



closes overhead; the only light is a rock-piercing sliver of sun. Inside the grotto, we briefly pause on an interior ledge where we are overwhelmed by the strikingly fresh air. Ahead we hear the rumble of a powerful source of water, which draws us around a final bend in this subterranean stream. There in all its thunder and glory, the waterfall crashes down before us.

After swimming into the falls a few times, we float motionless in the current back to the mouth of the cavern, where we warm our chilled bodies in a cascade of hot water, 20 feet from the entrance.

The next day we venture to the north of the island. Prince Rupert's Bay holds stunning mountain scenery, tropical deciduous forest and swampland, volcanic sand beaches, coral reefs and the romance of an 18th century fort. Portsmouth Beach Hotel and Dive Center is nestled among the palms, orchid trees and stands of ginger along the center of the bay. Quaint wooden efficiencies right on the beach make this a perfect spot for divers seeking solitude.

Toucarie, located in a secluded bay directly off a beach reminiscent of the movie *South Pacific*, offers divers premium multi-level diving from 10 to 80 feet. Massive columns of volcanic rocks have collapsed here, leaving passageways for divers to explore. Large schools of juvenile barracuda sometimes envelope divers approaching Toucarie's drop-off.

Divers who enjoy drift dives will be enchanted by the sights found along Photography Point. A vertical cliff that plunges about 70 feet to the bottom is splattered with stands of plate coral, sponges, crinoids and brittle starfish which find shelter amongst these stationary invertebrates. Wide-angle photographers thrill over the upward angles available here for dramatic sunburst shots. The end of the drift sweeps into a maze of enormous boulders which have tumbled from the cliff. Here schools of glass minnows meander around the precipice of the boulders where macro photography is also at its best.

An ideal afternoon activity for eco-divers is to arrange a row boat trip up the Indian River just south of Portsmouth. Here luxuriant vegetation hangs overhead and along the banks of the placid waters. Guides maneuver up this meandering stream pointing out tree lizards, ferns, epiphytes and philodendrons which cling to the grand mango trees, sometimes forming a green tunnel of foliage for the boat's passage.

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