

NORTH ISLAND

DIVING & DIVE CENTRE



NORTH ISLAND'S DIVE SITES AND MARINE LIFE

North Island presently has over 20 dive sites, of which eight are more frequently dived due to their proximity to the island and the prolific marine life found there. Most of the sites are around North Island itself with several more situated around neighbouring Silhouette Island (approximately half-hour's boat ride away). Long range dives such as the Ennerdale Wreck; South Marianne (good for grey reef shark sightings) and Shark Bank are situated further afield and are therefore chargeable.

The diving itself is hugely interesting and the sites offer a range of diverse topographies and sightings – each site is fascinating in its own way. The coral life around Seychelles was severely affected by the El Nino weather phenomenon in 1998 whereby many shallow reefs were bleached (lost their colour and died). However, despite the bleaching, there is good coral growth on many of the dive sites as well as a variety of soft and hard corals that have re-established themselves. Common coral sightings on our prime sites are that of daisy coral, lettuce coral, plate coral, staghorn coral, palmate sea fans and a wealth of sponge life.

Fish life is abundant within the Seychelles islands and apart from the array of resident reef fish that are present on almost all the dive sites, it is also common to spot large shoals of silver kingfish and sea-pike as well as giant barracuda, bonito, golden pilot jacks, wahoo and many other species of the kingfish family. Spotted eagle rays are also common sightings as are humphead parrotfish, Napoleon wrasse, white-tip reef sharks, round ribbontail rays, porcupine rays and the ever-inquisitive orbicular batfish.

The depth of the dive sites range from 5 – 30m. Open Water-certified divers (or equivalent certification) are permitted to dive to only 18 metres (without further training) while Advanced Open Water divers (or equivalent certification) are permitted to dive to a maximum of 30 metres. No dives are conducted deeper than 30 metres.

Many of the sites allow for multilevel dive planning and have sloping topography that begin at around 10 metres or so, gently sloping deeper to 24 metres or more.

The water temperature ranges from a minimum of 24° Celsius from around June – early October (the winter season) and increases to around 30 to 31° Celsius by the end of the summer in March and April.



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While there is seldom current, drift diving techniques, the dive team's preferred method of diving, is conducted on all dive sites thereby ensuring minimal impact on the reefs. This also means that a dive float is towed by the dive leader so that the skipper of the boat can easily locate the group at any time – no long swims back to the boat or shore.

THE DIVE CENTRE

The attraction of diving on North Island is that guests don't have to do a thing. Diving equipment is pre-prepared by Dive Centre staff and is already on board the boat when the guests arrive for their pre-dive briefing at the Centre. Similarly the guests do not have to disassemble their equipment; again the Dive Centre staff takes care of this. Whilst on the boat, the guests hardly have to do anything more than fasten their weight belts; the skipper will even take the weight of the scuba equipment while the guests amble to the edge of the boat – it's the most indulgent way to dive possible!

A qualified PADI Dive instructor or PADI Dive master accompanies all guests on the dives and acts as a tour guide whilst on the dive, thus ensuring that the North Island focus on attention to detail is applied whilst in the water. Attention is also given to strict buoyancy control on all dive sites to avoid any accidental damage to the reefs.

North Island has an established Marine Code of Conduct designed to minimise the impact divers have on the marine environment as a whole. Several of these regulations are orientated toward avoiding impact on the reef itself during the dives and include a no-touch, no-take policy in order to ensure that we limit our effect on the recovering coral reefs.

Only PADI-sanctioned dive courses are taught on North Island and range from the children's Bubblemaker programme (a scuba programme for 8-year-olds and upwards) and the Discover Scuba Diving (DSD) course, more commonly known as the Resort Course, through to the PADI Dive Master level. The most common courses are the Discover Scuba Diving experiences, Scuba Diver, Open Water and occasionally the Advanced Open Water programme.



