

DIVE WORLDWIDE

TRAVEL
EXPERIENCE
CONSERVE

Winter/Spring | 2016/17

THE PHILIPPINES
with Kate Humble

**Animal
MAGIC**

SHARKS
in the Spotlight

**Secrets of the
SOLOMON ISLANDS**

**NEW EXPERT LED
Adventures**



HIDDEN TREASURES OF THE PHILIPPINES



Small in size but big on impact, wildlife TV presenter Kate Humble discovers hidden treasures on her latest adventure to Magic Oceans Resort in the Philippines.

The coast off Anda, on the Philippine island of Bohol, is one of the best places in the world to see seahorses. On our first dive, our guide Rowena pointed to something on a pink coral fan. We looked and looked and finally saw what it was she was showing us. Pygmy seahorses, we discovered, are so masterful at mimicking their surroundings they are almost impossible to spot.

Without Rowena's help we would have happily admired the fan and moved on, oblivious that one of the most exquisite little creatures I have ever seen was skulking amongst its delicate branches.

On another dive, amongst coral rubble on a sandy slope, we found six seahorses in close proximity. Significantly bigger than the pygmy, they were just as cunningly camouflaged and again, we could easily have missed them.

We quickly realised that the diving here requires a different approach. Here the underwater stars are not the big charismatic show-stoppers like sharks or manta rays. There are no giant schools of fish, no dramatic drop-offs. Yes, we saw turtles, the occasional yellow-fin tuna and sleek, sharp-nosed barracuda, but here the underwater world is dominated by the small, the weird and the masters of disguise. There are pipefish that look exactly like the tattered scraps of weed they swim amongst. There are scorpion fish and frogfish that change colour to render themselves almost invisible. There are sand-coloured flying gurnards that will lie undetected until you get too close for comfort and then they take off, spreading beautifully patterned concertina 'wings' like those on the Chitty Chitty Bang Bang car. There are sea moths - funny little long-nosed creatures that look as if they were designed to be in Star Wars. There are arrow-head crabs, orangutan crabs, so-called because they really are orange and hairy, transparent shrimp, burrowing fish and tiny octopus exquisitely decorated with blue rings.

But not everything blends seamlessly into the background. As a fan of nudibranch, I am always excited to see one and always amazed by their sheer variety of colour, patterns, feelers and plumes. In many places finding a nudibranch is an occasional treat. In Bohol's waters there appears to be a permanent nudibranch carnival taking place. On the wall of the Magic Ocean dive centre is a montage of photographs of all the different nudibranch that had been photographed by staff and guests over the last year. There were almost two hundred of them!

For underwater photographers and divers who love the macro world, Anda should definitely be on your wish list.

Magic Dive Experience, Philippines

Diving in the Philippines doesn't get much better than this. Experience the magical combination of two dedicated dive resorts located in the Visayas region, famous for its stunning dive sites.

15 days from £2,145

“Magic Oceans is a pearl of a resort in a wonderful location, very relaxing, with friendly and enthusiastic staff, and an exceptional team at the dive centre! Almost 50 fascinating dive sites; especially for macro enthusiasts!”

Bjørn S travelled to the Philippines in August 2016



WELCOME

Welcome to our latest seasonal brochure.

Our eager Dive team are always searching the globe to seek out the finest dive destinations for you. In this edition Charlie recounts his recent adventure to the remote Solomon Islands and we introduce a new liveboard experience in the Andaman Islands.

We launch two new exclusive expert led adventures to Indonesia; ‘Sulawesi in Focus’ with underwater photographers Jane Morgan & Gill McDonald in 2017 and a very special trip to Wakatobi in 2018 with marine biologist Dr. Richard Smith. We also showcase the best shark diving encounters, some of nature’s greatest events and more.

We are proud to announce that we have raised a further £2,500 this year for our chosen marine conservation partners, Project AWARE and Bite-Back Shark & Marine Conservation. A huge thank you to all who contributed.

So that you keep up-to-date with new trips, events and offers, visit our website and sign up to receive our e-newsletters.

We look forward to welcoming you on your next dive adventure.

Phil North
Manager

DON'T JUST TAKE OUR WORD FOR IT...

“What a brilliant holiday, and great service from Mat from the moment I first contacted him with my vague ideas about resuming diving. His enthusiasm sold me on Mexico, and rightly so. The dive centre team were great, the instructor and guides superb and the Cenotes dives great fun. And I got to swim with whale sharks! It could not have been a better experience.”

