

Central Mozambique



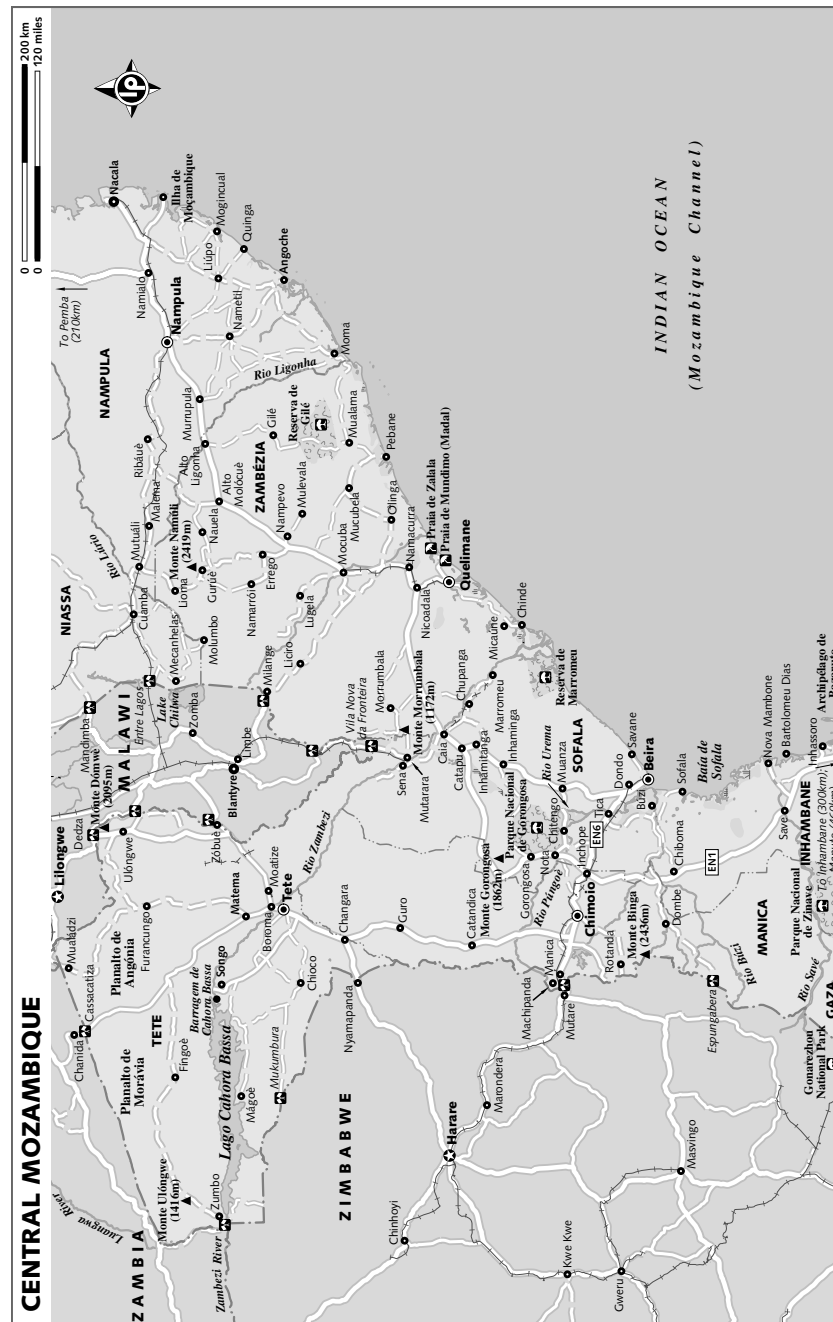
In the annals of ancient Africa, central Mozambique – Sofala, Manica, Tete and Zambézia provinces – should get top billing. It was here, at the old port of Sofala, that 15th-century traders from as far away as India and Indonesia gathered in search of vast caches of gold. And it was here that some of the region’s most powerful kingdoms arose, including the Karanga (Shona) confederations along the Zimbabwe border and the legendary kingdom of Monomotapa southwest of Tete. It was also in central Mozambique – along the course of the Rio Zambezi – that early explorers and traders first penetrated the vast Mozambican hinterlands. During the 17th and 18th centuries, they set up a series of *feiras* (gold-trading fairs) that reached as far inland as Zumbo on the Zambian border.

Today, the tides have turned: visitors are but a small trickle, and central Mozambique is seldom given more than passing mention in the tourist brochures. Yet, while it lacks the accessible beaches of the south, the region has a few gems that are well worth seeking out. In addition to wildlife watching at Parque Nacional de Gorongosa, these include vibrant traditional cultures, Mozambique’s highest peaks and alluring mountain landscapes. The highland terrain is at its most beautiful in western Manica and northwestern Zambézia provinces, where rolling, mist-covered hills stretch into the horizon. Central Mozambique is also a major transit zone, flanked by the Beira corridor, connecting landlocked Zimbabwe with Beira and the sea, and the Tete corridor, linking Zimbabwe and Malawi.

Places in this chapter are described roughly south to north and clockwise, going from Sofala province to Manica, to Tete, and then to Zambézia.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Wander into the wilds at wonderful **Parque Nacional de Gorongosa** (p111)
- Dine on port city Beira’s famous **seafood** (p109)
- Marvel at the massive **Barragem de Cahora Bassa** (p121) and go fishing on the lake
- Hike in the hills around **Gurúè** (p128), or scale misty **Monte Namúli** (p128)
- Go birding in the twittering, chirping bird-filled forests south of **Caia** (p123)



National Parks

Beautiful Parque Nacional de Gorongosa is slowly but surely making a comeback, and is well worth a visit if you are in the area; see p111. Central Mozambique's other protected areas – including Reserva de Marromeu and Reserva de Gilé – operate primarily as hunting concessions, although occasional birding groups visit, and plans are underway to make them more accessible for general tourism. Much of the Montes Chimanimani are protected as part of a transfrontier conservation area.

Dangers & Annoyances

As with elsewhere in the country, when hiking in the Montes Chimanimani or other areas of central Mozambique, stick to well-used footpaths to avoid the dangers of old land mines.

Getting There & Away

Central Mozambique is a transport crossroads and it's likely you'll at least pass through the region. For more on land border crossings with Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe, see p186. For north-south travellers, the main point of interest is likely to be crossing the Rio Zambezi – see p123.

BEIRA

Beira, capital of Sofala province, is Mozambique's second-largest city. It's also the country's busiest port, and as famed for its seafood as for its tawdry nightlife. Yet, despite a somewhat tarnished image, Beira is a reasonably pleasant place with a compact central area, an addictive harbour-town energy and a short, breezy stretch of coastline.

Beira has a reputation as one of the easiest places in the country to catch malaria, so cover up well in the evenings, and travel with a net.

History

Settlement of the area around Beira dates to at least the 9th century AD, when small fishing and trading settlements dotted the nearby

POUNDS STERLING

Unlike Portuguese-dominated Maputo, British influence was strong in late 19th- and early 20th-century Beira, and for a time the Bank of Beira even circulated sterling currency.

coastline. The most important of these was the fabled Sofala (p112). Following Sofala's decline, trade continued well into the 19th century, although on a smaller scale.

In 1884 a Portuguese landholder and imperialist named Joaquim Carlos Paiva de Andrada established a base at the mouth of the Rio Púngoè, at the site of present-day Beira, as a supply point for his expeditions into the interior. He also wanted to promote development of the Mozambique Company – one of the many charter companies set up by the Portuguese in their attempts to solidify their control over the Mozambican hinterlands. Paiva de Andrada was not the only one enamoured of Beira's charms. The British also found the area enticing as an export channel from their landlocked inland territories to the sea. Over the next decade, it became a focus of dispute between the two colonial powers before ultimately going to Portugal in 1891.

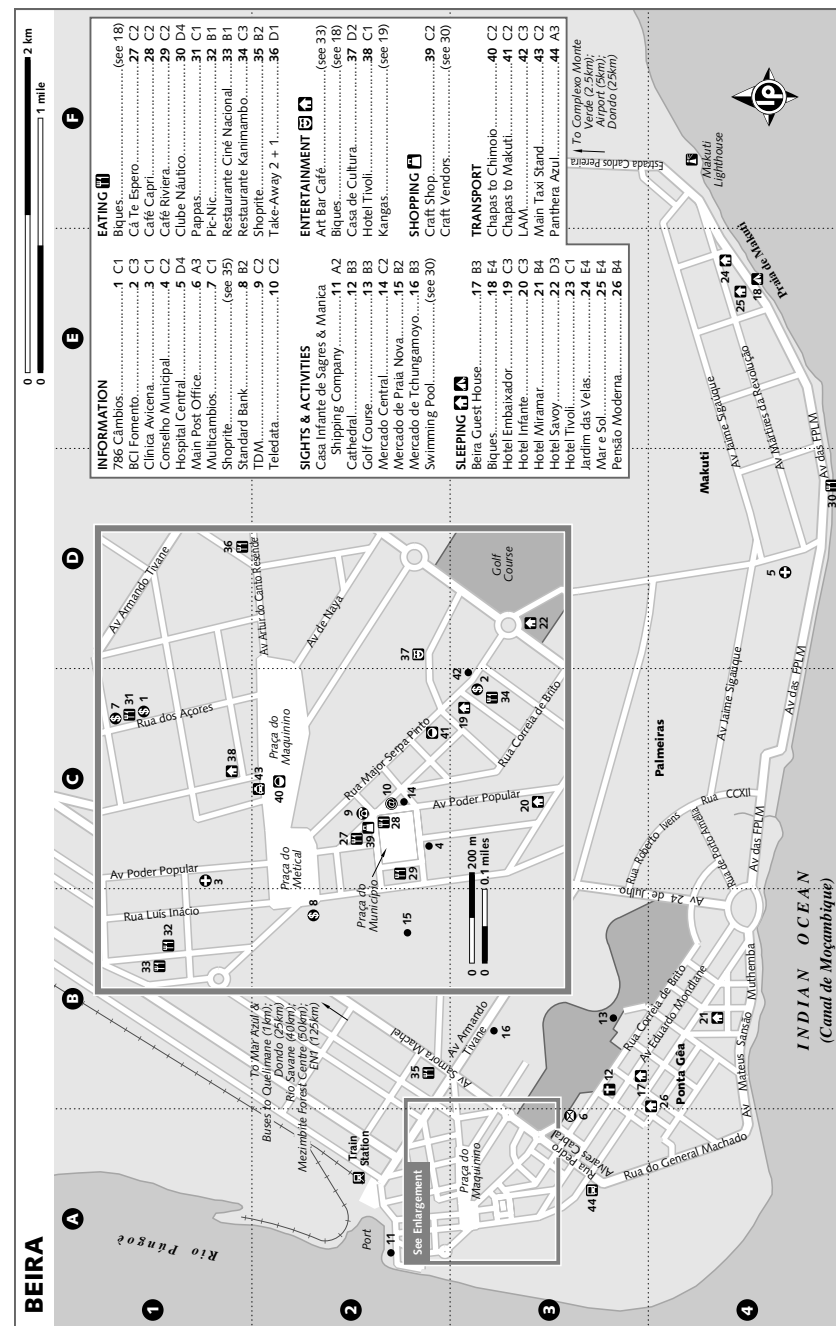
Andrada, who meanwhile had made Beira the headquarters for his Mozambique Company, began to develop its harbour facilities. At the same time, a railway line to the interior was completed and Beira soon became a major port and export channel for Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe).

From the mid-20th century, Rhodesia's links with South Africa increased, cutting into Beira's transport monopoly. Yet, by this time Beira's significance as a port was established and it continued to be one of Mozambique's hubs.

During the war years, Renamo leader Afonso Dhlakama had his headquarters at Maringüè, northwest of Beira near Gorongosa, and both Beira and Sofala province continue to be Renamo strongholds.

Orientation

The heart of the city is the area around the squares of Praça do Município and Praça do Metical (the latter marked by a large metical coin perched on a pedestal). Near here, you'll find shops, banks, telecom and internet facilities, plus an array of sidewalk cafés. North of the two squares is the baixa (old commercial area), with the port and some charming old colonial-style architecture, while about 1km east is Maquinino, the main bus and transport hub. From Praça do Município, tree-lined streets lead south and east through the shady and charming Ponta Gêa residential area to Av das FPLM. This then runs for several kilometres along the ocean past the hospital



to Makuti – another residential area fringing Beira’s small stretch of beach. At the end is the old red-and-white Makuti lighthouse, dating to 1904.

