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**October 2018**

# DIVING in HONG KONG (yes, it's possible!)



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# DIVING



# 101

## Underwater adventures in Hong Kong

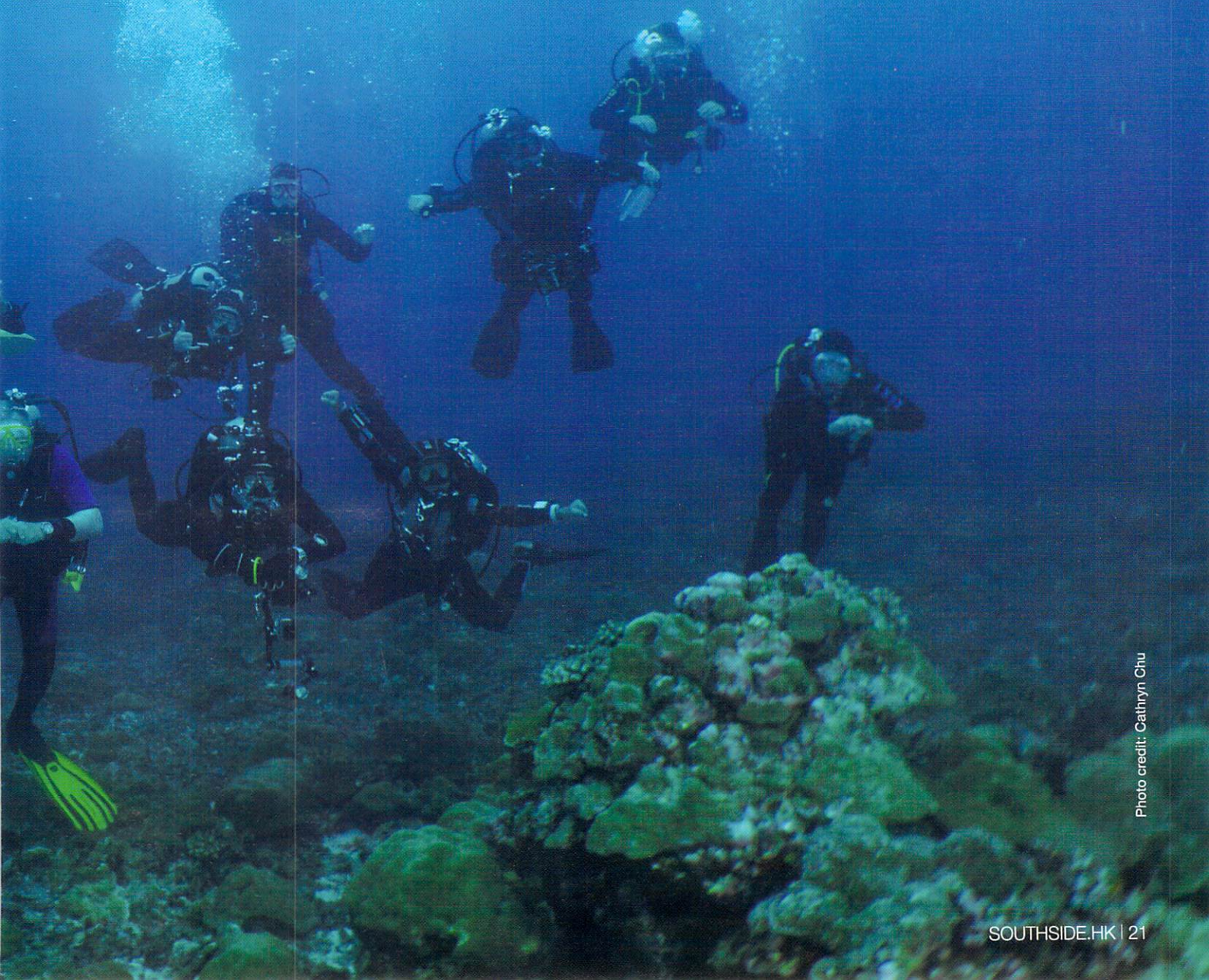


Photo credit: Cathryn Chu



Photo credit: Darren Gilkison, Splash HK



Photo credit: Cathryn Chu

**Y**ou may not believe it, but Hong Kong actually has a large community of divers. Sure, it may not be a likely destination for diving enthusiasts, but Hong Kong does in fact have its own world of underwater treasures just waiting to be explored.

With the help of some established clubs like South China Dive Club, Splash Hong Kong and Diving Express, we've put together a few pointers for those of you who have been wanting to take the plunge and dive in.

### When to dive in Hong Kong

Although you can dive in Hong Kong all year round, the best times are from late March until early June, and then again from September to early November.

The warmer months from around May to October can be crippled by typhoons, and prevailing south-west monsoons can bring in the murk from the Pearl River to the west, which dulls visibility. But on the upside - the water temperature is nice and warm, making for an overall comfortable dive on a calm day.

Winter can be cold, but also rewarding as it offers greater visibility. Hong Kong has a lot of small marine life and is a very interesting diving place for macro photography during this time. However, low water temperatures in winter can make for a chilly experience, so it's best to dive in a dry suit.

All in all? Planning ahead, good weather and a little luck are the main factors when it comes to enjoying Hong Kong waters. [seatemperature.org/asia/hong-kong](http://seatemperature.org/asia/hong-kong)

### Where to dive around Hong Kong

Believe it or not, Hong Kong actually has some pretty good dive sites, but where do you find them? Here are our tips on the best places to dive in Hong Kong.

