

Zanzibar Archipelago



Step off the boat or plane onto Zanzibar, and you'll be transported through the miles and the centuries – to the ancient kingdom of Persia, to the Oman of bygone days with its caliphs and sultans, to the west coast of India with its sensual rhythms and heavily laden scents. In Stone Town – the heart of the archipelago – narrow, cobbled alleyways wind past Arabic-style houses with brass-studded wooden doors. Elderly men in their *kanzu* (white robes) and *kofia* (caps) chat animatedly over cups of strong coffee while playing a seemingly never-ending game of *bao* (a board game). Nearby, veiled women in their flowing, black *bui-bui* (cover-alls) pause to share the latest gossip, while children chase balls through the streets.

Along the coast, life goes on as it has for centuries, its pace set by the rhythm of the tides and the winds of the monsoon. Just across the deep waters of the Pemba channel lies hilly, verdant Pemba – the archipelago's 'other' island, seldom visited and steeped in mystique. Dense mangrove swamps line its coast, opening occasionally onto stunning white-sand coves, and a patchwork of neat farm plots covers the hillsides.

There is, of course, another side to life on the archipelago: hassles from Zanzibar's ever-present street touts will probably be your first introduction, development threatens to overwhelm some areas of the coast, costs creep constantly skywards and *piki-piki* (motorbikes) careen recklessly through Stone Town's streets. However, there are still some quiet, unspoiled spots left and good deals to be found. And, while your reverie on caliphs and sultans may not last, the archipelago's allure will captivate long after you've finished your visit.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Wandering through **Stone Town's** (p112) narrow, cobbled streets
- Relaxing on picture-perfect **beaches** (p128)
- Discovering **Pemba's** (p142) unknown corners and culture
- **Diving and snorkelling** (p118) amid shoals of colourful fish around Mnemba atoll, Misali island or elsewhere around the archipelago.
- Browsing for **souvenirs** (p126) in tiny shops fragrant with spices



■ TELEPHONE CODE: ☎ 024

■ POPULATION: 1,352,000

History

The archipelago's history stretches back at least to the start of the first millennium, when Bantu-speaking peoples from the mainland ventured across the Zanzibar and Pemba channels – perhaps in search of bigger fish and better beaches. The islands had probably been visited at an even earlier date by traders and sailors from Arabia. The *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea* (written for sailors by a Greek merchant around AD 60) documents small Arabic trading settlements along the coast that were already well established by the 1st century, and makes reference to the island of Menouthias, which many historians believe to be Zanzibar. From around the 8th century, Shirazi traders from Persia also began to make their way to East Africa, where they established settlements on Pemba, and probably also at Zanzibar's Unguja Ukuu.

Between the 12th and 15th centuries, the archipelago came into its own, as trade links with Arabia and the Persian Gulf blossomed. Zanzibar became a powerful city-state, supplying slaves, gold, ivory and wood to places as distant as India and Asia, while importing spices, glassware and textiles. With the trade from the East also came Islam and the Arabic architecture that still characterises the archipelago today. One of the most important archaeological remnants from this era is the mosque at Kizimkazi (p138), whose mihrab (prayer niche showing the direction to Mecca) dates from the early 12th century.

The arrival of the Portuguese in the early 16th century temporarily interrupted this golden age, as Zanzibar and then Pemba fell under Portuguese control. Yet Portuguese dominance did not last long. It was challenged first by the British, who found Zanzibar an amenable rest stop on the long journey to India, and then by Omani Arabs, who in the mid-16th century gave the Portuguese the routing that they no doubt deserved. By the early 19th century Oman had gained the upper hand on Zanzibar, and trade on the island again flourished, centred on slaves, ivory and cloves. Caravans set out for the interior of the mainland, and trade reached such a high point that in the 1840s the Sultan of Oman relocated his court here from the Persian Gulf.

From the mid-19th century, with increasing European interest in East Africa and



the end of the slave trade, Omani rule over Zanzibar began to weaken, and in 1862 the sultanate was formally partitioned. Zanzibar became independent of Oman, with Omani sultans ruling under a British protectorate. This arrangement lasted until 10 December 1963 when Zanzibar gained its independence. Just one month later, in January 1964, the

UNGUJA VERSUS ZANZIBAR

Unguja is the Swahili name for Zanzibar. It's often used locally to distinguish the island from the Zanzibar Archipelago (which also includes Pemba), as well as from Zanzibar Town. In this book, for ease of recognition, we've used Zanzibar.

The word 'Zanzibar' comes from the Arabic *Zinj el-Barr* or 'Land of the Blacks'. It was used by Arab traders from at least the 8th or 9th century until the arrival of the Portuguese to refer to both the archipelago and the adjacent coast (*Zanguebar*). Now the name refers just to the archipelago. *Azania* – the name given by the early Greeks for the East African coast – is perhaps a Hellenised version of the Arabic *zinj*.

sultans were overthrown in a bloody revolution instigated by the Afro-Shirazi Party (ASP), which then assumed power. On 12 April 1964 Abeid Karume, president of the ASP, signed a declaration of unity with Tanganyika (mainland Tanzania) and the union, fragile from the outset, became known as the United Republic of Tanzania.

Karume was assassinated in 1972 and Aboud Jumbe assumed the presidency of Zanzibar until he resigned in 1984. A succession of leaders followed, culminating in 2000 with the highly controversial election of Aman Abeid Karume, son of the first president.

Today the two major parties in the archipelago are the Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) and the opposition Civic United Front (CUF), which has its stronghold on Pemba. Tensions between the two peaked during disputed national elections in 1995, and now, well over a decade later, still continue to simmer.

In 1999 negotiations moderated by the Commonwealth secretary general concluded with a brokered agreement between the CCM and CUF. However, the temporary hiatus this created was shattered by highly controversial elections in 2000, and ensuing violence on Pemba in January 2001. Since then renewed efforts at dialogue between the CCM and CUF have restored a fragile calm, and the 2005 elections – albeit somewhat tarnished by accusations of vote rigging – proceeded comparatively smoothly. However, little progress has been made at resolving the underlying issues.

Climate

Zanzibar's climate is shaped by the monsoon, with tropical, sultry conditions year-round, moderated somewhat by sea breezes. The main rains fall from March until May, when many hotels and eateries close. There's also a short rainy season from November into early December, and throughout the year showers can come at any time, especially on Pemba.

Dangers & Annoyances

While Zanzibar remains a relatively safe place, robberies, muggings and the like occur with some frequency, especially in Zanzibar Town and along the beaches.

Follow the normal precautions: avoid isolated areas, especially isolated stretches of beach, and keep your valuables out of view. If you go out at night in Zanzibar Town, take a taxi or walk in a group. Also avoid walking alone in Stone Town during predawn hours. As a rule, it's best to leave valuables in your hotel safe, preferably sealed or locked. Should your passport be stolen, get a written report from the police. Upon presentation of this report, Immigration will issue you a travel document that will get you back to the mainland.

If you've rented a bicycle or motorcycle, avoid isolated stretches of road, and don't stop if you're flagged down in isolated areas.

Given the ongoing history of political tensions on Zanzibar and Pemba, and the overall world political situation, it's a good idea to check for updates on your government's travel advisory site (see the boxed text, p336), especially if you plan on travelling to the archipelago in late 2010, when elections are scheduled.

ZANZIBAR

☎ 024 / pop 990,000

Zanzibar gets the lion's (sultan's?) share of attention on the archipelago, and with good reason. Its old Stone Town, where everyone arrives, is one of Africa's most evocative locations, with a mesmerising mix of influences from the Indian subcontinent, the Arabian peninsula, the African mainland and Europe. An easy drive away are the island's beaches, which are among the finest stretches of sand to be found anywhere. Zanzibar is small enough that you can base yourself either in Stone Town or at one of the beaches to do all

your exploring, and tourist infrastructure is highly developed, with hotels and restaurants for every taste and budget.

Getting There & Around

There are daily flights linking Zanzibar and Pemba with Dar es Salaam, Tanga, Arusha and the northern safari circuit airstrips and Selous Game Reserve. Ferries link Zanzibar with Dar es Salaam daily, and with Pemba several times weekly. Once on Zanzibar, taxi and motorbike hire is quite affordable, and networks of cheap, slow and crowded *dalla-dallas* (minibuses) or faster and pricier private minibuses cover the island.

ZANZIBAR TOWN

Orientation

Zanzibar Town, on the western side of the island, is the heart of the archipelago, and the first stop for most travellers. The best-known section by far is the old Stone Town

(Mji Mkongwe), surrounded on three sides by the sea and bordered to the east by Creek Rd. Directly east of Stone Town is the bustling but much less atmospheric section of Ng'ambo, which you'll pass through en route to some of the beaches.

MAPS

Commission for Lands & Environment (Planning Office; Map p113) Sells dated topographical maps of Zanzibar Town and of the archipelago; it's behind the Shangani St tunnel.

MaCo Map The best, with a detailed, hand-drawn map of Stone Town on one side and Zanzibar on the other; it's widely available in Stone Town.

Information

BOOKSHOPS

Gallery Bookshop (Map p113; ☎ 024-223 2721, 0773-150180; 48 Gizenga St; ☎ 9am-6pm Mon-Sat, to 2pm Sun) An excellent selection of books and maps, including travel guides, Africa titles and historical reprint editions.

PAPASI

In Zanzibar Town you will undoubtedly come into contact with street touts. In Swahili they're known as *papasi* (ticks). They are not registered as guides with the Zanzibar Tourist Corporation (ZTC), although they may carry (false) identification cards, and while a few can be helpful, others can be aggressive and irritating. The main places that you'll encounter them are at the ferry dock in Zanzibar Town – where they can be quite overwhelming, especially if it's your first visit to the region – and in the Shangani area around Tembo House Hotel and the post office. Many of the more annoying ones are involved with Zanzibar's drug trade and are desperate for money for their next fix, which means you're just asking for trouble if you arrange anything with them.

If you do decide to use the services of a tout (and they're hard to avoid if you're arriving at the ferry dock for the first time and don't know your way around), tell them where you want to go or what you are looking for, and your price range. You shouldn't have to pay anything additional, as many hotels pay commission. If they tell you your hotel of choice no longer exists or is full, take it with a grain of salt, as it could well be that they just want to take you somewhere where they know they'll get a better commission.

Another strategy is to make your way out of the port arrivals area and head straight for a taxi. This will cost you more, and taxi drivers look for hotel commissions as well, but most are legitimate and once you are 'spoken for', hassles from touts usually diminish.

Most *papasi* are hoping that your stay on the island will mean ongoing work for them as your guide, so if you do use one to help you find a hotel, they'll invariably be outside waiting for you later. If you're not interested in this, explain (politely) once you've arrived at your hotel. If you want a guide to show you around Stone Town, it's better to arrange one with your hotel or a travel agency. For any dealings with the *papasi*, if you're being hassled, a polite but firm approach usually works best – yelling or showing irritation, although quite tempting at times, just makes things worse. Another thing to remember is that you have a better chance of getting a discount on your hotel room if you arrive alone, since the hotel can then give you the discount that would have been paid to the touts as commission.

When arranging tours and excursions, never make payments on the street – be sure you're paying at a legitimate office and get a receipt.

Zanzibar Gallery (Map p113; ☎ 024-223 2721; gallery@swahilicoast.com; cnr Kenyatta Rd & Gizenga St; ☎ 9am-6.30pm Mon-Sat, to 1pm Sun) Books are also sold just down the road at this gallery (see p126).

CONSULATES

Mozambique (Map p113; ☎ 024-223 0049; Mapinduzi Rd)

Oman (Map p113; ☎ 024-223 0066/0700; Vuga Rd)

INTERNET ACCESS

Azzurri Internet Café (Map p113; New Mkunazini Rd; per hr Tsh500; ☎ 8.30am-10.30pm) Around the corner from the Anglican cathedral.

Macrosoft Internet Café (Map p113; Hurumzi St; per hr Tsh500; ☎ 9am-11pm)

Shangani Internet Café (Map p113; Kenyatta Rd; per hr Tsh2000; ☎ 9am-10pm)

Shangani Post Office Internet Café (Map p113; Kenyatta Rd; per hr Tsh1000; ☎ 8am-9pm Mon-Fri, 8.30am-7pm Sat & Sun)

Too Short Internet Café (Map p113; Shangani St; per hr Tsh1000; ☎ 8.30am-11pm) Diagonally opposite NBC.

MEDICAL SERVICES

Anything serious should be treated in Dar es Salaam or Nairobi (Kenya).

Shamshuddin's Pharmacy (Map p113; ☎ 024-223 1262, 024-223 3814; Market St; ☎ 9am-8.30pm Mon-Thu & Sat, 9am-noon & 3-8.30pm Fri, 9am-1.30pm Sun) Just behind (west of) the Darajani market.

MONEY

Despite its initial appearance as a backpacker's paradise, Zanzibar is not the place to go looking for rock-bottom prices. While it doesn't need to be expensive, prices are higher than on the mainland and you'll need to make an effort to keep to a tight budget. Plan on spending at least US\$10 to US\$15 per night for accommodation, and from Tsh7000

per day for food (unless you stick to street food only), plus extra for transport, excursions and diving or snorkelling. During the low season, for longer stays or if you're in a group, you'll often be able to negotiate discounts, although even at the cheapest places it won't go much below US\$8/16 per night per single/double. Many midrange and top-end hotels charge high-season supplements during August and the Christmas/New Year holiday period.

Prices are higher away from Stone Town, and at the budget beach hotels it can be difficult to find a meal for less than Tsh4000. If you're on a tight budget, consider stocking up on food and drink in Stone Town. Many hotels and restaurants close from March to May.

There are many forex bureaus – most open until about 8pm Monday to Saturday and often also on Sunday – where you can change cash and travellers cheques with a minimum of hassle. Rates vary, so it pays to shop around; rates in Stone Town are better than elsewhere on the island, but slightly lower than those on the mainland, and rates for US dollars are generally better than those for British pounds, euros and other hard currencies. Officially, accommodation on Zanzibar must be paid for in US dollars, and prices are quoted in dollars, but especially at the budget places it's rarely a problem to pay the equivalent in Tanzanian shillings.

Maka T-Shirt Shop (Map p113; Kenyatta Rd) Changes travellers cheques and cash.

NBC (Map p113; Shangani St) Changes cash and travellers cheques and has an ATM (Visa only). There's also an NBC ATM on Creek Rd, near the market, and just down from the Tourist Information Office.

Queens Bureau de Change (Map p113; Kenyatta Rd) Changes cash and travellers cheques.

Speed Cash/TanPay (Map p113; Kenyatta Rd) Has an ATM (accepts Visa, MasterCard, Cirrus, Maestro). Diagonally opposite Mazsons Hotel.

POST

Shangani post office (Map p113; Kenyatta Rd; ☎ 8am-4.30pm Mon-Fri, to 12.30pm Sat) Has poste restante.

PUBLICATIONS

Recommended in Zanzibar Free quarterly magazine with listings of cultural events, transport schedules, tide tables etc.

Swahili Coast (www.swahilicoast.com) Hotel and restaurant listings, cultural articles.

ZANZIBAR ETIQUETTE

Zanzibar is a conservative, Muslim society, and many locals take offence at scantily clad Westerners. Women should avoid sleeveless tops and plunging necklines, and stick with pants, skirts or at least knee-length shorts. For men, keep your shirt on when wandering around town, preferably also wearing pants or knee-length shorts. During Ramadan take particular care with dress, and show respect by not eating or drinking in the street or other public places during daylight hours.

TELEPHONE

Robin's Collection (Map p113; Kenyatta Rd; ☎ 9am–8pm Mon–Sat) International calls for about US\$2 per minute; also good for flash drives and digital camera components.

Shangani post office (Map p113; Kenyatta Rd; ☎ 8am–9pm Mon–Fri, 8.30am–7pm Sat & Sun) Operator-assisted calls from Tsh1300 per minute, and card phones.

TOURIST INFORMATION

Tourist Information Office (Map p113; ☎ 0777-482356; Creek Rd; ☎ 8am–5pm) Just down from Darajani market, with tourist information, ferry bookings and all the standard tours at very reasonable prices.

TRAVEL AGENCIES & TOUR OPERATORS

All the following can help with island excursions, and plane and ferry tickets. Only make bookings and payments inside the offices, and not with anyone outside claiming to be staff. For specific trips, see Tours (p117).

Eco + Culture Tours (Map p113; ☎ 024-223 0366; www.ecoculture-zanzibar.org; Hurumzi St) Opposite 236 Hurumzi hotel; culturally friendly tours and excursions, including to Nungwi and Unguja Ukuu, Jambiani village and Stone Town, plus spice tours, all with a focus on environmental and cultural conservation.

Gallery Tours & Safaris (☎ 024-223 2088; www.gallerytours.net) Top-of-the line tours and excursions throughout the archipelago; it also can help arrange Zanzibar weddings and honeymoon itineraries. It also has an office in Mbweni.

Madeira Tours & Safaris (Map p113; ☎ 024-223 0406; madeira@zanlink.com) All price ranges.

Sama Tours (Map p113; ☎ 024-223 3543; www.sama.tours.com; Hurumzi St) Reliable and reasonably priced.

Tabasam (Map p113; ☎ 024-223 0322; www.tabasam.zanzibar.com; Kenyatta Rd) Opposite Stone Town Café; midrange and upper-end tours.

Tima Tours (Map p113; ☎ 024-223 1298; www.tima.tours.com; Mizingani Rd)

Tropical Tours (Map p113; ☎ 024-223 3695, 0777-413454; http://tropicaltours.villa69.org; Kenyatta Rd) Budget tours.

Zan Tours (Map p113; ☎ 024-223 3042, 024-223 3116; www.zantours.com; Malawi Rd) Offers a wide range of quality upmarket tours on Zanzibar and Pemba and beyond.

Sights

If Zanzibar Town is the archipelago's heart, Stone Town is its soul, with a magical jumble of alleyways where it's easy to spend days wandering around and getting lost – although you can't get lost for long because, sooner or later, you'll end up on either the seafront or Creek Rd. Nevertheless, each twist and turn of the narrow

streets brings something new – be it a school full of children chanting verses from the Quran, a beautiful old mansion with overhanging verandas, a coffee vendor with his long-spouted pot fastened over coals, clacking cups to attract custom, or a group of women in *bui-bui* sharing a joke and some local gossip. Along the way, watch the island's rich cultural melange come to life: Arabic-style houses with their recessed inner courtyards rub shoulders with Indian-influenced buildings boasting ornate balconies and latticework, and bustling oriental bazaars alternate with streetside vending stalls.

While the best part of Stone Town is simply letting it unfold before you, it's worth putting in an effort to see and experience some of its major features.

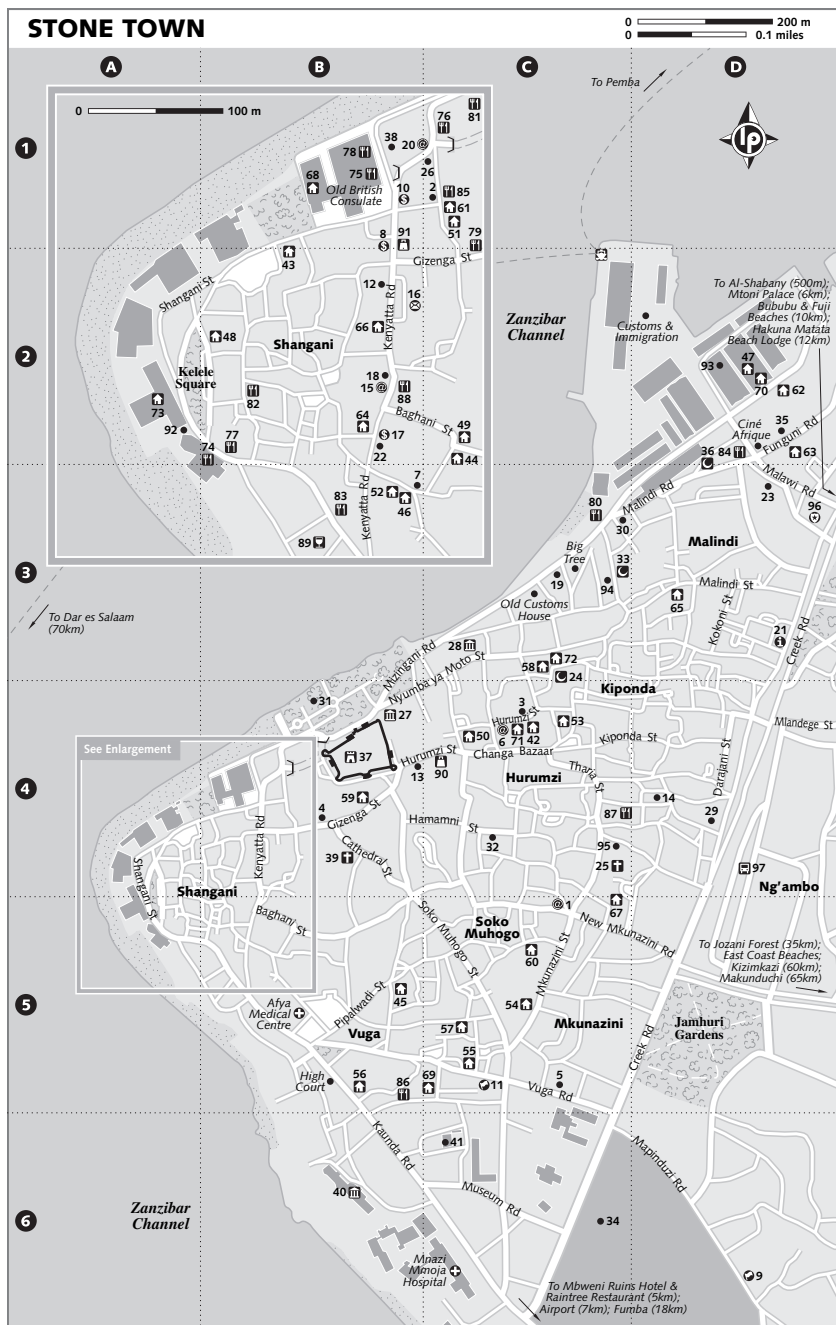
BEIT EL-AJAIB (HOUSE OF WONDERS)

One of the most prominent buildings in the old Stone Town is the elegant Beit el-Ajaib, now home to the **Zanzibar National Museum of History & Culture** (Map p113; Mizingani Rd; adult/child US\$3/1; ☎ 9am–6pm). It's also one of the largest structures in Zanzibar. It was built in 1883 by Sultan Barghash (r 1870–88) as a ceremonial palace. In 1896 it was the target of a British naval bombardment, the object of which was to force Khalid bin Barghash, who had tried to seize the throne after the death of Sultan Hamad (r 1893–96), to abdicate in favour of a British nominee. After it was rebuilt, Sultan Hamoud (r 1902–11) used the upper floor as a residential palace until his death. Later it became the local political headquarters of the CCM. Its enormous doors are said to be the largest carved doors in East Africa. Inside it houses exhibits on the dhow culture of the Indian Ocean (ground floor) and on Swahili civilisation and 19th-century Zanzibar (1st floor). Everything is informatively labelled in English and Swahili, and well worth visiting. Just inside the entrance is a life-size *mtepe* – a traditional Swahili sailing vessel made without nails, the planks held together with only coconut fibres and wooden pegs.

