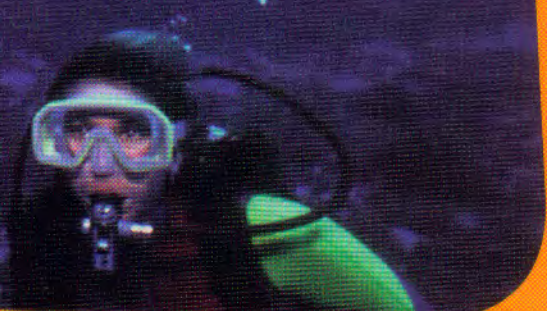
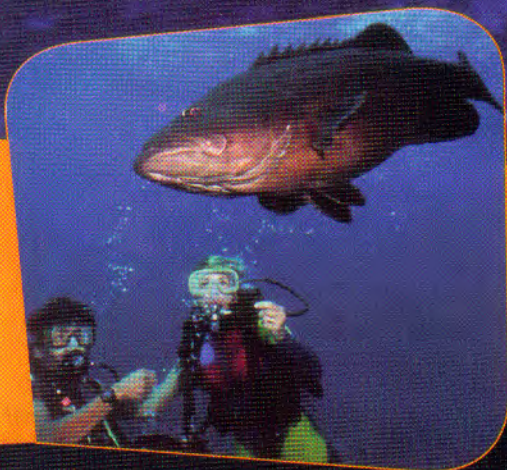




BIG CRITTERS AND GIN CLEAR WATER

This dive destination qualifies for not one, but two uniquely superb dive attributes. Although Cozumel is still struggling to recover from the 2005 hurricane season, the reef systems here are extremely deep-bedded structures some 30 to 60 feet high, and are cleansed and enriched by major current flow. Consequently, this accounts for the typical 100-foot-plus visibility which exists on a near daily basis.

Dives along two of the most outstanding reefs – Columbia and Palancar – are always drift dives. Here divers ride the normal one to three knot blue train of current on, over and around a labyrinth of deep winding ravines and crevices. These cavernous coral passageways are home to some of the Caribbean's most inquisitive and formidable vertebrate marine creatures. Huge black grouper, some measuring three to four feet, appear and disappear as one glides over their hidden lairs.



COZUMEL

Typically, your dive guide will have a baggie of cut bait and when he opens it – look out! These giant groupers are not timid and face-to-face encounters are extremely common.

Just when you think you were impressed by one of these overweight predators, an oversize and over-fed green moray may swim toward you from the reef. These monster size denizens of the deep can easily intimidate the novice diver, but alas most are reclusive and quite timid and just momentarily looking for a free handout. If this kind of interaction is your cup of tea, then Cozumel is for you.

