



Welcome to Tanzania

"The beach perfectly matched my vision of paradise: fine white sand and vivid blue sea set against a lush palm forest. I never want to leave this magical place!"

Tanzania has long been a favourite destination of scientists and anthropologists seeking answers to some of life's most intriguing questions in its magnificent natural phenomena such as the Olduvai Gorge, home to one of the earliest human skeletons ever discovered; the spectacular Mount Kilimanjaro, Africa's highest mountain; and the hugely biodiverse Eastern Arc Mountains. Tanzania's marine environment is equally spectacular and holds vast coral reefs and maze like mangrove forests, which are host to sea turtles, manta rays, dugongs, dolphins, sharks, hundreds of species of reef fish and the occasional passing humpback whale!

Know your History

Pre-History

Tanzania's famous Olduvai Gorge has provided rich evidence of the world's pre history, including fossil remains of some of man's earliest ancestors.

Little is known of the history of Tanzania's interior during the early centuries. The area is believed to have been inhabited originally by ethnic groups using a click tongue language similar to that of southern Africa's Bushmen and Hottentots. Some of these early tribes still exist but most were gradually displaced by Bantu farmers migrating from the west and south and by Nilotes and related northern peoples. Some of these groups had well organised societies and controlled extensive areas by the time the Arab traders, European explorers and missionaries penetrated the interior in the first half of the 19th century.

15th Century – 20th Century

The legendary Portuguese explorer Vasco da Gama explored the East African coast in 1498 on his voyage to India and by 1506 the Portuguese had claimed control over the entire coast. This control, however, was nominal, because the Portuguese did not colonise the area or explore the interior.

David Livingstone, the Scottish missionary explorer who crusaded against the slave trade, established his last mission at Ujiji here, where he was "found" by Henry Morton Stanley, an American journalist explorer who had been commissioned by the New York Herald to locate him.

German colonial interests were first advanced in 1884. Karl Peters, who formed the Society for German Colonisation, concluded a series of treaties by which tribal chiefs in the interior accepted

German "protection". Prince Otto von Bismarck's government backed Peters in the subsequent establishment of the German East Africa Company.

While the German colonial administration brought cash crops, railways and roads to Tanganyika, as it was then called, European rule also provoked African resistance. Between 1891 and 1894 the Hehe, led by Chief Mkwawa, resisted German expansion but were eventually defeated. After a period of guerrilla warfare Mkwawa himself was cornered and committed suicide in 1898.

The period of British rule began with the occupation of the island of Mafia by the Royal Navy in 1914. This met with German military resistance but by 1920 the League of Nations granted the mandate to administrate the former German colony of German East Africa except Rwanda and Burundi to the United Kingdom. Thereafter, the colony was renamed Tanganyika Territory.

Foreign rule continued for half a century until the first seeds of independence were sown in 1954 when Julius Nyerere, a school teacher who was then one of only two Tanganyikans educated abroad to university level, organised a political party, the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU). In May 1961 Tanganyika became autonomous and Nyerere became prime minister under a new constitution, with full independence being achieved on 9th December 1961. Mr. Nyerere was elected president when Tanganyika became a republic within the Commonwealth a year after independence.

1961 – Present

When in power Nyerere implemented a socialist economic programme which was announced in the Arusha Declaration, established close ties with China and also introduced a policy of collectivisation in the country's agricultural system known as ujamaa or "familyhood". Although some of his policies can be characterised as socialist Nyerere was first and foremost an African and secondly a socialist. Nyerere had tremendous faith in rural African people and their traditional values and ways of life. He believed that life should be structured around the ujamaa or extended family found in traditional Africa.

After his presidency Nyerere remained the chairman of the Revolutionary State Party (CCM) until 1990, when Ali Hassan Mwinyi took over. Nyerere remained vocal about the extent of corruption amongst officials during the Ali Hassan Mwinyi administration. He also blocked Jakaya Kikwete's nomination for the presidency, citing that he was too young to run a country. Nyerere was instrumental in getting Benjamin Mkapa, who had been Minister of Foreign Affairs for a time during Nyerere's administration, elected president. Since 2006 Kikwete has been in power, despite the party's remaining deeply influenced by Nyerere.

Money Talks

The Tanzanian economy has undergone significant measures to liberalise itself along market lines and to encourage both foreign and domestic investment. In 1986 the government began an adjustment programme to dismantle socialist economic controls and try to advance a more active participation of the private sector. This included a package of policies to reduce the budget deficit and improve monetary control, substantially depreciate the overvalued exchange rate, liberalise the trade regime, remove the majority of price controls, ease restrictions on the marketing of food crops, free interest rates and initiate a restructuring of the financial sector.

