

Western Tanzania



The west is Tanzania's rough, remote frontier land, with few tourists, minimal infrastructure, vast trackless expanses crossed only by the ageing Central Line train and little to draw you here – unless you're interested in chimpanzees. For this, and for watching wildlife in one of Tanzania's most pristine settings, it's a fascinating destination.

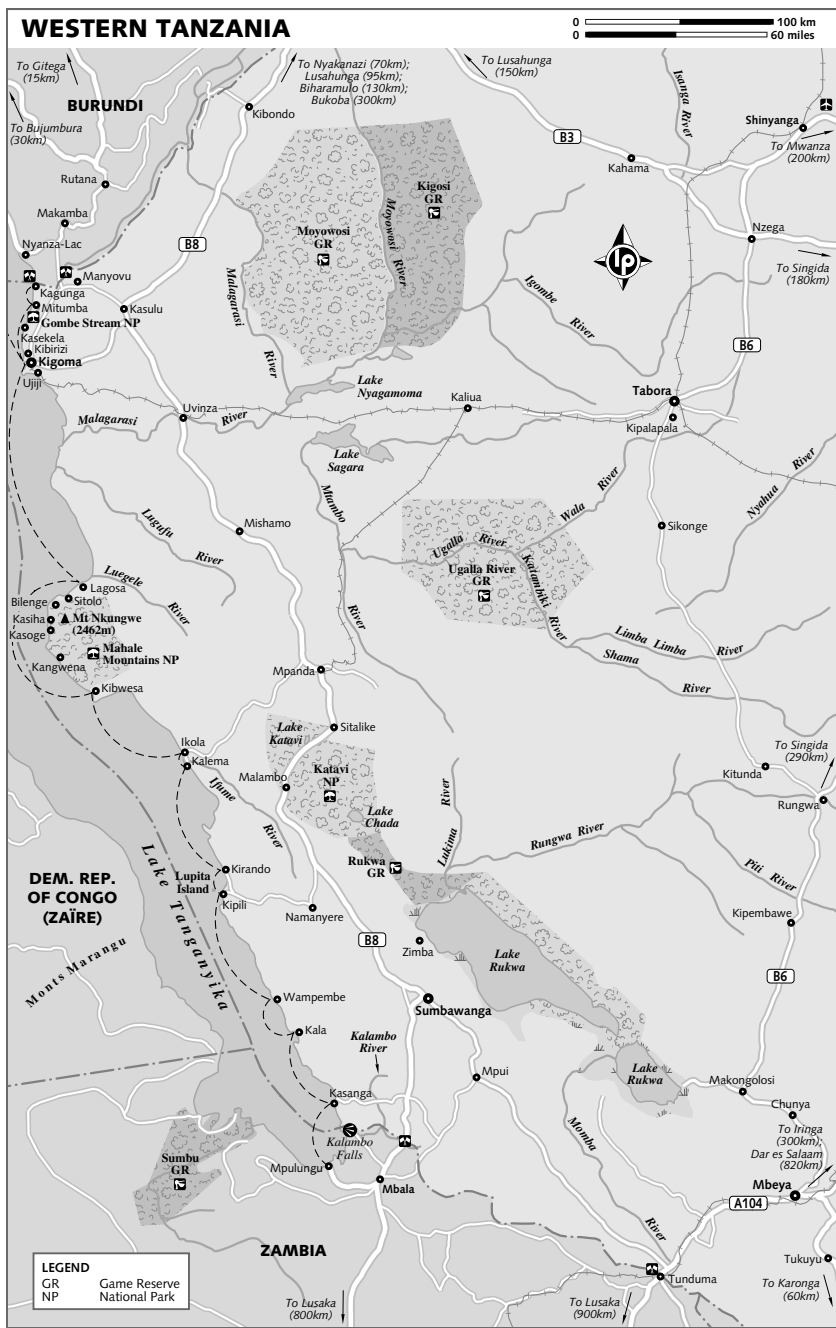
Gombe Stream National Park – Jane Goodall's world-renowned chimpanzee research station – and Mahale Mountains National Park offer excellent opportunities to get close to our primate cousins. At Katavi National Park, you'll be just a speck in the surrounding universe of vast floodplains trammelled by thousands of buffaloes, plus zebras, lions and more. Those with a sense of adventure and imagination can visit tiny Ujiji. Now it's a nondescript fishing village, but in its heyday it was the terminus of one of East Africa's most important caravan routes, linking Lake Tanganyika with Bagamoyo and the sea, an important dhow-building centre and a way station for several European expeditions. Lake Tanganyika itself is a scenic and useful transport route if you are heading to or from northern Zambia, and makes a welcome respite from dusty, bumpy roads, with some unforgettable sunset views.

Wherever you go, travel in western Tanzania is rugged, and you will need plenty of time. There are few roads (none of them good), and often the only transport choices are boat, train or truck. Outside of Kigoma, Tabora and the national parks, the region is seldom visited and has few facilities.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Experiencing the primeval rhythms of nature in **Katavi National Park** (p270)
- Visiting **Mahale Mountains National Park** (p267) – the ultimate 'get-away-from-it-all' destination
- Mingling with the chimps at **Gombe Stream National Park** (p265)
- Kicking back on the shores of **Lake Tanganyika** (p262), or sailing towards Zambia on the *Liemba* ferry
- Following the old caravan routes to **Tabora** (p259) or **Ujiji** (p265), or enjoying the modest creature comforts and urban outpost ambience of **Kigoma** (p262)





National Parks & Reserves

Gombe Stream (p265) and Mahale Mountains (p267) offer the chance to observe chimpanzees at close range, while Katavi (p270) is one of Africa's last great frontier destinations, with top-notch dry season wildlife watching.

Game reserves include Moyowosi, Kigosi, Ugalla River and Rukwa, although none are developed for tourism.

Getting There & Around

There are airports at Kigoma and Tabora, and airstrips in Katavi and Mahale Mountains National Parks.

Roads are in generally poor condition, and self-drivers will need a 4WD, and good supplies of time, spare equipment and mechanical knowledge. Buses run along major routes, although they're prone to breakdowns and journeys can be long and rough. The Central Line train was once a good alternative, but today it's increasingly unreliable, although still worth considering if you have plenty of time. Along Lake Tanganyika, the *Liemba* ferry makes a fine travel alternative for the adventurous.

TABORA

☎ 026

Tabora – a sleepy town basking in the shade of numerous mango and flame trees – was once a major trading centre along the old caravan route connecting Lake Tanganyika with Bagamoyo and the sea. Known in early days as Kازه, it was the domain of Mirambo, famed king of the Nyamwezi (People of the Moon) tribe, as well as headquarters of infamous slave trader Tippu Tib (see the boxed text, p261). A string of European explorers passed through its portals, most notably Stanley and Livingstone, and Burton and Speke. Stanley, waxing lyrical over the town, noted that it contained 'over a thousand huts and tembes, and one may safely estimate the population...at five thousand people.' After the Central Line railway was constructed, Tabora became the largest town in German East Africa.

By the turn of the 19th century Tabora had also become an important mission station. It soon also gained prominence as a regional educational centre – a reputation that it has somewhat managed to retain even today – and Julius Nyerere attended school here.

Today Tabora is still an important transport junction where the Central Line

branches for Mwanza and Kigoma. It's also the traditional heartland of the Nyamwezi, one of Tanzania's largest tribal groups. If you're travelling by train, you'll probably need to spend at least a day here, and it's worth spending a few more for a glimpse into a Tanzania well away from Zanzibar and the northern safari circuits.

Note that many locals refer to Lumumba St as Kazima Rd (its easterly extension).

