



Tales from the Deep Blue

Dec., 2002

Happy Holidays

The staff at the Abyss Dive Center and Training Facility, resident sea life, and of course, the turtles, wish you the best for the holidays. We are noticing a much welcomed rise in the visitor population with old and new friends dropping by the dive center to say hi and jump on the boats for a little fun-diving. Playa del Carmen itself is becoming full of activity with the holidays fast approaching. With a glimpse at worldwide weather reports (and we only want a glimpse) it is a great time to find some sun, surf and fish.

Our holiday weather continues to be clear, warm and inviting. The ocean is cooperating and providing us with some great diving. Dave spotted a hammer head shark on his dive today, Mitch continues to visit the octopus on Jardines reef (The Gardens), Selma has seen more turtles in the last two weeks than she can count and Diego has just returned from holidays so is itching to get back into the water.

The only escape we have from the hustle and bustle of the holidays is under the water where the sea life is unaware of this human activity. Local merchants have hung their various international decorations, the stores are displaying a variety of 'regalos' (presents) and seasonal music is heard through the streets of this small cosmopolitan city. Even with electricity at a minimum, houses and businesses find a way to brighten their places with lights, decorations making a public display of their holiday cheer. We are happy to report that palm trees work well with small white lights, or at least for us.

The Stay and Play packages offered at the Abyss are becoming a popular request from our divers. We have put together some inexpensive deals for vacationers/divers and are happy to book for you. Packages include an **Abyss t-shirt**, **hotel accommodations**, **diving**, **airport transfers** and **all applicable taxes**.

To match the various tastes of our guests we have included some alternative hotels; DaGabi Hotel located at 12th and 1st, Mosquito Blue at 12th between 10th and 5th, Kinbe Hotel at 8th between 5th and the beach, Deseo at 5th and 12th and Villa Catarina on 1st and 14th. Prices vary so packages are not posted on the website but leaves the visiting diver with a wide array of choices when coming to the Abyss. **For the Stay and Play Packages there is a minimum of 4 night s stay and three days of diving.** Reservations can be made at info@abyssdiveshop.com

Jardines Reef



Located directly in front of the dive center 5 minutes by boat is the Playa Del Carmen reef called Jardines. In English, this means 'The Gardens' and rightly named after its vast array of sea life and coral. It is a dive to go very slowly and look for all the small things that make up the underwater world.

Jardines is a soft coral garden that is home to large schools of grunts, jacks and parrot fish. It is not unusual to find spotted and green moray eels, lobster, scorpion fish, sting rays and butterfly fish. This 40ft/12m shallow dive provides the diver with a feast for their eyes. The reef is a small ledge with coral fans, barrel sponges and Christmas tree coral. It is the wealth of the vegetation and design of the reef that attracts the large amount of sea life. Sergeant Majors have nests for their eggs where they continuously remove any debris that lands on their carefully planted eggs.

Since the high winds in September, the reef has acquired new residents that continue to pop up on each dive. A small octopus has been sighted, more fish are frequenting the dive site and hopefully it has become a breeding ground for more sea life. This is a number one dive site in Playa Del Carmen for beginner divers that want to have a true underwater experience. We feel blessed to have such a site available to our divers and ourselves.

Mitch Burkett



Whether you are a fun diver, student or dive professional and have dove with the Abyss, you will have come across Mitch as either your guide or instructor. For five years, Mitch has been a dedicated employee and dive enthusiast. After obtaining his instructor certification in Canada, he migrated to Mexico looking for a different dive experience and warmer weather. His destination was Cozumel but upon the advice of a good friend, he decided to stay a few days in Playa Del Carmen. Once he dove the reefs here, the story ends. He never quite made it to Cozumel. Mitch has diving experience in Mexico, Belize, Hawaii, Thailand, Canada and the United States.

The Abyss Dive Shop and Training Centre

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