

HEADING : SOUTH-BY-SOUTHEAST

REPORTAGE BY MICHAEL W. BARNARD

Photos by Michael W. Barnard & Edwin Beckenbach



AUGUST 20-23, 2010



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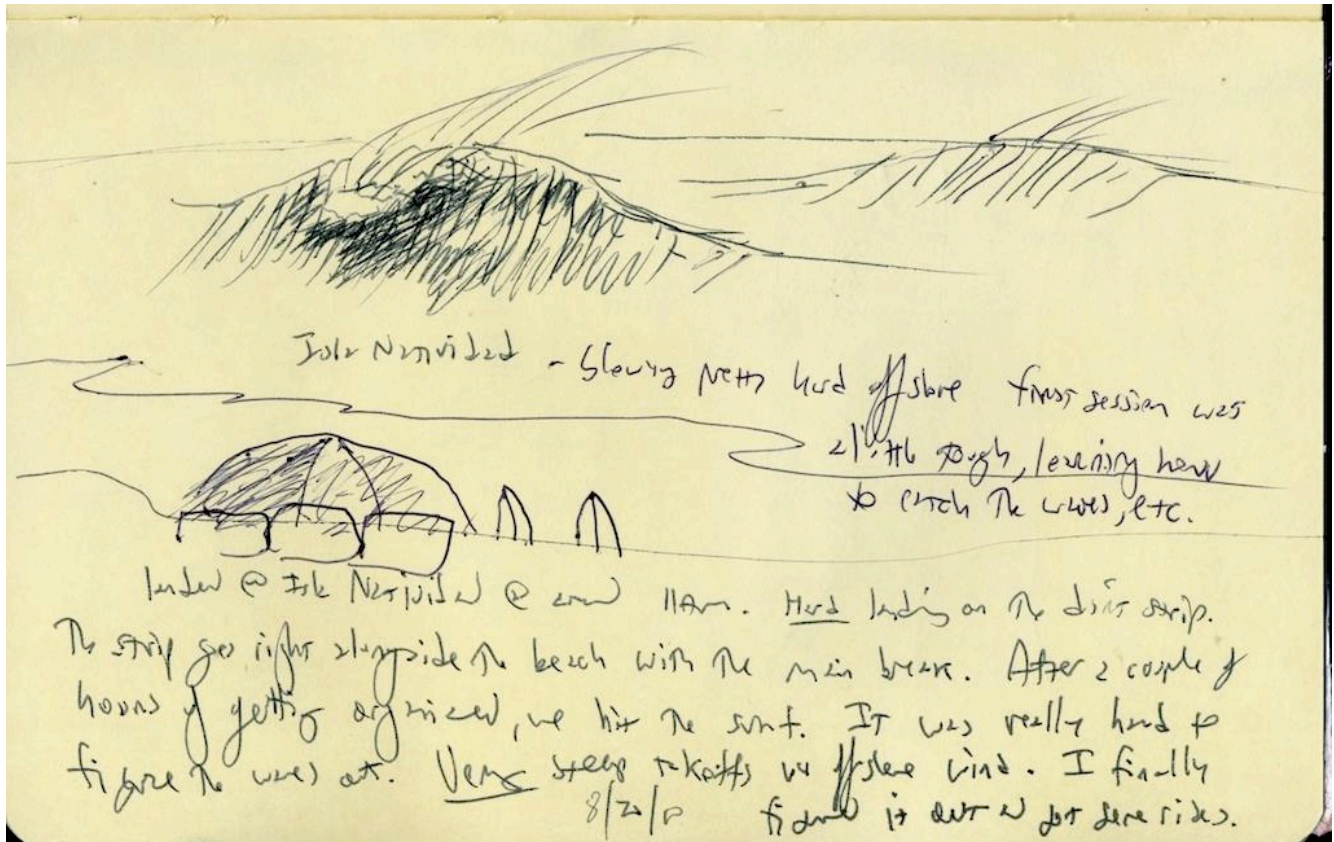
We flew down on a small plane from Chula Vista to a remote island off of Baja Sur.



