

ALL THE HOLIDAY NEWS

# Bella vista

UK tour operator Regaldive has started working in the Red Sea with Bella Safaris, operator of the *Bella I*, *Infinity* and, from March, the *Bella Majestic* diving liveaboards. Each vessel is more than 30m long and accommodates 20 guests in air-conditioned cabins. Introductory offers start from £599 on *Bella I*. Regaldive pledges to donate £1 from every direct holiday booking to the Marine Conservation Society as part of its "commitment towards responsible tourism", and raised £1040 in this way in 2008/9.

» [www.regaldive.co.uk](http://www.regaldive.co.uk)



30. There is a shelter deck, and even a dive-shop shuttle service for fills. Charter rates, which include lunches, are £450 per day.

» [www.rocket.eu.com](http://www.rocket.eu.com)

## TO THE SALT MINES!

A PADI Course Director is urging divers who suffer from sinus and allergy problems to visit the UK's first Salt Cave in Wandsworth, south London. An old church has been converted to recreate conditions found in a Siberian salt mine



but with therapeutic music, lighting and comfy chairs! Justin Mayers says congested sinuses and chest caused him problems when diving, but "after a regular number of sessions the relief in my chest and sinuses was palpable and three months on, the relief is still noticeable. Since using the 'cave', my air consumption whilst diving has got noticeably better." A session costs £35, though note that you may need 10-30 sessions to get up to a year's relief from a particular condition (10 sessions costs £260).

» [www.saltcave.co.uk](http://www.saltcave.co.uk)

## COMMENDABLE CAMEL

Camel Dive Club & Hotel in Sharm El Sheikh has been Highly Commended by judges in the Virgin Holidays Responsible Tourism Awards 2009.

Camel's entry in the Best In A Marine Environment category focused on its activities to inform and educate its 10,000 annual visitors on how to minimise their impact on the marine environment. Its message is also said to reach at least 100,000 additional visitors through its links with UK tour operator Thomas Cook. Whale Watch Kaikoura of New Zealand was overall winner of the awards.

» [www.cameldive.com](http://www.cameldive.com)



## DIVING & SHOPPING

PADI 5\* centre the Dive Connection has won a licence to go diving in a shopping complex! Gunwharf Quays in Portsmouth is a waterfront shopping and entertainment venue built on the site of HMS *Vernon*, once the Royal Navy's Anti-Submarine Warfare branch. Its lower lock,



formerly Vernon Creek, covers 65m by 25m, with an average depth of 5-6m of salt water. It is sheltered so diveable at all times and contains fish such as bass, eels, cuttlefish and blennies, all monitored by Blue Reef Aquarium. The Dive Connection has added a dive platform and now uses the lock for dive courses as well as leisure and night dives. "It's great to be so visible to the public at large," says its director Nick Poling.

» [www.tdc-dive.co.uk](http://www.tdc-dive.co.uk)

## WORLDWIDE COVERAGE

Dive Sportif reckons to put the world at our fingertips in its 2010 brochure *Diving Holidays Worldwide*. "Our mission is to give everyone the opportunity to experience some of the best diving conditions around the world at

affordable prices," it says, and it has rationalised its offerings with tried and trusted operations from Australia to Zanzibar.

Meanwhile, Dive Worldwide's 2010 brochure *The Ultimate Diving Collection* features new destinations for the company such as Christmas Island, Aruba, Panama and Fujairah in the UAE, plus Jordan and Cuba both above and below the water.

» [www.sportifdive.co.uk](http://www.sportifdive.co.uk),  
» [www.diveworldwide.com](http://www.diveworldwide.com)



## GOODMAN'S BACK

Wildeye, the international school of wildlife film-making, moves into the underwater world with its Red Sea Underwater Wildlife Filming Adventure programme this year. Presenting the course is award-winning cameraman Jeff Goodman, who will take both beginners and

experienced camera-users through the technical aspects and provide the opportunity to film a variety of marine wildlife. Dates are 14-21 April and the course price of £995 covers transfers, tuition, unlimited diving, cylinders and weights, accommodation and full board.

» [www.wildeye.co.uk](http://www.wildeye.co.uk)

## NO POCKET ROCKET

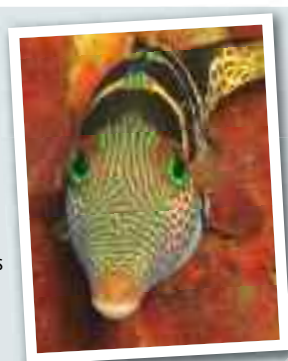


Skipper Trevor Small has upgraded his Poole-based dive-boat *Rocket* from a 36ft to a "truly massive 40ft catapult catamaran... the first to be fitted with a dive-lift, and two 3m-long kitting benches". The vessel's twin Iveco 450hp engines allow it to cruise at 20 knots and reach

## SULAWESI COMBO

A two-centre week-long dive package is on offer from Eco-Divers at the Kimo Bajo Resort & Spa in North Sulawesi in Indonesia, allowing visitors to enjoy both the celebrated wall-diving at Bunaken and the muck-diving in Lembeh Strait. You get five nights at Kimo Bajo with three days' diving and one night at Eco Diver's Lembeh Cottages with two days' diving plus night dive. Full-board accommodation, up to 16 dives and all transfers and taxes will cost US \$1095 from February through to March 2011 (two sharing). Check for cheap flights to Indonesia.

» [www.eco-divers.com](http://www.eco-divers.com)



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