BEIT EL-SAHEL (PALACE MUSEUM)

Just north of the Beit el-Ajaib is this palace, **Beit el-Sahel** (Map p113; Mizingani Rd; adult/child US\$3/1; ☎ 9am–6pm), which served as the sultan's residence until 1964, when the dynasty was overthrown. Now it is a museum devoted to the era of the Zanzibar sultanate.

The ground floor displays details of the formative period of the sultanate from 1828



INFORMATION

Azzurri Internet Café.....	1 C5
Commission for Lands & Environment.....	2 C1
Eco + Culture Tours.....	3 C4
Gallery Bookshop.....	4 B4
Institute of Swahili & Foreign Languages.....	5 C5
Macrosoft Internet Café.....	6 C4
Madeira Tours & Safaris.....	7 B3
Maka T-Shirt Shop.....	8 B1
Mozambique Consulate.....	9 D6
NBC Bank.....	(see 21)
NBC Bank.....	10 B1
Oman Consulate.....	11 C5
Queens Bureau de Change.....	(see 15)
Robin's Collection.....	12 B2
Sama Tours.....	13 B4
Shamshuddin's Pharmacy.....	14 D4
Shangani Internet Café.....	15 B2
Shangani Post Office.....	16 B2
Shangani Post Office Internet Café.....	(see 16)
Speed Cash/TanPay.....	17 B2
Tabasam.....	18 B2
Tima Tours.....	19 C3
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Bahari Divers.....	26 C1
Beit el-Ajaib.....	27 B4
Beit el-Sahel (Palace Museum).....	28 C3
Darajani Market.....	29 D4
Dhow Countries Music Academy.....	30 C3
Forodhani Gardens.....	31 B4
Hamamni Persian Baths.....	32 C4
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Mnazi Mmoja Sporting Grounds.....	34 C6
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Old Fort.....	37 B4

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One Ocean/ The Zanzibar Dive Centre.....	38 B1
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Ahlan Palace Hotel.....	44 C1
Annex of Coco de Mer Hotel.....	45 B5
Annex of Malindi Lodge.....	(see 70)
Baghani House Hotel.....	46 B3
Bandari Lodge.....	47 D2
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Chavda Hotel.....	49 C1
Clove Hotel.....	50 C4
Coco de Mer Hotel.....	51 C1
Dhow Palace.....	52 B3
Emerson Spice.....	53 C4
Flamingo Guest House.....	54 C5
Florida Guest House.....	55 C5
Garden Lodge.....	56 B5
Haven Guest House.....	57 C5
Hotel Kiponda.....	58 C3
Jafferji's House & Spa.....	59 B4
Jambo Guest House.....	60 C5
Karibu Inn.....	61 C1
Malindi Guest House.....	62 D2
Malindi Lodge.....	63 D2
Mazsons Hotel.....	64 B2
Pyramid Hotel.....	65 D3
Shangani Hotel.....	66 B2
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Livingstone Beach Restaurant.....	78 B1
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Mercury's.....	80 C3
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Msumbi Coffee House.....	82 B2
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Pagoda Chinese Restaurant.....	83 B3
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Dhow Countries Music Academy.....	(see 30)
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Dhow Countries Music Academy.....	(see 30)
Memories of Zanzibar.....	(see 15)
Moto Handicrafts.....	90 C4
Zanzibar Gallery.....	91 B1

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Asko Tours & Travel.....	(see 16)
Coastal Aviation.....	92 A2
Ferry Tickets.....	93 D2
Kenya Airways.....	94 C3
Precision Air.....	(see 94)
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Transport Stand.....	97 D4
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to 1870, during which commercial treaties were signed between Zanzibar and the USA (1833), Britain (1839), France (1844) and the Hanseatic Republics (1859). There is also memorabilia of Princess Salme, a Zanzibari princess who eloped with a German to Europe and later wrote an autobiography. The exhibits on the 2nd floor focus on the period of affluence from 1870 to 1896, during which modern amenities such as piped water and electricity were introduced to Zanzibar under Sultan Barghash. The 3rd floor consists of the modest living quarters of the last sultan, Khalifa bin Haroub (1911-60), and his two wives, each of

whom clearly had very different tastes in furniture. Outside is the Makusurani graveyard, where some of the sultans are buried.

OLD FORT

Just south of the Beit el-Ajaib is the Old Fort (Map p113), a massive, bastioned structure originally built around 1700 on the site of a Portuguese chapel by Omani Arabs as a defence against the Portuguese. In recent years it has been partially renovated to house the **Zanzibar Cultural Centre** (Map p113), as well as the offices of the Zanzibar International Film Festival (ZIFF). Inside is an open-air theatre

that hosts music and dance performances. There's also a small information centre that has schedules for performances, and a good restaurant. The tree growing inside the fort, in the area in front of the café, is known in Swahili as *mwarobaini* (the tree of 40) because its leaves, bark and other parts are used to cure up to 40 different ailments.

ANGLICAN CATHEDRAL & OLD SLAVE

MARKET

Constructed in the 1870s by the Universities' Mission to Central Africa (UMCA), the **Anglican cathedral** (Map p113; admission Tsh3500; ☎ 8am-6pm Mon-Sat, noon-6pm Sun) was the first Anglican cathedral in East Africa (see the boxed text, p130). It was built on the site of the old slave market alongside Creek Rd. Although nothing remains of the slave market today, other than some holding cells under St Monica's Hostel next door, the site remains a sobering reminder of the not-so-distant past. Services are still held at the cathedral on Sunday mornings; the entrance is next to St Monica's Hostel.

ST JOSEPH'S CATHEDRAL

One of the first sights travellers see when arriving at Zanzibar by ferry is the spires of the Roman Catholic **St Joseph's cathedral** (Map p113; Cathedral St). Yet the church is deceptively difficult to find in the narrow confines of the adjacent streets. (The easiest route is to follow

Kenyatta Rd to Gizenga St, then take the first right to the back gate of the church, which is usually open, even when the front entrance is closed.) The cathedral, which was designed by French architect Beranger and built by French missionaries, celebrated its centenary in 1998. There's a brief summary of the mission's history just inside the entrance. The church is still in use, with several services on Sunday.

MOSQUES

The oldest of Stone Town's many mosques is the **Msikiti wa Balnara** (Malindi Minaret Mosque; Map p113), originally built in 1831, enlarged in 1841 and extended again by Seyyid Ali bin Said in 1890. Others include the **Agga Khan Mosque** (Map p113) and the impressive **Ijumaa Mosque** (Map p113). It's not permitted to enter many of the mosques, as they're all in use, although exceptions may be made if you're appropriately dressed.

HAMAMNI PERSIAN BATHS

Built by Sultan Barghash in the late 19th century, these were the first public **baths** (Map p113; Hamamni St; admission Tsh500) on Zanzibar. Although they're no longer functioning and there's no water inside, they're still worth a visit, and it doesn't take much imagination to envision them in bygone days. To get in, you'll need to ask the caretaker across the alley to unlock the gate.

STONE TOWN'S ARCHITECTURE

Stone Town's architecture is a fusion of Arabic, Indian, European and African influences. Arabic buildings are often square, with two or three storeys. Rooms line the outer walls, allowing space for an inner courtyard and verandas, and cooling air circulation. Indian buildings, also several storeys high, generally include a shop on the ground floor and living quarters above, with ornate façades and balconies. A common feature is the *baraza*, a stone bench facing onto the street that serves as a focal point around which townspeople meet and chat.

The most famous feature of Zanzibari architecture is the carved wooden door. There are more than 500 remaining today in Stone Town, many of which are older than the houses in which they are set. The door, which was often the first part of a house to be built, served as a symbol of the wealth and status of a household. While older (Arabic) doors have a square frame with a geometrical shape, 'newer' doors – many of which were built towards the end of the 19th century and incorporate Indian influences – often have semicircular tops and intricate floral decorations.

Many doors are decorated with carvings of passages from the Quran. Other commonly seen motifs include images representing items desired in the household, such as a fish (expressing the hope for many children), chains (displaying the owner's wish for security) or the date tree (a symbol of prosperity). The lotus motif signifies regeneration and reproductive power, while the stylised backwards 'S' represents the smoke of frankincense and signifies wealth. Some doors have large brass spikes, which are a tradition from India, where spikes protected doors from being battered down by elephants.

THINGS TO DO IN STONE TOWN

- Enjoy a cup of coffee (p125)
- Stop by Dhow Countries Music Academy and arrange drumming lessons (right)
- Watch the sunset from Forodhani Gardens (opposite)
- Take a walk through Darajani market in the morning, when everything is still fresh (opposite)
- Visit the old slave market (p115)
- Buy a *kanga* (cotton wraps worn by women all over Tanzania) or *kikoi* (the thicker striped or plaid equivalent worn by men on Zanzibar and in other coastal areas) and dress like a local (p126)
- Watch a weekend afternoon football game at Mnazi Mmoja Sporting Grounds (opposite)
- Go diving or snorkelling (opposite)

BEIT EL-AMANI (PEACE MEMORIAL MUSEUM)

The larger of the two buildings that make up this **museum** (cnr Kaunda & Creek Rds) previously contained a poorly presented history of the island from its early days until independence, while the smaller building across the road housed a decaying natural history collection. Both are in the process of being rehabilitated and merged with the Zanzibar National Museum of History & Culture at the Beit el-Ajaib (p112), and are currently closed.

LIVINGSTONE HOUSE

Located about 2km north of town along the Bububu road, Livingstone House (Map p110) was built around 1860 and used as a base by many of the European missionaries and explorers before they started their journeys to the mainland. Today it's mostly remembered as the place where David Livingstone stayed before setting off on his last expedition. Now it houses the office of the Zanzibar Tourist Corporation. You can walk from town, or take a 'B' *dalla-dalla*.

OLD DISPENSARY

Near the port you'll find the **Old Dispensary** (Map p113; Mizingani Rd), built at the turn of the 20th

century by a wealthy Indian merchant. It has been impressively renovated by the Aga Khan Charitable Trust, and now houses boutiques and shops, and small displays of local artists' work. Upstairs are the offices of the **Dhow Countries Music Academy** (Map p113; ☎ 024-223 4050; www.zanzibarmusic.org; Mizingani Rd), where you can organise dance and drumming lessons, and buy CDs of local and regional music.

VICTORIA HALL & GARDENS

Diagonally opposite Mnazi Mmoja hospital is the imposing **Victoria Hall** (Map p113; Kaunda Rd), which housed the legislative council during the British era. The hall is not open to the public, but you can walk in the small surrounding gardens. Opposite is the **State House** (Map p113), also closed to the public.

RUINS

There are a number of historical sites around Zanzibar Town. All can be easily reached as short excursions from town, and many are included in spice tours (opposite).

Mbweni (Map p110), located around 5km south of Zanzibar Town, was the site of a 19th-century UMCA mission station that was used as a settlement for freed slaves. In addition to the small and still functioning St John's Anglican church, dating to the 1880s, you can see the atmospheric ruins of the UMCA's St Mary's School for Girls, set amid lush gardens on the grounds of the Mbweni Ruins Hotel (p123).

The once-imposing **Maruhubi Palace** (Map p110), around 4km north of Zanzibar Town, was built by Sultan Barghash in 1882 to house his large harem. In 1899 it was almost totally destroyed by fire, although the remaining ruins – primarily columns that once supported an upper terrace, an overhead aqueduct and small reservoirs covered with water lilies – hint at its previous scale. The ruins are just west of the Bububu road and signposted.

The ruins of **Mtoni Palace** (Map p110), built by Sultan Seyyid Said as his residence in the early 19th century, are located just northeast of Maruhubi Palace. In its heyday, the palace was a beautiful building with a balconied exterior, a large garden courtyard complete with peacocks and gazelles, an observation turret and a mosque. By the mid-1880s the palace had been abandoned, and during WWI parts of the compound were used as a supplies storehouse. Today nothing remains of Mtoni's

grandeur other than a few walls, although you can get an idea of how it must have looked once by reading Emily Said-Reute's *Memoirs of an Arabian Princess*. To get here, continue north on the main road past the Maruhubi Palace turn-off for about 2km, from where the ruins are signposted to the west.

The **Kidichi Persian Baths** (Map p110), northeast of Zanzibar Town, are another construction of Sultan Seyyid, built in 1850 for his Persian wife at the island's highest point. Like the other nearby ruins, they're rather unremarkable now, but with a bit of imagination, you can see the sultan's lavishly garbed coterie disrobing to test the waters. The décor, with its stylised birds and flowers, is typically Persian, though it's now in poor condition. To get here, take *dalla-dalla* 502 to the main Bububu junction, from where it's about a 3km walk east down an unsealed road. Look for the bathhouse to your right.

Activities

FORODHANI GARDENS

One of the best ways to ease into life on the island is to stop by **Forodhani Gardens** (Jamituri Gardens; Map p113) in the evening, when the grassy plaza comes alive with dozens of vendors serving up such delicacies as grilled *pweza* (octopus), plates of goat meat, Zanzibari pizza (rolled-up, omelette-filled chapati), a thick, delicious local version of naan, plus piles of chips, samosas and much more. The gardens are also a meeting point, with women sitting on the grass chatting about the events of the day, children playing and men strolling along the waterfront. It's all lit up, first by the setting sun and then by small lanterns, and the ambience is superb. The gardens are along the sea opposite the Old Fort.

SHOPPING AT DARAJANI MARKET

The dark, narrow passageways of the chaotic Darajani market (Map p113) assault the senses, with occasional whiffs of spices mixing with the stench of fish, the clamour of vendors hawking their wares, neat, brightly coloured piles of fruits and vegetables, and dozens of small shops selling everything from plastic tubs to auto spares. It's just off Creek Rd, and at its best in the morning before the heat and the crowds, when everything is still fresh.

WATCHING A LOCAL FOOTBALL GAME

Zanzibaris are passionate football fans, and watching a game is a good introduction to island life. Stroll by Mnazi Mmoja Sporting Grounds any weekend afternoon, and you're likely to catch a match. For early risers, there are also usually informal pick-up games most mornings at daybreak in the fields lining Kaunda Rd, diagonally opposite the Mnazi Mmoja grounds.

DIVING & SNORKELLING

For more on diving around the archipelago, see the boxed text, p118. Recommended dive operators:

Bahari Divers (Map p113; ☎ 0777-415011, 0784-254786; www.zanzibar-diving.com; Shangani St) This small, friendly and professional outfit primarily organises dives around the islands offshore from Stone Town. It offers a range of PADI certification courses, and caters to families (including rental of children's masks and fins). It can also help organise dives around Pemba, and is planning to open a branch at Nungwi.

One Ocean/The Zanzibar Dive Centre (Map p113; ☎ 024-223 8374, 0748-750161; www.zanzibarocean.com; just off Shangani St) This highly regarded PADI five-star centre has more than a decade of experience on Zanzibar. In addition to its main office in Stone Town – just down from the tunnel and NBC – it has branches at Matemwe Beach Village (Matemwe) and at various other locations along the east and southwestern coasts, and can organise dives all around the island, for divers of all levels. It also rents underwater cameras, prescription masks and Suunto computers.

Tours

SPICE TOURS

While spices no longer dominate Zanzibar's economy as they once did, plantations still dot the centre of the island. It's possible to visit them on 'spice tours', learning about what cloves, vanilla and other spices look like in the wild. These half-day excursions from Zanzibar Town take in some plantations, as well as some of the ruins described earlier and other sights of historical interest. Along the way you'll be invited to taste many of the spices, herbs and fruits that the island produces, including cloves, black pepper, cardamom, cinnamon, nutmeg, breadfruit, jackfruit, vanilla and lemongrass.

Organise tours through your hotel, a travel agent, the Tourist Information Office (p112) or through the long-standing **Mr Mitu's office** (Map p113; ☎ 024-223 4636; mitusspicetour@hotmail.com;

DIVING THE ZANZIBAR ARCHIPELAGO

The archipelago's turquoise waters are just as amazing below the surface as they are from above, with a magnificent array of hard and soft corals and a diverse collection of sea creatures, including shadowy manta rays, hawksbill and green turtles, barracudas and sharks. Other draws include the possibility for wall dives, especially off Pemba; the fascinating cultural backdrop; and the opportunity to combine wildlife safaris with underwater exploration. On the down side, visibility isn't as reliable as in some other areas of the world, although sometimes you'll be treated to ranges of 25m to 30m. Another thing to consider, if you're a serious diver and coming to the archipelago exclusively for diving, is that unless you do a live-aboard arrangement, you'll need to travel – often for up to an hour – to many of the dive sites. Also, prices are considerably higher than in places such as the Red Sea or Thailand.

Seasons

Diving is possible year-round, although conditions vary dramatically. Late March until mid-June is generally the least favourable time because of erratic weather patterns and frequent storms. However, even during this period you can have some good days, particularly in March when water temperatures are also warmer. July or August to February or March tends to be the best time overall, although again, conditions vary and wind is an important factor. On Pemba, for example, the southeastern seas can be rough around June and July when the wind is blowing from the south, but calm and clear as glass from around November to late February when the monsoon winds blow from the north. On both islands, the calmest time is generally from around September to November during the lull between the annual monsoons.

Water temperatures range from lows of about 22°C in July and August to highs of about 29°C in February and March, with the average about 26°C. Throughout, 3mm wetsuits are standard; 4mm suits are recommended for some areas during the July to September winter months, and 2mm are fine from around December to March or April.

Costs, Courses & Planning

Costs are fairly uniform throughout the archipelago, though somewhat cheaper on Zanzibar than on Pemba. Expect to pay from US\$350 for a four-day PADI open water course, from about US\$45/75 for a single-/double-dive package, and from about US\$50 for a night dive. Most places discount about 10% if you have your own equipment, and for groups. In addition to open water certification, many operators also offer other courses, including Advanced Open Water, Medic First Aid, Rescue Diver and speciality courses, including underwater photography and navigation.

As for deciding where to dive: very generally speaking, Zanzibar is known for the corals and shipwrecks offshore from Stone Town, and for fairly reliable visibility, high fish diversity and the

off Malawi Rd), although the tours are no longer led by Mr Mitu, and don't differ significantly from those organised elsewhere, other than perhaps being more crowded. The office is signposted near Ciné Afrique. Costs for all tours are about US\$10 per person in a group of about 15, and include a lunch of local food seasoned with some of the spices you've just seen. They depart about 9.30am and return by about 2.30pm (later, if a stop at Mangapwani beach is included). It's best to book a day in advance (you will be collected from your hotel), though it's usually no trouble to just show up in the morning. If you want your own spice tour – ie not join up with groups from other hotels – you'll need to make this

clear when booking, and will probably have to pay US\$5 to US\$15 more per person, depending on how many are in your group.

COLOBUS MONKEY TOURS

The Zanzibar or Kirk's red colobus is unique to Zanzibar, and is the focal point of excursions to Jozani Forest. All of the listings under Travel Agencies & Tour Operators (p112) can organise excursions. For more details, see Jozani Forest (p139).

DHOW & ISLAND TOURS

All the listings under Travel Agencies & Tour Operators (p112), plus the Tourist Information Office (p112), can arrange ex-

chance to see pelagics to the north and northeast. While some sites are challenging, there are many easily accessed sites for beginning and midrange divers.

Unlike Zanzibar, which is a continental island, Pemba is an oceanic island located in a deep channel with a steeply dropping shelf. Because of this, diving tends to be more challenging, with an emphasis on wall and drift dives, though there are some sheltered areas for beginners, especially around Misali island. Most dives are to the west around Misali, and to the north around the Njao Gap.

Wherever you dive, allow a sufficient surface interval between the conclusion of your final dive and any onward/homeward flights. According to PADI recommendations, this should be at least 12 hours, or more than 12 hours if you have been doing daily multiple dives for several days. Another consideration is insurance, which you should arrange before coming to Tanzania. Many policies exclude diving, so you'll probably need to pay a bit extra, but it's well worth it in comparison to the bills you will need to foot should something go wrong.

Most of the archipelago's dive operators also offer snorkelling. Equipment rental costs US\$5 to US\$15; when you're selecting it pay particular attention to getting a good mask. Most snorkelling sites are only accessible by boat. Trips average US\$20 to US\$50 per half-day, often including a snack or lunch.

Dive Operators

When looking to choose a dive operator, quality rather than cost should be the priority. Consider: the operator's experience and qualifications; knowledgeability and competence of staff; and the condition of equipment and frequency of maintenance. Assess whether the overall attitude of the organisation is serious and professional, and ask about safety precautions that are in place – radios, oxygen, emergency evacuation procedures, boat reliability and back-up engines, first aid kits, safety flares and life jackets. On longer dives, do you get an energising meal, or just tea and biscuits? An advantage of operators offering PADI courses is that you'll have the flexibility to go elsewhere in the world and have what you've already done recognised at other PADI dive centres.