Between 1998 and 2007 the current GDP per capita grew by more than 40%. In response to the global financial crisis in 2009, the International Monetary Fund approved an exogenous shock facility to help the country cope with the downturn. Tanzania has also embarked on a major restructuring of state owned enterprises, divesting itself of 335 out of around 425 para statal entities. Real economic

growth has averaged around 4%, better than the previous 20 years but still not enough to improve the lives of the majority of the population.

Tanzania's economy remains predominantly donor dependent, with an external debt of \$7.9 billion the servicing of which takes about 40% of all government expenditure. Tanzania has qualified for debt relief under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries initiative and has had over \$6 billion of debt cancelled under the Paris Club VII Agreement.

Exports

The Tanzanian economy is heavily dependent on agriculture, which provides more than 25% of GDP, 85% of exports and employs around 80% of the country's workforce. However, because of topography and climatic conditions only 4% of the land area is available to cultivated crops. The vast majority of export earnings come from crops such as coffee, tea, cotton, cashews, sisal, cloves and pyrethrum. Poor pricing and unreliable cash flow to farmers continue to cramp the agricultural sector, with large amounts of produce never reaching the market.

Tanzania's industrial sector is one of the smallest in Africa, representing only around 10% of GDP. Persistent power shortages caused by low rainfall in the hydroelectric dam catchment area is hitting the country hard – a result of years of neglect and bad management from the state controlled electric company, which was sold to the private sector in 2003. The main industrial activities include the production of raw materials, importing substitutes and processing agricultural products. Factories are deprived of much needed spare parts and have had to reduce capacity to less than 30% because of foreign exchange shortages and mismanagement.

Money

There are many places to change money in Dar es Salaam and there is the opportunity to change all major currencies into Tanzanian shillings (TZS) on arrival. The sterling exchange rate is particularly good value currently, though Scottish sterling is not accepted in Tanzania. It is best to avoid small notes when using US dollars, as they are exchanged at unfavourable rates. It has become difficult to change traveller's cheques in Tanzania so ensure that you bring your printed receipt as without this they cannot be changed. Traveller's cheques cannot currently be changed at the airport.

Typical prices include £1 for a beer, 25p for a soda and less for a bottle of water. Dar es Salaam has several ATMs which accept Visa, Mastercard and Maestro and dispense Tanzanian shillings and many companies catering for tourists also accept payment in US dollars. Be aware that there may not be ATMs elsewhere in the country so it's best to exchange at the airport on arrival.

Get Culture Savvy

Despite increasing foreign contact Tanzania has persistently maintained its traditional cultural heritage. Ancient rituals and customs are still observed by many tribes and daily life largely follows traditional practices. Life's most important events – birth, puberty, marriage, and death – are all celebrated through age old traditional ceremonies. In marriage, for example, the custom of giving a dowry is still respected and the aspiring groom still acquires his bride by giving cows, goats, local brew, hoes or machetes to his delighted father in law.

Family

In Tanzania as in many other African countries the family is an extended one, including cousins, aunts, uncles, sisters, brothers and even in laws, with the family clan remaining a strong entity in most tribes. Family disputes are resolved by a panel made up of clan members and all events, be they happy or sad, are shared by the whole clan.

Folklore

Tanzania has a very rich, diverse and sophisticated folklore. Each ethnic group has a store of myths, legends, folk tales, riddles, proverbs and sayings that embody culture and tradition and are an important element in Tanzanian cultural heritage.

Anansi

The "spider god" is a popular figure in Ashanti folklore who typifies the wily character, much loved by Tanzanians, who uses cunning to protect himself against much larger and more powerful foes. Other examples of this folklore legend are Àjàpá, a tortoise in the Yoruba folklore of Nigeria and Sungura, a hare found in central and east African folklore.

Ngomas

Ngomas are traditional dances that depict day to day activities, customary traditions, or even a particular traditional event or occasion and these colourful dances are performed with great passion. The Kiswahili word "ngoma" means literally "great drum", which is the main instrument used in any musical accompaniment to the dances.

Tribal traditions

While changes are slowly affecting the lives of many Tanzanians, there are still some tribes who have remained untouched by modern life. The Wa-Tindiga tribe even now exist mainly on roots and from hunting and their homes are still the ancient underground shelters that they have always used. Another tribe, The Wa-Barbaig, are exclusively pastoralists, living off meat and milk. Gradually, however, these tribes are responding to efforts by the government to resettle them in modern villages, although this has drawn some international criticism.

