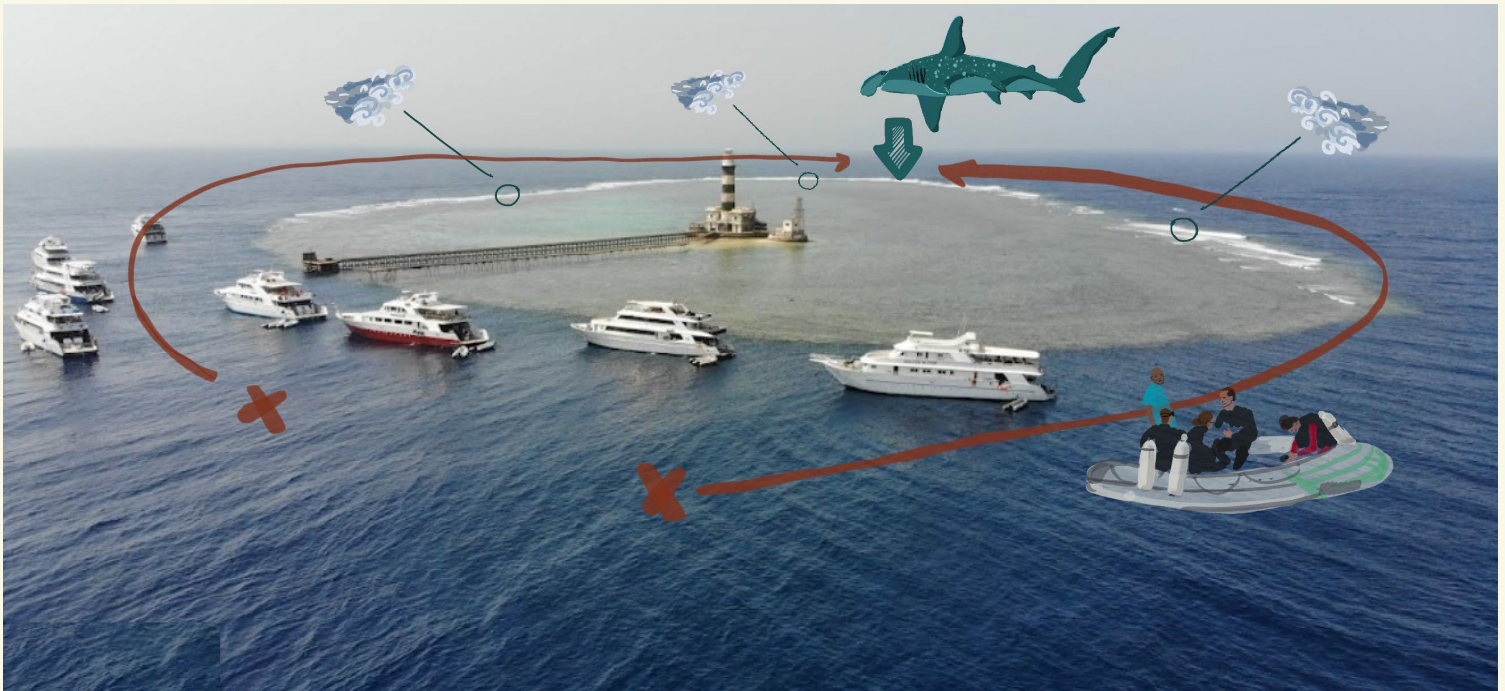


# Pre-booking briefing Daedalus

## Please read and confirm having read it before booking.

Hello dear scuba lovers! If you are reading this, you are booked to dive with us. We are extremely happy to share the Daedalus Reef with you. It is vitally important that you carefully read this document to ensure that you are familiar with the challenges, skills, cautions, organization of the dives and the dive planning associated with this unique and wonderful dive location. Diving Daedalus is challenging, but the rewards are immense. Get ready for the adventure!

