

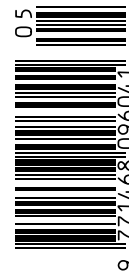
**BRITS STORM PKRA**

**WORLD'S 1ST TEST: HADLOW PRO**

# kitesurf

*The Number 1 Kitesurf Magazine*

MAY/JUNE 2008 047 £4.00  
ISSN 1468-0963



**THE HAMMER FALLS, THE KITE RISES:**

**PERU. RUSSIA.  
NICARAGUA. VIETNAM.**

**ROAD SODAS AND ENGLISH TAPPAS:**

**MIDWEEK KITING ON  
YOUR DOORSTEP**

**BRITTANY FEARS:**

**THE BIGGEST EURO SWELL  
KITED THIS WINTER?**

**+ FREESTYLE TWINNY ROUND UP; BRITS STORM MEXICO PKRA; READERS WIVES WINNER**

|| **RUSSIA**

Looping the 9m for freedom





**WORDS:** GABRIELE STEINDL | **PHOTOS:** ANDREY RYBCHINSKIY, GABRIELE STEINDL

# FROM DUSK TILL DAWN

I'M PASSIONATE ABOUT RIDING NEW SPOTS, exploring countries and people unknown to me, diving into different cultures, sharing the pure joy of kitesurfing with kindred mates all around the world no matter their background, age or mother tongue. Spreading this energy all around, that's what I love most; the true freeride spirit. "I'm going to a super exotic destination ... guess where?", "meh, some place in the Caribbean or perhaps South Pacific..?", none of my friends came even close to the right answer (I don't blame them!), "no, I'm going to Russia", "whaaat, what will you be doing there?", "kitesurfing of course, or have you seen me playing tourist ever over the last 5 years?".



“DOLZANSKAYA TURNED OUT TO BE A BREATHTAKING 2KM LONG PERFECT, WHITE SHELLY SAND BANK ABOUT 30 METRES WIDE. THE WIND HIT IT PERFECTLY SIDE ON; ONSHORE ON ONE SIDE, FLAT AND OFFSHORE THE OTHER. ”



Anapa, Russia. Leave the Beatles LP's and 501's at home, for liberation pack your 9m instead.

I was thrilled by the idea, had no clue though what to expect in general or kitesurfing-wise. However, exactly that totally unknown and unusual factor made the mission so exciting.

The flight into the capital of Russia, Moscow, was smooth and quick (only two and a half hours from Austria), unlike the Visa-formalities and hours spent at the Russian Embassy in Vienna beforehand. My friend Andrey, a young, passionate Russian kitesurfer and photographer, who I met in Florianopolis, Brazil, last year, picked me up from the airport. Once we managed to squeeze my monster-quiver into his small car the journey began; where to, I did not know. It was 5:30pm and according to the Andrey, we would be going down South and kiting the next day. It would be a long drive, "how far?" I asked many times, "very far" was all I could squeeze out of him...

We sped 1600km and 18 hours down Russian highways (the quality of which depended upon the wealth of the respective regions that we passed through), where no real road rules seemed to exist. No matter how bad the road, massive trucks were over taking everywhere, these nutters were only matched by the amount of top end cars that drove so recklessly they would have been banned from driving in Europe years ago. It was strange because police-patrols were lurking everywhere along the roadside. We got our collars felt six times along the way. The first time was rather scary. Two hulking Russian cops asked Andrey to step out of the car and to come over to the other side of the road where they had parked. He didn't return for 40 minutes. When he finally did, I continued the interrogation: "What happened? How much did you have to pay?", "100 Rubels for driving 30km too fast".

I had not been familiar with the with the currency at that point but 100 Rubels sounded a lot to me. "...which is about 3 Euros" added Andrey with a grin. Hehehehe, excellent, I thought. I noticed during the long hours of driving, there were cars (usually of the really expensive kind) with special number plates that were going faster and even crazier than the rest, however, I never saw any of those being stopped by police. "The owners enjoy special-status, diplomats, government and so on. This puts them pretty much above all laws", explained Andrey.

