

# TD TRAVEL



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Zanzibar Association  
of Tourism Investors

**ZANZIBAR ASSOCIATION  
OF TOURISM INVESTORS**  
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**ISSUE 1**



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## ZATI Board Members

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*Chairman of ZATI*



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*Vice Chairperson*



**Jabir Mahmood**  
*Board Member*



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**Helen Peeks**  
*Board Member*



# Foreword

## MR. RAHIM BHALOO

Chairman of Zanzibar Association of Tourism Investors (ZATI)



It is my great pleasure and honor, as the Chairman of Zanzibar Association of Tourism Investors, to welcome you to this very first edition of Travel Zanzibar, launched in commemoration of ZATI's 20th anniversary and in connection with the Z-Summit, Zanzibar Tourism, and Opportunities. With this Magazine, ZATI wishes to share a glimpse of the richness of Destination Zanzibar and welcome you to the Islands of Spices, a vibrant and diverse cultural heritage, and outstanding white sandy beaches and turquoise waters.

Zanzibar's history and culture are incredibly vibrant and diverse and offer a lot for visitors to explore and learn from. Due to the islands being a long-term meeting point for people from various places and backgrounds, Zanzibar's culture is today somewhat of a hybrid, shaped and infused by African, Arab, Persian, and Indian influences and practices. There is a sense of community here that is not found in many other places, which contributes greatly to the whole atmosphere of the islands.

Zanzibar Association of Tourism Investors was founded in 2003 by tourism stakeholders who saw the need for a united voice and platform for the tourism private sector. Our members today represent all areas of the tourism sector and its supporting industries, such as hotels, restaurants, property developers, tour operators, suppliers, law firms, and ICT companies.

Just as the vibrance of Zanzibar's society in many ways derives from the islands being a meeting point for people from many backgrounds, ZATI strives to be a uniting point and platform for tourism investors from various sectors and backgrounds so that we together can contribute to a flourishing development of the islands and the tourism. We strongly believe in the importance of uniting the whole industry with its many connecting sectors so that we, together, can work to improve the entire tourism value chain and contribute to the richness of the islands.

We aim to work for a Sustainable, Responsible, and Professional Tourism Industry in Zanzibar. To accomplish this while at the same time promoting the interests of our members, it is vital that we work closely together with the Government. We wish to thank His Excellency, The President of Zanzibar, the Honorable Minister of Tourism and Heritage, and the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar for the support given us over the 20 years ZATI has existed. We look forward to many more years of collaboration and good relations.

We also wish to thank our Z-Summit collaboration partners, KILIFAIR Promotion, our main sponsor Exim Bank Tanzania our fellow associations ZATO, ZATOGA, HAZ, and ZNCC as well as Zanzibar Commission for Tourism, Tanzania Tourist Board and the African Tourism Board.

Together, let's continue to promote our country and cooperate in providing quality services and unforgettable, genuine experiences to both visitors and investors. Let us also continue to cooperate in strengthening the existing unity, community, and solidarity within Zanzibar, Mainland Tanzania, and the East African region. Together we set the vision and direction for tourism development in our countries and create prosperity.

On behalf of the Board and members of Zanzibar Association of Tourism Investors, I wish to welcome you all to Zanzibar, come to relax, explore, invest, and enjoy some of the world's most genuine hospitality.

Yours Sincerely,

*Rahim Bhaloo*

**Rahim Bhaloo**  
ZATI Chairman



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## About ZATI

### ZATI'S MISSION AND VISION

ZATI is a membership-based organization, established in 2003 to represent the interests of all tourism investors in Zanzibar. As the united voice of the Tourism Private Sector, functioning as a bridge between the Government and the private sector stakeholders, ZATI highlights and drives the industry's important issues and works for a more sustainable, responsible, and professional tourism. Our main aim is to provide a platform for negotiation and support for our members in resolving issues and raising concerns.

ZATI takes part in the review of various laws and policies and projects affecting the tourism industry in order to ensure that policies and business conditions are designed to ease the operation of tourism-related businesses and investments. The purpose is to create better conditions for ZATI's members and make decision-makers fully aware of the great potential in Zanzibar's tourism industry as well as its vital role as an engine of growth and employment.

### ZATI'S MANDATE

ZATI is mandated to work with and advocate for improvements in six areas that are vital to the tourism industry.

- Safety & Security
- Policies & Taxation
- Infrastructure & Utilities
- Sustainable & Responsible Tourism
- Skills Development
- Destination Marketing

### MEMBERS

Our members represent all areas of the tourism sector and its supporting industries such as accommodation, food and beverage providers, tour operators, suppliers, ICT companies, law firms and audit firms. Together we are the united voice of the tourism private sector in Zanzibar!



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of Tourism Investors

# Chumbe Island

## SHOWING THE WAY IN ZANZIBAR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

By Diana Körner



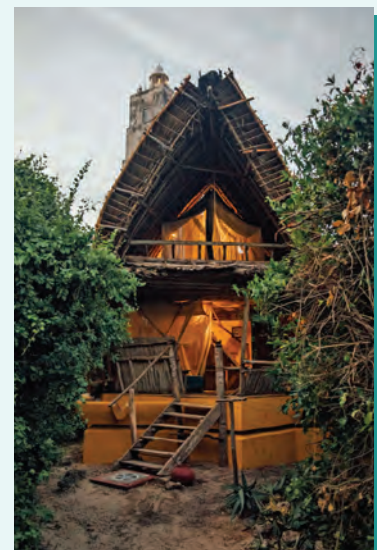
### INVESTING IN A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE FOR TOURISM IN ZANZIBAR

Tourism investments in Zanzibar are booming, and there is an excitement in the industry about the opportunities the Blue Economy will be bringing in terms of creating more jobs in marine tourism and diversifying the current offer. One aspect at the core of ZATI's mission is to promote a sustainable and responsible tourism development in Zanzibar, with many ZATI members having set industry examples on how to pursue a tourism model that is beneficial both to local communities and local economy, as well as to the environment. So, what are some of the key sustainability principles for securing a future for tourism in Zanzibar that benefits planet and people?

Diana Körner, sustainable tourism consultant, from Chumbe Island Coral Park, shares some insights into some recent sustainability trends.

#### (CLIMATE) RESILIENCE

The pandemic has highlighted the vulnerability of the tourism industry and especially the over dependency of island destinations on tourism. As we build back better, we as an industry need to stay focused on our joint vision for a sustainable future in the context of an ever changing, ever evolving travel industry, there digitalization is shaping new trends and consumer preferences, and where crises will not only reoccur, but also more frequently. By strengthening our local markets and making our products more accessible for travelers from the African continent, we can ensure a diversification of source markets. One aspect we can focus on is designing and building tourism experiences that are resilient to outside forces. On Chumbe Island, the unique eco architecture of its bungalows has enabled a consistent zero impact overnight experience for the past 30 years. Rainwater harvesting, solar power, greywater filtration and composting toilets not only eliminate any negative impacts on the island, but also guarantee an authentic overnight experience, fully immersed in the surrounding tropical nature. As an island destination, Zanzibar has all the potential to fully embark on more low impact, renewable holiday experiences of this kind.





