

Jannat House is a Swedish family home, which welcomes guests and offers a simple restaurant and a number of equally simple but charming rooms. Situated within Lamu town, with magnificent sea views, the House dates from the 18th century and was originally built as a merchant's house. Decorated in typical Swahili style, with antique furniture, the House is exceptionally peaceful. There is neither air conditioning nor glass in the windows - the House is cooled by the breeze. There are no telephones in the rooms. All this makes Jannat House the perfect place for relaxation, rest and rejuvenation.

Location and seasons

Kenya's Lamu Island, one of her most popular beach holiday destinations, offers clear blue sea, marine parks, excellent water sports, coral reefs, monsoon winds, numerous hotels and beach resorts, family vacations, sun n sand, cultural and beach travel and more. Close to Mombasa, it is also within easy reach of Malindi, Diani and many other popular Kenya safari resort hotels. Lamu is famed for its excellent deep sea fishing opportunities.

Beach vacation facts

Hottest time is between November and March, rainy season is May and June (hotel closed 01 May to 15 June); sea weed on beach and strong winds May /August. September to November is cool and pleasant.

Lamu

The Lamu archipelago is a cluster of hot low-lying desert islands, which runs for some 60 km parallel to the northern coastline of northern Kenya. The last survivor of a one thousand year-old civilization, Lamu was founded by the Arabs in the seventh century and traded for centuries thereafter in ivory, rhino horn and slaves. Today it offers a unique showcase for the traditional Swahili culture, a bustling historic town and some of the most pristine beaches in Africa.www.crocodileracers.com

The most famous in the archipelago, measuring about 16 km by 7km, Lamu resembles a smaller version of Zanzibar. Here, however, transport is by foot, donkey or dhow - there are no cars on the island. A magnificent Swahili settlement and a World Heritage Site, Lamu Town is a maze of winding streets and intricately carved doorways, which lies to the north-east of the island. The fishing village of Shela lies to the south (with a 12 km beach), while Kipungani is the local centre for dhow-building and palm-mat weaving. Transfers to Lamu take around 10 minutes by boat from Manda Island.

Lamu town

The oldest and best-preserved Swahili settlement in East Africa, Lamu is a centre for the study of Swahili culture. Although founded in the 13th century, the majority of buildings date from the 18th century. Today the town is a living monument to its past. The old houses, built with coral walls two-feet thick are built with a series of alcoves rather than rooms, whose size is decided by the length of the ten-foot mangrove poles that are used for both floors and ceiling. Many are three-storeys high and feature winding staircases, vast carved doors, intricate fret-work screens, balconies and flat roofs. In the winding streets, the majority of women are black-veiled, while the men wear traditional Swahili dress. The majority of the population is Muslim; and the town echoes to the call of the muezzin calling the faithful to prayer at the 23 mosques of the town. Lamu also hosts the important Maulidi Muslim Festival.

Accommodation

The House has 16 rooms (most of which are doubles). There are no TVs or telephones in the rooms, which are not air conditioned and have no glass in the windows. Safe and telephone can be used in reception.

Dining and bars

The House has a dining room, pool, bar and five terraces. The chef cooks the most delicious dishes including Lamu seafood specialties such as fish, crab, shrimps and lobster.

Child-friendly

This family home welcomes children.

What to see and do

We arrange excursions such as: 3 or more days tours (Tana River safari, Kiwayu, Lamu archipelago), town sight-seeing, fishing- and snorkeling sailing tours and much more. Jannat House has a large dhow (boat) used for the excursions, also available for beach tours.

Courses available on request at Jannat House are:

- retreat, leadership, team building workgroups and conflict solving (in Swedish).
- Swahili (English)
- drum courses

An idyllic climate cooled by the monsoon, the Swahili coast offers a daily average of 8 hours of sunshine, and the hot steamy climate is tempered by the monsoon winds: the south-easterly Kusi, which blows from April to October; and the north-easterly Kaskazi which blows from November to March.