Information

CRDB Bank (Jamhuri St) Has an ATM (accepts Visa).

NBC (Market St) Changes cash and travellers cheques; has an ATM (Visa only).

Post Office Internet Café (Jamhuri St; per hr Tsh1000; ☎ 8am–6pm Mon–Fri, 9am–6pm Sat & Sun)

Tabora On-Line (Lumumba St; per hr Tsh1000; ☎ 8am–5.30pm) Next to the library and opposite the Mohammed Trans office.

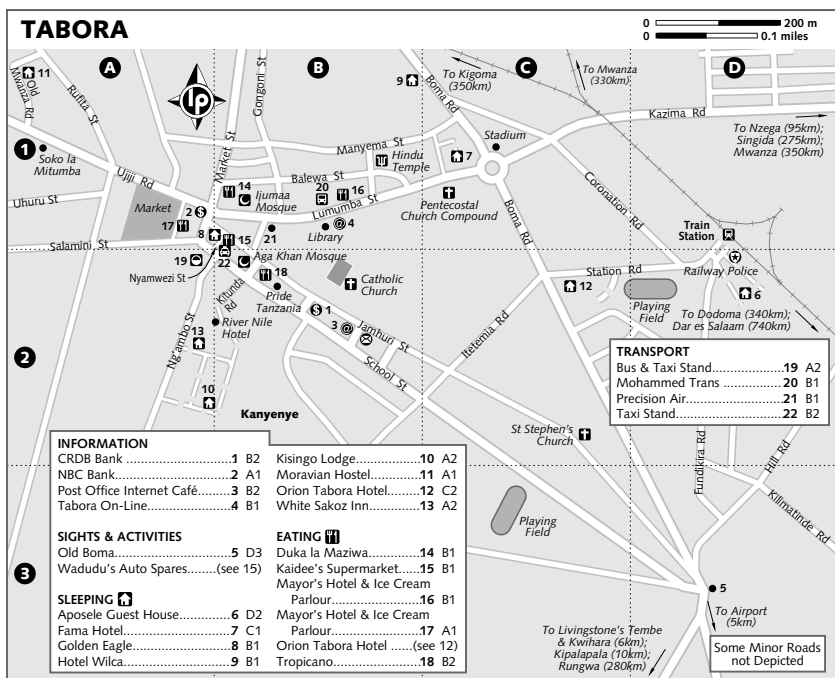
Sights & Activities

There are a few buildings dating back to the German era, including the **train station** and the old **boma**, at the end of Boma Rd. The main attraction, however, is the deep maroon-coloured and well-maintained **Livingstone's tembe** (admission Tsh2000; ☎ 8am–5pm), a flat-roofed Arabic-style house about 6km southwest of town in Kwiwaha, off the Kipalapala road. It was here that Livingstone stayed in 1872 after being found by Stanley in Ujiji, and the house – now a small museum – still holds some of his memorabilia, including letters, a diary and other items. To get here, take any *dalla-dalla* (minibus) heading to Kipalapala and have them drop you at the turn-off (to the right, when coming from Tabora), from where it's about 2km further on foot. Taxis from town charge about Tsh6000 return. Once at the tembe, you'll need to find the caretaker to let you in – he lives about 500m away and will probably come bicycling down if he sees visitors. Otherwise, ask anyone in the village for 'Livingstone' and they'll point you in the right direction.

Sleeping

BUDGET

Moravian Hostel (☎ 026-260 4710, 0787-401613; Old Mwanza Rd; s/d in new wing Tsh5000/8000, d without bathroom in old wing Tsh3000) Spartan twin-bed rooms with mosquito nets in a quiet compound about 2km from the train station, and about 10 minutes' walk from the bus station. Follow



the unpaved road past the main entrance to the market. Continue straight, turning right at the Soko la Mitumba onto Old Mwanza Rd. The Moravian Church compound is about 50m further on. Breakfast costs Tsh1000, and meals can be arranged.

Aposele Guest House (☎ 026-260 4510; d in annexe Tsh6000, d without bathroom in main bldg Tsh4000) A reasonable choice if you're travelling by train, with tatty but decent doubles in an annexe, with a mix of 'standing' and 'sitting' toilets, and some doubles sharing bathroom in the main building next door – both within five minutes' walk from the train station. Hot-water buckets can be arranged. Exiting the train station, head right, towards the railway police building. Ignore the road turning right immediately after the police building and follow the next path straight for about 200m.

Golden Eagle (☎ 026-260 4623; Jamhuri St; r 15,000, without bathroom Tsh6000, with TV Tsh25,000) In contrast with the scruffy exterior, rooms at this 1st-storey place are surprisingly decent, with clean sheets, fan and a convenient location just five minutes' walk from the bus stand.

The en suite rooms have one large bed, the rest two twins.

Fama Hotel (☎ 026-260 4657; s/d Tsh7000/8000, d with TV Tsh12,000) Clean and quiet, albeit faded rooms, and a restaurant. It's just off the small side road branching out from Lumumba St opposite the Pentecostal church compound.

Hotel Wilca (☎ 026-260 4105; Boma Rd; r Tsh15,000) Clean and quiet rooms (all with mosquito nets), a restaurant and a small garden. It's at the northeastern edge of town along Boma Rd. From the bus stand, continue straight along Lumumba St past the Pentecostal church compound, turn left on Boma Rd and continue straight on. From the train station, follow Station Rd to the roundabout and go left on Boma Rd.

In the dusty Kanyenye residential area, within a 10-minute walk from the bus stand, are several clean, decent-value budget places, including **White Sakoz Inn** (r Tsh10,000-15,000), in a white building with clean en suite rooms with TV, and the similar and slightly better **Kisingo Lodge** (r Tsh10,000-15,000, ste Tsh25,000). Exit straight from the bus stand, then take the first left and then the first right onto School St. Follow

this up past the Aga Khan mosque, take the first major paved right onto Kitunda Rd, go straight for about 300m past the signposted River Nile Hotel – White Sakoz is about half a block to the left. Kisingo Lodge is about one block further on and about two blocks in to the left.

MIDRANGE

Orion Tabora Hotel (☎ 026-260 4369; cnr Boma & Station Rds; camping per person Tsh6000, s/d Tsh36,000/48,000, ste s/d from Tsh60,000/72,000) The old railway hotel has been nicely restored and provides very good value – a lovely and unexpected respite for anyone travelling in the region. All rooms – most spacious and all looking out onto the surrounding gardens – have TV and mosquito net, and there's also a good restaurant and a well-stocked bar. The hotel was originally built by a German baron as a hunting lodge, and still has lots of atmosphere. If you're travelling by train, there is usually someone around to let you in for predawn arrivals.

Eating

Mayor's Hotel & Ice Cream Parlour (snacks from Tsh500, meals Tsh1500; ☎ breakfast, lunch & dinner) Samosas and other snacks and local meals, plus juice and bottles of fresh yogurt and (sometimes) soft-serve ice cream. The main restaurant is behind NBC bank, with a branch on Lumumba St next to the Mohammed Trans bus office.

TIPPU TIB

Tippu Tib (Hamed bin Mohamed el Murjebi), one of East Africa's most infamous slave traders, was born around 1830 in Zanzibar as the son of a wealthy plantation owner from Tabora. While still young, Tippu Tib began to assist his father with trade and soon came to dominate an extensive area around Lake Tanganyika that stretched well into present-day Democratic Republic of Congo (Zaire). By the late 19th century he had trading stations strung out across eastern Congo and Tanzania. Tippu Tib assisted Livingstone and Stanley with their expeditions, and in 1887 Stanley persuaded him to become governor of the eastern region of the Congo, although the undertaking was short-lived. In 1890 Tippu Tib left his base in the Congo for Zanzibar, where he died in 1905.