Our destination is the smudgy light-brown island in the distance on the right.



The fishing village is pretty small and very much NOT oriented towards tourists: no bars no restaurants, no hotels, etc. We were able to rent a small house, which was nice. Camping on the beach in Baja can be a gritty experience!



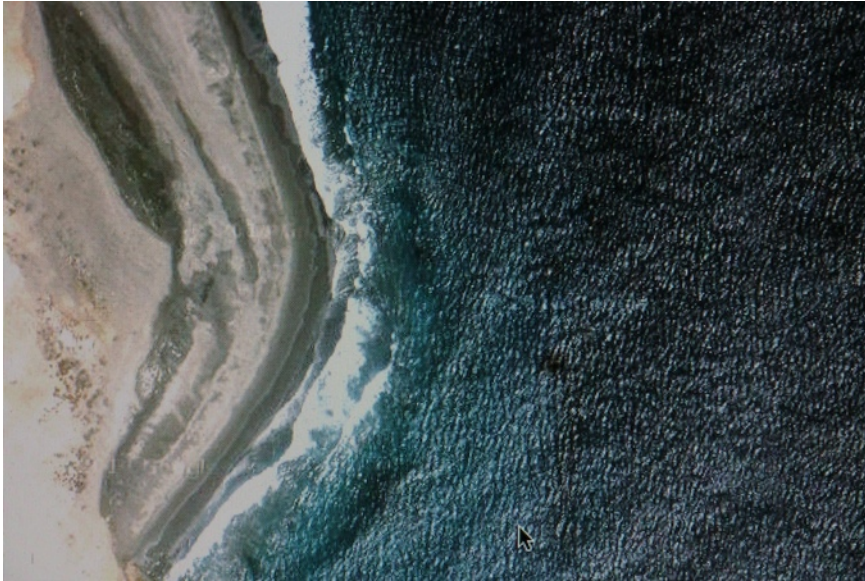
"Isla Natividad – blowing pretty hard offshore. First session was a little tough, learning how to catch the waves, etc. "

...landed @ Isla Natividad @ around 11 AM. Hard landing on the dirt strip. The strip goes right alongside the beach with the main break. After a couple of hours of getting organized, we hit the surf. It was really hard to figure the waves out. Very steep takeoffs with offshore wind. I finally figured it out and got some rides." 8/20/10



That's a tent in the foreground on the left. There was another planeload of guys who stayed there. They were very good surfers who had surfed here many times before. They knew the drill... And they were nice guys, to boot.

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Aerial view of the break. You can see how the lines from the South wrap in.



Here's a bomb about to explode! No one out... It looks pretty big!

