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To: info@regal-diving.co.uk
Subject: Saudi feedback

Hi Kate

Some feedback on my recent Saudi trip...

Visa process: all fairly seamless and kept up to date. Received great service from the Regal Dive office prior to departure.

Arrival at Jeddah airport & transfers: arrival checks a little slow, but all proceeded without any problems.

Boat: Dream Master is comfortable and very stable, but does lack the extra comfort, facilities and cabin space we are now used to from Egyptian Red Sea liveaboards. However, it is more than adequate for a week's diving, with the pros outweighing the cons. Food was plentiful and of good quality.

Crew & guide: Nelson, the guide, and his crew were very attentive and provided excellent dive briefings. You are encouraged to be independent with your buddy on the dive once the briefings have been given, but may of course try to stay with the guide if you like. It therefore suits more experienced divers who like to explore a little on their own. The dives were also relatively free of current on this particular week, so this also helped provide extra independence underwater.

Diving & dive conditions: What really sticks in the memory is the dramatic underwater topography with walls and pinnacles and array and abundance of corals, all in fantastic condition, with species of coral crowding each other out (it reminded me a little of White Knights in St. Johns, but more dramatic). There really was a sense of exploration and untouched feel about all the dive sites. For 4 days we saw no other boats. We were a little unlucky with the overall prevalence of dramatic fish life, but this could be as there were few currents during the week and the water was already a balmy 27+ degrees, but there was a Thresher shark, rarely glimpsed in the Red Sea and white tip reef sharks on a night dive! Once we got our heads around the fact there was not too much big stuff out there this week, we concentrated on the reefs and corals and were amazed over and over. It is a one off trip well worth making the effort for.

Jeddah: We enjoyed this at the end and would have liked a bit more time in the souks and markets. Although like many other Middle Eastern markets, there was real cultural mix of people, all friendly and welcoming with the contrast between the old town and the more modern shopping areas being quite marked.

Many thanks again for the organisation.

Andy Wilby