

Coastal Dive Sites

Straight off the beach

Atmosphere House Reef | max depth 30m

Reef and macro

Only a step away from Atmosphere and one of the largest coastal sanctuaries, the house reef offers splendid underwater life. The reef covers a very large area and is often done as two or three separate dives.

In the shallows, the sand eventually makes way to the reef at around 6-7 meters depth. There is a large reef area just in front of the resort, where soft and hard coral mix with sponges down to around 25 meters. The area has plenty of macro life, including mantis shrimps, harlequin shrimps, frogfish, leaf scorpionfish, different species of ghost pipefish like halimeda and velvet, nudibranchs, and sometimes even blue ring octopus hunting in the reef. Here you can also see jawfish sticking their heads out of the sand, and if you come during mating season, you might be lucky to see them while they guard their eggs in the mouths. The big day octopus are guarding their eggs in the crevices under the corals instead! Turtles often reside in the reef area, as does a large solitary barracuda. Towards north you will find a few sandy and grassy areas where pipefish and cuttlefish often hide, and further along another large reef area. Towards the south, there is a mix of sand with interesting bottom dwellers and reef patches with healthy stag horn corals and a myriad of fish such as sweetlips and snappers. Near the yellow staghorn corals you can often see non-venomous turtle headed sea snakes hunting and hanging out together as a family group. Deeper down you will find lush carpets of soft coral and sponges to a depth of about 30 meters. The house reef is a great dive for fish identification, photography and macro lovers.

**A great dive on Nitrox*

Atmosphere Containers | max depth 30m

Macro and artificial reef

In the spring of 2011, three large shipping containers were sunk between 18 and 30 meters depth on the sand, on the north side of the house reef. Atmosphere wanted to provide an artificial reef for its divers as well as make a home for critters and corals in the deeper area. The containers have now opened up due to corrosion and have become a beautiful artificial reef full of soft corals and a lot of different species of nudibranchs, frogfish, shrimps and crabs and a school of batfish. You can also find longnose hawkfish hiding by the soft corals. In the sandy area around the containers there's often interesting critters like flamboyant cuttlefish and thorny seahorses, as well as a school of barracudas and big cobias patrolling by the deeper container. And if you search the nearby small sea fan very carefully you can find the only pygmy seahorses along the Dauin coast.

**A great dive on Nitrox*

Atmosphere House Reef Mandarin and Night Dive | max depth 18m

Reef and macro

The Atmosphere house reef at night is very different from the day. During the sunset you can find mandarin fish, so shy in nature they only venture out at dusk. Entering into the water from the shore shortly before sunset and heading to a top part of the reef, at a maximum depth of 8m, you can hang out and hover over the broken coral (broken by a typhoon a few years ago) to watch the mating rituals of this stunningly colorful fish. Watch the males compete for the females and if you are lucky you will witness the little 'dance' as they join together and swim upwards from the protection of their home for their brief interlude. This is truly a photographer's dream.

When the night gets darker you will see sleeping fish, hunting fish and lots of crustaceans: Hermit crabs, box shrimps and hinge beak shrimps, sponge crabs, decorator crabs etc. The sandy bottom can be covered in tiny ghost/skeleton shrimps, we often see squid and cuttlefish as well as sleeping turtles. In the very shallow water you can come upon bobtail squid and other tiny creatures who only venture out at night. During the night, the colors appear more vivid and many corals let out their polyps at night to feed, looking like blooming flowers.

Atmosphere also offers “**Fluoro Night Dives**” which allow you to really experience the nightly magic of our corals and underwater animals. With the help of fluorescent light and filters you will see how the corals and fish give off their own light in the dark.

North to South

Mainit | max depth 20m

Reef

Mainit can be an exhilarating drift dive but it is also an excellent dive when the current isn't running. Due to the currents, there are frequent sightings of large schools of barracuda and fusiliers but there is also a lot of macro life. The boat will drop you on one side and pick you up on the other, so there is no need to swim against a current – instead you can just let the drift pull you along while you watch the scenery. The dive site starts with a sandy slope that gives way to soft and hard coral, as well as a lot of colorful sponges. If you look closely at the barrel sponges in particular, you will see that they all grow in the same direction along the bottom, a result of the current almost always running one way. Turtles and blue spotted stingrays as well as other larger fish are common, in the sandy area you can sometimes also spot flamboyant cuttlefish. “Mainit”, in the local language, means “hot”. At the end of the dive you will pass an artificial reef of car tyres and then enter an area with sulphur-rich yellowish sand. Placing a hand in the sand will allow you to feel the heat coming from underneath, in some places so hot that you will burn your fingers, indicating the volcanic nature of the area.

