

Tropical Beach Day

Fun on the beach, collecting shells and relaxing...

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Tropical Beach Day!



You wake to find that the yacht is anchored just a short distance away from a tropical island, from your cabin window you can see the golden sand and green palm trees, just waiting to be explored. Today you are going to take the small inflatable boat to the island and relax on the beach.

Coming onto the deck, you see that the captain has already been lowered the boat into the water and is now getting ready to sail it, all you need do is climb down the ladder and join him.

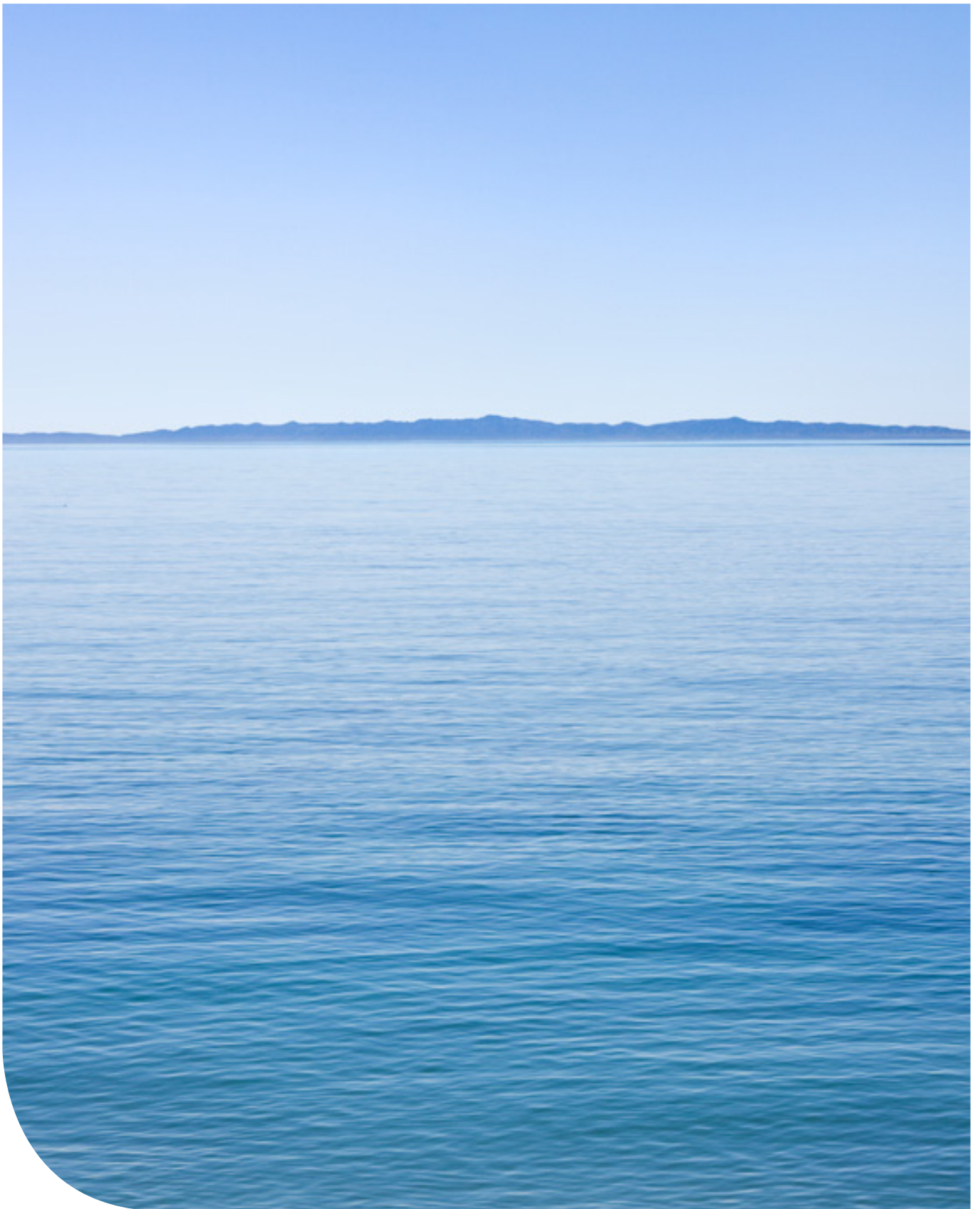
The metal is warm beneath your hands, and you know it's going to be a hot day; but the palm trees will offer some welcome shade once you reach the island and you can always go into the sea for a swim.

You step down into the boat and instantly feel it bob up and down beneath you in a slightly unsettling way. You spread your arms to keep your balance and the captain puts out a hand to help steady you. You adjust your balance until you are standing comfortably and then make your way across to the side of the boat, with only a small wobble.

You perch on the edge of the inflatable craft, holding on to a rope handle. Looking over the side, you can't resist leaning over and trailing your hand in the ocean. You flick the drops of salt water onto your face; it's so refreshing on this hot day.

The waves make the boat rock and you feel like you're really at sea, in a way you haven't felt on the yacht, because it's so large and stable. The motion is soothing though and you and yourself relaxing as you stare out at the green and gold of the nearby island. It will be so nice to have a day on the beach.

The captain is moving around the boat, checking that everything is ready before he goes to the back, or stern, of the boat and unties the rope that moors you to the yacht. He settles himself by the propeller and pulls on the chord to start the small engine and with a throaty rumble it comes to life, giving out a faint scent of petrol and then you're off.



He steers you away from the yacht, the engine just a quiet hum; but then he cranks up the speed and the boat seems to fly over the tops of the waves. At times the boat hits a large wave and lifts off slightly, bouncing you up and down. You cling tightly to the handle, making sure you don't end up with an unplanned dip in the ocean. The wind whips past you, carrying with it the scent of salt and sea. You laugh with exhilaration, you feel so alive and free.

The island is getting closer and closer, you can see the golden beach stretching out in front of you, with no sign of other people. This will be the perfect retreat from the world; somewhere you can relax and enjoy the peace.

As you get closer to the shore, the captain slows the engine, until you're just a few meters away. Then he stops the motor and lifts the propeller into the boat, allowing the waves to carry you onto the beach. The boat floats onto the sand and comes to a gentle stop.

Now you can clearly see the pure golden sand of the beach which looks almost white up close. It stretches out in either direction. There's a small wooden hut that will be a perfect place to escape the midday heat. The beach is surrounded by palm trees, so lush and green that this feels like your own private paradise. The captain climbs out and you follow suit, stepping down onto the cool wet sand and feeling the tips of the waves lapping at your bare feet.

You take a few steps away from the water, leaving behind perfect imprints as you head towards the warmer, drier sand. You sink into it slightly and feel the grains slipping and sliding beneath you as you walk towards the shelter.







As you approach, you realise this is far more than just a beach hut, there's a small balcony with a table and chair, perfect for you to sit and enjoy your lunch on. Opening the door you see that there's a complete suite inside with a miniature kitchen, bathroom and bedroom. Sitting down on the large double bed, you can look out through the windows and down to the ocean.

There's a bookcase to one side of the room, full of books and you've been meaning to read for ages. Today will be a great chance to catch up and relax in the sun with a great story.

The captain has followed you in and takes a wicker hamper in the kitchen. He leaves it in the fridge for you to unpack later. He tells you he'll be leaving you to explore; but that he can pick you up again whenever you're ready to return to the boat.

You follow him outside and watch him head back to the boat. You give him a final wave before turning to enjoy a wander down the beach. You stop to examine abandoned pieces of drift wood, twisted in curled, gnarling shapes.

The sand is scattered with creamy white shells, unusual shaped stones and pieces of smooth sea glass. You gather up the prettiest ones, the ones that seem to jump out at you and put some into your pockets, while a couple of pieces you keep in your hand, rubbing your fingers back and forth across the smooth surfaces as you walk.

You can't resist going back down to the shoreline and standing with your feet in the cool water. The waves are very gentle, lapping in and out with a steady, repetitive motion. The sound of the waves coming in is so peaceful; it's the perfect background noise. You look out to sea and focus on the pure blue horizon. You're unable to make out exactly where the sky and sea meet.







The sun is warm and you take in several deep, steady breaths, enjoying the tranquillity of your oasis. You could stay here forever.

Turning back to the hut, you notice that to one side of it is a hammock, strung between two palm trees. You walk across and sink down into it. You shift your weight until you find a spot in the centre that feels steady. The hammock swings gently as you settle yourself and you relax into the motion. It's the perfect place to enjoy the sun, sea and sand.

Enjoy the rest of your day here on the beach. You can relax in the sun, explore the beach or go for a swim. You're kitchen is stocked and you can spend the night in the hut or return to your yacht. The choice is yours.

Ice Lolly Recipes



There's nothing more delicious or refreshing than an ice lolly, they're even better when you make your own!

What you'll need...

Traditionally making ice lollies was a long process because you had to wait for them to freeze and you needed space in your freezer to put them away, keep them level and hope they don't spill!

You can still make them this way and there are lots of different silicone moulds which are really easy to use. Or you can even use paper cups with wooden sticks and freeze these, cutting off the paper cup once frozen.

My personal favourite is a Zoku Quick Pop Maker because I hate having to wait. This is a special stand that you freeze in advance and then get it out, fill with your liquid ice lolly mix and it freezes on its own in about 15 - 20 minutes, meaning you can have a yummy, cool snack at any time.

Ice Lolly Basics...

