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# TANZANIA

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# Basic facts

**Tanzania's** population includes around 120 different African tribal groups. The largest group is the Sukuma, who live in the north-western part of the country, south of Lake Victoria. The country's earliest people were hunters and gatherers, who inhabited the land as far back as 5000BC.

- Nearly 30 Percent of Tanzania is National Parks.
- Mount Kilimanjaro is the Tallest Mountain in Africa.
- The Great Migration Sees Over 2 Million Animals Travel Across the Plains.
- Ngorongoro Crater is One of the Best Places to See the Big Five.
- Lake Tanganyika is the Second Largest Lake in the World.

Tanzania is the home to the largest crab in the world, the coconut crab. It is also apparently one of the tastiest crabs in the world.

Freddie Mercury, the famous late songwriter and vocalist for the rock band 'Queen' was born in Zanzibar, Tanzania.

Almost every type of ecological system can be found on Mount Kilimanjaro. This includes cultivated land, rain forest, heath, moorland, alpine desert, and an arctic summit.

The shortest war in history was fought in 1896 in Tanzania between the United Kingdom and Zanzibar. It lasted only 45 minutes.

The Serengeti is home to the Ol Doinyo Lengai; the only volcano on the planet that is currently erupting carbonatite lava. This mineral rich carbonate lava is washed down to the plains where it fertilizes the land.

Lake Manyara National Park, in Tanzania, was the first park to become famous for being home to tree-climbing lions

Tanzania is one of the last remaining places when the possibility of discovering a new species still exists. In 2003, a new monkey, the kipunji, was discovered and is extremely rare with a population of only about one thousand animals

# Mount Kilimanjaro

Mount Kilimanjaro is a dormant volcano in Tanzania. It has three volcanic cones: Kibo, Mwenezi and Shira. It is the highest mountain in Africa and the highest single free-standing mountain in the world: 5,895 metres above sea level and about 4,900 metres above its plateau base.

Elevation: 5,895 m

Location: Kilimanjaro Region, north east Tanzania

Topo map: Kilimanjaro map and guide by Wielechowski

Last eruption: Between 150,000 and 200,000 years ago

Mountain range: Eastern Rift mountains

Continent: Africa

Since 1912, Kilimanjaro has lost 82% of its ice cap, and since 1962 it has lost 55% of its remaining glaciers – all due to climate change.

Approximately 35,000 people attempt climbing Kilimanjaro each year, of which only two thirds are usually successful. This is mostly due to altitude-related problems, forcing some climbers to turn back.

The youngest person to have climbed Mt Kilimanjaro is currently Keats Boyd from Los Angeles, who reached the summit in January 2008 at the age of 7. (This is even more impressive due to the fact that Boyd somehow managed to dodge the minimum age rule for young climbers, which is 10 years old).

Almost every person to have summited the Mountain has recorded their thoughts about their achievement in a book that is stored in a wooden box at the top of the Mountain.

South African-born inspiration, Bernard Goosen, managed to conquer the Mountain twice in a wheelchair! His first summit took place in 2003 and lasted for nine days. His second occurred four years later, taking him only six days to complete the trek. Goosen was born with cerebral palsy, but determinedly used a modified wheelchair (mostly without assistance) to scale the Mountain.

Douglas Adams, the late famous author of the legendary Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy series, took part in a Mt Kilimanjaro hike dressed in a rhinoceros suit for the British charity organisation.

# Tanzanian cultures

430,000 in Tanzania. Even though the Maasai live a simple life, they still thrive in spite of our quickly developing world. In fact, their population has probably been increasing. In 1989 their numbers were recorded at 377,089!

All special events and occasions of Tanzanian People require the preparation of huge, family-sized platters of food, like *pilau*, which is a local dish made up of potatoes, meat, and spiced rice. The cooks for these meals always cook a ton of food since it's considered very embarrassing and shameful for guests to leave dinner hungry.

Alcohol is also an important—and oftentimes incredibly symbolic—part of these ceremonies. Local spirits and beers, derived from rice, corn, bananas sorghum, and honey are served along with these large meals. There are religions in Tanzania that forbid alcohol, however.

Konyagi, gin-like alcohol, is brewed at a commercial scale in Tanzania, as are a variety of local soft drinks and beers. Some beers produced in neighboring countries—like Burundi's Primus beer, for example—are popular as well.

For Tanzanian People, the staple starches for these big meals vary from region to region. The Northwest part of the country like plantains, the Southwest part of the country likes Ugali, and the folks on the coast prefer rice.

These staple carbs are unique to each part of the country and are accompanied by a beef, fish, chicken, goat, or mutton stew.

On top of the festivals mentioned here, Christmas, Eid, and Easter are also important holidays in Tanzania.

## Unification Day

This event happens every year on April 26th and it celebrates the unification of Zanzibar and Tanzania to form one great country.

## Kiliman Adventure Challenge

This is a grueling triathlon that happens in February, which includes a hike up Mt. Kilimanjaro and then a bike ride around its circumference.

