

WRECKS OF AQABA



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aqaba
RED SEA WADI RUM · PETRA

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Introduction

At the top of many scuba divers' bucket list — and rightfully so — the Red Sea has an abundance of what true underwater enthusiasts desire: warm water, a temperate climate, thriving reefs, amazing wrecks, caves, walls, drop-offs, and encounters with pelagics like dolphins, sharks, whales, and whale sharks. The city of Aqaba, located on the northern edge of the Red Sea, a well-known scuba diving destination, grants easy access to some of the most exciting and dazzling with marine life dive sites along 27 km of coastline on the Gulf of Aqaba.

With a mild climate and the water temperatures between 26 degrees Celsius in the summer, and 20 degrees in the winter, Aqaba makes an ideal location for year-round scuba diving for all levels of experience.

The Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority (ASEZA) established Aqaba Protected Area as part of the master plan of the coastal resources embodying the coral reserve along the coast.

The area was created to preserve and regulate the natural near-shore marine environment of the south coast with its rich biodiversity while allowing particular tourist uses.

Most of over 21 dive sites along the Jordanian coastline are in the protected area of Aqaba Marine Park and easily accessible by boat or from the shore. Each dive site varies in shape and inhabitants. Slopes, drop-offs, canyons and flat bottoms, all veiled with flourishing corals and a plethora of marine life. Nutrient-rich upwellings wash over the reefs, nourishing soft coral gardens, stunning hard coral islands and pinnacles which can be found in less than 25m of water. The Gulf of Aqaba is home to more than 300 species of hard and soft corals, over 510 species of fish, and 1000's of molluscs and other invertebrates, some of them amongst an exciting collection of wrecks and underwater structures.

At the same time, it supports efforts to conduct research and monitoring programs on the physical, chemical, and biological properties of the northern Gulf of Aqaba and the coral reefs. The Royal Marine Conservation Society of Jordan (JREDS) an NGO that carries out regular beach and underwater cleanup programs, organises community awareness and public education and community programs in Aqaba and Jordan. Over the years JREDS has developed an active partnership role with ASEZA, in order to conserve the ecological integrity of ecosystems, habitats and species in Aqaba through marine surveys and various marine environmental studies and solutions. JREDS has actively supported in coral reef monitoring, turtle surveys, water conservation and other environmental campaigns in Aqaba, with ASEZA and Aqaba Marine Park and other stakeholders.

Currently, Aqaba plays a significant role in strengthening the regional capability for information exchange and resource management for the entire Red Sea.

Over the years, ASEZA in cooperation with Aqaba's private sector and environmental organisations has put loads of effort to protect and support the recovery of natural reefs by drawing visitors away to alternative sites created by scuttling various objects to become the foundation of an artificial reef.

These include a CI-30 Hercules military plane submerged back in 2017 and recently sunk passenger aircraft - Lockheed Tristar. The latest addition to the catalogue of wrecks available for divers in Aqaba is first in the world, underwater military museum. This unusual dive site comprises of 21, carefully positioned on the seabed military relics and imitates a tactical formation. The collection consists of tanks, a military ambulance, an army crane, a troop carrier, an anti-aircraft gun and combat helicopters. All involved in the project gave great attention to the environmental effects of the scuttling and taken all measures to ensure the protection and safety of the marine environment. Before the scuttling, all hazardous materials were removed to comply with the environmental best practices. The depth of the objects varies from 7 to 28 meters. It gives scuba divers and snorkelers a unique chance to explore military machines and to observe coral reef and marine life growth and recovery.

Let us take you on a photographic and informative journey through the wrecks of Aqaba and dive into a fantastic, underwater world of the Jordanian Red Sea.

Cedar Pride

Location: 29°25.852'N, 34°58.375'E
Accessibility: Boat or shore (180m from the beach)
Length: 74.4m
Width: 10.4m
Draft: 4.9m
Depth: 10 – 27 meters
Visibility: 20-40m
Currents: Low
Level: Beginner to Advanced
Attractions: Cargo Holds, Air Pocket, Superstructure, Crow's Nest, Engine Room, Propeller



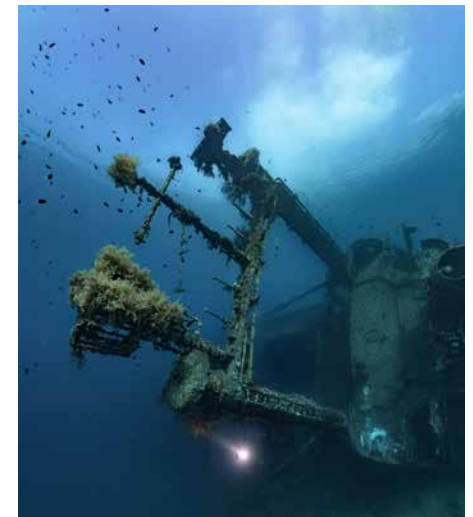
For a good reason Cedar Pride was described as one of the most photogenic wrecks of the Red Sea and holds its place on the lists of the best wreck dive sites of the world.

The Cedar Pride wreck is one of Jordan's most popular and celebrated dives. The 75 meters long, former Lebanese freighter sustained extensive damage during a fire in 1982. Back in 1985, following a request from King Abdullah, the ill-fated vessel was purposely sunk approximately 180m offshore as an artificial reef for divers. The wreck is lying on its port side, at a maximum depth of 27m and is home to numerous species of hard and soft corals. Marked by a surface buoy, the Cedar Pride, with the bow facing north, is easily accessible from a boat or the shore. The uppermost starboard side is at about 10m and makes an excellent wreck site for a scuba diving beginner.

The wreck is mostly intact with the most exciting diving on the seaward side, where you can see the entire deck and superstructure. The most outstanding feature is, perhaps, the crow's nest, which is covered by an abundance of colourful soft corals and stands out against the clear blue water. As you continue further towards the hull, you pass ventilation shafts and the mainmast. Here in the deeper water, the soft corals are more dispersed and replaced by hard corals with schools of fish, including the odd barracuda visiting the wreck.

As you swim back along the uppermost starboard side, you can find plenty of hard corals and small species that have made their home on the hull. The wreck is covered with a rich assortment of soft corals and large, waving sea fans along the entire length of the ship. Cedar Pride makes an excellent night dive with her deck smothered with lots of critters, including shrimps, urchins, Spanish dancers

and soft coral crabs as well as octopuses and morays on the hunt. Her interior is very stable and can be explored with swim-throughs and an air pocket amongst many of its features. Experienced wreck divers and photographers, will find many penetration opportunities and impressive lighting coming through the openings of the ship. Not for nothing, Cedar Pride described as one of the most photogenic wrecks of the Red Sea holds its place on the lists of the best wreck dive sites of the world.



Tarmac Five

Location: 29° 25.512'N 34° 58.246'E

20m to the South West of the Cedar

Pride

Length: 9

Width: 9

Height: 2.5

Accessibility: Boat or shore

Depth: 27m

Visibility: 20-40m

Currents: Low

Level: Advanced

Attractions: Marine life



The barge was scuttled in 1996 after Alcatel had finished laying the electrical cables to Egypt. She lies not far from the wreck of Cedar Pride, and when she went down, landed over the corner of an old sunken fishing boat that has been there since the '70s.

For those with good air consumption, it is possible to see both wrecks on the same dive but should visit "Tarmac 5" first as this is the deepest of the two. Although the wreck itself is not much to look at, it is a host to a great variety of marine life, including blue-spotted stingrays and frogfish.

Inside is full of banded coral shrimps. Large tuna fish and other pelagic species are frequent visitors of the wreck. Technical divers visiting Kleta's Wall reef, often stage their tanks on the barge, before finishing their decompression on the Cedar Pride.



