

Park. Permanent moorings installed at all of the sites. Stingray, electric ray, lots of different moray eels, flying gurnards, acres of garden eels, sea horses, stonefish, lobsters, octopus, squid, juvenile spotted drums, lots of Creole wrasse, barracuda, leaf fish and many more Caribbean fish. Dive site "Champagne" is an experience, hot water bubbles from active volcano. Most of the dive sites the safety stops are on top of the reef at 20 feet. Two morning dives from the boats and unlimited shore diving from the pier at Castle Comfort Lodge (day and night), watch out for the sea urchins (hundreds of them). Nitrox \$8 per tank or \$80 for the week. Lots of activities whale and dolphin watching (we saw at least eight sperm whales and a pod of 200 dolphins); many hikes to waterfalls including dips in the refreshing pools; hikes to the rainforest to watch the parrots, our guide climbed a tree and gathered fresh juicy grapefruit, great after a hot hike (recommend Khatts tours). A trip to the market is a must, 50 cents for a bus ride. Safety was never a problem during our walks around the town, locals were very friendly, and there was plenty of police around on market day. Two days to get to Dominica from USA (overnight in San Juan). Not a destination for shopping. No lively nightlife. Good hiking boots are required for the all day hiking trip to the Boiling Lake (largest in the world). Take granola bars or trail mix if you like to snack in the afternoon, snacks at the lodge not available between meals. Rinse tanks on boats and battery chargers available at dive operation.

**Nature Island Dive, Herche's Place, November 2001, Barry Klickstein, Swampscott, MA.** Experience: 251-500 dives. Vis: 45 to 100 Feet. Water: 82 to 84 F, calm. Healthy reef, lots of coral and small critters, not a lot of large stuff, but great facilities and good dive operation. Herche's place is clean and neat and Greg and Barbara are accommodating but the lack of a beach to sun on, read, etc., is a slight minus. Greg's gourmet cooking and a fantastic bar almost make up for the non-beach. Beautiful island; we would dive in the morning, climb in the jeep and find a different river to relax in every afternoon. The people couldn't be nicer. Several times drivers changed direction to show us where to go. Nature Island Dive is an A+ operation and shore intervals at their shop, in lounge chairs in the sun with a fresh sandwich from Bobby next door is a unique setup. Great diving for experienced and beginners alike. Large comfortable boat and good shore facilities. Only 10 minute run to dive sites and shore intervals at the shop. (Ph: 767-449-8181; e-mail [natureidive@cwdom.dm](mailto:natureidive@cwdom.dm); website [www.natureislanddive.com](http://www.natureislanddive.com))

### DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Despite the recent flurry of advertisements touting the diving on the reefs of Dominican Republic, we have yet to hear from a well-traveled diver who thinks much of the diving.

**November 2001, Arthur F. Graf Jr., San Antonio, TX.** I do not like to drive at night in a country that I have

never driven in and to a destination that is in "that" direction. The return trip --American said that we should arrive at the airport three hours ahead of departure. We arrived two hours ahead. It took us about 30 minutes to go through the security, get our tickets and to get to the gate. While waiting American Eagle had two flights to San Juan leaving ahead of ours. Our flight left Santo Domingo on time and arrived in San Juan on time, but couldn't get a parking space. We breezed through immigration. We waited and waited for luggage, when it finally arrived we breezed through customs and went to the American luggage check-in. Our flight had just left but they would put us on a later flight arriving in Dallas at 9:45 PM with no connecting flights to San Antonio until the next morning. Fly-Away had us set for one hour in San Juan. The San Juan desk said that we should have had at least a two hour lay over to make it through customs and immigration. So we had to cool our heels in DFW overnight. If Fly-Away had booked us on the earlier flight we would have had no trouble.

**Neptuno, BestWestern Metro, June 2002, Ray Fealko (raydar@netlink.net)**  
**Cortland, OH.** Experience: 101-250 dives. Vis: 75 Feet. Water: 80 to 81 F, choppy. Hotel excellent. All-inclusive package for \$40 day, safe water. Neptuno horrible dive operation. Very unsafe practices. They put us in dangerous situations daily. Cave diving beautiful but not set up for safety. No lines in places, bad visibility. Boats not adequate for long trips

in ocean. Engine problems. Inexperience with conditions, poor judgment. No safety precautions. We had to insist they call for help. Diving only fair in the Juan Dolio area, Boca Chica has some nice dive sites. Get on the bus and in five minutes you're in Boca Chica to dive. Catalina Island diving is excellent. Stay in that area if possible to save traveling. Santa Domingo is a nice city to visit. The tour of the historical city is wonderful. The country is nice and we were impressed with the people. (Ph: 809-526 1473; e-mail [coltrop@codetel.net.do](mailto:coltrop@codetel.net.do); website [www.neptunodive.com](http://www.neptunodive.com))

**Northern Coast Divers, June 2002, Clare Petosa, Manasquan, NJ.**  
Experience: 25 dives Vis: 80 to 100 Feet. Water: 80 to 82 F, calm, no currents. Diving around Sosua is marginal at best. Take an excursion to Rio San Juan. Pristine reefs, amazing visibility and lots of fish that swim right up to you. I kept feeling something hitting my fin and saw a tiny damselfish guarding his house from me! I wouldn't go back specifically for diving. (Ph: 809-571-1028; e-mail: [northern@codetel.net.do](mailto:northern@codetel.net.do); website [www.northerncoastdiving.com](http://www.northerncoastdiving.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. Diving is only average, with one exception: the biggest wreck in the Caribbean, the *Bianca C.*, a 592-foot liner that