

BRAZIL

Aguas Claras, Atlantis/Dolphin Hotel, October 2002, Martha & Jeff Hubbard (hubbard182@att.net), Glenmont, NY. Experience: Over 1,000 dives. Vis: 30 to 90 feet. Water: 78 to 80 F, choppy. There are three dive operators, Aguas Claras, Atlantis, and Noronha Divers. We dove with the first two. Atlantis has two spiffy fiberglass catamarans carrying up to 30 crowded divers and a smaller boat for up to 8 or so. Aguas Claras has old wooden boats that look like African Queen fitted for day diving, for up to 14 divers. Plenty of sun cover and we came to like the wooden boats. There was confusion about our diving reservations, so Aguas Claras sent English-speaking Andre to our hotel at 9 p.m. Sunday to review our C-cards and arrange for two tank morning dives Monday and the rest of the week. English-speaking and charming Claudia treated us like the experienced divers that we are. Most days' morning dive was just the four divers in our party. Afternoons we did two-tank dives with Atlantis. The cats are new but crowded: up to 3 groups of up to 10 divers. Since many divers are rookies — Brazilians on their first ocean dive trip — big groups and exiting fully geared leads to getting one's mask kicked off or 2nd stage ripped from the mouth occasionally. Dive guides usually had enough English to get by, not actually converse, and treated everyone like a beginner. The dives were of reasonable length but arbitrarily limited by the divemasters. The few Brazilian tourists who spoke

English were friendly and pleasant. All the locals were friendly, but few speak English. Brazil requires a visa and makes it difficult to get one. We used www.traveldocs.com and were delighted. We paid \$1,500/person for a week, hotel, breakfast, lunch and 3 dives a day (4th dive each day we paid on-island.) The Dolphin Hotel was simple but comfortable. Restaurants are not very good, with the exception of Miramar where Fernanda treated us like guests in her home. With US \$, eating out is cheap. Deal with the dive operations and hotel direct; no need for an agent. Island tours are cheap and fun. The scenery is magnificent, better than the diving. See lots of dolphins — just don't get near them in the water! Our guide (and indispensable translator) was Djanira (3619 1016), met us at the airport and helped with many things. When the airline TRIP seemed to abandon us because their (possibly only) plane broke, she pleaded/threatened on our behalf to get us on the only plane to the mainland. For the experienced North American diver, the distance and time to get there would be better spent in visiting Bonaire or Little Cayman. (www.aguasclaras-fn.com.br)

CANADA

Ontario

Trout Lake Diving, July 2002, Alan J. Maxwell (maxwell@velocity.net), Erie, PA. Vis: 20-30 ft. Water: 65-80 F. Dives accrued: 370. Dive restrictions enforced: No diving in mine shaft unless qualified cave. This is a lime-

stone quarry, 7 acres and 30 ft. deep and mine shaft to 50 ft. I have been to Sherkston Quarry (Niagra Falls area) and Nelson Ledges (upstate N.Y.), and this quarry is the best by far! The quarry features great camping facilities, with and without hook ups, a nice dive shop within 100 feet from the water, with gradual, grass covered entry areas. Natural cliff diving boards, at 2 ft., 5 ft., 10 ft., and 20 ft. surrounding one end of the quarry. They have 3 boats, 2 airplanes, 2 cars, a truck, and a school bus! All objects are easily found because each object has a compass location such as 250 degrees 20 k, 250 degrees and 20 kicks from this point. A laminated map is available for \$5 Canadian with all objects identified! Great fish diving!

CAPE VERDE ISLANDS

Sal

Operator Guido Resca/Morabeza Hotel, December 2002, Marilyn Koukol (koukolm@hotmail.com), FPO AE. Vis: 30-50 ft. Water: 70-75 F. Dives logged: 1,200. Dive restrictions enforced: time usually about an hour. This was my second dive trip to Sal in the Cape Verde Islands. Last time I saw 8 nurse sharks on 1 dive. This time I saw 1 nurse shark on 8 dives. Lots of rays and schools of soldier fish and surgeon, and snappers and lobsters too! It is still difficult wading out to the inflatable dive boat and getting in it while in the surf. There was current on several dives. The Morabeza is a great place to stay and right by the dive shop. Their Christmas celebration

was quite special. Americans are rare in the Cape Verde Islands, which are located off the coast of Senegal, Africa. I also tried to dive on the island of Boa Vista, but the waves were too large and the dingy too small. These islands are still rather primitive and the usual tourists are from Europe. Two weeks of sunshine was great!

(www.hotelmorabeza.com)

Technosea, Morabeza Hotel, March 2003, Anne W. Simon, APO, AE.

Dives logged: 157. Vis: 60 ft. Water: 21 C. Dove two sites with Guido Resca and Technosea. "Pontinha" (80 ft. max) had huge nudibranchs, worms, two moray eels, white anemone with spines, schools of snapper, and squirrel fish under reef. Very interesting dive with nice wall that kept getting better and better. Second dive after 40 minute interval was "3 Grotte" (61 ft. max) and featured three caves. Saw strange invertebrates — rope like big sausage covered with yellow bubbles, huge sea snails that belched purple ink when afraid. Also saw c. robustus. The robust a Ghana butterfly fish. Unique to this part of Atlantic and West African Coast. Hotel had best beach and location of all the Sal resorts. Cape Verde is popular with European package tours — German, Italian. Portugese speaking country but you can get by with Spanish at resorts. (www.technosea.fr)

CROATIA

Diver Sport Center, Rubin Villas, August 2003, David Schwab (schwabd@bunt.com), APO, AE. Experience: 251-500 dives. Vis: 10 to