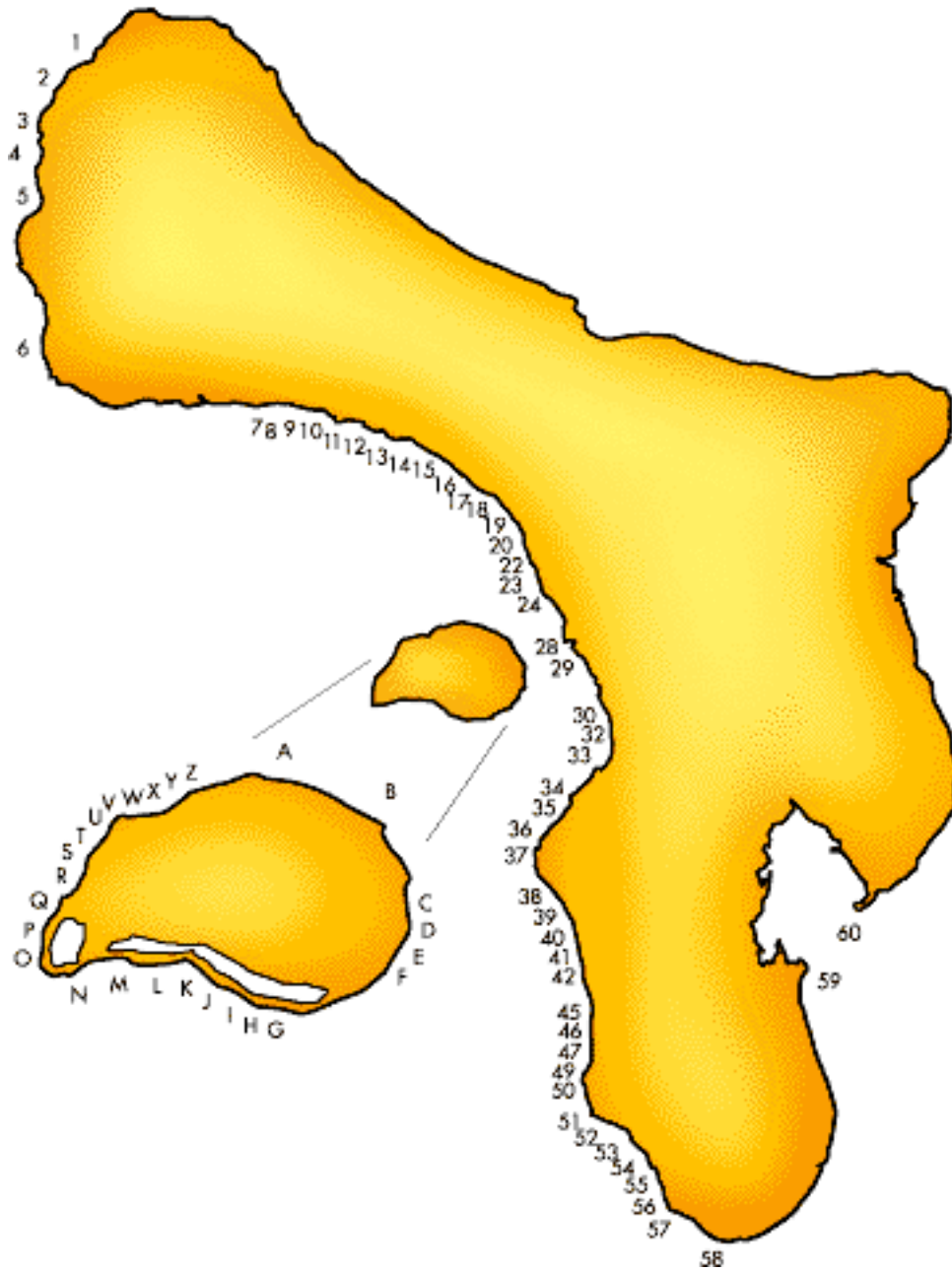


Bonaire Dive Sites



Shore Access: **B**=Boat Dive; **S**=Shore Dive; **X**=Shore or Boat Dive

Skill Levels: **N**=Novice; **I**=Intermediate; **E**=Experienced; **AL**=All Levels

1: Boca Bartol (S-E)

This shore dive is the northernmost site in the Marine Park. Advanced divers may encounter strong currents. The recommended depth is from 20-80 feet, with interesting coral formations in the shallows. Many of the larger fish species abound, and there is a chance to see rays and garden eels in the sandy bottom.