**A great dive on Nitrox*

San Miguel | max depth 25m

Macro and reef

San Miguel has two completely different areas, a sandy slope with rubbles and great macro life, and a lovely little shallow reef full of reef fish. The sandy area where the dive begins is often so interesting and full of life that many divers don't bother going to the reef at all. Check closely the mooring block where the boat is tied and you might see the first ornate

ghost pipefish, cuttlefish and frogfish of the dive, sometimes you can also spot halimeda shrimp camouflaged perfectly among the green algae. San Miguel is an excellent site for any cephalopod lover – move slowly and carefully and you can encounter mimic octopus or flamboyant cuttlefish hunting in the sand. If you swim towards the north you'll end up on the reef where you can often see turtles, day octopus, leaf scorpionfish and ribbon eels. For a safety stop you have the perfect shallow seagrass area where common seahorses are sometimes hiding.

**A great dive on Nitrox*

Lipayo | max depth 20m

Reef and macro

Diving the Lipayo sanctuary is a must for anyone who loves seahorses. The site comprises of a large artificial reef of car tyres and a natural reef, an area often too big to cover in one dive. The artificial reef is made up of car tyres, overgrown with both hard and soft corals and very colorful. A school of yellow snappers is always seen here, along with the odd sighting of flamboyant cuttlefish, different shades of thorny seahorses, spearing mantis shrimps, ghost pipefish and nudibranchs. Crossing from the car tyres and you head into the reef sanctuary on a gentle slope with a maximum depth of 20 meters. Sea moths, common seahorses, shaded batfish and frogfish are also common in the shallow seagrass area.

Sahara | max depth 20m for reef and 30m for macro

Reef and macro

Ranging in depth from 5-18 meters, this is a gentle sloping reef which also has interesting things to see in the sand (hence the name!). A large school of yellow snappers can be spotted on top of a substantial area of lettuce coral, where you will also find different kinds of sweetlips and fusiliers. Turtles, comets, shrimpfish and puffer fish are often seen around the shallows and there's a few resident marbled groupers who let you come quite close before they hide under the coral. Look under the coral ledges and you might see beautiful blue spotted ribbontail rays or fascinating comets who like to hide inside the coral at the daytime. Whilst the reef is not large, the diversity of life makes for a great coastal dive. There's also abundance of new artificial reef structures, like a big Bangka boat wreck waiting to be covered with soft coral and algae to create more hiding places to the critters of the area.

The deeper area of the site is ideal for macro providing a sandy slope with occasional rocks, mooring blocks and ropes for the cool critters like frogfish to live. Flamboyant cuttlefish are common in the sandy area.

Secret Corner | max depth 25m

Macro

On a sandy slope where two currents meet, an amazing array of macro life can be found with a bit of luck. Prone to strong currents, this dive site can only be enjoyed at certain times of the day depending on the tides. On a sandy slope with what appears as nothing but sand, rubble and the occasional bottle or coconut, you can encounter several members of the octopus family (mimic octopus, coconut octopus, mototi octopus, wonderpus, blue ringed octopus) as well as hairy frogfish, ghost pipefish, common seahorse, cockatoo waspfish, flamboyant cuttlefish and several types of shrimp etc. Due to unpredictable

currents this can be a challenging dive, mainly suitable for photographers and keen macro lovers.

**A great dive on Nitrox*

Ceres | max depth 25m

Macro

On the northern side of the famous Cars area we have a small macro heaven with a sandy slope and an artificial reef made of tyres and mooring blocks. The macro life is similar to cars with ambon scorpionfish, hairy frogfish, thorny and common seahorse, stargazers, painted, clown and ocellated frogfish, and flamboyant, pygmy and broadclub cuttlefish. During certain times of the year when waves bring algae to the shallow sandy plateau on the top of the slope, at a depth of 3-5m, you can often see huge green turtles enjoying a buffet lunch and munching away on the algae patches.