There's now a decompression chamber in Matemwe (otherwise the closest ones are in Mombasa, Kenya – an army facility and not necessarily available to the general public – and in Johannesburg, South Africa), and you can check the **Divers Alert Network Southern Africa** (DAN; www.dansa.org) website for a list of Zanzibar and Pemba-based operators that are part of the DAN network. If you choose to dive with an operator that isn't affiliated with DAN, it's highly recommended to take out insurance coverage with DAN.

Dive operators are listed by location elsewhere in this chapter.

cursions to the offshore islands near Stone Town. Sunset dhow cruises can be arranged by the tour operator listings and by many hotels, especially in the midrange and top-end categories. For something different, contact **Safari Blue** (☎ 0777-423162; www.safariblue.net), which organises day excursions on well-equipped dhows around Menai Bay (p140). The excursions, which leave from Fumba, include a seafood and fruit lunch, plus snorkelling equipment and time to relax on a sandbank. The dhows can also be privately chartered, for honeymoons or groups. Before booking, it's worth checking weather conditions, as some months, notably April/May and July/August, can get quite windy or rainy.

FREDDIE MERCURY TOURS

One of Zanzibar's most famous sons is Queen lead vocalist Freddie Mercury, born Faroukh Bulsara in 1946 in Stone Town to Parsee parents. He lived on the island until he was about eight years old, when he was sent off to India to boarding school. His family left Zanzibar in the wake of the 1964 revolution, never to return. There's no agreement as to which house or houses Freddie – he acquired the name while at school in India – and his family actually occupied, and several make the claim. For anyone wanting to make a Mercury pilgrimage, two good places to start are the **Zanzibar Gallery** (Map p113; ☎ 024-223 2721; gallery@swahilicoast.com; cnr Kenyatta Rd & Gizenga St;

☎ 9am-6.30pm Mon-Sat, to 1pm Sun), with a gold plaque on the outside memorialising Mercury, and the popular Mercury's restaurant (p124), which doesn't claim that he lived there, but capitalises on his name. Freddie Mercury died on 24 November 1991 in London of complications from AIDS.

Festivals & Events

Muslim holidays are celebrated in a big way on Zanzibar. **Eid al-Fitr** (p339) especially is a fascinating time to be in Stone Town, with countless lanterns lighting the narrow passageways, families dressed in their best and a generally festive atmosphere. Note that many restaurants close down completely during Ramadan.

Some festivals unique to Zanzibar (see p338 for more details):

Sauti za Busara (Voices of Wisdom; ☎ 024-223 2423; www.busaramusic.com) A celebration of all things Swahili, which got its start at Forodhani Gardens; well worth timing your visit to catch it in February.

Festival of the Dhow Countries and Zanzibar

International Film Festival (www.ziff.or.tz) Film screenings, performing arts groups from around the region, village events and a wonderful, festive atmosphere; check the website or with the Zanzibar Cultural Centre at the Old Fort for details. Yearly in July.

Mwaka Kogwa The Shirazi New Year, in July, is at its best in Makunduchi (p138).

Sleeping

BUDGET

Stone Town has a large selection of budget guesthouses, most costing about the same and with similar facilities – mosquito nets and fans, and usually shared bathrooms and cold-water showers. The standard price is US\$10 to US\$15 per person (US\$20 with bathroom), though it's usually easy to negotiate this down in the low season.

The following options are located in the lively Mkunazini area, on the eastern edge of town near the Anglican cathedral.

Flamingo Guest House (Map p113; ☎ 024-223 2850; flamingoguesthouse@hotmail.com; Mkunazini St; s/d US\$12/24, without bathroom US\$10/20) No frills but cheap and fine, with straightforward rooms – all with mosquito nets and fans – around a courtyard. There is also a common TV and a rooftop sitting/breakfast area.

Haven Guest House (Map p113; ☎ 024-223 5677/8; s/d US\$13/25) This old favourite and very backpacker-friendly place has clean, basic

DIVING SAFETY GUIDELINES

- Possess a current diving certification card from a recognised scuba diving instructional agency.
- Be sure you are healthy and feel comfortable diving.
- Obtain reliable information on conditions (eg from local dive operators).
- Dive only at sites within your realm of experience.
- Be aware of seasonal changes in sites and dive conditions, and equip yourself accordingly.

rooms, a travellers' bulletin board, free coffee and tea, and a small kitchenette for self-catering. It's just south of Mkunazini, between Soko Muhogo St and Vuga Rd.

Jambo Guest House (Map p113; ☎ 024-223 3779; jam boguest@hotmail.com; s/d/tr without bathroom US\$20/30/45; ☎) Just around the corner from Flamingo Guest House, and also popular with backpackers, Jambo has free tea and coffee, clean rooms, including some with air-con, decent breakfasts and an internet café opposite. Green Garden Restaurant, with cheap local meals, is just out the front.

St Monica's Hostel (Map p113; ☎ 024-223 0773; monicasanzibar@hotmail.com; s/d US\$28/32, s/d/tr without bathroom US\$12/24/36) An old, rambling place next to the Anglican cathedral, with spacious rooms, including some with a small veranda. Breakfast is served next door at St Monica's Restaurant.

The following places are near the southern edge of Stone Town, around Vuga Rd.

Florida Guest House (Map p113; ☎ 0777-421421; floridaznz@yahoo.com; Vuga Rd; r per person US\$20) This family-run guesthouse has small, clean rooms (check out a few as they're all different) – many with bathroom – and solicitous proprietors. It's next to Culture Musical Club, and there are discounts for stays of more than two days.

Annex of Coco de Mer Hotel (☎ 024-223 8466; cocodemer_znz@yahoo.com; s/d without bathroom US\$20/35) Formerly Vuga Guest House, and now under the same management as Coco de Mer Hotel (see p122), this place just off Vuga St has clean, bright, mostly spacious rooms, most of which have shared bathroom.

Garden Lodge (Map p113; ☎ 024-223 3298; gardenlodge@zanlink.com; Kaunda Rd; s/d/tr US\$30/40/60) Garden Lodge is an efficient, friendly, family-run place in a convenient, quiet location – diagonally opposite the High Court. Rooms are good value, especially the upstairs ones, which are clean, bright and spacious, and have hot water, mosquito nets and ceiling fans. There's a rooftop breakfast terrace.

Victoria House (Map p113; ☎ 024-223 2861; www.victoriahotel-zanzibar.com; s/d/tr US\$40/50/70) This place has had a facelift in recent times, and now offers large, airy rooms and an agreeably green and quiet location just off Kaunda Rd. Upstairs is a rooftop breakfast area.

On the northern side of town is a clutch of good-value places. The area isn't as pleasant as Shangani or Mkunazini, especially in the evening, but it's convenient to the port, which is within a five-minute walk away from most of these listings.

Bandari Lodge (Map p113; ☎ 024-223 7969; bandarilodge@hotmail.com; s/d/tw/tr US\$15/25/30/35) Good, clean rooms with high ceilings, mosquito nets and fan, plus a common kitchen and a fridge. Turn left as you exit the port – it's just two minutes' walk ahead on the right-hand side.

Malindi Guest House (Map p113; ☎ 024-223 0165; malindi@zanzinet.com; r per person with air-con US\$20, without bathroom US\$15; 🚽) This long-standing and consistently popular guesthouse has whitewashed walls, attractive, atmospheric and well-maintained rooms with mosquito

nets and fan or air-con, as well as a small rooftop restaurant.

Warere Town House (Map p113; ☎ 024-223 3835; www.wareretownhouse.com; s/d/tr US\$20/35/45) Warere has good-value rooms – some with small balconies and all with hot water – plus a rooftop terrace. It's just minutes' walk from the port (staff will meet you), and behind Bandari Lodge and Annex of Malindi Lodge.

Malindi Lodge (Map p113; ☎ 024-223 2350/9; sunsetbungalows@hotmail.com; s/d US\$20/40, r per person without bathroom & with fan US\$15; 🚽) Clean, basic rooms – most with air-con – near Ciné Afrique and the port, and diagonally opposite Mr Mitu's spice tours office.

Annex of Malindi Lodge (Map p113; ☎ 024-223 6588; d US\$35, s/d without bathroom US\$15/25) Confusingly named, as it's currently under different management to Malindi Lodge, this place is just behind Bandari Lodge, with no-frills, somewhat rundown but decent rooms sharing cold-water bathrooms.

The following options are located in and around the Kiponda area, roughly between the Old Fort and Malindi.

Pyramid Hotel (Map p113; ☎ 024-223 3000; pyramidhotel@yahoo.com; s/d US\$20/30, d without bathroom US\$25) This long-standing place notable for its very steep staircase has a mix of rooms, most with private bathroom and hot water, and all with Zanzibari beds, mosquito nets and fan. Look at a few rooms as standards vary; a few have small balconies, and there's a rooftop terrace.

RESPONSIBLE DIVING

- Never use anchors on the reef, and take care not to ground boats on coral.
- Avoid touching or standing on living marine organisms or dragging equipment across the reef. If you must hold on to the reef, only touch exposed rock or dead coral.
- Be conscious of your fins. Even without contact, the surge from fin strokes near the reef can damage delicate organisms. Take care not to kick up clouds of sand, which can smother organisms.
- Practise and maintain proper buoyancy control. Major damage can be done by divers descending too fast and colliding with the reef.
- Take care in underwater caves. Spend as little time within them as possible as your air bubbles may be caught within the roof and thereby leave organisms high and dry. Take turns to inspect the interior of a small cave.
- Resist the temptation to collect or buy corals or shells.
- Take home all your rubbish. Plastics in particular are a serious threat to marine life.
- Don't feed fish.
- Never ride on the backs of turtles.

Hotel Kiponda (Map p113; ☎ 024-223 3052; hotel kiponda@email.com; Nyumba ya Moto St; s/d/tr US\$25/45/60) This hotel is slightly pricier than others in this category, but rooms are spotless and very good value, the building is atmospheric and the location – tucked away in a small lane near the waterfront – is convenient. All rooms have private bathroom, except two that have a private bathroom outside. There's also a pleasant rooftop restaurant.

The following option is in the Shangani area, at the western tip of Stone Town, and convenient to restaurants and nightlife.

Karibu Inn (Map p113; ☎ 024-223 3058; karibuinnho tel@yahoo.com; dm US\$15, s/d/tr US\$30/40/60) Karibu has a convenient location in the heart of Shangani, within a five-minute walk of Forodhani Gardens, with dorm beds and quite decent rooms with private bathroom.

MIDRANGE

The following are all in the Shangani area.

Coco de Mer Hotel (Map p113; ☎ 024-223 0852; cocode mer_znz@yahoo.com; s/d/tr US\$35/50/60) Conveniently located just off Kenyatta Rd, near the tunnel, and vaguely reminiscent of the Algarve, with white walls and tile work. Avoid the one closet-sized room on the 1st floor, and the downstairs room, many of which have only interior windows; otherwise rooms are pleasant and good value.

Abuso Inn (Map p113; ☎ 024-223 5886; inafaa@hotmail.com; Shangani St; s/d/tr US\$50/65/75; 🍷) This family-run place has spotless, mostly quite spacious rooms with large windows, wooden floors and fan or air-con. Some rooms have glimpses of the water.

Shangani Hotel (Map p113; ☎ 024-223 3688, 024-223 6363; www.shanganihotel.com; Kenyatta Rd; s/d/tr US\$55/75/85) An unpretentious place opposite Shangani post office, with cluttered but reasonably comfortable rooms, most with TV, fridge and fan, plus a restaurant.

Baghani House Hotel (Map p113; ☎ 024-223 5654; baghani@zanzinet.com; s US\$55, d US\$70-90, tr US\$110) This small, atmospheric hotel is one of the best-value choices in this category, with rooms that are full of character – most on the upper level, reached via a steep staircase – dark wood and Zanzibari furnishings. Advance bookings and reconfirmations are recommended. It's just off Kenyatta Rd.

Mazsons Hotel (Map p113; ☎ 024-223 3694; www.mazsonshotel.net; Kenyatta Rd; s/d US\$70/90; 🍷) The long-standing Mazsons has impressively

restored lobby woodwork and a convenient location, which go some way to compensating for its rooms – modern and quite comfortable, though rather pallid. There's also a restaurant.

Chavda Hotel (Map p113; ☎ 024-223 2115; www.chavdahotel.co.tz; Baghani St; s/d from US\$80/100; 🍷) Chavda is a quiet, reliable hotel with some period décor and a range of bland, carpeted rooms with TV, telephone and minibar. The rooftop bar and restaurant are open during the high season only. It's just around the corner from Baghani House Hotel.

Outside the Shangani area are several more choices.

Clove Hotel (Map p113; ☎ 0777-484567; www.zanzi barhotel.nl; Hurumzi St; s/d/ff from US\$38/55/78) Renovated several years ago in shades of lavender and peach, Clove has rather spartan but reasonable-value rooms (check out a few) with mosquito nets and fans. The family rooms also have small balconies with views down onto the small square below. On the rooftop is a terrace for breakfast, drinks and views.

Zanzibar Coffee House Hotel (Map p113; ☎ 024-223 9319; www.riftvalley-zanzibar.com; s/d from US\$75/95, without bathroom US\$60/75, upstairs US\$115/145, family ste US\$145) This small, new, good-value boutique-style hotel above the eponymous coffee house in Hurumzi has just eight rooms, most spacious, some with bathroom and all decorated with Zanzibari beds and décor. You get a great rooftop breakfast (both the rooftop area and the breakfast). It's no frills, but in a comfortable, upmarket sort of way, and atmospheric, and gets good reviews.

TOP END

Dhow Palace (Map p113; ☎ 024-223 3012; dhowpalace@zanlink.com; s/d US\$70/90; 🍷 Jun-Mar; 🍷) This is a classic place with old Zanzibari décor, a fountain in the tastefully restored lobby and comfortable, well-appointed rooms. It's just off Kenyatta Rd, and under the same management as Tembo House Hotel.

Beyt al-Chai (Map p113; ☎ 0777-444111; www.stone towninn.com; Kelele Sq; s US\$70-230, d US\$100-260) This converted tea house is a lovely, atmospheric choice with just six rooms, each individually designed, and all with period décor. For a splurge, try one of the top-floor Sultan suites, with views to the sea in the distance and raised Jacuzzi-style baths. Downstairs is an excellent restaurant (meals from Tsh12,000; open lunch and dinner).

Ahlan Palace Hotel (Map p113; ☎ 024-223 1435; www.ahlanpalace.com; s/d US\$80/110; 🍷) A new place, down-to-earth and welcoming, with simply furnished but clean and comfortable rooms and a restaurant (no alcohol). It's diagonally opposite Chavda Hotel.

Tembo House Hotel (Map p113; ☎ 024-223 3005; tembo@zitec.org; s/d US\$90/100; 🍷 📺 🚿) This attractively restored building has a prime waterfront location, including a small patch of beach (no swimming), efficient management and comfortable, good-value rooms – some with sea views – in new and old wings. Most rooms have a TV and fridge, and there's a small pool, a restaurant (no alcohol) and a great buffet breakfast on the seaside terrace.

Zanzibar Palace Hotel (Map p113; ☎ 024-223 2230; www.zanzibarpalacehotel.com; Kiponda; s US\$95-110, d US\$95-225, ste US\$285; 🍷) A new place – actually a renovation of an older hotel. Rooms all have Zanzibari beds and period design, some have separate sitting areas, some small balconies, most have large raised or sunken-style bathtubs, and most have air-con. It's not to be confused with the similarly named restaurant and internet café around the corner. No credit cards accepted.

236 Hurumzi (Map p113; ☎ 0777-423266; www.236hurumzi.com; Hurumzi St; r US\$165-200) Formerly Emerson & Green, but now operating under a new name and without Emerson, this Zanzibar institution is in two adjacent historic buildings that have been completely restored along the lines of an *Arabian Nights* fantasy and are full of character. Each room is unique – one even has its own private rooftop teahouse – and all are decadently decorated to give you an idea of what Zanzibar must have been like in its heyday. It's several winding blocks east of the Old Fort.

Jafferji's House & Spa (Map p113; ☎ 024-223 2088; www.gallerytours.net; Gizenga St; r about US\$180-250) This upmarket place, under the same management as the Zanzibar Gallery and Gallery Tours & Safaris, is scheduled to open by this book's publication, with nine top-of-the-line rooms – all named after famous Zanzibari figures, and authentically furnished – and a spa.

Emerson Spice (Map p113; www.emersonspice.net; Tharia St, Kiponda; r about US\$200; 🍷) This five-star hotel in a 200-year-old restored building in the Kiponda area is the latest project of the venerable Emerson, of Emerson's House and Emerson & Green fame, and undoubtedly the best. It's scheduled to open soon after this

book's publication, with just a dozen impeccably appointed rooms, a butler on each floor, a pool running throughout the building and then into a central courtyard, a full-service health spa, hammam and Jacuzzi, a downstairs bistro, a rooftop tapas bar – the food promises to be an experience in itself – and throughout, Emerson's signature *Arabian Nights* meets Zanzibar style. The project is being done together with youth training groups and women's cooperatives and is impressively community integrated. Check out the excellent website for an update on the project.

Zanzibar Serena Inn (Map p113; ☎ 024-223 2306, 024-223 3587; www.serena-hotels.com; s/d from US\$325/475; 🍷 📺 🚿) The Zanzibar Serena, in the refurbished Extelecoms House, is Zanzibar Town's most upmarket accommodation option, with a beautiful setting on the water, plush rooms with all the amenities, and a business centre, although we've had some complaints about lackadaisical staff.

Just outside Stone Town are a few more options that make agreeable bases if you want proximity to the town as well as greenery and relaxing surroundings. Also see the listings for Hakuna Matata Beach Lodge and other places around Bububu (p128).

Mtoni Marine Centre (Map p110; ☎ 024-225 0140; www.mtoni.com; club s/d US\$70/90, palm court s/d US\$95/120; 🍷 📺 🚿) This long-standing family-friendly establishment has been completely refurbished, and now offers spacious and well-appointed 'club rooms', and more luxurious 'palm court' sea-view rooms with private balconies. There's a small beach, large, green grounds and gardens, a popular waterside bar and top-notch dining in the main restaurant. It's in large grounds overlooking the water about 3km north of town along the Bububu road. The hotel is affiliated with Coastal Aviation (p127), and it has package deals from Dar es Salaam.

Mbweni Ruins Hotel (Map p110; ☎ 024-223 5478; www.mbweni.com; s/d US\$105/180; 🍷 📺 🚿) Mbweni is a quiet, genteel establishment set in lovely, expansive and lushly vegetated gardens about 5km from town, and several kilometres off the airport road. In addition to well-appointed rooms and a relaxing ambience, it has the very good Raintree Restaurant and the new and relaxing Mangrove Bar, overlooking the water and stands of mangroves and ideal for bird-spotting. There's also a private jetty, from which dhow transfers to and from Stone Town

or elsewhere can be arranged. The property was formerly the site of the UMCA mission school for the children of freed slaves.

Eating

Stone Town has a wide selection of eateries, enough to keep even the most avid gastronomes happily occupied for days. Note that during the low season and Ramadan, many restaurants close or operate reduced hours.

RESTAURANTS

Amore Mio (Map p113; Shangani St; ice cream from Tsh2000, light meals from Tsh4000; ☎ high season) Across the road from La Fenice, Amore Mio has delectable ice cream, as well as pasta dishes and other light meals, good coffees and cappuccinos, and fantastic, quiet views of the water.

Archipelago Café-Restaurant (Map p113; ☎ 024-223 5668; mains Tsh5000-11,000; ☎ lunch & dinner) This popular place has an excellent, breezy location on a 1st-floor terrace overlooking the water just opposite NBC in Shangani, and a menu featuring such delicacies as vegetable coconut curry, orange and ginger snapper, and chicken pilau, topped off by an array of homemade cakes and sweets. There's no bar, but you can bring your own alcohol.

Old Fort Restaurant (Map p113; ☎ 0777-416736; Old Fort; meals from Tsh5500; ☎ 11am-late) The chefs from the former Sweet Eazy on the waterfront have now moved to the Old Fort, and serve up a well-prepared menu featuring grilled seafood and meat, salads, pasta dishes and more. For info on the accompanying traditional dance and drum performances, see p126.

Luis Yoghurt Parlour (Map p113; Gizenga St; meals from Tsh6000; ☎ 10.30am-2pm & 6-8pm Mon-Sat) This old favourite has reopened after a long hiatus, and is once again serving delicious and spicy home-cooked Goan cuisine, plus lassis, yogurt and milkshakes.

Mcheza Bar (Map p110; meals from Tsh6000; ☎ lunch & dinner) Next door to Mtoni Marine Centre is this recently completely refurbished beachside sports bar, with a mix of booth and table seating, two big screens, plus burgers and pub food, seafood, South African steaks and a pizza oven. A sushi bar is set to open soon on the adjoining beach. There's live music on Saturday evenings in season.

Kidude (Map p113; ☎ 0777-423266; 236 Hurumzi, Hurumzi St; meals Tsh6000-25,000; ☎ lunch & dinner; ♿) Downstairs at 236 Hurumzi, Kidude has a dark-wood interior with period décor, sky-

high ceilings, a lunch menu featuring well-prepared sandwiches, salads and cakes, an evening set menu similar to that upstairs at Tower Top Restaurant (also located at this hotel), a bar, and tea or coffee and delicious cakes throughout the day.

Monsoon Restaurant (Map p113; ☎ 0777-410410; meals from Tsh6500; ☎ lunch & dinner) The impeccably decorated and atmospheric Monsoon has traditional-style dining on floor cushions, and well-prepared Swahili and Western cuisine served to a backdrop of live *taarab* (Zanzibari music combining African, Arabic and Indian influences) on Wednesday and Saturday evenings. It's at the southwestern edge of Forodhani Gardens.