The Tank (M42 Duster)

Location: 29°25.163'N 34°58.327'E

Length: 5.8m

Width: 3.2m

Height: 2.8m

Accessibility: Boat or shore (80m from the beach)

Depth: 6-8m

Visibility: 20 - 40m

Currents: Low

Level: Beginner

Attractions: Turret, Driver Seats, Engine Room, Detached Door, Tracks



Scuttled in the late '90s, M42 "Duster" a 40 mm Self-Propelled Anti-Aircraft Gun, nicknamed "The Tank" has become a hotspot for marine life and corals as well as a popular "must-do" photo stop at the start or end of many dive routes in the area.

Known as 'The Tank', M42 40 mm Self-Propelled Anti-Aircraft Gun, or "Duster," is an American armoured light air-defence gun. Initially, it served the Royal Jordanian Army before being scuttled as an artificial reef in September 1999 by the Royal Marine Conservation Society of Jordan (JREDS). It has since accumulated a lot of marine life including exotic invertebrate species in the shallows surrounding the wreck. Over the years, soft corals and sponges took hold of the tank, and swirling schools of colourful reef fish now call it home. After moving in for a closer look, we can see what has attracted marine life.

The wreck has plenty of little nooks and crannies housing dozens of species of invertebrates including shrimps, crabs, starfish and more. Lionfish frequent the tank to pray around the hull while damsels fend them off with bravado. Divers keen on macro can spot colourful blennies watching the show from their homes in the coral and cracks of the tracked war machine. "The Tank" located between several diving sites, is the usual place for safety stops and the perfect spot to make a fish-packed, photo-of-a-lifetime safety stop. Furthermore, it is the easiest and the most convenient dive site in Aqaba for snorkelling and free diving.

It's not every day you get to see an old American anti-aircraft gun sunken on a sandy seabed! Although only a mere five meters below sea level, "The Tank" appeals to divers and snorkelers due to its rarity. The nearby Seven Sisters and Fairy Ring reefs with their pinnacles are one of the best examples of rare, rich in marine life dive sites with exciting topography, in a relatively small area. Close to the shore in shallow, bright water, divers can enjoy the sight of blennies, damsels, butterflies, schools of fusiliers and even a barracuda. Fish life here is plentiful as the pinnacles make a great nursery, and the corals and sponges are crawling with life.

Divers will find this dive perfectly relaxing, whether in training or taking a colourful break from more challenging dive sites. The M42 "Duster", nicknamed "The Tank", is just a few fin kicks away and the perfect spot to make a fish-packed, photo-of-a-lifetime safety stop. Also, for those returning from a nearby wreck of Hercules C1-30 or a technical dive at the deep wreck of Al Shorouk, it provides safe and comfortable conditions for the safety stop.

The Tank and Seven Sisters dive site is accessible by boat as well as from the shore. The site is particularly recommended for beginners who are ready to take that first step and kickstart their underwater adventure.

Hercules C1-30

Location: 29°25.110' N 34°58.298' E
Length: 30m
Wingspan: 40m
Height: 11m
Accessibility: Boat or shore (150m from the beach)
Depth: 17m
Visibility: 20 - 40m
Currents: Low
Level: Beginner



With its impressive size and easily penetrable interior, the former Royal Jordanian Air Force Lockheed C1-30 Hercules is one of the top dive sites around Aqaba and provides a breathtaking experience for divers of all levels of experience.

The Aqaba Marine Park's popular attraction has "landed" on the seabed on the 16th of November 2017 and has already become the divers' favourite. The Lockheed C1-30 Hercules is a four-engine turboprop aircraft and serves as the primary tactical transport aircraft for many military forces in more than 70 nations worldwide since the '50s.

Aqaba's Hercules was donated by the Royal Jordanian Air Force and all hazardous materials such as fuel, oil and paint were removed before the scuttling. The plane structure has become an artificial reef and consistently attracts marine life as a new habitat for Aqaba's diversity of species and perfectly fits into the coral reef environment.



Al Shorouk

Location: 29°24.924'N 34°58.372'E

Accessibility: Boat or shore (240 m from the beach)

Length: 61 m

Width: 10 m

Depth: 38 m to 60 m+

Visibility: 20-40 m

Currents: Low

Level: Technical Diver

Attractions: Loading Ramp, Vehicle Deck, Bridge, Funnel, Engine Room, Stern

Al Shorouk is an excellent technical dive for the experienced and students alike. Divers can explore the wreck on trimix or even air.

Al Shorouk, a large, well-preserved wreck lies on her starboard across two reefs to the west of Kirk's Forest Reef - named after Kirk Green, a pioneer of diving in Aqaba back in the '80s. It is a deep and technical wreck as her bow is at 38m and her stern at about 60m. At these depths, the coral growth is slower than in the sun-soaked waters above - remarkably free from encrustation and corrosion; she almost looks like could have sunk yesterday.

The Aqaba Marine Park scuttled the ship on the 18th of June 2008 and although intended for shallower water, it drifted away and could have easily ended up in over 100 meters of water. Fortunately for the divers, the wreck was pulled back from the depths allowing advanced and technical diving just before she slipped beneath the waves. Al-Shurouk hence created a new and exciting site for divers visiting Aqaba, by making an addition to the other technical diving wreck, the Taiyong. A mooring buoy is attached to the shallowest part of the wreck at 38 meters on the bow. Descend is easy and Al Shorouk, once a vehicle ferry, will slowly fade into the view below. Leave the line and head around the top side of the wreck. Begin the dive by swimming around her top-deck along the vehicle deck and up to the bridge area. At this point, you can swim under the wreck between the two reefs which is recommended only for trimix divers.

The vehicle deck is open and makes a great swim though, the bridge area and engine room are worth a visit as both are available for penetration for those certified for scuba diving in an overhead environment. Then start to turn and swim around her hull to explore more of the wreck. At the end of your bottom time return to the bow ready to begin your ascent and decompression stops up the mooring line. Al Shorouk is an excellent technical dive for the experienced and students alike. Divers can explore the wreck on trimix or even air if they carefully observe their bottom time. The permanent buoy attached to the ramp makes it easy to access the shipwreck from a dive boat. It is also possible after a tour on the wreck to swim to the north and stop at the famous M42 Duster "The Tank".

Al Shourouk is intact, very scenic and slowly attracting more marine life. The wreck has plenty of soft corals, small sea fans and bushes of black coral, especially along her starboard side and around the bridge.

The visibility is excellent, and the whole wreck is visible while staying above 50 meters - a unique opportunity for underwater photographers to take great wide-angle shots.

Taiyong

Location: 29°25.749'N 34°58.218'E
Accessibility: Boat or shore (360m from the beach)
Length: 36m
Width: 15m
Height: 30m
Depth: 35 - 58m
Visibility: 20-40m
Currents: Low
Level: Technical
Attractions: Crane, Tire Fenders, Cargo Hold, Crane Machinery



A classic Red Sea wreck, encrusted with more than 30 years of multi-coloured coral growth from bow to stern is in pristine condition, beautiful to look at and exciting to dive on.

The wreck was re-discovered by the Dive Aqaba Technical Diving Team in 2004, lying on her starboard side not too far from the dive site known as the Japanese Gardens. At its shallowest point, it reaches 35 meters and dropping to about 58 meters at its deepest, making it a great technical dive. The vessel was purchased by the Aqaba Port Authority in 1974 and used for offloading ships coming into Aqaba. An accident led to the jib of the loading crane dropping and causing damage to the ship's hold. Although this was repaired with a concrete plug, subsequent leaking was deemed uneconomical to service, and the authorities decided to scuttle the ship in the late 90s.