**A great dive on Nitrox*

Cars | max depth 30m

Macro and artificial reef

Cars is one of the most famous dive sites on the Dauin coast and a dream-come-true for the macro photographer or anyone who's a fan of crazy creepy crawlies. Starting in about 5 meters with a sandy plateau which is a great place to look out for sea horses, many species of frogfish including the rare hairy frogfish, stargazers, cuttlefish, spiny devilfish, box crabs and garden eels, the sandy slope continues slowly down to about 30 meters. Among the debris, tree trunks, concrete sinkers and coconut shells you'll find small cuttlefish, robust, ornate and roughsnout ghost pipefish, flamboyant cuttlefish and small frogfish. It is well worth staying in the shallow, since there is a lot to see here even if the area isn't what you would call pretty. Many divers spend the whole dive on the 5 meter plateau.

Deeper part of 'Cars' is an artificial reef with the remains of two old cars, a series of oil drums, a cement mixer and some other bits and pieces. The car wrecks are overgrown with coral but more than anything else they have become the home of lots of fish. It is a great place to look for moray eels, juvenile emperor angelfish, shrimps, snappers, colorful wrasses and groupers. The most spectacular feature though is the dozens and dozens of huge lionfish who never seem to leave the area. They have filled up the car wrecks inside and out but can also be found suspended in the water throughout the whole dive site. Snake eels, saddleback anemone fish in their leather anemone, ringed pipefish and flounders are also very common. A fantastic dive for photographers.

**A great dive on Nitrox*

Dauin North Reef | max depth 25m

Reef

This reef is situated close to the Dauin beach and you will often find snorkelers in the shallows. It is a gentle sloping reef with soft corals in the deep, beautiful hard corals in the middle and mixed corals in the shallows, most notably large areas of hard lettuce coral, potato coral and table corals. Turtles are often present on this vibrant reef with lots of small reef fish, anthias, parrotfish, scorpion fish, anemonefish and much more. Large potato groupers have their home here as do quite a few large batfish, broadclub cuttlefish, day octopus and rabbitfish. In the shallows we often find leaf fish hiding in the coral. This dive

site is suitable for all divers since there is generally no current and the reef begins in very shallow water.

**Also great for snorkeling*

Dauin South | max depth 25m

Reef

A sandy channel separates Dauin North from Dauin South and just like its other half, Dauin South is a very healthy coral reef with a mount of hard corals that gives way to softer corals deeper down. There are two huge families of garden eels in Dauin South, one in the shallows and one at 20 meters, with the eels reaching one meter off the ground as long as you don't get too close. The reef has a few resident turtles and is also known for its many giant clams, nudibranchs and big marbled groupers. Blue ribbon eels are also frequently found here.

**Also great for snorkeling*

Ginamaan | max depth 20m

Macro and Artificial reef

This dive site is good for the photographer or the macro enthusiast. It is an artificial reef made of car tyres and only covers a very small area but with lots to see. It begins on top of the slope in sea grass in about 10 meters and ventures down the sandy slope to the tyres - the dive site requires patience but you may be rewarded with sightings of pipefish, nudibranchs, juvenile frogfish, filefish and scorpion fish, as well as many species of crabs and shrimps. Take your time spotting critters and also check the sandy areas for great macro, there is no set route to follow so find a place to settle down and quietly observe the marine life around you. Possible special encounters are blue ring octopus, flamboyant cuttlefish, ornate ghost pipefish and thorny seahorse.

Richard's Point | max depth 25m

Macro

A sandy slope with a few scattered coral patches, this is another great macro site suitable for photographers and critter lovers. Nudibranchs, pipefish, frogfish and cuttlefish all fight for the diver's attention along with many seahorses. Tigershrimp and flamboyant cuttlefish have been sighted here and nobody will ever forget the one time when two blue ringed octopus were spotted here, mating. Check the shallow seagrass area for seahorses and pipehorses.

Masaplod North | max depth 25m

Reef and macro

This dive site is often done as a drift dive from one side of the marine sanctuary to the other. It has more schooling fish and pelagic than any other dive site along the coast and is also the oldest marine sanctuary in the area.

