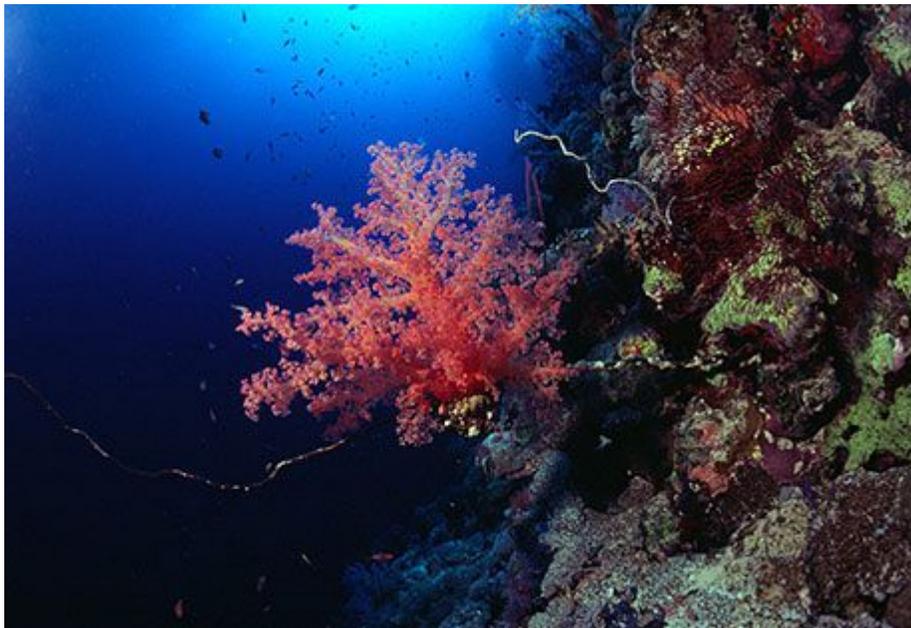


The Red Sea Diving Guide

25 February 2017

The Red Sea has some of the best diving in the world. It is part of the Great Rift Valley: a trough running from Israel to some degrees south of the equator. This immense crack in the Earth's surface makes for an extremely deep sea, reaching nearly 3000 m. It also explains small islands like the Brothers dive site. Steep-sided and far from land, they were probably thrown up by volcanic actions as the rift opened.



Diving in the Red Sea. Photo credit: [Tim Nicholson](#)

With around 1000 species of fish and 150 species of coral, the Red Sea is rich in life.

The average water temperature ranges from a low of 20°C in February to 31 °C in September in the far south. The winds are often weakest during full moon. As the Red Sea has few storms, her corals are intricate and beautiful.

Currents in the Red Sea are normally, like the wind, from north to south. But there are many exceptions to this.

The Red Sea borders many countries - learn more about diving in:

[Egypt](#) | [Saudi Arabia](#) | [Djibouti](#) | [Jordan](#) | [Sudan](#) | [Israel](#) | [Eritrea](#).

Diving in Egypt

Egypt is a popular diving area with good reason: it has some beautiful dives.

You will need to buy a \$25 tourist visa when you arrive. If you have no dollars you can pay 25 Euros or 25 pounds. The Egyptian parliament though want to raise the entry fee to \$60.

The countries revenue from tourism in 2016 was \$3.4 billion, a massive decrease from the \$11 billion generated by the sector in 2010.

Flights from some countries are still not going to Sharm El Sheikh. Flights to Hurghada and Marsa Alam are still operating, although Russia has ceased all flights to Egypt. Make sure you have [comprehensive travel and medical insurance before travelling](#). The [British Foreign Office](#) has up-to-date security information about the Red Sea.



Diving in the Red Sea. Photo credit: [Tim Nicholson](#)

How much to tip in Egypt?

Egypt has a culture of tipping. Tip everybody unless you receive bad service. If you have no Egyptian pounds you can tip in Euros, dollars or pounds. As a rough guide, per person, tip as follows.

Driver taking you to the hotel: 10 LE (Egyptian pounds)

Dive guides/boat staff: 10% of dive costs

Waiters: 5 LE per meal

Housekeeping: 5 LE per night

Luggage porter in hotel: 5 LE per bag

Taxi: funnily enough taxi drivers aren't generally tipped, but at least 5 LE if they have been helpful

Restaurants outside your hotel - service charge is often added but this doesn't go to the staff: tip the waiters as well.

