

## Red Sea Liveboard—Southern Red Sea 25th June — 2nd July 2008



We will be flying in to Marsa Alam Airport on Wednesday 25th June from Gatwick, and returning on Wednesday 2nd July. On arrival, we will be transferred to our boat for the week, Sea Serpent. We will be staying onboard for the entire week, only stepping foot on dry land on the last night to stay in a hotel. We are able to do a maximum of 4 dives a day (3 day dives and 1 night dive), all led by 2 professional guides from Tony Backhurst Scuba. In the evenings, everyone is left to their own devices. You could chill out under the stars with a drink or two on the sundeck, curl up in the saloon and watch a DVD or have a well deserved nap in your cabin. The choice is yours! We will be conducting selected PADI and TDI courses during the week.

### The Diving in the Southern Red Sea

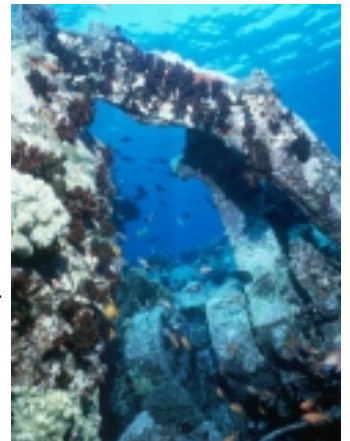


It seems that wherever there is diving taking place there are a couple of rocks or islands that someone has imaginatively named the Brothers or the Sisters!! But there are only 2 Brothers that need to be considered as far as current fuelled, pelagic sighting, wreck exploring diving goes. They are the Big and Little Brothers sited 60 miles East of El Quesir in the Egyptian Red Sea. These two specks are accessible only by liveaboards and are the only solid ground that can be seen from horizon to horizon. In Arabic they are known as “El Akhawein Kebir”, The Big Brother and “El Akhawein Soraya”, The Small Brother. They both have the reputation for challenging diving, with strong northerly currents and rough seas. Both of the islands have northern plateaus and it is here that the current splits, creating a nutrient rich environment attractive to Sharks, Barracudas, Trevallies, Tuna and even the occasional Manta. Apart from the plateaus, the rest of the diving on the Brothers takes place on steep walls.

When diving big brother you can combine magnificent wall diving along with some superb wreck dives. At 400 m in length the island needs a few dives to cover the area. It is easy to get lost in the shark action where frequent sightings of Grey Reefs, Hammerheads, Threshers, silver tips and white tips all feed off the smaller reef fish. The walls are covered in stunning soft coral, anemone and hard corals. There are often barracuda's, jacks and tuna's as well as the large Napoleon Wrasse.

There are a couple of wrecks sitting on the Brothers Islands. The Numidia was a British Cargo ship, built in 1901. She sits vertically in depths of between 10m and 80m. At 10m, you can see the broken up hold, and a little further down you will find the main superstructure which is the most interesting part. Here, you will find the engine rooms, lifeboat davit arms and corridors. It is an easy wreck to penetrate with many entry and exit points. 100 years of sitting in current has encouraged an incredible profusion of life to grow all over her. An awesome wreck!

Literally 50m or so around the corner from the wreck of the Numidia another ship met its demise in the rough seas that are common around the Brothers. Although a much smaller wreck than the Numidia, the Aida has its own charm. When it sank, it slid down the steep coral wall coming to rest on a sandy ledge with the stern in 60m. It is a deeper dive starting at 30m. Because it came to rest here on the more sheltered side of the reef, the soft corals have multiplied. With a torch it is possible to see the wonderful colours of red, orange, and purple that characterize these corals. The wooden decking has disappeared leaving easy access to the holds. The lifeboat davit arms are home to some friendly lionfish that don't seem to mind posing for the



cameras. Just 900m away from the Big Brother is the Little Brother. Imagine the tip of a very large underwater mountain rising from a depth of over 800m and this is what makes the Little Brother an amazing place to dive. Again the Northern plateau makes for the most exciting diving with a pinnacle down at 40m being a common place for different types of sharks to come and be cleaned. The most common sharks are the Grey Reefs which circle at around 25m seeming to be waiting for their turn on the cleaning station. In winter it is common to see Thresher Sharks with their beautiful long tails also taking advantage of the ever-busy cleaner wrasse. Down both sides of the Little Brother are steep walls full of hard and soft corals. On the south-eastern corner is one of the best Gorgonian Fan fields that can be seen in the Red Sea.

## Our Boat



Sea Serpent is a luxurious vessel, unparalleled in speed, stability, comfort and spaciousness. Her sleek hull and powerful engines, allow for increased speed and stability, assuring comfortable cruising even in high seas. a luxurious vessel, unparalleled in speed, stability, comfort and spaciousness. Her sleek hull and powerful engines, allow for increased speed and stability, assuring comfortable cruising even in high seas. The extensive teak laid deck areas allow ample space for kitting up, sunbathing, or relaxing in the shade. The spacious saloon is tastefully finished in oak and amboyna, and the soft furnishings in the Sea Serpent livery. Polished wood floors and oriental rugs all add to the overall opulent feel of this vessel. An Audio/ Visual system with CD, Video and DVD, bar with icemaker, and a library of books and videos ensure that time spent above water is relaxing and enjoyable..

Guest are accommodated in 8 twin and 2 double cabins, each with private bathroom, mini-bar, and individual climate control and audio system. The monogrammed towels and bathrobes complete the luxury hotel ambience. The extensive teak laid deck areas allow ample space for kitting up, sunbathing, or relaxing in the shade. The spacious saloon is tastefully finished in oak and amboyna, and the soft furnishings in the Sea Serpent livery. Polished wood floors and oriental rugs all add to the overall opulent feel of this vessel. An Audio/ Visual system with CD, Video and DVD, bar with icemaker, and a library of books and videos ensure that time spent above water is relaxing and enjoyable.

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## **The Holiday Price is £995 (Due to Egyptian Law, you must have 50 logged dives for this trip!)**

**Price Includes:** Return flights from Gatwick, airport transfers in Egypt, 6 nights full board (inc soft drinks and snacks) accommodation onboard Sea Serpent, 1 night half board accommodation at a hotel, up to 4 dives a day for 6 days, tanks, weights, marine park fees and Nitrox.

**Not Included:** Visa (approx £10-£15), alcohol.

### **Course costs are as follows:**

PADI Specs from £75  
Technical from £275

There is a 10% discount off our normal prices for equipment hire. Club members receive 40% discount on equipment hire.