

Ultimate Red Sea

10 nights - Egypt itinerary

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

OR

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

Please refer to our schedules and check your booking confirmation for embarkation and disembarkation locations for your chosen dates.

Flights

For all itineraries, we recommend booking 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

For your convenience, we provide a complimentary shared transfer between Hurghada International Airport or local hotels and Marriott Marina or Port Ghalib on the embarkation and disembarkation days. Transfers on other days or from/to other locations can be arranged for an extra cost.

- Transfer between Hurghada Airport and Marriott Resort Marina is about 15 minutes.
- Transfer between Hurghada and Port Ghalib Marina takes approximately 3-3.5 hours.
- Transfer between Marsa Alam Airport and Port Ghalib Marina is about 15-20 minutes.

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 or the afternoon transfer to Port Ghalib.**

***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 170 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, possibility of strong currents and depth of some dive sites on this itinerary, certain elements may not be suitable for inexperienced divers.

The minimum requirement for divers wishing to join this itinerary is PADI **Open Water Diver certification**, or equivalent with **at least 30 logged dives**.

Guests who do not have the minimum certification and number of dives, 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.

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 28

While we endeavour 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 impact 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. Your cruise direct will schedule up to 4 dives a day, typically organised as follows. Where night dives are not permitted, or not possible for other reasons, the diving schedule will be adjusted and may only include 3 dives:

- Briefing & Dive 1
- Breakfast, relaxation period, briefing & Dive 2
- Lunch, relaxation period, briefing & Dive 3
- Snack, relaxation period, briefing & Dive 4 (no night dives in Marine Parks)
- Dinner

Day 1: Embarkation at 18:00 followed by dinner and orientation briefings. The boat will remain in the marina overnight enabling guests to relax, get to know each other, and set up equipment in preparation for diving the following day.

Day 2: For your first full day on board, we schedule 3 dives (a check dive, practice zodiac dive and night dive), close to the embarkation port.

Day 3-9: Over these seven days you will have the opportunity to dive the reefs and wrecks around Abu Nuhas and the Strait of Tiran, including the world-famous SS Thistlegorm and the Safaga area including the Salem Express in addition to a day each at the Brothers, Daedalus and Elphinstone areas.

PLEASE NOTE: *Night dives are NOT permitted at Brothers, Daedalus or Elphinstone.*

Day 10: Two relaxed morning dives* local to your disembarkation port allowing you to spend the afternoon relaxing on board as we cruise into the harbour. Take advantage of an evening onshore to purchase souvenirs and enjoy Egypt's famous hospitality before your journey home the next day.

Day 11: 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.*

Following is an overview of the areas covered on this itinerary. Please note however that the order in which they are visited depends on the itinerary start and end locations.

While we wish to show you the very best diving possible, various factors determine the exact route the boat follows and which dive sites we visit from day to day. Weather, tides, currents and how many other dive vessels are at a particular location, influence the Cruise Director's and Captain's decision of where the boat goes 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 sites listed below.

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 Sh'aab 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.

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.

S.S. 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: Following local legislation, all divers must have a minimum of 20 logged dives to dive on the Thistlegorm.

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 comprises four main reefs that form the top of an underwater bridge. Named after British cartographers (Jackson, Woodhouse, Thomas and Gordon), the reefs are world-famous for their extraordinarily diverse 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 along the southern side 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 forest and an abundance of fish; A variety of sharks are commonly seen here, especially during 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.

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 115 metre long, 18 metre wide passenger ferry, which sank in 1991 with massive loss of life. There are also the wrecks of two other large ferries, **El Arish** (El Tor) and **Al Kahfain**, which both sank without any lives lost following engine room fires. The famous finger-shaped reefs of **Abu Kafan** and **Panorama** offer plentiful corals and incredible plateaus; Shallower reefs (such as Torbia Arbaa) are full of critters and make a perfect afternoon or night dive.

Brothers

The northernmost part of Egypt's offshore marine park comprises two islands 60 km from the coast and 140 km south of Hurghada. Big Brother, the larger island, (complete with a lighthouse from 1883) is 400 metres long with a spectacular plateau on the southeast corner, dotted with coral mountains and famous for thresher and grey reef shark sightings.

On the western side of Big Brother are two impressive wrecks both positioned almost vertically beside the reef. The most spectacular is **the Numidia**, a large cargo steamer that sank in 1901 and now lies at the northern tip of the island between 10-80 metres, is covered in soft corals and frequented by large pelagic predators. The smaller wreck of **the Aida** was a lighthouse authority supply vessel which sank in bad weather in 1957 and now rests on the northwest side of the island between 28-60 metres.

Small Brother Island is a little over 200 metres long but hosts an incredible concentration and variety of marine life. There is a pristine fan coral forest, a massive collection of hard and soft corals and compelling overhangs to explore. The main attraction is the abundant pelagic marine life with regular, seasonal sightings of hammerhead, thresher, grey reef and oceanic whitetip sharks.

Daedalus Reef

This huge tear-drop-shaped reef rises from the sea bed in the middle of the Red Sea, 80km offshore and more than 300km south of Hurghada. Easily recognised by its zebra-striped lighthouse, this reef offers some of the most amazing dives in the Red Sea. The sheer walls are covered in overgrown hard coral formations and a variety of reef fish. Napoleon wrasses and turtles are often seen cruising by, but be sure to keep your eyes on the blue too! Daedalus is one of those places where anything can happen...

Oceanic white tip, grey reef and thresher sharks are often spotted here, but Daedalus is most famous for the scalloped hammerhead sharks which can often be seen in large schools out in the blue during the summer months. The sheer size of this reef means that you can do several dives here and never get bored!

Elphinstone

A Red Sea legend, this isolated, long, finger-shaped reef, lies in open ocean 12 kilometres offshore between Port Ghalib and Marsa Alam. Due to its location and exposed nature currents are to be expected, which are often strong and can be unpredictable, but with them come rich rewards.

With north and south plateaus covered in hard and soft corals and stunning walls reaching depths of 40+ metres, diving here can be challenging and exhilarating. Grey reef sharks and Napoleon wrasses are regularly spotted in the summer, and occasionally Scalloped Hammerheads and oceanic whitetip sharks often congregate in vast numbers during late autumn.

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 happy to assist and advise you.