Tropicano (School St; snacks & light meals from Tsh500; ☎ until 7pm) Similar to Mayor's, but quieter. It's next to Pride Tanzania.

Orion Tabora Hotel (☎ 026-260 4369; cnr Boma & Station Rds; meals from Tsh5000; ☎ breakfast, lunch & dinner) Large portions and well-prepared meals – overall excellent value. There's dining in the outside bar-restaurant area and indoors.

For self-caterers:

Kaidee's Supermarket (Jamhuri St) Next Wadudu's Auto Spares.

Duka la Maziwa (Milk Shop) Sells fresh yogurt and milk. It's unsignposted (ask for the Tabora Creamery), to the side of the Ijumaa Mosque and just off Lumumba St.

Getting There & Away

AIR

Flights with **Precision Air** (☎ 026-260 4818; Lumumba St) stop at Tabora daily en route from Dar es Salaam to Kigoma (Tsh152,500 to Kigoma, Tsh329,000 to Dar es Salaam). The airport is about 5km south of town.

BUS

The 'new' Tabora bus stand is along the extension of Market St, past NBC bank. **Mohammed Trans** (Lumumba St) has its own office and departure point, opposite the library.

Mohammed Trans runs between Tabora and Mwanza, departing from Tabora daily at 6am and 10am (Tsh10,000, 7½ hours). If you're heading east, you can disembark at Nzega (which is also serviced daily by 4WDs), and then catch a bus on to Singida, though this means an overnight in Nzega. It's possible to drive between Tabora and Mbeya (4WD only), but it's a long, albeit in part highly scenic, slog; the route is serviced by three to four buses weekly during the dry season.

To Kigoma, the only direct public transport is by train.

TRAIN

Tabora is the main Central Line junction for trains north to Mwanza, west to Kigoma and south to Mpanda. For schedule and fare information, see p361. Trains from Mpanda reach Tabora about 3am, trains from Kigoma and Mwanza arrive by about 5am, and trains from Dar es Salaam reach Tabora by about 9pm. Travelling between Kigoma and Mwanza, you will need to spend the day in Tabora, where you should also reconfirm your onward reservation.

Getting Around

There are taxi stands by the bus station and on the corner of Jamhuri Rd and Nyamwezi St, diagonally opposite Wadudu Auto Spares. Taxis meet all train arrivals (Tsh1500 to the town centre). If arriving in the middle of the night, ask the driver to wait until you're sure that there's someone at your hotel to let you in.

KIGOMA

☎ 028

Kigoma is a scrappy but agreeable lake shore town in a tropical waterside setting with views to the Congo mountains in the distance. In addition to being a regional capital, Kigoma is also the most important Tanzanian port on Lake Tanganyika, the end of the line if you've slogged across the country on the Central Line train and a convenient starting point for visits to Gombe Stream National Park, or Mahale Mountains National Park if you're travelling on by boat. For much of Kigoma's history it was overshadowed by Ujiji to the south, only coming into its own with the building of the Central Line railway terminus. In the wake of the past decades' upheavals in nearby Democratic Republic of

Congo (Zaire), Rwanda and Burundi, the area around Kigoma became a major refugee centre. While many refugees have since returned home, there are still a large number of international aid organisations working in the region.

Information

CONSULATES

See p337 for visa details.

Burundi (☎ 028-280 2865; Kakolwa Ave; ☎ 10am-3pm Mon-Fri)

Congo (Zaire) (Kaya Rd; ☎ 8.30am-4pm Mon-Fri)

IMMIGRATION OFFICE

An immigration officer is posted at the port on Wednesday to take care of immigration formalities for travellers departing for Zambia on the MV *Liemba*. The immigration office is on the main road towards Ujiji.

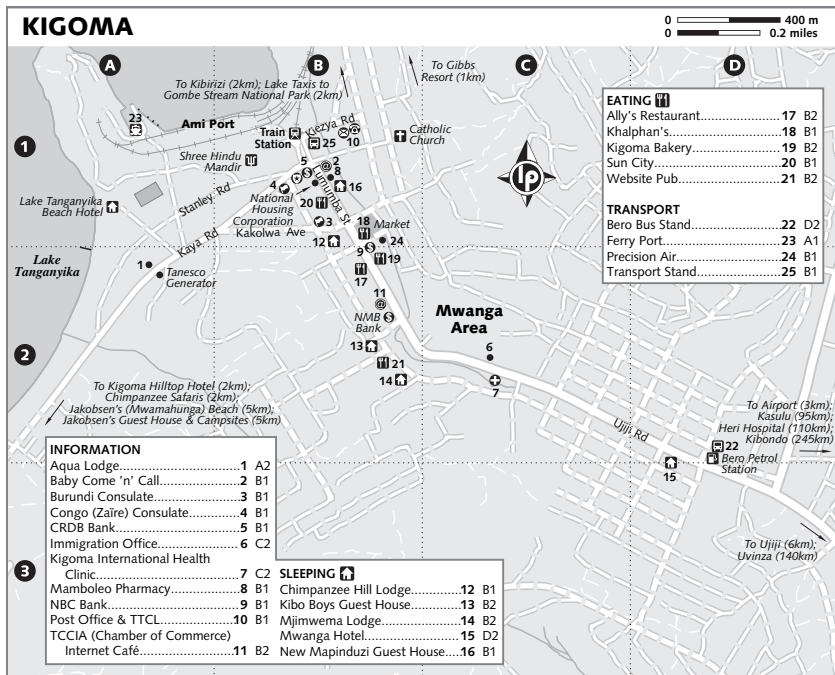
INTERNET ACCESS

Baby Come & Call (Lumumba St; per hr Tsh2000;

☎ 8am-7pm Mon-Sat) Just up from the train station.

TCCIA (Chamber of Commerce) Internet Café

(Lumumba St; per hr Tsh2000; ☎ 8.30am-7pm Mon-Sat, 10am-1pm Sun)



MEDICAL SERVICES

Heri Hospital Mission-run hospital about two hours' drive from Kigoma near the Burundi border.

Kigoma International Health Clinic (Ujiji Rd,

Mwanga) For minor medical issues.

Mamboleo Pharmacy (Lumumba Rd; ☎ 8am-6pm Mon-Sat, 10am-2pm Sun)

Mission Aviation Fellowship (MAF; ☎ 028-280 4940) May be able to help with emergency medical evacuations.

MONEY

CRDB (Train Station Roundabout) Has an ATM (Visa only).

NBC (Lumumba St) Changes cash; has an ATM (Visa only).

POST & TELEPHONE

Post Office & TTCL (Kiezya Rd) Operator-assisted calls and postal services.

TRAVEL AGENCIES

Both of the following organise boat rentals and visits to Gombe Stream and Mahale Mountains National Parks.

Aqua Lodge (☎ 028-280 2408) On the western edge of town opposite the Tanesco generator.

Chimpanzee Safaris (☎ 028-280 4437; www.mbalim.bali.com) At Kigoma Hilltop Hotel.

Sights & Activities

Kigoma's lively **market** is worth a stroll, as is the large and colourful fishing village of **Kibirizi**, which is 2km north of town and best visited in the early morning when the fishing boats pull in. The main fishing activity is at the far end of Kibirizi, downhill from the Tanapa office. In town, there are various buildings dating to the German colonial era, including the **train station** at the base of Lumumba St.