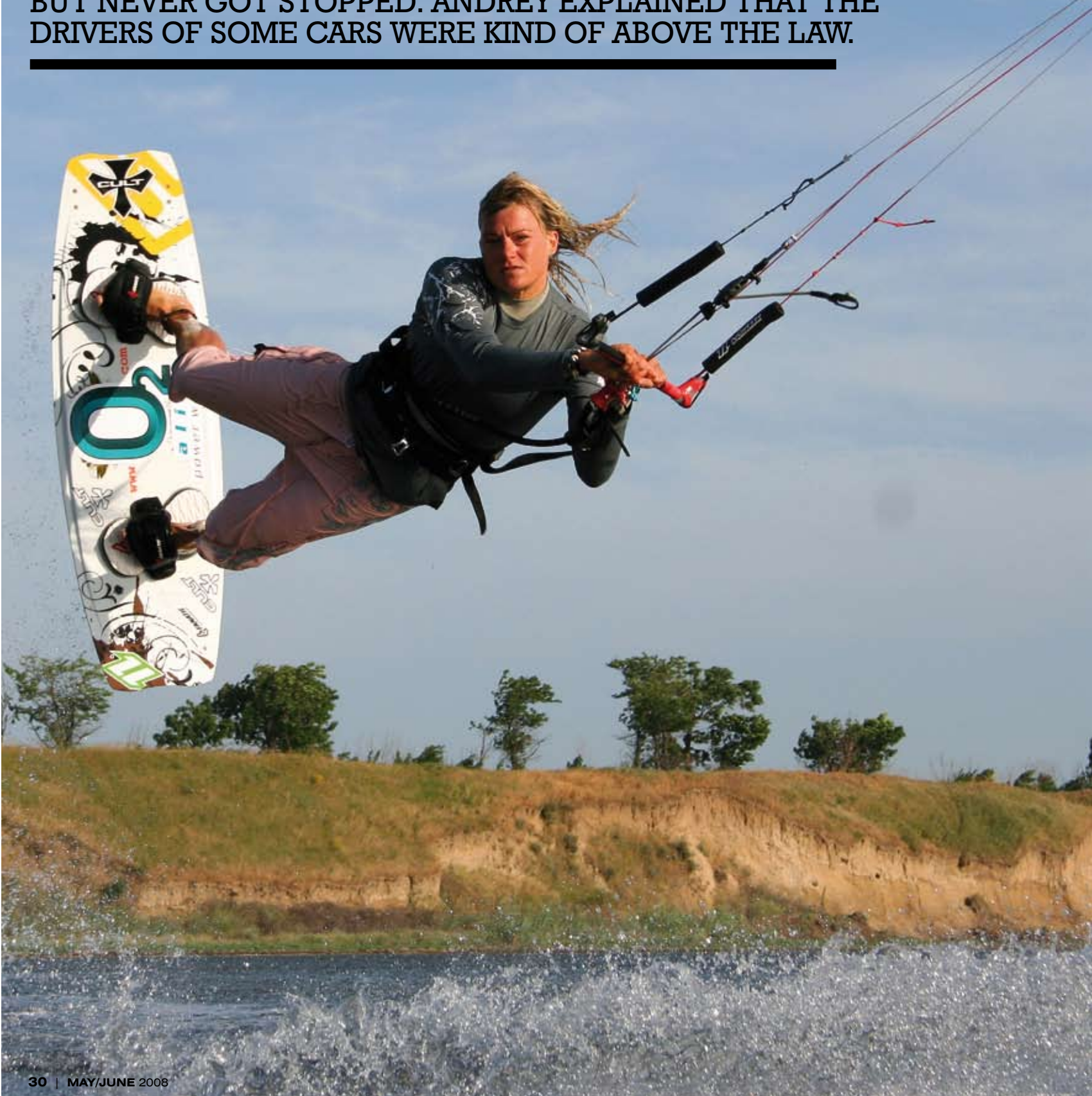
Andrey drove the whole night through, we stopped for gas but that was it. Hammering it from dusk till dawn 'Russian style'. At about 11am we finally had reached our destination: Anapa, a seaport town in the Krasnodar Krai region, along the northerly offshoots of the Caucasus mountains on the northern coast of the Black Sea. I was amazed by the beauty all around, wide endless planes, 🌐