Begin the dive by descending the mooring line, and the wreck will appear in its whole glory underneath. Leave the line and head around the top side of the wreck, booming with marine life shipwreck. Divers can admire a profusion of colourful soft corals growing on her while shoals of fusiliers patrol this pristine Red Sea wreck. The bow is home to shoals of glassfish hunted by several large lionfish lurking on the wreck. From there, move towards the stern and the massive, covered-in-soft-corals crane.

Considered as the best feature of the wreck, a huge, A-frame crane, stretches out over the reef with its tip at 58 meters. The structure, thriving with coral growth, makes a fantastic subject of underwater photography. Following the crane back to the stern, it is possible to enter the wheelhouse with some interesting swim troughs where divers can explore the crane machinery and gears. The cargo holds are also open and make for a great swim through. Towards the end of your bottom time return to the bridge area ready to begin your ascent up the mooring line returning to the boat or leave the wreck heading to the Japanese Gardens. Deco stops at the shallow end of this reef make for a relaxing end to a great dive. One of the most beautiful reef systems of Aqaba attracts hawksbill sea turtles, shoaling barracudas, shoals of sergeant majors and fusiliers amongst fantastic coral formations.



Lockheed L-1011 TriStar

Location: 29°28.328'N 34°58.458'E

Accessibility: Boat

Length: 54m

Wingspan: 47m

Exterior Height: 16.8m

Depth: 15 - 28 meters

Visibility: 20-30m

Currents: Low

Level: Beginner

Attractions: Cockpit, Cabins, Galleys,
Cargo Hold, Central Engine Vent.



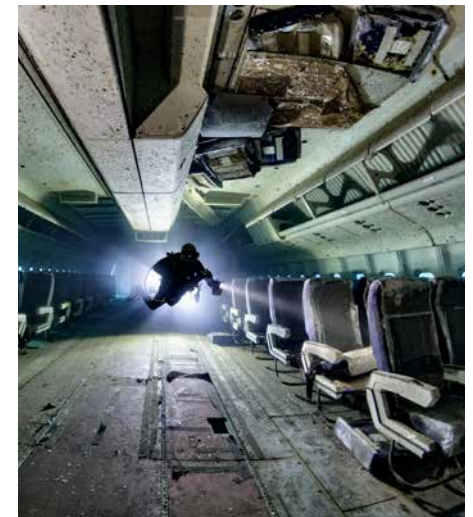
The “TriStar” wreck is a non-Jordanian commercial aeroplane that has been out of service and parked at King Hussein International Airport for several years. In April 2019, photos of the former Luzair CS-TMP emerged with the aircraft laying with its wings clipped, near the waters of the Gulf of Aqaba. The iconic, medium-to-long-range, wide-body trijet airliner was scuttled on the 26th of August 2019 with its wings and horizontal stabilisers re-attached.

It is located just a few meters from the shoreline, next to the Power Station Reef dive site, adjacent to Aqaba Container Terminal.

The wreck sits on a sandy slope where the substrate composition of the seabed has low complexity, and no growth of fringing coral reefs is present. Diving the TriStar is very enjoyable, with the cockpit at 15 meters which makes it accessible to open water divers, while its tail drops to the depth of 30 meters. Inside the plane divers can find complete interior including the seats and see all of the instruments inside the cockpit. Divers can also drop down into the cargo hold, and swim through the vent of the main central engine.

The intertidal zone is mainly sandy with the upper part consisting of shell fragments and medium/large rocks. The lower intertidal is an extensive sandy seabed with patches of gravel and flat boulders. The sub-tidal zone is dominated by a sandy substrate that is either bare or covered by a mixture of *Halophila stipulacea* and *Halodule uninervis* seagrass species.

The seabed on the southern side of the plane is composed mainly of a sandy substrate with small and medium scattered reef patches, while the seabed on the northern side is covered either by sand with some coral patches or by wide areas of seagrass meadows down to 30 meters. The purpose of the wreck, which already has become a new attraction for divers visiting Aqaba, is to create a unique, artificial coral reef, and a healthy habitat for fish and other marine organisms.



Underwater Military Museum

Location: 29°26'43.01"N 34°58'6.42"E

Accessibility: Boat or shore (50 M from the beach)

Site Length: 140m

Site Width: 75m

Number of Objects: 21

Depth: 7-30 meters

Visibility: 20-40m

Currents: Low to Medium

Level: Beginner to deep (please be aware that there are two obojects (helicopter and a canon) that are kept on a depth more than 28m (on the southern side) which makes the site suitable for beginners and deep dives



If you're a history buff and a diver, then this new dive site in Aqaba might be the place for you!

Military museums are not uncommon, but Aqaba has built what might be the most unusual of them all: an underwater military museum. The war machines were sunk in a depth range of 15 to 28 meters, stationed along the coral reefs imitating a tactical battle formation, creating an exciting underwater adventure, intriguing divers and snorkelers to discover more and more of the dive site and have a unique experience. The dive site is located just off the coast of Aqaba, South Beach in the Red Sea in an area popular with divers. The museum objects are decommissioned vehicles donated by the Royal Jordanian Army. The museum is currently made up of 21 military relics and expected to grow as more equipment becomes available.

The military hardware includes a U.K.-built Chieftain main battle tank (known as Khalid Shir in Jordan) with 120-millimetre tank gun, and an unarmed FV104 Samaritan tracked military ambulance.

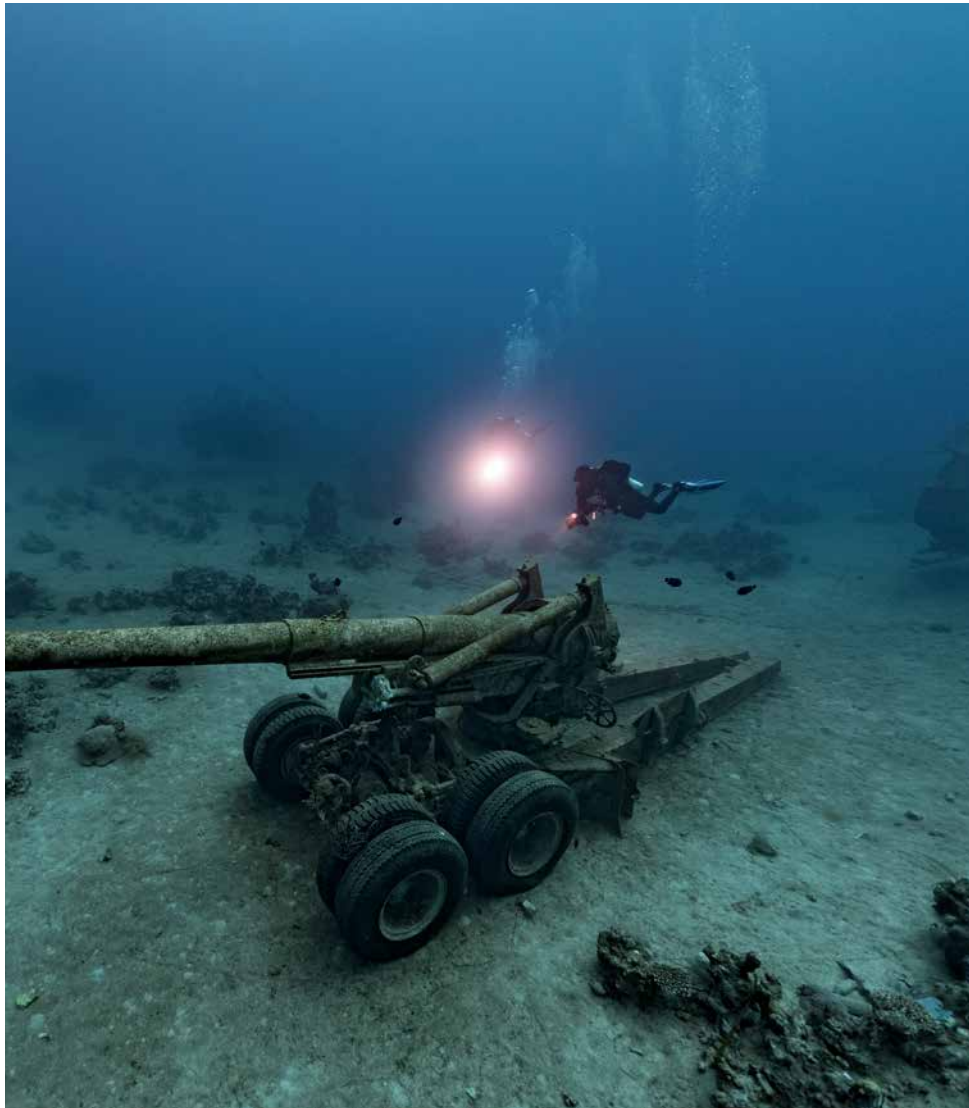
U.S.-made M42 Duster anti-aircraft gun with twin 40-millimetre Bofors guns, FV701 Ferret armoured car, and a South African Ratel (Honey Badger) 6x6 wheeled infantry fighting vehicle are also a great addition to the "battlefield".