The best place for relaxing is **Jakobsen's (Mwamhunga) Beach** (admission Tsh4000), which is actually two small, beautiful coves reached via steps down a vegetated section of hillside about 5km southwest of town. There are a few *bandas* for shade, the water is bilharzia-free (see p367) and the overall setting – especially if you visit during the week when few people are around – is idyllic. There's no food or drink. Head west from town along the road past Kigoma Hilltop Hotel, keeping right at the small fork until the signpost, from where it's about 3km further uphill and signposted. Via public transport, catch a Katonga *dalla-dalla* at the roundabout near the train station and ask the driver to drop you at the turn-off, from where it's 30 to 40 minutes further on foot.

Sleeping BUDGET

Mwanga Hotel (Ujiji Rd; r Tsh6000) In the Mwanga area – about 3km north of the train station, but within about 500m of the bus park, and convenient if you have an early bus to Mwanza, Burundi or other points north – try this hotel, about 400m before the Kibondo-Kasulu junction, with no-frills rooms and hot buckets on request.

New Mapinduzi Guest House (☎ 028-280 4978; Lumumba St; s/d Tsh8000/10,000, without bathroom Tsh5000/7000) In a tiny alley just opposite the large white and yellow National Housing Corporation building, and within five minutes' walk of the train and *dalla-dalla* stations. Rooms are basic and without fan, but clean and with mosquito net. The location is convenient and it's one of the better shoestring options. There's no food.

Mjimwema Lodge (☎ 028-280 4500; s/d from Tsh12,000/17,000, s without bathroom Tsh5000) No-frills rooms around a small cement courtyard, all with fan and mosquito net, except for the single with shared bathroom, which has no fan. Follow the dirt road uphill after turning off Lumumba St at NMB bank and before reaching Kibo Boys.

Kibo Boys Guest House (☎ 028-280 2388; s/ste Tsh12,000/20,000) Just off Lumumba St, and about one block in from NMB bank at the northern end of town, this place has noisy but clean single-bed rooms, all with TV and mosquito net. There's no food. The adjoining Kibo Social Hall hosts a disco on Saturday night (free admission if you have a room in the hotel, which is just as well, as you wouldn't get any sleep anyway). Next door is Website Pub (p264).

Jakobsen's Guest House (www.kigomabeach.com; accommodation per family per night Tsh40,000, per additional adult Tsh15,000, electricity per hr Tsh3500) This comfortable private guesthouse is located well out of town on an escarpment above Jakobsen's Beach (left), and is generally rented out in its entirety – three double beds and seven twins divided among several rooms – rather than by room, though space permitting, individual rooms are available as well. There are two well-equipped kitchens, two bathrooms and the quiet, cliff-top perch is lovely. It's overall good value, and a wonderful spot for a respite and for enjoying the lake shore nature. Just five minutes on foot down the hillside, just up from the beach and part of the same guest house complex, are two

attractive shaded, grassy camp sites (camping per adult Tsh6000, tent rental per night Tsh10,000) with ablutions, a grill, lanterns and water supply, and just downhill from these is the beach with sunset views. For both camping and the guesthouse, bring all your own food from town.

MIDRANGE

Chimpanzee Hill Lodge (☎ 0754-651319; off Lumumba St; r Tsh12,000-20,000) Reached via the road leading in from NMB bank past Kibo Boys Guest House, with simple rooms in attached rondavels with mosquito netting and TV. A restaurant is planned.

Gibbs Resort (☎ 028-280 4272; r Tsh45,000; 🍷) A newish place in the Kieyza area, signposted from the post office road (Tsh2000 in a taxi). The location is peaceful – on a hill overlooking the lake – and rooms (most have twin beds) are reasonable value for the price, though they don't quite live up to expectations. There's a shady porch, and a restaurant (ask for outdoor seating) with meals for about Tsh5000.

Kigoma Hilltop Hotel (☎ 028-280 4437; kht@raha.com; www.chimpanzeesafaris.com; s/d from US\$60/80; 🍷 🍷 🍷) Kigoma's only hotel approaching upmarket has a prime setting on an escarpment overlooking the lake, with small, slightly faded cottages with small fridge and TV, a not-always-clean pool (nonresidents Tsh5000) and a slow restaurant. The same management also runs camps in Mahale Mountains, Gombe Stream and Katavi National Parks.

Eating & Drinking

For inexpensive *wali maharagwe* (rice and beans) and other local meals, the best places are **Sun City** (Lumumba St; meals Tsh1500-3000), which also has a chicken or fish biryani special on Sundays and fresh juices, or the more no-frills **Ally's Restaurant** (Lumumba St; meals Tsh1000-2500; 🍷 until 7pm), with samosas and other snacks in addition to local meals.

Website Pub (off Lumumba St) Cold drinks, light meals and music. Turn left (uphill) just before reaching Kibo Boys Guest House and look for the *makuti* (thatched) roofing.

For self-catering, there are several well-stocked shops near the market, including the following:

Khalphan's (off Lumumba St) Opposite Precision Air.

Kigoma Bakery (Lumumba St) Also sells fresh juices and ice cream; diagonally opposite Ally's Restaurant.

Getting There & Away

AIR

Just around the corner from NBC bank, **Precision Air** (☎ 028-280 4720) flies daily between Kigoma and Dar es Salaam (Tsh368,000), stopping in Tabora en route from Dar to Kigoma.

The airport is about 5km southeast of the town centre. A taxi to the airport costs Tsh4000.

BOAT

Ferries

For scheduling and price information for the MV *Liamba* between Kigoma and Mpulungu (Zambia) via Lagosa (also called Mugambo; for Mahale Mountains National Park) and other lake-shore towns, see p358. The *Liamba* departs from the main port area, just south of the old Lake Tanganyika Beach Hotel.

Cargo ferries to Burundi and Democratic Republic of Congo (Zaire) – many of which also take passengers – depart from the Ami port, reached by following the dirt lane down to the left of the train station. Watch for the sign 'To Kigoma Port, Managed by APO'.

Lake Taxis

Lake taxis are small, wooden motorised boats, piled high with people and produce, that connect villages along the lake shore as far north as the Burundi border, including a stop at Gombe Stream National Park. They are inexpensive, but offer no shade or other creature comforts. The lake taxis don't stop at Kigoma itself, but at Kibirizi village, about 2.5km north of Kigoma. To get here, follow the railway tracks north, or alternatively follow the road uphill past the post office, turn left at the top and continue straight for about 2km (Tsh2000 in a taxi).

BUS

Roads from Kigoma in all directions are rough, although improving. For all long-distance departures, including to Biharamulo, Bukoba, Mwanza and other destinations near Lake Victoria, departures are from the bus stand on the small road turning left off the Ujiji Rd just before Bero petrol station. (Coming from Kigoma, look for the large, white, unmarked petrol station on the left shortly before reaching the Kasulu-Kibondo junction). Buy your tickets here, or at one of the booking offices signposted along the main road in the Mwanza area.

To Mwanza, there are two buses daily, departing from Kigoma at 5am (Tsh15,000, 15 hours), with most going via Lusahunga, Biharamulo and the Busisi ferry crossing. To Bukoba (Tsh15,000, 12 to 15 hours), there are two to three direct buses weekly departing at 5am, though it's often just as fast to take a Mwanza-bound bus as far as Biharamulo and get onward transport from there. Although significantly longer distance wise, it can sometimes be just as fast – especially if you're driving – to travel to Mwanza via Nyakanazi junction, Kahama and Shinyanga, as the stretch from Nyakanazi to Mwanza is paved the whole way, and there's no need to wait for the ferry near Mwanza.

The road via Uvinza to Mpanda is in various stages of repair, ranging from quite decent to very bad, though there's no direct public transport and very little traffic other than sporadic trucks.

TRAIN

For schedule and price information on the ageing and these days unreliable Central Line train from Dodoma, Tabora or Mwanza, see p361.

