

FIRST TEST BEST BULLAROO / RRD OBSESSION
AIRUSH LITHIUM & LOADS MORE **WIN!** A LIQUID FORCE ENVY &
CABRINHA NOMAD KITES

Kitesurf

JULY AUG 2010 060 £4.25
07
[Barcode]

The Number 1 Kitesurf Magazine

**GROMS,
LISTEN UP!**
SENSIBLE ADVICE
ON GOING PRO

**NAKED
CUISINE &
GAMBLING**
THAT'LL BE
ST. MARTIN

THE SOUND OF PROGRESS:

THAILAND, TAIWAN, PHILIPPINES BLOWING UP

**WOODMAN
POINT**
HOW NOT TO STINK UP
THE OZZY HOT SPOT

**SUGGESTED RELIGIONS FOR KITERS
WHEN THE PROS HIT 60
BUILDING YER OWN KICKER**



The author stretching out a few travel kinks



WORDS & PHOTOS: MARCUS HOHMANN

A HEAVENLY CORNER...

When, after an eight hour flight and a two hour drive in thirty four degrees heat we came upon a sign that read, "Where God goes on holiday --> 1km", I was highly skeptical.

MY pre-holiday research had yielded grim indicators about the prospects for wind. Neither WindFinder, WindGuru nor any other web authority seemed to think there would be any. Instead I had come across numerous mentions of tourist traps like Diani Beach, promising a steady stream of bothersome beach vendors. Add to this that the lunar cycle predicted extremely low tides and I really had to wonder why on earth God would want to vacation here? Obviously God is not a kiter. Or is he?

So where are we? Well here's a clue: A small East African country where corruption is king, of which Europeans seldom speak highly, unless they are smiling upon Barack Obama's ancestral homeland - you guessed it, KENYA! We had come non-stop from Frankfurt to the bustling island metropolis of Mombasa. But we were not on a city holiday. We headed straight for a ferry some ninety miles south edging up on the Tanzanian border. By this time if we hadn't realized we were far from home then we certainly did upon arrival at Mwazaro Beach.

I'VE NO IKEA

Over the centuries past, few tourists who got lost in Africa found themselves at Mwazaro. Hidden away in the midst of a mangrove, Mwazaro is on a peninsula in what is now a nature preserve, thanks to German owners Hans von Loesch and his business partner Jorg Karasch. We're here because the specialists at Kite Worldwide think this place is extraordinary. They are confident enough to have built a full service kite lodge equipped with Brunotti boards, Gin kites, and other top gear, plus professional instructors, and they are equally confident that my skepticism will be proved unwarranted. We were beckoned to relax with the greeting "Hakuna Matata".

Straight away, we were greeted by "Mr. Hans" and his dogs who lead us to a luxurious room on the upper floor of a "coral house". The coral house accommodations feature double beds, private baths, desk, wardrobe and best of all, roof decks with panoramic views: the sea in front and mangrove forest behind. A balcony equipped with an extra bed for sleeping under the vivid African stars was a nice touch as well. As one might expect, the furnishings

are far from being Swedish. Jorg has a passion for Kenyan antiques, custom furniture and other curiosities he has collected over the years. This authentic African decorum is consistent across the full range of accommodations which also include individualized dwellings called "Makuti huts". These cozy cabins lie directly on the beach and are always the first to be booked.

DOGS WITH JOBS

After a quick unpacking we went down to meet with KWW lead instructor Philip Mohr and lodge manager Jan Droese. With solar and wind power throughout, the main house comfortably seats about thirty five people. In addition to a full bar the menu features both European and African dishes. Guests dine in the open-air lounge which spills onto a beach of pristine white sand. The adjacent Kite Worldwide station provides space for training, equipment storage and sports a well stocked shop. While we never felt unsafe anywhere we went in Kenya, the resort is nevertheless protected by security guards. And Mr. Han's dogs seemed to have a keen sense of the difference between guests and strangers.

It had been a few weeks since we last hit the water and we were itching to go. But first we sat down to a bountiful late breakfast. Fresh baked bread, fruit, scrambled eggs, juice... Everything we wanted was there. As we concluded our meal the restaurant manager came around to inquire what we would like for dinner. There are no long lines waiting for a warmed over buffet here! Each guest may request any dish for dinner and every effort is made to accommodate. This is not part of a luxury package, but standard with every booking.

FLIP MODE ICELAND

The weather conditions here were so consistent that we didn't need a clock. Once the wind begins to blow in across the Indian Ocean from the northeast, you know it's about 11:00. When you find it necessary to transition to a smaller kite, then you know it's about 13:00. And when you have to switch to a seven meter kite then you know the time is around 15:00. Some days we had so much wind that we ran with small kites straight out of the gate. This pretty well summarizes the conditions throughout the period of Dec-Mar. We were some of the first real kites here and so had the honour of finding and naming our favorite spots. One fantastic spot that already had a name was "Crocodile Hole". But don't worry. We found no crocodiles nor sea urchins, nor coral reefs. This lagoon is located north of the lodge near the Ramisi river and fluctuates in size according to the tides. The waist-deep, smooth water offers freestyle conditions perfect enough to rival Brazil.

"Flip Mode Iceland" we discovered by chance on one of our downwind trips. It is an epic sand bank. Nipping into a shady spot we enjoyed a tasty lunch and then lounged in a lagoon worthy of the Caribbean while the winds kicked up a notch. Then it was forty five minutes back to the Lodge. There are countless spots still awaiting names. So don't be shy! Get out and explore. Kite where none before you has kited!

FORTY THIEVES AND SHARK ATTACK

Of course at some point, after days of intense wind and exercise any kiter's body is not going to mind a little break. And we were in Kenya after all. So we decided to take a day trip to nearby Shimba Hills. At first I didn't think much about seeing animals one might have seen previously at the zoo, such as giraffes, monkeys, zebras etc. But having a seven ton elephant walk right up to your car is a jaw dropping experience for sure!



No flat pack here my friend.



KWW instructor Philip Mohr makes the most of a lunch break

JORG HAS A PASSION FOR KENYAN ANTIQUES AND A BALCONY EQUIPPED WITH AN EXTRA BED FOR SLEEPING UNDER THE VIVID AFRICAN STARS WAS A NICE TOUCH. AS ONE MIGHT EXPECT, THE FURNISHINGS ARE FAR FROM BEING SWEDISH

After three more days of non-stop kiting, we decided on another excursion, this time taking the lodge's own deep sea fishing boat out for a little tour. I am not personally the world's most enthusiastic fisherman. I think it's a sport that requires a great deal of patience and skill but I quickly warmed to the experience as we headed out to sea and the waves pounded our boat from every direction. Before long we had Blue Marlin on our hooks being towed along behind the boat. Jorg roared as if addressing Moby Dick, "Let's rock & roll!"

As our time at the Kite Worldwide Lodge Kenya drew to a close our hearts grew heavy, but we weren't

done just yet. It was time to party! Jan drove us forty minutes to Diani Beach where we were introduced to colorfully named clubs like "Forty Thieves" and "Shark Attack". It was a long and wonderful final night.

So if God were looking to go on holiday then I can see why he would spend it here. He would forgo harassment of pushy beach boys and avoid the disappointment of low tide coastline. Rather he would find himself in a unique paradise. And if God loves to kite, then you would most certainly find him here at Mwazaro Beach. Hakuna matata indeed!