At the northern side of the site we have the most beautiful corals of the Dauin coast. The reef area is small but full of life and a huge variety of species like moray eels hiding in crevices, nudis wandering in sponges, banded pipefish looking for some lunch and jacks hunting ever-changing clouds of glassfish.

A long sandy slope is home to many blue spotted sting rays and occasional barracudas, as well as schools of surgeon fish. On the reef, which is divided into two parts by a sandy

channel, you will find big staghorn, potato and lettuce coral formations and a resident school of big eyed jacks will encircle divers whilst you look for creepy crawlies on the bottom. Turtles and nudibranchs are quite common here and don't forget to look for juvenile critters. Some of those white flecks on the sand could be baby frogfish, scorpionfish, leaf scorpionfish, and flounders. At the end of the sanctuary you will find a couple of big orange black coral bushes that often have big schools of shrimpfish surrounding them and sawblade shrimps hiding between the branches.

Pyramids | max depth 27m

Reef and macro

The dive site name "Pyramids" comes from the large metal pyramid shaped structures scattered in this area between 15 and 25 meters depth. They have attracted an unusual number of thorny seahorses, but also other exciting critters such as saw blade shrimps hiding in the black coral, tiger shrimp, razor shrimps, arrow crabs, candy crabs and giant frogfish, as well as ghost pipefish, spiny devilfish, fang blennies, eels, sea moths and ringed pipefish etc. In the shallows, you will find black corals, fallen tree trunks as well as some very rocky areas where large groupings of sea urchins are common, as well as many species of juvenile fish. The dive site is prone to current so make sure to dive it in good conditions, it is a good dive for all divers with a lot to see.

**A great dive on Nitrox*

Blue House | max depth 20m

Reef and macro

A sandy gentle slope with coral in the shallow area as well as around 20 meters, here you'll find critters that like the soft coral and colorful sponges, such as candy crab, orangutan crab, soft coral cowries and many types of shrimp. The sand will hide flounders, baby frogfish, cuttlefish, ghost pipefish and spearing mantis shrimps. A dive site with generally very little current, it is excellent for photographers.

Masaplod South | max depth 25m

Reef and macro

After a grassy slope, the reef begins at around 8m. A sandy slope leads to an area of soft corals, stag horn corals and where periodic boulders litter the shallows. This is a great dive site for macro and critters, and is suitable for all levels of divers. Often seen in the area are ghost pipe fish and nudibranchs, ringed and banded pipefish, juvenile emperor angelfish, leaf scorpionfish, shrimpfish and frogfish. Shrimps and crabs are everywhere. Masaplod Sur is also one of the dive sites where crab-eyed gobies can be found.

Bahura | max depth 18m

Reef

Just around the corner from Atmosphere sits Bahura reef, an easy dive with a lot of marine life and a reef that starts in very shallow water. On a boat dive, you begin the dive on a big lettuce coral colony, continue down a slope with lots of colorful and odd-looking sponges and reach a reef teeming with life. Giant groupers are often spotted here, as are turtles, moray eels, harlequin shrimps, mantis shrimps and snakes. Occasionally there is a current in the area and the dive master will sometimes plan the dive with the current and exit on the shore just in front of Atmosphere.

On the same reef you can also find the homes of mandarin fish in the lettuce coral colony in maximum depth of 7m. These shy and beautiful fish comes out from their hiding places only during the sunset for a mating dance ritual.

**Also great for snorkeling*

The Point | max depth 18m

Reef and Macro

A short walk or boat ride down the beach takes you to Atmosphere Point at the end of our beach, a macro dive which is also often struck by currents if not dived at the right time of the day.

The area consists of a sandy bottom with coral patches and rubble, lots of fish cages, tree trunks, ropes and the occasional car tyre. The marine life is exciting – robust and ornate ghost pipefish, spiny devilfish and flounders in the sand, moray eels and scorpion fish hiding in the coral heads, as well as the occasional barracuda and spotted stingray passing by.

The Pier | max depth 15m

Macro

A proper muck dive, this dive site consists of sand, rocks and rubble only. Because of its proximity to a small river, it has attracted many critters which makes it worthwhile despite its lack of colorful beauty. Named “Frogfish City” by some of the Atmosphere dive masters, there is a great variety of small painted and clown frogfish in different colors, squat lobsters, common seahorses, nudibranchs and if lucky, perhaps even blue ring octopus, mimic octopus or wonderpus.

