



***Dear Guest and Friend of Mafia***

***Welcome to Mafia Island and an especially warm greeting from all of us at Kinasi. The people of Mafia also welcome you as they know how tourism benefits the local economy.***

***We have included in this folder information that will make your stay much more enjoyable and allow you to experience Mafia to the full, with excursions to every corner of the island, its beaches, villages and forests.***

***Read and plan your trip, then let us know what you wish to experience while in Mafia. Your comments, suggestions and ideas are most welcome. Please use our blog, Facebook and other social media or email us directly with your experiences and memories.***

***Many thanks for coming to Kinasi and Mafia and our hopes for good weather and a wonderful holiday with us,***

***This year is very special – our 20<sup>th</sup> Birthday, so come and share with one of our special offers that will run through early 2016.***

***We want all our friends to return home with memories that will last forever. With very best wishes from ourselves and our wonderful, friendly team at Kinasi, Blue World and the Isis Spa...***



*Antonella Balestra and Peter Byrne*

## OUR PHILOSOPHY....EXPERIENCE MAFIA, DON'T JUST VISIT



*Our hope is for you to be involved in Mafia the way our family was able to live and enjoy the fishing and snorkelling, sailing and picnicking and all the other attractions and interests....all without any crowds. We have provided as many facilities and activities as possible to allow you to do this. You are welcome to use any of the "toys" we have or we can arrange something special and*

*unusual for you - like joining one of the local fishing boats. Just let us know.*

*Our philosophy also encompasses the ideals of "ecotourism" although we believe all tourism has to be "eco-friendly" or there will be nothing left to see and experience. What we do accept is that all tourism has an impact, some positive others negative. We intend to create net benefits for the country and especially Mafia Island and to contribute effectively to the conservation of Mafia Island Marine Park. Kinasi was the site of the principal research efforts that led to the establishment of the Park and we are proud that we were able to host the FRONTIER team from 1988 to 1993.*

*We contribute to community and commercial activities in Mafia and have done for two decades now, and even before Kinasi existed, as we love Mafia and hope you will too. We first came to Mafia in 1984.*

*So come on in and enjoy the experience; put yourself in one of these steamer chairs on our verandah, overlooking the beautiful Chole Bay...*



## THE MARIMBANI SAND BANK AND OTHER BEACH TRIPS

Each day guests will be asked which activities they would like to be involved in. Since these usually involve the sea we need to plan carefully around the tides for your maximum enjoyment of the snorkelling, diving, swimming and picnicking on sand banks and islets in and around the Bay.

All activities are tide-dependent so we keep the tide times on a board in the sitting area. The tide times not only change each day but the size of the tide (how high the water reaches and how low it falls) also changes throughout the month, in concordance with the moon.



### PICNIC ON MARIMBANI

We recognise that Kinasi is not a beach destination so we offer an excursion boat to the beautiful Marimnai Sand Bank in Chole Bay, to Miewe Island and to the swimming and sun-baking

destinations for those who are not taking part in other excursions and water sports. On each picnic the crew sets up a shade and there is a coolbox of drinks and a picnic buffet lunch on days when we eat out.



Another favourite picnic destination is Miewe Island, on the far side of Chole Bay, near the northern side of Kinasi Pass. This is a tiny island with tamarind and baobab trees, with a sandy beach and calm anchorage. It's the perfect spot after snorkelling at



### OUR BOATS AT UTENDE BEACH

#### DOWN THE KUA CHANNEL



## Bird-watching and the Kinasi Nature Trail

From Kinasi several walks can be made to places of interest as well as to just “meet the locals”. Our principal guide is Mzee Kirobo (*Mzee* being a term of respect, not simply “old man”). He is extremely knowledgeable of all Mafia lore, as well as much of the history and many of the birds. A trip with Kirobo means that you will be late for your next meal !

### KIROBO SAID SAGE OF MAFIA



### Village Walk and Bird-watching

Visit the village and surrounding farmlands where you can see rice-growing, cassava, beans, sweet potato and many fruit such as coconuts, papaya, bananas, pineapples, custard apples, jackfruit, mangoes, guavas,

This can also be a bird walk as many of the interesting birds are busy harassing the farmers’ crops or are more easily seen in the open farmlands. The visitor will see many spectacular rollers (Lilac-breasted) and bee-eaters (White-cheeked) between Kilindoni and Kinasi, and there are five species of sunbird in the Kinasi gardens. The black or white Dimorphic Heron is the common species at roosts in Chole Bay. The Kinasi Nature Trail has been designed with bird-watching very much in mind.