The most important piece of the collection: a Royal Jordanian Air Force AH-1F Cobra attack helicopter was built by Bell Helicopter in the U.S.

The site has an easy shore entry with the gently sloping sandy area. After crossing this narrow sandy stripe and heading from the only live Porites coral pinnacle present at 5 meters, you will reach a dense seagrass bed, where a mixture of Halophila stipulacea and Halodule uninervis species can be found.

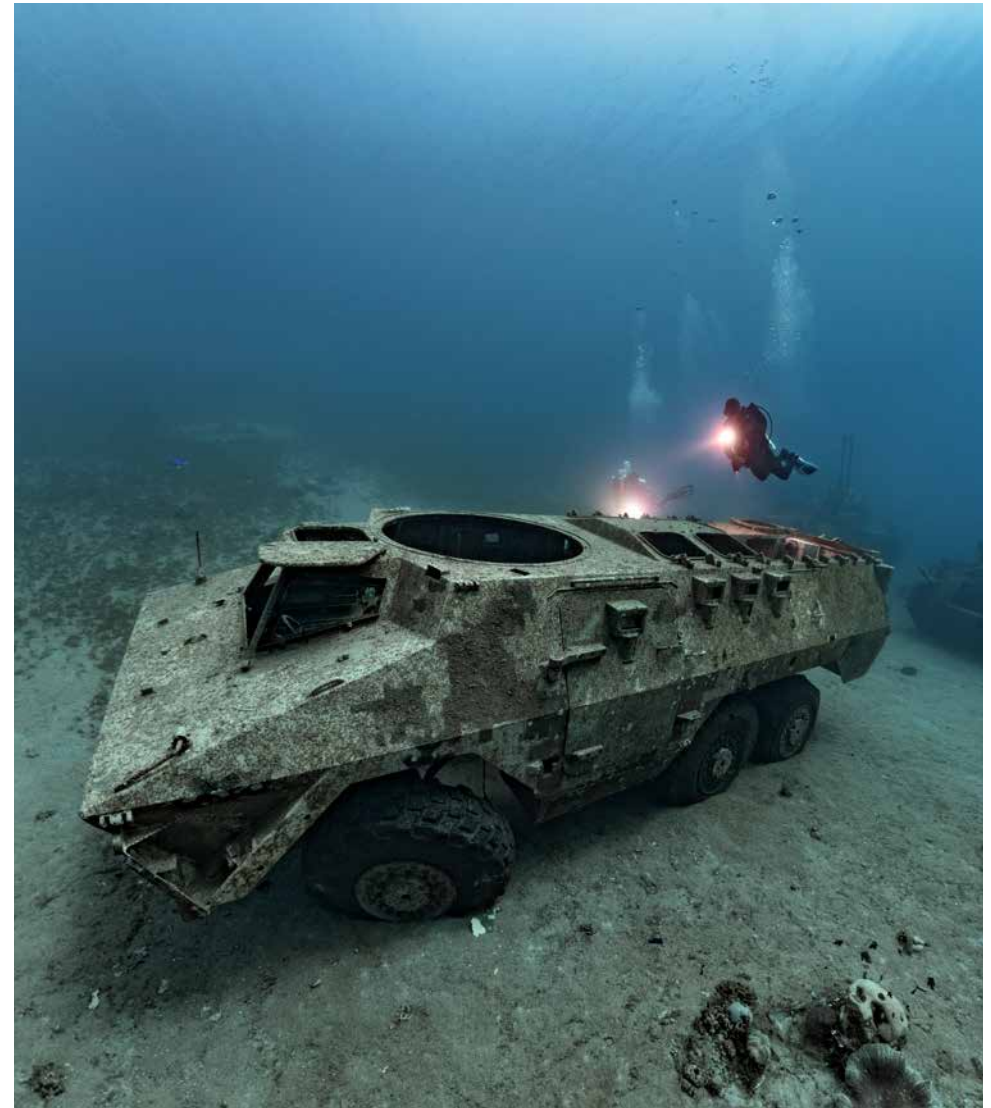
The site is home to a large population of Garden Eels, living in a vast expanse of seagrass slope stretching from just 6 to 16 meters depth. The flat and sandy area gradually slopes to 24 meters where the bare reef starts, together with the military vehicles carefully placed here to avoid any damage to the scattered small coral patches across this particular zone. A well-developed coral garden starts further down, at about 30 meters which makes an unforgettable dive for more advanced divers.

All hazardous materials have been removed from the vehicles, which will slowly turn into reefs to benefit the environment. The new attraction already brings more species to the site and scuba divers seeking new thrills to Aqaba. It is hoped the museum will also help alleviate the burden of increased tourism on local, healthy coral reefs.



1. Field Gun M1 155mm

Field gun M1 155mm, American-made in 1939, it was used in the Second World War. Weight 13.8 tons, shell weight 45kg, shooting range 23km, the crew of 14 soldiers. This gun was put to use in the Jordan Armed Forces in 1962 and it participated in 1967 War, Al Krama battle in 1968, and also, in the Attrition War 1968-1970.



