

International **WORKSHOP** UNDERWATER PHOTOGRAPHY

IN MALTA

July 07-12, 2024



Underwater Photographer
Mentor Malcom H. Ross

Explore the fascinating waters of Malta and Gozo and capture the amazing marine life through underwater photography

For details and to reserve your place contact us at info@discerngroup.com.mt or call us on +356 79237295

REGISTER NOW



Explore the fascinating waters of Malta and Gozo and capture the amazing marine life through underwater photography. Designed for underwater photographers who want to move beyond entry level as well as those; experienced who seek new inspiration and to enhance their skills and techniques. You will also have the benefit to meet like-minded people and expand your underwater photography network.

There are only **10 spots** available for this workshop and participants are accepted on a first come first serve basis. [BOOK NOW](#)

The Diving Sites

Malta and Gozo's caves, reefs and wrecks are reached from either the shore or by boat. Dive sites have a beautiful topography, pretty reefs and interesting rock formations with areas occupied by numerous fish, some of them being painted combers, damselfish, scorpion fish, stingrays and others. Octopus, eels and seahorses are also sometimes present. Other dive sites include amazing arches, tunnels and swim-thru's, drop-off, statues, wrecks and an abundance of marine life all in very clear blue waters.

The Blue Hole in Gozo is one of the most popular among divers as it offers amazing sheer drop-offs, rock formations and scattered boulders that have fallen down making this dive both exciting and beautiful all at the same time. The dive begins in a pool at 12 m and leads through a crevice – your window to the ocean's clear blue waters and the octopus and lobster that live amongst the rock. Bright orange and silver parrot fish also greet you. Advanced divers marvel at the atmospheric reflections in deeper caves.

The Workshop

1. Photography skills and techniques that will be covered during the 4 day workshop
 - a. Review your procedures for keeping yourself, your equipment and the environment safe before, during and after photographing underwater.
 - b. Planning your underwater macro photography shoot
 - c. Pre-visualising your intended macro shot – framing, lighting, depth of focus, approaching the subject, bracketing, working the subject
 - d. Taking well framed, well-focussed, well-lit close-up and macro subjects
 - e. Planning your underwater wide-angle photography shoot
 - f. Pre-visualising your intended macro shot – framing, lighting, depth of focus, approaching the subject, bracketing, working the subject
 - g. Finding your preferred ambient light background
 - h. Taking well framed ambient-light wide-angle landscapes, subjects and silhouettes
 - i. Lighting of foreground subjects in wide-angle shots
 - j. Taking well framed mixed-light wide-angle

k. Finding your creative style

2. The workshop consists of four elements:

- a) Classroom modules
- b) Dive modules with mentor available
- c) Independent dive modules to practise your skills
- d) Classroom review and mentoring of your results

Weather conditions will determine both the dive locations and the order in which the types of dive will be done. This in turn will determine the order of the classroom sessions.

A welcome talk will be held on arrival, covering core techniques, safe diving practices for photographers and care of underwater camera equipment. During the workshop you will have mentored and independent dives which will occur at various times of the day, morning, afternoon, evening and at night. On site your mentor will brief you about the dive site, and talk to you about the shoot you will be practising on the day. After, a break will follow for you to have lunch at a nearby eating place or if you prefer you can bring your own. At the end of each workshop day you will have an image review session where mentoring will be provided on the participant's results.

Qualifications

- a. Participants need to be **18 years and over**.
- b. A diving qualification is required – minimum PADI Advanced certificate or equivalent. Good to perfect buoyancy control is a prerequisite for underwater photography. You should also have full insurance such as provided by DAN Europe.

Photography Skill Level

- a. Essential is that you have experience of using your rig underwater.
- b. You should be familiar with your rig's auto and manual modes for focus, exposure and strobe/flash controls
- c. When registering, send us examples of your best shots, and shots you would like to improve – macro and wide-angle

Camera Requirements

Underwater camera or camera you are required to bring – please let us know what equipment you will be using when you register. If necessary we can adjust the content of the workshops.

1. DSLR or mirrorless camera which takes exchangeable lenses
2. Underwater housing – we will be diving to maximum 40m
3. A wide-angle lens (ideal is in range 13mm – 20mm)
4. A macro (close focus to 1:1) lens (ideal is in range 105 – 200mm)
5. Lighting – preferably two strobes/ashes or video lamps, on adjustable arms
6. Focus lamp or torch, also on an adjustable arm
7. When completely assembled, your rig should be neutral or slightly negative buoyancy underwater. Come prepared to adjust for slightly higher buoyancy in Mediterranean waters.
8. Computer setup to download, examine and edit your images.
9. Any more limited camera gear than this, will constrain the range of photographic techniques you can experience in these workshops

Equipment needed to perform a dive

Each participant is responsible to bring their own dive equipment. Dive Systems can provide rental equipment at their normal rental prices.

