

AFRICA · BEACHES · ISLANDS · DIVING · WILDLIFE · OFF THE BEATEN PATH



Mozambique

The Bazaruto Archipelago has some of the clearest water in the Indian Ocean, Tofo's reefs draw whale sharks and manta rays, and the coral-stone streets of Ilha de Moçambique recall four centuries as a Portuguese trading hub. Inland, Gorongosa National Park is midway through one of Africa's great conservation comebacks.

**The UK Foreign Office (FCDO) advises against all travel to parts of Mozambique.**

Read the latest FCDO travel advice before planning a trip. Your travel insurance may be invalid if you travel against FCDO advice. FCDO advice last updated 20 August 2026.

 CAPITAL Maputo	 CURRENCY Mozambican metical (MZN) £1 ≈ MZN 85.27	 LANGUAGE Portuguese, Makhuwa Tsonga, Sena	 BEST TIME May–Nov
 DAILY BUDGET £45–£280 ££ Moderate	 PLUGS Type C, F, M 220V · adapter needed	 FLIGHT FROM LONDON 14h via Johannesburg ~£750–£1,300 return	 TIME ZONE UTC+2 standard time

Mozambique's coastline runs for nearly 2,500 km, and most trips focus on one stretch of it. The south is the easiest: Ponta do Ouro's dolphins lie just south of Maputo, and the EN1 highway runs north to Tofo's diving, Inhambane's old port and Vilankulo, the jumping-off point for the Bazaruto Archipelago. The centre has Gorongosa National Park and the port of Beira. The north, a long flight away, holds Ilha de Moçambique and the remote shores of Lake Niassa. Given the distances, most visitors either travel the south by road or fly between two or three bases.

Food is cheap and good, from piri-piri chicken to fresh prawns and Portuguese-style bread rolls, but beach lodges are priced for South African and international visitors, and the Bazaruto islands are firmly luxury. Overland travel by chapa minibus is slow, crowded and starts before dawn. Portuguese is far more useful than English. December, January and Easter bring South African holidaymakers to the southern beaches, while rain and cyclone risk peak from January to March. It suits divers, beach lovers and overlanders who enjoy a slower, less polished side of Africa.

Top 5 highlights

1

BEACH

Bazaruto Archipelago

A national park of islands off Vilankulo, with towering dunes, turquoise sandbanks and reefs. Dhow trips from the mainland visit for snorkelling, and the park shelters the last viable dugong population on Africa's east coast.

2

HISTORY

Ilha de Moçambique

A small coral island linked to the mainland by a long, single-lane bridge, and capital of Portuguese East Africa until 1898. Its UNESCO-listed Stone Town of churches, mansions and the 16th-century Fortress of São Sebastião contrasts with thatched Macuti Town.

3

WILDLIFE

Gorongosa National Park

Its wildlife was devastated by civil war, but Gorongosa has rebounded since a restoration project began in the 2000s: elephants, lions, huge herds of waterbuck and reintroduced wild dogs now roam the floodplains below Mount Gorongosa.

4

ADVENTURE

Tofo

A laid-back surf and dive village near Inhambane, known for ocean safaris with whale sharks and for giant manta ray cleaning stations on its reefs; humpback whales pass offshore from about June to October.

5

WILDLIFE

Ponta do Ouro and Maputo National Park

Just north of the South African border, Ponta do Ouro offers dolphin swims and diving in the marine section of Maputo National Park, which also protects elephants and coastal lakes; loggerhead and leatherback turtles nest on its beaches from about November to February.

Biggest cities

LARGEST CITY

Maputo

≈ 2.5 million people

A relaxed capital of jacaranda-lined avenues, modernist buildings and a grand domed railway station; buy prawns at the Mercado do Peixe to have them grilled, and hear marrabenta in the bars.

2ND LARGEST CITY

Nampula

≈ 740,000 people

The north's commercial hub, with a good ethnographic museum and a large cathedral; most travellers stop overnight on the way to Ilha de Moçambique, about three hours east.

3RD LARGEST CITY

Beira

≈ 530,000 people

A major port still recovering from Cyclone Idai in 2019; few linger, but its Portuguese-era buildings and the ruined Grande Hotel are worth a look en route to Gorongosa.

Maputo's figure includes Matola and the neighbouring districts that form Greater Maputo; counted alone, Matola would rank as the second-largest city. Figures are based on the 2017 census.