MAPS

The excellent *Planta de Endereçamento da Cidade da Beira* and the companion map booklet, *Endereçamento da Cidade da Beira – Guia das Vias* are part of the series of maps put out by Coopération Française in cooperation with the Conselho Municipal. Copies are hard to come by these days, but you can try at the **Gabinete de Endereçamento da Cidade da Beira** (☎ 23-329165; 5 Praça do Município) at Conselho Municipal.

Information

EMERGENCY

Central Hospital (☎ 23-312073/4; Av das FPLM)

Malaria testing.

Clínica Avicena (☎ 23-327990, 84-302 1520; Av Poder Popular; ☎ 24hr) For medical emergencies. Just north of Praça do Metical.

INTERNET ACCESS

Teledata (Rua de Moçambique; per hr US\$2; ☎ 7.30am-7pm) Diagonally opposite the telecom office.

MONEY

There are numerous ATMs, including at the airport and at Shoprite (Av Samora Machel).

786 Câmbios (Rua Machado dos Santos) Changes cash.

BCI Fomento (Rua Major Serpa Pinto) ATM; opposite LAM.

Multicambios (Rua dos Açores) Changes cash.

Standard Bank (Praça do Metical) ATM; also rather reluctantly changes travellers cheques (minimum US\$35 per transaction, original purchase receipts required).

POST

Main post office (Rua Correia de Brito) Northwest of the cathedral.

MEZIMBITE FOREST CENTRE

Central Mozambique’s forests have long been plundered, but there’s finally some good news on the scene. If you have extra time and are interested in learning about local sustainable development projects, take a few hours to visit Mezimbite Forest Centre, about 50km west of Beira along the EN6. In addition to promoting sustainable conservation of the surrounding forests through maximising the forests’ benefits to local residents, it trains artisans and craftpersons to be competitive in quality at the highest levels, producing exclusive furniture designs, jewellery and other items that are marketed internationally.

The centre can be visited during the daytime (and preferably during the dry season, when it buzzes with activity) and staff will be happy to show you around. It’s also possible to order some of their products online (www.allanschwarz.com/bracelet.php).

TELEPHONE

TDM (Telecomunicações de Moçambique; Rua Companhia de Moçambique; ☎ 7am-10pm) Domestic and international telephone calls. North of Praça do Município; look for the green and white building.

Sights & Activities

Beira’s spired **cathedral** (Av Eduardo Mondlane), southeast of the centre, was built in the early 20th century with stones taken from the ruins of San Caetano fort in Sofala. Also worth a look are the surrounding **Ponta Gêa** area, with some charming old houses; **Praça do Metical**; and the area around the port, where the streets are lined with faded colonial-era buildings. One to watch for is the restored **Casa Infante de Sagres**, now the offices of Manica Shipping Company.

Praia de Makuti (Makuti Beach; Av das FPLM) is one of the better places in town to relax, though it can’t compare with the coastline further south or north. The water is moderately clean, currents strong (ask locally where swimming is possible) and the breezes good. There’s a **swimming pool** (Av das FPLM; per day US\$4) at Clube Náutico and a **golf course** in the southern part of town.

The chaotic **Mercado de Tchungamoyo** (Tch-ungamoyo Market; Av Armando Tivane), known locally as ‘Goto’, is in the northeastern corner of town. It’s full of imported goods, contraband and some unsavoury characters. **Mercado Central** (Central Market; Rua Correia de Brito) in the town centre is quieter, and the best place to buy fruit and vegetables. If neither of these suit, try **Mercado de Praia Nova** (Praia Nova Market), west of Praça do Município, with piles of fresh seafood, and just about everything else.

With your own transport, Rio Savane (see opposite) makes a fine day or overnight trip.

Sleeping

While Beira doesn’t distinguish itself with accommodation options, it has enough of a choice to satisfy most tastes and there are a few nice, new places.

BUDGET

Biques (☎ 23-313051; Praia de Makuti; camping per person US\$3.50; ☎) Set on a breezy rise overlooking Praia de Makuti, this camping ground has seen better days, and doesn’t receive too many travellers these days. Security isn’t what it once was, nor are the ablutions. However, the bar (with satellite TV) and restaurant are popular and it’s a good spot for watching the sunset. Take any chapa towards Makuti and ask them to drop you at the turnoff, from where it’s about 400m further on foot. Taxis from town cost about US\$3.

Hotel Savoy (☎ 23-329302; cnr Ruas Major Serpa Pinto & Pedro Amílcar Cabral; s/tw US\$8/16, d with bathroom US\$22) In an ageing grey high rise near Hotel Embaixador and worth a look if you’re on a shoestring but don’t want to camp at Biques. The rooms are mediocre but the central location is convenient.

Hotel Miramar (☎ 23-322283; Rua Vilas Boas Truão; s/tw/d US\$14/16/20; ☎) The Miramar is another faded classic, with the no-frills rooms – some with private bathroom – near the water (no beach), but inconvenient to the rest of town and not optimal for solo women travellers. There’s no food.

Pensão Moderna (☎ 23-329901; Rua Alferes da Silva; d/tr US\$24/31, d with bathroom & air-con US\$34; ☎) This is one of the better budget choices. Rooms – most with fan and shared bathroom – are faded but adequate, there’s a patio out front and meals can be arranged. It’s two blocks south of the cathedral and opposite the park with an old aeroplane in the centre; all the taxis know it.

Hotel Infante (☎ 23-326603; Rua Jaime Ferreira; s/d with fan US\$24/28, with air-con US\$26/30; ☎) In a high-rise building near Hotel Embaixador, Hotel Infante has small, clean rooms with bathroom, and a restaurant.

Rio Savane (☎ 23-323555, 82-385 7660; camping per person US\$3, 5-person barracas US\$6 plus per person US\$6, d/q self-catering bungalow US\$50/100) If you have your own vehicle and want to escape for a day or two, it’s well worth driving out to this rustic place, which is in a serene setting on the Rio Savane, separated from the sea by a narrow peninsula. In addition to camping, there are several rustic *barracas* (food stalls), self-catering chalets and

meals. The nearby wetlands are ideal for birding. Follow the Dondo road past the airport to the right-hand turn-off for Savane. Continue 35km to the estuary, where there’s secure parking and a small boat (until 5pm) to take you to the camp site. Transfers from Beira can sometimes be arranged with the camp.

MIDRANGE & TOP END

Beira Guest House (☎ 23-324030; 1311 Av Eduardo Mondlane; r/ste US\$75/100; ☎) This residential style B&B in the Ponta Gêa area has pleasant rooms with minifridge, TV and laundry service. Breakfast is included and there’s a cook available for other meals if you bring food. It’s near Farmácia Beira.

Jardim das Velas (☎ 23-312209; jardimdasvelas@yahoo.com; 282 Av das FPLM; d/f US\$75/85; ☎) We’ve heard good reports about this new place at the end of Praia de Makuti near the lighthouse. The doubles come with minifridge, mosquito nets and TV and the apartment-style family room has a kitchenette. There are no meals. Look for the peach-coloured place with the red roof.

Hotel Embaixador (☎ 23-323785, 23-329057; cnr Ruas Major Serpa Pinto & Belegard da Silva; s/d US\$38/50; ☎) A few blocks southeast of Praça do Município, this was once Beira’s top hotel. These days, it’s rather down at the heel and often empty. But the location is convenient, the rooms spacious (albeit a bit musty) and it’s worth a look if your budget doesn’t stretch to the Hotel Tivoli.

Hotel Tivoli (☎ 23-320300; h.tivoli-beira@teledata.mz; cnr Av de Bagamoyo & Rua da Madeira; s/d US\$83/99; ☎) In a busy area of the baixa, the Tivoli has captured Beira’s business market, with small but tidy rooms with TV and amenities, and a sleek restaurant-bar. Buffet breakfast is included in the price.

The old **Mar e Sol** (Av das FPLM, Makuti) was being renovated as a guesthouse and restaurant when we passed through – worth asking around to see if it’s been completed.

Eating

Beira’s restaurants and cafés are full of faded charm, and the dining scene is where you can experience this old-fashioned port city at its best.

CAFÉS

Café Riviera (Praça do Município; snacks & light meals from US\$1.50; ☎ 7.30am-9pm) This classic, pink Old

World sidewalk café is a wonderful spot to sit with a cup of coffee and *bolo de mandioca* (almond cake) and watch the passing scene, with soft, plump sofas inside and outdoor tables overlooking the beach.

Café Capri (Praça do Município; snacks & light meals from US\$1.50; ☎ 6.45am–9pm Mon–Fri, Sat 7am–8.30pm, Sun 8am–8pm) Another Beira classic, just down from Café Riviera, and with good *café espresso*.

RESTAURANTS

Pic-Nic (☎ 23-326518; Rua Costa Serrão; meals from about US\$4.50; ☎ breakfast, lunch & dinner) For years, this place was reputed to be one of the city's best restaurants and while its reputation is somewhat outsize for what you get, portions are large and service reasonable. Dining is in a windowless red-draped interior, with black-suited waiters at your beck and call.

Restaurante Kanimambo (☎ 23-323132; meals US\$4–7; ☎ lunch & dinner Sun–Fri) Behind Hotel Embaixador, with Beira's best Chinese food and a friendly proprietor.

Restaurante Ciné Nacional (Rua Costa Serrão; meals from US\$6; ☎ lunch & dinner Mon–Sat) A dark, windowless place just opposite Pic-Nic in the cinema building and known for its curries (which should be ordered in advance). Portions are small but it's a reliable bet for vegetarians.

Pappas (Rua dos Açores; meals from US\$2.50) There are no tables here – you get your meals at the L-shaped bar – but the steak and seafood grills on hot sizzle platters are delicious, and the ambience convivial. It's close to Hotel Tivoli.

Popular waterside hangouts include the restaurant at **Biques** (☎ 23-313051; Praia de Makuti) and **Clube Náutico** (☎ 23-311720; Av das FPLM; meals US\$6–11, plus per person entry US\$0.40; ☎ lunch & dinner), a colonial-era swimming and social club, with average food made enjoyable by the beachside setting. On Saturday afternoons, there are all-comers-welcome rugby matches on the sand in front.

Other recommendations:

Cá Te Espero (☎ 82-447 8860, 82-562 6950; Rua Companhia de Moçambique; meals from US\$5–12; ☎ 8am–10pm) Portuguese-style seafood and grills in a dark and smoky pub atmosphere.

Take-Away 2 + 1 (Av Artur do Canto Resende; meals from US\$2; ☎) A usually empty takeaway counter, and a tiny restaurant serving a modest selection of inexpensive local fare on plastic checked table cloths. It's just northeast of Praça do Município.

Self-caterers should head to **Shoprite** (cnr Avs Armando Tivane & Samora Machel).

Entertainment

Art Bar Café (Ciné Nacional, Rua Costa Serrão; ☎ 4pm to late Wed–Sat) This promising place in the cinema building was about to open when this text was written. It's run by the same people who used to run one of Beira's best bars (now closed) and will have snacks, drinks and a DJ after 11pm.

Complexo Monte Verde (☎ 23-302341; Estrada Carlos Pereira; entry US\$2) Beira's main nightclub is midway between Praia de Makuti and the airport.

Casa de Cultura (☎ 23-327858; Rua Major Serpa Pinto) Opposite Hotel Embaixador, with theatre and dance performances. Information on upcoming programmes is posted by the entrance.

Other bars include **Biques** (Praia de Makuti), with satellite TV; the smarter **Kangas** (Hotel Embaixador) and the classy albeit stuffy bar at the Hotel Tivoli.

Shopping

The vendors near Clube Náutico hawk a modest array of woodcarvings and other crafts. Pricier but worth a look is the small **craft shop** (Rua Companhia de Moçambique; ☎ 4pm–6pm Mon–Fri, 8am–6pm Sat) opposite TDM and next to Cá Te Espero.

Getting There & Away

AIR

There are flights on **LAM** (☎ 23-324141/2; 85 Rua Major Serpa Pinto) weekly to/from Johannesburg, daily to/from Maputo, and three to six times weekly to/from Tete, Nampula, Quelimane, Pemba, Vilankulo and Lichinga. The **LAM** office is opposite Hotel Embaixador. **Air Corridor** (☎ 23-302222/3; Airport) stops at Beira on its daily run up and down the coast. **SAair-link** (☎ 23-301569/70; www.saairlink.co.za; Airport) flies three times weekly between Beira and Johannesburg.

