

AFRICA · ISLANDS · OFF THE BEATEN PATH · HIKING · WILDLIFE · BEACHES · CULTURE



Comoros

The Comoros, three volcanic islands between Mozambique and Madagascar, see only a trickle of tourists. Climb to Karthala's vast crater on Grande Comore, wander the Swahili lanes of Moroni and Mutsamudu, and watch green turtles nest on Mohéli's beaches. Facilities are basic and French helps, but the welcome, the scent of ylang-ylang and the empty coral coast reward patient travellers.

 Before you go, read the UK government's travel advice for Comoros and entry requirements (visas, passport validity). Last updated by FCDO 10 December 2025.

 CAPITAL Moroni	 CURRENCY Comorian franc (KMF) £1 ≈ KMF 586	 LANGUAGE Comorian, French Arabic	 BEST TIME May–Oct
 DAILY BUDGET £45–£180 ££ Moderate	 PLUGS Type C, E 220V · adapter needed	 FLIGHT FROM LONDON 15h 30m via Nairobi or Addis Ababa ~£750–£1,200 return	 TIME ZONE UTC+3 standard time

The Union of the Comoros is three islands: Grande Comore (Ngazidja), the largest, dominated by the volcano of Karthala; steep, river-cut Anjouan (Ndzwani); and small, forested Mohéli (Mwali). Mayotte, the fourth island of the archipelago, remained French. Most trips start in Moroni, with a few days for the old medina, the black-lava coast and a Karthala climb, then hop by small plane to Mohéli for turtles, whales and the marine park's islets, and on to Anjouan for Mutsamudu's medina, Domoni's carved doors and the ylang-ylang plantations. Allow at least ten days, as inter-island links are irregular.

This is travel for the patient: hotels are few and simple, power cuts are frequent and schedules slip. Prices are higher than the facilities suggest, because most goods are imported and rooms are scarce. Comorian and French are the working languages, with little English outside a handful of guesthouses. The rewards are real, though: villages where visitors are still a novelty, beaches shared only with fishermen, humpback whales offshore from July to October, and cloves and ylang-ylang flowers drying by the roadside. The islands are devoutly Muslim, so modest dress is expected, and life slows noticeably during Ramadan.

Top 5 highlights

1

ADVENTURE

Mount Karthala

One of the world's largest active volcanoes, Karthala rises to 2,361 m, with a summit caldera about 3 km by 4 km. The climb through cloud forest and heath takes most of a day, so hire a guide in Moroni and camp near the rim.

2

WILDLIFE

Mohéli National Park

Founded in 2001 as the country's first marine park, it protects green and hawksbill turtles, dugongs and visiting humpback whales. Stay at Nioumachoua for boat trips to its offshore islets, or at Itsamia to watch turtles nest at night.

3

HISTORY

Moroni medina and Old Friday Mosque

Behind the harbour, the capital's old quarter is a tangle of narrow lanes, carved doorways and coral-stone houses. The arcaded Old Friday Mosque on the waterfront was first built in 1427, with its minaret added in 1921.

4

HISTORY

Mutsamudu medina and citadel

Stepped lanes wind up from the port through the medina, which dates back to the 15th century, past carved doors and small mosques to the citadel of 1786, with sweeping views over the harbour and Anjouan's green ridges.

5

ARCHITECTURE

Domoni

Capital of the Anjouan sultanate until the late 18th century and founded around the 12th, Domoni keeps old stone mansions with richly carved Swahili doors, historic mosques and remnants of its sea walls; its old families trace their roots to Shirazi settlers.

Biggest cities

LARGEST CITY

Moroni

≈ 75,000 people

The capital's waterfront Old Friday Mosque and the alleys of the medina behind it deserve a slow morning; the Volo Volo market is the place for spices, vanilla and gossip.

2ND LARGEST CITY

Mutsamudu

≈ 26,000 people

Anjouan's port capital has the archipelago's most atmospheric medina, a maze of whitewashed lanes climbing to a citadel built in 1786 to defend against raiders from Madagascar.

3RD LARGEST CITY

Fomboni

≈ 17,000 people

Mohéli's sleepy capital is little more than a market, a harbour and a few guesthouses, but it is the gateway to the national park and the turtle beaches of Itsamia.

Figures are rounded 2017 census counts for the towns. Mirontsi, effectively a suburb of Mutsamudu, is counted separately; Tsémbéhou and Domoni on Anjouan are the next largest.

When to go to Comoros

Best time: **May–Oct.**

Jan

Feb

Mar

Apr

May

Jun

Jul

Aug

Sep

Oct

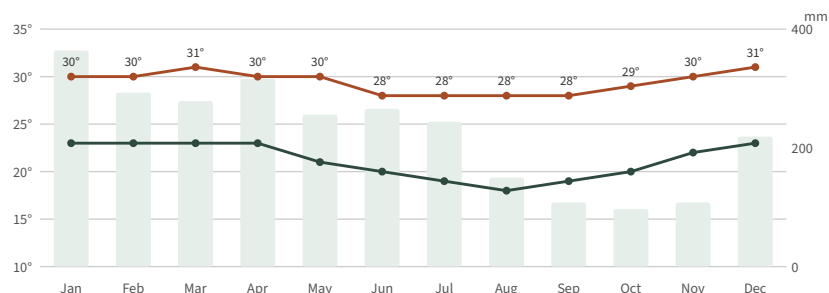
Nov

Dec

■ Best ■ Good ■ Mixed ■ Poor

Average climate in Moroni

— High °C — Low °C ■ Rain (mm)



Festivals & events

Jul–Aug	Grand Mariage season Grande Comore's lavish customary weddings, which confer lifelong status on the groom, cluster in July and August when the diaspora returns, with processions, dancing and feasts lasting days.
Jul	Independence Day On 6 July, the anniversary of independence from France in 1975, Moroni and the island capitals mark the day with parades, music and speeches.
Aug	Mawlid The Prophet's birthday is celebrated with night-long religious chanting, dancing and processions across the islands. It moves about 11 days earlier each year and falls in August in 2026–28.