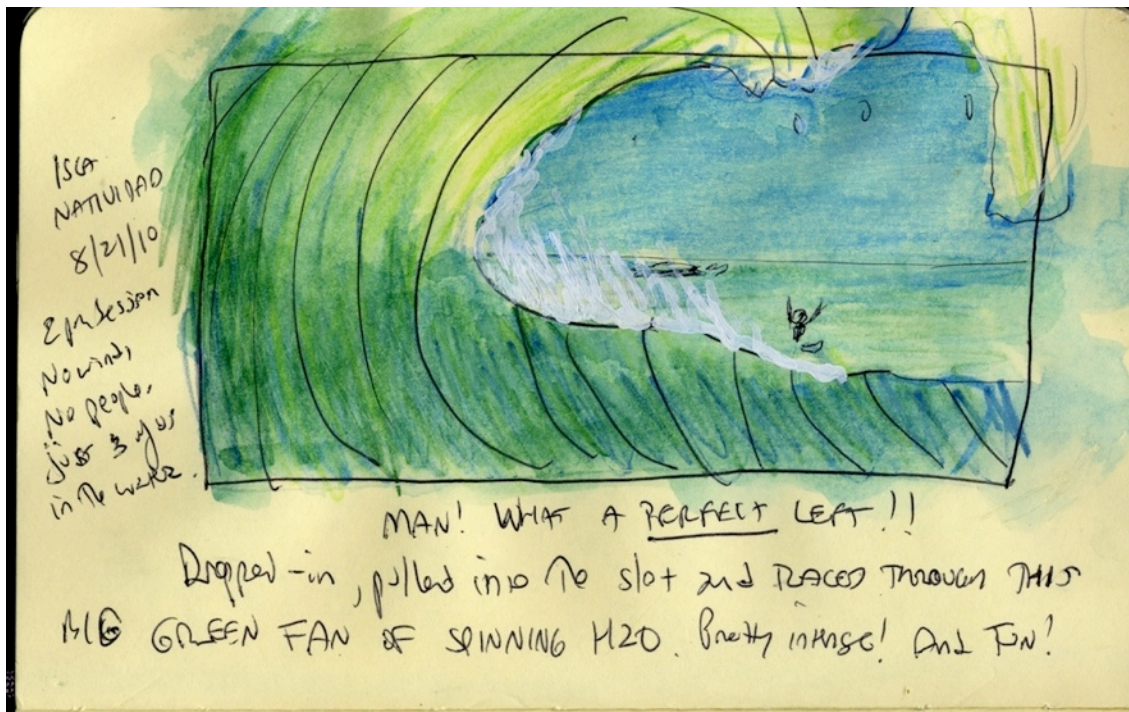
These two images courtesy of Google Earth.



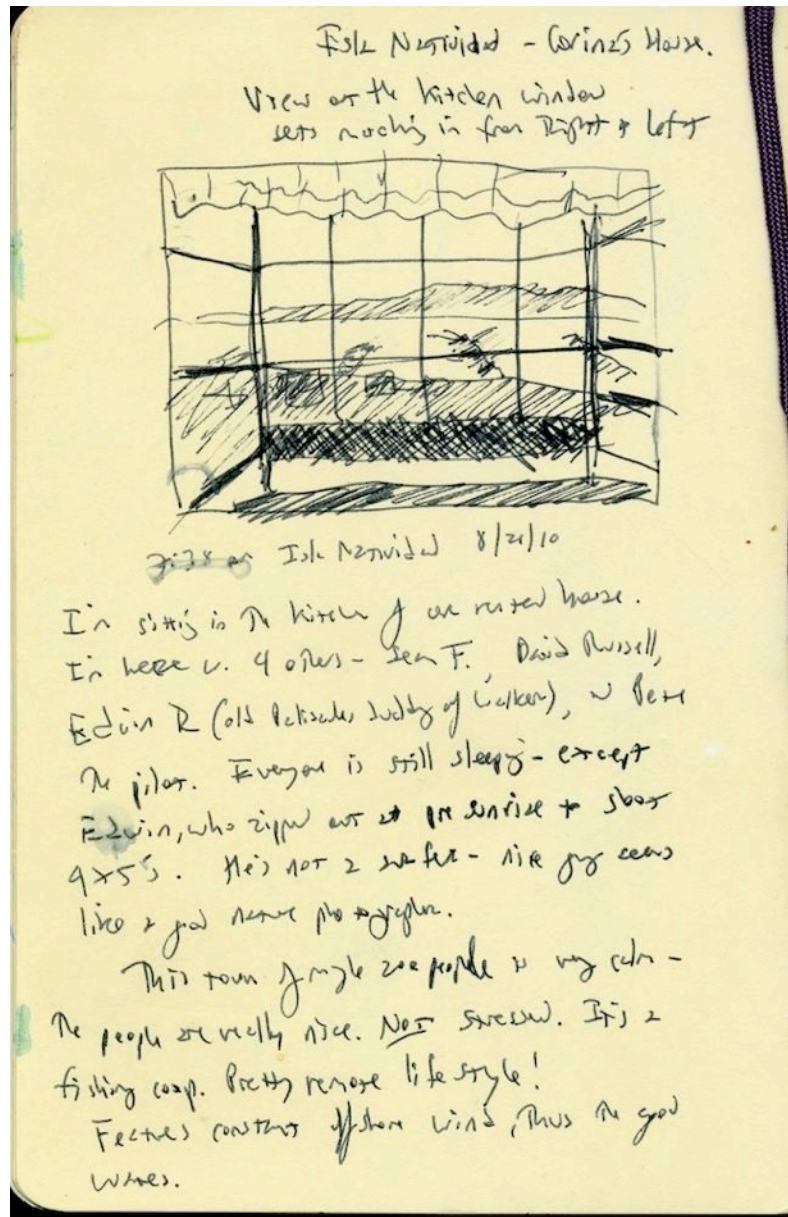
That's me deep into it. I'm kneeboarding these days due to my aching, aging shoulders.



