

# Overview of Mozambique

Situated on the southeastern coast of Africa, Mozambique has persevered through a violent civil war and terrible floods, and is emerging from a ruinous past to stake its claim once again as one of the jewels of Africa. A holiday in Mozambique provides a combination of glorious weather, gorgeous scenery, friendly people and great value for money, ensuring that this country is becoming an increasingly trendy destination for global travellers. In fact, Mozambique has become one of the most-visited countries in Africa in recent years, drawing around two million annual tourists to its welcoming shores.

The 1,500 miles (2,414km) of palm-fringed coastline is washed by the warm waters of the Indian Ocean and graced with long white beaches, excellent coral reefs and strings of pristine islands. The idyllic Bazaruto archipelago, off the coast of the Inhambane province, is one of the most popular tourist destinations in the country, consisting of four main islands that make up one of the most beautiful places on the continent. The islands offer a classic tropical getaway, with superb fishing, water sports, shaded beaches, surf, and a marine park offering outstanding diving and snorkelling opportunities.

The Portuguese established the capital city of Maputo, formerly known as Lourenço Marques. Located in the southern reaches of the country, it became one of the most stylish cities in Africa, with broad avenues lined with jacaranda and acacia trees, sidewalks paved with mosaics, tall buildings and a unique Mediterranean/African atmosphere that attracted a wealthy and cosmopolitan crowd. The civil war and a disastrous flirtation with socialism left the city in a dismal state of disrepair, and although still tainted by shabbiness, Maputo is slowly recovering some of its former glory. Today the bustling capital retains many Portuguese-style colonial buildings, and offers culture and old world charm along with a lively nightlife and a growing array of new restaurants serving seafood platters and spicy samosas.

Lying just off the coast of Maputo is the popular Inhaca Island, which has extensive coral reefs, a fascinating maritime museum and a historical lighthouse. Most of the wildlife reserves are located in the central and southern parts of the country, with the exception of the important Niassa Reserve on the northern Tanzania border; and although they were largely decimated during the civil war, they are currently being restocked and improved, with large populations of elephant, buffalo and antelope. North of Maputo there are some truly beautiful beaches and some of the finest fishing in the world, notably in the areas around Guinjata Bay and the Mozambique Channel.

---

## Key Facts

### **Language:**

Portuguese is the official language, though over 40 languages are spoken in the country. English is taught in secondary schools, but is only spoken in the southern tourist regions.

### **Passport/Visa:**

All foreign passengers to Mozambique must hold return or onward tickets, the necessary travel documentation for their next destination, and proof of sufficient funds to cover their expenses while in the country. Until recently visitors of most nationalities could obtain a 30-day tourist visa on arrival in Mozambique, but visas can now no longer be purchased at points of entry and must be organised beforehand. Those visiting Mozambique from a country where there is no Mozambican diplomatic mission should be able to get a visa on arrival but this should be confirmed in advance. A yellow fever vaccination certificate is required to enter Mozambique if visitors are arriving from or have transited through an infected area. It is highly recommended that travellers' passports have at least six months' validity remaining after the intended date of departure from their travel destination. Immigration officials often apply different rules to those stated by travel agents and official sources.

### **Currency:**

The official currency is the Mozambican Metical (MZN), which is divided into 100 centavos. In the southern parts of the country, South African rands and US dollars are often also accepted to pay for accommodation. It's prudent to carry some cash in these currencies for times when an ATM is out of order or nonexistent. Credit cards are accepted in most upmarket hotels in Maputo, but card facilities throughout the rest of the country are limited so, again, it's advisable to carry cash.

### **Electricity:**

Electrical current is 220 volts, 50Hz. The rounded three-pin plug is common, particularly near the border with South Africa and in Maputo. Two pronged, round- and flat-pin plugs are also found.

# Travel to Mozambique

## Overview

A laidback, friendly, and comparatively safe tourist destination in East Africa, Mozambique offers visitors numerous things to see and do. Perhaps most popular are the dozens of stunning tropical beaches that are perfect for just lazing around on.

