



July Blog - Unforgettable Zanzibar Excursions

Zanzibar is well known for its world-class white sandy beaches and crystal-clear turquoise waters, but there's a lot more to this island than you might know.

Zanzibar is the perfect place to land for a holiday full of adventure, culture, history and exploration. If you're dreaming about a once-in-a-lifetime East African adventure, Zanzibar could be just the place you're looking for.

Read on to find out more about Zanzibar holidays and the unforgettable excursions you can enjoy on the island.



Typical Zanzibar Dhow

Spice Farms & Cultural Encounters

Zanzibar is known around the world for its rich history with the trade of spices, which flourished between the 12th – 15th centuries, but that's not to say it's in the past.

Known as the 'Spice Island', Zanzibar produces many exotic and aromatic spices to this day, filling the air with mouth-watering scents and making a trip to Zanzibar a food-lover's

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Representing



paradise. Cloves are perhaps the island's most famous product, but cinnamon, nutmeg, cardamom, black pepper and vanilla are all big exports of Zanzibar.

As such, spice tours are a must-do when visiting Zanzibar. Guided excursions walk you through lush plantations where you can smell and taste the spices at source. Guides will share their knowledge about the history of Zanzibar's spice trade and the cultivation and harvesting process – you can even watch the entire thing from start to finish, if you wish!

This should be one of the first things on your list when you visit the island and every time you see a cardamom pod you'll be fondly reminded of your tour.



Stone Town Historical Walks

Stone Town, so named for its widespread use of coral stone throughout its buildings and architecture, is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

A visit to Stone Town is truly a step back in time, with its major buildings dating back to the 18th and 19th centuries. Previously, it was thought that Stone Town was a fishing village before the arrival of the Portuguese in the 14th century, however more recent research has uncovered evidence that the town may well have been established as a trading port by the Swahili, hundreds of years previous.

Winding alleyways, bustling markets, historic mosques, churches and cathedrals all make for an incredible adventure with a guide at your side. You can even visit the iconic Freddie Mercury Museum, which is set in his old family home in Stone Town - where he lived until he was 8 years old.



Ocean Excursions & Traditional Dhow Sailing



Zanzibar's waters offer much more than a good lounging spot. They're known for their vibrant marine life and wide variety of water-sports and activities, from snorkelling and diving to boat tours and traditional dhow sailing.

Some of these tours will see you board a traditional dhow boat and cruise Zanzibar's iconic coastline, perhaps passing by Nungwi and Kendwa beaches or reaching out to Prison Island – a hidden oasis which houses the ruins of a former prison hospital and many Aldabra giant tortoises.

You can also board a boat for a spot of fishing, to spot dolphins or even grab a snorkel and swim with them for a truly unforgettable day. Why not try to semi-submersible submarine tour around the waters close to Stone Town.

Whichever excursion you choose, a day spent in the waters of Zanzibar is a day well spent.



Wildlife & Conservation Excursions

Zanzibar, whilst not a large province, has an incredibly diverse ecology. East African wildlife are some of the most impressive and memorable around the world, making this another must-do for your trip to Zanzibar.

Whatever you're interested in when it comes to wildlife and the environment, there is something to suit you in Zanzibar. You can even take a day trip out to Nyerere National Park (previously known as Selous Game Reserve) in Tanzania to photograph lions, elephants, giraffes, and zebras amongst other world-famous animals.

In the south of the island lies Zanzibar's only national park, Jozani Forest, which is home to monkeys, antelopes, reptiles, and a remarkable diversity of flora.

One of the most sought-after sights in Jozani Forest is the Zanzibar red colobus monkey – an endangered group of African monkeys. They are very relaxed around humans and therefore make for truly fascinating viewing, letting you take photographs as they jump from tree to tree. If you're lucky, you might also see the Sykes' monkey (otherwise known as the Blue Monkey), although they are a bit shyer than their red counterparts and therefore a little harder to spot.

Whilst you're out searching for glimpses of these elusive animals, local tour guides will tell you about the fascinating environment and plant life in Zanzibar, from mangrove ecosystems to cinnamon trees and tropical palms.

Zanzibar Food, Flavours and Night Markets



After a day out on the water or exploring forests for a glimpse of Zanzibar's storied wildlife, there's no better way to top off a day than with a visit to the island's vibrant food scene. Forodhani Gardens, Stone Town, is one of the most celebrated night markets in the area, offering delicious grilled seafood, Zanzibar pizza (a savoury or sweet crepe-like snack), and the freshest of fruit juices.

Whether you've worked up an appetite or you've already eaten, a visit to Forodhani Night Food Market is worth the trip for the sights and scents alone. Although, we'd definitely recommend treating yourself to local seafood at a beach barbecue under the stars.

Explore Zanzibar with Unforgettable Excursions

There is so much to see and do whilst visiting Zanzibar, whether you're interested in food, wildlife, nature, culture, or history. From spotting the iconic red colobus monkey and swimming with dolphins to visiting hidden islands and learning about the island's rich history, there's a lot to cover!

At ARP Africa, we work with local experts and tour guides to bring together the perfect Zanzibar itineraries for you. If you're dreaming of a Zanzibar holiday that goes beyond the expected, [get in touch](#) with us and we'll help make it happen.