Sean Findley going right. Sean is my main surf-buddy here in LA, and he's the one that got this trip together. He was the standout of this trip, for sure. He'd been there once before, a few years back, and came home raving about the great surf. This time was even better, according to him.



Two views of the same ride. My sketch-book POV is the moment just after I took-off and trimmed into the tube. That's Sean hooting from the shoulder. The photo shows the end of the same wave, as I glide towards the end of the ride, with Sean looking on.



"Isla Natividad – Corina's House. View out the kitchen window. Sets marching in, from Right to Left."

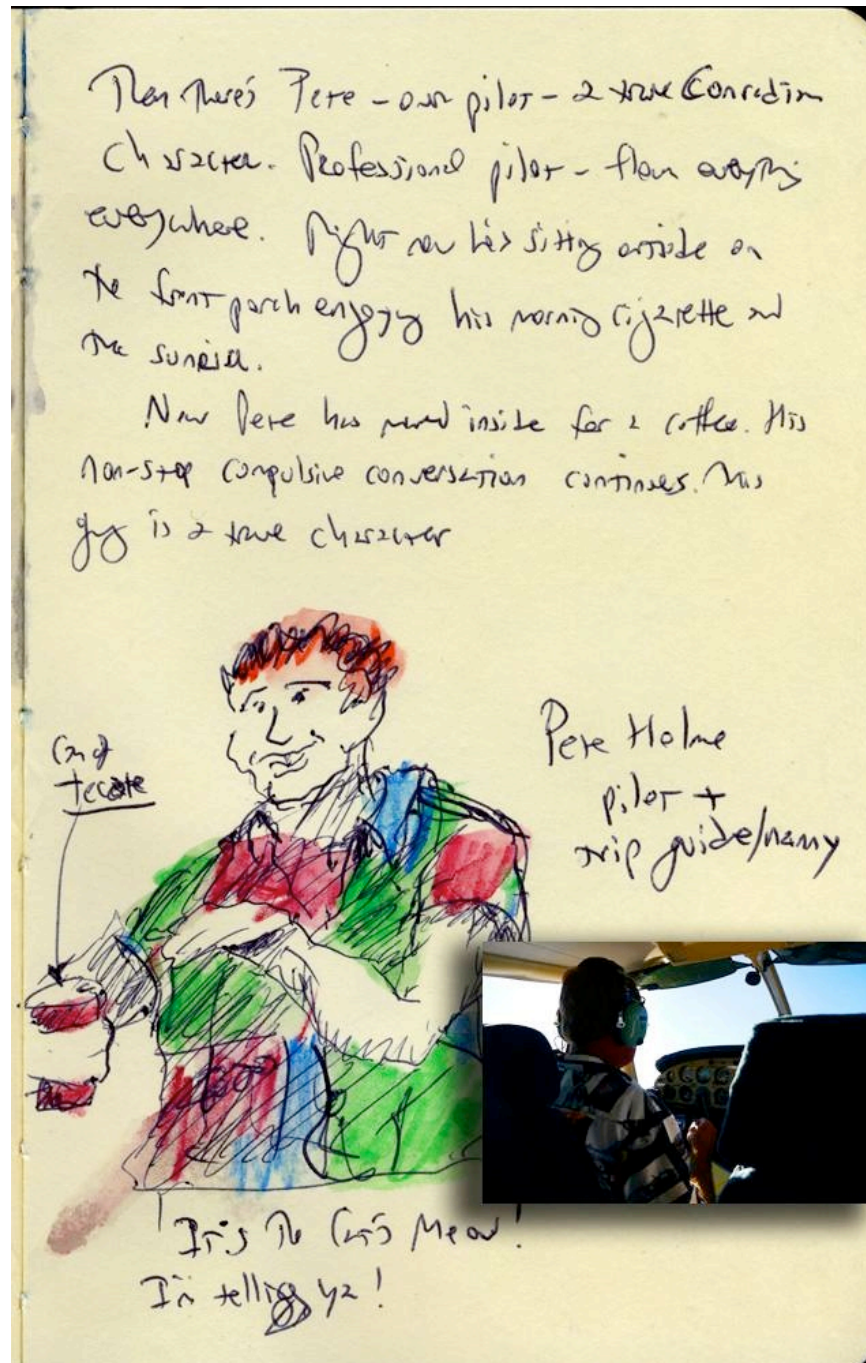
"I'm sitting in the kitchen of our rented house. I'm here with 4 others – Sean F., David Russell, and Edwin B. (old Palisades buddy of Walker's), and Pete the pilot. Everyone is still sleeping – except Edwin, who zipped out at pre-sunrise to shoot 4x5s. He's not a surfer – nice guy, seems like a good nature photographer.