2: Playa Bengi (S-E)

Located along the northwest coast of Washington Slagbaai Park, Playa Benge is known for its heavy currents. Recommended only for the advanced diver, the depth ranges from 15-100 feet. A shore dive only, the experienced diver will be rewarded with some of the most pristine coral on Bonaire.

3: Playa Funchi (S-E)

Located in Washington Slagbaai National Park, Playa Funchi is for the advanced diver and has moderate to heavy currents. There is no mooring here, so access is from the shore only. In depths of 15-100 feet, horse-eye jacks can be seen out in blue water. The shallows teem with spotted trunk fish that approach you looking for a hand-out.

4: Bise Morto (S-I)

Another Washington Park dive, this boat dive site can have moderate to strong currents and is recommended for the intermediate to advanced diver. Depths of 20-100 feet offer shallows loaded with elk horn and stag horn coral, hence the name, which means "dead deer." The deeper waters provide an opportunity to see larger species, including whale sharks and manta rays.

5: Boca Slagbaai (S-I)

Located in Washington Slagbaai National Park, this site is known for its moderate to strong currents and is recommended for intermediate to experienced divers. With depths of 20-100 feet, you may have a chance to see mantas or other smaller rays. At the southern end of the cove, there are cannon in just 10 feet of water. Slagbaai is also accessible by boat.

6: Nukove (S-I)

A bit hard to find, this site is a shore dive only. It ranges from 20-100 feet and has mild to strong currents. Intermediate level divers will find huge elk horn coral in the shallows, with schools of algae-eating reef fish present. Also seen are large midnight blue parrots. The drop-off has large coral heads that sometimes shelter nurse sharks.

7: Karpata (X-I)

One of Bonaire's most popular shore dives, Karpata can also be reached by boat. With depths ranging from 20-100 feet and light to moderate currents, novice and intermediate divers can pose for pictures alongside one of the many huge ship anchors embedded in the coral. Known for great visibility, wide angle photographers can enjoy panoramic vistas to frame their subjects.

8: La Dania's Leap (B-I)

Known for the practice of "leaping" off the shore and then doing a drift dive to Karpata, this site has been recommended for intermediate divers by boat only. With light currents and depths of 15-100 feet, La Dania's is one of Bonaire's few vertical walls, with numerous canyons and sand shoots.

9: Rappel (B-I)

The most often asked for dive site, Rappel is reached only by boat. Due to the close proximity to the rocky ledge, an intermediate skill level is required. With a depth of 30-100 feet and moderate currents, Rappel has huge sea fans in the shallows and an abundance of nudibranches.

10: Bloodlet (B-I)

Too difficult for shore diving, Bloodlet has moderate currents and is for the intermediate boat diver. Averaging 20-80 feet, there is a dense reef structure that is home to schools of algae-eating blue tangs. Yellow and green tube sponges are also evident. Bloodlet is one of the places where sea turtles are often sighted.

11: Ol' Blue (X-AL)

This shore or boat dive site lies just off a long coral beach, east of 1000 Steps. Light to moderate currents and depths of 20-100 feet offer the novice and intermediate divers the chance to see numerous friendly French angelfish and schools of horse-eye jacks.

12: Country Garden (B-AL)

A boat dive with moderate currents for the beginner to intermediate skilled diver. The average depth is 20-80 feet, and the shallows are covered with large boulders that have fallen from the cliffs and provide shelter for school masters, grunts, and goat fish.

