COCOS ISLAND

Cocos Island belongs to Costa Rica. It’s a remote island in the Pacific, 550km/342mi to the west of the mainland. The island is a Costa Rican National Park and a UNESCO World Heritage site. There are no inhabitants except for the park rangers living there. There are no hotels, homestays, restaurants or pubs… The only way to go and visit is on a liveaboard.

The liveaboards leave from Puntarenas. Because of its distance, it will take in between 35 and 40 hours before you arrive. A long time but so worth it! Cocos Island is a dream destination for every avid diver.

Only experienced divers should go and visit. The island has deep waters and strong currents. It is surrounded by caves and volcanic tunnels, rich coral reefs and steep walls. If you go, you won’t be diving for the small stuff. It’s the pelagics that rule! Tuna, Manta Rays, Hammerheads, White Tip Reef Sharks, Whale Sharks, Sailfish, Marlin, Dolphins, Pilot Whales, Humpbacks, Sea Lions… More than enough to never get bored.

There are only a certain amount of liveaboard operators that go. That means two things: It’s (very) expensive and boats are booked up to more than a year in advance.  
There is not really a best time to dive the island although most people prefer the rainy season, from June through December. There is more nutrient rich water coming out of the deep seas what will bring up the plankton and the plankton eaters, like Mantas and Whale Sharks. The Hammerheads will come into play and there will be more underwater action. The lesser visibility, rain and choppy seas you will have to endure.  
From December till May, the visibility will be lots better and the sea will be much calmer. People that suffer lots from motion sickness maybe are better to dive now. There will still be plenty of oceanic wildlife. The amount of liveaboards will be less though, and some operators alternately go to Caño Island.   
Water temperatures fluctuate between 24C/75F and 30C/86F There can be some very cold thermoclines so make sure you have gloves and a hood with you.