

vary; some are dry and nice, others are a bit damp and in need of repair — but after 5+ dives per day, the only time you are in your room is to download a card or sleep. The food, compared to other places we have just stayed in Malaysia, is nice — if you're a sweet tooth, you might feel a bit under catered for. All the staff are great. Some of the diving from other divers was not; the dive-masters could definitely be pointing out some of the bad techniques and behavior. The house reef is just fantastic for photographers, as you can spend as long as you want (or as your long-suffering buddy wants). We stayed for 9 days initially, and then extended for another 4. UW Photography Comments: No rinse tank on boat, but we were never more than 20-30 minutes from the rig. Separate rinse tank on the rig. There was no specific photo table or room, but your palatial accommodation had a small desk (which was transformed into a workbench for me).

MALDIVES

Baani Explorer, December 2006, Sally Byrd (ladybyrds@msn.com). Experience: 40 dives. Upon departure from Laguna Beach Resort, we were never informed of our pickup and where we would be met by a representative from the boat. We contacted Hussein Hamyz, boat manager. He informed us that we needed to be at the Male airport by 7 am. We sat at the airport until 12:15, arriving at the boat at 12:45. The cleanliness of the boat is atrocious. Dietary restrictions and food likes and dislikes were not forwarded on to the boat manager. The chef did not acknowledge any of our requests or restrictions but served tuna steaks/tuna fish two to three times every day. Daily

requests were made for fresh vegetables and totally ignored! The crew was never introduced to the guests and we did not know who was responsible for what. Room 11, Executive Honeymoon Suite, was infested with mold and the carpet was soaking-wet. The previous guest left the windows open for 3 days during a rain storm. The toilet seat was broken off. The bathroom shower and floor were dangerously slippery. There was no working air conditioning in Room 11. The temperature never varied from outside air temperature and extreme humidity. There was no hot water for three days. After that, unless you were the first off the boat and ran up the ladder in your room to shower, there was never hot water. In Room 11 the light next to the bed and the fan were on the same switch. So if you wanted the light off at night to sleep the fan went off, or vice versa. Bathroom door in Room 10 also, Executive Honeymoon Suite, did not stay closed. There was no toilet paper holder, so every time the boat shifted, the toilet paper would fall onto the wet floor. The rooms and sheets stunk like mildew, and sheets were never changed all week. The beds were extremely uncomfortable so we slept on the deck every night. Crew would smoke in the saloon, and all over the boat, which your website states is non-smoking, and totally disregarding that none of the guests were smokers. The disgusting smell would come through the vents into our rooms. The crew told us we could have fresh dive towels whenever we wanted, and we ran out on Tuesday night. There was nowhere to hang wet suits, clothes, or towels on the live-aboard. We had to use deck chairs, which took away from people using them. There were no fresh water tanks to rinse our gear. We had to drag our wetsuits back and forth. The

dhoni boat was challenging to get on and off. There was nowhere to hang wet suits, clothes, or towels on the dhoni. There was nothing to hold onto when the current was rough and the boat was rocking back and forth. Only one night dive was offered when the guests asked for more. On one occasion, tanks were filled with bad air, and every diver had a sore throat and had to abort the dive early. Hussein tried to compensate with free drinks, knowing that 90% of the passengers on the boat did not drink. He also mentioned numerous times that if we were so unhappy that we should get off the boat. Where were we to go? There was no fresh water on the dhoni for drinking after each dive. On Saturday evening we were told that Sunday there would be one dive at 6 am, and then we would be traveling back to Male to spend the day in town, so they could get supplies for next weeks trip. Our trip ended on Monday. When we booked this trip, it was for seven nights, six days of diving, and we only had five days of diving. All the staff members, minus Hussein Hamyz, were nice, respectful, helpful, and tried to do everything they could to make our journey more pleasant. We complained and they refunded each of us \$200.

