

# Capt. Daley's Sea Stories

## Namibia Expedition Lüderitz, Namibia, 2 of 2

22 March 2011

Lüderitz in south-west Namibia lies on one of the least hospitable coasts in Africa. The town was founded in 1883 when Heinrich Vogelsang purchased Angra Pequena and some of the surrounding land on behalf of Adolf Lüderitz of Bremen, Germany from the local Nama chief. Lüderitz began its life as a trading post, with other activities in fishing and guano-harvesting. In 1909, after the discovery of diamonds nearby, Lüderitz enjoyed a sudden surge of prosperity. Today, however, diamonds are mostly found elsewhere and offshore, and Lüderitz has lost a lot of this interest.

The harbor has a very shallow rock bottom, making it unusable for modern ships. This led to Walvis Bay becoming the centre of the Namibian shipping industry. Recently, however, the addition of a new quay has allowed larger fishing vessels to dock at Lüderitz. The town is known for its colonial architecture, including some Art Nouveau work, and for wildlife including seals, penguins, flamingos and ostriches.





More than a thousand vessels of various sizes and areas litter the coast. On the coast the upwelling of the cold Benguela current gives rise to dense ocean fogs for much of the year. There is a constant, heavy surf on the beaches. The Skeleton Coast is named for the bleached whale and seal bones which covered the shore when the whaling industry was still active, as well as the skeletal shipwrecks caused by rocks offshore in the fog.



The coast is quite inhospitable and the pounding of the surf is constant.



We hired Chris to be our guide through the peninsula and the town. She was born in Namibia but spent some time in South Africa. She moved back to Namibia and is dating a seaman working on the fishing vessels based in Lüderitz.



There is a large natural arch three hours south of here, but you need a federal permit to go into the area. This fake arch is on the peninsula and a favorite for the young to come and bar-b-que here, or as they say, have a braii.



Halifax Island is the home of many penguins and gannets. The Namibian Coast Conservation and Management Project (NACOMA) is a conservation and wildlife monitoring project in Namibia. NACOMA's objectives are to prevent the loss of biodiversity and coastal degradation in Namibia. NACOMA has centers, like the one shown here, for scientific monitoring and research which support the entire Namibian breeding population of Cape Gannets and the endangered African Penguin.



There is a lot of money to be made harvesting guano. The smell is horrible. The fumes almost knock you out. I think I'll find a better way to make money.



Seal Island is on the coast line. You can see there are many seals here. This is only a small amount compared to what we saw later near Cape Cross which you will see in a later sea story.



The lighthouse at Lüderitz as seen from the Diaz Cross Monument



The Diaz Cross Monument is one of many monuments set up where Bartholomew Diaz made landings while in search of a route to Asia.



The walkway out to the monument would not meet the safety requirements in the USA. Those gaping holes in the walkway are bigger than they look!



This is one of many German style homes built in Lüderitz. As you will see in later photos, Lüderitz does not have as many rich and famous Germans coming here for their vacation as does Swakopmund. There are thirty to sixty times more tourists in Swakopmund than Lüderitz. Lüderitz appears to be struggling to survive after the diamond miners left.



More German style homes, but notice the dirt road! Although historic, our guide could not remember the details.



The north side houses the poorer inhabitants.



Namibia is considered the safest country in Africa. We did not try our luck by exploring in this area.



The people of Namibia are happy people as a whole, much unlike the people of Equatorial Guinea who are tired of being oppressed by a wealthy dictator.



Agate Beach is on the far northside of town. On holidays we were told that the beach is packed full of people.



Each of the stone enclosures houses a large bar-b-que pit or a braai as they call them.



The land around the beach is fertile enough to support wild springbok.



A gemsbok with their long straight horns or oryx as it is also called is in the background. A male South African Shelduck is in the foreground.



The Shelduck with its white and black wings is flying away.



A grey heron is flying away.



The richer areas of Lüderitz have some very expensive houses, but they are scarce compared to Swakopmund.



This is the Lutheran church atop a hill that you see in most photos of Lüderitz.