



## **SCUBA DIVING AND SNORKELLING WITH BLUE WORLD DIVING AND WATER SPORTS**



Mafia Island and its reefs are reknown as an excellent, World-class diving destination. Scientists have confirmed that Mafia has some of the richest reefs in the World, with an unparalleled variety of hard and soft corals and diversity of tropical fish. We have identified fabulous dive sites from Mafia to Kilwa offering shallow reefs of immense beauty and richness, bommies, channels, walls and caves, drift and night dives. These are new sites and we have years of exploration to do.

**KJNASJ** – through its water sports department – **Blue World** - offers great diving for advanced and novice divers in safety under professional instruction. We take great snacks and picnic lunches aboard our dive boats and stay out for two-tank dives or, after diving, enjoy the rest of the day with a visit to other islands or historic and interesting sites. The snorkelling on the shallow reefs surrounding the many islands in and around Chole Bay is a great attraction for non-divers and divers alike.



Adventure dives (night, wall, reef and drift dives) are regular features of an active diving programme. For groups of up to twelve guests a cruise can be planned to take in the marvellous destinations of Ras Mkumbi, Forbes Bay, Kitutia Reef, Okuza and Nyuni Islands and the reef complex surrounding Songo Songo and Njove islands. These safaris offer superb diving and snorkelling over exquisite coral gardens in excellent visibility, and have rarely been dived.

Trained diving assistants handle all equipment, help

divers and check their equipment, so that you are free to enjoy the dives and all other activities during each day.

## ***SAFETY IS PARAMOUNT***



We use the best quality equipment and cylinders and employ rigid safety, inspection and maintenance standards. Equipment is replaced regularly.

We also ‘buddy’ divers carefully to ensure similar standards and interests and all diving is preceded by briefings and checks, to ensure maximum enjoyment.

The disturbance or removal of any form of marine life is prohibited and we use boat engines of low horsepower to minimise pollution, and sail the dhow

whenever possible. We have been assisting marine research for over six years and hope that all our guests will benefit from the accumulated knowledge and the conservation programmes underway.

## ***THE DIVE SITES***

We are indebted to FRONTIER Tanzania for some of the information in the text which follows. Their report on the diving in Mafia - The Guide to the Diving of Mafia Island: an Unexplored Paradise - is in the Kinasi library.

Chole Bay is blessed with a number of excellent dives within the Bay, ensuring diving in almost any weather, as well as easy access. Visibility varies with the wind and tides, and is generally poor on outgoing tides as there is the normal accumulation of organic and granular matter in the water. The diving is tide-dependent for this reason and also to avoid strong currents at the dive sites which are close to the mouth of the Bay (Kinasi Pass). We usually dive on the full low, full high or on the incoming tide for the Kinasi Pass drift dive and the Chole and Kinsai walls. Diving outside the Bay is subject to weather conditions and tides, as it can be dangerous to negotiate Kinasi Pass on an outgoing tide; however, once outside the Bay the dives are not tide dependent.

Almost all Mafia's best diving is at depths of less than 30m so it is a sport diver's paradise. The reefs of the archipelago offer a staggeringly beautiful and varied display of marine life. The excellent condition and high diversity of the reefs stimulated the creation of Mafia Island Marine Park, Tanzania's first marine park. Examples of most kinds of tropical marine habitat occur here, including exposed fringing reefs, rock walls, soft coral and algae-dominated reefs. The diversity of animal and plant life is hard to match, with over 50 genera of corals and 400 species of fish so far identified; many more still await determination. There are excellent examples of giant table corals, delicate seafans, whip corals, and huge stands of blue-tipped staghorn corals. Large predatory fish and turtles are common and surprisingly unaffected by approaching divers.

# DIVING INSIDE THE BAY

## KINASI WALL

This is a sheltered bank reef, moderately deep and steeply sloping from 8 to 21 metres. It runs south-east:north-west for approximately 800 m and is an excellent dive on a slack tide or with a slight incoming current. It is in superb condition and composed of many species of hard and soft corals and supports a great variety of shoaling and solitary fish and giant clams, seafans, large groupers, and Napoleon wrasse; there are abundant reef and pelagic fish, and turtles (especially the hawksbill) are often seen. One of our most popular dive sites.