**Po Toi Island and Sung Kong** to the south can be great spots, but are only accessible from March to May when the wind is gentle.

**Nine Pin Islands** to the east offer challenging but also rewarding dives.

**Sharp Island, Basalt Island, and Trio Island** are local favourites for both training

and fun dives.

Further North, departing from Sai Kung past **Sor See Mun**, a series of beaches and coves offer some very nice dive sites. **Pak Lap Tsai** and **Long Ke** have quiet beaches, and **High Island Eastern Dam** boasts an

### Safety precaution for diving enthusiasts

- Never hold your breath
- Always ascend slowly
- Make sure gear is intact
- Dive within your comfort
- Plan your dive ahead of time
- Always go with a diving buddy
- Make sure you have enough air-supply for your outward journey
- Practice your skills
- Controlled buoyancy is key



Photo credit: Darren Gilkison, Splash HK



Photo credit: Darren Gilkison, Splash HK

artificial reef.

For a quick shore dive, little rocky beaches known as **Lobster Bay** and **Little Palm Beach** are very popular.

Around Sai Kung, **Hoi Ha**, you will find an old favourite, the Main Dam. This year **Wang Chau**, **Bluff** and **Nine Ping** have been really popular. If you have only a day for underwater adventures, then head to dive sites no more than an hour's boat ride from Sai Kung. South China Diving Club organizes camps, barbeques and dive weekends two or three times a year.

The northeastern part of Hong Kong, especially around the **Plover Cove** and **Sai Kung Country Park** offers clean water and lots of marine life. Visibility in these waters can be up to 10 metres.

South of Hong Kong, **Waglan** and **Beaufort Island's** are considerably good, which is a shorter trip for those who live on Hong Kong Island.

### Diving communities in Hong Kong

South China Diving Club offers programmes covering everything from knots and navigation, to first aid and rescue techniques. By helping their members become better divers, they increase their comfort in the water, ultimately making diving



Photo credit: Mike Bejthaw

South China Diving Club members

safer and more fun. Their divers are a diverse group, ranging in age from 20 to late 60's. In addition to people from Hong Kong and the Mainland, they have members from the U.K., Germany, France, Italy, Spain, Japan, Canada, U.S., Philippines and many other

countries. [scdc.org.hk](http://scdc.org.hk)

Splash Hong Kong provides diving courses and fun dives. They have gear at the pool for confined water training, and gear on the boat to prepare students and guests for open water. [splashhk.com](http://splashhk.com)

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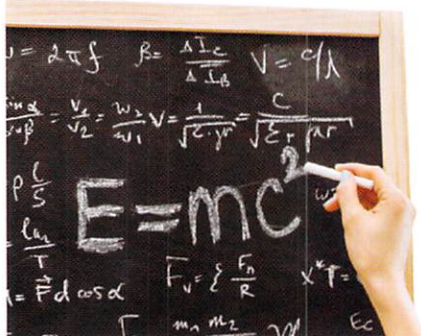
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Under the sea of Hong Kong

### Hong Kong diving scene

Diving in Hong Kong is surprisingly varied. The 30-meter visibility that is common in places like Thailand and the Philippines is not available here, but we do have vibrant coral gardens, hundreds of species of fish, as well as crabs, octopuses and nudibranchs (small, psychedelically coloured molluscs).

South China has been a trade hub for centuries, so it's not unusual to find anchors to potsherds (prehistoric pottery). There are also old ships and other structures that have been sunk to serve as artificial reefs.

The South China Diving Club also catalogues one reef every year for the Hong Kong Government, and participates in educational activities and beach cleanups to improve our city's environment.

### Precautions to take whilst diving in Hong Kong

Hong Kong is near some of the world's busiest shipping lanes, and there are also many pleasure vessels on the water, especially on weekends. Be sure to carry DSMB's (delayed surface marker buoys),

Diving Adventure has a mission. To promote scuba related activities to people of all different diving levels. [divinghk.com](http://divinghk.com)

Mandarin Divers offers recreational and technical diving from scuba diving, to

ambitious divers who want to sharpen their underwater skills. [mandarin-divers.com](http://mandarin-divers.com)

Diveholic is a one-stop-shop for overseas diving adventures, with various packages to suit your needs. [diveholic.com.hk](http://diveholic.com.hk)



Photo credit: Alex Groni

South China Diving Club members suited and booted



Photo credit: Maddy Prout

South China Diving Club member with chopstick

which are bright orange, 2-meter long inflatable "sausages" to indicate that divers are below. Diveboats must also fly a special

blue-and-white flag to warn other vessels that divers are in the water. Ghost nets (abandoned fishing nets) are a hazard in

## The struggle is real

### Becky Love puts on a wetsuit

Anyone that has ever worn pantyhose will know the struggle of wriggling into a size that is too small for them. Pulling up frantically at the crotch and somehow using more energy than an hour of Body Pump. Now imagine that, but way, way worse. That is putting on a wetsuit. Now there are many tips out there to assist in sliding a wetsuit on more easily, but my favourite would have to be starting with it inside out. I have tried this trick with my bedroom duvet, and I ended up stuck inside of it, which leads me to believe the science behind this theory is spot on.

Hong Kong waters, so carry cutters and knives in case you get entangled. Carrying whistles, signalling mirrors and other safety equipment is also recommended. And remember - always dive in pairs. **S**



## EVERYTHING UNDER THE SUN

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