

High cost of the diving — \$100 per person for a 2-tank dive.

## TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

Trinidad, the southernmost island in the Caribbean (it's actually south of Caracas) isn't for divers, but its smaller sister to the north is. . . . Diving from resort hotels along the southwest coast of Tobago is inferior to the diving to the north, where you'll find huge coral heads and good fish life, with mantas in the spring. Strong currents and choppy water make this a place for experienced divers. ( In 1997 a woman lost contact with her dive boat and spent 27 hours in the water before washing ashore.) . . . Blue Waters Inn is the main dive hotel; it's situated on a nice beach about 15 minutes from all sites. . . . Tobago is covered with rainforest and has good hiking, friendly people, and serene and beautiful beaches. Birding there is excellent, but Trinidad's Asa Wright Nature Center (a small hotel with a view that's almost guaranteed to be filled with scores of tropical species) is unparalleled, as is the lagoon trip to see 2000 scarlet ibis fly in from Venezuela each night. . . .

### Tobago

**Proscuba, December 2001, Clif & Peta Lewis, North Carolina.** First night in Trinidad was at a hole in the wall motel. Two hours sleep. Next time I won't be so cheap for a short overnight stay. Proscuba located in a little motel in Storbay. Friendly and

helpful. They we're willing to help us out with tanks and weight belts to get refamiliarized with our skills. We are novice divers with two yrs. experience. Marlon [a local divemaster] took us to Divers Dream first where we saw a huge turtle while observing lobster. Vis: easily 100', a mild current. Good dive briefing before entering the water. We did rollovers off a local uncovered boat. Dived with surface marker buoy that made us feel safe. Divemaster and two assistants, Ashton and Rachel kept an eye on everyone like a mother with her children. Ashton was assigned to us because we had the least experience. Reentry to the boat was done with a ladder. Fresh fruit and water provided. 2nd stop was Flying Reef. Much less current, large sponge and fan coral, and the usual tropical fish. Back at the shop, good gear rinse down with large barrels and unlimited water. Proscuba took us to Speyside via auto. For what little extra they charged for travel it was well worth it. Got to see the island for a whole lot less than a hired taxi. Hour scenic ride. Met Marlon and Smitty who was our boat captain and another one of those local boats. I knew we were going to be OK because painted on a hatch cover was "Trust God" Bookends, named I presume because the protruding rocks of the reef appeared like a pair of bookends standing out of the water. Here the water had about a 3' chop, vis was about 80-100'. Topography was a little different, saw some large barracuda and other large game fish. Kelston Drain, home of the famous largest brain coral I read about. When I saw this huge thing finally appear out of the distance I

was in awe. Their attitude on safety was very important. Well-informed briefings. They also believe in small groups. Our dives were 8-9 divers. They also switched out tanks on all our dives. (Ph: 868 639-7424; e-mail [proscuba@tsst.net.tt](mailto:proscuba@tsst.net.tt))

### TURKS AND CAICOS

#### Grand Turk

These islands, situated south of the Bahamas and north of the Virgins, feature awesome walls and clear water. . . . South Caicos wall, off Cockburn Harbor, has a stone arch at 50', a lip as sharp as a knife, and a breathtaking vertical face. . . . Provo, the glitzy island, has spectacular beaches, but it's at least an hour's boat ride to the better diving of South or West Caicos. Grand Turk, on the other hand, is a funky, laid-back island that has a wall right offshore. Salt Cay has a guest house and decent diving; West and North Caicos have no dive facilities . . . Bring a long-sleeved shirt during the winter; it can get cool in the evenings. . . . The flight to Provo from Miami is a little over an hour. . . .

**Blue Water Divers, Osprey Beach Hotel, July 2001, Roger Beuster, Rancho Mirage, CA.** Vis: 60-80 ft. Water: 78-82 F. Logged dives: 100+. Dive restrictions enforced: 100' max. Very limited night life. Laid back island, good place for peaceful relaxation. Diving was good; boat rides were very short — great to get in AM dives and relax thru the

day. Osprey Beach Hotel still under remodel. This was ok, but proprietor did not try to make us feel welcome. Mitch Rolling: Entertaining, informative and easy to dive with. (Ph: 649-946-2432; e-mail [info@grandturkscuba.com](mailto:info@grandturkscuba.com); website [www.grandturkscuba.com](http://www.grandturkscuba.com))

**Blue Water Divers, Osprey Beach, February 2002, William Edwards, Placerville, CA.** Dives logged: 214. Dive restrictions enforced: return with 500 lbs. The staff at Blue Water Divers were friendly, helpful, knowledgeable and they let us dive our own profile. The only requirement was that we return to the surface with 500 lbs. of air. We saw an abundance of corals and tropical fish, plus two of the largest octopus any of us had ever seen. All dive sites were within fifteen to twenty minutes of the boat dock. We were picked up in front of our hotel every morning and dropped off on our beach in the afternoon. They only had one guy to dive and be boat operator so the dive boat was left unattended while we were diving. The dive operation's owner, Mitch, also entertained us one night at the Osprey Beach Hotel where we stayed. The hotel is old and in need of some serious repairs. Although clean, these were not first class accommodations. However, the staff was friendly and the food was good and they did have the nicest beach.

**Blue Water Divers, Osprey Beach, August 2002, Anthony Dresden, Arlington, VA.** Experience: 101-250 dives. Vis: 100 Feet. Water: 82 to 84 F,