



The girls: Nina, Alexandra, Domenica & Susan

The date: April, 2002

The destination: Canary Islands, Spain



I had already begun to undertake trips of greater distance with the girls for my productions last year. Until now, however, we had only gone to southern France so far. I wanted to begin the summer season 2002 in early spring, but the production should be bigger, more exclusive and of greater expense than previously. So I had my eye on the Canary Islands: easily reached and blessed with a convivial, unproblematic climate (or at least I thought back then). In February 2002, I scouted locations in Gran Canaria, Lanzarote and Fuerteventura intensively for two weeks. The popular main island just wasn't for me, but the two rather brittle, desert-type islands proved quite yielding.

For the actual production, it meant, however, a totally new organizational and financial effort: it

was our first trip where flying was involved and also the first trip with four models all at once, since, of course, it wouldn't have been worth the cost and effort with only two. Because I wanted to work on Fuerteventura as well as Lanzarote, to make use of the completely different atmospheres of both islands, there was a lot to get organized. And something else was completely new: since I didn't always need the girls, thus giving them lots of free time, it was an opportunity to bring along another photographer. I had found an artistically ambitious and very experienced hobby photographer in Robert from Vienna, who was very enthusiastic about the idea, and whose style showed an extremely interesting contrast to my own.

Saturday, April 13th, 2002: Day of arrival

8:00 a.m.: I'm sitting with Heike, my make-up artist, on the train to the Paderborn-Lippstadt airport. The girls are on their way to Berlin, where they'll be taking off. Robert has a direct flight from Vienna to Fuerteventura. I'm glad that we succeeded in finding three flights at reasonable times all on the same day.

3:30 p.m.: We meet the others at the cafeteria in the airport on Fuerteventura. Robert has already gotten acquainted with Nina, Alexandra, Susan and Domenica. Our baggage has also happily arrived with us, we just have to pick up the two rental cars and drive to the hotel. We're spending the first night in Corralejo, in the north of Fuerteventura.



All together now: Nina, Domi, Alex (from left) and Susan (above).

5:00 p.m.: We decide to take a little stroll in Corralejo before dinner. It's sunny and pretty warm. Although the city isn't very big, it's very lively; still, it has held onto its nativeness. Susan forgot her sunglasses and wants to buy a new pair. No problem, there's plenty of selection! I recommend a sporty-cool model with silver frames to her.

7:00 p.m.: The girls let a charming waiter steer them into the first restaurant. We should have kept looking: the food in some cafeterias is better than this. At least the mood is good.



Forgot to bring sunglasses: that's bad! Must get a replacement pair.

Gruesome scene on the edge of the beach: bloody massacre of innocent pangolins!



Perfect in form: Domi and the meatball.

Sunday, April 14th: Free day

11:00 a.m.: We leave our hotel in Corralejo for another accommodation in El Cotillo, not too far away, situated in the northwestern part of the island. Actually, I wanted to come here right away, because El Cotillo is more conveniently located for what we have in mind; but the hotel there was booked. Also here we've found a small, comfortable and largely "un-touristy" hotel.

1:00 p.m.: Since I only want to spend four days working and we have six entire days here, we can take our time and don't have to get started straight away on the first day. Besides, it's Sunday and we'd have to deal with the all the traffic of the locals on their weekend excursions. Robert would like to use the day to scout suitable locations for his work. He has totally different conceptions than I do, and so I can't help him much with my findings. With nothing better to do, I drive off with him. Heike wants to see a little of the island and comes along.

6:30 p.m.: I've left the girls my car and suggested they take it and drive to the beach. But it's really cool and quite windy, such that nobody wanted to go and instead they all stayed at the hotel. Their loss.... We go to a nice restaurant that I knew of from my last stay. It offers no

regional specialties, but of very good quality and a fantastic atmosphere.



Cute: the gophers know where to go to get something.

7:00 a.m.: I would like to begin with Nina in the light of the rising sun on a few wonderful sandy inlets near the hotel, and I've already sent her to Heike for make-up at six. What's stupid is, the sun doesn't come up until 7:30. We could have slept another half-hour...

