

ALIWAL SHOAL, SODWANA BAY & ROCKTAIL BAY - OPTION#1

ALIWAL SHOAL
TIGER SHARK/BLACKTIP SHARK COURSE & 1 DIVE
OCEAN AWARENESS COURSE & 2 CASUAL DIVES
SODWANA BAY
5 CASUAL DIVES
ROCKTAIL BAY
5 CASUAL DIVES

DAY 1 - Arrive Aliwal Shoal

Arrive Durban. We will meet you at Durban International airport, or at another pick-up point in the area and transfer you to our dive base, (approx. 30 minutes drive) which is situated on a beautiful, tranquil 100 hectare farm, just minutes away from the actual launch site that we use for our diving operations. You will spend the rest of the day relaxing, becoming familiar with your surroundings at Fontana Farm & Al Fiume or Riva Valley lodge accommodation and gathering your energy for the days ahead. In the evening, you can enjoy dinner at one of the local restaurants in our little dive town.

DAY 2 - Aliwal Shoal (Course)

After breakfast (provided) we will commence with the first of your educational courses (if this option is chosen) - the PADI/SharkLife Ocean Awareness course, furthering your education & understanding of the Ocean, seafood sustainability, bycatch, destructive fishing methods, aquaculture, how you can make a difference to our oceans, the shark species, classification & diversity of sharks, biology, reproduction, prey capture & feeding, shark conservation, fear vs fact and threats facing sharks.

After a short break, we will continue with the next educational course, the PADI/SharkLife Tiger shark course. This will introduce you to the Tiger shark (*Galeocerdo Cuvier*) and we will cover Tiger shark classification & taxonomy, habits & distribution, biology, behaviour, reproduction and threats facing Tiger sharks.

We will break for lunch and we can either organise this for you or you can decide on your options.

After our lunch break, we will continue with the final educational course, the PADI/SharkLife Blacktip shark course. This will introduce you to the Blacktip shark (*Carcharhinus limbatus*) and we will cover Blacktip shark classification & taxonomy, habits & distribution, biology, behaviour, reproduction and threats facing Blacktip sharks.

In the evening you can enjoy dinner at one of the local restaurants in our little dive town.

DAY 3 - Tiger Shark / Blacktip Shark (1 Dive)

Get ready for your up close & personal dive with Tiger & Blacktip sharks.

An early morning start and after breakfast we will meet at the dive base and you will get your dive equipment ready and be transported down to the beach for departure to the dive location to view these magnificent sharks. After an in-depth briefing, either on the beach prior to the launch or on the boat, you will be introduced to these sharks. This is a single, but midwater & shallow dive and is done as a controlled baited procedure as the Tiger sharks will not stay around for long unless there is an attractant and this is a "necessary evil" in order to attract them to the vicinity of divers, in order for divers to be able to understand this shark better, thereby ensuring the future of these sharks in our oceans. In addition, there are usually a large number of Blacktip sharks that appear on this dive, which gives divers the perfect chance to learn more about these animals too, thus ensuring their future in our oceans as well.

This trip typically lasts for half the day and return time is usually around lunch time or just slightly afterwards. You will have the balance of the afternoon to relax.

In the evening you will be transferred to Durban for dinner at one of our favourite spots.

DAY 4 - Aliwal Shoal (2 Dives)

An early morning start and after breakfast we will meet at the dive base and the team will make a decision on where best to dive on this day. Our reefs are rated amongst the best in the world with a lot of variety for those looking for the small things or the larger things.

We will do our first dive, which starts with another exciting typical African surf launch. We can either decide to do 2 dives and then return to the beach or we can return for a small break and then re-launch the boat for our 2nd dive. We can organise a packed boat lunch for you, which you can enjoy in between your dives.

After this, you will return to the farm base and have the balance of the day at your leisure.

Dinner on this final evening can either be at our farm base, with a typical South African barbecue (Braai) at Al Fiume club house, which is situated on the river bank overlooking the Umkomazi River and small town of Umkomaas, followed by drinks at the bonfire, or we can enjoy dinner at another local restaurant.

DAY 5 - Depart to Sodwana Bay

In the morning you will enjoy breakfast at your accommodation or Al

Fiume club house. After breakfast, we will transfer you to our next shark safari destination, Sodwana Bay.

The trip to Sodwana Bay is an average 5½ hours of travel time up along the scenic north coast of KwaZulu-Natal, into the heart of the Zulu's. We will pass many large sugar cane estates along the way and we will also pass the very popular Zulu curio stall called Zamimpilo, where, time permitting, we can stop and you can browse through their traditional Zulu curios which make for excellent gifts.

Once at Sodwana Bay, the rest of the day is spent at leisure.