This town is maybe 200 people and very calm – the people are really nice. Not stressed! It's a fishing co-op. Pretty remote lifestyle!

Features constant offshore wind, thus the good waves." 8/21/10



Early AM moonrise view, looking southeast, across the village's boat-landing area.



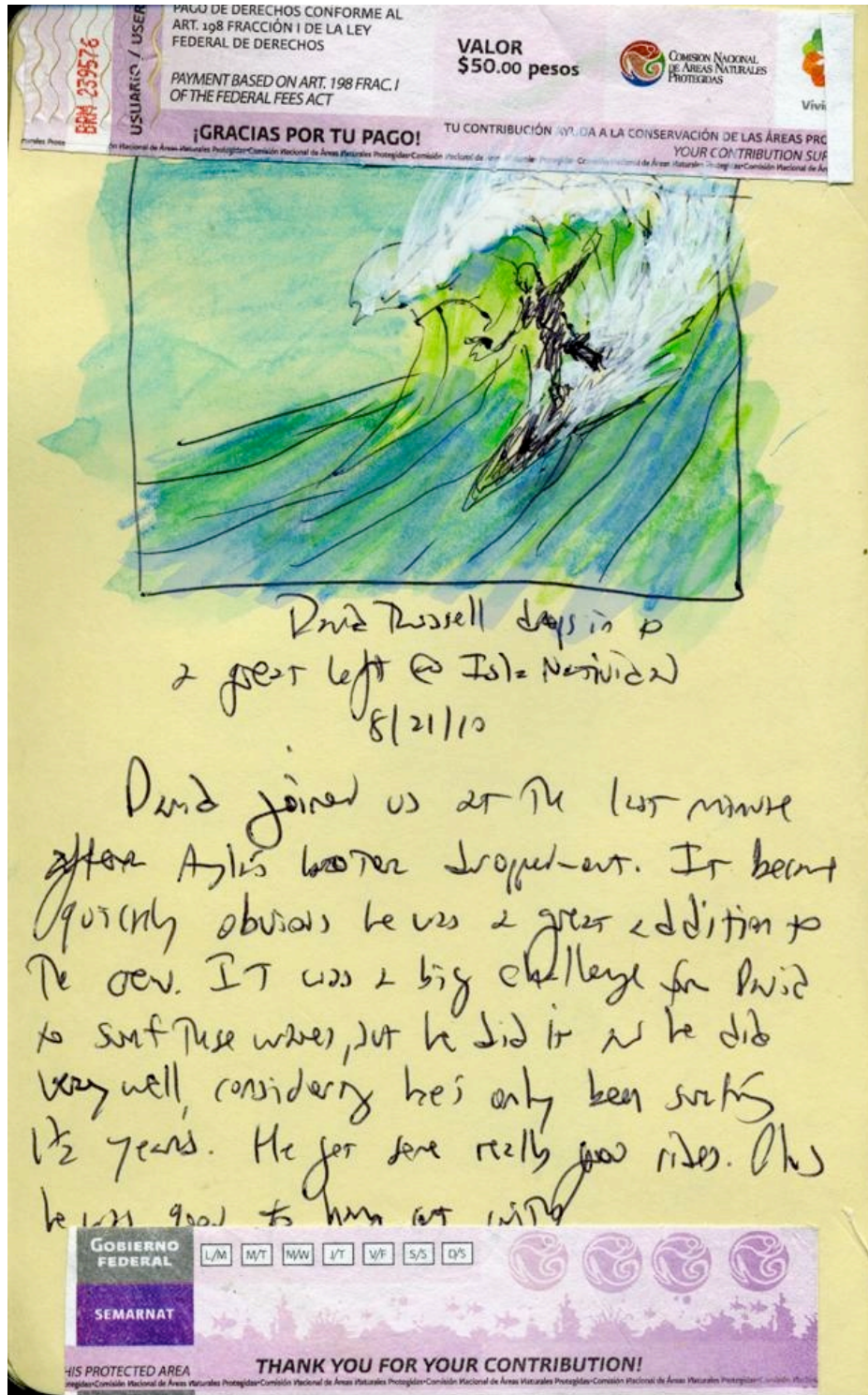
Then there's Pete – our pilot, - a true Conradian character. Professional pilot – flown everything, everywhere. Right now sitting outside on the front porch enjoying his morning cigarette and the sunrise. Now Pete has moved inside for coffee. His non-stop compulsive conversation ("It's the cat's meow! I'm tellin' ya!") continues. This guy is a true character. (Early AM 8/21/10)



