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WONDERS OF THE ISLAND

Being a designer, photography has become a natural part of Tânia Araujo's work. After ten years of working as a web designer in Portugal, Tânia swapped her city-office life in Lisbon for a new way of life on a paradise island. Here, she embraces the wonders of South East Asia with all her senses.

Photography is like an old friend to Tânia, beginning with her days as a little girl when she started taking photos with her grandfather's twin lens reflex camera. Fond and fun memories of this fostered her love of photography, which grows stronger day by day.

Her childhood in the countryside also brought her passion for nature and adventures. It has led her to some of the most stunning locations across an array of Asian countries, including Indonesia, Laos, Cambodia, Thailand and Vietnam.

She now has one of the most enviable jobs in the world, photographing and designing for a world ranking resort in Bali and Sumba.



Happy family returning home, Siem Reap, Cambodia - Nikon D7200, ISO 100, f/2.8, 1/320s, AF-S NIKKOR 70-200mm f/2.8G ED VR II at 100mm



Tânia's photography portfolio is distinct for its very diverse nature: underwater, surf, yoga, culture, entertainment, aerial, candid and lifestyle. It is always the natural, spontaneous moments of people and places that inspire her. She particularly loves it when a photo records a moment laced with traditions, culture and history as she believes these are the pictures that speak for themselves.

She often follows people on different activities, setting off to faraway seas to capture the way life unfolds around these places, during these times she also mastered skills such as scuba diving, helping her uncover an entirely new eco system to photograph. With the help of underwater gear for both for herself and her Nikon camera, she is able to capture amazing underwater creatures as well as everlasting moments.

Surf photos are not easy to conquer; knowing the motion of the waves and being able to read them is necessary to capture surfers in their element. Tânia, sitting on a small rubber boat, needs to be in the right place at the right time to get a perfect angle. She simply used a Nikon D7100 with the AF-S DX NIKKOR 18-105mm f/3.5-5.6G ED VR, to capture this image dubbed "Paradise Surf", and noted the importance of time spent cultivating your skill over your gear in hand. With a lot of skill and a bit of luck, she succeeded, and this has become her favourite image.



Paradise Surf, Occy's Left in Nihiwatu Resort, Sumba Island, Indonesia - Nikon D7100, ISO200, f/11, 1/1000s, AF-S DX NIKKOR 18-105mm f/3.5-5.6G ED VR at 105mm

Another favourite of Tânia's is a portrait of a Kayan Lahwi lady, also known as a long neck lady. Taken in one of the Myanmar villages where the refugees live, the village is also one that is steep in traditions. "Being able to visit there and see this lady with heavy rings was something that, not even in my wildest dreams, I thought it could happen."



Long Neck woman, Mae Hong Son, North Thailand - Nikon D7200, ISO200, f/4, 1/320s, AF-S NIKKOR 70-200mm f/2.8G ED VR II at 200mm

With a passion to engage more with the locals, it is no surprise that Tânia seeks to assist in the problems the people of Subma Island face. During one tour organized by the resort she works with, she followed the guests to a local school and had the opportunity to connect with young children.

"In one of this visits, some of the kids asked me my name and I answered "Nama saya Tânia" meaning my name is Tânia. Everybody laughed, played, and ran around. By the end of the tour, we said good-bye to each other with big smile. One month later, I returned to the same school and as soon as the kids saw me, they started screaming "Tânia!!" I was completely speechless, I almost cried!"

Smiles from the local people when they see the photos on her camera screen for the first time always touch her deeply. For Tânia, it is similar to a dream come true when she discovers she is able to invoke the same emotional responses in others through her photography.



Sumbanese kids having lunch in one of the Sumba Foundation Schools, Sumba Island, Indonesia - Nikon D810, ISO 100, f/7.1, 1/400s, AF Zoom-Nikkor 35-70mm f/2.8D at 70mm



During her journeys, she usually has the Nikon D7200 and D810 on hand. She uses the D810 as the main body and the D7200 either as a secondary camera or underwater camera with a third-party housing gear.

Drawn to capturing natural and spontaneous moments; a good tripod, the AF-S NIKKOR 70-200mm f/2.8G ED VR II for "paparazzi" photos, some ND filters and a bag pack to carry all the gear are crucial. While she sometimes encounters difficulties when shooting in low light conditions, she uses artificial lights to combat this.

Tânia plans her photo adventures by seeking out unique places with a strong sense of culture. With a long list of places to travel, including India, Raja Ampat, Komodo, Japan, Nicaragua, Hawaii, Aurora Boreal, and New Zealand, she is slowly working her way around the globe, and it certainly seems nothing can stop her in her tracks.

"I will continue to play a key role in telling the story of Sumba Island to a worldwide audience." Tânia has also carved out time next year to embark on new adventures and share her magical travels in a photo exhibition.

ABOUT TÂNIA

Born in Lisbon, Tânia is drawn to the natural charm of places. She has left her footprint in many Asian countries, whilst also setting up base in Bali and Sumba, working as an official photographer and designer of a world-renowned resort. She aspires to capture more stunning moments in her daily life on and off the island. With works published in over 40 top international magazines and websites, she has recently landed the cover of Jan/Feb 2017 issue of Departures Magazine, continuing to be enjoyed by inspired eyes all over the globe.

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