

#2 LIFESTYLE=MEMORIES ARE PRICELESS

Jan and Bill in Mozambique, Africa, 2003=The Bush

We jetted from Madrid overnight for 10 hours to Johannesburg, South Africa. Our friends Sue and Peet DuPreez met us at the airport and we went to their lovely home in Pretoria for a short rest and then to Brenda and Andre Friis' home for sundowners in their boma (an outside thatched area) and then a scrumptious dinner in their lovely African home. Brenda and Jan met years ago when Brenda was with Exclusive Touch in Botswana. It was terrific to be together with her again. Getting ready for Bill's hunt we repacked into small canvas bags just a few clothes and early the following morning we departed in a 6 seater small plane [Piper Seneca] to Pietersburg, South Africa, landed and cleared immigration/customs. We then flew 2 plus hours to clear customs in Beira, Mozambique. Leaving Beira we flew north to a concession known as "Contada 10," situated south of the Zambezi River delta. Soaring low above Africa as we did we were able to watch the fires that the natives set to clear the tall grass to make way for new grass for the animals. We then experienced our first "bush landing" on a grass airstrip recently cleared of warthogs. A large Mercedes open vehicle our professional hunter Maurius and a bevy of camp staff to take us to the camp met us. Now, get this, we were totally way way away from any civilization, hours away from any city by plane and certainly by car, no telephone lines, no television, no cell phone towers, no electric lines [generators only] and the only Americans. Wow!! We had arrived at the camp in the early afternoon and were met by a young lady, Dolly, all of 23 years old who is the camp manager and the only white woman in the entire camp. She is in charge of the staff of 16 local natives and runs the entire hunting camp, impressive wouldn't you say? Our accommodations for the next week were a tiny cabin, with 2 single beds, a small but functional ensuite bathroom and shower, bug spray, and clothesbasket. The instructions were to put our dirty clothes in the basket every morning (only exactly what we wish to have cleaned). The camp generator was run only from 6 to 9 each evening so that we could see to shower and eat our evening meal. Lights were off all over camp at 9pm. Our cabin had windows only of triple mosquito netting and outdoor reed shades in case of rain. We had a small area to hang up clothes and a tiny table to put things on, candles made it very cozy.

We settled in, met some hunters from Canada and had a lovely dinner in the main camp. The camp consisted of 5 small cabins and a few tents [for storage], an outdoor kitchen, an outdoor area for cleaning clothes, dishes, bread baking, etc. Our clothes were ironed by an iron that was warmed with hot ashes, the clothes were washed by hand, the food was cooked from meat brought in by the hunters, there was bottled water, a water tank with fresh clear water, and lots and lots of stargazing! We finished dinner, had delicious wine and changed from shorts to long pants so that the hot ash bugs (they vomit an acidic substance on you to soften your skin and then try to bore into you and their vomit is like meat tenderizer!). It can be very serious if enough of them get on you. They are tiny and you can barely see them! With long pants on, we

discouraged from biting us by the fire and then by 9pm went to our cabin for our first night in Mozambique. No kidding, the hyenas were very close to the camp as we could hear them most of the night. There were no locks on our doors so it was a bit interesting to say the least! Very early in the morning, since we were way south of the Equator, the sun came up very early, we could hear amazing birds, the calling of the parrots, the whistles of the birds, and the amazing delightful, peaceful early sounds of the bush. We went for an early morning tea/coffee and then went on our first hunt for sable. Jan was only there as an observer and photographer. Bill was the hunter. We took off at first light and the tsetse flies were up early looking for Jan's American body. We had 2 professional hunters, Marius and Peet and 2 native trackers [both were named Dominique, one was the son of the local chief, we called them Dominique uno and Dominique duo], Duo preferred to do his tracking barefooted, if you can imagine that in the bush filled with thorns. We drove and drove and drove, on a HUNT, not a game drive but a HUNT. The animals were not eager to provide us with much of a view. The concession that we were hunting on is huge. Enormous. It is over 1,200 sq miles and is bush meadows and dense forest, aquatic meadows and mangrove swamps. We got back to the camp without getting into a shooting position and ate breakfast. The order of the day is to get up very early to go on game drives, come back to the camp for a massive breakfast/lunch, take a long siesta to get ready for the evening drive, have sundowners in the bush, come back for an incredible dinner, and sit by the fire and talk about the things of life. Jan was finding out that the malarial mosquitoes and the tsetse flies had really feasted on her even though she used a bug spray with the wonderful name of "Peaceful Sleep." She got over 200 bites! Poor baby and Bill got none! We spent peaceful afternoons falling soundly asleep, truly resting our bodies and spirits and minds. But we were WAY away from civilization. Deep into the African bush.