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Night diving is also available and is qualification and weather dependent. Our resident sponge crab on Sprat City is always a favourite sighting for a night dive on this site.

Proof of dive qualification is essential in order to make a dive booking. This can take the form of the actual dive certification card or the signed diver's logbook.

Guests who have not dived in 18 months will be required to complete the full PADI Scuba Review programme which is specifically designed to refresh the knowledge development and the confined water skill sections of the PADI Open Water course.

If guests are required to complete the Scuba Review programme or wish to enrol in any other PADI training course on the island, they will be required to complete a PADI Medical Statement. In order to avoid hassles with questions arising as to the medical fitness of the diver, guests should please bring along a recent Medical Certificate from their doctor verifying specifically that they are "fit to dive and currently have no pre-disposing conditions that are incompatible with diving".

Student training either takes place in the bay off Main Beach (water conditions permitting) or in our stunning, 45-metre, infinity swimming pool, which has a shallow section perfectly designed for small children and a deep end of approximately 2.5m.

EQUIPMENT

North Island's Dive Centre is fully operational with 16 sets of Seaquest/Aqualung dive gear.

Dive cylinders range in size from 10-litre to 12-litre steel cylinders. Two smaller 3.8-litre aluminium cylinders are also available for use for small children wishing to enrol in the PADI Bubblemaker programme.

The Dive Centre also stocks Cressi-Sub, H2O and Dive-tek masks, Mares fins (open heel and closed heel fins), Aqualung dive booties and custom-made Cressi-Sub wetsuits. Weight belts are also provided, along with UWATEC Aladin dive computers and compasses.



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NORTH ISLAND DIVE CENTRE

- The dive centre at North Island is fully operational with 16 sets of Seaquest/Aqualung dive gear.
- Dive cylinders range in size from 10ltr steel cylinders, 12ltr aluminium cylinders and 12 ltr steel cylinders.
- The dive centre also stocks Mares masks, Mares fins (open heel and closed heel fins), Aqualung dive booties and custom made Cressi-Sub wetsuits. Weight belts are also provided, along with Suunto dive computers for rental or for sale.
- Drift diving, the dive team's preferred method of diving, is done on all dive sites thereby ensuring minimal impact on the reefs.
- North Island presently has 13 dive sites, of which 9 are more frequently dived. Some of the sites are around North Island itself and the remainder are around the neighbouring island, Silhouette. One long range dive site, Shark Bank, is situated outside Mahé.
- The diving itself is very good and each site is diverse and interesting in its own way. The coral life around Seychelles was severely affected by the El Nino weather phenomenon. However, with this in mind, there is good coral growth on many of the dive sites and there is plenty of variety of soft and hard corals. Common coral sightings are that of dead man's finger, lettuce coral, plate coral, palmate sea fans and a variety of sponge life.
- Fish life is abundant with large shoals of kingfish and seapike being sighted on a regular basis. Giant barracuda are a common sighting, along with bonita, golden pompano, wahoo, sailfish and many species of the kingfish family.
- Spearfishing is banned in Seychelles and therefore the larger fish life is of good quality and quantity.
- Spotted eagle rays are common sightings as are humphead parrotfish, napoleon wrasse, white tip reef sharks, round ribbontail rays, porcupine rays and a variety of colourful reef fish. The ever friendly orbicular batfish is a common sighting.