BUS & CHAPA

Beira's main transport stand is at Praça do Maquinino. There's no real order to things – you'll need to ask locals where to go for buses to your destination.

To Maputo, **Panthera Azul** (☎ 23-325042, 82-394 4551; www.pantherazul.com; 43 Av Mouzinho de Albuquerque, Complexo SNJ) goes weekly (US\$44, 17 to 18 hours), departing at 5am on Thursday from the Panthera Azul office at Prédio Grelha, at the southwestern end of Av Samora Machel. Otherwise, there's usually an 'express' bus (US\$30, 18 hours) and/or one regular

bus daily (US\$24), both departing by about 4.30am from Maquinino; buy tickets the day before. Coming from Maputo, the express bus departs Junta by about 5am, and the normal buses – which overnight at the Rio Save bridge – between about 6am and 7.30am. If you get stuck at the bridge, it's best to sleep in the bus.

To Vilankulo (US\$12, nine hours, 470km), there's a direct bus daily departing Maquinino by about 5am. Otherwise, get any southbound bus to drop you at Pambara, the junction town on the EN1, from where chapas regularly ply the final 20km to Vilankulo.

To Chimoio (US\$5, three hours, 200km) and Machipanda (US\$6, four hours), there are minibuses throughout the day from Praça do Maquinino.

To Tete (US\$16, 10 hours, 600km), there are direct buses at least several times weekly, but it's best to go first to Chimoio and get transport there. This will mean overnighting in Chimoio since transport from there to Tete leaves in the morning.

To Quelimane (US\$16.50, nine hours), buses depart from Mar Azul in Pioneiros bairro, about 1km north of the centre, and go via the new tarmac road running west of Gorongosa park to Caia.

Another option, for any northbound or southbound transport, is to head out to Inchope, 130km west of Beira, where the EN6 joins the EN1, and try your luck with passing buses there, though they are often full and waits are long. Inchope is the epitome of a scruffy junction town, with no accommodation except a few unappealing *pensões*. Chapas run between Beira and Inchope throughout the day (US\$2, two hours).

TRAIN

Passenger services to Zimbabwe have been indefinitely suspended. You'll need to take road transport over the border into Zimbabwe, where you can continue by rail to Harare.

Getting Around

TO/FROM THE AIRPORT

The airport is about 7km northwest of town (US\$8 in a taxi).

BUS & CHAPA

Chapas to Makuti (US\$0.30) depart from Maquinino, with some also leaving from Rua Major Serpa Pinto near Hotel Embaixador.

CAR

Rental agencies include **Imperial** (☎ 23-302650/1; www.imperial.co.za) and **Avis** (☎ 23-301263, 82-502 5360; avis.beira@teledata.mz), both at the airport.

TAXI

The main taxi stand is at the western edge of Praça do Maquinino. Taxis don't cruise for business, and companies come and go, so ask your hotel for the updated numbers.

AROUND BEIRA

Parque Nacional de Gorongosa

About 170km northwest of Beira is **Parque Nacional de Gorongosa** (Gorongosa National Park; www.gorongosa.net; adult/child/vehicle US\$8/2/8; ☎ closed 1 Dec–1 Apr), which was gazetted in 1960 and soon made headlines as one of Southern Africa's premier wildlife parks. It was renowned for its large prides of lions, as well as for its elephants, hippos, buffaloes and rhinos. During the 1980s and early 1990s, hungry soldiers and poachers brought an end to this abundance. Because Renamo headquarters were nearby, the surrounding area was heavily mined and the park's infrastructure was destroyed. Rehabilitation work began in 1995, and in 1998 Gorongosa reopened to visitors. In recent years, the park has received a major boost thanks to assistance from the US-based Carr Foundation, which has joined hands with the Government of Mozambique to fund Gorongosa's longterm restoration and ecotourism development.

While animal numbers still pale in comparison with those of the park's heyday, wildlife is making a definite comeback and the park is well worth a visit if you are in the area. It's likely that you will see impalas, waterbucks, oribis, kudus, warthogs, hippos, elephants and – with luck – even a lion or two. A wildlife sanctuary has been created in the park, where restocking of zebras, buffaloes, wildebeests and other animals has begun. Meanwhile, a major attraction is the birdlife, with over 300 species, including many endemics and near-endemics, and an abundance of water birds in the wetland areas to the east around the Rio Urema.

Also alluring is the park's unique mixture of ecological zones. Within its 5370 sq km it encompasses the southernmost part of the Great Rift system, the hulking Gorongosa massif, expanses of coastal plain and the Zambezi valley, and is considered to be the most biologically diverse of all Mozambique's conservation areas.

Since Gorongosa's reopening, infrastructure has been being gradually upgraded, with many more improvements planned for the near future. Check the enticing website (www.gorongosa.net) for updates.

Park headquarters (☎ 23-535012, 23-535003; travel@gorongosa.net) are in Chitengo, about 15km east of the entry gate, from where rough tracks branch out to other park areas. Vehicle rental and guides for wildlife drives (including night drives) can be arranged at park headquarters, and walking safaris will be starting soon. Many areas of the park are inaccessible during the rainy season. Note that park entry fees are payable in meticaís only.

SLEEPING

There is a **camp site** (camping per person US\$4) with ablation blocks and hot water at park headquarters, and six plain but pleasant **rondavels** (s/d US\$26/38) with bathrooms and nets, and more rondavels coming soon. Bookings should be made through park headquarters. There's also a reasonably priced restaurant serving good local-style meals, and braai facilities for self-caterers. Luxury bungalows are planned for Chitengo in the near future, as is a new restaurant. Also coming imminently is a new camping ground, plus a travellers dorm.

GETTING THERE & AWAY

Gorongosa has an airstrip for charter flights. By road, the turn-off for Gorongosa from the main Beira–Chimoio road is at Inchope,

about 130km west of Beira. From Inchope, it's another 43km along excellent tarmac to Nota village and the park access road, and from there, 17km east along an all-weather gravel road to the park gate. Once at the gate, it's about 15km further to the Chitengo headquarters, where you pay your fees. You can easily reach the park entrance with 2WD, but for exploring, you'll need 4WD. Pick-ups from Chimoio and Beira can be arranged with the park. Via public transport, take any transport heading north from Inchope to Gorongosa town ('Vila Gorongosa'). The park plans to open an information office here in the near future, from where reasonably priced pick-ups can be arranged to the park or to Monte Gorongosa (see following). Pink Papaya Backpackers in Chimoio (see p116) organises all inclusive overnight trips to Gorongosa Park for between US\$50 and US\$100 per person, depending on group size.

Monte Gorongosa

Outside the park boundaries to the northwest is **Monte Gorongosa** (Mt Gorongosa, 1863m), Mozambique's fourth-highest mountain. Steeped in local lore, it's known for its rich plant and birdlife and its abundance of lovely waterfalls. The mountain's slopes are the only place in Southern Africa to see the green-headed oriole, and one of just a handful of places where you can see the dappled mountain robin and Swynnerton's forest robin.

Monte Gorongosa is considered sacred, but it's possible to climb to its upper slopes with a local guide. The Carr Foundation, which is financing the rehabilitation of Gorongosa park, is also supporting a community-based ecotourism and reforestation project on the mountain, centred around hiking trails and birding, with a focus on conserving the mountain ecosystems that are essential for maintaining wildlife populations in the park. The project, which aims to give local communities alternative sources of livelihood other than slash-and-burn agriculture, is still in the early stages, but once going, it will encompass all tourism and hiking on the mountain. A base camp for hikers and birders is being set up near the beautiful Morumbodzi Falls, which are on the mountain's western side at about 950m. From the camp, there are paths to the falls (about one hour's easy walk away), birding walks and overnight climbs to the summit (about six hours one-way). A booking office and information centre for the mountain and park is planned for Gorongosa town, where guides and porters can also be arranged. Meanwhile, to organise hikes contact park headquarters at travel@gorongosa.net. All fees (to be determined soon – watch the park website for details) will go to the local communities.

According to tradition, no red can be worn when climbing the mountain and the climb must be undertaken barefoot, though this latter requirement seems to be conveniently waived these days. This is just as well: the mountain receives about 2000mm of rain a year, and its wet, humid conditions, combined with the steepness of the path on the upper reaches, make the going slippery approaching the summit. Good shoes and a reasonable degree of fitness are essential.

To get to the Morumbodzi base camp area, follow the EN6 from Beira to the turn-off at Inchope. Continue north along the tarmac road, passing the turnoff for Gorongosa park and continuing another 25km or so further to Gorongosa town. About 10km beyond Gorongosa town, turn off the main highway to the right, and continue 10km along an unpaved track to the base camp. Once the booking and information office in Gorongosa town is open (reachable via public transport from Inchope), transfers will be available from there to the base camp.

CHIMOIO

Chimoio is the capital of Manica province, and Mozambique's fifth-largest town. While its tourist attractions are decidedly modest, it's a pleasant place with an agreeable climate and worth a stop if you're in the area. It's also the jumping-off point for exploring the Montes Chimanimani (Chimanimani Mountains) to the southwest.

About 5km northeast of town is **Cabeça do Velho**, a large rock that resembles the face of an old man at rest. To get here, take Rua do Bárue past Magarafa market and continue along the dirt road; you'll see the rock ahead of you in the distance. Once at the base, you can climb up in about 10 minutes to enjoy some views. As with all mountains and high places in Mozambique, there are legends and traditions associated with this one and locals may still offer a prayer to the spirits once at the top.

Information

The moneychangers loitering around the bus stand should be avoided.

BIM (Av 25 de Setembro) ATM.

Shoprite (EN6) ATM.

Standard Bank (cnr Av 25 de Setembro & Rua Patrice Lumumba) ATM.

TDM (cnr Ruas do Bárue & Patrice Lumumba) International calls.

TDM (Shoprite; per 30 min US\$1.20; ☎ 9am–8pm Mon–Sat, 9am–3pm Sun) Internet access.

Teledata (cnr Av 25 de Setembro & Rua Mossurize; per min US\$0.04; ☎ 8.30am–6pm Mon–Fri, 9am–2pm Sat) Internet access.

Sleeping

BUDGET

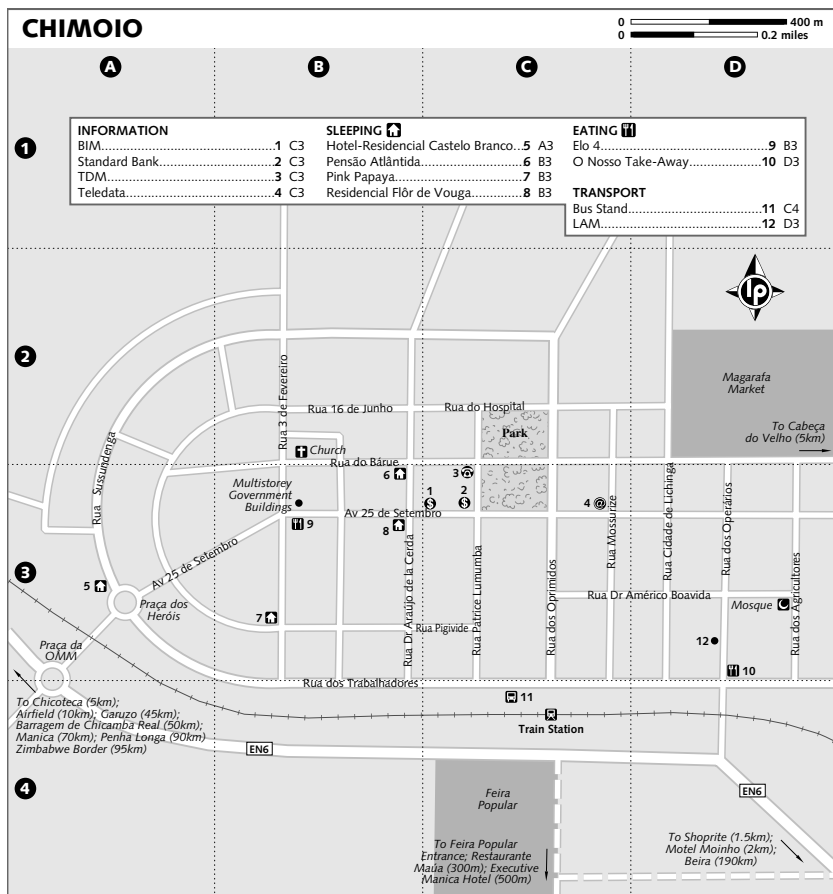
Pink Papaya (☎ 82-555 7310, 82-237 2980; <http://pinkpapaya.atspace.com>; cnr Ruas Pigivide & 3 de Fevereiro; camping per person US\$4, dm/d US\$8/24) A welcoming and popular backpackers and the best budget option, with camping, dorm beds and doubles, and a kitchen and braai area. The owner can sort you out with horse riding and excursions in the area (including to Parque Nacional de Gorongosa), plus visits up to Pink Papaya Forest Retreat (p116).

