



# VAMIZI NEWS

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**The remains of the old church and fort located in Aldeia (the oldest village on Vamizi) are both thought to be over 400 years old.**

Portuguese settlers began to colonise the Quirimbas islands in the middle of the sixteenth century and it is believed that the church and fort were built at around this time. The islands inhabitants were Islamic after centuries of Arabic influence from Zanzibar.

Both structures are simple and rough-hewn which is to be expected as the builders would have been hampered by the lack of materials, tools and skilled labour. The structures are mainly squared blocks of ancient coral, although the lintels above

doors and windows are stone which must have been transported from the mainland.

Both the church and fort have remained largely undisturbed and very little material has been removed. Fig trees entwine around the blocks holding the fragile structures together and ancient wild bee hives keep most people away. From an historical and cultural perspective these structures need to be preserved sensitively and there are plans to restore the church and the fort, if not to their former glory, to a state where deterioration is halted. ■



# MEET ADAMO AMADE

Adamo was born in Pemba on the Mozambican mainland south of Vamizi. He began his career in the Pemba Beach Hotel in 2002 and started working on Vamizi in 2005, when the Lodge opened. Adamo is a great character and is well respected amongst the staff. He was appointed as Restaurant and Bar Manager in February 2013. He feels very at home on Vamizi and during his free time, he likes to fish, visit Aldeia (the oldest village on Vamizi) and play volleyball or watch the kids from the villages playing football with a ball made from tied rags. ■



# 'NUISANCE'



When visiting Vamizi's most famous dive site Neptune's Arm, you will meet with many underwater inhabitants, but none more inquisitive than 'Nuisance'! Nuisance is a resident Giant Potato Bass (*Epinephelus tukula*), endearingly named due to her unsubtle attempts at attention. She loves divers, especially ones wearing anything yellow, and she likes to lead the way through the canyons and around the pinnacles. She is not in the least bit aggressive and the only real nuisance she will cause will be by being in the way when you try to look at or photograph other fish! ■



## THE COMMUNITY MARINE SANCTUARY

Vamizi has the only joint private/community/government partnership in Mozambique to co-manage its fisheries resource. A marine sanctuary surrounds the eastern side of the island and extends 3 kilometres out to sea (highlighted in red in the picture). The protected waters have been deemed one of the healthiest coral reef eco-systems in the world (David Obura, CORDIO), abundant with what ecologists' term 'indicator species'. These species are so sensitive to changes in the marine climate that they are the first

to disappear if there is a change in reef conditions. The marine sanctuary provides a much-needed refuge for marine biodiversity and is recognised by the Government of Mozambique as an area where no fishing is permitted. The Vamizi CCP (Fisheries Council) manages and protects these valuable coral reef and fish breeding grounds. They carry out regular patrols by boat and the Lodge provides \$3 from every dive and snorkelling boat launched into the sanctuary to support their efforts. ■

## SURF'S UP

Given that the seas around Vamizi are generally very calm, we never expected there to be any surfing! That is until Oli Stastny, a recent guest and ex professional snowboarder and windsurfer, proved otherwise on a paddle board just off Antares on the north east point of Vamizi. He described this area as a reef that will 'definitely pop out a great wave when a swell comes in'. He has surfed all over the world but Vamizi remains the only location where he has witnessed whales breaching from his board! ■





# TIME FOR KITUKULO!

The reefs around Vamizi are home for one of nature's most amazing phenomenon, coral mass-spawning, locally called 'Kitukulo'. One or two nights a year, countless corals from a variety of species simultaneously release their eggs in a colourful explosion of life. Mass-spawning is rare, occurring in only around 20 locations in the world but never before seen along the East African coast. This year we actually got to see it twice (a split event), the first mass spawning between the 29th to the 31st of August and the second one between the 27th and the 30th September. The first one could only be spotted on the south side of the island, but the second one could be seen from the Lodge and Private Villas, with the spawn slick covering the whole beach. Coral spawning brings with it other beautiful phenomena, like the huge aggregation of Powder blue Surgeonfish (*Acanthurus leucosternon*) that can be seen in the picture, feeding on the coral gametes. ■

## COMMUNITY MATTERS

In July this year Vamizi began a project to expand and improve the airstrip in line with new Civil Aviation Regulations. Local leaders from the villages were consulted and they expressed their interest to see the island develop. Owners of houses and coconut trees which had to be removed to make room for the wider airstrip were compensated. Construction began in August with full participation from the local community and works will be completed early in 2014. Vamizi now has a license, following a government inspection, to use the airstrip during the final works period. The community has also seen the completion of the school ablutions and the installation of the water collection system at the school. These are both Friends of Vamizi projects, the UK Charitable Trust established to support community projects on the island. More information about the work of the Trust can be found in the in-room folders and on our website [www.vamizi.com](http://www.vamizi.com). At the most recent general community meeting, the local leaders expressed their satisfaction

with the Friends of Vamizi Trust on its community project initiatives. The local leaders are key players in the implementation of these projects. During your stay we would encourage you to make a trip to the community to see the Friends of Vamizi Projects firsthand and to meet the people and experience the culture. Stanley, our resident guide, is available to lead these visits at your convenience. ■

