DAN Dives Gallipoli: Ambassadors Explore WW1 Wrecks

Gallipoli, Turkey, is a place steeped in history where the echoes of World War I battles endure. Yet beneath these storied waves lies a hidden world, patiently awaiting discovery by divers.

In this blog, we dive into the depths of Gallipoli. Our mission? Unearthing the submerged stories of Gallipoli's past. DAN Ambassadors – Arkadiusz Srebnik, Joanna Wyrebek & Ellie Hudson a seasoned crew of divers fueled by their love for exploration, history, and preserving Gallipoli's underwater legacy.



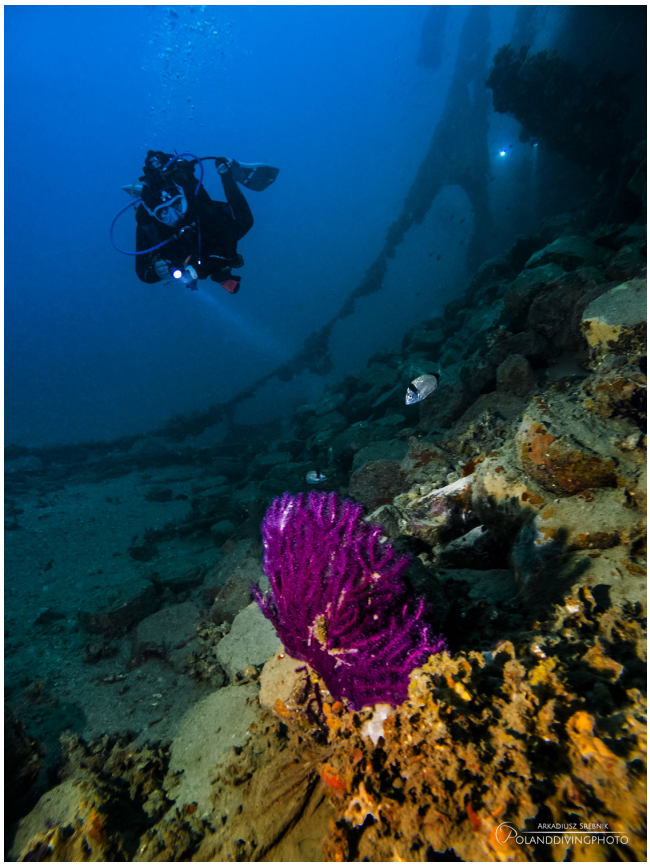
Location

Gallipoli is situated in the northwestern region of Turkey, overlooking the Dardanelles Strait. To get there, you can fly into Istanbul, Turkey's major international gateway, and from there, it's about a four to five-hour drive to Gallipoli. Alternatively, you can take a ferry across the Dardanelles from Çanakkale on the Asian side, which provides a scenic approach to this historically significant peninsula.



Step Into History

The Battle of Gallipoli, also known as the Gallipoli Campaign, occurred during World War I in 1915. During World War I in 1915, Allied forces, including ANZACs, British, and French troops, tried to capture the Gallipoli Peninsula from the Ottoman Empire in a significant military campaign. The objective was to open up a sea route to the Russian Empire and break the deadlock of the Eastern Front.



The battle, however, proved to be a costly and brutal stalemate. Fierce fighting, harsh terrain, and a determined Ottoman defence led to heavy casualties for both sides. The campaign lasted for eight months, resulting in a tragic loss of life. Ultimately, the Allies evacuated the peninsula in January 1916 without achieving their objectives.

Gallipoli holds immense historical significance as a symbol of sacrifice, bravery, and national identity for the countries involved, especially Australia and New Zealand. ANZAC Day, observed on April 25th each year, commemorates the landing of ANZAC forces at Gallipoli and is a day of remembrance for those who served and lost their lives in all wars, conflicts, and peacekeeping operations.

Today, the Gallipoli Peninsula is home to numerous cemeteries, memorials, and museums dedicated to honouring the memory of those who fought and died during the campaign. The region’s historical importance, both on land and underwater, continues to attract visitors from around the world who come to pay their respects and explore the relics and history that lie beneath the waves.

Among the Wrecks

Throughout history, numerous vessels have met their fate at the depths of the oceans due to failures, mistakes, natural disasters, and human conflicts. These events have left us with a plethora of reminders of these tragic occurrences. However, these vessels’ destiny did not signify an end; instead, it marked the inception of a new role in the protection of marine life.