Residencial Flôr de Vouga (☎ 251-22469; cnr Av 25 de Setembro & Rua Dr Araújo de la Cerda; s/d US\$8/19) Above the old Banco Austral building, this homy place has a handful of no-frills, breezy rooms on the second floor, all with fan and clean shared bathroom, and some with balcony. Breakfast can be arranged for a modest extra cost.

SOFALA

About 40km south of Beira and just south of the Rio Búzi is the site of the ancient gold-trading port of **Sofala**, dating from at least the 9th century AD. Sofala's importance lay in its role as the major link between the gold trade of the interior and the powerful sultanate at Kilwa in present-day Tanzania. By the 15th century, it had become one of East Africa's most influential centres, with ties as far away as Madagascar, India and even Indonesia. San Caetano, the first Portuguese fort in Mozambique, was built at Sofala in 1505 with stones shipped from Portugal. However, soon after the Portuguese arrived, trade routes shifted northwards, Ilha de Moçambique eclipsed Sofala as the main coastal base and Sofala and its fort rapidly sunk into oblivion. Today nothing remains of Sofala's former glory. The ruins of the fort (which lay a few kilometres outside present-day Sofala) have been completely overtaken by the sea.

There is no tourist infrastructure at Sofala and unless you're an avid history buff, it's difficult to think of a persuasive reason to visit. To get here from Beira by public transport, take any bus heading along the EN6 towards Chimoio and get off at Tica, from where there is sporadic public transport south to Búzi along a rough road that's slated for rehabilitation. If you are approaching by road from the EN1, the turn-off is at Chiboma; ask locally about conditions from Chiboma to the coast. Alternatively, there's a daily ferry for US\$4 from Beira, which stops at various points along the coast, including the small modern-day port of Sofala.



Pensão Atlântida (☎ 251-22169; Rua do Bárue; s/d US\$12/20, r with bathroom US\$24, r with bathroom & air-con US\$32; 🚽) Inferior to the other options, but worth a look if elsewhere is full, with spacious, slightly musty rooms in a cavernous, noisy building near the post office. Formerly known as Pensão Flôr de Vouga.

MIDRANGE

Motel Moinho (☎ 251-24762; r US\$20, r in windmill US\$24-28) This atmospheric place has musty but pleasant rooms in an old windmill – all with views over the surrounding flower gardens and countryside – and simple, nicer and non-musty rooms in a separate building nearby. All have their own bathroom, fan, TV and hot water. It's about 2km east of town, and about

1km off the EN6 from Beira – inconvenient unless you have your own transport. Breakfast costs extra. If you're arriving from Beira via bus, ask to get dropped on the main road near the windmill (*moinho*) turnoff, to avoid the hike back from the bus station.

Hotel-Residencial Castelo Branco (☎ 251-23934; Rua Sussundenga; r without/with breakfast US\$50/62; 📶 🚽) The nicest rooms in town, in a large white house overlooking small gardens just off Praça dos Heróis, and frequented by business travellers and aid workers. Everything is modern and spiffy; the twin-bedded rooms come with bathroom, minifridge and a small balcony.

Executive Manica Hotel (☎ 251-23135; r/stc US\$65/100; 📶 🚽) This longstanding place is

Manica's only other upscale hotel, with efficient service, somewhat overfurnished but nevertheless comfortable rooms with TV in the main building and similarly appointed but better, brighter rooms around a small garden in an adjoining annexe. There's also a restaurant. It's near the Feira Popular and signposted off the eastern bypass road at the edge of town.

Eating

Elo 4 (Av 25 de Setembro; meals US\$3-8) Opposite the government building in the town centre, this is the most popular eatery in town, with good pizzas and Italian dishes.

O Nosso Take-Away (cnr Ruas dos Trabalhadores & dos Operários; meals from US\$1; 🕒 6am-10pm Wed-Mon) At the eastern edge of town near the railway tracks, and a reasonable choice for shoestring dining.

Chicoteca (meals from US\$4; 🕒 lunch & dinner Wed-Mon) Serves grills and standard fare. It's about 5km out of town: follow the main road west to the signposted turnoff. Go south from here for about 500m, then left for 250m, then left again to the restaurant.

The Feira Popular at the southern edge of town has several good restaurants (most closed on Monday), including the longstanding **Maúa** (meals from US\$2; 🕒 lunch & dinner Tue-Sun), with local fare.

Self-caterers can try **Shoprite** (EN6), 2km east of the town centre.

Getting There & Around

AIR

There are several flights weekly on **LAM** (☎ 251-22531; Rua dos Operários, at Mafúia Comercial) to Vilankulo, Tete and Maputo. The airfield is 10km from town, and signposted about 5km west of Chimoio along the Manica road.

BUS & CHAPA

All transport leaves from near the train station. To Tete, there's a daily bus departing Chimoio at 4am (US\$9, six hours), and sometimes continuing on to Zóbuè on the Malawi border. Chapas and minibuses to Beira (US\$5, three hours) run throughout the day, as do chapas to Manica (US\$1.80, one hour) and on to the border.

For Quelimane, you'll need to make your way in stages via Inchope and Caia. Watch for touts trying to sell you 'direct' tickets – you'll still need to get out at Inchope and wait for northbound transport.

To Vilankulo, there's a direct bus leaving daily at 4am (US\$14, 10 hours). Otherwise, you'll need to go via Beira (and overnight there), or get out at Inchope and wait there for southbound transport.

TAXI

Chimoio has a couple of taxis – look for them in front of the park on Av 25 de Setembro or by the market, or ask your hotel to ring one.

AROUND CHIMOIO

About halfway between Chimoio and Manica is the placid **Barragem de Chicamba Real** (Chicamba Real Dam), set among low hills and popular with bass anglers. The sporadically functioning **Casa Msika** (☎ 251-66009; fax 251-22675; camping per person US\$5, d US\$30, 3-bed rondavels US\$50) has camping, plus faded rooms and rondavels overlooking the lake. There's a restaurant, though it's sometimes closed. Call or ask around in Chimoio for an update before heading out, as the complex was only erratically open when this book was researched and its future was uncertain. The signposted turnoff is about 45km west of Chimoio, from where



it's 4km further south to Casa Msika. There's no public transport from the turnoff.

Opposite the turnoff for Barragem de Chicamba Real and about 10km north of the main road is sleepy **Garuzo**, once a busy stop on the train line and now a very quiet town. Nearby is a small waterfall. The road running through Garuzo used to be the main Chimoio–Manica route before the highway was built.

About 100km northwest of Chimoio and about 6km off the road to Tete is **Pink Papaya Forest Retreat** (☎ 82-555 7310, in Zimbabwe 091-207064; helenmlarge@hotmail.com; camping per person US\$5, dm US\$10, rondavels per person US\$15, day excursions including lunch about US\$20), a camping and self-catering place under the same management as Pink Papaya backpackers in Chimoio and not yet open when this book was researched. It's set on a large farm southeast of Catandica. In addition to camping and a dorm, rondavels are planned, as is a bar. The owner plans to offer canoe trips along the river, hikes or biking in the forest and other excursions. Check with Pink Papaya for an update. Watch for the signposted turnoff 6km north of the Rio Púngoè bridge.

MANICA

Tiny, picturesque Manica, 70km west of Chimoio, is situated in what was once the heart of the kingdom of Manica and an important gold trading area. About 5km from town are the **Chinamapere rock paintings**. To get here, go west from Manica about 3km, and then south along a dirt road, following signs for '*pinturas rupestres*'. The site of the paintings is considered sacred by local residents, and before your visit, an elderly lady will conduct a brief prayer ceremony. According to tradition, no pregnant or menstruating women can visit the site.

Several kilometres south of Manica is **Vumba** (which means 'mist' in the local Manika language) and the bottling plant for Mozambique's Água Vumba mineral water.

There's an ATM at **BIM Expresso** (EN6).

Sleeping & Eating

Pensão Flamingo (☎ 251-62385; r US\$18) On the main road, a few blocks west of BIM Expresso, this spiffy place has simple rooms – all with bathroom and fan – plus a garden and a restaurant.

Motel Guida (☎ 251-62437; r US\$14-26) In the unlikely event that Pensão Flamingo is full,

THE MUTASA

Since long before colonial boundaries were drawn, the people of Penha Longa have been loyal to the *mutasa*, the dynastic title of the ruler of the kingdom of Manica, who controls the area from present-day Mutare (Zimbabwe). Despite a divisive 1891 Anglo-Portuguese treaty that put western Penha Longa under British control, and the eastern part under Portuguese control, cross-border ties remain strong and Mozambican residents of Penha Longa still profess loyalty to Nyakwanikwa (the present-day *mutasa*) in Mutare.

this hotel is a decent budget alternative, with spacious, no-frills rooms with fan and shared bathroom. It's at the western edge of town just before the turnoff for Manica Lodge. Meals can be arranged.

Manica Lodge (☎ 251-62452; manica.lodge@teledata.mz; small/large rondavels US\$20/30, 6-person house US\$40) At the western end of town, and about 400m off the main road (watch for the signposted turnoff just after the immigration office), this amenable place has stone rondavels scattered around tranquil, manicured gardens. The larger ones are nice – all reasonably spacious, with TV and private bathrooms. In back are several less appealing rondavels that are tiny, and without TV. There's also a restaurant and a three-room self-catering house.

Also recommended:

Estalagem Selva (☎ 82-5702480; EN6; r with fan & bathroom US\$20, swimming pool per person US\$1; 🚰) About 42km east of Manica, with sterile rooms in large grounds with a restaurant and a tiny tourist information centre. Mostly used as a day getaway from Chimoio.

O Outro Lado (EN6; meals US\$3-4) A small restaurant along the main road at the edge of the pine forest, about 25km east of Manica.

Getting There & Away

All transport departs from the market, diagonally opposite BIM Expresso. Chapas run frequently to/from Chimoio (US\$1.80, one hour) and to the Zimbabwe border (US\$0.60, 30 minutes). Four times weekly (currently Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday), there are direct chapas from Manica to Rotanda village in the Montes Chimanimani. Ask the driver to drop you at 'Paragem do João' (two to three hours from Manica), which

is within a 1km walk of the campsite at the base of Monte Tsetserra (see p118).

PENHA LONGA

The mountainous Penha Longa area straddles the border with Zimbabwe, beginning about 20km north of Manica. It's cool and scenic and offers many walks, all of which can be easily undertaken from the local accommodation spots. Although there is plenty of local cross-border activity, the only official border crossing is between Machipanda and Mutare (Zimbabwe) on the main road.

Penha Longa is home to the Shona people, and you'll see their traditional painted dwelling compounds dotting the hillsides. These typically consist of a cluster of buildings, including a large round kitchen which often doubles as a children's sleeping area. Nearby is a smaller square building, usually raised off the ground by a few stones at the corners and used by adults for sleeping. There are often small storage areas on the compound as well. The dwellings are made of brick and then layered with ochre-, grey- and olive-coloured clays. The distinctive decorations on the outside walls are achieved by mixing various types of clay which are then embellished with paints made from natural pigments, most often in designs of black and white.

It's sometimes possible to arrange to sleep at **Casa Gaswa** (rondavel US\$6), a simple three-person rondavel in the Mutombomwe area of Penha Longa. Bring food and drink from Manica; hiking guides can be arranged. If Casa Gaswa is occupied, you can also pitch a tent on the grounds for a negotiable fee or arrange something with local villagers. Better – ask the caretaker to show you the way to **Quinta**

da Fronteira, an old mansion about 3km from Casa Gaswa with a refreshing stream nearby. It's slowly being rehabilitated, but meanwhile they have a few basic rooms and you can camp. You'll need to bring your own food and drink here, too. For information in Manica, contact Dinis Zandamela (☎ 251-62217, 251-62222) at Kwaedza Simukai Manica, opposite the market.

Getting There & Away

Chapas run several times daily between Manica and Penha Longa (US\$1, one hour). From the chapa terminus in Penha Longa, it's a 20-minute walk to Mutombomwe and Casa Gaswa, and from there, 3km further to Quinta da Fronteira. Ask locals to point the way.

