

Tanzania

It is in Tanzania that some of Africa's most vivid images come to life: snow-capped Kilimanjaro, rhinos silhouetted against the backdrop of Ngorongoro Crater, wildebeests thundering over the Serengeti Plains, and white sands caressed by Indian Ocean breezes.

While most visitors head straight for the famed northern wildlife-watching circuit, followed by time relaxing on Zanzibar's beaches, Tanzania has much more to offer. Follow the coastline south into a Swahili culture where the rhythms have changed little over the centuries; journey through rolling hill country along the Tanzania–Zambia highway, detouring to Ruaha National Park; or explore Lake Tanganyika, with its remote fishing villages and chimpanzees.

The most popular areas have sealed main roads, and hotels and restaurants to suit every budget. Elsewhere, and especially in the south and west, you'll soon find yourself well off the beaten path, surrounded by a Tanzania that's far removed from Western development.

Wherever you go, take advantage of opportunities to get to know Tanzanians, as it is they who will inevitably wind up being the highlight of any visit. Chances are that you'll want to come back for more, to which most Tanzanians will say *Karibu tena* (Welcome again).

FAST FACTS

- **Area** 943,000 sq km
- **ATMs** All major towns (mostly Visa only)
- **Borders** Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Zambia, Malawi, Mozambique and Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)
- **Budget** US\$60 to US\$100 per day
- **Capital** Dodoma
- **Languages** English, Swahili and many other African languages
- **Money** Tanzanian shilling (Tsh); US\$1 = Tsh1340, €1 = Tsh1992
- **Population** 37.6 million
- **Seasons** Dry (June to August), wet (mid-March to May & November to December)
- **Telephone** Country code ☎ 255; international access code ☎ 000
- **Time** GMT/UTC + 3
- **Visa** US\$50 for three months, available at most border crossings (single East African tourist visa expected to be introduced soon)



HOW MUCH?

- **Midrange safari** From US\$200 per person per day
- **Plate of ugali** US\$0.50
- **Serengeti National Park entry** US\$50 per person per day
- **Papaya** US\$0.25
- **Short taxi ride** US\$2

LONELY PLANET INDEX

- **1L petrol** US\$1.50
- **1.5L bottled water** US\$0.50
- **Bottle of Safari Lager** US\$1
- **Souvenir T-shirt** US\$15
- **Mishikaki** US\$0.20

HIGHLIGHTS

- **Serengeti National Park** (p798) Immerse yourself in the sounds and sights of the world's greatest wildlife spectacle.
- **Zanzibar Archipelago** (p778) Follow the lure of the Spice Islands back through the centuries on Zanzibar and little-visited Pemba.
- **Mount Kilimanjaro** (p789) Admire it from afar or climb its mighty shoulders, but do it before its icecap melts.
- **Picture-perfect beaches** (p784) Take your pick of the beaches, from idyllic offshore islands to the palm-fringed mainland coast or serene inland lakes.
- **Mahale Mountains National Park** (p802) Spend time with our closest relatives – wild chimpanzees – in one of the country's most remote corners.

CLIMATE & WHEN TO GO

The coolest months are from June to October and the warmest from December to March. Along the coast, there's high humidity and temperatures averaging between 25°C and 29°C. On the central plateau, temperatures range from 20°C to 27°C between June and August. Between December and March they can soar above 30°C.

There are two rainy seasons, with the *masika* (long rains) from mid-March to May, and the *mvuli* (short rains) during November, December and into January. The best time to

travel is between late June and October, when the rains have finished and the air is coolest. However, this is also when hotels and park lodges are full and airfares most expensive. During the March to May rainy season, you can often save substantially on accommodation costs and have things to yourself.

ITINERARIES

- **One Week** Arriving in Dar es Salaam (p773), spend a day getting oriented, travel to Selous Game Reserve (p805) for a few nights and spend the remainder of the week on Zanzibar (p779).
- **Two Weeks** For the classic bush-and-beach itinerary, spend a week on the northern safari circuit or climbing Kilimanjaro (p789), followed by a week chilling out on Zanzibar.
- **One Month** With a month, combine any of the earlier itineraries; travel between Lake Victoria (p799) and northern or north-eastern Tanzania via the western Serengeti (p798); make your way southwest via Mbeya (p804), with stops en route at Mikumi (p803) and Ruaha (p804) National parks; or follow the coast south to Mtwara (p805).

HISTORY

Tanzania's history begins with the dawn of humanity. Hominid (humanlike) footprints unearthed near Olduvai Gorge show that our earliest ancestors were roaming the Tanzanian plains and surrounding areas over three million years ago.

Seafaring merchants, who came from the Mediterranean and Asia, came looking for gold, spices and ivory, and intermarried with the families of their local trading contacts. They formed a civilisation known as the Swahili, with a common language (also Swahili) and a chain of prosperous cities stretching from Mozambique to Somalia. The Arabic kingdom of Oman eventually gained control of the Swahili coast, installing its sultan on Zanzibar and growing rich on the profits of the slaving expeditions that penetrated far into the country's interior.

Dr Livingstone, I Presume?

The first Europeans to arrive in East Africa were the Portuguese, who clashed with the Omanis for control of the lucrative trade routes to India. Later came British, Dutch