13: Bon Bini Cas (B-AL)

"Welcome Home" in the native language, this site lies just next to 1000 Steps and is a boat dive only. With light to moderate currents, beginner and intermediate divers will enjoy schools of Creole wrasse and blue tangs in depths ranging from 20-100 feet.

14: 1000 Steps (X-AL)

Situated in front of the Radio Netherlands towers, 1000 Steps is a shore or boat dive (actually, for the shore divers, 64 steps down to the site from the road and it seems like 1000 steps coming back up with scuba gear!). Currents are light and the novice diver will have a chance to observe hawksbill turtles or a passing whale shark or manta.

15: Weber's Joy/Witches Hut (X-AL)

This easy shore or boat dive, with light currents and a depth of 20-100 feet, offers novice divers a chance to see mountainous star coral with abundant fish life. Angelfish, rock beauties, and butterfly fish make their homes in the rocky reefs. This site is a favorite of underwater photographers.

16: Jeff Davis Memorial (X-N)

Accessible from boat or shore, this site is great for beginners, with light to moderate currents and a depth of 20-100 feet. The shallows are covered with soft coral and are a good place to see a turtle or sea horse. There are a number of large coral accumulations, forming chutes that lead to a sandy bottom.

17: Oil Slick Leap (X-N)

Recommended as a boat dive, the hearty shore diver will find a steel ladder leading to the water. Named Oil Slick Leap because this was the original proposed site for the oil storage terminal, this dive is for the novice boat diver and has mild currents and a depth of 20-80 feet. There are generally large numbers of barracuda seen here.

18: Barcadera (B-AL)

This boat dive is located directly opposite the Bonaire Marine Park Headquarters. Moderate currents and depths of 30-100 feet are great for novice to intermediate divers. The shallows are covered with elk horn coral and host schools of algae-eating blue tangs.

19-20: Andrea I & II (X-N)

Located just past the desalination plant, Andrea I and II can be reached from boat or shore. Currents are mostly light, so they are ideal sites for beginner divers. With an average depth of 20-100 feet, there are many anemones and soft coral offering shelter to hungry trumpet fish. Both these sites offer a good chance of seeing sea horses.

21: Petries Pillar (S-AL)

This is a shore dive only for the beginner, with moderate currents and an average depth of 30-100 feet. The terrain is much like Andrea I and II. Large stands of pillar coral are found in the shallows along with schools of blue tangs. Named by Capt. Don as a wedding present for a friend.

22: Small Wall (X-N)

Located in front of the Black Durgeon Inn, this site offers the novice diver a chance to do a shallow wall dive. Accessed from boat or shore (you need permission to cross private property to shore dive), the currents are light to moderate, with the wall beginning at 20 feet. A cave can be found at 60 feet, with the possibility of seeing a sleeping nurse shark.

23: Cliff (X-N)

Accessed either from shore or boat, Cliff is located in front of the Hamlet Villas, north of Habitat. With light to moderate currents in 20-70 feet of water, the novice diver will have a chance to see Capt. Don's underwater Stone Memorial to the "divers who have gone before us," which is marked with a plaque and dive flag.

24: La Machaca, Habitat (X-N)

Situated off Capt. Don's Habitat, this site with mild to moderate currents allows the novice diver a chance to do a "wreck dive" in relatively shallow water. The 45-foot locally built boat lies in 40-50 feet of water, 30 yards from shore. It is the home of a large green eel, who is used to seeing divers, so approach him with caution.

25: Reef Scientifico (X-N)

South of La Machaca, in 40 feet of water, a grid system has been constructed to monitor algae growth on the reef. While the conditions are much the same as La Machaca, night diving here will reward you with a view of sleeping parrot fish and free swimming spotted morays.

