

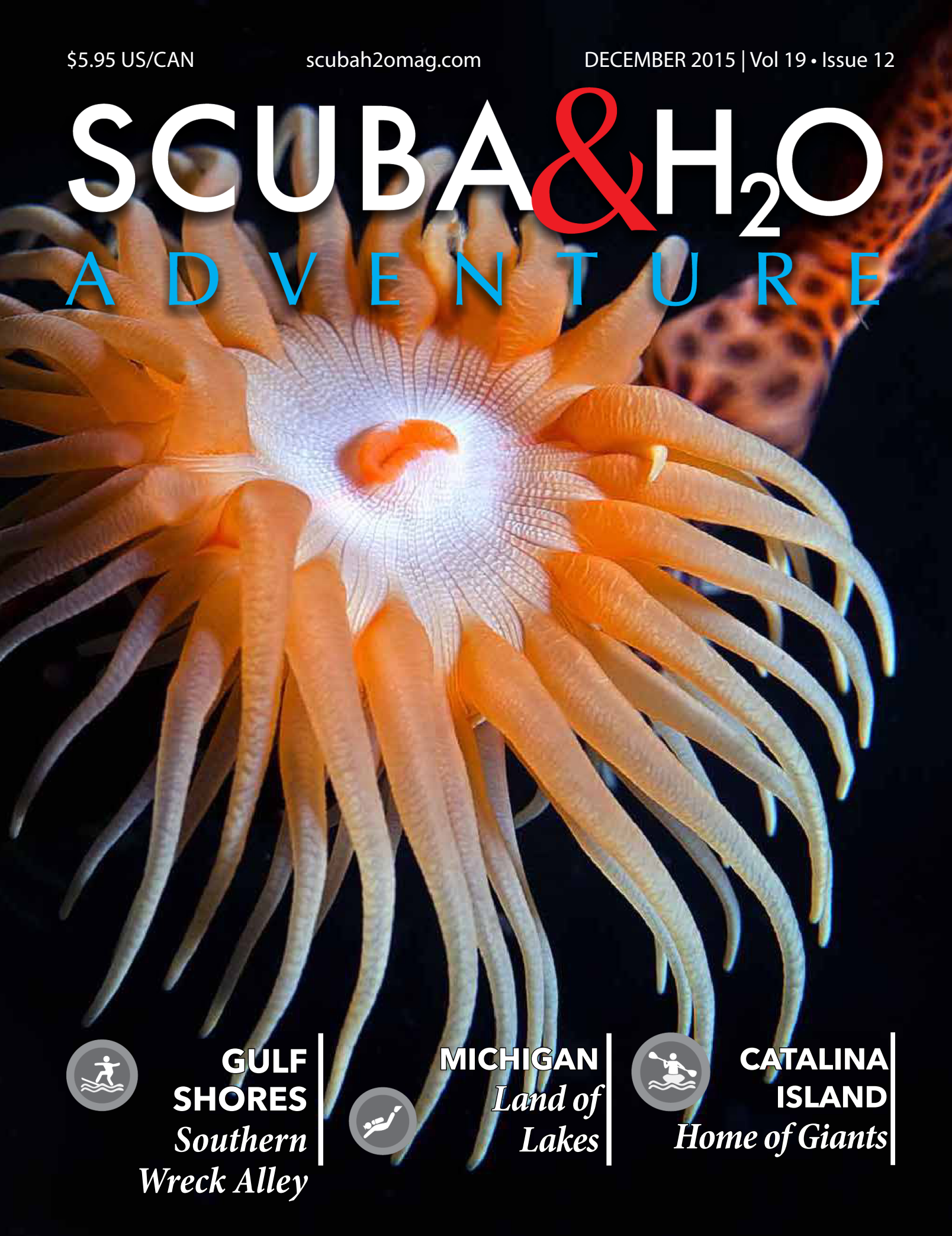
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SCUBA & H₂O

ADVENTURE



**GULF
SHORES**

*Southern
Wreck Alley*

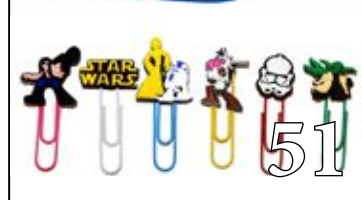


MICHIGAN
*Land of
Lakes*



**CATALINA
ISLAND**
Home of Giants

SE	DEMA Rocks Orlando	6
	Gulf Shores - Southern Wreck Alley	8
NE	LIDA Fim Festival	14
	Long Island's Best Sites	18
MW	Diver Sync - Podcast	24
	Michigan - Land of Lakes	26
NW	Dive for a Cure	32
	Inland Oregon's Cool Rivers and Cold Lakes	34
SW	Local Diving Summit - Texas	38
	Catalina Island, California	40
	Commercial Diving	44
	DAN - Overweight Divers	46
	UNEXSO Celebrates 50 Years	48
	Critter Corner	51
	Gear Check	52
	Directories	53



