

## the Red Sea...to dive for

### Best of Wrecks

**SCHEDULED MONTHS:** YEAR-ROUND

**VESSEL:** M/Y blue Horizon / blue Fin / blue Melody

**FOCUS:** Pure Wrecks

**PURPOSE:** The aim of 'Best of Wrecks' is to provide a week of heavy metal for divers who love exploring wrecks – with the added value of learning about the history of the vessel during its active life and how it came to rest on the bottom of the Red Sea.

During this week, divers will experience the excitement of diving famous wrecks of the Red Sea, including the SS Thistlegorm, the Carnatic and the Chrisoula K.

The week will offer the opportunity to:

- Learn about the history of the wrecks; including studying images and video capture made over the years showing the gradual erosion of the wreck.
- Preserving wrecks; learn about initiatives to slow down the degradation of the wrecks.
- Enjoy fantastic diving on some of the most unique Red Sea wrecks.
- Actively participate in the blue o two wreck monitoring study.

#### **EXPERTLY RUN:**

blue o two has employed the expertise of a wreck expert to run this speciality week.

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#### **WHO WOULD ENJOY THIS ITINERARY?**

Best of Wrecks allows divers who love wrecks to dive just that, so anyone who has an active interest in wreck diving, discovery and preservation. However, important to bear in mind is that as well as learning from experts about the wrecks specific to the Red Sea, divers will enjoy daily diving on very special Wrecks, making this an equally enjoyable week for those just wanting to enjoy the diving.

## ITINERARIES:

- **BEST OF WRECKS (STANDARD)** (S.S Thistlegorm, Ghiannus D, Carnatic, Chrisoula K, Seastar, Salem Express, Big Brother Island – (including the wrecks of Aida & Numidia).

**S.S Thistlegorm** - The Thistlegorm is probably the most famous of the Red Sea wrecks. The 129m English Freighter was bombed by German aviation on 6th October 1941 whilst fully loaded with supplies and arms for troops in North Africa. Today the Thistlegorm has created an artificial reef on a sandy bottom at 32m max depth. She is home to an enormous variety of marine life and is especially popular with large schooling fish.

**Ghiannus D** - This Greek freighter hit the reef in April 1983 and over the course of two weeks slowly broke in two and sank. She is the most dived wreck in this location, laying in 26m of water and leaning to port with a fully intact stern section and an impressive engine room packed with glass fish. Locally known as the 'wood' wreck for the cargo it was carrying when it sank. She is a great wreck for penetration but beware of disorientation due to the angle at which she lays. Be weary of the many lion fish and scorpion fish that call this wreck home. And watch out strong surges in and around the wreck in rough weather.

**Carnatic** - A British P&O steamer which struck the reef in 1869 and sank the next day as the weather worsened. She was a passenger and mail ship and is sometimes known as the 'wine' wreck for the numerous bottles once found in the holds, although sadly not many now remain to be seen. Rumour has it that she sank with forty thousand pounds sterling of gold bullion, much of which was never recovered. She lays in 29m and now the whole hull is draped in multicoloured soft corals and the inner areas are full of glass fish complete with red mouthed grouper sentinel. The wreck is also home to octopus, morays, jacks and tuna cruise overhead.

**Chrisoula K** - There is much discussion over the true identity of this wreck. Sunk in 1978 fully laden with stone floor tiles, she now lies from 4m to 30m. Penetration of the wreck is not recommended due to the unstable nature of the wreck.

**Seastar** - There is much discussion over the true identity of this wreck. Sunk in 1978 fully laden with stone floor tiles, she now lies from 4m to 30m. Penetration of the wreck is not recommended due to the unstable nature of the wreck.

**Salem Express** - The Salem Express was a large roll-on, roll-off car ferry which hit the reef off Safaga on 15 December 1991. Its sheer size makes for an impressive dive and although years have passed since the tragic incident, due to the sheer numbers who perished it can be an intensely moving experience. Now lying on its starboard side (30m max depth), the wreck has been colonised in places by large soft corals, especially visible on the starboard propeller. However, vast areas of the wreck remain clearly identifiable and reveal the sheer speed in which the Salem Express went down.

**Brother Islands – Big brother** is a 400 metre long island offering wreck diving and fabulous and wall diving. The wreck of the Numidia lies on the northern tip between 10 meters and 80 metres. The north-west side of the island houses the wreck of the Aida. A steam ship sunk in 1957, the bow section was destroyed leaving the hull at 30 meters and 60 metres. On every section of this reef the wall is covered with corals and life, take your time as you drift along.

**SUPPORTING CERTIFICATIONS:**

There are a range of speciality diving certifications that you can obtain throughout the week, as long as a few other options – just because you can!

PADI PROJECT AWARE

PADI SHARK

PADI NITROX

PADI PHOTOGRAPHY

PADI DEEP DIVER

PADI DRIFT DIVER

PADI WRECK DIVER

If you would like to pre-book your course, just ask your blue o two advisor for more information.