

TANZANIA · BEACHES · ISLANDS · HISTORY · CULTURE · DIVING

 Zanzibar

Zanzibar pairs Stone Town's Swahili, Arab and Indian history with white-sand beaches and a bath-warm Indian Ocean, often as the finale to a Tanzanian safari. Flights from London connect in the Gulf or East Africa, so allow a full travel day. June to October is dry and breezy, January–February hotter but good; avoid the April–May long rains.

 **The UK Foreign Office (FCDO) advises against all but essential travel to parts of Tanzania.**
Check whether Zanzibar is affected in the latest FCDO travel advice.

 COUNTRY Tanzania	 BEST TIME Jun–Oct, Jan–Feb	 FLIGHT FROM LONDON 14h 30m via Doha ~£650–£1,200 return	 DAILY BUDGET £45–£280 ££ Moderate
 WARMEST MONTH January (33°C)	 SEA TEMPERATURE 25–29°C coolest–warmest	 TIME ZONE Dar es Salaam +2h vs UK now	 CURRENCY Tanzanian shilling £1 ≈ TZS 3,502

Most visitors spend two or three nights in Stone Town, then move to a beach on the north or east coast for the rest of the week. Nungwi and Kendwa in the north shelve more steeply, so the sea stays within reach and you can swim at any time of day. The east coast, from Matemwe down to Paje and Jambiani, has wide reef-sheltered lagoons where the tide runs out for hundreds of metres, which suits kitesurfers and walkers more than swimmers. Many add Zanzibar after a safari in the Serengeti or Nyerere National Park; during the April–May long rains some beach hotels close.

Highlights

1

HISTORY

Stone Town

A UNESCO-listed maze of coral-stone houses, carved wooden doors and mosques, best explored on foot with a local guide. See the slave market memorial at the Anglican cathedral, then eat grilled seafood at the Forodhani Gardens night market.

2

WILDLIFE

Jozani Chwaka Bay National Park

The island's only national park protects groundwater forest and mangroves, and is the best place to see the endemic Zanzibar red colobus monkey at close range. Morning visits are cooler, and the mangrove boardwalk is worth the extra loop.

3

WILDLIFE

Mnemba Atoll

A protected reef off the north-east coast with clear water, turtles and frequent dolphin sightings. Boats from Matemwe and Nungwi run easy snorkelling trips; the island itself is private, so you stay in the water.

4

BEACH

Nungwi and Kendwa beaches

Powdery sand at the island's northern tip with deeper water close to shore, so swimming is not ruled by the tides. Nungwi still has dhow builders working on the beach, and sunset dhow cruises leave most evenings.

5

FOOD

Spice farm tour

Zanzibar was once the world's leading clove producer, and half-day tours of farms near Kizimbani let you taste fresh nutmeg, cinnamon, vanilla and lemongrass. Most tours end with a simple lunch, often pilau rice cooked with the same spices.

Where to stay

WHERE TO STAY

Stone Town

Characterful boutique hotels in old merchant houses; suits history lovers for two or three nights rather than a beach week.

WHERE TO STAY

Nungwi and Kendwa

The busiest beach area, with all-inclusives, bars and sunset dhow trips; suits couples and friends who want to swim at any state of the tide.

WHERE TO STAY

Paje

Laid-back east-coast village with backpacker lodges, boutique hotels and kitesurf schools; good for active travellers, though swimming depends on the tide.

WHERE TO STAY

Matemwe

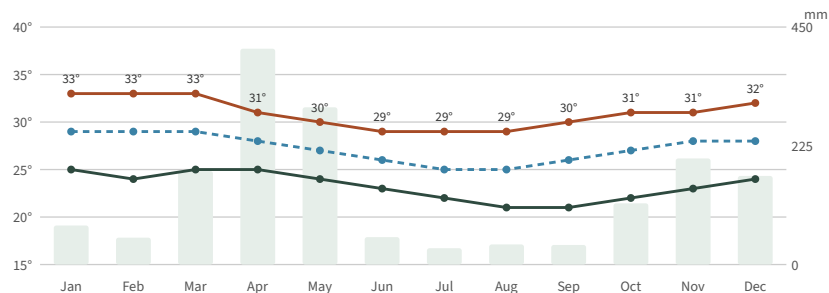
A quiet stretch of the north-east coast with small upmarket lodges and the closest boat access to Mnemba; suits honeymooners and keen snorkellers.

