

# Diving in Kenya

March 7 – 22, 1999

First I apologise, my english is not perfect at all - but if you like to correct my, just send me an email and I promise I will change it!

## Aristos

Down south in Africa is a Country called Kenya. There are Lions, Elephants and Black People. Masais are Nomads and the soil is red. What else do I know about Kenya? Not much before I met Steve last summer. He told me about his Homeland of its choice and made me curious about. It's always

warm, everything works a little different and even they got Internet Access. He told me about the sailing yacht Aristos and the diving adventures. With as much Advertisements I could other then go and see by myself.

## Malaria Prophylactics

First I need to go through the horrible experience of shots against Yellow Fever and Hepatitis. They got me pretty bad feeling. I also started with the Malaria prophylactics.

## Trip

Nine hours in this small seat, too small, impossible to sleep. But the arrival excuses for everything - it's wonderful. In the moment I get out the plane the warm air wraps me up. On the Airport of Mombassa is no stress, but we received our visa and step on the bus. On the ferryboat I feel uncanny. Many people look at me, as they have never seen someone white before. I would like to hide. Some are flirting with me. Now I start to laugh. But still, I am happy to leave that ferryboat. I felt like in the zoo.

## Aristos

In a little harbor close the island Pemba we put our luggage on the Aristos. Lots of boys carried it down slime steps. The first sight of the 18 meters long sailing yacht is knocks

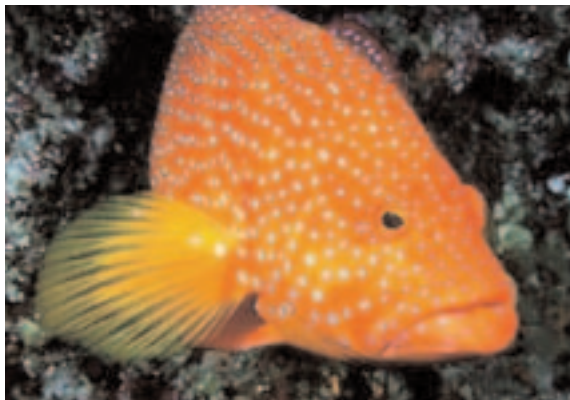


Photo: E. Glatz

me almost over. That's why I am lying on deck on the way to Pemba. I don't get up for long, just to eat. 3.5 hours later we arrive in the lagoon of Pemba. This island looks like the one in the prospectus of Travel Companies. White Sand for miles and palm trees, untouched and precious.

No Tourists, just us. I put my

bathing suit on and lay in the bathtub-warm water, drinking a special "Sundowner Drink". The flight is forgotten - my vacations are wonderful. After watching the starry sky - I go to bed early.

## Diving

For our first dive I just wear a shorty, that's absolutely enough. The water is 28 degrees. The underwater world is just great. I can't even name all those fishes.

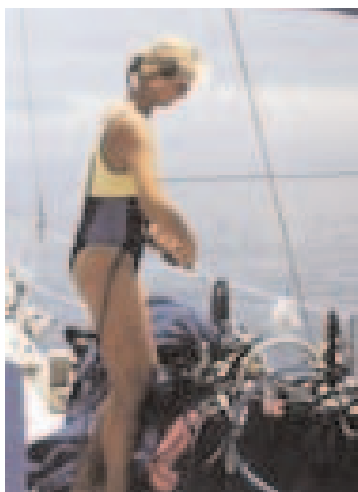
## Dolphins

My dream comes true, about 20 Dolphins are swimming with us. I am speechless. I am holding on the ladder with snorkel and Mask and enjoy those animals. This is so amazing - so fast and so graceful. They were jumping, one after the other. Just like in the ballet. The most wonderful thing is, they did it by fun or just for us. That sight made me really happy - first time seeing them in their natural environment. Those Dolphins were our daily guest and remained faithful.

## Cannibals

Today Steve shows us a little Island. The beach is over and over covered with shells. This seems the favorite food of those Natives. They are cannibals

but on its big grin we know there are no kitchen pots waiting for us. Quite the reverse, the young black



men are shaking our hands, the might see white people every two months. They don't look in my eyes and my hand feels somehow weird. We enjoy the sun set with a glass of red wine.

### Food

After every dive we are served from Caroline with Cakes and Drinks. The food made by her in that little kitchen is just fantastic. How to produce it as by magic such fine Meals in that little, hot and simple kitchen such wonderful meals.

### Water-ski

If I can water-ski even before breakfast, I get up much faster. First I had some troubles to get out the water, but on the second try it got very good. The nice horizon. Palm trees, Blue Ocean and also blue sky is the best prerequisite.

### Nightdive

My first nightdive in the Indian Ocean! Spanish dancers and octopus, but also little worms which swim into me and give a bad view. A parrotfish is sleeping and next to it is a huge crap. Nightdives are my favorites - the underwater world is even more fantastic if you light it up with a good lamp.

### Wete

Very impressed I was seeing the town of Wete. A young man shows us the town. Most women are veiled. They wear wonderful clothes. The kids are very cute. In the middle I can see an old man working on a sewing machine in an extremely small hut. We find a post office and send a card to Switzerland. We don't believe it will make her way ever at home. But we should be surprised that it will be home before us. Talk to our guide is very interesting and I surprised, they have even TV there.

