

Northeastern Tanzania



For at least 2000 years, northeastern Tanzania has been attracting visitors. In the 1st century AD, the author of the mariners' chronicle *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea* mentions the existence of the trading outpost of Rhapta, which is thought to have possibly been somewhere around present-day Pangani. Several centuries later, a string of settlements sprang up along the coast with links to ports in Arabia and the Orient. Today, this long history, plus easy access and lack of crowds, make the northeast's long, tropical, ruin-studded coastline and its lush, mountainous inland areas an appealing region to explore.

Along the coast, visit the medieval, moss-covered ruins at Kaole and Tongoni, step back to the days of Livingstone in Bagamoyo, relax on long stretches of palm-fringed sand around Pangani, or enjoy beach and bush at Saadani, Tanzania's only seaside national park. Inland, hike along shaded forest footpaths around Lushoto while following the cycle of bustling, colourful market days of the local Sambiaa people, head to Same and learn about the intriguing burial rituals of the neighbouring Pare, or experience the wild East African bush from the comfort of a wonderful upmarket camp in the seldom-visited Mkomazi Game Reserve.

Most of the region is within an easy half-day's drive or bus ride from both Dar es Salaam and Arusha, and there are good connections between many places in the region and Zanzibar. Main roads are in good to reasonable condition, there's a reasonably wide range of accommodation, and the local transport network reaches many areas of interest.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Savouring sun and safari at **Saadani National Park** (p158), Tanzania's only coastal national park
- Lazing in a hammock on the beaches around **Pangani** (p160)
- Meandering along winding footpaths in the cool and scenic **Usambara Mountains** (p168)
- Stepping back into history in the former colonial capital of **Bagamoyo** (p154)
- Getting a true bush experience from the comfort of a wonderful upmarket camp in **Mkomazi Game Reserve** (p179)



National Parks & Reserves

The northeast is home to Saadani National Park (p158), one of Tanzania's newest national parks and the only one on the coast. Northwest of here, on the Kenya border, is the seldom-visited Mkomazi Game Reserve (p179), soon to be gazetted as a national park and known for its pioneering black rhino conservation project.

Getting There & Around

There are commercial flights to Tanga and, sometimes, to Saadani, and several airstrips for charter flights around Pangani. Otherwise, you'll need to rely on the road network. The major routes are the tarmac roads connecting Dar es Salaam with Tanga and with Arusha. Secondary routes are mostly unpaved but in reasonable condition, except for along the coast, where things are still rough in spots (4WD required). There's no ferry over the Wami River, so it's not yet possible to drive from Dar es Salaam up the coast to Tanga.

Large buses connect towns along the main highways; elsewhere you'll need to rely primarily on *dalla-dallas* (minibuses).

BAGAMOYO

☎ 023

Strolling through Bagamoyo's narrow unpaved streets or sitting at the port watching dhows load up takes you back in time to the early and mid-19th century when the town was one of the most important settlements along the East African coast and the terminus of the trade caravan route linking Lake Tanganyika with the sea. Slaves, ivory, salt and copra were unloaded before being shipped to Zanzibar and elsewhere, and many European explorers, including Richard Burton, Henry Morton Stanley and David Livingstone, began and ended their trips here. In 1868, French missionaries established Freedom Village at Bagamoyo as a shelter for ransomed slaves, and for the remainder of the century the town served as an important way station for missionaries travelling from Zanzibar to the country's interior.

From 1887 to 1891, Bagamoyo was the capital of German East Africa, and in 1888 it was at the centre of the Abushiri revolt (p161), the first major uprising against the colonial government. In 1891 the capital was transferred to Dar es Salaam, sending Bagamoyo into a slow decline from which it has yet to

recover. Bagamoyo's unhurried pace, long history and sleepy charm make it an agreeable day or weekend excursion from Dar es Salaam. Once you've had enough of historical explorations, head to the southeastern edge of town, where there are some seaweed-strewn beaches with swimming at high tide.

Information

There's a card phone at the Telecom building at the town entrance. The National Microfinance Bank, next door, changes cash. There's **internet access** (per hr Tsh1000; ☎ 8.30am-5pm) at the office of the **Bagamoyo Institute of Tourism** (☎ 0784-869652, 0752-712001; bagamoyo2007@gmail.com; ☎ 8.30am-5pm Mon-Fri, to 2pm Sat), which can also help with guides and excursions, including town tours (per person per hour US\$15), museum tours (per person per half hour US\$5) and visits to the Kaole ruins (per person per hour US\$20).

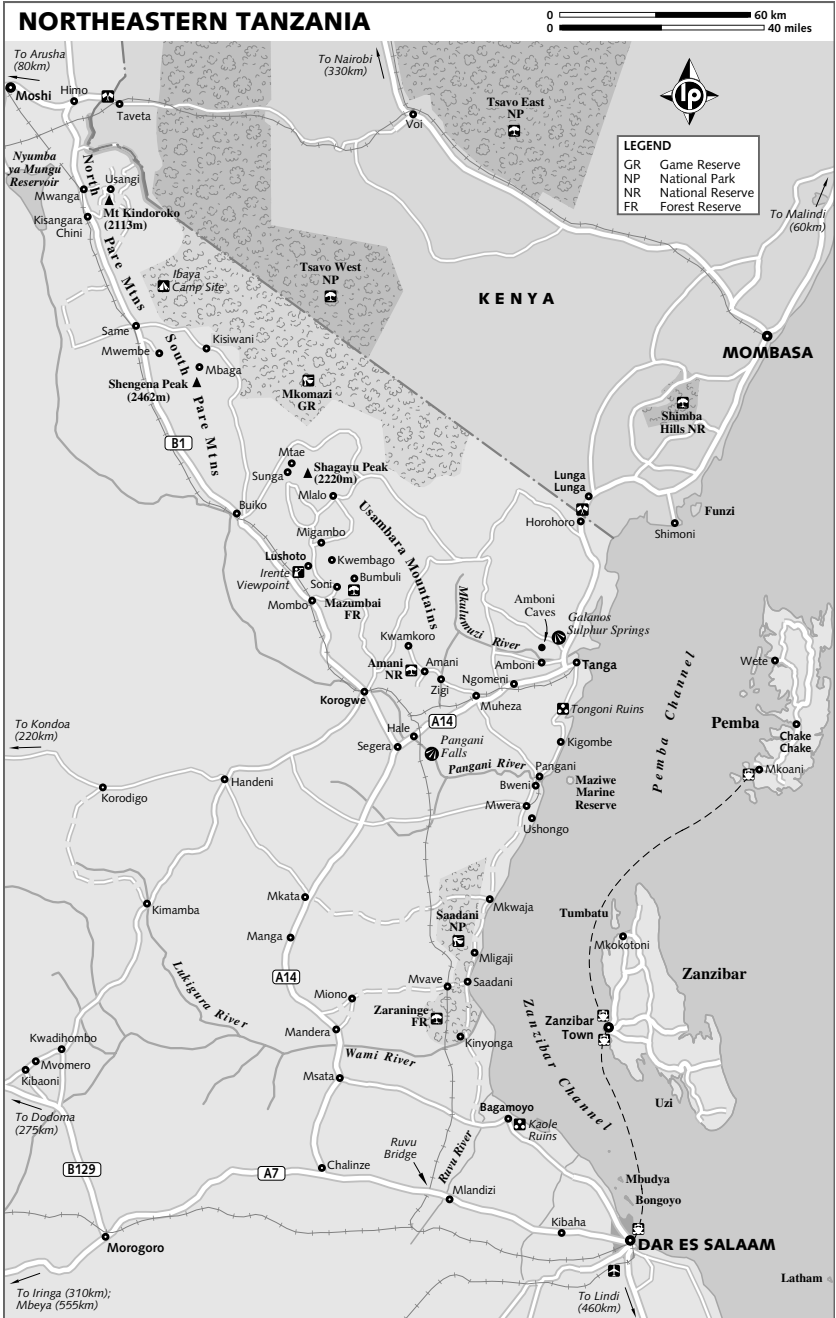
Dangers & Annoyances

Bagamoyo has a small coterie of aggressive touts and, at times, a bit of a hard edge. Take the usual precautions, avoid isolated stretches of beach, especially between town and the Kaole ruins, and don't bring valuables with you to the beach. At night, it's best to walk in a group, both in town and along the road to the beachside hotels, and not to carry valuables.

Sights & Activities

BAGAMOYO TOWN

With its cobwebbed portals, crumbling German-era colonial buildings and small alleyways where the sounds of children playing echo together with the footsteps of history, **central Bagamoyo**, or *Mji Mkongwe* (Stone Town) as it's known locally, is well worth a leisurely stroll. The most interesting area is along Ocean Rd. Here, among other buildings, you'll find the imposing remains of the old **German boma** (colonial-era administrative offices), built in 1897; a **school**, which dates to the late 19th century and was the first multiracial school in what is now Tanzania; and **Liku House**, which served as the German administrative headquarters until the capital was moved to Dar es Salaam. Directly on the beach is the **German Customs House** (1895) and Bagamoyo's **port**, where you can while away the time watching boat builders at work. The port is also home to a busy **fish market** (on the site of the old slave market), which has lively



auctions most afternoons. While you're at the fish market, take a break at one of the make-shift tables by the food vendors and enjoy a peeled orange and some grilled fish or *ugali* (a staple made from maize or cassava flour, or both). Northwest of here are several small streets lined with **carved doors** similar to those found on Zanzibar and elsewhere along the Swahili coast.

HOLY GHOST CATHOLIC MISSION

About 2km north of town and reached via a long mango-shaded avenue is the Holy Ghost Catholic Mission, with its excellent **museum** (☎ 023-244 0010; adult/student Tsh1500/500, camera/video Tsh1000/5000; ☎ 10am-5pm) – one of Bagamoyo's highlights and an essential stop. In the same compound is the chapel where Livingstone's body was laid before being taken to Zanzibar Town en route to Westminster Abbey. The mission itself dates from the 1868 establishment of Freedom Village and is the oldest in Tanzania.

KAOLE RUINS

Just south of Bagamoyo time slides several centuries further into the past at the **Kaole**

ruins (adult/student Tsh1500/500; ☎ 8am-4pm Mon-Fri, to 5pm Sat & Sun). At its centre are the remains of a 13th-century mosque, which is one of the oldest in mainland Tanzania and also one of the oldest in East Africa. It was built in the days when the Sultan of Kilwa held sway over coastal trade, and long before Bagamoyo had assumed any significance. Nearby is a second mosque dating to the 15th century, as well as about 22 graves, many of which go back to the same period. Among the graves are several Shirazi pillar-style tombs reminiscent of those at Tongoni (p167), but in somewhat better condition, and a small museum housing Chinese pottery fragments and other remnants found in the area. Just east of the ruins, past a dense stand of mangroves, is the old harbour, now silted, that was in use during Kaole's heyday.

The most direct way to reach the ruins on foot is by following the beach south for about 5km past Kaole village into the mangrove swamps. Where the beach apparently ends, go a few hundred metres inland and look for the stone pillars. There's an easier, slightly longer route along the road running past Chuo cha Sanaa. Both routes, and espe-

THIS OPEN SORE OF THE WORLD

David Livingstone – one of Africa's most famous explorers and missionaries – was born in 1813 in Blantyre, Scotland, the second of seven children in a poor family. After a childhood spent working at a local cotton gin, followed by medical studies and ordination, he set off for Africa, arriving in Cape Town (South Africa) in 1841. Over the next two decades, Livingstone penetrated into some of the most inaccessible corners of the continent on a series of expeditions – making his way north into the Kalahari, west to present-day Angola and the Atlantic coast, and east along the Zambezi River and to Victoria Falls. In 1866, he set off from the area around Mikindani for what was to be his final expedition, seeking to conclusively solve the riddle of the Nile's source. He made his way as far as Ujiji, where he was famously 'found' by the American journalist Henry Morton Stanley.

After exploring parts of Lake Tanganyika with Stanley and spending time near Tabora, Livingstone set off again on his quest. He died in 1873 in Chitambo, in present-day Zambia. After cutting out and burying his heart, his porters carried his embalmed body in an epic 1500km journey to Bagamoyo and the sea, where it was then taken to England.

During his travels, Livingstone was tormented by the ravages of the slave trade that surrounded him. On his trips back to Europe, he spoke and wrote ceaselessly against it in an effort to expose its horrors and injustices to the rest of the world. These efforts, combined with the attention attracted by his well-publicised funeral, the establishment of Freedom Village in Bagamoyo and reports from other missionaries, marked a point of no return for the slave trade. British attempts to halt the trade were mobilised, and it finally ground to a halt in the early 20th century.

