



Dar es Salaam

POP 4.36 MILLION

Includes →

Dar es Salaam.....	51
Around Dar es Salaam.....	70
Northern Beaches.....	70
Offshore Islands.....	71
Southern Beaches.....	72

Best Places to Sleep

- Alexander's Hotel (p61)
- Southern Sun (p60)
- Friendly Gecko Guesthouse (p60)
- Ras Kutani (p74)

Best Places to Eat

- Oriental (p63)
- Mamboz Corner BBQ (p63)
- Terrace (p64)
- Black Tomato (p64)

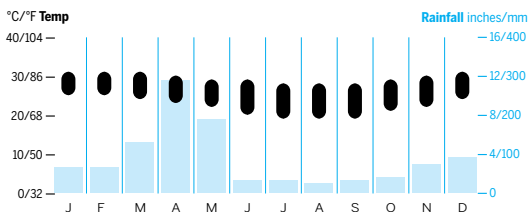
Why Go?

Over the last century, Dar es Salaam has transformed from a sleepy Zaramo fishing village into a thriving, striving, smoke-belching metropolis of over four million people (and growing). Straddling some of the most important sea routes in the world, it is East Africa's second-busiest port and Tanzania's commercial and cultural hub.

At the northern end of the harbour is the Kivukoni Front, with a bustling fish market where dhows dock at dawn to offload the night's catch. There are also excellent craft markets and restaurants and nearby sandy beaches and islands. The city's architecture is a mix of African, Arab, Indian and German, although the quaint colonial Lutheran Church is now dwarfed by towering high-rises that reflect Dar's rising prosperity in the golden-hued sunsets shimmering off their glass exteriors. Many travellers bypass 'Dar' completely; those who stick around will be rewarded by the city's eclectic cultural mix and down-to-earth vibe.

When to Go

Dar es Salaam



Mar-May Low season, cheaper rates, fewer tourists, but many southern lodges are closed.

Jun-Sep Dry, cool weather and low humidity make this a great time to enjoy the city.

Dec Fashion shows, Christmas, kitesurfing season, and the arrival of migratory birds.

History

In 1862 Sultan Seyyid Majid of Zanzibar alighted on the Zaramo fishing village of Mzizima as the location for his new summer palace. He named it Dar es Salaam, or 'Haven of Peace', a name that reflected its isolated location on a broad natural bay, making it perfect for the new trading depot he envisaged. Yemeni Arabs from the Hadrumat were invited to plant coconuts inland while Indian merchants established the fledgling economy.

Majid's sudden death in 1870 brought an abrupt end to the development, as his succeeding brother, Barghash, had little interest in the new port. So it wasn't until the late 1880s, when the German East Africa Company established a trading station, that the city really began to evolve. By 1887 Dar was the capital of the new German protectorate. The colonial administration was moved from Bagamoyo and the construction of a railway line accelerated the city's growth, facilitating trade with Central Africa via Lake Tanganyika.

As the city grew, social and political awareness grew too. Ironically, World War I was to prove the catalyst for the revival of African institutions such as the Tanganyika African Association, which was sanctioned by the post-war British administration in 1922. This organisation ultimately merged with the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU) to form the basis for the nationalist movement, which achieved independence for the country in 1961. Since then Dar es Salaam has remained Tanzania's undisputed political and economic capital, even though the legislature and official seat of government were transferred to Dodoma in 1973.

In the newly independent Tanzania, Dar fared poorly. President Julius Nyerere favoured a socialist economic model, and one in which urban areas were de-emphasised in favour of rural investment. As Tanzania's primary city, Dar es Salaam languished while a newly nationalised labour market and centralised government spawned Byzantine levels of bureaucracy and corruption. Still, the close ties of friendship between Nyerere and China started to pay dividends when socialism was abandoned in favour of liberalisation in the 1990s. Since then Chinese investment has transformed the city from a quaint colonial backwater into a thriving, high-rise metropolis. By 2013 direct Chinese investments in Tanzania were \$2.1 billion



Dar es Salaam Highlights

- 1 Meeting woodcarvers, entrepreneurs and performers and finding out what makes the city tick on a **cultural tour** (p53).
- 2 Discovering Dar's **diverse palate** (p62) savouring dhoklas, barbecued meat, spiced tea and coconut-crustured fish.
- 3 Heading out to Mbudya and Bongoyo for snorkelling and picnics on pristine **offshore islands** (p71).
- 4 Joining hardworking locals living it up on **Coco Beach** (p55) at the weekend.
- 5 Shopping for wonderfully wacky, upcycled souvenirs from **Wonder Workshop** (p65).
- 6 Immersing yourself in life local style by attending a church service at **Azania Front Lutheran Church** (p52).
- 7 Getting out on the water by dhow or kayak with **Dekeza Dhows** (p73).
- 8 Escaping to the luxuriously unspoilt headland of **Ras Kutani** (p74) where turtles come to nest.