GO LOCAL in 2016



Article By
Rick Stratton



As the calendar pages change, I am preparing my editorial calendar for 2016. As we do each October and November, we look at the past year, looking at actual accomplishment compared to the wonderful intentions that I had last fall. This year, I am pleased with myself and my team/friends for what we completed this year. We had a successful year, so successful that I decided to take on a massive project that I have been kicking around for several years.

Over the past 19 years I have focused my efforts on creating a monthly scuba magazine – focused primarily on supporting the sport locally. Dive locally and often has been our motto. As a monthly magazine we would have different content in each issue that fit a particular theme or agenda but did not assemble the big picture.

As we grew we expanded our focus to include other watersports, and launched our SCUBA & H2O Adventures brand as an outreach to people that enjoy all kinds of watersports. That venture is going great. Our SCUBA & H2O brand is growing leaps and bounds, but as we grow we did not want to lose touch with our core audience, local divers and the local dive community.

As we complete our 19th year, and begin our 20th season, we are kicking it up several notches. In early 2016 we are reconnecting with our roots by reintroducing our core brands, Northwest, Midwest, Northeast, Southeast and Southwest Dive News as a new Dive Guide Series. The national series will cover each geographic region in the country and promote the local community in that region. We will take stories that we have published from a variety of authors and sources to assemble a complete resource for that community, hopefully, inspiring our readers to dive locally and often.

The new Dive Guides are just now being written and we are reaching our to our readers in each region to provide us with content and feedback so that we can truly help them.

For those who are not aware, local diving is under siege. It is caught in a vortex of easy solutions, increasing age in the population, and the public's desire for 80 deg water and 80 ft vis. This is something that the typical great lake, river or quarry cannot offer or compete with. We are helping by offering our pages to help promote the sport and their community. Together we can work together to get folks diving – locally and often.

Rick

About the Cover
New Jersey diver Patricia Jordan Fairview, NJ captured this photo of a Tiger Anemone and took third place in last year's BTS imaging competition.

Publisher: Rick Stratton
rick@divenewsnetwork.com
Managing Editor: John Tapley
editor@divenewsnetwork.com
Regional Correspondent
Rick Knight

Show Manager: Selene Muldowney
selene@divenewsnetwork.com

Advertising Sales: Roosevelt Rumble
nwsales@divenewsnetwork.com

Circulation/Subscriptions:
360.639.6977

For more info, please visit
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SHARKS, WRECKS, & THE SHORELINE: Long Island's Top Dive Sites



Text & Photography By:
Michael Salvarezza
Christopher Weaver
Eco-Photo Explorers

The waters surrounding New York's Long Island provide a wide variety of adventure for SCUBA divers. Dive sites range from easy shore entries to challenging offshore shipwrecks. While visibility can be variable, ranging from a few inches to over 100 feet, the marine life, maritime history and scenic beauty of these sites is captivating. Along the shores of Long Island, divers can pursue the varied interests of underwater photography, marine life study, artifact recovery and spearfishing and with changing conditions throughout the year, divers can also hone their skills by conducting ice dives, drift dives, and offshore deep wreck exploration using technical diving techniques.

Shore Dives

BEACH 8TH AND 9TH STREET

Located in Far Rockaway, this is an easy shore entry dive. Divers swimming along the rock jetty in front of 8th Street will find depths of 25-feet just a short swim from the



Photos By: Michael Salvarezza & Christopher Weaver of Eco-Photo Explorers

beach. Divers should stay closer to shore to avoid the strong currents in the Atlantic Beach Inlet. Exploring the rock piles below the surface, divers can find a wide variety of marine life, ranging from macro subjects to larger fish such as striped bass and black fish. Visibility is variable but can reach 30 feet on good days. Limited parking is available at the end of Beach 8th Street in Far Rockaway, just steps from the dive site.