## REGENERATIVE TOURISM

Minimizing tourism's negative impacts on the environment is crucial, but with rapid biodiversity loss and the threat of climate change, regeneration is key. Latest consumer research by Booking.com showed that 59% of travelers are eager to leave the places they visit better than when they arrived.<sup>1</sup> Meaning tourism businesses that actively restore the environments they operate in, will be more actively sought out by tourists. Chumbe Island has been managing a 'no-take' zone for almost 30 years with direct positive impacts for local fishing communities (as the private marine park acts as a nursery for their fishing grounds) and the ecosystems it manages: Chumbe Island's Coral Reef Sanctuary hosts more than 500 species of reef fish and 59 hard coral genera and its Closed Forest Reserve is home to 178+ plant species, many of which are endemic, together forming a strong, healthy ecosystem.



## QUALITY OVER QUANTITY

The times of measuring a destination's success on the number of visitor arrivals have passed. Island destinations like Palau have long re-strategized and have decided to target the right kind of travelers over just any kind of visitor. With their award-winning Palau Pledge, the island state even involves visitors from their arrival at immigration and sensitizes them about rightful behavior towards the natural and cultural assets of its islands.<sup>2</sup> The phenomenon of over tourism has been making headlines around the world and to date 64% of travelers say they want to avoid popular tourist destinations and attractions.<sup>3</sup>

Chumbe Island has introduced a carrying capacity early on, which allows only 18 visitors at one given time on the island, to limit negative impacts on the island environment, but also to ensure for a more personalized visitor experience, involving guided tours with trained rangers.

## LOCAL EXPERIENCES

Latest research shows that 66% travelers are on the look for cultural experiences that bring value back to local communities and that are authentic and representative of the local culture. Tourism establishments have an enormous potential to positively influence the sustainability of a whole destination and creating direct positive benefits for local economy and culture, simply by working on their value chain and reviewing the experiences they offer to their guests. With large percentages of imported products prevailing in hospitality in Zanzibar, it begins by re-looking at one's own supply chain and how to make it more green and more sustainable, focusing on main suppliers. On Chumbe Island the emphasis has always been on sourcing as many products as possible locally, starting from construction material for the bungalows, all the way to the guest amenities in the bungalows and food served on the island. With this approach Chumbe Island has a wide network of suppliers and works closely with them and regularly reviews its offer. This applies particularly for aspects such as seafood on its menu, for which Chumbe Island has developed its own Sustainable Seafood Guide which is available for all tourism stakeholders in Zanzibar.<sup>4</sup>

Sustainability of a destination touches on all aspects of its tourism products and cannot be seen as a 'nice to have' or something apart but should be an integral part of every aspect of tourism operations. By prioritizing sustainability, we ensure not only an experience of higher quality for our guests, but also one that is more reflective and respectful of the Zanzibar culture and environment. Ultimately sustainable tourism means sustaining the destination long term into the future.



<sup>1</sup> Booking.com Sustainable Travel Report 2022

<sup>2</sup> <https://palaupledge.com/>

<sup>3</sup> Booking.com Sustainable Travel Report 2022

<sup>4</sup> CHICOP Sustainable Seafood Guide: <https://chumbeisland.com/news/newsdetails/article/greendestination/>



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# Zanzibar Investment Climate

## BOOMING NOW THAN EVER

By Farida Nassor

Zanzibar has shockingly stabilized her economy and steadfastly created a friendly environment for the increment of inflow of investments in its exotic setting of the islands. Zanzibar expresses remarkable resilience in combating the impact of the COVID 19 Pandemic in comparison to many countries in the world today.

Globally, the investment climate was heavily shaken by the unprecedented global pandemic of COVID 19, as it ravaged the lives of millions of people and economies across the globe. The world experienced a dramatic fall of 35% in the global inflow of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), from 1.5 trillion in 2019 to 1 trillion in 2020 as reported in World Investment Report 2021 by United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTD).

The crisis has had a significant negative impact on the most productive types of investment, notably new industrial and infrastructure projects, particularly in the developing countries where the number of newly announced Greenfield projects fell by 42%. FDI flows to Africa fell by 16% to \$40 billion – a level which was last seen 15 years ago. Greenfield project announcements, the key to industrialization prospects in the region, dropped by 62% and the commodity-exporting economies were affected the worst.

This global economic recession has wreaked havoc on Zanzibar's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) which fell from 7.0 in 2019 to 1.3 in 2020. The Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar's intentional efforts has quickly yielded greater fruit in the diversification of investment options, with a clear focus on enhancing the sustainable use of maritime resources (The Blue Economy).

Zanzibar witnessed an influx of high-end yet high-yield investment in the small islands, expanding opportunities and incentives to invest productively, create jobs, and thereby contribute to growth and poverty reduction. This is an immediate response to the impact of the pandemic through investment expansion for sustainable recovery and a resilient future.

Over 15, evidently chartered small islands received investors between January 17, 2021, to August 17, 2022, Zanzibar Investment Promotion Authority (ZIPA) recorded 98 approved investment projects in the year 2021, covering the areas of Agriculture, forestry and fishing, manufacturing, electricity and gas, waste management, accommodation, real estate development, education and healthcare services.

This exponential growth is the result of strategic marketing initiatives put in place and the amendment of investment laws in shaping a better investment climate in Zanzibar. The Third and Sixth Schedules of the Zanzibar Investment Promotion and Protection Authority Act, No. 14 of 2018 were amended by during the current tenure of Hon. Mudrik Ramadhan Soraga, Minister of State, President's Office Labour, Economic Affairs and Investment, to not only weather the impact and volatile environment brought forward by COVID 19 but also to improve the business environment and competitive advantage of Zanzibar.





The amendments named the island of Pemba as the strategic investment area where the approved investor may be granted the status of being a strategic investor after he has invested assets equivalent to ten million dollars in the below-mentioned areas.

- Tourism (High-end eco-tourism & Hotels on small islands)
- Fisheries (Aquaculture, Cold storage facilities, or deep sea fishing)
- Manufacturing (Processing factories in agricultural, Live-stock, fisheries, and natural resources products; or
- Garments, pharmaceutical, electronics, assembling, and packaging factories)
- Real Estate Development (Shopping malls, Commercial and residential properties, Convention and Exhibition Centers (MICE) or Specialty Hospital for Tourism).

More incentives are seen to the developers and buyers of real estate development in these new amendments. The following incentives may be offered to a real estate developer who has been granted the designation of Special Strategic Investor.

- Hundred percent exemption on withholding tax on payment of interest;
- Hundred percent exemption on stamp duty in the contract;
- Hundred percent exemption on accelerated depreciation within five years;
- Hundred percent exemption on exemption on capital gain on the purchased property;
- Hundred percent exemption on Value Added Tax for construction services during the project construction;
- Forty-nine years of the land lease agreement;
- Forty-nine years of the marina lease agreement;
- Fifty percent exemption of income tax;
- Allowance of conducting business activities and services in the business cities in accordance with provisions of the Act; and
- Hundred percent exemption on VAT on selling or renting of real estate.

More importantly is extended to the Real Estate Buyers who purchase property worth at least US\$ 100,000 in the designated Special Strategic Investment may be eligible for the following benefit, incentives, and allowance.

- Resident Permit for Real Estate Buyer and his husband/wife/spouse and four children who are under twenty years;
- Hundred percent exemption on stamp duty in Real Estate Buyer's contract;
- Hundred percent exemption on capital gain on purchased properties;
- Hundred percent foreign ownership is allowed;
- Hundred percent exemption from worldwide income for foreigners; and
- Hundred percent allowance for free repatriation of profit after tax.

