

Honduras, Five Ways

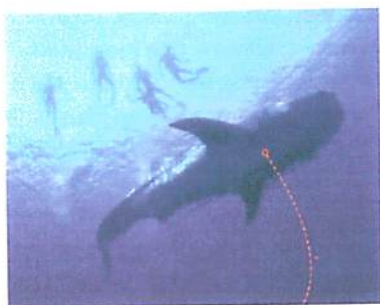
T+L'S OUTDOORS EXPERT **JEFF WISE** SHARES THE BEST OPTIONS FOR TAKING IN THE COUNTRY'S RAIN FORESTS, MAYAN RUINS, AND EPIC UNDERSEA HABITATS.



1 GO DEEP

The largest coral reef system in the Western Hemisphere lies off the three Bay Islands, about 30 miles north of the mainland. You can descend as far as 2,000 feet aboard the three-man sub **Idabel** (011-

504/3359-2887; stanleysubmarines.com; \$1,600 for two) to see such deep-dwelling rarities as the squat lobster and the six-gilled shark.



3 GO BIG

The waters off Utila, another Bay Island, are home to a thriving population of whale sharks. The **Whale Shark & Oceanic Research Center** (011-504/425-3760; wsorc.com; \$54 per person) conducts four-hour snorkeling trips to observe the gentle, plankton-eating giants, which can grow up to 60 feet long.

4 GO WILD

Near the mainland town of La Ceiba, the **Lodge at Pico Bonito** (011-504/440-0389; picobonito.com; doubles from \$240, including breakfast and two activities) occupies a 350-acre property abutting one of the largest national parks in Honduras. Guests staying at the eco-lodge's 22 cabins can enjoy hikes along trails through the surrounding rain forests or plunge down the white-water rapids of the Cangrejal River.



2 GO MELLOW

A launch whisks you across a mangrove-lined bay to Roatán's **Santé Wellness Centre** (011-504/408-5156; santewellnesscentre.com; one-hour massage \$60; doubles from \$95), a hotel and spa that offers open-air treatments in a *palapa* by the ocean. Listen to the waves as your masseuse eases out the knots with a house-made oil infused with fruits of the island-grown noni plant.



5 GO ANCIENT

Ensnconed deep in the country's mountainous interior, the exquisite little inn of **Hacienda San Lucas** (011-504/651-4495; haciendasanlucas.com; doubles from \$125, including breakfast) allows you to sway in a hammock and enjoy views out over the stepped ruins of Copán, which more than a thousand years ago marked the southern limit of the Mayan Empire.

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