

Fairmont Zanzibar is pleased to offer the following tours and excursions:

Sultan Panorama Tour with Lunch at Hakuna Matata / Mtoni Marine

The Sultan Panorama Tours is ideal for visitors with little time who want to experience a bit of everything Zanzibar has to offer.

It's a full day excursion, starting in Stone Town, covering the history of the sultans, slave trade and invasions that shaped Zanzibar's history. Your guide will give you a broad overview of the island's history and current affairs and you'll pass by many historic sites and visit the Slave Market. A stop at the vibrant Darajani Market helps you to experience city life, with all the hustle and bustle, smells and noise.

You'll be driven to a spice farm, and given the opportunity to taste seasonal spices and fruits as your guide describes their properties and uses. Throughout the tour, you can sample local delicacies and local staple foods. Your next stop is at a local village for a slice of Zanzibari culture and life. Cooking, weaving, building houses and playing with the children, you'll have chance to see what life is like for Zanzibaris.

An informative and action packed day, this tour gives a taste of everything found in all other Zanzibar excursions and is strongly recommended as a first excursion. You'll finish the excursion with a comprehensive view of Zanzibari life and you'll be able to plan future excursion based on what you enjoyed the most, choosing the most relevant tour from our standard excursions.

Zanzibar Spice Tour (3hours)

In days past, Zanzibar was known as a spice island, exporting cloves, vanilla, nutmeg and cardamom across the world. The spices were brought over from Asia and South America and flourished in the tropical climes. Nowadays the plantations are a tribute to the island's past, swapping spices for tourism, combining both in a spice tour, one of the most popular excursions on the island.

Walk through the spice farm with your guide. Touch, smell and taste different spices and tropical fruits. Try to guess which is which, from the crushed leaves, the fruit, shoots and vines and creepers crawling up the trees. Learn about their properties, their origins and their use as medicines and in food and drink.

A visit to a spice farm village gives you an insight into local life and the opportunity to try some Swahili dishes, taste the fruits in season and try some spiced tea. An optional lunch is available at Hakuna Matata Beach Lodge, a special menu, prepared with the best of the seasonal fruit and spices introduced to you during the tour.

Depending on the season you are visiting, you can find anything from vanilla, cardamom, cinnamon, nutmeg, turmeric, lemon grass, cloves, ylang ylang, cumin, garlic, ginger, coriander, pepper, allspice, tamarind, chilli, oregano and more!

Fruits can include banana, pineapple, jack fruit, custard fruit, oranges, star fruit, tangerine, passion fruit, mango, avocado, pear, papaya, grape fruit and many others.

Stone Town, Walking City Tour (3hours)

Follow the trail of the sultans, slaves and explorers in the winding streets of Stone Town. Your guide will tell you about the events that shaped Zanzibar, leading you through the buildings where it all happened, such as the former Slave Market and Anglican Cathedral, the House of Wonders and the Sultans' Palace Museum, the Old Arab Fort and Dispensary.

While tracing the steps of the past, the walking tour provides you with a window into modern life in Stone Town. Explore the markets, seafood and fish piled in the fish market, fresh loaves of bread in wicker baskets and the neat stacks of fruit and vegetables as traders sell their wares from their stalls. Children play in the streets in the residential areas, mamas sit out and gossip while the men play board games. An optional stop at The Zanzibar Coffee House provides a rest from the heat and hustle and bustle. A selection of drinks, local sweets & seasonal fruits act as the perfect pick me up, for you to continue your tour.

The City Tour is very flexible and can be adapted suit your interest and time frame, if you're a shopaholic, culture vulture or history buff. If you want to hunt for antiques and souvenir shop, follow David Livingstone's time in Zanzibar and walk the path of the slave trade, your guide can recommend and develop routes and itineraries that will optimise your time and get the most out of your trip.

Prison Island (Boat Trip)

Prison Island gets its name from the prison built to condemn Zanzibari citizens to the isolation of the island, looking out at the coast. Previously owned by an Arab to house his rebellious slaves, the prison was never used, and the island is now home to a tortoise sanctuary, prison ruins and hotel.

Prison Island is 20 minutes away from Stone Town by boat and has spectacular coral reefs to enjoy while snorkelling. Giant tortoises shuffle through the trees, with the patience that old age brings you. Originally thought to be from the Comoros Islands and Seychelles, some of these tortoises are said to be over 100 years old. Stately and lumbering, the tortoises have even been known to take children on a ride.

Lunch is available on the island and then you're left to your own devices. If you're feeling active, you can explore one of the hiking trails, snorkel in the crystal clear waters in search of colourful tropical fish darting through the reef or soak up some sun on the powder white beach. Thatched bandas are dotted along the waterfront, available for hire if you wish to stay for the night.