Getting Around

Dalla-dallas to Bero bus stand, Mwanza and Ujiji run throughout the day, departing from the transport stand just uphill from the train station. Taxis between the town centre and Bero bus stand charge Tsh2000.

UJJI

Tiny Ujiji, one of Africa's oldest market villages, earned its place in travel lore as the spot where explorer-journalist Henry Morton Stanley uttered his famously casual 'Dr Livingstone, I presume?' The site where Stanley's encounter with Livingstone allegedly occurred is commemorated by a plaque set in a walled compound near a small garden. Nearby are two mango trees, which are said to have been grafted from the original tree that shaded the two men during their encounter. There's also a tiny and rather neglected **museum** (admission free, donation appreciated; ☎ 9am-5.30pm) housing a few pictures by local artists of Livingstone scenes, plus some letters and other Livingstone memorabilia. An information centre, including a restaurant and hostel rooms, is under construction next door. Once finished, the

museum will be moved here. The site is about 300m off the main road coming from Kigoma and signposted – just ask for Livingstone and the *dalla-dalla* driver will make sure you get off at the right place.

Prior to Livingstone, Ujiji enjoyed prominence as the main settlement in the region (a status it lost only after the railway terminus was built at Kigoma), and as a major dhow-building centre. Burton and Speke also stopped here in 1858 before setting out to explore Lake Tanganyika. Thanks to its position as a terminus of the old caravan route to the coast, Ujiji still shows various Swahili traits, primarily in local building style.

Despite its distinguished past, little remains today of Ujiji's former significance, and many people find the village underwhelming. But it's easy enough to reach from Kigoma and its long history makes it well worth a stop if you're in the area. From the Livingstone compound, you can continue about 500m further along the same street to Ujiji's beach and small dhow port. No power tools are used in building the boats and construction methods are the same as they were generations ago. Once the rooms at the information centre are built, it would make an ideal base for anyone interested in getting off the main track and gaining insights into local village life.

Sleeping & Eating

There are a couple of very basic guesthouses and eateries along the main road, with bare-bones rooms and bucket baths for about Tsh3000.

Getting There & Away

Ujiji is about 8km south of central Kigoma; *dalla-dallas* run between the two towns throughout the day (Tsh200).

GOMBE STREAM NATIONAL PARK

With an area of only 52 sq km, Gombe Stream is Tanzania's smallest national park. It's also the site of the longest-running study of any wild animal population in the world and, for those interested in primates, it's a fascinating place.

The Gombe Stream area was gazetted as a game reserve in 1943. In 1960 British researcher Jane Goodall arrived to begin a study of wild chimpanzees, and in 1968 Gombe was designated as a national park. Goodall's study is now in its fifth decade.

CHIMPANZEES

The natural habitat of Tanzania's chimpanzees (*Pan troglodytes schweinfurthii*) once extended along much of the western border of the country, throughout the Kigoma and Rukwa regions and into Burundi, Rwanda, Uganda and Democratic Republic of Congo (Zaire). Deforestation and human population pressures have reduced these areas, and today the chimps are found mainly in Gombe Stream National Park and in and around Mahale Mountains National Park.

In addition to deforestation, the main threat to Tanzania's remaining chimp populations is illegal trafficking. Chimpanzees, which are coveted as pets, sought for medical research and wanted for commercial zoos, command high prices on the black market. Yet, to capture a baby chimpanzee, all nearby adults must be killed. The result is many dead chimps and many orphans. For young chimps that are recaptured from illegal traffickers, there is also the problem of reintegration. With few exceptions, chimps cannot be reintroduced to the wild in an area where there are other chimps living. While there are numerous groups working hard to halt illegal trafficking, the networks are entrenched and it's an uphill battle that requires constant vigilance.

If you're considering visiting either Gombe Stream or Mahale Mountains National Parks, also remember that chimpanzees are susceptible to human diseases, so don't visit if you're ill. (And if park officials get wind of a sniffle or the flu, you won't be allowed to enter.)

Gombe Stream's approximately 100 chimps are well habituated and you can sometimes get to within 5m of them. In addition to observing the chimps, it's possible to swim in the lake or hike in Gombe's forest. Other animals you may see in the park include colobus and vervet monkeys, bushbucks, baboons, bush pigs and a variety of birdlife. If you're really interested in the chimpanzees, allow at least two days at Gombe.

Information

Entry fees per adult/child aged seven to 15 years per 24 hours are US\$100/20. They technically apply from when you land on the beach at Kasekela, but in practice, park officials tend to interpret the guidelines generously and only charge you for the time you spend in the forest – which means that for a two-night stay (necessary, assuming you arrive/depart via lake taxi) and one day of chimp tracking, you'll most likely be charged only for one 24-hour entry. Guides cost US\$20 per group per day. Children aged under seven are not permitted in the park.

Gombe Stream can be visited year-round. There's a park office in Kibirizi, at the far end of the beach, and about a 10-minute walk from the footbridge at the entrance to the village. It's unsignposted, but anyone should be able to point out the way. Accommodation bookings can be made here. Otherwise, book through Kigoma travel agents (see p263) or directly through the **senior park warden** (☎ 028-280 2586; gonapachimps@yahoo.com). Park headquar-

ters are on the beach at Mitumba Valley at the northern end of the park. All tourism activities are south of here at Kasekela, on the beach near the centre of the park, and this is where you'll need to disembark when you visit.

For photos, bring high-speed film or appropriate equipment for use in the forest; flashes aren't permitted.

Sleeping & Eating

The park hostel is currently being rebuilt, and once finished will also include a restaurant. Meanwhile, there are simple rooms with nets in the park resthouse (per person US\$20) at Kasekela, on the beach near the centre of the park. You can also camp (per person US\$20) on the beach, although park staff don't recommend it because of the danger from baboons, and it doesn't save you any money anyway. If you do camp, don't underestimate the baboons, and bring a metal container for storing food. There's a small shop at park headquarters selling drinks and a few basics, and it's possible to arrange inexpensive grilled fish or other local meals with staff. Otherwise, until the restaurant is completed or unless you're staying at the luxury tented camp (see below), bring whatever provisions you will need from Kigoma.

Gombe Luxury Tented Camp (☎ 028-280 4437; www.chimpanzeesafaris.com; s/d all-inclusive US\$645/1090) On the beach at Mitumba in the northern part of the park, this is Gombe's only upmarket camp, with en suite tents and a shady, wa-

terside location. It's run by Kigoma Hilltop Hotel in Kigoma, which offers transport and accommodation deals.

Getting There & Away

Gombe Stream is about 20km north of Kigoma on the shores of Lake Tanganyika. The only way to reach the park is by boat – either charter or lake taxi. At least one lake taxi to the park departs from Kibirizi (see p264) Monday to Saturday between about noon and 2pm (Tsh2000, three hours). Returning, it passes by Gombe (Kasekela) at about 7am (which means you'll need to spend two nights at the park if travelling by public transport).

Alternatively, you can arrange with local fishermen to charter a boat – and you'll be besieged with offers to do so when you arrive at Kibirizi. Expect to pay from about Tsh80,000 to Tsh100,000 return. You may have to pay an advance for petrol (which should not be more than one-third of the total price), but don't pay the full amount until you have arrived back in Kigoma. It's common practice for local boat owners to try to convince you that there are no lake taxis, in an effort to get business.

Faster boats (taking about 1½ hours) can be organised through **Aqua Lodge** (☎ 028-280 2408) in Kigoma for US\$175 return per boat for up to eight passengers, plus a US\$82 per night stopover fee, and **Kigoma Hilltop Hotel** (☎ 028-280 4437; kht@raha.com; www.chimpanzeesafaris.com) for US\$655 return per boat for up to 20 passengers, plus a US\$50 per night stopover fee from the second night onwards.

