



FISHING BAZARUTO ARCHIPELAGO

Between the continent of Africa and the island of Madagascar lies a string of spectacular sub-tropical islands that rank alongside Australia's Great Barrier Reef as one of the earth's superb underwater wildernesses - the Bazaruto Archipelago.

One of the most beautiful places in Africa and famous for its pristine beaches, the world is starting to discover what we here in Africa have known for awhile - that these islands offer world class fishing.

The waters around the Bazaruto Archipelago National Park are an ecological paradise. At 1400km², it is one of the largest marine conservation areas in the Indian Ocean.

Traditional Arab dhows, motor launches and planes will whisk you off to our carefully chosen lodges and beach resorts. There is a good range of facilities from simple eco chalets and camps to luxury beach resorts. These beautiful properties wonderfully combine the magic of an African safari lodge set amongst some of the most unspoilt areas in the world.

Bazaruto Island is one of five islands in the Bazaruto Archipelago, which lies just 30km off the coast of tropical Mozambique's, Inhambane Province. The island falls into the Eastern African Marine Ecoregion, which stretches over a 4 600km coastline, from South Africa to Somalia. Part of the world's largest fringing reef system, there is over 2 000 fish species, 100 hard and 27 soft coral species, over 4 whale and 5 dolphin species. Bazaruto Archipelago is also home to the largest remaining population of the highly endangered Dugong in East Africa, raising the islands profile to a highly significant global marine conservation priority.

Along with several other islands in the archipelago, Bazaruto is probably one of most unique 'desert' islands in the world. Not only is she surrounded by magnificent



stretches of beach and the warm Indian Ocean -a tropical paradise, but her interior is equally fascinating with freshwater lakes that contain crocodile, leftovers from when the island was more connected to mainland Africa. There are plenty of walks and hiking trails that lead through a wide variety of scenery, huge sand dunes, inland lakes, forest and marshy grassland.

The island group is also home to all five marine turtle species of the western Indian Ocean. They are highly endangered and in urgent need of conservation. The turtles annually come to the beaches to breed and their nests are extremely vulnerable to predators.

Benguerra, the second largest island of the group was declared a National Park in 1971. Originally named "Santa Antonio" by Portuguese explorers she was later named "Benguera" after a local Tribal chief.

Most visitors come to Benguerra for the big-game fishing. The Indian Ocean surrounding the island comprises pelagic waters that play host to a multitude of sought-after game fish while the coral reefs remain pristine and home to a wealth of living organisms.

Fishing the Bazaruto Archipelago

The islands of the Bazaruto archipelago are blessed with an underwater topography that support large populations of baitfish which attract an immense variety of migrating pelagic fish as they cruise past the area throughout the year. Most fishing is done within depths of 15 to 200 feet and close to shore not further than 3 to 4 miles from the coast which means quick and easy access to the fishing grounds.

Game Fishing

Mozambique offers some of the best and most challenging game fishing in the world. Large black and striped marlins are regularly caught in the Bazaruto area and numerous 'Granders' (fish weighing over a thousand pounds) are taken by boats launched from the islands.

Sailfish are also caught throughout the year, the largest sailfish taken so far was 55kg. Other fish include Groupers, Prodigal Son, Wahoo, Dorado, Giant Trevally, Yellowfin Tuna, Barracuda, King Mackerel, Snappers and a vast array of other gamefish.

The Summer October to early March is the main Marlin time. These fish come in close to the shallow waters around the Islands and can often be found feeding around the shoals of various species of tunar. The average size fish caught is around 700 lbs. Numerous fish over 1000 lbs have been caught over the years as well as the all Africa record caught in November 1998 off the north point of Bazaruto which weighed in at 1298lbs.

Blue and striped Marlin are found between the months of September to January. These fish are found usually in the deep waters off the islands targeting the yellow fin and other tuna shoals. A Blue Marlin of approximately 650 lbs was caught and released during June 2002.

The main Sailfish season starts at the beginning of June till the end of September but it is not uncommon for these appear around the Islands during the middle of April. The average weight is 90 lbs.



Salt Water Fly Fishing

Mozambique boasts some of the finest saltwater fly fishing in the world. Salt water fly fishing is popular both on the mainland and from the islands beaches, particularly off sandbars produced by the high tidal range. Most commonly encountered are kingfish (including Giant Trevally) king and queen mackerel, kawakawa and springer. ***Fly fishers will also find the sought-after bonefish in the area – infact the islands of the Bazaruto Archipelago have a growing reputation for the world's largest bonefish!***

Rock and surf fishing is good all year round, Ignoblis kingfish, big springer, bonefish, stumpnose, pompano and barracuda are taken year round along with skates, rays and sharks.

This is truly a light tackle anglers paradise as the following species occur throughout the year: Giant Kingfish, Yellowtail, Kingfish & Bigeye, Skipjack Tuna, Bluefin Kingfish, Brassy Kingfish, Kingfish. Bigeye Tuna, Longfin Kingfish, Shortfin Kingfish, Ferdy Kingfish, Dorado, Yellowspotted Kingfish, Bludger. Rainbow Runner, King Mackerel, Largemouth Queenfish, Needlescaled Queenfish, African Pompan, Green Jobfish, Wahoo, Kawakawa or Little Eastern Tuna, Queen Mackerel, Yellowfin Tuna, Pickhandle Barracuda, Great Barracuda and Bonefish.

