

SHARM-EL-SHEIKH

It is a hot sultry morning when we arrive in Sharm-el-Sheikh. We have a leisurely breakfast on deck, as most passengers have disembarked on various excursions. Trips on offer vary from a city tour to quad biking.

We are booked on the afternoon excursion to a nearby beach area called Naama Bay, where we are taken on a glass bottomed boat to see the plants and animals under the waves.

This Red Sea resort seems very quiet when we arrive, there is hardly anyone walking on the pavements, and the shops have very few customers. We soon realise though that there are lots of people here, it's just that they are all to be found on the beach! We pick our way over the many arms, legs, sun loungers and bags to reach the jetty, where we board our glass bottomed boat.



The jetty is an interesting contraption made of hollow plastic cubes, tied together with rope, and one woman is so frightened of walking on this that she has to be helped all the way. She spends the whole trip worrying about getting back!



The sea life that we see underneath the boat is impressive, with angel fish, clown fish, brain and fire coral, parrot fish, sea anemones and multicoloured corals in shades of lavender, pink and yellow. We are disappointed though with the boat itself. We all sit on chairs leaning forward onto a rail, 4 feet above the glass bottom of the boat. This makes everyone's backs

ache and photography is difficult as the auto focus on our camera focuses on the glass rather than the fish.

We arrive back on board in time for a late lunch, after which we sit in the shade on the port side of the ship. About half an hour after leaving port, we notice that the Van Gogh seems to be sailing in a complete circle and making back towards the port. A small police boat then pulls alongside, and one of the officers hands over something to a member of staff on the Van Gogh. We later hear that a passenger had somehow left their passport on shore. How embarrassing!



We now have 4 days at sea before we arrive at our next port of call, and have decided to start a new project in our computer club. This will be billed in the "Daily Telescope" as "Learn how to make a calendar, using your very own digital photos". We think we may be very busy over the next few days!!