Animal management is amazing in Mozambique. Mozambique was originally a Portuguese colony [the reason the natives all speak Portuguese] and has been through a terrible civil war. It's been 15 years now after the war and it is just starting to slowly rebuilding. The Mozambique military killed most of the animals to feed the troops and the game is gradually coming back and there is amazing game across the country. The government has made EXACT amounts of animals that may be killed by hunters. And it is not that many. Perhaps 10 buffalo, 5 sable per concession and the owners of the concessions must have permits per EACH and every small and large animal. So, it's not surprising that these permits go fast and are mostly bought for years in advance. Now here is why it's important to have hunters arrive in Mozambique. The country is so poor, the natives are living as they lived hundreds of years ago, the natives take wives at 13 years old and many times they take more than one wife [4 being the max]. They live in mud huts without windows and each area has a tribal leader. Malaria is a huge killer, most children don't live long, the natives trap animals many times unsuccessfully and have no feeling of it being cruel to trap them, they depend on the animals for their food, and many times the animal is abused and is maimed long before it is found in the many traps. The tribal leaders come to the white hunters concessions at the beginning of the short hunting season and PRAY that the white hunter will come and will be successful. When Billy brought his trophy animals into the camp, they fed everyone in the camp PLUS their entire families, over 50 people! There are those who live very far away from the hunting fields

who believe that an animal should not be killed, (clearly they don't eat meat or fish since both must be killed before eating) but if they went to Africa, they would see that in reality, the kill is so important to the lives of the villagers. They celebrate that an animal is killed because nothing goes to waste in Africa!

When the hunting season begins, the natives are LINED up to be hired by the white game concession owners. They become staff, wear their uniforms with pride, cook, clean, sing, make fires in the boma, drive the vehicles, service the vehicles, clean the cabins, and they do this all cheerfully, thankfully and gladly. You would be amazed at their attitude. They are THRILLED to be of service. They are happy to be of service and kind, happy, upbeat and excited to get up early in the day to serve the hunters in the camp. Normally no women go to this camp. It was very important to Billy that Jan go with him. Jan did and both of us would not trade being on this trip of a lifetime for anything in the world. Our memories will not fade soon.

We took malaria pills every day, got up very early, and enjoyed every minute of being together. However, it was too far away from civilization for Jan. What we loved the most is no lights, no electricity, no TV, no computer, no telephone, no faxes, no way to reach anyone. Billy's last word, "it is a 5* hunt."

Here is Billy's account of hunting the Sable:

The bull Sable is a magnificently horned animal with a jet-black coat. Its horns sweep back from its head and have the appearance of long sabers. It has a powerful neck, which it is reputed to be able to gore a full-grown lion and throw it over its head. Although the Sable is of the deer family it runs like a horse and quite fast. Sables are found mainly in the forest so we headed for the forested areas of the concession. On the first day looking for Sable we saw quite a few females with calves and young bulls. We also saw some lone bulls but couldn't get into a shooting position. (At this point let me digress and explain my shooting abilities lest you think I do this sort of thing regularly. I grew up with no guns in the house. It wasn't until I joined the Navy and was preparing for Viet Nam that I learned to shoot a gun. Before going on this hunt I had not shot a rifle in 14 years before Jan and I married. We went to the shooting range and I borrowed Peet's rifle and we shot several times before we set out for the hunt, but my skill at the long scoped shot was yet to be proven.) So on the morning of the second day of looking for my Sable trophy bull, Jan decided not to go [too many flies and mosquitoes and frankly bouncing around in a large vehicle hunting can be tiring]. Again we were bouncing around on the edge of a recently burned meadow when Marius [the PH] stopped the truck and indicated that he had seen a bull Sable in the forest far to the right. I saw nothing. Peet and the trackers got quite excited so we all exited the vehicle and started tracking on foot in the forest. We tracked the trail for about 30 minutes when we came out into a meadow where there were many Sable tracks. Too many tracks to determine where our Sable had gone. So we gave up on this trail. Marius and Uno went to retrieve the vehicle and pick us up while Peet, Duo and I continued to walk out of the meadow. Just as Peet and I had walked out of the meadow I heard Duo clicking his fingers. Peet and I turned at the same time and saw that Duo was pointing to

the far end on the meadow where a large number of bull Sables were coming out of the forest into the meadow where we had just been. Peet immediately identified the lead bull and what appeared to be the largest. Fortunately there was a small tree with a crook for me to steady the rifle and make my shot from about 120 yards. The bull immediately fell to the ground dead. I amazed myself greatly, one-shot wow! I had visions of wounding the animal and having to track it for the rest of the day. Letting out a whoop that probably scared any other animals in the area I ran to my trophy, my first big game kill. The bull was estimated at being 12 years old with a greatest of horns and was leading a group of 11 younger bulls. Peet and Maurius had not seen this many bulls together in one spot before; it bodes well for future hunts in Contada 10. The ride back to camp was anticlimactic. I don't think I felt a bump along the route. And to think that one animal would feed an entire village! Wow! I was contributing to the animal management as well. It was such a great feeling to be a part of such an important hunt.

Now that I had my 1st trophy it was decided that we would depart our base camp in the afternoon with the PH, the 2 trackers and a cook and head for a Fly camp in the swamps in the south delta of the Zambezi to hunt for the Cape Buffalo. We were gone for the entire night. The girls didn't go to the swamps. Sue and Jan took a long walk and shared lots of their life ideas and values together. They had long talks about their children and their hopes and dreams. It's so wonderful to have a special friend to spend time dreaming and thinking out loud together. Jan and Sue rested all afternoon while it poured rain and got ready for the hunters to come into camp. Jan, Sue and Dolly visited a local camp of the chief in the afternoon, watching them make their food, and taking photos.

Here is Billy's account of hunting the Cape Buffalo:

The main camp was in a high dry meadow. The Fly camp was in a semi-aquatic meadow on the edge of the swamps some 20 miles away. On the way to the Fly camp we were looking for other trophies to take when Duo spotted a large warthog at about 90 yards distance. While sitting in the truck I found it difficult to scope the warthog, but it obliged me and I finally made a shot that hit. But the warthog shot out of site into a grouping of trees around an anthill and disappeared. The trackers followed it and found it dead 50 feet away. Wow, another one-shot kill. Great tusks and a fine trophy. We put the warthog into the back of the truck and continued on our way to the Fly camp. When we got to the camp the natives skinned the warthog and then dried the meat and then eat hand rice with the meat, without washing their hands by the way! The Fly camp is maintained by 2 natives and consists of 2 tents for the hunters, 2 clay sheds for the natives that they prefer and an outdoor toilet that was flushed by a bucket of water. Not much but the basics. We arrived at the Fly camp around dusk and our private chef got our dinner ready while we sat around the campfire drinking beer and eating Biltong. [Biltong is a unique South African treat made by cutting animal meat into strips, rubbing it with a special salt recipe and then allowing it to dry in the dry wind. Although similar to our American jerky, Biltong is much juicier and tastier.] My accommodations in the Fly camp was my own tent with a cot that I barely held me. After a dinner of fresh sable steaks we hit the cots at 8:30pm in preparation for an early rising for the Buffalo hunt. I barely slept