#### Kilimanjaro Marathon

This athletic event also happens in February. It is a pure road race that takes place around Kilimanjaro.

#### Wanyambo Festival

Every January in Dar es Salaam, this celebration of local culture includes dance, music, food, and elaborate costumes.

#### Karibu Travel and Tourism Fair

Every May or June in Arusha, this expansive flea market sells local wares, like gemstone necklaces and safari gear, from local vendors.

#### Mzalendo Halisi Music Festival

Every May in Dar es Salaam, this music festival celebrates local musicians and African artists from all over the continent.

#### Mwaka Kogwa Festival

This is a 4-day event that happens in Zanzibar in July in which men hit each other with banana stalks to put arguments between each other in the last year to rest.

#### Festival of the Dhow Countries

This is a two-week film festival that happens in Zanzibar every July.

#### Serengeti Wildebeest Migration

If you're looking to watch wild wildebeests herds do their annual migration, make sure to visit the country in December through February.

#### Bagamoyo Arts Festival

Between Zanzibar and Dar es Salaam, a week-long music and dance festival in a town called Bagamoyo happens every year in September.

In Tanzania, you must dress modestly. Wearing revealing clothes is a sign of disrespect in this country.

Especially in Zanzibar, you have to dress modestly to respect the cultural beliefs of Muslims. To do this, women should be covered below the knees and above the elbow. Your midriff must not be showing.



Tanzania, and especially Zanzibar, are popular with newlyweds and honeymooners. But these people must be wary. While hugs and kisses are just fine in your hotel room, or even at your resort's pool, PDA on sidewalks and public beaches are highly frowned upon.

Since many Tanzanians are Muslim, and they believe that affection between men and women should be in private, you should be keeping physical signs of public affection on the down-low.

The country's favourite sports are football and boxing.

The Tanzania culture is Swahili, an Arab/African mix, but there are also big Asian communities, particularly Indian, in towns and cities. Tribes inhabit rural areas, including the Maasai of the Great Rift Valley of the north. It is okay to photograph the locals, but always ask first. Some Maasai will charge you for this.

Zanzibar is predominantly Muslim so attention to dress is paramount and women should always keep knees and shoulders covered. Guides and cooks on safaris expect to be tipped, as do waiters in city restaurants (typically 10 percent). Tanzanians are big on shaking hands and small talk.



# Food

Some typical mainland Tanzanian foods include wali (rice), **ugali** (maize porridge), nyama choma (grilled meat), mshikaki (marinated beef), samaki (fish), pilau (rice mixed with a variety of spices), biriyani, and ndizi-nyama (plantains with meat).

Mchuzi wa samaki is a Swahili dish consisting of fish that is cooked in a combination of onions, oil, garlic, curry powder, tomatoes, water, and lemon juice. The dish is often additionally flavored with freshly chopped coriander. After it has been properly prepared, mchuzi wa samaki is typically served hot with fluffy white rice on the side, ideally complementing the spicy, full-bodied sauce.

Mchemsho is a tasty dish from Northern Tanzania consisting of numerous ingredients such as potatoes, green beans, carrots, bananas, tomatoes, cabbage, eggplant, sweet peppers, and a variety of spices. The name of the dish can be translated as *something that is boiled*.

The vegetables are combined with meat or fish in order to make a full meal. In Tanzania, mchemsho is considered a special dish made for special occasions, since it is quite expensive compared to other dishes in the country.

Mchicha is the most popular Tanzanian dish. This thick and creamy vegetarian meal is usually prepared with leafy vegetables such as amaranth or spinach with added grated coconut, coconut milk, peanut butter, tomatoes, and onions. It is recommended to serve mchicha with rice, ugali, or samp and beans on the side in order to make a satisfying main course.

The name of this popular Tanzanian and Kenyan street food dish, mshikaki, refers to skewered pieces of marinated meat such as beef, goat, or mutton that is slowly cooked over hot coals. The meat is marinated in a combination of various herbs and spices that are popular along Africa's eastern coast.

The dish is most often enjoyed after dusk, when the vendors start to sell mshikaki at their stalls, and it is said to taste even better when accompanied by sauces or dips on the side.

# Fact file

**OFFICIAL NAME:** United Republic of Tanzania

**FORM OF GOVERNMENT:** Republic

**CAPITAL:** Dodoma

**AREA:** 947,300 square kilometres

**POPULATION:** 47,173,000

**OFFICIAL LANGUAGE:** Kiswahili or Swahili, English

**MONEY:** Tanzanian shilling

**FLAG:**



Did you know?

Zebras are native to Tanzania

Did you know?

Tanzania has the largest concentration of wildlife in the world? It boasts animals including (but definitely not limited to!) leopards, giraffes, hyenas, buffalos, warthogs, baboons, chimpanzees, hippopotami, elephants, crocodiles, flamingos and many, many more!

Did you know?

the Serengeti Nature Reserve is larger than Northern Ireland?

Did you know?

It is also home to 12 National Parks and 13 Nature Reserves and 38 protected areas, including the *Serengeti*, Africa's largest Nature Reserve.