Shipwrecks serve as remarkable havens where a diverse array of life thrives, making them an even more incredible destination for divers to explore.



Many nations allocate substantial effort and resources to deliberately sink ships, creating artificial reefs. Gallipoli stands as a place abundant with historical wrecks, transformed into an underwater historical park accessible to all divers.



The mission of this underwater park extends beyond preserving the historical significance of the Gallipoli battles; it aims to disseminate knowledge about these widely known but often overlooked events.

Efforts to establish underwater protected zones began in 2017 with extensive mapping and documentation of wrecks in the Dardanelles and Aegean Sea. This comprehensive undertaking included 3-D modelling and led to the designation of over 20 sites of historical importance as protected zones.
Currently, these dive sites, some with origins dating back to ancient times, are open to divers under special supervision and have become one of the most captivating dive spots in that region.

Diving in Turkey also promises an extraordinary underwater experience, catering to the preferences of every diver, whether it's encountering tiny nudibranchs and seahorses, marvelling at vibrant red corals – all within the confines of this underwater park.

It's Not Turkish Delight, but Photographer's Delight

The Gallipoli Underwater Park is truly a "Turkish Delight" for diving photographers seeking to capture the perfect blend of historic wrecks and vibrant marine life. Just as each piece of Turkish delight chocolate combines various flavours to create a delightful treat, this underwater park combines history and marine beauty in a uniquely delightful way.

Here, divers can immerse themselves in the fascinating remnants of historical wrecks, providing an exceptional backdrop for stunning underwater photography. These sunken relics tell stories of the past and serve as a time capsule for those eager to capture their essence through the lens.



Beyond the wrecks, the park teems with marine life, offering photographers a vibrant palette of colours and captivating subjects to frame their shots. With its rich history and thriving underwater world, the Gallipoli Underwater Park is a true “delight” for diving photographers, promising unforgettable moments to capture and savour.

“*I will be honest, my expectations were a bit skeptical. Having experienced Turkey’s rich culture, delectable cuisine, and warm hospitality before, I wasn’t quite sure what to expect from its diving scene. But little did I know, I was about to embark on a journey that would forever change my perception of Turkey as a diving destination. The versatility of diving in Turkey’s Gallipoli region is one of its most striking features. It caters to divers of all skill levels, with dive sites beginning at shallow depths of just 6 to 12 meters. For the more adventurous technical divers, there are wreck sites that plunge to depths of up to 100 meters. This diversity in diving experiences is part of the allure that makes this region a must-visit for diving enthusiasts.*



I highly recommend diving in Turkey at GHUP. It's not just about exploring the depths of the sea; it's about connecting with the past, appreciating the present, and looking forward to what the future of underwater exploration holds." from Marcin Pawelczyk – Divers24

Diverse Depths for Diving Adventures in Gallipoli

Gallipoli offers a unique diving experience with wrecks scattered at varying depths, catering to both recreational and technical divers.

"*For me, I was one of the only recreational divers that attended this trip – but that caused no problems.*" – Ellie Hudson

Whether you're an experienced technical diver seeking deep exploration or a recreational diver looking for shallower wrecks, Gallipoli has it all. The wrecks range from relatively shallow depths, suitable for divers of various skill levels, to deeper sites with more current that attract the more experienced divers. This diversity in depths makes Gallipoli a versatile and exciting destination for divers of all backgrounds and preferences.

"*The variety of wrecks and range of depths attracts divers from both recreational and technical levels of expertise.*" – Joanna Wyrebek



DAN’s Commitment to Diver Safety in Turkish Hyperbaric Medicine

The trip was led by two DAN representatives, Professor Dr. Akin Savas Tolku from the Department of Underwater and Hyperbaric Medicine at the University of Istanbul and Emanuele Giacchetta, who diligently ensure our safety during the diving activities.

Turkey has a well-established presence in the field of hyperbaric medicine, boasting an extensive network of recompression chambers. The majority of these chambers collaborate with DAN Europe, guaranteeing the safety of divers across the country.

“These recompression chambers are staffed by individuals whom I had the privilege of meeting in person during previous DAN Europe workshops and training sessions. This firsthand experience assures me that they are among the foremost specialists in their field.” – Arkadiusz Srebnik