all night hearing disturbing sounds outside my tent. However, when I arose the next morning I was alive and to my surprise there were no tracks of any kind outside my tent. I had survived! Up before dawn, after a light breakfast we headed into the swamps in an amphibious vehicle, brand name "Argo." This vehicle was about 10 feet long, 4 feet wide and 2 feet high with treads like a tank. It had 2 seats in front and a bed in back where the 2 trackers sat with Peet. Although it floated, it could only be pushed, pulled or winched when it got into water. It required 2 natives to operate in water, to work the vehicle through the weeds, water and papyrus that clogged the rivers that we had to cross. And boy were those natives great. It took us 4 hours to get near the buffalo herds. Four hours of some of the roughest, wettest country I have ever experienced. My hat goes off to the 2 Domingos.

When we finally spotted a herd of buffalo (there are several herds of about 50+ animals) we exited the Argo and proceeded forward on foot. Keeping tall reeds between us and the herd we walked bent over getting into our shooting position. Several times we had to walk through mucky water up to our knees to get close to the herd. The black muck almost pulled my boots off. I learned why they called the local grass "saw grass" as I severely sliced my thumb when I grabbed it to steady myself. That's when I was told "Don't grab the saw grass!; now you tell me as I was bleeding into the swamp. I positioned for a shot at what appeared to be a large bull with thick boss and a wide set of horns, but as I prepared to pull the trigger the herd moved and I lost the position. Then we spent another 90 minutes positioning for another shot. We finally got into position by using the trackers to move the herd to me. By this time my finger had stopped bleeding thank God. I selected a bull who was facing me head on and pulled the trigger. I couldn't believe my eyes.

After reading many books on hunting buffalo in Africa, I expected the bull to get mad and charge me and then I'd have to keep shooting until it stopped. But no, this bull reared up on its back legs to its full height of over 8 ft. tall and simply fell backwards on to its back planting its horns in the sand, stone cold dead. The PH (professional hunter) was stunned. The trackers couldn't believe their eyes and were excitedly chattering as we approached my trophy. I had shot it in the heart. Wow, it was another great trophy.

Upon arrival back to the camp, we all celebrated, along with the natives, the bringing home of the Buffalo. This means jobs for the natives. There are skinners, buffalo soup to be made, meat to be dried and money that goes to the Mozambique government. A large percentage of the trophy fee goes to conservation of the buffalo. Animal management is incredible in Mozambique. I truly contributed to the lives of many in Mozambique, what a grand feeling!

It took most of the day to get back to the Main Camp. I missed Jan a lot and could not wait to tell her of my adventure in detail and to show her the photos. I could not wait to shower and get all the muck off my legs. That evening we had a wonderful feast and boy was I tired to get to bed. My beautiful brown suede hunting boots were now totally black with muck but the next day they were totally cleaned by the staff, amazing.

Here is Billy's account of hunting another Warthog for the District Administrator of the local District:

An official letter came to the Main Camp from a local District Administrator requesting a warthog for an official function to be held the following week. So I was offered the opportunity to shoot another warthog to contribute to this festive official occasion. After the Buffalo hunt, the following day, I went out again with the trackers and the PH's and we began to hunt for the warthog. This time Jan and Sue went with us. And it didn't take long to find the warthog and it was as well a long shot, the warthog ran away but we tracked it and found it dead. The natives loaded the huge warthog onto the back of the truck. I thought Jan would pass out! It was even bigger than the first one I shot. We went back to the camp for another feast.

Fabulous Bush dinner:

Our last evening in camp Dolly had a surprise dinner out of camp in the bush with white table clothes, candles, and a quite beautiful bush dinner, Jan's FAVORITE part of being at this camp! Wow! It was so perfect! We got packed that night to depart the next morning. Bottom line from Billy: A fantastic 5* hunt with great trophies. Look for the pictures. The trophies will be shipped in a couple of years to the USA. What a trip! Our memories are simply priceless! Big thanks to Sue and Peet DuPreez for organizing this trip. We are so thankful that we get to see the world. Thanks to Network Marketing!