## CHOLE WALL

Another bank reef that joins the Kinasi Wall but lying north-east:south-west, also about 800m long. A steep bank of coral descending to 15 m, usually with excellent visibility, and ending in coral rubble and sand. A panorama for the diver as there is a startlingly rich tapestry of corals enveloped in clouds of tiny fish, dominated by colourful damselfish and fusiliers; numerous butterflyfish and angelfish. Especially interesting for the many species of colourful nudibranchs and flatworms. This is an excellent night or introductory dive. A great site of interest.



of  
is an  
dive full

## CORAL GARDENS

A very large area of beautiful coral outcrops "bommies", lying in a wedge behind the Kinasi and Chole walls. The coral is very densely packed and continuous behind Kinasi wall; elsewhere the coral is separated by seagrass and sand patches. This is an excellent site for photography with a very high diversity of fish, colourful corals and anemones and the shallow water makes visibility excellent. This is a shallow water dive, often undertaken as the last phase of one of the wall dives. Excellent for snorkellers behind Kinasi Wall at low tide.

or  
Kinasi  
packed

## THE CORAL PATCHES

This site comprises three extensive and spectacular coral patches at 9 to 17 m that are separated by sand channels. The many species of coral are packed around the ancient Porites formations. There are a large number of dense shoals of fish, equalled only by Kinasi Pass. A peculiarity is the occurrence of large numbers of spotted garden eels, so named for their habit of living together in "gardens" in the sand around the coral.

## THE PINNACLE

The Pinnacle is a 12 m spire of ancient coral rock (7o57'005S/39o47'850E) lying in the inner Kinasi Pass, close to the last rock island. Maximum depth is 24m at the base of the spire. This is a spectacular dive for the unusual structure and the mixture of reef and pelagic fish in the channel. Home to a very large potato cod and a very large resident moray in a hole on the "whale-back" of rock that slopes off the western side of the stack and many giant batfish.



## KINASI PASS

After completing a tour of the Pinnacle the diver heads south-west to the side of the channel, the Kinasi Pass dive, rightfully famous as a stunning drift dive. The Pass has two walls, commencing with a deep 20-26 m shelving reef, then a shallower one at 6-15 m. The diver floats along a wall with small caverns and overhangs, with great shoals of juvenile and adult reef fish, barracuda and carangidae that sometimes block out the light, a vast array of corals, parrotfish, large groupers

and pelagics coming and going with the tide. A fantastic dive.

## MILIMANI REEF

Extremely picturesque with unusual coral formations through which the diver navigates. Spectacular layered coral peaks. This is followed by vast Porites formations that are dome-like, with many lionfish, glass fish and moray eels. From here it slopes away to 21 m with a wide variety of soft and hard corals. This site is good in all conditions as it is only slightly affected by currents; an excellent second dive.

## MSUMBIJI

This site consists of a small primary reef with a variety of soft and hard corals on slopes and sheer walls down to 15 m. Away from the central formation are spires of coral that provide archways and overhangs for the diver to explore. Beautiful anemones of fluorescent red colour and rays (especially blue spotted) are common. This site is a good introductory dive but has unpredictable visibility conditions.

## DIVES OUTSIDE THE BAY

### DINDINI WALL NORTH

This is a rock wall from 8 m down to 28 m, with caves, caverns, overhangs and an archway; this is the only true rock wall so far discovered and it makes a spectacular and exciting dive. Large groupers, sharks, guitarfish, turtles and basket sponges are features. We have also seen many large pelagics here, including sailfish, very large tuna and dolphins, as the wall lies close to great dropoffs. There is lush growth of sedentary filter feeders and algae on the upper part of the wall; seafans and whip corals lower down.

### DINDINI SOUTH WALL

An extension of the same wall, from 9-22 m, this dive is interesting for the many small walls interspersed with shelving reef, offering a great variety of soft and hard corals and more reef fish. There are very many Napoleon wrasse and potato bass. An excellent dive.



## JINAPASS

This site is also an extension of the Dindini Wall lying at the northern tip of Jina Island, ranging in depth from 8 m to 20 m at the base of a small, vertical wall that has shallow caverns and overhangs and bottoms out in a gravel field. The site is one of our favourites for a rough-mannered, persistent, overfriendly and very large potato bass who dominates every dive.

## JINAREEF

A gently sloping fringing reef down to 26 m with many brightly coloured soft corals. Home to many mid-size groupers (Flowery Cod) and inquisitive blue-spotted trevally, which are common on all Mafia dives. This site is close to and a continuation of the fringing reef complex near Kinasi Pass.

