



# The Art of Exploration

EXTRAORDINARY EXPLORERS AND CREATORS INSPIRE US ALL TO REACH OUR OWN POTENTIAL

The Kennedy Center  
**IMAGINATION  
CELEBRATION**  
Fort Worth



## Anne Doubilet



For the last thirty years Anne Doubilet has been roaming the world's oceans photographing the amazing creatures living in reefs along the shore and in the deep ocean. For twenty-five years she photographed for National Geographic Magazine on thirty-five stories including a two year odyssey of following sharks around the world. She has written books and articles about her experiences. Anne took her daughter, Emily, with her on many of her expeditions sometimes living on a boat for months at a time.

*Even after more than 5000 dives and hundreds of hours underwater I have never lost the sense of awe and amazement I had on my first dive. I always feel that going underwater is like visiting another planet without leaving Earth.*

### **Dive Gear:**

Extra for safety and to maximize time spent underwater

decompression gages to keep track of time at depth

dive watches to keep track of time underwater

Wetsuit-even in warm water for skin protection

Weights and weight belts

Mask, fins, snorkel

Good dive buddies because underwater photography is a team effort

### **Photo Gear:**

Cameras in waterproof housing - each setup with a different lens

because you can't change lenses underwater!

Strobe lights with bendable arms

to attach to the housings

imagine  
**NOTES**

## Conversation with Anne



### What got you interested in underwater photography?

Growing up on the shores of Cape Ann along the North Atlantic Ocean I loved to roam the beach looking for pirate treasure buried in the sand. I collected seaweed and shells and stones and built elaborate sand castle estates. Then during the autumn of my twelfth year I was struck with an uncommon childhood illness that paralyzed me for a year. Frustrated with the inability to move, and watching the sea from my window, I vowed that if and when I recovered I would learn to swim underwater to explore all the places I could then only dream about.

### Is it hard to take pictures underwater?

Taking photographs underwater is more complicated than on land because you are in an alien environment. Going under water requires time and patience. I learned the technical aspects of diving and went diving for about three years before I felt comfortable enough to take a camera with me. In order to photograph or observe or work underwater one must be at home in the water & comfortable with the equipment because working underwater requires total concentration on the subject matter & you can't be worried about drowning So a

good solid course of SCUBA certification and really knowing why you cannot hold your breath even for a second while ascending is a very important first step.

### What was your favorite expedition?

My favorite expedition was to Sharm el Sheikh on the Red Sea off the southern tip of the Sinai Peninsula. The Red Sea is a very young & rich sea geologically speaking with a steep drop-off close to shore. A lot of fish are concentrated around the reef because most fish don't go into the deep sea. Once I was photographing a story on MATING GREY REEF sharks when I saw a small, defenseless looking flat fish slowly drifting on the shallow sandy bottom. It was a flounder called the "Moses sole" and it contains one of the most powerful poisons in the sea. The milky white toxin causes paralysis in the unfortunate predator. The little slow flounder produces a natural shark repellent--because when the shark bites down to try & eat it the shark gets instant lockjaw. This poison becomes stronger the more diluted with sea water it gets. Life underwater is so amazing and different than anything we can imagine on land.

### Why do you like to take pictures underwater?

I love being underwater because it makes me feel like Alice in Wonderland. I am always swimming around looking and searching for new sightings--either of new creatures (so much of uw life is still unknown) or new patterns of light ripples in the shifting sands and combinations of shimmering colors.