Baani Adventurer, January 2007, Maria Brinson (lemurs@cox.net), Lemon Grove, CA. Experience: 51-100 dives. Vis: 40 to 60 Feet. Water: 79 to 81 F, calm, choppy, surge, currents. We stayed overnight at the Central Hotel and then met the Baani back at the airport the next day. The locals were great and are very friendly and had no problems with Americans. There were 18 passengers: 8 Germans, 4 Italians and 4 non-diver Italians. We did 3 dives a day and 1 day with 4. The currents were pretty strong on 1/2 the dives, so doing more than 3 was a challenge. On one channel dive,

1/2 of the divers had to abort the dive because they couldn't get down fast enough before they passed by the reef too quickly. The crew was really great and tried very hard to find good spots where the current didn't pull your mask off. The crew said that the currents were unusually strong and the water temp was down and vis is usually better in January and February. There were loads of fish, especially macro. The boat was clean and the food was really good. All the DMs were knowledgeable, friendly, and had safety in mind. We saw loads of white tips, 1 12-ft grey reef shark and lots of mantas. On our last dive we could snorkel or dive at a manta site and the snorkels said the mantas were very friendly and would come circle them and even touch them, but if you tried to touch a manta it would take off. We dove and I had one small manta play with me by spinning whenever I spun. It was great interaction. We got 18 dives in 7 days. The corral was looking like it was making a comeback from the Tsunami. One passenger said he had been there 10 years before and the corral was pristine back then compared to what it looks like now. The only thing that really bothered us was that there was no regard about touching the coral. We saw some divers kick right into it, causing damage. We did use reef hooks for some areas, which seem to do less damage than just grabbing onto whatever you could.

Baani Adventurer, February/March 2007, Edith Summey (summey11@aol.com), Carbondale, IL. Experience: Over 1000 dives. Vis: 80 to 100 Feet. Water: 80 to 84 F, strong currents. After a restful night at the Hulhuli Island Hotel recovering from our 10-day trip on the Ocean Dancer, we were taken to the dock where we joined other passengers to board the dhoni and proceed

to the Baani Adventurer operated by Maldives Live-aboards. The dhoni associated with the Baani Adventurer was vastly different than the one utilized by the Ocean Dancer. It was the traditional style boat of the Maldives, complete with the characteristic prow that gracefully swept in a curve in the bow and the ornate trim around the roof. It was a colorful vessel of a rusty-orange with blue accents. The Baani Adventurer was of a more modern design, but did not appear to be as new as the web description implied. When we arrived, the dhoni pulled along side the Baani Adventurer and we had to climb aboard via a ladder to the deck above, about 4 or 5 feet. This was the method of access between these boats for diving the rest of the week. Likewise, the dhoni deck was high out of the water and required a challenging climb the ladder up the side and over the gunnels after a dive. On the Baani Adventurer, we were welcomed into the salon/dining area which was appropriately furnished with water-resistant furniture. No T-shirts required here! The charging station was conveniently located on shelves by stairs to the cabins below and next to the rear door to the back deck. The salon was not air conditioned. But there was cross ventilation via both port and starboard doors. However, a fan or two would have been useful. There was no dedicated camera station, but neither was there any restriction as to where one could put cameras or work on them. In fact, there was little restriction at all, even to the point of smoking allowed anywhere except in the cabins and in the salon. The salon was open and smoke blew in from the front deck and smokers on the back deck during dive briefings, dinner, or other times presented an obstacle to using that area. We were shown our cabins. Ours was in the bow:

a spacious room containing two double beds, plenty of storage under both beds, a generous cabinet with both shelves and hanging space, another space behind that, a shelf beside the bed, and a mirrored vanity with drawers. The bathroom was tiled and roomy, but the shower was open-style. The cabins were described on the web as fully air conditioned; however, the air conditioning was not working at all except to circulate warm air. The temperature in the room was over 80 degrees the entire week. I always travel with my own multi-speed fan and transformer. That was our only salvation from heat stroke! Towels were issued at the beginning of the trip and changed again mid-week. Two towels each were issued for the cabin and one for diving. I carry swipe towels that are extremely absorbent and can be wrung out and used to dry off again. They do not have to get dry to be effective. I prefer to shower after diving and shampoo on deck to avoid wasting more water and using terry towels in the cabin. No Nitrox. Because we only did 3 dives a day, the advantage of less fatigue was less of an issue on this trip. But depth took a big bite out of bottom time when the computer was set on an air mix. I had to constantly monitor the no-stop time and ascend to keep out of decompression obligations. On the dhoni, things were inconvenient in that there was little water and what was there quickly ran out. I brought fresh water in a bottle with me to wash my regulator and clean my mask. Gear including suits was never rinsed until the end of the trip. Cameras were not rinsed until taken back on the Baani Adventurer. Then they were rinsed in a tub on the back deck. There were only a few serious photographers on this trip, but if there had been more, the tub would have been inadequate. No extra

