WHERE TO STAY

Africa’s paradise islands are perfect for honeymooners, says YVONNE GORDON, but to be sure to explore beyond the resorts...

We were standing in a mangrove forest, but what we saw was nothing like what I had expected. The red mud of the mangroves was dotted to the right with red flowers. Red crab burying itself in a rock pool, a last gasp of orange before the rising tide. We turned our backs on the beach, a romantic set-up under a wooden-pole edifice, four tables and a roof of palm leaves. As we admired the sea, the wind blew and a line of surf breaking on the distant reef, we turned into fresh mud and choked wallow and watched couples pass by on foot or by dhow, before the warm taste of the incoming fish came lapping around our feet and we moved, shuffling, up the sand towards the horizon.

There’s plenty to do in Zanzibar. A visit to Stone Town with its mix of European, Persian, Arabian and Italian history, will take you down a maze of alleys and the burning-Durajani Market, or history buffs can visit the Old Palace Market. One evening we sipped cocktails on the terrace of The Africa House Hotel (africa- househotel.com), admiring the show, the sun setting in a distant palm.

It was once the world’s main producer of spices, and another highlight was our visit to a spice farm to smell and taste spices like cinnamon, ginger, nutmeg, longon and vanilla — seeing them grow and learning different uses from food flavour and colour to medicine. We also

WHAT TO PACK

Check your shots. You will need to take malaria tablets, and if coming from a yellow-fever area, you must have a vaccination certificate. Consult your doctor or travel insurance provider (or its website) for advice. Reef shoes are a wise investment, though they can be carried on the resort’s water sports centre.

GETTING THERE


WHERE TO STAY

Yvonne was a guest of The Zanzibar Collection (zanzibarcollection.com), which has a two-bed villa at the five-star Banana Resort & Spa from €642 per night. At The Palms, prices start from €725 per night — both prices are inclusive of all meals and an all-inclusive beverage plan. The rate includes flights and transfers from €95 per night, half-board.

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