MAHALE MOUNTAINS NATIONAL PARK

It's difficult to imagine a more idyllic combination: clear, blue waters, white-sand beaches backed by lushly forested mountains, some of the most challenging and intriguing wildlife watching on the continent and a setting of such unrivalled remoteness that you're likely to have it all almost to yourself. Mahale – Tanzania's most isolated national park – stretches along the Lake Tanganyika shoreline about 130km south of Kigoma, with the misty and rugged Mahale range running down its centre. Like Gombe Stream National Park to the north, Mahale is primarily a chimpanzee sanctuary, home to about 700 of our primate relatives, with roan antelopes, buffaloes, zebras and even some

lions keeping them company (although the lions are seldom seen).

Mahale has been the site of an ongoing Japanese-sponsored primate research project since 1965, when the Kyoto University Africa Primatological Expedition initiated research here, and the chimpanzee communities that have been focal points of study are well habituated to people. While Mahale's size and terrain mean that it can take time (and some strenuous, steep and sweaty walking) to find the chimps, almost everyone who spends at least a few days here comes away well rewarded.

Mahale Mountains was gazetted as a national park in 1980 with an area of around 1600 sq km. The park's highest peak is Mt Nkungwe (2462m), first climbed in 1939.

Information

Entry fees are US\$80/30 per adult/child aged 10 to 16 years. For camping fees, see p77. Children under seven years aren't permitted in Mahale. Camping and park *bandas* can be booked through **Kigoma Hilltop Hotel** (☎ 028-280 4437; kht@raha.com; www.chimpanzeesafaris.com) in Kigoma, which can also help you contact park headquarters if you'll be arriving independently. Guide fees are US\$20 per group.

Park headquarters, where fees are paid, are at Bilenge in the park's northwestern corner. About 10km south of here are Kasiha (site of the park camp site and *bandas*) and Kangwena beach (with two top-end camps). The park's eastern section is currently closed to tourists, although trail development is planned.

The park is open year-round, although during the rains it gets too muddy to do much walking, and the private camps close. There are no roads in Mahale; walking (and boating along the shoreline) are the only ways to get around. Bring high-speed film or appropriate equipment for use in the forest; flashes aren't permitted.

Following an outbreak of human influenza virus among Mahale's chimpanzees in 2006, park officials currently require all visitors to wear surgical-style masks while trekking, and not to get closer than 10m to the chimps. Each group's viewing time is also limited – currently to one hour per day – and the maximum group size is six. No eating or drinking is permitted within sight of the chimps.

LAKE TANGANYIKA

Lake Tanganyika is the world's longest (670km) and second-deepest (over 1400m) fresh-water lake. At somewhere between nine and 12 million years old, it is also one of the oldest lakes on the planet and, thanks to its age and ecological isolation, is home to an exceptional variety of fish. Most notable are its colourful cichlids, many of which are found nowhere else, and which make for some wonderful snorkelling in the lake's clear waters.

During the late 18th and early 19th centuries the lake was a major conduit for slaves and trade along the old caravan routes, while today its shores bustle with cross-border traders and refugees. The best way to get a feel for local life is to set off on the MV *Liemba*, which calls in at a string of small ports as it makes its way down the shoreline. There are few docking jetties, so at each place where the *Liemba* pulls in, it's met by dozens of small boats racing out to the ferry, with boat owners and food vendors all jostling for custom from the passengers. At night the whole scene is lit up by the glow of dozens of tiny kerosene lamps, waving precariously in the wind and waves.

Besides Kigoma (the largest town on the Tanzanian lake shore), Ujiji (one of the oldest lake-shore settlements) and Lagosa (for Mahale Mountains National Park), ports of note include the village of Ikola, the old mission station of Kalema (Karema), about 15km further south, and – further south – the village and mission station of Kipili. In Ikola, there is the simple **Zanzibar Guest House** (r about Tsh3000), with buckets of hot water on request and filling, inexpensive meals. The owners can help you organise a local boat to explore the surrounding lake shore and nearby rivers. At Kalema is an old Catholic mission station, parts of which were originally a Belgian fort before being handed over to the White Fathers in 1889. Kipili is the site of an old Benedictine mission, set on a hill on the edge of town, and of the small St Bernard's Monastery & Guest House, with simple, clean rooms and meals. From both Kalema and (better) Ikola, you can get transport to Mpanda, while from Kipili there is transport – usually 4WDs or trucks – to Sumbawanga (four to six hours), or (in stages) to Katavi and Mpanda.

About 3.5km offshore from Kipili on tiny Lupita Island is the very exclusive **Lupita Island Resort & Spa** (www.firelightexpeditions.com; s/d all-inclusive US\$1100/1725), with just a dozen suites, each with its own plunge pool, and a lake cruiser for day and overnight charters.

Also immediately offshore from Kipili is **Ntanga Island Retreat** (www.awesomeafricansafaris.com; candlehornsfall@gmail.com), a lovely and genuinely eco-friendly place which will be opening right about when this book is published. In addition to reasonably priced accommodation, it will offer overnight kayak and dive safaris along the lake, and overland camping trips to Katavi National Park.

Sleeping

Mango Tree Bandas (per person US\$20) Basic, but quite decent, park-run double *bandas* at Kasiha – and the most convenient budget option. There are en suite bucket baths, but no meals or canteen, so bring what you need from Kigoma.

Park Resthouse (per person US\$20) Near park headquarters at Bilenje, it's possible to stay at this resthouse. It's less convenient for chimp tracking (which starts at Kasiha, 10km to the south), but has the advantage of local-style meals and drinks being available.

Nkungwe Luxury Tented Camp (☎ 028-280 4437; www.chimpanzeesafaris.com; s/d all-inclusive US\$635/1070) This place, run by Kigoma Hilltop Hotel, has six comfortable double tents, and makes a good-value alternative to Greystoke Mahale for those on more moderate budgets. It's on

the beach north of Kangwena and about 1km north of Greystoke Mahale.

Greystoke Mahale (www.nomad-tanzania.com; per person all-inclusive from US\$750; 🗓 mid-May–mid-March) An exclusive camp in a stunning setting on Kangwena beach, with six over-the-top tented *bandas* with solar power and bush showers. Children under 12 years are not permitted on chimpanzee-tracking walks. Book through upmarket travel agencies or safari operators.

Getting There & Away

AIR

Flying in to Mahale treats you to some impressive aerial views of the Lake Tanganyika shoreline. The airstrip is just north of the park boundary at Sitolo. Charter flights from Arusha can be arranged through **Chimpanzee Safaris** (☎ 028-280 4437; www.mbalimbali.com) in

Kigoma, **Nomad Safaris** (www.nomad-tanzania.com) and **Flycatcher Safaris** (www.flycat.com), all of whom operate camps in the park and have twice-weekly flights to/from Arusha primarily for their guests, although some are willing to take other passengers on a space-available basis. Foxtreks (p47) also has twice-weekly charters to Mahale from Ruaha and Katavi. Expect to pay from US\$1000 per person per seat for Arusha–Mahale–Arusha, and about US\$600 one way from Ruaha to Mahale via Katavi. All of these operators fly on twice-weekly rotations (either Monday and Thursday, or Tuesday and Friday), so fly-in guests will generally need to plan on a minimum stay of three nights. All flights also stop at Katavi en route, and the parks are thus frequently visited as a combination package.

