



TEXT FLORIAN GLÜCK PHOTOS CHRISTIAN PFANZELT

TURKEY

1 WEEK ALL-INCLUSIVE!



COCO



HIAS



MARTINA



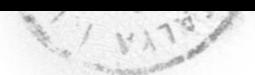
LULU

DON'T WORRY.

This isn't about guided city tours and 5-star hotel residents wearing elastic bands on their wrists. This is about the winter escapades of four rock friends. Away from the freezing cold winter in Europe and particulate pollution in German climbing gyms. Away to soft sunlight, steep sinters and the knowledge that in Antalya there is everything to content a climber's heart – and some.

GEYIKBAYIRI, TURKEY
03:19 PM

Lulu is pleased to be "Back on funky planet" (7b+).



GEYAGLI
D0580
SIM
TERI
EME



**"WOW!" HE THINKS.
"THIS IS GONNA BE WICKED!"**

His fingers tie into a knot. The knuckles clench getting whiter and whiter, like his face. His stare, almost obsessed, to the left, then to the right. No help, no escape – all he can come out with is a timid "Lulu ...?" to his climbing partner. What happens next is something Hias had never experienced before. There's a bang, a roar, everything shakes. Deafening noise, jet engine loud, then a jolt and the belt suddenly tightens across his stomach. At last he has reached the ground. Along with 174 other passengers.

Hias didn't expect landing in Antalya in a 737 was going to be the greatest psychological challenge he had experienced in his life so far. He is not a frequent flyer, at least not in aeroplanes. And with his normally cool, relaxed disposition he is convinced that a charter flight pilot would have no problem putting the plane down safely. But then he had never had to worry about turbulence, crosswinds and similar aerodynamic phenomena.

One seat away and clearly relaxed, Lulu takes off her massive headphones. Noise reducing, of course. "Did I miss something?" asks the 18-year-old student cheekily. It takes at least another three seconds before she gives him an ironic grin. The Boeing rolls towards the gate.



SO EXCLUSIVE

GEYIKBAYIRI - CLIMBING & CHILLING

An hour's car drive and a dozen headstrong customs officials later – "How do you say 'exe' in Turkish? He doesn't know what this is ...!" – Martina, Lulu, Coco and Hias are sitting under an oriental moon sipping their first winter escape beer. A crescent moon in the night-blue sky above them. Facing its open side there is a lone illuminating star. Obvious! We are in Turkey! The four winter escapees are ensconced in a landscape that is a cross between a spaghetti western film set and the Greek climbing mecca Kalymnos. With the two central, several hundred metres long rock outcrops of **Geyikbayiri** centre-stage, all four look past the rocks into the never-ending emptiness.

"Wow," says Christoph – aka Coco – deep in thought. He grew up in the mountains and currently works as a professional mountain guide, among other things, and in his mid-thirties has already got to know a few impressive climbing areas. But the mood of the moment and the flashback to the turbulent landing bring out the emotion. "Totally," agrees Martina as she cuddles up to him. Coco and the 28-year-old education professional have been a team for two years, both on the mountain and in the valley. "I reckon we'll find plenty to do over the next few days."



Lulu completes another cool sinter. Being there is everything on "Olympos Games" (8b).



"NOT ALL 7A'S HERE ARE LIKE THIS!"

A student powers up the rock Lulu on "High Voltage" (7c+).



A party for steep sinter fans - Lulu is delighted to be "Back on funky planet" (7b+).



Hias power-climbs "High Voltage" (7c+).



"Get on top" thinks Hias on "Red Hot Chili Peppers" (7a).



