

# Standing Up for Caribe Bay

## *Readers defend Crooked Island, Bahamas resort*

Readers Bob and Char Sigman of Menasha, Wisconsin, read our review of Caribe Bay in the March issue. They don't think we gave Caribe Bay a fair shake:

"We've made 31 trips to the Out Islands of the Bahamas, and have dived virtually all of the recognized premier dive destinations of the Caribbean as well as the Galapagos and the Red Sea. We have dived Crooked Island several times when the resort was still known as Pittstown Point Landing, and tried Caribe Bay last November.

"Caribe Bay is not perfection, but it IS a tranquil and friendly little resort with superb, virtually virgin wall diving. In January we dove the world-famous Bloody Bay Wall off Little Cayman, and honestly felt that the wall off Crooked Island was close to the same league.

"We liked their Bayliner dive boat and did not mind getting wet on the ride to the dive sites or wading out to the boat. True, it wouldn't be adequate if the resort had a full house of divers, but frankly, as remote as it is, I don't think that is going to be a frequent problem.

"There is no quarrel that the rooms could use a major makeover, but they are clean, safe, and quiet, as well as convenient. We don't miss the telephone, radio, or TV and can't envision the need for an air conditioner.

"Sure there's lots of room for improvement at Caribe Bay, but it would be an awful shame if

reports such as yours discouraged divers from visiting there, with the result that the owners don't generate the profits necessary to put the money back into the place or (worse yet) it closes for lack of sufficient business. That would deprive the dive community of a real (albeit rough-cut) gem."

### **Know Before You Go**

Grab an oar, we're in the same boat when it comes to dive resort preferences. The last thing I need in my room on a dive trip is a TV or telephone, and I'll take a cool sea breeze over air conditioning any time. I also don't mind wading in the water to get to the dive boat or even lugging a few tanks around if it means I beat the wait-in-line tour-bus dive operations and get to a more pristine reef. Give me a call, we can book our next trip together.

However, not everyone is looking for the same things as we are in a dive trip. *In Depth's* role is to present an accurate picture of the resort, the diving, and the service as compared to other dive destinations. What we all want to know before we plunk down our

money is precisely what it is we are buying.

You say it would be a shame if divers were discouraged from visiting Caribe Bay by reading our report. I disagree. There are plenty of publications that write with the sole purpose of encouraging divers to visit whichever destination they are covering. Divers discouraged from choosing Caribe Bay by reading *In Depth's* review would do so because they had the information they needed to make the correct decision. Those looking for a luxury resort would not be happy at Caribe Bay. It would be a shame if they did go.

### **What We Said**

At the same time, the review contained all the key lines to let divers like you and me know why they would like Caribe Bay. I quote from the report: "If you're willing to put up with adequate but not luxurious accommodations, come on down for some good to great diving. . . . Nearly pristine reefs with tons of biodiversity. . . . Prices are a little steep, but if you like out-of-the-way places, you won't mind paying."

The review was clear. So was the message. I personally wanted to go to Caribe Bay after reading our reviewer's report, and after your recommendation I'm even more interested. I hope that Caribe Bay does make it as a dive resort — just not at the expense of uninformed *In Depth* readers looking for something that Caribe Bay is not offering. (Caribe Bay, 800-752-2322 or 504-624-3998)

J. Q.

### **Caribe Bay Update**

It looks like the Bayliner dive boat is no longer an issue. A recent storm blew it up on the reef and put it out of commission. Caribe Bay assured me that they had other boats to take its place, a 32-footer and a couple of aluminum skiffs.