Radha Food House (Map p113; ☎ 024-223 4808; thalis Tsh7000) This great little place is tucked away on the small side street just before the Shangani tunnel. The menu – strictly vegetarian – features thalis, lassis, homemade yogurt and other dishes from the subcontinent.

Livingstone Beach Restaurant (Map p113; ☎ 0773-164939; meals from Tsh7000; ☎ lunch & dinner) This justifiably popular place in the old British Consulate building has seating directly on the beach – lovely in the evening, with candlelight – and a good array of well-prepared seafood grills and other dishes, plus a bar.

Mercury's (Map p113; ☎ 024-223 3076; meals Tsh8000-16,000; ☎ 10am-midnight) Named in honour of Queen vocalist Freddie Mercury (see p119), this is Stone Town's main waterside hang-out. On offer are good seafood grills, pasta dishes and pizza, and a well-stocked bar and a terrace that's a prime location for sipping sundowners. There's a beach bonfire nightly, and live music on Wednesday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday evenings.

La Fenice (Map p113; ☎ 0777-411868; Shangani St; meals from Tsh8500; ☎ lunch & dinner) A breezy little patch of Italy on the waterfront, La Fenice has top-notch Italian cuisine and outdoor tables where you can enjoy your pasta while gazing out at the turquoise sea in front of you.

Mtoni Marine Centre (Map p110; ☎ 024-225 0117; mtonirestaurant@zanzibar.cc; meals Tsh10,000-27,000; ☎ dinner) Mtoni Marine's main restaurant has what many connoisseurs consider to be the finest cuisine in Stone Town, with a range of seafood and meat grills, and waterside barbecues several times weekly, with a backdrop of *taarab* or other traditional music.

Sambusa Two Tables Restaurant (Map p113; ☎ 024-223 1979; meals US\$10; ☎ dinner) For sampling au-

thentic Zanzibari dishes, it's hard to beat this small, family-run restaurant just off Kaunda Rd, where the proprietors bring out course after course of delicious local delicacies. Advance reservations are required; up to 15 guests can be accommodated.

236 Hurumzi Tower Top Restaurant (Map p113; ☎ 024-223 0171, 0777-423266; www.236hurumzi.com; 236 Hurumzi, Hurumzi St; meals US\$25-30; ☎ dinner) Dinner at this rooftop restaurant has long been a Zanzibar tradition, and while it seems to have rather suffered from success somewhat in recent years, it still makes an enjoyable evening out and a fine spot for sundowners. The menu is fixed, and reservations are essential. On Friday, Saturday and Sunday, meals are served to a backdrop of traditional music and dance. The terrace is open from 5pm, drinks start at 6pm and dinner at 7pm.

Also recommended:

Pagoda Chinese Restaurant (Map p113; ☎ 024-223 1758; meals from Tsh6500; ☎ lunch & dinner) Tasty Chinese food near the Africa House Hotel, including a good-value set-menu lunch.

Raintree Restaurant (Map p110; ☎ 024-223 5478; Mbweni Ruins Hotel; meals from Tsh9000) Elegant dining in a lovely setting overlooking the surrounding gardens and the water; delicious seafood grills and salads. Special features include occasional evening beachside barbecues, and a Sunday lunchtime curry buffet (Tsh15,000).

CAFÉS

Msumbi Coffee House (Map p113; off Kelele Sq) Tucked away in a small alleyway near the Zanzibar Serena Inn, this small, informal place has a full array of coffees, cappuccinos and more, and also sells roasted beans (all Tanzanian grown) to take away.

Buni Café (Map p113; Shangani St; snacks & light meals from Tsh2000; ☎ 8.30am-6.30pm) Just before the Shangani tunnel and around the corner from Monsoon restaurant, with a similar menu to Stone Town Café (though no all-day breakfasts) and a nice outdoor porch where you can watch the passing scene.

Zanzibar Coffee House (Map p113; ☎ 024-223 9319; coffeehouse@zanlink.com; snacks from Tsh2000) A great place below the hotel of the same name, with a large coffee menu, plus milkshakes, fruit smoothies and freshly baked cakes. It's affiliated with Utengule Country Lodge in Mbeya, from where much of the coffee is also sourced, and coffee beans are available to take away.

Stone Town Café (Map p113; Kenyatta Rd; breakfast Tsh5000, meals from Tsh2500; ☎ 8am-6pm Mon-Sat) A

new, good eatery opposite Shangani Internet Café, with all-day breakfasts, milkshakes, freshly baked cakes, veggie wraps and very good coffee.

QUICK EATS

Forodhani Gardens (Map p113; meals from Tsh1000; ☎ dinner) These waterside gardens (p117) have great-value street food, with piles of grilled fish and meat, chips, snacks and more, all served on a paper plate or rolled into a piece of newspaper and eaten while sitting on benches or on the lawn. Locals advise against eating fish and meat during the height of the low season (when food turnover is slower), but we've never heard of any problems.

For inexpensive meals, try **Passing Show** (Map p113; Malawi Rd; meals from Tsh1000), opposite Ciné Afrique, or **Al-Shabany** (off Malawi Rd; meals from Tsh1000; ☎ 10am-2pm), another local favourite on a small side street just off Malawi Rd and east of Creek Rd. Both serve delicious pilau and biryani, plus chicken and chips.

SELF-CATERING

Shamshuddin's Cash & Carry (Map p113; Soko St) Just behind the Darajani market.

Drinking

Stone Town isn't known for its nightlife, but there are a few popular spots.

Dharma Lounge (Map p113; Vuga Rd; ☎ 7.30pm-late) Zanzibar's first and only cocktail lounge, with big cushions for relaxing, a well-stocked bar, air-con and a good selection of music. It's next to the Culture Musical Club.

Africa House Hotel (Map p113; www.theafricahouse-zanzibar.com; Shangani St) Terrace-level sundowners overlooking the water.

Also recommended:

Mcheza Bar (Map p110; ☎ 024-225 0117; mtonires@zanzibar.cc) A happening sports bar that draws mainly an expat crowd; see also opposite.

Mercury's (Map p113; ☎ 024-223 3076) Waterside sundowners and a beach bonfire nightly plus live music Wednesday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday evenings.

Entertainment

Entertainment Zanzibari-style centres on traditional music and dance performances.

Zanzibar's most famous contribution to the world music scene is *taarab*; for more information and details on where to hear it, see the boxed text, p126.

TAARAB MUSIC

No visit to Zanzibar would be complete without spending an evening listening to the evocative strains of *taarab*, the archipelago's most famous musical export. *Taarab*, from the Arabic *tariba* (roughly, 'to be moved'), fuses African, Arabic and Indian influences, and is considered by many Zanzibaris to be a unifying force among the island's many cultures. A traditional *taarab* orchestra consists of several dozen musicians using both Western and traditional instruments, including the violin, the *kanun* (similar to a zither), the accordion, the *nay* (an Arabic flute) and drums, plus a singer. There's generally no written music, and songs – often with themes centred on love – are full of puns and double meanings.

Taarab-style music was played in Zanzibar as early as the 1820s at the sultan's palace, where it had been introduced from Arabia. However, it wasn't until the 1900s, when Sultan Seyyid Hamoud bin Muhammed encouraged formation of the first *taarab* clubs, that it became more formalised.

One of the first clubs founded was Akhwan Safaa, established in 1905 in Zanzibar Town. Since then numerous other clubs have sprung up, including the well-known Culture Musical Club, based in the building of the same name, and the smaller, more traditional Twinkling Stars, which is an offshoot of Akhwan Safaa. Many of the newer clubs have abandoned the traditional acoustic style in favour of electronic equipment, although older musicians tend to look down on this as an adulterated form of *taarab*. The performances are an event in themselves. In traditional clubs, men and women sit separately, with the women decked out in their finest garb and elaborate hairstyles. Audience participation is key, and listeners frequently go up to the stage to give money to the singer.

For an introduction to *taarab* music, stop by the **Zanzibar Serena Inn** (Map p113; ☎ 024-223 2306, 024-223 3587; www.serenahotels.com), where the Twinkling Stars play on Tuesday and Friday evening on the veranda from about 6pm to 7.30pm. For something much livelier, head to the **Culture Musical Club** (Vuga Rd), with a classic old-style club atmosphere and rehearsals from about 7.30pm to 9.30pm Monday to Friday. Akhwan Safaa has rehearsals several times weekly from about 9.30pm in the area off Creek Rd near the traffic police; locals can point you in the right direction. An excellent time to see *taarab* performances is during the **Festival of the Dhow Countries** (p120) in July.

The best contact for anything related to traditional music and dance is the Dhow Countries Music Academy (p116).

Old Fort (Map p113; admission Tsh4000) On Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday evening from 7pm to 10pm there are traditional *ngoma* (dance and drumming) performances at the Old Fort, although be prepared for rather flat tourist displays.

Shopping

Stone Town has wonderfully atmospheric craft shopping, and – if you can sort your way through some of the kitsch – there are some excellent buys to be found. Items to watch for include finely crafted Zanzibari chests, *kanga* (cotton wraps worn by women all over Tanzania), *kikoi* (the thicker striped or plaid equivalent worn by men on Zanzibar and in other coastal areas), spices and handcrafted silver jewellery.

A good place to start is Gizenga St, which is lined with small shops and craft dealers. At

the western end of Forodhani Gardens are vendors selling woodcarvings, Maasai beaded jewellery and other crafts.

Zanzibar Gallery (Map p113; ☎ 024-223 2721; gallery @swahilicoast.com; cnr Kenyatta Rd & Gizenga St; 🕒 9am-6.30pm Mon-Sat, to 1pm Sun) This long-standing gallery has an excellent collection of souvenirs, textiles, woodcarvings, antiques and more, in addition to its books.

Memories of Zanzibar (Map p113; Kenyatta Rd) Offers a large selection of jewellery, textiles and curios.

Moto Handicrafts (Map p113; www.solarafrica.net/moto; Hurumzi St) Sells baskets, mats and other woven products made by local women's co-operatives using environmentally sustainable technologies. The cooperative itself is based in Pete, shortly before Jozani Forest, where it also has a small shop.

Dhow Countries Music Academy (Map p113; ☎ 024-223 4050; www.zanzibarmusic.org; Mizingani Rd) For CDs of *taarab* and other local and regional music. See also its listing on p116.

Getting There & Away

AIR

Coastal Aviation and ZanAir offer daily flights connecting Zanzibar with Dar es Salaam (US\$60), Arusha (US\$150 to US\$200), Pemba (US\$80), Selous Game Reserve and the northern parks. Coastal Aviation also goes daily to/from Tanga via Pemba (US\$90), and has day excursion packages from Dar es Salaam to Stone Town for US\$112, including return flights, lunch and airport transfers. Air Tanzania and Precision Air also fly daily between Zanzibar and Dar es Salaam, with connections to Nairobi (Kenya). Precision Air, in partnership with Kenya Airways, also has a direct flight between Zanzibar and Nairobi. Note that the Nairobi–Zanzibar flight is routinely overbooked, and passengers are frequently bumped (especially if they've booked through Precision Air). Reconfirm your seat many times, and arrive early at the airport.

Airline offices in Zanzibar Town include the following:

Air Tanzania (Map p113; ☎ 023-223 0213; Shangani St) Next to Abuso Hotel.

Coastal Aviation (Map p113; ☎ 024-223 3489, 024-223 3112; www.coastal.cc; Kelele Sq) Next to Zanzibar Serena Inn, and at the airport.

Kenya Airways (Map p113; ☎ 024-223 4520/1; www.kenya-airways.com; Mizingani Rd) Just southeast of the Big Tree.

Precision Air (Map p113; ☎ 024-223 4520/1; www.precisionairtz.com; Mizingani Rd) Located with Kenya Airways.

ZanAir (Map p113; ☎ 024-223 3670; www.zanair.com) Just off Malawi Rd, opposite Ciné Afrique.

BOAT

For information on ferry connections between Zanzibar and Dar es Salaam, see p99. For ferry connections between Zanzibar and Pemba, see p148. You can get tickets at the port, through any of the listings under Travel Agencies & Tour Operators (p112), and – most easily – at the Tourist Information Office (p112). If you leave Zanzibar on the *Flying Horse* night ferry, take care with your valuables, especially when the boat docks in Dar es Salaam in the early morning hours.

Dhows link Zanzibar with Dar es Salaam, Tanga, Bagamoyo and Mombasa (Kenya). Foreigners are not permitted on dhows between Dar es Salaam and Zanzibar. For other routes, the best place to ask is at the beach behind Tembo House Hotel. Allow anywhere

from 10 to 48 hours or more to/from the mainland; also see the boxed text, p357.

TRAIN

Riverman Hotel behind the Anglican cathedral can help you make bookings for the Tazara line for a Tsh1000 fee; you pay for the ticket at the Tazara train station in Dar es Salaam.

Getting Around

TO/FROM THE AIRPORT

The airport is about 7km southeast of Zanzibar Town. A taxi to/from the airport costs Tsh8000 to Tsh10,000. *Dalla-dalla* 505 also does this route (Tsh300, 30 minutes), departing from the corner opposite Mnazi Mmoja hospital. Many Stone Town hotels offer free airport pick-ups for confirmed bookings, though some charge. For hotels elsewhere on the island, transfers usually cost about US\$25 to US\$50, depending on the location.

CAR & MOTORCYCLE

It's easy to arrange car, moped or motorcycle rental and prices are reasonable, although breakdowns are fairly common, as are moped accidents. Considering how small the island is, it's often more straightforward and not that much more expensive just to work out a good deal with a taxi driver.

You'll need either an International Driving Permit (IDP; together with your home licence), a licence from Kenya (Nairobi), Uganda or South Africa, or a Zanzibar driving permit – there are lots of police checkpoints along the roads where you'll be asked to show one or the other. Zanzibar permits can be obtained on the spot from the **traffic police** (Map p113; cnr Malawi & Creek Rds). If you rent through a tour company, they'll sort out the paperwork.

Daily rental rates average from about US\$25 for a moped or motorcycle, and US\$45 to US\$55 for a Suzuki 4WD, with better deals available for longer-term rentals. You can rent through any of the tour companies, through **Asko Tours & Travel** (Map p113; ☎ 024-223 0712; askotour@hotmail.com; Kenyatta Rd), which also organises island excursions, or by asking around in front of Darajani market, near the bus station. If you're not mechanically minded, bring someone along with you who can check that the motorbike or vehicle you're renting is in reasonable condition, and take a test drive. Full payment is usually required at the time of delivery, but don't pay any advance deposits.

DALLA-DALLAS

Dalla-dallas piled with people and produce link all major towns on the island. They are open-sided and generally more enjoyable than their mainland Tanzanian counterparts. For most destinations, including all the main beaches, there are several vehicles daily, with the last ones back to Stone Town departing by about 3pm or 4pm. None of the routes cost more than Tsh1000, and all take plenty of time (eg about three hours from Zanzibar Town to Jambiani). All have destination signboards and numbers. Commonly used routes include the following:

Route No	Destination
101	Mkokotoni
116	Nungwi
117	Kiwengwa
118	Matemwe
121	Donge
206	Chwaka
214	Uroa
308	Unguja Ukuu
309	Jambiani
310	Makunduchi
324	Bwejuu
326	Kizimkazi
501	Amani
502	Bububu
504	Fuoni
505	Airport (marked 'U/Ndege')
509	Chukwani

PRIVATE MINIBUS

Private minibuses run daily to the north- and east-coast beaches, although stiff competition and lots of hassles with touts mean that a splurge on a taxi isn't a bad idea. Book through any travel agency the day before you want to leave, and the minibus will pick you up at your hotel in Stone Town between 8am and 9am. Travel takes 1½ to two hours to any of the destinations, and costs a negotiable Tsh5000 per person. Don't pay for the return trip in advance as you'll probably see neither the driver nor your money again. Most drivers only go to hotels where they'll get a commission, and will go to every length to talk you out of other places, including telling you that the hotel is closed/full/burned down etc.

TAXI

Taxis don't have meters, so you'll need to agree on a price with the driver before getting into the car. Town trips cost Tsh1500 to Tsh2000, more at night.

AROUND ZANZIBAR Beaches

Zanzibar has superb beaches, with the best along the island's east coast. Although some have become overcrowded and built-up, all offer a wonderful respite from bumping along dusty roads on the mainland, or from dreary London winters. The east-coast beaches are protected by coral reefs offshore and have fine, white coral sand. Depending on the season, they may also have a lot of seaweed (most abundant from December to February). Locals harvest the seaweed for export, and you'll see it drying in the sun in many villages.

Everyone has their favourites, and which beach you choose is a matter of preference. For meeting other travellers, enjoying some nightlife and staying at relatively inexpensive accommodation, the best choices are central and west Nungwi in the far north (although for a beach, you'll need to go around the corner to Kendwa, which together with east Nungwi is the real treat of the north), followed by Paje on the east coast. Bwejuu and Jambiani on the east coast are also popular – and have some of the finest stretches of palm-fringed sand you'll find anywhere – but everything is more spread out and somewhat quieter here than in the north. For a much quieter atmosphere, try Matemwe, Pongwe or the southern end of Kiwengwa. If you're seeking the large resort scene, the main area is the beach north of Kiwengwa towards Pwani Mchangani. The coast north of Bwejuu near the tip of Ras Michamvi is worth considering if you're looking for top-end standards away from the large resorts. Except for Kendwa and Nungwi, where you can take a dip at any time, swimming at all of the beaches is tide dependent.

BUBUBU (FUJI BEACH)

This modest stretch of sand, 10km north of town in Bububu, is the closest place to Zanzibar Town for swimming, though if you're after a beach holiday, it's better to head further north or east. It's accessed via the dirt track heading west from just north of the Bububu police station.

Sleeping

Bububu Beach Guest House (☎ 024-225 0110; www.bububu-zanzibar.com; s/d from US\$15/25) This budget haunt has airy no-frills rooms near the beach, and meals with advance notice. It's at the end of the dirt track heading west from the

BEST BEACHES

Almost all of Zanzibar's beaches would be considered superlative if they were located anywhere else, but a few stand out, even here:

- **Matemwe** (p133) For its powdery, white sands and intriguing village life.
- **Kendwa** (p132) Wide, white and swimmable around the clock.
- **Pongwe** (p135) For its crystal waters and lack of crowds.
- **Jambiani** (p137) For the otherworldly turquoise shades of its waters.

Bububu police station and signposted; staff will come and collect you free from the airport or Stone Town, and can organise excursions around the island.

Hakuna Matata Beach Lodge (☎ 0777-454892; www.hakuna-matata-beach-lodge.com; s US\$130-165, d US\$160-210; 🍷 📺 🚿) This lovely place, built among the old Chuini Palace ruins and overlooking a pretty little cove, is about 12km north of Stone Town. Accommodation is in spacious, comfortable and well-appointed stone and thatch bungalows set amid gardens dotted with mango and papaya trees, and there's a good restaurant with traditional music some evenings. There's also a spa and a pool.

MANGAPWANI

The small and unremarkable beach at Mangapwani is notable mainly for its nearby caves, and is frequently included as a stop on spice tours.

The caves are located about 20km north of Zanzibar Town along the coast, and are an easy walk from Mangapwani beach. There are actually two locations. The first is a large **natural cave** with a freshwater pool that is rumoured to have been used in connection with the slave trade. North of here is the sobering **slave cave**, a dank, dark cell that was used as a holding pen to hide slaves after the legal trade was abolished in the late 19th century.

There are no facilities at Mangapwani other than the **Mangapwani Seafood Grill** (☎ 024-223 3587; set lunch US\$25; 🍷 lunch), with a bar and a set, grilled seafood lunch. It's run by Zanzibar Serena Inn.

To get to the beach, follow the main road north from Zanzibar Town past Bububu to

Chuini, from where you head left down a dirt road for about 8km towards Mangapwani village and the beach. Zanzibar Serena Inn provides a shuttle twice daily in the high season, departing from the hotel at 10am and 3.30pm and returning at 2.30pm and 6.30pm (not included in the lunch price). *Dalla-dallas* also run between Stone Town and Mangapwani village, from where it's a short walk to the beach. Just before reaching the restaurant area, there's a small sign for the caves, or ask locals to point the way.

NUNGWI

This large village, nestled among the palm groves at Zanzibar's northernmost tip, is a dhow-building centre and one of the island's major tourist destinations – and this, despite now lacking any sort of substantial beach during much of the year, thanks to shifting tidal patterns and development-induced erosion. It's also where traditional and modern knock against each other with full force. Fishers sit in the shade repairing their nets while the morning's catch dries on neat wooden racks nearby, and rough-hewn planks slowly take on new life as skilled boat builders ply their centuries-old trade. Yet you only need to take a few steps back from the waterfront to enter into another world, with blaring music, an internet café, a rather motley collection of guesthouses packed in against each other and a definite party vibe. For some travellers it's the only place to be on the island (and it's one of the few places you can swim without needing to wait for the tides to come in); others will probably want to give it a wide miss. Most hotels and the centre of all the action are just north and west of Nungwi village, where it can get quite crowded. If partying isn't your scene, there are some lovely, quiet patches of sand on Nungwi's eastern side (where swimming is more tidal), and beautiful Kendwa (p132) is only a short walk, boat or taxi-ride away.

Information

There's an internet café and forex bureau at Amaan Bungalows, though exchange rates are significantly lower than in Stone Town or on the mainland.

Because of the large number of tourists in Nungwi, it's easy to overlook the fact that you're in a traditional, conservative environment. Be respectful, especially with your dress and your interactions with locals, and ask

THE SLAVE TRADE

Slavery has been practised in Africa throughout recorded history, but its greatest expansion in East Africa came with the rise of Islam, which prohibits the enslavement of Muslims. Demands of European plantation holders on the islands of Réunion and Mauritius were another major catalyst, particularly during the second half of the 18th century.

