

environmental protection agency of the Brazilian government, and not overly developed. There are small inns called pousadas, most just 2-3 rooms, the largest with 10 rooms. The three best are Pousada Maravilha (really only for the true jet set, about US\$670/person/day with breakfast, double occupancy), Pousada Solar dos Ventos right next door (about US\$135/person/day with breakfast, double occupancy) and Pousada Ze Maria (more expensive than Solar dos Ventos, but we didn't visit it). Maravilha and Solar dos Ventos both have stunning views of the pristine Bahia do Sueste and beach. They are well away from the center of the island (taxi about US\$8 or rent a buggy about US\$60/day). Atlantis picked us up and brought us back every day included in their price for diving. Of the three operations running diving, Atlantis has clearly invested in all aspects — boats, equipment, divemasters, courses, etc. A two-tank boat dive costs about US\$93, Nitrox was an additional US\$18/tank. We asked for Nitrox but didn't check the price in advance, and there really is no reason to use Nitrox. Atlantis usually does 'experienced' divers in the morning and 'beginners' including courses in the afternoon. The boats (catamarans) are well organized and comfortable, great ladders, easy giant strides, marine head. Divemasters are knowledgeable and competent, and, once they see that you know what you are doing, lighten up a bit. They are clearly used to getting too many just certified divers. Groups were formed based on experience. There are no great hard or soft coral formations — this is a volcanic island with incredible rock formations 'coated' with coral, so take a light with you and get up close. Dive locations are chosen based on the weather and time of year,

as well as where IBAMA says they can dive each day. Because of this, you probably will not want to plan more than 4-5 days diving. Expect to see nurse sharks, reef sharks, rays, turtles, barracudas, green and spotted morays, schools of large fish, tropicals. For an off-the-beaten-path diving experience, check it out.

## CANADA

### Ontario

**Abucs, August 2005, Harry Edward White (harrywhite@rcn.com), New York, NY.** Experience: Over 1000 dives. Vis: 40 to 80 Feet. Water: 70 to 75 F, calm, choppy, currents. St Lawrence River. Decent but somewhat primitive boat (it did have a head). Great, intact wrecks with good viz. Current was sometimes a hindrance, sometimes a help, sometimes a great joy. Operator is a nice lady. Stayed at a good motel about 5 miles from shop in Brockville ON. Quaint town. Good (and bad) restaurants available. Price per diver (air; boat; motel [includes breakfast] and lunch) quite reasonable. A great trip for North East divers who want to dive wet (so long as boat does not go into Lake Ontario).

**Abucs Dive Center, August 2006, Jack Gullo, Jr. (jgullo@carr.org), New Windsor, MD.** Experience: 251-500 dives. Vis: 50 to 75 Feet. Water: 76 to 78 F, calm, currents. 1000 island diving is the best wreck diving around. You can dive there; have short boat rides (less than ½ hour); no sea sickness and great viz — the only thing to contend with is the current. Wrecks are in great shape and many are accessible from shore! The dive operation leaves a lot to be de-

sired. Broken boats are the norm; delays in diving; slow tank fills with seemingly dangerous overfills. The crew was helpful and made an attempt at safety — although some of the practices did not seem that safe. On the admin side — the price always changed, nothing was done in writing, no timely feedback when setting up the trip; and no definite answer in getting details before arriving.

## CROATIA

**Shark Diving Center, September 2006, David Schwab (schwabd@bunt.com), APO, AE.** Experience: 251-500 dives. Vis: 20 to 30 Meters. Water: 12 to 17 C. Second time with this dive operation. Shark Dive Center was supportive of what our group wanted to do and responsive to our needs. Fully equipped shop. We brought our own equipment, to include cylinders, but were able to use the shop's for day trip w/two dives. Shop also arranged lunch on board — quite tasty! And plenty of food for little \$. Nitrox available for 2 Euros/cylinder (about \$2.60/tank). Divemaster briefed all Nitrox divers and oversaw checking of %. Safety-conscious. Dive boat was a tour boat, but it worked for our 20 divers. Lots of cover on deck, plenty of room, easy to get back on board. Center has other dive boats, too. Dived on three wrecks each at about 40 meters; plus two walls. Diagrams of each dive are on the website. Dive operation located in Medulin, near Pula, Croatia. This is a tourist area so there is plenty to do. Good food, sightseeing, transportation. Roman Coliseum in Pula isn't as grand as the one in Rome, but worth a visit. Medulin/Pula is in NW Croatia, just across the Adriatic Sea from Venice. English, German and

Italian spoken here. There's an airport in Pula.

## SPAIN

**Happy Divers, Atalya Park Hotel, April 2006, Nancy Aberg (codycreek@sisqtel.net), Greenview, CA.** Experience: 250 dives. Vis: 6 inches to 5 feet. Water: 58 to 61 F, calm and flat, no currents. Divemaster, Sven, was really helpful and handled all problems without hesitation. He was a great instructor for the large classes they hold at that dive shop in a pool. If I had known of the poor visibility I never would have gone! Also, most dives are shore entry, or swim out to the site, then dive down. That is a big turn off for me as I have a back problem which I told them about beforehand. They alluded to using a boat ... only one dive that week used a boat. And Saturday, as there were 12 people who had signed up to dive, Peter, the owner of the shop, took 6 divers out first, dropped them off without a divemaster, left, and went back to get the other 6 divers and a trainee divemaster to be dropped off while he took the first group back to shore. If there aren't laws against this, there should be. None of those divers had ever dove there before and most were inexperienced divers — not a time to be without a divemaster or a boat in extremely low visibility!

## UNITED STATES

### Iowa

**Lake Okoboji, August 2006, Larry Sensenig (sensenig@morningside.edu), Sioux City, IA.** Experience: 101-250 dives. Vis: 15 to 20 Feet. Water: