



Kenyan Odyssey



WRITER PROFILE.

NAME CHRIS KEMPSTER

AGE 38

INFO *Real Travel* publisher Chris has travelled widely throughout Europe, the States and Southeast Asia, but never before to Africa until now. Chris and wife Gillian particularly enjoy food and drink, and watching wildlife on their travels.

LOOKING FOR THE PERFECT INTRODUCTION TO THE AFRICAN CONTINENT, **CHRIS** AND **GILLIAN KEMPSTER** PLANNED A TRIP TO KENYA, INCLUDING GAME WATCHING AND OCEAN BEACHES

We need money, not sweets; implored a village boy running beside us as we made our way back to the Land Rover. It's a scene we've all seen lots of times on TV, but as familiar as it may be, nothing really prepares you for the moment you're surrounded by groups of smiling children in a village where grinding poverty is the norm.

Popular wisdom suggests giving an adult some pens or sweets to share out to the children after the obligatory photocall, but the instinct is to give more substantially. The situation perfectly sums up the extreme emotions Africa provokes

– the elation of meeting warm people in traditional dwellings is tempered by the knowledge that their subsistence existence is back-breakingly hard.

My wife Gillian and I had escaped our hotel for the day to visit the village of Muyeye at the beginning of a two-week Kenyan odyssey that would take in four different stops, ranging from beaches to game reserves. Having travelled extensively before but never to Africa, we'd decided that Kenya might give us the ideal introduction to the continent, with its legendary wildlife, friendly people and colonial past – sort of like a soft initiation to a continent known for its extremes.

OCEAN VIEW

It's fair to say that our hotel in Kilifi Bay, an hour's bumpy drive from Mombasa, had definitely seen better days. But with a renovation promised by new owners Mada Hotels, and its dramatic position on the edge of the Indian Ocean, its best years could well be ahead of it.

Visiting a typical Kenyan village was high on my list, and with our aforementioned visit to Muyeye ticking that particular box, I set my sights on a trip out to sea with the local Kilifi Bay fishermen.

So, getting up at the crack of dawn I headed down to the nearby creek and persuaded the captain of a small boat to let me onboard for