Welcome to the Daedalus reef! And let's see what is waiting for us here:



The primary goal of SCUBA diving in Daedalus Reef is to find scalloped hammerhead sharks. There is limited room for mooring boats on the southern side of the reef, above the southern plateau. The reef protects the boats from the prevailing wind and inherent waves. The schools of hammerhead sharks are only on the northern side of the reef, so this is where we go to dive with those amazing animals. The trip to the north side of the reef is by Zodiac, a ride of approximately 750 meters (½ mile), a 10–15-minute ride. When the wind is blowing or the currents are strong, the ride can be exciting. Hold on and enjoy the trip. It takes skill and patience to find the hammerheads. We have yet to figure out how to entice the animals to meet us directly under the Zodiacs. Your dive guide will enter the water first to evaluate the current and visibility combined with his/her previous experience to determine the specific dive point where the group should enter the water. This procedure may take 5 minutes or more. Be patient while waiting for the countdown for all to make the back roll water entry.

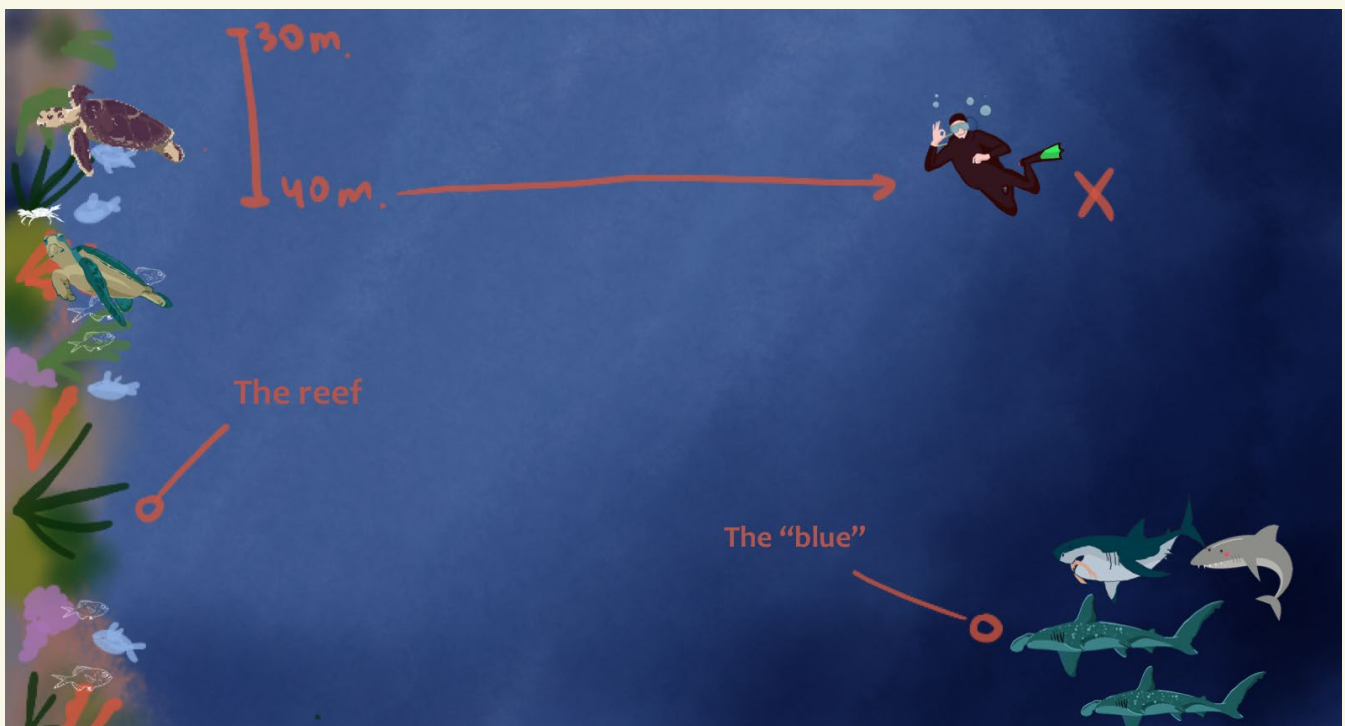
It is imperative that all divers enter the water at the same time. Do not hesitate even for a second when the command to dive is given, because waves, current and wind make hesitation dangerous for the divers and the Zodiac.