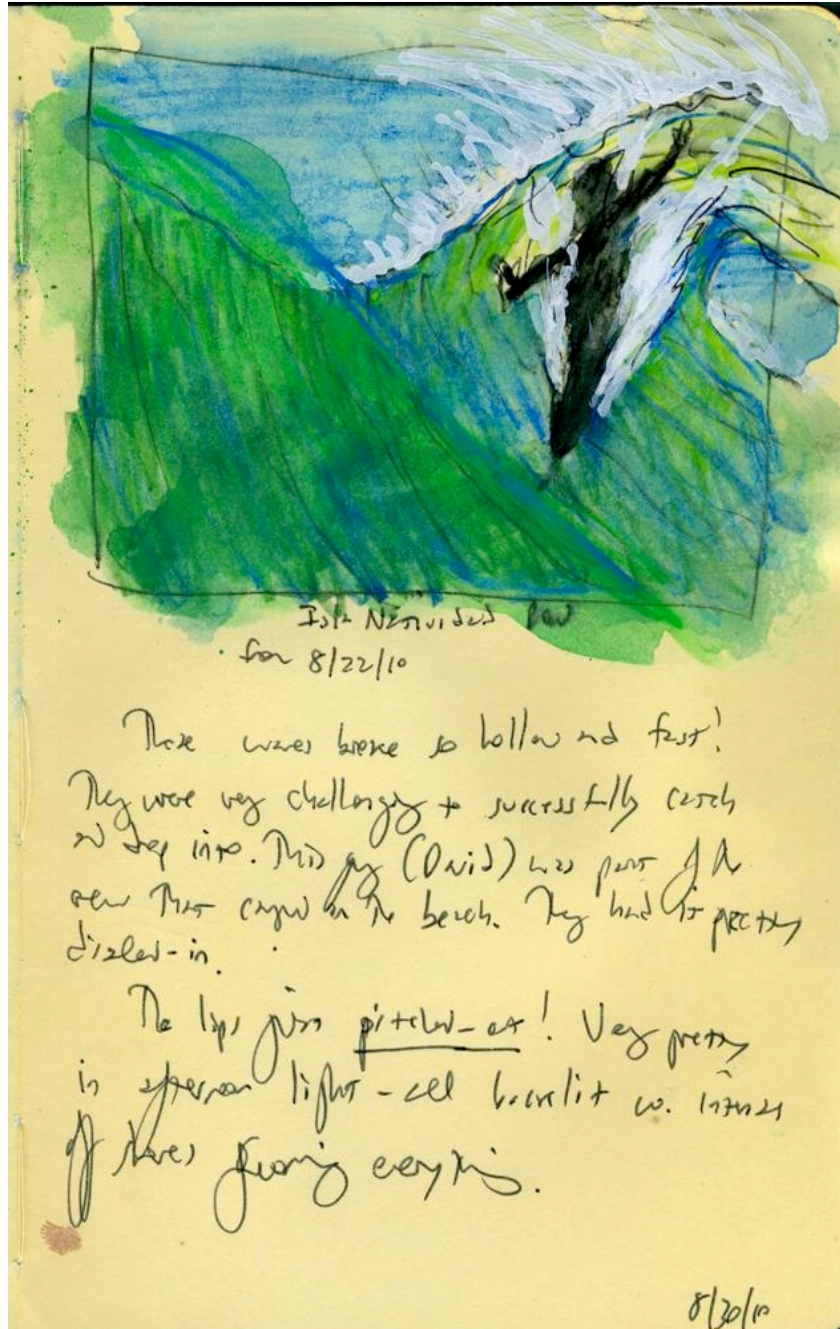
View of the South Swell wrapping around the island with the village in the foreground. This was taken from our house. The surfing beach is to the left about ½ mile.



This was the other view – to the North – from our house. One day we watched for hours as a couple of families of adult dolphins taught their babies how to surf at this beach.



"David joined us at the last minute after Ayla's brother dropped-out. It became quickly obvious he was a great addition to the crew. It was a big challenge for David to surf these waves, but he did it and he did very well, considering he's only been surfing for 1 1/2 years. He got some really good rides. Plus he was good to hang out with." 8/21/10



These waves break so hollow and fast! They were very challenging to successfully catch and drop into. This guy (David) was part of the crew that camped on the beach. They had it pretty dialed-in.

The lips just PITCHED-OUT! Very pretty in afternoon light – all backlit w. intense offshores grooming everything (8/22/10)



Dave Russell gets a good right!



Sean going left. He made that wave. That's me below, going for it.

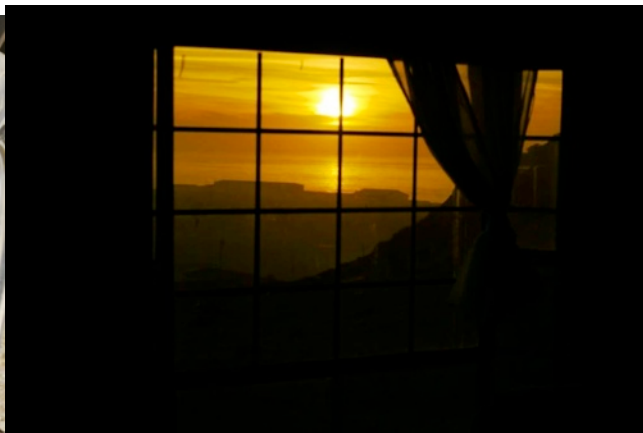


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The break only really works on a South Swell. The waves bend around the island and end-up breaking towards the West. The Westerly prevailing wind is therefore almost always offshore. It is a kind of freakish, perfect beach-break wave.



