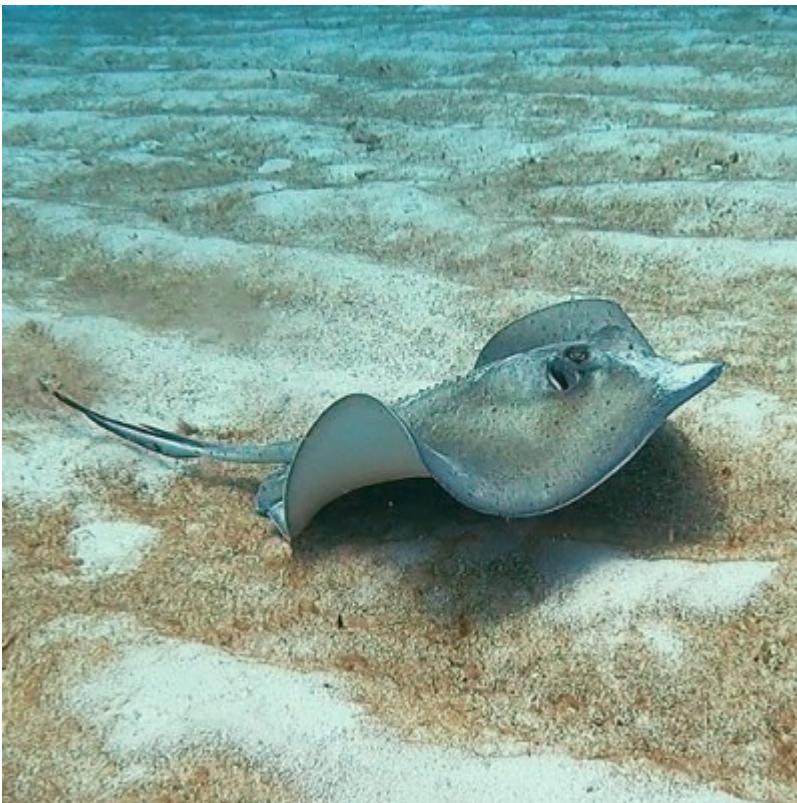


# Akumal Bay



Akumal Bay is one of the oldest resort areas along the riviera. It was first founded in 1958 by Pablo Buch Romero. Because of the easily accessible, healthy and abundant coral reef surrounding the bay, the town of Akumal was originally conceived as a community for scuba divers.



southern stingray, *hypanus americanus*

Akumal is especially well known for its Turtle population. In

fact the name Akumal means "The Place of the Turtle". Akumal Bay has a unique double reef barrier that provides excellent protection from predators for juvenile baby turtles. This is why hundreds of Turtles travel to Akumal every year to lay their eggs. The double reef attracts many, many other sea creatures too besides turtles, making the area an excellent diving location for seeing a wide variety of marine life.



green sea turtle, *chelonia mydas*

In Akumal Bay you will find an abundance of seafife, including Triggerfish, Pufferfish, Scorpionfish, Snapper, Parrotfish, Lobsters, Eels, Jacks, Grunts, Damselfish, Groupers, Boxfish, Butterfly, Barracudas, and Angelfish. There are also 3 species of Sea Turtles, plus Sharks and Rays here. There are 35 unique dive sites in Akumal Bay.



creole wrasse, *Clepticus parrae*

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The main reef and most popular diving spot is called Las Redes (The Nets) and is located directly in front of Akumal Bay. Las Redes is actually three different ranges of reefs separated by sandy channels. The shallowest portion of the reef is at 30 feet. This area attracts a lot of smaller schooling fish. The deeper part of the reef is at 50 ft. In the deeper region, there are more medium sized fish and usually many juvenile turtles. At the very lowest point of the reef, it's not uncommon to see nurse sharks and full grown adult turtles.





nurse shark, *ginglymostoma cirratum*

Right next to Las Redes is another site called La Herradura (Horseshoe) named because the stoney coral forms the shape of a horseshoe. It's common to find Stingrays and Lobsters hanging out in the horseshoe.



caribbean lobster

The Half Moon Bay (Media Luna) in Akumal is mostly shallow for diving and snorkelling so you will get excellent visibility of all its colourful fish on a calm day. Half Moon Bay has the most abundant crop of Elkhorn Corals in Akumal, and is the best spot to find Hawksbill Turtles and Spotted Eagle Rays.

At the Northern tip of Akumal, between Half Moon Bay and Akumal Bay is La Moto (Motorcycle Reef), named after a sunken motorcycle that marks the site. This is another great reef featuring plenty of life and characterized by huge coral formations at its deepest section.

If you are diving the area make sure not to miss Morgan Reef. Morgan Reef has a greater diversity of stoney coral than Las Redes, including species that are among the most important in the Mesoamerican reef. The colourful coral and abundant marine life make this a great dive to do. Morgan Reef is also a favourite hangout for Nurse Sharks and congregations of Sea Turtles.

If you are interested in Scuba Diving around Akumal you should talk to Akumal Dive Centre. They are well established, been around since 1975, and have run over 1 million dives. They have a really great location right on the beach and know the areas 35 dive sites very well. You couldn't ask for a better operator.

Turtle nesting season in Akumal lasts from May to September.

*Akumal Dive Shop Contacts:*

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*Akumal Dive Centre Contacts:*

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green moray, *Gymnothorax funebris*

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