The basics of making an ice lolly is creating a flavoured liquid that you pour into a mould and freeze. You can make ice lollies out of lots of different things and it's great fun to experiment. You can try...

- Fruit juice, cordial or squash - can be diluted with water or lemonade
- Pureed fruit - blended with some fruit juice, water or plain yoghurt
- Fizzy drinks - coke, lemonade etc
- Yogurt - any flavour
- Smoothie drinks - pre-bought
- Angel Delight
- Chocolate Mousse or Fromage Frais - peel the lid back, add a stick and freeze
- You can add pieces of fruit or even chocolate drops.





Basic Mix

This is the easiest mix - adapt to your own tastes. You can sample the mix as you go to see if you need to add any sweetness or more acidity. Use honey, maple syrup or icing sugar to sweeten. If using an acidic ingredient like orange juice, avoid using milk or dairy ingredients as it's likely to curdle.

- 1 cup liquid e.g. juice, milk, soy milk
 - 1 cup berries e.g. blueberries, blackberries, raspberries, or sliced strawberries
1. Blend everything together in a liquidiser or with a hand blender, or even crush the berries with a fork and mix by hand.
 2. Pour into moulds.
 3. Freeze - At least 3 -4 hours normally.
 4. Enjoy!

More Recipes...

Strawberry

1 (135g) packet of strawberry jelly, dissolved in 250ml boiling water and left to cool. Mix with 100g pureed strawberries and 150g vanilla or strawberry yogurt. Pour into moulds and freeze.

Mango

Peel and dice 2 ripe mangoes. Blend with 125ml (1 orange) freshly squeezed orange juice or orange juice and 2 tablespoons icing sugar or powder sugar. Taste and add more sugar, if necessary. Pour into moulds and freeze.

Frozen Banana

Line a baking tray with baking paper. Peel 4 bananas and cut off one end. Insert a lolly stick into the cut-end, pushing it halfway in, leaving the other end exposed as the handle. Place the bananas on the sheet pan and freeze 1 hour.

Melt 100g chocolate and 1 tbsp butter in a bowl over a saucepan of simmering water, stirring occasionally. Even easier coat in chocolate spread or peanut butter.

Dip the bananas in the chocolate, covering completely. You can roll them in chopped nuts, coconut or sugar sprinkles. Place on the baking tray and freeze until the chocolate is set.

Check out these sites for some delicious ideas...

- www.ecoicepops.com/
- www.goodtoknow.co.uk/recipes/ice-lolly
- www.fruitlollies.com/
- www.mnn.com/food/healthy-eating/blogs/unusual-healthy-homemade-popsicles



Beach in your Room!



When you can't get to a beach then the next best thing is to create a beach in your own room. You can paddle your feet, play in the sand and have fun, all without ever going out.

Creating your relaxing beach is easier than it sounds. All you need is a couple of buckets and a little help. The easiest thing to recreate is the sea - all you need is a bucket of water - add some sea salt to make it authentic! Or if you want to go upmarket you can have a proper foot spa. Add some essential oils to make it really relaxing. When I paddled in the Aegean it was lavender scented, I can recommend it!

You can have a similar bucket with sand, stones and shells in it. Buy play sand which is used for sand pits and is available online. Make sand castles and generally play with it!

You may want to put towels down to avoid water spills and plastic sheets or newspaper for the sand. The great part is that when you're finished the buckets or bowls can be carried away easily.

Have fun!!!

People Watching...

*One of the joys of lazing on a beach is people watching!
Check out these Beach Cams ...*

- <http://explore.org/#!/live-cams/player/hawaii-pipeline-cam>
- <http://explore.org/#!/live-cams/player/hawaii-waimea-bay-cam>
- <http://www.mybeachcams.com/hawaii/maui/>



Fun Things To Do!

Movies

- *Cast Away*
- *The Blue Lagoon*
- *Six Days and Seven Nights*
- *Swiss Family Robinson*
- *Thomas Crown Affair-Pierce Brosnan*
- *Forgetting Sarah Marshall*
- *Couples Retreat*
- *Swept Away*
- *Lord of the Flies*
- *Robinson Crusoe*
- *Nim's Island*

Books

- *Robinson Crusoe* by Daniel Defoe
- *Swiss Family Robinson* by Johann David Wyss
- *Season of the Machete*, by James Patterson
- *Castaway* by Lucy Irvine
- *Lord of the Flies* by William Golding – not cheery
- *The Thousand Autumns of Jacob de Zoet* by David Mitchell
- *And Then There Were None* by Agatha Christie
- *Miss Ranskill Comes Home* by Barbara Euphan Todd
- *Old Man and the Sea* by Ernest Hemingway
- *The Pearl* by John Steinbeck
- *Beach Babylon* by Imogen Edwards Jones
- *The Beach* by Alex Garland – not cheery

