





# Tanzanian revels



**Louise O'Loughlin** reports on two stunning holidays at Pemba Island – one under the stars, the other under water

## The Manta Lodge, Pemba Island, Tanzania

Opening August 2008

I remember my father returning from a trip to Pemba and saying that you have the feeling of being able to 'reach the stars'. I thought he had had one too many – until I visited the peninsula myself.

It is a magical place. The Manta Lodge consists of six, newly-built, seafront villas. They are spacious and private, with air conditioning and ensuite bathrooms. In addition, the resort has four garden rooms which also have views of the sea.

The garden rooms are paired up, with inter-connecting doors, which are ideal for families or large groups. All have 'Makuti-thatch' roofs and covered terraces.

Inside you will find king-sized four-poster beds, and they can also house two more beds per room upon request. All are fitted with ensuite bathrooms.

During the day, visit the newly-opened dive centre, Oxygene Pemba. It is the first fully-serviced, five-star PADI (Professional Association of Diving Instructors) centre on the island, providing multiple dive experiences with the quality and variety Pemba has become famous for.

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The diving round Pemba is nothing but breathtaking, with untouched coral reef surrounding the entire island, making it one of the top dive sites in the world.

Oxygène Pemba provides marine adventures and experiences with safety and environmental concerns as natural components, offering more comprehensive courses than other dive centres on the island.

If you're not interested in diving, don't worry. You can go on organised excursions, have spa treatments or go deep-sea fishing. The options are endless.

Alternatively, you could always relax on the white sands and do absolutely nothing at all.

In the evening, dinner is served on the main verandah or you can request the sandbank dinner. This involves being taken out to a wide stretch of sandbank that only appears at low tide to be served a platter of exquisite sea food and left alone to enjoy the crystal waters with an opportunity to 'touch the stars'. Romance beyond your wildest dreams. Just perfect for a honeymoon.

#### fact file

The Manta Resort and Oxygene opens on 1 August 2008.

Email: [reservations@monsoonempires.com](mailto:reservations@monsoonempires.com)

Websites: [www.pembaisland.com](http://www.pembaisland.com) or [www.monsoonempires.com](http://www.monsoonempires.com)



### Pemba Underwater Resort, Pemba Island, Tanzania

Opening 2010

The Pemba Underwater Resort will be placed amongst the remote and unspoiled coral reefs of Pemba Island, Zanzibar. Created from the concept by Genberg Underwater Hotels, another Swedish company, Resort Investors AB, has been developing this project since 2006.

The resort is planned to open in mid-2010. For progress reports visit the management team at [www.monsoonempires.com](http://www.monsoonempires.com).





# The only way is DOWN

If you ask people what they wish they had done in their lives so far, scuba diving is one of the most popular answers.

I learnt to dive at an early age while growing up in Mombasa, Kenya. The magical waters of the Indian Ocean are close to my heart and scuba diving runs deep in my veins. Once you have tried it, you never look back.

All those years ago, Bruce Phillips started up his scuba diving company, Buccaneer, and is now an established course director, the highest accolade in the business. His company is Kenya's only 5-star centre, based on the north coast of Mombasa, and boasts a range of awards including the coveted Professional Association of Diving Instructors Service to Industry Award.

Buccaneer Diving's base is at the Sarova Whitesands Beach and Spa situated on Bamburi Beach, approximately 14 kilometres from Mombasa town. Bruce has bases all over Mombasa, including his first resort-based Buccaneer at the famous Reef Hotel.

It makes no difference if you are starting out, or wanting to become a divemaster or instructor, rest assured, Bruce and his team of highly-qualified staff, and the combination of an inviting climate and extraordinary marine life, should make you want to pack your suitcase now.

While there is no absolute guarantee of 100 per cent visibility, nine times out of ten the Indian Ocean won't let you down. Diving through wrecks and swimming with sharks and sea turtles while being safely



guided by Buccaneer's team of expert divers gives added assurance to anyone of any level.

Bruce's knowledge and love of marine life inspired him to set up another company, Buccaneer Wrecks. This allows for the creation of artificial reefs which have proved to contribute greatly to the marine environment, as well as creating fabulous dive sites.

LOUISE O'LOUGHLIN

#### fact file

Bruce Phillips, Buccaneer Diving  
 Telephone: 00 254 733 630369  
 Email: [bruce@buccaneerdiving.com](mailto:bruce@buccaneerdiving.com)  
 Website: [www.buccaneerdiving.com](http://www.buccaneerdiving.com)