In 1874, Livingstone was buried with full honours in London's Westminster Abbey. Today a plaque memorialises his efforts to end the horrors of the slave trade with what were purportedly his last written words: 'All I can add in my solitude, is, may heaven's rich blessing come down on every one, American, English or Turk, who will help to heal this open sore of the world.'

COMMUNITY TOURISM SPOTLIGHT: BAGAMOYO LIVING ART & HANDICRAFT DESIGN CENTRE

This little **centre** (www.jamani.nl/site/BLACC.html; ☎ 9am-4pm Mon-Sat), just off the main Dar es Salaam road near the entrance to town and the post office, was established with Dutch funding about a decade ago to empower women by training them in business and handicraft design and production, giving them a means to earn their livelihood. Since its founding, several hundred women have been trained, many of whom have gone on to start their own craft-production groups. There's also a small showroom where you can buy crafts and sometimes watch the craftswomen at work.

cially the beach route, have a reputation for muggings, so it's best to walk in a group with a guide and not carry valuables. If you want an English-speaking guide, arrange it in advance at either the tourist information office or with your hotel; the going rate is a steep Tsh30,000 per group, though you can probably bargain this way down.

COLLEGE OF ARTS

About 500m south of Bagamoyo along the road to Dar es Salaam is the **College of Arts** (Chuo cha Sanaa; ☎ 023-244 0149, 023-244 0032; www.college-of-arts.org), a renowned theatre and arts college, home of the national dance company and one of the best measure's of Tanzania's artistic pulse. When school is in session there are occasional traditional dancing and drumming performances, and it's possible to arrange drumming or dancing lessons. The annual highlight is the Bagamoyo Arts Festival (p338). For more on the college and arts in Bagamoyo, see the website of the **Bagamoyo Friendship Society** (www.bagamoyo.com).

EXCURSIONS

The coast around Bagamoyo is full of interesting water birds, mangrove ecosystems and a few uncrowded stretches of sand. The tourist information office and most of the hotels can arrange excursions to **Mbeganí lagoon**, the **Ruvu River delta** and **Mwambakuni sand bar**, all nearby. Expect to pay from US\$20 to US\$25 per person with four people.

Sleeping & Eating BUDGET

Kizota Guest House (r without bathroom Tsh4000) No-frills rooms in a local-style guesthouse along the road leading from the main junction to the beach places, about a 10-minute walk from the *dalla-dalla* (minibus) stand. Buckets of hot water are available on request.

Francesco's Hostel & Camping (camping per person Tsh5000, r Tsh15,000) Basic rooms with cold-water shower, net and fan, just 100m further up the road from Mary Nice Place and reasonable value.

Mary Nice Place (☎ 0754-024015; maryniceplace@yahoo.co.uk; r Tsh25,000) A converted house with a small garden, basic and somewhat overpriced rooms with fan, and meals (Tsh4500) with advance order. Its popularity means that there's also usually a group of touts waiting outside trying to drum up business to go to Kaole ruins and other sites. It's signposted, just in from the road to the left a few minutes on foot after passing the College of Arts.

New Top Life Inn (meals Tsh2000) About 50m back from Kizota Guest House towards the main junction and two blocks northwest of the market, this place has inexpensive local meals.

MIDRANGE

Travellers Lodge (☎ 023-244 0077; www.travellers-lodge.com; camping per person with shower US\$5, s/d garden cottages US\$40/55, beach cottages US\$50/65; ☎) With its relaxed atmosphere and reasonable prices, this is among the best value of the beach places. Accommodation is in clean, pleasant cottages scattered around expansive, lush grounds, including some on the beach, some with two large beds and all with mosquito netting. There's also a restaurant (meals from Tsh5000) and a great children's natural-style play area. It's on the road running parallel to the beach, just south of the entrance to the Catholic mission.

Bagamoyo Beach Resort (☎ 023-244 0083; bbr@baganet.com; bandas per person without bathroom US\$10, s/d/tr US\$34/42/50; ☎) Fine and friendly, with adequate rooms in two blocks (ask for the one closer to the water), a few no-frills *bandas* (thatched-roof huts) on the beach that have just a bed and net and are good budget value, and a seaside location just north of Travellers Lodge. The cuisine (meals about Tsh6000) is French-influenced and tasty.

In addition to these places, Bagamoyo has a string of bland midrange hotels, most of which

cater to conferences and groups, and none of which are particularly notable. Among the better ones are the following:

Paradise Holiday Resort (☎ 023-244 0136/40; www.paradiseresort.net; s/d from US\$70/85; 🏠 🚗 🚶) Modern rooms, some with sea views, in a large, apartment-style complex overlooking manicured lawns. Add 6% to these prices if you're paying by credit card. It's along the beach road north of Bagamoyo Beach Resort.

Malaika Beach Resorts (Livingstone Club) (☎ 023-244 0080/0059; www.livingstone.ws; s/d US\$90/114; 🏠 🚗 🚶) The best of the bunch, with an opulent reception area and comfortable rooms. The pool costs Tsh4000/3000 per adult/child for nonguests.

TOP END

Lazy Lagoon (☎ 0784-237422; www.tanzaniasafaris.info; s/d with full board & boat transfers US\$200/280; 🏠 🚗 🚶) A relaxing, upmarket place about 10km south of Bagamoyo on the secluded Lazy Lagoon peninsula. Accommodation is in large *bandas*, and short dhow trips and excursions to Bagamoyo can be arranged. Follow signs from the main highway to the Mbegani Fisheries compound, from where it's just a short boat ride over to the lodge. You can leave your vehicle in the fisheries compound.

Getting There & Away

Bagamoyo is about 70km north of Dar es Salaam and an easy drive along good tarmac. With 4WD it's also possible to reach Bagamoyo from Msata (65km west on the Dar es Salaam–Arusha highway, north of Chalinze).

Via public transport, there are *dalla-dallas* throughout the day from Mwenge (north of Dar es Salaam along the New Bagamoyo road, and accessed via *dalla-dalla* from New Posta) to Bagamoyo (Tsh1200, two hours). The *dalla-dalla* stand in Bagamoyo is about 700m from the town centre just off the road heading to Dar es Salaam. Taxis to the town centre charge Tsh1500 (Tsh500 on a motorbike).

Dhows to Zanzibar cost about Tsh5000, but before jumping aboard, read the boxed text on p357. You'll need to register first with the immigration officer in the old customs building. Departures are usually around 1am, arriving in Zanzibar sometime the next morning if all goes well. There is no regular dhow traffic direct to Saadani or Pangani.

SAADANI NATIONAL PARK

About 70km north of Bagamoyo along a lovely stretch of coastline, and directly opposite Zanzibar, is tiny **Saadani** (www.saadanitana.com), a 1000-sq-km patch of coastal wilderness that is one of Tanzania's newest national parks. Unpretentious and relaxing, it bills itself as one of the few spots in the country where you can enjoy the beach and watch wildlife at the same time. It's easily accessed from both Dar es Salaam and Zanzibar as an overnight excursion and is a good choice if you don't have time to explore further afield.

To the south of the reserve is the languidly flowing Wami River, where you'll probably see hippos, crocodiles and many birds, including lesser flamingos (in the delta), fish eagles, hamerkops, kingfishers and bee-eaters. It's interesting to watch the vegetation along the riverbanks change with the decreasing salinity of the water as you move upstream. In some sections, there are also marked variations between the two banks, with areas of date palms and lush foliage on one side, and whistling thorn acacias reminiscent of drier areas of the country on the other.

While terrestrial wildlife-watching can't compare with that in the better-known national parks, animal numbers are slowly but surely increasing now that poaching is being brought under control. In addition to hippos and crocs, it's quite likely that you'll see giraffes, and elephant sightings are increasingly common (we saw a herd of 50-plus on a recent visit, although another group on safari the same day saw none). With more effort, you may see Lichtenstein's hartebeests and even lions, although these are more difficult to spot. The birding is also wonderful.

Away from the wildlife, the lovely and mostly deserted beach stretches as far as you can see in each direction, and because it faces due east, it offers plenty of chances to catch one of the subdued, pastel-toned Indian Ocean sunrises that are so typical of this part of the continent. Just south of the main park area is tiny Saadani village. Although it doesn't look like much today, it was once one of the major ports in the area. Among other things, you can still see the crumbling walls of an Arab-built fort that was used as a holding cell for slaves before they were shipped to Zanzibar. During German colonial times the fort served as the customs house.

Information

Entry to the park costs US\$20/5 per day per adult/child aged five to 15 years, and guides cost US\$10 per day. Camping costs US\$30/10 per adult/child aged five to 15 years. There is also an additional US\$20 per person per day fee for river usage that applies to those doing boat safaris. Although the park officially stays open year-round, access during the March to May rainy season is difficult. If you do make it in during this time, you'll probably be limited to the area around the beach and the camps. Saadani is administered by the Tanzania National Parks Authority (Tanapa; see p77), with the **park office** (saadani@saadani.tanapa.com; ☎ 8am-4pm) at Mkwaja, at the park's northern edge.

For information on Saadani's history and wildlife, browse through *Saadani: An Introduction to Tanzania's Future 13th National Park* by Dr Rolf Baldus, Doreen Broska and Kirsten Röttcher, available free at http://wildlife-programme.gtz.de/wildlife/tourism_saadani.html, or check out the park's informative website, www.saadanitana.com.

Activities

In addition to relaxing, walking along the beach and observing birdlife, the main activities in Saadani are **boat trips** along the Wami River, **wildlife drives** (in open-sided vehicles, as in Tanzania's southern parks and reserves), **bush walks** and **village tours**.

Sleeping & Eating

Tent With a View Safari Lodge (☎ 022-211 0507, 0713-323318; www.saadani.com; s/d full board US\$255/350, s/d all inclusive US\$355/550) For a secluded tropical getaway, this wonderful and recommended luxury camp is the place to come, with raised treehouse-style *bandas* tucked away among the coconut groves just outside the park's northern boundary on a lovely stretch of deserted, driftwood-strewn beach. The well-spaced *bandas* – all with verandas and hammocks – are directly on the beach and reached by soft sand paths. In addition to safaris in the park (US\$80 per person for a full-day safari, including a boat safari along the Wami River; US\$40 for a half-day vehicle safari; US\$40 for a walking safari – all prices per person with minimum two people), there are various excursions, including guided walks to a nearby green-turtle nesting site. Park entry fees need

only be paid for days you go into the park on safari. No children under six years old. The same management runs a lodge in Selous Game Reserve, and combination itineraries – also including other destinations in southern Tanzania and special Zanzibar-Saadani combination packages – can be arranged.

Saadani Safari Lodge (☎ /fax 022-277 3294; www.saadani lodge.com; s/d full board US\$285/480; 📍) This delightful beachside retreat is the only lodge within the park and a fine base from which to explore the area. Each of the nine cosy and tastefully decorated cottages is set directly on the beach. There's an open, thatched restaurant, also directly on the sand, with a raised sundowner deck, and a treehouse overlooking a small waterhole. The atmosphere is unpretentious and comfortable, and staff are unfailingly friendly and helpful. Safaris – including boat safaris on the Wami River, vehicle safaris, walks and snorkelling excursions to a nearby sandbank – cost US\$45/25 per adult/child per excursion, with a minimum of three people. No children under six years old.

There are several park **camp sites** (camping adult/child US\$20/5), including on the beach north of Saadani Safari Lodge and along the Wami River at Kinyonga. You'll need to be completely self-sufficient. There's also the faded **Tanapa resthouse** (adult/child US\$20/10) near Saadani village, for which you'll also need to be self-sufficient. A new resthouse is planned for the near future.

In Mkwaja village, at the northern edge of the park, is **Mwango Guest House** (r Tsh2000), a very basic but potentially useful option if you're continuing north via bus.

Getting There & Away

AIR

There are airstrips for charter flights near two of the lodges. Contact them, or any of the charter companies listed on p356 to arrange charters or to see if a charter is going with extra seats for sale. Rates average about US\$200 one way from Zanzibar (20 minutes) and about US\$300 from Dar es Salaam (30 minutes) for a three-passenger plane. Tropical Air is currently the only airline flying regularly between Saadani and Zanzibar (about US\$55, daily), though it's also worth checking with ZanAir, which sometimes operates scheduled flights between Zanzibar and the airstrip near Saadani village during the July to September high season.

BOAT

Local fishing boats sail regularly between Saadani and Zanzibar (from behind Tembo House Hotel), but the journey is known for being rough and fewer travellers do it. Better to arrange a boat charter with one of the lodges in Saadani or with the lodges further up the coast north and south of Pangani.

ROAD

All the lodges provide road transport to /from Dar es Salaam for between US\$150 and US\$250 per vehicle, one way. Allow 4½ to five hours for the journey.

From Dar es Salaam, the route is via Chalinze on the Morogoro road, and then north to Manderu village (about 50km north of Chalinze on the Arusha highway). At Manderu bear east along a reasonable dirt road (you'll need a 4WD) and continue about 60km to Saadani. Once at the main park gate (Mvave Gate), there's a signposted turn-off to Kisampa (about 30km south along a road through the Zaraninge Forest). Saadani village and Saadani Safari Lodge (about 1km north of the village) are about 17km straight on. For Tent With a View Safari Lodge, continue north from the village turn-off for about 25km. Some parts of this route get quite muddy during the rains and 4WD is essential. Via public transport, there's a daily bus from Dar es Salaam's Ubungu bus station (Tsh5000, five to six hours), departing Dar at 1pm and Saadani at 6am. It's also easy enough to get to Manderu junction by bus (take any bus from Dar heading towards Tanga or Arusha and ask the driver to drop you off), but from the junction to Saadani there is no public transport,

other than what you might be able to arrange with sporadically passing vehicles.

Coming from Pangani, take the ferry across the Pangani River, then continue south along a rough road past stands of cashew, sisal and teak via Mkwaja to the reserve's northern gate at Mligaji. Although much improved in recent years, this route is only possible with 4WD. Transfers can generally be arranged with the lodges for about US\$130 per vehicle each way (1½ to two hours). There's also a daily bus between Tanga and Mkwaja (Tsh5000, five hours), on the park's northern edge, from where you could arrange to be collected by the lodges. However, it's prone to frequent breakdowns and the whims of the Pangani River ferry so ask around locally to be sure it's running. Departures from Tanga are around 11am, and from Mkwaja around 5am.

If you've arrived in the park via public transport, there's no vehicle rental in the park for a safari, unless you've arranged something in advance with one of the lodges. However, if you base yourself at the Tanapa resthouse or adjacent camping ground, it's quite enjoyable just walking along the beach or visiting the village, and the park makes a fine low-budget getaway.

Until the ferry over the Wami River is repaired, there's no direct road access to Saadani from Bagamoyo, although you can arrange boat pick-ups with some of the camps.

PANGANI

☎ 027

About 55km south of Tanga is the small and dilapidated Swahili outpost of Pangani. It rose from obscure beginnings as just one of many coastal dhow ports to become a terminus of

COMMUNITY TOURISM SPOTLIGHT: KISAMPA

The small, socially conscious **Kisampa** (☎ 0756-316815, 0753-005442; www.sanctuary-tz.com; per person all inclusive US\$220), set off on its own in a private nature reserve bordering Saadani park, has made impressive progress since its opening in promoting conservation of the surrounding Zaraninge Forest and supporting local community development. Village fees paid by each visitor go to the local community to support health, school and other initiatives, and a local beekeeping project aimed at poverty alleviation and environmental conservation has been established. There are six 'stargazer' tents, netted on three sides. Each tent has a mattress on the floor and private outside bathroom with hot-water bucket showers. Unlike the other Saadani camps, Kisampa isn't on the beach, although excursions can be arranged to the coast (about an hour's drive away), as well as into the park for wildlife-watching. If you have your own vehicle, you can drive from Bagamoyo as far as the Wami River, where Kisampa has guards to watch your car. There's a canoe to the other side of the river, where Kisampa staff will meet you and take you the remaining short distance to the camp.

THE ABUSHIRI REVOLT

Although the Abushiri revolt, one of East Africa's major colonial rebellions, is usually associated with Bagamoyo, Pangani was its birthplace. The catalyst came in 1884, when a young German, Carl Peters, founded the German East Africa Company (Deutsch-Ostafrikanische Gesellschaft or DOAG). Over the next few years, in an effort to tap into the lucrative inland caravan trade, Peters managed to extract agreement from the Sultan of Zanzibar that the DOAG could take over the administration of customs duties in the sultan's mainland domains. However, neither the sultan's representative in Pangani nor the majority of locals were amenable to the idea. When the DOAG raised its flag next to that of the sultan, simmering tensions exploded. Under the leadership of an Afro-Arab trader named Abushiri bin Salim al-Harth, a loosely organised army, including many of the sultan's own guards, ousted the Germans, igniting a series of fierce power struggles that continued in other port towns along the coast. The Germans only managed to subdue the revolt over a year later after the arrival of reinforcements, the imposition of a naval blockade and the hanging of Abushiri. In the wake of the revolt, the DOAG went bankrupt and the colonial capital was moved from Bagamoyo to Dar es Salaam.

the caravan route from Lake Tanganyika, a major export point for slaves and ivory, and one of the largest ports between Bagamoyo and Mombasa. Sisal and copra plantations were established in the area, and several European missions and exploratory journeys to the interior began from here. By the end of the 19th century, focus had shifted to Tanga and Dar es Salaam and Pangani again faded into anonymity.

Today, the town makes an intriguing step back into history, especially in the area within about three blocks of the river, where you'll see some carved doorways, buildings from the German colonial era and old houses of Indian traders. More of a draw for many travellers are the beaches running north and south of town, which are also the best places to base yourself.

History

Compared with Tongoni, Kaole and other settlements along the coast, Pangani is a relatively modern settlement. It rose to prominence during the mid-19th century, when it was a linchpin between the Zanzibar sultanate and the inland caravan routes, and it was during this era that the riverfront slave depot was built. Pangani's oldest building is the old boma, which dates to 1810 and was originally the private residence of a wealthy Omani trader. More recent is the Customs House, built a decade later. Probably several centuries older is the settlement at Bweni, diagonally opposite Pangani on the southern bank of the river, where a 15th-century grave has been found.

In September 1888, Pangani was the first town to rebel against the German colonial administration in the Abushiri Revolt (above).

Orientation

The centre of Pangani, with the market and bus stand, is on the corner of land where the Pangani River meets the sea. About 2km north of here is the main junction where the road from Muheza joins the coastal road, and where you should get out of the bus if you're arriving from Muheza and staying at the beaches north of town.

Information

The closest banks are in Tanga. The **Pangani Cultural Tourism Program office** (☎ 8am-5pm Mon-Fri, 8am-noon Sat) on the riverfront organises reasonably priced town tours, river cruises and excursions to Maziwe Marine Reserve and other local attractions, as well as to Saadani National Park. All of the hotels also organise Maziwe trips.

Use caution when walking along the beaches close to town.

Sights & Activities

Meandering along the southern edge of town is the **Pangani River**, which attracts many water birds, as well as populations of crocodiles and sometimes other animals. It's best explored on a river cruise via local dhow, which can be arranged by any of the hotels. For views over the river, climb up the bluff on the southern bank to the currently closed Pangani River Hotel.

Shimmering in the sun about 10km off-shore is tiny **Maziwe Marine Reserve** (admission Tsh1000), an idyllic sand island with snorkelling in the surrounding crystal-clear waters. Dolphins favour the area and are frequently spotted. Maziwe can only be visited at low tide; there's no food or drink on the island, but a picnic lunch is included in most hotel excursions.

The **beaches** running north and south of town – especially to the north near Peponi Holiday Resort and Capricorn Beach Cottages, and to the south around Ushongo – are generally deserted and lovely. They're long, with stands of coconut palms alternating with dense coastal vegetation and the occasional baobab.

Sleeping & Eating

Almost all visitors to the Pangani area stay at one of the beaches running north or south of town.

TOWN CENTRE

New River View Inn Restaurant & Lodge (Jamhuri St; s/d without bathroom Tsh3000/4500) This is the cheapest recommendable place, with no frills but decent rooms sharing facilities. It's on the waterfront road, just east of the Customs House.

Stopover Guest House (☎ 0784-498458; d with Tsh7000) A better bet, with simple but good doubles with nets, fan and bathroom, and meals. It's near the beach – turn right after the petrol station at the northern end of town.

NORTH OF PANGANI

Peponi Holiday Resort (☎ 0784-202962, 0713-540139; www.peponioresort.com; camping per person US\$4, s & d bandas US\$50, extra adult beds in family bandas US\$20; 🚽) This relaxing, traveller-friendly place is set in expansive bougainvillea-dotted grounds on a long, good beach about 19km north of Pangani. In addition to simple, breezy double *bandas*, there are several larger five-person chalets – all *bandas* and chalets have been recently refurbished – plus a shady camp site, clean ablution blocks and a small beachside pool (for Peponi guests only). A restaurant, a nearby reef for snorkelling (you can rent equipment at Peponi) and mangrove stands rich with birdlife to the north of Peponi complete the picture. The proprietors are very helpful with information about excursions and onward connections, and the camp has its own *mashua*

(motorised dhow) for sailing and a nice curio shop. If you're camping, bring supplies with you, and if you'll be staying in the *bandas*, book in advance during high season. Take any bus running along the Pangani–Tanga coastal route and ask the driver to drop you near Kigombe village at the Peponi turn-off (Tsh500 from Pangani, Tsh800 from Tanga), from where it's a short walk. Taxis from Tanga cost Tsh15,000 to Tsh25,000, depending on road conditions and your bargaining abilities.

Tinga Tinga Lodge (☎ 027-264 6611, 0784-403553; www.tingatingalodge.com; camping per person US\$4, d/tr US\$60/85) This down-to-earth, recently renovated place has spacious twin-bedded bungalows set slightly inland and just north of the main junction. Five minutes' walk away is a restaurant-bar gazebo overlooking the water, with swimming possible just below. Walking tours and sunset cruises can be organised.

Mkoma Bay (☎ 027-263 0000; www.mkomabay.com; s/d bandas US\$30/50, s/d luxury tents from US\$70/140; 📶 🚽) Architecturally eclectic and subdued in ambience, this place has a range of raised tents of the sort you find in upmarket safari camps, set around expansive grounds on a low cliff directly overlooking the water. All are nicely furnished and come with private bathroom. There are also some small stone *bandas* sharing bathroom facilities, a good restaurant, a sundowner deck overlooking the sea, and a range of excursions. It's signposted about 3km north of the main junction.

Capricorn Beach Cottages (☎ 0784-632529; www.capricornbeachcottages.com; s/d US\$60/84; 📶) This classy, low-key self-catering place on the beach just south of Peponi Holiday Resort offers three spacious, well-equipped and spotlessly clean cottages set in large, lush grounds dotted with baobab trees. Each cottage has its own covered porch, internet access for laptops, a kitchen and mosquito netting, and all have plenty of ventilation and a natural, open feel. It's an ideal choice if you're looking to get away from it all for a while. There's a grill area overlooking the water, either for catered BBQs or for cooking yourself, and the hosts go out of their way to be sure you're not lacking for anything and that no detail is overlooked – from a cooler and ice on the BBQ deck to a jar of homemade jam and top-notch local coffee beans in the refrigerator. Also on the grounds is a tiny internet café and a clothing boutique.

Homemade bread, fresh seafood, cheese, wine and other gourmet essentials are available at a small deli on the premises.

SOUTH OF PANGANI

Though rarely featuring on tourist itineraries, the long, palm-fringed beach about 15km south of Pangani around Ushongo makes a wonderful getaway. Swimming isn't tide-dependent, and apart from the area in the immediate vicinity of Ushongo village, it's clean, and you'll have most spots to yourself.

Beach Crab Resort (☎ 0784-543700; www.thebeachcrab.com; camping per person US\$3, s/d safari tent without bathroom US\$15/24, d bandas US\$64) This budget and backpacker-friendly place was under construction at the time of research. About 1km south of The Tides, it's set to open soon with camping (including tents for rent) and permanent safari-style tents just in from the beach, and self-contained *bandas* on a hill just behind. There are clean ablution blocks for campers and guests staying in the permanent tents, and a beachside bar-restaurant. Diving (there's a PADI dive instructor on-site), windsurfing, hiking and other activities are planned. For road access, follow signs to The Tides and continue about 1.2km south. Pick-ups can be arranged from Mwera (about 7km away and along the bus route from Tanga to Mkwaja village near Saadani) or from Pangani.

Emayani Beach Lodge (☎ 027-264 0755, 027-250 1741; www.emayanilodge.com; s/d/tr US\$60/86/105) Laid-back Emayani, on the beach about 2km north of The Tides, has a row of rustic bungalows strung out along the sand. All are made entirely of *makuti* (palm-thatching), and all are very open (no locks), except for *makuti* shades that you can pull down in the evening. Small kayaks and windsurfing equipment are available to rent, and staff can arrange sails on a *ngalawa* (outrigger canoe), and excursions to Maziwe Marine Reserve, Pangani and elsewhere in the area. Pick-ups from Pangani can be arranged. Meals are available (breakfast/dinner US\$5/12).