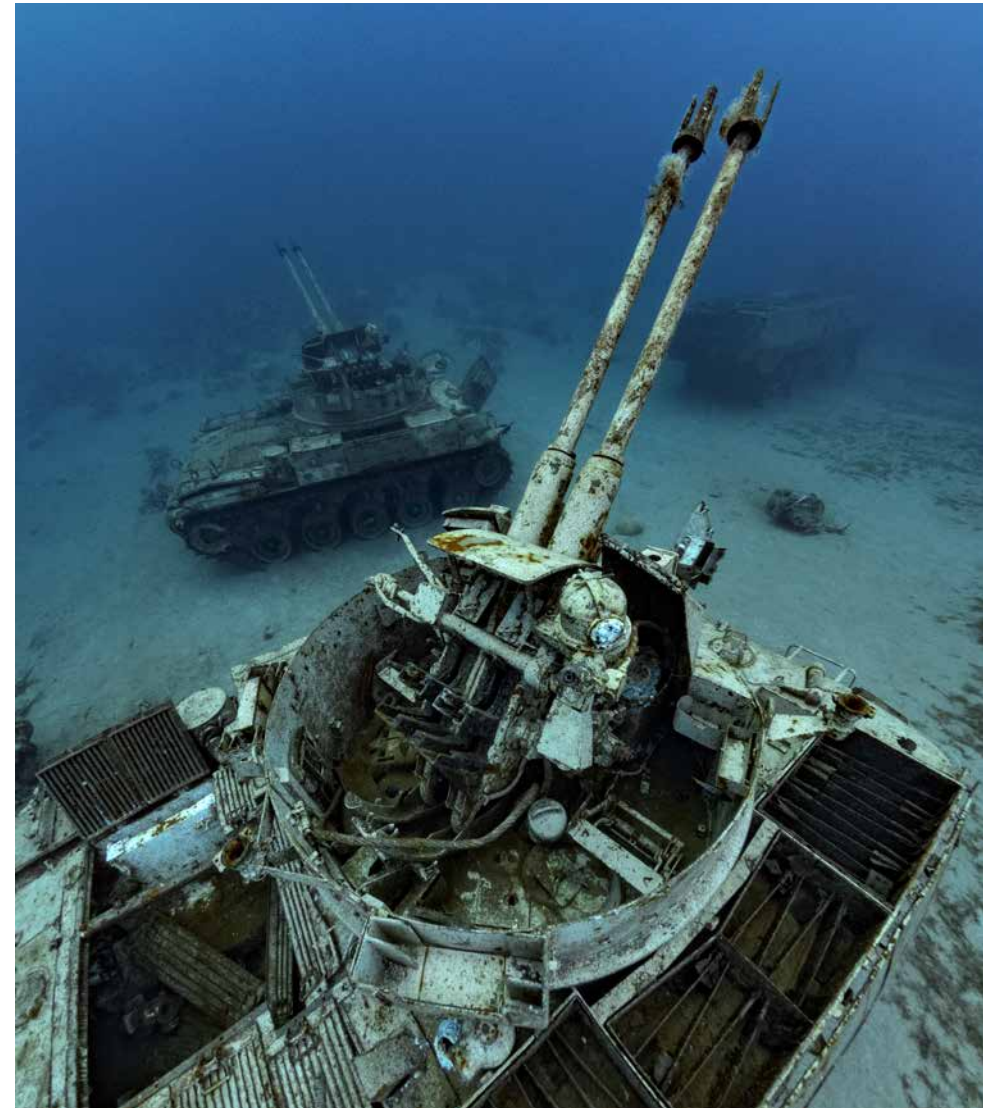
2. RATEL Armoured Infantry Carrier

The Ratel is a South African infantry fighting vehicle. Production started in 1976, and it was the first wheeled infantry fighting vehicle to enter service worldwide. The Ratel was a simple, economical design which helped reduce the significant logistical commitment necessary to keep heavier combat vehicles operational in undeveloped regions. Weight of 18 tons and can carry 12 soldiers, armed with varied weapons from 90, 23 to 23mm guns. The RATEL entered the Jordanian Armed Forces service in 2002.



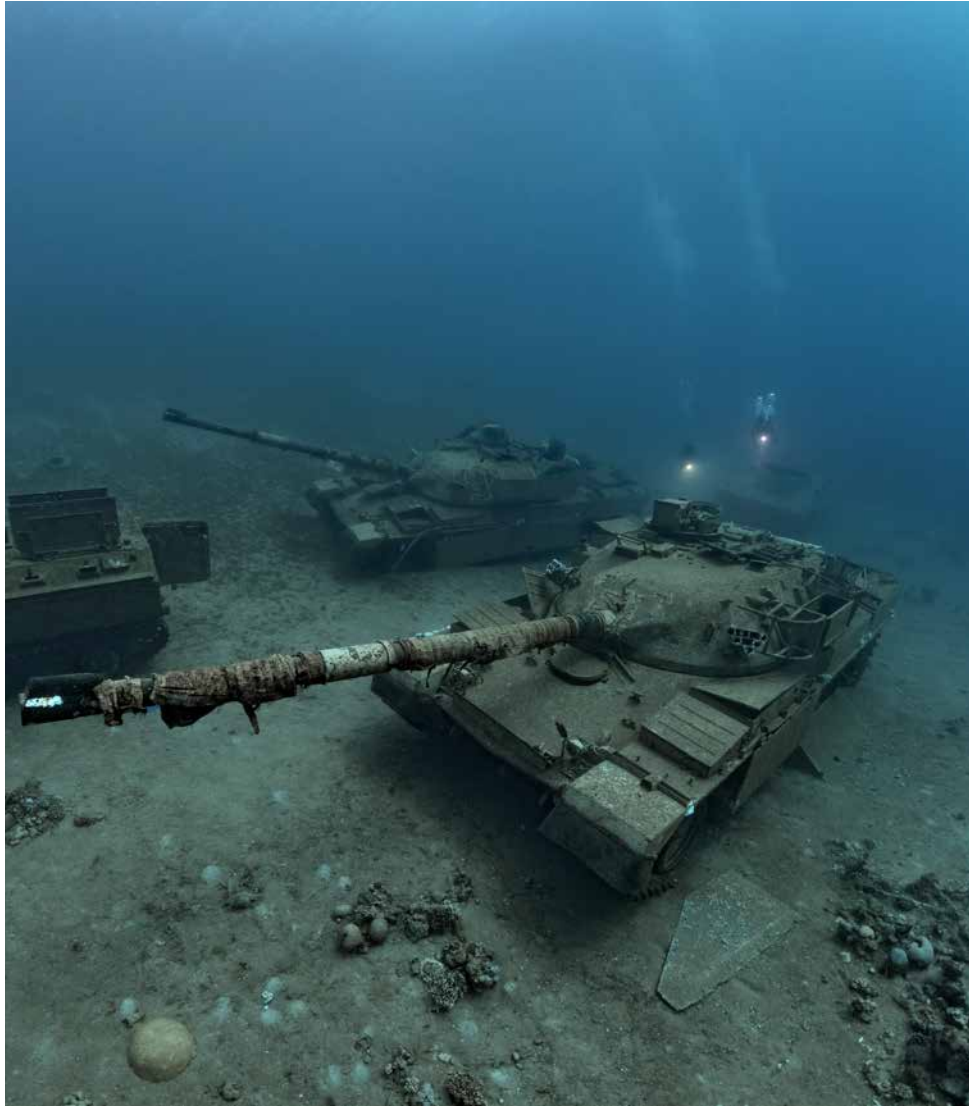
3. FERRET Armoured Car

FERRET is a British-made reconnaissance armoured car which entered the service in 1952. It was used by many countries, especially in the Middle East region. Weight 3.7 tons, equipped mainly with a 7.62 mm calibre machine gun. The crew consisted of two soldiers. The vehicle entered in the Jordanian Armed Forces service in 1963 and remained in service until 1985.