These lucrative incentives, a stable economy, and a strategic location that gives access to more than 300 million markets unequalled Zanzibar's comparative advantage over many other places in the world. Investing in Zanzibar now has proven to be more rewarding for those who wish to expand and receive more value in their investments. Excellent investors' facilitation garnered this Tropical Island a positive reputation and accolades. The Global Banking and Finance Awards named the Zanzibar main government institution responsible for investment promotion, facilitation, and aftercare services the winner of the Best Investment Promotion Authority-East Africa 2021 Award.

"We feel particularly honored and pleased that ZIPA has been recognized as the Best Investment Authority in East Africa for 2021, which affirms our commitment to delivering world-class service and continuing to make ZIPA the Centre of Excellence", said Shariff A. Shariff, Executive Director, Zanzibar Investment Promotion Authority (ZIPA).

The Zanzibar Investment Promotion Authority (ZIPA) runs as a One-stop Center, with the clear objective of facilitating the speedy acquisition of various services that are required by approved investors in order to start or operate a business here in Zanzibar. Zanzibar has far simplest procedures of acquiring investment certificate to operate a business, the process involve two main stages submission of investment intention form and application form.

### STAGE 1: INVESTMENT INTENTION FORM

Investors shall submit a concept note for the proposed project to be implemented in Zanzibar using the Investment Intention Form, which is available for free at ZIPA offices or online at [www.zipa.go.tz](http://www.zipa.go.tz). Once the concept note is accepted, the investor will be notified and provided with an Application Form for a non-refundable fee of US\$ 200, to be paid at Peoples' Bank of Zanzibar at Account number 0400424000 (US\$) or its equivalent in Tanzanian Shillings at Account number 0404140000 (TZS); or otherwise advised. The processing time is three working days.

### STAGE 2: SUBMISSION OF THE APPLICATION FORM

A duly filled application form should be submitted to ZIPA, accompanied with copies of the following documents.

- Ten (10) copies of the Business Plan/feasibility study
- Proof of availability of funds for investment including bank statements for the last six months
- Passport copies, passport size photographs, CV, and police clearance certificates from country of residence and country of origin of all Directors and share holders
- Certificate of Incorporation

Zanzibar welcomes all open-minded individuals to explore the investment opportunities on it lush archipelago respectively. It is certain that the islands are very much prepared to make sure it does her best to lure high class investors to uplift the lives of her people.

# Destination Zanzibar

## BLISS IN HEAVEN

From slow, humble and modest beginning but seriously opening up for tourism in the 1990's, Zanzibar has now established herself as a paradise which had always the potential to grow into a sought after destination by visitors from across the globe. She can now stand tall and proud as a destination in her own name and status and is indeed a bliss in heaven.

Historically Zanzibar has not been stranger to visitors, having welcomed sea voyagers from Portugal, Oman, Iran, The Vikings from Denmark, Yemen, Malaysia, China all of them following the ivory, silk, slaves and spice route and necessarily making a stoppage to load Zanzibar water - the cleanest along this the coastal strip from South Africa up to India and Indonesia.

But also those sea-fearers left behind their traditions, culinary, attire, architecture, languages thus shaping Zanzibar as it looks now with some leaving their religion which has been deeply entrenched into the society in the name of Islamic culture. And no wonder the Swahili language is adorned with 55 percent of Arabic words including Assalam Alaykum that a visitor will hear very often in the streets, though Jambo is also very common greeting in Zanzibar and always with an open heart and a big smile.

Until late 1980's Zanzibar had just two hotels worth of tourists' stay namely Zanzibar Hotel and former colonial English Club changing name after 1964 Revolution into The Africa House Hotel and the only flight in and out of Zanzibar Airport was the East African Airways doing only one weekly international flight to London, but that flight ending at Dar es Salaam Airport and Nairobi, Kenya and a tourist had to make connection.

Back then Zanzibar had not discovered or realized, so to speak, the beauty and attraction it had, the nature and beaches that were so lonely for want of visitors, but also the history and heritage lying dormant but in abundance, all waiting to be enjoyed by all who would have come to choose Zanzibar to spend their holidays.

Years down the line, things have changed for the best. Zanzibar has taken all the qualities into her and turning them into now a multi-million dollars tourism industry and growing. The whole world now descends upon Zanzibar. From the traditional British tourists back in the days, now all world nationalities choose to come here when a fully international airport can handle the like of Ethiopian Airline, Qatar Air, Air France, Omani Air. Coming to Zanzibar can also be through Nyerere International Airport in Dar es salaam and Kenyatta International Airport in Nairobi.

Furthermore as regarding to accommodation which is the principle issue in the tourism sector, Zanzibar has hugely improved with time. Destination Zanzibar can now boast several 5 Star hotels in different ranges such as boutique, resorts and others owned by some world re-known brands catering for high end budget. But certainly the middle and low end tourists can also be serviced with satisfaction as more travelers choose Zanzibar as destination of choice.

It is now certain while a visitor is in Zanzibar there is wide selection of programs and activities for him or her to enjoy. There is a range of tour and which include the exceptionally a must-do Old Town City tour- an iconic UNESCO declared preserved city where standing proudly are the The Old Portuguese Fort, The House of Wonders, The Sultanate Palace, The Tip Tip House, The Old Customs House, The Old Dispensary, Freddy Mercury House - all found along the main arcade along the sea front, almost.



Photo Credits: Bilkis-Narid Ally



The city is proud of her rich architecture and its big curved doors numbering about 800 according to 2015 count, and it is hosting about 50 mosques many of them with towering minarates for an area of about 80 hectares. As Zanzibar has always been a tolerant society that is why several prayer houses for the Bohora, Ismaili and Ithnaasheri, who by far the most affluent, have special place in the Stone Town. So too are the Catholic Cathedral at Shangani and Mkunazini Anglican Church which still showcase slave dungeons and the actual place where slaves were auctioned before the abolition. It is always a joy to walk and meander in the narrow streets of Zanzibar Stone Town where it is fun to get lost and also to have a cup of coffee at local outdoor sellers on the baraza, but there are increasing upper class restaurant serving mouth watering meals including local spicy and hot cuisines. The open food market at Forodhani Gardens is where you find fresh seafood but also you might try the Zanzibar Pizza and Zanzibar Shawarma.

At Forodhani Gardens there is now a new edition of a sport for young people known as Kachumbe- sort of free diving from a sea wall stretching at the length of the sea front but the most vintage diving spot is at the front of the Sultan Palace. Kachumbe which has now gone viral, is also catching up with some tourists. The Stone Town tour cannot be complete without going to the main market at Darajani where it easy to by a number of packed spices to take home. Without forgetting to visit the bazaars for artworks and carvings. Instant henna paintings is available for the ladies in many a place, but also massage parlours.

Destination Zanzibar offers variety of packages including the Prison Island, Spice Tours, Dolphin tour, Safari Blue and without going to Jozani Forest to say hello to the Red Colobus Monkey - a tour to Zanzibar is not complete.

With Destination Zanzibar come also with beautiful beaches at Nungwi which is most popular spot lying North of Unguja, while in the South the choice is wider at Jambiani Paje and Bwejuu where one could lazy out for days. Pemba Island, the sister to the main Unguja Island offers the best for water sport and game fishing as it proudly has the Pemba Channel, second to Sham el Sheikh in Egypt. But equally around both islands there are beautiful scuba diving, goggling spots managed by highly qualified instructors recognized by global association PADI.