7:45 a.m.: The sun has just come up, only to disappear behind a thick cloud ten minutes later. Crap! The temperature is a mere 17°C and the strong wind is making it even more uncomfortable. Nina is peeved at me because I'm asking this of her. We toil on three rolls of film before I realize there's just no sense in it. Back to the hotel for some breakfast first.

10:30 a.m.: It's still overcast and cold, but the weather here can change quickly. I have decided to drive with Nina and Alexandra to the extreme southern part of the island, where I know of some very lovely and secluded beaches. It's a long way and I'm hoping that the weather will improve in the meantime.

1:15 p.m.: The tourist center in Jandia is terrible, but you can do some good shopping here. We pack the trunk to the brim with provisions, since we won't have any time to go to a restaurant for

dinner this evening. We drive further Playa di Cofete, a kilometer-long, remote sandy beach. The dusty pothole slope is a popular route for Jeep Safaris, who act as if one absolutely needs an all-terrain vehicle here. Ridiculous: our Opel was brave; only on the steep grades did the drive wheels slip a little.



The boss has a zest for action - the girls, not so much...

2:00 p.m.: Finally there, and indeed, the sun comes out every now and then. An endless beach with a dramatic backdrop of desert-like mountains and a rough surf lying at our feet. I begin with Alexandra; at first, she's terribly listless and is afraid of catching cold; but then I actually manage to convince her to go into the water, although it's still cool. Suddenly, she has fun playing in the foaming surf and getting showered by the waves. I don't have to give any more instructions, just snap the photos. Super, this way always creates the best photos!

4:30 p.m.: Within a short while I've gone through 12 rolls of film. The day has been saved, now I'm feeling better. We leave the desert-like Playa di Cofete and lumber on to another beach. It's not at all far away, but looks totally different:

Playa di Cofete: desert beach for adventurous types.

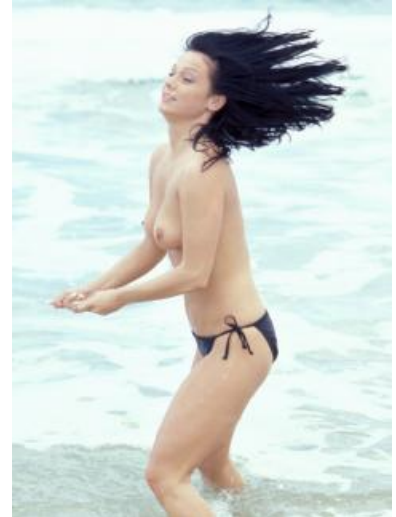


a wonderful sandy inlet with picturesque rocks that provide a very lovely background. Besides me, no one seems to know about this place, or at least for the evening we are alone. Since the bay opens up to the west, we're able to work until sunset. There's protection from the wind here and it's a little warmer; in spite of this, I still can't persuade the girls to go into the water just once. What a shame!



Somehow it's just not quite warm...

8:00 p.m.: The sunset is beautiful, but I want to at least make the pothole route to the next village while it's still light. It's so nice of Alexandra take the steering wheel in between. The island is only about 90 kilometers long; nevertheless we need two-and-a-half-hours to cruise up to the north.



...and the wind is also pretty mean!

Tuesday, April 16th: Second day of work

8:00 a.m.: With Alexandra I make another attempt to do a shoot in the early morning. But there's no use: it's cloudy and cold. We decide to go have breakfast first and wait for better weather. The only thing keeping my mood up is the good outcome from the day before.



The sand is truly everywhere!

10:15 a.m.: Slowly, it's getting better. I set myself and Alexandra in the car and drive to an inlet on the west coast. After a good hour we finally arrive, and it's not sooo great here, either. Bad ratio between input and outcome...

3:00 p.m.: We're back at the hotel, packing Nina in the car and heading off to the famous sand dunes of Corralejo. In the meantime, it's sunny

and truly warm and the gal has a lot of fun romping around in the dunes and playing with the warm sand. I'm worried about my camera: drifting sands are treacherous!

