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**Treasure Divers, Don Juan Beach Resort, February 2001, Bob Sines, Warren, OH.** Experience: 251-500 dives Vis: 20 to 40 Feet. Water: 78 to 80 F, choppy surge no Currents. The resort is good and the food was fine. The dive operation was not what we were accustomed to using. Little English spoken, the boats were small and the seas were rough. Visibility was bad, very little coral, and hardly any Fish. I'm not sure where the dive magazines get the underwater shots to advertise the DR. (Ph: 800-820-1631 or 809-523-5320; e-mail [treasuredivers@hotmail.com](mailto:treasuredivers@hotmail.com) )

## GRENADA

Grenada's as lush as Caribbean islands get, with great local food, an extraordinary beach, friendly people, and the most picturesque capitol in the Caribbean. Sadly, diving is only average, with one exception: the biggest wreck in the Caribbean, the *Bianca C.*, a 592-foot liner that burned in 1962 and was towed a mile off the beach to die. Unfortunately, it's not fertile ground for coral or fish, and the surface current is often strong enough to splay you on the downline — still, it's a unique Caribbean dive. . . . Grenada is out of the hurricane belt, though it's pelted by summer rains, which is why it's so lush. A fine way to visit the old Caribbean, get in a little no-hassle reef diving, sit in the sun, and drink rum in the rum houses along a harrowing perim-

eter road — which is about as safe as a Boston turnpike on St. Paddy's Day.

**Aquanauts Diving, Secret Harbor, December 2000, James McMeins (marinenine@hotmail.com) Carnation, WA.** Vis: 15 to 50 Feet. Water: 78 to 82 F, choppy surge currents. Secret Harbor is on a small secluded bay at the southeast end of the island on the Atlantic side. All the rooms are duplex units perched on the cliff over the water. The rooms consist of a very large bedroom with two antique four-poster beds with a dressing area, small refrigerator, large tiled bath with a huge bathtub, double sinks and a bidet. There is a sitting room with an arched rock wall. Fronting the sitting room are floor to ceiling windows with French doors that lead out onto the deck. The rooms are nice but need some upkeep. No curtains on the windows so be prepared to be woken early by the rising sun. The maid service kept the room up nicely. The main lobby, bar, front desk and dining room on top of the cliff above the rooms and the dive shop is on the water. A lot of climbing of stairs. Small beach and two lighted tennis courts but you have to buy your own balls and only one of the 4 lights worked so you have to play during the day when it can get in the 90s. Food prices very high, the service is atrocious! The tip is included in the prices for all food and beverages so not much incentive for the waiters. Only one breakfast was delivered in less than 30 minutes! Most meals would take an hour to get served.

There are 3 good restaurants within 15 minutes walk: The Red Crab, Castaways and Choo Light Chinese Restaurant. Moorings has a store with a limited selection of food and alcohol. The Island is a tropical paradise, postcard perfect except for the garbage! Nearly every creek and river we crossed over was littered with plastic bottles and tin cans along with clothing and other junk. Aquanauts Divers: <http://www.spicedivers.com/> contains classrooms, the shop and waterspouts equipment. On arrival we lugged our equipment down the stairs and then left it there the rest of the time. Upon returning each day from diving you rinse your gear off and it is locked up. The operation is run by Peter and Gerlinde, who ran a shop on Curacao. If you need to rent equipment, (like we did the first day because American failed to get our luggage on in San Juan) they have fairly new Scuba Pro equipment. They have a 30 foot dive boat with twin diesels that is covered and has a head/ changing room. They limit it to 8 divers and it was cramped. There are no photo tables or freshwater tanks Aluminum 80s and few 67s but never filled over 2900 lbs. Nearest Recompression chambers are on Trinidad and Barbados, The boat is fairly fast. A couple of days we had 8-10 ft swells as we rounded the southern tip. Also, the ladder on the stern for getting back on the boat is the tubular aluminum type, including the rungs, its very easy to injure you feet when climbing back up with your gear on and not wearing any booties. I bruised my arch and it has taken almost a month to heal. The

only crew on the boat is Peter and Gerlinde, so while one is playing dive master the other is the skipper. Most of the dives are drift dives, which means the skipper has to get the boat to the divers, then put it in neutral and then help get the divers back on board. If the water was calmer, which we were constantly told was the norm; this might not present to big a problem. If you don't have a safety sausage they supply you with one. It came in handy for the German couple that managed to get separated from us and came up about 300 yards away from the boat. The dive master always has a buoy with a dive flag attached to it that is on the surface. So if you don't get down right away and the others have moved on, the boat will pick you up and take you back to the buoy and you can follow it down to the rest of the group. You had to hit the water and submerge right away, as the surface current could be quite strong some times. Once on the surface you signaled the boat and they pick you up. This was fine unless the dive master was finished, usually no safety stop or an abbreviated one and then surface at which point the boat would come over resulting in several near collision with the boat hull as my wife and I attempted to complete our safety stop. Both Peter and Gerlinde are very liberal in your diving profile, basically try not to go below 130' and if you have a computer, follow it. You have to stick together because all dives are basically drift, some pretty fast. The diving here is pretty good. We had strong winds off the Atlantic and the current was flowing from the

