**Ras Nusrani**

Meaning of the name is “Cape of the Christ”. The Ras Nusrani reef is another Egyptian dive site fancied by divers from all over the world. It is located at the western mainland point at the southern end of the Strait of Tiran. This dive site is not recommended for novice-divers since currents can be extremely violent. The reef is thickly covered with massive, truly captivating, soft and hard corals. A large variety of colorful fish, including morays, fusiliers, jacks, surgeonfish, needlefish, and barracudas, swim close to the reef. Huge, dignified turtles occasionally appear, thrilling divers.

Diving Sites in Ras Nusrani

* Ras Nusrani

Location: Western mainland point at the southern end of the Strait Tiran.

Access: By shore or by local boat from Sham El Sheikh, Na'ama Bay or other ports.

Conditions: Current can be fierce-novices beware.

Average depth: 20m (65ft)

Maximum depth: 40m+ (130ft+)

Average visibility: 20m (65ft)

This site is a sloping wall at the point of Ras Nusrani (Arabic for Christian Headland). In profile, it varies between very steep to moderately sloping, depending on location: the steepest wall section lies south of the point, while the reef to the north flattens somewhat. Inshore, a shallow mini-wall follows the edge of the reef top. The reef is well covered in dense stony and soft corals, with lots of massive coral heads, some good branching forms, and a nice selection of colorful soft corals. Fish life is spectacular, with a huge range of reef and pelagic species. Morays hide in reef crevices, fusiliers, jacks, surgeons and barracuda school off the reef, and needlefish shimmer near the surface. Large turtles are also a common sight, padding lazily along the reef slope.

* White Knights

Location: Just South of Ras Nusrani (site 5).

Access: by local boat from Sharm El Sheikh, Na'ama Bay or other ports.

Conditions: Some deeper sections require caution.

Average depth: 15m (50ft)

Maximum depth: 35m+ (115ft+)

Average visibility: 20m (65ft)

This site, lying inside the bay formed by Ras Nusrani to the north, has numerous points of interest. Just inshore from the boat mooring a deep canyon extends down from the shallows, while to the north of this mixed sand and coral patches lead to a wide sand slope colonized by gardens eels. To the south, a wooden wreck adds even more interest. Most dives begin at the entrance to the canyon, a narrow opening leading down from an inshore sand patch. The narrow, sand-bottomed canyon descends steeply, passing through a series of overhangs and two covered swimthroughs, one at around 15m (50ft) and a second, for advanced divers only, leading out to the reef face at 35m (115ft).

After leaving the canyon, there are two options. Turning right takes you south along the reef to the wreck; while a left turn takes you across the reef slope to the eel garden and a series of beautiful shallow reef patches. Swimming south and gradually ascending, you will see a dens assortment of species, including cabbage, corals, staghorn and table Acropora, and several varieties of soft corals. At about 14m (45ft), ten minutes swim south from the canyon; you will encounter the upturned bulk of wood-hulled wreck, the Noos 1, a local dive boat that sank in 1994 after an electrical fire in the engine room.

* **Shark Bay**

Location: on the coast of Shark Bay, south of Ras Nusrani.

Access: By shore or by local boat from Sharm El Sheikh, Na'ama Bay or other ports.

Conditions: Easy shore entry, but watch out for boat traffic. Average depth: 20m (65ft)

Maximum depth: 60m+ (195ft+)

Average visibility: 20m (65ft)

This site, lying just in front of the Shark bay Camp and dive Centre, is a sloping reef broken by a large sandy area which houses the dive centre's jetty and boat area. To the south, the reef has a moderate slope and is well covered in coral; north of the jetty is a shallow area good for relaxed snorkeling. Directly in front of the sandy shore entry point, a deep canyon drops through the reef; its mouth lies at the foot of the reef wall forming the sand slope's southern edge.

The canyon's steep and sandy floor descends rapidly to depths of 60m (195ft) and more-take care not to be drawn too deep. Exiting the canyon, you can explore the moderately sloping reef to the south, gradually ascending before turning back to the north. This section shows dense growth of both stony and soft corals, although less pristine than at some places along this coat. Fish life is diverse and interesting, with angels, parrotfish,, groupers, wrasse and morays among the attractions on the reef, and rays and flatfish lying on the sandy entry shop.