

Blue Dolphin Travel

Dolphin Clicks

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Galapagos on the Sky Dancer June 28-July 5th 2009 Review



Located approximately 580 miles West of Ecuador lies the Galapagos Islands, a naturalists wonderland. These enchanted islands provide a natural habitat for numerous species of unusual wildlife. They were made famous by Charles Darwin during his studies over 120 years ago and were the inspiration for his "Theory of Evolution by Natural Selection." The bio-diversity of the Galapagos is spectacular.

The islands are volcanic in origin with rare ecosystems of flora & fauna with coexisting aquatic & terrestrial wildlife. These 13 primary islands, 5 smaller islands and numerous islets and rock formations are part of the Ecuadorian National Park System and World Heritage Site. They play host to over 400 endemic species of wildlife throughout the island chain.

The Galapagos Islands are the crossroad for the Equatorial Counter Current and colder Humboldt Current of South America, thus providing an area rich with nutrients and food for the numerous marine creatures. Whales, dolphins, sea lions, sharks, turtles and jacks join the many other species crossing your path as you cruise through these prolific waters.



It was all we expected and more! That was the comments from our Blue Dolphin Group. We encountered whale sharks, hammer head sharks, Galapagos sharks, white tip and black tip sharks. We saw schools of spotted eagle rays, manta rays and marbled sting rays. We played with Sea Lions and photographed turtles on almost every dive! We were visited by dolphins on our safety stops! We watched as free swimming morays cruised the volcanic rocks. There is so much more that I'm forgetting right now but would love to chat with you about our entire adventure. The water temperature was a steady 74 degrees which is a bit warmer than usual this time of year. Most of the Blue Dolphins wore 5 and 7mm suits and hoods. The Sky Dancer crew looked after us with kind efficiency. We always felt safe both on the Pangas or on the well equipped M/V Sky Dancer. The pangas can be a challenge for some to get back into as there was no ladder. Our land excursions gave us some wonderful views of the islands and sea with great photographic opportunities. Remember to bring proper shoes for walking on rocks and a bit of climbing. Long sleeve shirts, hats and sunblock will serve useful. This trip has encouraged me to give Doctor Tom a call and get a few trans derm patches for my "dive kit"! Thank you Rick and Jacquie for sharing your valued, extensive knowledge and for coming so well equipped in the event of sea sickness. - MaLinda

Solomon Islands on the Bilikiki



The Solomon Islands is an island nation located in the southwest Pacific, 1,500 miles west of Fiji and 1,200 miles northeast of Australia. The walls, reefs, pinnacles and coral gardens of the Solomon's support an amazing variety and quantity of sea creatures. Within a few yards of each other divers can see Anemone Fish, Angel Fish, Parrotfish while nearby schools of Barracuda, Big-eye Trevally and other pelagics offer incredible photo opportunities.

Located just a few degrees below the equator, the islands enjoy a year round tropical climate moderated by the sea air. Rainfall averages 10 inches per month year round, ranging from 8 inches in the dryer season to 12 inches in the wet. There is no monsoon season with extensive periods of heavy rainfall, but rain can be expected at any time, although it usually blows over fairly quickly. January to early March period is slightly wetter so the maintenance and well deserved crew holidays are observed during this time.

The Bilikiki is 125' in length with a 24' beam making it a very stable, comfortable ship. It also features large sundecks, plenty of covered areas, 10 deluxe cabins each with private bath and shower.

2009 Rates : 7 nights-\$2590, 9 nights-\$3330, 10 nights-\$3650, 12 nights-\$4380, 14 nights-\$5110

2010 Rates : 7 nights-\$2716, 9 nights-\$3492, 10 nights-\$3880, 12 nights-\$4656, 14 nights-\$5432

Wakatobi Dive Resort - Indonesia



Although one of the world's most remote resorts, Wakatobi Dive Resort offers a whole new level of comfort and class not usually associated with a typical dive resort. The beach villas and bungalows are spacious, tastefully decorated and offer all of the amenities you would expect in any fine resort. Blessed with a house reef where you can begin your dive only 60 feet from the dive center, Wakatobi is often described as a live aboard with built-in beach. In addition to the spectacular house reef, there are several dozens of easily accessible dive sites offering incredible marine life diversity, color and natural splendor. Wakatobi is about something more than just a great diving experience. Their mission from day one was to establish a dive resort that gave divers a sense of well-being and that they are helping contribute to an environmentally and culturally sound conservation program. It's not an accident that the Wakatobi Collaboration Reef Conservation Program is now one of the world's largest privately funded protected marine areas. Call for pricing and availability. 480-940-9242

Live Aboard News

**Aqua Cat Cruises
Nassau Bahamas**

Save \$400 on select cruises.
Regularly \$2295 per person, pay
only \$1895.00 if you confirm it by
July 31st. Dates for savings:

September 12
September 19
September 26
October 24
November 28
December 19

**Peter Hughes Diving
Blue Dole Bargains on Sun Dancer II**
Save \$700 per person.

Rates are \$1895 or \$2095 when
traveling between
9/5 and 12/26, 2009.

2009 Photo & Video Contest pays
\$15,000 in prizes! Go to
www.peterhughes.com or call
MaLinda for details for entry
forms. I know you Blue Dolphins
have some great shots!

Aggressor Fleet
Fall Savings of up to \$700 off on
select dates in October, November
and December, 2009.

