

# *St. Some Times*

Maldives Dive Trip

12.27.2022 - 01.03.2023

Full Trip  
20 Divers



# The Maldives



“Hey Greg, what dive sites did you go to?  
Are both trips going to the same spots?”

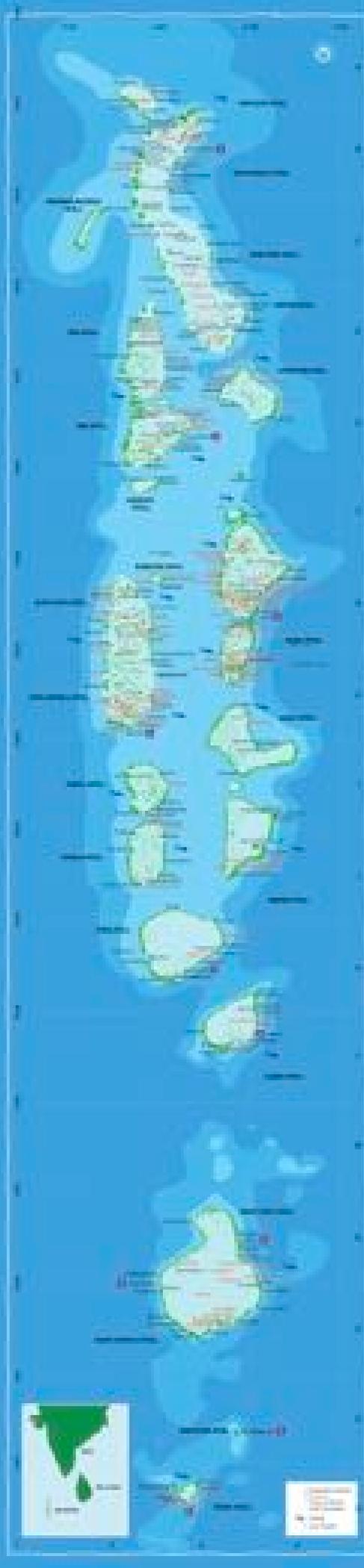
Umm.... I dunno. This is the first time I've actually marked a map with specific sites. Why? Funny you should ask. I don't give a rat's ass. Each and every dive is different. I've been to the same site perhaps six times and had six different experiences. Truly. It doesn't matter. You will see a bunch of fish, usually sharks, and be pleasantly surprised. The dive guides are like Safari guides. Some people refer to this kind of diving as Diving Safari.

No matter what dive site, you will have the following: East or West currents, Incoming or Outgoing currents from the North or the South, sharks, maybe manta rays, three minute safety stops, maximum depths of 30m/99ft, 45-60 minute dives, and a partridge fish in a pear tree coral.

Take a look at the two maps. There are actually four maps, but we didn't go far enough South this trip.

There are 1200 islands. Only 200 are inhabited. That is truly amazing. I say come and dive Maldives now, before the population explodes. Every year, the airport is getting busier and busier. More and more people are flocking to Malé. More dive ships are on the dive spots.

Visit now. Dive now. Or pay for me to go instead!



# Basics of the Carpe Diem

I've written about the Carpe Diem in past issues over the last five or so years. But let me share an elevator version of the ship and the experience.

I like to describe it as a five-star hotel on water, with a whole lot of first class scuba diving.

- ✓ Fly into the Airport. Crew meets you upon arrival.
- ✓ Board the ship. Say Goodbye to your shoes.
- ✓ Ship Briefing.
- ✓ Check dive.
- ✓ Get into the rhythm:
  - ✓ DIVE
  - ✓ EAT
  - ✓ SLEEP
  - ✓ REPEAT
- ✓ Days later: cry as you put your shoes on and head to the airport.
- ✓ Dream of the next Carpe Diem Trip

The Diem is one of three vessels in their fleet. Built by a local in 2008, it is also the first and oldest. You wouldn't know this unless you read about it or someone told you. It is the best of the fleet if you ask me. (Nope. Not getting paid for this.)

The 35m/115ft Carpe Diem serves up to twenty fun divers. There are 10 cabins on three decks, but I love sleeping under the stars on the top deck.

Navigate to their website and see all the details of their company fleet, resort, and dive packages.