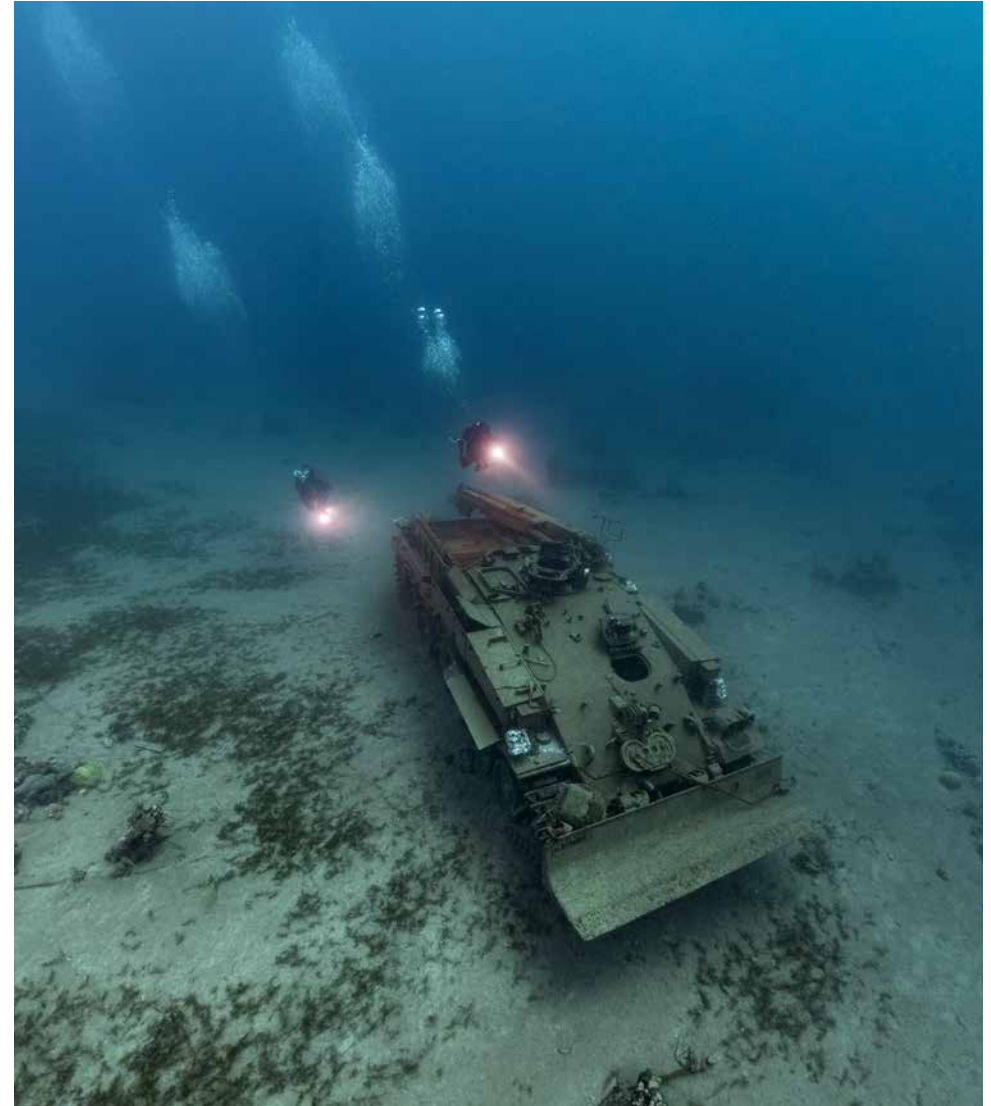
4. Anti-aircraft, self-propelled, gun M42 40mm (Duster)

American-made since 1952. Armoured, tracked vehicle with dual-barrel anti-aircraft 40mm calibre guns. The crew consisted of four soldiers. M42 was in Jordanian Armed Forces service from 1965 to 1998 and participated in the 1967 War, Al Karama Battle, and also, in the War of Attrition.



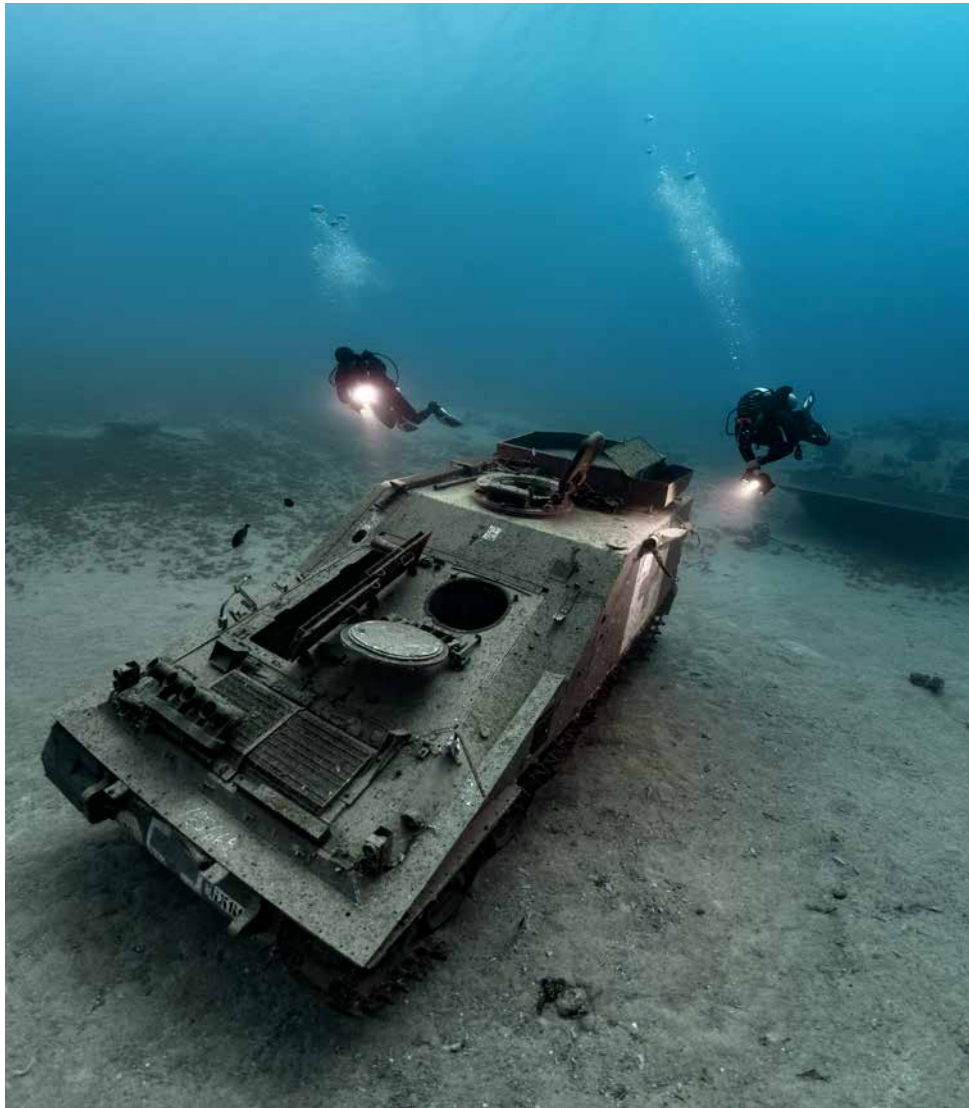
5. Chieftain Tank (KHALID)

British-made in 1966 and widely used in Gulf Wars 1980-1991. The Chieftain was an evolutionary development of the successful cruiser line of tanks that had emerged at the end of the Second World War. Weight 55 tons, the crew of four soldiers. It carries an L11A5 120 mm rifled gun and two, 7.62 mm calibre machine guns. The tank entered the Jordanian Armed Forces service in 1982 and ended in 2000 under the name KHALID Tank.



6. Chieftain Armoured Recovery Vehicle "The Crane"

Recovery vehicle, Chieftain Brand, a British-made in 1967 to work with Chieftain Tanks in the field, used in recovery operations of damaged or technically broken down tanks. Weight 50 tons, the crew consisted of five soldiers. The vehicle started service in the Jordanian Armed Forces together with the Chieftain tanks in 1982.