At the outset, slaves were taken from coastal regions and shipped to Arabia, Persia and the Indian Ocean islands. Kilwa Kisiwani was one of the major export gateways. As demand increased, traders made their way further inland, so that during the 18th and 19th centuries slaves were being brought from as far away as Malawi and the Congo. By the 19th century, with the rise of the Omani Arabs, Zanzibar had eclipsed Kilwa Kisiwani as East Africa's major slave-trading depot. According to some estimates, by the 1860s from 10,000 to as many as 50,000 slaves were passing through Zanzibar's market each year. Overall, close to 600,000 slaves were sold through Zanzibar between 1830 and 1873, when a treaty with Britain finally ended the regional trade.

As well as the human horrors, the slave trade caused major social upheavals on the mainland. In the sparsely populated and politically decentralised south, it fanned up interclan warfare as ruthless entrepreneurs raided neighbouring tribes for slaves. In other areas the slave trade promoted increased social stratification and altered settlement patterns. Some tribes, for example, began to build fortified settlements encircled by trenches, while others – notably the Nyamwezi and other central-Tanzanian peoples – concentrated their populations in towns as self-defence. Another fundamental societal change was the gradual shift in the nature of chieftaincy from a religiously based position to one resting on military power or wealth – both among the 'gains' of trade in slaves and commodities.

The slave trade also served as an impetus for European missionary activity in East Africa – prompting the establishment of the first mission stations, as well as missionary penetration of the interior. After the abolishment of slavery on Zanzibar, the Universities' Mission to Central Africa (UMCA) took over the slave market, and built the Anglican cathedral that still stands on the site today.

permission before snapping photos. Also, watch your valuables, and don't walk along the beach alone or with valuables, particularly at night.

Sights & Activities

Other than diving, snorkelling and relaxing on the beach, you can watch the dhow builders, or visit the **Mnarani Aquarium** (admission Tsh2500; ☎ 9am-6pm), home to hawksbill and green turtles that are being nurtured as part of a local conservation initiative. It's near the lighthouse at the northernmost tip of Ras Nungwi. The lighthouse, which dates to 1886, is still in use and not open to the public.

The best diving in the north is around Mnemba, which can be readily arranged from Nungwi, though it's a bit of a ride to get there. Leven Bank is closer and can be quite rewarding, but you'll need previous experience. Otherwise, there are a collection of sites closer in that is good for beginners. For more on diving around Zanzibar, see the boxed text, p118. Locally based operators include the following:

East Africa Diving & Water Sport Centre (☎ 0777-420588; www.diving-zanzibar.com) Next to Jambo Brothers Beach Bungalows.

Ras Nungwi Beach Hotel (☎ 024-223 3767; www.rasnungwi.com) A PADI five-star centre based at Ras Nungwi Beach Hotel.

Spanish Dancer Dive Centre (☎ 024-224 0091, 0777-417717; www.spanishdancerdivers.com) At Nungwi Inn Hotel.

Sleeping & Eating

The main cluster of guesthouses is on the western side of Nungwi, where there's not much ambience and little to distinguish between the various places, but plenty of activity. Just northeast of here are a few other budget options. Further east, around the tip of the cape and past the lighthouse, everything gets much quieter, with a handful of good hotels spread along a low cliff overlooking the water, surrounded by empty tracts of scrub vegetation. Many of Nungwi's hotels have restaurants, and in the village there's a tiny shop with a few basics. For anything more than that, you'll need to shop in Zanzibar Town.

Nungwi Guest House (☎ 0777-494899, 0784-234980; nungwiquest@yahoo.com; Nungwi village; s/d US\$10/20) A good budget option in the village centre, with simple, clean en suite rooms around a small garden courtyard, all with mosquito nets and fans, meals on request and discounted long-term rates.

Jambo Brothers Beach Bungalows (jambobungalows@yahoo.com; central Nungwi; s/d without bathroom US\$20/30) This low-key place on the sand has been spruced up a bit, though rooms are still quite basic and a bit tatty. Meals can be arranged with advance notice. East Africa Diving & Water Sport Centre is next door.

Union Beach Bungalows (central Nungwi; s/d without bathroom US\$20/30) A step up, although nothing special, with small, two-room cottages near the beach next to Jambo Brothers.

North Nungwi Beach Resort (east Nungwi; d US\$35) This is the cheapest place on Nungwi's eastern side, with very basic rooms in quiet and rather neglected but attractive grounds close to the beach, friendly staff and meals available with advance order. It's just south of Tanzanite Beach Resort, and well away from all the action in the town centre.

Nungwi Inn Hotel (☎ 024-224 0091; www.nungwi-inn.com; west Nungwi; d garden view with fan/air-con US\$50/60, d sea view with air-con US\$70; ☎) Located towards the southwestern end of the main hotel strip, this hotel has reasonable rooms scattered around rather hotch-potch grounds in small whitewashed cottages, plus a restaurant and a somewhat quieter location near the beach. Note that the garden view rooms are well back from the beach and the rest of the hotel, across a small dirt road.

Amaan Bungalows (☎ 024-224 0024/6; www.amaanbungalows.com; central Nungwi; tw from US\$60, with sea view US\$120; ☎) This large and efficiently run place is at the centre of the action, with various levels of accommodation, ranging from small garden-view rooms with fan to quite nice and more spacious sea-view rooms with air-con and small balconies. All rooms have hot water. Also in the complex is a waterside restaurant-bar, internet access, moped rental, a travel agency and more. No credit cards accepted.

Smiles Beach Hotel (☎ 024-224 0472; www.smilesbeachhotel.com; east-central Nungwi; s/d US\$75/100; ☎) Smiles – on the eastern edge of Nungwi centre – has well-maintained and well-appointed rooms in two-storey tile-roofed cottages overlooking a manicured lawn and a nice patch of beach. They're spotless and good value,

all with small sea-facing balconies, and with more space and quiet than at some of the other central hotels.

Game Fish Lodge (☎ 0753-451919; gamefish@zanlink.com; east Nungwi; r US\$100) In a good setting high up on a hill dotted with fig palms and with lovely views overlooking the sea on Nungwi's quiet eastern side, this new place offers four well-equipped rooms (more are planned), fully equipped fishing (including a three-day catered camping trip to Quata island offshore from Pemba) and a restaurant.

Flame Tree Cottages (☎ 024-224 0100; www.flametreecottages.com; east-central Nungwi; d US\$105; ☎) Nice, simply furnished white cottages in a small fenced-in garden just in from the beach in a quieter spot on the northeastern edge of Nungwi. All have fan and air-con, and some have a small kitchenette (US\$10 extra) and minifridge. Dinner can be arranged with advance order. A new, promising-looking upmarket place was being built next door.

Baobab Beach Bungalows (☎ 024-223 6315, 0773-907276; www.baobabbeachbungalows.com; west Nungwi; s US\$115-165, d US\$180-280; ☎) At the far southwestern end of the strip, and quieter, with clean, small bungalows set around the lawn well away from the water, plus several simpler rooms with fan and spacious, air-con deluxe rooms closer to the beach.

Mnarani Beach Cottages (☎ 024-224 0494; www.lighthousezanzibar.com; east Nungwi; s/d US\$72/108, q/family cottage US\$128/225, deluxe d US\$170, honeymoon ste US\$200, all prices include half board; ☎) This small owner-managed lodge is the first place you come to on the placid eastern side of Nungwi – just after the lighthouse (the name means 'at the lighthouse' in Swahili), a fine choice and warmly recommended. It's set on a small rise overlooking the sea and with easy access to the beach below – ideal for swimming or for long walks at low tide. Accommodation is in small and spotless cottages, some with sea views, plus a few larger beachfront family cottages with minifridge and a loft. There are also deluxe rooms in the new Zanzibar House, including the Sunset and Sunrise suites on the top level and a rooftop bar with the best views in Nungwi. At the other end of the complex is the Mahaba honeymoon suite, with a loft, throw pillows for relaxing and a private breakfast, and a good restaurant and a deck that juts out over the water at high tide, with hammocks and swings for lounging. The lodge is well suited for both couples

and families, and with a surprising feeling of space despite being often booked out. For children or children-at-heart, there is a pair of fantastic swings overlooking the sea directly above the beach. The same management is also building several two- to three-bedroom self-catering flats nearby.

Ras Nungwi Beach Hotel (☎ 024-223 3767; www.rasnungwi.com; east Nungwi; s/d full board US\$220/300, with sea view from US\$260/380; ☎ Jun-Mar) This attractive, upmarket place has a low-key ambience, airy sea-view chalets nestled on a hillside overlooking the sea, and less expensive 'garden-view' rooms in the main lodge, plus a huge and very comfortable and well-appointed suite. The hotel can organise fishing and water sports, and there's a dive centre. It's the last (for now) hotel down on Nungwi's eastern side.

Getting There & Away

Bus 116 runs daily between Nungwi and Zanzibar Town (Tsh1300) along a now completely tarmac road, but almost everyone uses one of the private minibuses (p128). If you're driving on your own, it's faster to take the route from Mahonda via Kinyasini (to the east), rather than the somewhat deteriorated road via Donge and Mkokotoni.

KENDWA

About 3km southwest of Nungwi along the coast is Kendwa, a long, wide and wonderful stretch of sand known for its laid-back atmosphere and its full-moon parties. Apart from the full-moon parties, when it's loud until the wee hours, the beach is lovely and tranquil, swimmable at all hours, and refreshingly free from Nungwi's crush of activity and accommodation. Offshore are some reefs for snorkelling. For diving, there's **Scuba Do** (☎ 0777-417157; www.scuba-do-zanzibar.com), who has a full range of PADI courses and certification and is located at Sunset Bungalows.

Sleeping

All the hotels are within about a 700m stretch, so you can easily go from one place to the next on foot, and just about everywhere has sea views.

Les Toits du Palme (☎ 0777-418548; s/d US\$25/50, d banda without bathroom US\$10) Basic thatched *bandas* (thatched-roof huts or shelters) on the beach with not much more than a mattress, plus some bungalow-style rooms up on the small escarpment behind.

Malaika (☎ 0777-856167; www.malaikabungalows.com; s/d US\$30/40) A handful of no-frills rooms at the southern end of Kendwa, and just in from the beach. No one was there to show us around when we passed by – if you stay, let us know how it is.

Sunset Bungalows (☎ 0777-414647, 0777-413818; sunsetbungalows@hotmail.com; s/d US\$35/45, s/d with air-con from US\$60/75, s/d deluxe beachfront with air-con US\$70/95; ☎) A long-standing place with straightforward but quite nice rooms and cottages on a small cliff overlooking the beach, plus better, cheerily decorated ones lined up in facing rows on the sand, including a few 'deluxe bungalows' closer to the water. There's also a resident dive operator, and a large and popular beachside restaurant-bar with evening bonfires on the beach. You can also book through Malindi Lodge (p121) in Stone Town.

Kendwa Rocks (☎ 0777-415475; www.kendwarocks.com; s/d wooden bandas US\$50/70, d banda without bathroom US\$30, s/d stone bungalows from US\$55/75; ☎) A Kendwa classic, with straightforward and recently spruced-up wooden bungalows on the sand, some cooler stone and thatch versions nearby, including some with air-con, some simple *bandas* with shared bathroom up on the small cliff, away from the water, and the biggest full-moon parties.

White Sands Beach Hotel (☎ 0777-411326; www.ajvtours.co.tz; d US\$50-80) Nice en suite stone cottages on a small cliff above the beach (prices vary according to size), and a great beachside bar and restaurant.

Kendwa Beach Resort (☎ 0777-492552; www.kendwabeachresort.com; d US\$69-109) This large place towards the southern end of Kendwa has been completely redone in recent years and now has various types of rooms. These range from small 'hill-view' rooms, set well back from the water on a hill, to well-appointed and larger 'ocean bungalows' closer to the beach. There's also a good waterside restaurant.

Getting There & Away

You can walk to Kendwa from Nungwi at low tide in about 25 to 30 minutes, but take care as there have been some muggings. Alternatively, inexpensive boats go from near Amaan Bungalows (p131) a few times daily depending on demand. Via public transport from Stone Town, have *dalla-dalla* 116 drop you at the sign for Kendwa Rocks (a few kilometres south of Nungwi), from where it's

HONEYMOON HEAVEN

Tanzania has become a hugely popular destination for honeymooners, and many upmarket hotels, both on Zanzibar and on the mainland (especially along the coast and on the northern safari circuit), offer special honeymoon suites, private candlelit dinners and other luxuries to help you ease into betrothed bliss. We've mentioned a few of the suites in the listings in this book, but it's always worth asking. Web-based tour operators who specialise in arranging upmarket honeymoon safari/beach packages in Tanzania include **Africa Travel Resource** (www.allaboutzanzibar.com) and **Encounter Zanzibar** (www.encounterzanzibar.com). Most of the mid-range and top-end safari operators listed on p44 also arrange special honeymoon packages.

about a 2km walk to the beach. (If you're driving, this access road is supposed to be rehabilitated soon, but even now it's passable in 2WD, with some care needed over the rocky patches.)

MATEMWE

The long, idyllic beach at Matemwe has some of the finest sand on Zanzibar. It's also the best base for diving and snorkelling around Mnemba, which lies just offshore. In the nearby village, life moves at its own pace, with women making their way across the shallows at low tide to harvest seaweed, strings of fish drying in the sun, and cows and chickens wandering across the road – all thousands of miles from the world of ringing mobile phones, traffic jams and high-rise office buildings that most of Matemwe's visitors have left behind.

As you head south along the coast, the sands of Matemwe slide almost imperceptibly into those of Pwani Mchangani, a large fishing village that acts as a buffer before the string of Italian resorts further south at Kiwengwa.

Sleeping – Budget

Mohammed's Restaurant & Bungalows (☎ 0777-431881; r per person without bathroom US\$15) This establishment has four very basic en suite bungalows, each with two large beds, just

back from the beach. Grilled fish and other local meals can be arranged.

Matemwe Minazini (per person US\$20) At the far southern end of the beach, this very chilled place has a handful of very basic rooms and meals. The setup is nothing special, but the price is about as good as it gets on Matemwe.

Sele's (☎ 0777-413449; d US\$40) This friendly and no-frills place was still being built when we passed by but looked promising. There are a couple of simple, large en suite rooms with more to come, plus a restaurant – all just in from the beach in a dhow-themed garden.

Nyota Beach Bungalows (☎ 0777-484303; www.nyotabeachbungalows.com; d with garden/sea view US\$65/80) Straightforward but atmospheric bungalows (including one two-storey bungalow) set amid the palms and papaya trees just back from the beach, and a restaurant.

Sleeping – Midrange & Top End

Matemwe Baharini Villas Beach Resort (☎ 0777-417768; www.matemwevillas.com; villa per room US\$75-100, s/d bungalow US\$100/110) This quiet and unassuming place is on the beach between Matemwe Beach Village and Matemwe Bungalows. There are two main houses ('villas'), one with two double rooms downstairs and the other with two rooms upstairs and two rooms downstairs, plus a row of simple, beach-facing attached double bungalows. Furnishings and ambience are simple and functional, and meals can be arranged.

Matemwe Beach Village (☎ 0777-417250, 0777-437200; www.matemwebeach.net; s/d US\$85/110, with air-con US\$95/120, shamba ste US\$190, asali ste incl half board US\$400; ☎ ☎) This recommended beachfront place has a wonderful setting on a beautiful stretch of coast, a low-key ambience and spacious, airy bungalows with small verandas. Most are on the beach, separated only by a low wall of vegetation, with a few more set back about 100m on a low rise. There's also a plush and very private beachfront honeymoon suite complete with its own plunge pool, outdoor bathroom, chef and separate stretch of sand, plus several appealingly designed two-storey 'shamba suites' and a convivial open lounge area where you can relax on large throw pillows while looking out to sea. One Ocean/The Zanzibar Dive Centre (p117) has a branch here, which means if you start with them in Stone Town, you can get in some good east-coast diving as well.

Half-board arrangements are available, as are discounts for children. In Stone Town, book through One Ocean, which can also help with transport arrangements.

Zanzibar Retreat Hotel (☎ 0773-079344; www.zanzibarretreat.com; s/d US\$135/145; 🏠 📺 📺) A small, well-located place on the beach with just seven rooms – all well appointed and with Zanzibari beds – but on the small side and rather on top of each other, although good value considering the location. The main attraction, besides the lovely beachside setting, are the beautiful common areas – all with polished hardwood floors, and including an upstairs bar overlooking the beach. There's also satellite TV.

Matemwe Bungalows (www.asilialodges.com; ste per person full board US\$285; 🗓️ mid-Jun–Easter; 🏠 📺 📺) Matemwe Bungalows, about 1km north of Matemwe Beach Village, is a relaxing, upmarket place with a dozen spacious and impeccably decorated seaside bungalow suites. It has a pampered, upmarket atmosphere and receives consistently positive reviews. All the bungalows have their own veranda and hammock, and there are also more luxurious suites, including one for honeymooners with its own beach.

Matemwe Retreat (www.asilialodges.com; villa per person full board US\$485) Just north, and directly opposite Mnemba atoll, is this new and very upmarket retreat, with three luxurious villas and the best access on the island to diving Mnemba (except on Mnemba itself).

Getting There & Away

Matemwe village is located about 25km southeast of Nungwi, and is reached via an unsealed road branching east off the main road by Mkwajuni. *Dalla-dallas* travel here daily from Stone Town (Tsh1200). Early in the day, they continue as far as the fish market at the northern end of the beach (and this is where you can catch them as well). Otherwise, the start/terminus of the route is at the main junction near Matemwe Beach Village hotel. The last *dalla-dalla* in both directions departs about 4pm, the first about 6am.

KIWENGWA

Kiwengwa village is spread out along a fine, wide beach, much of which is occupied by large, Italian-run resort hotels, although there are some much quieter stretches to the north and south.

Sleeping

Shooting Star Lodge (☎ 0777-414166; www.shootingstarlodge.com; s/d garden-view US\$100/160, s/d sea-view cottages US\$145/235) Classy and intimate, this lodge is highly recommended, both for its location on a small cliff overlooking an excellent stretch of beach – well away from the larger resort developments further north and south – and for its impeccable service, top-notch cuisine and lovely décor. There is a mix of rooms, ranging from four simpler and smaller garden-view 'lodge rooms' to 10 impeccably decorated, spacious sea-view cottages. There's also a salt-water infinity pool with stunning views over the sea, and a raised and cosy beachside bar. It's tranquil, the epitome of class and an overall excellent place to unwind.

Bluebay Beach Resort (☎ 024-224 0240/1; www.bluebayzanzibar.com; per person per night incl half board US\$135-290; 🏠 📺 📺) The nicest of the large resorts along the Kiwengwa coastline, with a more subdued atmosphere than its neighbours. Rooms have two large beds and all the amenities, and the grounds are expansive, green and serene. One Ocean/The Zanzibar Dive Centre (p117) has a base here, and the pool can be used for introductory lessons.

Also recommended:

Ocean Paradise Resort (☎ 0774-440990; www.oceanparadisезanzibar.com; per person half board US\$160; 🏠 📺 📺) An agreeable choice if you're seeking a resort, with accommodation in spacious, round bungalows, a raised restaurant with commanding views over the water, large, green gardens dotted with palms and sloping down to the beach and a huge swimming pool. Diving here is catered for by One Ocean/The Zanzibar Dive Centre (p117).

Zamani Zanzibar Kempinski (☎ 0774-444477; www.kempinski-zanzibar.com; r from US\$500; 🏠 📺 📺) Worth a mention simply because of its considerable presence at the luxury end of the market. Rooms and services are upmarket (though it can't compare with the Kilimanjaro Kempinski in Dar es Salaam), and there are several pools, including a 60m infinity pool as well as smaller private infinity pools. For beach swimming, you'll need to go about 1.5km south to the Zamani Beach Club, the hotel's private stretch of sand.

Getting There & Away

Dalla-dalla 117 runs daily between Kiwengwa village and Stone Town. The village itself is divided into three parts: Cairo to the north; Kiwengwa proper in the centre and just east of the main junction; and Kumba Urembo to the south. Public transport will drop you in

Kiwengwa proper unless you pay the driver extra to take you further.

Almost all transport south takes the new road. The old road south of Kiwengwa turns into a rough dirt lane winding through the tropical vegetation and coconut palms to Pongwe, where it then becomes tarmac. Apart from a few rocky patches between Kiwengwa and Pongwe that need to be negotiated with care, 2WD is fine during most times of the year.

PONGWE

This quiet arc of beach, about 5km south of Kiwengwa, is dotted with palm trees and backed by dense vegetation, and is about as close to the quintessential tropical paradise as you can get. Thanks to its position in a semisheltered cove, it also has the advantage of having less seaweed than nearby Chwaka and other parts of the east coast.

Set on a lovely stretch of sand south of Pongwe village, **Santa Maria Coral Park** (www.santamaria-zanzibar.com; s/d/tr US\$30/50/75) is a very laid-back budget beach haunt with accommodation in either simple *makuti* (thatch) *bandas* or stone-and-thatch bungalows. There's a no-frills restaurant focusing on the catch of the day, and the chance for snorkelling or excursions in the local fishing boats. The beachside bar has music in the evenings, and sometimes a bonfire.

The intimate and unassuming **Pongwe Beach Hotel** (☎ 0784-336181; www.pongwe.com; s/d from US\$85/140) has just 10 bungalows (including one honeymoon bungalow with a large, Zanzibari bed) nestled among the palms on a wonderful arc of beach. All are sea facing, spacious and breezy, the cuisine is very good, and when you tire of the turquoise panoramas at your doorstep, there's fishing, and excursions to Stone Town. It's justifiably hugely popular, very good value and often fully booked.