<https://carpediemmaldives.com/carpe-diem/>



## From the Editor...

This is the second full volume from the Carpe Diem 2022-23 Holiday trip. Some of the content is repeated from the previous volume. If you are unhappy with this, please email all complaints to the personal emails of Wathe or Shazeel.

This newsletter is just one of many in the St.SomeTimes collection. The collection is available at [www.stsomewhere.online](http://www.stsomewhere.online).

Even though the newsletter is available online, there is a very small readership made up primarily of family and friends. The newsletter was originally written to keep my friends and family in the loop about my life and career around the world.

I accept all responsibility for the contents of the entire collection. Mistakes found within any of the articles are the fault of Matt Judd. You can reach out to him at his toll free complaint number 1-800-615-1978.





**David Lemoine** A.K.A. **“Papa”** or **“You’re HOW old?”** or **“What?”**

Oh sure, other divers at his age have been on the Carpe ships. Yet, most of them didn’t dive two or three dives every day for three weeks straight.

The greatest challenge for dad was letting other people help him with everything. Dad has always been self sufficient. But diving is a demanding sport. I am proud of Papa for “giving in” and allowing us to help him sweat the small stuff. Challenge accepted!



**Jeff Lemoine** A.K.A **“you and I have a different idea of what cold means”**

Jeff is a specialty diver that primarily dives with one part rebreather kit, two parts ice, and one part deep wrecks.

The Maldives was extremely fun for Jeff. His newly adopted challenge was taking pictures and avoiding other divers’ fins.

Jeff is a dive buddy anyone is lucky to have.

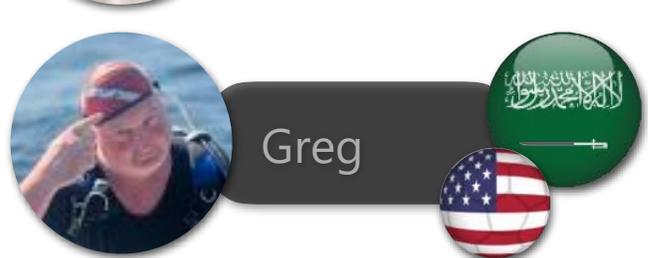
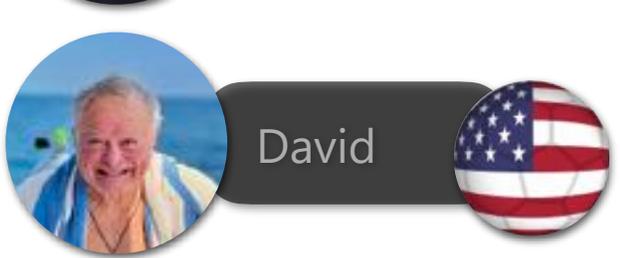
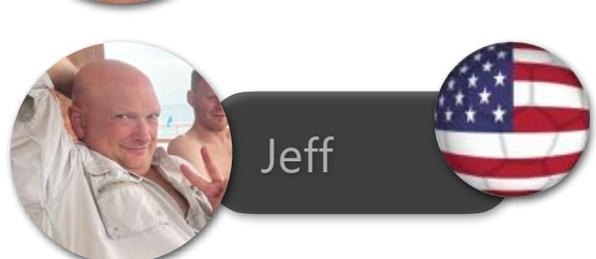
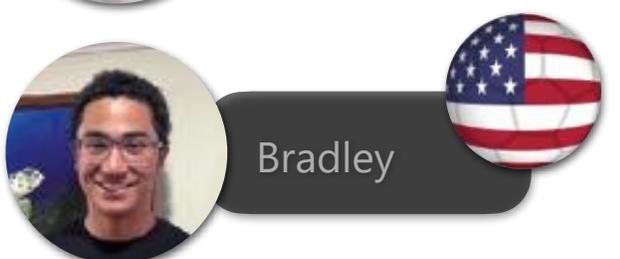
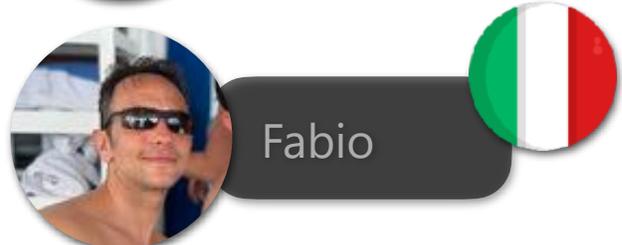
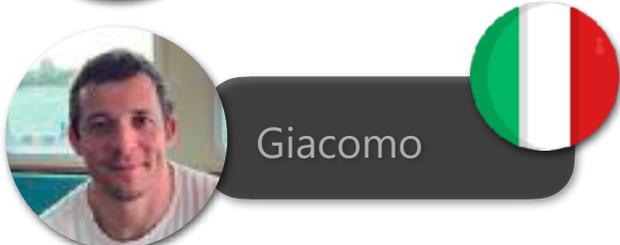
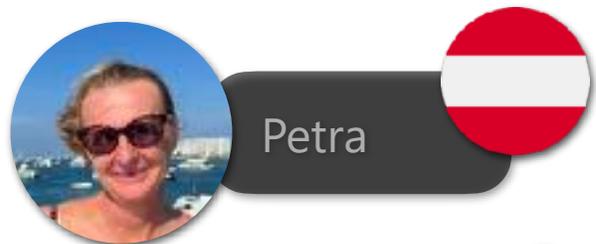
# We, the Divers...

