



ASSOCIATED PRODUCT

News and Updates

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October 2023

GENERAL UPDATES

[Auric Air](#) is launching daily flights to Songo Songo, Tanzania, from the 15th of October 2023.

[Coastal Aviation](#) has unveiled its new trading name; it will be referred to as Coastal Air going forward.

[Chem Chem Safari](#) has increased its conservation fees effective immediately; applicable to Chem Chem Lodge, Little Chem Chem and Forest Chem Chem.

Fees have increased as follows:

2023: an increase of USD35 from USD160 to USD195 per person per night.

2024: an increase of USD15 from USD180 to USD195 per person per night.

The increase will apply to all existing bookings as well as all new bookings, unless paid in full by the 30th of September, in which case, Chem Chem will absorb the increase in conservation levies.

[Legendary Expeditions and Chem Chem Properties](#) are extending their opening dates for 2024; all safari camps and lodges will remain open until 7 April 2024; Legendary Lodge will be open until 8 April 2024 and will be offering Savings Season rates.

[Exclusive Serenity](#) has been appointed to represent Asanja Africa, an authentic collection of luxury safari camps and lodges in Tanzania, effective 01 October 2023. Exclusive Serenity also represents Zuri Zanzibar and Kantabile Afrika in Tanzania.

[Nomad Tanzania](#) has launched its new Expeditionary Walking Camp, a light-touch mobile camp designed with exploration and exclusivity in mind. Mobility is central to its purpose to be able get into and around some of Tanzania's least explored wilderness areas. The small private camp has 3 tents accommodating 2 to 6 guests and will operate all year round in 2 national parks. From August to October the camp will operate in Ugalla National Park, a remote park in Western Tanzania. Ugalla offers superb walking terrain and varied wildlife at this time of year. From November to July the camp will operate in Serengeti National Park in various locations. From November to February it will be based in the Eastern Serengeti Plains, March to April in the Gol Mountains and Salei Plains, and May to July in the Western Serengeti, which becomes the heart of the migration corridor.

SPECIALS

TANZANIA

[Asilia Africa](#) – due to the success of the 2023 Rubondo flight special, Asilia Africa is extending the offer to all new bookings travelling before 31 December 2024. Book 3 nights or more for a minimum of 2 adults at Rubondo Island Camp and return light aircraft flights between Rubondo and the Serengeti will be included.

FIRST-HAND FEEDBACK

Lucy Lopez, Wilderness Senior PR & Media Relations Manager, hosted a media trip in Tanzania with 3 international journalists, and shared some feedback.

Legendary Lodge

Day 1:

Beautiful expansive property surrounded by a coffee plantation. Lovely historical home used as the main area, with enormous guest suites dotted around. Very luxurious accommodation, huge bedroom, bathroom and lounge area as well as boasting a gorgeous garden full of trees. Superb food and hosting. Ismael the general manager, joined us in the evening to tell the group more about the property and its history.

Legendary Lodge is suite to all travellers such to couples, honeymooners, families and small groups.

Afternoon trip into Arusha to meet some of the artisans who created items for Usawa. We met a lady called Evelyn who does pottery and who employs local community members, trying to perpetuate the craft of pottery. Also, concrete basins and sinks incorporating recycled glass. Met Jeremiah who makes lamp shades from acacia thorns and who does wood carvings. The headboards at Usawa are carved by him, and many of the side tables in camp. Then we went to SANAA, basically a creative art hub that gives employment to people with disabilities. The blankets, throws, tapestries and the beaded chandelier at Usawa come from there.

The Arusha tour was hosted by Doctor Tipiya who was an orphan who was adopted by an American woman who runs an orphanage, and who will be heading up the community engagement side of things and CITW.

Delicious dinner was had at Legendary Lodge to end the day.

Usawa

Day 2:

Flight to Kogatende and straight onto game drive with Chrisple Sikawa as our guide. Wonderful man, very kind, soft spoken, respectful and knowledgeable.

Went to the Mara River, lots of carcasses around, vultures and marabou storks. Big herd of wildebeest looked like they wanted to cross but decided against it and we moved on. Landscape is insanely beautiful, wide-open plains and then hills as far as the eye can see. Heaps of wildebeest, zebra, topi, gazelle, elephant, mongoose, and a very special sighting of a cheetah mother with two cubs, who were very relaxed.