Driving, turn north at the intersection in the centre of Manica town towards the market. Continue past the market, staying left at the first fork, then right at the second. Mutombomwe bairro is reached after about 20km. Casa Gaswa will be on the hillside to your left. The road is unpaved, but in reasonable condition during the dry season.

MONTES CHIMANIMANI

Silhouetted against the horizon on the Zimbabwe border southwest of Chimoio are the Montes Chimanimani, with Monte Binga (2436m), Mozambique's highest peak, rising up on their eastern edge. The mountains are beautiful – with stands of pine and mahogany – and exceptionally biodiverse, and together with Chimanimani National Park in Zimbabwe have been designated part of a transfrontier conservation area. Chimanimani is particularly notable for its abundance of

A LEGEND OF PENHA LONGA

During the late 19th century, Penha Longa lay in the centre of a disputed area. To the west were the lands of the kingdom of Manica. To the southeast was the territory of the powerful Gaza chief Ngungunhane.

These two kingdoms had long been enemies, and Ngungunhane's troops staged frequent raids into Manica. To protect themselves from the invaders, the people of Penha Longa would send heralds up the mountain to Mudododo village (on what is now the Zimbabwe border), from where they had wide views down over the valleys. When these heralds saw the forces of Ngungunhane coming, they would notify the villagers, who would set out roots from a certain plant for the invaders and then flee the village. Although this type of root closely resembled yam, a local staple, it was actually poisonous. The invaders were not able to tell the difference and would eat it and then fall ill. In this way, the residents of Penha Longa were able to protect themselves and resist the Gaza invaders.

plants. At least 50 unique species have been identified here, many of which are prized for their medicinal value by traditional healers. There is also a multitude of birds, including the rare southern banded snake eagle and the barred cuckoo. Rounding out the picture are bushbuck, eland, sable, duiker, klipspringer and countless smaller animals.

Like the Penha Longa area to the north, the Montes Chimanimani have a long history and rich traditional life. Rock paintings similar to those at Chinamapere (see p116) have been found at several locations. Many of the rivers and pools in this area are considered sacred by local communities, as are some of the forest areas in the foothills of the mountains, and some of the peaks themselves. Traditional beekeeping is widely practised and you're likely to see odd-looking hives (made from the bark of *brachystegia* trees) hanging from tree branches.

Hiking in the Montes Chimanimani

There's a fledgling network of very rustic campsites and hikes (ranging from several days up to a week) for anyone wanting to explore the mountains and surrounding plains on foot. Everything's very basic and access is limited during the rainy season, but if you're self-sufficient, have access to a good 4WD and don't mind doing without the amenities, it's a good way to get acquainted with the local culture. For help arranging guides (which can also be arranged at the campsites), stop by the **Direcção Provincial de Agricultura** (DPA; ☎ 251-22075, 251-22706; Rua Pigivide; 🕒 7.30am-3.30pm Mon-Fri) in Chimoio and ask for the Chimanimani section.

The easiest camp to reach is Tsetserra Camp, at the base of Monte Tsetserra, and reachable on public transport from both Chimoio and Manica. From here, you can climb through some beautiful forest to the top of Monte Tsetserra (five hours return), or do various day or overnight walks. At the summit are the ruins of an old mansion, and another area where you can camp.

Another option (reachable only by 4WD) is the camp at Chikukwa village, which is scenically located in a valley surrounded by forest, and which is the base for climbing Monte Binga, as well as for other hikes. There are also camps at the low-lying Zomba, (reachable by public transport) and several other villages.

For all hikes, you'll need to have a guide, and be fully self-sufficient. Waterproofing your gear is also a good idea, as is bringing along a bag to pack out your trash. Chimoio is the best place for stocking up for hikes. Before heading off, it's worth having a chat with your guide to sort out who is expected to bring what food and supplies. Fees are about US\$5 per day for a guide, US\$3 per meal, and US\$8 per two-person hut. Stick to beaten paths to avoid the dangers of old landmines.

Climbing Monte Binga

The main way to climb Monte Binga is to approach from Zimbabwe. If you have your own transport, it's also possible to climb from Mozambique, beginning at Chikukwa Camp on the Zimbabwe border (see preceding section). Allow a total of four days for the climb from Mozambique, including travel time between Chimoio and Chikukwa. You'll need to be self-sufficient with food and water and a guide is essential (best arranged at Chikukwa Camp).

Getting There & Away

The best access to the Chimanimani area on the Mozambique side is from Chimoio via Mavita and Rotanda. For Monte Tsetserra and Tsetserra Camp, take the signposted turnoff for Barragem de Chicamba Real for about 15km southwards to the dam administration buildings. From here, continue southeast (4WD) as the road winds scenically for about 60km to the top of Tsetserra peak.

To reach Chikukwa Camp on your own steam, take a chapa from Chimoio to Sussendenga, from where you'll need to wait for another vehicle going towards Mavita and Rotanda. After passing Mavita, watch for the signposted Chimanimani/Chimbuwane turnoff, from where it's about 30km further on foot to Chikukwa (a guide is necessary). For self-drivers, 4WD is essential.

TETE

Dry, dusty Tete doesn't have much in the way of tourist attractions and its reputation as one of the hottest places in Mozambique often discourages visitors. Yet, the arid, brown landscape, dotted with baobab trees and cut by the wide swathe of the Rio Zambezi, gives it a unique charm and an atmosphere quite unlike that of Mozambique's other provincial capitals.

History

Tete was an important Swahili Arab trading outpost well before the arrival of the Portuguese and today remains a major transport junction. It grew to significance during the 16th and 17th centuries when it served as a departure point for trade caravans to the gold fields further inland. At the end of the 17th century, it was all but abandoned when the Portuguese lost their foothold in the hinterlands. In the 18th century, it again began to prosper with the opening of the gold fair at Zumbo to the west and the expansion of goldmining north of the Zambezi. It became a regional administrative centre in 1767, and a hospital and a house for the governor were built. More recently, Tete received a boost with the building of the dam at Cahora Bassa, which opened in 1974. Today, with a population of roughly 50,000, it is one of the major towns in the Mozambican interior.

The main languages are Nyungwe, around Tete city; Chewa near the Malawi border; and Ngoni.

Information

BIM Expresso (Av Julius Nyerere) ATM.

Immigration office (Rua Macombre) A few blocks up from Hotel Zambeze.

MBC Internet Café (Av Julius Nyerere; per min US\$0.04; 🕒 7.30am-noon & 2pm-5.30pm Mon-Fri, 8am-1pm Sat) Diagonally opposite and up from Prédios Univerdadas.

Standard Bank (cnr Av Julius Nyerere & Av da Independência) ATM and can change cash dollars; next to Hotel Zambeze.

TDM (Av 25 de Junho; 🕒 7am-10pm) Domestic and international telephone calls.

Sights & Activities

Tete's main sights are the impressive 538m-long **suspension bridge** that spans the Rio Zambezi and the remains of an old Portuguese **fort** on the river near the bridge.

TETE PROVINCE

Tete province is an anomaly within Mozambique, lying inland and almost divided from the rest of the country by Malawi. While the south is hot and arid, northern Tete, much of which lies at altitude, enjoys a delightfully cool climate, with beautiful hill panoramas. Tete is also interesting as one of the few areas of Mozambique (in addition to Cabo Delgado) where you'll see masked dancing.

About 25km northwest of Tete overlooking the river is the **Missão de Boroma** (Boroma Mission). Founded in 1885 by Jesuit missionaries, it was known for its school (*colégio*), its carpentry-training centre and its attractive church. After being abandoned for many years, activities have recommenced on a small scale.

Northeast of Tete near the Malawi border is the district of **Angónia**, which is set on a plateau between 1000m and 1500m in altitude, and has a wonderfully cool and refreshing climate, especially if you've just come from Tete. It's also a scenic area and good for walks, although there are no tourist facilities. Ulóngwe, its pleasant capital, is just 20km west of the border and is closely tied into the Malawian economy; kwacha are accepted here as well as meticals.

Sleeping

Hotel Zambeze (☎ 252-23100/3; Av Eduardo Mondlane; s/d US\$10/14, with air-con from US\$16/22; 🏠) Cheap and centrally located, but otherwise highly unappealing, this cavernous, grey high-rise is the main budget option. Rooms are moderately clean, the shared bathrooms less so (and they don't have hot water, despite what staff may tell you). There's also a restaurant. It's in the lower part of town next to Standard Bank.

Complexo Piscina (☎ 252-23079; s/d/tr US\$12/20/24; 🏠) Piscina, on the riverbank under the bridge, is a step or two up, with small but tolerable rooms – all with their own bathroom – and a restaurant. Breakfast costs extra.

Prédios Univerdadas (☎ 252-23198/9, 252-22670; Av Julius Nyerere; s/d US\$22/31, with bathroom from US\$42/52; 🏠) The entrance to the rooms (most with fan, air-con, TV and shared bathroom) is just around the corner from the Univerdadas shop on Av da Independência.

Motel Tete (☎ 252-22345; EN103; r US\$42; 🏠) On the river about 1km past Piscina, and about 25 minutes on foot from the town centre along the main road to Changara, this unassuming place is Tete's most upmarket option. The low-ceilinged but spacious rooms have private bathroom, TV and placid river views with breezes. There's a good restaurant (no alcohol) and helpful management.

Eating

Pastelaria Confiança (Av 25 de Junho; snacks & light meals from US\$0.80; 🕒 7.30am-8pm Mon-Sat; 🏠) Clean and cool (good air-con), with a good selection of

snacks, hamburgers, omelettes and other light meals, plus pastries and beverages.

Pino's Pizza (Av Eduardo Mondlane; pizzas from US\$2.50; 🍷 dinner) This Italian-run place on the ground floor of Hotel Zambeze (go right from reception) has the best pizza in town, with fresh cheese and lots of trimmings.

Freitas (meals US\$6-8; 🍷 lunch & dinner Wed-Mon) Next door to Piscina and known for its chicken *zambezi*.

Of the hotels, **Motel Tete** (☎ 252-22345; EN103; meals from US\$3) has the best dining, with riverside views, a good menu selection and relatively fast service. **Supermercado Tete** (Av 25 de Junho) is the best bet for self-caterers.

Drinking & Entertainment

Good spots to enjoy a cool drink while watching the sun set over the Zambezi include the outdoor patio at Motel Tete, or (only go in a group) any of the small bars lining the river under the bridge.

Casa de Cultura (Av Eduardo Mondlane), near the Municipal Garden III Congresso at the lower end of town, provides information on upcoming cultural events.

Getting There & Away

AIR

There are flights on **LAM** (☎ 252-22056; Av 24 de Julho) connecting Tete three to four times weekly with Maputo, Beira, Lichinga, Nam-pula, Quelimane and Chimoio.

The airport is 6km out of town on the Moatize road; take any chapa heading to Moatize. There are no taxis.

BUS & CHAPA

For Malawi, chapas run to Zóbuè (US\$2, two hours) and Dedza from Mercado da OUA on the western side of town. At the border

you'll need to change to Malawian transport. The daily bus from Chimoio also continues on to Zóbuè, departing Tete about 10am from Av 25 de Junho, down from Pastelaria Confiança. Alternatively, catch the bus that stops in Tete on its route between Harare and Blantyre.

For Harare (Zimbabwe), take a chapa from Mercado 1 de Maio (along Av 25 de Junho) to Changara (US\$2.80, 1½ hours) and get transport from there. Another (pricier) option is to wait at the intersection of the bridge road and the road to Harare and try to catch one of the daily Harare-Blantyre buses.

For Zambia, take a Moatize chapa over the bridge past the SOS compound to the petrol station, where you'll find chapas to Matema, and from there, infrequent transport to Casacatiza (on the border).

For Chimoio (US\$9, six hours), all transport leaves from opposite Prédio Emose near Prédios Univendas, with the first departures between 4.30am and 5am.

Chapas to Moatize (US\$0.35) depart throughout the day from the Moatize bus stand on Rua do Qua.

To Songo (for Barragem de Cahora Bassa), several pick-ups depart daily from the old Correios (post office) building in the lower part of town near the cathedral.

The Tete to Lichinga journey via Blantyre and Mandimba is best done in stages.

To Boroma, there are occasional direct chapas leaving from Mercado da OUA. It's possible to hitch, although the going is slow. The best place to wait is at the Boroma road junction, about 1.5km west of Mercado da OUA.

