

Snorkelling

Dive the depths and explore a coral reef...

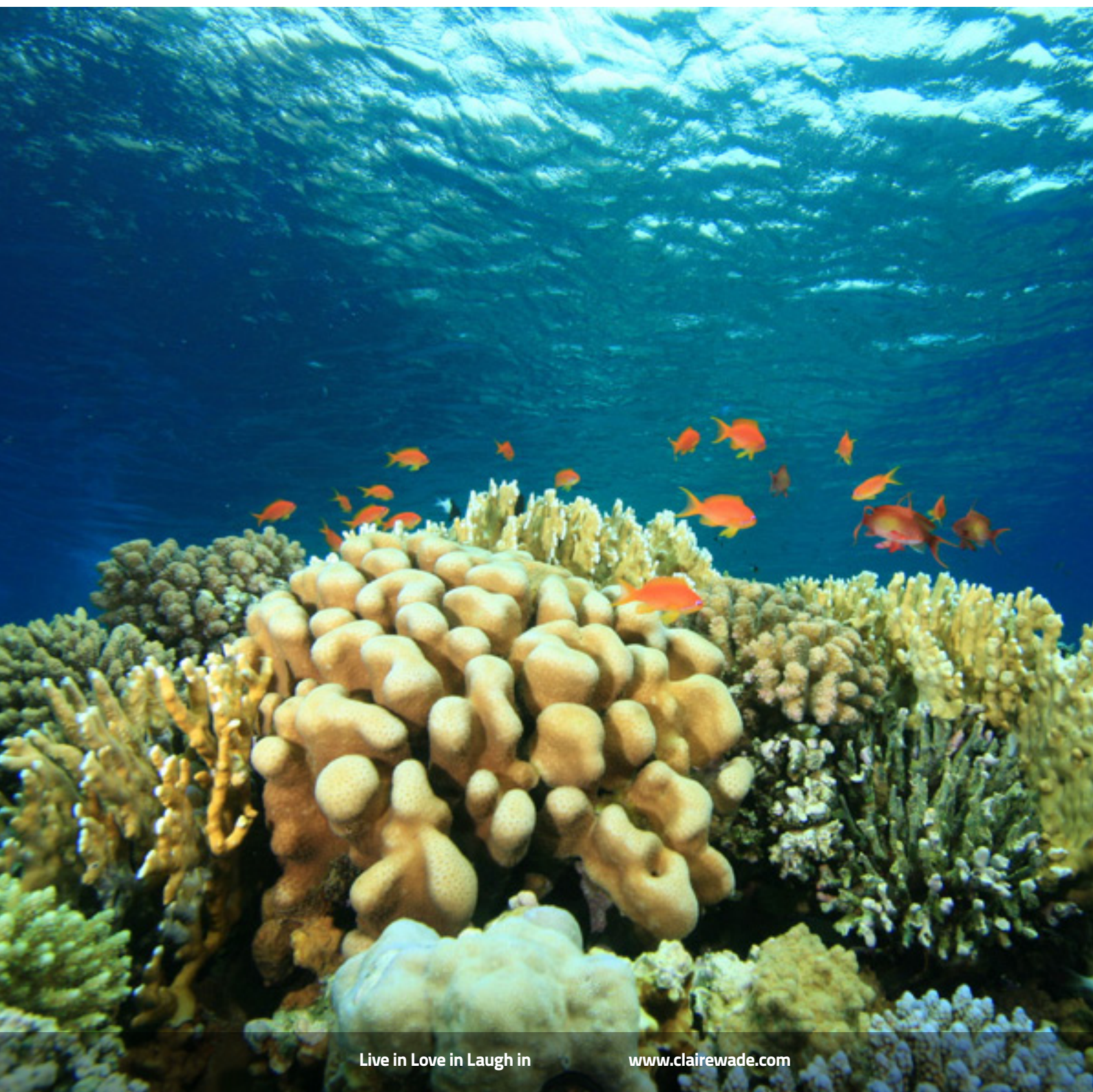
Your Day...

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Snorkelling!

You wake up in your large, comfy double bed and can hear the sound of the waves lapping against the hull of the boat. It's so soothing and relaxing that you don't feel inclined to move; but the sunshine peeping in through the curtains calls to you with the promise of a glorious day. You stretch and get up gently, changing into your swimming costume before slipping on a light T-shirt and shorts over the top.

Heading downstairs to the boat's main living room, you see the table has been laid with platters of fresh fruit for you to enjoy for breakfast. There's also a pot of tea and one of coffee, as well as a jug of fruit juice. Help yourself to whatever you fancy and then carry your plate out onto the table on the deck, the perfect place to eat and enjoy the view.

Your yacht is moored just off a beautiful looking island. You can see the golden sandy beach and lush greenery from your spot on the deck.

It's a beautiful day and the sun is already high in the sky. The light sparkles on the water, reflecting back from the tips of the gentle waves and looking down you can see through the clear turquoise water, to the seabed below.

You can clearly see fish swimming back and forth around the boat, darting here and there. They look like they're having a great time, they're free to explore the ocean and go wherever they please.

You feel the warmth of the day soaking into you and the cool water looks so inviting, you can't resist going in for a dip. You remove your clothes to reveal your bathing suit and then move to the edge of the boat, where there is a lowered platform that gives easy access into the water.

There are snorkels and masks sitting on one side and you pick a set up before sitting down on the platform to put them on. You dangle your feet into the warm water and feel the waves gently washing against you, feeling like a giant bath.

You slip the mask on and adjust the rubber strap, fitting it to your head. The world looks strange through the window of plastic that is now attached to your face.





