


Dylan Kotze



Cormac McCreesh

Somente Aqua Dolphin Centre owner Noleen Withers and guide Megan Williams swim with their finned friends.

DID YOU KNOW?



Dolphins have the ability to keep part of their brains alert for any predators, even when they're resting, and inshore bottlenose dolphins can live up to 80 years.

This was a smaller pod that had broken off from a larger group and they wanted to socialise. A dolphin darted out of the blue and started circling me with its belly pointed skywards, while another cruised in-between, blowing a bubble trail. Then another swam by. And another.

To me, it seemed like chaos, but this was their realm and they would dictate the encounter. I tried my best not to blink, so I could take in this calming yet exhilarating experience. Then, all too soon the dolphins had had enough, but the memory of a brief moment will last forever.

However, our two-hour excursion wasn't over. Two large humpback whales sailed by on their return south with a calf born during the winter months. An unforgettable breach which ended with an enormous splash marked the end of an amazing day at sea. Somente Aqua Dolphin Centre, tel +258-842-429-864, email info@somenteaqua.com, www.somenteaqua.com.

Ponta d'olphin





Everyone loves dolphins and to swim with them is an experience of a lifetime. There's no better place to do that than in Ponta do Ouro, Mozambique, where more than a decade of interactions have made the resident dolphins rather friendly.

We heard them long before we saw them. The unmistakable clicks, whistles and squeaks of the inshore bottlenose dolphin seemed to come from every direction as we floated in the warm, clear waters of Ponta do Ouro bay.

Our guide, Megan Williams, had already entered the water as we fumbled with our snorkelling gear. She's part of a team that's been working with the resident 250 dolphins for more than five years and has established an incredible connection with her

playmates. She assessed their behaviour to determine if it was suitable for us to join. Had they been resting or if there were newborns in the group, it would just be surface viewing for us. Skipper Clint Morkel gave us a big grin: it was our lucky day.

Thursday 22 December marks the summer solstice, the day with the longest period of daylight.

TIDE CHART	SUNRISE	SUNSET	MOONRISE	MOONSET	HIGH TIDES	LOW TIDES
 First quarter: Fri, 2 December	05h28	19h43	12h34	00h35	08h47 21h13	02h08 15h19
 Full moon: Sat, 10 December	05h28	19h50	19h51	05h11	03h05 15h08	09h01 21h20
 Third quarter: Sun, 18 December	05h31	19h55	00h26	13h12	08h52 21h36	02h22 15h31
 New moon: Sat, 24 Dec	05h33	19h58	05h05	19h47	02h50 15h01	08h55 21h23

NOT FOR NAVIGATION: Information based on Cape Town; times vary slightly countrywide.