



## Cave Diving in Namibia

### Description

The Place: Drachen Hauchloch  
The depth: 90 metres  
The Suit: **ZERO**

**SAY NO MORE!!**

P.S. Dive Computers now available.  
Ask your favourite Dive Store.

The image is a promotional advertisement for cave diving. It features a diver in a blue wetsuit and a yellow and black diving mask, positioned in a dark, rocky underwater environment. The diver is holding a P.S. Dive Computer. The text 'The Place: Drachen Hauchloch', 'The depth: 90 metres', and 'The Suit: ZERO' is displayed in the top left corner. The phrase 'SAY NO MORE!!' is written in large, bold, yellow letters across the center. A close-up of the dive computer's screen is shown in the bottom right, displaying '100', '190', and '904 DIV 5 0'. The background is dark and textured, suggesting a cave interior. A large, diagonal watermark reading 'default watermark' is overlaid on the image.

Namibia is a land of contrasts and surprises. Where the once mighty Fish River carved its magnificent canyon, severe droughts now alter the landscape. Perhaps for this reason nature hides much of its precious water underground, protected from the relentless power of the African sun.

Sossusvlei, a lake at the foot of the 350 metre high sand-driven sand dunes of the Namib desert, dry from years of drought and surrounded by the skeletons of gemsbok, **Oryxgazella**, and other wild game, miraculously sprung to life during the good rains of 1996. The Tsauchab River runs underground during periods of drought. The San hunter-gatherers (Bushmen) have always known where to dig for water in the dry river beds. They named this land **“The land God made in anger”**.

In the north of the country is a vast dolomite deposit, laid down over millions of years by the skeletons of the animals of an ancient sea. Here the water does not soak into the desert sand but slowly dissolves the dolomite to form huge underground lakes. Sometimes the process leaves the roof so thin that it collapses, forming crater lakes, sometimes underground lakes such as Dragon’s Breath, the largest underground lake in the world, lie undisturbed in total darkness.



Here you can retrace these ancient water courses in search of rare fish, aquatic amphipods, German field guns from the First World War and spectacular backdrops of sheer rock walls, huge calcite formations and cobalt-blue water of unsurpassed clarity. The visibility in Dragon’s Breath and

Harasib has been estimated to be in excess of 150 metres. For the more adventurous divers water depths of well over 100 metres can be found. A knowledge of advanced rope climbing techniques is required for some caves. Charles Maxwell has been personally involved in six cave diving expeditions to this region. The most memorable trip was in 1987 to head a diving team to film, map and explore Dragon's Breath Cave for the first time. This huge underground lake was discovered by the South African Spelaeological Association the previous year.

**The most impressive caves include:**

**Dragon's Breath Cave**, only discovered by South African speleologists in 1986, is the largest underground lake in the world.

**Harasib** has a spectacular 120 metre abseil from a hole in the roof to the beautiful cobalt blue lake beneath.

**Aigamas Cave** is home for the catfish *Clarias lavernicola* is unique to this cave.

**Guinas Lake** is one of only two places that the multi-coloured indigenous fish *Talapia guinasana* can be found.

**Otjikoto Lake** is where the retreating German army dumped their weapons during the First World War. Field guns and ammunition boxes still lie in 50 metres of water, perfectly preserved. Other relics are housed in the war museum in the town of Tsumeb.

For more information contact Theo Schoemans, President of the Namibian Underwater Federation:  
[theo@schoemans.com.na](mailto:theo@schoemans.com.na)

or The Cave Diving Officer  
The South African Spelaeological Association  
PO Box 4812  
Cape Town  
8000  
South Africa

**Category**

1. Cave Diving
2. Film Shoots

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**Author**

kerryn