



ROATAN AGGRESSOR

These islands have a wealth of underwater treasures—marine animals from seahorses to whale sharks, wrecks, walls and pristine coral gardens

The diving in these western Caribbean islands—Roatan, Utila and Cayos Cochinos—is spectacular and diverse. It's a phrase used often when describing a vacation locale, but in this case, it's absolutely true—there's something for everyone. There are dramatic cliffs and gently sloping walls, open-ocean sea-mounts and sheltered cays, sun-dappled coral gardens and fish-filled valleys, small and large wrecks, and an ex-

cellent chance of encountering a nearly endless list of ocean creatures—seahorses, sea turtles, eagle rays, octopuses, schooling fish, dolphins and sharks. And, yes, with a bit of luck, maybe even a whale shark.

The Bay Islands are blessed by their location along the Mesoamerican Barrier Reef System—the second-longest barrier reef in the world—which extends north of the Yucatan Peninsula and down to the Ca-

BOAT SPECS Length/Beam 120 feet/21 feet **Passenger-to-Staff Ratio** 18/6 **Staterooms/beds** 9/17 **Bathrooms** Staterooms have private head and shower, individual climate control, toiletries, fresh towels daily and hair dryer **Sundeck** Yes, with Jacuzzi, wet bar and shaded area **Food/Beverages** Yes, including local beer and wine



NEED TO KNOW

HOME PORT

French Harbour, Roatan

DIVE SEASON

Year-round

DIVE CONDITIONS

78–82°F

TRAVEL TIP

The port/park fee of \$125 for seven nights and \$185 for 10 nights is payable in cash only at the beginning of the trip. For guests departing Saturday afternoon, a day package option can be purchased. It includes transportation from the yacht to the Clarion Resort, where guests can enjoy lunch, use of the facilities and transportation to the airport.

ribbean coast of Honduras. Roatan's and Utila's fringing reefs are roughly 300 feet from shore and shallow; these slope down to the drop-offs that have made the islands so popular among divers. The sparsely populated cays that comprise the Cayos Cochinos, reached only by the luxury yacht *Roatan Aggressor*, offer a string of seamounts and a pristine



The diving in the Bay Islands is both fun and accessible—so much so that you might not want to get out of the water. But ending a great dive isn't so bad when you're greeted with a warm towel or, after a night dive, hot chocolate, perhaps spiced with a splash of Caribbean rum if you like, to keep you warm until you can get to that hot tub. Worried about staying in touch with folks back home? *Roatan Aggressor* is never too far from shore, and is often close enough to pick up cell service.

fringing reef. *Roatan Aggressor* also visits the remote Co-co's Seamount.

No matter which island you're diving, you'll find gorgeous fissures in the reef, such as Roatan's Mary's Place and Calvin's Crack, their sides adorned with sponges, sea fans, and stacked piles of plate and sheet corals. The stunning drop-offs, such as Roatan's Half Moon and Tavia's Wall and Utila's Raggedy Cay and CJ's Drop-Off, are decorated with delicate bunches of translucent blue-bell tunicates and black coral. Along the wall, spotted eagle rays are frequent visitors; on the sun-filled reef tops, an assortment of fish keep divers entertained during safety stops. Then there are the wrecks—from Roatan's *El Aguila*, *Odyssey* and *Mr. Bud* to Utila's *Halliburton*, these islands deserve being mentioned among the Caribbean's best for wreck divers. Throughout the islands, you will find macro life that rivals some of the richest sites in the Pacific. In Cayos Cochinos, a site called Toon Town is home to an entire kingdom of tiny animals, such as small crabs, nudibranchs, banded coral shrimp and flamingo tongue cowries.

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GET MORE

If you're spending a few extra days on Roatan, visit the island's West End, where you'll find a fun-filled beach scene, restaurants, bars and shops. Half Moon Bay Beach is perfect for kicking back and relaxing; at night, local bands provide entertainment. Roatan's lush hilltops are on full display at Carambola Gardens, where you can hike up to see exotic orchids and mahogany trees. The 360-degree view at the top is spectacular. For a bit of adventure, sign up for a zip-line tour.