

NC. Experience: 251-500 dives. Vis: 30 to 60 Feet. Water: 80 to 82 F, calm, currents. Amazing place to dive, hike, eat, and tour. Great wrecks. Gorgeous coral with schools of fish. Advanced or easy diving. Out of the hurricane belt. This place is absolutely enchanted. It has lush tropical rainforests, a large variety of spices, fruits. Everywhere I went were breathtaking vistas and overlooks. Eco Dive & Trek owner Ed sincerely enjoy diving with their customers, and were warm and genuine. (**True Blue Bay Resort: Ph: 866-3BLUEBAY or 473-443 TRUE; e-mail jennifer@truebluebay.com or dives@truebluebay.com; website <http://www.truebluebay.com>**)

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. . . .

HONDURAS

All dive resorts are on the Bay Islands: Roatán, Guanaja, Utila,

Cayos Cochinos, and other small cayes. . . . Honduras is home to the world's most aggressive no-see-ums; they bite, bite, bite, and many people have serious allergic reactions to the bites. Those who are unprepared — meaning DEET — often find their vacations ruined. . . . The diving features great walls, offshore seamounts, and excellent coral and gorgonians, although there are few large fish or lobsters due to overfishing. . . . Whale sharks are seen near Utila, while diving on Guanaja falls short of other venues. . . . There's limited access to beach diving except at CoCoView and Fantasy Island on Roatán, and Plantation Beach on Cayos Cochinos. . . . The rainy season is October through February, and northers can disrupt the diving. . . . TACA often overbooks, so reconfirm flights (which may not help) and carry essentials as TACA loses or delays luggage. . . . Spanish is spoken on the mainland, English in the Bay Islands. . . . Classic Central American jungles and Mayan ruins inland make great side trips. . . . Malaria protection is advised. . . .

Cayos Cochinos

Plantation Beach Resort, May 2002, Dick Puelicher, Chico, CA. Experience: 51- 100 dives. Vis: 30 to 60 Feet. Water: 78 to 81 F, choppy. Dive boat to take us to island from main land broke down. Resort rented boat but lost one day as we waited overnight at La Ceiba for its arrival (resort paid for hotel). 3 hour trip to Cayos Cochinos.