

# Island Getaways

## Diving In For Amazing Adventures On A Scuba Vacation

(NAPSA)—Over 70 percent of the Earth's surface is covered with water. The allure and mystery of the underwater world has inspired the human imagination since pre-history, from the mythological creatures described by seafaring people to the science fiction of Jules Verne and the modern underwater adventures in Hollywood films.

To get there, American Airlines and Air France could be good places to start researching travel information.

The chance to explore the deep inspires many people to take "scuba vacations" to such tropical locales as Martinique—a land of endless beaches, fascinating dive sites, ideal water temperatures, abundant marine life and incredible shipwrecks.

Another part of what makes Martinique a diver's paradise is the conditions: warm tempera-



**Martinique is a land of endless beaches, fascinating dive sites and ideal water temperatures.**

tures whatever the depth (80° to 86° F) and exceptional visibility whatever the season.

Diving is like underwater fireworks. The color is mainly due to corals, sponges, gorgonians, anemones and the numerous small Caribbean fish. Huge brown barrel



Photos courtesy Martinique Promotion Bureau/Oceandimages.com

**Incredible shipwrecks can be seen off Martinique's coast.**

sponges, yellow tube sponges, blue or purple vase sponges and all the fixed fauna illuminate the seabed. Surgeonfish, parrot fish, queen and French angelfish, wrasse, butterfly fish, grunts, snappers—they all twirl all around you.

In the north, you will face towering submarine walls cracked by black and volatile sandy strips disappearing in the most extreme depths. Or perhaps you prefer a more varied ambience, full of history, with the shipwrecks of Saint-Pierre.

In Les Anses d'Arlet in the south, the two points (Burgos and Salomon) offer one of the most visited waters of Martinique with a mix of grassy plates, rocky slopes, sandy areas, and small and deep walls. Go on a little bit more to the south and the Diamond Bay appears with its famous rock; a bay crossed all along by a huge coral wall. At last, have a glance at the coral reef of the bay of Sainte Luce. All coral species are present in these waters.

The catastrophic eruption of Mount Pelée in 1902 gave Martinique 12 ancient wrecks to supplement a coastline of fringing

reefs and dramatic offshore rocks. All this promises a scuba vacation full of unforgettable sights and incredible adventure. While it can be beneficial to have a working knowledge of French in order to maximize the ease of arranging a trip to Martinique, many of the dive club guides do speak English.

Also, you can make unforgettable dives, such as night dives and on wrecks, and pay one price with the Madinina Pass at [www.plongezenmartinique.com](http://www.plongezenmartinique.com), with access to reduced rates for individuals and groups—and dive where you want. All dives are under supervision of qualified instructors for a great experience.

There are 90 possible dive spots off Martinique and no two are alike. Each has a very special and wild feel, inviting you to smile and be dazzled.



**Before taking your scuba vacation, it may be beneficial to take a training course.**

### Planning a Trip

For information on booking a scuba vacation in Martinique and for a list of the country's dive clubs and top dive sites, visit [www.martinique.org](http://www.martinique.org). To learn more, contact the Martinique Promotion Bureau/CMT USA located at 825 Third Avenue, 29th floor, New York, NY 10022. You can also call 212-838-7800, ext. 981.



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*Note to Editors: From the Southeast United States, you can fly from Miami to Martinique.*