

EXPLORING TRAVEL FAVORITES AND FRONTIERS

TRAVEL AGE WEST

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HIP TO THE KOR

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Brad Korzen,
Principal,
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Tours in Tobago

Operators show clients the sights — above and below the waves

BY JAMIE WETHERBE

Clients who book a vacation in Tobago often want to lie on the beach and go at their own pace. But for those wanting a bit more excitement, book them for a special ocean-centric package at The Palms Villa Resort in Tobago.

If scuba is what your clients seek, The Palms and Wild Turtle Dive Safari have teamed up to offer a package for qualified divers. The Dive Safari starting at \$1,675 per person (double occupancy) lets clients test the waters during seven dives at different sites around Tobago, including a reef dive and an Atlantic drift dive.

"It was fabulous," said Jayne Lloyd-Jones, a spokeswoman for The Palms. "We saw fish and other water life. It was a great time."

Meals, tanks, weights and transportation to and from the dive sites are included, and qualified dive masters oversee small dive groups to ensure safety.

"The Palms Villa has worked with Wild Turtle Dive Safari for many years and knows that they are very qualified and professional," said Janine Fisher, director of operations at The Palms.

Also included in the Dive Safari package is a wonderful seven-night stay at the Palms Villa Resort. Set on a 10-acre estate minutes from beaches and national parks, The Palms is surrounded by rainforest and gardens. Clients stay in one of five, three-bedroom villas

fit with a balcony, a veranda opening onto a private swimming pool and a full kitchen complete with a fridge stocked with clients' favorite food and drinks.

Agents who book The Palms package will receive a 10 percent commission.

For clients looking for a more rustic Tobago trip, book them on Wild Turtle's overnight dive safari. The five-dive adventure for \$325 per person includes a camp out on one of Tobago's isolated beaches. Clients will take three day dives and a night dive where they can swim up close to hammerhead



sharks and rays. The overnight is spent on a deserted beach eating meals cooked over an open fire and sleeping in four-person tents. The next day clients will take in breakfast and a couple more dives during the trip back.

Wild Turtle also offers scuba certification classes, snorkeling and other water activities, including water skiing and coastal tours.

For clients who aren't avid scuba divers but still want to experience the action of the island, expert tour guide David Williams, of King David Tours, will take clients through the sites and sounds of Tobago, including the unspoiled Caribbean coast, tiny fishing villages and hikes through hidden coves and beaches. Island tours typically start at 8 a.m. and guests return by 7 p.m.; lunch and transportation are also included. King David offers several other island tours and a slew of activities year-round, including snorkeling and fishing. For after-hours entertainment, there is a stargazing tour and nighttime rainforest walks, both \$50 per person.

"David is very knowledgeable," Lloyd-Jones said. "At the end of the day, visitors have sampled much of what Tobago has to offer, taken in some history and have an understanding of the warmth of the islanders and the relaxed island life." ■

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