

INSIDE: DAVEY BLAIR SHANNON BEST JOSH MULCOY AND MORE...

# sbc kiteboard

Rider: Davey Blair / Photo: John Bilderback



**TOP 25  
IN THE SURF**

**LAND OF 10,000 TURNS**

JOSH MULCOY AND FRIENDS INVADE PERU

**2008 KITE TEST**

SIX NEW KITE DESIGNS GO HEAD-TO-HEAD

**FLORIANÓPOLIS THE HAWAII OF BRAZIL**

VOLUME 8, ISSUE 4

\$6.99 CAN \$5.99 USA



CDN PUBLICATION AGREEMENT #40036843  
DISPLAY UNTIL JAN 31, 2008

## SPOT CHECK



Down Loop S-Bend at the Lagoa de Conceição.

## FLORIANÓPOLIS THE HAWAII OF BRAZIL

WORDS BY GABRIELE STEINDL

PHOTOS BY ANDREW RYBCHINSKY AND GABRIELE STEINDL.

A lot is being written these days about Brazil: this mind-blowing country with lovely people, incredible nature, and perfect conditions for kitesurfing. Most articles, however, cover northeast Brazil only, namely the state of Ceará, and sometimes a bit further south to the state of Rio Grande do Norte and Paraíba.

Having visited and kited the spots along the northeast coast for the past three years, I decided to check out some new kite-grounds and head down south to the island of Florianópolis, the capital of the state of Santa Catarina. With an area the size of Maine and a population similar to that of Norway, the state of Santa Catarina is a land with distinct aesthetics: mountain ranges contrast with the coastline, which is punctuated by beaches, bays and inlets and dozens of islands. In terms of architecture, cities such as Blumenau and Joinville have re-

tained the same typical building style from the time the first immigrants colonized the state, contrasting with the capital, Florianópolis, a young and modern paradise.

Florianópolis, with an estimated population of 360,000, is considered Brazilians' "best capital for living", as violence and poverty levels are reduced. Blonde children with blue eyes and a strong regional accent make you wonder, Am I really in Brazil? Florianópolis also has 42 diverse beaches around the island, an international airport, different hotel chains, and plenty of restaurants and bars. Three bridges link the island to mainland Brazil—the locals refer to it as "the continent." In spite of the modern development, Florianópolis kept its old traditions and habits, and fascinates by its variety of nature and entertainment possibilities. Floripa, as the city is known locally, is widely recognized as

the country's surf capital or the "Hawaii of Brazil" and is renowned for year-round consistent swell, a diversity of breaks, and crystal-clear water catering to all surf abilities. Santa Catarina is also host to the annual and only WCT Surfing World Cup stop in Brazil.

The different faces of the island are impressive. Northern beach resorts Jurerê, Daniela, Canasvieiras, Brava and Ingleses are touristic, and get very busy during the summer. Eastern beaches such as Joaquina, Mole and Moçambique are among the best surfing beaches and popular with young people. Beaches heading south include Campeche, Armação and Morro das Pedras, which are all very beautiful with a rustic charm and awesome waves. Isolated and unspoiled beaches such as Lagoinha do Leste and Naufragados, are at the southern end of the island and can only be reached by trail. The

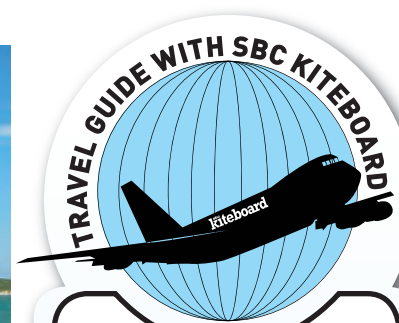
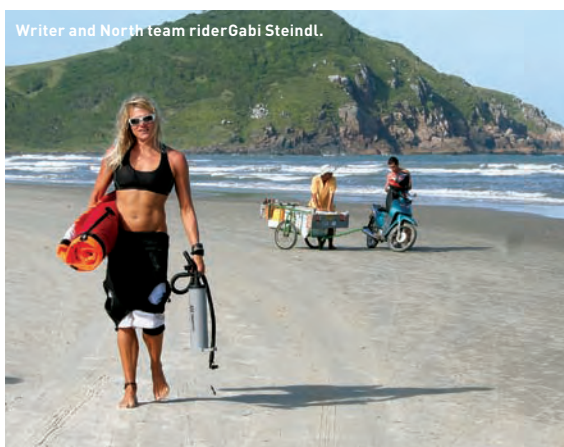
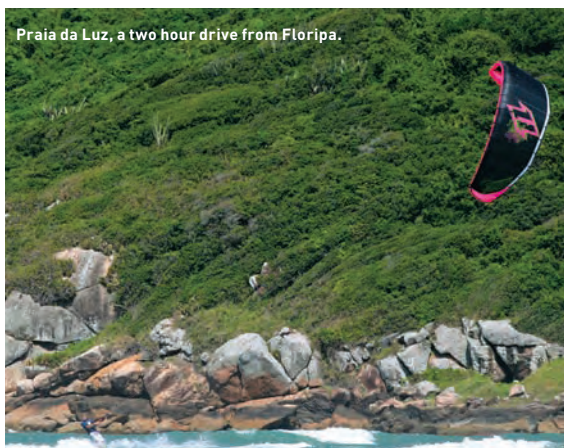