## KINASIPASS ENTRANCE

The north and south shoulders of the Pass are fringing reefs with dramatic landscapes; here there are excellent stands of pristine staghorn and large table corals. Shoals of juvenile reef and pelagic fish; the red lunar-tailed groupers are common; many parrotfish. Turtles, rays and small reef sharks are seen, as well as many of the larger ocean-going kingfish, caranx, barracuda, rainbow runner. dive sites - on either side of the Pass - slope to 20 where the coral peters out to rubble and sand, 500 m offshore.



often fish - Both m, about

## EXCURSION DIVES

The dive sites described below can only be undertaken as full day excursions due to their distance, for which the boat will be charged as extra.

## KITUTIAREEF

comprises two large bare sand bars or "cays" and an ancient rock outcrop, surrounded by patch reef, approximately 9 south east of Jibondo Island and 18 km from Kinasi. There high diversity of corals and reef fish, large oceanic pelagics outer slopes, and excellent stands of staghorn corals. Closer cays there is excellent snorkelling with "bommies". There moray and honeycomb eels, and turtles and dolphins frequent Kitutia. There are several dive sites here; the site east of the coral cay slopes to 21 m with a pristine coral and a great variety of fish; a pair of giant potato cod and a



This coral km is a on the to the are due slope

Chinaman cod provide friendly company. There is also a superb drift dive down the western side from the sand cays.



## MANGE REEF AND SANDBAR

This is a sand bar with patch reef 3 km long located 18 km south-west of Kinasi. The best dive site is off the eastern corner of the reef where the reef drops off to a maximum depth of 20 m. At 10-14 m the coral is dominated by massive, encrusting forms with an impressive variety of soft corals flourishing at all depths. There are many juvenile fish,

extensive stands of staghorn coral, octopus, crayfish, moray eels, and large pelagics.

## NIGHT DIVING

Many reef creatures are nocturnal, avoiding daytime predators. As the light fades and the rich "soup" of plankton rises from deeper water, the daytime, rock-like appearance of corals is transformed into a brilliance of colour as the polyps emerge from their stony cups to feed on the plankton. Many sheltering, daytime fish will be seen resting amongst the corals and in crevices, while octopus, sea cucumbers and crayfish forage on the reef. Night diving focuses the attention on the many small, delicate reef species usually missed during the day. A spectacular occurrence is the spawning behaviour of corals.



Chole Wall and the Coral Gardens are an excellent night dive

## SNORKELLING

A number of the reefs around Mafia are both snorkelling and dive with shallow reef sloping away to walls. The snorkelling here is truly excellent for the beginner and those experienced. The shallow water constant tidal movements provide excellent light, showing off the wonderful colours of both soft and corals.



*Going snorkelling at the islets in Kinasi Pass*

sites,

more  
and

hard

## CORAL GARDENS

Located on the shallow reef backing the Chole and Kinasi Walls; the maximum depth is 8 m and the snorkeller is usually in 3 to 6 m. A very extensive and superb photographic site with numerous coral "bommies" in seagrass and

sand patches. A high diversity of reef fish with each "bommie" demonstrating a small world of great colour and variety. Stands of "fire" coral (*Millepora* spp).



## KINASIPASS ISLETS

The two larger islets in the main Kinasi Pass (*Kisiwa Kubwa*, *Kisiwa Ndogo*) are superb snorkelling sites with protected anchorages in sand on the inner, Bay side. There are scattered "bommies" and shallow reefs between and around the islets. Lionfish and the Titan triggerfish are very common. Open-billed storks, hadada ibis, little egrets and fish eagles are resident on the islets. A small pool, hidden in the centre of the largest islet, can be

reached by swimming through a narrow channel in the rock. Small groups of nocturnal cardinal fish lurk in the shady crevices. The "bommie" adjacent to the largest islet falls away to about 15m and houses a fascinating complex of corals and fish.

## *Lesser known Dive and Snorkel Sites*

### MANGE REEF snorkel

In the shallows are some of the most beautiful stands of branching staghorn corals, best appreciated by snorkelling. Large expanses of shallow coral and sand patches with brilliant illumination for superb snorkelling and photography.

### KITUTIA snorkel

Superb snorkelling just off the main sand cay and in the channel facing Jibondo Island. A wonderful day trip for all.

### JIBONDO PASS snorkel

A shallow reef in the channel north of Jibondo Island with many scattered bommies in sand. There can be strong tidal movements but this is an ideal site to see many colourful parrotfish of all sizes.