To Ulóngwe, there is at least one direct chapa departing daily from Mercado da OUA. Otherwise, take any car heading to Zóbuè, get out at the Angónia junction about 15km

before Zóbuè and get onward transport from there.

The management at Motel Tete can help arrange car rental; expect to pay about US\$100 per day plus fuel.

BARRAGEM DE CAHORA BASSA & SONGO

About 150km northwest of Tete near the town of Songo is massive Cahora Bassa, the fifth-largest dam in the world. The dam, which was completed in 1974, is set at the head of a magnificent gorge in the mountains and makes a good day or overnight trip from Tete. It's also a wonderful destination for anglers, and is renowned for its tiger fish.

History

Barragem de Cahora Bassa had its beginnings during the colonial era, when it was proposed as a means of flood control and for water storage to irrigate plantations downstream. The scheme was later enlarged to include a hydroelectric power station, with South Africa agreeing to buy most of the energy. Construction of the dam was highly politicised, with the Portuguese government intending it as a statement of its permanent presence in the region. Plans were made to place up to one million settlers, white and African, on the new farmland that the dam waters would irrigate. This was vigorously opposed by Frelimo. Party leadership viewed Cahora Bassa as a perpetuation of white minority rule in Southern Africa and made blocking the dam's construction a major objective in the late 1960s. Opposition was organised on an international scale, as sympathetic groups in Western countries worked to discourage private investment.

Ultimately the contracts were signed and, despite repeated Frelimo attacks during construction, the massive undertaking was completed in 1974. To move all the equipment needed for the dam, existing roads and railways had to be modified, and a suspension bridge was built across the Zambezi at Tete. While resettlement of people living in the area was not as great a problem as it was with the construction of the nearby Kariba Dam on the Zambia-Zimbabwe border, more than 24,000 new homes had to be built.

Yet, three decades after its construction, Cahora Bassa has not come close to fulfilling early expectations. One major reason was

LAGO CAHORA BASSA

Lago Cahora Bassa, the lake created by the dam, stretches for 270km westwards to the confluence of the Zambezi and Luangwa rivers on the Zambian border, and has the potential to generate more than 3500 megawatts of energy – enough to illuminate the entire region. En route, it partially covers the thundering Cahora Bassa rapids, which blocked David Livingstone's attempt to find a direct route through Rio Zambezi in the late 1850s.

destruction of power lines by Renamo rebels in the 1980s. Even after repairs were completed, power supplies remained grounded by contractual and pricing disputes between Mozambique, South Africa and Portugal. Silt has been another impediment. Most of it is brought in via the Luangwa River, where overgrazing and poor farming practices lead to soil erosion and turn the waters muddy brown. Now, with the late 2005 agreement for a turnover of majority control from Portugal to Mozambique, perhaps the dam finally has a chance of reaching its potential.

Information

The dam can be visited, including the impressive underground turbine rooms. To arrange a tour, contact the offices of **Hidroeléctrica de Cahora Bassa** (HCB; ☎ 252-82157, 252-82221/4; rp.sng@hcb.co.mz) in Songo town and ask for Relações Públicas (Public Relations), which will help you organise things. There's no charge for a visit, and permits are no longer necessary to enter Songo. If you're already in Songo, ask locals to point you towards the HCB office in the 'substituição' (substation).

Sleeping & Eating

Centro Social do HCB (☎ 252-82215, 252-82454, 252-82508; r/stc US\$30/36; 🍷) This pleasant place in the town centre has clean and comfortable twinbedded rooms – all with fridge, window screens and private bathrooms with hot water – set in large manicured green grounds. Breakfast costs extra. Also here is **Restaurante O Teles** (meals US\$5 to US\$10).

Gezi Tiger Lodge (☎ 82-599 8410, fax 252-82049; c61@mweb.co.za; camping per person US\$11, chalets per person US\$19-25, with air-con US\$23-30; 🍷) Anglers – or anyone wanting an escape to nature – will

RIO ZAMBEZI

The mighty Zambezi tumbles into Mozambique at Zumbo in western Tete province and flows about 1000km through the country before spilling into the sea near Chinde, south of Quelimane.

Up to 8km wide at points, it has long served as a highway between the coast and the interior. Among the notables it has carried was Livingstone, who took a paddle steamer upriver from the Zambezi delta to Tete before his progress was thwarted by the Cahora Bassa rapids. Earlier, Arab traders had made their way upriver at least as far as Sena and Tete, and the Portuguese had built settlements near the river delta in the hope of gaining access to western gold fields.

Apart from the Caia ferry (soon to be replaced by a bridge), the only links over the Mozambican portion of the river are the suspension bridge at Tete and the Dona Ana bridge between Mutarara and Sena.

love this rustic fishing camp perched on a hill overlooking Lago Cahora Bassa. There's a choice of camping (tent rental possible), or accommodation in chalets on the densely vegetated hillside, some with air-con and private bathroom. It's all very no-frills but the morning scenery on the lake at the base of the property (there's no beachfront) is beautiful. Boats are available for fishing charters and for lake tours up towards the dam. It's about 14km from Songo town and 6km beyond the dam. The restaurant (meals from about US\$11) serves superb grilled fish.

Getting There & Away

There are frequent charter flights between Tete and Songo; check with listed accommodation for details or ask at the airfield about seat availability.

Chapas run several times daily between Tete and Songo (US\$4, three to four hours), departing Tete from the old *correios* (post office) building. Once in Songo, it's another 7km down to the dam, which you'll have to either walk or hitch. Ugezi Tiger Lodge does pick-ups from Tete.

ZÔBUÊ

Zôbuê, 115km northeast of Tete, is the main border town between Tete province and Malawi. There are a few basic *pensões*, and numerous moneychangers. Several vehicles go between here and Tete (US\$2, two hours) daily. For more on getting to/from Malawi, see p186.

ZUMBO

Remote Zumbo's history dates back to at least 1715, when the Portuguese established a gold trading fair at the eastern edge of the Luangwa River at its confluence with the Zambezi. The settlement grew rapidly and by the mid-18th century was one of the most prosperous European cities in Southern Africa, with numerous Portuguese trading houses. This boom was shortlived, and by 1765, Zumbo's wealth began to decline. The difficult overland journey along the Zambezi from Tete, shifting trade patterns, the town's fragile economic foundation and drought were all factors. By the mid-19th century, Zumbo had been all but abandoned and today it is little more than an oversized village.

Near Zumbo is **Tchuma Tchato** (camping per person US\$3, bungalows per person US\$10), a community-based

natural resources project in which the local community has organised itself to bring a halt to poaching of local wildlife – elephants and other large animals abound – and earn some revenue. They run a small campsite here on the bank of the Rio Zambezi opposite Zumbo and about 5km from the Zimbabwe border. There are also some basic bungalows with shared facilities and meals can be arranged, though it's best to bring food supplies with you. Soda and beer are sometimes available at the camp, but bring drinking water or a filter. For more details, or to arrange a booking, contact the **Direcção Provincial do Turismo** (☎ 252-24225; dpturismo@teledata.mz; Rua 3 de Fevereiro) in Tete.

Well southeast of Zumbo, on the southern side of Lago Cahora Bassa, are several hunting concessions that also cater to anglers. Access is via Mukumbura on the Zimbabwe border, or from Tete via Chinhanda (there's a fishing camp just west of Chinhanda). If you're interested in these, contact www.tgsafari.co.za for more information.

The easiest access to Zumbo from Tete is via Zimbabwe. On the Mozambican side, you can reliably get as far as Fingoé (north of the lake, and at the midway point between Songo and Zumbo) via public transport. From Fingoé to Zumbo, there's no public transport, but the road is passable with a good 4WD.

SENA & MUTARARA

About 250km downstream from Tete along the Zambezi are the twin villages of Sena and Mutarara, known for the 3.6km Dona Ana railway bridge (built in 1934) which spans the river here. The bridge has been converted to take vehicles; it's open from sunrise to sunset, and – because of its narrow width – alternates directions roughly every hour. There are a few basic *pensões* in both towns, including Pensão São Francisco in Mutarara, and Mira Zambezi in Sena. The river here is known for its hippos, which you can sometimes see if you happen to be flying over in a charter flight, or by asking the *pensão* to help you organise a local boat.

From Mutarara, you can continue north on an unpaved but reasonable road and a generally hassle-free border crossing into Malawi, or eastwards over the Shire River (bridged by a small ferry, US\$2) and then on to Morumbala (where there's a good *pensão*) and the main road to Quelimane.

CAIA

About 60km further downstream is Caia, the main north-south crossing point. There's no accommodation worthy of the name in Caia itself, but in Catapu, 32km south of Caia along the main road, is the very good **M'phingwe Camp** (www.dalman.com; s/d cabins US\$18/24, with bathroom US\$22/30), with six rustic but spotless double cabins sharing facilities, plus one with its own bathroom. Breakfast can be arranged with advance notice (US\$6.50) and there's a restaurant with steaks and other meals (US\$6.50 to US\$9) and cold drinks. Although most people just stop for an overnight en route north, the surrounding forest is a rewarding birding area and worth longer exploration. M'phingwe can also be used as a base for climbing Monte Gorongosa (p112) and a guide can be arranged at the camp. The turnoff is signposted on the main road, from where M'phingwe is about 2km further.

The road from Inchope to Caia via Gorongosa village is good tarmac the entire way. From Caia northwards, it's being rehabilitated, though it's in reasonable shape as far as Alto Molôcúe.

Work has started on a bridge over the Zambezi, which should be completed around 2010. For now, the river at Caia is crossed by two ferries (per vehicle with driver US\$4, per person US\$0.05) that run roughly every half hour or so from 7am to 5pm, except at midday when the captains take off to have lunch.

MARROMEU

Marromeu is an old sugar-growing centre beside the Rio Zambezi, dating back to the late 19th century when the Portuguese Sugar Society of East Africa built a plantation and sugar factory here. After many years of neglect, the factory has been rehabilitated under Mauritian ownership, and is now Mozambique's largest sugar processing mill. There is no infrastructure to speak of other than that connected with the sugar company.

About 45km upriver from Marromeu is the town of **Chupanga**, where Mary Moffat, wife of the missionary and explorer David Livingstone, is buried. She died here on 17 April 1862.

South of Marromeu begin the extensive wetlands of the Rio Zambezi delta, which are home to a wealth of water birds, including wattled crane, flamingo and pelican. On the coast is the **Reserva de Marromeu** (Marromeu Reserve) which formerly was known for its

vast herds of buffalo – put by some estimates at about 55,000 in the 1970s. Today, only a fraction of that number remain, although plans are underway for restocking. For now, the area is of interest primarily to hunters (there are several hunting concessions here) and birders – in 2003, it was proclaimed as a 'wetland of international importance' under the Ramsar convention.

In Marromeu, there's accommodation at the basic **Pensão Domino** (☎ 23-640420; r about US\$16). It's better, however, to base yourself at Catapu and explore the area from there.

Getting There & Away

There is an airstrip at Marromeu for charter planes. Chapas go daily to Marromeu from both Inhamitanga and Caia.

QUELIMANE

Bustling Quelimane is the capital of Mozambique's densely populated Zambézia province and heartland of the Chuabo people. While lacking the architectural charm of some other Mozambican towns – with the exception of the abandoned Portuguese **cathedral** near the waterfront, and the nearby **mosque** – its compact size and energetic atmosphere make it an agreeable place to break your travels.