The lilac-breasted rollers and Madagascan bee-eaters are especially spectacular. The ***Bird Check-list of Mafia*** is in the Kinasi library.

### Nature Trail and Reef Walk

The nature trail starts near the dive centre and extends approximately 3 km to the west along the foreshore and back along the ridge to Kinasi, or back to the road via Didimiza Beach, a lovely beach about 1.5km away. Along the walk there are many special sights, trees and all four of the main types of mangroves. There is a guide pamphlet and Kirobo usually accompanies the walk.



At low tide the reef flats in front of Kinasi are very interesting with many creatures to see: live cowries, starfish, small eels, etc. the bird life trying to make a living off this rich part of the food chain is also fascinating and includes the palm nut vulture.

### A TINY BARRED OWLET LOOKS DOWN FROM A CASHEW TREE, WHILE A FISH EAGLE WATCHES OVER KUA RUINS



## Guided Excursion to Kua Ruins



### THE KUA RUINS ON JUANI ISLAND

The Kua Ruins are amongst the most important of the historic ruins of East Africa for the valuable link they provide in the chain of historic events that shaped the coast of East



Africa, and for the examples of construction and imported building technology that became common from Somalia to Sofala. The use of coral stone and lime mortar began approximately 1,100 years ago. Buildings found in Kua and its parent city, Kilwa, bear the indelible architectural stamps of Iraq, Persia, Turkey and the Hadramout of Yemen.

### THE MIHRAB OF THE SMALL MOSQUE

Kua was clearly a very rich little settlement covering about 15 ha and including 5 mosques. We believe it owed its wealth to the trade cowries harvested on the reefs between Juani and Jibondo, which were used all the way to Central Africa. In 1829 cannibals from Madagascar, known as the Sakalava sacked the town, after arriving in war canoes. A similar fate befell Kisimani Mafia and Kilwa in the 1870s. The Ruins sit atop a small hill with spectacular views of the Bay and have the best views of the sunset over the Rufiji Delta. Many shards of pottery can still be found, such as exquisite designs in blue ceramic from Tang Dynasty bowls, providing valuable insights to the trading history of Kua and its former wealth.

**We have all the information available on Kua, which was fully excavated in 1955-7, in our library files, so please read up on this interesting site.**

The Kua ruins are also an excellent bird-watching site and there are



many shore birds and waders to be seen during the excursion.



The Kua trip can only be made on high tides as it is shallow around the site. We usually make the trip in conjunction with a sail down the Kua channel and return slowly across the Bay with a sunset drink.

## Guided Walk on Chole Island



### **KIROBO TAKES A REST UNDER THE RUINED WALLS OF THE JAMAAT ON CHOLE MJINI, HELD TOGETHER BY THE ROOTS OF STRANGLER FIG TREES (L)**

Chole is a tiny island with an interesting history. It became the prominent settlement on Mafia after the sacking of Kua, believed to have taken place in 1829. For the next century it was the main centre of the Mafia archipelago.

As the first 'Capital' of Mafia, Chole was originally known as *Chole Mjini* (Chole town) while the main island was *Chole Shamba*, the farm. The first settlers, probably part-Arabs, who referred to themselves as Shirazi, possessed slaves and there are still bitter handed-down memories of this period. In 1890 Germany took control of Mafia as a result of a purchase agreement with the Sultan of Oman and established the main house on the island called the German Boma. The ruins are prominent on the foreshore of the island. The German colonial government created Kilindoni in 1910-13 and Chole gradually withered as an economic centre, so many buildings have fallen into ruin.



### **THE GIANT FLYING FOX, *PTEROPUS* (R)**

The Chole Walk is a fascinating window on the traditional life of a peaceful and industrious village community, as well as an interesting visit with nature. Mafia was formed from sediments of the Rufiji River and it seems that Chole was blessed with more than its fair share of rich soils, so it is a lush and agriculturally productive "shamba". In addition to all the plants to see there is a large colony of the Giant Flying Fox *Pteropus madagascarensis comorensis*. Their fur is a beautiful russet colour, and some have a wing span of 1 m.

### **SKILLED CRAFTSMEN BUILD DHOWS BY EYE**

The Chole people have mastered many crafts such as boat building and rope-making from coconut fibre, and visitors can see these craftsmen at work.