A kite is a machine for generate pop with.  
Popular Marxist slogan

**THE COPS PULLED US OVER SIX TIMES ON THE DRIVE  
DOWN. I NOTICED SOME CARS WERE REALLY SPEEDING  
BUT NEVER GOT STOPPED. ANDREY EXPLAINED THAT THE  
DRIVERS OF SOME CARS WERE KIND OF ABOVE THE LAW.**

---



This ones for the indissoluble union of the working class, peasants and the intelligentsia



fields, picturesque small villages with delightful wooden houses, not a single cloud in the sky, pleasant sunshine, about 22 degree centigrade. Wow, everything was so different than I would have imagined in Russia.

"Anapa is amongst Russia's top kite-locations, hosting the final stop of the 'Black Sea Cup', the Russian Open Championships at the end of September every year. It's got spots for whatever you want to do, from super flat freestyle-heavens to waves", pointed Andrey out whilst cruising into the parking lot in front of the local kiteschool. We finally got out of the car for real; aaaah, what a nice feeling to finally stretch out after this monster journey. I felt like a chuffing zombie though. Two 'cafe naturale' (kinda Turkish coffee, unfiltered) did the trick however and kick started the aching body and kite mindset. Vetal, the owner of the local kiteschool ([www.kiteschool.ru](http://www.kiteschool.ru)) was optimistic and predicted the wind to

soon pick up. We jumped back in the car and drove to the 'Naked Spit', a top freestyle spot. Vetal was right, on arriving at the spot, a sweet northeasterly breeze set in which picked up progressively. I quickly screwed fins and straps onto my board, pumped up the kite, jumped into a thick wetsuit (assuming the water to be quite cold - I was so wrong!!) and off I went for my first ride in Russian waters. Yippeee!

I had a beautiful session on my 12m Vegas and did high jumps of joy, totally lit by the end of my session but too tired to pump up a smaller kite. To my surprise the water was pleasantly warm. I had a little nap in the car and went out for another ride at sunset. Andrey was full of energy, and kited more than me that day and initiated the first shooting that evening too...Rrrrrrethpect!

The next day a bunch of really sweet, funny Russians, also part of the Moscow kite scene, joined us and we

spent five memorable days in beautiful Anapa. All but one day it was always windy with clear sunny skies all the way through. There were spots for all wind directions. For wind with any North, it was freestyle rock'n'roll on world-class flatwaterplaygrounds. Waist deep waters in two different spots: the 'Gólenkaya' (which you already know as the 'naked spit'), the other 'Bugàskaya' (proper name: untranslatable). With wind from the South, the swell sometimes brings sweet waves, which can reach a couple of metres on good days.

On the way back to Moscow, we did a sub quest to another spot, 'Dolzanskaya', for which the forecast had looked very promising. Dolzanskaya turned out to be a breathtaking 2km long perfect, white shelly sand bank (made from teeny-weeny little mussels polished by the sea that you could walk on barefoot) about 30 metres wide poking out in the Sea of Azov. 📍

Hi, do you speak English?



Europe was freed by MacDonalds and now all we do is moan about them



You couldn't fault the build quality on the early Russian motors.

Stomping it for the proletariat



The wind usually came in perpendicular to the sandbank. It was choppy and onshore on one side and super-doooper flat offshore on the other. Many people camp here for a couple of days and enjoy 'Coche (Venezuela) conditions', just with way less crowd outside their tents. It was a beaming blue sunny day, about 30 degrees, unfortunately only with a very light breeze. Still I gave it a go with my biggest kite. It was an unsuccessful attempt and once back ashore I have to admit considered myself rather lucky plus a bit silly. Obviously I chose the 'Coche-like off-shore side' to go out...coming back turned into a major challenge that I mastered only by looping my kite a million times, being pulled submarine-like kneedeep through the water on my board and finishing off with some hardcore body dragging.

