

## Rabaul Dive Sites

- The Lighthouse** On the southwest side of Ura Island is a small lighthouse, below which there are huge coral rock bommies standing at least 6-7 metres tall. There are resident double-headed maori wrasse, coral trout, crayfish as well as heaps of critters like nudibranches. We swim down through the bommies until you get to a flat bottom where there are barrel sponges, sea whips, lettuce leaf coral and schools of reef fish, all just in 16-20m of water. One of my most talked about dive sites.
- Tom's Knob** A small seamount just a short swim from the main reef Tom. This outcrop of hard and soft coral is a nice point to hover in the on-coming current to see the world pass by...
- Dick** Being between it's two brothers - Tom and Harry, Dick is generally a start or finish point when the current is a bit too fast for the divers. On finishing here in the shallows, Dick consists of an apparently barren field of rock and some clusters of coral. Taking the time to peruse this field will pay off with nudi's and shells.
- Harry** This is the longest of the three reefs (Tom, Dick & Harry) and has a much deeper flat than the other two reefs.(12m). Harry is 90% live coral, from stag horn to large plates and barrel sponges. Having a high likelihood of seeing pelagic species pass by makes this one of my favourites to dive...
- Yogi's Knob** Named after the photographer's nickname, this site is only 5 minutes from Kabaira. Mainly a hard coral reef, it has large plate corals - some the size of a double bed - with its own collection of fusiliers and other marine fish. It makes for a nice relaxing dive to end the day or the week. Oh, and it's the only spot so far that we've had an 11ft tiger shark say hello.
- Pigmy Point** As the name suggests, this is the closest site to Kabaira where I have found a small cluster of Pigmy seahorses. They were nestled under an overhanging branch of coral fan amongst other fans and black coral trees. This reef also has a deep wall for you to peruse to your heart's content. It would be classed as a classic wall dive.
- Hannah's Hot Spot** This is a small sunken reef that rises up from a deeper coral ride. With the right moon and tide this site is amazing with dozens of different fish species going for broke in the current. Even when the time isn't right this site still produces something interesting either large or small.
- Reimer's Wall** This wall has over hangs, short swim-throughs, and canyons spread right the way round the open side of the reef. The drop-off plummets to 50m before easing away. Many small schooling fish travel the wall; rainbow runners and blue fin trevally to name two, but the wall is also covered with smaller and cryptic creatures.
- East Point** A fantastic dive, with lots of colourful corals ranging from the 3m to the 30m depth mark. With hard and soft corals, barrel sponges, olive sea whips and more on site, you'll be definitely happy with this dive and relaxed. It is also great for the snorkeller as there is plenty of colour in the shallows and has it's fair share of marine life to be seen.

## Submarine Base

This sheer drop off (250 metres or more) located metres from the shore line, was used in World War 2 for Japanese submarines to unload and load cargo with a quick escape plan. Straight down! Its natural sheer wall is the edge of a vast submerged caldera, with many soft and small corals growing from the wall, barrel sponges and sea fans and sea-whips decorating the wall. Entry here can get a bit awkward at low tide especially if you don't have your booties but once in, it is like you are falling into the abyss. A must dive.

## The Hump

It is said to be the outer edge of the Tavui Caldara, which stretches into the Saint George's Channel. This sea mount rises in the middle of the channel, from the depths to the shallowest point at 30m. It is not dived a lot. Because of the extreme current, you just hang onto the rope and watch the world go by.