

boat or at a restaurant near the sites run by the dive operation, buffet style and similar to food at hotel. Lunch included in package, pop or bottled water in US dollars sold on the boat as well as beer for the end of the day. Opted for additional dives v tour of island and ended up on one of the cattle boats which makes for a very long ride adds 30-45 minutes to the same sites as the faster boats. Strong military presence, they are always on the docks when the boats leave and arrive. One day in Havana to explore. People are friendly and very poor. Most everything can be bought in US dollars.

CURAÇAO

A short hop from Bonaire, Curaçao's colorful, historic, cosmopolitan Dutch city of Willemstad offers something for the non-diver, making it popular with diver/non-diver couples and as an extension to a Bonaire sojourn. . . . There's good diving, international shopping for high-rollers, night life, hiking (bring boots), an orchid-filled forest, beautiful rural villages and country homes, windsurfing, half-naked Europeans, and horse-back riding. Excellent Indonesian restaurants offer all-you-can-eat rijstafels (rice tables). Tours of the Amstel Brewery are also available. . . . Marine Park, southeast of the public aquarium ("Seaquarium"), offers rough boat rides in exchange for the best wall dives on the island. There's outstanding beach diving from

protected coves on the north-western side of the island, which is usually calmest and has easy access by car. The windward side is almost always too rough to dive, but the diving's good if the wind shifts from its prevailing pattern. . . . Expect water temperatures in the low 80s most of the time. . . .

Caribbean Sea Sports, Marriott, April 2000, Dennis Dukes, Fort Wayne, IN. Vis: 75 to 100 feet. Water: 80 degrees, calm and flat. Dive your own profile? Dive restrictions: 110 feet. The Marriott was recently purchased from Sonesta Resorts. The accommodations are what you expect from Marriott; food and the service was excellent. The dive operation was very good. The dive personnel were very accommodating and knowledgeable of the dive sites. The dive shop provided rinse tank and lockers for your gear with ample hanging area to dry the gear. Water clarity and temperature compare favorably to Cayman and the coral is outstanding. Do not miss this location.

Habitat Curaçao, September 1999, Tari Hanneman (thanneman@peoplepc.com) Los Angeles, CA. Vis: 60-80 ft. Water: 80-85 degrees. Calm, rainy. A great place to stay if you love to dive. They lived up to their "diving freedom" motto with tanks available for unlimited shore diving and no restrictions on the diving. The house reef is great. During the first part of our stay, the boat was not very

crowded, with our group of five and maybe one or two other couples. Toward the end of the week, the resort and boats were packed. Most of the people had come to catch the coral spawning (an unintentional bonus for our trip). The divemasters all had a sense of humor and were good about pointing out things (i.e., seahorses and frogfish) if you were following them. The diving was above average. Essentially all dive sites have gently sloping walls starting at about 30 feet. Best diving probably in 40 to 60 foot range. Corals, gorgonian, etc., covered much but not all of substrate. Moderately healthy reefs with some damage, primarily in the form of algal overgrowth of coral but also some places with light trash. Lots of colorful tropical fish but not many big ones; also lots of shrimp, crabs and other "little things." Habitat boats were the only ones we saw and they anchored carefully on moorings or sand. There isn't much to do for non-divers. One of our nondiving companions decided to give diving a try with a resort course and then decided to get certified. Good short introduction to photography courses are available — just enough to get you started without spending half your vacation in a classroom. We stayed in two cottages on the hill (which are no longer using for guests). The extra kitchen space was great for cooking some of our own meals. The food at the restaurant was ok, but definitely lacking in vegetarian options. The service was well-intentioned but could be slow. Make sure to check your bill if you are in a group with more than one check

at the table. We also went into town for dinner twice. Dive shop management is good. Lodging and restaurant management seemed disorganized on the whole. Allow an hour to check out and review your bill carefully (save those receipts!). Communication between lodging and dive shop management not great, which may explain both some of the bill problems we had and the overbooking of the resort at the end of our trip, for which the dive operation seemed completely unprepared. (Ph: 800-327-6709 or 305-438-4220)

Habitat Curaçao, January 2000, Marcia Kerl, St. Paul, MN. Vis: 60 to 80 feet. Water: 78 to 80 degrees, choppy. Dive your own profile. Dive restrictions: 60 min. A hurricane hit in November, there was a lot of destruction below water. A great deal of coral had been scattered. The staff was gardening during many dives. The sights north of the resort was great, those south were trashed with tires, bottles and other human garbage.