Mark P travelled to Mexico in July 2016

“Just returned from Truk and all I can say is, *amazing!* The Odyssey was fantastic - they catered for all our needs and we couldn't fault them at all. We will certainly be looking at using you again for future trips and will recommend Dive Worldwide wholeheartedly to everyone we speak to.”

Adrian R travelled to Truk in August 2016

“Just wanted to let you know what a fantastic holiday we had in the Galapagos. The liveboard trip could not have been better. Jonathan was great, so knowledgeable and enthusiastic about his work. Every dive we did at Darwin there were whale sharks!”

Helen W travelled on our Galapagos Whale Shark Expedition with expert Jonathan Green in August 2016.

Unrivalled DIVING EXPERIENCES

With more than 40 destinations worldwide, we offer you a diverse collection of diving and snorkelling experiences. Explore by liveaboard, combine colourful reefs with topside activities, learn to dive, travel together, or simply relax in style. The possibilities are endless.

Liveaboards

Liveaboards allow divers to explore areas beyond the reach of dive resorts, transporting you to some of the most remote diving destinations on earth. From the Caribbean to the South Pacific, we offer the widest range of liveaboards.



Resorts

We offer a collection of carefully selected accommodation with characterful hotels, charming guesthouses, luxurious properties and purpose built dive resorts in the world's finest diving destinations to suit all budgets and requirements.

Single Travellers

We have created a collection of trips ideal for solo divers. Join one of our liveaboards, small group adventures or one of our resort based options, selected for the low single supplement or sharing options available.

Families

Experience the magic of the underwater world with all the family. From outstanding resort facilities to safe and colourful diving adventures, our carefully designed trips and destinations offer everything a family needs for the perfect diving holiday.

Group Travel

Group diving holidays are hugely rewarding, allowing you to dive with like-minded people and experience superb diving. We offer unique expert led trips along with holidays for groups of friends and dive clubs.

LEARN TO DIVE



PHOTOGRAPHY



SNORKELLING



SHARK DIVING



WRECK DIVING



REEF DIVING



View our website to see our full collection of dive holidays.

What's BUBBLING



We are continually adding new destinations, resorts and liveboards to our expanding portfolio. To keep up-to-date, sign up to 'What's Bubbling', our regular e-newsletter and follow us on Facebook Google+, Pinterest and Twitter.

NEW LIVEBOARD AND RESORTS

Infiniti Liveboard, Andaman Islands

Featuring six spacious cabins, this custom built boat offers something a little extraordinary for divers of all abilities; pioneering diving adventures to the Barren and Narcondam islands, part of the Andaman archipelago. Expect manta rays, sharks, striking colourful walls, a stunning wreck, schools of snapper and bioluminescence night diving on this unique diving adventure. The opportunity to dive these remote locations is only available in March and April. Alternative, shorter itineraries operate from December to March exploring the southern islands including Cinque and Passage as well as Ritchie's Archipelago.

12 days from £3,945 (Barren & Narcondam itinerary)



Dive into Lembeh at Hairball Resort, Indonesia

Wake up to panoramic views of Lembeh Island from this new owner-managed resort located adjacent to two of the best muck dive sites that the location is so famous for. The intimate purpose built property features nine sea view bungalows, bar and restaurant, swimming pool, spa, fire pit and a full service dive facility. Daily boat dives allow divers access to the best sites and photographers are well catered for. Expect an amazing array of critters, too many to mention!

10 days from £2,045



Dive into Ambon at Maluku Resort & Spa, Indonesia

A hidden gem located in Baguala Bay on the spice island of Ambon, Maluku Resort & Spa is a boutique resort set amongst tropical gardens overlooking the Banda Sea. With access to Ambon Bay and local reefs, divers can indulge in the best of both worlds with Dive into Ambon, the onsite owner-operated dive centre. Discover world-class muck sites in Ambon Bay as well as the colourful reefs off the southern coast, all easily accessible from the resort.

11 days from £2,235



All holiday prices in this brochure are based on two persons sharing, including flights from the UK, accommodation, transfers and diving except where specified. For full details call our expert Dive team. Prices correct at time of going to print.

SULAWESI IN FOCUS

Jane Morgan and Gill McDonald are co-leading our new exclusive photography workshop to the world-class diving locations of northern Sulawesi, Indonesia. Below, they share their thoughts on why Bunaken and Lembeh are ideal for budding underwater photographers...