Holidays

1st January New Years Day
12th January Zanzibar Revolution Day
5th February Chama Cha Mapinduzi Day
Varies Eid al-Moulid
Varies (Friday before Easter) Good Friday
Varies (Saturday of Easter) Holy Saturday
Varies (Sunday of Easter) Easter Sunday
Varies (Monday after Easter) Easter Monday
26th April Union Day
1st May May Day/Worker's Day
7th July Saba Saba
8th August Farmer's Day
15th August Assumption
Varies Id al-Fitr (End of Ramadan)

14th October Nyerere Day
 29th October Naming Day
 1st November All Saint's Day
 Varies Eid al-Kebir
 9th December Independence Day
 25th December Christmas Day
 26th December Boxing Day

Learn the Lingo

English, Kiswahili and many indigenous languages are spoken in Tanzania.

Kiswahili is a phonetic language – you say what you see written. The stress of a word in Kiswahili falls on the penultimate syllable.

Greetings are extremely important in Kiswahili. It is very rude to go straight into a conversation. Sometimes you can take 5 minutes just to greet each other.

ENGLISH	KISWAHILI	ENGLISH	KISWAHILI
Greetings		Numbers	
Hello!	Jambo!	1	moja
How are you?	Habari?	2	mbili
Fine / Okay	Sawa sawa	3	tatu
Pleased to meet you	Nafurahi kukuona / Nimefurahi kukutana nawe	4	nne
Good morning	Habari ya asubuhi	5	tano
Good afternoon	Habari ya mchana	6	sita
Good evening	Habari ya jioni	7	saba
Goodnight	Usiku mwema / Lala salama (sleep well)	8	nane
Goodbye	Kwaheri	9	tisa
10	kumi		
About Yourself		20	ishirini
What's your name?	Jina lako ni nani?	50	hamsini
My name is...	Jina langu ni...	100	mia (moja)
Where are you from?	Unatoka wapi?	1000	elfu (moja)
I am from...	Natoka...	1 million	milioni (moja)
I don't understand	Sielewi		
Do you speak English?	Unazungumza kiingereza?		
Please speak more slowly	Tafadhali sema polepole		
How do you say... in Swahili?	Unasemaje ... kwa Kiswahili?		
General Phrases		Animals	

How much is this?	Hii ni bei gani?	Whale shark	Papa shillingi
Excuse me (to get past)	Samahani nipishe	Lion	Simba
Excuse me (to get attention or say sorry)	Samahani	Elephant	Tembo
Yes	Ndiyo	Buffalo	Nyati
No	Hapana	Rhino	Kifaro
(very) Good	Mzuri (sana)	Leopard	Chui
Where	Wapi	Giraffe	Twiga
Please	Tafadali	Hippo	Kiboko
Thank you (very much)	Asante (sana)	Antelope	Swala
Water	Maji	Bird	Ndegi

Lay of the Land

Tanzania consists of a large mainland area in East Africa and three main islands – Pemba, Zanzibar and Mafia. The country is roughly the same size as France. Uganda and Kenya lie to the north, the Indian Ocean to the east, Mozambique, Malawi and Zambia to the south and the Democratic Republic of Congo (formerly Zaire), Burundi and Rwanda to the west.

Tanzania has a low, flat coastline with tropical vegetation. Inland there is a highland plateau where the landscape ranges from desert to semi arid savannah. In the northeast is a mountainous region consisting of the Pare Mountains, the Usambaras, Mount Meru (4,556 m) and Mount Kilimanjaro (5,895 m), the highest peak in Africa. The Livingstone and Poroto Mountains rise in the south.

Lakes

Three major lakes form a part of Tanzania's boundaries. Lake Victoria is one of the primary headwaters of the Nile and is the largest lake in Africa. It lies west of the Serengeti on the border with Uganda and Kenya. To the southwest of Lake Victoria is the deepest freshwater lake in the world, Lake Tanganyika, which separates Tanzania from Congo. In the southern part of the country lies Lake Nyasa, also called Lake Malawi, which is the third largest lake in Africa. The famous Serengeti National Park and the Ngorongoro conservation area lie between Kilimanjaro and Lake Victoria.

What's the Weather like?

The coastal regions are usually hot and humid, with the mountainous central regions having much cooler temperatures. The top of Mount Kilimanjaro is covered with snow all year. The weather on Zanzibar and the other islands is tropical, but sea breezes keep the islands from becoming too hot. The northern game reserves are a little cooler. There are two rainy seasons: from November to early January and from March to May. The average daytime temperature from June to September is 23°C and from December to March it's 27°C.

