

Ultimate Bahamas

14 Nights Itinerary

- **Embarkation:** 17:00
- **Disembarkation:** 08:00
- **Meeting point:** Bradford Marine, Freeport at 16:45

Transfers to and from Bradford Marine on embarkation and disembarkation days are provided free of charge with specific pick-up times from Freeport Airport, Fortuna Beach, Bell Channel and Pelican Bay to arrive at the embarkation point at 17:00.

Bradford Marine, where Bahamas Master will be moored, is approximately 15 minutes drive from Grand Bahama Airport. *Early embarkation is not possible*, and there is no waiting area; therefore *guests are kindly asked not to arrive at the marina earlier than the specified meeting time*.

Marine & Port Fees: 240 USD per person (payable onboard only)

PLEASE NOTE: *Marine and port fees are subject to change without notice. The applicable amount at the time of departure will be added to your onboard extras to be paid prior to disembarkation.*

Minimum certification, experience and requirements

Minimum age is 18 years for participation in shark dives. Divers are recommended to have **PADI Advanced Open Water** certification*, or equivalent, with a minimum of **50 logged dives**.

*Guests who have the minimum number of required dives but are not certified as Advanced Open Water divers may be able to complete the course on board (pre-booking and confirmation required).

Please refer to our [Bahamas Trip Info](#) document for further important information about shark diving and equipment requirements.

Guests who do not fulfil the minimum certification and experience recommendations, or who the crew have insufficient experience in certain conditions, may be denied participation in some or all dives.

It is a mandatory requirement for all divers to have insurance which covers scuba diving activities, including emergency evacuation and recompression chamber costs.

Itinerary Details

Participation in this liveboard itinerary is subject to acceptance of our Terms & Conditions as outlined here: www.masterliveboards.com/terms-conditions.

This itinerary involves some long-distance (overnight) travel. Whilst we attempt to ensure the number of dives we have scheduled is fulfilled, bad weather can hinder or prevent the boat's ability to reach a specified area in good time.

Number of dives: Up to 45

At Tiger Beach, dives 1-3 are scheduled baited/ shark feeding dives during which divers are strategically positioned on the bottom facing the shark feeder. Extra weights help divers to maintain their position in the water to fully enjoy the shark action.

When visiting other islands, scheduled dives will be more traditional guided dives.

All guests are responsible for their own dive profiles and for obtaining suitable dive insurance to cover all diving activities.

The following is an example of the day-to-day schedule.

Day 1: Embarkation at 17:00 followed by introductions, boat and safety briefings and dinner. There is no diving on embarkation day.

Days 2-13: Typically, the full diving days will be scheduled as follows:

- Light breakfast and briefing followed by Dive 1
- Full breakfast, relaxation period, briefing and Dive 2
- Lunch, relaxation period, briefing and Dive 3
- Snacks, relaxation period, briefing Dive 4*
- Dinner

A comprehensive safety briefing will be given before the shark dives outlining expected shark behaviour and the do's and don'ts of observing the shark activity.

*Depending on weather conditions and the boat's location, we will usually try to offer a sunset or night dive, although it may not always be possible. Guests should bring dive lamps if they have them, although we also have torches available to rent for those who need them.

Day 14: For your final full day on board we schedule two morning dives before the boat heads back to port after lunch.

We kindly request that guests check their outbound flight times to ensure that they leave a minimum of 24 hours between their final dive and their departure from Freeport.

Disembarkation Day: After breakfast, disembark at 08:00

All safety and dive briefings are conducted in English. If you or any of your group do not speak or understand English, please contact us.

The following is an indication of the areas and some of the dive sites we may visit during the Ultimate Bahamas liveaboard itinerary. While we wish to show you the very best diving possible, a number of factors determine which sites we visit on each trip.

PLEASE NOTE: *Weather conditions, tides and currents* as well as diver experience are among the considerations which **determine the Cruise Director and Captain's decision of which route the boat takes and which sites are selected** for diving.

The safety of the vessel and all on board is paramount and we will always do our best to offer diving, or other activities, at alternative locations should we be unable to visit the sites listed below for any reason.

Depending on weather conditions and other factors, dive sites we may visit during your Ultimate Bahamas liveaboard holiday on Bahamas Master include, but are not limited to:

New Providence - Nassau

Amongst other sites, we visit the stunning **Pumpkin Patch** reef system which offers a range of diving from shallow 10 metres (33ft) reefs and, for those wishing to enjoy the view of the coral encrusted drop-off, you can venture down to 40 metres (130ft) plus.

Off the Southwestern tip of New Providence, we also visit numerous wreck sites, many of which have been deliberately sunk, including the famous '**James Bond**' wrecks, as well as taking in the many conservation efforts around Nassau in the form of coral propagation.