For local services, contact Swim and Scuba of Rockville Center at www.swimandscuba.com

OLD PONQUOGUE BRIDGE

Below the south side remains of the Old Ponquogue Bridge at Hampton Bays is one of the premier shore dive sites on Long Island. The pilings from the bridge have created a perfect habitat for a thriving ecosystem. Divers typically enter from the shore at the marine reserve park and swim to the beginnings of the bridge. Depths under the bridge reach about 30 feet and visibility is generally good, reaching 30-feet at times. Here divers will encounter abundant beds



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Author Michael Salvarezza explores a shipwreck off Long Island. Photos By: Michael Salvarezza & Christopher Weaver of Eco-Photo Explorers



Divers exploring the Ponquogue Bridge. Photos By: Michael Salvarezza & Christopher Weaver of Eco-Photo Explorers

of shellfish, and will often see striped bass, sea robins, flounder, blackfish, and bergall. In the late summer and autumn months, divers frequently find tropical fish such as butterflyfish, angelfish, and even grouper blown north in the Gulf Stream. Divers must time their dive to coincide with slack water as the currents under the bridge can be treacherous. Parking at the area is permitted with a Town of Southampton Parking Permit.

For local services, contact Hampton Dive Center at www.hamptondive.com.

HORTON'S POINT

The parking lot at Horton's Point is at the top of a bluff and climbing down a staircase of about 120 steps accesses the dive site. From the beach in Southold, divers enter directly into the Long Island Sound and can explore a rocky bottom with several large boulders providing a haven for marine life. Starfish

abundant, along with sea urchins, blackfish, bergall, and porgies. Depths reach about 25 feet and visibility is generally about 10 feet. Parking is permitted with a Town of Southampton Parking Permit or by paying parking admission to the Horton's Point Lighthouse Museum.

BAYVILLE BARGE

Located off the beach at Greenwich Street in Bayville is the sunken wreck of an old barge. The barge itself makes for an interesting dive, but divers will also encounter abundant marine life including schools of blackfish, bergall, porgy, and even striped bass. The barge is easily located by swimming on a compass heading of 330 degrees from the east side of Greenwich Avenue. The wreck will be found in about 30 to 40 kicks. Depths will range to about 30 feet at the end of the wreck site. Visibility is variable, ranging from a few inches to several feet. Parking is not permitted on Greenwich Avenue and must be found elsewhere in Bayville.

CAUMSETT STATE PARK


Caumsett State Park is located on the shores of the Long Island Sound at Lloyd Neck. The dive site provides direct access to the sound and here divers will find a rocky bottom with flounder, skates, porgy, and an occasional blackfish. Visibility is variable and can reach 15 feet, and depths reach about 15 feet. This is a good dive for beginning divers and

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LAKE RONKONKOMA

Lake Ronkonkoma is a fine example of a kettle bowl lake on Long Island, formed during the last ice age from receding glaciers. Divers exploring Lake Ronkonkoma will find very little to keep their interest except for the opportunity to see freshwater aquatic life, including sunfish and small bass. In the winter, however, if the lake freezes over divers can often be found practicing their ice diving skills on the lake. There are several areas of available parking along the lake shore.

Contact Port Diver for local services at <http://portdiver.com>.

Offshore Dives

THE JOHN C. FITZPATRICK*

The wreckage of the John C. Fitzpatrick, sometimes referred to as the "Jug" wreck, lies in 130 to 140 feet of water about 10 miles southeast of the Shinnecock Inlet. The wreck is low lying and scattered across a wide swath of ocean floor. For divers who are experienced to visit these depths, the wreck is an ideal hunting ground for large lobsters. Divers will also find red hake, Atlantic cod, flounder and fluke, along with black sea bass and occasional pelagics that make their way through these waters. Although penetration on this wreck is not possible due to the broken up nature of her wreckage, the use of wreck reels are encouraged to help with navigation on a site that can be a little confusing.

Local diving services can be found with Sea Turtle Charters at <http://seaturtlecharters.com>.

USS SAN DIEGO

Easily one of the most popular shipwrecks in the area, the USS San Diego lies upside in 120-feet of water and rises to within 65-feet of the surface, and can be found 13.5 miles south of the Fire Island Inlet. The San Diego, a 503-foot armored cruiser, sank in



Diving on Long Island can be exciting!. Photos By: Michael Salvatore & Christopher Weaver of Eco-Photo Explorers

1918 after striking a floating mine left by a German U-Boat. Divers exploring this wreck will find a large wreck that is deteriorating rapidly in the ocean conditions. There are many inviting access points to penetrate inside but divers must always be cautious to

never exceed their skill level when diving or penetrating shipwrecks. The USS San Diego is listed on the US Register of Historic Places and divers are prohibited from removing anything from the wreck site. Visibility can exceed 50-feet on this site, with variable