towels were provided for the cameras. The enthusiasm of the divemasters and leaders on the Baani Adventurer and their willingness to deal with any problems generated a healthy atmosphere on the boat. They exercised patience and listened. The divemasters were attentive to their guests and their diving by making sure that they were accounted for and understood the diving conditions. They also did an excellent job of taking us to superior dive sites at prime times when the coral was at its best. Our night dive was outstanding; many pronounced it their best ever. They found two whale sharks — one that stayed at the surface with snorkelers for quite a long time. We had multiple encounters with manta rays, did many shark dives, and observed pilot whales and dolphins. Baani Adventurer fulfilled what were just promises, promises on Ocean Dancer! And they did it with enthusiasm and style. In compliance with the Maldives laws, the Baani Adventurer insisted on the 98-foot depth limit and the buddy diving. And, they had a form for recording the depth, time, and pressure used on each dive, which was filled out when divers returned to the main boat from the dhoni. This practice was not observed on the Ocean Dancer. We were told that dive vessels were required to collect this record and submit it to the authorities. The group became unified even though the members were from a variety of countries: Britain, Austria, Germany, and the Czech Republic in addition to us from the USA. They were eager to share their sightings and elation at having such inspiring opportunities. And they were anticipating even more adventures on each dive. I was able to work on my computer in the salon where other divers could see photos and some could observe Photoshop op-

erations. There was more opportunity for interaction given the availability of this forum. The food on the Baani Adventurer was served buffet-style and offered a wide variety including a range of local flavors and specialties. It was well balanced including meat, fish, vegetables, pastas, and salads. Appetizers were so generous and substantial that sometimes we were surprised when there was yet more brought out as the main course. The last evening on the Baani Adventurer reminded me of the Hafbrauhaus in Munich, Germany. The group was enjoying laughing and joking and singing on the back deck while having a few beers. The idea was to ring the bell and sing a song.

Baani Explorer, January 2007, Jane Goble, Lexington, SC. Experience:

251-500 dives. Vis: 40 to 80 Feet. Water: calm, choppy, currents, no currents. The whole operation was professional yet personal. Cabins were spacious and clean, as were the ensuite bathrooms. Food was plentiful and good (not gourmet but that's not why we're here). Gear is kept on separate boat (dhoni) where tanks are filled in place so your gear is never removed — and it pulls away from the main ship so you never hear compressors. The crew are friendly and handle cameras and gear with respect. Guests are mainly Europeans and experienced so we had lots of freedom to dive our plans. Diving was exceptional despite below average visibility. Sharks on every dive, schools of every description and more critters than I could log. Huge fans on beautiful walls and great seamounts for viewing the underwater drama. Wrecks and interesting swim-throughs. The crew and divemasters were informative and gave great site descriptions as well as being personable, which helped set the tone for the week. We met a great and diverse group

of people as well as fine divers, and one can't ask for more than that. Take advantage of the day rates at the one hotel on the airport island and laze around the pool if you need to kill time before boarding your flight home. You can see most of Male in an afternoon. It is interesting for Westerners to see locals going about their business but please, ladies, dress modestly.

Eagle Ray, December 2006, NCD, Ramah, NM. Experience: 51-100 dives. Vis: 15 to 30 Meters. Water: 24 to 27 C, choppy, surge, currents. This was our first live-aboard. We booked thinking it was a new boat, but was actually refurbished in 2006. Unfortunately they didn't paint the outside, so your first impression upon arrival is rather negative. The picture on the website is actually a computer generated one — it bears little resemblance to the real thing. We were only the second group on the boat, so there were some teething problems, the worst being that the air conditioning system pumped diesel exhaust fumes into the living areas — we had to turn off the whole system. Luckily the cabins do have good natural ventilation and it was not hot in early December. Dive master is experienced and safety conscious (he had done over 8000 dives in the Maldives) and knew the dive sites well. We dived three dives a day, plus one night dive. We looked after our own gear, as the crew was not detail orientated. Lot of visible damage to the reef. We saw many sharks, eagle rays and Napoleon wrasse. My biggest complaint is the divemaster's obsession with tips. The service was not good, apart from underwater. Every single day tips were mentioned. When it came to the end of the trip, we gave our tips, then the dive masters left the boat and the rest of the crew got out the power tools and starting drilling, banging and

doing major construction work until midnight, and totally ignored us. It was not a nice ending to a rather disappointing trip. I wouldn't stay on the boat the last night — leave the boat as soon as you get into port and stay in one of the nearby resorts.