Conceição lagoon is a famous natural attraction, and the centrepiece of the island—sports, cuisine and entertainment are first class. Peri lagoon is quieter and great for nature walks.

Cultural highlights are the maritime forts, Santa Cruz de Anhatomirim and São José da Ponta Grossa, archaeological sites and Azorean villages, which are windows into the vibrant culture and history of this island people. The city centre is pleasant and can be explored by foot.

Home of windsurf world champion Kauli Seadi, Florianópolis is the perfect place for any sport involving wind and water. Therefore, it comes as no surprise that kitesurfing is growing at a fast pace with constant winds from all quadrants and waters around. The island offers a diversity of conditions, from shallow lagoons to waves of all sizes, or you might want to test your endurance by going around the island. A number of kite schools have established themselves around Floripa, and you can find everything you need in terms of equipment and instruction on the island.

It's a year-round kitesurfing destination, however—don't expect anything like the wind statistics from up north (April–December almost 100 per cent). Assume an average of three-to-four days of wind per week. Brazilian spring occurs September–December and is the best time to come, with stronger and more reliable wind (usually kites 7–12 m<sup>2</sup>). Winter brings big swell, often related to strong southern winds (perfect for most wave spots), requiring you to fly kites 9–16 m<sup>2</sup>. In autumn (our winter) the wind is weaker and blowing from the north-northeast, ideal for kites 9–16 m<sup>2</sup>. The winter (our summer) is Floripa's weakest wind time of the year, and when you'll require 12–16 m<sup>2</sup> kites. Despite these seasonal guidelines, the predominating wind directions are north-northeast and south-southeast, and are moderate-to-strong in nature. Therefore, bring all of your kites as climatic conditions are unpredictable.



#### Climate and water temperature

Florianópolis has a subtropical climate with rainfall well distributed throughout the year. Cold fronts coming from the southern Atlantic bring rain to the region. These can be followed by days of strong southern winds, which clear the sky and the sea but can cause the temperature to drop. Therefore, bring a rain jacket, long trousers and a warmer jumper.

Contrary to the popular kite-surfing states up north (like Ceará, Paraíba, etc.), the water in the south of Brazil is way cooler and you will need a wetsuit. It's amazing how fast the temperature can change from one day to the next, depending on swell, wind direction, and time of year.

#### Getting there

Florianópolis is served by Hercílio Luz International Airport for both domestic and international flights. All major Brazilian airlines fly there, with São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro as the main hubs.

GOL Airlines operate flights similar to companies like easyJet in Europe and Northwest in the U.S., offering cut-price airfares. Other major airlines such as TAM and Varig, also operate flights to Florianópolis.

#### Other activities

The nightlife in Floripa is amazing. You'll find everything on the island from small bars and kiosks along the beaches to vibrant samba clubs, while others can choose to sip Caipirinhas at a low-key reggae bar. The main concentration of night clubs, bars and restaurants are in the city centre and Conceição lagoon.

Live gigs are big in Floripa, with international stars performing year round. During my stay, I had the pleasure of enjoying one of my greatest all-time favourites: Ben Harper, live!

In regards to accommodation, Floripa has it all: camping, bed and breakfasts, mid-range hotels, pure luxury houses and apartments to rent.

#### Web Extra

For more information and a full list of riding locations, log onto [sbckiteboard.com](http://sbckiteboard.com)