This trip involved a lot of divers from all over the world. English was the lingua franca, the main communication language, but at different times of the trip you could hear German, Italian, Maldivan, French, and the five different languages dad is practicing on his iPad app.

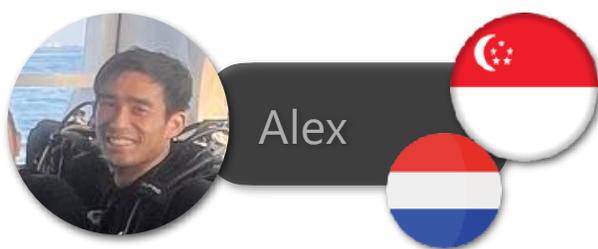
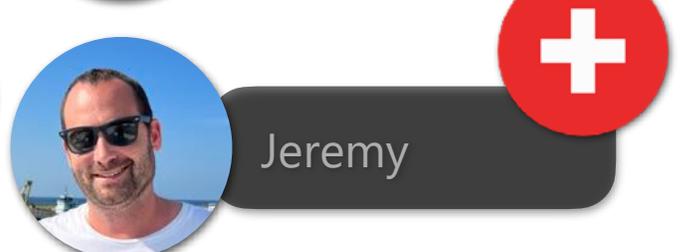
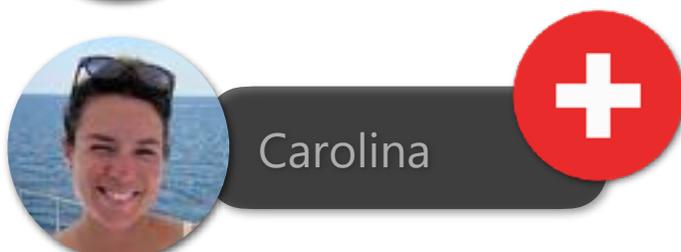
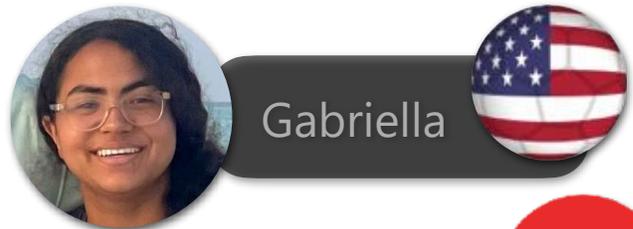
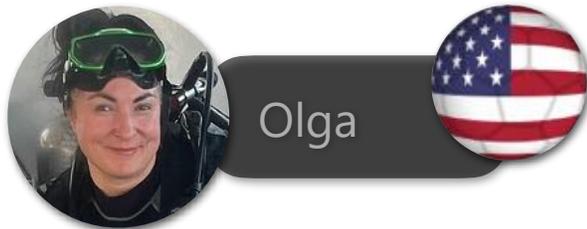
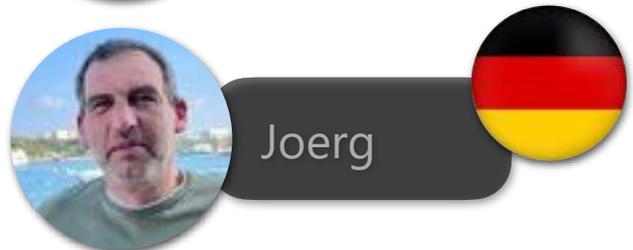
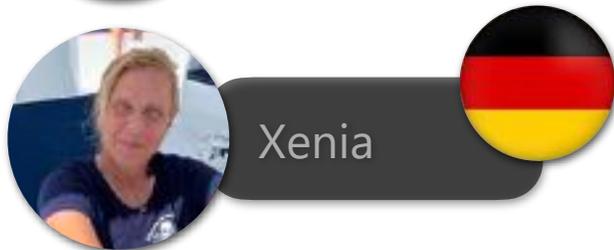
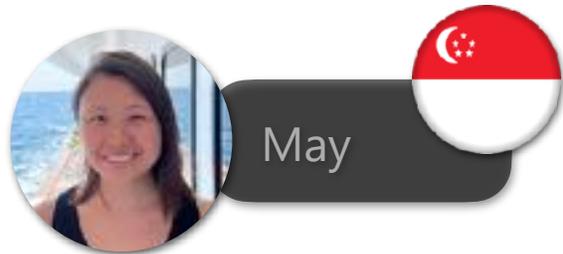
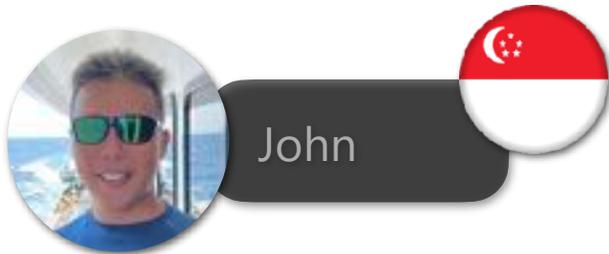
The beginning of the trip was naturally divided into homogeneous arrival groups. The German/Austrian crowd, the Italian and Swiss couples, a USA mother with her kids, the Singapore group, and the Lemoines.