Habitat Curaçao, March 2000, Susan Clegg, College Station, TX. Vis: 50-75 ft. Water: 76-78 degrees. Diving was not spectacular but was nice. Everyone at the resort went out of their way to help with our 15 mo. old daughter, even tho they are not set up for kids.

Habitat Curaçao, May 2000, Craig Young and Sharon Busey, Menomonee Falls WI. One of the nicest diving trips we've taken. Habitat Curaçao is on an isolated coast 12 miles from the airport and the main

town of Willemstad. Each room has air conditioning, a small room safe, a mini kitchenette (including mini refrigerator, stove, dishes and sink). Rooms have 110v outlets. Upstairs rooms have large really nice balconies. Beach towels available at front desk. Resort and dive personnel are friendly and helpful. On-site restaurant has average food and reasonable prices. Rental vehicles are available. Flew directly on American more expensive than ALM, but no problems. Tanks available 24 hours a day. There are lockers and rinse tanks available at the dive dock. Great place for night dives. Snorkeling off resort beach was fair at best. Air fills usually 3000+. Best condition rental equipment we ever used. Boats have camera tables and rinse tanks. Oranges and water are served between dives. Crew very professional and helpful. Divers may dive on their own or with guide. Computer use encouraged. Water temperature 77°; air temperature 81° with nice breeze most of the time; visibility 50 ft. Nice coral, no large fish. Lots of morays, Peterson cleaner shrimp in corkscrew anemones, baby spotted drums, scorpion fish, reef squid, lettuce sea slugs and flamingo tongues, many toothed conger, sharptail eels, juvenile trunkfish, leopard flatworms, apricot sidegill slug, seahorses and turtles. Dolphins played in bow wake of dive boat. Restaurants in Willemstad: Fort Nassau Restaurant in old fort overlooking city and harbor great food, great view, has both air-conditioned and al fresco dining expensive. Bistro LeClochard in old waterfront fort: nice

view of historic Willemstad, harbor entrance and swinging pontoon bridge nice ambiance, good food, expensive.

Habitat Curaçao, May 2000, James McMeins (marinenine@hotmail.com), Carnation, WA. Vis: 30 to 75 Feet. Water: 78 to 80 F, choppy surge. Dive your own profile: yes. Dive restrictions: None other than they'd remind you not to go deeper than your last dive. 4th stay in Curaçao, 3rd stay at Habitat, compared with resorts in town it is very secluded and quite, which is what we like. Boat dives were so-so this time as unusually strong winds blowing out of the SE the entire time we were there (1st through the 17th) causing large waves and rollers. Getting back onto the boats was a real challenge sometimes. Water was also cooler than normal, 78-80 degrees. Some of the mooring buoys are missing from Lenny's visit in November and quite a few of the shallow reefs are covered with sand now. Lenny's most apparent damage is to the shallow areas as the beach off of Habitat used to be swarming with small tropicals around the small coral heads but now they are mostly covered with sand and lots of dead coral was washed into the beach area. The house reef though is in great shape and one of the best reefs for doing night dives that I've found. Low rating on the food due to the slug that arrived in our salad one night...at least for the next few months I'm sure they'll clean their veggies better...Mike, Dive ops manager and his crew are still one of the best I've seen. UW Photography comments: Freshwater rinse tanks on

all boats and at shore diving facility, On-site developing.

Habitat Curaçao, June 2000, Gary and Pam Rudy, San Jose, CA. Vis: 50 ft. Water: 79-81 degrees. Our luggage stayed in Miami. We could see it on the baggage cart, but ALM said the belly was full. It arrived the next day. Habitat lent us equipment at no charge. They said it happens all the time. Our plane was 5 hour late. Dive operation is tops. Very efficiently run. Dive boats are comfortable with helpful dive guides. Saw squid and saw frogfish, sea horses and lots of juvenile fish. Hotel very nice, clean and comfortable.

