



Welcome to Rott's Manor

Pete & Mary Clukey

Florida Thanksgiving 2007 Trip Report

[Sea Turtle Dive Club's](#) first official trip as a group...

Thursday, November 22nd, morning we met up with Keith at [American Pro Diving Center](#), our guide for the week. Then we drove a short distance from the dive shop and took a 15 minute boat ride, where we all snorkeled with some very friendly manatees. Keith served us some hot chocolate on the way back to the marina. After a quick stop at the dive shop to view the video, we all went back to Bella Oasis. Some originally had planned to stay at the Sea Grass Hotel, but the accommodations were not as advertised on their website. After a quick shower and a change, we all met up at the Monkey Bar & Restaurant for Thanksgiving lunch. We had a great time watching the Monkey's on their island. We all ate so much, that for the remainder of the afternoon most of us napped... but hey, it was Thanksgiving, it's tradition to nap after lunch. Soon we all gathered again for dinner... well, OK, we were all still pretty full, so we went back to the Monkey Bar & Restaurant for dessert!

Friday, November 23rd, was a full day of diving and water adventures. First we went snorkeling with the manatees again. And again the manatees were very active and friendly. Then we suited up and went for a cavern dive. This was exciting. Keith pointed out fossils and directed us to a swim through. After the cavern dive we had a long break for lunch. After lunch, we convoyed to our next destination, Rainbow River. At Rainbow River we had a relaxing drift dive. We sighted turtles, gar fish, and Keith even said that he saw a little gator. Pete found a shark's tooth in the river during the dive. After the drift dive, we had a short break for dinner. On our way to dinner, Cooter returned a call from her mother. Cooter's husband was injured in a horseback riding accident. He was at the hospital. Cooter decided to go home to be with her husband. The rest of us went to eat pizza at Pavarotti's in nearby Dunnellon Florida (in the Rainbow Square Plaza). Before the night dive, we got an update that Cooter's husband was in stable condition but would require surgery. The night dive was great, it was also on Rainbow River. The moon was full, and even though the dive operator required that we have dive lights, we almost didn't need them. We saw a lot of the same fish, just they weren't as active. At the end of the dive, the dive leader of the other group put on a spectacular underwater light show... sorry, I'm not going to spoil it... you'll just have to go on the dive to see it.

Saturday, November 24th, we got to sleep in. The first dive wasn't until after lunch. The guys hung out at the hotel in the morning, while Mary & Debby went to see the Homosassa Wild Animal Park that was right next door to our hotel. The park was great; most of the animals are native to Florida. Mary & Debby took their time, barely getting back to the hotel with anytime for lunch before we all met back up at the dive shop. The first dive of the day was at [Blue Grotto](#). By this time, it was just the guys diving. Mary wasn't feeling up to it. The guys had a fun time. The next dive was just down the road at [Devil's Den](#). Andrew really seemed to like this dive. There were lots of swim throughs and interesting features. After the last dive, we made our way back to the dive shop to "settle up", almost everyone purchases a video of the dives. Finally we all met at the hotel's restaurant for a nice dinner. The gator bites and prime rib were really tasty!

Sunday, November 25th, was the long drive home. Well, there you have it. We had a great time and wish everyone could have been there too.