26: Buddy's Reef, Buddy Dive (S-N)

Located in front of Buddy Dive Resort, this shore dive has mild currents and is perfect for beginners. With depths of 30-100 feet, expect to see black chromoids perched on coral heads in the shallows. A resident school of tarpon almost always greets night divers.

27: Bari Reef, Sand Dollar (S-N)

Located at the Sand Dollar Beach Resort in 20-100 feet of water, it has light to moderate currents and is an ideal site for the novice or non-diver to learn scuba diving. Access is from the shore at the dive shop pier. A popular night dive, with friendly tarpons darting back and forth in front of your light beam!

28: Front Porch, Sunset Beach (S-N)

Truly an easy dive, with light to moderate currents, Front Porch is located at the Sunset Beach Resort. Access is always from shore. The prolific fish life begins at 15 feet, right under the pier, and continues down to 80 feet, where a small wreck of a tug boat lies upside down.

29: Something Special, Garden Eels (X-AL)

Located just south of the marina entrance, this is a shore or boat dive for the beginner. Currents are mild and the depth is from 20-80 feet. There is very little coral growth, since this is one area where sailboats are allowed to anchor. However, the fish life is abundant, with a sandy bottom where rays are often seen. Great for night diving.

30: Town Pier (X-AL)

The most well known dive sight on Bonaire. All levels of divers will experience little current and depths from 20-40 feet. As a shore dive, you must have permission of the harbor master and be accompanied by a local dive guide. Boat diving is almost always done at night with one of the island's dive operators. It is a photographer's dream location, with literally hundreds of photo opportunities.

31: Calabas Reef, Dive Bonaire (S-N)

Located in front of Dive Bonaire at the Divi Flamingo Resort, this reef is well suited for all levels of divers, with mild currents and a depth of 20-100 feet. All species of reef fish abound, with the occasional turtle or ray passing by.

32: Eighteen Palms (X-N)

This shore or boat dive lies directly in front of the Lt. Governor's house, which, coincidentally, has at least 18 palm trees planted in the front yard. Accessed from shore at the Plaza Resort, it has mild currents and ranges from 20-80 feet for the novice and intermediate divers. Southern and eagle rays are often seen in the sandy bottom.

33: Windsock (S-AL)

A shore or boat dive, Windsock offers the novice diver the chance to cruise the area located at the end of the runway off Flamingo Airport. With the depth ranging from 30-100 feet, divers often see turtles and rays. Named for the windsock that flies from a pole on the runway, this dive site also is excellent for snorkelling.

34: North Belnem (X-AL)

Also sometimes called Dick's Place, this is an easy shore or boat dive for all skill levels. With moderate currents and a depth of 20-100 feet, the shallows have stands of elk horn coral and schools of blue tang.

35: Bachelor's Beach (X-AL)

A great boat dive, the novice diver will find Bachelor's Beach also easy to do from shore. Located just past the airport, the 30-100 foot site has lots of soft coral in the shallows and mild currents. Also, chances of seeing sea turtles are good here.

36: Chez Hines (X-AL)

Sometimes called South Belnem, Chez Hines is accessible from both shore and boat. With moderate currents, the beginning diver can expect a depth of 30-100 feet. This is another site where turtles are often seen.

37: Lighthouse Point (X-I)

Located in the southern part of the island, this shore or boat dive has moderate currents for the intermediate diver. With a depth range of 30-100 feet, Lighthouse Point has a sandy bottom, with plenty of soft coral.

38: Punt Vierkant (X-I)

Dutch for square point, this site marks the beginning of the double reef system. Either a boat or shore dive, the current can be moderate to strong and the depth ranges from 30-100 feet for the intermediate diver. Lots of soft coral can be found in the shallows.

39: The Lake (X-AL)

The second of the double reef dives. Lake is 30-100 feet and has moderate currents. Accessed from either boat or shore, the beginner diver will find soft coral in the shallows and schools of colorful reef fish.