When to go to Mozambique

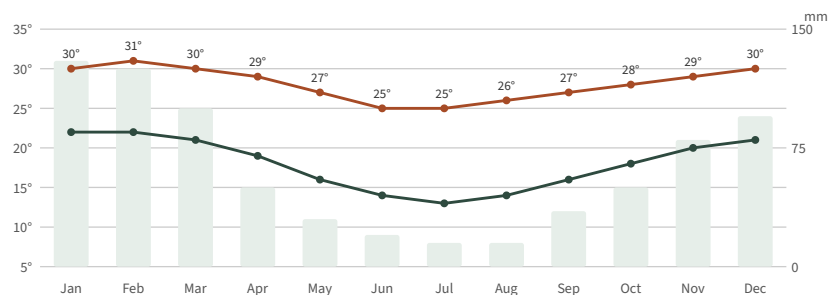
Best time: **May–Nov.**



Best Good Mixed Poor

Average climate in Maputo

High °C Low °C Rain (mm)



Festivals & events

Feb	Festival Marrabenta Each February Maputo and the surrounding province celebrate marrabenta, the country's signature guitar-driven dance music, with concerts that often include a trip to Marracuene, its birthplace.
May	AZGO Festival Maputo's biggest music and arts festival brings artists from across southern Africa and the Portuguese-speaking world to the capital for several days of concerts, usually in May.

How much does Mozambique cost?

SHOESTRING £45 per person / day ≈ MZN 3,837 hostels, street food, buses	MID-RANGE £110 per person / day ≈ MZN 9,379 3-star hotels, restaurants, some taxis	COMFORTABLE £280 per person / day ≈ MZN 23,875 4-star+, guided trips, private transfers
---	--	---

Estimates per person per day, excluding flights. Prices vary by season and city.

Food to try

Piri-piri chicken

Chicken marinated in fiery piri-piri chilli, garlic and lemon, then grilled over charcoal; Mozambique's Afro-Portuguese signature, served with chips or rice.

Matapa

Cassava leaves pounded and slow-cooked with ground peanuts and coconut milk, often with crab or prawns, and served with rice or xima, the local maize porridge.

Camarão grelhado

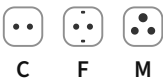
Mozambique's big, sweet prawns grilled with garlic and piri-piri butter and eaten with your fingers, ideally at Maputo's fish market, where a stall cooks what you buy.

Getting around

Distances are huge, with Ilha de Moçambique well over 2,000 km from Maputo by road, so LAM's domestic flights between Maputo, Vilankulo, Beira, Nampula and Pemba save days. In the south, chapas (minibuses) and larger buses run along the EN1, leaving very early. Dhows and boats reach the islands, and a 4x4 is needed for sandy coastal tracks and parks. Agree taxi fares before getting in.

Practical information

PLUGS & VOLTAGE



220V — bring a UK-to-C/F/M adapter

DIALLING CODE

+258

TAP WATER

Not safe — drink bottled or treated water

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

Call **112** (ambulance, fire, police)

Ambulance: **848888** or **823388**

Fire: **198**

Police: **112**

Source: FCDO “Getting help”

TIME ZONE

UTC+2 (standard time)

DRIVING

On the left

TIPPING

About 10% in restaurants is appreciated where service is not included; also tip guides, boat crews and the car guards who watch parked cars.

ETIQUETTE

Greet people with 'bom dia' and a handshake before getting down to business, ask before photographing anyone, and never photograph police, soldiers, airports or government buildings.

MAIN AIRPORTS

Maputo International Airport (MPM), Maputo; Vilankulo Airport (VNX), Vilankulo

Visas & entry for Mozambique

Shown for a British passport.

Apply online before you go (travel authorisation)

British passport holders must get an Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA) before travelling to Mozambique for tourism or business visits of up to 30 days.

You can apply for an ETA through the official Mozambique eVisa portal at least 5 working days before you travel. You must pay online when you apply. You cannot pay on arrival at the border.

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

Tuberculosis

YELLOW FEVER CERTIFICATE

A yellow fever certificate is only required if you arrive from (or transit through) a country with yellow fever risk — not if you fly direct from the UK.

MALARIA

High risk of malaria

- There is a high risk of malaria in Mozambique: 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 Mozambique

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

Fri 25 Dec 2026

Family Day

Fri 1 Jan 2027	International Fraternism Day
Wed 3 Feb 2027	Heroes' Day
Wed 7 Apr 2027	Women's Day
Sat 1 May 2027	International Workers' Day
Fri 25 Jun 2027	National Independence Day
Tue 7 Sep 2027	Victory Day
Sat 25 Sep 2027	Armed Forces Day
Mon 4 Oct 2027	Peace and Reconciliation Day

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

Useful phrases in Portuguese

ENGLISH	PORTUGUESE	SAY IT
Hello	Olá	<i>oh-LAH</i>
Thank you	Obrigado / Obrigada	<i>oh-bree-GAH-doo / oh-bree-GAH-dah</i>
Please	Por favor	<i>poor fah-VOR</i>
Excuse me	Com licença	<i>kom lee-SEN-sah</i>
How much is this?	Quanto custa?	<i>KWAN-too KOOS-tah</i>

Know before you go

Carry your passport, or a certified copy, at all times: police checks are common, especially along the EN1, and you may be asked to show it.

If driving, carry two warning triangles and reflective vests, keep strictly to speed limits through villages, and avoid driving after dark.

Malaria is present throughout Mozambique; see a travel clinic about antimalarials and vaccinations at least several weeks before you leave.

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.