

# Full Trip Report — CocoView Resort

## Roatan, Bay Islands, Honduras

### July 2008



This was our first visit to Roatan and we were a bit apprehensive after reading and hearing about the effects of over development on the island. After spending a week at Cocoview Resort, our concerns were put to rest, at least for this small part of the island. The coral in Roatan was not in as good of condition or as large as what we saw in Guanaja. The size and diversity of fish we saw in Roatan was more than what we saw in Guanaja. The week we were there, we were treated with an unexpected bonus; the annual fish count sponsored by ReefNet Inc. and Cocoview Resort was taking place. We took some time to do two activities off the resort and enjoyed both very much. All considered, we would go back to and recommend Cocoview Resort in Roatan.



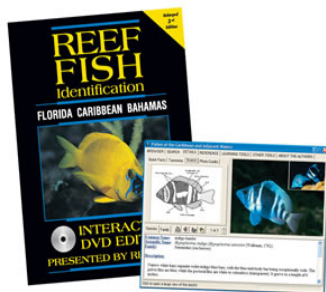
**CocoView's dining room doubles as access port to the outside world with the free wireless web accesses.**

We flew Sosa airlines from Guanaja to Le Ceiba and then on to Roatan, arriving on July 26, 2008. When we met the driver for CoCo View Resort, we were introduced to the greeting hostess, who was not expecting us and brushed us off as unimportant. However, the driver took us under his wing, and helped us load into the van with the other guests. We unloaded next to a pier where the *Red Lady*, a small red boat, picked us up and took us to the resort. We were given a brief introduction in the business office, which raised many questions. We were then assigned a cabin and waited for our luggage to show up shortly thereafter. The questions we had waited until the orientation session the following morning. Teresa, our friend from Texas, flew in that evening to join us for the week.

The morning's orientation was thorough and well attended by all new visitors, as well as a surprising number of people who had been to the resort many times. The dive operations were efficient but confusing in the beginning because of so many resort procedures. For example: masking tape on the locker shows you want nitrox, a wooden paddle hung on a nail means you plan to participate in the boat dives, and a flashing beacon light missing from the dive board means someone is in the water for a night dive. Once we figured these things out, it was great! Because of the masking tape, there were always fresh nitrox tanks in our locker ready for us to analyze and use. Because of the wooden paddle, our dive gear was automatically loaded on to the boat with two tanks for both the morning and the afternoon trips. We were able to dive sites such as Iron Shore, The Wreck of the Prince Albert, Newman's Wall, CoCo View Wall, Castle Canyon, The Wreck of Mr. Bud, John's Spot, Big French Cay Cut, Missing Link, Valley of the Kings, and Forty Foot Point. We did not even have to leave the resort to find numerous species of fish in the "frontyard". We found nudibranchs, corallimorphs, a huge variety of blenny, sea horses, octopus, balloon fish and large groupers. The one disappointment was that the boats didn't venture far from the resort and the second dive of each boat trip was always a drop off within swimming distance of the resort.



**CocoView's compressor room keeps full tanks available for all divers.**



**Their fish identification software is innovative and comprehensive. Check it out at <http://reefnet.ca>**

Scott and Patti Chandler from ReefNet Inc, were at CoCo View for the annual fish count in July. A couple of evenings they held informational sessions to educate and answer questions on proper fish identification. Each day they would put 3 "wanted" fish posters to encourage people to look for fish they may not otherwise see. Scott and Patti were always available and willing to answer questions and to help identify fish we had seen. Their passion for the subject is so high they continue to correspond via email to those interested in more knowledge. We thoroughly enjoyed spending time with them and continue to appreciate how much we learned about fish behavior and identification.

We did take time for two activities off the resort. The first was Pirates of the Caribbean Extreme Canopy Tour which consisted of 8 high strength cables strung across a valley and through the trees, the highest being about 300 feet above the valley floor. The toughest part of “zip-lining” was the first jump! Once you are attached to the cable with a pulley and harness, you have to step off a platform and launch yourself into the air, letting gravity do the rest of the work. The second was a Shark Dive with Waihuka Adventure Diving. Before the dive, we all assumed we would be kept a ‘safe distance’ from the sharks, but during the dive briefing, it became clear to us that ‘safe



**Close encounters with at least 16 Caribbean reef sharks during the shark adventure dive.**

distance’ is a relative term when the dive lead told us the hand signal he would give when he felt it safe to swim *with* the sharks. After the briefing, sixteen divers loaded into a small boat for the nervous ride out to the wall. When we dropped into the water, there was not much current and visibility was about 100 ft. You could easily see 4 or 5 sharks circling the anchor point 75 ft below. Once we all gathered on the bottom near a long-dead coral outcropping, the dive lead threw the bait bucket out into the water a couple times, calling another 10–12 sharks with the delicious smell of fish bits. The dive lead then gave us the signal that we could leave the outcrop and swim with the sharks. Sixteen divers, sixteen sharks: as far as I am concerned, the sharks could have had us for a snack, but what an incredible experience! Check out the pictures and video from the shark dive and let us know what you think.

All in all, the week at Cocoview Resort was well spent and represented a good overall value. We will be going back some time and recommend any diver to try it at least once.