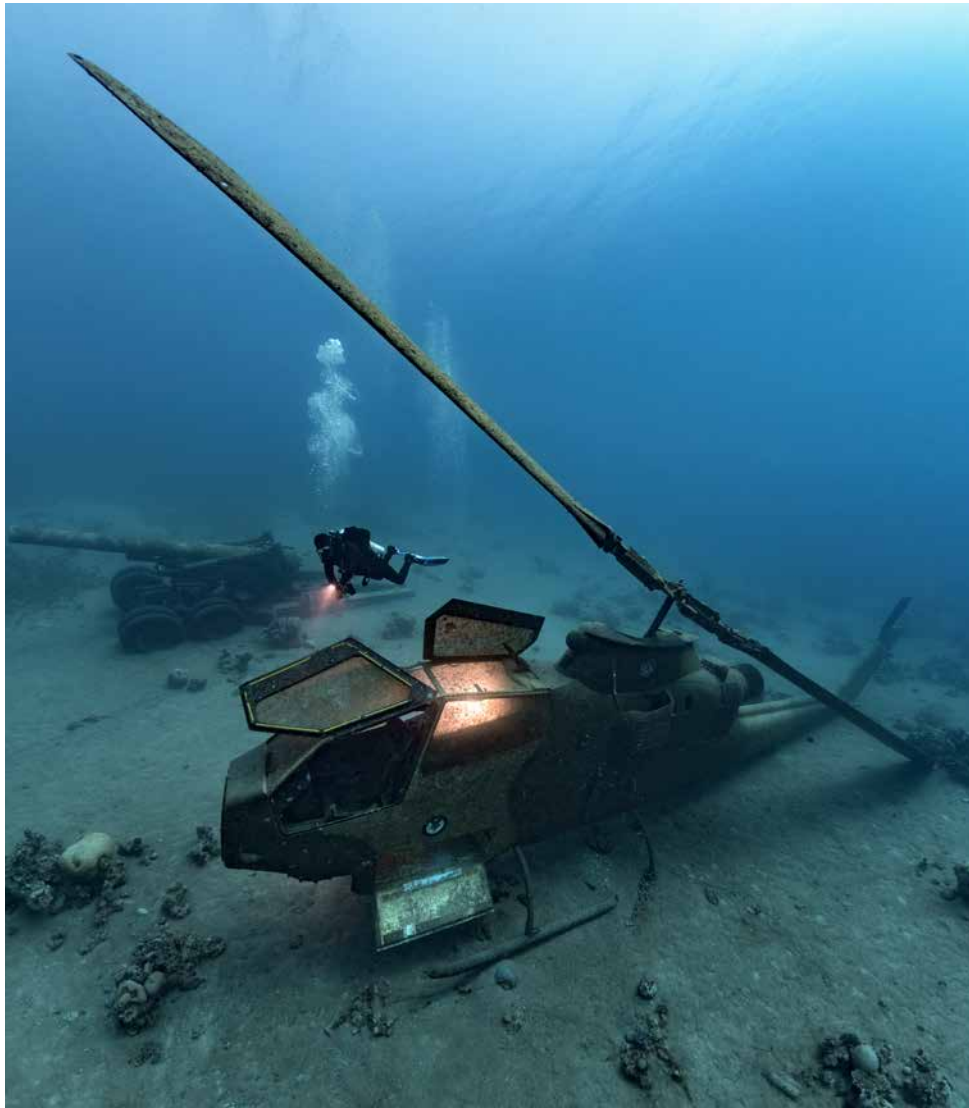
7. SAMARITAN Armoured Ambulance

Samaritan is a British made armoured ambulance based on FV101 light tank with a capacity of up to 6 injured soldiers. It used to operate in battlefields along with the other armoured vehicles. Weight 8.7 tons, with the crew of two soldiers. As an ambulance, this vehicle does not carry any weapons according to the International Laws.



8. Scorpion Light Tank

The FV101 Scorpion is a British armoured reconnaissance vehicle, introduced into service with the British Army in 1973 and was withdrawn in 1994. Weight 8 tons and crew of three soldiers. Its primary weapon was a 76 mm calibre gun.



9. Bell AH-1F Cobra

Developed from the Huey transport helicopter, the Cobra was the first purpose-built helicopter gunship to enter military service. It was the backbone of U.S. Army attack aviation from its combat debut in South Vietnam during 1967 until replaced by the AH-64 Apache in the 1980s and '90s. Several versions of the Cobra continue to serve in the U.S. Marine Corps and the armed forces of many nations including The Royal Jordanian Air Force which has at least one squadron of Cobras currently in service.



10. Willys MB - The Jeep.

The iconic Willys MB, commonly known as "Jeep" was a highly successful off-road capable, light, military utility vehicle, built in large numbers to a standardised design, from 1941 to 1945, for the Allied forces in World War II. There were more than one million Jeeps produced in various versions and used for several military purposes as the over one tone vehicle was also capable of carrying different types of weapons. Jeeps continued service in different armies across the globe to the late '90s, playing a significant role in different wars.

Other Dive Sites

The coast of Aqaba is not extensive, just 27 kilometres, but it contains a rich variety of more than 21 dive sites to suit all levels of ability, and new sites are still being discovered.



The coral reef formation of the Gulf of Aqaba primarily made of the fringing reef has no offshore reefs. It makes shore diving in Aqaba easily accessible; you can step into the water and start your dive.

The ease of access also makes Aqaba ideal for snorkelers. The typical reef structure includes flat and shallow coral plateau which can be exposed at extreme low tide and leads from the lagoon to the reef crest.

Underwater pinnacles and caverns teem with marine life, while coral canyons lead down to dropoffs and walls of corals ending in the depths of the Gulf of Aqaba.

Most of Aqaba's dive sites are within the boundaries of the Aqaba Marine Park, but some of them are available south of the protected area.

Nature has generously provided the rest of Aqaba's dive sites with beauty and variety.

The Power Station does not boast an elegant name, but it is rich in fan corals and is a great place to catch sight of yellowmouth morays, devil scorpionfish, frogfish and octopus.



The Japanese Gardens offer large Gorgonian fan corals, hanging soft coral "gardens" and sometimes a sighting of white tip reef sharks and its resident turtles.



Eel Canyon is named for the eel garden at its bottom but also offers the chance to see fire coral, sea anemones and lionfish. During the mating season, you can also see eagle rays and stingrays.



Paradise lives up to its name with a display of beautiful soft red coral and the bonus of a cavern full of glassfish. Each of the many dive sites along the coast has its unique feature, whether it is massive cabbage coral formation, beautiful Acropora or staghorn coral formations with their vibrant colour variations, or the chance of a close encounter with rare and exotic fish.

Aqaba has more than 21 dive sites and it is impossible to describe them all or to catch their real character. They can only be truly appreciated by putting on your diving gear and losing yourself in the warm, enticing waters of Aqaba's unique coastline.



Dive Sites



Marine Park



Boat Access



Shore Access



Tech Wreck

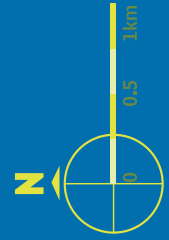


Tech Dive

1. Tristar **B /TD**
2. Power Station **B**
3. First Bay North **B/S**
4. First Bay South **B/S**
5. Ras Al Yamanya military museum **B/S**
6. King Abdullah Reef **B/S**
7. Black Rock **B/S**
8. Rainbow Reef **B/S**
9. Cedar Pride Wreck **B/S**
10. Tarmac Five (Barge Wreck) **B/TW**
11. Taiyong Wreck **B**
12. Japanese Garden **B/S**
13. Gorgon I **B/S**
14. Gorgon II **B/S**
15. Seven Sisters **B/S**
16. New Canyon(Tank) **B/S**
17. Eel Canyon **B/TW**
18. AL Shorouk **B**
19. C130 Hercules **B**
20. Yellowstone Reef **B**
21. Blue Coral
22. Kiwi Reef
- 23.