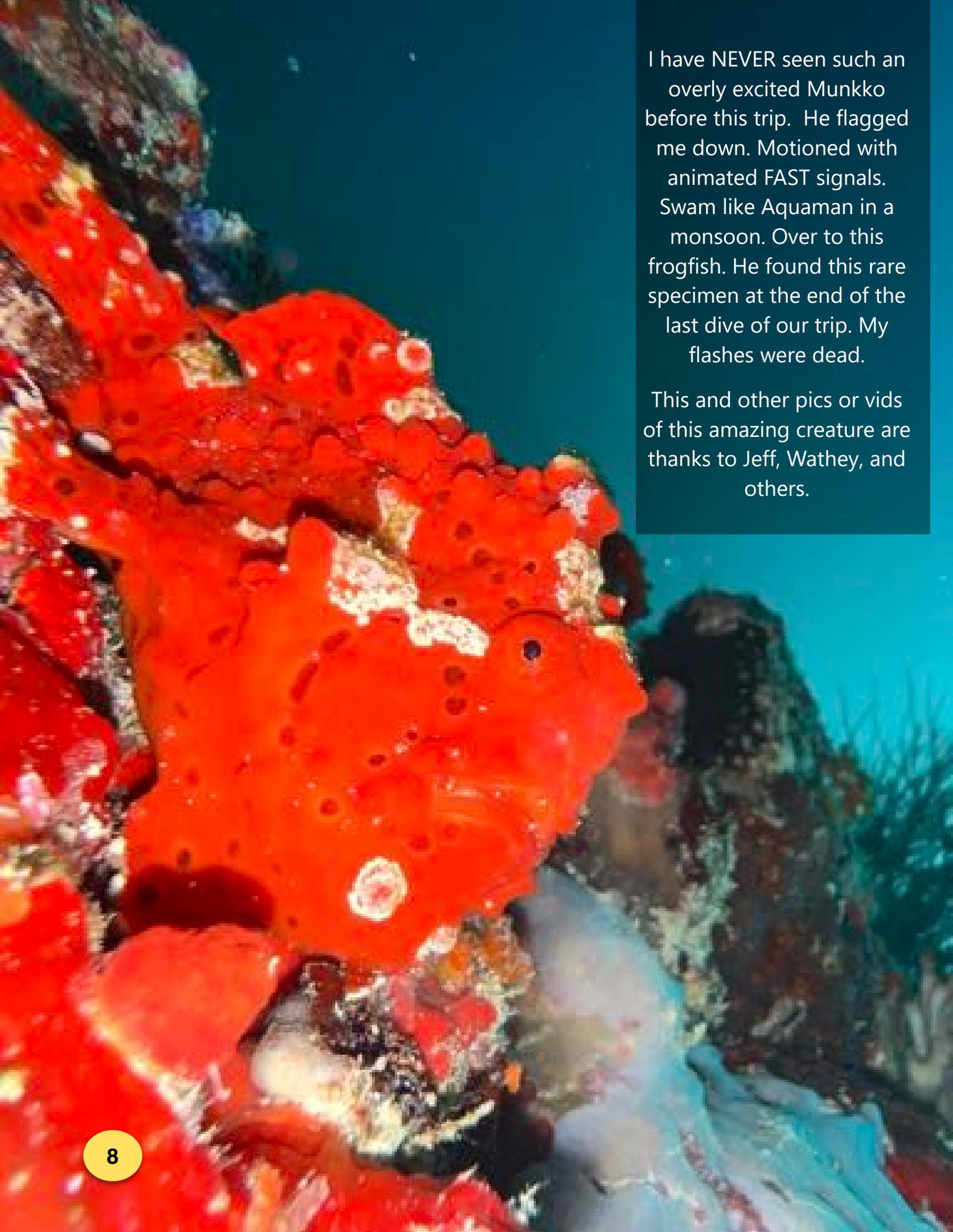
Diving and eating commenced. The groups immediately mixed. One of my favorite tricks for mixing it up is to sit somewhere different for every meal. For some reason, I found myself sitting in the same place this trip. Oh well. Dad isn't shy. He sat everywhere and mixed it up for me.