But the crown jewel to Zanzibar is the Misali Island in Pemba so richly endowed with large areas of flora and fauna, vast coral reef and home to 250 fish species and it coral garden constitutes. Its coral garden constitutes 80 percent of all coral in Tanzania and East Africa as a whole. Just imagine what would be the pleasure of diving at Misali island. Zanzibar is well organized for conference tourism and facilities are widely available and more facilities are in pipeline. However, the most valuable asset Destination Zanzibar has her culture and her people. Always, happy, open, understanding and very good at intermingling and making friends. That is why everyone who comes to Zanzibar feels at home and most would come back to this heavenly destination.



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# Pemba Island

## BEST FOR BEACHES, NATURE AND CULTURE

By Ali Sultan

To visit the Island of Pemba is like a fairy tale – you will never finish to narrate the story; and a visitor will never regret to visit Pemba Island, lying in the India Ocean 56 kilometers off the coast of East Africa. From birds watching, to scuba diving in the dizzying blue water or attending traditional bullfighting inherited from Portuguese some centuries ago. The interest and the influence of Pemba's tourism attractions reaches beyond its own borders – another unfolding story to be narrated.

Pemba is commonly known as Jazirat al Khudra meaning Green Island, a name given by Arab explorers and it remains environmental healthy, lush clove trees and coconut trees standing alongside each other for centuries since the tropical plants were introduced there 1832. The 'Green Island' has an undulating landscape covered by dense forests of which the Ngezi Forest in the largest remaining in Pemba.

Pemba has rich biodiversity but the Island is also said to merit World Heritage status for its exceptional beauty as well as significant habitats which pegs the peculiarity of the island. Pemba's long history has also created a unique Island's culture where the evolution of the Swahili civilization with rich cultural and archeological traces until this day.

To add value and maintain status quo of Pemba's marine ecosystem, the government of Zanzibar has established the Pemba Channel, one of the world's richest and most diverse coastal and marine ecosystems in terms of natural resources and Pemba has no rival on this aspect. The new Pemba Channel Marine Conservation Area (PECCA) is a national asset that requires special attention as it contributes to the livelihood of Zanzibar, coastal communities, and hugely to the economy of Zanzibar. PECCA area lies from the tip of the northern part of Pemba Island deep to the west coast of Pemba comprising from mangrove to deep reef which remains in a state of healthy richness full of ecological functionalities and farming in strong interlinked system. The ecological part along the heavily indented coastline feeds the channel between Mainland and Pemba with nutrients and replenishes stocks of marine organism.

In a nutshell, PECCA covers the marine and coastal habitats of the west side of Pemba Island, extending from the Island's Northern section in Ras Kigomasha to its Southern tip in Panza Island. It covers a total area of 1000 square km of which more than half are marine habitat.

PECCA includes the mangroves on the shoreline, sea grass beds, coral reefs, and deeper waters, as well as living marine organism that they support. The coastal settlements and their people are an integral part of PECCA. The checklist of Pemba islands is long – from where to visit, diving and birds watching, plus visiting archeological sites like Mkumbuu and Mkamandume - all holding history, culture, and explorations as it is widely believed that Portuguese explorer, Vasco Da Gama had landed in Pemba.

Coordinator of the Ministry of Tourism and Heritage, Mr. Khamis Ali Juma says Pemba's tourism has two main categories – nature and culture. On nature, he says tourists or visitors prefer to visit all top sites in Pemba like Misali Island, Ngezi Forest, Vumawimbi beach, Ras Mkumbuu and Kigomasha. Also, in the list is Uvinje Island is at the top as an attraction worth to be visited while in Pemba. Others are Kiweni, Njao, Kokota and Uvinje islands while on natural features these Pemba Islands have special meaning for the local population and are sometimes considered as sacred. Specter of different both drone/satellite images, shows Pemba as a beautiful island with un-match different plantations – from newly introduced rubber plantations in early 80s to traditional spice farms at Bwagamoyo Spice Farm, to spices such as vanilla, cloves, cinnamon and cardamom. Also found are lang lang trees whose flowers can sweetly smell from a distant and when placed in a room the scent can remain for days.

It is all known that Pemba holds history of explorers who left permanent historical mark – such as afore mentioned Portuguese Vasco da Gama who visited Pemba in around 1490 at Mtangani, Mkoani district and he mentioned Portuguese Vasco da Gama who visited Pemba in around 1490 at Mtangani, Mkoani district and he then put a permanent writing on huge existing baobab tree there. While in the 6th Century another explorer, Ali Massoud from the Gulf landed at what is now known as Mkumbuu. Ali Massoud was an explorer and businessman and he explored then 'Kambakuu' (now is Mkumbuu), according to Mr. Khamis of Archive Department in Pemba.





Caves, trees, stones, part of the sea and even islets often have spiritual significance. Misali Island, for instance, is for the people of Pemba a sacred place and the three caves in the islet are used as shrines, noted Mr. Khamis.

“Our tourism in Pemba is mainly associated with attractions from white sand beaches to nature and culture including diving and birds watching and lifestyle of Pemba residents,” says Khamis. In his famous book – A Guide to Zanzibar W.H. Ingrahams (1952) described the caves, tombs, and all spiritual habits/beliefs of Pemba as “These pillared tombs are typical of the Zanj Empire”, said Ingrahams justifying the fact that Portuguese explorer, Vasco da Gama had visited Unguja and Pemba.

In nature, the officer mentions cultivation like seaweed farming, aquaculture which he said, Zanzibar has a vast space of about 600 km of coastal line for the local aquaculture operations. Pemba island is rich of archeological sites – Mkamandume ruins at Pujini village and Ras Mkumbuu. It is worth also to mention one of the recent top attractions in Pemba is underwater room located at Vumawimbi area, part of Manta Reef resort, one the oldest investment tourist hotel in Pemba.

The most important towns in Pemba are Chake-Chake (the capital), Mkoani, and Wete, which is the largest city. The centrally located Chake-Chake is perched on a mound with a view to the west on a bay and the tiny Misali Island, where the tides determine when a dhow can enter the local harbor.

Pemba is, except for a strip of land along its eastern coast, a very fertile place: besides clove trees, the locals grow mainly rice, coconut, bananas, cassava, and red beans. Pemba supplies a lot of agricultural goods to her sister Unguja island. Pemba is home to several dive sites, with steep drop-offs, untouched coral, and very abundant marine resources and vast ecosystem.

Most of the island, which is hillier and more fertile than Unguja, is dominated by small scale farming. There is also large-scale farming of cash crops such as cloves and slowly vanilla is catching up.

Exploring Pemba is easy – either the Island can be reached by the sea or flight from either destination points – be it Unguja/Zanzibar or from Dar Es Salaam or Arusha Mohammed Khatib, prominent tour guide in Pemba says ‘Pemba is full of attractions, but we haven’t fully utilized them yet and because there has been lower publicity.’

We have been blessed with both historical sites, culture coined with traditions of nature watching”, says Khatib who is in the business for the last 20 years plus ferrying tourists from one point to another in Pemba as a tour guide.

The strength in Pemba as that it is still a Swahili culture all over. Khatib added that existing legends of underwater wells and towns are evidently prove the case that Pemba is rich with historical sites worth to be visited whist traditional music and events such as Mwaka Kogwa (New Year Festival) inherited from the Persians and annual Maulid Festivals praising the birth of Prophet Muhammed (Peace Be Upon Him) are part of the Swahili history and any visitor will enjoy to attend.