Ocean Dancer, December 2006, Nancy and Lee Skinner. Experience: 800 and 1000 dives, respectively. The trip was outstanding in various ways. Designed and built by David just one year before, the boat showed great imagination in design and appointments. It would take much space for examples, but you might not believe the dimensions and details of the main salon. The staterooms were larger than any other standard rooms we have had on 14 previous live-aboards, and the bathrooms could have been in a 5-star hotel. It has an accompanying 57-foot boat for the all the divers' gear, wetsuits. This boat could stand off at a distance so the compressors were not heard on the Dancer. Exit and re-entry were easy and fast, and the crew handled gear and divers well. The dive sites themselves were presumably among the best since David has researched the atolls for many years, choosing the best for his itineraries. The number and types of dives were determined by the preferences of the divers aboard. And the adaptability of the trip was evident also in the switch from a planned dive to follow a pod of orcas that suddenly appeared in these tropical waters. For 1-1/2 hours we stayed with the pod. The enthusiastic spirit of the boat emanating from David and Gayle was shared by the entire crew, all Maldivians. The food, service and general concern for detail could not be faulted. The evening meal especially was done with impressive style and attentiveness. The combination of accommodations and service made the

trip halfway around the world from Chicago well worth the investment.

Ocean Dancer, January 2007, Mario Mizrahi (mmizrahi@avantel.net), Mexico, Mex. Experience: 501-1000 dives. Vis: 60 to 100 Feet. Water: 82 to 83 F, currents. Ship is 1 year old, beautifully crafted with wooden floors, big windows, large main salon, outdoor dining table for 16 people, beautiful and ample cabins with big bathrooms. It looks and feels more like a luxury yacht than a regular live-aboard. There are big spaces indoors and outdoors to relax and have some privacy. Main salon and each room have flat screen TVs plus DVD players. Host was David Mesnard, owner of the ship, plus Gaelle, his girlfriend and Lucy, the divemaster. No diving equipment (other than cameras) allowed on main ship; they have a Dhoni (dive vessel) that stores all gear, compressors, cameras, etc. No smelly carpets because of the wooden floors. The day you board, they take away your shoes and give them back when you disembark. Diving we saw multicolored moray eels, clown and anemone fish, banded shrimp, clown and titan triggerfish, Napoleon wrasses, lionfish, blue, gray and giant jacks, dog-tooth tuna, octopi, green and hawkbill turtles, grey reef, whitetip, silvertip and hammerhead sharks, marlin, pigmy frogfish, unicorn surgeonfish, emperor, blue faced and other angelfishes, batfish, juvenile and adult sweetlips and scores of mantas. One night we visited the lovely Hilton Resort on one of the atolls (\$800-\$4000 per night) and had dinner at the buffet (\$60 + beverages); it was well worth it. Great ship and great place. UW Photography Comments: Large space on main ship for cameras, charging, etc. Rinse tank and adequate space for cameras on Dhoni (accompanying dive vessel).

Ocean Dancer, February 2007, Edith Summey (summey11@aol.com), Carbondale, IL. Experience: Over 1000 dives. Vis: 80 to 100 Feet. Water: 80 to 84 F, strong currents. Ocean Dancer in the Maldives is the newest addition to the Peter Hughes franchise. It is owned and operated by Capt. David Mesnard, a Frenchman, who built it. A combination of factors makes the Ocean Dancer a less desirable dive live-aboard than one might imagine. Capt. David not only built the boat, he crafted it. The boat itself is a museum piece with inlaid floors, elaborate woodwork throughout, high-end fabric upholstered furniture, art, and artifacts. Placement of various areas to be used by divers were chosen without consideration for access or convenience. For example, the camera station was located at the bow end of the salon which was at the opposite end of the boat away from the access to the dive dhoni. It was also inside the salon where any wetness was forbidden. Likewise, the charging station was nowhere near the camera station, but was in the middle of the salon. Thus, batteries that needed to be transferred to or from cameras and strobes were not convenient. Furthermore, divers were required to be dry and to wear T-shirts to enter the salon in order to work on their cameras or access the charging station! This rule would necessitate a change after every dive, more than a nuisance. The entire main deck of the boat was occupied by the salon (inside of the boat) which was effectively "off limits" to those who remained in a swim suit between dives leaving only the front and back decks where there were no power connections for computers, no places for personal items, and no amenities whatsoever. The only remaining option was to retire to one's cabin between dives to work on