As you go through the list, the flag is either where the diver is from or where they live. I apologize for any mistakes. I tried my best. Also, thank you to Alex and Vatanya for taking profile shots of everyone...except you, Alex. Hah! You left yourself out. Had to make do.



# And the rest of us Divers...





I have NEVER seen such an overly excited Munkko before this trip. He flagged me down. Motioned with animated FAST signals. Swam like Aquaman in a monsoon. Over to this frogfish. He found this rare specimen at the end of the last dive of our trip. My flashes were dead.

This and other pics or vids of this amazing creature are thanks to Jeff, Wathey, and others.

# Safety First, Fun Second, great guiding at all times...

Nobody wants to dive with a dive guide that rushes them, lacks personality, doesn't know the dive sites, or simply doesn't care because it's just a job.

That's why you should dive with the Carpe dive fleet. Munkko and his dive guide team make sure safety is first. Their methods are meant to show you the most amazing under water life and have the best experience while being safe.

The captain and the cruise director try to stick to the itineraries posted online. You pay for a specific itinerary. However, you must rely on the depth of experience the captain and the dive guides have. All of them are locals. They have literally grown up in these waters, eaten the fish life their entire lives, and know their dive sites like you know your own office at work. Trust them. Your happiness is their bread and butter. Every decision is made to ensure safety, fun, and a dive trip to fondly remember.

My father said something we can all bank on: "Carpe Diem is the only dive outfit I've

ever dived with that constantly enforces the safety stop for each and every dive." No wonder I keep going back trip after trip! Every dive ends with a safety stop unless there is a boat emergency call. But that is only one unlikely scenario.

It is on the safety stop that you might - if everything is going well and the safety stop is a simple 3 boring minutes in the deep

blue - you might experience some shenanigans.

By shenanigans, I mean fun. The guides know a lot of bubble tricks. Bubble circles are not easy to make. Sometimes, an unwary guide might get a bubble tornado surprise from another guide or a South African prankster or a German, carrot-eating *Gauner* or *Unheilstifter*. (You can look those words up!)

Anyway, you get my point. Fun and great experiences only start after safety is ensured. That is Munkko's mindset and the way the Carpe fleet works. You are

sure to laugh. You are sure to have fun. I know my family did! - Thank you to the entire crew of the Carpe Diem.







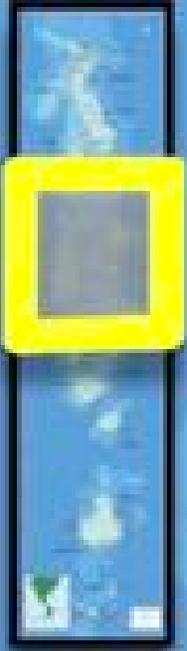
## ***The Span of the Trip Can be Seen by the Ripeness of the Bananas***

I've always figured that somewhere in the Indian Ocean, there are some very unhappy small monkeys. A small bunch (or two) of bananas are hanging in the stern (back of the ship) throughout the trip.

