



ZANZIBAR SWINGS YEAR ROUND, WITH ITS ART, FESTIVALS,

Quick now! What are the facts about Zanzibar?

- Zanzibar is popularly known as the “spice islands.”
 - Zanzibar is located about 30 K off the coast of mainland Tanzania in the Indian Ocean.
 - Zanzibar is actually an archipelago with the two main Islands of Zanzibar (also known as Unguja, the larger one) and Pemba (the smaller of the two).
 - Zanzibar was incorporated into the United Republic of Tanzania in 1964.
 - Zanzibar, which in 1992 had only 723,300 people, does have its own democratically elected president and government that run the internal affairs of the Islands.
 - Zanzibar’s Serena Inn on the Stone Town waterfront is a splendid example of the careful preservation of historic buildings. This project undertaken by the Aga Kahn Fund for Economic Development, owner and manager of the Serena Hotels, involved the restoration and rehabilitation of two historic buildings , the Old Extelcoms Building and the Chinese Doctors’ Residence.
 - Zanzibar has the largest number of carved doors in East Africa.
 - Zanzibar’s Stone Town has 50 mosques and four Hindu temples.
- The House of Wonders is one of the first buildings in East Africa to have electricity and Stone Town’s oldest existing building. In 1987, the Stone Town Conservation Authority was created to provide strict guidelines for architectural design and materials used in all renovations of public and privately owned buildings.
- Zanzibar is the world’s oldest functioning Swahili city.
 - Zanzibar has seen an influx from the

British, Dutch, Portuguese, Egyptian, Phoenicians, Assyrians, Indians, Chinese, Persians, Arabs and Sumerians at various times in its history.

- Zanzibar offers the visitor a variety of pristine beaches and stunning coral reefs.
- Zanzibar’s Muslim worshippers, during daylight hours of Ramadan lunar month, may not eat, drink, smoke or have sex. Exempt only are the sick, young children and travelers .

The earliest visitation to Zanzibar was in the 8th century, when the Arab traders arrived.

- Zanzibar’s oldest remaining building is the 11th century mosque at Kizimkazi .
- The name Swahili comes from the Arab word sawahil which means ‘coast’.
- Zanzibar named Best Island Destination in Africa and Middle East
- Zanzibar, the “spice islands” of the Indian Ocean, and part of Tanzania, was named by the Travel+Leisure Magazine’s readers as the highest-ranking Island in Africa and the Middle East in the World’s Best Awards Readers’ Poll.

Zanzibar lures the American traveler, not just because the name itself conjures up a mystical and romantic image, but also because it is known as a peaceful, stable and hospitable island, just like mainland Tanzania.

Festivals Zanzibari Style

“Zanzibar,” the name itself conjures up a mystical and romantic image, consists of Unguja (known as Zanzibar Island), Pemba



and some 50 smaller surrounding island and islets. Already popular for its beaches, water sports, scuba diving (using environmentally-friendly equipment), underwater photography, reef watching, dolphin watching and snorkeling, Zanzibar is now focusing on promoting its many year-round festivals showcasing the diverse cultures and history of Tanzania’s Swahili coastal islands.

“What makes Zanzibar’s

festivals unique and popular with visitors is that they are for the local population as well as for the tourists,” says Mohammed Vuai, Executive Secretary of the Zanzibar Tourism Commission. “There are events and activities that take place in the local communities throughout the islands.”

Swahili Music & Culture

For many years, our editors and colleagues in the Africa Travel Association have been impressed by the Busara Swahili Music Festival in Stone town. So, to answer your question in advance - who is Busara? For the record, Busara Promotions, organizers of the festival, is a non-governmental, non-political, non-profit cultural organization based in Zanzibar. The above photos illustrate the quality of presentation at its popular events.

Mission and Vision

Established in 2003, the company’s mission is as follows: “To promote and develop opportunities for local and international music



CULTURAL TREASURES, SPICES AND SWAHILI HOSPITALITY

and performing artists within the East African region, work to strengthen the local arts infrastructure and build networks internationally, for the social, cultural and economic growth of Africa and the dhow region" Busara's vision is for Zanzibar to become internationally recognized and valued as a cultural epicentre for Africa and the Indian Ocean region. This is in the context of a broader cross-regional network which links festivals, venues and promoters, performing artists, music institutions and related organizations around Africa, the Indian Ocean and beyond. Busara Promotions' main event is the Sauti za Busara Swahili Music Festival, held annually in Stone Town, Zanzibar each February.

Swahili Encounters

Another of Busara's principal activities is the Swahili Encounters project. The mission of Swahili Encounters is "to encourage audiences to celebrate pluralism of cultural and religious diversity; to promote and develop opportunities for musicians and performing artists along the Swahili coast and islands to connect, learn and perform together; and to develop regional artistic cooperation, for the social, cultural and economic growth of East Africa and the Swahili region." Keep in touch with events and activities in Zanzibar on www.africa-ata.org/zanzibar.htm

SOUNDS OF WISDOM (Sauti za Busara)

MUSIC FESTIVAL TOUR:

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Zanzibar Festival Tours

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Recommended Links

www.busaramusic.org

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www.africa-ata.org/zanzibar.htm

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