

Roatan Honduras

My family and I were extremely lucky to have a chance to visit Roatan Honduras. Roatan is a small island off the coast of Honduras with only a few things tourist things to do. Sorry but lying in the sun does not count as an activity to me. Snorkel/Scuba Diving is the largest tourist activity but fishing was also available. Getting to Scuba Dive with my daughter, and actually swim with dolphins for almost an hour had to be the top things outside of fishing. The location we stayed at had two different boats available for fishing. One was a small "Panga" about 16 feet long with a 40hp outboard. The other was a 26' Grady White with twin 200's. I put some pictures in "All Others" to view.

I had no idea what or how to fish in this area so it was a total show up and figure it out. We had a guide scheduled, but not for several days after arriving. There was some limited fishing equipment at the place we stayed. Limited means...a couple (literally two) Rapala style stick baits, two trolling poles, and a very small spinning rod. We stopped by the store to get some gear, but really we had no idea what to get. The clerk showed us some of the basic gear to try and we bought some and headed back

We just applied some of our experience with what the grounds keeper told us to do and caught some fish. Normally we had an hour or two between different things we were doing so I would head out in the lagoon area. Mostly we were pretty much fishing off the dock or trolling inside the reef. We caught several different fish from Barracuda to Grouper. Most of the fish were released back as they were smaller fish that we did not want them to eat. Some did not appear edible or no one had ever seen them eaten. What a mistake we made. No one had told us the small fish were the best way to catch big fish in this area...and we were throwing them back. Oh well we did our conservation part. Just in case you did not know most salt water fish regardless of size have TEETH and a lot of them. One of the guys who had stayed before us literally had the last joint of his finger bit off. A Porcupine (puffer) fish got some pay back when he tried to take the hook out. Not what you want to have happen on an island in the middle of the ocean with limited medical care. (No doctor was on the island when we were there...he was on vacation. No Joke!) I guess Porcupine fish have more of a beak/shear type tooth for eating crabs, etc, and they are super sharp.

Finally it was time to get out of the Panga and into the 26' Grady White with twin 200hp 2 strokes and our guide Greg Baldwin. Greg is originally from Oregon and has fished all over the world. He was a really great guide and was a blast to spend several days fishing and talking with.

Day 1:

We take off from the dock, and this is one super nice boat for sure. I had been itching to fish out of it for five days having had to look at it every day. Greg is taking us deep sea fishing outside the reef with lures and hooks that could catch a whale. We are talking about Rapalas that were huge 9-12", and skirted jigs with hooks as big as my palm. There were some smaller skirted jigs with what looked like 8/0 hooks. I have never fished like this at all, and was kind of shocked when Greg just started putting out lures. We still had both motors running and were moving along pretty fast. I actually had to ask

how fast we were going to troll as I was learning how to fish this new way? Greg just laughed a little and said “No.....a lot faster”. I was totally amazed we were actually going to troll with 400hp!

After getting the lures out Greg tells us what to expect, where to stand, what to do, what not to do, and I am absolutely in heaven. Fishing a way I never have in 80 degree air and water temperature. I was seriously wound up...and could care less at that point if I even caught a fish. So we fish with the wind and get some black tuna and Bonita. The one Bonita my nephew caught was big, and according to Greg it was the largest Bonita he had ever caught or seen. We go to the dock to get some ice and Greg brings a friend of his out to see the Bonita. Obviously Greg is not just saying it's big he is bringing people to see it. We put it on the spring scale and it says 17lb. I don't know but that is a good fish to us. Then it was time to head back up wind. What an absolutely crazy return route. Our troll speed was just perfect to create a large bow splash, and the wind would blow it right back into the boat. The first wave just soaked us completely. Greg said he could slow down, but the troll speed would not be optimal. Simple to me...fish at optimal speed and live with the occasional wave. Well not really the occasional wave but pretty much continually. I have to say I have never been so totally soaked from head to toe every minute or so in a boat. It was absolutely crazy and fun as heck. A relative did some extra chumming on the way up wind and we headed in as it was close to the days end and we had several more to go.

Day 2

Same trolling technique with new fishing partners from the family. We headed into a different area where Greg said we had a better chance at a Wahoo. It was one of those days that had amazing weather, great fishing, with some catching. We caught a couple small black tuna. Greg showed us some amazing sights and a cool little island that reminded all of us of “Gilligan's Island”. I almost forgot we hooked up on a double of Wahoo, but could not find the school or get them to bite again. We did land both with the smaller one 15lbs and the larger one 30lbs. For me another great day fishing...but two more fishing partners were done. I thought it was a fluke when the last two said they did not want to go back out, and would rather do other vacation things. Now the latest two said the same thing. Why would anyone not want to go fishing again after catching a Wahoo?

Day 3

Everyone else bailed on fishing and went sliding down a cable. For me the answer was simple as I wished everyone a nice day as I headed down to the dock with ice, lunch, and beer. Greg and I head to another location 50 miles away. We set up do not get all four lures out before one rod starts screaming. Clickers are used on the reels to help pick up the strike. The previous fish we caught made the reels sing, but the clicking was not discernable on this fish. Greg gets me buckled in, and this fish is smoking the line off. Then nothing the fish is gone. We found several boils of tuna feeding, but they were super spooky and fled when we moved close. We did catch several tuna trolling and a pretty nice Barracuda. On the way back home we had a pod of dolphins swimming in front and around the boat. I was able to get some good video, but missed the best thing

they were doing. They would surf down the face of the boats wake, front flip backwards under the water, and then surface at the crest and surf the face again. It was a great time seeing a new area, catching some fish, and watching wild dolphins.

Ron