In addition to the wrecks and colourful reefs, there is plenty of shark action to enjoy at various locations around New Providence. **Shark Wall** and **Runway Wall**, starring mainly Caribbean reef sharks but also stingrays, black and Nassau groupers and green-eyed moray eels. These sites can be dived shallow at around 10 metres (33ft). Nearby, the walls drop away, and you can see sharks swimming in the deep blue ocean.

For further details of New Providence dive sites that may be included on the Ultimate Bahamas liveaboard itinerary, please refer to the [Wrecks, Blue Holes and Sharks itinerary](#).

Cat Island (weather dependent)

Please note: Cat Island is a considerable detour from our largely circular itinerary route in the Bahamas and will only be included if weather conditions are perfect during the months of June, July and August when oceanic white tip encounters are most likely.

Cat Island is one of the best locations in the world to see oceanic whitetip sharks; Get up close and personal with these inquisitive and impressive pelagic creatures. Most dives will be in the blue of the open sea but the sharks tend to stay close to the surface.

Exuma Islands

The Exumas are a chain of 365 islands covering a distance of around 145 km (90 miles) and divided into three major areas: the Exuma Cays to the north, Great Exuma in the middle and Little Exuma at the southern end of the chain.

Weather permitting, we will sail to the Exuma Cays for a day of R&R providing you with a chance to snorkel, de-gas and soak up some of the Bahamian sunshine on beautiful white sand beaches.

Pig Beach, Big Major Cay

A visit to Big Major Cay provides an opportunity to swim with the world famous pigs that live on this otherwise uninhabited island; a unique and remarkable experience. How the pigs got to the island remains a mystery, but they are very friendly and used to humans. They can drink from fresh water springs on the island and are fed well by locals and tourists alike.

Thunderball Grotto, Staniel Cay

In a setting of crystal clear, shallow water sits a small and innocuous looking rocky islet beneath which lies a fantastic underwater cave system with a maze of short tunnels to swim through. The location has been used as a setting for underwater scenes in several Hollywood films including the 1965 James Bond classic, 'Thunderball', after which the site is named, the 1983 remake of Thunderball - Never Say Never Again, 'Splash' starring Tom Hanks and Daryl Hannah, and 'Into the Blue' starring Jessica Alba.

Andros Island

Andros is the largest, yet most sparsely developed island of the Bahamas and boasts the world's third-largest fringing barrier reef, with the Tongue of the Ocean (a mile-deep abyss teeming with vibrant marine life) running parallel to the island's eastern shoreline, mesmerising blue holes that some say are home to the mythical creature Lusca, and numerous species of flora and fauna in exceptional natural surroundings.

A visit to the Bahamas wouldn't be complete without experiencing a dive in The Great Ocean Blue Hole also known as **King Kong Cavern**, which is just one of the many beautiful blue holes around the island.

Bimini Islands

Situated 89 km (55 miles) east of Miami and 111 km (69 miles) southwest of Freeport, the Bimini Islands are the westernmost of the Bahamas. Comprising North Bimini, South Bimini, and a chain of cays, they truly are 'islands in the stream' located as they are along the path of the Gulf Stream, on the edge of an underwater cliff that drops hundreds of metres into the blue abyss of the Straits of Florida, on the western edge of the Great Bahama Bank.

Bimini is the most famous spot in the Bahamas for Great Hammerhead sharks which are drawn in by the cooler water temperatures during the winter months from December to April. Other regular encounters around these islands include nurse sharks and bull sharks.

PLEASE NOTE: Great Hammerhead shark sightings are generally at specific locations around North Bimini and are NOT guaranteed. Dives that we might organise specifically for this purpose involve baiting and follow the same rules and procedures as shark dives conducted at [Tiger Beach](#).

Bimini Barge wreck

The 60 metre (200 ft) long Bimini Barge wreck sits upright on sand at a depth of 30 metres, on the north-western edge of the Great Bahama Bank. Due to her proximity to the wall, along the edge of the Atlantic Gulf Stream, currents can be strong and unpredictable but, with them come a variety of sharks and other pelagics. Around the wreck, nurse sharks and southern stingrays are often spotted resting on the sand while the vessel itself is overgrown with corals and sponges creating a beautiful artificial reef where grouper, jacks and barracuda can be found hanging around the vessel's hull.

Hawksbill Reef

Running parallel to the western shoreline of North Bimini for almost 1.5km (1 mile) this stunning reef is teeming with life from small, brightly coloured reef fish to dolphins, rays and sharks. Despite its namesake, it is rare to find Hawksbill turtles here but, the abundance and variety of other marine life will not leave you disappointed.