The Tides (☎ 027-264 0844, 0713-325812; www.thetideslodge.com; s/d half board US\$135/220; 📶) This unpretentious and intimate place mixes a prime seaside location with spacious, breezy bungalows and excellent cuisine. The seven bungalows – all lined up amid the coconut palms and vegetation along the beach – are wonderful, with huge beds surrounded by

billowing mosquito nets, large bathrooms and stylish, subdued décor. At night, you can step out directly onto the sand to gaze at the star-studded skies or be lulled to sleep by the crashing of the waves on the shore. There are also two beautifully decorated family cottages set away from the main lodge area, one of which has a plunge pool and is ideal for honeymooners. Other attractions include the beachside bar and restaurant areas, and staff can sort out whatever excursions you'd like, including dhows to Maziwe Marine Reserve, Zanzibar or along the Pangani River, and inshore and offshore fishing. For a honeymoon location, beachside retreat or family destination (children under six stay for free), it's ideal and good value, especially in comparison to similar-quality places elsewhere on the coast. The lodge also arranges private honeymooners' snorkelling trips to Maziwe, complete with a waiter, cool box, champagne and all the trimmings. Pick-ups from Pangani and Tanga can be organised, as can transfers to/from Saadani.

Getting There & Away

AIR

There's an airstrip between Ushongo and Pangani for charter flights. ZanAir, Coastal Aviation and Tropical Air are the best lines to check with, as all have scheduled flights to nearby destinations and may be willing to stop in Pangani if demand is sufficient.

BOAT

Dhows sail regularly between Pangani and Mkokotoni, on the northwestern coast of Zanzibar. Better is to check with the lodges near Pangani, several of which also arrange dhow charters to Zanzibar's Stone Town from about US\$150; ones to try include Peponi Beach Resort, The Tides and Emayani.

ROAD

The best connections between Pangani and Tanga are via the rehabilitated coastal road, with about five buses daily (Tsh2000, 1½ hours), except during the height of the rainy season. The first departure from Pangani is at about 6.30am, so you can connect with a Tanga–Arusha bus. It's also possible to reach Pangani from Muheza (Tsh1000), from where there are connections to Tanga or Korogwe, but the road is worse and connections sporadic.

For Ushongo and the beaches south of Pangani, all the hotels there do pick-ups from both Pangani and Tanga. There's also a daily bus between Tanga and Mkwaja (at the northern edge of Saadani National Park) that passes Mwera (6km from Ushongo) daily at about 7am going north and 3.30pm going south. It's then easy to arrange a pick-up from Mwera with the lodges.

The vehicle ferry over the Pangani River runs in theory between 6.30am and 6.30pm daily (Tsh100/4000 per person/vehicle), and there are small passenger boats (large enough to take a motorcycle) throughout the day (Tsh200).

TANGA

☎ 027 / pop 250,000

Tanga, a major industrial centre until the collapse of the sisal market, is Tanzania's second-largest seaport and its third-largest town behind Dar es Salaam and Mwanza. Despite its size, it's a pleasant-enough place with a sleepy, semicolonial atmosphere and faded charm. While there's little reason to make a special detour to visit, it makes a convenient stop en route to or from Mombasa, and is a springboard to the beaches around Pangani.

History

Although there has probably been a reasonably sized settlement at Tanga since at least the Shirazi era, the town first came into its own in the early to mid-19th century as a starting point for trade caravans to the interior. Ivory was the main commodity traded, with a turnover of about 70,000lbs annually in the late 1850s, according to explorer Richard Burton, who visited here. The real boom, however, came with the arrival of the Germans in the late 19th century, who built up the town and harbour as part of the construction of a railway line linking Moshi and the Kilimanjaro region with the sea. The Germans also introduced sisal to the area, and Tanzania soon became the world's leading producer and exporter of the crop, with sisal the centre of local economic life. In WWI, Tanga was the site of the ill-fated Battle of Tanga (later memorialised in William Boyd's novel, *An Ice-Cream War*), in which poorly prepared British troops were soundly trounced by the Germans.

As the world sisal market began to collapse in the 1970s, Tanga's economy spiralled downward. Today, much of the town's in-

frastructure has been abandoned and the economy is just a shadow of its former self, although you'll still see vast plantations stretching westwards along the plains edging the Usambara Mountains.

Orientation

The town centre is set along the waterfront and is easily covered on foot. About 1.5km south of here (Tsh1500 in a taxi), and south of the railway tracks in the Ngamiani section is the bus station. About 2km east of town, reached by following Hospital Rd (which runs parallel to the water) is the quiet and suburban Ras Kazone section, with a few hotels and some places to eat.

Information

INTERNET ACCESS

Impala Internet Café (Sokoine St; per hr Tsh800;

☎ 9am-7pm)

Kaributanga.com (Sokoine St; per hr Tsh800; ☎ 9am-9pm Mon-Thu, 9am-noon & 2-8pm Fri, 9am-2pm & 4-8pm Sat & Sun)

MEDICAL SERVICES

MD Pharmacy (☎ 027-264 4067; cnr Sokoine St & Mkwakwani Rd; ☎ 8am-12.45pm & 2-6pm Mon-Fri, to 12.45pm Sat & Sun) Opposite the market.

MONEY

CRDB (Tower St) ATM (Visa card only).

NBC (cnr Bank & Sokoine Sts) Just west of the market. Changes cash and travellers cheques; ATM (Visa card only).

POST

Main post office (Independence Ave) Near the south-eastern corner of Jamhuri Park, just off Independence Ave.

TOURIST INFORMATION

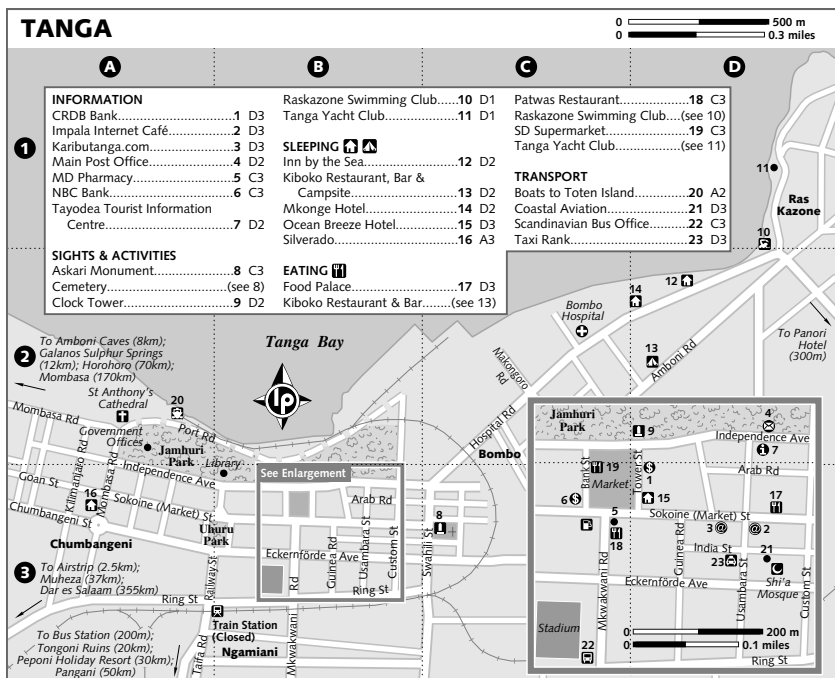
Tayodea Tourist Information Centre (☎ 027-264 4350; cnr Independence Ave & Usambara St; ☎ 8.30am-5pm) Information and English-speaking guides for local excursions; look for the small kiosk near the post office.

Dangers & Annoyances

The harbour area is seedy and best avoided. In the evenings, take care around Port Rd and Independence Ave near Jamhuri Park.

Sights & Activities

Despite its size, Tanga has remarkably few 'sights', apart from its atmospheric colonial-era architecture. The most interesting areas for a stroll are around Jamhuri Park overlook-



ing the harbour, near which you'll find the old German-built **clock tower**, and the park and cemetery surrounding the **Askari monument** at the end of Sokoine St.

Directly offshore is the small, mangrove-ringed **Toten island** (Island of the Dead) with the overgrown ruins of a mosque (dating at least to the 17th century) and some 18th- and 19th-century gravestones. Fifteenth-century pottery fragments have also been found on the island, indicating that it may have been settled during the Shirazi era. The island's apparently long history ended in the late 19th century, when its inhabitants moved to the mainland. Its ruins are less accessible and less atmospheric than those at nearby Tongoni, and it's only worth a look if you have lots of extra time. There are fishing boats on the western side of the harbour that can take you over, although we've only heard unhappy tales from the few travellers we know who have tried this. Better is to organise an excursion through the tourist information office.

Tanga Yacht Club (www.tangayachtclub.com); Hospital Rd, Ras Kazone; day admission Tsh2000) has a small, clean beach, showers and a good restaurant-bar area

overlooking the water. It's a pleasant place to relax and, especially on weekend afternoons, it's a great spot to meet resident expats and get the lowdown on what's happening in town.

Raskazone Swimming Club (Hospital Rd, Ras Kazone; admission Tsh500), about 400m southwest of the yacht club, has a small beach, showers and changing rooms and meals.

Sleeping

BUDGET

Kiboko Restaurant, Bar & Campsite (☎ 027-264 4929, 0784-469292; jda-kiboko@blueemail.ch; Amboni Rd; camping per person US\$4) A welcome addition to Tanga's accommodation scene, with secure camping in a large green yard (including tents for rent), spotless hot-water ablution blocks, laundry service, power points, a well-stocked bar and a great garden restaurant. Reasonably priced rooms are planned (about US\$40 per double). Management is very helpful and can arrange excursions and provide information on Tanga. It's about 300m in from Hospital Rd; the turn-off is signposted about 500m before Inn by the Sea. Camping is free for children under six years of age.

Ocean Breeze Hotel (☎ 027-264 4445; cnr Tower & Sokoine Sts; r with fan/air-con Tsh7000/12,000) Rooms here are faded and no-frills but quite OK for the price – all have bathrooms and many have nets. It's just east of the market, and one of the better budget choices in the town centre.

Inn by the Sea (☎ 027-264 4614; Hospital Rd; r Tsh12,000; ☺) Inn by the Sea has a prime waterside setting on the southwestern edge of Ras Kazone, but very run-down rooms, although they're fair enough value for the price. Meals can be arranged; allow about two hours.

MIDRANGE

Panori Hotel (☎ 027-264 6044; panori@africaonline.co.tz; Ras Kazone; s/d old wing Tsh15,000/18,000, old renovated wing Tsh18,000/22,000, new wing Tsh25,000/30,000; ☺) If you don't mind the location, in a residential area about 3km from the centre (no public transport), this is a decent midrange choice. There are clean, adequate rooms in the new wing, all with nets, fan and TV, and an outdoor restaurant with slow service and tasty meals. Take Hospital Rd east to Ras Kazone and follow the signposts.

Silverado (☎ 027-264 6054, 027-264 5259; cnr Mombasa Rd & Chumbangeni St; r incl breakfast Tsh40,000; ☺) Clean, generally quiet rooms with minifridge, mosquito netting in the windows (although no bed nets) and TV.

Mkongge Hotel (☎ 027-264 3440; mkonggehotel@kaributanga.com; Hospital Rd; s/d US\$55/70, with sea view US\$60/75; ☺) The imposing Mkongge Hotel, on a grassy lawn overlooking the sea, has recently had a facelift and now has among the nicest rooms in town (worth the extra money for a sea view). There's also a restaurant.

Eating

Tanga is the home of Tanga Fresh, which produces yogurt and milk that is sold throughout the region – ask locals to point out the way to the Tanga Fresh outlet, where you can get excellent fresh yogurt, milk and cheese.

Patwas Restaurant (Mkwakwani Rd; meals from Tsh1500; ☎ 8am-8pm Mon-Sat) An unassuming, friendly place with very helpful owners who have helped out countless first-time visitors over the years, plus fresh juices and lassis, and tasty, good-value local-style meals. It's just south of the market.

Food Palace (☎ 027-264 6816; Sokoine St; meals from Tsh2000; ☎ lunch Mon, breakfast, lunch & dinner Tue-Sun)

Indian snacks and meals, including some vegetarian selections.

Kiboko Restaurant & Bar (☎ 027-264 4929, 0784-469292; jda-kiboko@bluemail.ch; Amboni Rd; meals Tsh5000-10,000) A great spot with shady garden seating, a well-stocked bar, a spotless kitchen and a huge menu featuring delicious *kiboko*-sized portions of such delicacies as prawns *kiboko* with green pepper sauce, king fish curry, sandwiches and *mishikaki* (marinated, grilled meat kebabs). For dessert, there's ice cream, plus chocolate truffles and other indulgences on order.