North Sulawesi is at the very tip of one of the largest of 17,000 islands making up the diverse, exotic nation of Indonesia. It is pretty much in the centre of the perceived Coral Triangle, which has the greatest marine biodiversity on earth and stretches from the Philippines to Malaysia to the Solomon Islands. It contains a staggering number of corals - nearly 600 different species of reef-building corals alone (76% of the world's known species) - and more than 2,000 reef fishes along with many other marine organisms.

The underwater photographic opportunities in this region are breathtaking. The world-class diving ranges from spectacular scenic walls and coastal reefs in Bunaken National Park to the famous black sand muck diving in the wonderful Lembeh Strait. The opportunity to dive in these two very different environments on one trip and photograph the huge number of fascinating, colourful yet different wildlife in each zone makes North Sulawesi an absolute must-visit if photography is on your agenda.

Bunaken National Park has beautiful walls, slopes and stunning reef-tops blessed with hawksbill and green turtles, vast schools of red-toothed triggerfish and yellow and white butterflyfish. There are huge barrel sponges, rainbow-coloured crinoids and healthy soft corals. But the walls are not limited to wide-angle photography because many smaller creatures live here too, from minute hairy shrimps to minuscule coral hermit crabs.

The coastal sites around Bunaken provide a contrast to the walls including sloping reefs, sandy seagrass and muck diving. Dive sites such as City Extra and the Tasik Ria house reefs have seahorses, frogfish, juvenile filefish among the seagrass and exquisite porcelain crabs.

The Lembeh Strait is truly magical. With its mysterious black sand it is a muck diving paradise and one of the best macro-photography sites on earth. There are miniature sea-dragons, pygmy seahorses, harlequin, bumble-bee and tiger shrimps, octopus that mimic other creatures, or walk across the seabed carrying their seashell home. There are extravagant flamboyant cuttlefish and decorated Ambon scorpion fish, and more types of nudibranch and shrimps than you can imagine.

Why not join Jane and Gill to experience exceptional underwater photography opportunities in not just one but two of the best natural aquariums in the world. It is a photographer's paradise!

Book your place today - see opposite for details.



Jane Morgan



Jane is an award-winning underwater photographer and photo-journalist. Her work has been widely published in the UK diving press and national media. Jane discovered underwater photography during a trip to the Red Sea in 2001 and never looked back. With her vast experience she is just as comfortable shooting apex predators as she is anemone fish and rates Lembeh as one of her top diving locations.

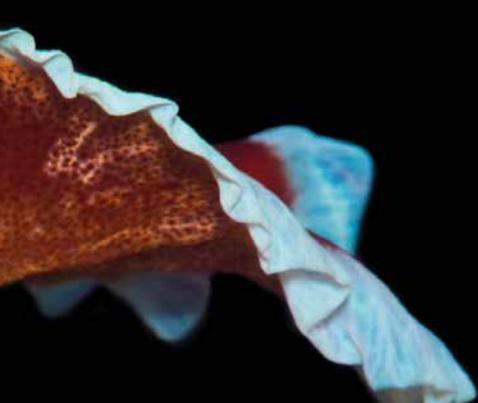
Gill McDonald



Gill has been involved in the underwater industry for 15 years in many different guises. Currently, Gill is the underwater photo-pro at Tasik Ria Resort in North Sulawesi teaching to all levels of photographers. Her writing and photography have been published many times and Gill gives photo talks at dive shows together with her colleague and friend Jane Morgan.

Spanish dancer image courtesy of Gill McDonald

Expert Led Small Group ADVENTURES



Four Kings Expedition

LIMITED SPACE

Experience the diversity of Indonesia's Raja Ampat on board the S/Y Indo Siren liveaboard with marine biologist Dr. Richard Smith. Considered by many to offer the most spectacular diving on earth, 'The Four Kings' sits at the epicentre of the Coral Triangle.

Departs 28 Feb 2017 **Duration** 15 days
Group size 15 **Price from** £4,495
Leader Dr. Richard Smith.



Sulawesi in Focus

NEW

Join award-winning photographers Jane Morgan and Gill McDonald in northern Sulawesi, diving Bunaken, Lembeh and more. Suitable for underwater photographers of all levels this exclusive trip includes personal tuition and informal underwater photography workshops, along with a unique boat transfer diving seldom visited areas en route.