How much does Comoros cost?

SHOESTRING £45 per person / day ≈ KMF 26,352 hostels, street food, buses	MID-RANGE £95 per person / day ≈ KMF 55,633 3-star hotels, restaurants, some taxis	COMFORTABLE £180 per person / day ≈ KMF 105,409 4-star+, guided trips, private transfers
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Estimates per person per day, excluding flights. Prices vary by season and city.

Food to try

Langouste à la vanille Spiny lobster cooked in a creamy sauce flavoured with local vanilla, the islands' celebration dish and a fixture of hotel menus in Moroni.	Mataba Pounded cassava leaves simmered slowly in coconut milk, often with fish or crab, and served with rice or boiled green bananas.	Pilaou Rice cooked with meat, onions and warm spices such as cinnamon, cloves and cardamom, a staple of weddings and festive meals.
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Getting around

Small planes link Moroni's Hahaya airport with Anjouan and Mohéli in well under an hour, but schedules change often. Boats also cross between the islands, though standards vary, so check the FCDO advice on sea travel. On each island, shared taxis and minibuses (taxi-brousse) run the coast roads for low fixed fares. A car with driver, arranged through your hotel, is the easiest way to explore.

Practical information

PLUGS & VOLTAGE ⏻ ⏻ C E 220V — bring a UK-to-C/E adapter	EMERGENCY NUMBERS Fire: 113 or 114 Police: 117 Source: FCDO “Getting help”
DIALLING CODE +269	TIME ZONE UTC+3 (standard time)

TAP WATER

Not safe — drink bottled or treated water

DRIVING

On the right

TIPPING

Tipping is not customary in local eateries; round up taxi fares and leave about 10% in hotel restaurants or for guides who have looked after you well.

ETIQUETTE

Comorians are devout Sunni Muslims: cover shoulders and knees, avoid public displays of affection, and eat and pass things with your right hand. Ask before photographing people, especially women, and greet elders first.

MAIN AIRPORTS

Prince Said Ibrahim International Airport (HAH), Moroni

Visas & entry for Comoros

Shown for a British passport.

Visa required — apply before you go

You must have a visa to enter or travel through Comoros. You can buy a visa for 30 euros when you arrive at Hahaya airport or other points of entry.

From the UK government's FCDO entry requirements for British passport holders — read the full page for passport validity, permits and exceptions.

Health & vaccinations



See a travel health nurse, GP or travel clinic **6–8 weeks before you go**. Make sure routine UK vaccinations (such as MMR and diphtheria-tetanus-polio) are up to date.

RECOMMENDED FOR MOST TRAVELLERS

Hepatitis A

Tetanus

Typhoid

SOMETIMES ADVISED — DEPENDS ON YOUR TRIP, ACTIVITIES AND HEALTH

Dengue

Hepatitis B

Measles

Rabies

YELLOW FEVER CERTIFICATE

No yellow fever certificate is required to enter.

MALARIA

High risk of malaria

- There is a high risk of malaria in Comoros: antimalarial tablets recommended.

Source: TravelHealthPro (National Travel Health Network and Centre), checked 21 October 2026. This is a summary, not medical advice.

Public holidays in Comoros

The next 12 months. Banks, offices and some sights may close, and transport and hotels get busy around these dates.

Thu 12 Nov 2026

Maore Day

Fri 25 Dec 2026

Christmas Day

Fri 1 Jan 2027	New Year's Day
Tue 5 Jan 2027	Isra' and Mi'raj (date may shift)
Tue 9 Mar 2027	Eid al-Fitr (date may shift)
Wed 10 Mar 2027	Eid al-Fitr (date may shift)
Thu 11 Mar 2027	Eid al-Fitr (date may shift)
Thu 18 Mar 2027	Cheikh al Maarouf Day
Sat 1 May 2027	Labour Day
Sun 16 May 2027	Eid al-Adha (date may shift)
Mon 17 May 2027	Eid al-Adha (date may shift)
Sun 6 Jun 2027	Islamic New Year (date may shift)
Tue 6 Jul 2027	National Day
Sat 14 Aug 2027	Prophet's Birthday (date may shift)

National holidays only. Dates based on lunar calendars can move by a day or two depending on official announcements.

Useful phrases in French

ENGLISH	FRENCH	SAY IT
Hello	Bonjour	<i>bon-ZHOOR</i>
Thank you	Merci	<i>mair-SEE</i>
Please	S'il vous plaît	<i>seel voo PLAY</i>
Excuse me	Excusez-moi	<i>ex-koo-ZAY mwah</i>
How much is this?	C'est combien ?	<i>say kom-BYAN</i>

Know before you go

Bring euros in cash: the Comorian franc is pegged to the euro, cards work only in a few hotels, and ATMs are scarce outside Moroni and Mutsamudu.

Leave at least two spare days before your flight home, as inter-island flights and boats are often delayed or cancelled at short notice.

During Ramadan, avoid eating, drinking or smoking in public in daylight; many restaurants close until sunset, so carry snacks and water to have discreetly.

Visa, health and safety rules change. Before you book or travel, check the FCDO travel advice (gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice) and TravelHealthPro (travelhealthpro.org.uk). Costs are estimates. © 2026 Pick My Trip.