ALBY RONDINA JOINING THE FLOTILLA OF FISHING BOATS PIC BY STEPHANIE NEIL

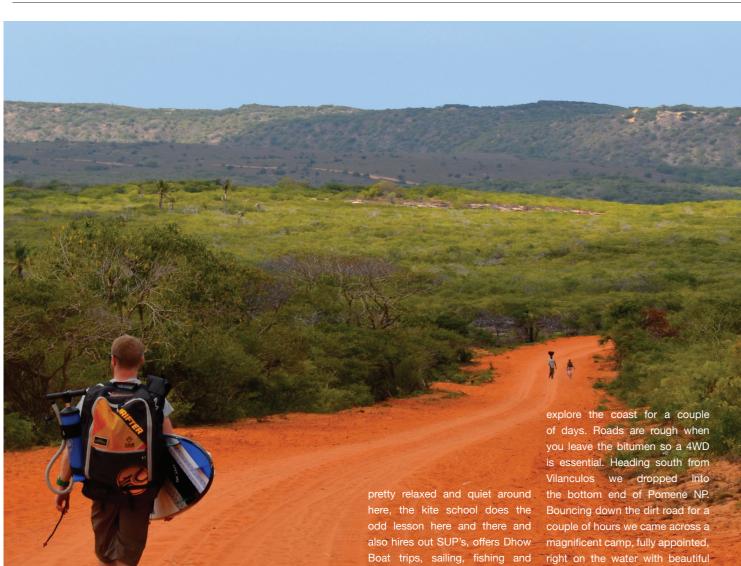


## **MOZAMBIQUE**

## BY KITE EXPLORER TRENT MOON

hey say that the first impressions count and that in the first 5 seconds of meeting someone you'll have already made an opinion that will take some shifting. Well flying into the smallest international airport I've been to in err probably ever, my mind was made up before we touched down. Flying in you could see the streets were clean, yards immaculately maintained and open, no high fences or barbed wire, rather a neat, proud yet humble and inviting place awaited. >>>

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Half-hour after touch down the airport was emptied, forget taxi ranks, there was not a single taxi in sight. After negotiating with a on flat water right in front of the couple of locals we were on our way. Yep we were winging it. This trip was all about getting a feel for the place and discovering some new and exciting kite and surf water is as flat as a shit carter's locations.

After many years of travelling we have known a lot of people who rave about it. It's like South Africa on the net.

planning, rolling into Casa Cabana Hotel on the beach of Vilanculos we found a restaurant with sand on the floor, a neat bar and sweet little air-conditioned rooms. It was low tide and the sand went out for a few hundred meters, perfect for learning or getting a session in hotel. Further out islands dot the Bazaruto Archipelago with a huge system of pristine white sandbars stretching for miles. Here the hat for miles, perfect for down winders. What an epic looking

and Zimbabwe's best kept secret. Kitesurfing Centre Mozambique, You won't find many, if any tourist is pretty much the only centre from outside Africa, only ex pats in Mozambique and definitely or visitors from neighbouring the only one in Vilanculos. It's conveniently located next to the

spot this was, up until now I had

downwinders. More importantly it supports a small group of localex pat kiters who we were lucky beginning; over the next couple enough to meet. One of the best of days we crashed, bashed, things about this sport is that no fell in love and lost ourselves in matter where you are in the world, Mozambique. Darting between when you meet other kiteboarders small towns and villages along the you always find them warm and coast we found an abundance of

with one of locals and the owner of place, why does no one come Kitesurfing Mozambique Mark to here? explore the sandbars and closest islands. What we found was a Our last big push back to waiting to be explored.

Time was not on our side so we Wildlife is scarce after the War of hired a Ford Ranger from Kerry Independence from 1964 - 74, the There had been some pre bar of Casa Cabana Hotel. It's a who owns the local Europcar to country then erupted into civil war

right hand beach breaks pealing off a sandspit. This was just the lagoons and a myriad of waves, beach breaks and right hand We teed up a couple of boat trips barrelling point breaks. What a

maze of sandbars and lagoons. Vilanculos from Inhambane and no reef or seaurchins, just epic Tofo we crossed the Tropic of only seen this from Google earth flat-water, all to yourself in a Capricorn and the official line into visit Mozambique and they all images and a few I could dig up beautiful yet less travelled part of tropical paradise. Shooting into the world. It was postcard perfect the northern end of Pomene NP, with the boats on the sand, beers the road was long and quickly on the beach, incredible water just turned into a 4WD track after passing through the gates.



shortly after from 1977 - 92.

In 1994 Mozambique held it's first multi national party elections and has been relatively stable since but the wars and poverty took a big toll on the local wildlife although a lot of it is fighting back and there are some great parks in central Mozambique today, although very remote.

Winding through thick bush land close to the coast on a soft sandy track so chewed up it'd rattle your fillings out we eventually rolled onto the beach where we found another perfect looking right hand point break and a large slowly sweeping bay with endless beach breaks

A huge sand spit toward the north with mill pond butter flat water and waves on the outside was the place we parked the Ranger for a cheeky session before dark and high tailing it across the churned out and dusty dirt track to leave the park. Yep, it was hire car so we left it to the last minute to leave.

The only local surfer down there told us that this break tops all the others in Mozambique when it's firing. The place had a great lodge and camp ground facilities that can accommodate 200 people. Sounds busy?

We were the only people there, not one other guest. What a place, we loved it so much we have already booked five Land Cruisers fully equipped to drive from South Africa, through Kruger National Park into Mozambique and up 800km of coastline next year. A real surf, SUP and kite expedition.

Thanks to the guys at Casa Cabana Hotel, Kerry at Europcar, Mark at Kite Surifng Centre Mozambique and all the friendly local crew we met in Vilanculos. Can't wait to be back next year for the annual Vilanculos Down Wind event. If this sounds like your kind of expedition you can find out more on how to join at our

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