Unity Point | max depth 22m

Reef and Macro

We like to consider this dive an exploration dive. A dive site often struck by currents, this site should be dived when the current is not running and by individuals who wish to search for small critters. Look out for the red tooth trigger fish, schooling banner fish and moorish idols playing on the coral heads. Red snapper, yellow striped snapper and turtles also fight for the diver’s attention. There is a vast expanse of sand mixed with coral heads. In the shallows, there is sea grass where you can find nudibranchs, juvenile batfish, pipefish and snake eels. You will notice many fish traps in this area, due to it not being a protected marine park, which means that fishing is allowed.

Thalatta | max depth 25m

Macro and artificial reef

The whole site is full of great macro, whether you’ll head to the artificial reef or to the sandy channel next to it. Different species of shrimps, crabs and nudies are common in the artificial reef while in the rubble you can encounter frogfish or even mimic octopus. When the night comes the site starts to resemble the alien nightmare planet when the scary looking bobbit worms come out from their hiding places and start hunting.

**A great dive on Nitrox*

Daniel's Bay | max depth 25m

Macro

Our frogfish loving marine biologist named this site after himself after he found a record number of juvenile frogfish – 8 different species and many different color variations! Check the site in the right season and you might see painted, clown, randall's, rosy, ocellated, giant, hairy and spotfin frogfish. Among all these exiting froggies there's also other interesting macro like zebra crabs, coleman shrimps, and robust and ornate ghost pipefish, just follow slowly the slope made of sand and rubble and don't forget to check coral patches or rock formations.

**A great dive on Nitrox*

Basac | max depth 25m

Reef and Macro

This site is similar to the Dauin South dive site further north with a sloping reef full of interesting macro life. On the reef you might spot ornate and robust ghost pipefish and giant frogfish. Move slowly down the slope towards the deeper sandy area where you can find flamboyant cuttlefish, and also thorny seahorses in the depth of 20-25m.

**A great dive on Nitrox*

Guinsuan | max depth 30m

Reef and macro

Guinsuan is a colorful drift dive which can be dived as one when the current is strong or as two separate dives when the current is slow or not running. It is a long extensive reef which begins and ends with a sandy slope. Lots of schooling fish – look out for the barracudas – turtles, snakes, wrasses, rainbow runners, groupers, triggerfish, surgeonfish, milkfish, ribbon eels, harlequin shrimps, longnose hawkfish, you name it! In the sand, snake eels are often spotted sticking their heads out of the sand, and giant frogfish and peacock mantis shrimps are common. Also spot the countless colorful feather stars sitting atop the coral formations. Both soft and hard corals are abundant here and the amount of teeming fish is very impressive, like an aquarium.

Atmosphere often dives Guinsuan on Wednesdays as a half day trip, with a visit to the Malatapay market in-between dives. The market is a local food and live stock market where divers can experience the Filipino barter system before going back under water again.

**A great dive on Nitrox*

Apo Island

Cogon | max depth 30m

Reef

Cogon is named after the Filipino 'cogon' grass that lines the shore in front of the dive site. This dive site is known for its sometime fierce currents and is therefore only recommended for advanced divers with drift diving experience. The dive site starts on a sandy slope and progresses to a coral slope with amazing colours and a vast array of soft corals and sponges. Look out for the family of bump head parrot fish that sometimes frequent this area as well as the occasional giant trevally. As the dive site progresses you head into a sandy channel where you can hide from the current and watch the fish play above you. Eventually the topography changes to a wall dive with big coral boulders and outcrops. The current ensures there is a variety of marine life in evidence, and keep an eye open in the blue for the huge schools of big eye trevallies.

**A great dive on Nitrox*

Mamsa | max depth 30m

Reef

Mamsa is the local word for 'Jacks' and often there is a large school of Jacks to be seen at this dive site. Again prone to strong current, this is also a drift dive for the more experienced diver. Starting on a steep slope the topography is quite unique as it turns into a host of underwater boulders which later joins a steep wall covered in soft corals. Drift along and keep your eyes open for the occasional hawksbill turtle.

