



Le Asiatique and Teppanyaki Grill,  
Emerald Zanzibar Resort & Spa

# Spice up your life

Set your sights on the new Emerald Collection resort in Zanzibar for an all-inclusive escape with a cultural twist, writes **Katie McGonagle**

There's a teacher at the front and a list of phrases scribbled across a whiteboard, but this is unlike any language lesson I ever had at school. The bright mid-afternoon sun is high overhead, the tropical scent of frangipani drifts on a balmy breeze and the gorgeous infinity pool a few metres away is abuzz with activity.

We're at the Eclipse Pool Bar in the heart of the Emerald Zanzibar Resort & Spa, which opened its doors in December, and the daily Swahili lesson I'm engaged in is more like an introduction to local culture. We've covered a few basics: *habari za asubuhi* (good morning), *jina langu ni* (my name is) and my favourite, *rafiki* (friend), which brings new meaning to the loveable *Lion King* character of the same name.

Then as we get into the family tree – jotting down *bibi* and *babu* for grandparents, *mama* and *baba* for mum and dad – we discover the words for aunts and uncles vary depending on their age and which side of the family they're from. It's a much more complex hierarchy than its English equivalent, offering a small but important insight into the intricacies of family life here in Zanzibar.

## EMERALD ENCORE

This latest addition to the Emerald Collection is set on the northeastern tip of Unguja, also known as Zanzibar Island, the main island in the Tanzanian archipelago. The all-inclusive group is known for its good-value Maldives

flagship, but expanded late last year with a second Maldivian property, Emerald Faarufushi Resort & Spa, followed by this East African debut.

In a sign of Zanzibar's flourishing tourism scene, it's the largest resort on the island and its first member of Leading Hotels of the World, with 250 suites set on the

“There's a balance between wellness – with a tranquil, 10-room spa – and family fun, including a free kids' club and separate pool for children

white sands of Muyuni Beach and fringed by a protected coral reef. The resort's efforts to support the environment include solar panels, on-site water purification and steam cleaning (to avoid using harsh chemicals).

Guests will find the deluxe all-inclusive formula of its Indian Ocean sisters perfectly replicated here, right down to the same restaurants – all-day buffet at Aqua, sand-between-your-toes bites at the Beach Club, surf and turf at Carnivorous and pan-Asian with a teppanyaki twist at Le Asiatique. There's also the same balance between wellness – with a tranquil, 10-room spa featuring products from ➤

# DESTINATIONS

## INDIAN OCEAN | ZANZIBAR

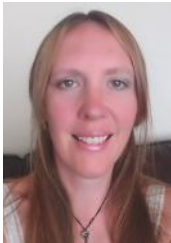
### ASK THE experts



**Tommy Compton**  
product manager,  
long-haul, Tui

"The resort has its own watersports centre so is perfect for customers who want to enjoy activities in the Indian Ocean, including diving.

There's lots to see and do beyond the resort too, so I'd recommend clients discover the fascinating history of Stone Town, look out for monkeys in Jozani Chwaka Bay National Park or relax on a sunset dhow cruise."



**Diane Prendergast**  
destination manager,  
Indian Ocean & Africa,  
dnata Travel Group

"If you want an exotic holiday that won't break the bank, Zanzibar is ideal – people compare it to the Maldives and the Seychelles. Visitors can look forward to miles of pristine beaches, a rich history, delicious cuisine and a warm welcome. At the Emerald Zanzibar Resort & Spa, you can swim and snorkel all day as the property is on the nicest non-tidal beach on the island."



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: Stone Town; spices for sale at Darajani Market; Beach Club Grill Restaurant and reception lounge, both Emerald Zanzibar Resort & Spa



PICTURES: Shutterstock/Moiz Husein Storyteller, Ventura

South African brand Healing Earth – and family fun, including a free kids' club and separate children's pool.

Meals, most drinks (excluding some top-shelf spirits, cocktails and premium wines) and the in-room minibar are included, along with non-motorised watersports, a boat tour and a snorkelling trip for seven-night stays.

While guests might find it hard to forgo lazy days lounging by the busy infinity pool or the secluded garden pool with its swim-up bar, it's worth the effort to go snorkelling on the reef at nearby Mnemba Island. Even the journey is a stunner, skimming across crystal-clear waters in a wooden dhow. No sooner had we dipped our masks into the water than we were greeted by huge schools of bright yellow Bengal snappers, striped sergeants and powder-blue surgeonfish.

### TRUE COLOURS

The vibrant marine life is matched only by the kaleidoscope on land, where lush green fields and bright skies are interspersed with low-rise buildings painted baby pink, bright orange or cobalt blue, and street market stalls sell limes and mangoes in towering stacks.

Clients can get a feel for Zanzibar's cultural heritage with trips from local provider Sun Tours. Stone Town, the Unesco-protected heart of the capital Zanzibar City, is a must to understand its troubled history as a centre of the East African slave trade, commemorated with a monument on the site of the former trading post.

Lighter landmarks and activities include browsing the spice-filled stalls of Darajani Market, admiring the

“Zanzibar once supplied the world with cloves, and farm visitors can see vines of vanilla pods, tiny peppercorns and fragrant cardamom growing wild

elaborately carved teak and mahogany doors influenced by Indian, Arab and Swahili styles, and snapping a shot of Freddie Mercury's House, where the Queen singer spent much of his childhood. Foodies will enjoy visiting a spice farm; Zanzibar once supplied the world with cloves, and there are community farms across the island where visitors can see twisting vines of vanilla pods, tiny peppercorns in bud and fragrant cardamom growing wild, alongside heaving bunches of red bananas, spiky-topped pineapples and bulging jackfruit.

It's easy to see why the 'Spice Island' caught the attention of the family behind the Emerald Collection for a first foray onto African soil – though if their expansion plans pay off, it certainly won't be the last. **TW**

### BOOK IT

**Gold Medal** offers seven nights' all-inclusive in a Junior Garden Suite at Emerald Zanzibar Resort & Spa from £1,999 per person based on two sharing, including flights from Heathrow (indirect) with Ethiopian Airlines, departing May 17, 2024. [goldmedal.co.uk](http://goldmedal.co.uk)