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Spicy Sails!

Ex-pat fisho SEAN MORGAN reveals a sailfish fishery as hot as chili laksa which is easy to access and surprisingly affordable.

THE balloon made a nervous twitch; then another. The ominous black sail casually surfaced and circled the panicked baitfish. The ratchet sang and all hell broke loose. Our first sailfish of the day tore 30m of line from the reel before beginning an extravagant aerial dance that lasted for more than 20 minutes.

Towards the end of the fight the magnificent fish made a last ditch effort by charging straight at the boat, prompting some pretty nervous laughter from the crew. After circling the boat one final time, the trace was wrapped by our experienced guide Mike Tan of Bluesails Sportfishing, the hook deftly removed and the fish revived boat-side prior to release. The same script was to be repeated: seven more times that day before we headed back to the ramp, going six captures for eight hookups.

Welcome to Kuala Bempin, an unassuming fishing town on the east coast of Malaysia, and what is arguably