

Strait of Tiran & North

7 nights - Red Sea itinerary

- **Arrival airport:** Hurghada International (HRG)
- **Departure airport:** Hurghada International (HRG)
- **Embarkation:** Marriott Resort Marina, Hurghada at 18:00 only
- **Disembarkation:** Marriott Resort Marina, Hurghada between 09:00 and 10:00

Flights

Book flights to and from Hurghada International Airport (HRG) which is served by many direct scheduled and charter flights from the UK and much of Europe, as well as several flights per day from Cairo (CAI).

Transfers

The liveaboard price includes a shared transfer between Hurghada Airport or a local hotel, and the Marriott Resort Marina on embarkation and disembarkation days only. Transfers on other days or from/to other locations can be arranged for an extra cost.

Arrivals

Guests arriving in Hurghada in the morning* or early afternoon on embarkation day will be transferred to the Marriott Resort (approximately 15 minutes from the airport) where they can use the beach until embarkation at 18:00.

***PLEASE NOTE:** Guests arriving earlier than 08:00 a.m. on embarkation day are advised to book a hotel room and arrange transport from the airport to the hotel.

Departures

Guests departing from Hurghada Airport on afternoon or evening flights can wait at the Marriott Resort in Hurghada before being transferred to the airport in time for check-in.

Transfers earlier than 09:00 a.m. will be charged. Guests with early morning flight departures are advised to disembark the evening before and make hotel arrangements.

Marine & Port Fees:

Governmental Reef Tax is 90 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 of some of the diving locations, possible strong currents and dive depths, 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 these minimum requirements, or who the crew feel have insufficient experience in certain conditions, may be denied participation in some or all dives.

All divers must have insurance which covers scuba diving activities, including emergency evacuation and recompression chamber costs

Itinerary details

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

Number of scheduled dives: Up to 21

While we endeavour to ensure the number of scheduled dives 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 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 in advance.

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

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

Day 2: A morning check dive close to Hurghada before heading north for an afternoon and night dive.

Day 3-6: Normally, you will have the opportunity to make three day dives and a night dive each day, typically scheduled as follows:

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

The exact itinerary and order of dive sites will vary depending on the conditions but you can expect to visit plenty of wrecks including SS Thistlegorm. There is also some fantastic reef diving including the Ras Mohamed and Tiran marine parks, Sha'ab El Erg (famous for dolphin encounters) and the islands of Gubal.

Day 7: Two relaxed morning dives* close to Hurghada before cruising 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: Breakfast on board followed by disembarkation between 09:00 and 10:00.

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

Following is an overview of the areas covered and some of the dive sites that may be included on this itinerary.

While we wish to show you the best diving possible, several factors determine the exact route the boat takes, and which dive sites we 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 where the boat goes each day and which sites are selected for diving.

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

Gota Abu Ramada

Gota Abu Ramada is a shallow, oval-shaped reef, close to Hurghada, 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.

Abu Nuhas

Also known as the '**Ship's Graveyard**', Abu Nuhas is positioned dangerously close to the busy shipping lanes of the Gulf of Suez and has claimed more ships than any other in the area. On the north side of the triangle-shaped plateau, four wrecks lay on the sandy sea floor at 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 world-renowned dive site is situated at the tip of the Sinai Peninsula. 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 entire area is big fish territory so keep an eye on the blue!

Strait of Tiran

Only accessible by boat, this dive area is situated at the entrance to the Gulf of Aqaba and is made up of four main reefs that form the top of an underwater bridge. These reefs, named after British cartographers (Jackson, Woodhouse, Thomas and Gordon), are world-famous for their extraordinary diversity of corals and strong southwesterly currents which make them home to many large pelagic fish.

Jackson Reef

The most northerly of the four reefs, on its northern shore the wreck of Lara, a cargo ship, breaks the surface serving as a stark warning to ships in the narrow straits. Diving is usually conducted along the southern side of the reef which is sheltered from the currents and swells and where there are fixed moorings. The reef slopes steeply to the 45-metre-deep sandy sea floor and features sandy ridges and splits, a spectacular Gorgonian fan coral forest and an abundance of fish. A variety of sharks are also commonly seen here, especially during the late summer.

Woodhouse Reef

The longest reef of the four in the Strait of Tiran, Woodhouse is usually dived as a drift on the east side going south to north. The southern part of the reef features a 30 metre deep wall covered with coral from top to bottom. A canyon running parallel to the wall leads to a sandy ledge that expands northwards to a depth of 14 metres. Multifarious hard and soft corals adorn the route, including clusters of black corals at a depth of around 25 metres. Marine life includes jacks, turtles, sharks and eagle rays.

Thomas Reef

The smallest reef in the strait, diving here is governed by sea conditions as the currents can potentially be very strong. The ends of the reef are vertical walls with a large plateau at about 25 metres on the southeastern side which is covered in colourful corals and has a fence of gorgonian fans where you can find the longnose hawkfish.

Gordon Reef

The most southerly reef of the four, Gordon has a different topography from the others offering both a shallow plateau area and vast drop-offs. There is a huge variety of reef fish and the chance to see whitetip reef sharks sleeping on the sandy patches. The top of the reef, with its lighthouse, is the final resting place of the Louilla wreck, which sits almost parallel to the wreck on Jackson Reef.

Sha'ab Mahmoud - Small Crack

This is a small split in the middle of Sha'ab 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!

SS Thistlegorm

Probably the most famous of the Red Sea wrecks, the 129m English freighter was bombed by German aviation on 6 October 1941 and sank as a result. Today she rests, listing to her port side, on the sandy seabed at a maximum depth of 32 metres. Not only does she hold a treasure trove of WWII munitions and military vehicles but, as an artificial reef, she has also become home to a large variety of marine life and is especially popular with large schooling fish, as well as divers.

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

Gubal Islands

'**Bluff Point**', at the gate of the Strait of Gubal, gets its name from the turbulence created by strong currents that batter the northeastern corner of Little Gubal island. The wreck of **the Ulysses** lies on the reef 300 metres north of the lighthouse, starting at 5 metres 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.

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. Also located at Sha'ab El Erg, the reef and pinnacles of **Poseidon Garden** are covered with abundant 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 fish species 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!

Should you have any questions regarding the diving 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.