

**Koukol, APO, AE, Portugal.** Vis: 30-80 ft. Water: 60-70 F. Dives logged: 1,075. Dive restrictions: No decompression dives. I am living on Terceira Island in the Azores. We see string rays on every dive. I saw 20-40 at a cavern in Split Rock. I usually shore dive — less than 3 minutes from my house. When I boat dive, I go with Paulo Santos who operates Aquarius Diver (aquarius.diver@mail.telepac.pt) out of Angra do Heroismo or Herb Hodgeman (www.TeamAzores.com). (Dives are \$15) There are usually barracuda, tuna, octopus, and wrasse. Coral is limited to tubastrea in the caves. It's a beautiful island! (Ph: 292-672-686; e-mail aquaacores@aquaacores.com)

## Madeira

**Diving Center Baleia, Village Hotel, April 2001, Marilyn Koukol.** Vis: 10-20 ft. Water: 65-70 F, choppy. Dives logged: 1,087. Don't go to Madeira for diving if it is not the summer season! They were not taking boats out to the Marine preserve or the harbor wrecks. Shore dives were the only option. I did 2 — that was two too many. The first dive was past Canical. We found some small octopus and anemone with shrimp. It was just myself and the guide — so I didn't mind paying \$30 even though I had my own gear. The next dive was right outside the Crowne Plaza Resort in Funchal. I was one of 4 divers. The guide stayed with the young couple since it was their first ocean dive, and one could not equalize. So, my buddy and I swam around waiting for awhile — then went along the rocks for a shallow dive. He was through the tank of air in 30 minutes. So, I paid \$25 to

blow bubbles at sea urchins and wrasse and used less than half a tank of air. The Island of Madeira is gorgeous — lots of canyons, waterfalls, and Levadaas — walks along the aqueduct. It has lots of flowers, vegetation, and trees. (Madeira means "wood" in Portuguese.) Many older Europeans vacation here. (I felt very young!) It also has unique thatched roof houses. The hotel was well designed with Portuguese tile and the pool was surrounded by plants and flowers. Diving might be different from a boat — but it was definitely not worth cleaning the gear for the shore dives. (Ph: 00351-291-967435 or 00351-291-965751; fax 00351-291-967435; e-mail baleia@mail.telepac.pt)

## SWEDEN

**Aqua Land, Kärningön, Sweden, July 2001, Christopher Leahy** (chris@gothambuilders.com)  
**Colonia, NJ.** Experience: 501-1000 dives. Vis: 40 to 60 Feet. Water: 55 to 60 F, calm choppy. Basically we looked at rocks and seaweed in the North Sea. Some fish. Nice people. One dive was enough. Bring a din adapter or din type regulator if you want to use your equipment. Prices were reasonable, but the diving was dull. (Ph: +46 31 19 43 42; fax +47 31 25 60 95; e-mail info@aqualand.se)

## UNITED STATES INLAND

### Michigan

#### Isle Royale

**Superior Diver, August 2000, A. Thayer, Commerce, MI.** Vis: 30-50 ft. Water: 37-42 F. Dive restrictions: 140', no deco diving. Some of the best

Great Lakes diving. Boat small. Emperor an outstanding wreck. Upright and intact. Same with the America. Good penetration possibilities. Crew did very well. Ran tight operation. Food good. Plenty of it. This is cold water diving. Days and night can get cold, too. Be prepared. But it's worth it! **(P. O. Box 388, Grand Portage, MN 55605)**

### Minnesota

#### Bloomington

**Underwater Adventures, Mall of America, February 2001, Marvin Sommerfeld, St. Paul, MN.** Water: 67 F. fresh water tank, 77 F. salt-water tank. Air temp: Minnesota February temperature 22 F, temperature inside the Mall 70 F. On a cold and snowy winter evening my wife and I enjoyed two dives, in addition to the behind-the-scenes tour, at the aquarium at the Mall of America. The evening was \$175 per person, but much less expensive than going to the Bahamas for a shark dive. Sally, Dave, and Tom, the husbandry staff and our hosts at the aquarium, made the evening a huge success. The maximum number of divers was four, and four guests were allowed to tag along. The evening started with a tour through the tunnels to see the tanks in which we would dive, and then the back-stage tour. The majority of the animals are named, and we got the run down on their personalities (i.e., who to watch out for). With a maximum depth of 13 feet in the tanks, there was no concern about running out of air, only of getting too close to something bigger than yourself, or of getting cold. The