UROA

This rather centre-less and nondescript village lies on an attractive and seldom-visited stretch of beach, which is better than that at nearby Chwaka but still not up to the level of other east-coast destinations. It's a reasonable choice if you want to enjoy the sea breezes and sand away from the resort crowds. The small, quiet beachfront **Uroa White Villa** (☎ 0713-326874; www.uroawhitevilla.net; s/d US\$45/70) consists of a four-room house and a nearby two-room bungalow annexe,

both with a few pleasant, spotless rooms – most with bathroom – and a restaurant. There's a 20% discount on room prices if you book direct.

Getting There & Away

Dalla-dalla 214 runs between Stone Town and Uroa several times daily. Sometimes you can get this at Darajani market, but usually you need to take bus 501 (Amani Stadium) to a junction known as Mwembe Radu (just ask the *dalla-dalla* driver), where you can pick up *dalla-dalla* 214. Alternatively, bus 206 (Chwaka) sometimes continues northwards as far as Uroa. The last departure from Uroa back to Stone Town is at about 4pm.

PAJE

Paje is a wide, white beach at the junction where the coastal road north to Bwejuu and south to Jambiani joins with the road from Zanzibar Town. It's quite built-up, with a dense cluster of mostly unremarkable places all within a few minutes' walk of each other, and somewhat of a party atmosphere, though it's quieter and marginally more low-key than Nungwi. For diving, there's the **Paje Dive Centre** (☎ 024-224 0191; www.pajedivecentre.com) on the beach at Arabian Nights hotel.

Sleeping

Kinazi Upepo (☎ 0777-497495; www.kinaziupepo.com; d bandas without bathroom US\$28, d bungalows US\$45) Good vibes and good value are the main attractions at this place nestled amid the palms and coastal pines on a very nice section of beach. You can sleep in simple thatched *bandas* on low stilts, or in large bungalows with Zanzibari beds – most bungalows have a private bathroom. The food is good, and there's a well-stocked bar with fruit smoothies, among other drinks. There's often music nightly, and Saturday night currently features an all-night East Coast Beach Party with the hugely popular DJ Yusuf (the force behind Sauti za Busara, p120).

Paradise Beach Bungalows (☎ 024-223 1387; saori@cats-net.com; s/d US\$30/40) This long-standing Japanese-run place is hidden among the palms on the beach at the northern edge of Paje and slightly removed from the main cluster of hotels. Each room has two large beds, and there's a restaurant serving tasty food, including sushi and other Japanese cuisine if you order in advance, plus local fare.

Kitete Beach Resort (☎ 024-224 0226; www.kitete.beach.com; s US\$40-70, d US\$60-90) This small place on the beach has a dozen large and comfortably furnished rooms, six smaller and simpler rooms in the original building and a three-room family cottage, plus a good restaurant featuring Zanzibari cuisine.

Paje by Night (☎ 0777-460710; www.pajebynight.net; s/d from US\$50/60, d/tr jungle bungalows US\$75/90) This chilled place, known for its popular bar and good vibe, has a mix of standard and more spacious rooms, plus several double-storey four-person thatched jungle bungalows. Standards are high, staff are friendly and there's a good restaurant with a pizza oven and a full range of excursions available.

Also recommended:

Arabian Nights (☎ 024-224 0190; www.zanzibarabiannights.com; d US\$100-150; 🍷 🍷 🍷) Well-appointed and comfortable albeit very closely spaced rooms in stone cottages just back from the beach, including some with sea view.

Getting There & Away

Bus 324 runs several times daily between Paje and Stone Town en route to/from Bwejuu, with the last departure from Paje at about 4pm.

BWEJUU

The large village of Bwejuu lies about 3km north of Paje on a long, palm-shaded beach. It's quite spread out, and quieter and less crowded than Paje and Nungwi, with a mellow atmosphere and nothing much more to do other than wander along the sand and listen to the breezes rustling the palm trees. The only blot on the scene is the large amount of rubbish that litters the area back away from the beach.

Sleeping & Eating

Miza wa Miza Kiamboni Bungalows (☎ 0777-871757; ibrahim@kunst-gsund.at; s/d without bathroom US\$15/25, d with hot shower US\$40-55) A chilled backpacker place set inland away from the water, with small, darkish bungalow rooms downstairs and equally small but nicer ones with views upstairs.

Bahari Beach Village (www.bahari-beach-village.com; r without/with bathroom US\$15/35, beachfront bungalows US\$50) This refreshingly local beachfront place has a few simple but tidy rooms in a small house plus some nice bungalows. All are set on the sand amid the palm trees. Also

available are tasty local meals, and staff can help you organise airport pick-ups and excursions. It's at the northern end of Bwejuu – just keep heading up the sandy track until you see the sign.

Mustapha's Nest (☎ 024-224 0069; www.fatflatfish.co.uk/mustaphas; dm US\$15, r per person US\$20-25) This vibey Rasta-run place has a variety of simple, cheery and very creatively decorated rooms, some with their own bathroom and all with their own theme. Meals are taken family style, and staff can assist with bike rental, drumming lessons and other diversions. It's south of Bwejuu village, and just across the road from the beach. Changes are planned here, so call before arriving.

Robinson's Place (☎ 0777-413479; www.robinsonspace.net; per person US\$20-30) This *Robinson Crusoe*-style getaway just south of Bahari Beach Village has a small collection of appealingly designed rooms nestled amid the palms directly on the beach. The two-storey Robinson House has an upstairs tree-house double, open to the sea and the palms. Downstairs is a tidy single, and there are a few more rooms in a separate house. Some have their own bathroom, and the shared bathroom is spotless. Eddy, the Zanzibari owner, cooks great breakfasts and dinners (for guests only). The same management also has a self-catering house up on the hill behind the beach for long-term stays.

Evergreen Bungalows Bwejuu (☎ 024-224 0273; www.evergreen-bungalows.com; d back from beach US\$50, d bungalows US\$60-70, d upper bungalows without bathroom US\$35) North of Bwejuu village, with pricey but spiffy two-storey bungalows, plus three single-storey cottages back from the beach. There are also a few upstairs bungalow rooms that aren't self-contained, with the loo a bit of a walk away.

Palm Beach Inn (☎ 024-224 0221; palmbeach@zanlink.com; s/d from US\$50/70, ste US\$120; 🍷) This beachside inn has small, rather heavily furnished rooms with hot water and mini-fridge – all quite OK, but nothing special. There are also two newer and nicer sea-view suites, a tree-house lounge-library area overlooking the beach, a good restaurant and helpful staff.

Sunrise Hotel & Restaurant (☎ 024-224 0270; www.sunrise-zanzibar.com; s/tw US\$80/90, s/d sea-view bungalows US\$100/110; 🍷) The Belgian-run Sunrise has tidy rooms and bungalows set around a small garden area and a highly regarded

restaurant. The beach-facing bungalows are worth the extra money, as they're much nicer than the overly dark rooms. It's on the beach about 3km north of Bwejuu village.

Getting There & Away

Bus 324 goes daily between Stone Town and Bwejuu village, and private minibuses come here as well.

MICHAMVI PENINSULA

Beginning about 4km north of Bwejuu, the land begins to taper off into the narrow and comparatively seldom-visited Michamvi Peninsula, where there are several upmarket retreats. In Michamvi village, there are a few simple *bandas* where you can arrange grilled fish or other local fare.

Breezes Beach Club & Spa (☎ 0774-440883; www.breezes-zanzibar.com; per person half board from €117; 🍷 🍷 🍷) is an intimate place that receives consistently good reviews and is often fully booked. There are lovely garden-view rooms plus deluxe rooms and suites closer to the sea, all beautifully appointed and with a full range of amenities, plus diving, a gym and plenty of other activities to balance out time on the beach. Advance bookings only – you won't get by the tight gate security without one. Next door and under the same management is the exclusive **Palms** (www.palms-zanzibar.com; per person full board €455; 🍷 🍷 🍷), with six luxurious villas, each with their own private outdoor spa bath.

Once past Bwejuu, there's no public transport. Local boats cross between Michamvi village (on the northwestern side of the peninsula) to Chwaka, usually departing from Michamvi in the early morning (Tsh1000), or you can arrange to hire one at any time of day (about Tsh15,000 return).

JAMBIANI

Jambiani is a long village on a stunning stretch of coastline. The village itself – a sunbaked and somnolent collection of thatch and coral-rag houses – is stretched out over more than a kilometre. The sea is an ethereal shade of turquoise and is usually dotted with *ngalawa* (outrigger canoes) moored just offshore. It's quieter than Paje and Nungwi, and has a good selection of accommodation in all price ranges. In the village, there's a post office (with bicycle rental nearby) and a shop selling a few basics.

Sleeping & Eating

Kimte Beach Inn (☎ 024-224 0212, 0777-430992; www.kimte.com; dm US\$15, d without/with bathroom US\$30/35) At the southern end of Jambiani, this chilled Rasta-run place has spotless rooms on the land side of the road (about half a minute's walk from the beach), a good vibe, delicious meals, and a great beach bar with music and evening bonfires.

Red Monkey Bungalows (☎ 024-224 0207, 024-223 5361; standard@zitec.org; s/d/tr US\$25/40/50) Located at Jambiani's far southern end, this place has clean, agreeable sea-facing bungalows set along a nice garden on the beach.

Oasis Beach Inn (☎ 0777-858720; oasisbeachinn45@yahoo.co.uk; s/d US\$30/45, without bathroom US\$25/35) This straightforward beachside place has simple but quite decent rooms with shared bathroom, and friendly staff. A restaurant is planned to open soon.

Pakachi Beach Hotel (☎ 024-224 0001, 0777-423331; www.pakachi.com; s/d US\$30/50) Just a few small and simple stone-and-thatch bungalows (one is a six-person family bungalow) with mosquito nets set in a lush garden somewhat back from the beach, and a good restaurant featuring local cuisine and pizzas.

Dhow Beach Village (www.dhowbeachvillage.com; s/d US\$35/50, without bathroom US\$20/30) A vibey place with a restaurant area, a handful of straightforward self-contained rooms, and three simpler rooms with fan and shared bathroom just behind the restaurant area, plus beach volleyball, full-moon parties and more.

Coco Beach (☎ 0777-413125; cocobeach@zanlink.com; s/d US\$40/50) A small place with just a handful of rooms in an enclosed garden just back from the beach, and a restaurant.

Blue Oyster Hotel (☎ 024-224 0163; www.zanzi.bar.de; s/d US\$55/60, with sea view US\$65/70, without bathroom US\$35/40) This German-run place on the beach at the northern end of Jambiani has pleasant, spotless and very good-value rooms, and a breezy terrace restaurant with delicious meals.

Casa Del Mar Hotel Jambiani (☎ 024-224 0401, 0777-455446; www.casa-delmar-zanzibar.com; d downstairs/upstairs US\$65/85) Two double-storey blocks of six rooms each – the upper-storey rooms have lofts – set around a small, lush garden in a small, enclosed beach area. There's also a restaurant with classical music playing in the background, and a terrace bar area.

Hakuna Majiwe (☎ 0777-454505; www.hakunamajiwe.net; s/d US\$145/182; 🏠) A pleasant place in a lovely setting with nicely decorated cottages with shady porches and Zanzibari beds, and décor that's a fusion of mostly Zanzibar with a touch of Italy. The food is good, though readers have complained about the scanty breakfasts. It's at the far northern end of Jambiani, about 4km north of Jambiani village, and on the edge of Paje.

Also recommended:

Coral Rock (☎ 024-224 0154; www.coralrockzanzibar.com; US\$55/76; 🏠 🏠) Set on a large coral rock jutting out into the sea at the southern end of Jambiani and just south of Kimte Beach Inn, with the beach to the side. Accommodation is in a dozen whitewashed stone-and-thatch cottages with fan, air-con and small porches, and there's a bar directly overlooking the water.

Villa de Coco (www.villadecoco.com; s/d €47/75) Airy chalets – all with ceiling fans and hot water – in gardens bordering the beach. It's just north of Mt Zion Long Beach.

Sau Inn Hotel (☎ 024-224 0169; sauinn@zanlink.com; s/d/tr from US\$70/80/90; 🏠 🏠 🏠) Modern, reasonably well-equipped, attached bungalow-style rooms scattered around manicured green grounds bordering the beach.

Jambiani Guest House (☎ 0773-147812; www.zanzibar-guesthouse.com; per house US\$123, per d US\$40) A large whitewashed thatched-roofed house on the beach, with the village just behind. It has five rooms (maximum seven people) and a cook available on request.

Getting There & Away

To get to Jambiani, there are private minibuses, or take bus 309 from Darajani market in Stone Town. Public transport from Jambiani back to Stone Town usually departs by 6am. South of Jambiani the coastal road deteriorates to become a sandy track with very rocky patches, and there's no public transport – all vehicles now use the new tarmac road to Makunduchi.

MAKUNDUCHI

The main reason to come to Makunduchi is for the **Mwaka Kogwa festival** (p120), when this small town – otherwise remarkable mainly for its 1950s East German-style high-rise apartment blocks and a seaweed-strewn and generally deserted stretch of coast – is bursting at its seams with revellers. The only accommodation is at the large **Makunduchi Beach Resort** (☎ 024-224 0348; www.lamadrugada-resort.com; per person US\$80), with rows of two-storey attached rooms in a large compound just back from the sea, and generally permanently rented

out to Italian tour groups. It's also easily possible to visit as a day trip from Stone Town or Kizimkazi, and it shouldn't be too hard to arrange accommodation with locals during Mwaka Kogwa, as it's considered an unfavourable omen if you don't have at least one guest during the festival days. Bus 310 runs to Makunduchi on no set schedule, with plenty of additional transport from both Zanzibar Town and Kizimkazi during Mwaka Kogwa. The new tarmac road connecting Makunduchi with Jambiani and Paje was just being finished as this book was researched, although there's not yet any regular public transport along this stretch.

KIZIMKAZI

This small village – at its best when the breezes come in and the late afternoon sunlight illuminates the sand – actually consists of two adjoining settlements: Kizimkazi Dimbani to the north and Kizimkazi Mkunguni to the south. It has a small, breezy and in parts quite attractive beach, but the main reason people visit is to see the **dolphins** that favour the nearby waters, or to relax or go **diving** at one of the handful of upscale resorts that have recently opened in the area. Dolphin trips can be organised through tour operators in Stone Town from about US\$20 per person, depending on group size, and some of the hotels at Paje and Jambiani also organise tours from Tsh15,000 per person. Most of the places listed under Sleeping & Eating (opposite) also organise tours. Otherwise, Cabs Restaurant in Kizimkazi Dimbani organises dolphin trips for walk-ins for Tsh50,000 per boat plus US\$5 per person for snorkelling equipment (it also serves tasty fresh grilled fish meals). While the dolphins are beautiful, the tours, and especially those organised from Stone Town, are often quite unpleasant, due to the hunt-and-chase tactics used by many of the tour boats, and they can't be recommended. If you do go out, the best time is early morning when the water is calmer and the sun not as hot. Late afternoon is also good, although winds may be stronger (and if it's too windy, it's difficult to get in and out of the boats to snorkel).

Kizimkazi is also the site of a Shirazi **mosque** dating from the early 12th century and thought to be one of the oldest Islamic buildings on the East African coast, although much of what is left today is from later restorations. The building isn't impressive from

WATCHING THE DOLPHINS

Unfortunately for Kizimkazi's dolphins, things have gotten out of hand these days, and it's not uncommon to see a group of beleaguered dolphins being chased by several boats of tourists. If you want to watch the dolphins, heed the advice posted on the wall of the Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF) office in Zanzibar Town, which boils down to the following:

- As with other animals, viewing dolphins in their natural environs requires time and patience.
- Shouting and waving your arms around will not encourage dolphins to approach your boat.
- Be satisfied with simply seeing the dolphins; don't force the boat operator to chase the dolphins, cross their path or get too close, especially when they are resting.
- If you decide to get in the water with the dolphins, do so quietly and calmly and avoid splashing.
- No one can guarantee that you will see dolphins on an outing, and swimming with them is a rare and precious occurrence.
- Remember – dolphins are wild and their whereabouts cannot be predicted. It is they who choose to interact with people, not the other way around...

the outside, apart from a few old tombs at the front. Inside, however, in the mihrab are inscribed verses from the Quran dating to 1107 and considered to be among the oldest known examples of Swahili writing. If you want to take a look, ask for someone to help you with the key. You'll need to take off your shoes, and you should cover up bare shoulders or legs. The mosque is in Kizimkazi Dimbani, just north of the main beach area.

Sleeping & Eating

Kumi na Mbili Centre (www.zanzibar-tourism.org; r per person US\$15) For budget accommodation, it's worth checking in at this centre, which is part of an NGO-sponsored village development centre, near the entrance to Kizimkazi Mkunguni. No one was around when we passed by, but it has several simple guest rooms with mosquito nets.

Kizimkazi Coral Reef Village (s/d US\$40/50) Just up from Swahili Beach Resort with six rooms (more planned) with fan and mosquito nets, and set rather well back from the sea. There's also a small restaurant. Decent value.

Karamba (☎ 0773-166406; www.karambaresort.com; s/d €68/92) This place (formerly known as Kizidi) is on the northern end of the beach in Kizimkazi Dimbani. It's recently been completely renovated by the new Spanish management, and makes a thoroughly relaxing stop. Accommodation is in 12 spotless detached whitewashed cottages lined up along a small cliff overlooking the sea, all en suite and good value, and some with open-roof show-

ers. There's also a good restaurant serving a mix of dishes – vegetarian, Mediterranean, sushi, sashimi and milkshakes included – and a beachside chill-out bar with throw pillows.

Unguja Resort (☎ 0774-477477; www.ungujaresort.com; per person half board US\$200; 📍) A new place with 12 spacious two-storey villas – all impeccably decorated and well appointed, and some with sea views – set amid reasonably mature gardens dotted with baobab trees. Diving in nearby Menai Bay can be arranged with One Ocean (p117). Very relaxing if you can afford it.

Getting There & Away

To reach Kizimkazi from Stone Town take bus 326 (Kizimkazi) direct (Tsh1500), or take bus 310 (Makunduchi) as far as Kufile junction, where you'll need to get out and wait for another vehicle heading towards Kizimkazi, or walk (about 5km). The last vehicle back to Stone Town usually leaves Kizimkazi about 4pm. The mosque is about 2km north of the main section of town in the Dimbani area. As you approach from Stone Town go right at Kufile junction (ie towards Kizimkazi) and then right again at the next fork to Kizimkazi Dimbani. Kizimkazi Mkunguni is to the left at this last fork.

Jozani Forest

This cool and shady patch of green – now protected as part of the Jozani-Chwaka Bay National Park – is the largest area of mature forest left on Zanzibar. Living among Jozani's

tangle of vines and branches are populations of the rare red colobus monkey, as well as Sykes monkeys, bushbabies, Ader's duikers (although you won't see many of these), hyraxes, more than 50 species of butterflies, about 40 species of birds and several other animals. There's a nature trail in the forest, which takes about 45 minutes to walk, the tiny Colobus Café with soft drinks, and the small Tutoni Restaurant next door, with a modest and reasonably priced selection of meals.

Jozani Forest (adult/child incl guide US\$8/4; ☎ 7.30am-5.30pm) is about 35km southeast of Zanzibar Town off the road to Paje, and best reached via bus 309 or 310, by chartered taxi, or with an organised tour from Zanzibar Town (often in combination with dolphin tours to Kizimkazi). The best times to see red colobus monkeys are in the early morning and late evening.

When observing the monkeys, take care not to get too close – park staff recommend no closer than 3m – both for your safety and the safety of the animals. In addition to the risk of being bitten by the monkeys, there's considerable concern that if the monkeys were to catch a human illness it could spread and rapidly wipe out the already threatened population.

Along the main road near Pete village, and signposted shortly before the Jozani Forest entrance, is the small Moto Handicrafts workshop and showroom (see p126), where you can buy crafts and watch the artisans at work.

Menai Bay & Unguja Ukuu

Tranquil Menai Bay, fringed by the sleepy villages of Fumba to the west and Unguja Ukuu to the east, is home to an impressive assortment of corals, fish and mangrove forests, some idyllic sandbanks and deserted islets, and a sea-turtle breeding area. Since 1997 it's been protected as part of the **Menai Bay Conservation Area** (admission US\$3). The main reasons to visit are to enjoy the placid ambience, to take advantage of some good **sailing** around the islets and sandbanks offshore, and for the chance to see **dolphins**. Unguja Ukuu is notable as the site of what is believed to be the earliest settlement on Zanzibar, dating to at least the 8th century, although there is little remaining today from this era.

The main place to stay is **Menai Bay Beach Bungalows** (☎ 0777-411753; www.menaibay.com; r from US\$60; ☎ Jul-Mar), on the bay at the southern edge of Unguja Ukuu village. It has straightforward, pleasant enough cottages scattered around leafy grounds just in from the beach, a nice stretch of sand and a restaurant, and staff can help organise excursions on the bay or to nearby sandbanks. Call first, as it's sometimes booked out completely to charter groups.

Eco + Culture Tours (Map p113; ☎ 024-223 0366; www.ecoculture-zanzibar.org; Hurumzi St) in Stone Town also organises trips to Unguja Ukuu and the offshore islands (see p112).

Fumba

This village at the end of the Fumba peninsula fringing Menai Bay boasts a lovely, quiet beach and the pleasant **Fumba Beach Lodge** (☎ 0777-860540; www.fumbabeachlodge.com; per person half board from US\$172). Accommodation is in about two dozen cottage-style rooms – which are fine and spacious, albeit a bit frayed at the edges and not quite up to expectations at this price level – set in large grounds, plus there's a small spa built around a baobab tree (including a great Jacuzzi up in the tree) and a resident dive operator. It's also the base for Safari Blue (see p119). Fumba makes an enjoyable change from the more crowded destinations to the east and north, although be prepared for a decent amount of coral rock on the beach. It's only about 18km south of Zanzibar Town, but along a rough road that can take 45 minutes or so to traverse.

Offshore Islands

Once you've had your fill of the main island, there are various smaller islands and islets nearby that make enjoyable excursions and offer some good snorkelling.