south, bringing with it all the runoff from the recent flooding in South America. Visibility was poor, the best we ever had was 50-60'; most dives were in the 20-30' range and the one day we dared to dive the Atlantic side, 10-15'; with a lot of surge was all we got for our troubles. There are several wrecks 2 to 3 miles out that have groups of nurse sharks and some reef sharks as well as turtles and other large fish around. Did the Bianca C twice. It is impressive but with the upper deck at 100'; and the keel at 137'; you spend about 10 minutes then you let the current take you from the bow about 100 yards to the reef that is at about 70 feet and complete the dive. Rum Runner is a sunken 40' cat lying in a patch of sand in about 70' between the reefs, large and friendly French angel fish. Other dive sites are patch reefs with a few spur and groove and a couple with small walls hard corals in the deeper water were very healthy looking and the soft corals in the shallower areas are abundant and healthy looking. I've never seen as many huge sea fans; several turtles and large southern stingrays. Saw one seahorse, lots of lobsters, some really big and green morays. On one drift in the shallows at 30-50' in the 1-2kt current and all the soft corals below us, it was like flying low over a forest, just great! I According to Peter, the best time is July through August. Grenada is far enough south that it normally does not get hit by hurricanes; last year, they did get quite a surge from Lenny. (Ph: 473-444-1126; fax: 473-444-1127; e-mail [aquanauts@caribsurf.com](mailto:aquanauts@caribsurf.com); website [www.spicedivers.com](http://www.spicedivers.com))

**Aquanauts, 2001, Chat Watts ([nancyandchat@juno.com](mailto:nancyandchat@juno.com)), Tucson AZ.** Vis: 50 ft.+ although small particles at a couple of the sites limited photo opportunities to close-up work. Water: 80-82 F. 117 dives in the Sea of Cortez (off San Carlos), Great Barrier Reef Australia, Beqa Island Fiji, etc. Aquanauts operated by Peter and Gerlinde Seupel. They are associated with the Rendezvous Beach Resort at L'Anse aux Epines, Grenada. (Nancy and I were not staying at that resort so I can only report that their food was very good) The Aquanauts can be reached at 473-444-1226, email [aquanauts@caribsurf.com](mailto:aquanauts@caribsurf.com). The weather was warm and sunny with a slight chop. One of the dives, on the Atlantic side of the island, featured a swift current; the rest were in very slight or no current. The Aquanauts run a 30-foot twin diesel named "Spice Lady." She is extremely clean and well maintained. There is a spacious cabin and clean head. The cockpit is shaded by an awning; there is room for sunning on the forward deck. Her equipment includes an extensive first-aid kit, oxygen, ship-to-shore FM radio, GPS and cell phone. The boat is set up for 12, but Peter and Gerlinde try to limit their excursions to 8 divers. They provide fresh water, tea, fruit juices and, between dives, something interesting to eat — homemade cake or cookies, fish salad on crackers, tropical fruits, etc. All the dives were "guided tours," led by Peter or Gerlinde. My buddy, an experienced ice diver from Alaska, and I were allowed to deviate from the tour at will. We generally stayed pretty

close to the tour because Gerlinde and Peter knew where all the best stuff was located. Divers who ran low on air were sent to the surface along the float line towed by the dive master, permitting those of us who breathe sea water to prolong our dives. Surfacing divers were picked up by the boat as they came up. We saw a dozen nurse sharks of all sizes at Shark Reef, and encountered turtles on several dives. In addition to the normal small reef fish, we found two honeycomb cowfish, a spotted trunkfish, many barracuda and a host of beautiful blue sponges. There were two small spotted eels peering from their holes and a variety of anemones and tube worms. Gerlinde told me that they do encounter whales in season and sometimes dolphin. (We saw several schools of dolphins as we sailed north from Grenada) Rental equipment, like their boat, was nearly new, well cared for and in excellent condition. Peter will pick divers up from nearby resorts; he is extremely punctual! Had I know that Aquanauts will outfit a diver for a two-tank trip for only \$15, I would have taken only my mask and camera. (Two boat dives cost \$60.)

### GUADELOUPE

Guadeloupe lies south of Antigua and north of Dominica. Because it's a French-speaking island, English-speaking tourists often have difficulty getting by. . . . Although there's wonderful shopping, a wealth of music and art, and the cuisine's out of this world, the diving is only average. Les

Heures Saines (or "the quiet hours") is among the best operations at Pigeon, and they speak some English. . . . The French diving rules are a bit quirky. Unless you're a divemaster yourself, which allows you great freedom, you must dive with a guide. . . .

**Les Heures Saines at the Cousteau Reserve, Auberge de la Vielle Tour on Grand Terre, August 2000, Bob Morris ([morrisr1@war.wyeth.com](mailto:morrisr1@war.wyeth.com)) Wayne, PA.** Vis: 40-100 ft. Water: calm and flat. Logged dives: 70. The Cousteau Reserve is barely one-half mile from shore. Due to the rocky, volcanic nature of the island, shore diving is not allowed. The topography underwater appears to be coral growing on hardened lava, unlike what I've seen in other Caribbean dives. There were many unusual fish including a spotted snake eel, many spotted drum, many boxfish, several species of filefish, spotted moray, stone crab, spiny lobster and scorpionfish. There were schools of Atlantic spadefish and horse-eye jacks and many trumpet fish. Since an active volcano is on this island (Mt. Soufrieré), we saw hot water springs at the reef base in 50 ft. of water. This is not a country high on the list of "must-see" dive sites but the reserve was very interesting due to the number of unusual fish while lacking many of the regular Caribbean species ( few angelfish, butterflyfish, parrotfish, triggerfish, etc.) The reef was in excellent condition with many colorful sponges, corals and gorgonians. The visibility was 100 ft. every dive except