

# North & Safaga

## 7 nights - Red Sea itinerary

- **Embarkation:** Marriott Resort Marina, Hurghada at 18:00
- **Disembarkation:** Marriott Resort Marina, Hurghada between 09:00 - 10:00

Transfers from and to Hurghada Airport (HRG) on embarkation and disembarkation days are included in the cruise price.

Transfer between Hurghada airport and the marina takes approximately 15 minutes.

Transfers to hotels and resorts outside of the local area can be arranged for an additional charge.

### Marine & Port Fees:

Governmental Reef Tax is 80 USD per person. These fees will be added to your invoice to be paid in advance.

### Minimum dive certification and experience:

Due to the exposed nature and possible strong currents, some elements of this itinerary are not suitable for inexperienced divers.

The minimum requirement for divers wishing to join this itinerary is **PADI Open Water certification**, or equivalent, with **at least 10 logged dives**\*

**\*PLEASE NOTE:** Due to local legislation, you must have a *minimum of 20 logged dives to dive on the SS Thistlegorm wreck*. Other dives on this itinerary are not affected by these regulations.

*Guests who do not fulfil the minimum certification and experience recommendations, or who the crew feel 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.

Participation in this liveaboard itinerary is subject to acceptance of our Terms & Conditions as outlined here: <https://masterliveaboards.com/terms-conditions/>

## Itinerary details

### Number of scheduled dives: Up to 21

Whilst we attempt to ensure the number of dives indicated above is fulfilled, this is only indicative, and not guaranteed. Various factors can hinder the vessel's ability to reach, or remain at a specific area and may therefore affect the number of dives possible.

**Safety and dive briefings are conducted in English. If you or any of your group do not speak or fully understand English, please let us know before you arrive.**

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

**Day 1:** Embarkation at 18:00 followed by dinner and briefings.

**Day 2:** Start the week with a check dive before heading north for an afternoon and night dive.

**Day 3-6:** Your Cruise Director will schedule up to 4 dives per day. Normally, you will have the opportunity to make three day dives and a night dive each day. The exact itinerary and order of dive sites will vary depending on the conditions but you can expect to visit plenty of wrecks including Thistlegorm, Dunraven, Giannis D, Carnatic and potentially even more. There is also some fantastic reef diving including the Ras Mohamed marine park, Danaba (Shag Rock), Sha'ab El Erg (famous for dolphin encounters) and the Islands of Gubal.

A typical diving day is scheduled as follow:

- Briefing & Dive 1
- Breakfast, relaxation period, briefing & Dive 2
- Lunch, relaxation period, briefing & Dive 3
- Snack, relaxation period, briefing & Dive 4
- Dinner

**Day 7:** Enjoy two relaxed morning dives\* close to Hurghada allowing you to cruise into the harbour in the early afternoon. Take advantage of an evening onshore to purchase souvenirs and enjoy Egypt's famous hospitality before your journey home the next day.

**Day 8:** Following breakfast on board, disembarkation is between 09:00 and 10:00.

*\*We kindly request that guests check their flight departure times to ensure that they leave a minimum of 18 hours (ideally 24 hours) between their final dive and their flight home.*

While we wish to show you the very best diving possible, a number of factors determine which route the yacht takes and which dive sites we are able to visit. Weather, tides, currents and how many other dive vessels are at a particular site, influence the Cruise Director's and Captain's decision of which route the boat takes and which sites are selected for diving.

The safety of all on board is paramount and we always do our best in offering diving at alternate locations should we be unable to visit those sites listed below.

Following is a sample of dive sites which we may visit during your time aboard.

Guests are welcome to suggest preferred dive sites to the Cruise Director. He/she will be happy to accommodate guests' wishes, providing it is possible and the schedule allows for it.

### **Sha'ab El Erg**

Famous for its dolphin sightings (therefore also known as Dolphin House), this shallow, horseshoe-shaped reef features stunning hard corals and a huge variety of moray eels, blue spotted stingrays, crocodile fish and napoleon wrasse.

### **Poseidon Garden**

This is also located at Shaab El Erg. The reef and pinnacles are covered with an abundance of large corals and clams of all sizes and colours. Masked pufferfish, large shoals of bannerfish and butterfly fish, and trevally are just a few of the many types of fish which can be found here.