Departs 3 Sep 2017 **Duration** 14 days
Group size 11 **Price from** £2,595
Leaders Jane Morgan and Gill McDonald.



Wonders of Wakatobi

NEW

Join Dr. Richard Smith as he returns to Wakatobi to explore the exceptional marine life of this remote region. Richard will spend a week on the beautiful Pelagian Liveaboard, and a further week at the award-winning Wakatobi Dive Resort with opportunities to join Richard for various lengths of stay.

Depart	Holiday Options	Duration	Price from
18 Aug 2018	7 nights liveaboard	11 days	£4,475
18 Aug 2018	7 nights liveaboard & 4 nights resort	15 days	£5,650
18 Aug 2018	7 nights liveaboard & 7 nights resort	18 days	£6,745
25 Aug 2018	7 nights resort	11 days	£4,345

Prices are based on two persons sharing, including flights from the UK, accommodation, diving, transfers, most meals & services of expert leaders as applicable. Single supplements on request. For full details contact the Dive team.

ANIMAL MAGIC

Nature offers exciting times throughout the year as seasons transform our planet and animals migrate, aggregate, nest and calve. Marine wildlife encounters are spectacular, but some stand out above the rest. We have selected some of the most impressive diving and snorkelling experiences with magnificent marine life doing what it does best, naturally.



Sardine Run Adventure, South Africa

Witness the 'Greatest Shoal on Earth' as millions of sardines migrate along South Africa's eastern coastline. The shoals can stretch for over ten kilometres in length and 40 metres in depth. Dive and snorkel with thousands of dolphins, seals, sharks, whales, and even birds. It's a wildlife extravaganza!

When to go: Jun-Jul
10 days from £2,335

Christmas Island Red Crab Migration

Visit this Australian outpost for the spectacular migration of over 40 million red crabs from the rainforest to the coast which occurs at the start of the wet season. Eggs are released and hatch immediately on contact with the sea; many of which are eaten by large plankton feeders such as whale sharks.

When to go: Nov-Dec
18 days from £4,095



Mammoth Cetaceans of Sri Lanka

Thirteen species of whale and eight of dolphin reside in the Sri Lankan waters but the peak times for encounters are during the inter-monsoonal seasons. Sperm whale and spinner dolphin are seen off the Kalpitiya coast and the blue whale feed in the waters of Dondra and the natural harbour of Trincomalee.

When to go: Mar-Apr & Sep-Oct
9 days from £2,675



Turtle Nesting in Oman

Green and hawksbill turtles are frequent visitors to a protected beach with March and April being the optimum time to see the hatchlings. The largest nesting site in the Indian Ocean is at Ras al Jinz where hundreds of green turtles lay their eggs in the dark of night from June to August.

When to go: Mar-Apr (hawksbill), Jun-Aug (green turtles)
9 days from £1,695



A Fever of Stingrays in New Zealand

The reason for their annual appearance is unknown, but hundreds of short-tail stingrays aggregate in the Poor Knights Marine Reserve from December to March. As well as patrolling the Northern Archway, the large rays (two metre wingspan) can be seen flying through the water; a dramatic and unique sight for divers.

When to go: Dec-Mar 16 days from £4,295



Humpback Whale Migration, Tahiti

The shallow waters of Rurutu provide a perfect environment for humpback whale mothers to give birth and nurse their young calves. Great visibility and the cooperative nature of the whales make for a memorable encounter. This is also a great time to visit Rangiroa; famous for its clear waters and pelagic encounters.

When to go: Jul-Oct
15 days from £3,995



Barrel Rolling Mantas at Hanifaru Bay, Maldives

Witness this annual mass feeding spectacle where 50+ manta rays can be seen barrel rolling and swimming near the surface in the plankton rich waters of the small, protected area of Hanifaru Bay. This incredible event can be experienced from either a liveaboard or resort but only snorkelling is allowed in the bay.

When to go: Jul-Sep
10 days from £2,375



Underwater ESCAPES

We offer an extensive range of dive holidays to suit all budgets. Whether you are looking for simple accommodation or want to blow the budget on a holiday of a lifetime we can help. Our expert Dive team have selected some of their favourite trip ideas from around the world to suit every budget.

UNDER £2,000

Visit Tobago

Tobago is full of life and offers diving to suit all abilities, from shallow sloping reefs to thrilling drift dives and wrecks; a fantastic Caribbean experience and great value for money, Tobago is relaxed and welcoming all year round.

