

## Eastern Pacific

***Coral Star, February 2000, Bruce Cohen, (bcohen2562@aol.com), Chatham, PA.*** Vis: 25 to 60 feet. Water: 80 to 82 degrees, calm and flat. A good change of pace from Caribbean dive destinations without much additional travel time. Very well maintained boat; attention captain and crew, excellent food. 5 dives offered most days. Diving similar to Sea of Cortez. Visibility 25 to 60 ft. not much coral but a lot of fish and critters. Saw schools of large jacks, barracuda, king angle fish, saw white tips on about half of my dives, many green morays (6 or more free-swimming), at least 10 octopus, 3 sea horses, a variety of rays, tropicals, invertebrates, etc. Because I elected to dive Nitrox (an additional \$75/wk) and the fact that most dives were to 80 ft. of shallower I was able to rack up a lot of quality bottom time. **(800-215-5169 or 307-733-3127; Fax: 1-307-739-9139; e-mail: info@coralstar.com; website: www.coralstar.com)**

## UNITED STATES

### California

#### Monterey

***Cypress Charters, Clinton Bauder, (gecko1@apple.com), Cupertino, CA.*** Vis: 5 to 80 Feet. Water: 48 to 58 F., calm choppy surge currents no Currents. I dive nearly every weekend with Cypress Charters. The diving in Monterey south to Big Sur is spectacular, if not exactly comfortable. Cypress Charters caters to

experienced cold water divers and is the best way to see the really wild and woolly dive sites. These are offshore pinnacles featuring shear dropoffs, amazing invertebrate life, big schools of rockfish, sea lions, harbor seals and the occasional wolf eel. The walls and pinnacles are absolutely covered in brightly colored anemones, nudibranchs, hydrocorals and sponges. Coral reefs have nothing on the more advanced Carmel and Big Sur dives. Fish life is not as diverse as Southern CA but the rich and colorful invert life more than makes up for it. The ride in and out and surface intervals often feature whales and porpoise. Expect difficult conditions. Surge, limited vis (usually about 25 feet) and cold water are the rule. Deep dives (100 feet or more) are often the order of the day to get under the surge. Drysuits are highly recommended. Topsides conditions can be tough if you are susceptible to seasickness. People not familiar with these kinds of conditions should arrange for a guide. The boats provide a safety diver who stays on the surface and watches for trouble but dives are normally unguided. The Cypress Charters boats are a bit Spartan but very functional. They feature really nice swim steps, onboard Nitrox fills, hot showers and nice benches on the dive deck. There is lots of room for gear and all areas of the boat are accessible by people wearing exposure suits. The *Cypress Point* is about 60 feet and has 2 heads. The *Cypress Sea* is

about 50 feet but more stable in the water and better for people who get sick easily. 3 tank trips offer a deli style lunch and hot soup. The crew of both boats are great and have gone well beyond the call of duty on a number of occasions. Both the *Cypress Sea* and *Cypress Point* have good camera tables. *Cypress Sea* has a rinse tank. Both boats have freshwater showers that can be used to rinse gear. Crew good with equipment. (408-244-4433, [www.cypresscharters.com](http://www.cypresscharters.com))

Santa Barbara

**Truth Aquatics, Vision, August 1999, Gordon Robinson**  
([gogorobinson@hotmail.com](mailto:gogorobinson@hotmail.com))  
**Larkspur, CA.** Vis: 20 to 40 ft.  
Dive your own profile: yes. Dive restrictions: none. Operation accommodates all experience levels, but especially good for highly experienced, independent dives. Excellent setup for photographers.  
(805-962-1127; fax 805-564-675; e-mail [info@truthaquatics.com](mailto:info@truthaquatics.com), website [www.truthaquatics.com](http://www.truthaquatics.com))

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## PLANNING A TRIP?

Want to know the chances for good weather...  
good visibility ... calm seas ... warm water?

Want to know whether to bring a 15mm lens or a macro?

Want to know what to expect at customs,  
where to stay before you reach the resort,  
potential airline problems, bug problems?

Want to know whether to expect big fish or few fish?  
Bleached reefs or beautiful reefs?

Want to know whether there is enough food....  
vegetarian food....fried food....fresh food?

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