Tanga Yacht Club (☎ 027-264 4246; www.tangayachtclub.com; Hospital Rd, Ras Kazone; admission Tsh2000, meals from Tsh5000; ☎ 10.30am-2.30pm & 6.30-10.30pm Mon-Fri, 11am-3pm & 6-10.30pm Sat, 11am-9pm Sun) The yacht club has a tranquil waterside setting, with a small swimming beach, a sun-downer deck and tasty meals, including ice cream. It's a good spot to relax on weekends and evenings, and catch up with Tanga's expat crowd.

Also recommended:

Raskazone Swimming Club (Hospital Rd, Ras Kazone; admission Tsh500; meals Tsh2000-4000; ☎ dinner) Good, cheap Indian meals.

SD Supermarket (Bank St) For self-caterers; behind the market.

Getting There & Away

AIR

There are daily flights on **Coastal Aviation** (☎ 027-264 6060, 0713-566485; off India St) between Tanga, Dar es Salaam, Zanzibar and Pemba (one-way between Tanga and Pemba /Zanzibar/Dar es Salaam US\$70/100/130). Its office is near the mobile-phone tower and the Shi'a mosque. The airstrip is about 3km west of town along the Korogwe road (Tsh2000 in a taxi).

BOAT

The unreliable *Mudasi* – primarily a cargo ship, but also takes passengers – sails three times weekly between Tanga and Wete; see p150.

BUS

To/from Dar es Salaam, the fastest connection is on **Scandinavian** (☎ 027-264 4337), departing at 8am in each direction (Tsh8000, four hours) from its office on Ring St, between the stadium and the railway station, and near the corner of Makwakwani Rd.

Otherwise, Raha Leo departs Tanga every few hours between about 7am and 3pm (Tsh7000, five hours).

To Arusha, there are at least three departures between about 6am and 11am (Tsh12,000, seven hours). To Lushoto (Tsh4000, three to four hours), there are a couple of direct buses departing by 7am, or you can take any Arusha bus and transfer at Mombo.

To Pangani (Tsh2000, 1½ hours), there are small buses throughout the day along the coastal road.

Getting Around

There are taxi ranks at various places around town, including at the bus station, and at the junction of Usambara and India Sts. The tourist information office can help with bicycle rental. Occasional *dalla-dallas* run along Ocean Rd between the town centre and Ras Kazone.

AROUND TANGA

Amboni Caves

Long the subject of local legend, these limestone **caves** (admission Tsh3000) are one of the most extensive subterranean systems in East Africa and an intriguing off-beat excursion for anyone with an interest in spelunking. Now home to thousands of bats, they were traditionally believed to house various spirits, and continue to be a place of worship and ritual. The caves were originally thought to extend up to 200km or more, and are said to have been used by the Kenyan Mau Mau during the 1950s as a hide-out from the British. Although a 1994 survey concluded that their extent was much smaller – with the largest of the caves studied only 900m long – rumours of them reaching all the way to Mombasa persist.

It's possible to visit a small portion of the cave network, which is quite interesting,

once you get past the litter at the entrance. Bring along a torch, and wear closed shoes to avoid needing to pick bat droppings off your feet afterwards.

The caves are about 8km northwest of Tanga off the Tanga–Mombasa road, and an easy bicycle ride from town. Otherwise, charter a taxi or take a *dalla-dalla* towards Amboni village and get off at the turn-off for the caves, which is near the forestry office. From here, it's about 2.5km on foot to Kiomoni village; the caves stretch west of Kiomoni along the Mkulumuzi River. Guides can be arranged locally or at the tourist office in Tanga.

Galanos Sulphur Springs

If bending and crawling around the caves has left you feeling stiff in the joints, consider finishing the day with a visit to these green, odoriferous sulphur springs nearby. They take their name from a Greek sisal planter who was the first to recognise their potential for relaxation after the rigours of a long day in the fields. Now, although still in use, they are quite unappealing despite their supposedly therapeutic properties.

The unsignposted turn-off for the springs is along the Tanga–Mombasa road, about 2km north of the turn-off for the caves, and just after crossing the Sigi River. From here, it's about 2km further. *Dalla-dallas* from Tanga run as far as Amboni village, from where you'll need to continue on foot.

Tongoni Ruins

Basking in the coastal sun about 20km south of Tanga are the time-ravaged but atmospheric and historically intriguing **Tongoni ruins** (admission Tsh1000; ☎ 8am–5pm). The ruins – which are surrounded by rusted barbed wire and set between baobabs overlooking nearby mangroves and coastline – include

PLACE OF RUINS

Together with Mafia, Kilwa and other now sleepy settlements along the coast, Tongoni (Place of Ruins) was once a major port in the network of Swahili trading towns that linked the gold, slave and ivory markets of Africa with the Orient. Its heyday was in the 15th century, when it had its own sultan and was an inadvertent port of call for Vasco da Gama, whose ship ran aground here. By the early 18th century, Tongoni had declined to the point of nonexistence, with the Portuguese disruption of local trade networks and the fall of Mombasa. In the late 18th century, it was resettled by Shirazis fleeing Kilwa (who named it Sitahabu, or 'Better Here than There'), and experienced a brief revival, before declining completely shortly thereafter.

the crumbling remains of a mosque and about 20 overgrown Shirazi pillar-style tombs, the largest collection of such tombs on the East African coast. Both the mosque and the tombs are estimated to date from the 14th or 15th century, when Tongoni was a major coastal trading port (see p167). Although most of the pillars have long since toppled to the ground, you can still see the recessed areas on some where decorative porcelain vases and offering bowls were placed. There are also about two dozen more recent, and largely unremarkable tombs dating from the 18th or 19th century.

To get here, take any vehicle heading towards Pangani along the coastal road and get out at the turn-off (look for a rusty sign-board). The ruins are about 1km further east on foot, on the far edge of the village (ask for 'magofu'). It's worth getting an early start, as finding a lift back in the afternoon can be difficult. Taxis from town charge from about Tsh12,000 for the round trip.

MUHEZA

Muheza is a scrappy junction town where the roads to Amani Nature Reserve and to Pangani branch off the main Tanga highway. Although well inland, it's culturally very much part of the coastal Tanga region, with a humid climate, strong Swahili influences and surrounding landscapes marked by extensive sisal plantations broken by stands of palms. Muheza's main market and trading area, dominated by rows of rickety wooden market stalls and small corrugated metal-roofed houses, is about 1km uphill from the main highway.

Elephant Guest House (r Tsh10,000), just in from the highway near the main junction and a five-minute walk from the bus stand, has self-contained rooms with TV and meals.

Buses to Amani Nature Reserve leave from the main junction along the road leading up towards the market (see opposite for more details). There are direct buses daily in the mornings from Muheza to Lushoto (Tsh2500, three hours), and throughout the day between Muheza and Tanga (Tsh1000, 45 minutes).

KOROGWE

Korogwe is primarily of interest as a transport junction. In the western part of town, known as 'new' Korogwe, are the bus stand

and several accommodation options. To the east is 'old' Korogwe with the now defunct train station. Southwest of town, a rough road branches down to **Handeni**, known for its beekeeping and honey production, and its hospital.

Motel White Parrot (☎ 027-264 1068, 027-264 0668; main highway; camping per person Tsh10,000, s/d Tsh30,000/35,000; 🚻) is a large roadside rest stop with surprisingly decent rooms, an adjoining large grassy camp site with hot water showers and a cooking area, and a restaurant (meals from Tsh4000). It also has chilled Ceres fruit juices to go and a nice collection of large plastic animals at the entrance.

USAMBARA MOUNTAINS

With their wide vistas, cool climate, winding paths and picturesque villages, the Usambaras are one of northeastern Tanzania's delights. Rural life here revolves around a cycle of bustling, colourful market days that rotate from one village to the next, and is largely untouched by the booming safari scene and influx of fancy 4WDs in nearby Arusha. It's easily possible to spend at least a week trekking from village to village or relaxing in one spot and doing your exploring as a series of day walks.

The Usambaras, which are part of the ancient Eastern Arc chain (see p74), are divided into two ranges separated by a 4km-wide valley. The western Usambaras, around Lushoto, are the most accessible and have the better road network, while the eastern Usambaras, around Amani, are less developed. Both ranges are densely populated, with an average of more than 300 people per sq km. The main tribes are the Sambia, Kilindi, Zigua and Mbugu.

MARKET DAYS

Local villages are especially colourful on market days, when traders come on foot from miles around to peddle their wares:

Bumbuli Saturday, with a smaller market on Tuesday

Lushoto Sunday

Mlalo Wednesday

Soni Tuesday and Friday

Although the climate is comfortable year-round, paths get too muddy for trekking during the rainy season. The best time to visit is from July to October, after the rains and when the air is at its clearest.

AMANI NATURE RESERVE

This often overlooked reserve is located west of Tanga in the heart of the eastern Usambara Mountains. It's a peaceful, lushly vegetated patch of montane forest humming with the sounds of rushing water, chirping insects and singing birds, and is exceptionally rich in unique plant and bird species – a highly worthwhile detour if you are ornithologically or botanically inclined. For getting around, there's a network of short, easy walks along shady forest paths that can be done with or without a guide.

History

Although Amani was only gazetted as a nature reserve in 1997, research in the area began about a century earlier when the Germans established a research station and extensive botanical gardens here. Large areas of forest were cleared and numerous new species introduced. Within a few years the gardens were the largest in Africa, totaling 304 hectares and containing between 600 and 1000 different species of plants, including numerous unique species. Soon thereafter, exploitation of the surrounding forest began and the gardens began to decline. A sawmill was set up and a railway link was built connecting Zigi, about 12km below Amani, with the main Tanga–Moshi line in order to facilitate the transport of timber to the coast.

During the British era, research was shifted to Nairobi, and the railway was replaced by a road linking Amani with Muheza. Many of the facilities at Amani were taken over by the nearby government-run malaria research centre and the gardens fell into neglect.

In more recent years, the real work at Amani has been done within the framework of the East Usambara Conservation Area Management Programme, with funding from the Tanzanian and Finnish governments and the EU. In addition to promoting sustainable resource use by local communities, one of the main focuses of the project has been to facilitate visitor access to the forests of the eastern Usambaras through

establishing a trail network and training local guides.

Information

At Zigi, there is an **information centre** (☎ 8am–5pm) at the old Station Master's House with information about the area's history, plants and animals, the traditional uses of medicinal plants and more.

The main office for the **reserve** (☎ /fax 027-264 0313; adult/child US\$30/5, Tanzania-registered/foreign vehicle Tsh5000/US\$30) is at Amani. The outrageously high entry and guide (per adult/child per day US\$20/10) fees can be paid here or at Zigi.

Most trails take between one and three hours. They are detailed in the booklet, *A Guide to Trails and Drive Routes in Amani Nature Reserve*, on sale at the information centre at Zigi and at the reserve office in Amani. Among the unique bird species you may see are Amani and banded green sunbirds, and the green-headed oriole.

Sleeping & Eating

Camping (per person US\$5) is possible at both Zigi and Amani with your own tent and supplies.

The **Amani Conservation Centre** (☎ 027-264 0313; anr@twiga.com) runs two guesthouses: the **Amani Conservation Centre Rest House** (r without bathroom Tsh10,000) at Amani and the **Zigi Rest House** (r Tsh10,000) at Zigi. Both are reasonably good, with hot water for bathing and filtered water for drinking. The rooms at Zigi have bathrooms and are large (all with three twin beds) and marginally more comfortable, while the setting and rustic atmosphere are better at Amani. Meals (breakfast/lunch/dinner Tsh1500/3000/3000) are available at both, though it's a good idea to bring fruit and snacks as a supplement. The Zigi Rest House is directly opposite the Zigi information centre. To reach the Amani Conservation Centre Rest House, once in Amani continue straight past the main fork, ignoring the 'resthouse' signpost, to the reserve office. The resthouse is next to the office.

Getting There & Away

Amani is 32km northwest of Muheza along a dirt road which is in fair condition the entire way, except for the last 7km, where the road's are rocky and in bad shape (4WD only). There is at least one truck daily between Muheza and Amani (Tsh2000, two hours), continuing on to Kwamkoro, about 9km beyond Amani.

Departures from Muheza are between about 1pm and 2pm. Going in the other direction, transport usually passes Amani (stopping near the conservation centre office) from about 6am.

In the dry season, you can make it in a 2WD as far as Zigi (25km from Muheza), after which you'll need a 4WD. Allow 1½ to two hours between Muheza and Amani, less in a good car with high clearance. You can also walk from Zigi up to Amani along one of the trails, which takes 2½ to three hours. If you're driving from Muheza, the route is straightforward and signposted until the final junction, where you'll see Bulwa signposted to the right; Amani is about 2km further to the left.