9 days from £1,260



Jordanian Highlights

Visit Jordan's cultural and historical sites of Petra, Jerash and Kerak, dive the uncrowded shores of Aqaba and explore the dramatic desert landscapes of Wadi Rum on this itinerary of adventure and discovery.

10 days from £1,945



UNDER £3,000

Maldives Dive Safari

Explore world-class dive sites from the comfort of a liveaboard, followed by a few days relaxation in a resort on North Malé Atoll. Highlights include manta ray and whale shark encounters, and time to unwind in a tropical paradise.

13 days from £2,595



Visit Grenada

An ideal trip for both novice and experienced divers, Grenada is a great option for all. Discover beautiful hard and soft corals, turtles, sharks and spotted eagle rays, as well as several iconic wrecks.

9 days from £1,695



Maldives Island Hopping Adventure

Experience the local side of Maldivian life. Staying at guesthouses on local islands allows you to dive the same sites for less, while experiencing more of the local life of the Maldives, adding a new dimension to your holiday.

9 days from £1,795



Komodo Liveaboard, Indonesia

One of Indonesia's most iconic diving areas, the vast Komodo National Park is best dived by liveaboard to fully appreciate the area's riches. Expect critters, sharks, manta rays, napoleon wrasse and turtles.

11 days from £2,845



South Africa & Mozambique Dive Safari

This guided dive safari along the KwaZulu-Natal coast and up into Mozambique offers amazing wildlife experiences both underwater and topside. Expect plenty of shark encounters, whales, rhino and lions!

14 days from £1,965

Cenotes & Reefs, Mexico

This dive adventure includes turtle encounters on the reef, along with a unique and breathtaking experience as you discover the crystal clear waters of the world-famous Cenotes. No specialist qualifications are required.

9 days from £1,765

Island Hopping Dive Safari, Philippines

Choose from five exceptional diving locations in the Visayas region of the Philippines. Enjoy stress free diving adventures as you island hop between them, exploring everything from macro life to pelagics.

17 days from £2,145

“Charlie was great as usual. I gave him a bit of a mission organising things so quickly. But it was all done and I was away to the boat within about a week I think! Big thanks to him for breaking my whale shark jinx.”

Kate H travelled to Indonesia in August 2016

WE CREATE OUTSTANDING DIVING HOLIDAYS

Our website features over 160 trip ideas throughout the world to help you plan your next diving adventure.

OVER £3,000

East End Explorer, Cayman Islands

The East End of Grand Cayman is famous for its never ending walls with their brightly coloured sponges, plus stingrays and turtles galore. Spend a week exploring some of its 50+ dive sites in warm, pristine waters.

9 days from £2,165

Guatemala & Belize

These two fascinating Central American countries combine well to offer Mayan ruins, colonial architecture and tropical rainforests blended with stunning coral reefs, sandy beaches and the world-famous Blue Hole.

14 days from £3,045

Diving Adventure in Alor, Indonesia

The allure of Alor is its eclectic mix of marine life and diving experiences, where you can spot blue whales, explore stunning reefs and discover countless critters. This remote location is undeniably enchanting.

14 days from £3,175

Ari Atoll Diving Experience, Maldives

Divers return again and again to the popular dive sites of the South Ari Atoll, for healthy reefs, prolific marine life and large pelagic encounters including turtles, sharks and rays. Suited for snorkelling friends too.

9 days from £2,425

Socorro Liveaboard, Mexico

The Revillagigedos Islands are acclaimed for majestic manta ray, shark, dolphin and humpback whale encounters. This adventure to Socorro has, quite simply, some of the best big fish diving in the world.

12 days from £3,675

Dive into Luxury, Philippines

Experience world-class diving at a beautifully calm pace with this superb trip idea. Combine two of the Philippines' hidden gems for a diving holiday brimming with indulgence and laid back luxury.

13 days from £3,395



Truk - Wreck Extravaganza

Explore Truk Lagoon, considered the best wreck diving destination in the world. This resort based itinerary will take you to explore the underwater museum of an entire Japanese fleet, sunk in WWII.

12 days from £2,795

Dive & Discover PNG

Uncover the magic of Papua New Guinea, on this adventure to two exceptional diving areas - both renowned for a huge biodiversity of marine life, macro and pelagic encounters on vibrant coral reefs.