Habitat Curaçao, June 2000, K. Reeser (rees43@aol.com), Bloomington, IL. Vis: 35 to 90 Feet. Water: 79 to 81 F. Our stay at ice. Selected it based upon the information we gathered from *Undercurrent*. Pool was excellent. Rooms OK with small fridge, sink, and 2 burner stove and utensils. The interior and exterior of the rooms are beginning to show the wear and tear of many travelers. How Habitat keeps up with maintenance will help determine how successful they are in the next several years. They need to pay a little more attention to replacing doors, faucets, mattresses, deck furniture, which show wear. The landscaping is very nice and kept up. Dining facilities were not as bad as we expected. No one is in a hurry and that's what we expect while we're on "island time." Shore diving was nice and accessible. Short walk down a dock and you're in. If you prove yourself as an experi-

enced, level-headed diver — you're on your own. I made many shore dives, boat dives and even night dives by myself and was given no grief. Boats are in good shape. One boat had a small but adequate table for cameras and a rinse tank, 2nd boat had only the rinse tank. We visited 2 dives site twice. They could spread more dives beyond the regular 4 popular dive sites. Habitat would benefit from putting a 2nd diver master in the water to police all the "reef gropers." While 1 dive master was spotting a sea horse and showing others I stayed back and watched one diver with video crash into the reef several times. Another so-called divemaster from the states was into the reef while his newly certified wife was bouncing on and off the reef because she could not control her buoyancy. Tsk Tsk.

Habitat Curaçao, July 2000, DL and FL, New York, NY. Vis: 40-90 ft. Water: 79-82 degrees. Dive restrictions: "You're a certified diver-you're responsible for yourself." This resort very pleasantly surprised us, which was set up with divers in mind. Shore diving couldn't have been easier. Tanks available 24 hours next to the lockers where you stow your gear. Just a few steps down the dock and you're in the water, 20 ft. from a beautiful wall. You can only do one boat dive (2 tank) a day as boat goes to same sites in morning and afternoon, but shore diving is unlimited. Rooms were very clean and comfortable with shower/tub and large terrace. Great for washing and drying gear (also good rinse tanks at dock). We

bought groceries in town and made lunch each day in our kitchenette to eat on the terrace while looking out at the ocean. The town is very pleasant but about 30 minutes away. The hotel offers free shuttles at 9 am, 2 pm, and 6:30 pm into town and can return at 9:30 am, 2:30 pm and 7 pm or can take taxi (about \$30). You can also rent a Toyota pickup for \$6 an hour.

Habitat Curaçao, September 2000, Ray Kanyok (Rkanyok@snet.net), Hamden, Ct. Vis: 60 to 100 Feet. Water: 29 to 30 C. calm. No restrictions enforced, Diver Freedom. Overall I would give the reefs at Bonaire only a slight edge over Curaçao. The Superior Producer wreck at Curaçao is much better than the Hilma Hooker or even the Rhone. It sits upright in 105' of water. Visibility is 60' when cloudy, 100' when the suns out. Good wreck to learn penetrations on. I found a wallet in the cargo hold along with a few women's purses. We dove the wreck once from the shore then dove it with Caribbean Sports at the Marriott Hotel because we heard that the crack addicts hide in the bushes when your not around then rob your car. Habitat did not boat dive the wreck; one of the dive masters told me it was a management decision not to go there anymore. Diving with Habitat was pretty good, the boats held 20 people and were almost crowded. Fruit given out between dives but there was no fresh water to take a quick rinse for your body. Boats were slow. Divemasters were pretty good and they had a good

selection of reefs on the North West side of the Island. Mushroom Forest was awesome. Better than Ole' Blue on Bonaire. Cave with a 20 yard opening at the end of the dive you can penetrate 30 yards into in 20' feet of water. Dive operation very well run, Mike Stafford was a very helpful Photo shop well run, Karen puts on a pretty good slide show reminiscent of Jim Brandon's show at Sand Dollar. Dive Locker area way too small look out for gear falling on your head if you have a lower locker. The area gets very crowded when the boats come in and out. Shore diving good with a remote spot in the parking lot to pick up tanks. We would take 6 and head out for the day. You do have to carry your gear from the shop to the parking lot so a cart would be helpful. Shore diving at Puerto Marie was the best. You pay a few bucks for the parking, rinse tanks and shower but its worth it. Saw a Hawksbill turtle each trip. It's a double reef system like the Lake on Bonaire, but first reef had sand damage. There is a place to get lunch right on the beach. Playa Lagun was a great beach dive as was Veersabani (Police Beach) Again you pay a couple of buck but you felt your car was secure while you dived. Playa Jeremi was a good reef but a long swim out. Habitat rooms are overpriced; \$155 in the off season. You could sit on the end of the bed and fry an egg on the stove. The ocean view was nice with a sunset every evening from the large veranda. No TV in rooms so your out of touch with the world. Hotel staff was good. The resort is 10 miles to town but takes