Biodiversity

Tanzania is still covered extensively by forest – mostly savannah woodland and montane forest and scattered patches of lowland forest. Much of this forest is high in biodiversity and endemism especially in the southern highlands. But these forests are increasingly threatened by the rapidly expanding population and fuel wood collection as well as commercial felling of timber and expanding agriculture.

In 2002 the government passed the Forest Act, banning the exportation of logs from July 2004. But the regulations were poorly enforced and illegal logging continued without pause, with one estimate claiming that the country was losing 910 km² to illegal logging each year. Between 1999 and 2006 the country planted 100 million trees. In early 2006 the government reinforced the export ban on logs and sandalwood in an effort to halt the deforestation. Between 1990 and 2005 forest cover fell by 15% and the deforestation rates have increased since 2000 despite 40% of the country being preserved in parks.

Flora

Of the 10,000 species of flora to be found in Tanzania the majority are typical savannah species. However, certain regions yield certain species; hardwood and softwood trees are abundant where rainfall is highest and dry bushes and thickets where it is less. In the highlands the grassy expanses are dotted with flowering plants and trees including the ever-present baobab and the coastal regions are blanketed by mangroves.

Fauna

Tanzania has recently reached headlines with the news that a new species of monkey has been found and that the extinction of a small yellow toad is imminent. With 316 species of mammals, 1,056 birds, 335 types of reptiles, 116 amphibians, and 331 species of fish Tanzania boasts a huge range of both endemic and migratory species. The famous Serengeti National Park and the Ngorongoro conservation area lie between Kilimanjaro and Lake Victoria. They contain the largest concentration of migratory game animals in the world, including elephants, buffaloes, lions and rhinos. Each year these animals migrate to Kenya between June and September. Lake Tanganyika forms one of the most biologically rich aquatic habitats in the world. Lake Natron, on the northern border, is world renowned for its extraordinary population of flamingos – it is the only known breeding ground for the lesser flamingo – and is host to antelope species such as gerenuk, lesser kudu and oryx.

Good Books

Guidebooks

- Footprint East Africa Handbook 2000. M. Hodd, 1999
- Lonely Planet: Tanzania. M. Fitzpatrick, 2003
- Lonely Planet: East Africa. M. Fitzpatrick et al., 2003
- Lonely Planet Swahili Phrase Book. M. Benjamin et al., 1998

Wildlife

- Collins pocket guide to the coral reef fishes of the Indo-Pacific and Caribbean. E. Lieske & R.

Myers. ISBN 9780007111114 (1996)

- The ecology of fishes on coral reefs. P. Sale. ISBN 9780126151817 (2002)
- The Kingdon Field Guide to Africa Mammals. J. Kingdon. ISBN 9780713665130 (2003)
- A field guide to the tracks and signs of Southern and East African wildlife. C. Stuart & T. Stuart. ISBN 9781868725588 (1999)
- Collins Illustrated checklist: Birds of Eastern Africa. P. Van Perlo. ISBN 9780002199377 (1995)
- Measuring and monitoring biological diversity. Standard methods for mammals. D.E. Wilson. ISBN 9781560986379 (1996)

Fiction/Travel Writing

- Ice Cream War. William Boyd. ISBN 9780140065718 (1999)
- Masai Dreaming. Justin Cartwright. ISBN 9780340768365 (2000)
- Out of Africa. Karen Blixen. ISBN 9780140282610 (1999)
- The Shadow of Kilimanjaro: on foot across East Africa. Rick Ridgeway. ISBN 9780747585756 (1999)

Teaching Guides

- Essential Grammar in Use with Answers: A Self-study Reference and Practice Book for Elementary Students of English 2nd Edition. Raymond Murphy. Cambridge University Press, 2002. ISBN 9780521529327
- Essential Grammar in Use with Answers: A Self-study Reference and Practice Book for Intermediate Students of English 3rd Edition. Raymond Murphy. Cambridge University Press, 2004. ISBN 9780521532891
- Lessons from Nothing: Activities for Language Teaching with Limited Time and Resources (Cambridge Handbooks for Language Teachers). Bruce Marsland. Cambridge University Press, 1998. ISBN 9780521627658
- Games for Children (Resource Books for Teachers). Gordon Lewis & Gunther Benson. Oxford University Press, 1999. ISBN 9780194372244
- Techniques and Principles in Language Teaching 2nd Edition. Diane Larsen-Freeman. Oxford University Press, 2000. ISBN 9780194355742

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INTO THE WILD
THE GAP YEAR BLOG FROM
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