

83-88 F. Dives logged: 1200+. Dive restrictions enforced: 130' max. recommended. The potential for finding lots of unique critters/fish is very high in Milne Bay, but our crew wasn't very familiar with the sites, so there were a lot of weird species that were not found. Disappointing. The accommodations for this spacious boat were excellent.

Spoilsport, June 2001, Nikki Mahan, Bellevue, WA. Experience: 251-500 dives. Vis: 50 to 100 Feet. Water: 83 to 87 F, calm currents. Wonderful diving but not for the faint hearted. Felt like the crew was more family than hired. (Ph: 800-952-4319 or +61 (0)7 40 315484 (Australia); e-mail mbde@mikeball.com or resv@mikeball.com; website www.mikeball.com)

SOLOMON ISLANDS

Bilikiki, March 2001, Marcia Holland, Dana Point, CA. Water: calm and flat. Logged dives: 1,000+. Good ship, comfortable quarters, excellent food — fresh, abundant and well-prepared. Breakfast not exceptional, rest outstanding. "Cocktail hour" with yummy hors d'oeuvres every evening. Night diving mediocre — most divers skipped after first few. Beautiful walls with huge, healthy sea fans starting at 5-10 ft. so shallow water decompression stop a treat. An

apparent unusual lack of current at most sites. Good native crew — immediate panga and pickup when surfacing. Solomon Airlines charges an overweight fee of significant amount; even weighing hand carried luggage. This happened to flights out of Brisbane — not out of Caines. (Ph: 800-663-5363 (US) or 250 383-7253 (Canada); fax 250 383-6598 (Canada); e-mail bilikiki@horizon.bc.ca; website www.bilikiki.com or www.infobilikiki.com)

Spirit of the Solomons, June 2001, Mark Cortright, Arcata, CA. Experience: Over 1000 dives. Water: 78 to 83 F, choppy. Table coral dead and turned upside down; the staghorn is suffering. I'd say a 30% to 40% die off. The fish are still there but for how long? Due to the hostilities on Guadalcanal they don't dive the nearby war wrecks. The air connections are a nightmare. 40 hours from San Francisco to Solomons. UW Photography: Good table for the 6 of us. Many more would be crowded. The ships power 110 system fried my chargers for my Oceanic strobes. The managers Debbey and John where super. (Ph: 800-663-5363 (US) or 250 383-7253 (Canada); fax 250 383-6598 (Canada); e-mail bilikiki@horizon.bc.ca; website www.bilikiki.com or www.infobilikiki.com)