That evening we had the most incredible traditional meal by the fire. Plantain soup, fish stew, okra, pap, sweet potato and butternut. Local equivalent of vetkoek with caramel dipping sauce and South African wines.

Day 3:

Left camp at 4am as Jean managed to arrange a hot air balloon ride with Serengeti Balloon Safaris. Unbelievable experience to float over the Serengeti and spot wildlife as the sun rose over the Mara River. Flew lower than I was expecting, it was possible to spot a fair amount of wildlife. Afterwards we had a champagne breakfast, then met up with Chris for a full day game drive and picnic lunch in the most beautiful location, with no one else around. Would really say that the Usawa guides know where to find the best locations where you don't see anyone else, and it feels like a private area even though it isn't. Fabulous lion sighting (5 lions), giraffe, plains game, etc.

Dinner in main area as it was raining. Again, delicious food, and a fun evening.

Day 4:

Walking safari direct from camp, about 7km long, it took us 2.5 hours out, and a quick 30 minutes back, with a stop under a stunning fig tree where we had smoothies, carrot muffins and date balls.

Early lunch was cold avocado soup with chapati, crudités with baba ganoush, hummus and tilapia.

Tents are very comfortable, but you do feel quite exposed to the elements. However, this creates the feeling of being totally part of whatever is going on out in nature.

Bucket shower works quite well and lasts longer than I expected.

Game drive in the evening, again in the private area with sundowners in a spot with amazing views. Journalists seemed blown away by the experience – although it's quite something for someone who hasn't done a safari before, it's very wild and raw and close to nature, animals all around and for some, sleep was challenging because of the noise of nature all around.

Impressed with the team in camp, very friendly and caring and fantastic service. They commented that activities were very well planned out and locations well chosen. It really is possible to do the Serengeti and make it feel like a private experience most of the time. Loved being able to walk directly from camp.

Usawa is suited to couples, honeymooners and guests looking for an adventure!



Zanzibar White Sand

Day 5:

Early departure from camp to Kogatende, where we flew to Zanzibar – around 1 hour 40 minutes direct flight. Roughly an hour to get from the airport to Paje which is on the east side of the island and where we stayed at Zanzibar White Sand. This is a stunning property, each villa has a butler, and the staff and service are impeccable, as well as the food. Villas are very spacious, mini-bar, fruit basket, welcome gift (sandals, hat & kanga cloth). Lovely amenities. Two-bedroomed villa is perfect for families or friends, private lounge, outdoor dining area and private plunge pool. Close to the beach, beach bar serves sunrise breakfast from 5:30am.

Heaps of activities available, could easily spend 4 to 5 days there and still keep busy, or simply relax. Todd and I did a cooking class with Emmanuel, the executive chef, and we learnt how to make an octopus stew using spices from Zanzibar, coconut milk from the trees on the property. The property has its own garden, herbs & banana trees, etc. We then had a set course dinner in the dining area overlooking the pool.

We did a tour of the property, main area comprises reception, dining room, sunset bar upstairs, kitchen, small lounge area. Décor is contemporary with both African and Eastern influences; bit of a Bali feel in the spa area particularly. Stunning gardens, lots of tropical plants and a few species of monkey around.

Day 6:

We met for breakfast and then Andrew and I went to Stone Town for a guided tour. We started around 10:30 and finished at 14:00 so it's quite long but there is a lot to see and definitely worthwhile, as it gives great insight into the culture and the history of Zanzibar. All buildings made of stone hence the name. Started at the fish market, then veggie market, meat market, and spice market.

Very interesting to see the architecture, mosques, etc. Zanzibar is probably 95% Muslim. Went to the Slave Market and learnt about the history of slavery in this area and further into East Africa. The site of the actual market is now an Anglican cathedral. Freddie Mercury's childhood home is in Stone Town and is a museum, but we didn't go inside.

We learnt all about the famous carved doors of Stone Town and what the carvings mean.



Back at ZWS, went for a swim and then a complimentary massage. Wonderful, peaceful spa.

The general manager then told us a bit more about the property, privately owned by a Polish family that has been living in France for 40 years and they are very involved in it. It's almost 10 years old. They have just added two new villas with two more to come soon which are entirely solar-powered.

Traditional meal in the evening, served buffet-style around the pool, the food was excellent. Local band singing local music, very good, great vibe.

Zanzibar White Sands is suited to couples, honeymooners and families wanting to relax after a busy safari.