The **Guide** to Chole, which includes many historical and cultural notes, is available in the Gift Shop, and there is a map of the nature trail on Chole available from our Activities Desk. All proceeds from sale of the book go to the village development association.



## Jibondo Island



**THE FAMOUS GREAT DHOW THAT HAS LIVED ON LAND SINCE IT WAS BUILT HAS NOW BEEN DISMANTLED FOR ITS TIMBERS**



### THE VILLAGE FROM THE AIR

Jibondo is our best-known fishing village and another fascinating boat and walking excursion that brings you closer to the lives of our people. The island is about 30 minutes away by boat.

When we first came to Mafia in the early 1980s Jibondo people fished almost exclusively for shark and octopus, which was sun-dried and exported to all parts of Tanzania and as far as the Gulf. Over-fishing resulted in a decline in shark populations but the people still harvest a great deal of octopus that is processed by Tanpesca and exported to the Mediterranean. Seaweed farming is now becoming an important business, growing in the shallow waters protected by the barrier reef that runs along from Kinasi Pass all the way to Kitutia.

Jibondo is a large village of very friendly people and you are welcome here as you are on Chole Island and can take photos and talk to the people and see how they live and work without any feeling of intrusion. The people are related to the main communities to the south, on SongoSongo island and Kilwa. The Jibondo people are famous throughout the Swahili-speaking world as boat-builders, and their “jahazis” will be found all over East Africa, as they are very well constructed for the rough seas outside the islands.

Unlike Chole, Jibondo island is almost entirely coral rock (ancient Porites coral) so no crops can grow in the shallow soil. There is always a water shortage and many of the younger people spend a great deal of time carrying water from sources on the main island.

### THE JIBONDO “HARBOUR”





## MANGE REEF

Mange is an atoll on the far western edge of the archipelago and lying in the Mafia Channel. It is a stunning place with a sand island – cay – exposed at low tide and an excellent coral reef for snorkelling and good diving on the deeper channel side.

This is a full-day excursion on the dhow “Papara” with picnic lunch and barbecued fish on the beach. We erect a sun shade canopy to protect you and of course carry the essential cold stores to make sure you don’t dry out, especially on the homeward journey when sundowners are mandatory. The Mange excursion will be arranged for guests by the activities staff. It is a wonderful excursion so please take part whenever the conditions are right.



## RAS KISIMANI & KISIMANI MAFIA and BWEJUUISLAND



Ras Kisimani is the far western cape of the main island, facing the Rufiji Delta. Kisimani Mafia, just north-east of the Cape is KiSwahili for “the place of the well”. An old town dating to the 12<sup>th</sup> Century has been drowned by rising sea levels and a collapsing foreshore for over 100 years. The Kinasi library contains a full account of the fascinating archaeology of these ruins, once the most important town on Mafia, especially from the 12<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> Centuries. It was founded by Bashat, one of the sons of the first Sultan of Kilwa, and extended the control of the Sultan to Mafia. The power and wealth of the Sultan of Kilwa was based upon gold, ivory and customs tariffs on all goods traded on the southern coast. In its time it was far more important than Zanzibar but its economic influence waned upon the arrival of the Portuguese at the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> Century.

There is little left of the town now, but visitors can easily find many beautiful potsherds and coins in the ruins and on the beautiful palm-fringed beach. The circular rock weights used to confine slaves at night can also be found here. Due to erosion the old well from which the town took its name now stands on the beach. The whole area is now a protected core zone of the Mafia Island Marine Park.

Bwejuu Island sits between Ras Kisimani and the Rufiji Delta and is a lovely sand-fringed, palm-covered island surrounded by sand bars and snorkelling reefs.

These are wonderful all-day excursions by boat from Kilindoni for beach-lovers and those looking for a castaway experience. There are huge expanses of beautiful beaches and fabulous swimming along the edge of the Ras Kisimani point and off the reefs and sand bars of Bwejuu. If you wish to make this excursion we will arrange a boat, beach shade and picnic for you.



## WHALE SHARKWATCHING IN MAFIA



These beautiful giants are seasonally found just a few hundred metres offshore near Kilindoni Harbour. A short boat ride towards the west brings us to a feeding ground for the sharks and soon fins and dark shapes are apparent.

Up to 24 can be seen at any one time: males, females and juveniles, all beautifully marked with stripes and spots. The larger sharks are estimated at over 8 m long, so they are an impressive sight next to the boat, and quite stunning under the water.