CHANGUU

Also known as Prison island, Changuu lies about 5km and an easy boat ride northwest of Zanzibar Town. It was originally used to detain 'recalcitrant' slaves and later as a quarantine station. Changuu is also known for its large family of **giant tortoises**, who are believed to have been brought here from Aldabra in the Seychelles around the turn of the 20th century. There's also a small beach and a nearby reef offering some novice **snorkelling**, as well as the former house of the British governor,

General Lloyd Matthews. Today the island is privately owned and open only to guests of the **Changuu Private Island Paradise** (www.privateislands-zanzibar.com; per person incl half board & airport transfers US\$190-230), although snorkelling is still possible in the surrounding waters. Day trips to visit the tortoises cost US\$25 per person including lunch and the US\$4 entry fee to the island, but excluding boat transfer costs from Stone Town.

BAWI

Tiny Bawi, about 7km west of Zanzibar Town and several kilometres southwest of Changuu, offers a beautiful beach and **snorkelling**. For years marketed as a day out from Stone Town, it's now privately owned, and while snorkelling in the surrounding waters is still possible, the island itself can only be visited by guests of the very lovely **Bawe Tropical Island Lodge** (www.privateislands-zanzibar.com; per person-full board incl airport transfers US\$340).

CHAPWANI

This tiny, privately owned island (also known as Grave Island, thanks to its small cemetery and the tombs of colonial-era British seamen) is about 4km north of Zanzibar Town. It's surrounded by crystal waters, with a postcard-perfect white-sand beach backed

by lush vegetation running down one side, and it makes an agreeable getaway from Stone Town, although it can only be visited if you're either staying or dining at the lodge. As it's a waterless island, all fresh water must be pumped in from Zanzibar. The only development is **Chapwani Island Lodge** (www.chapwaniisland.com; s/d full board US\$265/340; ☎ Jun-Mar), with five simple and rustic but cosy attached double-room bungalows along the sand. Day visits are also possible (centred on a meal), though advance bookings are required as well as for overnight stays. Unlike the east-coast beaches, swimming at Chapwani isn't tide dependent. The lodge provides transfers from Stone Town for US\$10 per person, minimum two people.

TUMBATU

The large and seldom-visited island of Tumbatu, just off Zanzibar's northwest coast, is populated by the Tumbatu people, one of the three original tribal groups on the archipelago. Although Tumbatu's early history is somewhat murky, ruins of a mosque have been found at the island's southern tip that possibly date to the early 11th century, and it's likely the island was settled even earlier. As recently as the last century, there were no water sources on Tumbatu and villagers had

COMMUNITY TOURISM SPOTLIGHT: CHUMBE

The uninhabited island of Chumbe, about 12km south of Zanzibar Town, has an exceptional shallow-water coral reef along its western shore that is in close to pristine condition and abounding with fish life. Since 1994, when the reef was gazetted as Zanzibar's first marine sanctuary, the island has gained widespread acclaim, including from the UN, as the site of a highly impressive ecotourism initiative centred on an ecolodge and local environmental education programmes. It's now run as **Chumbe Island Coral Park**, a private, nonprofit nature reserve that is doing fantastic work not only in protecting the reef, but also in community outreach with local school children.

The excellent state of Chumbe's reef is due largely to the fact that from the 1960s it was part of a military zone and off limits to locals and visitors. In addition to nearly 200 species of coral, the island's surrounding waters host about 370 species of fish and groups of dolphins who pass by to feed on the abundant fish life. The island also provides a haven for hawksbill turtles, and more than 50 species of birds have been recorded to date, including the endangered roseate tern. There are three historical buildings on Chumbe: a lighthouse and a small mosque dating from the early 1900s, and the former warden's house.

Chumbe island can be visited as a day trip, although if you have the money and an interest in conservation, staying overnight in one of the seven **ecobungalows** (☎ 024-223 1040; www.chumbeisland.com; s/d full board US\$250/440) is highly recommended. Each of these intimate structures has its own rainwater collection system and solar power, and a cosy loft sleeping area that opens to the stars. Advance bookings are essential. Day visits (also by advance arrangement only) cost US\$80 per person.

to come over to the mainland for supplies. In between Tumbatu and Zanzibar lies the tiny and uninhabited island of **Popo**.

There's no accommodation, but Tumbatu can be easily visited as a day trip from Kendwa or Nungwi, where the hotels can help you organise a boat (US\$35 to US\$50 per boat). Alternatively, local boats sail throughout the day between Tumbatu and **Mkokotoni** village, which lies just across the channel on Zanzibar, and which is known for its bustling fish market. The trip takes anywhere from 30 minutes to three hours, depending on the winds (or much less with a motor), and costs about Tsh150. Residents of Tumbatu aren't used to tourists – they are actually notorious for their lack of hospitality – so if you're heading over on your own or if you want to try to arrange an overnight stay with locals, it's best to get permission first from the police station in Mkokotoni, or from the *shehe* (village chief) in Nungwi, who will probably request a modest fee. There's at least one bus daily between Mkokotoni and Stone Town. Once on Tumbatu, the main means of transport are bicycle (ask around by the dock) and walking.

MNEMBA

Tiny, idyllic Mnemba, just northeast of Matemwe, is the ultimate tropical paradise for those who have the money to enjoy it, complete with white sands, palm trees, turquoise waters and total isolation. While the island itself is privately owned with access restricted to guests of Mnemba Island Lodge, the surrounding – and stunning – coral reef can be visited by anyone. It's one of Zanzibar's best **diving** and **snorkelling** sites, with a huge array of fish, including tuna, barracuda, moray eels, reef sharks and lots of colourful smaller species.

The very exclusive 'barefoot luxury'-style **Mnemba Island Lodge** (www.ccafrica.com; per person full board US\$1055) is a playground for the rich and famous, and is often rented out in its entirety.

OTHER ISLETS

Just offshore from Zanzibar Town are several tiny islets, many of which are ringed by coral reefs. These include **Nyange**, **Pange** and **Murogo**, which are sandbanks that partially disappear at high tide, and which offer snorkelling and diving (arranged through Stone Town dive operators).

PEMBA

☎ 024 / pop 362,000

For much of its history, Pemba has been overshadowed by Zanzibar, its larger, more visible and more politically powerful neighbour to the south. Although the islands are separated by only about 50km of water, relatively few tourists make their way across the channel for a visit. Those who do, however, are seldom disappointed.

Unlike flat, sandy Zanzibar, Pemba's terrain is hilly, fertile and lushly vegetated. In the days of the Arab traders it was even referred to as 'al Khuthera' or 'the Green Island'. Throughout much of the period when the sultans of Zanzibar held sway over the East African coast, it was Pemba, with its extensive clove plantations and agricultural base, that provided the economic foundation for the archipelago's dominance.

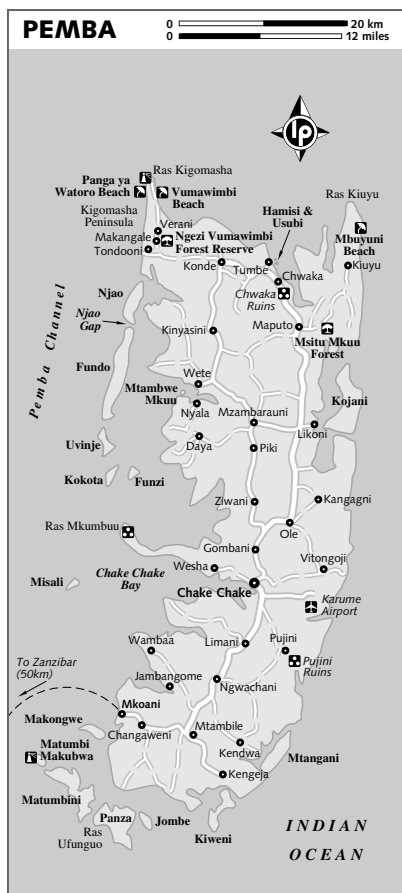
Pemba has also been long renowned for its voodoo and traditional healers, and people come from throughout East Africa seeking cures or to learn the skills of the trade.

Much of the island's coast is lined with mangroves and tidal creeks and lagoons, and Pemba is not a beach destination. However, there are a few good stretches of sand and some idyllic offshore islets. In the surrounding waters, coral reefs, the steeply dropping walls of the Pemba channel and an abundance of fish offer some rewarding diving.

The tourism industry on Pemba is small and low-key, and infrastructure is for the most part fairly basic, although this is slowly but steadily changing, with an ever-increasing number of upmarket hotels and more development on the way. It will be a while, however, before tourism here reaches the proportions it's taken on Zanzibar. Much of Pemba is relatively 'undiscovered' and you'll still have things more or less to yourself, which is a big part of the island's charm. The main requirement for travelling around independently is time, as there's little regular transport off the main routes.

History

Pemba is geologically much older than Zanzibar and is believed to have been settled at an earlier date, although little is known about its original inhabitants. According to legend, the island was once peopled by giants known as the Magenge. More certain is that Pemba's



first inhabitants migrated from the mainland, perhaps as early as several thousand years ago. The Shirazi presence on Pemba is believed to date from at least the 9th or 10th century, with Shirazi ruins at Ras Mkumbuu, northwest of Chake Chake, indicating that settlements were well established on Pemba by that point.

The Portuguese attacked Pemba in the early 16th century and sought to subjugate its inhabitants by ravaging towns and demanding tributes. As a result, many Pembans fled to Mombasa (Kenya). By the late 17th century the Busaidi family of Omani Arabs had taken over the island and driven away the last remaining Portuguese. Before long, however, the Mazrui, a rival group of Omanis based in Mombasa, gained the upper hand

and governed the island until 1822. In 1890 Pemba, together with Zanzibar, became a British protectorate.

Following the Zanzibar revolution in 1964, the archipelago's president, Karume, closed Pemba to foreigners in an effort to contain strong antigovernment sentiment. The island remained closed until the 1980s, although the situation continued to be strained. Tensions peaked during the 1995 elections and relations deteriorated thereafter, with Pembans feeling increasingly marginalised and frustrated. This was hardly surprising, considering that illiteracy rates are as high as 95% in some areas, and roads and other infrastructure are badly neglected. In January 2001 in the wake of the October 2000 elections, tensions again peaked, resulting in at least several dozen deaths and causing many people to flee the island. The 2005 elections proceeded comparatively calmly, and daily life these days is back to normal.

Getting There & Around

Pemba is small, and getting around isn't difficult with a bit of time and patience. A plodding local bus network connects the three main towns and several smaller ones. To reach destinations off these routes, take one of the buses to the nearest intersection, from where you'll either have to walk, rely on sporadic pick-ups, or negotiate an additional fee with the bus driver. There are no regular taxis as there are on Zanzibar or the mainland, but there are plenty of pick-up trucks and 4WDs that you can hire – best arranged in Chake Chake. The main roads connecting Mkoani, Chake Chake and Wete are good tarmac; most secondary routes are unpaved.

Cycling is an excellent way to get around Pemba, although you'll need to bring your own (mountain) bike and spares, unless you're content with one of the single-speed bicycles available locally. Distances are relatively short and roads are only lightly travelled.

CHAKE CHAKE

Lively Chake Chake, set on a ridge overlooking Chake Chake Bay, is Pemba's main town and a good base for diving and for excursions to Misali. Although it has been occupied for centuries, there is little architectural evidence of its past other than the ruins of an 18th-century fort near the hospital, and some ruins at nearby Ras Mkumbuu (p146).

Orientation

Almost everything of interest in Chake Chake is along or within a five-minute walk of the main road.

MAPS

Maps of Chake Chake are a rarity, but the Bureau of Lands & Environment, situated just outside Chake Chake in Machomane, sells a Pemba map. Head north from the town centre for about 1km, take the first right onto the road leading to the Pemba Essential Oil Distillery and continue about 700m to the two-storey white building on the right. The Commission for Lands & Environment in Zanzibar Town (p109) sells topographical maps of Pemba.

Information

INTERNET ACCESS

Adult Computer Centre (Main Rd; per hr Tsh1500; ☎ 8am-8pm) Opposite the telecom building.

MONEY

Speed Cash ATM (Main Rd) Located at the old People's Bank of Zanzibar building on the main road. It currently accepts Visa only, but MasterCard is planned to start soon. This is currently the only place on the island to access cash, so carry some extra, in case it's out of service.

POST

Main post office (Main Rd; ☎ 8am-4pm Mon-Fri, 9am-noon Sat)

TELEPHONE

There are several card telephones around town, including opposite the old fort and at the Telecom building.

Adult Computer Centre (Main Rd; ☎ 8am-8pm) You can place/receive telephone calls here.

TRAVEL AGENCIES & TOUR OPERATORS

Most hotels also organise excursions.

Bachaa Travel & Tours (☎ 0777-423429, 0787-423429; samhamx@yahoo.com; Main Rd) Near ZanAir; ferry ticket bookings and island excursions.

Pemba Island Reasonable Tours & Safaris

(☎ 024-245 2023, 0777-435266; Main Rd) Downstairs at Evergreen Hotel; ferry ticket bookings, spice tours and island excursions.

Sights & Activities

Chake Chake's appealingly scruffy main street is lined with small shops and makes for an interesting walk. Apart from the bustling **market**,

buildings of note include the **courthouse**, with its clock tower, and the old Omani-era **fort**, which dates to the 18th century and was probably built on the remains of an earlier structure. Inside is a tiny and dusty **museum** (admission Tsh1000; ☎ 8.30am-4.30pm Mon-Fri, 9am-4pm Sat & Sun), with a few rather forlorn displays of pottery shards and old photos. West of town along the Wesha road are **fairgrounds** (Kiwanja cha Kufurahishia Watoto, or – literally translated – Fairgrounds for Making Children Happy) dating from Pemba's socialist days and now opened only on holidays.

Just out of town to the northeast can be found the sleepy **Pemba Essential Oil Distillery** (admission Tsh1500; ☎ 7.30am-3.30pm Mon-Fri), where you can smell lemon grass and cloves and see how spices are made into oil. It's best visited in combination with a spice tour, which can be arranged through any of the hotels or the listings under Travel Agencies & Tour Operators (left). About 6km further, reached via an easy bike ride past the oil distillery, are some tiny, baobab-dotted **beaches** near Vitongoji.

Most diving and snorkelling from Chake Chake focuses on Misali island (p146).

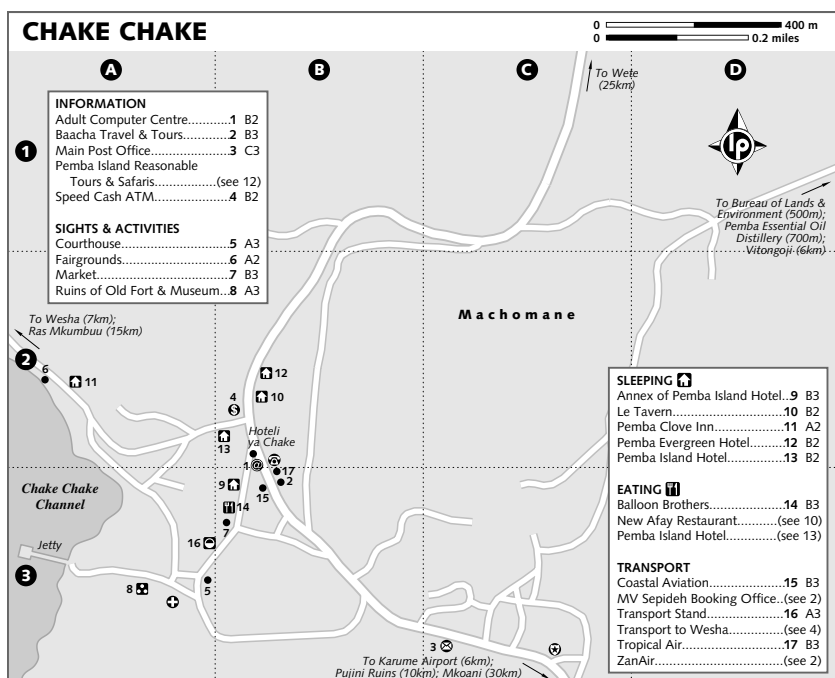
Sleeping

Annex of Pemba Island Hotel (☎ 024-245 2215; s/d/tw without bathroom US\$10/20/30) Related to Pemba Island Hotel and nearby – in a multi-storey building about 100m down the road to the market in a rather noisier location – rooms here are clean and basic.

Pemba Evergreen Hotel (☎ 024-245 3326; pemba evergreen@hotmail.com; Main Rd; s/d/tw US\$20/25/35) A new high-rise still under construction. Four rooms – with TV, window screens (though no mosquito nets) and fan, and a couple with balcony – are finished now, with more planned. Upstairs is the Top Green restaurant, which hasn't yet gotten into full swing when we passed by. It's just up from Le Tavern.

Le Tavern (☎ 024-245 2660; Main Rd; s/d with air-con US\$25/30, d without bathroom US\$15; ☎) This slightly tatty establishment, opposite the Old Mission Lodge, has clean-ish, no-frills rooms with mosquito nets and is a reasonable budget choice. Included in the price is an early morning wake-up call from the mosque next door.

Pemba Island Hotel (☎ 024-245 2215; pembaisland@yahoo.com; Wesha Rd; s/d/tw US\$35/45/55; ☎) Small, clean rooms with mosquito nets, TV, mini-fridge and hot water, plus a rooftop terrace



restaurant and a 10% discount for longer stays. It's about 100m downhill from the main junction.

Pemba Clove Inn (☎ 024-245 2794/5; pembadoveinn@zanzinet.com; Weshu Rd; s/d from US\$90/120) A new place adjoining the Social Security Administration buildings, about 700m down from the main junction. Rooms are short on ambience, but clean, spacious and well equipped. It's currently the most upmarket accommodation in town.

Eating

Balloon Brothers (Market Rd; snacks & meals from Tsh500) A local haunt with snacks and light meals just up from the market.

New Afay Restaurant (top fl, Le Tavern, Main Rd; meals Tsh2000; ☎ lunch & dinner) A popular local option with good rice and fish and other standard fare.

Pemba Island Hotel (☎ 024-245 2215; pembaisland@yahoo.com; Weshu Rd; meals Tsh5000) This place has a good rooftop restaurant.

There's also a lively night market in the town centre, where you can get grilled *pweza* (octopus), *maandazi* (doughnuts) and other

local delicacies at rock-bottom prices, and experience a slice of Pemban life. Most shops sell only basic supplies, but there are a few that have more exotic items, such as tinned cheese and peanut butter.

Getting There & Away

AIR

Both **ZanAir** (☎ 024-245 2990, 0777-431143; Main Rd), on the main road uphill from the main post office, and **Coastal Aviation** (☎ 024-245 2162, 0777-418343), diagonally opposite ZanAir, fly daily between Chake Chake and Zanzibar Town (US\$80), with direct connections on to Dar es Salaam (US\$100). Coastal also goes daily between Pemba and Tanga (US\$60).

Tropical Air (☎ 0777-859996; Main Rd) also flies between Dar es Salaam, Zanzibar and Pemba during the high season. Its office is opposite the Adult Computer Centre.

BOAT

See p148 for ferry schedules between Zanzibar and Mkoani (from where you'll need to take a bus or *dalla-dalla* up to Chake Chake). Tickets for the *MS Sepideh* and *Sea Express* ferries are

best arranged through hotels or one of the travel agencies (p144). The *Sepideh* also has a **booking office** (Main Rd) near ZanAir.

BUS

Main routes (all departing from the transport stand behind the market) include the following:

Route No	Destination	Price (Tsh)
603	Mkoani	Tsh1000
306	Wete via the 'old' road	Tsh1200
334	Wete via the 'new' (eastern) road	Tsh1000
335	Konde	Tsh1500
305	Wesha	Tsh500

There's a shuttle bus from Chake Chake (Tsh1000) to Mkoani connecting with *Sepideh* departures and arrivals, departing from the main road in front of Evergreen Hotel about two hours before the *Sepideh's* scheduled departure time. Be sure to book a seat on the bus when buying your boat ticket, as the bus gets very crowded.

Getting Around

TO/FROM THE AIRPORT

Karume airport, about 6km east of town, is Pemba's only airfield. There's no regular bus service to/from the airport, but at least one vehicle meets incoming flights (Tsh8000 to central Chake Chake).

CAR & MOTORCYCLE

Cars and motorbikes can be hired in Chake Chake through hotels and travel agencies, or by negotiating with one of the cars marked with 'Gari ya Abiria' parked at the stand in front of the currently closed Hoteli ya Chake. Prices are fairly standard – US\$20 between Mkoani and Chake Chake; US\$25 one way between Chake Chake and Wete; and US\$35 return between Chake Chake and Ras Kigomasha, including stops at Vumawimbi beach and Ngezi.

AROUND CHAKE CHAKE

Misali

This little patch of paradise lies offshore from Chake Chake, surrounded by crystal waters and stunning coral reefs. Nesting turtles and breeding sea birds favour the beaches on its western side, which have been set aside just for them. Also on the side are some of the best reefs. On the northeast of the island is **Mbuyuni beach**,

with fine, white sands and a small visitors centre, and to the southeast are some mangroves. About a 10-minute walk south of the visitors centre is **Bendera cave**, which is believed to be inhabited by the spirits of ancestors and is used by Pembans from the main island for rituals. To the west are the larger **Mpapaini caves**. Thanks to Misali's lack of fresh water, development of permanent settlements has been limited, but the island is in active use by local fishers, and there are several fishing camps.

In 1998 the island and surrounding coral reef were gazetted as the **Misali Island Marine Conservation Area** (adult/student US\$5/3), with the goal of maintaining the island's ecosystems in harmony with usage by local fishers. There are underwater and terrestrial nature trails, and you can arrange guides at the visitors centre. Camping is not permitted.

