



Similan Islands Expedition Trips

Big Blue Technical Diving, Thailand

Similan and Surin Islands 4 Days, 4 Nights

Big Blue Tech run technical diving trips to the similan islands from the period of November to April.

A typical trip aboard the MV Pawara runs something like this.

Our liveaboard customers will be picked up at their hotel or at the airport in the afternoon, and taken to our pier at 7pm and board the boat. Most days we will depart around 9pm after a full boat briefing and a full hearty dinner, this is a perfect time to prep your gear or rebreather. Customers usually spend the time after dinner getting to know their fellow passengers and dive staff whom they'll be spending the next 4 days with. Some nights we will depart as late as midnight to accommodate some of our customers who fly in late to Phuket. In either case, guests usually go to bed about midnight and sleep through the overnight trip to the Similans.

You'll wake at 7am by music played over the intercom letting you know that its time for Dive 1. Most people stumble out of bed bleary-eyed and get greeted by staff who help you in to your equipment and get you in to the water. It's true that most guests finally wake up at that moment. Dive groups are a maximum of 4 people, and the first dive is what we call a check-out dive. Your leader will see how well you dive and how your air consumption is.

At the end of this and every dive, you and your group will surface and indicate to our dingy that you're ready to be picked up. This dingy will pick you up and take you back to the liveboard. No surface swims, ever.

As with every dive, once back on board, our staff will help you out of your equipment and place it in the racks for you. You can grab a quick freshwater rinse from the shower on deck and then head up to the outdoor eating areas where a hot breakfast awaits you. Our staff will rinse your gear and fill your tanks while you eat.

After breakfast, most people head back down to their cabins for a nap before the next dive. All the cabins are individually air-conditioned so as the day gets hotter, you're still comfortable to nap.

Dive 2 is at about 11am and most people wake for this one a little more refreshed. Dive groups might be reorganized to put divers of similar skill levels together, based on observations of the check-out dive. Obviously we never split up people who want to dive together.

After Dive 2, we serve lunch on deck. After lunch, we usually offer an activity for the day. Usually, this involves taking the dinghy to the shore of one of the island where you can lay on the beach, snorkel with turtles, go hiking, or just do nothing at all. Some customers prefer to stay out of the heat and spend their time in the air-conditioned lounge watching one of our DVDs in stock. Sun worshipers may decide to skip the ride to the beach and spend all their time on the sundeck. Others may prefer just to stay in the shaded decks reading or relaxing with the other passengers.

Dive 3 is usually about 2pm, followed by the entire afternoon to relax or go to the beach. For those interested, the night dive is normally about 7:00pm. After the night dive, dinner is served and after that some people head straight to their cabins, others prefer to relax on deck having a beer and talking about the days dives and discussing what adventures they hope to have on tomorrows dives.

This is a typical day on a 4-day cruise. on day 3 there is no beach to go to, as the dives are at rocky pinnacles, so people just relax on the boat. This is where

having a nice big boat really comes in beautifully. There's always plenty of room for everyone.

On the final day of the cruise, we only make dives 1 and 2, and return to our pier about 3pm. There's usually a lot of photo taking and email exchanging among new found friends, and after some goodbyes to each other and to the boat we drive our customers back to their hotels.

In addition to this schedule we also run speed boat trips to Richelieu Rock almost every single day with one of our two speed boats. Our schedule always includes one trip to the Similan islands and another travelling to Koh Bon and Koh Tachai which is a popular destination for Manta Rays and Whale Sharks.

What's included ?:

Technical diving live-aboard expeditions are run on a very regular basis - normally twice a month, plus very occasional recreational diving trips. All meals are provided, a mixture of Indonesian and international cuisine.

Technical tours take a maximum of twelve divers. Twins (2 x DIN aluminium 11 or 13litre) and DIN deco cylinders are included, all other equipment is available for rent. We are CCR rebreather - friendly. If you can put a group together, we're more than happy to give you a daily charter price. Cost of Oxygen is minimal, maximum of US\$10 per diver- total usage divided amongst the team, (if we can be bothered to do the maths)! Continuous Flow Nitrox to 40% included in the above. Trimix is also blended with continuous flow, helium costs 3baht/litre. Helium analyser on board. For CCR Divers, all popular brands of rebreather sorb are available on-board (but please confirm you're requirements prior to the trip), and oxygen can be boosted to 200 bar if required. We have CCR rebreather cylinders to fit all popular CCR units.