BOAT

Despite the lake's temperamental choppiness and the length of the journey, it's hard to beat the satisfyingly adventurous edge – and the impressive lake-shore scenery – of journeying to Mahale via ferry. The MV *Liamba* stops at Lagosa (also called Mugambo), to the north of the park (1st/2nd/economy class US\$25/20/15, about 10 hours from Kigoma). From Lagosa, it's possible to continue with small local boats to park headquarters, about two hours further south, but not the best idea as the *Liamba* reaches Lagosa about 2am or 3am on Thursday morning. (If you do decide to try this, there's a basic guesthouse in Lagosa where you can wait until dawn.) It's better to radio park headquarters in advance from Kigoma and arrange a pick-up. **Kigoma Hilltop Hotel** (☎ 028-280 4437; kht@raha.com; www.chimpanzee-safaris.com) and the *Liamba* office in Kigoma can help with the radio call. The park boat costs US\$50 per boat (for up to about 15 people, one way), although if the park is sending a boat up anyway, you may be able to negotiate something better. Coming from Mpulungu (Zambia) the *Liamba* passes Lagosa sometime between late Saturday night and early Sunday morning around 3am or 4am.

The other option is to charter a boat through either Kigoma Hilltop Hotel for US\$2985 return per boat (about 10 hours) for up to 20 persons, plus US\$50 per night stopover charge from the second night onwards, or **Aqua Lodge** (☎ 028-280 2408) in Kigoma for US\$900 per boat for up to eight people, including two nights waiting at Mahale, plus US\$82 for each ad-

ditional night. Kigoma Hilltop Hotel also has a faster, pricier speedboat, which cuts travel time by more than half.

Guests of Lupita Island Resort & Spa (opposite) can travel on the resort's exclusive boat from Lupita Island to Mahale.

UVINZA

Salt production has kept Uvinza on the map for at least several centuries, and the town is still one of Tanzania's major salt-producing areas. If you find yourself here, a highlight is visiting the local salt factory, which has been running since the 1920s. As so few travellers pass this way, staff will be happy to see you; permits can be arranged at the entry gate. For lodging, there are several no-frills guesthouses in the town centre.

Uvinza is about two hours southeast of Kigoma via the Central Line train. There's no regular public transport to/from the town, but the road towards Kigoma is gradually being upgraded, and is regularly traversed by trucks and at least one vehicle daily (Tsh6000, about three hours). From Uvinza, it's also possible to get a vehicle to Kasulu, from where there are daily minibuses to Kigoma (Tsh1500). Trucks also run sporadically between Uvinza and Mpanda, especially during the dry season (about Tsh7000, one day). However, there is little traffic on this road and few supplies available en route, so stock up before setting off.

MPANDA

☎ 025

This small and somewhat scruffy town is of interest mainly as a starting point for visits to Katavi National Park. It's also the terminus of a branch of the Central Line railway and a useful junction town if you're heading inland from Lake Tanganyika.

Sleeping & Eating

Marangu Guest House & Bar (r Tsh3500) For something inexpensive in the town centre, try this noisy but cheap option, with small rooms and shared bucket baths. It's near the market and behind the Sumry bus line office.

Super City Hotel (☎ 028-282 0459; s/d from Tsh4000/6000) No-frills rooms with mosquito nets and a restaurant about 1.5km from the town centre, near the roundabout (ask for 'Super City Ghorofani'). It's convenient to the train station, and buses to Katavi and

Sumbawanga have their stand out the front. From the train station, follow the tracks to the end, then take the first left and look for the multistorey building.

Highway Guesthouse (☎ 025-282 0001; r Tsh7000)

Diagonally opposite Super City on the other side of the roundabout, with reasonable-value en suite rooms with showers.

Getting There & Away

BUS

Dalla-dallas run several times daily between Mpanda and Sitalike (for Katavi National Park; Tsh1500, 45 minutes) from in front of Marangu Guest House & Bar in the town centre. A better option is to head to the main transport stand in front of Super City Hotel and catch one of the daily buses (watch for Sumry bus line) and 4WDs to Sitalike and on to Sumbawanga (about Tsh12,000, seven hours). The best time to find transport is around midday on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday, just after the train has arrived, when there's always at least one bus heading southwards.

The train is the best option to Kigoma, although trucks ply the route towards Uvinza and Kigoma fairly regularly, especially during the dry season; allow at least 12 hours.

From Mpanda southwest to Kalemwa and Ikola (the main Lake Tanganyika ports in this area), there are sporadic trucks, which are usually timed to coincide with arrivals of the MV *Liamba* ferry.

TRAIN

There is a branch of the Central Line that connects Mpanda with Tabora via Kaliua. For schedule and fare information, see p361. If you're heading to Kigoma or Mwanza from Mpanda, you will need to spend at least a day in Tabora or Kaliua. You can wait for the connection at Kaliua, but as there are few guesthouses and little to do, most travellers continue on to Tabora and wait there.

KATAVI NATIONAL PARK

Katavi, about 35km southwest of Mpanda, is Tanzania's third-largest national park and one of its most unspoiled wilderness areas. For travellers seeking an alternative to more popular destinations elsewhere in the country, it is a high-adventure, rugged safari experience. Katavi's predominant feature is its enormous flood plain, the vast, grassy ex-

panses of which cover much of the northern section of the park. The plains are broken by the Katuma River and several seasonal lakes, which support huge populations of hippos, plus crocodiles and a wealth of birds (over 400 bird species have been identified in Katavi thus far). In the west and centre of the park, the floodplains yield to vast tracts of brush and woodland, which are the best areas for sighting roan and sable antelopes; together with Ruaha National Park, Katavi is one of the few places where you have a decent chance of spotting both.

The park comes to life in the dry season, when the river and lakes dry up and huge herds of buffaloes, elephants, lions, zebras, giraffes and many more make their way to the remaining pools and streams. At these times it's hard not to feel that you've reached the heart of Africa, vast, uncontainable and pulsing to the primeval rhythms of the wild.

Katavi was originally gazetted in 1974 with an area of 2253 sq km. In 1997 it was extended to about 4500 sq km and, together with the contiguous Rukwa Game Reserve, encompasses a conservation area covering 12,500 sq km. Because of its remote location and, at least until recently, its completely under-publicised attractions, the park receives relatively few visitors.

Information

Entry fees are US\$20/5 per adult/child aged five to 15 years. For information on camping fees, see p77.

Katavi is open year-round, but should only be visited during the dry season, between June and November or December, with the peak months for wildlife watching from late July to October. **Park headquarters** (☎ 025-282 0213; katavinp@yahoo.com), for hut bookings, entry-fee payments and other information, is just off the main road, about 1.5km south of Sitalike, on the park's northern edge. The Celtel network includes Sitalike and Vodacom works from a point about 2km from town.

Wildlife viewing is permitted in open vehicles, and park vehicles can be hired if they aren't being used by staff. Rates are US\$1 per kilometre with a minimum charge of US\$100, plus guide fees. It's also possible to drive in the park with your own vehicle. While it's not required to bring a guide along in the original (western) section of the park, it's highly

recommended. In the newer (eastern) section there are only rough bush tracks and you'll need an armed ranger.

Walking safaris are permitted with an armed ranger. For any safaris in Katavi, bring along thick, long-sleeved shirts and trousers, preferably in khaki or other drab shades (avoid anything bright, very contrasting or very dark), as protection against tsetse fly bites.

Sleeping

There are several public camp sites in the park, including the well-situated Chada Campsite near Lake Chada; Ikuu Campsite at Ikuu ranger post northwest of Lake Chada; and Lake Katavi Campsite near Lake Katavi, just west of the Sumbawanga–Mpanda road. About 2km from park headquarters there is also a public camp site, as well as double-bedded *bandas* (per person US\$30). For camp sites and *bandas*, bring all food and drink with you.

