

MUSEUMS WITH A TWIST - DON'T LEAVE YOUR GOGGLES BEHIND



Egypt and UNESCO considers turning the Bay of Alexandria to underwater museum with glass walls and an underwater tunnel.

The human imagination is one of our most fascinating features. There are so many things we adore and are willing to do anything to see them. The submarine life captivates hundreds of thousands - scuba diving is undoubtedly on the rise. There are many who are interested in more than the marine riches of the deep blue seas - they seek out traces of human life as well. Aquariums which feature an underwater tunnel are always a winner, but entire museums? That is the new hit.

The Bay of Alexandria, Egypt, hides many archaeological treasures - the famous lighthouse, Cleopatra's palace, wrecks of Greek and Roman ships and much more. Experts have long been leading a discussion whether to bring these up to the surface (thus exposing them to the threat of light and air) or to simply leave them in the depth to be preserved by the 'natural' environment which helped them survive until today.

But there is no use in them being hidden. One possible solution is creating **an underwater museum, which is currently being discussed by Egypt and UNESCO experts**. The idea includes underwater tunnel and glass walls enabling tourists to see all the sunken treasures without getting wet. Even though tourists would surely be coming in thousands, the polluted bay water, local seismic activity as well as potential damage to the environment need to be taken into account. Opening the 'gates' to scuba divers is another attractive possibility. It would not be one of its kind. Israel, for example, in 2006 proudly presented its "underwater museum" - the well preserved port of **Caesarea** - once a great port fascinating for more than its genius structure. There are official maps taking the divers through 36 marked sites.

Perhaps, more underwater parks museums will follow soon. After all, the seabed still hides many gems which the world ought to see. And scuba diving appears to be a perfect opportunity to explore long lost past while keeping the environment unharmed.

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