

# Maputo



With its Mediterranean-style architecture, waterside setting and wide avenues lined by jacaranda and flame trees, Maputo is easily one of Africa's most attractive capitals. It's also the most developed place in Mozambique by far, with a wide selection of hotels and restaurants, well-stocked supermarkets, shady sidewalk cafés and a lively cultural scene.

The heart of the city is the bustling, low-lying baixa (busy port and commercial area). Here, Portuguese-era buildings with their graceful balconies and wrought-iron balustrades jostle for space with ungainly Marxist-style apartment blocks. *Galabiyya*-garbed men gather in doorways for a chat, Indian traders carry on brisk business in the narrow side-streets and women wrapped in colourful *capulanas* (sarongs) sell everything from seafood to spices at the massive Mercado Municipal.

A few kilometres away, along the seaside Avenida Marginal, life takes a more leisurely pace. Fishermen stand along the roadside with the day's catch, hoping to lure custom from the constant parade of passing vehicles; banana vendors loll on their carts in the shade, with Radio Moçambique piping out eternally upbeat rhythms in the background; and local soccer teams vie for victory in impromptu matches in the sand.

Maputo is pricier than elsewhere in the country – especially for imported goods brought in on the toll road linking Johannesburg and the South African economy with Maputo's port and the sea. Yet, there's enough selection to make it a good destination no matter what your budget. Getting to know the city is a highlight of visiting Mozambique and essential to understanding the country. Don't miss spending time here before heading north.

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Catch some culture at one of Maputo's many **museums** (p61)
- Dine out in style, sampling a different **restaurant** (p66) every night
- Shop for souvenirs and browse for bargains at the city's colourful **markets** (p69)
- Experience the pulsating pace of the capital's thriving **nightlife** (p68)
- Enjoy the laid-back ambience of **Ilha de Inhaca** (p72), take in the sea air at **Praia de Macaneta** (p73) or sample upcountry life in quiet **Catembe** (p71)

## HISTORY

Long before Europeans discovered Maputo's charms, the local Ronga people were living here, making their living by fishing, whale hunting and farming, with a bit of local trading thrown in to make ends meet.

In 1545 Portuguese navigator Lourenço Marques happened upon Baía de Delagoa, now known as Baía de Maputo (Maputo Bay), in his journey up the Southern African coastline. His reports attracted other traders who established temporary settlements offshore on Inhaca and Xefina Grande islands as bases for ivory trading forays to the mainland. Yet Portuguese attention was soon diverted northwards and they all but abandoned their activities in the south.

Lourenço Marques – as the area eventually became known – took on a new glow in the mid-19th century, with the discovery of diamonds and gold in the nearby Transvaal Republic. Around 1898 it replaced Ilha de Moçambique as the capital of Portuguese East Africa. A new rail link with the Transvaal in 1894 and expansion of the port fuelled the city's growth. In the 1950s and 1960s, 'LM' became a favoured playground for Portuguese holiday makers, and for apartheid-era South Africans who came over the border in droves seeking prawns, prostitutes and beaches. With Mozambican independence in 1975, the city's original residents reasserted themselves and in 1976 President Samora Machel changed the name to Maputo, honouring an early chief who had resisted Portuguese colonialism.

## ORIENTATION

Maputo sits on a low escarpment overlooking Baía de Maputo, with the long avenues of its upper-lying residential sections spilling down into the baixa.

Many businesses, the train station, banks, post and telephone offices and some budget accommodation are in the baixa, on or near Av 25 de Setembro, while embassies and most better hotels are in the city's more staid upper section, especially around the Sommerschild diplomatic and residential quarter. Maputo's tallest building and a good landmark is known as '*trinta e três andares*' (33 Storey Building), in the baixa on the corner of Avs 25 de Setembro and Rua da Imprensa. At the northernmost end of the Marginal and about 7km from the centre is Bairro Triunfo and the Costa do Sol area, with a small beach and several places to stay and eat.

About 10km west of Maputo is the large suburb of Matola, site of the Chissano Museum (p61), and home to many industries.

## Maps

The *Planta de Endereçamento do Centro da Cidade de Maputo* (1997), put out by Conselho Municipal in collaboration with Coopération Française, is somewhat dated but still the best city map; look for it at hotel bookshops. There's a larger version of the same map in book form (*Guia das Vias* 1997) which includes the city's outskirts.

