

El Hierro

The smallest and westernmost of the Canaries, El Hierro can make an ideal place for a relaxing holiday. Its steep and rocky coastline is very different to that of the other islands. However, the volcanic craters in the middle of the island, heavily wooded areas and the beach of Golfo are areas frequently visited by those who tour the island.

Related internet sources

Red2000.com:

<http://www.red2000.com/spain/canarias>

Spain.costasur.com: <http://spain.costasur.com/en/islas-balearic.html>

Abouttenerife.com:

<http://www.abouttenerife.com/tenerife/history.asp>

Infoplease.com: <http://www.infoplease.com/ce6/world/A0810151.html>

Red2000.com:

<http://www.red2000.com/spain/baleares>

Idealspain.com: <http://www.idealspain.com/Pages/Places/Menorca.html>

Matthew D. Barber

SPAW Protocol: see **Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife Protocol of the Cartagena Convention**

Spearfishing Underwater spearfishing is defined as **fishing** by a person swimming or

diving and using a hand-held mechanical device that utilizes a rubber band, spring or pneumatic power to propel a spear used to capture a fish by piercing its body. The earliest devices were simply sharpened poles, or poles with a point on the end, but now rubber sling and spear 'guns', powered with carbon dioxide or explosive cartridges, are used to shoot the spear further from the diver (Patrick, 1996; Maas, 1998). The effective range of a speargun is about 4–6 m.

Divers may either free-dive or **scuba-dive** (see Figs S16 and S17). The very best freediving spearfishers (or spearos) can hold their breath for durations of up to 2–4 min. Running out of oxygen and blacking out is a risk that even experienced divers face. The use of scuba or other artificial breathing apparatus (such as rebreathers) is frowned upon in some locations, and illegal in many others. Even the use of modern, mechanically powered spearguns is outlawed in some jurisdictions.

Spearfishing can take place in shallow **reefs**, oil and gas platforms (fish congregate at the structures) and in open, deep waters. Blue-water hunting is the most dangerous type of sportfishing, since divers spearing these large, powerful fish are in danger that the fish may retaliate and hurt them. Fish can also tow divers into offshore **currents** or, if their lines get tangled, drag them deep below. Bluefin tuna are one of the largest gamefish available to the blue-

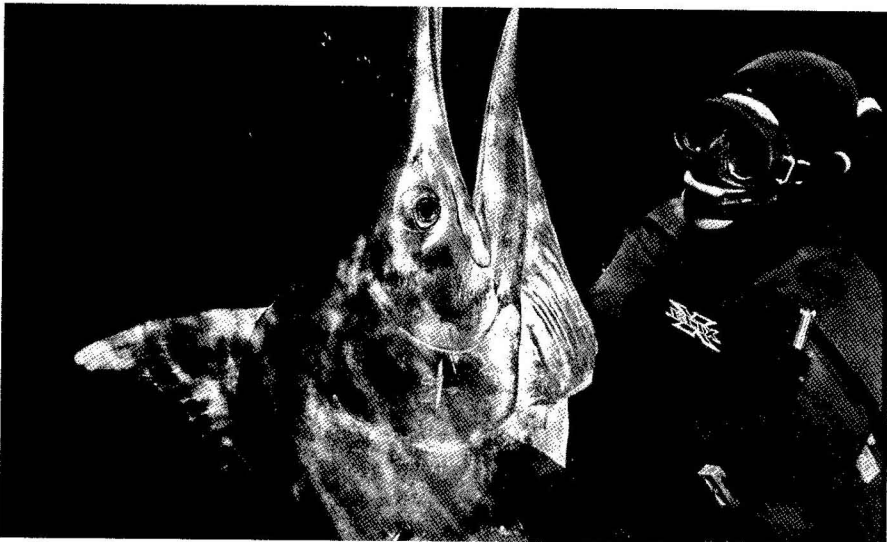


Fig. S16. A diving spearfisher and his prey (photograph courtesy of T. Maas).