6:00 p.m.: After a half-hour of the road and a further half-hour on a brutal stretch like corrugated metal, we've reached a wonderful beach on the west coast. It's remote and not easy to find. We're not totally alone, but the few campers don't disturb us, and we work until shortly before sunset. Unfortunately, it's so cold that, whenever we take a break, the girls immediately wrap up in their blankets and don't want to come out anymore. I don't get them in the water at all today.



Stranded: small jellyfish.

Wednesday, April 17th: **Free day**

10:00 a.m.: Today calls for a change of location to Lanzarote. Robert has been away with Domenica and Susan the last couple of days, so



Our taxi to Lanzarote.

away from each other, the crossing lasts just a half-hour. Robert and I let the wind blow in our faces on the upper deck; the girls, afraid of catching cold, retreat to the cafeteria.

2:00 p.m.: After our arrival on Lanzarote, we've settled into our hotel a couple of kilometers inland, far enough away from tourist center. We have this afternoon off, so I invite the girls on a tour round the Timanfaya National Park, because I think it absolutely belongs to a Lanzarote visit. The volcanic area originated in the great eruption of 1730-36, which completely changed the face of the island and left a bleak, very dramatic landscape behind.



we'll trade models on Lanzarote. I have to run to the rooms three times in order to gather them all up, and I'm beginning to feel like the teacher on a field trip.

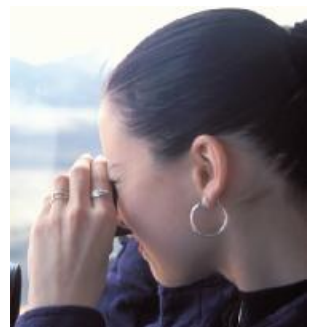


At sea before Lanzarote.



11:00 a.m.: Our ferry pulls in. Since the two islands are just a few kilometers

5:00 p.m.: Free time for the girls, I go around with Robert location scouting until the break of dusk. Lanzarote has the advantage that it's not so big; you don't have to do a lot of driving around.



A must-see: Timanfaya!

Thursday, April 18th: **Third day of work**

7:00 a.m.: We've agreed to check on the weather first before we start with make-up. But it looks as if the situation may improve, so I ask Heike to get Susan ready. As we're on the famous Papagayo beaches in the southern part of the island at 8:30, we actually have sunshine and make good

progress with our work. Shortly before ten it's time to disappear: as if on schedule, the first tourists arrive.

12:30 p.m.: I'm with Susan, Domenica and Heike at the second location for today, a small volcano, whose crater is accessible and which creates a



First shoot for Susan on the Papagayo beaches.

dramatic scenery. The place makes an impression: whether this volcano really is dormant, Domi asks me, worried. Well, I answer, nothing's happened here for 270 years, so probably it won't start acting up again today... A much larger problem than the volcano's activity is actually the wind, which has increased to a stark breeze, blowing the hair around constantly and making the poor girls freeze. I'd hoped that the crater's edge would protect us, but the volcano doesn't do us the favor.

4:00 p.m.: We've driven on to the next location, a very wild and varied section on the west coast.



Lucky: the volcano didn't spit us out!

Everything is black and scrapped and looks like at the beginning of creation. Actually, I wanted to continue with Domi, who, however, at first glance of the rough surf and at the thought of the cold water, broods.



This awakens in Susan the courage of a strong woman, who, with the phrase "I'll do it!" jumps into the water. I'm so glad to see such dedication, but I have my own problems to deal with: the black surface makes the shadows very deep and the contrasts harsh. I have to adjust the flash and exposure correction very carefully and lack experience using a thumb judgement. Besides that, the vapor of salty spray is constantly blowing into my face. Every two minutes, I have to clean the filter and at the same time be careful that my Nikon doesn't get showered.



Blankets and sweaters are indispensable for camping.