### CHOLE CHANNEL AND REEF snorkel and shallow dive

Just in front of Chole Island, facing Kinasi, is a shallow reef with many soft corals and seagrass, sloping to a maximum depth of 15 m. A fine site also for drift dive training. This area has a high diversity of bottom-living filter feeders due to the regular tidal movements. Soft corals, seapens, anemones and sponges carpet the seafloor in a diverse array of colours and forms. Interspersed are numerous small coral "bommies" with their own individual communities.

### NORTH SIDE OF KINASI PASS

On the north-eastern side of the Pass, not far from Miewe and Jina Islands, there is a field of seagrass with scattered "bommies" and shelves or coral.

## *Diving Conditions in Mafia Island*

Mafia Island is the site of Tanzania's first Marine Park. The Park covers the Southern half of the island and part of the North-East coast. Mafia is undoubtedly the best dive location in Tanzania. It's a haven that has a lot to offer and does not require lots of experience to be dived.

Chole Bay - the area where most of the dive sites are located is part of the park, is also blessed with a number of excellent dive sites outside and within the bay; ensuring the possibility of diving in almost any weather condition as well as easy access.

Visibility varies with the wind and tides. There also tend to be strong currents at the dive sites that are close to the mouth of the Bay (Kinasi Pass). For these reasons, diving in Chole Bay is arranged around the tidal movements (tide-dependent).

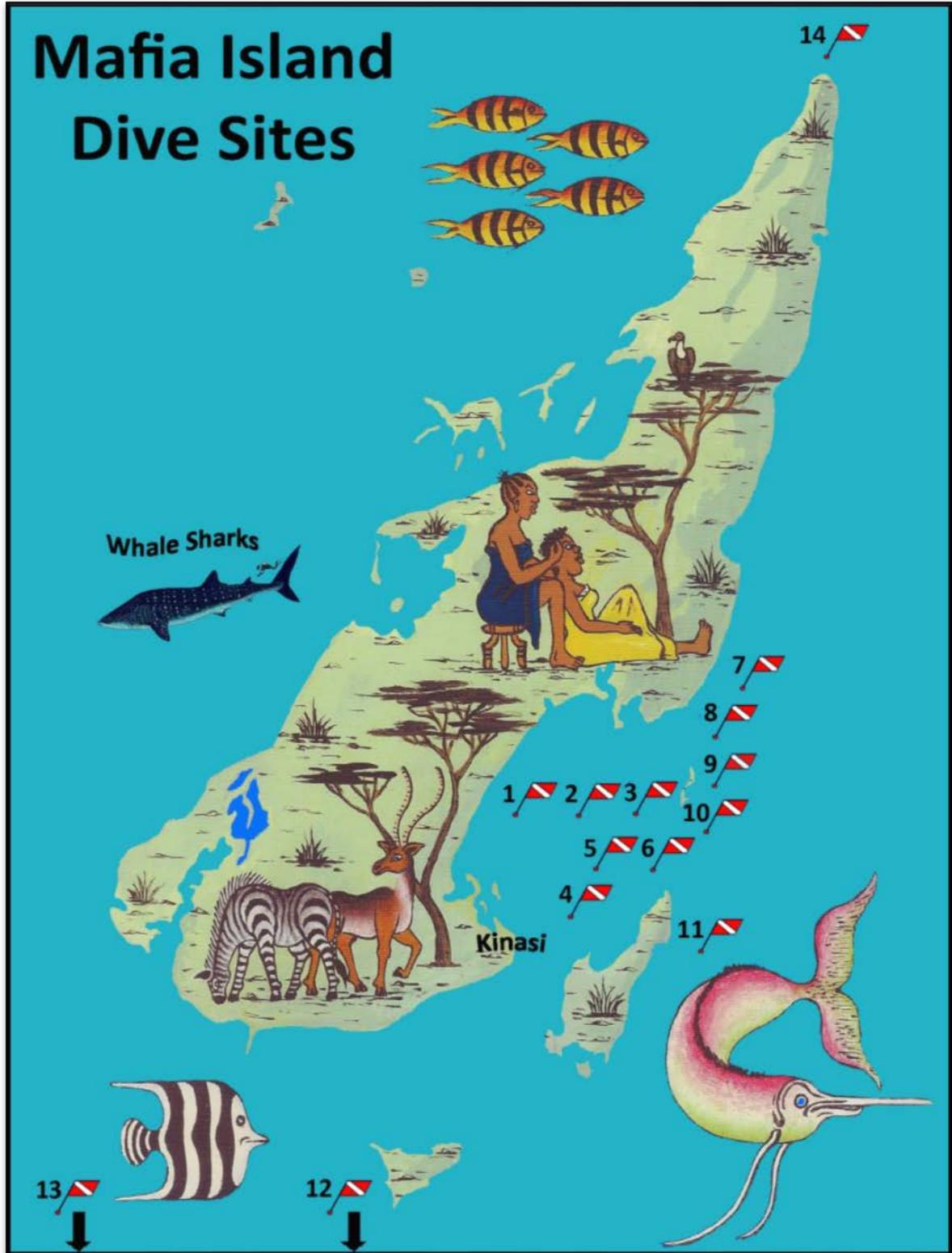
Once outside the bay, this is no longer the case. Almost all of Mafia's best diving is at depths of less than 30 meters, so it is a sport diver's paradise. The reefs of the archipelago offer a staggeringly beautiful and varied display of marine life.