- The depth of the dive sites range from 5m – 35m.
- Many of the sites have sloping topography and start off at around 10m, gently sloping deeper to 24m+.
- The average water temperature ranges from 25 degrees C from around June – October and increases to around 29 degrees C from November onwards.
- PADI dive courses are taught on North Island and range from the Discover Scuba Diving course, more commonly known as Resort course, through to DiveMaster level. The most common courses being Resort, Open Water and Advanced.
- Night diving is also done and is qualification and weather dependant.
- Proof of dive qualification is essential to ensure a booking on the dive boat. This can take the form of the actual dive card or log book.
- Guests who have not dived in 18 months, or wish to enroll in any PADI training course on the island, should please bring a recent Medical Certificate from their doctor verifying specifically that they are fit to dive and currently have no pre-disposing conditions that are incompatible with diving. If not in possession of a recent medical certificate, they have to be transferred to Silhouette Island for a medical check up before being allowed to dive in the pool or open water.
- Student training either takes place in the bay off main beach or in the stunning swimming pool, which has a deep end of 2.8m.
- The luxury of diving at North Island is that guests don't have to touch their dive gear. Gearing up and getting the gear to the boat is all done for them. The dive boats have all the mandatory gear, as required by law.
- A qualified dive instructor/divemaster accompanies all guests and acts as a tour guide, thus ensuring that personal attention is the order of the dive. Attention is given to strict buoyancy control on all dive sites.
- The dive centre currently uses a Canon G2 digital camera with Ikelite underwater housing. When conditions are good the camera is taken down to film guests as the activity is happening. Once back on North Island, the images are downloaded for guests to view and can be burnt onto CDs to take home. This is also used as a debriefing tool about fish seen on the dive. The centre will be getting a TV with DVD player and video recorder, so that images taken during the dives can be perused using this equipment.

Dive centre	NORTH ISLAND SEYCHELLES
Management	NORTH ISLAND COMPANY
Responsible	DEBBIE SMITH
Address	NORTH ISLAND
Phone	09248 – 293100
Fax	09248 – 293150
Email	reservations@north-island.com
Website	www.north-island.com

DIVE BASE DESCRIPTION

Year established	2003
Number of staff	7
Languages spoken	English, French, Creole (due to change in 2004 with additional languages spoken)
Opening hours	07h30 – 17h30
Time of first departure: boat or jeep in morning	Guest dependant and weather dependant – no set schedule of times
Check-in times	Half an hour prior to dive

DIVE OPERATION

	yes	no	Description
Shore diving	Yes		One dive site just in front of island "Boulders"
Jeep diving	No		
Boat diving	Yes		13 dive sites – around North, Silhouette, Mahe, Praslin and La Digue islands
Number and size of boats	1 – catamaran "North Spirit" – 28 ft in length.		
Max. number of divers on the boats	10 + dive staff and boat crew		
Day trips	Yes		Outer islands – weather dependant
Half day trips	Yes		Normal dives are single tank returning to the island for lunch
Several day safaris	No		
If yes, tour description			

DIVE SITES

	yes	no	Description
House reef available	Yes		"Boulders" – within snorkelling distance of North Island
Distance from shore/dive centre	15 min snorkel or swim		
House reef snorkelling	Yes		
# of regular dive sites	4		
# of dive sites by boat	11		
Average duration of transfer to dive sites	Closer sites = 20 minutes. Further sites = 1 hour		

TECHNICAL DIVING

	yes	no	Description
Nitrox diving	No		
Oxygen filling in % available	No		
Rebreather diving	No		
Rebreather calcium available	No		
Tec Diving	No		
Trimix diving	No		
Abnoe diving	No		

ASSOCIATIONS/COURSES

Rep. of associations	PADI Resort Association – store number S 32403		
Staff per association	2		
Courses up to which levels	Resort course & Open Water up to Dive Master level & certain specialties available		
Important info about courses	Medical history dependant.		
Specialties	Night, Drift diving, Shark Awareness, Underwater Naturalist		

TANKS

	yes	no	Description											
Steel tanks	Yes	6 lt		8 lt		10 lt	14	12 lt	4	15 lt		18 lt		20 lt
Aluminium tanks		10 lt	1 6	12 lt										
Nitrox tanks	NO	10 lt		12 lt		15 lt								
DIN/INT valves	Can be converted to DIN or standard A-Clamp easily													
Adapters available														