For beach holidays, Mozambique is arguably the best destination in Africa. It's widely lauded as one of the best destinations in the world for scuba diving and game fishing, and its colourful and well-preserved coral reefs and clear warm waters attract plenty of snorkellers and honeymooners.

Travellers should see the enormous sand dunes and freshwater lakes of Bazaruto Island or visit Bengueria Island's forests and wetlands. History enthusiasts will enjoy the historic lighthouse on Inhaca Island and a number of UNESCO-listed cultural attractions.

Known mainly for its beach resorts and ocean activities, other attractions include Africa's fourth-largest artificial lake, Cahora Bassa, and Gorongosa National Park. The north of the country offers some amazing wilderness areas.

It's worth horse riding on the beach in Vilanculos or scuba diving in its turquoise waters, and taking a trip on a Pemba Bay dhow. Ponta d'Ouro, in the south, is good for swimming with dolphins, or surfing one of the most perfect waves in the world.

## Climate in Mozambique

The climate of Mozambique is typically tropical between October and March, with a wet season during the long summer, and a dry season in the winter, from April to September. There is little variation of temperatures between the seasons.

Differences in climate are dependent mainly on altitude. The wet season brings the heaviest rain along the coast, and cyclones occur during this period. Mozambique's climate varies in different regions of the country. But generally, the inland areas are slightly cooler and more humid than the coastal areas during the rainy season.

Rainfall is usually heaviest between December and March. The southern parts of the country are drier and less tropical than the north, with temperatures along the coast averaging 80F (27C) during winter. The rainy season can get swelteringly hot and humid with average coastal temperatures of 88F (31C).

The best time to visit Mozambique is in the cooler, dry winter season between April and September, when it's sunny and the water is still pleasantly warm. The country is also a popular New Year's destination, particularly for South Africans, but those travelling in December and January should be prepared for rain.

## Health Notes when travelling to Mozambique

Health regulations in Mozambique require visitors to have a yellow fever certificate if travelling from infected areas. Malaria is a risk throughout the year and prophylactics are recommended, as well as precautions against mosquitos.

Vaccinations are recommended for hepatitis A, hepatitis B, and typhoid. Visitors who will be spending a lot of time outdoors and may be at risk of animal bites should consider a rabies vaccination. All eligible travellers should be up to date with their COVID-19 vaccines.

Diseases caused by unsanitary conditions are common throughout the country, and untreated water should be considered as unsafe to drink. Cholera and other waterborne diseases are prevalent during the rainy season.

The government has declared tuberculosis (TB) a national emergency and expects it to be a problem for the foreseeable future. Hospital facilities are generally poor in Mozambique, and outside the major cities of Maputo and Beira medical facilities are limited.

Comprehensive medical insurance is essential and visitors should carry personal medical supplies with them. Visitors should make sure that all medication is in its original packaging and accompanied by a signed and dated letter from a doctor, detailing what the medication is and why it is needed.

## Safety Notes when travelling to Mozambique

Most visits to Mozambique are trouble free, but tourists should remain vigilant at all times. Violent crime can occur in major cities and tourist areas, and there is some mugging, bag snatching, and pick-pocketing. Visitors are advised to be alert in public places, to keep valuables out of sight, and to avoid walking anywhere at night. All visitors, especially women, should avoid walking alone on the beach, as beaches and offshore islands are not policed.

Visitors are advised that it is extremely risky to wander off well-travelled paths and roads, as a few unexploded landmines still lie scattered about the southern parts of the country. Local information should be sought before going off-road outside provincial capitals.

Travellers should remain vigilant when driving, as traffic accidents are common due to the poor condition of the roads. Many roads can become impassable in the rainy season (November to April), when there is also a risk of cyclones. Overland travel after dark is not recommended, and travellers should be especially alert when driving near the Mozambique-South African border. Police checkpoints are common, where foreigners may be at risk of harassment. There have been many reports of police attempting to solicit bribes, but travellers should insist on a written citation that can be paid at a police station. Travellers should also not travel to some northern districts in Cabo Delgado Province due to terrorism.