The Prison Island excursion is a great companion to a morning city tour. After an eventful morning of walking through the busy streets of Zanzibar, you can enjoy this slow and relaxing island excursion.

Jozani Forest Tour (Half day)

In the south of the island, Jozani Forest is a wonder and delight, with tales of Zanzibar leopards, medicinal cures and stunning scenery. Currently under consideration to become Zanzibar's second World Heritage Site, the Jozani-Chkwa Bay area is a hotspot of biodiversity. The forest is home to a number of endemic species, including the Zanzibar Red Colobus Monkey.

Your park ranger will take you on a nature trail, lined with eucalyptus and mahogany trees and explain the medicinal properties of various plants and tell you about the animals, birds and reptiles that make their home in the various habitats of this tropical rainforest.

Troops of Zanzibar Red Colobus monkeys can be found scrambling from branch to branch, in search of food. The monkeys have become acclimatised to people and allow you to get close to them to take photographs as they eat, play and jumping from the treetops.

The mangrove boardwalk takes you above the swamp, where, depending on the tide, you can see tropical fish flitting between the mangrove roots and crabs scuttling across the mud. Mangroves play an important role in environmental conservation and as a resource for villagers and community life. Your ranger will explain the different species found in the swamp and their uses.

North Coast Tour with Lunch (Full day)

The north coast is the dhow building capital of Zanzibar. Your drive to Nungwi will take you past the fish markets, where you can see freshly caught seafood being auctioned. There's a stop at the ruins of an old Portuguese settlement, where your guide will explain the history of the ruins and the Portuguese conquest of Zanzibar, dating back to 1497.

A stop at the blacksmith is fascinating. Tools are still made in the traditional way for constructing dhows. At the construction site, dhows are built in the same way they have for centuries, skilled craftsmen bending wood to create the dhows. Visitors may be invited to try their hand at this unique craft.

A visit to the Nungwi turtle sanctuary and aquarium follows, where ailing turtles are nursed back to health and released into the ocean. A guided tour of Nungwi village, where mamas wrapped in kangas cook over firewood and smiling kids play. Walk down to the beach where you can enjoy an optional lunch at one of Nungwi's popular restaurants and enjoy some free time sunbathing, swimming and snorkelling.

The northern tip of Zanzibar offers some of the most beautiful sunsets in the world. The sky turns pink and gold as the sun sinks over the Indian Ocean. Sundowners and a late transfer back to your hotel can be arranged if you wish to stay to enjoy the sunset.

South Coast, Kizimkazi Boat Trip with lunch (Full day)

Take a one hour drive from Stone Town to Kizimkazi, on Zanzibar's southcoast for a day of dolphin spotting. Kizimkazi is home to large numbers of bottle-nosed and spinner dolphins, beautiful coral reefs and tropical fish.

On arrival, you're given a short safety briefing and the dos and don'ts when faced with these wild animals. Then, you board a traditional ocean going dhow and set sail on the Indian Ocean in search of dolphins.

You can get as close as 10 to 20 metres away from the dolphins. Sleek and grey, they jack-knife through the water, sometimes showing off with jumps and twists. In the past, some tourists have been lucky enough to swim and snorkel with these magical animals. However, the dolphins aren't tame, and can be shy and elusive. Although visitors see dolphins on the majority of outings, there are no guarantees. Whether you're fortunate enough to see dolphins or not, you can enjoy two hours sailing and taking in the sights of the ocean. There's superb snorkelling in the pristine coral reef and swimming in the clear, warm water of the Indian Ocean.

You'll return to the beach for lunch, where you can swim in the shallower waters and talk to the crew, who can tell you sea stories about the one that got away.

Safari Blue with lunch (Full day)

A full day excursion on a traditional sailing dhows, Safari Blue starts from Fumba, the perfect starting point to explore Menai Bay, an official Conservation Area. Home to beautiful uninhabited islands, the area is stunning, frequented by humpback and bottlenose dolphins.

On arrival at Fumba, clients are given a briefing on Safari Blue and then you board your dhow and you're off to explore the bay. Dolphins are sighted on approximately 90% of trips. Anchor is dropped at the Kwale sandbank, where sunshades are set up and guests have the chance to go snorkelling in the coral reefs, helped by the guides.

After snorkelling, you'll be offered refreshments to whet your appetite before heading to Kwale Island, for lunch under the tamarind trees. Drinks are served throughout the day and lunch is a buffet of grilled fish, lobster, calamari, chicken and rice, with a tasting of tropical fruits.

After lunch, you can sunbathe, snooze or visit the beautiful mangrove lagoon. Depending on the tide, you may be able to take a swim in the lagoon. For the adventurous, join the crew to sail in an "ngalawa", a local outrigger canoe but be careful not to tip the boat! Then it's back to Fumba for around 5:30pm.