first dive was in the freshwater, Minnesota lake, tank. We were allowed to swim around in the tank unrestricted with the sturgeons, tiger muskies, eels, walleyes, carp, sunfish, and turtles (snapping and soft shell). With the branches, weeds and rocks, it was just like diving in Minnesota. 30 minutes was enough time in the tank. The second dive was in the shark tank, where everyone was guaranteed to see a shark. The instructions were to stay on the bottom and keep your back to the tank wall. At all times, even prior to entering the tank, Sally, Dave and Tom kept their eyes peeled for the sand tigers and the browns. The entry point was a little moon pool where the animals receive their physicals and other needed attention. Once all the divers were settled on the bottom, the seven person buddy-team went to the first of four stops in the tank. The inhabitants of the tank included sand tigers, brown sharks, black tip reef sharks, nurse sharks, as well as Southern stingrays and loggerhead turtles. Six to eight feet was the average length of the sharks. Sally, Dave and Tom used handheld 3-foot PVC poles to discourage the large ones from coming too close. It was the sand tigers and browns that were the concern and were kept at least 8 feet away, but the nurse sharks, rays, and even a turtle, lazily swam within a few feet. Each stop provided a different vantage point of the activity in the tank. We could clearly note the different levels and types of activity in the various spots, but it always seemed like we were there for the amusement of the sharks. It was as if

they were testing the defense put up by Sally, Dave and Tom. After a 35-minute dive, the staff cleaned up our gear as we showered and changed in the locker rooms. A Certificate of Achievement and an AI Swam with Sharky tee shirt were presented as mementos. **(Ph: 888-DIVE-TIME or 952-888-DIVE; fax 952-883-0303; e-mail jadelmann@minnesotaaquarium.com; website www.underwaterworld.com)**

## Utah

### Salt Lake City

**Belmont Hot Springs.** 96-98 degrees in the winter; too hot to dive in the summer, vis. is up to 10 feet. Hot showers and changing rooms — they raise rare blue lobsters there. During surface interval (in the snow) there are hot tubs beside the lake. Blue Lake — lots of fish and vegetation; 72 degrees winter, 76 in summer. A long walk with gear, but worth it. The crater at Homestead — a hill with a door in the side of it — a calcium spring, beautiful colored water and 99 degrees year-round. Bonneville Sea base — salt water diving pools with sharks and other salt water fish. A glass dome covers one pool so the water is about 73 degrees year-round. Contact Don Sherwood with Wasatch Water Sports (801)-550-1992 or e-mail at [www.watrsptr@aol.com](mailto:www.watrsptr@aol.com). **(Belmont Hot Springs phone 435-458-3200)**

## Vermont

**Waterfront Diving Center, August 2001, Keith A. Trimels** ([trimbus@asus.net](mailto:trimbus@asus.net)) **Cheyenne, WY.** Experience: 51-100 dives. Vis: 8 to 10 Feet. Water: 66 to 68 F, choppy no currents. Cold, fresh water diving at the VT Underwater Historical Preserve on Lake Champlain. Several 19th century wooden wrecks, in various stages of deterioration, have been marked and preserved as state historical locations. They're in reasonably good condition. Viz can be very low, and water temps can fluctuate (dress warm). Some unique wrecks including a two horsepower ferry (once powered by two real horses — honestly). Dive shop is geared toward cold water. They have NAUI instruction on site and offer Nitrox. Dive boat run by Larry Boivin has 6 people max sitting on the boat's railing. This setup can induce seasickness in rough water (saw a couple of people turn pale), but 100+ year old wooden wrecks have a draw. They have supposedly discovered a Revolutionary War boat with cannon and mast intact, purportedly one of Benedict Arnold's boats. **(Ph: 800 283 7282 or (802) 865-2771; fax 802 865 2759)**