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Zuri Zanzibar Hotel Zanzibar, Kendwa, Tanzania

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9/10
Telegraph expert
rating

"Zuri, a high-design eco-resort, spills onto the best stretch of beach on the Tanzanian archipelago. Follow lantern-lit jungle paths to one of 55 thatched-roof villas gathered in clusters reflecting a traditional African village. The first Design Hotel in Zanzibar, Zuri serves sustainability with Afro-chic style."

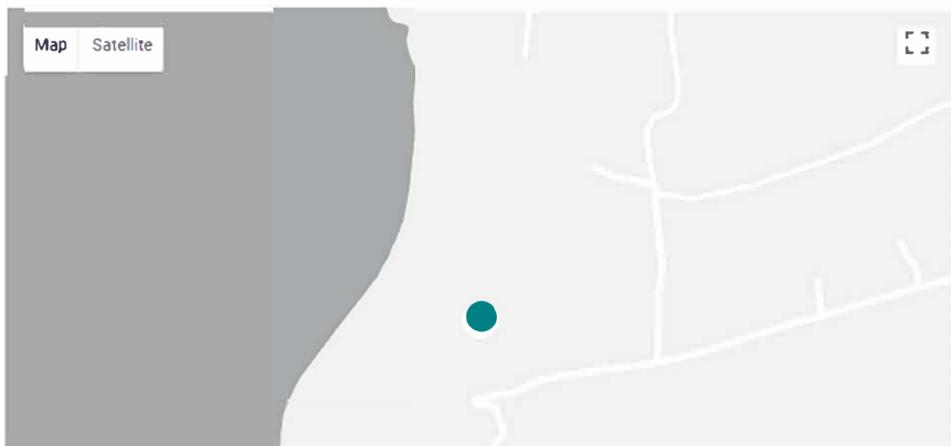
Telegraph Review



By **Nicole Trivillas**, TRAVEL WRITER

10/10 Location

Zuri is quite literally off the beaten track, secreted away at the end of an unpaved road about an hour from the airport and Stone Town. Draped across a gentle beachside slope in Kendwa, the 13-acre Zuri micro-universe feeds into dreamy, sunset-facing beach, uniquely unaffected by the massive tidal fluctuations that plague the rest of the region's beaches.





10/10 Style & character

Zuri has a highly curated, sleek-style pedigree that respects local context. It has a cool appeal, from the arty library to the open-air Peponi Bar ornamented in rainbow-hued hanging lamps upcycled from old bottles. Decorative touches like carved doorframes nod to traditional Zanzibari culture and much of the contemporary wooden furniture comes crafted from old dhows, the local fishing boats.



[See more images at Booking.com](#)

9/10 Service & facilities

You can't pass the flocks of gardeners in wide-brim sunhats and other staff members without hearing Swahili greetings of 'jambo' or 'hakuna matata.' Service is slow, steady and smiley. Though some things get lost in translation (an order for a double cappuccino required an explanation), everyone is there to make you happy — and they succeed.

Zuri has social hubs aplenty: a fragrant spice garden, an al fresco library, water sports pavilion, yoga deck, open-air gym and spa using all natural products. Favourite spots are the chic ice-blue infinity pool and silk-sand beach.

- ✓ Bar
- ✓ Fitness centre
- ✓ Parking
- ✓ Restaurant
- ✓ Wi-Fi
- ✓ Beach
- ✓ Laundry
- ✓ Pool
- ✓ Room service

9/10 Rooms

Set above the ground to protect the native flora, Zuri's villas are dressed in warm Tanzanian teak, eucalyptus and nyasi grass thatch brought in from the mainland. Inside, willowy mosquito nets waft over bouncy beds cleverly outfitted with Evening Breeze, an energy-efficient cooling system hidden in the folds of the net. Hand-drawn murals swirl across the walls.

7/10

In indoor/outdoor bathrooms, cool concrete-like floors contrast with delicate curtains of handmade paper beads, the craftsmanship of Chaka, a women-led social enterprise. Organic, small-batch Seaweed Co. bath products are made by female seaweed farmers in another of Zuri's community collaborations. Outdoor terraces, with garden or Indian Ocean views, have come-hither hammocks and wicker furniture in punchy purples, blues and oranges.

Food & drink

Zuri's restaurants, Upendo, Maisha and Bahari Grill & Bar, serve a fusion of African, Indian, Arabian and European cuisine. The seafood is remarkable throughout — try the sweet meat of the barbequed slipper lobster.

Sophisticated cocktails that rival any city club are served in Peponi Bar, poolside at Maisha and beachside at Dhow Bar and Bahari Grill & Bar. Before dinner, watch the moon brighten at the treehouse-like terrace of Maisha with a dowa cocktail in hand — meaning 'medicine' in Swahili, this tart tippie is made with Konyagi, a Tanzanian spirit, along with lime and honey.

Breakfast can be taken buffet style in Upendo or à la carte at Maisha. Go for the ruby-hued hibiscus juice and griddle-fresh pancakes swiped with dewy honey from Iringa in the southern highlands.

9/10

Value for money

Double rooms from \$390 (£299) in low season on a half-board basis; and from \$560 (£429) in high season on a half-board basis. Breakfast included. Free Wi-Fi.

Access for guests with disabilities?

Not suitable.

Family-friendly?

Interconnecting bungalows are available along with cots and extra beds, children's menus, games, books and DVDs. Nannies can be arranged.

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zurizanzibar.com