you 40 min to get there. Security at the hotel is good with guards everywhere and a main gate a mile from the resort. Great restaurants; De Taveern, Bistro Choland, Fort Nassau and the Wine Celler excellent. Don't waste your time with Bay Sight (Town) or Jaanchis (Westpunt) Casinos are pretty good with the Marriott at the higher end and Holiday Beach with \$1 roulette and \$3 blackjack. Marriott is a nicer hotel closer to town with better amenities with a lower price. The dive operation (Caribbean Sports) was also well run and goes to the Producer as well as the Northwest end of the island. They had a fresh water shower on board, towels as well as treats. The dive locker area was 3 times the size of Habitat's and you could pull your vehicle to the door step to load equipment. The only draw back was that there was no photo shop. Nice long beach at the hotel with plenty of topless bathers. Puerto Marie was good for that also.

Lions Dive Hotel, November 1999, Steve Duncan (wdwerker@aol.com), Norcross, GA. Vis: 60 to 80 Feet. Water: 78 to 80 F. Dive your own profile. Not too strict, but we mostly stayed with our group (6 divers). The couple that runs the hotel dive operation was great. They took good care of our group of 6 who dive together. We got to request dive sites in advance, and they were helpful with info for shore dives. They got us on the trip to the mushroom gardens at the last minute (most-of-the-day trip to the other end of the island, lots of fun, big boat smooth ride, great coral

formations). I wish my friends wanted to shore dive more, if not don't rent a dive truck for the whole week. The local Aquarium is next to the hotel, nice but small tanks. The photo shop at the Aquarium rented us a flash and a video camera, fair prices, nice guy. Local grocery store was nice, we rented the one apartment at Lions and ate in a few meals, but the living room is not air conditioned, just the bedrooms. **(Lions Dive Hotel Curaçao, Bapor Kibra z/n, Curaçao, Dutch Caribbean; telephone 011-5999-461-8100; fax: 011-5999-461-8200; e-mail: info@lionsdive.com)**

Lions Dive Hotel, August 2000, Andrea Weiner, Whitefish Bay, WI. We stayed at the Lions Dive Hotel because Habitat Curaçao was full. Underwater Curaçao staff were friendly and knowledgeable, however, their rigidity about diving together ruined the trip for everyone in our group. For the first four days, the various divemasters policed every dive. We were so concerned about staying within "ARMS LENGTH" of our buddies — I'm not exaggerating — that we couldn't concentrate on anything else. The pace they set was so fast, if you stopped to look under a ledge you'd get bumped into the reef. On each dive, one divemaster led the group of 14-17 divers, one hovered in the middle and policed our every move, and one followed behind. I can't tell you how many times I was kicked in the face and found another diver directly under me, with his tank against my body. On the last day of diving, they agreed to let us plan our

own dives, dive our computers, and go anywhere we wanted with our buddies. Very nice. The Lions Dive Hotel was a good place to stay. The staff was friendly and accommodating. The rooms were nice. The bathroom was extra large. Our room on the 2nd floor had a private balcony that was convenient to hang wet items and a spectacular view of the Caribbean. The dive shop was close. We made 13 dives in 5 days and found that they always filled the rinse tank with clean water. There were outdoor lockers to store your dive equipment. The hotel's breakfast buffet was free with our package, and was an enjoyable way to start the day. However, the dinner menu at the hotel's restaurant "Rumours" is way overpriced and the service is nothing short of awful. The Sea Aquarium next door was outstanding, free unlimited admission for Lions Dive Hotel guests. The "house reef" adjacent to the Sea Aquarium was, unanimously, one of the best shore dives any of us has ever experienced. The "Animal Encounters" dive, however, where you could feed nurse sharks and lemon sharks through a hole in a plexiglass wall is NOT worth \$58. And neither is the \$28 "Snorkel Experience," where you could swim with and feed tarpon, snook, parrot fish, and sting rays. It took us 17 hours to get there — canceled flights and delayed flights, and 26 hours to get home. We had to spend the night in Miami because they prohibited all ALM flights from leaving the gates until 6 p. m. They scheduled our departure for 8:20 a. m. While waiting all day at the airport,