When tipping do so discretely, fold in the palm of the hand and pass across for example.

Don't be surprised if an Egyptian asks you to convert a number of coins to a bank note. The banks will only exchange notes and so people need a friendly tourist to change their foreign tips for them.

[Egypt Liveboards - Compare prices online. Book now & pay later.](#)

Diving Areas of Egypt

- [Diving at Elphinstone](#)
- [Diving Marsa Alam](#)
- [Dive Operators in Southern Egypt](#)
- [Dive Operators in Hurghada](#)
- [Diving in Hurghada](#)
- [Wreck diving in Northern Egypt](#)
- [Diving Sharm El-Sheikh](#)
- [Dive Operators in Sharm El-Sheikh](#)
- [Diving in Dahab](#)
- [Dive Operators in Dahab](#)
- [Diving the Brothers](#)
- [Photos of The Brothers](#)
- [Photos of the wreck of the Rosalie Moeller](#)
- [Photos of the wreck of the Thistlegorm](#)
- [Photos of the wreck of the Ulysses](#)
- [Photos of Red Sea corals](#)
- [Underwater Photos of Red Sea](#)
- [Red Sea Life](#)
- [Books on the Red Sea](#)
- [Travel Insurance for Egypt](#)

Diving in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

The fledgling diving tourist industry in Saudi Arabia has been curtailed by the impossibility of getting a tourist visa. Diving is still available for foreign workers and Saudi nationals.

PADI and BSAC qualification cards are no longer recognised in Saudi Arabia: you need a Saudi-issued, Arabic language dive permit to dive



Diver in Saudi Arabia. [Photo credit](#): Captain Victor Organ.

The main diving areas are around Jeddah and Yanbu. There are also some good reefs south of Jeddah. Some of the shore dives in Jeddah have been heavily spear fished (even though spear fishing is banned) and there are also problems with coastal developments polluting the water in some areas. However there are many more fantastic dives, full of life, and numerous wrecks.

The best diving is via [liveaboard](#). Whale sharks visit Farasan Banks from March to June. You need to bring along a passport, Igama or Saudi ID and your Saudi Dive Permit.

The top hotels in Jeddah have contacts with the dive shops and can arrange instruction for beginners and recreational dives for qualified divers. Many offer private beaches from which to shore dive.

More on Diving Saudi Arabia

- [Dive Sites of Saudi Arabia](#)
- [Diving Operators in Saudi Arabia](#)

Diving in Djibouti

Djibouti is right at the foot of the Red Sea. It is famous for whale sharks. You dive Djibouti from a liveaboard.

Djibouti sits on the junction between the African and the Arabian tectonic plates and you can dive in this crack at Goubbet at La Faille

[Djibouti Liveaboard - Book now & pay later.](#)



More on Diving Djibouti

- [Diving Djibouti](#)
- [Djibouti Photo Gallery](#)

Diving in Jordan

Jordan is at the north end of the Red Sea. It has a Red Sea coastline of just 15 miles. The coral is in good condition and you will often see turtles and napoleon wrasse. It's not the place to go to see sharks though. Most of the dives can be done as shore dives.



Photo [copyright Tim Nicholson](#)

More on Diving Jordan

- [Dive Sites of Jordan](#)
 - [Diving Operators in Jordan](#)
-

Diving the Sudan

Sudan's most famous dive site is the wreck of the Umbria. This huge shipwreck is a spooky castle of a dive, covered by corals and loaded with 36000 aircraft bombs, cars and wine bottles. Manta rays, whale sharks and, at night, tiger sharks visit. You'll probably be alone on the wreck due to the small numbers of divers visiting the country.



The wreck of the Umbria. Photo [copyright Tim Nicholson](#)

Another great Sudan dive site is Sha'ab Rumi South with its awe-inspiring hammerhead sharks.

[Sudan Liveaboards - Compare Prices Online](#)

More on Diving Sudan

- [Diving the Sudan](#)
 - [Photos of the wreck of the Umbria](#)
-

Diving Israel

Israel's Red Sea diving is around Eilat. Highlights include Moses Rock and the wreck of the Satil. The diving is shore diving.

More on Diving Israel

- [Diving Israel](#)
-

Diving Eritrea

Eritrea is very little dived. One of its best dive areas is the Dahlak Islands. "*Outstanding visibility, crowded with fish and bold coral formations, and NO PEOPLE!*"

More on Diving Eritrea

- [Diving Eritrea](#)
-

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