

# Treasure Coast Beach Diving Sites

## Sebastian to St. Lucie Inlet

Reefs which are located on the East Coast of Florida from Sebastian to St.Lucie Inlet are generally shallow - anywhere from 6 ft to 20 ft in depth. When conditions are favorable (calm seas with little or no swells) there are many locations which can be accessed from the shore. When the sea is rough, these areas can be dangerous and usually provide no visibility when there is any type of swell or wave. This is because shallowness of the reefs and the fact that there is no filtering effect of the water. Clarity is generally due to a calm, flat sea where the turbidity settles to the bottom. A calm sea is usually due to west winds or a southwest wind which gives us a bit of a current pushing in the clearer Gulf Stream waters. The weather conditions are so unpredictable in these areas that one can hardly plan on making a scheduled dive. Most is done sporadically or during a clear spell. Calling for dive conditions is always recommended. Or Sign up for the Clear Water reports at [www.deepsix.com](http://www.deepsix.com) we will send you an E-Mail of the dive conditions for their respective. The Following is a listing of known dive sites accessible by public and semi public beaches. Semi public meaning that there may or may not be parking nearby, but if found, you can walk to the beach via an accessible walkway. Remember, a diver down flag is required at all times while persons with snorkeling or scuba equipment are in the water. Salt water licenses are required for collecting.

**1. Sebastian Inlet N. & S. Jetty** (15 mi. N. of Rt.60 on SR A1A)  
Warning: This is a state park and a navigable inlet. It is hazardous due to boats, fishing line, and strong tidal currents. Popular with jet skiers, sail boarders and surfers. Divers should be warned this is a hazardous area and is not recommended for sport diving.

**2. Inlet Cove Tidal Pool** (15 mi. N. of Rt.60 on SR A1A)  
Located on the North Side of the Inlet State Park is a shallow tidal pool with a sand bottom composition teeming with tropical fish, crabs, starfish, shells, shrimp, squid and lobster. There is a small rock jetty enclosing the pool with a 200 ft. wide opening into the inlet. Manatees are commonly seen swimming in the pool. The area is safe as long as you stay well inside the rock boundary, especially during an out going tide. Going too close to the edge of the jetty could be very dangerous causing one to be pulled too far off shore with the current. The safest time to explore this tidal pool is during an in-coming high tide, as the current is then moving toward the shore line. Young snorkelers should be supervised at all times.

**3. Sebastian South Beach Park** (14 mi. N. of Rt. 60 on SR A1A)  
This is one of the newest parks, with plenty of parking. The reef is close to the shoreline with only 3 to 6 feet of depth on the first and second reefs. The reef line extends as far out as 200 yards where the depth reaches approximately 20 feet. With the inlet less than one mile away, tidal currents are strong, out-going tides may bring debris causing poor vis.

**4. El Capitana Wreck & Museum** (13.5 mi. N. of Rt. 60 on SR A1A)  
Museum is about the 1715 Silver Plate Fleet Wrecks run by the State. It's neat and interesting; worth the entry fee. This is a semi public access for you cannot dive directly from the museum due to a large rock sea wall that blocks access, but if you park along the river just north of the museum, you will see trails that lead to the beach. Be prepared for a walk. The reef is 20 feet from the beach in 3 to 6 feet of water and further from shore reaches 20 ft deep. This is a state wreck site and in-water salvaging is illegal. One may stumble across a cannon or cannon ball. Remember, these wrecks were wooden ships which have deteriorated completely, the only remnants being made of metal and stone.

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**5. Indian River County Access** (12.5 miles N. of Rt. 60 on SRAiA)  
There are numerous accessess similar to this with limited parking (from 2- 6 cars, paved and unpaved). Caution should be used to avoid getting your car stuck in areas with soft sand. This particular area has access tucked between two private your car stuck in areas with soft sand. This particular area has access tucked between two private beach homes, so it is easy to miss if you don't watch for it carefully as you drive along A1A. Just north of the museum along State Road A1A, there is only soft sand parking, so use caution. This is the closest access to the Green House wreck and is a popular site for people using metal detectors on the beach. The reef is close to shore, reaching a depth of 20 ft. as you progress out to Sea

**6. Golden Sands** (9.5 mi. N. of Rt. 60 on SR A1A)  
The newest public beaches with facilities, ample parking, and life guards. This area is virgin territory with very few divers, except for the treasure salvors. There are more quadrant markers for triangulation along this beach than in any other. The salvors have many a wreck pegged out here. The reef is 10 to 20 feet deep approximately 100 feet from the beach. There are several small crevices intertwining through the reef, providing an interesting dive.

