



International Scuba

Post Spring Break—Now What?

Howdy everyone:

Hope the Easter Bunny was kind to you and your family. Brian and I were at the lake this weekend. Saturday was fantastic while Sunday on the other hand was not for the weak of heart. Our students were troopers and even did their deep dive.

The season is fast approaching as we have folks in Belize this week and several of us head to Turks in May. We are expecting to take a neophyte instructor with us as well—Darrell Gardner. He is taking his exams May 8-9. Cayman Brac is set for July. Hope to see some of you on our next trip. The June and August Cozumel trips are filling fast so don't wait too long before signing up.

Some of you may know I was in California at PADI headquarters two weeks ago getting the low-down on a new program. PADI in conjunction with **National Geographic** (NGS) is introducing a new Open Water Diver certification. We are co-branding with NGS, something they've never done before with their

100+ years of existence. The program debuts in June. An existing diver will be able to purchase the additional manual then jump in the pool for a few buoyancy skills, and finally do those skills in open water. The focus of the program is conservation and ecology much like the Project AWARE only on steroids. You will work on navigation and become more aware of your surroundings as you move along reefs. It is going to be spectacular and we have the distinction of becoming the first National Geographic Dive Center in Texas.



Watch for the new signs and to see us continue to improve to serve your needs.

Have a great weekend and hope to see you soon.

- Patti Stewart
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Remember to visit our website!

www.internationalscuba.com

Upcoming Lake Weekends:

Apr 10-11

Apr 24-25

May 8-9

May 22-23

Upcoming Trips:

May 15-21 Turks & Caicos

June 11-14 & 14-18 Cozumel

July 8-9 Flower Gardens

July 17-24 Cayman Brac

August 6-9 Cozumel

September Costa Rica

October Grenada

November Bonaire

And much much more!

The World of Divers Continues to Grow

The number of certified divers in the world continues to grow and International Scuba continues to contribute to that growth. We would like to congratulate and thank all those divers who completed their certification in November: **If you have hit a milestone please send me an email or call.**

Scuba Diver

Cameron Garmon

EFR

Tom Baggett
Alison Franklin

Milestones

25 Dives

Open Water/Junior

Open Water

Kim Ellis
TC Carroll
Vanja Pstrosik
James Pak
Elizabeth Shyne
Lyn Zastrow
Logan Zastrow
Carmen Martinez
Lucas Martinez
Mac Bain

Enriched Air Diver

Chris Walls

30 Dives

40 Dives

Dry Suit Diver

TK Laux
Simone Schreiner

50 Dives

60 Dives

Your name here!

Peak Performance

Carmen Martinez
Lyn Zastrow
Mac Bain

80 Dives

100 Dives

Underwater Navigator

Simone Schreiner
TK Laux

500 Dives

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Living the Dream

OK, admit it. Ever since that first trip to a tropical resort area you've dreamt about chucking it all and moving down there. But then we wake up and go back to work. As divers every time we go on a trip this pull seems just as strong as the first time. A few months ago we started a program to help people fulfill that dream. With the cooperation of Sail Caribbean Divers in the British Virgin Islands, we now have an instructor internship program in the BVI. You can go down for 30 days and live the life of working at a resort. For those of you who don't know, our lead Course Director, Mike Rowe, runs the program in the BVI for Sail Caribbean Divers. I would like to describe what is involved in the program, how you can join, or how you can live vicariously.

There are two prerequisites to going being involved with the program, the first is you must be an instructor; the second is you need to go through an interview. We have instructor programs throughout the year. If you are currently not an instructor, but have always wondered what it would take and where you can go from there, let us know (you know we love talking about the diving thing).

During the internship program, you room, most board, and you airline ticket is paid for. When you arrive you will be introduced into boat driving, guiding dive tours, doing Discover Scubas, compressor maintenance, boat maintenance, and the various other items that need to be done. In short you are one of the staff and may be asked to do anything any other member of the staff would do. You will work hard, but the view from the office (atop the deck of the boat) is a blue ocean, the reef, the wrecks, beautiful sunsets, sailboats, etc. Since you will be working with Mike, you also have the opportunity to advance your professional training with specialty ratings as well as the general experience.

