



MOZAMBIQUE

BY KITE EXPLORER TRENT MOON

They 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. >>>



Half-hour after touch down the airport was emptied, forget taxi ranks, there was not a single taxi in sight. After negotiating with a 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 locations.

After many years of travelling we have known a lot of people who visit Mozambique and they all rave about it. It's like South Africa and Zimbabwe's best kept secret. You won't find many, if any tourist from outside Africa, only ex pats or visitors from neighbouring countries.

There had been some pre

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 on flat water right in front of the hotel. Further out islands dot the Bazaruto Archipelago with a huge system of pristine white sandbars stretching for miles. Here the water is as flat as a shit carter's hat for miles, perfect for down winders. What an epic looking spot this was, up until now I had only seen this from Google earth images and a few I could dig up on the net.

Kitesurfing Centre Mozambique, is pretty much the only centre in Mozambique and definitely the only one in Vilanculos. It's conveniently located next to the bar of Casa Cabana Hotel. It's a

pretty relaxed and quiet around here, the kite school does the odd lesson here and there and also hires out SUP's, offers Dhow Boat trips, sailing, fishing and downwinders. More importantly it supports a small group of local ex pat kites who we were lucky enough to meet. One of the best things about this sport is that no matter where you are in the world, when you meet other kiteboarders you always find them warm and welcoming.

We teed up a couple of boat trips with one of locals and the owner of Kitesurfing Mozambique Mark to explore the sandbars and closest islands. What we found was a maze of sandbars and lagoons, no reef or seaurchins, just epic flat-water, all to yourself in a beautiful yet less travelled part of the world. It was postcard perfect with the boats on the sand, beers on the beach, incredible water just waiting to be explored.

Time was not on our side so we hired a Ford Ranger from Kerry who owns the local Europcar to

explore the coast for a couple of days. Roads are rough when you leave the bitumen so a 4WD is essential. Heading south from Vilanculos we dropped into the bottom end of Pomene NP. Bouncing down the dirt road for a couple of hours we came across a magnificent camp, fully appointed, right on the water with beautiful right hand beach breaks peeling off a sandspit. This was just the beginning; over the next couple of days we crashed, bashed, fell in love and lost ourselves in Mozambique. Darting between small towns and villages along the coast we found an abundance of lagoons and a myriad of waves, beach breaks and right hand barrelling point breaks. What a place, why does no one come here?

Our last big push back to Vilanculos from Inhambane and Tofo we crossed the Tropic of Capricorn and the official line into tropical paradise. Shooting into the northern end of Pomene NP, the road was long and quickly turned into a 4WD track after passing through the gates. Wildlife is scarce after the War of Independence from 1964 – 74, the country then erupted into civil war



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 Surfing 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 website.

www.moontours.com.au -K-



moontours
WORLD WIDE KITE & ADVENTURE EXPEDITIONS



- AFRICA ▪ FIJI
- PAPUA NEW GUINEA
- MEXICO

www.moontours.com.au
www.facebook.com/moontours

p. 0413 835 345 e. info@moontours.com.au