**7. Wabasso/Disney Resort Beach** (8 mi. N. of Rt. 60 - on SR A1A and SR 510)  
SR 510 is the closest access from the north via US1 or Interstate 95 to all the public beach dive sites from Sebastian Inlet area, all the way down through Vero Beach to Ft. Pierce Inlet State Park. This beach dive site has good parking with facilities, it is right next door to the Walt Disney Beach Resort. The reef is very shallow in this area and close to the beach.

**8. Sea Grape Beach** (6.5 mi. N. of Rt. 60)  
Limited parking. No facilities. Nested in between two condominiums complexes. The reef is about 100 feet from the beach. It is a shallow, low lying reef with small ledges. Due to its close proximity to a popular treasure wreck site. Clarity is not always good due to the blower activity of the salvors.

**9. Turtle Trail** (5.8 miles N. of Rt.60)  
Limited parking and no facilities. This is a popular metal detecting area. This is a marked treasure wreck site. Triangulation markers are used by the salvors for locating the treasure sites. The reef is a fair dive site with low lying ledges. To the south, you will see a point jutting out from the shoreline, marking where the reef line is only 50 ft. from it. It is quite shallow in this area, and when the salvors are in the area the clarity is usually poor due to the blowers used for searching.

**10. Tracking Station** (1.8 miles N. of Rt. 60)  
This beach access has life guards, facilities and ample parking. The reef is "scrub-like" approximately 100 ft. from the shore line ranging 15-20 feet in depth. Another 100 ft. from the shore lies a nicer reef with well-defined ledges, affording nice hiding places for the abundant lobsters. Just south, directly in front of the tracking station, is a trans-Atlantic cable, approximately five inches in diameter which extends to Puerto Rico. If you swim to the south, you should cross it. If you are past the tracking station, you missed it. Once on the cable, you may follow it to the east to locate excellent reef structures.

**11. Vero Beach Inn and Pier** (1.5 miles N. of Rt. 60)  
Private beach with a pier to the north. The reef begins approximately 150 feet from the beach with good ledges. Caution should be taken near the pier to avoid entanglement in fishing lines, both underwater and on the surface.

**12. Jaycee and Conn Beach** (1 mile N. of Rt. 60)  
Nearly one mile long with a boardwalk extending from one end to the other, this is the largest beach area in Vero Beach. Facilities are located in Jaycee Park on the north end of the beach, where there are also life guards and ample parking. The reef is unique in the area with a wide variety of shapes and interesting formations. Within 100 feet from shore is a low-lying ledge with flat areas good for lobstering. From 150 to 300 feet from shore, there are large swim through areas with cave-like openings. On the south end, there are flat rock formations that slope to within five feet of the surface with the maximum depth of 20 feet. This is an excellent reef for divers whether exploring or hunting. It is highly recommended that a surface float be carried in addition to the required dive flag.

**PADI**

**13. Breconshire Wreck** (Boiler Wreck) (Sexton Plaza, end of Rt. 60)  
Between the Holiday Inn and Ocean Grill Restaurant is the Sexton Plaza, a drive-through parking lot overlooking the ocean. About 300 feet from the beach is a large boiler protruding through the water visible from the shore. This is a nice dive during calm seas. There are two other boilers next to the one which is visible from shore. This wreck was caused by the ship running aground and is now trapped between the fourth and fifth reef lines. There is a substantial amount of structure in only 15-20 feet of water, so it is better to avoid it on days with poor visibility and strong surge. There are barnacles, sharp objects and other growth on it which could be hazardous to a diver during less than optimum conditions. On the reefs in the area, some of the reef line extends to within four feet of the surface, with the maximum depth on the sand bottom at 20 feet. The reef line directly in front of the Holiday Inn is shallower close to shore and becomes larger further from shore.

**14. Humiston Park** (4 blocks S. of Rt. 60 on Ocean Dr.)  
This park has all facilities, lifeguards and ample parking. There are five reef areas with sand between each. Only 20 feet from the shoreline, the first reef line begins. It is very shallow and quite silty with very little life. As you progress further from the shore and reach the next 4 reefs, they become progressively larger and reach farther toward the surface with a stair-step effect. There are abundant fish and lobsters on these reefs, an all-around good dive site.