If you want more information, come by and talk to Suzanne, she was our first instructor to go through the program. Kathleen Garrett and Amanda Rickman are currently running through the program. Kathleen will return in a couple weeks and I'm sure will have many stories to share.

This experience may feed the passion or let you know that it should remain a dream. In either case it is well worth it. Even if you aren't interested in this personally come by and let Suzanne share her stories with you.

Happy diving and blow lots of bubbles,

- *Brian Divine*

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Packing for the Dive Trip

We've come up on a year of living and working in the British Virgin Islands. The experience is absolutely wonderful and we could not be happier here! Jeff and I have decided (with a little push from a few of you) to write an article every now and then to share some of the experiences we have working as dive professionals in the Caribbean. No, we won't rub it in, but we do want to share with you some great stories and a few dive travel tips.

Being dive instructors and guides in a tropical location has some great rewards! We dive with people from all over the world, and see the most amazing creatures in our own back yard. Since the summer breaks are coming up and some of you will be going on dive vacations, we'd like to share a few tips for you to ponder while you're preparing for your trip!

Make a list of everything you need and CHECK IT OFF as you PACK it! Swing into the shop and run through the list with one of the staff members to be sure you aren't forgetting something extra. For instance, we have some great wreck dives here, and having a little flashlight with you to search for the elusive green moray or lobster is a great extra! Also a Save-A-Dive kit is a great idea to keep in your dive bag. Throw in some extra fin straps, mask straps, zip-ties, mouthpieces, etc.

The most important item to pack up is your certification card! "No Card-No Dive" is our motto. Fortunately PADI makes it easy to check cert information by having an online database of its divers, but Internet access is not always available. Logbooks have so many great uses like recording your weight needs and to give you proof of certification, and your experience. Guides like to know your background in diving as to be sure not to exceed your limits or hold you back.

If you are taking your own equipment, be sure it's been serviced within the past year. Get in the pool and be sure it all works correctly,

and re-familiarize yourself with all the details like the extra dump valves, where your pockets are, and that it still fits!

If it's been at least 6 months since you've even been wet, jump in the pool to relax and work out some of the kinks. If it's been longer than 6 months or even a year, it's a good idea to take a refresher. The International staff is more than willing to run through some of those skills you may have forgotten or become rusty with. The most frustrating situation for a dive leader is to look at your logbook and see that you haven't been in the water since 1981! Diving is not like riding a bike; it takes practice!

If you are traveling to a dive destination alone, be sure the operator knows you're coming and not only has space for you but has enough people going to have a trip going out. International Scuba has dive trips monthly, and always ensures a great time! If you plan on doing your check out dives for a certification or any continuing education, call ahead to be sure you are bringing everything you need to complete your courses.

Hopefully these hints will help you pack for your trip to avoid any problems. Above all, review safety procedures for diving, do your safety stops, and have a great time!!! We wish you a wonderful dive trip and hope to see you around here soon to dive with us!



- *Casey McNutt*

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When and Where are you going?

Greeting to all...Have you booked your SUMMER travel yet??? Have checked the schedule lately??? We are adding new trips all the time and have plenty of room for you. Three new SUMMER trips have been added to the already packed schedule. They are:

1. May 28-31 to Cozumel .
2. June 13-20 Bonaire (singles)
3. August 14-21 Grand Cayman
4. September 4-11 Costa Rica.

These trips are in addition to what is already on the board. For the most up to date details on these and other trips visit www.travelforyouinc.com. You can do this at the shop now. Come by and visit the travel center and play on the new system and you can book your own travel right there!!!! It really is cool!!!



Next month we will begin planning the schedule for 2005-2006. If you have any ideas or a place you would really like to visit let us know. Group travel is fun and will help us all save a little cash by booking this way. YOU make the groups not us...So let us hear from you and we will help make it happen.