When to go to Zanzibar

Best time: **Jun–Oct, Jan–Feb.**

**Average climate in Zanzibar Town**

— High °C
 — Low °C
 — Sea °C
 ■ Rain (mm)

**How much does Zanzibar cost?**

SHOESTRING

£45

per person / day
≈ TZS 157,608

MID-RANGE

£110

per person / day
≈ TZS 385,263

COMFORTABLE

£280

per person / day
≈ TZS 980,670

Per person per day excluding flights. Return flights from London typically cost £650 off-peak and £1,200 in school holidays.

Visas & entry for Zanzibar

Shown for a British passport.

[Check the entry requirements](#)

You must have a tourist or business visa to enter Tanzania.

If you are planning to work or volunteer, you will also need a work permit. Information on how to apply is available from the Tanzanian Prime Minister’s Office.

From the UK government's FCDO entry requirements for British passport holders — read the full page for passport validity, permits and exceptions.

Health & vaccinations

 See a travel health nurse, GP or travel clinic **6–8 weeks before you go**. Make sure routine UK vaccinations (such as MMR and diphtheria-tetanus-polio) are up to date.

RECOMMENDED FOR MOST TRAVELLERS

- Hepatitis A
- Tetanus
- Typhoid

SOMETIMES ADVISED — DEPENDS ON YOUR TRIP, ACTIVITIES AND HEALTH

- Chikungunya
- Dengue
- Hepatitis B
- Measles
- Meningococcal disease
- Polio
- Rabies
- Tuberculosis
- Yellow fever

YELLOW FEVER CERTIFICATE

No yellow fever certificate is required to enter.

MALARIA

High risk of malaria

- There is a high risk of malaria in all areas of Tanzania below 1,800m (including Zanzibar): antimalarial tablets recommended.

Source: TravelHealthPro (National Travel Health Network and Centre), checked 21 October 2026. This is a summary, not medical advice.

Public holidays in Tanzania

The next 12 months. Banks, offices and some sights may close, and transport and hotels get busy around these dates.

Wed 9 Dec 2026	Independence and Republic Day
Fri 25 Dec 2026	Christmas Day
Sat 26 Dec 2026	Boxing Day
Fri 1 Jan 2027	New Year's Day
Tue 12 Jan 2027	Zanzibar Revolution Day
Wed 10 Mar 2027	Eid al-Fitr (date may shift)
Thu 11 Mar 2027	Eid al-Fitr (date may shift)
Fri 26 Mar 2027	Good Friday

Mon 29 Mar 2027	Easter Monday
Wed 7 Apr 2027	The Sheikh Abeid Amani Karume Day
Mon 26 Apr 2027	Union Celebrations
Sat 1 May 2027	International Workers' Day
Mon 17 May 2027	Eid al-Adha (date may shift)
Wed 7 Jul 2027	International Trade Fair
Sun 8 Aug 2027	Peasants' Day
Sun 15 Aug 2027	Prophet's Birthday (date may shift)
Thu 14 Oct 2027	The Mwalimu Nyerere Day and Climax of the Uhuru Torch Race

National holidays only. Dates based on lunar calendars can move by a day or two depending on official announcements.

Know before you go

Zanzibar is largely Muslim: cover shoulders and knees away from the beach, especially in Stone Town and villages, and expect quieter days and shorter restaurant hours during Ramadan.

On the east coast, check a tide table before booking a hotel or planning swims: at low tide the sea can retreat hundreds of metres across the reef flat.

Plugs, money, phrases, emergency numbers and more: see our Tanzania guide.

Visa, health and safety rules change. Before you book or travel, check the FCDO travel advice (gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice) and TravelHealthPro (travelhealthpro.org.uk). Costs are estimates. © 2026 Pick My Trip.