



CONTACT: Karen Gee-McAuley
RELEVANCE PR
818-541-7724
Karen@relevancepublicrelations.com

RELEASE AT WILL

**CATALINA ISLAND –
THE TOP RATED DIVE DESTINATION IN NORTH AMERICA**

Catalina Island, located only 22 miles off the coast of Southern California, is recognized as one of the best dive sites in the world. In fact, Catalina Island has been ranked the No. 1 dive destination in North America in past issues of *Rodale's Scuba Diving* magazine, in their annual Reader's Choice Awards of the top 100 dive destinations in the world. Catalina's naturally clean and clear waters, abundant marine life, giant kelp forests and diver-friendly services have made it a renowned dive destination that attracts expert and beginner divers alike. Several dive shops on the island offer everything from introductory dives and refresher course to certifications. Introductory dives are designed to make your first-time dive safe, with certified instructors, and easy to accomplish, with all the equipment and gear included. Offshore diving and charter boat excursions are available as well as equipment sales and rentals.

Many hotels offer dive packages that include round-trip cross channel transportation, accommodations, and unlimited diving with all the tanks, weights and air fills included. Many dive shops also offer snorkeling trips and snorkel gear rentals. Some of the options are:

- Catalina Divers Supply, No. 7 Green Pleasure Pier, Avalon, 310-510-0330, www.catalinadiverssupply.com
- Catalina Scuba Luv, 126 Catalina Ave., Avalon, 310-510-2350, www.scubaluv.com

- Catalina Snorkel & Scuba Adventures, 400 Pebbly Beach Road, Avalon, 310-510-8558, www.catalinadiveshop.com
- CatalinaTours.com, 228 Metropole Ave., Avalon, 310-510-0211, www.catalinatours.com
- Dive Catalina, 107 Pebbly Beach Road, Avalon, 310-510-3175, www.snorkelingcatlina.com

Diver-friendly hotels on Catalina Island include the Seaport Village Inn (www.seaportvillageinn.com), the Hermosa Hotel (www.hermosahotel.com) and La Paloma Las Flores (www.lapalomalasflores.com).

Southern California First City-Designated Underwater Park

Casino Point Marine Park, located at the edge of the Casino Building, is Southern California's first city-designated underwater marine park. Established in 1965 by the City of Avalon as a reserve, Casino Point is the only spot within Avalon's city limits where diving is permitted. It's a popular spot for first-time divers and experienced divers alike. Because it is protected, an abundance of marine life resides in the waters, and several wrecks and artificial reefs have been established to provide additional habitats. Giant kelp forests also flourish in the park.

Annual Special Event for Divers

Each year in February, as many as 500 divers attend the annual Avalon Harbor Underwater Clean-Up. This is the only time scuba diving is allowed in Avalon Bay. The annual clean-up is a fund-raiser, with proceeds benefiting the Catalina Island Conservancy Divers and the USC Catalina Hyperbaric Chamber. The Catalina Conservancy Divers is a SCUBA support group of the Catalina Island Conservancy, a non-profit ecological organization whose mission is the restoration and protection of Catalina Island and the surrounding waters. Many hotels offer "clean-up specials" to participating divers.



Catalina Express welcomes divers year round aboard its boats from Long Beach, San Pedro and Dana Point. While traveling with dive gear can be cumbersome, options include advance shipping on Catalina Freight or Catalina Flying Boats, and leaving tanks at home and renting them on island. For more information or questions call Catalina Express at 800-429-4601.

About Catalina Island and Catalina Express

Located 22 miles off the coast of Southern California, Catalina Island is accessible by boat from three ports via Catalina Express: San Pedro, Long Beach and Dana Point. Catalina Express offers up to 30 daily departures and year-round service to Avalon and Two Harbors, transporting nearly one million passengers annually. It offers comfortable airline-style seats and grouped table seating. Traveling to Catalina Island in as little as one hour, each vessel was designed and built/purchased specifically for comfort and speed. Catalina Express is an unparalleled resource in Southern California, and one of the world's most respected ferry fleets. For information and reservations, call 800-429-4601, or visit

[Catalina Express](#).

[Catalina Island's](#) clear blue waters and Mediterranean climate and ambiance are a Shangri-La. This laid-back island town is chock full of places to eat, drink, shop. Catalina has a wealth of natural and cultural resources, unique animals and plants found nowhere else on earth. Sightseeing opportunities are numerous and varied from escorted tours around town, adventure rides into the interior, jeep eco tours, hummer rides, to zip lines, rock climbing and undersea adventures. Independent activities are plentiful, camping, hiking, snub, diving, snorkeling, kayaking, spa treatments, beach lounging, golf, motor boating, parasailing, fishing, boat rides down the coastline and more.