- a. Wetsuit – we recommend a full wet suit or 5mm semi-dry, hood and booties. Photographers stay stationary for long periods underwater, so need more thermal protection than average divers. A full wet suit also gives some protection against scrapes and injuries. Gloves are permitted in Malta.
- b. Mask, fins, snorkel
- c. Dive tool (knife)
- d. BCD
- e. Dive Systems provides weight belts and weights. We recommend you bring your own oouch-style weight belt as it is then easier to adjust your weights for the perfect buoyancy required for underwater photography.
- f. 1st & 2nd stages, with octopus and pressure gauge
- g. Dive computer
- h. Lamp/torch with lanyard that can be hung on your BCD
- i. You might also consider an underwater magnifier and blow bottle

Price

€1475.00 per person

- **€500.00 per person** non-refundable deposit is required to reserve your place
- **€975.00** to be paid by 31st May 2024

After 31st May 2024 full payment of **€1475.00 per person** is required in order to secure your place.

There are only **10 spots** available for this workshop and participants are accepted on a first come first serve basis. In order to secure your place we ask you to make a non-refundable deposit of **€500.00** euro upon registration. [BOOK NOW](#)

For registration <https://forms.gle/2m3zLa9s7J5vZSHX6>

Contact **Celine Farrugia** for enquiries on info@discerngroup.com.mt or call on +356 79237295

Included in your price

The Workshop, a mix of shore and boat dives in Malta and Gozo, mentor on dive site and in the classroom, instructor as guide, tanks, weights, oxygen and first-aid kit. Land transport to and from Dive Systems to shore-dive sites and back. At the dive centre you will have access to dive kit storage, lockers, washing facilities, showers and use of a classroom.

Flights and accommodation

Everyone is free to choose and book their own flight and accommodation. The workshop will start daily from Dive Systems which are located in Sliema. There are different types of accommodation to suit different budgets in this area for you to choose from.

Underwater Photographer Mentor



Malcolm H. Ross is PADI Master Instructor #31684, (certified 16 August 1994). He started diving in 1986 and became a PADI Open Water Instructor within one year. In 1989 he was certified as a PADI Underwater Photographer Speciality Instructor by Kurt Amsler at the PADI European College in Cannes. He has taught diving with PADI dive schools in Darmstadt and Munich, Germany, San Francisco and Malta. He has certified 240 divers at all levels, including 28 PADI Underwater Photographers, staffed instructor development courses.

Malcolm has thousands of logged dives, including German and Austrian mountain lakes, Spanish Costa Brava, French Riviera, Croatia, Malta, Red Sea, Maldives, Cuba, Aruba, Bonaire, Northern California, Galapagos, Australian Great Barrier Reef and Ningaloo Reef, Palau, Truk Lagoon, Solomon Islands, and New Britain, New Ireland and Milne Bay in Papua New Guinea, Lembah Straits, Raja Ampat and Triton Bay in Indonesia.

Malcolm has participated in nearly 30 underwater photography expeditions to the Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea, Galapagos and Indonesia, under the mentorship of Chris Newbert, who produced “Within a Rainbowed Sea” (the most award winning photography

book ever printed) and “In a sea of dreams”, two of the most widely sold “coffee-table” format books of underwater photographs.

Despite over 10,000 images, he has restricted showings to friends and colleagues, apart from the chapter on underwater photography in a German dive encyclopaedia, a few pictures published as part of newspaper articles and a collection with Alamy.com. He is currently preparing his collection of images for a coffee-table book, his own web site and for placement with additional photographic stock agents.

Between dives, Malcolm is an independent Management Consultant with 40 years + experience in mobile communications. He is also developing a process for turning starting new ventures into a career choice, rather than a risky adventure. Malcom is an active member of the *Malta Photographic Society* and from time to time he delivers presentations on Underwater Photography to its members.

This workshop is being organised by **Discern Group** in collaboration with the **Malta Photographic Society** which was founded in 1961 with the intention of fostering friendship through photography. It also serves as a learning platform to all enthusiasts eager to increase their knowledge in the skills of practising photography. Furthermore, we have engaged **Dive Systems** who have been at the forefront of diving in Malta for the past 40 years providing a mix of fun, safety and excellent diving and are also founding members and actively involved with the Malta Professional Diving School Association (PDSA).