Katavi Hippo Garden Hotel (☎ 025-282 0393, 023-262 0461, 0784-120498; camping per person US\$5, r per person US\$30) In Sitalike village just outside the park gate, this is a good budget choice, and under the same management as Genesis Motel in Mikumi (p280). It has self-contained *bandas* – some with double bed and others with twins – along the river about 1km from park headquarters and an easy walk from the Sitalike bus stand, which is good value, especially considering its location. The river forms the park border here and there's a resident pod of hippos just out the front. You can arrange a rental vehicle here to go into Katavi (US\$150 per day). A drop at Mpanda train station costs US\$80.

Katavi Wildlife Camp (☎ 0784-237422; www.tanzania-safaris.info; s/d full board plus wildlife drives US\$450/700) This comfortable, rustic camp in a prime setting near Ikuu ranger post offers great value, with spacious en suite tents overlooking the floodplains, top-notch guides and excellent cuisine. Owned by Foxes African Safaris (p47), which also runs camps in Ruaha and Mikumi, it offers some excellent combination itineraries.

Palahala Luxury Camp (www.firelightexpeditions.com; per person all-inclusive US\$595; ☞ Jun-Feb) The newest of Katavi's upmarket camps, with six spacious tented suites and a riverside setting, and the same management as Lupita Island Resort & Spa (p268).

Chada Katavi Camp (www.nomad-tanzania.com; s/d all-inclusive US\$730/960; ☞ Jun-Oct & mid-Dec–mid-Mar) Set in a prime location overlooking the Chada floodplains, this place mixes a classic safari

ambience with the bare minimum of amenities. The camp has just seven double tents, each with bush shower and solar-powered lighting, can only be booked through upmarket travel agencies.

Other recommendations:

Katume Katavi Camp (☎ 022-213 0501; www.chimpanzeesafaris.com; s/d all-inclusive US\$585/970; ☞ mid-May–mid-Feb) Under the same ownership as Kigoma Hilltop Hotel (p264), with six fairly spacious and well-appointed tents on low stilts.

Flycatcher Safaris (www.flycat.com) This long-established Swiss-run outfit offers Katavi itineraries based out of its own temporary camp, and can arrange combination itineraries taking in Katavi, Mahale Mountains and Rubondo Island National Parks, as well as other destinations in Tanzania. Prices are midrange to top end.

Riverside Guesthouse (per person US\$20) Just a short walk away from Katavi Hippo Garden Hotel and a good budget alternative in this area.

Bateleur Tented Camp (www.awesomeafricansafaris.com; candlehorsfall@gmail.com; ☞ May-Feb) This six-tent place is scheduled to open near Lake Katavi by the time this book is published. Balloon safaris and combination Katavi-Lake Tanganyika itineraries are planned.

Getting There & Away

AIR

There are airstrips for charter flights in Mpanda, Sitalike and at Ikuu ranger post near Lake Chada.

BUS

Any bus running between Mpanda and Sumbawanga can drop you at the park gate, where you can hire a vehicle to visit the park. Alternatively, it's an easy (about 1km) walk between the gate and the Sitalike bus stand, from where there is daily transport to/from Mpanda. Alternatively, it's sometimes possible to find a lift with one of the park vehicles that come frequently to Mpanda for supplies. If you're driving, the closest petrol stations are in Mpanda and Sumbawanga.

SUMBAWANGA

☎ 025

The peppy and surprisingly pleasant capital of the Rukwa region is set on the fertile Ufipa plateau at about 1800m altitude in the far southwestern corner of the country. While there's little reason to make the town a destination in itself, Sumbawanga is a useful stopping point if you're travelling between Zambia or Mbeya and Katavi National Park.

The market is a good place for stocking up (there's nothing to rival it until you get to Mpanda or Mbeya), and the climate can be refreshingly cool, especially in the evenings. The surrounding Ufipa plateau, which lies at around 2000m, cradled between the eastern and western branches of the Great Rift Valley, is home to an ecologically important mixture of forests and montane grasslands.

East of Sumbawanga, below the escarpment, is the vast, shallow Lake Rukwa, and to the east, the seldom-visited Mbizi mountains, both of which make potential excursions if you find yourself in Sumbawanga with extra time on your hands. The most straightforward access to Lake Rukwa is via the small village of Zimba, down the eastern slopes of the Mbizi escarpment and served by relatively regular public transport from Sumbawanga. Zimba is also a possible starting point for hiking in the Mbizi range, though you'll need to make your way back up the escarpment. Accommodation can usually be arranged with the Catholic mission in Zimba. Guides for excursions towards the Mbizi Forest Reserve can be arranged at Mbizi Forest Hotel.

Sleeping & Eating

Zanzibar Guest House (☎ 025-280 0010; d Tsh7000, r without bathroom Tsh4000) The en suite rooms are worth the splurge. It's just a few minute's walk from the bus stand, off Kiwelu Rd and south of Upendo View Hotel. There's no food.

Moravian Conference Centre (☎ 025-280 2853/4; Nyerere Rd; standard s/d Tsh7000/14,000, executive s/d Tsh12,000/20,000) A good place with spare but clean rooms and inexpensive meals. Breakfast costs extra. It's fairly centrally located in a quiet compound along the road to the Regional Block area.

Upendo View Hotel (☎ 025-280 2242; Kiwelu Rd; r Tsh10,000) Reasonably large and clean rooms, inexpensive meals and a central location just southeast of the bus stand. On Friday and Saturday nights it has a loud disco.

Mbizi Forest Hotel (☎ 025-280 2746; s/d Tsh15,000/20,000) Simple but good-value en suite rooms, and meals available. It's about 3km from town off Nyerere Rd and signposted.

Forestway Country Club (☎ 028-280 2800/2412; Nyerere Rd; r Tsh20,000) Large, clean rooms and a good restaurant. It's about 2km from town

along Nyerere Rd in the Regional Block area, past the Moravian Conference Centre (Tsh2000 in a taxi from the bus stand).

Getting There & Away

Sumry has two buses daily between Mbeya and Sumbawanga via Tunduma (for Zambia), departing in each direction between 5.30am and 7am (Tsh10,000 to Tsh13,000, seven hours, book in advance). To Mpanda, Sumry buses depart from Sumbawanga daily at 10am, and during the dry season again at 1pm (Tsh12,000, six to seven hours). There are also daily 4WDs departing from the petrol station on the main road from about 7am (Tsh13,000). The road passes through Katavi National Park, although it is not necessary to pay the park fees if you are just in transit. To Zimba (for Lake Rukwa), there's at least one pick-up daily leaving from near the market; coming back, the last vehicle usually leaves by about 4.30pm.

KASANGA & KALAMBO FALLS

Plunging about 212m down the Rift Valley escarpment into Zambia are the Kalambo Falls. In addition to being Africa's second-highest single-drop waterfall, the area is also important archaeologically, as the site of some major Stone Age finds.

The main access route to the falls is from Zambia, via Mbala. It's also possible to reach the falls from Kasanga, which is about 120km southwest of Sumbawanga on Lake Tanganyika and the last (or first) stop in Tanzania on the MV *Liemba* (see p358). From Kasanga, you'll need to get a lift towards the falls and then walk for about four hours in each direction.

There is a basic guesthouse in the Muzei section of Kasanga, where you can also arrange a guide.

Trucks journey sporadically between Sumbawanga and Kasanga, and a bus meets the MV *Liemba* arrivals (Tsh4000, up to nine hours). These arrivals can be anywhere between midnight and 6am, although the boat often remains at the dock until dawn. You're allowed to stay on board during this time, but the boat pulls out without much warning, so best to ask staff to wake you in time to disembark.

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