LUSHOTO

☎ 027

Lushoto is a leafy highland town nestled in a fertile valley at about 1200m, surrounded by pines and eucalypts mixed with banana plants and other tropical foliage. It's the centre of the western Usambaras and makes an ideal base for treks – guided or on your own – into the surrounding hills.

Lushoto is also the heartland of the WaSambaa people – the name 'Usambara' is a corruption of WaSambaa or WaShambala, meaning 'scattered' – and local culture is strong. Unlike in Muheza and other parts of the Tanga region closer to the coast, where Swahili is used almost exclusively, the local KiSambaa is the language of choice for most residents.

History

Lushoto's charms were first discovered by outsiders during the German era when the town (then known as Wilhelmstal) was a favoured holiday spot for colonial administrators, a local administrative centre and an important mission station. It was even slated at one point to become the colonial capital. Today, thanks

to a temperate climate, it's best known for its bustling market – overflowing with pears, plums and other produce, and at its liveliest on Sundays – and its superb walking. In addition to a handful of colonial-era buildings – notably the German-built churches, the prison and various old country estates – and the paved road leading up from Mombo, the Germans also left a legacy of homemade bread and cheeses, now produced by several missions in the area.

Due in part to the high population density of the surrounding area and the resulting deforestation, erosion has long been a serious concern. Erosion control efforts were first initiated during the British era and today there are various projects under way, which you're likely to see as you hike in the area.

Information

INTERNET ACCESS

Mount Usambara Communication Centre (per hr Tsh2000; ☎ 7.30am-8pm) On the main road, diagonally opposite the bank.

MEDICAL SERVICES

Afro-Medics Duka la Dawa (☎ 8am-1pm & 2-8pm Mon-Sat, 11am-1pm Sun) On the main road, just before Mount Usambara Communications Centre.

MONEY

There's no ATM in Lushoto that accepts international credit cards.

National Microfinance Bank (☎ 8am-3pm Mon-Fri) On the main road. Changes cash and travellers cheques (minimum US\$40 commission for travellers cheques).

TOURIST INFORMATION

Friends of Lushoto Cultural Tourism Centre

(☎ 027-264 0132) Just down the small road running next to the bank. In addition to guides and treks, it also arranges bike rentals and cycling excursions in collaboration with the International Bicycle Fund (www.ibike.org).

Tayodea (☎ 0784-861969; youthall2000@yahoo.com) On the small hill behind the bus stand, and next to New Friends Corner guesthouse. Arranges guides and hikes.

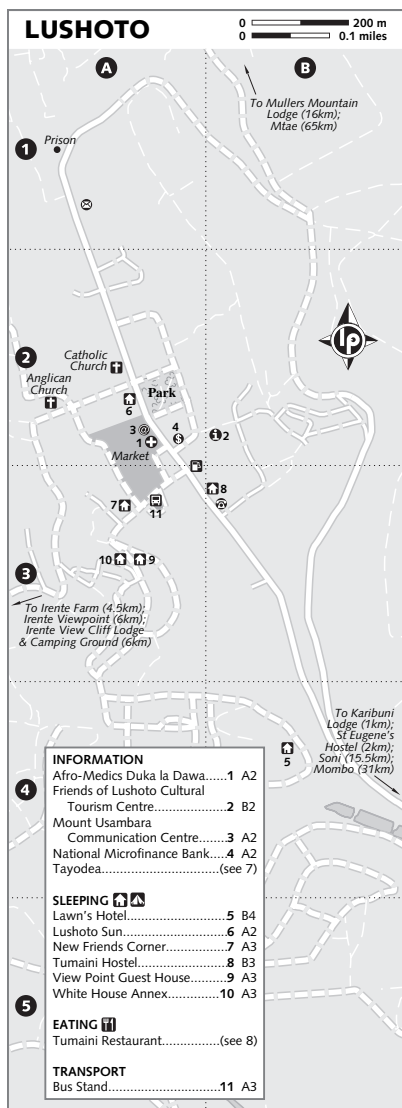
Activities

HIKING

The western Usambaras around Lushoto offer some wonderful walking. Routes follow well-worn footpaths that weave among villages, cornfields and banana plantations, and range from a few hours to several days. It's easy to hike on your own, though you'll need to mas-

GREETINGS IN KISAMBAA

<i>Onga maundo</i>	Good morning
<i>Onga mshee</i>	Good afternoon
<i>Niwedi</i>	I'm fine (in response to <i>Onga maundo</i> or <i>Onga mshee</i>)
<i>Hongea (sana)</i>	Thank you (very much)



ter a few basic Swahili phrases and should also try to get a topographical map of the area from the Surveys & Mapping Division sales office in Dar es Salaam (p85) or carefully study the ones posted on the walls of the two tourist information centres (opposite). Carrying a compass or GPS is a good idea. You should also either carry a tent or plan your route

to go via the handful of villages where local guesthouses are available.

Several of the establishments listed under Sleeping & Eating (p172) can recommend guides and routes, and the two tourist information centres can also help you organise hikes. Don't, however, go with freelancers who aren't associated with an office or reliable hotel. Rates vary depending on the hike, but expect to pay from Tsh8000 per person for a half-day hike to Irente Viewpoint, up to a steep Tsh30,000 to Tsh60,000 per person per day on multiday hikes, including camping or accommodation in very basic guesthouses, guide fees and food. For any hikes that enter forest reserves (which includes most hikes from Lushoto), you'll also need to pay an additional reserve fee of Tsh5000 per person per day (sometimes included in the quoted daily rates). Note that if you're fit and keen on covering some distance, most of the set stages for the popular hikes are quite short and it's easy to do two or even three stages in a day. However, most guides will then want to charge you the full price for the additional days, so you'll need to negotiate an amicable solution. A basic selection of vegetables and fruits is available along most routes and bottled water is sold in several of the larger villages, though if you're hiking on your own, you'll need to carry a filter.

An easy walk to get started is to **Irente Viewpoint** (about 1½ hours return), which begins on the road running southwest from the Anglican church and leads gradually uphill to the viewpoint, with wide views on clear days. It's impressive to see how abruptly the Usambaras rise up from the plains below. En route is **Irente Farm** (☎ 8am-5pm Mon-Fri, 10am-5pm Sat & Sun), where you can buy fresh cheese (it's in stiff but good-natured competition with the nearby Montessori Centre – buy some cheese at both and judge for yourself), homemade rye bread and granola, and also get accommodation.

Another easy walk to do on your own: head north out of Lushoto along the road running between the Catholic and Anglican churches. After about five minutes, bear sharply left and start climbing, following the road past scattered houses and small farm plots. About 35 minutes further on is the royal village of **Kwembago**, the traditional seat of the local Samba chief and notable

CHIEF KIMWERI

Kimweri, chief of the powerful Kilindi (Shambaa) kingdom during the first half of the 19th century, is one of the Usambara region's most legendary figures. From his capital at Vuga (on the main road between Mombo and Lushoto), he ruled over an area stretching from Kilimanjaro in the north to the Indian Ocean in the east, levying tributes on towns as distant as Pangani. The extent of his dominion in the coastal regions soon brought him into conflict with Sultan Seyyid Said of Zanzibar, who also claimed sovereignty over the same areas. Ultimately, the two leaders reached an agreement for joint governance of the northeastern coast. This arrangement lasted until Kimweri's death in 1869, after which the sultan assumed full authority.

Tradition holds that Kimweri had magical powers, including control of the rain and the ability to call down famines upon his enemies. His kingdom was highly organised, divided into sub-chiefdoms ruled by his sons and districts ruled by governors, prime ministers and local army commanders. It was Kimweri to whom the missionary Johann Ludwig Krapf went to request land to build his first church for the Anglican Church Missionary Society.

Following the death of Kimweri, interclan rivalries caused the kingdom to break up, and fighting over who was to succeed him continued until the Germans arrived in the region.

for its large open field and handful of old double-storey, balconied houses. Continue uphill, bear right at the junction, and follow the path around and then down again to the other side of the Lushoto valley, where it joins with the tarmac road heading up to Migambo. For a longer variant, head left at the large junction after Kwembago, and follow footpaths steeply down to the former mission hospital station of **Bumbuli**, where you can find transport back to Lushoto via Soni. From Bumbuli, it's a scenic, gentle climb up and into the cool, lush **Mazumbai Forest Reserve**, which at its higher levels protects some beautiful patches of dense upper montane forest.

There's also a lovely three- to four-day hike that you can do from Lushoto to **Mtae** through stands of pine and past cornfields, villages and patches of wild asters, a five-day walk to Amani Nature Reserve (p169), plus many other possibilities. The tourist information centres have wall maps detailing some of the routes, and several hikes are described in detail in Lonely Planet's *Trekking in East Africa*. Nearby villages where accommodation is available include Bumbuli (with rooms at the old Lutheran mission hospital guesthouse for Tsh10,000), Lukozi (local guesthouse rooms for about Tsh2000), Rangwi (basic rooms in a lovely setting at the local convent), Mtae (local guesthouses) and Mlalo (local guesthouses or the nearby Lutheran mission).

Lushoto can get chilly and wet at any time of year, so bring a waterproof jacket.

CYCLING

Cycling tours in affiliation with **International Bicycle Fund** (www.ibike.org) can be organised at the Friends of Lushoto Cultural Tourism Centre (p170). A seven-day tour from Lushoto to Same via Mkomazi costs US\$350 per person (minimum three people) including bicycle and helmet rental, plus extra if a support vehicle is needed. Contact International Bicycle Fund directly or in Lushoto email ymadiwa@yahoo.com.

Sleeping & Eating IN TOWN

Budget

Karibuni Lodge (☎ 027-264 0104; camping Tsh5000, dm Tsh8000, r Tsh15,000-20,000) Very faded these days and with only a trickle of custom, this private house has a handful of spacious rooms, including some with bathroom, and meals available with a half-day's notice. It's signposted about 1.5km south of the town centre near the district hospital, set back from the main road in a patch of trees; ask the bus driver to drop you at the hospital.

Lushoto Sun (☎ 027-264 0082; s/d Tsh12,000/15,000) Rooms here are a bit cramped, but clean and with hot water. Out front is a restaurant serving *ugali* and other inexpensive dishes. It's on the main road, just south of the Catholic church.

Tumaini Hostel (☎ 027-264 0094; tumaini@elct-ned.org; s/d US\$10/17, ste US\$25) This hostel offers rather unatmospheric but spotless twin-bedded rooms with nets and hot-water showers in a two-storey compound overlooking small gar-

dens. It's well located in the town centre near the Telecom building and just behind **Tumaini Restaurant** (☎ 027-264 0027; Main Rd; meals from Tsh1200; 🍳 breakfast, lunch & dinner), which has great banana milkshakes, plus the usual assortment of standard fare, all well-prepared.

Near the market and bus stand area there are lots of no-frills guesthouses, all with serviceable, undistinguished rooms and hot-water buckets on request. **White House Annex** (d without bathroom Tsh7000, s/d Tsh8000/9500) is cramped and somewhat noisy, though it's arguably the best of the bunch, with hot water and meals on order. Others – all more basic – include **View Point Guest House** (☎ 027-264 0031; r without bathroom Tsh5500), where you should ask for rooms in the annexe, and **New Friends Corner** (s without bathroom Tsh4500, d Tsh6000), next to the Tayodea tourist information centre, with noisy but quite OK rooms. To reach all, head left when coming out of the bus park and go over the small footbridge. New Friends Corner is straight ahead. White House Annex is left and up the hill, and View Point is diagonally opposite White House.

For camping in town, the best bet is Lawn's Hotel (see following).

Midrange

Lawn's Hotel (☎ 027-264 0005, 0784-420252; lawnstony@yahoo.com; camping per person with hot shower US\$6, s/d US\$40/45; 📺) This Lushoto institution is full of charm, with vine-covered buildings surrounded by extensive green lawns and gardens, spacious, musty rooms with dark-wood floors, a fireplace, a small library and a bar. If the rooms could be given an airing out and staff given an injection of energy, it would be thoroughly recommendable. As it is though, it's one of the better bets for camping (on the surrounding lawns) and quite a reasonable choice for a double. It's at the entrance to town and signposted – follow the unpaved road up and around to the main entrance. Meals at the restaurant cost about Tsh8000.