With some solid kiting action behind us, we cruised the 1000km to Moscow to spend a couple of days. Moscow, you may know, is a wild city. The Red Square competes for space beside extremely modern skyscrapers, the worst traffic that I have ever experienced, convoys of the newest luxury cars everywhere (the annual contingent of Lamborghinis imported into Russia was sold out in only three weeks!), indeed an interesting, crazy new experience for me. What made sightseeing and my usually very independent

anthropological studies rather complicated was the language barrier: all street signs, underground maps, everything, is only printed in Russian and almost nobody speaks a word of English. I had an emergency if worst comes to worst plan in my mind: I would have handed Andrey's business card to a taxi driver, requesting to drive me to that adress. Although that most probably would have gotten very expensive as tourists who do not speak any Russian often get plucked like chickens (\$\$\$), it still felt reassuring.

So much for the city. We uploaded the car again and drove 120km North to the lake of 'Plescheevskoe', the closest kite-playground of the Moscow kite scene, close to the small city of 'Perejaslavl-Zalesskij'. Once more we were lucky with the weather: sunny skies and strong wind, perfect for my 9m Vegas. Extremely heavy gusts forced me to stick to more basic moves, all the same I really enjoyed my ride in the unique scenery with two wonderful churches in the background and the greenest splendor all around. Then in the afternoon a rain front passed through and we had to call it a day. The rainbow that came up over the small picturesque church on top of the hill just beside the lake made up for it and was the perfect end to yet another brilliant day in Russia. ●

Go for the bottom one, it's closer





Aye, Anapa shines on



With three more days to go in Russia, I decided to buy myself a train ticket to St. Petersburg, known as one of the most beautiful cities in the world. This was also hometown for a dear fellow pro, Petr Tyrchevich, international teamrider for Cabrinha, who I admire for his strong and radical style. Off I went in the first class wagon of the high velocity train that connects Moscow and St. Petersburg in just four hours. I could not wait to meet up with Petr and his parents again, who I already knew well from Mauritius. Petr's enrepenuer tea magnate father, Ivan, met me at the station gates ready to give me a quick first sightseeing tour before driving me straight to Petr's 20th birthday party at one of the most popular cocktail-show-bars in town...perfect! Even more so as that very night was during the so called 'White Nights', a unique and very poetic natural phenomena, when all night is as bright as early evening. St. Petersburg is the world's only metropolis where such a phenomenon takes place, which can be explained by its geographical location as the world's most northern millionaire city. The dusk meets the dawn and it is so bright that they don't bother with street lighting during that time. That night my trip to Russia climaxed - true Russian style - with Beluga caviar and a tiny sip of the finest Russian vodka; even sportswomen cut loose at special occasions!

St. Petersburg excelled my expectations and I was truly impressed by its breathtaking architecture of buildings, monuments, churches, palaces. Up to that visit I had always thought of my hometown Vienna as super clean, pompous and practically unbeatable in beauty. I am not so convinced anymore. Windwise I was not that lucky in St. Petersburg, zero knots, but hey, my Russian family Ivan, Lyudmila, Petr and Co. took great care of me when I was there. "Project Russia" was a lifetime experience and takes a very special position in my 'trip-hit-list'. (thank you!) to Andrey, his girlfriend Anna, Petr, Ivan, Lyudmila and all the other beautiful Russian people I met! ●

**Yours, Kitegabi**  
www.kitegabi.com



The white shell spit at Dolzanskaya

For each according to their ability,  
for each according to their needs,  
Anapa lays it on! Karl Marx,  
a few years ago.



If you know what this car is mail me at dom@arcwind.co.uk. The first correct answer to wins a years subscription to Kitesurf Magazine.

**I SET OFF FROM THE OFFSHORE BANK. COMING BACK TURNED INTO A MAJOR CHALLENGE SURMOUNTED ONLY BY LOOPING MY KITE A MILLION TIMES, BEING PULLED SUBMARINE-LIKE KNEE DEEP THROUGH THE WATER ON MY BOARD AND FINISHING OFF WITH SOME HARDCORE BODY DRAGGING.**