

we've encountered. Bilingual dive briefings were remarkable! Dive sites at most a 10 min. boat ride, on a fiberglass V-hull with swim steps, making for easy boat entries. All dive sites buoyed. One lagoon dive in limited visibility to see a school of eagle rays; other dives were all on walls, starting in 20-30', and dropping to 500', with visibility mostly in the 100' range. Pristine corals, and holes full of critters. Large free-swimming morays, Napoleon wrasse, titan triggers, enormous jacks on every dive, with caves and holes both on the wall and on top of the reef filled with the entire spectrum of critters and reef fish. Latter aspects of each dive on the corner of the wall, and onto the plateau, accompanied by a school of up to forty blacktip sharks, quite content to swim with us. Fare Nanao is an "ecotourism" pension, with eight thatch-roofed fares, full of unique, hand-built, rustic furniture. Monique Meriaux and her children provide excellent home-cooked meals, wines included, and French hospitality. We stayed in a tree house! Package included daily transportation to dive shop, and to and from airport. (Ph: +689 57 7793; e-mail itidiving@mail.pf; website www.itidiving.pf)

Raie Manta, September 2001, Lisel Doreste (Lisel27@yahoo.com) Maspeth, NY. Experience: 26-50 dives. Vis: 50 to 100 Feet. Water: 75 to 80 F, currents. Raie Manta Club is a great operation. Professional, courteous staff. They picked us up every morning in the dive bus. Were not

overbearing (like Blue Dolphin operation from the Kia Ora) but there to help whenever needed. Sharks on every one of 17 dives! The drift dives are tough for the inexperienced, but once you're used to them, they are a thrill! They are also where most of the silvertips would hang out, just outside the lagoon. Also witnessed an amazing 'wallpaper' of gray reef sharks sitting off the reef at 100 feet. Hundreds in every direction. Thoroughly incredible. Two independent hammerheads in the distance on two dives. Also saw nurse sharks, black tips, white tips, wrasses, turtles, dolphins jumping in the pass, schools of jacks and barracuda, and lots of little critters. Nice big manta rays on almost every dive. Saw one beautiful big mother with her baby and they hung with us for the whole dive. The Kia Ora is a great and expensive resort, but worth it. Almost the same price as the local b&b's but much more comfortable and luxurious. No night life, good food. The French influence ensures fresh baguette every morning and great wine at dinner. (e-mail raiemantaclub@mail.pf; website <http://raiemantaclub.free.fr>)

GUAM

The island of Guam is the main layover point for divers headed for the Micronesian destinations of Palau, Truk, the Marshall Islands, and others. The diving is several notches below those final destinations, but it is the Pacific, and if you end up there with time on your hands, there is diving available.