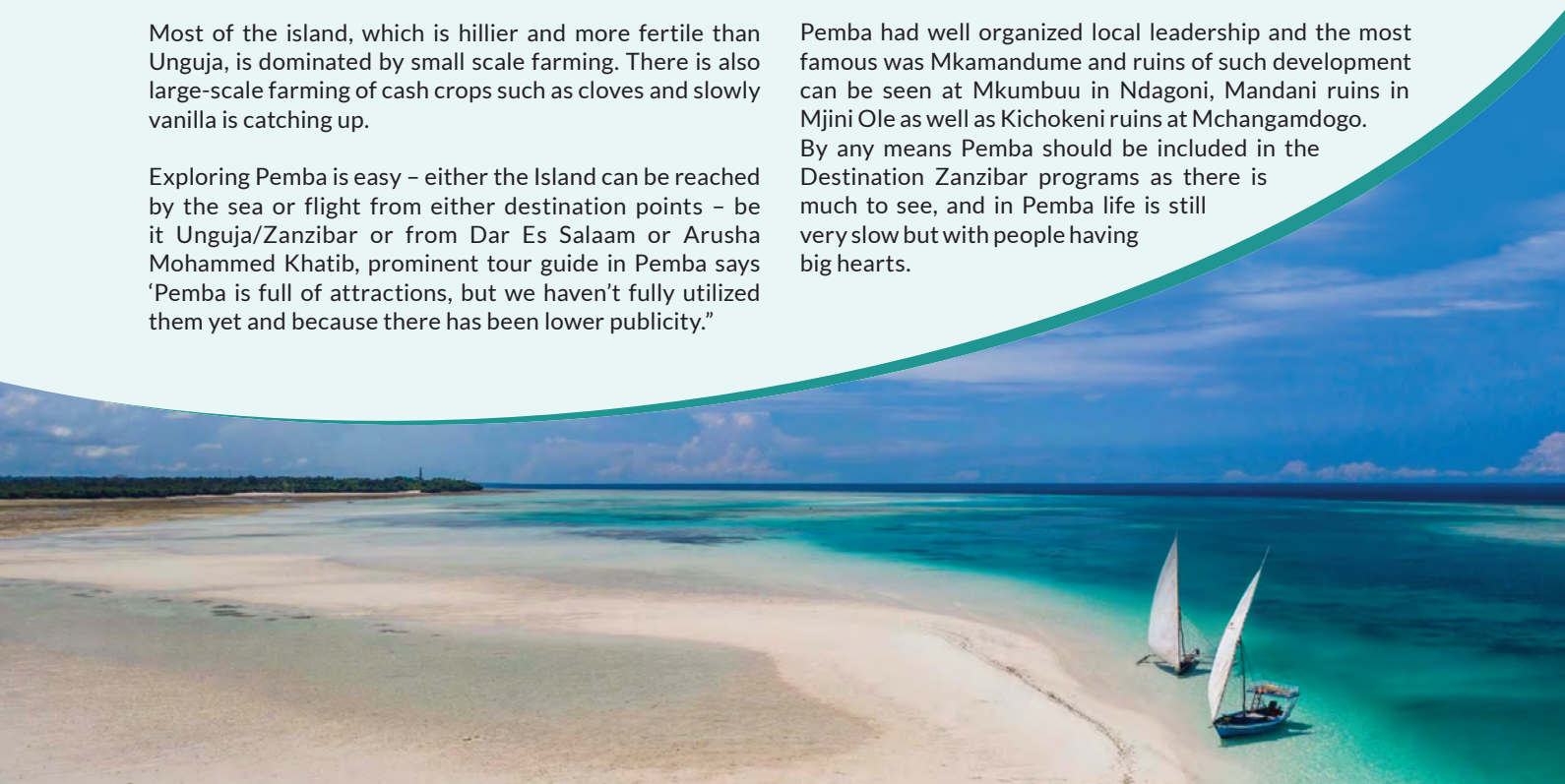
One of the notable cultural epics of Pemba Island is bullfighting, a relic of the occupation of the Island by Portuguese during their brutal stay. The bullfighting is held in the hot season from December to February in an open ground when it is hard and dry. In Zanzibar bullfighting is for the amateurs and for fun recreation.

Pemba is a bird watcher’s paradise and it is agreed that the Island is a sanctuary of several birds. There are even four endemic species, namely – Sun Birds (Chozi Jabir), Pemba White Eye (Manja), Pemba Scoops Owls (Kihodi) and Pemba Green Pigeon (Ninga).

Pemba is also a well-known spot for the famous Pemba flying foxes, only found in Pemba – Mjini Ole and Kangagani, Wete near the main port of Wete and Machomane.

On archeological point of view, Pemba has vast history as afore said and their stone building remains can be seen as a result of Portuguese stay including an old fort and a museum at Chake Chake. And the Arabs living mark of their stays with historical worship places – the mosques – such as Masjid Choko at Tumbe.

Pemba had well organized local leadership and the most famous was Mkamandume and ruins of such development can be seen at Mkumbuu in Ndagoni, Mandani ruins in Mjini Ole as well as Kichokeni ruins at Mchangamdogo. By any means Pemba should be included in the Destination Zanzibar programs as there is much to see, and in Pemba life is still very slow but with people having big hearts.



# Zanzibar thrives with Eco Tourism

By Ali Sultan

Zanzibar Islands are blessed with colorful corals, beautiful flora, and fauna. They also enjoy attractive areas including culture, food, historical sites and beaches. Visitors are obsessed to see underwater gardens in place like Misali or Mnemba Island. It is always fascinating to see underwater beauties comprising of different species of fish and colorful corals with their unique marine habitats.

Misali Islands lies few kilometers from the west side of Chake-Chake, Pemba, the main town of Pemba while Mnemba is located adjacent of the Unguja island on the northern tip of the bigger island – but all are blessed with corals, and variety of species and marine products. Zanzibar lures visitors because of its rich natural habitats, historical sites, heritage, and hospitality of her people, derived from cosmopolitan values acquired from years of intermingling with the world so to speak. As Zanzibar has witnessed boom in tourism in early 90s, investments poured in and boosted the once mono-crop economy of Zanzibar, but not with cost on the environment and at times with shocking results and effects.

Hoteliers in Zanzibar are refocusing their business to cash in on the rising environmental and cultural concerns by potential tourists visiting the island because they know very much that good tourism augur well with strong environmental policy, action and ground implementation. The context is that an increasing number of tourism-related businesses in the island have adopted practices that encourage eco-tourism, which is a relatively new concept. Faced with the problem of erosion of cultures, rising poverty levels among communities and degradation of landscapes and environment, hoteliers and tourist resorts operators have shifted their focus from mass tourism to the emerging eco-tourism in a bid to benefit indigenous people who have preserved some of the tourist attractions in the island for ages.

In the past most beach resorts concentrated on tourism profits, but this scenario has changed – change of narrative; and many are working towards creating a sustainable future for the environment and local culture. Authorities in Zanzibar took several measures to mitigate it by pushing for quick adoption of eco-and responsible tourism to save environmental degradation caused by tourism as well local people action in earning their livelihoods. Sheha Mjaja, Director General of Zanzibar Environment Management Authority (ZEMA) says Zanzibar must balance its tourism development by setting standards to protect the fragile Isles environment by establishing environment impact assessment (EIA) prior to any project on tourism as first line of defense.

