

adventure

Infiniti Aboard gives you access to South Asia's only active volcano and some rare underwater sights



IF YOU are a certified diver with 40 odd dives under your belt, you must have heard of Barren Island, perhaps the only active volcano in South Asia and a diver's delight. While international maritime laws and Government regulations have made it impossible to stay on the island, dives in the region are now possible thanks to Sunil Bakshi, an engineer turned co-founder of Karina Tourism. He spent 18 months building his dream project, a luxury cruise liner, Infiniti, 130 feet long and 22 feet wide in Thailand, before sailing to India, with the capacity to comfortably accommodate over 20 people. This liner is the first of its kind and allows access to fantastic dive locations.

Psychedelic world

The outstanding feature of the island is that though it is only 16 nautical miles away from Port Blair and its white sandy shores, this island is filled with black sand, presumably ash. "Of the dives I have been on, this is my favourite because of the colourful corals and fish across the black sand. The effect is almost psychedelic," says Bakshi. Dives to this area have not been possible before the Infiniti that began business in April this year as there were no ships big enough to navigate the waters. Though entry to the island is still restricted, you can dive off the ship and do

some exploring.

Book in time

If you have not dived before, there is no reason to fret – Bakshi and his team of experienced divers will certify you over a period of four days and after a few dives in safer waters, you are good to go! With the base at Port Blair, the packages last for a minimum of four days, with the gear and food being provided by the company. The best time to visit Andamans is between September to March so book early.

Packages start from ₹59,999 for four days. Details: 9870110525

— Anjana Palepu

Into the Volcano

