



Southern Highlands

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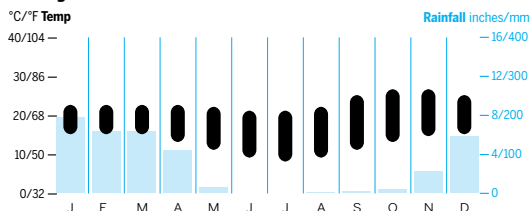
Why Go?

Tanzania's Southern Highlands officially begin at Makambako Gap, about halfway between Iringa and Mbeya, and extend southwards into Malawi. Here, the term encompasses the entire region along the mountainous chain running between Morogoro in the east and Lake Nyasa and the Zambian border in the west.

The Highlands are a major transit route for travellers to Malawi or Zambia, and are an important agricultural area. They are also wonderfully scenic and a delight to explore, with rolling hills, lively markets, jacaranda-lined streets, lovely lodges and plenty of wildlife. Hike in the Udzungwa Mountains, watch wildlife in Mikumi or Ruaha National Parks, get to know the matrilineal Luguru people in the Uluguru Mountains, or head well off the beaten track to Tanzania's southwesternmost corner. Here, wild orchids carpet sections of Kitulo National Park and verdant mountains cascade down to the tranquil shores of Lake Nyasa.

When to Go

Mbeya



Jul–Sep Ruaha National Park is at its best, with 'sand rivers' and elephants.

Oct–Nov Jacarandas everywhere; wonderful wildlife viewing and hiking.

Dec–Mar Kitulo National Park's flower display is in full bloom; peak birding season in Ruaha NP.

Morogoro

POP 286,000

Morogoro would be a fairly scruffy town were it not for its setting at the foot of the Uluguru Mountains, which brood over the landscape from the south. The surrounding area is one of the country's breadbaskets, home to the prestigious Sokoine University (Tanzania's national agricultural institute), and a major educational and mission station. While there are few attractions, Morogoro offers a good introduction to Tanzanian life outside Dar es Salaam, plus the chance for cultural tours and hikes in the nearby Ulugurus.

Sleeping

Princess Plaza Lodge & Restaurant

GUESTHOUSE \$

(☎ 0754 319159; Mahenge St; d Tsh30,000; ☎☎) Princess is a basic guesthouse with small no-frills rooms, all with hot water, air-con, fan and free wi-fi access. Some have interior windows only. There are no mosquito nets, but rooms are sprayed daily. Downstairs is an inexpensive local-style restaurant. It's one block in from the main road, and a five minute walk from the dalla-dalla (minibus) stand in the town centre.

Amabilis Centre

HOSTEL \$

(☎ 0716 880717, 0719 348959; amabilis.conferencecentre@yahoo.com; Old Dar es Salaam Rd; s Tsh20,000, s/tw without bathroom Tsh15,000/20,000; ☎) This church-run place on the northeastern edge of town offers small, spotless rooms in a multistorey building surrounded by gardens. All rooms have fan, net and hot water, and meals are available with advance order. Dalla-dallas heading towards Bigwa will drop you in front, or take a taxi from Msamvu bus stand (Tsh5000).

Mama Pierina's

GUESTHOUSE \$

(☎ 0786 786913; Station St; tw with fan/air-con Tsh25,000/45,000; ☎☎) The ageing Mama Pierina's is long past its prime, with lackadaisical plumbing and faded facilities, but the welcome is warm and the central location is convenient. The no-longer new 'newer' rooms to the back of the compound are worth the extra money and are reasonable value for a double. The restaurant serves undistinguished but filling meals.

Hotel Oasis

HOTEL \$\$

(☎ 0754 377602, 023-261 4178; hoteloasitz@moro-goro.net; Station St; s/d/tr from US\$50/60/80;

☎☎☎☎) Oasis has acceptable albeit faded rooms that are redeemed by generally good service, a decent restaurant, convenient central location, small gardens and a sparkling, recently renovated swimming pool. All rooms come with fan, air-con, TV and fridge.

Morogoro Hotel

HOTEL \$\$

(☎ 023-261 3270, 023-261 3271, 023-261 3272; www.morogorohotel.com; Rwegasore Rd; s/d/ste from US\$50/70/140; ☎☎☎) This Morogoro institution has decent twin- and double-bedded rooms in detached bungalows set in spacious green grounds 1.5km off the main road and opposite the golf course. It's popular for weddings on weekends, which can mean loud music until late. Its restaurant and pool are popular for whiling away a Sunday afternoon.

Windows are all screened – a nice touch if you don't want to use the air-con.

New Acropol Hotel

B&B \$\$

(☎ 0754 309410; newacropolhotel@moro-goro.net; Old Dar es Salaam Rd; s/d/tr US\$55/65/75; ☎☎☎) This eccentric B&B-style hotel has six mostly spacious and somewhat heavily furnished rooms around a tiny cement courtyard. All have TV, fridge, fan and nets, and there is a good restaurant-bar.

Mbuyuni Farm Retreat

B&B \$\$\$

(☎ 0784 601220, 023-260 1220; www.kimango.com; s/d US\$115/190, 4-person self-catering cottage US\$140; ☎☎) This quiet place consists of three roomy, lovely cottages in the private gardens of a farm just outside Morogoro overlooking the Uluguru Mountains. Meals are available; self-catering is also possible. Turn north off the main highway 12km east of Morogoro at the end of Kingolwira village

CHILUNGA CULTURAL TOURISM PROGRAM

Chilunga Cultural Tourism (☎ 0754

477582, 023-261 3323; www.chilunga.or.tz; Rwegasore Rd) Organises day and overnight excursions around Morogoro, including village visits, hikes and Mikumi NP safaris. Its programs are a good introduction to local life. Prices run from US\$25 per person per day for short excursions up to about US\$75 per person per day for multi-day hikes, including transport, guide, and village and forest fees.