St Eugene's Hostel (☎ 027-264 0055, 0784-523710; steugenes_hostel@yahoo.com; s/tw/tr US\$20/36/42) This quiet place has spotless, comfortable and spacious rooms, all with good hot showers and balconies with views over the hills. It's run by an order of sisters and profits go to support their work with local children, including a school on the premises. Meals are available, and homemade cheese and jam are available for sale. St Eugene's is along the main road

about 3km before Lushoto, on the left coming from Soni. Ask the bus driver to drop you at the Montessori Centre.

OUTSIDE TOWN

Budget & Midrange

Irente Farm (☎ 027-264 0000, 0784-502935; murless@elct.org; camping per person Tsh3000, r without bathroom Tsh6000, d Tsh18,000-30,000) This rustic place about a 4.5km walk from town has camping, as well as a few tiny rooms sharing ablutions (cold water only). Also at Irete Farm are converted farm buildings that can be rented as a six-bed/two-room self-catering house with a kitchen (bring your own food), plus two simple doubles and a triple room. All are attached and the entire lodge can be rented out for Tsh78,000 (sleeps up to nine people). Irete Farm also prepares picnic lunches for Tsh3000 per person (minimum Tsh5000, order in advance).

Irente View Cliff Lodge (☎ 027-264 0026; www.irentevue.com; s/d from US\$50/65) Stunning views over the plains below on clear days from all the rooms compensate for the somewhat over-furnished interior at this new lodge, which is built on the edge of a cliff on the choicest piece of property in the Lushoto area and about 1.5km beyond Irete Farm directly at Irete Viewpoint. Just below is a grassy camping ground (camping per person US\$5, with tent rental US\$15) with hot-water showers. Transport to/from Lushoto costs US\$20 per vehicle for up to six people round-trip.

About 15km outside Lushoto near Migambo village are several more places, all well situated for walking and reasonable options if you have your own transport.

Mullers Mountain Lodge (☎ 026-264 0204; mullersmountainlodge@yahoo.com; camping Tsh5000, s/d/f US\$30/40/60) An old family homestead set in sprawling grounds, with rooms in the main house or, for a bit more privacy, in nearby cottages, plus meals (from Tsh6000). There are also a few less appealing cement huts with shared bathroom and a large grassy camping area with a covered cooking area. Transport from Lushoto can be arranged.

Getting There & Away

There are *dalla-dallas* throughout the day between Lushoto and Mombo (Tsh2000, one hour), the junction town on the main highway.

Daily direct buses travel between Lushoto and Tanga (Tsh4000, four hours) on Sashui

COMMUNITY TOURISM SPOTLIGHT: ST MARY'S MAZINDE JUU

Tucked away in the Usambara Mountains near Lushoto, in the tiny village of Mazinde Juu, is St Mary's Secondary School, an impressive educational success story. The school was founded in 1989 by a Benedictine missionary, based on the idea that Tanzania's long-term development can only be achieved through the education and empowerment of the country's women. The area around Mazinde Juu – long neglected and lagging behind much of the rest of the region economically – was an ideal place to put this belief into practice. Most local families made (and continue to make) their living from small-scale farming, and education for girls, especially secondary education, was traditionally perceived as an unattainable or unnecessary luxury.

Initially, the school had only basic resources and just 42 girls. Today, it has around 350 students and is ranked near the top among the approximately 60 girls' schools and in the top 10 of about 600 secondary schools in the country. Its reputation has also spread well beyond the Usambara Mountains; close to 700 girls from all over Tanzania competed in the most recent entrance exam for places, although true to its original mission, the school reserves 50% of its seats for applicants from the Lushoto–Mazinde Juu area.

While St Mary's is still dependent on outside contributions to make ends meet (write to PO Box 90, Lushoto if you'd like to help), strong emphasis is placed on achieving sustainability. The principal and all of the teachers are Tanzanians, and most are women. Students are taught ecologically sound farming methods and help out on the school farm, which supplies about 80% of the food needs in the compound. The school grows timber, which is used in the construction of new buildings, raises livestock and maintains fruit trees as cash crops.

Although St Mary's is less than two decades old, there is already tangible proof of its success. Several former students are now teaching at the school and at other schools in the area. Others are pursuing further professional training, including nursing and accountancy, and some are studying at university level.

and Tashrif lines, departing at 7am and 9am; Lushoto and Dar es Salaam (Tsh7000, six to seven hours) on Mbaruku and Shambalali lines, departing at 6am, 8am 9am and noon; and Lushoto and Arusha (Tsh9000, six hours) on Fasaha and Chakito lines, departing at 6.30am and 7am. All of these buses stop for a while in Mombo to collect more passengers. If you're going from Lushoto to either Dar es Salaam, Moshi or Arusha, it often works out just as fast to take a *dalla-dalla* or taxi (Tsh25,000) to Mombo, and then get one of the larger express buses to Dar es Salaam. The place to wait is at New Liverpool Hotel, on the main highway about 1km west of the Mombo junction, where all the Dar es Salaam–Arusha buses stop for a rest break. Buses from Dar es Salaam begin arriving at the New Liverpool Hotel from about 10am.

To get to the lodges near Migambo (Mullers Mountain Lodge), take the road heading uphill and northeast of town to Magamba, turn right at the signposted junction and continue for about 7km to Migambo junction. Mullers is about 1km further down the Migambo road and signposted. Via public

transport, there's a daily bus between Tanga and Kwamakame that goes to within around 2km of Mullers, departing Tanga at about 9am or 10am and reaching the Migambo area at around 2pm.

AROUND LUSHOTO Mtae

Tiny Mtae is perched on a cliff about 55km northwest of Lushoto, with fantastic 270-degree views over the Tsavo Plains and down to Mkomazi Game Reserve. It makes a good destination if you only have time to visit one village from Lushoto. Just to the southeast of Mtae is **Shagayu Peak** (2220m), one of the highest peaks in the Usambara Mountains. In addition to its many hiking paths, the area is also known for its traditional healers.

Staff at the Lutheran church will usually allow you to camp on their grounds, or there's the no-frills **Muivano II Guest House** (s/d without bathroom Tsh2500/3500) near the bus stand. Meals are available up the road at Muivano I.

Near Sunga village, 7km southwest of Mtae, there's camping at **Limbe Travellers Camp** (per person Tsh5000) in green grounds about 1km south of the village along the main road.

The road between Lushoto and Mtae is full of turns and hills, and particularly beautiful as it winds its way up the final 7km to Mtae. If travelling by public transport you'll need to spend at least one night in Mtae as buses from Lushoto (Tsh2500, four hours) travel only in the afternoons, departing Lushoto by about 1pm. The return buses from Mtae to Lushoto depart between 4am and 5.30am en route to Dar es Salaam. There are no *dalla-dallas* on the Mtae–Lushoto route.

Mlalo

Set in a valley cut through by the Uмба River, Mlalo is an incongruous place with a Wild West feel, a modest selection of basics and a guesthouse. Nearby is **Kitala Hill**, home of one of the Usambara subchiefs. The walk between Mlalo and Mtae (five to six hours, 21km) is beautiful, passing by terraced hillsides, picturesque villages and patches of forest.

Afilfx Guest House (r without bathroom Tsh3000) in the town centre has no-frills rooms with shared bucket showers and meals.

Lutheran Mission (r Tsh4000) sometimes also takes travellers. It's away from the town centre – cross the bridge from the bus stand and head right, asking directions as you go.

Buses run daily between Dar es Salaam and Mlalo via Lushoto, departing Lushoto by about 1pm, and Mlalo by about 5am (Tsh3000 between Mlalo and Lushoto). There are also sporadic *dalla-dallas* between Lushoto and Mlalo.

Soni

Tiny Soni lacks Lushoto's infrastructure, but makes a good change of pace if you'll be staying for a while in the Usambaras. It's known for nearby **Kwa Mungu mountain**, about 30 minutes away on foot, and for the small **Soni Falls**, which you can see to the left along the road coming up from Mombo. Soni is also the starting point for several wonderful walks, including a two- to three-day hike to the Mazumbai Forest Reserve and Bumbuli town (per person per day Tsh50,000), and a short stroll (three to five hours return) to pine-clad **Sakharani**, a Benedictine mission that sells locally produced wine. There's also a lovely, longer walk from Maweni Farm (right) up to Gare Mission and then on to Lushoto. The area around Gare – one of the first missions in the area – was reforested as part of erosion control efforts, and it's

interesting to see the contrast with some of the treeless, more eroded areas surrounding. After Gare, and as a detour en route to Lushoto, stop at the village of **Kwai**, where there's a women's pottery project. Kwai was also an early research post for soil science and erosion control efforts. Guides for all routes from Soni can be arranged at Maweni Farm or in Lushoto.

Budget sleeping options include **Kimalube Guest House** (r Tsh5000), with a few dusty rooms and no food about 1.5km downhill from Soni along the road to Mombo, and **Kwamongo Guest House** (r Tsh4000), with basic, grubby rooms – most with two large beds – in a central location five minutes' walk from the main junction (signposted).

No-frills and somewhat dilapidated rooms are available at **Old Soni Falls Hotel** (r Tsh15,000), but the setting is good, overlooking the valley and hills beyond. There's no food, though this may change. It's just uphill from the main junction along the Mombo road and signposted.

Soni Falls Resort (☎ 0784-384603, 0784-510523; d & tr Tsh28,000, f Tsh48,000) offers three enormous, good-value rooms – all with hard-wood flooring and lots of windows – in an old restored colonial-era house perched on a hill overlooking the valley. Apart from continental breakfast, there are no meals, but once a chef is found, food will be available. It's about 100m uphill from the main junction and signposted.

Maweni Farm (☎ 027-264 0426, 0784-279371; www.maweni.com/lodge; s/d safari tent with half board €47/64, s/d without bathroom with half board €30/46, ste with half board €64/78) is an atmospheric old farmhouse is set in lush, rambling grounds about 3km from the main junction, against a backdrop of twittering birds, flowering gardens and a pond covered with water lilies, with Kwa Mungu mountain rising up behind. The recently renovated rooms – some in the main house and some in a separate block – are spacious and quite comfortable. There are also four en suite safari-style tents, plus meals prepared with produce from the organic garden and guides for organising walks. Maweni is 2.9km from the main Soni junction along a rough road and signposted.

Soni is about 12km below Lushoto along the Mombo road, and easy to reach via *dalla-dalla* from either destination (Tsh750 from Lushoto, Tsh1000 from Mombo). Maweni Farm provides free pick-ups if you're staying in its rooms.

Mombo to Same

Mombo is the scruffy junction town at the foot of the Usambara Mountains where the road to Lushoto branches off the main Dar es Salaam–Arusha highway. There's no recommendable accommodation in Mombo, though as most buses from either Arusha or Dar pass at a reasonable hour, you should have no trouble getting a *dalla-dalla* up to Soni or Lushoto to sleep.

Better than staying in Mombo is to head out to **Tembo Lodge & Campsite** (☎ 027-264 1530/9, 0784-663205; tembo.lodges@iwayafrica.com; camping per site US\$4, s/d US\$14/18; 📍), at the foot of the mountains about 15km west of town. In addition to camping, it has rooms, food, a bar and a swimming pool, and staff will come to collect you for free in Mombo. There are also numerous hikes in the area. It's about 1km off the main highway and signposted.

Further up, about 45km northwest of Mombo, is **Pangani River Campsite** (camping per person with shower US\$5) on the Pangani River, with hot-water showers. It's just off the main road and signposted.

PARE MOUNTAINS

The seldom-visited Pare Mountains – divided into northern and southern ranges – lie southeast of Kilimanjaro and northwest of the Usambara range. Like the Usambaras, they form part of the ancient Eastern Arc chain, and their steep cliffs and forested slopes host an impressive number of unique birds and plants. Also like the Usambaras, the Pares are densely populated, with many small villages linked by a network of paths and tracks. The main ethnic group here is the Pare (also called the Asu). While there are some historical and linguistic differences among various Pare groups, socially they are considered to be a single ethnic entity.

The Pare Mountains are not as accessible or developed for tourism as the Usambaras, and for any exploring you'll be largely on your own. Thanks to the relative isolation, the traditions and folklore of the Pare have remained largely untouched. Also, unlike the Usambaras, there is no major base with developed infrastructure from where a series of hikes can be undertaken. The best way to begin exploration is to head to Mwanza and then up to Usangi (for the north Pares) or

Same and then up to Mbaga (for the south Pares). From both Usangi and Mbaga, there are various hikes, ranging from half a day to three days or more, and English-speaking guides can be arranged.

Information

Lodging and food in the Pares are, for the most part, very basic. With the exception of Hill-Top Tona Lodge in Mbaga, most accommodation is with villagers or camping (for which you'll need your own equipment). Prices for both average Tsh4000 to Tsh7000 per person per night. For all destinations, except Mbaga and Usangi, it's a good idea to bring a portable stove.