GEYIKBAYIRI

TONGUE TWISTER AND FOREARM PUMPER

180 GÜN İÇİN
GİRİŞ VİZE
İLK ÇA
MULTIPLE EN
STAY OF NO M
180 DAYS, DU
ENTRY TO TURKE



"Poker Face" is the name of Lulu's first warm-up climb in the Sarkit Left sector. In keeping with the name of the route, the youngest in the team manages the 22 pretty steep metres without missing a beat. "Not all 7a's here are like this," she shouts down after the crux to Hias, who belays virtually in awe. "This is one of the tough ones." Lulu was here over New Year - student, need we say more - and has almost a photographic recall when it comes to most of the routes and their moves. "I can't believe it, at home it's minus ten degrees," shouts Hias back, putting on his chilled grin, which remains firmly planted on his face for most of the next seven days.

While the four in winter exile get used to spring temperatures, three-dimensional climbing on sinters, pillars and other limestone creations, here to the southwest of Antalya begins a perfectly normal blue-sky day. With loud, guttural shouts a goatherd keeps his flock together. The goats look very much at home on the short access terrain below the rock face. Woe betide the climber who leaves an energy bar or anything else edible unattended for too long at the foot of the rock.

"Coco, where is that banana then?" Martina asks her friend next morning. "Don't know, look for yourself!" he retorts. After all Christoph has got other things on his mind right now. The key sequence on "Geyikbayiri Games" (7b+) happens to be building up the lactate in his forearms. And the professional construction engineer wants to do it on sight without having to draw it first.

Hias has wished the same a short time later by Lulu. She had unceremoniously raised the bar pretty high on the second "warm-up" day by finishing off a 7c+. "White Spirit" is the name of this 35-m challenge. Hias, who in recent months has only been solving this kind of difficulty level at his local climbing wall in Kochel/Germany, could already tell the difference between Antalyan and Upper Bavarian limestone structures. "Just pull on the sinter till it's at shoulder level, yo, a bit further, now on the right, then cross over, now a snap and bring your feet up, more, no, more to the left, etc, etc." Lulu's commands peter out. Hias flies. A single "Sh... ame!" is all he has to say as he hangdogs on the rope. And while he is looking down at Lulu so that her photographic memory can go through the sequence again, his attention gradually drifts away from the rock face.



"Look at that goat!" he calls into the valley. Everybody turns to look. They all grin. And Martina knows that she can finally write off the banana. Munching and surprisingly adept at processing the banana skin, the straggly thief trots off behind the rest of the herd, turning briefly to bleat at everybody with an unmistakable "Baaaa!" to bid farewell in the soft morning sun.

Later, during a short break for a snack in the pleasant shade, Hias massages his forearms as he tells of his past in general – and of the greediness of animals in herds in particular. "I'm actually a fish farmer by trade. But the profession is dying out at home on Lake Ammersee. So then I thought that being a shepherd would be pretty cool."

With everybody grinning broadly the ex-shepherd adds: "Except you don't get to do much climbing, which is why I now prefer to look after people." As he said this he pulls Lulu gently by the plait towards the Sarkit Right sector. He liked the look of the oversized slab at the start of "Olympos Games" (8b) and wanted to go "try it out".

**1 WEEK
ALL-IN(CLUSIVE)!**



Not feeling sabotaged - Martina manages "Sabotaj" (7b+).



Coco plays "Geyikbayiri Games" (7b+).



Coco doesn't need warp drive for "Beam me up Scotty" (7c).



Magnesium instead of stardust - Coco claims "Beam me up Scotty" (7c).



Two south-facing sunny days later the four rock friends are looking forward to Tobi's idea of showing them the area from a different perspective. It is Sunday, and Sunday is market day in Geyik. The joint owner of the JoSiTo climbing camp drives all four about five kilometres down the main road towards Antalya, throwing them out of his 4WD to park in the shade. Nearly ten years ago three Germans – Jost, Siri and Tobias – started setting up a place for climbers at the foot of the lower rock formation. Today, JoSiTo offers sufficient room for a glorious bunch of climbing freaks from all over the map, who can stay here in tents, bungalows and small cedar huts.

