

# Tropical Marine Science Sierra

LIVE ABOARD  
CATAMARAN  
SAILBOATS

## Details

Age: Completing grades 9-12

Location: British Virgin Islands

Length: 21 days

Arrive/Depart: St. Thomas (STT) or  
alternatively Beef Island Airport, Tortola (EIS)

Program	Start	End	Tuition
Sierra 1	Jun 20	Jul 10	\$5,195
Sierra 2	Jul 13	Aug 2	\$5,195

Sierra is home to our tropical marine biology studies program. We've partnered with expert marine biologists for a 21-day adventure set in the beautiful BVI. Visiting these islands' white sand beaches, scenic palms and dramatic rock formations, your catamaran is both your home and your launching pad for expeditions above and below the sea! If you've got a love of the deep, this is the place to put your passion into motion.

With your spacious catamaran as your base, you'll explore the BVI's coral gardens, intricate reefs and fish-filled seas. You'll go scuba diving almost every day and also some nights, applying your diving skills and your new marine biology knowledge learned that morning in your floating classroom. You'll immerse yourself in the unique island culture by sampling the incredible local food or learning the latest dance moves. You can even earn marine science credit at your high school credit through the activities, research, lectures and discussions each day.

You can earn academic credit by working with marine scientists on exciting hands-on research projects, field studies and by participating in dynamic discussions. The surrounding coral reefs, man-

groves and shallow water habitats will be your laboratory as you collect data on colorful fish and other reef species.

Your work will depend on your scuba diving in the BVI's crystal clear waters. You can earn your PADI Open Water, Advanced Open Water and some specialties. In addition to our research and classroom time, you'll lead and participate in discussions and activities as part of our True Course initiative for leadership training and personal growth.

There's always something new to try on Sierra! Snorkel in crystal clear waters. Swim in and explore the Caves at Norman Island. Go on a morning swim, organize a new activity for local children during a community service day, and pose challenging questions during our day-end discussions. It's all up to you.

In addition to the academics and outdoor adventure activities, you'll also have the opportunity to earn 20-25 hours of community service credit through our environmental service and community outreach activities. You'll teach local youth about the importance of water safety and then introduce them to the fun of snorkeling. You'll make a connection with the community through interviews with local fisherman whose livelihood depends on sea. In all these projects, you'll see the true impact of your work.



*"The program balanced the academics very well. On a given day we'd spend time in the 'classroom' and then go out in the water to demonstrate what we had just learned. Very effective and very enjoyable."*

*Hannah Armstrong, age 16  
Newton, MA*



### Scuba Diving Options

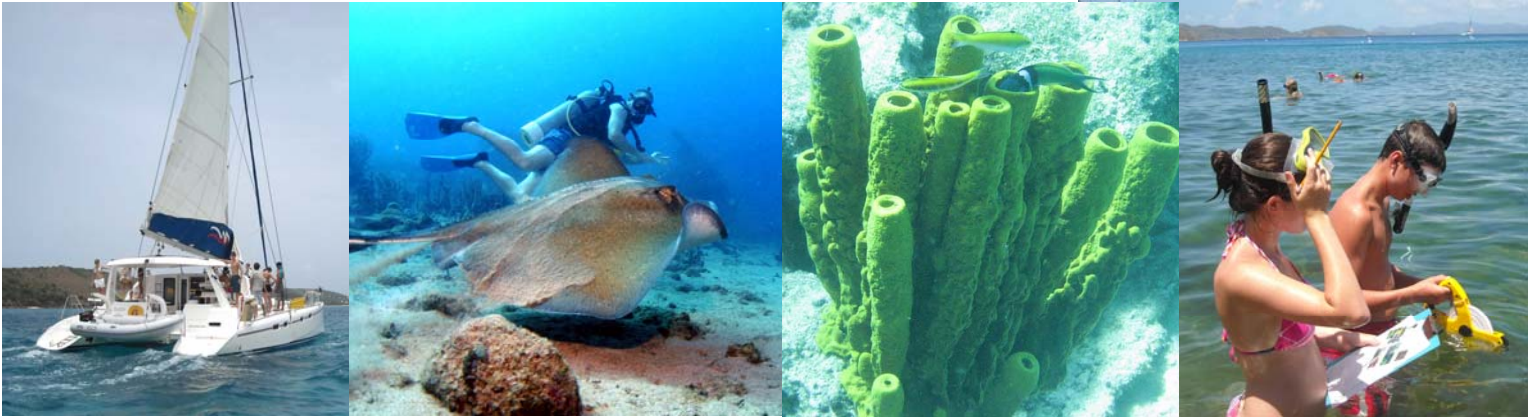
### Optional Courses

	Discover Scuba	Recreational Diving	Open Water (OW)	Advanced Open Water	Dive Specialties	EFR	Rescue Diver	DM/OWSI	ASA Basic keelboat	Academic Credit
Sierra 1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	
Sierra 2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	

### Optional Courses

Optional scuba courses include PADI Open Water and Advanced Open Water Certifications, Specialties, recreational diving, and Discover Scuba (a non-certification course for first time divers).

You can also choose to take advantage and obtain Academic Credit through your school.



### It's another great day on Sierra!

- 7:00am– Wake up to a scrumptious pancake breakfast
- 8:00am– Depart from Cooper Island and voyage to Marina Cay
- 9:00am– Learn about proper sail trim as you make your way through Sir Francis Drake Channel
- 10:30am– Arrive at Marina Cay and head ashore for a group discussion on how to identify soft coral species and the sustainability of soft corals in tropical environments
- 11:30am– Return to your boat for a microscope lab and the opportunity to explore the microstructure of various coral species
- 12:30pm– Enjoy a quesadilla lunch onboard
- 1:00pm– Take two dives with Sail Caribbean Divers. First, a skills dive on Diamond Reef where you'll continue developing your buoyancy and breathing skills. Then, a dive on Tow Rock with your underwater slate to record soft coral coverage and fish populations
- 4:00pm– Return to your boat to discuss observations, compile data, and record your entries in the ship's marine biology log
- 5:00pm– Take showers and prepare for the evening meal
- 6:00pm– Time for a delicious jerk chicken dinner and a review of today's topics and events
- 7:30pm– Head ashore for some socializing and dancing to the music of our favorite DJ "Heavy B"

### Your catamaran sailboat is your home



### Dive from our fleet of custom-built boats

**We are the only teen program with a fleet of custom-built dive boats.** That means no noisy compressor and no wet dive gear onboard the sailboat where you live. Our dive boats carry the dive equipment, tanks, BCDs, regulators, and wetsuits to each site.

**Nothing is more exhilarating than taking your first giant stride off the stern of our dive boat.** Our dive boats are comfortable and spacious with diving platforms and complete emergency equipment. Four custom-built Newton boats were specifically designed for dive enthusiasts like you.

**Learning and fun go hand in hand.** The boats are a perfect area for your knowledge reviews and discussions. When you're *Divemaster of the Day* you take your place at the helm, high up on the flybridge. It's a thrill to experience the 450hp twin diesel engines' speed and power as you steer for 'home'.



Our 36ft custom dive boat, *Discovery*.