

ARUBA

WRECK DIVERS HEAVEN

There are many places that boast of being a wreck diving destination, but few equal the accessibility and history that Aruba has to offer. Shrouded in mystery and legend, many of Aruba's wreck sites offer divers an intriguing look into the past.

One of the island's most notable wreck sites is the S.S. Antilla, a.k.a. the German Freighter Wreck, or the Ghost Ship. This 397-foot-steel-hull wreck is consistently covered by tropical fish and steeped in maritime lore. As a supply ship for the German U-Boat fleet, this highly elusive ship was dubbed the Ghost Ship by the allies who were never able to locate and attack the ship outside of neutral waters, which Aruba was at the time. On the eve of Germany's invasion of Holland in 1940, its crew, to prevent the ship's capture, scuttled the Antilla.

Today the ship rests in 50 to 60 feet of water off the tranquil south side of Aruba. Being one of the largest intact wrecks in the Caribbean, the resultant 60-plus years of marine life is spectacular. Huge tube sponges plus brilliant orange encrusting coral now coat the hull, and enormous compartments are most times thick with glass minnows.

There are many other wrecks here in Aruba and throughout the Caribbean, however the Antilla is a one-of-a-kind wreck that will beckon those wreck divers looking for a lasting memory.



BAHAMAS

OUTER CAVE REEFS

The millions of years that have led to the formation of outer barrier reefs of the Bahamas have resulted in the creation of inter sanctums, which few humans have ever encountered. The most amazing of these are located on the Atlantic side of Walkers Cay, along the Abaco chain of islands of the Bahamas. Here divers can enter passageways – underwater flashlights required – to find catacombs of coral and silversides, which refract rays of light, much like a prism.

Captain Skeet La Chance, a diving historian of the Bahamas, began trips to intermediate reef coral heads more than 30 years ago. His whimsical sense of humor led him to place modern day comical artifacts along these inner portals. Many of these reefs are still frequented by out island dive operators today. This out-of-the-ordinary reef dive is sure to spark the interest of those seeking mystical experiences – deep within these ancient coral temples of penetrating light.

Regardless of your preference for specific types of diving, trying one of the above unusual or unique dives will certainly add a bit of spice to your diving interests. Surely adding one or more of these to your dive log will allow you to respond to your next inquiry on "favorite dive sites" by responding, "What kind of diving do you enjoy?" Hopefully, your response will cause your inquirer to also try one of these distinctive dives as well. 🐠