photos and attend to tasks at hand. At least the cabins were air conditioned which the salon was not! And, the salon windows could not be opened. There was a small window at the bow end of the salon, a single door on the side, and a single door at the rear. There were a couple of floor fans to circulate the hot air. The great design standard, form follows function, was totally ignored, both in the construction and then in the operation of this boat. The salon was just one of the problems with the design of the Ocean Dancer. All dining was on the back deck of the boat. The breakfast and lunch was served buffet style from a shelf in front of a pass-through kitchen window. With the exception of a hot pan with a lid, the dishes were uncovered allowing flies to help themselves, first. There was a dispenser for cool water. Getting ice was a major project and usually resulted in 3 or 4 cubes from the bar, not a glass full as requested. Sodas were extremely expensive. Juice was usually available along with packaged cookies. After-dive snacks consisted of such items as egg rolls or pizza slices. Again, the flies got first choice. On the dhoni, water, tea, fresh coconut, and the packaged cookies were the usual fare. Another problem with dining and even sitting at the table on the back deck was that the designated smoking area was on the lower level just below at the aft of the boat. When smokers were there, their smoke would curl up onto the dining area right on top of the chairs and table where people were sitting and eating or talking. Capt. David was particularly proud of his chef and menus which he displayed daily in a book. Some things were quite delicious. Other items got repetitive and became boring. If you were on a diet, you would have been satisfied. If you were expecting

all-you-can-eat hungry-man meals with plenty of pit stops in between, forget it. There was a bowl of fruit so you would not starve and always those bland packaged cookies. But you had better not take any of it to your cabin! That was against the rules. Our cabin was the first one on the starboard side of the boat at the foot of the stairs, beside the engine room and we were treated to a roar the entire trip! Moreover, our air conditioner was emitting a powerful odor of burning that caused both me and my buddy to develop deep chest coughing every night of the 10 nights we were in that cabin. You could open the cabinet containing the air conditioner and smell the fumes coming off the unit, yet nothing was done about it despite our complaints. The effect was quite wearing on our energy and mood in terms of loss of sleep. Another source of irritation was fumes from the dhoni, which was brought up beside the Ocean Dancer just outside our cabin. Superficially, the cabin looked quite attractive, but it did not have functional storage space for clothes and personal items. There were two small drawers in a wicker stand and a cabinet that had a few shelves and a short space for hanging items. The larger space was under the bunks, but access was with hard-to-remove panels. There were no hooks in the cabin itself at all. There were two hooks in the bathroom upon which were hung the two robes. There was one towel rack. There was no top sheet provided for the beds. There was a bottom sheet and a waffle-patterned spread only. One bed had two pillows. The other had one. The bathroom window was exactly at the level of the dive dhoni deck that frequently was parked outside, giving anyone a direct view into the bathroom. My roommate stacked luggage on the window sill to

block this temptation. There should be a curtain there. The dive briefings were held on the back deck of the Ocean Dancer. The bell was rung to summon divers to briefings as well as meals. Briefings consisted of drawings and descriptions of the dive site and warnings about the conditions and instructions about the dive. There are a number of Maldives laws that affect diving. We were told about some of them — the ones that Capt. David wanted to emphasize. Others he chose to ignore. The ones he liked were the depth limit of 98 feet and mandatory buddy diving (reach out and touch someone!). The ones he chose to ignore were the dive log that was supposed to be recorded after each dive (depth, time, pressure) and turned in to the authorities and the Nitrox records. (I was never even shown the analyzer or the record sheet.) It is a real pain to have all of the dive gear on the dive dhoni and to have to get on and off of it for every dive. There is a lot of risk of forgetting something because of having to move it on and off the dhoni between dives. Another problem on the dhoni was lack of fresh water to rinse gear. I had to dip water out of the camera rinse to clean my regulators after every dive so that they would not get clogged with salt and free flow. On the dive dhoni, there was good crew support. Another feature on the dhoni that disturbed me was the use of unmarked cups for water or tea. These plastic cups were stacked before each dive and one could pick up a fresh cup. But, after using it, it was hard to tell the difference between them. Likewise, fresh water is preferable for cleansing masks to avoid cross contamination instead of the community bucket method used on the dhoni. I have my own defog and use separate water.

