



DIVER PROFILE



■ WHERE DID YOU LEARN TO DIVE?

● I've wanted to dive since I can remember, when other children played with Barbie Dolls, I was a deep sea diver. I did a PADI Open Water course at the Central Club in London, then one weekend we drove to Stoney Cove. I was given a small semidry to wear. It took an hour, two other girls, much swearing and a tube of KY to put it on. I remember thinking, "**** if it is this much palaver to go diving why do people do it". And then we dived. What a surprise. There were rocks on the bottom, and fish.

■ WHAT TYPE OF DIVER ARE YOU?

● Since I learnt to dive in 1992, I've done about 5,000 dives both in this country and abroad. Professionally speaking I am a PADI IDC Staff Instructor, a BSAC Advanced Instructor and Advanced Diver, a DAN Oxygen Instructor, an IANTD Normoxic Trimix Diver, and a TDI Nitrox Diver, and I'm qualified to dive Ray, Dolphin and Inspiration rebreathers. I guess that means I am beginning to become a diver then.

■ WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE PIECE OF KIT?

● This is a very difficult question because I do like my toys. One piece of kit I use every day is my Suunto Stinger. It's great for timing when I am cooking, or letting me know how long I've got left before I need to get back to the car (to avoid a parking ticket). Diving wise, I really fancy a pair of Excellerating Force Fins as they significantly reduce the stress on the muscles at the top of my legs and they look pretty luscious in translucent colours. A bit like a high class boiled sweetie.

■ FAVOURITE DIVE SITE?

● I like Italian food and I like Indian food. Both are wonderful for different reasons and it is the same with diving. Ghamila in Arabic means beautiful, and there is a dive site in Sharm el Sheikh called Ras Ghamila. (Beautiful head). So for me Ras Ghamila always has been a very gentle happy dive, that I never got tired of guiding.

Then there is the grown up temperate water diving off Cornwall and Scotland. Temperate water diving is cool - in all senses of the word. I feel privileged to have experienced the tranquility of the Tabarka in Scapa Flow, and the plethora of gaudy vibrant life at St Kilda where it looks as though someone has stuck green dolly mixtures all over the rocks!

■ BEST COUNTRY VISITED?

● The Orkneys have a wild splendour and loneliness that is haunting and memorable. But then there is Canada and the St Lawrence River. I dived the river one autumn when the trees were aflame. The wrecks of the St Lawrence are incredible. Intact, wooden 200 year old wrecks in warm (22 degrees), fresh water with 20 metres viz. Alternatively I love Egypt and it's culture, people, land and seascapes.

■ WHAT MOTIVATES YOU TO GO DIVING?

● There is something indefinable that draws me to diving, I don't know how to tell you what it is, but it runs through my soul. Over the years I dived whenever I could, spending numerous weekends underwater. Now I am a bit more picky and don't get so excited about hurling myself into the nearest scummy puddle to get wet. Things feel right underwater, I'm happier and more relaxed when I am by water; which is ironic considering I currently live in the middle of the country.

■ DREAM DIVE BUDDY?

● I have to confess 'absolute pin up dream dive buddy' would be a tough choice between George Clooney and Colin Firth. They both have 'pwarh' factor, but for me looks are not everything and they also strike me as intelligent and down to earth men who would probably get a great kick out of diving. That said, I would be very curious to dive with Trevor Norton, a Professor of Marine Biology at Liverpool University. I've heard him speak on a couple of occasions and read one of his books. He's witty, entertaining and imparts knowledge in such an amiable way that it suddenly slams into place why certain marine life has the thickness, shape of shell and foot that it has.

One man that I would also really like to take diving would be my father. He originally trained as a marine biologist so I would like to take him diving around the Western Isles and show him the castanet swimming scallops, and the Velvet Crabs with berry red eyes.

■ DREAM DIVE DESTINATION?

● My other half promised me when we started dating that we would go to the Maldives on a liveboard. Two and half years later we've still not been, probably because of boring things like the mortgage. That said, for me the cream of dream diving destinations has got to be the Galapagos Islands. Probably the World's top all round dive site. Where else do you find penguins swimming around rocks where iguanas munch algae, and the seas rich with dolphins, sea lions and Hammerhead sharks. So the Galapagos is the premier site for marine life, that have evolved with a no fear of humans. Yet.

■ BEST DIVE BOOK EVER READ?

● This will probably be 'Diving Physiology in Plain English'. An absolute bible for me. It is a useful book for divers who need to refresh, or for divers expanding into other areas of diving. I really think it should be a mandatory read for any diver thinking of doing PADI Dive Master or BSAC Advanced Diver. Its content goes beyond what you need to know, and overall is informative, easy to read, and an enjoyable book.

■ WHAT BUGS YOU MOST ABOUT DIVING?

● Probably what bugs me most about diving is diver's mentality and attitude to money, training and buying equipment. We should start valuing our local dive centres and stop grinding them into the dust by arrogant attitudes and demands. By wanting a bargain we are making it increasingly difficult for small companies to remain viable. If the push for cheap equipment and cheap training continues we will be left with less choice, a few regional dive centres and a lot of poorly trained divers and instructors. Our loss.

■ HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE DIVING TO NON-DIVERS?

● With the BBC producing such beautiful programmes as Blue Planet, it has made our underwater world more accessible to people who will never see it for themselves, so this is a good way to educate, inform and delight non-divers about the life aquatic. When I am describing diving to non-divers I try to draw pictures in people's minds they will understand. When describing UK wreck diving I'd explain that we occasionally dive in light similar to summer afternoon sunshine, streaming in through great stained glass windows. And the atmosphere can be very much like a hushed cathedral. Get a good wreck dive and, for me, it is almost a religious experience.



In this edition of SCOTTISH DIVER we speak to writer, instructor, underwater model, and Diving PR girl, Rosemary (Roz) Lunn, about her love for Planet Water.