### **Siyul Kebir**

This island is surrounded by a beautiful reef that is famous for its critters and can surprise us with larger visitors. With regular frogfish sightings and the opportunity to see rare pipefish, shrimp, sea moths and marbled snake eels this site is a dream for macro lovers. Pods of dolphins often visit and the resident Zebra Shark is seen from time to time. By night, slipper lobsters and many types of crustaceans can be seen surrounded by a forest of basket stars, a real treat!

### **Gubal Islands**

At the gate of the Strait of Gubal is 'Bluff Point', which gets its name from the turbulence created by strong currents that beat the eastern coast of the island. The wreck of the Ulysses lies on the reef 300m north of the lighthouse, starting at 5m and sloping down to 25m. 'The Barge' wreck provides divers with a fun and unusual night dive with the wreck's skeleton creating protection for all sorts of night critters.

### **Abu Nuhas**

Also known as the 'Ship's Graveyard', this reef is positioned dangerously close to the busy shipping lanes of the Gulf of Suez. Abu Nuhas has claimed more ships than any other in the area. On the north side, four wrecks lay on a sandy sea floor on the bottom of a steep sloping reef layered with table corals. Wrecks here include the Ghiannis D, Carnatic (Wine Wreck), Chrisoula K (Tile Wreck) and Kimon M (Lentil Wreck). On the south side, there is a safe anchorage for liveaboards and two ergs, known as Yellow Fish Reef.

### **Ras Mohamed - Shark & Yolanda Reefs**

This is a world-renowned dive site, situated at the tip of the Sinai. Two small ergs are joined by a vertical wall dropping into the abyss. At Shark Reef, the current allows you to drift along the wall, rich with colourful corals. Moving towards Yolanda Reef you reach a plateau scattered with small ergs and coral outcrops. Continuing around the reef you will come upon the scattered remains of the wreck 'Yolanda' complete with its cargo of toilets and baths. The whole of this area is big fish territory so keep an eye on the blue!

## Small Crack

This is a small split in the middle of Shaab Mahmoud's barrier. Drift along the outside wall next to beautiful corals and colourful fish. Look for a sand slope that leads you up and through the crack. When the current is right you can fly through the 5m deep channel and be thrown out across the sandy lagoon!

## Danaba – Shag Rock

This large circular reef is often overlooked but offers excellent diving on pristine coral from any location on its perimeter. Weather permitting, you can dive the wreck of the Kingston which sank in 1881 and has become part of the reef and is now covered in hard corals.

## SS Thistlegorm

Probably the most famous of the Red Sea wrecks. The 129m English freighter was bombed by German aviation on 6 October 1941.

Today, she makes for an artificial reef on a sandy bottom at 32m maximum depth. She is home to an enormous variety of marine life and is especially popular with large schooling fish.

**Please note:** Due to local legislation, you must have a minimum of 20 logged dives to dive on the Thistlegorm.

## Safaga

Filled with a variety of stunning drop-offs, shallow coral gardens and interesting wrecks, Safaga offers something for everyone. The most famous wreck is 'Salem Express'; a large ferry, which sank in 1991 with massive loss of life. There are also the large ferry wrecks of El Arish El Tor and Al Kafain, which both sank without any lives lost. The famous finger-shaped reefs of Abu Kafan and Panorama offer stunning drop-offs with plentiful fan corals and incredible plateaus encrusted with soft and hard corals. Shallower reefs (such as Torbia Arbaa) are full of critters and make a perfect afternoon or night dive.

## Abu Kafan

Safaga's most famous reef dive combines two stunning plateaus (North and South) with spectacular wall dives on the east and west. With some of the best coral to be found anywhere in the Red Sea, and a cacophony of wildlife (including massive schools of fish and the occasional pelagic visitor), this reef is a treat for any diver.

## Gota Abu Ramada

Gota Abu Ramada is a shallow, oval-shaped reef that slopes steeply from the surface to a sandy bottom at around 15 metres. Also known as The Aquarium due to the abundance of marine life it hosts including parrotfish, pairs of yellow butterflyfish, large schools of goatfish, yellowtail barracuda and blackspotted sweetlips. The sand is dotted with small coral bommies

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](mailto:dive@masterliveboards.com) who will be pleased to assist and advise you.