What starts off as a bunch of green bananas slowly ripens in the Maldivan sun and eaten or not, feed the crew and guests. Actually, the crew doesn't eat them. They stick to their beloved tuna and cigarettes. But the bananas are a sweet favorite of mine. Nothing goes

to waste. If you are bored, eat a few sweet bananas and try to throw your peels into the dinghy. Not the dhony. The dinghy. The tiny little "go get something" or "take John fishing at 4am" motorboat that is always trailing the ship.

Oh sweet banana bunches, I cannot wait to hang out with you again sometime. I tried hanging up a bunch of bananas in my apartment, but the lack of ocean in the backdrop presented a depressing bunch.



GOIDHOO ATOLL

RASDHOO ATOLL

ALIFU ALIFU ATOLL

ALIFU DHAALU ATOLL

KAAFU ATOLL  
MALT' ATOLL

VAAVU ATOLL

FELIDHOO

FAAFU ATOLL

# Dive Guides

## of the Carpe Diem



**MUNKKO - "Mili"**

Our Cruise Director and Master of Mischief, this is the man that makes sure we are all treated to the Five Star Carpe Diem dive-vacation experience.

Laughter is a virtue.



**WATHEY - "Vanili"**

He doesn't sing underwater, just lip-syncs. Wathey is the king of finding Macro stuff - the smallest of the smallest underwater creatures.

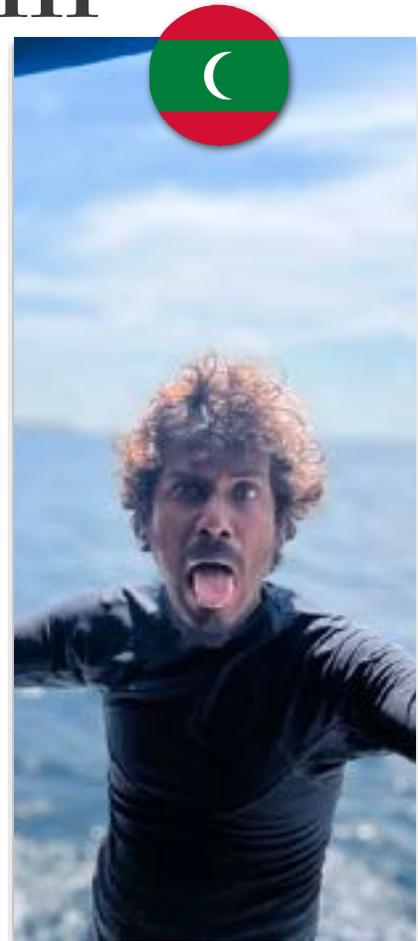
When you are 79 years old and need to descend quite a bit slower than the average diver, Wathey has the patience and skill to be your ultimate guide.



**SHAZEEL - "Deep Pockets"**

Except for Sharon, he's your guide for finding the pelagic. Shazeel doesn't give himself enough credit for an excellent dive briefing but we do.

He is also the only guide to have earned two nicknames. Doesn't he look like a young Marlin Brando?



**CHA CHA "LONG FIN"**

Cha was brought over from the Carpe Novo to help with our number of divers and to allow Wathey to stay focused on dad. Cha is very knowledgeable about the ways of the ocean. He is an excellent dive guide and fishing teacher.



# McGyver

Give this chef a fish... and see what he can make.

Nilanka and his two kitchen crew are the glue that holds the Carpe Diem, the crew, and the guests together. They work all day, every day to feed all souls aboard. Not an easy job if the seas are a bit angry.

Nilanka earned the name McGyver a few years ago because of his amazing skills in the kitchen. He makes a very wide variety of meals, but if you give him a freshly caught rainbow runner....poof.... We are eating fish, lobster, lamb, beef, and so much more.

Like I said on an earlier page, the Carpe Diem is a five star hotel on water. Nilanka prepared a bountiful feast for Christmas Eve that made everyone truly feel like it was Christmas. Their decorations helped too. (Personally, the huge Grinch that Jeff and dad brought with them really raised the bar of expectations on the ship).

