

We made our third trip to CocoView Resort on Roatan in June 2009. We flew direct from Atlanta to Roatan on Delta and the flight and transfer from the airport to CocoView were flawless, so we were on-site by noon. As returning guests, we did not have to do the full orientation and were able to dive immediately, so we were set up and in the water by mid-afternoon.

We arrived on Saturday to learn that there had been a major earthquake on Thursday night. Repairs were underway throughout the week, such as the installation of new pilings under the bungalows and cabanas. Guests reported feeling aftershocks on a couple of occasions, and we felt one that lasted for about 10 seconds or so while we were underwater at the Prince Albert. It was a very strong vibration that sounded and felt like a huge cruise ship was passing over us.

We stayed in an over-the-water cabana this year and it was very nice. There appeared to have been more renovations since our last stay in a cabana in 2005 – refrigerator in the room, floors re-varnished, bathroom repainted. We really enjoyed being over the water and spent early mornings and evenings on the deck looking out over the ocean. AC worked great. It is clear that the owners are maintaining the property very well and Liz, the property manager, keeps everything running very smoothly.

As noted in our previous trip reports, CCV rooms do not have TV, phone, or internet access. I actually find this to be one of the most appealing features of the resort. There is a wireless router in the main dining hall so you can check e-mail, etc. there whenever you want. We found that our PDA/phones connected automatically.

The dive operation at CocoView is simply outstanding. CCV has 5 large, powerful boats with multiple exits and a moon well in the center for easier re-entry in rough waters (we used this several times on this trip), great camera rinse tank, stable tank rack system, and good gear storage and dry storage spaces. The gear rooms are also spacious and well designed. Everything about the dive facilities is great.

The dive schedule includes morning and afternoon boat dives each day, generally with boat rides of 5-15 minutes from the resort, followed by drop-off dives on one of two sites on the way back to the resort – CocoView Wall or Newman's wall. There is also a wreck between the two walls as you come back toward the resort – the Prince Albert. There are lots of sponges and corals growing all over the Albert, and you can find lots of interesting macro life here.

On this trip we were on the red boat with Osmond and Dave as our DM and captain, and they were great. One thing we really appreciate about CCV is the crew's attentiveness to divers' needs, and Osmond and Dave were fantastic. Once when Osmond was handing my camera rig down to Darren off the back of the boat, a swell rocked the boat and Osmond just jumped right off the boat making sure to hold the camera up out of the water to prevent damage. We also enjoyed the other divers on our boat – they were a nice, laid-back bunch of folks. We had 11 people on our boat for most dives, with a few extra people on some dives for training, etc.

Sites that we visited included Mary's Place and Calvin's Crack, along with a number of sites closer to the resort. We really liked the sites close to the resort between Valley of the Kings and Menagerie because

they were among the most colorful and full of life. They generally featured nice walls with plentiful large sponge and coral formations that make for excellent wide-angle photography. As other divers have noted, the marine life (fish in particular) is not abundant on this part of Roatan's reef system. For us, the colorful walls with sponges and corals makes up for this, and you do see a good variety of fish and critters overall.

The one thing that is always the least impressive at CCV is the food – not trying to nit-pick (we know there are lots of Coco-nuts that will debate this), but the lunch and dinner meals are generally mediocre to average, with a few that are above average to good. You just have to remember that the meals are all buffet style and people can eat as much as they want, so it is understandable that you are not going to eat gourmet meals for the VERY reasonable all-inclusive price they charge. Bottom line – you get fed and portions are plentiful –fair deal for the price.

All in all, CCV is one of our favorite dive destinations due to great dive facilities, healthy marine ecosystem, friendly and helpful staff, good accommodations, and focus on diving. We are planning to schedule our 4th trip there next summer.