



## Top Ten Grand Cayman Dive Sites

Recently we caught up with Joanna Mikutowicz, Managing Partner of [DiveTech](#), and asked for



her top ten favorite dive sites. Jo, or “Pinky Jo” as her friends call her, became Open Water certified on her 15th birthday in 1997 at Bob Soto’s in Grand Cayman, and she knew she wanted to grow up and become a Scuba Diving Instructor in Grand Cayman. After becoming a PADI Course Director and Director of Training at Ocean Concepts in Hawaii, she moved to Grand Cayman and joined DiveTech in 2012. There she advanced to become boat captain, MKVI

rebreather diver, SSI Free Diving Instructor, and now Managing Partner. So here are Jo’s top ten favorite Grand Cayman dive sites:

1. **Lighthouse Point, Guardian of the Reef** - The site features a mini-wall from 30-60 feet just minutes from shore, and access to the deep wall only 10 minutes off shore. Multiple wave notches, chutes, overhangs and pinnacles make for interesting topography for diving. In April 2014 Divetech sank the [Guardian of the Reef](#). Sculpted by Simon Morris, the Guardian is dedicated to Ocean Conservation. Great anytime of the day, morning dives, afternoon dives -evening dives - night dives - dawn dives - the choice is yours!



2. **Orange Canyon** - On the North West Point of the Island, this wall features stunning Orange sponges that line the deep walls, as well as a pinnacles and swim throughs that you will find packed with silversides certain time of the year.



3. **Hepps Pipeline** - This mini wall can be dove from boat or shore. The mini wall has a curve to it that looks like a wave about to crash over you. The wall is lined with sponges, wire corals, sea fans and you will generally find lobster hanging out all over the place.



4. **Tarpon Tunnels** - Located on the North side of Grand Cayman, you will find channels or



tunnels that start from the shallows at about 50 feet and weave their way to the main wall. In these tunnels you will come across silverside, tarpon, lobster and sometimes nurse sharks. Once you break out onto the top of the main wall keep your eyes out for reef sharks and hammerheads. This dives site's close proximity to Stingray City makes it

a favourite for Hammerheads.

5. **USS Kittiwake** - The 251 foot ex-USS Kittiwake, a former US Navy submarine rescue vessel ASR-13, was sunk on the West side of Grand Cayman on January 5, 2011. Maximum depth is 65 feet, making it a great dive for all levels of divers, and it can be seen clearly from the surface for snorkelers. It is very open and light making it



a great wreck to penetrate. You can swim through the engine room, down shaft alley, through the bathrooms, recompression chambers and dining area and finish off in the wheel house where you can stand in front of the big wheel and pretend you are driving the Kittiwake.

6. **Princess Penny's Pinnacle** - Named after Freediver Penny Ventura- this North wall deep site features a large pinnacle covered in black coral, sponges and lobster. You can corkscrew your way around the pinnacle 2 or 3 times before carrying along down the wall observing all the beautiful coral and looking out into the blue for passing eagle rays.



7. **Stingray City** - This 12 foot dive has been named the best 12 foot dive in the world. Kneel on the sandy bottom in the warm clear waters of the north sound while the Stingrays swim all around you. Kissing a Stingray brings 7 years of good luck.



8. **Ghost Mountain** - This North Wall deep site features a large pinnacle just off the main wall.



When you enter the water and swim to the edge of the main wall you cannot see the pinnacle, as you head out over the open blue water the pinnacle starts to appear out of no-where, as if it's a ghost. The pinnacle is covered with giant gorgonian sea fans, sponges and a couple green moray eels that call it home. You can spend a good 20 minutes just swimming around and through the

pinnacle before swimming back to the main wall to enjoy the soft corals in the shallower water.

9. **Big Tunnels** - This west side deep wall is a maze of swim throughs, archways and overhangs. Starting in about 50 feet of water you work your way through the maze and end up on the main wall in about 90 feet of water. You generally find tarpon hanging out in the tunnels along with a large goliath grouper at times. Swim into the shallows a bit and you will find Hawksbill sea turtles munching on sponges.



10. **Bonnies Arch** - The shallow mini wall on the North West Point of the Island starts off with a



large natural arch on the coral that was created over time from the movement of the ocean. Drop down through the arch and say "hi" to the resident crocodile that lives on the bottom. Weave your way along the mini wall in about 40-60 feet of

water enjoying the healthy soft corals and sponges. Lots of sea turtles and green moray eels call this dive site home as well as small juvenile fish hanging out in the shallows.

Special thanks to Jason Washington for permission to use his beautiful photos, more of which can be found at [www.idivecayman.com](http://www.idivecayman.com).