

Dear ladies and gentlemen,

We are two experienced divers. One instructor (Ute, diving for 20 years), and one rescue diver (Helga, diving for 36 years).

Regarding diving at Rufas island, we need to inform you about an incident that happened to us at Lagoon Homestay.

We arrived on Sunday, October 29 before noon. In the evening, the owner Ariens and Jonas the 'dive guide' appeared.

The owner spoke almost no English, and the 'dive guide' spoke very, very little. So communication was difficult. We agreed to go diving the next day at half past eight. But we were quite surprised that nobody asked us whether we are certified divers.

The next day in the morning, there was little action. It turned out that none of the boats were working. The engines were broken, and there was no gasoline. So, they had to order a boat, which arrived sometime after ten o'clock.

We finally went diving. It quickly became apparent that the 'dive guide' couldn't dive. He didn't know how to buoyancy control and ended up on the seabed at 35 meters. We had to show him how to add air to his BCD. He couldn't even read his dive computer, and inflating his safety buoy was a show in itself.

At the surface, he had to listen to our instructions. He looked quite disheartened. We eventually told him that Ute was an instructor to make him feel less foolish. Bad plan. He immediately felt encouraged to take a very young guy with him on the second dive who most likely had never been diving before. Ute made it clear that she wasn't responsible for that. We went down to 25 meters and agreed to do the dive without the guide.

He then took the young guy back to the boat and joined us underwater. Again, he was swimming along the seabed. Since there was no current, Ute tried to teach him buoyancy control.

After a while underwater, we felt a scratchy throat and heartburn. The buoyancy exercise didn't yield the desired results. He kept swimming below us as he did that on the first dive already. So he had a deco stop of 9 minutes, as Ute found out by checking his computer. He definitely didn't know what all the numbers on his dive computer meant. He didn't understand the purpose of it at all. So, Ute had to keep him down there. Eventually, he ran out of air, but luckily, Ute still had enough air to supply to him.

As we are experienced divers, we could have lived with a 'dive guide' who couldn't dive, but not with what happened next. Besides the scratchy throat and heartburn, on the surface, we also had a severe headache. Back on the island, we felt very dizzy.

So, we contacted a specialist and described our symptoms. He said, it was carbon monoxide in the tank's air. Breathing carbon monoxide at any concentration can have serious and potentially life-threatening consequences and we had all symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning.

When we checked the compressor used for filling the tanks, we realized that the air intake was right over the compressor as the intake pipe was disconnected. As it was disconnected near the ceiling and carbon monoxide is a gas lighter than air, the concentration of it is highest at this point. So that was the gas that was filled in the tanks.



In addition, the filter of the compressor has to be changed and drained regularly. The 'dive duide' who was responsible for filling the tanks was not aware of that either.



The setup of the compressor provided the explanation why we had all symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning. As the symptoms didn't disappear, we decided to leave Rufas island to be closer to a place where medical care is available.

We hope, you have a closer look into this incident and the situation at the dive shop in general to avoid a deadly diving accident.

Upon our departure, the owner told us that he doesn't know anything about diving, but he believes that his 'dive guide' has the knowledge. According to our experience, this is not the case, which makes diving at Lagoon Homestay very dangerous for guests and the 'dive-guide' as well.

As we just stayed 2 nights at Lagoon Homestay, but paid for 7 nights, we would like to ask for a refund of the 5 remaining nights.

Best regards,

Ute Weeren & Helga Fischer