

A.C. Frieden Researches Dive Scenes in Bonaire, Caribbean

KRALENDIJK, Bonaire, Caribbean Netherlands (May 23, 2014) – Novelist A.C. Frieden arrived in Bonaire, in the Dutch Caribbean, for a week of scuba diving, including researching underwater scenes for an upcoming thriller and a short story. Having recently completed his PADI divemaster certification, Frieden is eager to go in search of captivating locations on the island that could be included in a fast-paced thriller scenario. He went diving at ten sites, including several off the unpopulated Klein Bonaire and a night dive at the Salt Pier on the southwestern end of the island. He also dove off the island's east coast, known for its stronger currents and larger marine life.



(Above) A.C. Frieden dives the Hilma Hooker wreck, a drug smuggling vessel seized by police but which later sank under mysterious circumstances. The wreck lies off the west coast of Bonaire.

Bonaire, together with the nearby islands of Aruba and Curaçao, forms the group known as the ABC islands, located only 60 miles from Venezuela's northern coast. Unlike the other two islands, Bonaire, with its small permanent population of fewer than 18,000, recently became a special municipality of the Netherlands, and is far less developed for general tourism. Instead, it has become a beacon for divers and nature lovers. Bonaire has over 450 species of fish and is encircled by a coral reef that is easily accessible from shore along the western and southern sides, which makes it an ideal place for shore divers. Most of the island's coastline is a protected marine sanctuary, and the ecology is further preserved by the Washington Slagbaai National Park, which takes up most of the northwestern part of the island.

The island's capital still shows its Spanish and Dutch colonial influences. Bonaire were discovered in 1499 by the Spaniards, who eventually settled, but the Dutch conquered the island in 1636. Britain took temporary control of Bonaire during the Napoleonic Wars in the early 1800s but returned it to the Dutch in 1814. The island's official language is Dutch, as it is legally part of the Netherlands. However, the most common language is Papiamentu, a form of Creole.

"As an avid diver—and now a divemaster, too—I'm eager to weave scuba-related scenes into my thrillers, as I did most recently in *The Serpent's Game*," Frieden said. "Bonaire offers many choices, including the sunken *Hilma Hooker* wreck that was used by drug traffickers until it was intercepted by police and later sank."



(Above) *Novelist A.C. Frieden prepares to dive the Cargil-managed Salt Pier in Bonaire.*



(Above) *A giant sea turtle passes by novelist A.C. Frieden during a dive on the east coast of Bonaire.*



(Above) A.C. Frieden aboard a rigid-hulled inflatable boat after a dive off Bonaire's eastern coast.

Using the island's renowned Buddy Dive Resort as his base, A.C. Frieden managed to see and film a wide variety of marine life, including stingrays, sea turtles, spotted Moray eels, trunk fish, parrot fish, Spanish lobsters, lion fish, jelly fish and more. "This is certainly one of the best islands to dive in the Caribbean," added Frieden. He also picked out three dives sites that will be featured in his upcoming novels.

About the author: A.C. Frieden is a Chicago-based fiction author, lawyer, pilot, divemaster, and former army sniper and biologist. His works include the Jonathan Brooks thriller series as well as other fiction and non-fiction books. For more info, visit his website at www.acfrieden.com and his blogs. His novels are published by Avendia Publishing (print) and Down and Out Books (ebooks).

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To contact the author, visit his official website or email his publishers:

Avendia Publishing
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