## Customs in Mozambique

Identity documents should be carried at all times; drug offences are taken very seriously, and can receive long jail terms and heavy fines. Visitors should ask permission before photographing anyone, particularly in remote parts of the country.

## Duty Free in Mozambique

Travellers to Mozambique may enter the country with the following items without incurring customs duty: 200 cigarettes or 250g of tobacco, perfume for personal use, and 750ml of spirits or three standard bottles of wine. Drugs are strictly prohibited and a permit is required for firearms and ammunition.

## Doing Business in Mozambique

Conducting business in Mozambique can be difficult, as many people only speak Portuguese or their own ethnic language. Translators are usually found in Maputo, but remain hard to come by. Punctuality is important and dress is usually conservative, with lightweight materials recommended.

Business associates should be addressed by their professional titles unless otherwise stated, and meetings generally start and end with a handshake. Men and women may shake hands, but any additional physical contact can be interpreted as romantic interest.

## Communication in Mozambique

The international dialling code for Mozambique is +258. The outgoing code is 00 followed by the relevant country code (e.g. 0027 for South Africa). Internet access is easy and fast in Maputo and other major centres; upmarket hotels offer WiFi. Mobile coverage is expanding to all main cities in most provinces.

## Tipping in Mozambique

Tipping has become standard practice in Mozambique, particularly in tourist areas where a tip of about 10 percent is expected in restaurants.

## Passport/Visa Note

All foreign passengers to Mozambique must hold return or onward tickets, the necessary travel documentation for their next destination, and proof of sufficient funds to cover their expenses while in the country. Until recently visitors of most nationalities could obtain a 30-day tourist visa on arrival in Mozambique, but visas can now no longer be purchased at points of entry and must be organised beforehand. Those visiting Mozambique from a country where there is no Mozambican diplomatic mission should be able to get a visa on arrival but this should be confirmed in advance. A yellow fever vaccination certificate is required to enter Mozambique if visitors are arriving from or have transited through an infected area. It is highly recommended that travellers' passports have at least six months' validity remaining after the intended date of departure from their travel destination. Immigration officials often apply different rules to those stated by travel agents and official sources.

## Entry Requirements

### Entry requirements for Americans:

US citizens must have a passport that is valid on arrival in Mozambique. A visa is required.

### Entry requirements for Canadians:

Canadian citizens must have a passport that is valid on arrival in Mozambique. A visa is required.

**Entry requirements for UK nationals:**

British citizens must have a passport that is valid on arrival in Mozambique. A visa is required.

**Entry requirements for Australians:**

Australian citizens must have a passport that is valid on arrival in Mozambique. A visa is required.

**Entry requirements for Irish nationals:**

Irish citizens must have a passport that is valid on arrival in Mozambique. A visa is required.

**Entry requirements for New Zealanders:**

New Zealand citizens must have a passport that is valid on arrival in Mozambique. A visa is required.

**Entry requirements for South Africans:**

South African citizens must have a passport that is valid for at least 30 days after their arrival in Mozambique. No visa is required.

## **Tourist Offices**

Department of Tourism official site: <http://www.visitmozambique.net>

## Mozambique Embassies

### **In the United States:**

Mozambique Embassy, Washington DC, United States (also responsible for Canada): +1 202 293 7146

### **In the United Kingdom:**

Mozambique High Commission, London, United Kingdom: +44 (020) 7383 3800

### **In Australia:**

Consulate in Melbourne, Australia: +61 3 9652 9000

### **In South Africa:**

Mozambique High Commission, Pretoria, South Africa: +27 12 401 0300

## Foreign Embassies in Mozambique

### **American Embassy**

United States Embassy, Maputo: +258 21 492 797

### **Canadian Embassy**

Canadian High Commission, Maputo: +258 21 244 200

### **British Embassy**

British High Commission, Maputo: +258 21 356 000

### **Australian Embassy**

Australian Consulate, Maputo: +258 21 498 778

### **Irish Embassy**

Irish Embassy, Maputo: +258 (0)1 491 440

### **New Zealand Embassy**

New Zealand High Commission, Pretoria, South Africa (also responsible for Mozambique): +27 12 435 9000