Nilanka (left) and Shaun (right) are both from Sri Lanka and work as a team to make sure all of our glasses and plates are full. Every meal is an event, just like a five star hotel restaurant on the water should be





This is the first trip I have been on where more than three people, yes MORE than THREE people, have the DiveVolk underwater case for the iPhone.

# The Dhoani Crew

Dhoani is the local Maldivian word for Dive Boat. The Dhoani takes us to and from our dive sites, carries all of our tanks and diving equipment, and serves as the home of the three man dive crew.

From the moment we get onto the Dhoani for a dive, the crew is taking care of us. Each tank is measured and remeasured for Oxygen percentage. They support divers with gear on as they duck-walk to the stern swim platform for entry or climb up the ladder.

The crew is always watching out for their divers. Thuhthu is in constant communication with the Carpe Diem, his own crew, and the dive guides. He watches over the dive groups, following our bubbles and picking us up when we return to the surface. More than once, one of the crew will scramble to help you put on your fins or hand you your forgotten camera or mask.



**THUHTHU**

ThuhThu is the captain that finds our dive sites, follows the divers bubbles, and makes sure we get back to the main ship safe and sound. That's not easy in 3m / 15ft waves. We never have given ThuhThu a nickname.



**MIRAAZ**

Nicknamed smiley, this is the guy in charge of filling our tanks. Since we dive a regular three dives a day, that is a lot of tanks. Miraaz also makes sure we each sign off for our nitrox levels before any dive. His mixes are constantly between 31% and 32%.



**ISLAM**

He's the new guy on the Dhoani. But he does a fine job of making sure divers are safe on the Dhoani. Some day he will take over for Miraz.



# The Crew *of the* Carpe Diem



**CPT. ISSEY "RED BEARD"**

Issey is our quiet captain of this vessel and all souls aboard. Safety first.



**BEYBE FISHING PRO**

The Engineer of this vessel. Someone has to keep this behemoth in working order!



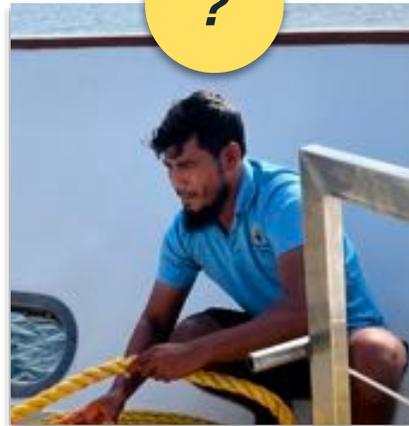
**KOKO**

Deck Boy. Some day he will be a Room MAN. For now, we thank him for such clean rooms and daily turndowns.



**SAIFUL**

Being Assistant Chef under the watchful eye of McGyver cannot be an easy position. But some day...another McGyver?



**ARISH**

Room Boy. Always running around, Arish makes sure Captain Red Beard is happy with the way the ship is running.



## The NickNames...

### Explained...

It all goes back to 2019. There was a complete a-hole from the USA on board. This particular individual earned the "fork-you!" Award and the nickname of "G.I. Joe". Another story for another time. Trust me. It's awesome.

Anyway, the best group of Carpe Diem guests EVER, began to list off nicknames of each and everyone on the ship. As each individual earned their nickname.

When it came to nick names, several of us looked at each other and simultaneously started calling Munkko and Wathey - obviously - Milli Vanilli.

It's the hair man! I couldn't find a better Revlon pic of Munkko.

In order to explain to the younger generations out there, Milli Vanilli was a huge hit in the 1980's. Google it. Watch - "Girl, You Know it's True" and watch the model MV's dance. The real singers were replaced by models to make their music videos. Back in the 80's & 90's this was a BIG deal. Now it's just funny.



THIS IS THE REAL - FAKE - MILLI VANILLI



# Yes, I Use an iPhone 13 Pro Max Underwater

For three years, I have used my iPhone underwater. I started without lights. Just the SeaTouch 1 case and iPhone 7. Awesome. Now I have added huge lights. All I need to do now is even out the buoyancy of the entire kit. The best part of the DiveVolk case? You can access everything just like on land. The gel case for touch is amazing. Don't get the SeaLife case. Get the DiveVolk.