We got really lucky on this trip. We had solid surf every day and were often the only 3 out there. A little after the above session, some 15'+ set waves came through. Pretty sizeable!



That's the truck we rented for our beach excursions. Your basic Baja-Mobile! The right pix shows the sunrise view from our living room.



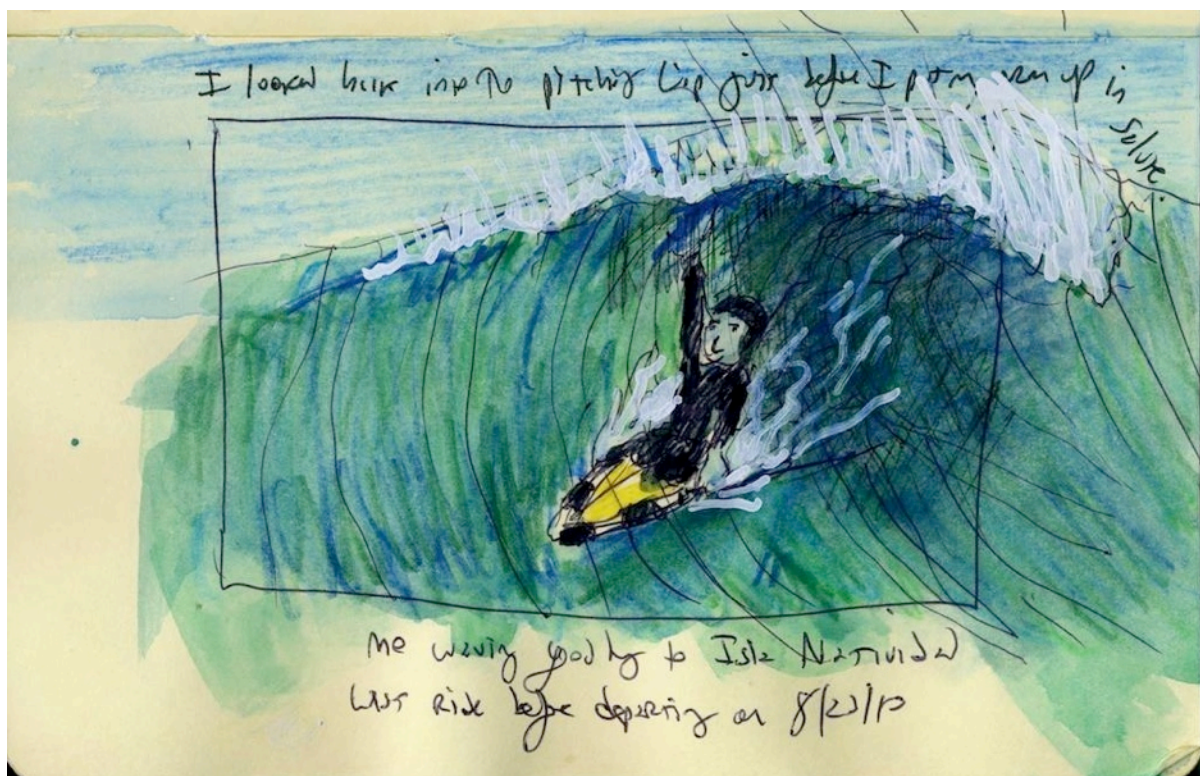
Two of Edwin's arty shots of me from the mellow last session on the last day, when the swell dropped a bit.



You can just make out my keg-like form in this one, deep in the tube. I think I actually made this wave. They were really amazing! This was a dream-like session – just us, and all these perfect waves. Our arms were totally shot by this point, but we squeezed every bit of surf we could manage out of the day.



Sean - last session of the trip.



“I looked back into the pitching lip just before I put my hand up in salute.
Me waving good-bye to Isla Navidad. Last ride before departing on 8/23/10.”



The crew about to depart the island. Me on the left, then Dave Russell, Sean Findley in the red, and on the right Edwin Beckenbach – who shot most of the surfing pix. Thanks, Edwin!

