

## AFRICA

## Mozambique

**Marlin Lodge, August 2004, Nancy Aberg, Greenview, CA.** Experience: 200+ dives. Vis: 80 to 100 ft. Water: 80 to 84 F, calm and flat. Fly direct from Johannesburg, South Africa, to Vilanculos, Mozambique (offered only once a week) to save \$3,000 on private charter plane. Beautiful lodge, excellent service and food. Pool and 4 x 4 tour and fishing for nondivers. Divemaster is nice and helpful with cameras. Loads of nudibranchs, lobsters, soft corals and magnificently colored tropical fish! Plus lots of large fish. Not a place for the budget-minded, as only other lodge on the island is more expensive. Access to boat was directly off a wharf. Re-entering boat was easy via steps.

AUSTRALIA  
(WESTERN)

Few Americans ever travel to the west coast of Australia for diving, except occasionally to dive with whale sharks out on Ningaloo Reef, out of Exmouth. There's a lot more territory out there worth exploring.

**Cocos Dive, March 2005, Peter Donahue (donahueelectric@aol.com), Waltham, MA.** Experience: Over 1000 dives. Vis: 20 to 80 Feet. Water: 84 to 84 F, calm. The flight to Cocos Island goes through Exmouth Monday (home of Ningaloo Reef) and refuels there. It goes to Christmas Island, then to Cocos, then back to Perth. The reverse

happens Thursday. It is possible to go to Exmouth, get off the plane and dive for a week, then go to Christmas Island and dive for a week and then go to Cocos Island and dive for a week. You've already paid for the plane. So you get three dive vacations for the price of one plane. The baggage limit is 20 K between two bags. I landed with only one gear bag, but I left Christmas Island, en route to Cocos, with 35 k and two bags. I was way overweight. . . and they won't take it. Des Hill, the manager of the airport remembered me, and waved me through the weight station, explaining to his crew that it was photographic equipment. Losing my bags paid off in the end. Dieter and Karen Gerhard own Cocos Dive ([www.cocos-dive.com](http://www.cocos-dive.com)) Phone: 61-8-9162-6515 This is the only dive shop on this coral atoll of 26 islands. They own a 20-foot open outboard with a canvas roof. The boat is packed full with four divers, the two crew, 12 cylinders, food, water. There is no room to do anything on this boat. You sit and listen to Dieter's stories, most of which are entertaining. On the way to the first dive site, we came upon a pod of dolphins. Dieter threw us in to amuse the dolphins, directing us to swim up and down in hopes the dolphins would come close. He circled us, going full speed, making waves and the dolphins buzzed us. They clicked at us. They were beside you, over you, under you — 30 minutes later, I was out of film, out of breath! The diving was different from Christmas Island. Lots of large animals. 6 manta rays on the first dive, flying along the bottom, underneath us. Some divers didn't see them as they were chasing another pod of