17 days from £4,845

Classic Antarctica

On this voyage of a lifetime discover the best of Antarctica, with plenty of activities to explore the unique landscape both above and below the water. Diving is optional - qualifications are required.

11 days from £5,695 (boat only)

SHARK DIVING ADVENTURES

Diving with sharks represents a pinnacle for many divers. These iconic and ancient animals engender emotions in us that few other animals can rival. From walls of hammerheads to mighty bull sharks, cage dives with great whites to gentle whale sharks, our range of shark diving trips take you to the heart of the action. Here, we showcase some of the most thrilling shark diving experiences on earth.

Ultimate Shark Encounter in Fiji

Set your pulse racing with this Fijian shark adventure. Beqa Lagoon is home to Fiji's most exhilarating shark diving, promising up close and personal encounters with huge bull sharks, tiger sharks, lemon sharks and more.

We recommend combining Beqa with one of Fiji's other top diving spots for the ultimate holiday.

12 days from £2,695



Schools of Hammerheads at Cocos

If walls of hammerheads get you going, look no further than a Cocos Island liveaboard. A remote outcrop in the eastern Pacific Ocean, Cocos Island fully justifies its place as one of the world's finest liveaboard destinations. Cocos is a magnet for sharks, most notably large schools of hammerheads. The best shark encounters are generally from May to November.

14 days from £4,565



The Caribbean's Finest

Head to Nassau in the Bahamas to stare right into the eyes of an apex predator. As well as wonderful walls, colourful reefs and wrecks, the Bahamas is possibly the Caribbean's finest shark diving destination. Add a shark adventure dive to your holiday for up close encounters with numerous Caribbean reef sharks.

9 days from £1,795





Wonderful Whale Sharks at Mafia Island

Head to the sleepy backwater of Mafia Island in Tanzania from October to March to witness the annual whale shark migration, where male whale sharks can be seen feeding. The marine park is also home to some of Africa's richest reefs.

10 days from £1,895



Great White Shark Heaven, Isla Guadalupe

Discover the world's most exciting great white shark dive site by liveaboard. Enjoy cage diving expeditions in the crystal clear waters of the Pacific and experience nothing short of great white shark heaven!

9 days from £3,995



Awesome Shark Adventures in South Africa & Mozambique

World-class shark diving experiences are found along the KwaZulu-Natal coast and in Mozambique. On this year round trip dive Aliwal Shoal and Ponta do Ouro for encounters with ragged tooth, oceanic black-tip, bull, hammerhead and tiger sharks.

12 days from £1,535



Shooting the Pass in Tahiti

A fantastic adventure for shark lovers! Combine exhilarating diving in the crystal clear waters of Rangiroa's two passes with thrilling drift diving, prolific marine life and numerous shark species at Fakarava. This is true diving paradise!

17 days from £4,650



Sharks in the Maldives

Escape to the southern Maldives for a liveaboard experience with an air of discovery and plentiful shark encounters. Highlights include grey reef, hammerhead and silky sharks. Trips are year round, with the finest shark encounters from January to March.

9 days from £2,650



Mighty Galapagos by Liveaboard

The Galapagos Islands offer world-class diving and are a must for all experienced divers. Encounter silky, Galapagos, hammerhead and whale sharks from the comfort of a liveaboard, and come face to face with incredible and unique wildlife topside.

10 days from £5,295

Meet THE DIVE TEAM



Here we continue with our Master (scuba) Mind series and in this issue we put our questions to Dive Consultant Mat Howell. Mat is an experienced Divemaster with a passion for adventure – you'll find him as close to the action as possible both above and below the water.

What or who inspired you to learn to dive?

My big brother arranged a PADI Open Water course for my 18th birthday. He was already a Master Scuba Diver at the time. Little did I know it would turn out to be the best present anyone could ask for.

What excites you most about being underwater?

I mean it when I say that simply being underwater is exciting to me. Jacques Cousteau said it best; "From birth, man carries the weight of gravity on his shoulders. He is bolted to earth. But man has only to sink beneath the surface and he is free."

Have you had any other jobs in the travel industry?

I spent some time working in Thailand as a Divemaster. Assisting instructors on courses and leading recreational divers was probably my most rewarding 'job' to date...until I found Dive Worldwide of course!

Where was your last logged dive?

If standing in a submerged cage off the remote island of Guadalupe, surrounded by huge great white sharks is 'diving' then that would be it. Highly recommended!

