



BEAU MCCLELLAN HAS MORE ARROWS TO HIS QUIVER THAN MOST, ESPECIALLY FOR THE ALGARVE. HIS SMILING EYES AND CURLY LOCKS CAN BE SEEN IN THE MOST DIVERSE OF LOCATIONS, UNDERTAKING THE WACKIEST AND MOST DARING OF ENTERPRISES, ALWAYS WITH UNRELENTING SUCCESS. WE TAKE A LOOK INTO THE MIND OF THE MAN WITH THE MIDAS TOUCH.

THE MAN FOR ALL SEASONS

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"It's Ridiculous Being Me!" This particular phrase, from hundreds of other weighty exclamations, really sums up an evening I was fortunate to spend with one of the region's most charismatic personalities. It all begins with a rendezvous at the nerve centre of Beau McClellan's growing empire: a duo of ochre-coloured buildings in the countryside between Loulé and Boliqueime. Home to his blacksmith and lighting design workshops, this is the place where many of Beau's "crazy ideas", his words not mine, come rushing into his head and progress from paper to reality. Beau bolts up to the office to get his laptop, determined to show me his latest projects, but we've another agenda for this stifling summer evening, and one that seems equally close to his heart: food.

Excitedly leafing through the menu of one of Quinta do Lago's best known Italian restaurants, Beau bubbles with

comments on wide-ranging topics. In moments we've covered wine, art, the fleetingness of time, extreme sports, cars and marriage. Talking fifteen to the dozen seems second nature to Beau, with intelligent thoughts flowing from his lips as soon as they enter his head. Supping on our complementary champagne, the conversation continues. "Being an artist is a passport to any social level. That's one of the best things about my life: the variety of people I come into contact with...as my father would say 'if you give anyone a little time, they've all got something to teach you.'" In search for the perfect form and medium, Beau's restless creative spirit took different shapes: From music, film and theatre, to sculpture and design. Openness, and the willingness to try anything once, seem the cornerstones of Beau's philosophy in life, leading the way to a kaleidoscope of experiences and enterprises.



His production of the spectacle Fulgor at Pinheiros Altos is a pinnacle in the region's cultural circuit, yet to be beaten. Each project is grasped with the same gusto, with Beau often juggling more than one totally unrelated project at once. "If you want to get something done, ask someone who's busy!" he quips, quoting another of his father's favourite sayings to illustrate the point. Busy is certainly one way of putting it and to maintain his focus Beau has the perfect remedy, or maybe two: "Kite surfing is my release...together with my beautiful wife!" Beau's history with extreme sports goes right back to his youth in Scotland, where he and his brother David – "a bad influence", Beau jokes, whose role as chief sparing partner continues following his arrival in the Algarve – practiced competition skiing and ice climbing, replacing them eventually with paragliding. Following a near-fatal accident, freefalling 40 metres onto a rocky slope after his canopy folded in on itself, a broken Beau faithfully promised to his family and friends never to paraglide again. Two years' recuperation nailed the reality of his predicament well and truly home and for a while he was at a loss as to how to find the release he needed. The solution came with a chance sighting in Tarifa, Spain. Returning from a trip to Morocco six years ago, Beau stopped in the Spanish coastal town to get a closer look at what he



thought were paragliders at play. To his amazement the "paragliders" were leaping over the waves on surfboards; Beau had discovered kite boarding. Taking a typical spur-of-the-moment decision, Beau arranged some lessons for him and his brother – ordering him down from Scotland – kicking off what was set to become a lasting passion in his life. "When I saw the kite boarders I thought, 'I've got to do this!' If the wind is up, you'll find me surfing at the Ilha de Faro or Praia de Falesia." Our main course comes and goes while Beau energetically rattles off the ins and outs of his favourite pastime. "It's a real buzz, there's nothing to beat it! The kite surfing community contains people from all walks of life, a small group of people of any nationality and any profession, finding a release from powerful jobs. When you're out surfing, you're part of a very strong family, we watch out for each other. We have to be strict, because if any safety issues were ignored, especially on the beach, then the consequences would mean the end of our sport." Fondly, Beau talks of the man who taught him all he knows in the sport, Pedro Serra,

now a good friend and one of Portugal's top kite surfing instructors. "He's amazing! His patience in teaching and knowledge of the sport know no bounds." Beau's dedication to his sport – he and his brother David have even become "team riders" for Pedro Serra, promoting his latest equipment – provides the ideal anchor from which to jettison into his many other work projects. The latest is a recently signed design partnership with German lighting company Brumberg. Launching a new range of LED-based products bearing Beau's name is the hard-earned end result of five years delving into the world of lighting solutions, making outstanding one-off designs along the way. "Working with a multinational has plenty of benefits: they appreciate my creative input; I get to travel the world for inspiration; and I have access to the very latest in technology, with a team of technicians and engineers at my disposal." Beau's work, backed by his incredible team at Ferro Design, has produced unique

pieces, stunning chandeliers gracing beautiful homes in Quinta do Lago and beyond. The same team is by his side when he dabbles in private functions, which, although he doesn't really have the time to do, he can't resist taking on, from time to time. "You have to pull the carpet from under their feet...there has to be an element of surprise," Beau explains, referring to recent one-off parties he has organised, where "expect the unexpected" is a recurring motto, especially given his carte blanche policy when accepting any commission. As our coffees arrive and we think about leaving the air-conditioned calm of the restaurant, Beau reflects on his good fortune in finding Lucia, his recent bride. Talk of romantic proposals in snow-bound highlands and unforgettable honeymoons is followed by words of undying praise for his partner-for-life: "She realises when I've taken on too much. She watches as all these crazy ideas spark off in my mind, and then she takes control, bringing me back down to earth."