To get to the island on your own, head to Wesha, northwest of Chake Chake, via bus 305 (Tsh500), which departs from Chake Chake several times daily from in front of the old People's Bank of Zanzibar building. Alternatively, hiring a car costs about Tsh5000. Once in Wesha, you can negotiate with local boat owners to take you to Misali. Expect to pay about Tsh35,000 per person return. There's no food or drink on the island, so bring whatever you'll need with you. It's easier, and only slightly more expensive, to arrange Misali excursions through hotels or travel agencies in Chake Chake, through Sharook Guest House in Wete, or through Jondeni Guest House in Mkoani.

Ras Mkumbuu

Ras Mkumbuu is the long, thin strip of land jutting into the sea northwest of Chake Chake. At its tip are the **ruins** of a settlement known in ancient times as Qanbalu, which is thought to have risen to prominence in the early 10th century, when it may have been one of the major settlements along the East African coast. The main ruins, consisting of a mosque and some tombs and houses, are estimated to date from around the 14th century, and are now quite overgrown.

The best way to visit the area (which is also referred to by locals as Ndagoni, the name of the nearest village, or Makutani) is by boat from Chake Chake, although this can be expensive. If you go via road, you'll have at least an hour's walk at the end; one section of the path often becomes submerged at high tide, so plan accordingly.

COMMUNITY TOURISM SPOTLIGHT: MISALI

When you see Misali, you may wonder why such a paradisaical island hasn't been snatched up by developers. The answer in part is that it has been gazetted as a conservation area in order to protect it from this very scenario. However, this conservation status is fragile, and given the right (or wrong) set of factors, it could be reversed.

The idea of Misali as the site of a luxury lodge might be appealing to some. However, there is another side to the picture – namely, the equity issue involved when traditional resource users (ie the indigenous population) are excluded from an area in the name of conservation. The **Misali Island Conservation Project** seeks to empower locals to manage their own natural resources, thereby ensuring promotion of both environmental conservation and also the wellbeing of the at least 8000 people who depend on the island and its waters for their sustenance. An additional benefit of this approach is that the conservation area remains accessible to tourists from various socioeconomic and national backgrounds. Contrast this with a scenario that would exclude not only local fishers, but also any tourist unable to pay several hundred dollars a night to experience their own private and (now) deserted tropical isle.

By visiting Misali you are making an important contribution to a model of ecological conservation that supports community development and 'egalitarian' ecotourism. The more successful the Misali Island Conservation Area is financially, the stronger the argument for resisting developers' attempts to wrest control from the fishers, and the greater the likelihood that it will remain available both to traditional local users and the average tourist, rather than becoming the fenced-off domain of a wealthy few.

AROUND PEMBA

Pemba offers opportunities for some enjoyable and very laid-back exploring. The following places are covered roughly south to north.

KIWENI

Tranquil Kiweni, marked as Shamiani or Shamiani island on some maps, is just off Pemba's southeastern coast. It's a remote backwater area, neglected by the government and overlooked by most visitors, where little seems to have changed for decades. With its undisturbed stretches of sand and quiet waterways, it's also one of the island's more scenic and alluring corners, as well as home to five of Pemba's six endemic bird species and a nesting ground for some sea-turtle colonies. Offshore is some good **snorkelling**.

Near Kiweni, in the area around Kengeja (as well as other spots on Pemba), you'll occasionally come across light-hearted **'bull fights'**, said to date back to the days of Portuguese influence on the island. At the moment, there's nowhere around Kiweni to stay. However, the small, midrange **Pemba Lodge** (www.pembalodge.com), under the same management as Mnarani Beach Cottages in Nungwi (p131), is planned to open soon – check its website for an update.

To get here, catch any bus running along the Mkoani–Chake Chake road to Mtambile junction. From Mtambile, you can find pickups or other transport to Kengeja, from where you'll have to walk a few kilometres to the water and then take a boat over to Kiweni (about Tsh2000).

MKOANI & AROUND

Although it's Pemba's major port, Mkoani has managed to fight off all attempts at development and remains a very small and rather boring town. However, its good budget guesthouse goes a long way to redeeming it, and it makes a convenient and recommended base for exploring the sleepy and often overlooked but beautiful southern parts of the island.

Information

For medical emergencies, try the Chinese-run government hospital, although standards leave much to be desired.

The immigration officer usually meets all boat arrivals. Otherwise, if you're coming from anywhere other than Zanzibar, you'll need to go to the immigration office and get stamped in. It's 500m up the main road from the port in a small brown building with a flag.

Sleeping & Eating

IN MKOANI

Jondeni Guest House (☎ 024-245 6042; jondeniguest@hotmail.com; dm/s/d US\$10/20/30, s/d with hot water US\$25/35, without bathroom US\$15/25) This friendly and recommended backpackers' guesthouse, set up on a hill overlooking the sea in the distance has simple but spotless rooms with mosquito nets, breezes and good meals (Tsh6000). Staff have lots of information on Pemba, and can help you arrange snorkelling and excursions, including to Matumbini lighthouse (on Matumbi Makubwa island), 'Emerald Bay' – a large, pristine sandbank about 8km away and good for swimming and snorkelling – and Ras Ufunguo, with snorkelling around an old wreck between about October and March (when it's not too windy). Snorkelling trips to Misali can also be organised (US\$35 per person). To get here, head left when exiting the port and walk about 700m up to the top of the hill.

Apart from Jondeni Guest House, which has Mkoani's best cuisine, it can be difficult to find meals, although there is street food nightly by the port.

OUTSIDE MKOANI

Misale Matumbawe (☎ 024-223 6315; www.misalematumbawe.com; s/d half board US\$200/300) A low-key place near Jambangome village, about midway between Mkoani and Wambaa. It's under the same management as Baobab Beach Bungalows in Nungwi and accommodation is of a similar standard, in straightforward, pleasant beachside bungalows with Zanzibari beds, mosquito nets and small verandas. There's also a restaurant, and a full range of excursions can be organised.

Getting There & Away

BOAT

The MS *Sepideh* sails in theory on Monday and Wednesday in both directions between Dar es Salaam and Pemba's Mkoani port via Zanzibar, departing from Dar es Salaam at 7.30am and Zanzibar around 10am, reaching Pemba about midday. In the other direction, the boat departs from Pemba at 1pm, reaching Zanzibar at 3.30pm and then continues to Dar es Salaam at 4pm. The *Sepideh* is good when it runs, but service is very sporadic. The fare is US\$40/55 in economy class between Pemba and Zanzibar/Dar es Salaam, including port tax.

The smaller and less comfortable (especially on rough seas, when it bounces around like a cork) *Sea Express* does the Pemba (Mkoani)–Zanzibar–Dar es Salaam route on Thursday and Saturday, departing from Dar at 7.30am, Zanzibar at 10am, Pemba at 12.30pm and Zanzibar (back to Dar) at 4pm. Prices are US\$45/60 in economy class between Pemba and Zanzibar/Dar es Salaam, including port tax.

All boats have their main booking offices at the port in Mkoani. You can also arrange tickets through travel agencies in Chake Chake, and with Sharook Guest House or travel agents in Wete.

BUS

Bus 603 runs throughout the day between Mkoani and Chake Chake (Tsh1000, two hours). The bus station in Mkoani is about 200m east of the port, up the hill and just off the main road. For Wete, you'll need to change vehicles in Chake Chake.

WAMBAA

The main reason to come to Wambaa is to luxuriate in Pemba's only five-star resort.

The exclusive **Fundu Lagoon Resort** (☎ 0774-438668; www.fundulagoon.com; s/d full board from US\$475/670; ☞ mid-Jun–mid-Apr) is set on a low hillside overlooking the sea, with luxurious bungalows tucked away amid the vegetation and an excess of amenities. Particularly notable are its bar, set over the water on a long jetty, and its cuisine. In addition to the usual excursions, there's a good dive operator here, primarily operating around Misali and off Pemba's southern tip. It's also possible to arrange private yacht charters and deep-sea sport fishing.

PUJINI RUINS

About 10km southeast of Chake Chake at Pujini are the overgrown and atmospheric ruins of a town dating from about the 14th century and perhaps earlier. It was here that the infamous Mohammed bin Abdul Rahman, who ruled Pemba around the 15th century, prior to the arrival of the Portuguese, had his seat. Locally, Rahman is known as Mkame Ndume (Milker of Men) and for Pembans, his name is synonymous with cruelty due to the harsh punishments he meted out to his people. The main area of interest is framed by what were once the

PEMBA PECULIARITIES

Unlike Zanzibar, where tourist infrastructure is well developed, Pemba is very much a backwater once away from its three main towns. It's also highly picturesque. *Kofia*-clad men ride ageing Chinese-made single-speed bicycles and zebu-drawn carts trundle along, laden with palms for making the *makuti* (thatch) roofing that is interspersed in villages with corrugated tin roofing. Square houses with strong wooden carved doors line the roadsides, and emerald-green rice fields spread out into the distance. Both in its main towns and in the countryside, Pemba offers an authentic experience that's increasingly difficult to find in other parts of the archipelago. A few island-specific tips:

- Away from the pricier hotels, allow plenty of time for getting around and for meals. At budget places, you'll usually need to put in an order for a meal a few hours in advance. Apart from guesthouses, the main places to eat are at the island's lively night markets. These are found in all the major towns, but are best in Chake Chake. They sell *mishikaki* (skewered meat), *maandazi* (doughnuts), grilled *pweza* (octopus) and other delicacies. Wete has the best selection of vegetables from the mainland.
- Other than local brews (the most common of which is *nazi*, a fermented coconut wine), there's little alcohol available on the island once away from the hotels. If you try the *nazi*, be sure it's fresh (made within the past 24 hours), otherwise it goes bad.
- Chake Chake is the only town with banking facilities, so come prepared with enough cash (a mix of US dollars and Tanzanian shillings is best).
- Most businesses operate from 8am to 4pm, and almost everywhere shuts down for about half an hour for prayers from about 4pm or 4.30pm, and at midday on Friday.

ramparts surrounding Rahman's palace, although several other ruins, including those of a mosque, have been found nearby. While the ramparts are in many places little more than a mound of earth, they show the scale of the residence, and, with some imagination, give an indication of Pujini's power in its heyday.

There's no regular public transport to Pujini. The best way to get here is by bicycle, following the road from Chake Chake southeast past farm plots, small villages and mangroves. Car hire from Chake Chake costs about Tsh12,000 return.

WETE

The lively port and market town of Wete makes an agreeable base from which to explore northern Pemba. The port here is Pemba's second largest after Mkoani, and serves as the export channel for much of the island's clove crop. At the centre of Wete life is the market, which is just off the main road at the eastern end of town.

Information

There's internet access at the Umati office just down from Sharook Guest House. The best place for arranging excursions is

Sharook Guest House, which can also help with booking ferry tickets.

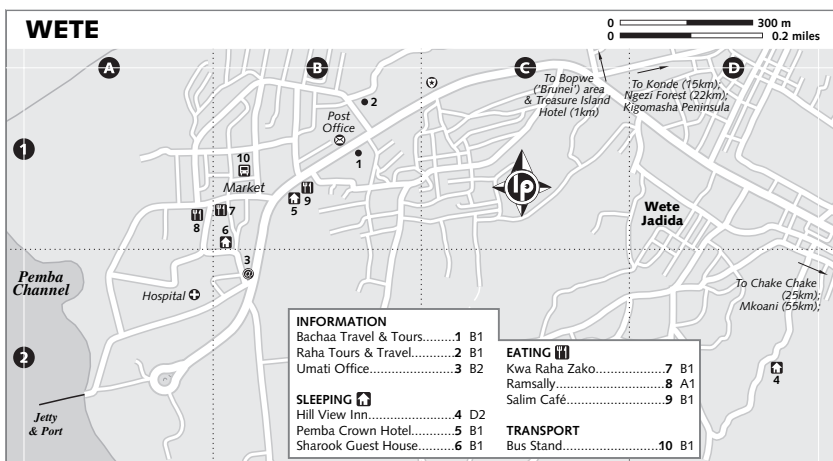
Bachaa Travel & Tours (☎ 0784-423429, 0777-423429; samhamx@yahoo.com) On the main road, and poorly signed; does bookings for *Sea Express* and *ZanAir*.

Raha Tours & Travel (☎ 024-245 4228) Just off the main road near the post office. Also does *MV Sepideh* bookings.

Sleeping

Wete has a small collection of good budget guesthouses.

Sharook Guest House (☎ 024-245 4386, 0777-431012; sharookguest@yahoo.com; r US\$20, without bathroom US\$15) There's more competition these days in Wete and rooms may be more modern elsewhere, but for service and a friendly welcome, you can't beat this small guesthouse, just off the main road at the western end of town. Rooms in a private house are basic but clean, all have mosquito net and fan, and there's satellite TV in the living room. The owner is very knowledgeable about Wete and the surrounding area, and is the best contact for organising excursions to Vumawimbi beach, Ngezi Forest, Misali and elsewhere, making ferry bookings, bicycle or motorbike rentals and the like. If all this doesn't persuade you to stay here, you get a free breakfast if you arrive at the guesthouse



in the morning (lunch and dinner also available). Transfers from the Mkoani port or the airport can be arranged. The same owner is building a new guesthouse near the water that isn't quite finished yet, but it's attractively located and looks very promising – ask for an update when you arrive.

Hill View Inn (☎ 0784-344359; binahmed75@hotmail.com; r per person US\$20, without bathroom US\$15) A small, friendly establishment with no-frills, clean rooms – the ones upstairs, some with breezes and views to the water in the distance, are nicer. Meals and hot water are available on request. It's at the entrance to town, about two blocks in from the main road, next to a set of apartment blocks in Wete Jadida ('New Wete').

Pemba Crown Hotel (☎ 024-245 4191; www.pembacrown.com; Main Rd; s/d US\$20/30; 📶) Spotless good-value rooms – all with fan and air-con – in a low high-rise diagonally opposite the market. There's no food.

Treasure Island Hotel (☎ 024-245 4171, 0777-454976; treasurehotel@yahoo.co.uk; Gando Rd; s/d US\$20/30) This large, new high-rise in the Bopwe (or 'Bruni') area about 2km from the town centre has bland but spacious and comfortable rooms that are quite good value as long as prices stay as they are. There's also a rooftop terrace, and a restaurant is planned.

Eating

The main place to eat in town (order meals ahead) is **Sharook Guest House** (☎ 024-245 4386, 0777-431012; lunch/dinner Tsh4000). Otherwise, try

Ramsally (meals from Tsh500), a local haunt near the market, or **Kwa Raha Zako** (meals Tsh500), diagonally opposite. The quite basic-looking **Salim Café** (meals from Tsh500; Main Rd) just down from Pemba Crown Hotel, has also been recommended for inexpensive local fare.

Getting There & Away

BOAT

The unsteady *Mudasi* – primarily a cargo ship that also takes passengers – sails three times weekly between Wete and Tanga, departing from Wete at 8am on Friday, Saturday and Sunday (three to five hours), and Tanga at 3pm on Saturday, Sunday and Monday.

Wete is also the best place on Pemba to look for a dhow to the mainland, although captains are often unwilling to take foreigners. Inquire at the Wete port; passage costs about Tsh5000 between Wete and Tanga. There are also sporadic dhows between Wete and Mombasa. See also the boxed text, p357.

BUS

A tarmac road (the 'old' road) connects Wete with Chake Chake via Ziواني, winding its way past hills, villages and lots of banana trees en route. East of here, the 'new' road, also tarmac, connects Wete with Chake Chake via Ole. The main bus routes are on bus 306 (Wete to Chake Chake via the 'old' road), bus 334 (Wete to Chake Chake via the 'new' road) and bus 324 (Wete to Konde).

There's also a shuttle bus from Wete to Mkoani (Tsh2500) connecting with MV

Sepideh departures and arrivals, departing from Wete about three hours before the *Sepideh*'s scheduled departure time. The main pick-up point is at Raha Tours & Travel; pick-ups at Sharook Guest House can also be arranged.

TUMBE

The large village of Tumbe lies on a sandy cove fringed at each end by dense stands of mangroves. It's the site of Pemba's largest **fish market**, and if you're in the area, it's well worth a stop, especially in the mornings when the catch of the day is brought in and the beach bustles with activity. Just offshore are the two small islands of **Hamisi** and **Usubi**.

About 2km southeast from Tumbe at Chwaka are some overgrown **ruins**, including those of a mosque, an 18th-century fort and some tombs. There are several sites, the best of which is known as the Haruni site, marked by a tiny signpost to the east of the main road. It's named after Harun, who was the son of Mkame Ndume (p148) and, according to local tradition, just as cruel as his father.

There's no accommodation in Tumbe. To get here, take bus 335 and ask the driver to drop you at the junction, from where it's an easy walk.

NGEZI

The small, dense and in parts wonderfully damp and lush forest at Ngezi is part of the much larger natural forest that once covered wide swathes of Pemba. It is notable in that it resembles the highland rainforests of East Africa more than the lowland forests found on Zanzibar. Ngezi is also notable as the home of *Pteropus voeltzkowi*, or the Pemba flying fox, a bat unique to the island and Pemba's only fully endemic mammalian species. The forest is now part of the protected **Ngezi Vumawimbi Forest Reserve** (admission Tsh4000; ☎ 8am-4pm), with a short nature trail that winds its way beneath the shady forest canopy. If you want to see Scops owls and other nocturnal birds, it's possible to arrange evening tours in advance with the caretaker.

Ngezi is along the main road between Konde and Tondooni, which in this section becomes narrow and winding and edged with dense vegetation. To get here via public transport, take the bus to Konde, from where it's a 3km to 4km walk. Bus drivers are sometimes willing to drop you at the information centre

for an additional Tsh1000 to Tsh2000. The best idea is to combine Ngezi with a visit to Vumawimbi beach (below). Despite what the Ngezi caretaker may tell you, you don't need to pay the forest entry fee if you're just passing through en route to the beach.

KIGOMASHA PENINSULA

The main reason to come to the Kigomasha peninsula in Pemba's northwestern corner is to relax on the beautiful, palm- and forest-fringed **Vumawimbi beach** on the peninsula's eastern side, or on **Verani beach** to the west. Until recently, hardly anyone made it up this way, but this is changing fast, with several new hotel developments under way. For now, though, if you want to visit Vumawimbi for the day, bring whatever food and drink you'll need with you.

The **Ras Kigomasha lighthouse** is an easy walk from Manta Reef Lodge. Built in 1904, together with the lighthouse on Chumbe Island, it's still actively maintained by its keeper. Climb up to the top for wonderful views (for a Tsh2000 donation to the lighthouse keeper).

On the northwestern end of the Kigomasha peninsula are Panga ya Waturo Beach, and the relaxing and superbly situated **Manta Reef Lodge** (☎ 0777-423930, in Kenya 41-471771; www.mantareeflodge.com; s/d full board US\$150/220; ☎ mid-Jun–mid-Apr), on a breezy escarpment with spectacular views over the ocean. Accommodation is in rustic but comfortable and well-appointed and recently renovated sea-facing cabins – in Europe it would rank as a very nice three-star place – and staff can help you organise diving, including live-aboard arrangements, as well as sea kayaking and fishing charters. There's a bar-restaurant overlooking the water, a pool was being built when we passed by and meanwhile there's swimming at high tide on the beach below. Pick-ups can be arranged with the lodge. Otherwise, there's usually at least one pick-up daily in the morning from Konde to Makangale village, about 4km or 5km south of Manta Reef, from where you'll need to walk or pay the driver extra to bring you all the way up.

Further down to the southwest near Tondooni is the low-key **Verani Beach Hotel** (☎ 0773-321254, 0773-355685, 0777-414408; www.veranibeach.com; camping per person with own/rented tent US\$5/10, s/d bungalows US\$25/40), which is not yet complete. For now, it has two no-frills stone-

and-thatch bungalows, plus a few tents. Meals can be arranged, as can excursions, including a multiday dhow trip over to Saadani National Park on the mainland.

The **Kervan Saray Beach Lodge** (📍 satellite 88-21652-073106; www.kervansaraybeach.com; dm about US\$40, bungalows per person about US\$120) – an unpretentious and rustic but comfortable diver-oriented lodge and the new base for the well-established Swahili Divers (www.swahilidivers.com) – is set to open soon on the beach near Makangale village, just past Ngezi Forest and about 5km south of Manta Reef Lodge. Accommodation is in either a six-bed divers' bunk dorm or in six double-room, en suite, stone-and-thatch, high-roof bungalows, and there's a restaurant serving daily set menus (lunch/dinner about US\$15/30). There's generator-supplied power available nightly for charging cameras and the like, and a satellite internet connection (per hour US\$13). Diving, including PADI open-water instruction, is the main activity (per dive US\$75 including equipment), but there's also a full range of other excursions around the island, including sunset cruises, overnight sails to Misali island and village walks. Pick-ups can be arranged from Chake Chake (per vehicle US\$70) or Mkoani (US\$100), or you

can take a *dalla-dalla* to Konde, from where pick-ups cost US\$20.

Other than hiring a vehicle in Chake Chake, the best way to get to all of these places is on bicycle from Konde. The road is sealed until the Ngezi Forest, then dirt, and thereafter loose sand. Alternatively, try to negotiate a lift with one of the Konde bus drivers, although you'll then need to make arrangements for your return. Hitching is usually slow going, as there's little vehicle traffic. See p360 for more information on hitching.

OFFSHORE ISLANDS

There are dozens of tiny islets dotted along Pemba's coastline. Most have nothing on them, but they make enjoyable excursions. If you have any ideas of camping, keep in mind that many of the islands off Pemba's western coast are badly rat infested. Some good destinations include **Hamisi** and **Usubi** (tiny fishing islands offshore from Tumbwe village), **Mtambwe Mkuu** (actually a peninsula southwest of Wete) and the large **Kojani** in the northeast, with areas of protected forest. **Ras Kiuyu**, Pemba's far northeastern corner, is also well worth exploring, with forest, villages and beaches, including **Mbuyuni beach**, with some interesting water-sculpted rocks.