Where in the world would you most like to dive?

Known as the final frontier of travel; Papua New Guinea is at the top of my bucket list. Such an exciting and remote part of the world that really sparks the imagination; I hope to be heading there next year!



What is your most memorable marine life encounter?

I have been so lucky with my encounters that picking one worthy winner is tough. The tiger shark that took me by surprise at Socorro might just take the prize though. Seeing giant mantas on every dive and a school of hammerheads made for a very special trip indeed.

Marine conservation plays a big role in our industry. Have you done anything to help make a difference?

I spent a month volunteering with Coral Cay Conservation in the Philippines. In this relatively short period of time I learnt so much about marine conservation and conducted surveys that contributed to the global data of our world's coral reefs.

If you weren't working in the dive travel industry, what would be your ideal job?

For years I have dreamt of being a globetrotting adventurer! I have a huge amount of respect for characters such as Ranulph Fiennes and Ed Stafford; the physical and mental battles they overcome to achieve their exploration goals is nothing short of astonishing!

SECRETS OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC

Solomon Islands



Dive Consultant Charlie Munns explores the hidden depths of some of the most remote seas on earth on board MV Bilikiki.

I am often asked why I have such a passion for diving. A tricky question to answer but a large part is the opportunity to travel and explore some of the most remote places on the planet. I recently visited the Solomon Islands, a destination that very much befits my passion and spirit of adventure.

Less than 2,000 divers visit the Solomon Islands each year, putting it on the very edge of the diving map. Yet getting there was surprisingly simple. Just two flights to Fiji, an overnight hotel and a short hop to the capital, Honiara.

My host for the 10 day trip was the excellent MV Bilikiki liveaboard. We sailed from Honiara and quickly made our way to some of the most remote islands imaginable. Uninhabited and impenetrable rocks gave way to truly stunning reefs, the likes I have never seen before.

I was hooked from the moment I slipped beneath those magical and warm waters. I have been diving 25 years and confess I have never seen anything quite like it. From mobula rays and schools of bumphead parrotfish to pygmy seahorses and orange mantis shrimp, the list goes on. The infamous Leru Cut was mesmerising as the midday sun shone a spotlight on a narrow channel of water, enticing us from the ocean into the heart of the island and back. To top it all I snorkelled alongside more than 20 pilot whales.

From my extensive time spent diving Truk and Palau, I knew the legacy that the US Pacific campaign against Japan in WW II had left on the region's seas. Guadalcanal was of major strategic importance, with the Japanese using the island as a base to threaten allied shipping with the intention of isolating Australia from the US and its allies. The US was determined to stop them before this became reality and the battle that followed was a turning point in the war against Japan. The resulting casualties were staggering. The loss of over 26,000 men, 67 ships and about 1,400 aircraft destroyed in just six months. Though most are lost to the depths, the wrecks of Iron Bottom Sound provide exceptional dives.

The hard and soft corals in the Solomon Islands covered everything. The gorgonian sea fans were super-sized. Some dives were mini-sinkholes, allowing me to surface into the sweaty jungle, the home of salt water crocodiles. Surface intervals were spent with the local villagers, witnessing their culture and buying their beautiful wood carvings. This is island life without electricity, motorised transport or a sense of time. It perhaps defines purity and nature.

To book your Dive holiday to the Solomon Islands contact Charlie or one of our expert Dive team today.

Dive the Solomon Islands, 12 days from £4,895

Discover TOBAGO

LIVE THE CULTURE.
THE ISLAND OF
Tobago
STYLE.
WWW.TOBAGOSTYLE.TRAVEL



Tobago's tropical climate, friendly people and easy pace of life make this beautiful island a relaxing and welcoming destination year round. There are many gentle dives with a range of superb reefs suitable for beginners, whilst experienced divers can enjoy challenging drift dives.

Visit Tobago, 9 days from £1,260

Includes flights, accommodation, breakfast, diving and transfers.

Contact our Dive experts to plan your Tobago diving adventure

We create outstanding DIVING HOLIDAYS

Over 160 locations worldwide, hand-picked for the best diving and snorkelling experiences.

- Finest dive locations
- Superb selection of resorts & liveaboards
- Tailor-made specialists
- Personalised service
- 100% independent
- 100% financial protection



Our Conservation Partners



Our Awards



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Regional Winner Chamber Commerce
Awards 2015

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(front cover image), Amira Liveaboard, Dr.
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