



Atlantic Rose

WRECKS

There are eight shipwrecks around St Helena that divers can explore, and many dive sites are scattered with articles of marine archaeological interest, such as cannons and anchors.

- 1 Bedgellat** The salvage vessel for the Papanui, sunk in 2001 as an artificial reef.
- 2 Frontier** A drug running fishing trawler confiscated and sunk in 1994. The Frontier has become a popular wreck dive for advanced divers.
- 3 Portzic** A fishing vessel, old and unrepairable, so sunk in 2008 as an artificial reef.
- 4 Atlantic Rose** A boat first used for cargo and later converted into a fishing vessel until it broke its moorings and sank.
- 5 Spangereid** A coal ship that caught fire and sunk 1920.
- 6 Papanui** Over the years the Papanui has attracted an abundance of marine life and the many endemics and other species of fish that can be found here is testament to the island's strict conservation efforts. The Papanui lies in approximately 20 to 40 feet (6 to 12m) of water. The stern post protrudes above the surface occasionally as the tides move in and out. This is one of the most popular dive sites around St Helena for both the beginner and the experienced diver.
- 7 Darkdale** A royal fleet auxiliary tanker sunk by a German U-boat in 1941. The Darkdale is a war grave and displays the union jack on the stern. An early morning dive is the best time to visit the Darkdale.
- 8 Witte Leeuw** A cargo ship sunk in 1613, lying approximately 115 feet (35m) deep. Jacques Cousteau dived this wreck many times when he visited in the 1970's.



St Helena Island

Secret of the South Atlantic

ABOUT ST HELENA

St Helena is a small British Overseas Territory situated in the South Atlantic Ocean. One of the remotest places on Earth, it is also one of the most extraordinary places to visit. Its unique character and unspoilt beauty lies in contrasting and spectacular scenery, a rich cultural heritage and an environment extremely rich in biodiversity. These are just a few of the reasons why this remote jewel is a perfect location for active exploration and discovery.

THINGS TO DO

- Birding and wildlife
- Indigenous Fauna and Flora
- Walking and hiking
- Whalesharks, dolphin and whale tours
- Historic legacy and cultural tours
- Napoleon
- Astronomy and photography

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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DIVING &
MARINE ACTIVITIES

St HELENA
ISLAND



Discover the abundance of life and beauty of the South Atlantic Ocean. Swim with whale sharks, explore historic wrecks and marvel at the many endemic species of marine life that call our coastline home.



St Helena Island
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DIVING AND SNORKELLING

Clear, warm waters, wrecks and fascinating marine life make St Helena Island an enticing snorkelling and scuba diving destination. Dive site habitats vary from rocky reefs with caves and areas of boulders to cobbles and sand, all teeming with marine life and all within easy reach of the wharf in Jamestown. The wrecks dotted around the coast present popular dive and snorkelling sites.

Sea temperatures vary from 66 to 75°F (19 to 25°C) and visibility can range from 16 to 130 feet (5 to 40m) with peak visibility being from December to May. Dives vary between 40 and 130 feet (5 to 30m+) and offer a range of diving opportunities. There are a number of local laws for divers to abide by, including no wreck penetration and rules for swimming and interacting with whalesharks. Further information can be found in the "Diving and Snorkelling St Helena Good Practice Guide" and "Whaleshark Guidelines".

Some of the popular dive sites are Buttermilk Point, Cat Island, Cat Island Main, Cavalley Point, Egg Island, Ladies Chair, Long Ledge, Robinsons and Thompson's Valley Island.

Most of the dive sites are located on the leeward side of the Island where divers can experience a bit of surge from the ocean swells, but there are no strong currents. These dives are suitable for both beginners and advanced divers.

If a visitor is planning to scuba dive they should bring their certification and log book.

There are two dive operators on St Helena and both offer PADI diving courses, dive excursions and marine tours.

The St Helena Dive Club is a thriving group on the Island. Many divers are trained through the club each year.

There are snorkelling nature trails at the wharf steps in Jamestown and also at Lemon Valley which can be done at one's leisure. Snorkelling tours are available for those unqualified in scuba.



Chilean devil ray
Mobula tarapacana

MARINE LIFE

Nearly 750 marine species have so far been recorded, with at least 50 of those being endemic. Divers and snorkelers will encounter a vast array of marine life including fish (of which 16 species are endemic) and various invertebrates including sea slugs and anemones (about 40 of which are endemic). Green and Hawksbill turtles are often seen and visits from devil rays are not uncommon. The island also has resident populations of Pantropical Spotted, Bottlenose and Rough-toothed dolphin and is seasonally visited by a number of transient species, including Humpback whales which can be spotted from June to December.



Whaleshark
Rhincodon typus

WHALESHARKS

January and February are the hottest months on the island, which correlates with fish spawning patterns and the appearance of whalesharks. Reaching lengths of up to 40 feet (12m) or more, they scoop up plankton and small fish with their colossal gaping mouths while swimming close to the water's surface. Seeing the whalesharks during their seasonal visit is not to be missed. Although massive, whalesharks are docile creatures and it is possible to swim with them. Whaleshark interaction is strictly regulated on the island and is only offered by accredited local marine tour operators.



FISHING

St Helena offers a wide range of quality fishing experiences, be it for a quiet day of fishing off the rocky coastline, or the thrill of deep-water sports fishing. Different fishing grounds surround the island and many varieties of fish can be caught. In the main season, between April and August, Wahoo and Tuna are generally plentiful and other varieties of fish caught include Marlin and Grouper.

Sport fishing enthusiasts can join a local fishing vessel for a day's fishing. Boats set out at around dawn to catch bait in the inshore waters of James Bay before setting off for one of the fishing grounds further offshore. Getting to these grounds may take an hour or more.

An alternative to deepwater fishing is to go fishing from the rocks. The fishing grounds on the leeward side of the island take about an hour to reach and those on the windward side are about two hours away from James Bay. A local pastime is to fish for Silver Fish, Bullseye or Soldiers from sites on the rocky shoreline around the island during the evening.

SOME FISH SPECIES AROUND ST HELENA



Bottlenose dolphin
Tursiops truncatus



St Helena sharp nose pufferfish
Canthigaster sanctaehelenae



Island hogfish
Bodianus insularis



Marmalade razorfish
Xyrichtys blanchardi



St Helena butterflyfish
Chaetodon sanctaehelenae



Strigate parrotfish
Sparisoma strigatum



Spotted scorpionfish
Scorpaena plumieri



Ocean surgeonfish
Acanthurus bahianus