we spotted a headline in a Dutch newspaper that said ALM declared bankruptcy and rumors in the airport were that the Curaçao government wanted its gate fees up front before allowing any of its planes to take off. The day in the airport was virtually a nightmare. Many areas weren't air conditioned and it was nearly 100 degrees. They gave us vouchers for sandwiches, but there weren't any sandwiches. They gave us vouchers for beverages, but they didn't have anything identifiable to drink. The bottled liquid they had was worse than nothing to drink. And the restrooms were so disgusting, none of us would use them. Police who were called in squelched riots. KLM and American Airlines planes were coming and going, so people started crowding the gates screaming threats that they were going to go on those planes. The environment was a bit scary. And the worst part was ALM staff either didn't speak English well enough or pretended not to speak it, because no matter who we asked, no one was able to tell us what was going on. The story they "stuck with" was that "international airline inspectors showed up unannounced to make a surprise maintenance check of all the planes. . . on a Saturday." Meanwhile, we're all looking out the window at the planes all day and there was no one inspecting anything. In addition, the ALM plane we took from Miami to Curaçao was in such disrepair it was scary. The seats were broken and squeaked terribly the whole trip. The seat backs were also broken and couldn't be brought upright. And the whole

interior was dirty. The plane returning to Miami, though, looked fine. Just thought that since you are the “sooth-sayer,” you’d like to know all of this.

Ocean Divers, Princess Beach Resort, August 2000, Terry Kahn, Piscataway, NJ. Vis: 60-100 ft. I read one of your reports on ALM after my trip was booked. I called travel agent, Caradonna Tours, who reassured me they had had no problems with either Air Aruba or ALM. Air Aruba lost my luggage on the way down and I had no clothes, toiletries etc. and even dive accessories. I still don’t have it back after 2.5 weeks and they are not helpful. The ALM connecting flight from Curaçao back to Aruba hasn’t existed since April 2000. Yet that flight was in the computers that the travel agent used to book my flights. I had a great time diving and the reefs were very beautiful and healthy.

Princess Beach Resort, November 1999, Walt and Angie Redmond, Austin, TX. Vis: 60 to 90 Feet. Water: 78 to 80 F. Dive your own profile. Dive restrictions: Depth, time. Don’t bother with this dive operation! Supposedly they had 3 boats but we never saw one. Every day they had to contract for dive boat and captain. So if we were able to dive in the a.m., we always left 45-90 min. late resulting in either shortened dive times or late return. On two occasions, we had to come back in the afternoon as they were not able to secure an a.m. dive boat. As a result, we missed some “touring” opportunities. Upon our return to the U.S., we called the

Peter Hughes office in Florida to ask as to if they still owned Princess Divers. They told us that they were repairing the boat. As soon as they learned that we had not booked through them nor were we requesting a refund, our complaints were not treated seriously. Hurricane Lenny struck less than a week before our arrival, resulting in poor visibility, part of the boat dock missing, and eroding beaches. Divemasters were helpful and informative. *Superior Producer* was a great wreck dive. Unable to dive Car Pile just off the hotel shore because of poor visibility due to construction on the other side of the hotel. When asked to dive Mushroom Forest, they told us that they don’t go there although they list it as a premier site. Hotel supposedly was sold while we were there. First they put us in a building farthest from the dive shop. After requesting politely for a room change they moved us to a room that was in closer proximity to everything. Restaurant/bar service was slow, even for island time. Breakfast buffet included as price of our package was a good deal. Bottom line: if you want to dive Curaçao, don’t bother with Princess Beach Hotel or Princess Divers. (Ph: 800-223-9815, Fax: 011-599-9614131)