With its tropical diving, Sodwana Bay, rated alongside Aliwal Shoal, is a top international dive site and is certainly a hugely popular dive destination for locals. The reefs are exquisite, with warm waters, great visibility and biodiversity, said to rival that of the Great Barrier Reef.

Dinner is served from 19h00 and this is included in your tariff for the duration of your stay here.

DAY 6 - Sodwana Bay (2 Dives)

After an early breakfast, we will transport you to the beach for your first day of diving. Launch times will be advised on the previous evening and you will be notified of your collection time.

We will spend at least half of the day doing 2 dives and enjoying this very different location and all that it has to offer. Dive sites will be chosen on the day and are weather dependant.

There is a small shop on the beach which caters for small meals, snacks and refreshments and you can enjoy your lunch here whilst watching the ocean, so be sure to exchange your currency for Rands for this purpose, as the shop does not exchange currency.

After your dives, you will be transported back to your accommodation and the rest of the day is yours to explore and relax and enjoy the warmth of Zululand.

If you choose to do the ragged tooth shark course or whale shark course at this location, you will have a formal presentation in the afternoon ahead of the dive the following day.

Dinner is served from 19h00.

DAY 7 - Sodwana Bay (2 Dives)

After an early breakfast, we will transport you to the beach for your 2nd day of diving. A dive briefing will take place prior to all dives and if you are doing either of the shark courses, your briefing will take place at this time.

Enjoy a further 2 dives on these beautiful reefs.

After your dives and time spent on the beach, you will be transported back to your accommodation and the rest of the day is yours to explore once again.

Dinner is served from 19h00.

DAY 8 - Sodwana Bay (1 Dive) - Depart to Rocktail Bay

After an early breakfast, you will complete your last dive in this beautiful location.

On this day, you can either choose to have breakfast before the dive or after the dive as the kitchen will close for breakfast at 11h00.

We bid farewell to the heart of Zululand & Sodwana Bay and you will be transported just a short 1 hour trip to Rocktail Bay, in the Maputaland coastal forest reserve.

Few places along the South African coastline are as unspoilt and secluded as this "secret haven" and during our time here, you will be spoilt rotten with extraordinary diving, intimate & superb service and pristine sandy beaches, where there are no footprints on the beach.

You will be forgiven for thinking that you are on a safari and that at any minute you may hear lions roaring in the bush. Your accommodation will make you feel this way, amongst the fact that you are nestled right in the heart of the bush.

The balance of your day will be at leisure, finding your way to some secret little spot or another and exploring your surroundings. Dinner time will be advised to you upon arrival.

Extra note – if you wish to visit Rocktail Bay from late October until late March, you will be able to witness one of the most spectacular events in nature, Loggerhead & Leatherback turtles laying eggs!!! From January onwards you may catch the little hatchlings making their dash for the water and for their first breath underwater.

DAY 9 - Rocktail Bay (2 Dives)

After an early morning snack, we will have our 1st dive of the day at Rocktail Bay. Our dive site will be chosen on the day and will be weather dependant.

You will know immediately that you are diving within a World Heritage site area by the sheer remoteness of this location, by the fact that there are no other divers on the reefs and that you will probably not see another person, aside from your dive buddies.

After your 1st dive, you will have a snack whilst you sit tucked away in the trees on the beach. At the same time that you are resting and enjoying the remoteness of your area, your dive gear will be re-assembled ready for your 2nd dive.

A short walk back to the boat will find you enjoying yet another thrilling typical African surf launch out to your dive site. Early afternoon, after the 2nd dive, you will have the rest of the day at leisure.

If you are doing the PADI/SharkLife Ragged tooth shark course at this location, you will have an afternoon presentation prior to meeting these sharks in the morning. The course content will include: An introduction to the Spotted Ragged tooth shark *Carcharias taurus*, Ragged tooth shark taxonomy & classification, habitats & distribution, biology, behaviour and threats to this shark.

Dinner - A time to catch up on the day of diving, the new place and to take a stroll on the beach afterwards, gaze up at the spectacular array of stars, just to complete the day.

DAY 10 - Rocktail Bay (2 Dives)

After an early morning snack, we will head out for our 2nd day of 2 dives. This day of diving will either be spent learning more about the Ragged tooth shark (2 dives) or the team will choose the dive site, depending on the weather.

We will again disappear to our little hideaway in the trees to enjoy a scrumptious snack in-between dives and then, after a break, head out for our 4th dive in this superb location.

The balance of the day is yours – enjoy it and soak it all up as we bid a sad goodbye tomorrow to this area.

DAY 11 - Rocktail Bay (1 Dive) then Depart Rocktail Bay to Durban International Airport

An early start, a last dive and hearty breakfast and we bid farewell to this location. With 5 amazing dives done at this spot, we can truly reflect on some great dives and some great shark dives that we have done.

We will prepare for our 5 – 6 hour journey back to Durban international airport or alternative drop off point in the area.