“We set standards for every investment to oblige with eco-conservation rules and its elements which includes, landscape, waste water management and minimizing energy usage”, says Sheha and adding that law is used to push for compliance though education is the key.

Eco-tourism is widely defined as ‘responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and sustains the well-being of local people – respecting their culture and well-being. It’s another way seen as sub-category of sustainable tourism or a segment of the larger nature tourism market. “Eco tourism is not only about saving fragile areas, but about helping the communities that live in them and are custodians of the existing flora and fauna so that in the end they too can benefit from their preservation”, noted Mr. Mjaja. Meaning they should enjoy the money that comes with it to sustain their livelihood.

In Zanzibar, for example, Chumbe Island, home to over 200 and 400 species of coral and fish, tourist investors are working towards creating a sustainable future for the environment and local community. Chumbe island is the first privately managed marine park in east Africa, and is adorned with several prestigious international award-winning eco-bungalows built using pioneer eco-technology combined with local materials that has been harmonized with the natural environment. Due its nature, eco-tourism is the only solution or way to practice a balancing act between nature, tourism investment with human being in the centre of everything.

In an environmental-conscious world, eco-tourism goes together with sustainable tourism which is defined as “tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities.” (UNEP and UNWTO). It is basically the tourism of today and tomorrow with insignificant negative impact and providing optimum positive impact. Negative impacts include economic leakage, damage to the natural and cultural heritage. Positive impacts include job creation, preservation, and restoration of national heritage.



In Zanzibar, tourism stakeholders have changed the way the tourism is perceived and contributed to the development of tourism products in their destinations through different arguments, according to Ali Amour, Managing Director of Fisherman Tours and Safaris in one of his presentations at tourism platforms held in Zanzibar recently; namely:

- Accessibility of points of attractions.
- Empowering communities to showcase their cultures.
- Creating economic benefits to the local communities.

Travelers are becoming more responsible and are becoming conscious of the impact of their travels. Basically, they want to make sure that destinations remain the same for future generations.

In a nutshell, sustainable tourism embraces all segments of the industry with guidelines and criteria that seek to reduce environmental impacts, particularly the use of non-renewable resources, using measurable benchmarks, and to improve tourism's contribution to sustainable development and environmental conservation. Tourism impact to the environment is widely known and fought for. The tourism value chain has also added immensely to the natural greenhouse effect through human activities. It is essential that tourism industry is operated in a manner that it supports environmental, social, and economic sustainability for it to be sustainable. Our own sustainability plans are essential and beneficial to the wellbeing of our clients and our destinations.

Without responsible and eco-tourism, the consequences will be - cause the disturbance to the ecosystem, leading to the alteration of the natural habitat of wildlife and sea life, eventually we may experience deforestation, drought. In Zanzibar, when the concept of eco-tourism or sustainable tourism is mainly focused on either Chumbe islands Marine Park, or Mnemba island famous for snorkeling, Pemba flying fox, Misali island and Jozani forest with its

famous rare red colobus monkeys – these are eco-tourism landmarks in Zanzibar plus its uniquely historic stone town comprising both culture, heritage and inhabitants as cosmopolitans. Furthermore, Zanzibar remains as a hotspot for eco-tourism with flora and fauna, surrounded with mangroves – another attraction of eco-tours in Zanzibar- which is now has become popular under guise of 'mangrove eco-tourism'.

Mangrove ecosystem provides a multitude of goods and services, including provision of food and clean water, enhance climate resilience, soil composition and disaster risk reduction, recreational and spiritual space. This new type of eco-tourism is mainly practiced around Jozani Forest is considered yet another unique attraction and source of revenue. Mangrove ecosystems have components of natural resources in the form of landscape, flora, fauna, and local communities interacting with each other to become an ecosystem unit that has important ecological, economic, and social functions in development in coastal areas with high-end benefits to local coastal communities.

It is highly believed that the mangroves ecosystem is the second largest forest in Zanzibar after the coral rag forest. Pemba island has approximately 12,000 hectares of mangroves with nine species, whereas there are 6,000 hectares with eight species in Unguja islands. Zanzibar has a good chance to promote and maintain its fragile environmental profile by promoting eco-tourism as the best approach to protect both environment, cultural encroachment, increase awareness of conservation of the forest which consist of flora and fauna for the benefit of the visitors but the local as well.





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# Zanzibari attire and etiquette

## DRESS MODESTLY

By Salim Said Salim

Zanzibar fascinates its people as well as foreigners from many countries for her rich history, white beaches, spices, fruits, the charm, kindness, traditions, culture, customs, generosity and kindness of its colorful cosmopolitan society for many years. Its people have always been proud of their religion, customs, moral and social values and their rich tradition of hospitality to guests. There is no argument that the way of life in many countries, even in isolated islands, has drastically changed over the years and no one can stop the wind of change on different issues.

But despite the wave of modernization, the people of Zanzibar look determined now as well as later, to continue to preserve their rich history, which is like their second skin, because they consider them to be very important to their identity. But as Muslims are majority in these islands of about 1.7 million people, it is therefore not odd or surprising to see their life style and behavior follow rules and guidelines stipulated in the Quran, as much as they could commit themselves. There is a strong feeling that, if they allow their customs and traditions to be part of their history, they will in future have little to be proud of as part of their identities and nothing to pass to their children and grand children.

This may even result in a drop of the number of tourists who visit here, because most of the time visitors like to see their hosts in their real lives and living cultures. For three decades tourism has been an important source of income for Zanzibar, but the government and the people of this Indian Ocean archipelago have made it clear that they won't compromise their religious teachings, customs, traditions, hospitality, moral and social values for foreign exchange. To enable tourists to enjoy their stay in Zanzibar the government has issued a dress code and tips of what to do and what not to do so as to enjoy their stay in the Islands. This code is available to all those, bringing, providing accommodation, tour guides and all those dealing with the tourist industry.

Zanzibar has struggled to issue useful information but also to educate tourists to respect the local culture in general as visitors should do what their hosts wish them to so that each side is happy. Tourists can be with skimpy attire along the beach on in their hotel compounds, but as soon as one leaves the beach or the hotel and sets foot in the street in town or a village, he/she must put clothes on. Frankly speaking local Zanzibaris are more concerned with women

attire and expect them to at least cover themselves not to reveal anything above the thigh, or open back or the breasts, as much freedom the tourists are used to enjoy in their countries of origin. Transparent apparel are not welcomed. As such women are expected to dress modestly, with legs, breasts and shoulders covered. Trousers are acceptable for both genders, but shorts and short skirts are offensive to many and the visitors are advised to refrain from wearing them in public.

Dress codes for men are more lax, though extreme shorts are not common, unless in sports environment. Men can go bare chest without offending many, but not totally shirtless and any short should not be too short or revealing the wearer's upper body shape such as being too skimpy, when in the village of the streets. But at the beach is a different case. It is recommended that women should put on khanga (also called lessa) or kitenge – colourfully printed wraps that local women use as skirts, head wraps, and baby slings. Local women are always helpful to tourists to tie them in a correct way. Sometime back several women who came to Zanzibar for a holiday and refused at the airport to buy khanga or kitenge to cover themselves appropriately were not allowed entry and ordered to go wherever they wanted by the next available flight

In Zanzibar elders are cherished and greeted respectfully and it is considered a show of deep respect when one greets an elder he/she bows. The culture here is that the younger greets an older person where the younger person says Shikamoo and the elder returns with Marhaba. Of late the most common greeting is Assalam Alaykum and response will be Alaykum Salam. With children the greeting a visitor will receive will be Chei Chei and the response would be Chei Chei. Normally if one wants to offer a candy or any gift to a young person, permission should be sought if there is an elder around if not a parent. In Zanzibar anything is given out with a right hand and accepted in the same way and the responding word both ways will be Ahsante for Thank You. One other word that a tourists will keep hearing from people he/she hardly knows is Karibu for You are Welcome almost everywhere.