Down here it is at least as colourful as all the climbing nomads back at the camp. Curious wind-blown wooden stalls form an avenue on either side of the main road, forcing car drivers to slow down to 20 kph. How inviting is the aroma of freshly browned almonds, fresh gözleme – thin Turkish pastries – and an indefinable mixture of herbal tea and shisha smoke. The boys head straight for the tea tent, while the girls – no surprises here then – go shopping. At every third stall in the market they sell these incredibly stylish cotton baggy pants, worn by generations of Turkish farming women well over 30 and decorated with floral patterns, reminiscent of Woodstock, Peace, Love & Harmony, even without the enjoyment of shisha. Not quite so harmonious ten minutes later was a market stall owner when Lulu tried on the fourth pair of these pants – on top of each other. The girls squealed with delight while the boys chewed walnuts and slurped freshly pressed orange juice – **this is Turkey all-inclusive.**

**IN THE CLIMBING CAMP
AND AT THE MARKET
FULL OF COLOUR**





Sunshine like out of a power socket – Lulu once more on "High Voltage" (7c+).



Martina fixes the first moves on "Caf Caf" (6c).



30131



Coco, still the ski guide, is delighted for another reason. "Hey Tobi," he says, turning to the resident German and then looking over his shoulder to the west. "Those summits over there look so white they must be skiable, right?"

"Absolutely," grins Tobi back. "And they're really not bad. The forest road above the camp takes you directly to Saklikent, the valley station of the Antalya ski area. Okay, it's no comparison with Gulmarg, but freeriding in the morning, a couple of touring routes in the afternoon and then a quick dip in the sea before the sundowner; there aren't many places you can do that on this planet. If you are feeling really fit, then you can even leave the car behind and do the whole thing on your mountain bike," he adds with more than a trace of pride in his voice.

On the way back to the camp Tobi explains that the summits on Saklikent reach nearly 2,600 m in the almost permanently blue sky and that he regularly takes his touring skis out for a spin up there between December and the beginning of April. "We haven't brought our skis with us," says Coco a little disappointed, "but what do you think of the sundowner idea?"

That had to wait for another day. Monday starts with many new visitors to the camp – and for our four rock friends that means a new sector. Klaas, an all-around-the-world climber from Belgium recommends "Güzel Manzara". "Nice warm-ups and some demanding 2nd-pitch crags!" he grins in the morning sun. 15 minutes later on the rock, Hias – whose English is not the most fluent – understands what Klaas means. "Nice, a 6c to warm up and then a steep 7c+ on the 2nd pitch!" was his comment. And Lulu added: "Yes, and plenty of quiet before the new arrivals!" What happens next is not really what you could call alpine because it doesn't get any further than the 2nd pitch. But with at least 50 m of air under the soles of your feet and another 4 m above the last bolt, even a climber used to 10er climbs has to invest a bit of effort and concentration to finish the last few moves. "High Voltage" is the name of the climb and because it is also new terrain for Lulu, she and her partner spend the next two hours generating enough electricity to climb this pitch with its fantastic views without falling.



"AND AT HOME THEY'VE GOT MINUS 10 DEGREES AGAIN."

TURKEY

1 WEEK ALL-INCLUSIVE!



Hias under the roof of "High Voltage" (7c+).



Martina visits "Käpt'n Kirk" (6c+).



After such effort they happily recollect the idea from yesterday and just 50 kilometres later all four really are paddling in the Mediterranean Sea – in mid-February. However, when it comes to the subject of temperatures of liquids they seem to give preference to Turkish beer and after a relaxed drive back to the camp they have a quick shower and then find themselves with the first barley ale of the evening in the company of climbers from Turkey, Norway, the Czech Republic, Switzerland, Poland and Germany in the JoSiTo lounge.

The iPod plays chilled island tunes and despite having free WLAN access there are surprisingly few people sitting around with notebooks. The faces and stories of the people around the large tables are simply too interesting. "That's great that communication here is still at an analogue level," says Martina, the teacher. Hias takes a sip of beer, grins and says: "And at home they've got minus ten degrees again."