

AFRICA

Travel Magazine.

**World Edition
Preview of
Pemba Island
Manta Resort
Feature**

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THE SWAHILI COAST



DISCOVER A SWAHILI SHANGRI-LA ON PEMBA ISLAND.



From Seashore to Safari

By Jerry W. Bird, Editor

Not long ago, thanks to Nicola Colangelo and the Coastal Aviation team in Dar es Salaam, we discovered that East Africa's Swahili Coast is the ideal place for a laid back vacation. In these enchanted islands that have won the raves of our readers and travel industry colleagues from near and far, we learned the true meaning of the Swahili expression 'Pole-Pole,' which we readily adopted as our motto. Together, those catchy words and a local song by the same name, are sure to invoke a feeling of euphoria, Swahili style. Our first-ever Seashore to Safari experience was a rare chance to enjoy the best of two worlds - the many delights of an Indian Ocean Swahili Shangri-la and a world class safari at camps in Selous and Ruaha. Details on these and all Tanzania National Parks can be seen in the "Tanapa" section of this Best of Africa World Edition. Coastal Aviation services the three main islands of the Zanzibar Archipelago - Pemba Island in the North, near the Kenya border - Zanzibar (Unguja) in the middle - and Mafia, Island, southernmost of the chain.

The big three, and dozens of smaller islands off their shores provide an opportunity to explore by canoe, sailing boat, ferry, motor launch or the classic 'dhow,' which has plied these warm, idyllic waters for many centuries.

History and Culture

The dhow is a symbol of the local culture. This traditional Arab sailing vessel has one or more lateen sails, and is seen along the coasts of the Arabian Peninsula, Pakistan, India, and here in East Africa. Some dhows accommodate as many as 30 persons. They are a reminder that while the western world slumbered through the Middle Ages, here on the Indian Ocean coast, trade, commerce and civilization thrived. It became the meeting place for cultures from China, the Indian subcontinent, Persia and Arabia, each adding to the mosaic and fabric of the rich Swahili tapestry. A common sight along the Swahili Coast of East Africa, the dhow is honored by the Festival of Dhow Countries in June and July. (<http://www.ziff.or.tz/>)

Gem of the Indian Ocean

Pemba is a jewel from a sparkling necklace of large and small islands in the famous archipelago, 50 km north of Zanzibar. Most fertile of the 'Spice Island' group, Pemba has been the prime source of most of Zanzibar's famed clove production, in addition to other cash crops. Pemba is also the East African hub of traditional medicine,



where folks from as far away as Central Africa come for healing or to learn the ancient arts. A blessing for today's visitor is the fact that Pemba was closed to all foreigners until the 1980s. That's why the beach areas are so pristine and uncrowded. Pemba is geologically older than Zanzibar Island and was settled earlier than its better known counterpart.

Sport and Adventure in the Deep

The sport of Bull Fighting was introduced by the Portuguese, first of the Europeans to become involved in this area. This spectacular activity can be seen in different villages. Of special note, Pemba is earning worldwide notice for its outstanding dive sites, with vertiginous drop-offs, untouched



A PARADISE IN THE EXOTIC ZANZIBAR ARCHIPELAGO

coral and a great variety and abundance of marine life. Chake-Chake, the mid-island capital of Pemba is perched on a hill, with a view of the bay area and the Misali Island, where the tides determine when a dhow can enter the harbor. To its west, on the Ras



Mkumbuu Peninsula, visitors will discover some of the oldest, best preserved ruins in the archipelago. Why is Pemba famous for its rich fishing grounds? Here, between the island and mainland is the deep 20 miles wide Pemba Channel, known as one of the

most profitable locations for game fishing on the East Africa coast. With a booming tourism industry in Zanzibar and the coast of Mainland Tanzania, many adventure travelers from the USA, UK and beyond, have been attracted to the more pristine, less-crowded Pemba Island. The catalyst is 'dive tourists' who relish the uncrowded and unspoiled reefs the island offers to experienced divers.

Visitors enjoy Pemba's Swahili culture, beach activities, snorkeling, deep-sea fishing, exploratory tours, cruises and world class diving at some of the finest reefs or the deep waters of the Pemba Channel. Where there's great fishing, there's also fabulous seafood - so be prepared to enjoy.

New World Class Project

Over a decade ago Monsoon Empires, The Management company, laid the foundations on northern Pemba Island to create its first land based accommodation.

They knew that their discriminating clients would enjoy the bliss of being alone on an

island and exploring undiscovered reefs, and empty beaches. As they said at the time, "We built simple structures, called them tented rooms, and used a small boat to get around. How simple it was to please people then. Then ambition and competition set in. We did whatever we could to improve our level of accommodation, services and excursions. We moved on to wooden chalets, coral rooms, yachts. A bigger lounge. A bigger verandah. A pool. But still no end in sight." Early this year the resort was acquired by Resort Investor, and the resort is now run by the management company Monsoon Empires. The new owners have developed the first underwater resort, based on a successful concept from Sweden, planned to launch on Pemba during 2009.





THE MANTA RESORT, PEMBA ISLAND, ZANZIBAR



Recent Developments

During the period of April to August, the Manta Resort has gone through a major facelift, with new guest rooms and public areas. At the heart of the resort you will find Oxygene Pemba, a PADI 5 star Dive Center, offering a combination of diving, snorkelling, fishing and water sports.

- In the front there will now be six Seafront Villas, dedicated to comfort and romance. The honeymoon market as well as guests that demand elevated levels of service is a growing segment of business.
- Air conditioned, large bathrooms, private sea side verandahs - all the trimmings.
- The brand new Village are ten cottages nicely set in the gardens with wooden floors, mosquito net covered king size beds, lamu screen floored en-suite bath rooms, and a makuti-thatched verandah – all with views overlooking the Pemba channel.
- The sea side Kipepeo Spa offers all customers soothing massage treatments that have become an expected service in boutique lodges.

- A watersports centre, a swimming pool, and a beach lounge will form the hub of the clients' social life during the day.
- Dining facilities have been increased, as well as the main bar and lounge relaxing area, overlooking the amazing views of the Pemba channel. The Manta Resort has the potential to become the most unique ocean product in the world.

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Tanzania *The Land of Kilimanjaro and Zanzibar*

It is a land of superlatives and contrasts, something for everyone: from the majestic Mount Kilimanjaro to the fabled Islands of Zanzibar. The largest and most diverse wildlife concentrations on Earth including the untouched Serengeti plains, Ngorongoro Crater, Katavi and the mighty Selous Game Reserve. The Legacy of the ancient Swahili civilizations, such as Kilwa Ruins once a city of

the Arabian Nights. Wonderful places for swimming, snorkeling, scuba diving, fishing off thousands of kilometers of Indian Ocean coastline and around the Africa's Great Lakes. And then there is Tanzania's greatest asset: its friendly people and cuisines. The country is among the world's leaders in Cultural tourism. This indeed is AUTHENTIC AFRICA.



TANZANIA

The Land of Kilimanjaro and Zanzibar