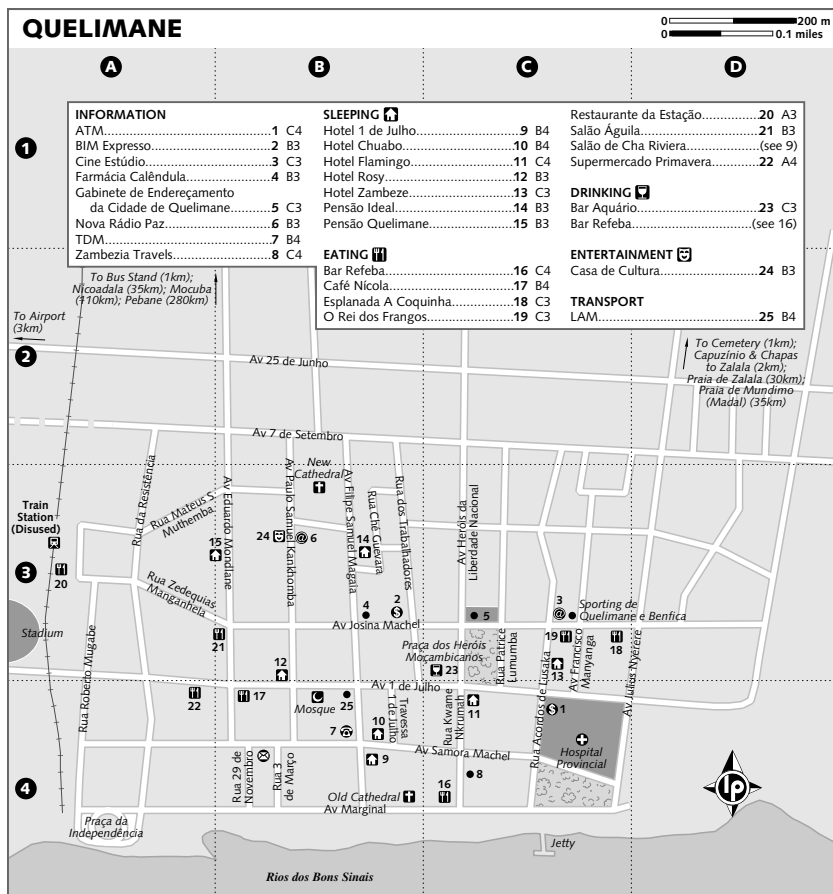
Well outside town are several **beaches** that can't rival the coastal stretches further north or south, but make good getaways if you're based in Quelimane longer term. The **riverfront** is at its best at sunset.

History

Quelimane stands on the site of an old Arab trading settlement dating to at least the 15th century and built on the banks of the Rio dos Bons Sinais in the days when this was still linked to the Rio Zambezi. Until the 19th century, when the river channel became clogged with silt, Quelimane served as the main entry port to the interior. It was also an important export point for agricultural products, and a major slave-trading centre. Today few traces of this long history are evident and, apart from the cathedral, almost no old buildings remain.

Information

The excellent series of maps done by Coopération Française in collaboration with the local Conselho Municipal covers Quelimane – *Planta de Endereçamento da Cidade de Quelimane*. It's hard to find – try **Gabinete de Endereçamento da**



Cidade de Quelimane (☎ 24-214912; 558 Av Josina Machel) in the Conselho Municipal building.

INTERNET ACCESS

Cine Estúdio (cnr Av Josina Machel & Rua Acordos de Lusaka, 1st fl; per min US\$0.04; ☎ 7am-8pm Mon-Fri, 8am-7pm Sat) A few computers and a sporadically functioning internet connection; while waiting, head to the tiny café next door, with views down onto lively basketball games at the adjoining sports club.

Nova Rádio Paz (Av Paulo Samuel Kankhomba; ☎ in theory 8.30am-8pm) Quelimane's only other internet connection; opposite the Casa da Cultura.

MEDICAL SERVICES

Farmácia Calêndula (☎ 24-213393; Av Josina Machel; ☎ 8am-8pm Mon-Sat, 9am-1pm Sun)

MONEY

ATM (Hospital Provincial, cnr Rua Acordos de Lusaka & Av Samora Machel)

BIM Expresso (Av Josina Machel)

TELEPHONE

TDM (cnr Avs Samora Machel & Filipe Samuel Magaia) Near Hotel Chuabo.

TRAVEL AGENCIES

Zambezia Travels (☎ 24-216174; www.zambezia.ch; Rua Kwame Nkrumah) A recommended Swiss-Mozambican run travel agency specialising in Mozambique north of the Rio Save, and the best contact for arranging visits to Gurúé, climbing Monte Namúli, and anything else in central Mozambique. It's on a small side street diagonally opposite Hotel Chuabo and just off Av Samora Machel.

Sleeping BUDGET

Hotel 1 de Julho (cnr Av Samora Machel & Rua Felipe Samuel Magaia; tw US\$16, with bathroom & air-con US\$28) Near the old cathedral, this reasonable budget choice has no-frills rooms, all with fan and sink, and meals available (breakfast costs extra).

Pensão Quelimane (☎ 24-212359; Av Eduardo Mondlane; s/d/tw US\$12/14/16, with bathroom & air-con from US\$18/22/24; ☎) More no-frills rooms (not quite as good as those at Hotel 1 de Julho), and no breakfast.

Hotel Rosy (☎ 24-214969, 24-213825; cnr Avs 1 de Julho & Paulo Samuel Kankhomba; s/d US\$24/28; ☎) Centrally located near the central mosque, this place has quite decent rooms – those on the ground floor have air-con, while those upstairs are marginally nicer, but with fan only. Breakfast is included in the price, and meals can be arranged.

Other recommendations:

Pensão Ideal (☎ 24-212731; Av Filipe Samuel Magaia; s/tw US\$13/18, d with bathroom US\$20) Ideal only for its price, with musty, stuffy rooms with sagging beds and continental breakfast.

Hotel Zambezi (Rua Acordos de Lusaka; s/d US\$10/14) Reasonably clean rooms, a shiny floor leading out to a small courtyard and bucket baths. Breakfast costs extra.

MIDRANGE

Hotel Flamengo (☎ 24-215602; sogetra@teledata.mz; cnr Rua Kwame Nkrumah & Av 1 de Julho; s/d US\$50/60; ☎) This nice and newish place, under the same management as Restaurante da Estação, has quite decent rooms, all with bathroom and air-con, plus a small pool (entry per adult/child US\$2/US\$3) and a tiny gym. Full breakfast is included in the price.

Hotel Chuabo (☎ 24-213181/2; fax 24-213812; Av Samora Machel; s/d US\$56/60; ☎) The Chuabo is a Quelimane institution – one of the few hotels anywhere in the country that managed to stay running throughout the war years. The large rooms come with TV, fridge and air-con, and many with views over the river. The rooftop restaurant (meals from US\$6) has reasonable meals, waiters in starched shirts and views over town. It's rumoured that the hotel will soon undergo renovations and an upgrade, so get an update before booking.

Eating

Quelimane has plenty of cafés that offer light meals starting at about US\$3, including **Café Nicola** (Av 1 de Julho); **Salão Águila** (cnr Avs Josina Machel

& Eduardo Mondlane) next to Cinema Águila; and the less atmospheric but spiffier **Salão de Cha Riviera** (cnr Avs Samora Machel & Felipe Samuel Magaia), underneath Hotel 1 de Julho. **O Rei dos Frangos** (Av Josina Machel), opposite Sporting de Quelimane e Benfica has takeaway grilled chickens with fries for US\$4.

Esplanada A Coquinha (cnr Avs Josina Machel & Julius Nyerere; meals from US\$4; ☎ lunch & dinner) Opposite and about 100m past Cinema Benfica, this is one of the best places to try local Zambézia cuisine. There's a large menu selection, outdoor seating under a few large, thatched shelters, and a Sunday lunch buffet (US\$6) featuring local dishes.

Bar Refeba (Av Marginal; meals from \$2.50) Overlooking the waterfront near the old cathedral, this is a popular spot for a meal and an evening drink. The menu features good grilled prawns, plus grilled chicken and a few other choices.

Restaurante da Estação (☎ 24-213730; Rua da Resistência; meals from US\$5) This spiffy restaurant near the train station is a popular hangout for expats and aid workers, with a pizza oven, good-value Italian meals and porch seating.

None of Quelimane's restaurants are renowned for speedy service, so order before you're hungry or, better, stop by in advance to place an order.

For self-catering, try **Supermercado Primavera** (Av 1 de Julho), a block down from and opposite Hotel Rosy.

Drinking

Popular bars include **Bar Refeba** (Av Marginal) and **Bar Aquário** (Av 1 de Julho) in the gardens near City Hall.

Entertainment

The best place to find out about upcoming events is the **Casa de Cultura** (Av Paulo Samuel Kankhomba), near the new cathedral. Montes Namúli, Zambézia province's excellent traditional song and dance group, is based here, and it's often possible to watch their rehearsals.

Well-known local theatre groups include Falados da Zambézia, and Xenhê (pronounced wen-yay, the Chuabo word for 'scorpion'). As elsewhere in the country, theatre pieces here are frequently used to draw attention to social themes, or to carry out civic education on issues such as AIDS. For information on performances (all in Portuguese or Chuabo) ask at the Casa de Cultura.

ZAMBEZI DONAS

Just as much a part of Quelimane history as the Rio dos Bons Sinais is the old Portuguese *prazo* system. As the Portuguese saw things, *prazos* were land-holdings granted to private individuals by the Portuguese government in an attempt to solidify control over the Mozambican hinterlands. The *prazo* holder (*prazeiro*) had to be a female Portuguese citizen who would then pass the *prazo* on to her female offspring married to white Portuguese. All sorts of rules and duties applied: the *prazeiro* was allowed to employ Africans, to raise a private army (generally made up of slaves) and to trade, and was responsible for maintaining law and order within the *prazo* area.

While some *prazos* were small, others were hundreds of square kilometres in extent. At the height of the system, the area encompassed by *prazos* was said to have been greater than the entire area of Portugal. By the 18th century, some *prazos* were effectively functioning as independent states, and the 'Zambezi donas', as the *prazeiros* were known, enjoyed positions of prominence and power. Over time, the system became the basis for the rise of an Afro-Portuguese ruling elite, and formed a type of feudal aristocracy that dominated the affairs of the region.

However, the *prazo* system was inherently unstable and ultimately failed due in part to rivalries among the *prazeiros*, a scarcity of Portuguese women, African resistance, and poor economic performance. By the late 19th century, many of the *prazeiro* families had emigrated and the system lay in shambles. *Prazos* were finally abolished in the early 20th century when António Salazar came to power in Portugal.

Getting There & Away

AIR

There are flights four to five times weekly to/from Maputo, Beira, Nampula and Tete on **LAM** (☎ 24-212801; Av 1 de Julho). **Air Corridor** (☎ 24-216333/93; Av 25 de Junho) stops in Quelimane on its run up and down the coast.

The airport is about 3km northwest of town at the end of Av 25 de Junho – start walking and you'll find a lift or ask your hotel to call one of Quelimane's handful of private taxis.

BUS & CHAPA

The bus stand is at the northern end of Av Eduardo Mondlane. Chapas run frequently to/from Nicoadala at the junction with the main road (US\$1.50, 45 minutes).

To Nampula, a Grupo Mecula bus departs daily at 4.30am (US\$14, 10 hours). Several vehicles also run daily to Mocuba (US\$4, two to three hours), from where you can get onward transport to Nampula via Alto Molócuê, or to the Malawi border at Milange.

To Gurúê (US\$9.60, six to seven hours), there's a small (30-seater) bus departing daily at about 4.30am, for which you should buy a ticket the afternoon before to be certain of a seat. (Even with a ticket, it's a good idea to show up early at the bus stand.)

Heading south, buses to Beira depart daily at 5am (US\$16.50, nine hours). If you're driving, it's also possible to cross further upriver via the bridge between Sena and Mutarara.

AROUND QUELIMANE

The closest beach to Quelimane is **Praia de Zalala**, about 30km northeast of town. It's long and wide, with sunrise views, a row of fringing palms, and water of questionable cleanliness (as it's used as a toilet by local villages). However the drive out from Quelimane is scenic, through extensive coconut plantations formerly owned by Companhia da Zambézia.

Complexo Kass-Kass (☎ 24-212302; bungalows US\$32) is the only accommodation, with basic four-person bungalows that haven't seen a dust rag in years and a mediocre restaurant. Due to incidents of petty theft, camping isn't recommended. If you have your own transport, head for the day to the quieter **Praia de Mundimo** (usually called Praia de Madal); there are no facilities.

Chapas to Zalala (US\$1.60, 45 minutes) depart Quelimane from the Capuchin mission (*Capuzínio*), about 1km from the cemetery on the Zalala road. To Praia de Mundimo, you'll need a 4WD and someone to point the way. There's an unmarked righthand turnoff from the Zalala road about 15km from Quelimane. From there it's another 20km or so on unmarked tracks through the coconut plantations.

Much of the area south of Quelimane surrounding the Rio Zambezi delta consists of various hunting concessions, and is known for its birdlife. **Mahimba Hunting Camp** (bookings

through www.tgsafari.co.za) caters to birders out of season.

PEBANE

About 280km northeast of Quelimane is Pebane – a fishing port and popular holiday destination during colonial times, and today a charming (albeit faded) and quiet town not far from a long beach. There's a basic **campsite** (camping per tent US\$2) on the sand near Ponta Matirre, about 4km from town, and inexpensive rooms with bucket baths and meals at **Pensão Jamaima** (r US\$12).