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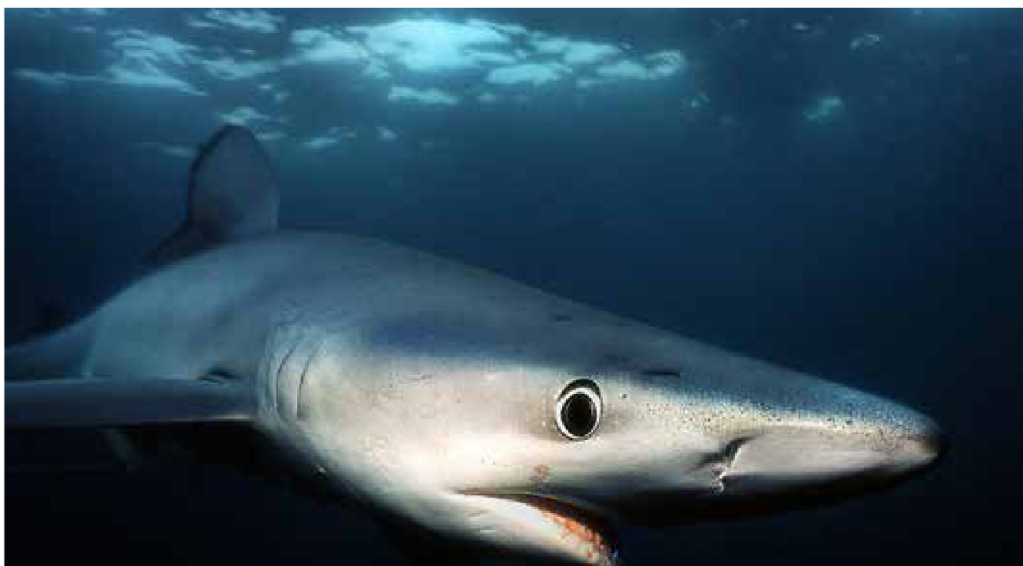
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Shipwreck diving on Long Island is filled with opportunities for local divers. Photos By: Michael Salvarezza & Christopher Weaver of Eco-Photo Explorers



Offshore, divers can observe sharks from the safety of a shark cage. Photos By: Michael Salvarezza & Christopher Weaver of Eco-Photo Explorers

current and surface conditions.

THE OREGON

The Oregon was a luxury liner that sank in 1886 after being struck by an unidentified vessel in the dark of night. The wreck lies in

125 feet of water and is one of Long Island's most popular shipwreck dives; it can be found 21 miles southeast of the Fire Island Inlet. The wreckage is largely jumbled on the bottom with few opportunities for deep penetration. Divers can experience visibility

exceeding 50-feet but with cold temperatures (45 degrees) even in the summer months. The Oregon is popular with artifact hunters as well as those looking to observe marine life. Large schools of pollock, striped bass, and black sea bass can be found here.

THE LIZZIE D

A prohibition rumrunner that sank upright in 80 feet of water in 1922, the Lizzie D is a popular dive for beginning shipwreck divers and for those looking for a dive into American history; she can be discovered eight miles southeast of the Atlantic Beach Inlet. Although divers no longer can easily find intact rum and bourbon bottles on this wreck, they still can find shards of broken glass from the sinking of the vessel. Visibility on this site is variable and can range from 10 to 40 feet

THE STOLT D'AGALI

The 140-foot stern section of the Stolt D'Agali rests in 130 feet of water after being sheared off in a collision in 1964 with an Israeli luxury liner, Shalom. Located 36 miles south of Deb's Inlet, the wreckage rises to within 65 feet of the surface. The wreck is a favorite for shipwreck divers from Long Island and New Jersey as it is a haven for marine life. Bathed in generally clear water, the Stolt D'Agali is home to large schools of sea bass, red hake, bergall, and other common species from these waters. In addition, divers have seen mola mola, sea turtles, sharks, and even whales in the vicinity when diving this wreck. A picturesque wreck, the Stolt is a favorite for underwater photographers as well.

OFFSHORE SHARK CAGE DIVING

Sharks of many species thrive in the waters off Long Island. In particular, blue sharks, thresher sharks, mako sharks, and even an occasional great white can be found in the open ocean southeast of Montauk Point. Shark Cage diving takes place on the surface in open ocean waters, with depths exceeding 200 feet. Divers use the protection of cages to experience Blue Sharks and other species of sharks in their natural element. ■

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