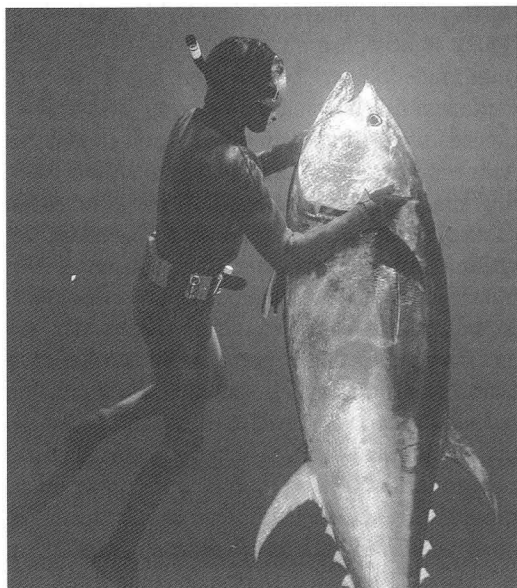


Fig. S17. Spearfishing for tuna (photograph courtesy of T. Maas).

water hunter, with individuals such as 180 kg bluefin tuna being hunted by some spearfishers (Maas, 1998). Many spearfishermen belong to clubs and compete in tournaments ranging from local, through national to international competitions. The International Underwater Spearfishing Association and the International Blue Water Spearfishing Records Committee are the certifying bodies and custodians of the spearfishing world records taken while free-diving.

On land, a special type of recreational spearfishing ('darkhouse spearfishing') exists in North America today, where the fisherman sits in a dark house on a frozen lake or river (Minnesota is one popular location) waiting for a fish to be attracted into range by a decoy hanging several metres below the surface of the ice in the clear water below (Pierce and Cook, 2000; Leitch, 2001).

There is much controversy about whether any type of spearfishing has a marked effect on target fish populations by reducing both the size of the population and the proportion of larger animals (Leitch, 2001; Smith and Nakaya, 2002).

See also: Fishing, Freediving.

Related internet sources

International Underwater Spearfishing Association:
<http://www.iusarecords.com>

Spearfishing.com: <http://www.spearfishing.com>

Freediving spearfishing equipment: <http://www.spearfishing.com/articles/article01.php>

International Blue Water Spearfishing Records Committee: <http://www.freedive.net/ibsrc>

Australian Underwater Federation – Spearfishing:
<http://www.auf-spearfishing.com.au/index.php>

Darkhouse fishing: <http://www.mndarkhouse.org/history.html>

Dagmar Fertl
Terry Maas

Special-interest Cruise In addition to the cruises on larger **vessels** that are marketed to many travellers, there are other cruises marketed for specialized passenger needs and wants. Perhaps the best example of this is the themed cruise. Such themes include the following: (i) music/entertainment (for example, a 'big band' cruise); (ii) gourmet dining and food preparation with celebrity chefs on board; (iii) history and culture; (iv) cruises for singles; and (v) **gay cruises**. These types of cruise may be offered on many cruise vessels of different sizes and lifestyles (from **mass market** to **ultra-luxury cruise liners**).

A second major category of special-interest cruises is that of adventure cruising. Numerous areas targeted for this segment of cruising include Alaska, the Amazon, the **Antarctic** and **Arctic** regions, the **Galapagos Islands**, the Norwegian **fjords**, the **South Pacific**, trans-canal (for example, the **Panama Canal**) and trans-Atlantic services. These itineraries tend to be highly specialized and often use smaller vessels. In some cases these vessels must be ice-strengthened designs in order to cope with severe environmental conditions that may be experienced in polar regions.

Other types of special-interest cruise include categories such as river cruises (and coastal cruises) that are typically found in China, Egypt, Europe and North America, with the latter often using vessels with steam-powered paddle-wheel propulsion that evokes an earlier era of passenger transportation. Another category is that of sail-powered and sail-assisted cruise vessels, which have as their main attraction the fact that some or all of their cruises are under wind power rather than the mechanical power found in most cruise vessels.

Fredrick M. Collison