

Travel forecast for intra-Africa travel in 2020 - Spotlight on Mozambique

By  Natalie Tenzer Silva

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Intra-Africa travel should be a priority for every African. While visas remain a challenge for many travellers and destinations, the good news is that air accessibility is improving - although in many cases those flights are still much too expensive.



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Air accessibility is on the agenda, however, in April, IATA (The International Air Transport Association) [projected](#) that Africa's aviation sector would grow close to 5% per annum over the next 20 years. This will make our continent one of the fastest-growing aviation regions in the world.

MICE travel is on the rise

One of the most significant travel trends we've observed for travellers heading into Mozambique, is MICE travel (meetings, incentives, conference and events). The MICE industry in Africa holds vast potential. The sector on the continent is currently valued at R2.8tn, and up to 38% of MICE travellers are likely to become repeat leisure travellers, according to a [report by The Business Tourism Company](#) published in May 2019.

Mozambique has seen new development projects and growing transport links accommodating more large-scale events in 2019. Eight airlines now operate regularly scheduled flights to Mozambique, creating an opportunity for business in new connecting markets. International corporations and financial institutions have a growing presence.

Maputo hosted several big-name events in 2019, including AORTIC's (African Organisation for Research and Training in Cancer) 12th International Conference on Cancer in Africa in November.



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Last year, Dana Tours organised the transport for the Special Convention of Jehovah's Witnesses, which brought more than 2,700 delegates from various parts of the world to Maputo – Maputo is Mozambique's go-to MICE destination simply because it is where most of the multinational businesses have set up shop. It has the infrastructure to handle large groups.

Working closely with the Mozambican Ministry of Transport, Dana Tours vetted guides and inspected vehicles at various stages. Not many of the operators had experience working with foreign tourists, and had to navigate language barriers and cultural differences. We provided training where necessary, successfully managing the transfers and excursions in Maputo and day trips to eSwatini.

This was an incredibly rewarding experience, reaffirming our belief in the Mozambican product and that the country is more than open – and ready – for MICE business.

Bleisure is better

'Bleisure' trips (that combine a leisure holiday element with a business trip) are also on the rise. This is especially popular with companies looking to incentivise and attract staff, particularly Millennials, who value experiences over material rewards.



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To this end, we offer all our travellers a selection of day trips and bleisure extensions (pre and post-work or conference commitments). Delegates can relax on a tropical beach, snorkel or explore the art and culture of Maputo on a walking tour. Or swap your suit for a swimsuit and visit the stunning Santa Maria, Inhaca and Portuguese Islands, no visa required.

My personal favourite, however, is our Maputo' foodie tour.' African countries are not primarily known for their food tourism markets, but Mozambique is undoubtedly an exception. African culture, mixed with Portuguese-influenced flavours, locally grown tropical fruit and delicious fresh fish and seafood, make Mozambique heaven for food-lovers.

On our food tour, for example, delegates will embark on a culinary journey, sampling Mozambican cuisine, including traditional street food, Badjia (bean dumplings fried in oil), Matoritor (a coconut sweet), and fiery Piri Piri. They'll wash their meal down with sweet juice made from sugar cane or fresh coconut water.

The advantage of choosing Mozambique as a MICE travel destination is that it has so much to offer. It will give any MICE experience a distinctly African flavour, with world-class hotels and infrastructure. Travellers looking to head into Africa in 2020 are advised to visit now – before the world cottons on to the many benefits of MICE, or any travel for that matter, both in Mozambique and throughout Africa.

ABOUT NATALIE TENZER SILVA

Natalie Tenzer-Silva was born in South Africa and moved to Mozambique in the early 90s where she learned Portuguese. Natalie has worked in the tourism industry since 1994, first managing a large travel agency and then becoming Mozambique's largest inbound tour operator.

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