There is no shower on the dhoni. There was a fresh water shower on the back lower deck on the Ocean Dancer. The flow does not fit a standard live-aboard routine. Someone needs to sit down and help them figure it out. But then, Capt. David already knows everything, so he would probably not listen. One main disadvantage seemed to be the inability to put divers in simultaneously on a dive site when current was an issue. It was difficult for divers to jump together. Staged entries meant more risk of missing the reef in swift current. It was also difficult for the dhoni to pick up all of the divers in a reasonable amount of time. Often divers were waiting for 10 to 15 minutes at the surface. Once, we almost drifted into the surf before we were picked up. In that case, we were urged to swim out to the boat. Get real! Finally they threw out a line! And that was another problem — no lines, not even on the side of the boat to hold while they handed down the camera. Diving was OK. But Capt. David, who bragged that he knew the best sites in the Maldives, must have been keeping the prime dive sites a big secret because he did not take us to them. In fact, I did not see any spectacular sites while I was on the Ocean Dancer. We had to wait for the second part of our trip on the Baani Adventurer to find the better dive sites of the Maldives. Certainly one site which was famous for blue coral looked drab and lifeless when we saw it from the Ocean Dancer, but it was a magical dive from the Baani Adventurer. We saw some of the same parts, but saw much more of it from the Baani Adventurer. I think a big difference was the guidance. The dive masters on the Ocean Dancer did little to assist divers to find things of interest and help direct them to the better parts of the dive. Also, there was

little effort to get the divers into the water right over the reef so that often it was a struggle just to find the reef. Sometimes dives had to be aborted in the blue. They did do a good job of cleaning up our gear and helping us get it ready to pack up at the end of the trip. They were gracious and deserve credit for being cheerful and eager to please the whole time. Another fact to note was a charge made to my buddy for her weight belt that vanished mid-trip. She would remove it and hand it up at the end of the dive. She was wearing 8 kg (17 lbs.). That is not a weight that one would lose and not notice! Yet, when it went missing from her equipment basket, she was accused of losing it and charged over \$60 at the end of the trip! Capt. David would not entertain the possibility that it could have been misplaced or mixed up with other belts and held her responsible. Check out my web page: <http://e-diver.spaces.live.com>

MV Ocean Dancer, March 2007, Susan I. Welch (siouxwelch@yahoo.com), Stuart, FL. Experience: 251-500 dives. Vis: 50 to 125 Feet. Water: 83 to 85 F, calm. The Ocean Dancer is an incredible boat, just beautiful, designed and built by David Mesnard with hand-picked wood from different areas in Asia. It is an extremely stable vessel with a shallow draft, perfect for navigating the waters of the Maldives. It is roomy in all aspects, particularly the cabins and main saloon. It has 8 cabins for 16 divers, all with ensuite bathrooms that are also quite roomy. You can have a massage onboard or just relax between dives on the bow or upper deck. The Maldivian crew are friendly, accommodating, and always ready to help you, whether on the dive boat or the mother ship. They assist with a big, beautiful smile. David

(owner/operator) and Gaelle live onboard. Their enthusiasm and love of the Maldives permeates all aspects of the operation of the boat. They add a charm and energy to the vessel that is contagious. You feel like honored guests in a beautiful floating lodge. The diving is done from a 32-foot dhoni. Your dive gear will never touch the beautiful floors of the MV Ocean Dancer. Nor will your shoes! Nitrox is available and highly recommended due to the dive profiles. Seldom does the top of the reef go above 35 or 40 feet. All safety stops are done in the blue. It is all drift diving, using sausages in the safety stop for the dive boat to locate you and pick you up. We were there in the wrong time of the year for whale sharks (November) but did see the large mantas. Beautiful coral, beautiful reefs, and lots of fish life. Also, if you have any interest in free diving, David is an accomplished free diver who will be happy to share some instruction and insight to this fascinating sport. I highly recommend this boat and this location. Book through his USA agent, Peter Hughes. UW Photography Comments: saloon area was used to store/charge camera gear. Adequate setup.

THAILAND

M/Y Genesis, Sea Bees, Palm Garden Khao Lok, March 2007, Bob Sivak (bobsivak@cox.net), Mission Viejo, CA. Experience: 101-250 dives. Vis: 10 to 30 Feet. Water: 80 to 83 F, calm, currents. Went to Thailand to see the renowned Similan and Surin Islands during whale shark season. Overall, disappointing trip due to poor visibility and zero whale sharks. Sea Bees dive center has a user friendly website with tons of info. I booked a 3 day "north