With us physical contacts like a hug is not an automatic gesture unless indicated so – between a man and a woman. It is avoidable between men and women in public. A visitor is advised not to shake hands first, till the time the other person extends his hand first.



Kissing and fondling or any affectionate action should be resisted as much as possible in public. Slaughtering of any animal, a visitor should be aware, is done in Islamic way and availability of any pork meat or bacon is not served at local restaurants being strictly prohibited under Islam. Just like locals, the visitors are supposed to show due respect to religious buildings, shrines and people at prayer. When entering mosque or a temple after being permitted one is supposed to remove shoes and leave them at the door. A woman in her monthly days cannot enter a mosque or touch the Holy Book – Quraan.

The people of Zanzibar have their traditional attire, but unlike in the past there have been changes with many men preferring to wear a trouser and a shirt from the kanzu (a long white robe reaching the ankle) and a kafiye and or sarong. The kafiye is a hand-made job and has perforated holes made into designs. The kanzu should be worn with sandals. Women use different kinds and styles of dresses which are shape in public because they cover them by wearing a head to ankle covering material, now available in different styles and colors known here as buibui. With buibui every-one looks amazingly beautiful.

A visitor who will use the local attires will be most welcomed by the old and the young and easily to be accepted by the society, as well as to make friends or at least if she puts a head scarf for in Islam women hair should not be public exposed. Another famous attire which has deep cultural roots in the Islands is walking with a cane, a straight rod or stick, especially among elders.

For some this is used to provide stability in walking, but for others it is a traditional symbol of strength and power, authority and social prestige. But this culture is fading out. As much as women like their jewellery in gold and silver, the Zanzibari women are always ready to share henna painting with visitors. Now parlors offering such services are found both in the Stone Town and along the beaches in hotel settings.

A fading culture in Zanzibar is that of man going around with a multi colored local made basket popularly known as mkoba wa ukili kept hand for picking supplies. Now only the old school will be carrying one. All in all, the attire and etiquettes of the people of Zanzibar which have deep roots in their culture, customs and traditions, apart from the importance for visitors to show respect are tourist attractions. There are many souvenirs to take home by tourists but importantly is the Zanzibari's art work which are very fascinating, eye catching and how beautiful they look when hung on the wall back home.



Photo Credits: Bilkis-Narid Ally

# The Stone Town coffee drinking barazas

By Ally Saleh

Dotted in the UNESCO conserved Stone Town in Zanzibar City, as a world heritage, and among the meandering and narrow alleys, are the coffee drinking Barazas, which have special mark of importance in the daily life of this touristic destination. The coffee drinking Barazas are being patronized from sunrise to sunset, every day of the week except for the holy of month of Ramadhan when Muslims observe dawn to dusk fasting and coffee as such is taken after breaking the fast at home with their families. Thus during Ramadhan coffee business drops down except for those who are addicted.

Historically, the coffee sellers were Zanzibaris of Yemen origin, who donned short colorful sarongs tied with thick khaki belt with several pockets, and a sleeve less khaki coat. Some of them went street after street selling this hooking drink. But at present none is doing that in the Stone Town, but admittedly they are the best coffee brewers around. To Zanzibaris coffee is a deep rooted culture and it is not taken only at the barazas but in many important social occasions such as the weddings, bereavement of the dead to name but a few. At the Barazas the best times for having coffee are early in the morning when the head is fresh, at the afternoon after 4 pm following a short siesta and the prayers known as L-asr and after the sunset prayers known as Maghrib. Though as much as coffee is for quenching thirst and suppressing hunger pangs, others would have it any other time.



*Photo Credits: Bilkis-Narid Ally*

In the Kiswahili meaning, Baraza is a cement block protruding from a house, being part of the Swahili architecture, which is used for people to gather for resting, talking, but the meaning and function of a Baraza has been extended to any setting where people are able to meet and intermingle to while away their time. As such Barazas are places where people meet including for coffee, with most of the Barazas having permanent frequenting people or people who know each other, but new ones and strangers are always welcome, including tourists. Most of the time Barazas are male dominated but women are also welcome but tendency shows the one going there are the middle aged only and rarely the young ones.

Younger women tend to shy away from the Barazas. And there is a feeling among them that they are back-biting subjects of the those men patronizing the Barazas. This should not mean women do not come together with men in other settings like in the political world of Zanzibar. There has been a growing culture that sees a lot of younger Zanzibari men of liking their coffee, and frankly speaking they are the majority now. The tourists, who as ritual must do a Stone Town tour, are common visitors to the Barazas where they are always warmly welcomed out of the warm spirit which is integral part of the Zanzibari way of life, thus a crucible of culture having welcomed those who have been brought by monsoon winds from China, India, Portugal, Oman, Iran, Malaysia, Indonesia and many others who left their mark in attire, language or culinary.

The tourists are thus introduced to a Zanzibari brand of coffee which is always drunk very hot, in small cups known as kikombe cha kahawa, spiced with cadammon or ginger or cinnamon. All the time the coffee available at the Barazas is the from the grounded beans and served in tin kettle popularly known as birika but in the old days it was served from a mdeli. Most of the times the coffee is served with a delicacy such as kashta made from coconut or kisheti but most of the time coffee goes well with dates or halua (sweet meat), and a typical Zanzibari will have not less than four or five cups in a one hour long sitting.



As a culture coffee in Zanzibar barazas like in the homes as well, is always served with a right hand, the cup is never filled to the brim and if there are senior people they will be served first for respect. As a culture also the cup will be received by right hand and accepted by right hand as a form of respect and culturally right thing. Normally Zanzibaris like their coffee very strong and it is a long tradition that coffee is taken with a company and not alone. And in such a company, most of the time inter mingle with own peers, but there is no boundaries even if there were younger adults. The coffee Barazas are talking shops and gossiping places. Any subject is going but with nationalism running in the blood of Zanzibaris the bigger part of the talk always will be on politics and local and world latest news. Jokes –both dirty and clean are always in galore.

No wonder some of the coffee barazas openly identify themselves with political parties though dissenting views are always in discussion. Zanzibaris have a very tolerant culture. Some of the B. In election times politicians looking for elective office will be seen frequenting such barazas to woo influential voters hidden therein.

A coffee drinking Baraza cannot be complete without in the environment to have a board game of a sort. Most of the time it would be cards known in Kiswahili as karata, or dominoes which has borrowed an Arabic name of dhumna. The other game likely to be found around a coffee Baraza is bao which is played on a piece of wood with 16 holes and very rarely chess.

While in bao the game is played by two people, the dhumna is a team play of one against one or two or three in a team, in the karata the main game is Wahed Wa Sitin where two teams of three are competing to earn 61 points each game and to be overall winner a team must win the best of 8 rounds. In public only men play Wahed Wa Sitin.

To some the coffee barazas are meeting point to cut deals. Sometimes serious business is done by people moving to a corner doing a one-on-one while sipping their bitter coffee. Even if you do not have shilling in your pocket just drop at the Baraza and someone is for sure going to get a cup offered to him and this has been a living spirit and goes with the Zanzibari culture of charity and selfless.