About 5km north of town on the beach is **Macuacane Lodge** (☎ in Zimbabwe 011-611298; www.macuacane.com; per person self-catering US\$35), a rustic and still-in-process Zimbabwean-run anglers camp with a few double chalets and fishing boat charters, and several more self-catering houses planned. Advance bookings recommended.

Pebane is reached in slow stages by public transport or with a 4WD, via Namacurra, Olinga (Maganja) and Mucubela. From Pebane northwards, the road paralleling the coast continues as far as the Rio Ligonha, which is bridged only by dugout canoe, and from there on to Moma. There's no regular public transport along this route until you get to Moma, from where there are chapas to Angoche and on to Nampula. It's much better to go via Olinga to Mocuba and the main road northwards. Another option from Pebane heads north along a bush track (4WD) via the **Reserva de Gilé** (Gilé Reserve) to Gilé village and on to Alto Ligonha, from

where it's straightforward to continue on to Nampula.

Prior to the war, the 2100 sq km Reserva de Gilé was home to elephants, buffaloes and other wildlife. It's relatively inaccessible now (the best road access is via Pebane or Alto Molócuê), and no recent surveys have been conducted, though it's rumoured to still have decent populations of large animals. There are ruins of an old camp on the reserve's western edge, but no other facilities.

MOCUBA

Mocuba is the junction town for travel from Quelimane to Nampula or Malawi. About 40km north, near Munhamade in Lugela district, are some **hot springs**. Also in Lugela district are the large **cavernas do Monte Mulide**, caves used during the war as a place of refuge by local populations. Both spots are considered sacred, and there are no facilities at either.

Pensão Cruzeiro (☎ 24-810184; Av Eduardo Mondlane; r US\$14; meals from US\$2), on Mocuba's main street, has basic rooms and meals.

Transport to Quelimane (US\$4, two to three hours) leaves from the market. Transport to Nampula (US\$11, eight hours) leaves from the northern end of the main street. The road is tarmac but potholed from Mocuba to Nampevo junction, from there under construction to Alto Ligonha, and then tarmac to Nampula. There are several vehicles daily to Milange (US\$6.50, four hours) departing from Mocuba's market, though you'll maximise

CULTURE ZAMBÉZIA STYLE

Zambézia province's rich culture is best discovered by getting out of Quelimane and into the surrounding districts. Namarrói, in the north of the province, is known for its snake dancers (*cobras de Namarrói*). After first performing a ritual to ensure success and safety, they go into the bush to capture snakes, dance with them and then return them alive to the bush.

In Morrumbala in southwestern Zambézia, and in bordering areas of Tete province's Mutarara district, you'll find marimba (known locally as *varimba* or *valimba*) players. Unlike the Chopi *timbila* (marimba) orchestras found in southern Mozambique, where each instrument is usually played by one person at a time, the large Morrumbala/Mutarara marimbas may be played by two or three people at once, often switching parts several times within the same song. The Morrumbala marimbas are also made using different materials and techniques, giving them a distinctive tone, although purists consider the tone quality of the *timbila* to be superior.

Gilé, northeast of Quelimane, is known for its dancers.

The best time to see local groups performing is on the *dia da cidade* (city/town day). Check with the Casa de Cultura or the local district administrator for information about upcoming events. None of these places have tourist facilities; you'll need your own vehicle or plenty of time to take public transport.

your chances of a lift by walking west past the airstrip to the Milange road junction.

MILANGE

Milange is a peppy town about 3km east of the Malawi border. BIM Expresso has an ATM; moneychangers can help with Malawian kwacha.

Pensão Lili (r US\$12) has meals and no-frills rooms.

Finding a lift between Milange and Mocuba usually isn't a problem. To Gurúè, there's sporadic public transport northeast along a rehabilitated road to Molumbo, and from there on to Lioma, from where you can get a chapa the rest of the way.

Also see p186.

GURÚÈ

The charming and picturesque town of Gurúè is set amidst lush vegetation and tea plantations in one of the coolest, highest and rainiest parts of the country. Tea has long been one of the most important crops, and there are extensive holdings dating from colonial days. Only a small proportion have been rehabilitated. The surrounding area offers good walking and if you don't mind foregoing the comforts, it would be easy to spend up to a week here hiking in the hills.

BIM (Av da República) has an ATM. There's internet access (plus domestic and international telephone calls) at **TDM** (per min US\$0.04).

Sights & Activities

A good place to start is with a walk through the jacarandas on the northern edge of town. To get here, find the small church in the centre of Gurúè and head north along the road running in front of it. Continue for five to 10 minutes, following the edge of the hill and staying on the uphill side at the forks.

A popular destination for longer hikes is the **cascata** (waterfall) in the hills north of town. To get here, head first to the UP4 tea factory (also known as Cha Sambique), which you can see in the distance to the north; ask locals to point out the way and allow about 45 minutes on foot. From UP4, it's another 1½ hours on foot through overgrown tea plantations and forest to the falls, which will be to your right. En route are several detours offering beautiful views back down towards Gurúè. Swimming is possible in the pools above the falls. There are said to be some wild

horses from colonial days in the surrounding hills, as well as herds of cattle. As the falls are situated in the middle of tea plantations, you will need permission to visit. This is free and can be obtained from the Gulamo company at their UP6 warehouse, a complex of white buildings several kilometres out of town off the Quelimane road; ask for Senhor Rafiq. If you don't have your own vehicle, you may be able to arrange a lift out to UP6 with the Gulamo office in the centre of town diagonally opposite the bank.

At UP6 you can also arrange to tour one of the tea factories, which still have much of their original equipment, including an old steam engine.

In the hills about 12km northeast of town is **Casa dos Noivos** – originally a honeymoon spot (hence its name, 'House of the Newlyweds'). It's well past its prime, but makes a good spot for watching the sunset. The house itself consists of a single room, with several other smaller houses on the property, presumably used to accommodate the accompanying entourage.

Climbing Monte Namúli

Rising up from the hills about 15km northeast of Gurúè are the mist-shrouded slopes of Monte Namúli (Mt Namúli, 2419m), from which flow the Licungo (Lugela) and Malema rivers. If you find yourself in the area with time to spare, it makes a good, and very scenic climb, manageable by anyone who is reasonably fit. The mountain is considered sacred by the local Makua people, so while climbing is permitted, you'll need to observe the local traditions. It's also highly advisable to go with a guide, as the route isn't straightforward and it's easy to get lost.

Before setting out, buy some *farinha de mapira* (sorghum flour), rice and sugar at the market in Gurúè (it shouldn't cost more than US\$1.50 for everything), to be used to appease both the spirits and the local *régulo* (chief).

The climb begins about 6km outside Gurúè near UP5, an old tea factory. To reach here, head south out of Gurúè along the Quelimane road. Go left after about 2km and continue several kilometres further to UP5. With a vehicle, you can drive to the factory and park there. With a 4WD it's also possible to drive further up the mountain's slopes to Mugunha Sede, about 40km from Gurúè by road and the last village below the summit. There's no public transport.

Shortly before reaching UP5 you'll see a narrow but obvious track branching left. Follow this as it winds through unrehabilitated tea plantations and stands of bamboo and forest, until it ends in a high, almost alpine, valley about 800m below the summit of Monte Namúli. The views en route are superb. On the edge of this valley is Mugunha Sede, where you should seek out the chief and request permission to climb the mountain. If you don't speak Portuguese, bring someone along with you who knows either Portuguese or the local language, Makua. If you've come this far with a 4WD, you'll need to arrange to leave it here. The sorghum flour that you bought in Gurúè should be presented to the chief as a gift, who may save some to make traditional beer and scatter the remainder on the ground to appease the ancestors who inhabit the area. The chief will then assign someone to accompany you to the top of the mountain, where another short ceremony may be performed for the ancestors.

About two-thirds of the way from the village is a spring where you can refill your water bottle, although it's considered a sacred spot and it may take some convincing to persuade your guide to show you where it is. Just after the spring, the climb becomes steeper, with some crumbling rock and places where you'll need to use your hands to clamber up. Once near the summit, the path evens out and then gradually ascends for another 1.5km to the mountain's highest point. The top of Namúli is often shrouded in clouds, so you'll likely have better views during the climb than from the summit itself. After descending the moun-

THE MAKUA

Although widely scattered today throughout large areas of central and northern Mozambique, most Makua consider Monte Namúli as a common home. According to tradition, the Makua ancestors – all once living in the area around the mountain – split into several groups. Some followed the Rio Malema from its source on the mountain northwards into Nampula province, while others made their way southwards along the Rio Licungo (which also has its source on Namúli) into present-day Zambézia, thus resulting in the distinct Makua groupings of modern times.

MAKUA MARRIAGE CUSTOMS

Women contemplating marriage could take a tip from the matrilineal Lomwe-Makua people who live around Gurúè. Instead of the traditional exchange of gifts (*lobola* – bride price or dowry) to seal an engagement, an exchange of services is often required – anything from repairing a fence to building a house – so that the man is able to prove he can work. Another tradition stemming from the matrilineal culture is that after marriage, the groom sets up his house near that of his mother-in-law.

tain, present the rice that you bought at the Gurúè market to the chief as thanks.

OVERNIGHT OPTIONS

It's possible to do the climb in a long day from Gurúè if you get an early start and drive as far as Mugunha Sede, from where it's about three hours on foot to the summit. The road to Mugunha Sede has been rehabilitated and is in rough but decent condition.

To do the entire climb on foot from Gurúè, allow three days, walking the first day as far as Mugunha Sede (about seven to eight hours from Gurúè), where the *régulo* will show you a spot to camp or arrange basic accommodation in a local house. The second day, head up to the summit and back, spending the night again in Mugunha Sede and returning the next day to Gurúè. With an early start and good fitness levels, it's possible to combine the second and third stages into one long day. If you have an extra day available, there's a longer detour route possible via the UP4 warehouse and a beautiful waterfall. Camping on the summit isn't permitted (and isn't a good idea anyway because of rapidly and often dramatically changing weather conditions). Be prepared for frequent rain and cold. Also, if it's raining, the guide will definitely want an extra incentive to continue up to the summit. Guides can be arranged in Quelimane through Zambézia Travels (p124), or in Gurúè through Pensão Monte Verde and Residencial Likungo.

Sleeping & Eating

Pensão Gurúè (☎ 24-910050; Av da República; r US\$14) On the main street near Pensão Monte Verde, this was once Gurúè's best option, though it's now

run down. There are basic rooms (most sharing facilities) and a struggling restaurant.

Residencial Likungo (☎ 82-442 0290; Av 25 de Setembro; d & tw from US\$16) A decent place, with five clean rooms in a large house, all with shared bathroom. Breakfast is included in the price and meals can be arranged. It's in the town centre near Escola Primária dos Monte Namúli. You can also make bookings and get information through Salão de Cha Riveiera in Quelimane (p125).

Pensão Monte Verde (☎ 24-910245; Av da República; s/d US\$20/30) Rooms here are quite reasonable, with their own bathroom and hot water, and there's a restaurant (breakfast included). It's on the main street near BIM.

For food, other than what you can arrange at the hotels, there are inexpensive plates of rice and beans at the market and a bakery just down from Pensão Gurúè. For self-catering, try **Aquil Comercial** (Av da República) near BIM.

Getting There & Away

There's a daily chapa to Quelimane (US\$9.60, six to seven hours) departing about 4.30am from near the market. Otherwise there are several vehicles daily to Mocuba (US\$5, 3½

to four hours), where you can get onward transport to Quelimane. The road from Gurúè south to the Nampevo junction with the EN104 is good tarmac.

For Nampula, there's at least one vehicle daily in the dry season to Alto Molócuè, from where there is frequent onward transport. Alternatively, catch a chapa to Mutuali – they run whenever there's a train connection – and wait for the train to Nampula (or Cuamba). Cuamba can also be reached via a decent road, though there's little traffic, as almost everyone takes the train (see p145). If you leave Gurúè early enough (no later than 5am), you can take any Mocuba or Quelimane transport to Nampevo junction, get out there and wait for a passing bus or truck on to Nampula.

The fastest way to get to Milange with public transport is via Mocuba.

ALTO MOLÓCUÈ

This agreeable town is a refuelling point between Mocuba and Nampula.

Pensão Santo António (d US\$16; meals from US\$3) on the main square has clean doubles. Vehicles go daily to/from Nampula (US\$4, 3½ hours) and Mocuba (US\$4, four hours).