The diversity of animal and plant life is hard to match, with over 50 types of corals and 400 species of fish so far identified. There are excellent examples of Giant Table Corals, Delicate Seafans and Whip Corals. Large predatory fish and Turtles are common. Giant Groupers, schools of Barracuda, Rays and if you are lucky Sharks can often be seen on the dive.

On top of all this, snorkeling with the Whale Sharks during their annual visit to Mafia between September and March makes Mafia one of the best places in the World to visit.

**FOLLOW THE MAP BELOW FOR BASIC DESCRIPTIONS OF THE DIVES**

# Mafia Island Dive Sites



# Dive Sites of Mafia Island

## Dive Sites inside the Bay



### Milimani

DIFFICULTY: EASY

MAXIMUM DEPTH: 18 MT.

1

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TYPE: SLOPE

VIS: 15 – 30 MT.



### Coral Gardens (Utumbi)

DIFFICULTY: EASY

MAXIMUM DEPTH: 16 – 18

2

TYPE: SLOPE / GARDEN

VIS: 15 – 30 MT.



### Kinasi Wall

DIFFICULTY: EASY

MAXIMUM DEPTH: 24 MT.

3

TYPE: WALL / SLOPE

VIS: 15 – 30 MT.



### Chole Wall

DIFFICULTY: EASY

MAXIMUM DEPTH: 18 MT.

4

TYPE: SLOPE

VIS: 15 – 30 MT.



### Kinasi Pass

DIFFICULTY: MEDIUM

MAXIMUM DEPTH: 40 MT.

5

TYPE: PASS / CHANNEL

VIS: 15 – 30 MT.



### The Pinnacle

DIFFICULTY: MEDIUM

MAXIMUM DEPTH: 24 MT.

6

TYPE: PASS / CHANNEL

VIS: 15 – 30 MT.



### The Kinasi Express

DIFFICULTY: HARD

MAXIMUM DEPTH: 30 MT.

TYPE: FAST DRIFT

VIS: 15 – 30 MT.

## Dive Sites outside the Bay



### **Dindini Wall North**

DIFFICULTY: EASY  
7 MAXIMUM DEPTH: 28 MT.  
TYPE: WALL  
VIS: 15 – 30 MT.



### **Dindini Wall South**

DIFFICULTY: EASY  
8 MAXIMUM DEPTH: 23 MT.  
TYPE: WALL  
VIS: 15 – 30 MT.



### **Jina Pass / Jina Wall (Mlila)**

DIFFICULTY: EASY  
9 MAXIMUM DEPTH: 20 MT.  
TYPE: SLOPE / WALL  
VIS: 15 – 30 MT.



### **Jina Reef (Mikadini)**

DIFFICULTY: EASY  
10 MAXIMUM DEPTH: 20 MT.  
TYPE: SLOPE  
VIS: 15 – 30 MT.



### **Juani**

DIFFICULTY: EASY  
11 MAXIMUM DEPTH: 26 MT.  
TYPE: WALL  
VIS: 15 – 30 MT.

## Excursion dive safaris outside of Chole Bay



### **Kitutia Reef**

DIFFICULTY: EASY  
12 MAXIMUM DEPTH: 22 MT  
TYPE: SLOPE  
VIS: 15 – 30 MT.



### **Mange Reef**

DIFFICULTY: EASY  
13 MAXIMUM DEPTH: 26 MT.  
TYPE: SLOPE  
VIS: 15 – 30 MT.



### **The Lighthouse**

DIFFICULTY: DIFFICULT  
14 MAXIMUM DEPTH: 70 MT.  
TYPE: WALL / REEF  
VIS: 20 – 30 MT.