40: Hilma Hooker (X-E)

This internationally known shipwreck lies at the beginning of the double reef system. With light to moderate currents and an average depth of 60-100 feet, it is recommended for advanced divers. Can be a shore or boat dive. For penetration, some wreck and deep dive training should be taken.

41: Angel City (X-AL)

Shore or boat dive, with moderate currents and suitable for all skill levels. This double reef dive was named for the friendly angelfish in the area which accompany divers. The depth is from 30-100 feet and there is a "swim-through" coral arch near the mooring, which provides a good frame for photographs.

42: Alice In Wonderland (X-AL)

Located along the double reef system, average depth is 30-100 feet with easy access by shore or boat. For intermediate skill levels, current is light most times. The two distinct reef systems are separated by a sand channel. Lots of friendly French angels and parrot fish are generally present. Sand channels are host to garden eels and stingrays.

43: Aquarius (X-AL)

Shore or boat dive, with mild to moderate currents. All levels of divers will find this an easy site with depths of 30-100 feet. Sandy bottom shallows offer an opportunity to see rays and turtles.

44: Larry's Lair (X-I)

This intermediate level shore or boat dive has mild to moderate currents, with a depth ranging from 30-100 feet. Expect to see rays and large groupers at cleaning stations. The entry for shore divers tends to be a bit rocky, so booties are advised.

45: Jeannie's Glory (X-AL)

Another easy shore or boat dive for all skill levels with mild to moderate currents and depths ranging from 30-100 feet. Lots of soft coral in the shallows and sandy bottom for rays to hide in. Turtles are often seen along these southern dive sites.

46: Salt Pier (X-AL)

At the end of the salt conveyer system, it should not be attempted when a ship is in the process of loading. Depth is 15-50 feet, with very little current. Easy entry for novice divers is from shore only. Great for photography. Pillars are fully encrusted with sponges and soft coral.

47: Salt City (X-AL)

Still part of the double reef system, Salt City is a shore or boat dive with depths of 30-100 feet. Mild currents offer the beginner to intermediate diver the chance to see eagle rays and sea turtles.

48: Invisibles (X-AL)

With depths ranging from 20-100 feet, this is one of the few places divers have a chance to see garden eels in shallow water. One of the last of the double reef dives, beginner to intermediate divers will have a chance to see "islands" of coral separated by sand chutes. The currents are generally mild to moderate.

49: Tori's Reef (X-AL)

A shore or boat dive, Tori's Reef runs from 20-100 feet. All levels of divers can enjoy shallows that have large stands of elk horn coral and a sandy bottom for rays to camouflage themselves. Located directly opposite the outflow from the salt works, the shore entry is fairly easy.

50: Pink Beach (X-AL)

A shore or boat dive, it lies just off one of Bonaire's most famous beaches. Depth is 25-90 feet, with easy entry for shore divers. Intermediate skill is required. Current can be strong. There are lots of coral in the shallows and stingrays are often seen along the sandy bottom.

51: White Slave (X-AL)

A shore or boat dive, the currents can be moderate to strong. The intermediate diver will enjoy this dive, since turtles are almost always spotted. The depth ranges from 20-100 feet. The site is named for the white pinnacle and slave huts that are on the shore opposite the mooring.

52: Margate Bay (X-AL)

A shore or boat dive that has mild to moderate currents and a depth of 30-100 feet, all levels of diver will enjoy this dive. There are schools of black margate generally swimming at the top of the reef and pristine corals abound. This is another site at which turtles are almost always seen.

53: Red Beryl (X-I)

This shore or boat dive has moderate currents and a depth of 30-100 feet. Intermediate dive skills are required for this site. Turtles, rays, and large schools of fish feeding near the surface are generally encountered.

54: Atlantis (X-I)

This is a shore or boat dive with moderate to strong currents. Intermediate skill levels are required, with depths ranging from 30-100 feet. Turtles and larger species of fish are generally seen in this area.

55: Vista Blue (X-I)

A shore or boat dive with moderate to strong currents. Intermediate to experienced skill levels are required, with depths of 30-100 feet. Turtles and rays are sometimes seen in this area.