**15. Flamevine** (5 blocks S. of Rt. 60 on Ocean Dr.)  
This is a public street with only street parking for offices and apartments. The reef here is the beginning of the reef known as "Rio Mar Reef". Close to shore, the reef is "scrub" and 150 feet from shore there are two more reefs. They range from 2 to 9 feet high. Progressing out 300 feet from shore, the reef is very large, appearing as a wall with huge ledge openings. As you move further from shores, the reefs become larger and blend together to form one reef, the Rio Mar Reef.

**16. Rio Mar** (1715 Wreck Site) (8 blocks S. of Rt. 60 on Ocean Dr.)  
This is the best reef on the east coastline and is located only 50 feet from the beach. At low tide, it protrudes from the water and is visible from shore. This reef, unlike the others, is solid even in the shallow areas (15 feet or less) with many cracks, crevices, and ledges which extend for at least 200 yards. Many lobsters make their home here along with large grouper and even nurse sharks. Toward the south end in front of the golf course is where the 1715 wreck is located. Salvor boats are common in this area, and consequently stir up quite a bit of silt. There is very limited parking, only about 4 spaces that are quite often taken by early morning. There are no facilities.

**17. South Beach** (End of the 17th St. Causeway)  
This is NOT a good dive site because the reef is over one mile from shore. This is a sandy cove area. Next nearest beach dive is on private property with no public access until you reach Round Island Beach Park.

**18. Round Island Beach** (5.5 miles S of 17th Street Causeway on A1A)  
(8 miles N. of North Beach Causeway on A1A) This site can be easily missed if you are not observant. Look for a concrete sign with a lot of jungle foliage. There is only dirt parking and no facilities. The reef is 150 feet from the beach and is well-formed with large ledges. Beyond the first and second reefs is only sand with small outcroppings, so stay within 200 feet of the beach.

**19. Paddle Wheeler Wreck** (8.5 miles S of 17th St. Causeway Bridge on A1A)  
Look for a sand and gravel parking area on the side of the road with a telephone pole in the center. This Civil War Paddle Wheeler sunk in a sandy area 15-20 feet deep, approximately 250 feet from the shore. On calm, clear days, you can easily spot it from the beach by the dark patches in the water. The gunnels protrude from the sand approximately 4 feet and there is quite a bit of visible structure, boilers and pipes with sharp edges. Use caution on days with surge and limited visibility. This is an excellent site for tropicals with some lobsters and spearfishing.

**20. Pepper Park** (1715 Wreck Urca De Lima) (11 miles S. of 17th St. Causeway on A1A)  
This is a more popular beach dive site located north of Ft. Pierce. It is a large beach with plenty of parking, lifeguards and facilities. The reef begins about 150 feet from the beach reaching 10 to 15 feet of depth. There is good lobstering, but spearfishing is not permitted.

**21. Walton Rocks** (11 miles S. of Sea Way Dr. on A1A) (5 miles N. of Jensen Beach Causeway on A1A) This is another large beach area with plenty of parking, lifeguards and facilities. The reef is only 50 feet from the shoreline in about 6-10 feet of water. As you progress toward the north, the reef is a little farther from shore and the water becomes deeper. Caution should be used on days with surge

**22. Jensen Beach** (Directly from the Jensen Causeway on A1A)  
This reef is located a little further from shore, approximately 150 yards. It is a relatively small reef area. Head to the north to find it. The depth is about 15-20 feet. There are some large lobsters which have been found here. There is also good spearfishing and tropical fish are abundant. Since there is a relatively long swim out to this reef, we highly recommend use of a surface float.

**23. House of Refuge** (4.8 miles S of Jensen Causeway on A1A) (Turn into Indian River Plantation)  
This is an old coastal rescue station which has been turned into a turtle museum. There is no beach here, only a rocky, cliff-like entry. Use extreme caution in this area. All the diving is along the rocky cliff. Don't dive on days with surge or waves. It is a good area for tropicals. The depth is only 3-5 feet. There is also part of an old schooner located here about 150 feet from shore directly from the house in approximately 15 feet of depth. Parking here is very limited.

**24. Martin County Beach Access** (5.6 miles S. of Jensen Causeway on A1A) (Turn into Indian River Plantation)  
This is a unique and interesting dive site. The parking is limited and there are no facilities. The entry must be made from a dune crossing which goes directly into the water. Use caution because it is quite shallow and you must walk over the rocks to reach deeper water. Snorkel out until you reach deeper water. This area is just outside the bathtub reef with excellent reef structure approximately 100 feet from shore with a depth of 15 feet.