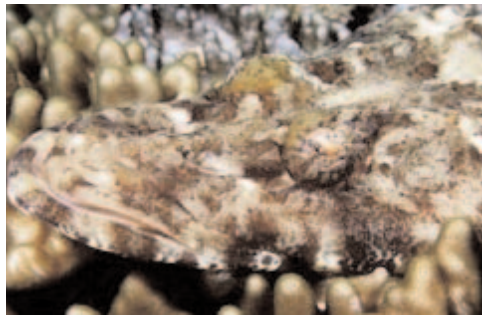


Photo: E. Glatz

### Snorkeling

While the others are diving, I am snorkeling with Rosie. On the ground they are diving and I observe them 30 meters above them. Steve is making jokes and I almost die of laughing. Wouldn't be good diving I would have lost my regulator. I don't trust diving with the snorkel. The Firefish and the Unicorn fish I see also well from above.

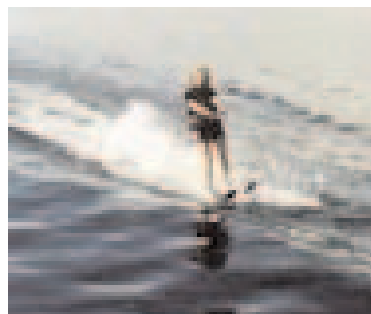
### Wreckdive

Another high spot is the wreckdive. Just frame from the 80 meters freighter look out the ocean. We have a lot of current and we fly by as birds. You can't hear my scream as I look into a crocodilefish. In the evening we are surprised as we see the fishermen start working. One light after the other is lightening up. It looks like a beach promenade in Cannes.

### Kilifi

I am sitting on the bug of the Aristos and enjoy the swim. Hours for hours- the motor is making to much noise. We are driving to Kilifi, where Steve and his parents live. The last night on the Aristos - I would have liked it much longer.

Next morning we are invited for breakfast at Steve's parents house. The Driveway has on both sides' most wonderful flowers. After the breakfast I cool down in the swimmingpool and now follows a sad good by from Rosie, Caroline and Steve and after the last view of the Aristos we drive to Wata-mu.



# Watamu

I spent two weeks in Kenya, the first on the Aristos in the lagoon of Pemba and the second on the Beach of Watamu while diving and an impressive Safari.

The tide is intense, sometimes you put our feet just underneath the Bungalow in the water and sometimes you might walk a mile to do the same. Watamu is a small, lost town between Mombasa and Malindi. Just the kitchen is built by stone, the "rooms" and the "diningroom" is made by sisal or wood. We were more outside than inside. Branches laid next to another on piles make the "way" to the rooms. The Bungalow looks like a weave basket with balcony, bedroom and shower and toilet. Around the bed are mosquito net, there are no windows just wholes. 3 or 4 employees are cooking, cleaning, chase away mosquito in the net and guard us. I felt like a princess. The first night was a little scary, sleeping outside without a bedroom door. The noises are weird. But we slept that night and all others very well without any problems. Honestly it sleeps very well in the nature but still with a roof over my head.

## Diving in Watamu

Employees of the diveschool help us to carry us the heavy bottles to the boat. Not just my back is thankful for it. It's a very nice place to dive, but we have to be careful with the tide to come back on the beach. I lost the flashlight on a nightdive and had first problems to dive down. I looked around even more, and I was very lucky, I found that expensive torch.

## Gedi

The Gedi-Ruins is an old Town, but there is not much left. I think there where Arabs who built it. Nearby are the caves where the slave traders put the slaves to bring them afterwards everywhere in the World. Honestly I don't feel to well over there, I am happy to leave this place soon.

## Safari:

At five o'clock in the morning I am waken up. Julian the employee brings me to the gate and waits with me for the bus. I get the best seat in the bus, next to Rafael the driver. I fall asleep then we have a drive of 220 km to the Tsavo East Park. The first animals we see are



elephants. Red from the soil we see the giants far away from the street. By now I am awake, but because of the regular landscape and the bad streets I'm very tired. I don't miss anything, then as soon as someone's sees anything alive in that park they scream loud enough. For Lunch we arrive in Satao Lodge. The rooms are Tents with roof, balcony and extension with bath. From the Tower we have a good view off the visited Waterhole. On 4 o'clock we go again on tour. We see Hippos and a wonderful sunset. In Kenya the sun's shining from six to six, afterwards it's night. I would not eat dinner with this one woman on the bus. She has a beard but no teeth. Lucky me, I meet two Swiss guys and we eat together. Both are Pilots and by hazard they will fly us home. We sit a long time on the fire and listen to the voices of the night animals in Tsavo east.

The next morning we make a last excursion in the wilderness. Lions, Elephants, Hippos, antelopes and gazelles, termites and their hills, buffaloes, Zebras, Ibis, Antelopes ugly jackals and bucks can I see. A safari must be in Kenya. At least if you have such a good driver as we have. He has eyes like an eagle and can explain everything. On our way back home we drive through lots of small villages. Anywhere races small children to the bus to beg.

But they still smile when I just wave at them and do not give them any candies.

Rafael told me so. We talk on the whole way back about the country and its people.

## Trading

I had not much Kenya Shilling left, but I wanted to buy some souvenirs. I still have a bad conscience then I swapped my Baseball Cap toward a stone dolphin and my shoes and the backpack against a wooden paper-knife and other nice gifts.

## The flight back

I'm invited to the Cockpit and after talking a while, they invite me to attend the landing. I sit in the middle. This Airport is in the middle of the desert and we first fly around the rocks. What a great occasion! I don't move, just my eyes try to not miss a thing.

**A great experience!**