Friday, April 19th: Fourth day of work

6:30 a.m.: I just assume that we're also going to have good weather this morning and have sent Domi to make-up so that she'll be ready when the sun comes up. Heike wants to put a couple of curls in her hair and that always takes pretty long.

8:00 a.m.: I drove with Domenica once again to the Papagayo beaches, where I already was with

Susan yesterday. And we're actually lucky: a couple of cloudy patches drift by, but mostly, the sun is shining. Fortunately, it's not quite as windy here; nevertheless, she's in a bad mood because of the cold. It would be nice if she'd go into the water, but I just don't have the nerve to ask her.

11:30 a.m.: Domi is thankful to be parked at the hotel until early evening. I pack Susan in the car



Fortunately the weather cooperates: morning shoot with Domi on the beach.

and drive with her to a rocky cliff, on which the surf has created a few tide pools. A great location: one can go into the water without getting instantly washed away, while, in the background romps a dramatic surf. Afterwards, it's off to another black beach nearby. A couple of people are there, but Susan doesn't have a problem with it. To my astonishment, she even goes into the water!

1:00 p.m.: Because we worked so hard yesterday, we don't absolutely have to work the entire day today: Susan is finished and I don't want to continue with Domi until the evening, once the sun is lower and the light has become more accessible. Heike and I decide to pass the time by driving to one of the black beaches.

5:00 p.m.: The last shoot with Domi. We have a lot of sun now, but the wind is still harsh and cold



Alex enjoys her free day on the canopy.

and spoils Snow White's mood once again. We agree to shoot four more rolls of film at the salt mines and on the beach. As her mood becomes too much for me, I explain that we're going to need an entire hour to shoot the four rolls of film, if she continues to be so stiff, but that it could also be taken care of in just a half-hour, if she would work with me. She realizes it, and suddenly, she's very disciplined, and everything goes very fast. As we finish, she's suddenly in a good mood, so we sit for a while on the beach, look at the waves and chat.

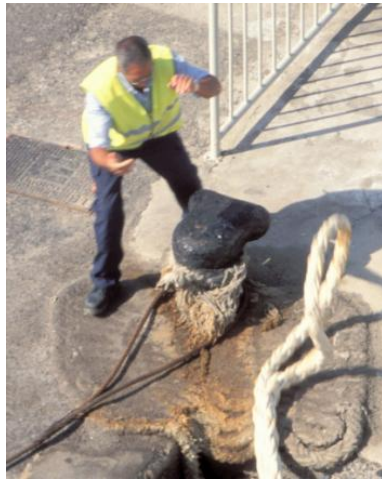


Canary Islands specialty-trio: Papas Arrugadas, goat cheese and Mojo Verde.

Saturday, April 20th: Day of departure

9:30 a.m.: We're at the ferry port in Playa Blanca to transfer back to Fuerteventura. Before the jetty, there is a considerable line of cars: for the natives, their excursions are cherished and dear, and Fuerte is obviously a well-loved destination. I worry whether the ferry company has correctly estimated the capacity of its ship. On the other

island, there's so much going on, the boat has a half-hour delay. For that, it's bigger than I expected: we all fit on. The upper deck is jam-packed, the weather and the mood are super. In the midst of the crowd, there's a band playing traditional music. The singing is ghastly, but the others seem to like it.



**iHasta Luego,
Lanzarote!**

11:00 a.m.: We don't have to be at the airport for another two hours. Plenty of time for a city stroll in Corralejo. I'd rather stick around the car, though, to keep an eye on the baggage.

2:00 p.m.: We get into a little trouble at check-in, because our luggage is so heavy - well, one wants to be armed for everything, and the free baggage allowance of 20 kg just isn't sufficient. Robert flies first; after that, it's the girls' turn. Heike and



**In the airport terminal: no longer the desire
to be photographed!**

I have to wait the longest. At least our flight has been moved up a half-hour. The worst thing about flying is always the sitting around at the airport!

9:30 p.m.: We land on time in Paderborn-Lippstadt. The others must already be home by now. I'm so glad the stressful week is over.