**25. Bath Tub** (6 miles S. of Jensen Causeway on A1A) (Very end of Indian River Plantation Rd.)  
This is the last beach dive site located on Hutchinson Island. There is a large beach with plenty of parking, facilities and lifeguards. On the inside of the "bathtub", the depth is only 2 feet, and very difficult if not impossible to swim over the reef to the other side. To access the outside, walk about 150 feet past the south end of the beach and wade in, snorkel to the south until you can see an opening through the reef. The second and third reefs are excellent and are within 150 feet from the shore. There is excellent lobstering, spearfishing and tropicals.

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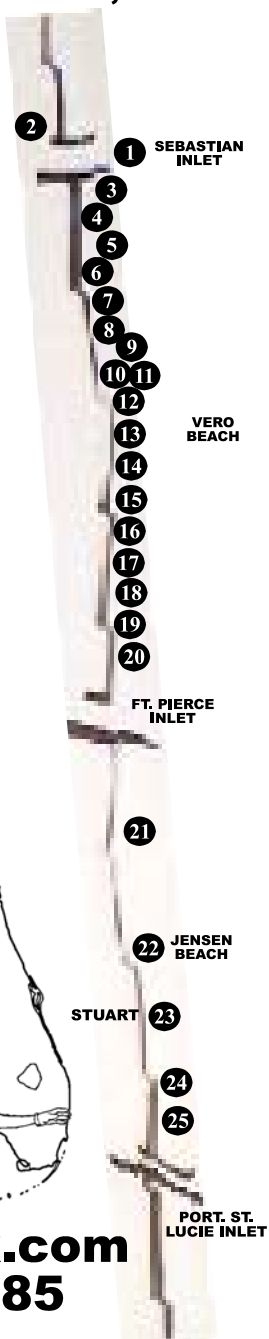
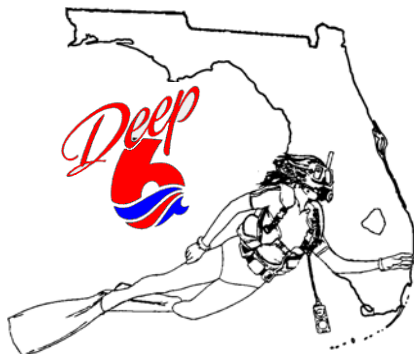
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# Beach Dive Sites

Sebastian Inlet, Vero Beach,  
Ft. Pierce, Jensen Beach, Stuart

1. Sebastian Inlet
2. Inlet Cove Tidal Pool
3. Sebastian South Beach
4. El Capitana & Museum
5. Indian River Access
6. Golden Sands
7. Wabasso Beach
- 7a. Disney Resort
8. Sea Grape Beach
9. Turtle Trail
10. Tracking Station
11. Vero Beach Inn & Pier
12. Jaycee and Conn Beach
13. Breconshire Wreck
14. Humiston Park
15. Flamevine
16. Rio Mar
17. South Beach
18. Round Island Park
19. Paddle Wheeler Wreck
20. Pepper Park
21. Walton Rocks
22. Jensen Beach
23. House of Refuge
24. Martin County Beach
25. Bath Tub



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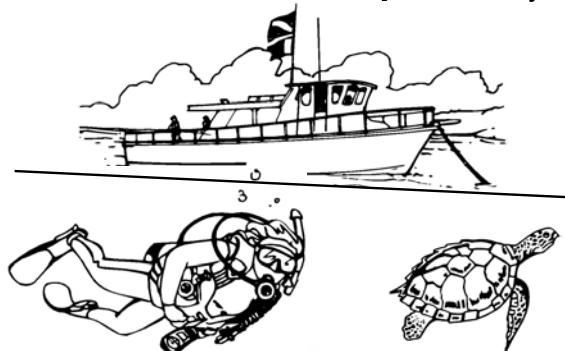
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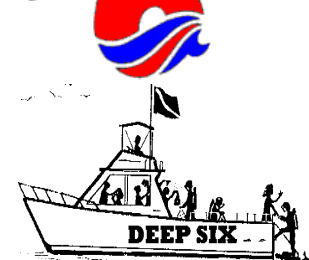
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