There's currently no organised tourism programme in either Same or Mwanza, but one is planned for Same and meanwhile a few enterprising locals are filling in the gap, with routes and hikes modelled on those from a previously existing cultural tourism programme. The best places to arrange guides are Hill-Top Tona Lodge in Mbaga or at local guesthouses in Usangi. Elephant Motel in Same can also put you in touch with guides. For organised hikes, expect to pay from about Tsh8000 per group per day for guide fees, plus about Tsh4000 per person per day for village fees and about Tsh3000 per person per meal. Fees for guides arranged in Same are a bit higher – about Tsh20,000 per person per day including a guide, camping fees and meals. There is a Tsh5000 per visit forest fee for any walks that go into forest reserves, including walks to Shengena Peak. The fees are payable at the Catchment office in Same or through your guide. For any hikes done with guides, the stages are generally quite short – two or three can usually be easily combined for anyone who's reasonably fit – although your guide will still expect you to pay for the same number of days.

The Pares can be visited comfortably at any time of year, except during the March to May long rains, when paths become too muddy.

SAME

Same (*sah-may*) is a lively market town and the largest settlement in the southern Pares. You'll need to pass through here to get to Mbaga, the centre for hikes in this area. Unlike Lushoto in the Usambaras, Same has essentially no tourist infrastructure and the town is more suitable as a starting point for

PARE CULTURE

The Pare (locally, WaPare) hail from the Taita Hills area of southern Kenya, where they were herders, hunters and farmers. It was the Maasai, according to Pare oral traditions, who pursued them into the mountains, capturing and stealing their cattle. Today, many Pare are farmers, cultivating plots of vegetables, maize, bananas, cassava and cardamom. Thanks to significant missionary activity, the Pare also distinguish themselves as being among Tanzania's most educated groups. During the 1940s, leading Pares formed the Wapare Union, which played an important role in the drive for independence.

Traditional Pare society is patrilineal. Fathers are considered to have great authority during their lifetime as well as after death, and all those descended from a single man through male links share a sense of common fate. Once a man dies, his ghost influences all male descendants for as long as the ghost's name is remembered. After this, the dead man's spirit joins a collectively influential body of ancestors. Daughters are also dependent on the goodwill of their father. Yet, since property and status are transmitted through the male line, a father's ghost only has influence over his daughter's descendants until her death.

The Pare believe that deceased persons possess great powers, and thus have developed elaborate rituals centred on the dead. Near most villages are sacred areas where the skulls of tribal chiefs are kept, although you're unlikely to see these unless you spend an extended period in the mountains. When people die, they are believed to inhabit a nether world between the land of the living and the spirit world. If they are allowed to remain in this state, ill fate will befall their descendants. The prescribed rituals allowing the deceased to pass into the world of the ancestors are of great importance.

To learn more about Pare culture, look for copies of *The Shambaa Kingdom* by Steven Feierman (1974), on which some of this section was based, and the intriguing *Lute: The Curse and the Blessing* by Jakob Janssen Dannholz (revised translated edition 1989), who established the first mission station at Mbaga.

excursions into the Pares rather than as a base. If you do want to stay a few days before heading into the villages, there are several walks into the hills behind town, although for most of the better destinations you will need to take local transport at least part of the way. Sunday is the main market day, when traders from towns all over the Pares come to trade their wares.

The Catchment office (for paying forest reserve fees) is at the end of town, on the main road past the market.

There's currently no reliable internet connection in town. National Microfinance Bank (go left out of the bus stand, up one block, then left again) changes cash.

Amani Lutheran Centre (☎ 027-275 8107; s/d Tsh7000/10,000) offers simple, clean rooms around a quiet compound, and has meals available on order. It's along the main road, just south of the market, and about five minutes' walk from the bus stand.

Same's most 'upmarket' accommodation, **Elephant Motel** (☎ 027-275 8193; www.elephantmotel.com; camping per person US\$5, s/tw/tr US\$20/25/30) has faded but reasonable rooms, a cavernous res-

taurant serving up decent meals, and a TV. It's on the main highway about 1km southeast of town.

Most buses on the Dar es Salaam–Arusha highway stop at Same on request. Otherwise, *dalla-dalla* travel daily between Same, Dar es Salaam and Moshi, leaving Same in the morning. There is a direct bus between Arusha and Same, departing Arusha at around 8am (Tsh4000, 2½ hours). To Mbaga, there are one or two vehicles daily, departing Same between 11am and 2pm.

MBAGA

Mbaga (also known as Mbaga-Manka), perched in the hills southeast of Same at about 1350m, is a good base for hikes deeper into the surrounding southern Pare mountains. You can also walk from here in two or three days to the top of **Shengena Peak** (2462m), the highest peak in the Pares. Mbaga, an old Lutheran mission station, has long been an influential town because of its location near the centre of the Pare Mountains, and even today, it is in many respects a more important local centre than Same.

A popular three-day circular route is from Mbaga to **Chome** village, where you can spend a night before ascending Shengena Peak on the second day and then returning to Mbaga.

The rustic **Hill-Top Tona Lodge** (☎ 0754-852010; tona_lodge@hotmail.com; camping per person Tsh7000, r per person without bathroom US\$10) is the former mission house of Jakob Dannholz (see the boxed text, p177) and one of the best bases in the Pares, with good views, helpful staff, simple cottages and reasonable hiking prices (guides Tsh8000 per group of up to three people; village development fee Tsh3000 per person per day). Traditional dancing performances (about Tsh10,000 per small group) and other activities can also be arranged. Meals are available (Tsh3000).

Kisaka Villa Inn (☎ 027-275 6722; kisakas@yahoo.co.uk; camping per person US\$10, r per person with half board US\$50) is an amenable although rather over-priced mountain lodge in a good setting in Chome village.

There are one or two vehicles daily around midday between Same and Mbaga, with the last one departing Same by about 2pm (Tsh3000, two to three hours, 40km). If you're coming from Moshi, this means that you'll need to get a bus by 8am in order to get to Mbaga the same day. Coming from Dar es Salaam, you'll probably need to stay overnight in Same. Hiring a vehicle up to Mbaga costs about Tsh40,000 one way; ask Elephant Motel or one of the other Same guesthouses to help you arrange this. From Mbaga back to Same, transport departs by 6am or earlier. It's also possible to catch one of the several daily *dalla-dallas* running from Same to Kisiwani, and then walk about 5km uphill to Mbaga. There's also a daily bus between Same and Chome village, departing Same about 2pm.

If you're driving to Mbaga, there is an alternative route via Mwembe, which can be reached by following the Dar es Salaam–Arusha highway 5km south to the dirt road leading off to the left.

MWANGA & AROUND

This district capital sprawls across the plains at the foot of the Pares about 50km north of Same on the Dar es Salaam–Arusha highway. Once away from the scruffy central junction and old market area, it's a shady, pleasant town with wide, unpaved roads, large swathes of green and stands of palm. The main reason to come here is to change vehicles to get to

Usangi, the starting point for excursions in the northern Pares.

For overnight stays, try **Anjela Inn** (☎ 027-275 8381; d Tsh10,000, in newer annexe Tsh15,000), with clean, albeit noisy doubles with nets in the main building and similar but larger and somewhat quieter rooms in a house next door, plus meals. It's about 10 minutes on foot from the highway and bus stand – follow the main road in towards the 'new' market, turn left down a wide, tree-lined lane at the clutch of signboards, and then keep straight on.

About 10km south of Mwanga is **Kisangara Chini**, the site of a cultural tourism programme of sorts that offers the chance to do some walking and to visit a herbal hospital. At the nearby **Nyumba ya Mungu (House of God) Reservoir**, there are Luo fishing communities that originally migrated here from the Lake Victoria area. Take any bus heading south from Mwanga and ask the driver to drop you at Kisangara Chini, from where the tourism programme base is about a 30-minute walk eastwards; ask for the Hasha Project, which also has a camp site and simple rooms. Costs, including guide fees and lunch, total about Tsh22,000 per day, more for overnight and meals, or to hire a vehicle to visit the reservoir.

USANGI

Pretty Usangi, lying in a valley ringed by mountains about 25km east of Mwanga, is the centre of the northern Pares and a possible base for exploring the region.

The main point of interest in town as far as hiking is concerned is **Lomwe Secondary School**, where you can arrange guides. There's a camp site here with water, and the school serves as a **hostel** (camping & dm per person Tsh3000) when classes are not in session. If you can't find anyone at the school, ask for Mr Kangero. Other than Lomwe, accommodation options include homestays in the village (generally in houses near the school) or in **Usangi Guesthouse** (r without bathroom Tsh4000), near the main mosque, with basic rooms and food.

In addition to short jaunts, it's possible to hike in a long day through Kindoroko Forest Reserve (which begins about 7km south of Usangi village) to the top of Mt Kindoroko (2113m), the highest peak in the northern Pares. From the upper slopes of Mt Kindoroko, it's possible to see over the Maasai Steppe to the west and to Lake Jipe and into Kenya to the northeast.

Several small pick-ups and *dalla-dallas* run daily along the unpaved but decent road between Mwangi and Usangi (Tsh2000, 1½ hours), from around 10am. Hiring a taxi costs Tsh30,000. From Arusha and Moshi there is also a direct bus to Usangi, departing in the morning (four hours from Arusha). Ask the driver to drop you at Lomwe Secondary School. To give yourself time to get here and organise things, allow at least two days for an excursion to Usangi.

MKOMAZI GAME RESERVE

The wild and undeveloped Mkomazi Game Reserve (Mkomazi-Umba Game Reserve) – soon to be gazetted as Mkomazi National Park – spreads along the Kenya border in the shadow of the Pare Mountains, its dry savannah lands contrasting sharply with the moist forests of the Pares. The reserve, which is contiguous with Kenya's Tsavo West National Park, is known for its black rhinos, which were introduced into the area from South Africa for breeding and are part of a pioneering and little-publicised conservation success story (for more, see the highly informative www.wildlifefor.com and www.ifaw.org/ifaw/general/default.aspx?oid=82095). There are currently nine rhinos (up from zero since 1989, when Tony Fitzjohn – the force behind conservation work in Mkomazi – started his work there), including three babies. All are within a heavily protected 45-sq-km enclosure built around Hafino Mountain in the north-central part of the reserve and not viewable as part of general tourism.

In addition to the rhinos, there are wild dogs (also reintroduced and, as part of a special endangered species programme, also not viewable as part of general tourism). Animals that you're more likely to spot include oryx, eland, dik-dik, the rarely seen gerenuk, kudu, Coke's hartebeest and an array of birds. The huge seasonal elephant herds that once crossed regularly between Tsavo and Mkomazi are also beginning to come back, after reaching a low point of just a dozen elephants in the area in 1989, although elephants still are not commonly spotted in Mkomazi. The main reasons for coming to Mkomazi – apart from enjoying the wonderful Babu's Camp – are to appreciate the alluring wilderness area and

evocative nyika bush landscapes studded with baobab and thorn acacia and broken by low, rocky hills. Despite its relative ease of access, Mkomazi is still well away from the beaten track and offers a true wilderness experience. Guided bush walks, including evening walks, are another attraction.

Information

Reserve admission currently costs US\$20 per day and camping costs US\$20/5 per adult /child, though these fees will almost certainly increase within the lifetime of this book, once Mkomazi's national park status is formalised. The main entrance to the reserve is at Zange Gate, about 5km east of Same, which is also the location of **reserve headquarters** (☎ 027-275 8249; 🕒 9am-4pm) and the place to arrange an armed ranger for bush walks. Significant sections of Mkomazi's road network were long impassable during the rainy season, although main routes (including the road from Zange Gate to Babu's Camp) are in the process of being made all-weather. Despite this, 4WD is necessary for a visit. Guides for bush walks cost US\$20.

Sleeping & Eating

There is a basic camp site (bring everything with you) at Ibaya, about 15km from Zange Gate, and several other cleared areas elsewhere in the reserve without any facilities where camping is permitted.

Babu's Camp (☎ 027-250 3094, 0784-402266; babuscamp@bol.co.tz; s/d full board US\$248/440) This classic safari-style camp is reason enough to visit Mkomazi. It has just five tents, all well spaced and set amid baobabs and thorn acacias in the northern part of the reserve looking towards the Gulela Hills. The cuisine is wonderful, staff attentive and the entire ambience, together with the evocative surrounding landscapes, recalls quintessential East Africa. Wildlife drives and walks – including to a nearby rock pool and stream, or further afield – can be arranged, as can night drives.

Getting There & Away

Via public transport, *dalla-dallas* between Same and Mbaga can drop you at Zange Gate, from where you can arrange guides and begin a walking safari. Babu's Camp provides transfers for its guests.

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