SOUTH COAST MAP



Aqaba Diving Information

The opportunities for diving abound. For their size, the shores of Aqaba have more dive sites accessible by boat or from the beach than any other destination in the Gulf of Aqaba. Accessibility of the dive sites offers convenience and variety while a large number of wrecks and an abundance of marine life will satisfy even the biggest appetite for exploration.

Aqaba established its first few dive centres in the '60s. Since then the industry has flourished. The enjoyment of diving in Aqaba today is a result of the local diving industry's dedication being at the forefront of safety and technological advances.



Dive Centres in Aqaba

Most of Aqaba's Dive Centres are certified as PADI 5* IDC, Gold Palm Resorts or Dive Resorts, accredited by BSAC and CMAS. The professionally qualified staff offers a wide variety of courses at all levels, from beginner to professional. Children and families are also well looked after. Courses range from one-day introductory to specialist professional training, underwater photography, navigation and environmental courses. Members of staff are usually qualified to do commercial diving as well.

All dive centre staff speak English, and some centres offer courses and learning materials in other languages. Divers who have started BSAC, CMAS and other qualifications can finish their courses in Aqaba and obtain PADI certificates.

Recreational Diving

Our clear, calm, warm water, with its lack of significant tidal movement, makes Aqaba a recreational diving delight. The dive sites are easily accessible for all levels of divers. The development of several artificial reefs has provided an even wider variety of diving experiences.

Technical Diving

The waters of the Aqaba Bay are unique in their opportunity for technical expeditions. The three elements vital to the satisfying technical dive experience are water clarity, depth and wrecks. We have a number of technical centres which cater for technical divers and provide on-site gas mixes and ancillary equipment.

Recreational Courses

Aqaba's reputation for diving education is second to none. Our dive centres provide the widest variety of certifications from all the leading training organisations, for divers from all countries. Centres run courses in English and some other languages. Whether you are a novice or an experienced diver, there is something to suit and challenge you.

Technical Courses

Again, our ideal water conditions make technical training more relaxed. Our deep wrecks and reefs are close to the shore and provide a safe platform for your technical diving development and ideal conditions to learn complex and challenging new skills.

Professional Courses

Aqaba's dive centres are renowned for producing competent dive professionals. Due to our favourable year-round conditions, professional courses are conducted throughout the year.

Unlike many dive destinations equipment replacement, upgrade and servicing are easily available, and some of our dive shops are retail and service centres for a range of dive equipment brands.

Local Diving Regulations

Scuba diving is only permitted through Aqaba Marine Park registered agencies and dive centres.

Instructors

Instructors can only offer diving services through an Aqaba Marine Park licensed dive centre and must produce proof of certification, 3rd party insurance cover and full diving medical.

Medicals

Divers are required to complete and sign a medical questionnaire. If any prescribed medical condition is indicated, divers are required to produce a 'fit for diving' medical, signed by a doctor specialising in hyperbaric medicine.

Independent and Solo Divers

Under the Jordanian regulations, divers are not permitted to dive independently or solo even if they are certified as a self-reliant diver and must be accompanied by a licensed instructor, divemaster or guide.

Minimum Age

There are no age restrictions. The training agency regulations stipulate the decision on minimum age. Written parental/guardian consent is required for all divers under 18 years of age.

Illegal Fishing

Any form of fishing, including usage of spearguns and spearfishing, is not permitted.



Please do not collect any shellfish or corals.



Please do not place your equipment on corals.



Please do not walk or step on the coral reef.



Diving boats must use purpose installed mooring buoys.



Please do not touch or aggravate marine life.



Please be aware of your buoyancy and stay above the reefs.

How To Get To Aqaba

By Air

National carrier Royal Jordanian operates four daily flights from Amman where passengers can connect for their international flights. Turkish Airlines, which provides a free baggage allowance for scuba diving equipment, offers a direct flight from Istanbul to Aqaba twice a week. Several charters and low-cost airlines, including Ryanair and EasyJet, operate seasonal flights to Aqaba from major departure points in

By Ferry

A journey by ferry between Taba and Nuweba in Egypt to Aqaba takes approximately 1 hour.

By Land

Regular coach bus service operates from Amman and Irbid to Aqaba.

Visitors can get to Aqaba from Eilat in just over 30 minutes by crossing at Wadi Araba border. It is by far one of the easiest journeys between the two nations and visitors to Eilat should make the most of its proximity to Aqaba.



Getting Around Aqaba

Aqaba has an abundance of metered, air-conditioned taxis and several car rental agencies. Minibuses are also available and serve local destinations.

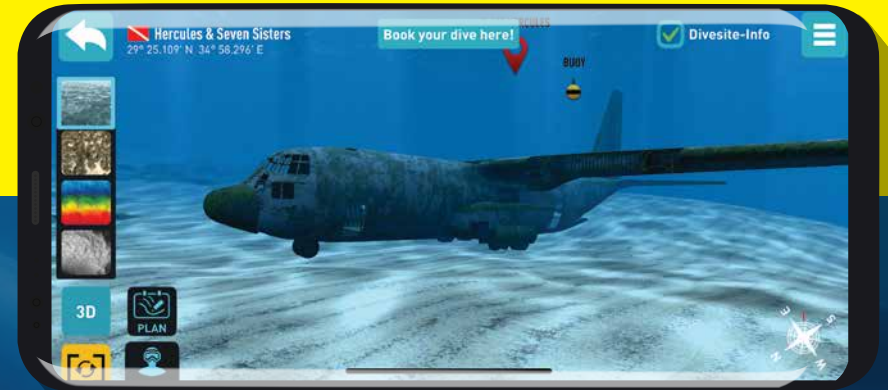
Visas

Travellers arriving in Aqaba, either through the port, the airport or land (except for The Wadi Araba Crossing in the south) are granted a free visa to Jordan. There is no obligation associated with this visa, provided that the traveller will leave the country through the same border and within one month of arrival, and that they do not need to renew their visa. Visitors arriving at any entry point other than Aqaba, who declare to the authorities that they are going to Aqaba can claim a free visa but must register with the ASEZA visa office in Aqaba within 48 hours of their arrival in Jordan. Failure to do so brings liability to pay for the visa plus a fine for each unregistered day.

Certain nationalities require an entry visa to be obtained prior to arrival and we recommend checking the latest information with the Jordanian diplomatic mission in your country before you travel.

DISCOVER

Aqaba's Dive Sites in 3D interactive-Mode



DIVING AQABA APPLICATION

With Diving Aqaba Application, you can now create your personal dive plans for your individual dive sites. This groundbreaking feature helps you easily brief fellow divers or lets you share information about a dive with everyone to increase overall dive safety. Diving Aqaba Application is the first interactive 3D underwater maps, based on high resolution sonar, satellite and video data.

- √ Interactive 3D maps
- √ 20+ dive sites
- √ virtual Dive-Mode.
- √ 4 visualization modes
- √ Next generation dive-planning feature:

Diving Aqaba Application is also designed for dive centers with tools and features for creating next generation dive briefings.

Get free access to show all Aqaba's dive sites, for every screen in your business (tablets of dive guides, in the shop or on the ship). Record virtually and share your dive plans with your diving buddies. It is more real and meaningful than ever before!

Download now !



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aqaba
RED SEA WADI RUM-PETRA



This publication is part of a joint effort between the Tourism Directorate at the Aqaba Special Economic Zone (ASEZA) , Aqaba Marine Park (AMP) and the Royal Marine Conservation Society of Jordan (JREDS) to help improve your diving experience in the Gulf of Aqaba .