SS Sapona wreck

Built by Liberty Ship Building Company and launched in 1920, the SS Sapona was a concrete hulled cargo steamer which was used as a floating warehouse for liquor storage and distribution during the US Prohibition Era. She ran aground and sustained substantial damage during a hurricane in 1926 and was subsequently used for military target practice by the US Navy during WWII. Today she still remains upright in just 5 metres (16 ft) of water with her superstructure more or less intact and sitting proud above the water.

Tuna Alley

Often called one of the best dive sites in the Caribbean, Tuna Alley gets its name from the large numbers of tuna that are frequently spotted along the reef. Gulf Stream currents keep the corals vibrant and healthy and, when present, make for a great drift dive along the wall which starts at 13 metres (45 ft) and slopes gently down to 30 metres (100 ft) with caves and swim-throughs to explore along the way.

Victory Reefs

The Victory Reefs cover a total distance of around 7 km (4 ½ miles) along the western edge of the Great Bahama Bank where it drops off into the Straits of Florida. Stretching southwards from South Cat Cay, the reef system provides some fantastic and varied dive spots with dramatic underwater topography including walls, overhangs, caverns and swim-throughs. All Divers can expect to see a variety of marine life such as turtles, barracuda, tuna, rays and Caribbean reef sharks; If the time is right, there is also the possibility of seeing hammerhead sharks, Wahoos and Mahi-mahi (dolphinfish, a.k.a dorado) out in the blue. Along the coral and sponge covered reef tangs, parrotfish, angelfish, snappers, groupers and batfish can also be spotted in large numbers.

Grand Bahama Island

Grand Bahama Island is best known for Tiger Beach which is located off the West End area of the island. As well as being world famous for its crystal-clear waters and powdery, white sandy bottom, the area around and beyond Tiger Beach is home to a multitude of reef networks, pinnacles, and of course the continental shelf with drop offs to more than 600 metres (2,000 ft), although our dives in these areas are no deeper than 30 metres (100 ft).

However, there is much more to experience around Grand Bahama including wrecks, walls, blue holes and swim-throughs, many of which are located along the southern shore line of the island.

Tiger Beach

Located around 30 nautical miles off the West End of Grand Bahama, Tiger Beach is best known for tiger sharks, Caribbean reef and lemon shark encounters. At a depth of around 8-10m (26-33ft), and average visibility of 25 metres (80+ ft), Tiger Beach is the ultimate site for photographers and videographers to get their dream close up shots. In addition to tiger sharks, there are good chances of seeing bull sharks and black tip reef sharks and, if you're lucky, you may even see a great hammerhead!

Baited / Feeding Shark Dives

There are various mooring/ anchor points throughout the area at relatively shallow depths where we will stop for these breath-taking dives. Guests will be invited to dive in groups of 8 where they will form a 'V' formation kneeling on the sand, with one of our expert shark divers at the apex of the 'V'. The tiger sharks typically arrive soon after we enter the water, at which point the show will begin. An average dive can bring as many as 6 (sometimes many more) tiger sharks into the area. The majestic tigers will swim from the outer limits of your 'V' formation to the apex where our feeder will be waiting with the bait box. After feeding, the sharks will be redirected back down the middle of the 'V' allowing for some amazing close encounters and jaw dropping photograph opportunities.

Sugar Wreck

Not far from Tiger Beach, Sugar Wreck was a sailing ship that sank whilst, unsurprisingly, carrying sugar to the Caribbean. Abundant in fish life, the bones of the ship are now home to congregations of snappers, grunts, wrasse, gobies, angelfish and parrot fish that can be seen all over the remains of the wreck. Lying in only 6 metres (20 feet) of water, this is a dive site accessible only with our tender. In addition to the wide array of fish that can be seen at the site, occasionally you can also see reef, lemon, nurse and tiger sharks lingering.

Mount Olympus

As the name suggests, this large underwater pinnacle on the outer reaches of the Tiger Beach area, is considered to be the "home of the gods". The peak of the coral ridge, which is almost 1.2km (¾ mile) long, starts at around 18 metres (60ft) and drops off to over 450 metres (1,500ft). Although Mount Olympus is best explored as a deep dive, there is plenty to see within recognised recreational depths.

As a reef dive, with its awe-inspiring canyons, unique geological features, abundance of colourful corals and variety of marine life, this dive site is definitely amongst the best in the Bahamas. Occasionally there are hammerheads, manta rays, dolphins, turtles, and even tiger sharks cruising along the wall.

Should you have any questions or queries concerning the dive sites or whether this itinerary is suitable for your experience level, please contact our reservations team dive@masterliveboards.com who will be pleased to assist and advise you.