

St. George 1962-1999



“Remember to take only photos and leave only bubbles.”



Evolution of an Artificial Reef

Artificial reefs are created worldwide to enhance recreational diving opportunities while providing habitat for marine organisms. To create an artificial reef, stable and environmentally safe material, such as the St. George, is placed on the ocean floor. Once in the ocean, the ship provides hard substrate necessary to establish a reef community. Although the substrate is man-made there is nothing artificial about the host of marine organisms that inhabit virtually all available space. Coral polyps attach to the substrate and colonize the area together with a myriad of sponges and algae. These marine organisms provide both food and shelter for a variety of more complex reef creatures like crustaceans and reef fish. Given the diverse assemblage of organisms, large predators, such as barracudas who have been known to stake out their territory within hours of sinking a ship, make the St. George their home.

History

Originally known as M.V. Norbrae, St. George was built in 1962, in Ardrossan shipyard in Strathclyde, Scotland. This 240 feet long, transatlantic cargo freighter, which transported wheat and barley between Norway and the Americas, was abandoned in Santo Domingo harbor after 20 years of service. Renamed after taking the full brunt of Hurricane George, St George was bought by Club Dominicus and sunk on June 12, 1999, offshore Dominicus Resorts.

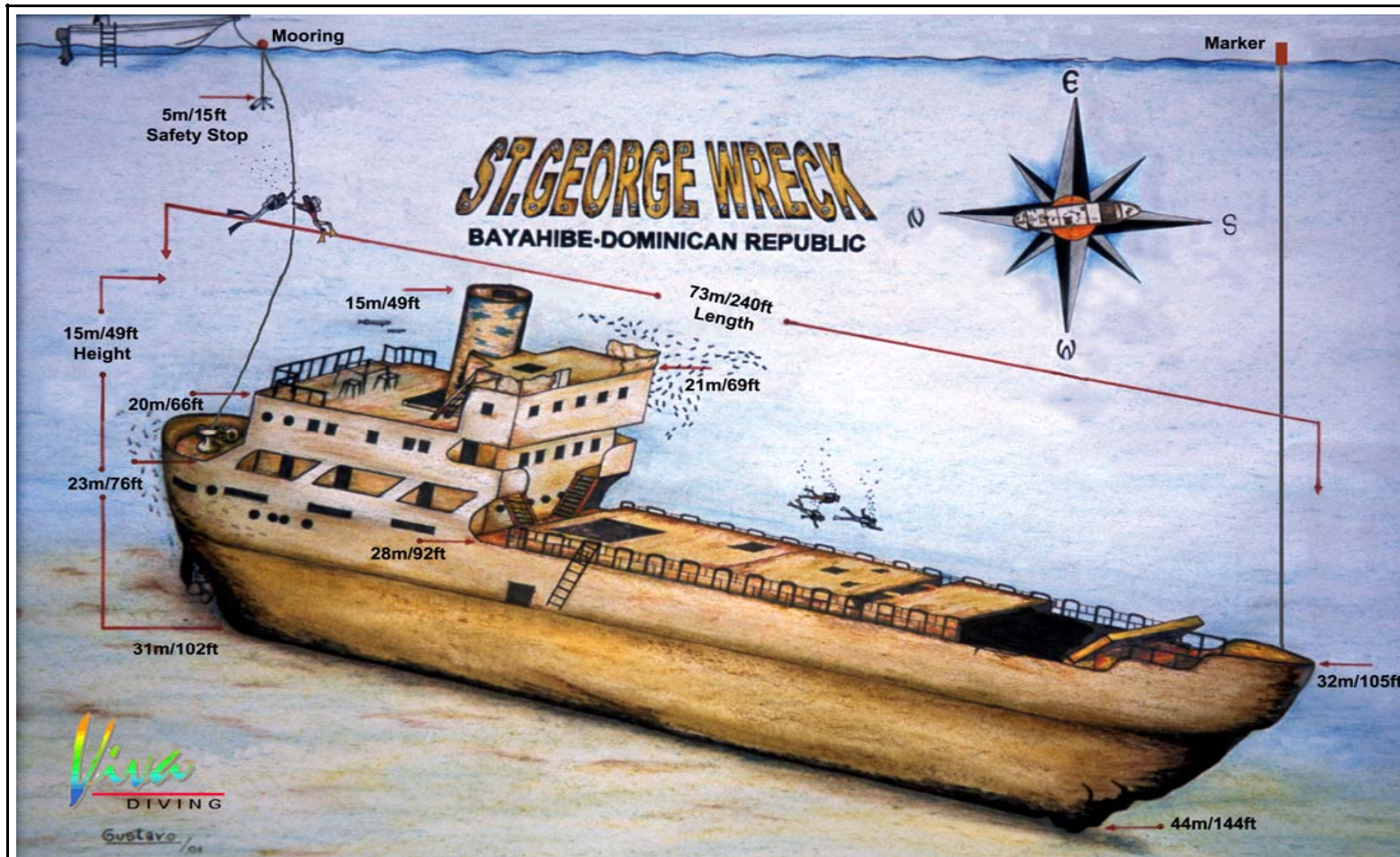


Today

Surrounded by an ocean desert, the St. George harbors a multitude of marine organisms. Sponges, corals, and schooling tropical fish make the St. George their home. As you explore the shipwreck, you have a unique opportunity to see a snapshot in the evolution of an artificial reef. As a visitor to the site, you should enjoy your underwater experience but understand that this ever changing ecosystem is fragile. Your brief visit may have a lasting impact on the reef environment. Therefore, please, “Remember to take only photos and leave only bubbles.”



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Location

St. George lies in 50 to 140 feet of water, approximately 1/2 mile offshore Club Viva Dominicus, 15 miles east of La Romana, Dominican Republic. GPS: N 18° 20.536 W 068° 50.175

Buoy System

A mooring buoy is attached to the stern of the ship and a spar marker buoy is attached to the bow to identify the St. George.

Protected Area

As a protected area, St. George is subject to park rules and regulations.



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