

Magical memories with MSC in Mozambique

 By [Ilse van den Berg](#)

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The speedboat glided effortlessly over the see-through water and slowed down as we entered the bay. Luckily we were on the first shipment out, so we had some time to get a good spot on the beach. Soon it would be crowded with almost all the Sinfonia passengers.



Pomene Bay is a new destination as part of MSC Cruises' South Africa itineraries. The Swiss-based cruise line developed the unspoiled peninsula, which lies 605km north of Maputo and 170km south of Vilanculos, exclusively for guests sailing on MSC Sinfonia from Durban.

Our day in this paradise consisted of nothing but relaxation. Seriously. We splashed around in the warm Indian ocean and spent a great deal of the day soaking up the Mozambican sun in an aim to bid our horrifying winter skins farewell.



It's clear that MSC takes great care when it comes to preserving the environment at Pomene and the company is also creating jobs for the locals in the area. Everything that guests may need during the day at Pomene gets taken to shore by speedboat, and everything - every piece of waste - gets shipped back and gets disposed of ethically back in Durban.

Even though Pomene is only in the first phase of what MSC plans to do with the space, it offers something for everyone.

MSC Cruises adds marine safari experience Pomene Bay to SA itineraries



27 Nov 2017



To get ourselves moving again after having savoured a delicious buffet lunch consisting of tasty braaied meat, build-your-own pitas, and fresh island fruits a couple of hours earlier, we headed to the excursion hut to get our gear for our snorkelling trip.

Flippers and snorkels in hand, we headed out to the estuary. All our excitement for nothing, thanks to an unfortunate strong current and murky water. We only spotted some grey fish here and there and every five minutes would hear someone "scream" underwater at a jellyfish.

Snorkelling is only one of many options guests can keep themselves busy with on their day at Pomene. There are also kayaks and stand-up paddle boards for rent plus a whole range of other organised excursions such as a Pomene Hotel ruins transfer, a nature reserve mangrove tour, or an ocean safari. If you're a lazy bum and don't want to do anything, that's also okay. You can casually sip on your R&R under one of the grass beach umbrellas, at the pool, or even in a private beach cabana - complete with bottled water, tropical snacks, a bathroom, and heavenly beds for an afternoon nap. Bliss.





Shore to ship

But back to the lovely vessel that brought us all the way here... We were spoiled with one of the Sinfonia's balcony cabins which added just that little something extra to our trip. Early morning breakfasts consisting of fresh coffee, croissants, yoghurt, and muesli were peacefully enjoyed on the balcony, allowing us to wake up slowly to the fresh ocean air.



We thoroughly enjoyed the gym and thermal suites - especially since the food is so darn delicious and we felt we had to burn some calories to continue eating guilt-free! We were a bit disappointed that one of the steam rooms were out of order but had a relaxing time nonetheless.

To us, it was clear that a cruise liner is the bombdiggy for families. First of all, kids cruise for free. Yes, you read right. The swimming pool area and the surrounding deck was packed with people throughout the day. Passengers were suntanning, swimming, dancing, reading, and snoozing in this popular area.

However nice that was for them, we were exceptionally delighted to have exclusive access to the solarium on the 13th deck. What does that mean, you may wonder... In a nutshell, peace and quiet, sun tan beds and tanning pods complete with mattresses, as well as a waitress who tended to our needs throughout the day. *Livin' la vida dolce* for sure.

In the evenings we joined our travel partners for the first dinner seating at // Covo restaurant, and we were impressed with (and got quite attached to) our lovely, professional waiter over the course of the week. This was usually followed by a show in the theatre or a quiz of some sorts at the Manhattan Bar.



The good news is, the cruising season is here, folks! A cruise like this will set you back between R5,000-R8,000 per person sharing (rough figures including food and accommodation) depending on your package and room type. And remember kids cruise for free!

Keep in mind, however, that everything on the ship is in dollars, so it's a good idea to buy a drinks package as soon as you get onboard so you don't get a heart attack when you pay your bill on the last day.

For more, go to www.msccruises.co.za.

ABOUT ILSE VAN DEN BERG

Ilse is a freelance journalist and editor with a passion for people & their stories (check out Passing Stories). She is also the editor of Go & Travel, a platform connecting all the stakeholders in the travel & tourism industry. You can check out her work here and here. Contact Ilse through her website here.

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