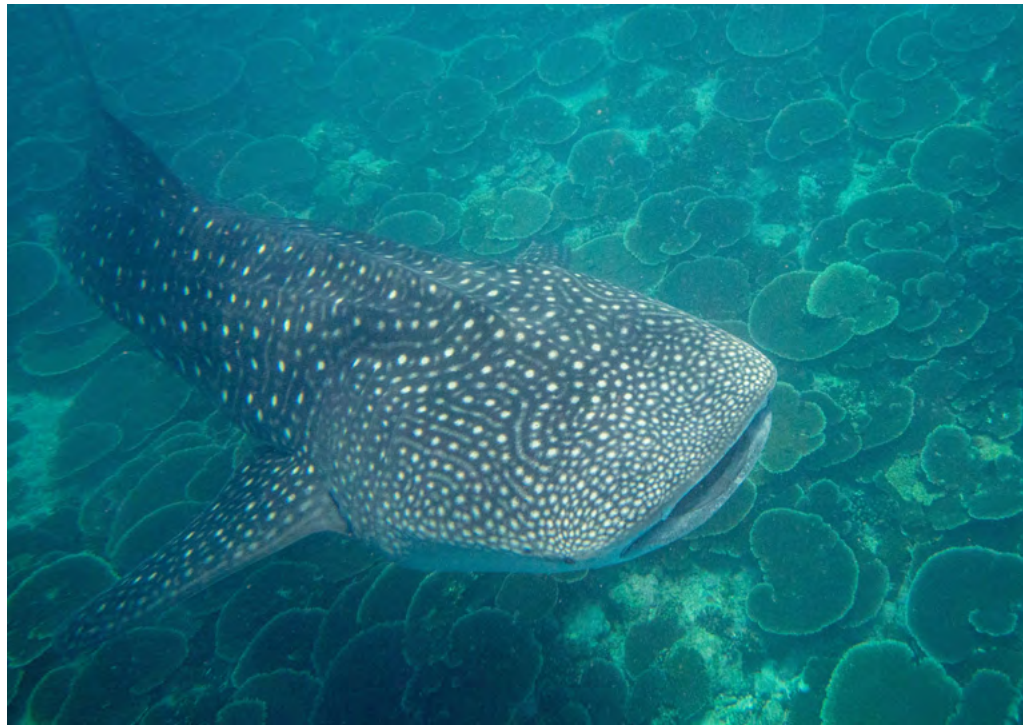


The diving highlight was spotting the magnificent whale shark – not on our dives, but during the surface interval between our first and second dives. The captain heard on the radio that one of the other boats had spotted the creature, so we gunned for the spot. As soon as we neared the area – we could see a mass of people just swimming excitedly en masse towards us. We jumped in, and started paddling towards them, though initially we couldn't see anything on the ocean floor but the beautiful gigantic plate corals. Then, just as the water surface started roiling with the frantic splashing of arms and legs, I spotted a dark silhouette looming rapidly towards me. I had just a moment to admire the distinctive white spots of the whale shark when the crowd was upon me.

Haha, thankfully, the guides had warned us about the enthusiasm for the crowd, so I was prepared for it, and willing to give as good as I got. The snorkelers' fins had nothing on my dive fins, and I easily broke my way to the front of the crowd again, through desperate hands that tried to pull me back. But I kept easily ahead, just abreast of the creature swimming placidly and regally below, ignoring the excitement at the surface. I swam with it for long minutes, until it moved towards deeper waters and its brilliant white spots merged



into the darker blue. At that time, I finally looked back, and saw that most everyone was already out of the water, and my own dive boat was back in the distance.

The snorkeling was stellar too. With my underwater strobe malfunctioning, I couldn't get magnificent colors in the deep, but the shallows provided a ton of interest. Along the house reef on our daily leisurely and languid swims, we spotted grey reef baby sharks, white tip sharks, marble rays, grey sting rays, eagle rays, mobula rays, turtles, lobsters, octopuses, and tons and tons of fish – triggerfish, fuisiliers, angel





some water. I didn't even open a book once that week haha.

We spotted dolphins twice during the week. Once at a surface interval dive up north, and another time during a sunset cruise near our resort. Always fun to see these playful creatures

We're already trying to plot a return next year.

Peishan Tan
www.ptanphoto.com

fish, banner fish, Napoleon wrasses, golden blue-striped snappers etc. What a feast for the eyes!

Certainly one of our most active but also most restful vacations. We'd be up around 5am every morning, to catch the sunrise on the eastern end of the island. If we had an early morning dive, we'd then grab breakfast before going to the dive boat. Otherwise, we'd take a 2 hour snorkel around the island. We'd be on the water until sunset, whereby we'd hit the tennis court, or grab a pre-dinner cocktail. By 930pm, we'd be hitting the bed already. And unlike my fitful sleeps back home, I'd get up just once in the middle of the night maybe, to drink



All images taken with a Sony RX100 in a Recsea housing

Don't settle for 2nd best



Film - No Filter No
White Balance



Digital - No Filter Manual
White Balance



Magic Filter Manual
White Balance

Digital cameras have opened up new possibilities to underwater photographers. For available light photography manual white balance is an invaluable tool for restoring colours. But when you use it without a filter you are not making the most of the technique. You're doing all the hard work without reaping the full rewards. These three photos are all taken of the same wreck in the Red Sea. The left hand image was taken on slide film, which rendered the scene completely blue. The middle image is taken with a digital SLR without a filter, using manual white balance. The white balance has brought out some of the colour of the wreck, but it has also sucked all the blue out of the water behind the wreck, making it almost grey. The right hand image is taken with the same digital camera and lens, but this time using an original Magic Filter. The filter attenuates blue light meaning that the colours of the wreck are brought out and it stands out from the background water, which is recorded as an accurate blue.

www.magic-filters.com