



Beginner's Luck

Often when asked the question “what’s your favourite sport”, I really want to answer “snorkelling”. But I have been corrected many times, **snorkelling** apparently does not constitute as a sport. I would be lying if I said that I liked swimming, I’m not really in love with swimming, and public pools **gross me out**. I just like seeing fish, and sometimes when I swim really fast it feels like exercise. After all, part of the definition of sport is: an activity involving physical **exertion** and skill. So, breathing through a snorkel without **fogging up** the mask **demonstrates** skill, and following fish around the lagoon completes the physical exertion part, so there we have it; my favourite sport!

With that being said, since coming to Reunion I practice my favourite sport as much as possible (since I didn’t have many chances to practice in my **hometown** Toronto) and I would like to think that I know the lagoon, especially in St Leu, **like the back of my hand**. I have seen **octopus, moray eels, boxfish, lionfish, even squid!!** I thought I had seen everything there was to see without venturing beyond the coral barrier.

However, my in-laws came on vacation last November and within a week of being here my **father-in-law** came back from snorkelling in Trou D’Eau and announced that he had just been swimming with a huge ray! I was **green with envy**, why haven’t I gone swimming in the lagoon with a ray? I jumped in the water right away and went searching for the ray. But as luck may have it, I came back disappointed; the ray was nowhere to be seen.

A few days later my sister-in-law went snorkelling in St. Leu, while I stayed on the beach. What a mistake, she came back excited telling us how she had just spent fifteen minutes or more swimming with a turtle! I have swum with turtles before, but not in the lagoon in St. Leu. I was jealous for the second time that week.

So, I started wondering why I had never seen these big magnificent creatures in the lagoon and visitors who have only been snorkelling a few times were finding them with **ease**? I came to the conclusion that either it can all be **chalked up** to beginners luck, or my in-laws were **pulling my leg**. They did happen to forget their underwater camera both times. Ever since then, I have **kept my eyes peeled**, looking for turtles or rays, or maybe I’ll just have to **settle for** a visit to Kélonia or the Aquarium in St Gilles.





Vocabulary

snorkelling - palmes, masque, tuba
to gross out - dégouter
exertion - effort
fogging up - buée dans le masque
to demonstrate - démontrer

that being said - ceci dit
hometown - ville natale
like the back of my hand - comme le fond de ma poche
octopus - pieuvre
moray eels - murène

boxfish - poisson coffre
lionfish - poisson-lion
squid - calamar
father-in-law – beau père
green with envy - vert de jalousie

ease - aisance
to chalk up - engranger
pulling my leg - faire marcher qqn
to keep your eyes peeled – garder les yeux grand ouvert
to settle for - se contenter de