

on board. The divemasters set up the guests gear each morning and switched tanks over between the two morning dives. Cold drinking water was always available and fresh fruit was always offered between dives in the morning. For the 2-tank morning dive package, the boats leave the dock by 8:00 and go around to the north side of the island to dive sites in Bloody Bay and Jackson Bay. Boat rides are about 30 minutes each way. On most days, the divemasters gave afternoon divers the option of an afternoon or a dusk dive, and we did the dusk dive on 4 of the 5 afternoons that we dove. These were definitely some of the best dives of the trip. There was a charge for the dusk dive (\$10/dive). The walls at some of the sites in Bloody Bay and Jackson Bay are absolutely breathtaking — sheer walls with lots of colorful sponges and corals. For the first few days, we experienced some rough waters (though not really bad), but the end of the week was remarkably calm — almost like lake water on the last day. Vivid clear blue water — almost surreal in some places. Diving in the Bay Islands is quite different from Little Cayman (more color and macro in the Bay Islands but more stunning walls in Little Cayman), but we rank them similarly in quality for different reasons.

COLOMBIA

Two islands, while under the Colombian flag, are less than 75 miles off the coast of Nicaragua and have a strong Caribbean flavor. They do not pose the travel risks of mainland Colombia and you can reach them from Costa Rica. You may find good diving, though some operators may make no effort to take you to it.

San Andres Island

Karibik Diver, March 2007, David W Taylor (taylordw@mcmaster.ca), Hamilton, Ont. Experience: 251-500 dives. Vis: 70 Feet. Water: 79 to 82 F, calm, no currents. Werner looks after you, from the cold one on arriving at the airport, tank swapping, gear rinsing, a rum and coke on departing, to lots of entertaining tales. Usual profile is a 45-minute guided tour, then stay in the vicinity of the boat until you are ready to surface. I had several 75-minute dives. Dives along the coast ... jump in, come up when ready, we will find you. Great soft corals, not a large number of fish except at two shallow sites at the top of the island. One spotted eagle ray at a wall dive and a pair of juveniles at a marina used for the surface interval. Werner also feeds you well. I will go again, but it is not at the top of my list of repeats. Isleno, Aquarium, Marazul (all Decameron), in that order, would be better resorts, being closer to the dive shop, but Werner does cover travel to and from the shop.

Poseidon Dive Center, May 2007, Terry Anderson (tha@tamu.edu), Bryan, TX. Experience: 501-1000 dives. Vis: 30 to 40 Feet. Water: 82 to 84 F, no currents. Went with Poseidon Dive Center in Toganga, Columbia. This is not their best area. German-run center, good service, \$65 for 2 dives, 8 a.m. to 1.30, with a snack. Good rental equipment, new boat, DMs are friendly and experienced. We dove in two groups, beginners and experienced. All dives are along the coastline, so about 60 feet, 50 to 60 minutes. Saw lots of small fish, half-dozen eels, a hawksbill turtle. DM said that he had 2,000 dives in area and only saw one shark, a nurse. Pretty fished out, unfortunately.