

Tanzania

Authentic Africa

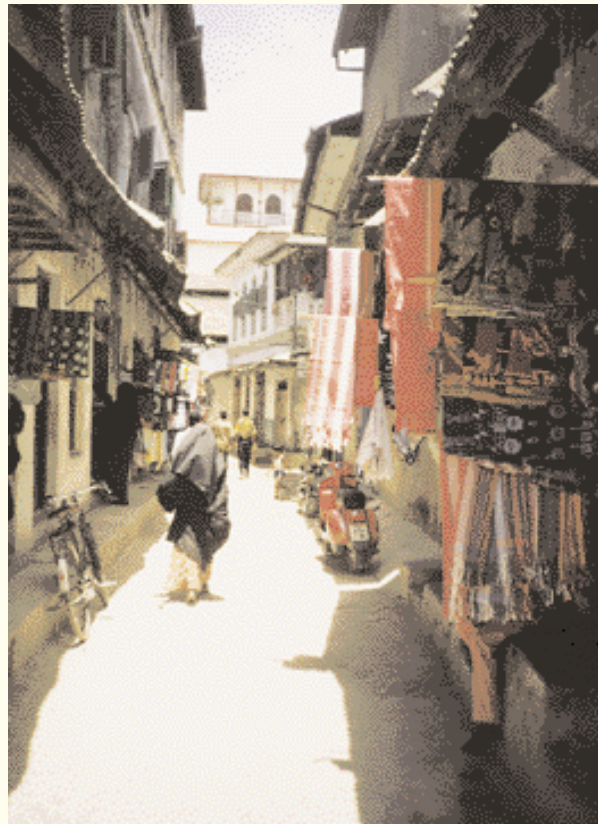
Cairo-Mounir El-Fishawy

The United Republic of Tanzania lies in East Africa, bordered by Kenya and Uganda to the north; Burundi, Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo to the west; and by Zambia, Malawi and Mozambique to the south.

Tanzania is divided into several clearly defined regions with differing geographical features; the coastal plains, the Maasai steppe, miombo woodland and high plateau in the southern area. Savannah and bush cover half of the country. The semiarid desert is in Dodoma region while volcanic highlands can be seen in the northeast and the southwest. These include the Great Rift Valley – a gigantic fracture in the earth's crust – and Mount Kilimanjaro, Africa's highest peak. The islands of Zanzibar, Pemba and Mafia are also part of Tanzania, as are other coral and volcanic islands just off the coast. Like the 800 km coastline, these islands are lush with palm-fringed white beaches washed by the turquoise water of the Indian Ocean. Tanzania and its neighbors share the waters of the Great African Lakes Victoria, Tanganyika and Nyasa.

History of Tanzania

Tanzania is considered the cradle of mankind for it was here in the Olduvai Gorge that the remains of the 1.75 million year old Homo habilis (Zinjanthropus) were discovered. They had been influencing the local population as far back as 2000 years ago when Arab and Persian merchants visited some parts of the country along the coastline. During the 8th century, settlements by Arab merchants were established in Zanzibar, Kilwa Masoko, Mikindani and Pangani. The Portuguese, established temporary settlements along some areas in the 16th century. In the late 17th century, they were superceded by the Omanis who developed the slave trade and made Zanzibar their



Traditional Tanzania market.

سوق شعبي.

capital. By the late 19th century, Germany occupied the mainland (then known as "Deutsche Ost Africa". At the end of the WWI, the administration of the mainland, which was renamed Tanganyika, was taken over by the British. This administration continued – as a League of Nations mandate – until the end of the Second World War when Tanganyika became UN trust territory although still under British administration. The country achieved independence in 1961. Two years later Zanzibar followed suit and joined with Tanganyika.

The Capital

Dar es Salaam is considered the commercial

capital together with its main port. The population of Dar es Salaam is about 2.5 million, out of a total population of 35 million who all speak Swahili. Most people speak English fluently. They are mainly Muslims but there are also Christians and Hindus. The harmony and peaceful coexistence of different religions are characteristic of the easy life of the country.

The friendly people belong to the Bantu tribes, mainly the Sukuma and Nyamwezi. There are also 125 other tribal groups but they are either Bantu or Nilotic. The diverse nature of the country can be seen in the diversity of clothes, hair styles, local dance, art, craft and hospitality.

Tanzanian Tourism world

There are different types of holidays and tours. Balloon safaris over the Serengeti steppes, or camel safaris in the bushes and villages. You can also visit the Amboni caves to the north of Tanga, or go fishing in Zanzibar's islands, Pemba and Mafi and the Gulf of Manazi in Mikindani where you could also dive to see different, colorful fish and coral reefs. You may want to play golf, go mountaineering, surf boarding and bird watching.

In the cities and in the countryside there are many fashionable resorts, restaurants, sea food delicacies, museums and local markets. And there is plenty of beautiful scenery to enjoy when traveling from city to city.

After our forthcoming visit to Tanzania and Zanzibar, Islamic Tourism magazine will share the delights of this popular tourist destination with its readers. ■