### **South African Embassy**

South African High Commission, Maputo: +258 21 243 000

## Currency

The official currency is the Mozambican Metical (MZN), which is divided into 100 centavos. In the southern parts of the country, South African rands and US dollars are often also accepted to pay for accommodation. It's prudent to carry some cash in these currencies for times when an ATM is out of order or nonexistent. Credit cards are accepted in most upmarket hotels in Maputo, but card facilities throughout the rest of the country are limited so, again, it's advisable to carry cash.

## Port of Call - Maputo

The capital of Mozambique since 1898, Maputo may look a little run-down, but the city is full of hidden beauty and unexpected sights and experiences. Most visitors to Maputo arrive via cruise ship and spend their time lazing on the beaches of Inhaca and Portuguese Island, but the city itself is worth exploring. Visitors fall in love with the relaxed pace of life in Maputo, known as Lourenço Marques before independence, with its lively markets and street vendors showcasing the emergence of African culture after so many years of Portuguese rule. Enjoy the wide selection of hotels, restaurants and supermarkets, and take a stroll along the waterfront, where the majestic Polana Hotel has been standing since 1922. Residents are friendly and welcoming, and the streets are safe to walk in, even at night. From the spicy piri-piri prawns offered by numerous restaurants, to the busy markets and pumping nightclubs, the city is working hard to restore some of her former grandeur.

## Shopping in Maputo

You won't find shopping malls in Maputo, but the city has a few bustling markets with great opportunities to buy souvenirs like jewellery made of shells, seeds and beads; wooden masks and carvings; and brightly coloured Batik fabric.

**Best Buy:** Brightly coloured wax-dyed fabric, hand-carved wooden items, bead jewellery

## Dining in Maputo

Mundo's - Sports bar serving pizza, pasta and Portuguese food  
Costa do Sol - Seafood restaurant a short taxi ride from town  
Zambi - Highly rated Portuguese and seafood restaurant with an outdoor patio

**Best Dish:** Fresh seafood



## Overview of the Attractions in Mozambique

A laidback, friendly, and comparatively safe tourist destination in East Africa, Mozambique offers visitors numerous things to see and do. Perhaps most popular are the dozens of stunning tropical beaches that are perfect for just lazing around on.

For beach holidays, Mozambique is arguably the best destination in Africa. It's widely lauded as one of the best destinations in the world for scuba diving and game fishing, and its colourful and well-preserved coral reefs and clear warm waters attract plenty of snorkellers and honeymooners.

Travellers should see the enormous sand dunes and freshwater lakes of Bazaruto Island or visit Benguerra Island's forests and wetlands. History enthusiasts will enjoy the historic lighthouse on Inhaca Island and a number of UNESCO-listed cultural attractions.

Known mainly for its beach resorts and ocean activities, other attractions include Africa's fourth-largest artificial lake, Cahora Bassa, and Gorongosa National Park. The north of the country offers some amazing wilderness areas.

It's worth horse riding on the beach in Vilanculos or scuba diving in its turquoise waters, and taking a trip on a Pemba Bay dhow. Ponta d'Ouro, in the south, is good for swimming with dolphins, or surfing one of the most perfect waves in the world.

# Public Holidays in Mozambique

	2023	2024
New Year's Day	Mon. January 1	Mon. January 1
Heroes Day	Sat. February 3	Sat. February 3
Women's Day	Sun. April 7	Sun. April 7
Worker's Day	Wed. May 1	Wed. May 1
Independence Day	Tue. June 25	Tue. June 25
Victory Day	Sat. September 7	Sat. September 7
Armed Forces Day	Wed. September 25	Wed. September 25
Peace Day	Fri. October 4	Fri. October 4
Christmas Day	Wed. December 25	Wed. December 25