Princess Beach Resort, June 2000, Gail Barranda, Whitestone, N. Y. Vis: 60 to 70 ft. Water: 82 to 84 degrees, choppy. Dive your own profile. No diving deeper than 100 ft. Second trip to Curaçao. Great macro photography; sites are easy to get to. Princess Beach is perfect for families,

divers, and non-divers. Free shuttle bus to town and within proximity of a great outdoor seafood place (Seaside Restaurant-freshest seafood I've had), club (Cactus Club and Mambo Beach Bar) and Seaquarium (you can feed stingrays, lemon and nurse sharks, and turtles). Get it on video or film. Calm beach area and pool for children. Grounds well-maintained. Princess Divers on premises. Divemasters very helpful; Eugene and Clark were excellent at describing the sites and what to look for. Very helpful in pointing out flamingo tongue, sea-horses, banded coral shrimp, arrow crabs, etc. I owe most of my good shots to them. At one point a diver got seasick; they went way back to the dive shop to drop her off; helped you in and out of gear. Liked that they had a private space to store your gear; unlimited shore dives, a great bonus. Divemasters partied with us at Mambo Beach. If you're prone to getting seasick, go in Sept. when the waters are calm.

Princess Beach Resort, July 2000, Randy Waltz (randywaltz@yahoo.com), Frederick, MD. Vis: 0 to 100 Feet. Water: 80 to 82 F, choppy surge. I have dived with Peter Hughes operations since 1985 and this has to be the poorest one I have come across. Their literature says they have three boats but we only saw one. On our first day there the boat was already booked up so we couldn't get on. So we had to either shore dive or sit on the beach. They did book our group of 5 divers and 1 bubble watcher on another operation's boat the second day. (Lion Dive- a very nice boat and

a great crew, but they were booked up too so our bubble watcher had to sit on the beach.) We learned from them that Peter Hughes had just bought the Lion Dive operation and would use them more. The dive shop seemed more geared to selling T Shirts and stuff. Three masks and a couple snorkels hung on the wall along with about 8 sets of fins. My wife's compass didn't survive ALM's tender loving care, but there was none at the shop. She was told by the Manager that "You don't need a compass here, just dive a long the reef and come back to the boat." Excuse me? Someone was dredging up the shore from the resort and vis at the break water and just outside was like diving in milk. At the conclusion of our week of diving, did we get a smile and 'Hope you enjoyed your diving,' from the manager? nope. I don't expect anyone to kiss my ring because I spent my money with them but bland indifference is not an inducement for me to return. The crew of the boat tried but the attitude of an operation flows down from the leader and this place was no different. Peter better look into this place or his name will be mud rather than an icon for good safe reliable diving and support.

Safe Diving, March 2000, H. B. Roholt, Bemidji, MN. Vis: 75-100 ft. Water: 79-82 degrees. Now that we've reached age 77, we wanted a combined diving/sight seeing vacation with a less active diving schedule, wanted to be in a quiet and uncongested area, and wanted a relatively inexpensive place to stay where we could prepare most of our

own meals. On a previous visit we had learned that there is plenty to do and see above water, that the people and climate are delightful, and that the drinking water is clean and uncontaminated. Reviews of previous *Undercurrent* issues, the 1999 and 2000 *Chapbooks* led us to choose SAFE DIVING operated by Simone and Chris Kerdel in the small community of Lagun. Chris arranged for us to rent a small car, and an adequate small air-conditioned apartment with kitchenette right in Lagun. The two “minority” Chinese men (in this nearly all black community of cordial and gentle people) operating the “China Snak” restaurant around the corner from our apartment house prepared really good Chinese food. The Brasilieria mini-market 5 Km east of Lagun had a surprisingly adequate amount of needed groceries and household supplies. The community of Barber 11 Km away had a nice laundry, another mini-market, a bank, and a gas station. SD supplied us with rental equipment in excellent condition, and arranged for all the diving that we did. We made one unguided (and I learned that my underwater orientation skills needed upgrading), and two guided shore dives, but just three boat dives during our stay. We were very disappointed to find that SD no longer had a dive boat, as we had expected from the descriptions of the facility in the 1999 Chapbook, and from the presentations on their Internet website. lost their dive boat from a freak tidal wave that hit the northern lee side of Curaçao in January 1999 — a wave that an