56: Sweet Dreams (X-E)

Accessed from shore or boat, this site can have strong currents. Advanced skill levels are recommended, with depths of 30-100 feet found. The corals on this dive are generally lush in the shallows, with larger formations of stony species in the depths.

57: Red Slave (X-E)

Lying adjacent to the second set of slave huts, this shore or boat dive has depths of 20-80 feet and moderate to strong currents. Advanced divers recommended. Horse-eye jacks and turtles are often seen.

58: Willemstoren Lighthouse (S-E)

Located at the island's southern tip, there is shore diving only, with depth ranges of 20-80 feet. This site is recommended for advanced divers only, because its moderate to strong currents can cause a rough entry. Lots of schooling fish and, at times, tarpons and sea turtles.

59: Blue Hole (S-E)

More often called White Hole, this is a shore dive that is for advanced divers only. It lies off Lac Bay and requires a long walk in shallow water to the drop-off. The dive begins in 15 feet and slopes down to 100 feet. Numerous tarpon are found here, as are rays and a chance of sharks.

60: Cai (S-E)

Definitely a shore dive for advanced divers. Currents can be strong and unpredictable. Entry is made off the mouth of Lac Bay and depth ranges from 30-100 feet. Large species are often seen. This is truly a dive for strong swimmers with lots of experience.

On Klein Bonaire

All of Klein Bonaire's sites are boat dives.

A: No Name (B-AL)

This dive lies directly in front of No Name Beach at 30-100 feet. Currents are mild, however, the coral is sparse. The advantage is that the sandy bottom is often home to rays and large school masters. All levels of divers will enjoy this site.

B: Ebo's Reef (B-I)

This 40-100 foot site has light to moderate currents, suitable for the intermediate diver. What makes it so special are the giant orange elephant ear sponges that are topped off with numerous black feather crinoids.

C: Jerry's Reef (B-N)

Good boat dive for beginners, the currents are moderate with a depth of 30-100 feet. Crinoids abound at this site and large elephant ear sponges are evident. Lots of black coral is also seen in the depths. This site is also called Ebo's Reef.

D: Just A Nice Dive (B-AL)

This dive, with mild currents and depth ranges of 20-100 feet, is for all levels. There is an abundance of yellow pencil coral and leaf or sheet corals. Lots of schooling fish reside at the top of the reef and solitary species, such as ocean trigger fish, are often seen.

E: Nearest Point (B-AL)

A dive with moderate currents and depths ranging from 20-100 feet. All levels of diver can enjoy stony mountain corals in the drop-off area. At lower depths, black coral can be found, as well as big orange and purple tube sponges.

F: Keepsake (Closed)

G: Bonadventure (B-AL)

A dive with moderate currents and a 20-100 foot depth. Good for the beginner as well as the intermediate diver. A large amount of soft coral is found in the shallows. Angelfish often accompany divers up and down the reef.

H: Monte's Divi (B-N)

The currents are mild and beginner divers stand a good chance of seeing a sea horse here. The depth ranges from 15-100 feet, with large stands of elk horn coral in the shallows. A lone divi divi tree stands guard on shore, directly opposite the mooring site.

I: Rock Pile (B-AL)

The shallow (15-100 feet) water and mild to moderate currents make this site suitable for all levels of diving skill. A large green moray eel is often seen hiding among the boulder coral. The mooring lies directly offshore from a pile of rocks on the shore.

J: Joanne's Sunchi (B-AL)

A dive site with 20-100 foot depths and moderate currents. For all levels of diver, Joanne's Sunchi has lots of sand chutes and large tube sponges. Sunchi is the Papiamentu word for "kiss."

K: Capt. Don's Reef (B-AL)

Ranging from 20-100 feet with mild currents, Capt. Don's Reef is a must dive for all levels. Located at the mooring is a plaque dedicated to Bonaire's pioneer diver, Don Stewart, which thanks him for his dedication to the preservation of Bonaire's reefs.

