

South Coast Dive Safari

ALIWAL SHOAL / PROTEA BANKS / SHARKS



Enjoy some spectacular diving on your South Coast Safari dive holiday

3 nights / 5 dives, accommodation, 3 reef dives Aliwal Shoal, 1 wreck dive, 1 Protea banks dive.

ALIWAL SHOAL

The Aliwal Shoal is a rocky reef which is the remains of an ancient sand dune approximately 5 km off the coast Umkomaas, South Coast Durban. The reef plays host to many kinds of hard and soft corals and a variety of tropical and subtropical fish species, as well as the migrating pelagic fish, whales, dolphins, and many sharks.

Out of the 100's of dive sites, here are some favourites of Aliwal Shoal

Raggies Cave
Cathedral
Shark Alley
Manta Point
Pinnacles
False Cathedral
Amphitheatre
Alan's Cave
North Sands

Wreck Diving:

The Produce Wreck
The Nebo Wreck

The Produce Wreck 24 – 32m

The Produce is an old cargo vessel that was carrying molasses and was travelling from Durban, heading south when it struck the pinnacles on Aliwal Shoal in 1974. There were no lives lost as a rescue party launched from the Umkomaas River managed to reach her and saved all the people on board. It is 119m long and lies facing north.



She has come to rest on her starboard side and her back is broken leaving her midship very flat and scattered. Her propeller has been salvaged; however, her spare prop can still be seen on her bow. There are a number of swim-through's for the more experienced diver and it is advisable to take a torch on this dive as light does not penetrate all the swim-through's.

A host of very shy giant Brindle bass about 3m long and 1.5m wide could be seen, as well as Harlequin goldies all around the wreck, they are endemic to the wreck and can only be found on her and the Nebo. Scorpionfish and Stonefish are regularly found on the wreck, camouflaged and blended into the scenery. Manta rays and game fish can also be spotted in the big blue if the visibility is good. The coral on this wreck consists of more soft than hard coral. Some of the soft coral found here includes, Fire coral, Whip coral, Green fern coral, Polyp coral and yellow Turret coral.



Wreck photos by Bryan Hart

The Nebo Wreck 18 – 26m

The Nebo is reported to have been carrying materials for the Van Staden's River Bridge back in the 1800's when she was sunk due to incorrect loading. She was very top heavy and when she encountered rough seas she simply went belly up and sank. The wreck, which is over 100 years old, is broken into two main parts.

If the visibility is good or you have an experienced dive master, it is a simple navigation exercise to get from one part to the other. One regular fish species found swimming in and out of the wreck on this reef is the Natal catfish. Harlequin goldies, which are endemic to this area, are seen on the wreck. Round ribbontail ray, Sharpnosed stingray and Greyspot guitarfish are just a few visitors in the sand around the Nebo. Squid and Scorpionfish are also found lingering about the schools of fusiliers, tuna and Hammerhead sharks.

Keep an eye out for Green Fern coral, different colours of Polyp coral and Green and Yellow turret coral are found on this wreck. The different dive sites on the Aliwal Shoal have something to cater for everyone's taste including the shark fanatics.



PROTEA BANKS

Protea Banks, Shelly Beach is only one hour's drive south from Aliwal Shoal & Umkomaas. Protea Banks offers the experienced advanced certified diver (minimum 20 logged dives) an unforgettable experience. We dive completely unprotected with wild sharks in their natural environment.

The diving at Protea Banks is conducted to the highest standards of safety and professionalism. The boats carry oxygen as well as highly skilled skippers and dive leaders. The reef is situated 8 km offshore from Shelly Beach, which is in turn 160km south of Durban. You dive to approximately 32-38 m depth.



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SAFARI PACKAGE PRICE

3 nights / 5 dives, accommodation, 3 reef dives Aliwal Shoal, 1 wreck dive,
1 Protea Banks dive.

Various accommodation to suit all types of budgets all within a few minutes from the dive charter, one of them on site!

Email info@meridiandive.com for great dive safari packages.

BAITED SHARK DIVE

As an added extra, click on the link below to find out and view the videos on our Baited Shark Dived.

Happy Holidays and look forward to hearing from you ☺

At your service, best regards

Celia Coleman

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