Look at the above photograph. The entire eastern, northern and western parts of the reef are covered by whitecaps or "white lambs". The common high waves are the main reason why divers must immediately descend to 5 meters link up with their buddies and signal the guide with an OK sign. Once all have given the OK sign, the group will descend to the pre-briefed depth, while following the guide as he leads the group away from the reef into the "blue".

# Pre-booking briefing Daedalus

When one member of a buddy team cannot descend, both he and his buddy should inflate their BCDs on the surface and abort the dive together. If the Zodiac driver does not see them, a surface marker buoy (SMB) should be inflated. They should swim away from the reef so the Zodiac driver can safely help them back into the boat.

Hammerhead sharks are not reef inhabitants. They are not as directly dependent on the reef ecosystem as are the Napoleon wrasse and stonefish. Hammerhead sharks are typically found at depths between 20 and 30 meters, well within safe recreational diving limits. When searching for sharks at deeper depths, safety demands that the search time must be limited. Consequently, whether sharks have or have not been found, expect the guide to lead the group back to the reef wall and shallower water to finish the dive. A safety stop must always be done with an SMB on the surface. The Zodiac then picks up the group and takes the divers back to the liveboard.



There is a maximum of 14 divers in a group and no more than 7 divers per Zodiac. If there are more than 14 divers on the boat, the divers will be organized into two groups, each with its own guide. As one group prepares for the dive, the second group will stay off the dive deck. As the first group boards the Zodiac(s), the second group can begin to prepare for the dive.

After the Zodiac(s) have dropped the first group at the dive location, both will return to the liveboard. Their return will be 20 to 30 minutes after leaving the liveboard. They will then board the second group into the Zodiac(s) for travel to the dive location. After dropping the second group, the Zodiac(s) will retrieve the first group, returning them to the liveboard and then return to retrieve the second group.

Following this plan, we normally manage to do four dives per day on Daedalus Reef in the summer, and three in the autumn and winter.

# Pre-booking briefing Daedalus, Red Sea

It is important that the dive guide find the right "entry point" to "the blue" and professionally predict the water entry location with the greatest probability to find hammerheads. Diving on north side of Daedalus Reef provides little, if any, opportunity for macro photography and searching for other small reef inhabitants on the reef wall. The safest and most productive dive experience is to stay together as a large group. When a school of hammerheads arrives, absolutely everyone will see them!

It is necessary to book a private guide for inexperienced divers or those who are not psychologically ready. A private guide can be booked for €350 per week. That private guide can accommodate one or more divers. The most important skill to have mastered for these dives is buoyancy control.

Is it possible to dive using the buddy system on Daedalus?

As follows from the explanation above, in order to search for hammerhead sharks, the only way is to be dropped off by Zodiac on the northern part of the reef and "dive to the blue" searching for the school of hammerheads, returning to the reef afterwards. Unguided diving is prohibited for safety reasons: There are only two Zodiacs. They will carry each group as a whole and return each group as a whole. If a group is caught in a current that carried it away from the reef, a group that had stayed together will be found as a group. Individuals or buddy pairs that have separated from the group risk not being found. The Zodiacs simply cannot support individual buddy teams, as the conditions are such that the risk of losing one or both members of a buddy team are too great. Besides, a special skill set is needed to determine where to enter the water in the search for hammerheads. Even if the liveboard operator wanted to allow individual buddy teams, it is illegal to explore "the blue" without a guide and as part of a group.

If experienced divers want to dive unguided on Daedalus Reef, there are only two ways they can do it:

1. On the southern plateau from the boat and back to boat.
2. Drift along the north wall without going "into the blue". They still travel together with their assigned group to the north, but they remain near the reef wall riding the prevailing. Visibility permitting, they should parallel the remainder of the group that has entered "the blue". They must still follow the briefed time frame such that the Zodiac can pick them up together with the group which remained with the dive guide. It is possible, but less likely to see single or groups of hammerheads sharks while remaining near the wall.

Thank you for reading this briefing to the end! The north side of Daedalus Reef is a real challenge but can be enjoyed with perfect safety. All our dive guides are very experienced. Your safety is our top priority. By following our system and our advice, your chance of seeing scalloped hammerheads is huge! Don't hesitate to contact us for any additional questions.

**See you aboard!**