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The diminutive southern Caribbean island of Aruba, lying less than 20 miles from mainland South America, attracts over half a million tourists from far and wide, each year. Some come for the luxury accommodation, gorgeous beaches and guaranteed good weather, but huge numbers are drawn to this little piece of paradise by the excellent snorkeling, and more significantly, the fabulous diving opportunities, it presents. There are over 40 Aruba diving sites, the majority situated off the sheltered south western coast and the many local dive operators have developed a smooth and professional operation to allow visitors a truly memorable experience.

Aruba scuba diving is chiefly about shipwrecks, with some of the most captivating visual images to be found under the water anywhere across the globe. Exploring these wrecks is something people with a fascination for this type of exploration, will travel thousands of miles to partake in, and the marine life that lives in and around them, makes the whole adventure extra special. The coral formations, are simply stunning, encircled by some brilliantly colored tropical fish, octopus, lobsters, stingrays, moray eels, barracudas and turtles.

The ecological health of the marvelous reefs is something that the island's authorities are keen to preserve and have begun educational programs to help people better understand the needs of these striking natural areas. Mooring buoys are being introduced, and divers are being made very welcome to take part and assist in their installation, all components of a newly established and totally protected, underwater park.

The Aruba diving sites themselves are all worth taking a look at, but naturally some people will be stretched for time and will have to choose the ones that most suit their pre-trip itinerary. If it is the wrecks that make most appeal then a great starting site would be Arashi Reef, which is an artificial reef, created following the crash of a Lockheed Lodestar airplane, parts of which are scattered approximately 35 feet below the surface. Being such a short distance down means even the beginners can easily access this unusual wreckage.

Of course, the real attraction is those sunken ships, as there remains a real mystique attached to them, which lures the diving community to them time after time. One of the oldest wrecks is that of the California, which has been embedded for almost 100 years. However, this is only really recommended for the advanced divers, as the currents and choppy seas can make it a little hazardous. The 20 year old wreck of a 120 foot fuel barge, referred to as Debbie II, was deliberately sunk and offers fantastic photographic opportunities and a far less challenging dive.

Other wrecks include: The Star Garret a 300 foot long cargo ship, The Jane C a cement freighter sitting upright in 90 feet of water, The Pendernales an oil tanker torpedoed nearly 70 years ago during the second World War and most famously of all, The Antilla, which at over 400 feet in length, is the largest wreck in the entire Caribbean. This German freighter was scuttled at the end of the same conflict to stop it getting in the allied hands, and is the one dive that has to be undertaken above all the others. Aruba scuba diving is big business, guaranteed to leave individuals with a truly memorable experience, in an underwater realm to marvel at.

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Some of the finest [Aruba diving sites](#) can be found listed at a [www.arubaprivatediving.com](http://www.arubaprivatediving.com), together with many more fascinating facts. For anybody with an interest in a [Aruba scuba diving](#) these sites offer an opportunity to view some truly remarkable shipwrecks at close quarters.

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