

owners and staff even went out with the group for dinner and drinks several nights. There was plenty for my non diving wife to do and she did not get boring. The Old Gin House was newly renovated and comfortable. Rooms were clean and maid service available daily. The pool, although small, was a welcome dip between dives. The restaurant is good and has a 4 star chef. Dinner was about \$40 (1 Guilder = \$1.80 US). There were several good places to eat on the island and Smoke Alley, made great desserts. The eating establishments on "Island Time" so be patient.

**Golden Rock Dive Center, Old Gin House, August 2002, Charles Stigall (cstigall47@earthlink.net) Sealy, TX.** Vis: 45-65 ft. Water: 81-82 F. Dives accrued: 200+. Dive restrictions enforced: 500 psi, but not really strict. Glenn and Michele Faires along with their dive masters, Benji and Annouck provided the most accommodating dive experience ever. They would dive whenever and wherever you wanted. Their boat, Stumpy, was not state of the art, but was more than adequate. Also used an inflatable for one to two divers, sites were close to shop and we returned after each dive. Corals were in good shape, especially soft corals. Large critters were limited, but we did see some reef sharks, nurse sharks and several turtles. Found one black frog fish — which I had never seen before. Several wrecks to explore. Diving is easy and hassle free. Golden Rock dive masters set up gear for each dive and rinse it after. Blue beads that can be found. These were used during the

slave trade years for the slaves to buy wives with. I found one during a dive. Old Gin House is probably the nicest place to stay on the island. A/C worked, hot water worked, they furnished bottled water daily and kept the room clean. The grounds were well kept and there is a small pool. Breakfast in our package. Lunches at Old Gin House's ocean front restaurant. The island has several places to eat, Smoke Alley and Cool Corner to name two that were good. The Blue Bead Restaurant across the street from the dive shop, was a good lunch stop. Se the museum in town to learn the island's history, visit Fort Oranje and if you are there at 6:00 p.m. introduce yourself to Stanley Van Putter, the gentleman who lowers the fort's flag and rings the bell each day at 6:00 p.m.

## ST. KITTS AND NEVIS

These small, intimate islands have a lot of "Old Caribbean" charm. Their strong suits are gracious hotels and old inns, verdant, green scenery, and lovely beaches. The diving is decent, but there are no thrills. . . .

**Kenneth's Dive Center, St. Kitts, February 2002, Kyle O'Malley, Le Center, MN.** Vis: 60-70 ft. Water: 74-75 F. Dives accrued: 150+. Dove St. Kitts as a day trip off the cruise ship. Contact Kenneth before your trip by phone as we did and save a lot of money over the cruise ship's commission! Arrangements were made and Kenneth himself met us at the cruise ship dock — considerate. Diving (not a fair critique here because time

limitations dictated a quick, simple dive at nearest reef) was mediocre, lots of nice, healthy coral but not much marine life. Kenneth's boat at first glance looks like a homemade raft/pontoon but was actually very diver friendly — stable, room to walk around with full gear, and good overhead cover from the sun. Dive guide/boat diver both friendly and extremely helpful. We had booked two dives but only did one, they only charged us for one — 1st class approach to business! Truly a good, honest accommodating operation. (Ph: 869-465-2670)

**Scuba Safaris, Four Seasons, Nevis, August 2002, Harold & Jan Bedoukian, Keeseville, NY.** Dives logged: 300. Diving restrictions enforced: 80 ft. Scuba Safaris is a well-run dive operation. Ellis and his staff are polite and make your dives as interesting as possible, taking us to dive sites in both Nevis and St. Kitts. Every morning we were picked up on time at the Four Seasons dock. Fresh towels were provided after each dive. We were not expecting adrenaline charged diving. However, we were surprised. The marine life was abundant enough and the coral was in good condition. There were the usual: sea turtles, eels, rays, and schools of squid. On one dive we did see tarpon. The most interesting site was the wreck of the Christina. The ship went down 30 years ago. The boat was overloaded and capsized with a terrible loss of life. Depth was limited to 80 feet and was controlled by the choice of dive sites. It was impossible

to go deeper without a shovel. (Ph: 869-469-9518; e-mail [scubanev@caribsurf.com](mailto:scubanev@caribsurf.com); website [http://www.nevis1.com/scuba\\_safaris.html](http://www.nevis1.com/scuba_safaris.html))

## ST. LUCIA

St. Lucia lies in the hurricane belt west of Barbados. Diving on this beautiful, heavily-forested island, with pretty reefs and tiny fish, is managed and controlled. . . . Anse Chastanet hotel is located near the Pitons on the southwestern part of island, where the better diving is, but it's rigidly controlled; there's not much worth seeing elsewhere underwater. . . . The year-round high is in the 80s days; night lows are in the 70s. Afternoon cloudbursts are common. . . .

**Anse Chastanet, January 2002, William Boswell (wfboswell@marklang.com) Millersville, MD.** Experience: 101-250 dives. Vis: 50 to 100 Feet. Water: 79 to 82 F, calm. Clearing immigration and customs in St. Lucia was no problem. The taxi driver was happy to stop and let us buy beer for the long ride to the resort. The resort is nice and the staff excellent. After orientation the first dive is a shore dive. Everyone at Scuba St. Lucia was very helpful and friendly. Nitrox is not available. The diving was great, mostly slow drift dives. There is a Marine Park fee. There are a lot of steps on this island! (Ph: 758-459-7000; e-mail [ansechastanet@candw.lc](mailto:ansechastanet@candw.lc); website [www.ansechastanet.com](http://www.ansechastanet.com))