



Purity

in the Tropics

DESTINY's Sonja Raath invites you to follow her on her five-day journey of fitness, mild sunstroke, mosquito bites, yoga and tranquillity as she takes part in the Purescapes Fitness Programme on the banks of the Guvoru River Estuary in Mozambique. Everybody chant, "Om!"

DAY 1: THE SCARE-O-PLANE

I'm not a happy flier, so I was filled with trepidation as I boarded the 19-seater aircraft. But a smooth flight and a few Jim Beams later, we were back on terra firma and steering our way along the roads of Vilanculos. As I took in the splendour of my tropical surroundings at the Rio Azul Lodge, I thought: "No sweat." Little did I know...

DAY 2: THE INTRODUCTION

The Purescapes Programme is all about fitness and well-being, so when I found out that coffee, alcohol, carbs and nicotine were off limits, I wasn't amused. I'm no energy bunny – as the small

tyre around my waist attests! Still, I bolted out of bed on the first day, ready to embrace my lactic acid. Our bubbly British trainers met us on the deck, demonstrated a killer ab circuit and we followed suit. I discovered muscles I never knew I had and felt great. After breakfast, we hit the water, heading through the mangroves by speedboat to go kayaking. Ten kilometres later, I still hadn't noticed I was exercising as I soaked in the beauty of the estuary – but I certainly felt the effects later! After a light, but nutritious dinner and yoga on the deck, set against a portrait of an African sunset, I was woman down.





DOWNTIME

Travel

WRITTEN BY SONJA RAATH



Early-morning workout on the beach



DAY 3: LACTIC ACID

Pain riddled my body – from sunburnt knees, back and feet to my aching muscles. In no mood for exercise, I groaned all the way to the beach as we climbed over dunes to reach the soft shore. Then we had to run and skip along the sand. I appreciated that I was allowed to work at my own pace. Finally, the lactic acid that was at the root of my self-pity seemed to subside. We then set sail to a

small island, where I felt as if I'd just walked into a post-card. We snorkelled, swam and even set up a few fishing lines while we snacked on cashews and coconut. This was “exercise” I could relate to. In the late afternoon, we met

again to do a few stretches on the deck before dinner. I was finally getting into the rhythm of the programme.

DAY 4: DETOX DRAMA

We headed to the beach, hopscotching over mutant mosquitos, for our daily morning bout of fitness. I really enjoyed this routine, as we used natural resources as instruments of exercise, tossing logs that had been washed up and carrying large canisters of water. After lunch I was overwhelmed by a detox headache, so I stayed in my chalet recovering for the rest of the day – but resurfaced later for yoga and dinner. I slept like a

baby that night, right through a monsoon-like storm.

DAY 5: HOME

Fully recovered from my detox-induced state, I was bright-eyed and bushy-tailed for my last day of early-morning fitness. I bid a sad farewell to the sea while trying to crunch, squat and lunge, and finally left the dazzling resort ready to start implementing my new, healthy mindset.

Now that I'm home, when I look back on my journey, I realise how much I've learnt about purity and well-being. I've started applying the principles of the Purescapes Programme to my regular routine – with positive results. The less you see of me, the better!

• For further information on the Purescapes Fitness Programme or to book a retreat, email: info@purescapes.com or visit: www.purescapes.com. The next retreat runs 10-17 April and is priced from £840 (about R9 900) per person, for two people sharing, excluding flights.

HOW TO GET THERE

Federal Air has daily flights from Johannesburg to Vilanculos, from R1 200 one way.

For further information and bookings, tel: 011 395 9000, email: info@fedair.com or visit: www.fedair.com.