The boat is able to move among them quietly and visitors can swim and snorkel to get a closer, underwater view of these gentle, wonderful animals. The sharks remain in a well-defined area and have a repetitive feeding pattern, so there is no noisy motoring all over the area to look for

them. And no crowds to compete with, as with the Kizimkazi dolphins in Zanzibar.



Please make this a must when you are in Mafia. The whale shark trip can be combined with a picnic on the beach, swimming, a trip to the Kilindoni Market or a full day to Ras Kisimani or Bwejuu Island.



## SUNSET CRUISE

One of the delights of staying in Mafia is to sail our local craft, which are *jahazis* (also called dhows). And this is very special when we do this as a sunset cruise around Chole Bay. Audie and Jacques will arrange this when conditions are right complete with a coolbox full of cold white wine and other beverages, so please don't miss it.



## PRIVATE BOAT EXCURSIONS

Our boats are available for private excursions and picnics so please arrange with the Activities Manager whenever you would like to take a boat out for snorkelling, a safari around the bay, a full day trip to another part of Mafia or simply for a swim and sunbake on your own on one of the marvellous secluded beaches or islets.



## ROAD SAFARIS and PICNIC EXCURSIONS

**There are many interesting places to see on Mafia, but the condition of the roads can make this rather tiring for those not initiated to bad African roads.** On these excursions the visitor will see village life as it has always been, with almost none of the trappings of the modern day.



### KILINDONI TOWN & HARBOUR

Kilindoni is the district centre and most populous settlement on Mafia, which is also Tanzania's smallest electorate. The harbour is a bustling port and a great place to see how the coastal dhow trade works, as almost all Mafia's needs and exports are still handled by these vessels. The fish and vegetable market is also interesting.

### RAS MBIZI PLANTATION

Ras Mbizi is one of the peninsulas on the northern side of Mafia, and was planted to coconuts before World War I by German settlers. This and its sister plantation, Chunguruma, form a lovely area for a day's outing, with your guide explaining how the coconut industry works and the products derived, as well as miles of beach to explore in total isolation.



### BALENI & KIFINGE

Baleni is a village in the south-central area of Mafia, and lies enroute to the lovely Kifinge Bay (also known as Forbes Bay), the northern boundary of the Marine Park. There is a very interesting 45 minute walk through the Mlola Forest down to the beach for a picnic lunch on the sand.



### KIRONGWE, KANGA & JIMBO

These are the northern villages of Mafia before reaching Bweni and Ras Mkumbi. The north of Mafia is quite different to the south, as a result of lower rainfall and better soils. There are many baobabs and multi-headed doum palms, euphorbia and Acacia trees. The people live from a combination of farming and fishing, with most having additional skills such as sail-making, rope-making, weaving. Kanga and Jimbo are famous for the natural and coloured mats made from Phoenix palm leaves.

## BWENI VILLAGE and RAS MKUMBI

Located at Bweni Village near the northern tip of Mafia is a lovely promontory called Ras Bweni. "Ras" stands for peninsula, and from here one has a fine view of the superb sunsets over the Rufiji Delta and the moon rising over the Indian Ocean.

### ANGEL'S BEACH, BWENI

This part of Mafia is where the beautiful beaches have been formed. In contrast the Chole Bay side of Mafia is superb for diving and snorkelling.

The stunning feature of the location is the nearly 3 km of beach stretching away in both directions, all yours.....the sand is white and pure and one can always swim, despite tidal changes. And the complete isolation from any other tourist facility or commercial activity of any kind. Solitude, nature, complete relaxation.



### THE LIGHTHOUSE AT RAS



### MKUMBI



### STUNNING BEACHES, NORTH MAFIA

The owners of Kinasi have access to miles of magnificent beach stretching from Kanga Beach to Bweni Village. The lighthouse is 55 km from Kilindoni to Bweni so it's a wonderful day for this excursion; we take a 4x4 vehicle and picnic with us.



We have commenced construction of Lua Cheia our dream luxury beach camp right on the beach within metres of the beach. A day trip here takes the visitor to a completely different part of Mafia that is quite another world of vegetation, beaches and activities.

### ANCIENT BAOBABS OF BWENI

A visit to the lighthouse will allow you to see far to the south over the Mlola Forest, protected for its vegetation and wildlife, including Sykes monkeys. There are magnificent baobabs in the north of Mafia, especially at Ras Mkumbi (the northern tip of the island, just beyond Bweni village).