

SCUBA News

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Welcome to the first issue of the year. Thanks for subscribing and our best wishes for a prosperous and healthy 2018. On the subject of the new year, we've a guest article this month by Kathryn Curzon on her top ten diver's resolutions. We've also a reader's plea for where to dive with unbleached coral - any suggestions?

You can download a pdf version of *SCUBA News* [here](#).

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What's New at SCUBA Travel?

Safaga & Soma Bay - Still a Special Place to Dive

The Red Sea is unaffected by recent coral bleaching events and the still offers special diving from beautiful wild drifts to pottering along with turtles.

[Learn More...](#)





Here's Why: Diving Madeira

Out in the Atlantic, 876 km west of Casablanca, Madeira is waiting. With its benign climate there is year-round diving and sperm and pilot whales a common sight.

[Learn More...](#)



Cambodia: Macro and Whale Sharks

Unexpected diving in Cambodia

[Learn More...](#)

Letters

Help Needed

My Dad, John Clarke, died diving for Comex on 14th October 1974. I was 2. I'm trying to find archives of the incident as I know almost nothing of my dad.

Dean Clarke

Where to Dive with Unbleached Coral?

We just returned from a 10 day tour of the upper Maldives reefs. All the coral is DEAD. Gray and brown. Coral bleaching has wiped it out. The mantas and fish still seem to be strong but otherwise the whole trip was a bust. I have been diving for 30 years. I did the Great Barrier Reef in 1987. It was stunning. Unbelievable. Now, everywhere we have gone (maybe excepting the Red Sea) has been bleach beyond recognition.

Still, we will not give up. Do you know of a great place with live coral? Please advise me.

Bret

Can anyone help Dean or Bret with information? Email news@scubatravel.co.uk and we'll pass your message on - thanks!.

Top 10 Diver Resolutions for the New Year

With the New Year here, it's time to get those resolutions underway. Traditionally a time to set personal goals, what better way to begin next year than by planning adventures, pledging to help others, and learning new dive skills?

1. Get to know your dive kit

The festive holidays are a great time of year to step back and go through dive kit, checking everything is in working order. Equipment services can be

scheduled in a calendar for the coming year, and you can create a kit of spare parts for new adventures, such as O-rings and mask/fin straps. It's also a good time of year to keep an eye open for festive sales and upgrade old equipment at bargain prices.



2. Learn something new

There is always something new to learn as divers and PADI has a broad range of Speciality Diver courses to enjoy. Two of the most useful for improving dive skills as a new diver are the Dry Suit Diver and Peak Performance Buoyancy specialities. Those looking for something a little different, and a dive holiday, can do a Coral First Aid speciality in the Dominican Republic or the Mola Mola Diver course in Bali.

3. Get scuba fit

To get the most out of diving, and to enjoy more challenging dives, it's worth investing in a good level of scuba fitness. Swimming regularly, especially ocean swimming, will help build stamina and also confidence for open-water dives. Yoga is great for improving breathing techniques, both on land and underwater, whilst Pilates builds a strong core to support divers carrying their own gear. It also helps prevent back injuries, keeping you active and hopefully injury-free all year.

4. Practice, practice, practice those scuba skills!

For divers in the middle of winter at New Year, it's still a great time to practice those dive skills. Get to know local dive clubs and spend time in a swimming pool honing dive techniques, whilst making new friends for the coming dive season. As with any sport, muscle memory is key and can improve dive safety in an emergency when quick and calm reactions are required.



5. Cultivate a Blue Mind life

[Blue Mind](#), a book by Wallace J Nichols, explains how being near, in, on, or under water can make us happier, healthier, more connected and better at what we do. We can't always be in the water, but we can cultivate that sense of calm with regular meditation. Why not combine that with a commitment to spend more time by (or preferable in) water whenever possible. Meditation is not only good for finding inner-peace, it's also a great tool for anxious divers overcoming dive-related fears and for improving breathing techniques for great buoyancy.

6. Help other divers

One of the best dive courses for improving confidence, having fun, and learning how to help others is the PADI Rescue Diver. The PADI Adaptive Support Diver is great for learning how to support a dive buddy with physical or mental challenges. For those looking for a more challenging and in-depth course, the Public Safety Diver provides an opportunity to learn about working within a scuba diving rescue team.

7. Support a charity or become a volunteer

With environmental awareness constantly increasing, there are plenty of charities and volunteer groups to join. Divers can participate in Project AWARE Dives Against Debris in numerous countries, organise local beach cleans, or create underwater clean-ups to remove ghost fishing nets and plastic waste at local dive sites. Every little bit helps.

8. Try a new type of diving

Every diver has their favourite dive sites and type of diving. A good way to improve dive skills is to set a challenge to try new types of diving in the coming year; be that deep dives, drift dives, or open-ocean dives to master depth and orientation in the big blue. Fans of cold-water diving can join [Antarctica liveaboard diving expeditions](#) and try polar-water diving. There is a wealth of dive types to choose from, for all abilities, and in world-class destinations around the globe.



9. Visit a new destination

Divers looking for a new destination off the beaten track should consider Myanmar. It has only recently been opened to tourists and the Mergui Archipelago has pristine, unexplored dive sites only accessible by [Myanmar](#)

[liveboard diving](#). Red Sea divers can enjoy quieter [scuba diving in Djibouti](#), and those looking for a challenge can dive Scoresby Sund in Greenland. It is the largest and deepest Fjord system in the world and is great for whales and icebergs.



10. Make new friends

The dive community is known for being sociable and welcoming; a great place to make new friends. Committing to just a few of the dive resolutions above is bound to result in new adventures, new friendships, and potentially a dive buddy for life.



This article was written by Kathryn Curzon, a diver and writer for [Liveboard.com](#)

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Diving News From Around the World

Our round up of the best underwater news stories of the past month. For breaking news see our [Twitter page](#) or [RSS feed](#)



[PADI launches into liveaboard bookings](#)

PADI has consumed the Diviac liveaboard booking agency and now offers "PADI Travel". The best price guarantee remains.



[Vote now for the Wildlife Photo of the Year](#)

Four underwater shots are in the shortlist for the People's Choice Wildlife Photo of the Year. Anyone can vote and you have a chance to win a book of all the winning photos in the competition if you do.



[Cave divers discover world's longest cave](#)

Divers discover link between two systems of flooded caverns that together form the world's largest underwater cave at Quintana Roo, Mexico



[Palau makes all visitors sign pledge to respect environment](#)

International arrivals must sign promise that they will "tread lightly, act kindly" during their stay



[Public fear sharks less when they understand their behaviour](#)

Researchers surveyed more than 500 visitors to an aquarium shark tunnel to understand how attitudes to sharks and government shark policies can change.



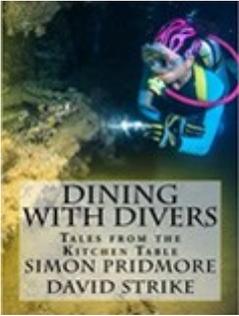
[Three reasons why sea level is rising](#)

What has caused a sea level rise of 80 mm in just the last 24 years?



Belize bans oil activity to protect its barrier reef

Decision hailed as huge step forward that will safeguard both the marine environment and the country's lucrative dive tourism industry



Cookbook for Divers

Read stories and try dishes served up by a gathering of some of the great and the good of the scuba diving world - that's what Simon Pridmore's new diving cookbook promises. Explorers, record-breakers, innovators, designers, entrepreneurs and raconteurs all compete for your attention and taste buds in this first volume(!) of diving story cookbooks.

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