Everything seems very far away; but you know you'll be glad of it when you can look underwater without getting salty sea water in your eyes.

Looking down, you can see a shoal of tiny fish swimming past and you watch them go before lowering yourself down into the ocean. You naturally float, bobbing up and down. It's so easy to tread water; but you realise that the sandy ground isn't far below you, in fact you're so close to shore that you only need swim a short distance and you could easily stand with your feet on the bottom.

You slip the snorkel into your mouth and hold it between your lips. It feels alien and you're unsure how to breathe through it. It takes courage to lean forward and dip your head into the water the first time; but the view makes you gasp and in doing so you draw in a lungful of air through your snorkel.

You quickly get the hang of breathing in and out through your mouth; but are amazed at how loud the noise of the air going through the snorkel sounds. It seems to dominate in the quiet stillness of the day.

You lay on your front floating in the water, staring down at the sandy bottom. You can make out a dark shadow beneath you and for a second your heart lurches, then you realise it's your own shadow. You let out a laugh which comes out as an explosion of bubbles around your mouthpiece. You stand up and your feet instantly touch the bottom, sinking into the gritty sand.

You take out the mouthpiece and it feels good to take a normal breath; but your attention is captured by the most beautiful rainbow fish just to your right. You can't resist having a closer look, so you replace the mouthpiece and dip your head back under, so that you can swim over.







You kick your legs gently, worried that you might scare it away; as you are carried forward to swim behind the fish, you realised it's paying you no real attention. It seems happy gliding through the water and you don't mind following behind.

You turn your head and notice a shoal of tiny silver fish that are moving together, catching the light as they turn in one motion, before turning again. It's as if these individual are really part of one much larger creature. You swim closer; but they scatter, darting off in all directions before returning to their shoal a short distance away.

You decide to leave them in peace and look around you for something new to explore. You see a gentle movement of rainbow colours, reds, pinks, blues, oranges and greens – you swim across and realise that these plants floating in the current are part of a coral reef.

Among the fronds of plants that grow on the reef, your eyes focus on the hundreds of fish that are swimming around it.

They are all shapes and sizes, some large and round, others long and thin. There are all the colours you can imagine, bright rainbow shades of pink, red and orange, as well as more muted shades of brown, black and grey. These camouflaged fish are harder to spot as they prefer to hide in the darker shadows nears the sand. They tuck themselves away in the coral and can be almost invisible.

One black fish pops its head out as you go past, looking like a nosey neighbour seeing what's going on.





You catch a scuttle of movement and see a crab dart across the seabed before falling still as the shadow of a fish swims over it. You look up to see a bright orange and white clown fish swim so close to you that you could almost reach out and touch it. It swims up to a piece of coral which looks like a stone brain, the undulating ridges make it perfect for the clown fish to hide in.

The fish all swim in and out of the coral, appearing then disappearing, before emerging once again. You float on top of the water, looking down at them, watching the way they move together and dart apart. It's hypnotic and very relaxing and times passes quickly.

Spend as long as you want snorkelling, follow the reef and see what other fish you can see. You're free to return to your yacht whenever you want.



Fruit Punch Recipe



After a dip in the ocean, you need a refreshing drink to sit and sip on deck. Enjoy this delicious Fruit Punch recipe.

Ingredients

- 1 cups cranberry juice
- 2 cups lemonade
- 1/2 cups orange juice
- handful of maraschino cherries
- 1/2 litre ginger ale
- 1/2 orange (sliced in circles)

Instructions

1. In a large jug, combine cranberry juice, lemonade, and orange juice. Stir in the maraschino cherries. Refrigerate for 2 hours or more.
2. When ready to serve, pour in the ginger ale. Garnish each glass with an orange slice.

Fun Things To Do!

Deep Sea Exploration

How to snorkel... www.youtube.com/watch?v=pDzXYJAe5yU

Snorkelling with fish and dolphins www.youtube.com/watch?v=QCbH9TPY-SE

Beneath the Waves, A Relaxing Coral Reef Journey
www.youtube.com/watch?v=gxAfmS0iUIM

See the Reef - Webcam

<http://explore.org/#!/live-cams/player/pacific-aquarium-tropical-reef-camera>

Music

Let's here it for Sebastian in Little Mermaid's Under the Sea...

www.youtube.com/watch?v=NPQVrjnC1jo

Movies

- *Finding Nemo*
- *The Little Mermaid*
- *Madagascar 3*
- *Jaws - the only sharks you'll see!*
- *The Life Aquatic With Steve Zissou*
- *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*
- *The Abyss*
- *Ghosts of the Abyss - Titanic documentary*
- *IMAX Deep Sea*

Books

- *The Paradise Room* by Belinda Jones
- *The Reef* by Nora Roberts
- *Time Kissed Destiny* by Constance O'Day Flannery



Make a CD Fish!



Decorate your room with these fabulous CD fish - bring the rainbows into your room

You will need...

- An old CD or a cheap blank CD - the ones that go wrong when you're trying to record a data disc are perfect!
- Coloured card
- Glue or double sided tape
- Googly Eyes
- Stickers and other decorations
- Ribbon or string

Make your fish...

1. Take a CD and lay it with the rainbow / holographic side down.
2. Cut a tail out of coloured card and stick it to the non-holographic side of the CD - either with double sided tape or glue.
3. Turn the fish over and attach a Googly eye.
4. Decorate your fish with stickers and anything sparkly that will catch the light.
5. Attach a length of ribbon by threading it through the centre hole and tying a knot. Make a loop and then hang the fish somewhere that will catch the light.