Belize Aggressor III
Cayman Aggressor IV
Turks & Caicos Aggressor II
Utila Aggressor
Kona Aggressor II



See your favorite photo here next month.



Hey divers! Where are your favorite photos? These photos were taken at the Otavalo Market about 2 hours drive from Quito, Ecuador. It is an open air market and offers local hand crafted clothing, blankets, jewelry, wood carvings, spices and fresh produce. The photo at left shows a traditional presentation of a cured pig as the woman was cutting portions to serve her guests. The photo at right is a selection of spices for sale at the market.



Resort of the Month - Deep Blue Utila



Low Season Rates from \$1006 per
diver per week based on double
occupancy.

Whale Shark Season rates from
\$1412 per diver per week based
on double occupancy.

Whale Shark Season
Feb, Mar, Apr, May.



Packages include:

- Ocean front accommodations
- Air conditioning & fans in all rooms
- Refrigerator in each room for drinks and snacks
- Welcome cocktail & resort orientation
- Breakfast, lunch buffet & full 3 course dinner
- Drinking water, iced tea, hot tea/coffee
- Unlimited shore diving
- Unlimited snorkeling
- 3 boat dives daily inclusive of 2 night dives
- Tanks, belts & weights
- Buoyancy control workshop to help protect the reefs
- Internet access

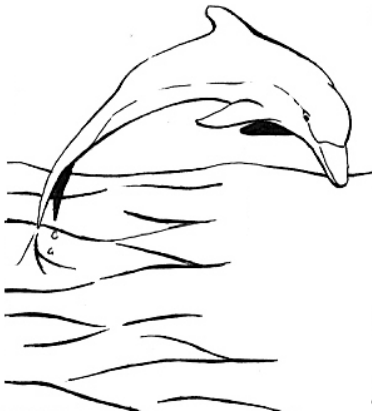
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**Let me book
your next
Dive Trip.**

*Experience Life,
Dive into Adventure*



Back Page Bubbles

Network with Divers

DIVE INSTRUCTION

Private classes, at your home and on your schedule. Gear rental, sales and repair. Joe Joe KODS Scuba will give you quality, professional service. Visit his web site at: <http://web.mac.com/cupofjoe1>

FISH ART

Ron Stevens AKA Rogest will draw you into the picture quite literally. A painter, author and environmentalist, his art is the most recognized Marine Dot Art today. See his site for early Christmas Shopping!
www.rogest.com

PET SITTING

Do you have pets that need some special attention while you are traveling? Linda takes care of large and small pets and has been serving the Ahwatukee Foothills Area since 2003. See her list of services at:
www.afriendofminepetsitting.com

Did you know?



This majestic giant of the kelp forest is common to the California Pacific coast. Under ideal conditions, giant kelp can grow an astonishing two feet each day. Held upright by gas-filled bladders at the base of leaf-like blades, kelp fronds grow straight up to the surface, where they spread across the top of the water to form a dense canopy. Giant kelp often grows in turbulent water, which brings renewed supplies of nutrients, allowing the plants to grow to a height of 175 feet. Unlike a proper root system, the holdfast — a cone-shaped mass of branching extensions, doesn't carry nutrients or water; it anchors the kelp to a rock.

Giant Kelp has a variety of inhabitants. Invertebrates graze on the blades, fish seek shelter in the fronds and thousands of invertebrates live in the holdfast—such as brittle stars, sea stars, anemones, sponges and tunicates. Sea otters like to hang out in the kelp forest where they find sea urchins, their favorite food, and can wrap up in a kelp frond to keep from drifting away at naptime.

"Diving the Kelp" is a mystical, almost surreal experience. Much like walking through a dense forest, divers swimming through the kelp stalks are treated to rays of sunlight shining through the canopy forming streamers of light and color. Kelp diving does require some specialized knowledge. Newcomers are advised to seek training from a diving professional familiar with the environment.

Recipe of the Month

Spinach Pasta with Salmon and Cream Sauce

This easy to prepare yet elegant dish illustrates the versatility of pasta. The subtle flavors and combine to make this a unique dish equally suited for a casual family supper or a special treat for guests.

2 cups heavy cream
Pinch of freshly grated nutmeg.
2 tbsp. freshly grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese
2 cups canned, flaked best quality salmon, all skin and bones removed
1/4 cup finely chopped fresh dill plus additional sprigs for garnish
Salt

4 tbsp. sweet butter
1 lb. spinach pasta



Bring the cream and half of the butter to a simmer in a small saucepan. Add 1 teaspoon of salt and the nutmeg and continue to simmer until the cream is reduced by about 1/4 (stir frequently being careful not to scald or burn cream). Bring 4 quarts of water to a boil and add 2 tablespoons of salt and drop in the noodles. Meanwhile, stir grated cheese into the cream and remove from the heat. Drain cooked pasta (al dente, please) and toss with remaining butter in large serving bowl. Portion the buttered pasta on dinner plates and ladle Salmon Cream Sauce over the top. Garnish with dill sprigs and lemon slices, serve with a crisp salad with an Italian vinaigrette (Newman's Own preferred) and a loaf of warm Italian bread. Place additional grated cheese and a pepper mill on the table for those who would like extra cheese or fresh ground pepper.

A perfect wine to compliment this dish would be a Abbaziadi di Novacella Pinot Grigio. *Buon Appetito!*