions for our safety. The reefs are not in good diving shape. The three dive shops on the Island are the only ones trying to protect them. On their best reef, Paradise, there was a lot of garbage left by other dive operations. A freighter dropped anchor on one of the reefs we dove upon causing a great deal of damage. ATA airlines did everything

to they could to ruin our vacation and they succeeded. UW Photography Comments: The dive master did have fresh water rinse on the boat and shore for the cameras. There was no flat surface to dry the camera and change rolls of film.

ST. LUCIA

St. Lucia lies in the hurricane belt west of Barbados. Diving on this beautiful, heavily-forested island is fine for beginners and vacationers, with pretty reefs and tiny fish. On the southwestern part of the island is the better diving but it's rigidly controlled. The year-round high is in the 80s days; night lows are in the 70s. Afternoon cloudbursts are common. Great spot for a nondiving vacation, however.

Anse Chastanet, August 2004, Russ & Mary Battisto (Russ_Battisto@comcast.net), **Ros-ville, MN.** Experience: 251-500 dives. Vis: 80 to 120 Feet. Water: 80 to 84 F, calm. Travel from airport to resort and back was the only "bumpy" portion of our trip. Accommodations, food and service were above average to great! Diving was controlled and fun but geared for a beginner to average diver. Advanced divers would find this trip somewhat boring although relaxing. No large fish, mainly small tropical and micro life to see/take pictures of. Dive operators wanted us to have fun and, after seeing we were capable divers, allowed us to do our thing and left us alone. Only challenging dive, the second night dive when currents were

strong and switched directions mid-dive. Newer divers in a different group decided to invade our space and made it difficult to navigate back to shore. All made it back without incident but it was challenging.

Anse Chastanet, October 2004, Laurie & Kerry Watts (klwatts@earthlink.net), **Charlotte, NC.** Experience: 101-250 dives. Vis: 70 to 90 Feet. Water: 81 to 83 F, calm. Reefs are healthy with large schools of typical fish — angels, parrotfish, butterfly fish, Creole wrasse, fairy basslets, blue chromis, etc. Lack of large species such as grouper, barracuda, sharks, turtles, rays etc. Scuba St. Lucia is at Anse Chastanet. Lockers and spacious rinse facilities are available to divers. Most of the staff is friendly and helpful, especially the divemasters. Some administrative staff can't be bothered. The Anse Chastanet Reef is a shore dive right off of the resort which is one of the best dives. You may see it a lot as there are only 2 single tank boat dives per day and all other dives are shore dives. The shore dives are guided as can't go it alone. Were told they offer an additional boat dive in the morning if we had four or more divers, but when we got four divers to reserve an early morning dive, they told us that the dive boat was being used to escort other guests to Castries for a shopping trip. Having booked a dive package, we were annoyed that we the divers didn't seem to be a priority to the dive shop. The Anse Chastanet is 25 miles from the airport but the trip took a hot and dusty 1.5 hours because of the poor roads and construction. Beautiful resort with amazing architectural design built into the side of a mountain near the