## Macro Lens + Red Filter?

Nah. I say get rid of them. The macro lens is VERY difficult to use. Finding the focal point is a real issue that takes a LOT of practice.

IF you want to use the red filter at shallow depths, go ahead. It's not an easy switch.

## Lights

TrustFire DF50 Scuba Diving Light,  
6500 Lumens Video Camera  
Photography Dive LED Flashlight,  
USB Rechargeable Torch, 70M  
Underwater, Super Bright, with Violet  
Red White Lights

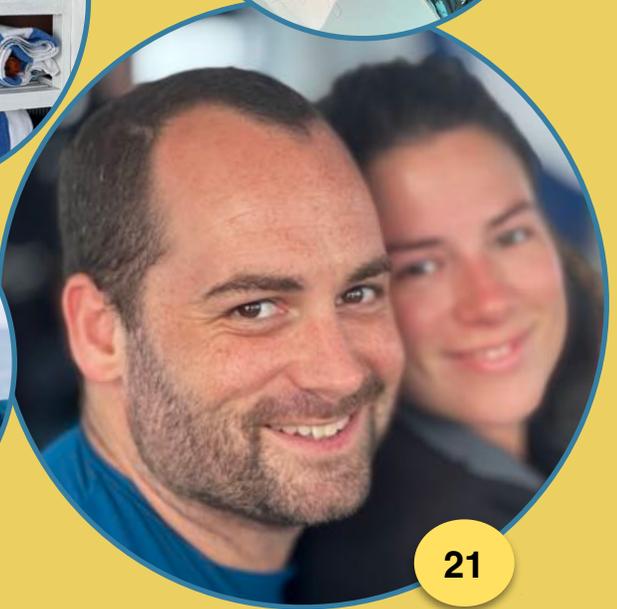
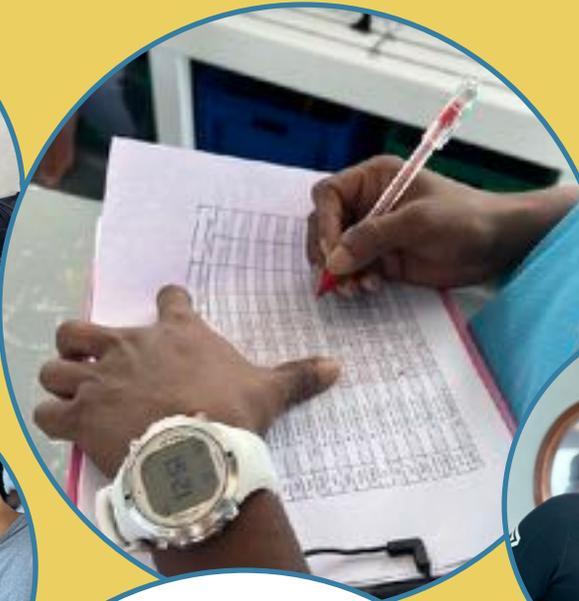


## DiveVolk SeaTouch 4

DiveVolk is currently on its 4th version of their underwater smartphone case. This case goes down past 30m/100ft and fits almost any iPhone or Android phone (except the very newest of course).

This is my third case. Due to upgrading my phones. I've taken thousands of pics over the past three years. I love this case! Don't be a PADI sheep and buy the SeaLife case.

The DiveVolk is tested. Tried and true. All of my pics are taken between surface and 35m/115ft. The DiveVolk is awesome. Note: you will need some extra gadgets for the lights - arm extensions for the lights and twisty things to attach the pieces. Don't ask me. Just google it.







Marbled moray

oriental sweetlips



spotted boxfish



Juvenile Emperor Angelfish



Orange spine unicorn fish



evil Munkko Fish

clown triggerfish



Red tailed butterfly fish



Lionfish



Durban dancing shrimp



Moorish idol



Yellow leaf scorpion fish



Nurse shark

green moray eel

Purple frogfish

green turtle

Leafy scorpion fish

Blue masked angelfish

rare finger eels

Dinner

regular octopus

white tip reef shark

Banana fish? No.  
Blue striped snapper

peacock mantis shrimp

Manta Rays

Final Note:

I certainly hope you enjoyed this St.SomeTimes. You can navigate to [www.stsomewhere.online](http://www.stsomewhere.online) to see all of the volumes.

Dive Safely!

- Greg Lemoine

