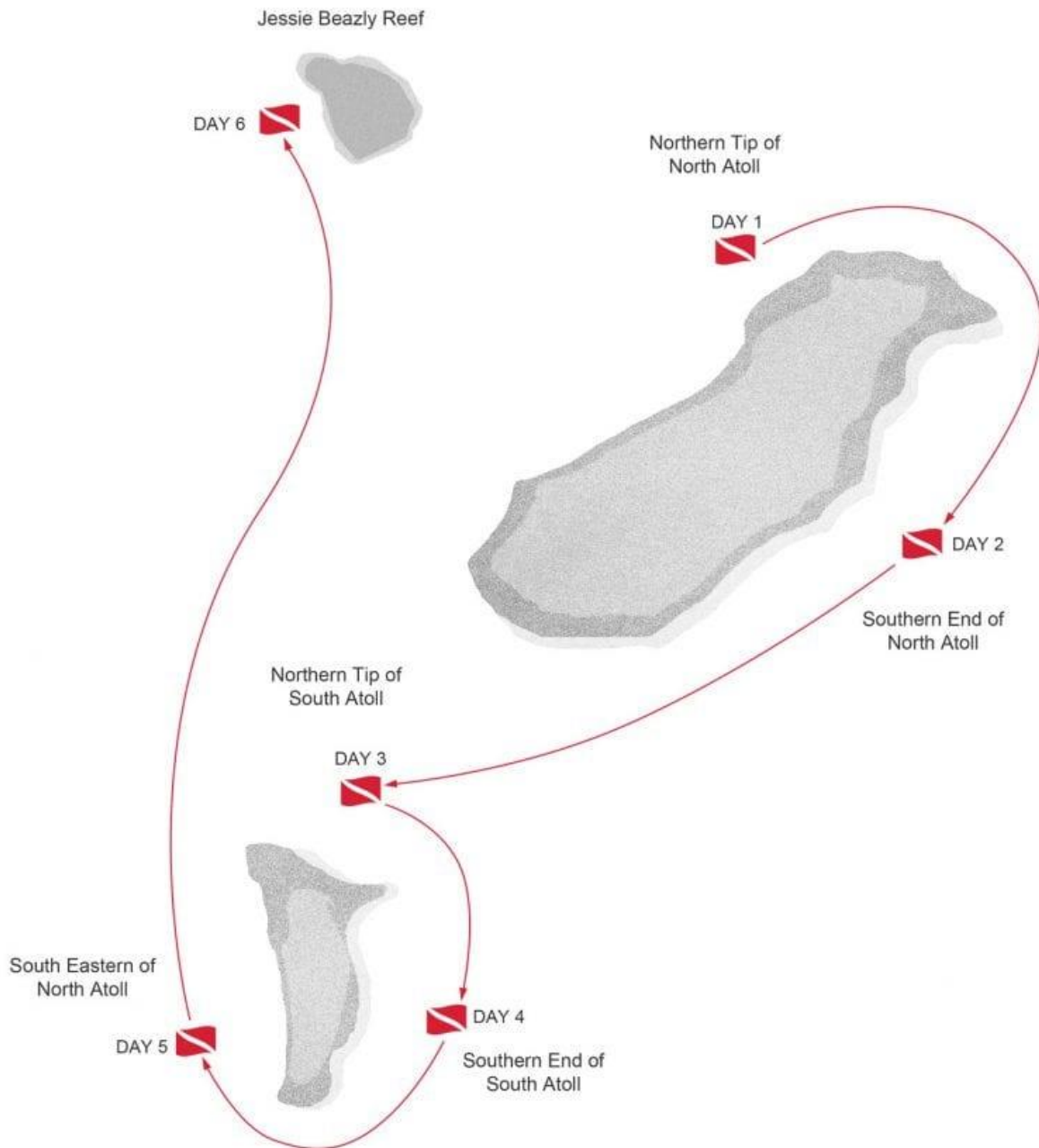


Diving in Tubbataha

Tubbataha is located in the Sulu Sea, at the centre of the Coral Triangle between Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines. Rarely visited due to its location and its status as a marine preserve, Tubbataha is made up of two reefs, simply referred to as the North and South Reefs. The North and South Reefs both enclose a sandy lagoon. On the southern tip is an islet with a lighthouse. This is used as a rookery for birds and is frequented by turtles.

Tubbataha Reefs Natural Park is home to no less than 573 species of fish, 373 species of corals, 11 species of sharks, 12 species of dolphins and whales, nestling hawksbill and green sea turtles.



Day 1: Northern Tip of North Atoll

Fissures and crevices lead into it where nurse and whitetip reef sharks can be found resting during the day. Small manta rays, stingrays and spotted eagle rays, together with numerous turtles have all been spotted. The wall has huge gorgonian fan corals, soft corals and barrel sponges. Blacktip, whitetip and grey reef sharks can normally be seen patrolling here in numbers.

Day 2: Southern End of North Atoll

Malayan, Wallstreet and Amos Rock are the pick of the dive sites. Fans and macro will enjoy these sites with Denise pygmy seahorses clinging to the sea fans. See scorpion fish, moray eels and even ghost pipefish. Don't worry pelagic fans, you can still see huge dogtooth tuna, sharks and Spanish mackerel in the blue.

Day 3: Northern Tip of South Atoll

Highlights include Black Rock, T Wreck and Eiger Wall. You will lose count of the number of green and hawksbill turtles in the area. Look out for marble stingrays in the sand. Eagle rays often cruise by and expect to see large grouper and giant trevally.

Day 4: Southern End of South Atoll

This area is known for its lighthouse and is home to famous dive sites Delsan Wreck and Black Rock. Hammerheads are the most prized sighting here as well as occasional whale sharks passing by. Look out for guitar sharks in the shallows.

Day 5: Southern End of North Atoll

The dive starts on a gentle slope that is covered in superb, unmolested corals and ends with a wall covered with dramatic gorgonian fans where sharp eyed divers can often spot pygmy seahorses. If there's current, you'll come across a wide variety of large fish, including narrow-barred Spanish mackerel, giant trevally, red snapper, napoleon wrasse and giant groupers.

You're almost certain to see whitetip and grey reef sharks. Look out for manta rays, spotted eagle rays and both green and hawksbill turtles closer to the surface. Other fish that can be seen include rainbow runners, African pompano, angel fish, leaf scorpion fish, fire dart fish and down deeper, decorated dart fish

Day 6: Jessie Beazley Reef

The charter finishes with a couple of dives at Jessie Beazley Reef. You can see schools of bumphead parrotfish munching on the corals. Watch out for inquisitive napoleon wrasse. The shallow reefs are full of colourful tropical fish like the regal angelfish and titan triggerfish.