L: South Bay (B-AL)

This dive has mild to moderate currents and depths ranging from 30-100 feet. All levels of diver can enjoy seeing different species of groupers and schools of horse-eye jacks.

M: Hands Off (B-N)

A novice-level dive with mild currents and an average depth of 30-100 feet, Hands Off was originally established to gauge diver impact on the reef. No photographers or clumsy diving practices were allowed.

N: Forest (B-I)

From 25-100 feet, the intermediate skilled diver will encounter mild to moderate currents here. Forest was named for the abundance of soft coral found in the shallows, especially black coral.

O: Southwest Corner (B-I)

Ranging in depth from 15-100 feet, intermediate divers will encounter mild to moderate currents. Black Durgions and, of course, an abundance of yellow tail snappers will be seen.

P: Munk's Haven (B-I)

A dive with mild to moderate currents, this site ranges from 20-100 feet. All levels of diver can enjoy lush soft coral in the shallows, with large sculptured coral heads in the drop-off area. Large groupers are often seen at cleaning stations.

Q: Twix (Closed)

R: Sharon's Serenity (B-AL)

Located on the southwest corner of Klein Bonaire, Sharon's Serenity has moderate currents suitable for intermediate levels of diving. A good site also for snorkelers, since the mooring is located quite close to shore. With an average depth of 20-100 feet, there are numerous elk horn and stag horn coral, as well as many varieties of soft coral. Large groupers have also been sighted here and a number of basket star fish make this a popular night dive.

S: Valerie's Hill (B-AL)

A boat dive for all levels of diving skill, the range of depth is 30-100 feet. Usually, a mild current is present. Named after Capt. Don's wife by local dive guides, it has numerous sponges and plentiful black coral. Scrawled file fish and gray parrot fish are often seen.

T: Mi Dushi (B-AL)

This dive averages 25-100 feet. All skill levels will find mild to moderate currents. Mi Dushi means "my sweetheart" in the local language. The shallows are filled with stag horn and yellow pencil coral. Many smaller reef fish also inhabit this site.

U: Carl's Hill (B-AL)

This site is named after underwater photographer Carl Roessler and lies on the northwest tip of Klein Bonaire. This 20-100 foot photographer's dream has light to moderate currents for the intermediate diver. The main feature of the dive is the sheer wall that begins 20 yards offshore and drops to a sandy bottom at 70 feet. The face of the wall is covered with sponges and soft coral, making for dramatic scenery. Barracudas and bar jacks are often seen here, as well as schools of blue tangs.

V: Carl's Hill Annex (B-AL)

Also known as Yellow Man, this dive has mild currents, depths of 20-100 feet, and an abundance of soft coral in the shallows. Sea horses can usually be found close to the mooring barrels and there are plenty of groupers and jacks in the deeper areas.

W: Ebo's Special (B-AL)

Also known as Jerry's Jam, it is named for Bonaire's first certified diver, Ibo Domacasse. All levels of diver will enjoy mild currents on this site. One interesting feature is a cave that is in shallow waters and generally is the home of large groupers. A nurse shark is often seen sleeping among the coral heads.

X: Leonora's Reef (B-N)

Just one site east of Carl's Hill, this is an ideal site for the beginning diver. The currents are almost always moderate and an average depth of 20-80 feet will take you by huge plate coral and mountainous star coral. There is a small tunnel through the coral that makes an ideal frame for a picture. Tiger groupers are generally seen in the deeper water, while parrot fish, yellowtail snappers, and four-eye butterfly fish prevail in the shallows.

Y: Knife (Closed)

Z: Sampler (B-AL)

On the north coast of Klein Bonaire, this 20-100 foot site boasts light to moderate currents for the novice to intermediate diver. Friendly angelfish willingly approach divers looking for a hand-out, as do many of the reef residents at this site. It is one of Bonaire's most popular dive sites.