**A great dive on Nitrox*

Rock Point East/West | max depth 30m

Reef

Rock Point is separated into 2 different dives sites - East side and West side - both are situated on the southern tip of the island. The dive site starts on a steep wall and tapers towards a plateau at the point with interesting ragged rock formations that reach up to the surface. Suitable for divers of all levels this is an impressive dive site for the marine life. Commonly seen in the area are turtles, potato groupers, scorpionfish, black and white snapper, batfish, butterfly fish and many varieties of pufferfish. Also look out for the banded sea snake! Macro lovers can look in amongst the corals to see a wide array of nudibranchs, flatworms, gobies and anemone shrimps.

**A great dive on Nitrox*

**Also great for snorkeling*

Katipanan | max depth 30m

Reef

Katipanan is named after the small cowrie shells often seen on this site. Situated on the Southern side of the island this is an easy dive site with little or no current. It is a gentle to steep slope with soft corals and a step down to a sandy slope and can be dived in the direction of Rock Point West or towards Chapel Point. Look out for turtles!

**A great dive on Nitrox*

Chapel Point | max depth 30m

Reef

From this dive site you can see Apo Island's only chapel, hence the name. It starts on a steep white sandy slope that closely resembles a ski slope and joins a dramatic wall that drops down to 30, 40 and 50+ meters. The wall has many nooks and crannies and large cave like overhangs which are great for exploring. Chapel Point can be dived as a very easy shallow dive if one stays on the hard coral plateau above the wall or a deeper dive with a bottom beyond recreational dive limits. The wall has a vast quantity of sea fans, soft corals and anemones. Look out for the numerous garden eels in the shallows, blue and yellow ribbon eels which are frequently spotted in the overhangs, nudibranchs, scorpion fish, sea snakes and the odd turtle sitting on top of the wall.

**A great dive on Nitrox*

Boluarte | max depth 18m

Reef

This is a dive site so unique that the volcanic nature of the island can be seen as steady streams of bubbles erupt from the sand, shimmering as they catch the sun light. This is an easy dive site with a varied topography. A little wall dive, followed by a slope littered with coral heads and joining back on a fringing reef.

**Also great for snorkeling*

Largahan | max depth 18m

Reef

This dive site starts on a sandy steep slope which joins a small but steep wall and then goes back to a gentle slope again. Largahan is a beautiful diverse dive site with lots an unusual amount of macro life for Apo Island, such as nudibranchs, flatworms and frogfish to look out for. In one area, volcanic bubbles come out of the sand, shimmering as they catch the sun light. The sand, which is usually white in Apo island, is dark in many areas of Largahan.

Coconut | max depth 30m

Reef

This dive is for the experienced diver who likes fast drift dives. Because of its location on the tip of the island, the currents can be fierce - down- and up-currents are not uncommon and the divers might find themselves in something resembling a washing machine. In the shallows, the fish life is extraordinary with a rainbow of colourful reef fish blocking the view to the surface. Look out in the blue for schools of big eyed trevallies, turtles, wrasses and other big fish.

**A great dive on Nitrox*

Siquijor Island

Paliton Wall | max depth 30m

Reef and walls

Diving in Siquijor can be described as mostly reefs and walls with a mild to moderate current. There's almost always a turtle or two passing by and if you pay enough attention to corals and cracks in the wall you'll find lots of nudis, shrimps and crabs. Look closely to fans and you might even encounter a pygmy seahorse. As always in the walls there's lot of reef fish life like fire cobys, red snappers and marble groupers, sometimes even eagle rays, and it's always a good idea to also check the blue for big pelagics.

**A great dive on Nitrox*

dive sites

atmosphere

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Atmosphere Dive Sites



↑
to Dumaguete

↑
North

● Mainit

● San Miguel

● Lipayo

● Sahara

● Secret Corner

● Ceres

● Cars

● Dauin North

● Dauin South

● Ginamaan

● Richard's Point

● Masaplod North

● Pyramid

● Blue House

● Masaplod South

● Bahura

● Atmosphere House Reef

● The Point

● The Pier

● Unity Point

→
to Siquijor

atmosphere

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Zamboanguita

● Thalatta
● Daniel's Bay

● Basac

● Guinsuan

● Largahan

● Coconut Point

● Boularte

● Cogon

● Chapel Point

● Mamsa

● Katipanan

● Rock Point West

● Rock Point East

Apo
Island