The only problem with the Barazas, is that most are in open situations and when the rain comes, the business ceases, and the patrons go without quenching their thirst and will surely be a long day for them. But surely they will come back for a sip when the rain is over, such is the power of Zanzibari coffee.



Photo Credits: Bilkis-Narid Ally

# Revisiting Stone Town streets, shops and alleys

By Mustafa Shariff

The idea of revisiting the city where you have been born, bred and possibly spent most your life might sound weird but for those of us who are the fans of the contemplation, revisiting the Stone Town of Zanzibar sounds like a good act of self-reflection.

I decided to dedicate my forty's birthday to take my friend who is not a Zanzibari and new to Stone Town to roam around the city that has amazed so many of its visitors, explorers and even rulers with its fascinating mixture of cultures, religions, trade and many other unique features of human co-existence. Because this city has so many to offer and many of its amazing features, I have got used to them for so long, I had decided to revisit the part of the city to explore most iconic streets, shops and alleys located in Stone Town, Zanzibar with a mixture of music sounds coming from each shop and from the houses mainly on the first floors of the old building as the ground floors are for businesses.

Our expedition to explore the UNESCO World Heritage city from Majanini (a street name not commonly known today) beneath the biggest Banyan Tree at Malindi Street where is the launching point for island tours boat trip which was my play ground for swimming and football games in younger days. To us who have grown up here playing beach football like in Copa Cabana we have been branded as beach boys and a day will not pass without having that fun.

I walked past the famous Msikiti wa Ijumaa (Friday Mosque) whose original dates of where it was build are really confusing because it is believed to stem back n 1830s but it is believed to be build at the site of the older mosque that dates back in 17th century or earlier but some sources indicates that it was built in 15th century.

Apart from the historical confusion and significance of this, behind it is the Nyumba ya Washihiri (The house of the people of Shihir from Hadhramout, Yemen). It is in this house where I spent most of my childhood and it was a house and a street commonly known for coffee brewing business in all of Stone Town.

My roaming took me to Dega Street located at the middle of Malindi Street. It is a common coffee drinking corner and a festivities location where people used to flock and rejoice in all of the festivities being Eid or celebration of a championship of our home football team Malindi Sports Club.

We had to march through the twisted alleys that took us to Hurumzi Street in front of an iconic Stone Town door of Ismailia Jamaat Khanna, a picturesque square that every visitor never misses a photo shoot session while at this place. The way I cut through the narrow alleys of my birthplace, my guest had to sweat. I heard "If it wasn't walking with you in these thick walled buildings and look alike streets, I would have found myself circling around the same place again and again." I laughed at her.

As it is normal for visitors to take photos in the Stone for memory, she turned me her photographer and I was bombarded with tons of instructions and scolds that pushed for quality photos at the costless photo-shop session from an un-professional photographer and her a novice model. When the photo-shoot ended successfully, we went on passing under the short tunnel at Hurumzi besides Ismailia Jamaat Khanna and came towards the Hindu Temple where we entered to appreciate their ways of life and religion of this former business community in Zanzibar.



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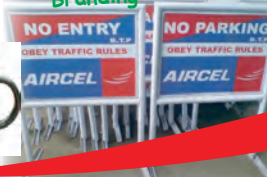
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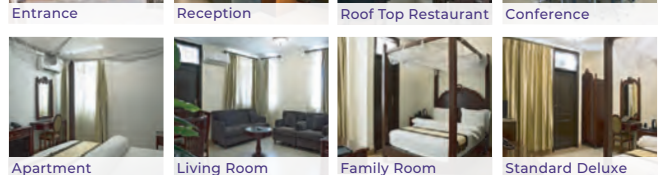
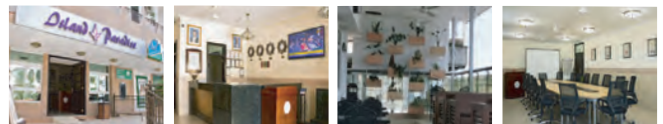


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After that we started to explore the bazaars targeting the tourist shops to where I heard the sight of happiness because from my guest as she seemed enjoying haggling with the shop keeper and from her bargaining power she indeed got good deals and thus spending less for much.

At some shops she got unrealistic prices, and I did not know what charms she was using to the sellers or was it the Zanzibari hospitality to the guests but believe me, she was grabbing expensive fashionable clothes and souvenirs in prices that I would have never imagined asking the sellers. It was like she was putting her own price tags to the products.

The only place that she couldn't play her charms was at Chavda' Khanga Bazaar where the sellers knew how to play the tunes she was playing very well and snatched the cash out of her pocket very well by displaying different brands of Khanga from India to Mombasa to Oman and make her pick every good piece put at the display. While drama was unfolding, I was there enjoying the show.

Because traditionally each khanga was having a different message, I had to translate to her so that she buys each piece with a purpose. All in all it was seeing payback from the secret prayers that tourism shops sellers were praying she was luring them to sell their expensive merchandizes at the lowest unimaginable prices.



*Photo Credits: Bilkis-Narid Ally*

Our shopping part of the Stone Town excursion was a back-and-forth expedition to rove around the entire stone city from where it started at Hurumzi shops behind the Ismaili Jamaat entering each and shop on that street then rounding the next street going back to the famous late Ali Mapengo shop besides Emerson Spices only to learn this Stone Town icon has passed away. Going back to the famous shopping street of Gizenga, the route that took us to the Kenyatta Road where shopping scavenger got more fun with the presence of shops like Kumi and Inaya Zanzibar. Here was the Old Post Office and surely not only the busiest but the most expensive street.

From the shopping spree at Gizenga, we walked our way to Sokomuhogo Street to Jaws Corner, the street that is famous square for its coffee and a baraza for gossiping, open discussions and political chit chats. We sat at Jaws for a cup of coffee then the journey resumed through Kajificheni for a short stop at Babu Issa's place to give her a taste of Ubuyu wa Babu Issa (Babu Issa's Baobab fruits).

One thing that surprised my friend was how closed the streets located that you can hear the names of more than three to four streets in between one street. When we started, she heard Malindi, Kiponda and Hurumzi and then came Kajificheni, Hamamni and Mkunazini separated by few yards. From Babu Issa's place we walked down Kajificheni Primary School on our right where I used to go extra classes (tuitions) in the evening and on our left, there was Hamamni Secondary School which I only attended for one day and traded it with what I thought as a way better school Vikokotoni Secondary School which is located at the Ng'ambo side of the Creek Road that separates the Stone Town and the new town.

Crossing Kajificheni we met Hamamni Baths on our rights where we took a short tour and when we came out, I made her laugh at now after telling her the stories of how I and my friends used to sneak into the Shia Ithnasheria Mosque at the opposite side to go for Pilau, Biriani and Sharbat offerings that were prepared during Muharram season. What made us dodge school was the taste of the cooking that were not available anywhere, not even our home. We then took few very narrow streets like three or four and reached at Ukutani where the famous Baraza Mosque is located. This was for two centuries the center of Islamic education where most the Zanzibar renowned Islamic scholars got their education or taught here.

After this long route of revisiting the Stone Town, hunger would not let us resist anymore. We decided to go back to Mkunazini passing through Mkunazini Jewellery Bazaar with no shopping or window shopping allowed until we reached at Lukmaan Restaurant where we really really stopped and got something to tame our hunger.



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