RENTAL EQUIPMENT

	yes	no	Description			
Air Regulators	Yes		Brand :			
Nitrox Regulators	No		Brand :			
BCD's	Yes		Brand :	SeqQuest. Regulators are Aqualung Calypso		
Suites	Yes		Sizes:	XSmall – Xlarge	mm - Neopren:	3mm
Rebreather equipment	No		Brand :			
Tec Dive equipment	No					
Trimix equipment	No					
Torches	Yes					
Photo-Cameras/Film	No		Brand:			
Photo-Cameras/Digital	No		Brand:			
Video-Cameras	No		Brand:			
Scoters	No					
Fins	Yes		Sizes:	Closed heel from 3 – 12. Open Heel from 5 – 14		
Masks/Snorkle	Yes					
Corrected masks	No		until with dioptr:			
Compressor	Yes		Brand:	Bauer Mariner with 2 x air banks. Fills 3 tanks at a time.		
Others						

KIDS DIVING

	yes	no	Description
Accepted age	Yes		8 onwards
Courses available	Yes		PADI Bubblemaker course
Special kids equipment available	Yes		2 x Kiddies BCD, Regulator & 7ltr aluminium dive tanks
Special education of staff	Yes		
Dive sites for kids	Yes		

DIVING FOR HANDICAPPED

	yes	no	Description
Diving for handicapped possible	No		
Specially educated staff available	No		
Which level of handicapped accepted	No		
Boat diving possible	No		
Beach diving possible	No		
Special infrastructure	No		

SAFETY MEASURES

	yes	no	Description
Oxygen at the benter	Yes		
Oxygen on the boats	Yes		
Oxygen on the jeeps			
Next decompression chamber	Victoria Hospital Mahe – currently out of service		
Medical education of staff	Yes		
Special safety philosophies	Yes		No diving within 24 hours of flying rules apply. No dive card no diving.

NEEDED DOCUMENTATIONS FOR DIVING

	yes	no	Description
Logbook	Yes		
Dive certification	Yes		
Medical certification	Yes		If guests have not dived in 18 months, or wish to enroll in any PADI training course on the island, they should please bring along a recent Medical Certificate from their doctor verifying specifically that they are fit to dive and currently have no pre-disposing conditions that are incompatible with diving. If not in possession of a medical certificate, they will have to be transferred to Silhouette Island for a medical check up before being allowed to dive.
Others	No		

PRICES FOR RENTAL EQUIPMENT (fill in only, if no price list is attached)

Complete rental equipment	Fully inclusive in hotel rates
<i>Rental equipment without ABC</i>	Fully inclusive in hotel rates
<i>Computer rental</i>	Available and fully inclusive in hotel rates
<i>Photo cameras</i>	No
<i>Video cameras</i>	No
<i>Torches</i>	Fully inclusive in hotel rates

FEES PAYABLE ON THE SPOT

	yes	no	Description
National park fees			
Government fees			
Decompression chamber fee	No		compulsor y/voluntar y?
Others	No		

ACCEPTED MEANS OF PAYMENT IN THE CENTER

	yes	no	Description
Cash (currencies)			
Credit cards (cards?)			
Traveller checks (checks?)			
Expected fees for chards or checks			

MARINE LIFE SPECIALITIES

Marine Life specialities the divers can find diving in your dive grounds

TOP FIVE DIVE GROUNDS

Description of the top 5 dive grounds
SPRAT CITY – situated 10 minutes from North Island. Max depth 20m. Easy coral dive.
THE SPOT – situated 40 minutes from North Island. Max depth 30m. Very active shark dive & marine life dive
FISHERMANS PLATEAU – situated 30 minutes from North Island. Max depth 30m. Very active fish life dive.
TWIN ANCHORS – situated on Silhouette island – 30 minutes boat drive. Max depth 16m. Good coral dive.
SHARK BANK – situated 50 minutes near Mahe. Max depth 27m. Good fish dive, ray activity, sharks.