International Scuba is now set up as a full-service travel agent and can book ANY of your travel needs. Yes, our focus will always be dive

travel, but we realize some of you do go other places and Patti and I want to help you with that too. Our job is to service ALL of your dive and travel needs. Let us hear from you and how we can help.

WE are working for "your" fun, so go out and have some.

- Tami Gardner

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Featured Product – TUSA BCDs

We are really excited about Tusa's new BCDs. They have 3 greatly improved options for us. These BCs feature the independent harness system separating the main bladder unit from the harness system. This enables extremely accurate fitting while eliminating tank movement.



Back inflate: The Imprex Pro features a waist support system that uses the independent harness system to ensure a custom fit. It comes in sizes ranging from XS to XL will a lift capacity of 43 lbs. Additional features include: lumbar support, large concealed and detachable Ninja pocket bungee cord to even the air pressure in the bladder, heavy duty 1000 denier nylon shell for superior strength, trim weights, 6 stainless steel d-rings. Retail \$550



Traditional Bladder: The Evolution Platina features a waist support system that uses the independent harness system to ensure a custom fit. It comes in sizes ranging from XS to XL will a lift capacity of maximum 48 lbs. Additional features include: 3-D wrap-around type bladder for greatest buoyancy with compact size, heavy duty 1000 denier nylon shell for superior strength, trim weights, 6 stainless steel d-rings. Retail \$525



Ladies: The Selene is a great women's BC and should be classified with the SeaQuest Diva series. The bladder uses a high cut line to ensure smooth hip movement. In the shoulder section, a high chest belt (removable) minimizes pressure on the chest area. The position on the shoulders behind the neck is linked to the new angle adjuster so that even ladies with narrow shoulders

can be sure that the jacket will not slip off. The best new feature is an advanced weight loading system. It angles downward on loading and has a double locking mechanism. This angle keeps the pressure of weight off the hipbone.

Happy Diving!

Suzanne Williams

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TUSA



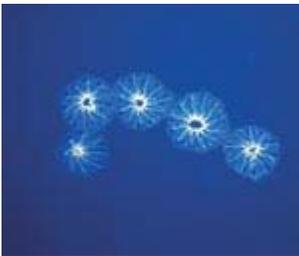
Please visit our website. We do our best to keep it up to date. Let us know what you think about the site and the newsletter. An important part of our success has been the friendships developed among customers and staff. That's part of why

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Creature Feature – Salp

Haven't you seen these little critters and wondered what they were too?



Many people have heard of sea squirts (ascidians), but not as many people know about the other members of the phylum Tunicata. Divers frequently see large numbers of transparent barrel-shaped creatures called salps in open water (salps look nothing like sea squirts, but are related to them). There are also appendicularians, tiny tadpole-like organisms that spin a translucent and gelatinous 'house' around them to trap food particles. Sea squirts, salps, and appendicularians are all important in our marine ecosystems, but identification of species is difficult and there are no specialists in New Zealand. Systematic collection and taxonomic research are needed to help us better understand this group for ecological, bio-security, and biotechnology purposes.

Solitary and colonial sea squirts (class Ascidiacea) are abundant in some seafloor assemblages. In Foveaux Strait pygid sea squirts play an important role in regeneration of habitat after long-term oyster dredging. The leathery tunics of adjacent colonies stick to one another as they grow, creating large clumps that can also include sediment, broken shells, and other organisms. At least a dozen sea squirt species appear to be alien immigrants to New Zealand's ports and harbors, and are responsible for fouling marinas, boat hulls, and other structures. Several New Zealand species contain biochemicals that could be valuable to the biotechnology industry, but the lack of a New Zealand tunicate taxonomist is slowing progress in this area.

There are currently 166 species of sea squirts, 19 species of Thaliacea, and 5 species of Appendicularia recorded in New Zealand.

Come down and dive with us!

- Mark Hayhurst
New Zealand International Scuba Diver