

# WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW...

## Fort Lauderdale USA

### How to get there

Various airlines fly direct into Miami International Airport from the UK, and Fort Lauderdale is an easy 45-minute drive north on I-95. Just rent a car at the airport and you are good to go.



### When to go

Florida enjoys a warm climate during all months and can be visited year-round. Hurricane season is June to November.

**“A riot of colour exploded wherever I shone my torch, with yellow, orange, red, purple and green being the most vibrant”**

### Entry requirements

Visitors to the USA now have to pre-register their details with ESTA (Electronic System for Travel Authorisation – [www.cbp.gov/travel](http://www.cbp.gov/travel)), while still filling out a visa waiver form on the airplane. You will need the full address of your holiday accommodation for both.



### Currency

US dollar (£1 = \$1.51).



### Where to eat

YOLO on Las Olas Boulevard or Beach Place on A1A.

### Where to meet

Bar Aruba on the seafront at the end of Commercial Drive.



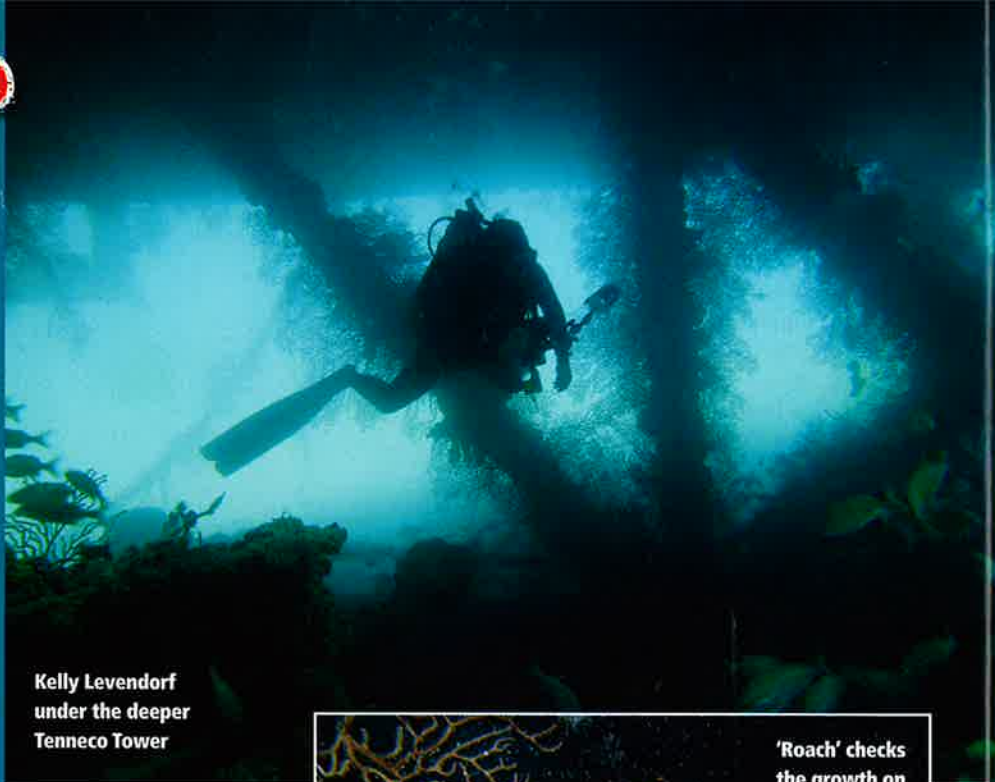
### The local brew

Budweiser, MGD, Coors – any of the major brands.



Fort Lauderdale offers something for all level of diver, and will especially appeal to wreck fanatics.

Non-divers will be happy with the vast array of land and surface watersports/activities available

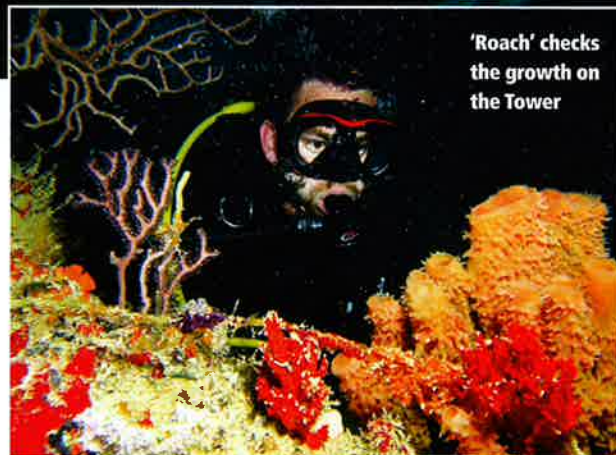


Kelly Levendorf under the deeper Tenneco Tower

In a joint venture between Broward and Dade counties, the three platforms were sunk in 1985 on a site just south of Hollywood – a position close enough to the county line to enable dive operators from Fort Lauderdale and Miami to visit them.

The Towers are located 1.7 miles offshore and were originally around 75-100 metres apart. However, when Hurricane Andrew rolled into Florida, it tossed two of the platforms together, while partially collapsing the third. The merged pair is the main dive site, sitting in some 36m, but they rise up to 20-22m, so using a suitable nitrox mix and starting at the deepest point, you can get a decent dive time working your way up, through and around the twisted structure until you arrive back at the mooring line.

Unfortunately, when I dived the Towers, the visibility was not as good as it can be, due to strong easterly winds blowing for several days previously, but this gave the whole site an eerie, atmospheric appearance, especially in the very midst of the structure.



'Roach' checks the growth on the Tower

### Conclusion

Fort Lauderdale's coastal waters contain more than enough wrecks to keep even the most manic metal-head in a state of rapture for weeks, but even those who don't get a thrill out of diving an old ship will enjoy interacting with the plentiful marine life which inhabits these artificial reefs. Generally good visibility and warm waters are other major plus-points for the region.

There are plenty of recreational activities to keep you occupied on non-diving days, or if you have non-divers in your group. If you still want to feel the water on your face, then you can choose from snorkelling, kayaking, windsurfing, water-skiing and fishing, to name but a few, and there are also plenty of land-based attractions to take in. ■

## The dive centres

I dived with two operations while in Fort Lauderdale, Pro Dive International and South Florida Diving Headquarters. • Pro Dive International is a PADI Career Development

Centre offering recreational training, instructor training and dive charters/snorkelling trips aboard its 20-metre boat Pro Diver II. [www.prodiveusa.com](http://www.prodiveusa.com) • South Florida Diving Headquarters offers recreational training and dive charters/snorkelling trips on

board its three boats, including two spacious custom-built catamarans. [www.southfloridadiving.com](http://www.southfloridadiving.com) • For a definitive list of dive centres in Fort Lauderdale, check out the Greater Fort Lauderdale Convention and Visitors Bureau website: [www.sunny.org](http://www.sunny.org)