earthquake had induced in nearby Venezuela. SD is presently set up for shore diving on arrangement with All West Diving in Westpunt and with Easy Dive at the defunct Coral Cliffs resort east of Lagun. SD’s “cooperative arrangement” with them appears to be tenuous at best; for 4 planned additional arranged boat dives (2 with each of those facilities) were canceled shortly before the dives were to occur — one of them after we had arrived at All West from Lagun. The personnel at all three places were competent, and helpful with all aspects of each dive. We hope that SD will let people know that they have no boat now. If we had known this before hand, we would have chosen All West Diving instead. As we left, Simone told us that we would be the first to know when they finally get a new dive boat. Nice people — we’d go to Lagun and with them again if that happens — should we live long enough to do so.

Seascape Dive and Water Sports, Sheraton Curaçao, July 2000, Rick Glider, Tucson AZ. We stayed in a timeshare units that wasn’t anything luxurious but met our needs. Walk out the front door and you’re on the beach. The resort is on 2 small beaches, with the hotel on one beach and the timeshares on another beach. The hotel has a large swimming pool, a hot tub, a nicely equipped exercise room, 2 restaurants, and 2 bars (1 right on the beach). There is a smaller pool by the timeshare units. All the personnel were very friendly. The service in the restaurants was rather slow. The island isn’t cheap, but they

do have some very good restaurants. We enjoyed Jaanchi's in Westpunt. Seascope Dive and Water Sports (seascope@Interneeds-net) on the property. Eva and her husband run a nice operation and made you feel at home. They've been there 30 years. 10 dive package is \$250. You get 1 night dive and free use of lockers. For the 1st 2 days, they hooked me up with the dive operation at the Marriott. They had both their boats in dry dock. One of Seascope's divemasters, Andy (a great guy), went with us on the 2nd day. The next 3 days was on a Seascope boat. None of the dives were crowded. My last day was just with Andy. The weather was dry and sunny with the usual trade winds; twice the dive boat broke off the dive mooring. Water was 80 degrees with some strong surface currents. Visibility was 60 to 100+. Good dive briefings. I pretty much followed my computer. The corals were nice and healthy with many tropical fish, small critters, and some large morays and one eagle ray. Easy diving for experienced divers and nice diving for beginners. The only thing missing was large fish. (11-599-9625; Fax 11-559-9625)

Underwater Curaçao, Lions Dive Hotel, March 2000, Drew Elliott, Portage, WI. Vis: 75 to 100 feet. Water: 79 to 80 degrees, choppy, surge. This resort and dive operation exceeded every one of my expectations. Resort is clean and well kept with a good restaurant/bar. Food and drink prices are moderate. Great beach (private) and nice pool. Small store on premises for souvenirs, snacks. Dive

operation under new experienced management 40 ft. boats. We had 12-16 people on board all week; not at all crowded. Divemasters professional and very pleasant. Few rules: 1 hr. max. dive time return to boat with 500 psi. Excellent reef and wall diving plus 3 wreck dives. Lots of reef fish, lots of juveniles. No big fish. All in all a wonderful experience. **(P.O. Box 4095, Bapor Kibra, Curaçao; Telephone 800-468-0023 or 11-599-9616)**

Underwater Curaçao, Lions Dive Hotel, August 2000, Rob (meat2beat@prodigy.net), Wauwatosa, WI. Vis: 40 to 80 Feet. Water: 80 to 85 F, choppy. Dive your own profile. Follow your own dive limits. Dive staff was unbelievable. We were able to keep the same divemaster and captain for the whole week. Our divemaster brought us together and went over the sites and allowed the group to choose when and where we wanted to go. Everything was well organized and very relaxing. The only bad thing was the smell of diesel that constantly came from the boat.

DOMINICA

Dominica is arguably the best all-around adventure vacation island in the Caribbean, with gorgeous reefs, plenty of tropicals (though few of eating size), lush rain forests, hiking, waterfalls, warm water springs, splendid fruits and vegetables (prepared by great local cooks), modest hotels—and it's inexpensive to boot. . . . On the other hand, go forewarned that there are no