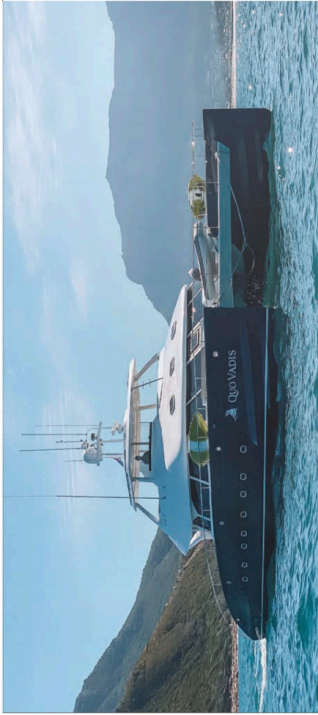




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ACCOMMODATION



Where are you going?

Why restrict your holiday lodging to terra firma? Cruising on a liveaboard allows a different, contrasting experience, as Mike Urwin discovered on a visit to the Seychelles

an invitation to adventure.

Lunch earlier was sumptuous. Chef Damien Michaud produced a succession of local creole specialties, including keri kokopou (chicken, coconut and coriander curry), served with pumpkin chutney and a coconut/lentil daal. Keeping things local is clearly Damien's mantra. As I sat at the open-plan kitchen watching him at work, he explained how the garden produce used on board is grown organically on Alphonse Island. "Did you know that Seychelles coconuts have the highest nutritional value of any in the world?" he added, with evident pride.

The dolphins head off to their own horizon — a swooping retinue of noddies and fairy terns marking the course of the fish they are pursuing. Soon we are mooring off Sainte Anne Island and slipping into turquoise waters for a spot of afternoon snorkelling. The reef is a living kaleidoscope, with surgeonfish, angelfish, butterfly fish and Moorish idols darting over sunlit coral gardens below me. A stingray lifts like an alien spacecraft from a sand patch and hovercrafts away over the seagrass.

Several fishermen charter

the Quo Vadis in search of larger fare, targeting the likes of dorado, wahoo and yellowfin tuna on multi-day big-game fishing expeditions. Others set out simply to enjoy nature, some venturing as far as Aldabra Group — the Galapagos of the Indian Ocean — to find seabird colonies, giant tortoises and and kayaks, carried on board, allow you to enjoy the crystal-clear atolls at surface level. It's whatever floats your boat — literally.

Dinner that night brings another culinary masterpiece from Damien, calamari in honey, ginger and chilli, since you ask, and that was just for starters. Afterwards, I find myself alone on the sundeck — now a moon deck — with cocktail in hand. The Southern Cross above me is a reminder of how close we are to the Equator. Flying foxes wing overhead in angular silhouette, commuting between island feeding grounds. Fruit bats over the ocean?

It seems weird. But then there's plenty about my circumstances right now that feels other-worldly. Magical, in fact. Where are you going? It's a question to ponder. I head to the bar for a top-up.

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Emboo's vertical hydroponic garden. Credit: Ken Robinson. Emboo's hydroponic works helps Emboo River address its carbon bias

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE CARBON NEUTRAL?

Increasingly, safari camps are adapting more environmentally-sensitive practices. To see what a carbon-neutral facility looks like in practice, we visit the Maasai Mara

Emboo River, located on the banks of the Talek, claims to be Kenya's first carbon neutral camp. Solar-powered electric Land Rovers offer a silent safari experience, gliding through the Mara plains, but the owners have tried to look deeper into every aspect of their operation, focusing foremost on minimising their carbon emissions and then on offsetting the carbon they have incurred.

Using their own carbon calculator, they are able to track their emissions accurately to ensure carbon neutrality. Their strategy is shaped around the three scopes of the Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Protocol:

● **Carbon emissions that Emboo control:** What can they do to directly control their emissions? For example, solar-powered vehicles emit no CO2 in the safari experiences.

● **Energy sources:** Emboo derives all its energy from solar power.

● **Emissions out of Emboo's direct control:** Examples of this are food and the transport that guests use to reach the camp. With its new hydroponic vertical garden, Emboo aims to grow 100 per cent of its fresh food very soon. To offset the emissions of transport, guests plant indigenous trees, which helps to capture carbon dioxide, reforest the local area and raise awareness among guests.

Every effort has been made to minimise their trace in every detail of operations: Biogas: Emboo turns organic food waste into biogas, which is used in the kitchens. Food scraps are placed into the biodigester, which adds bacteria and turns them into gas, which is used for cooking. Citrus fruits are

Novel recruitment strategy

empathy, kindness, team spirit and leadership qualities. "Some tasks were designed to fail, to see how they would cope," explained Korf. Those who showed supportive camaraderie and innate compassion got the job. "We had 2000 applications for 90 jobs," said General Manager Reinard Korf. 400 were invited for a day of activities aimed at finding those who displayed sympathy,

to bring his culture of nurture combined with excellence to The Rockefeller. "My job is to look after my staff. Their job is to look after the guests," he says.

BY ALICIA ERICKSON

BY CARRIE HAMPTON



THE ROCKEFELLER