

A photograph of a boat deck, likely a traditional wooden vessel, set up for a meal. The deck is made of dark wood and has several tables with white tablecloths. Each table is set with white plates, glasses, and silverware. Several ornate, metal lanterns with intricate designs are placed on the tables, some of which are lit. The boat's rigging, including thick wooden beams and ropes, is visible in the foreground. In the background, a calm body of water stretches to a distant, tree-lined shore under a blue sky with light clouds. The overall atmosphere is serene and suggests a peaceful dining experience on the water.

The life aquatic

Drift away with this swell selection of boat-based breaks,
say **Catherine Fairweather** and **Eleanor Southall**

Escape Afloat



IN THE MAST LANE
Onboard the *Tusitiri*
dhow. Opposite: the
spacious deck of *Tusitiri*

FOR EXOTIC CHARM

TUSITIRI DHOW, LAMU, KENYA

This 75-year-old traditional dhow once ferried mangrove poles and cement to Mombasa and back, but today it is fitted with Persian rugs, Zanzibari chests and brass lanterns for exclusive charters. Spending just one night aboard is a magical experience. The dhow can take up to eight guests, who sleep on bedrolls on *Tusitiri's* ample decks, either beneath an awning or under the stars.

The route *Tusitiri* travels the ancient Indian Ocean trade routes between northern Kenya and Mozambique. She anchors most frequently in the shallows of the Lamu archipelago, the natural habitat of turtles, dugongs and whale sharks; this coastal landscape of mangroves and deserted beaches has a strange and wild beauty.

Her crew At least six men are needed to hoist the huge sail, and the chef is a genius, whipping up extraordinary meals from a tiny alfresco galley on the poop deck. The crew are expertly captained by Mark Eddy, a former surfer from South Africa.

X-factor This is one of the great romantic sea journeys of the world; the tranquillity of life on the dhow will make you shed layers of stress.

Would suit Though it's very comfortable, this is no gin palace; it's not for those who want air-con and luxury. *Tusitiri* sails from August to mid-April. *Three nights' full board, from £187 a person. Book with Journeys by Design (01273 623790; www.journeysbydesign.co.uk).*

OTHER OPTIONS

Cevri Hassan III, Turkey A traditional Turkish gulet, hand-crafted in pine, teak and mahogany, *Cevri Hassan III* is designed to sail or cruise, with spacious berths for up to 12. Seven nights, from £4,000 a person. Book with DayDreams Travel (020 7637 8921; www.daydreams-travel.com).

Discovery, Kerala, India Malabar House's new state-of-the-art rice barge cruises the peaceful backwaters of Kerala with a super-quiet engine. Contact Malabar Escapes (+91 484 221 6666; www.malabarescapes.com).