

Red Sea Packing List.

(last updated 22/10/2009)

Diving.

Wetsuit boots

Wetsuit

Wetsuit hood (I find my head gets cold by the later dives in the week, so I take a hood)

Swimming trunks

(...the above items are used as padding in the bag for the following...)

Fins

Mask

Snorkel

Weight-belt and retainers (but not the weights!)

BCD and a few clips / double-enders / octopus retainer.

Small torch

SMB and spool (smaller and lighter than using a reel)

Knife (small)

Slate (for me this includes my depth gauge and compass)

Regulator(s), you can leave the dry-suit hose at home to save weight.

Computer (and its manual!)

A few spares – mask strap to fit your mask, fin strap to fit your fins, battery to fit your computer... but the boat will have plenty of tools (including gas analysers for nitrox)

Log book and pen

Certification cards (they will want to see these on the boat, particularly your nitrox card.)

Tables

Camera and underwater housing

Memory stick

Download cable for camera

(Often one of the guides will have a laptop on the boat and they may allow you to download your pics from the camera to a memory stick, freeing up space for more pics on your cameras' memory card.)

Towel. (The provision of towels seems to vary from boat to boat, some only supply one (intended for the shower) and some supply two (one for shower one for dive-deck)... If I've got room I'll be taking one.)

Other

Passport

Any tickets, travel info.

Copy of travel insurance documents

Copy of key pages of passport, packed somewhere the passport isn't.

Shorts, a couple of pairs

Tee-shirts, a few

Underwear, as few as I can get away with

One fleece or similar (probably wear it on the journeys but also good if sitting under aircon)

Perhaps a thin waterproof / windproof in hand luggage, but this is really for when you arrive back in Gatwick in the middle of the night and it's sleeting and the bus is late.

Phone battery charger (some places in the Red Sea you can send / receive texts if you want to and if

you have international roaming, I've never tried phoning anyone.)

Camera battery charger

Electric socket adaptor (we've got a multi-adaptor from Boots, from memory the sockets on the boats are some sort of 2-pin at 220v).

Sun glasses

A hat of some sort

Suntan lotion

Dioralyte powders (or similar) in sachets. I aim to drink one of these a day to make up for dehydration and salt loss, although they can also help if you get a dose of the trots... :o)

Imodium, for the same reason!

Tampons if you are female (long way from any chemists, also in dire circumstances I've heard of these being used to combat diarrhea!)

Normal wash-kit; shower gel, comb, toothbrush, toothpaste, etc. (Note, use bottled water for brushing teeth.) Cotton buds.

Ear plugs (for sleeping, cuts out boat engine and air conditioning noises as well as other peoples snoring!)

Sea sickness tablets if you are prone (Red Sea can get pretty lumpy)

Tea bags – if you like 'proper' tea don't expect any on the boat (they'll probably have that American Liptons stuff, instead take a supply of your own favourite).

A good book, because there is precious little else to do between dives.

For what it's worth...

- I'll be wearing clogs or sandals for the journeys to and from, and for around the hotel, but on the boat you don't wear any shoes or socks – the crew on the boat will impound your shoes when you arrive and if you behave and pay all your bills you may get them back at the end of the week (Muslim country).
- Some people put their regs in their hand luggage; I just pad them as best possible with neoprene and put them in the hold. I do take my camera as hand luggage. Up2u... may even be worth putting the heavy first and second stages in hand luggage and the rest in the hold to make best use of weight allowances.
- If prone to ear infections might be worth taking 'swim ear' or similar. Red sea water temperature is high so bugs in it are much more likely to be able to grow at human ear temperature than bugs found in UK water..
- You won't need an alarm clock, you'll be woken at some god awful hour by the guide hammering on the cabin door for the pre-breakfast dive. Most dive briefings and meals are also called by ringing the boats bell.
- Money. From memory the only need for 'cash' on the boat is for tipping the guides and crew at the end of the week. From memory they will accept sterling, US dollars or Egyptian pounds quite happily (normally an envelope comes round at the end of the week). On the boat your bar bill plus any odds and ends (for example if you buy one of the boats t-shirts) is kept as a 'tab' and can be paid by cash or plastic card at the end of the week. You will want some cash in the hotel on the last day for drinks and towel hire and stuff, the hotels seem to be able to deal in any currency you like. In fact you may find that if you pay in one currency your change comes back in a mixture of other currencies!