

Mozambique means business with 5 bleisure day trips near Maputo

By [Dorine Reinstein](#)

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Mozambique has seen a phenomenal increase in demand for meetings, conferences, incentives and events in recent years, a trend that is likely to continue to intensify with the recent opening of the country's new Maputo-Katembe suspension bridge.



Image(s) Supplied.

The longest suspension bridge in Africa, it connects the north and south banks of Maputo but has also cut travel times between South Africa and Swaziland.

International hotel brands including Tsogo Sun, Radisson Blu, Sheraton and AccorHotels, have all entered Mozambique, and are capitalising on the growing Meetings, Incentives, Conference and Events (MICE) market. Dana Tours Director Natalie Tenzer-Silva says more top brands could follow, especially as foreign and domestic arrival numbers continue to climb.

Maputo is also set to host a number of big-name, reputable events in 2019, including the US-Africa Business Summit in June. Companies booking smaller MICE events are impressed by the country's beauty and by the attractions it offers for delegates.

Day trips are a favourite and easy way to spice up any event.



Tenzer-Silva suggests five of the most exciting options in reach of Maputo that are worth booking in 2019:

1. A Maputo foodie experience

African countries are not especially known for their food tourism markets, but Mozambique is an exception. Around five hundred years of Portuguese influence mixed with local African culture, locally-grown tropical fruit and delicious fresh fish and seafood make Mozambique heaven for food-lovers.

Delegates visiting Mozambique can also embark on a culinary journey, sampling of traditional street food; Badjia (bean dumplings fried in oil), Matoritor (a coconut sweet), and fiery Piri Piri.

2. With your toes in the sand

Mozambique is best known for its beautiful beaches, sparkling blue waters and golden beach sand. For delegates with only a few hours to spare, venture off the beaten track to Santa Maria, Inhaca Island, and Portuguese Island, drenched with wild, beautiful beaches and exciting coral reefs popular with divers, snorkellers and explorers.

Speedboat transfers from the Maputo Marina (Escola Nautica) to Santa Maria operate in the morning. At Santa Maria, delegates can enjoy snorkelling in the warm waters before heading to Inhaca Island for a delicious seafood lunch. They'll also visit Portuguese Island for a swim before their return to Maputo.

3. Walk on the wild side

The world-renowned Kruger National Park is on many a traveller's bucket list. The good news is, this iconic Big Five wild reserve is only 100 kilometres from Maputo, making it the perfect opportunity for a day-trip for delegates who would like a break from the conference room.

Delegates visiting can enjoy a slow drive through the park to spot elephant, buffalo, giraffe, impala, zebra and, for the very fortunate, lion or rhino.

Although the trip does cross the Mozambican border, and immigration formalities must be considered, a professional driver is on hand to assist delegates through the checkpoint.

4. Get to the heart of Maputo

A melting pot of Latin and African flavours, Maputo is a unique and historic city with plenty of unique attractions.

Various tours of the city explore the different sides of Maputo. Delegates can meet the Maputo loved by its locals on a half-day tour that includes stops at the Fortress, Central Market, Museum of Natural History, Railway Station and FEIMA curio market.



Or explore the soul of the city on the Mafalala Walking Tour. The walk is an enlightening three-hour meander through a historic neighbourhood in the capital, where guests will learn more about Mozambique's history and get acquainted with the delicious food and community life, Mafalala literature, marrabenta (local rhythm), traditional dancing and sports. The tour is also part of a community development programme run by a local NGO focused on elevating the Mafalala community and creating opportunities for its women and youth.

5. Explore neighbouring cultures

The culture of the Eswatini (formerly Swaziland) people involves music, food, religion, architecture, and kinship, and certainly warrants a day trip to explore.

Delegates can browse for locally-produced jewellery and art at the Manzini Market and the Mantenga Craft Centre, after which the tour moves to the Mantenga Cultural Village to learn about the history and culture of this legendary nation. To the beat of echoing cowhide drums, traditional dancers will perform in a nearby boma.

Delegates can also take in more art and craft attractions at the popular Mandela's Complex before making the return journey via the famous Swazi Candle Factory. Lunch is hosted either at Mandela's or at the Candle Factory.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dorine Reinstein is corporate division leader for Big Ambitions. She is a seasoned travel writer and editor, who is passionate about corporate and retail travel. She has written for several award-winning publications including Travel Weekly and Travel Buyer.

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