## MAPUTO IN...

### Two Days

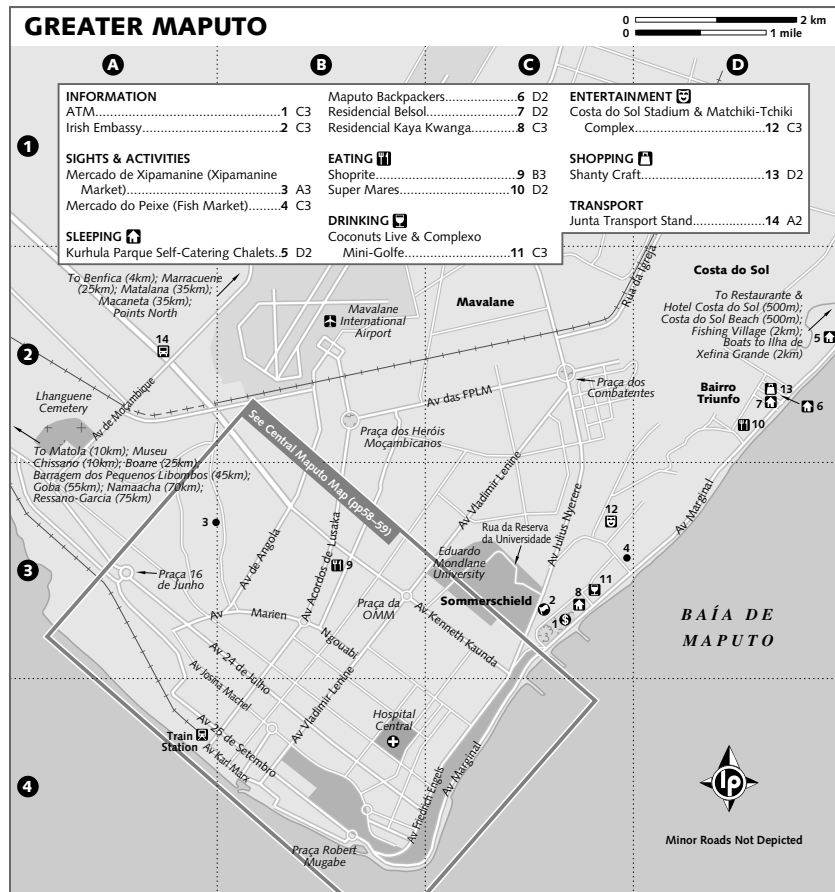
After breakfast at your hotel or a sidewalk café, get an early start on some of the **Walking Tour** (p63) sights, with a detour from the **Mercado Municipal** (p62) to buy some textiles at the nearby **shops** (p69). Once finished the morning's sight-seeing, hire a **laranjinha** (p64) for a ride along Av Marginal to **Restaurante Costa do Sol** (p66) for lunch with sea breezes.

The **Museu Nacional de Arte** (p61) is an essential afternoon stop, before resting up for an evening at **Chez Rangel** (p68), or a pub- and club-hopping tour in a **habana** (p64).

Spend day two visiting more museums – the **Núcleo de Arte** (p61), **Museu Chissano** (p61) and **Malangatana's house and studio** (p61) are highlights – and **craft shopping** (p69). For dinner, treat yourself to a seafood grill buffet at **Hotel Polana** (p67) or enjoy the local cuisine and ambience at **Feira Popular** (p67) before heading out for another night on the town.

### Four Days

Follow the two-day itinerary. On day three, take the ferry to **Catembe** (p71) and lunch at **Restaurante Marisol** (p71). On day four go to **Inhaca** (p72) for relaxation on the beach on Ilha dos Portuguêses or snorkelling around Cabo Santa Maria.



## INFORMATION

### Cultural Centres

**British Council** (Map pp58–9; ☎ 21-310921, 21-321577; www.britishcouncil.org/mozambique; 226 Rua John Issa) Near the UK high commission.

**Centro Cultural Franco-Moçambicano** (Map pp58–9; ☎ 21-320787; www.ccfmoz.com; Praça da Independência; ☎ 2-6pm Mon, 9am–6pm Tue–Fri, 9am–noon Sat) An excellent place with art exhibitions, music and dance performances, films, theatre and more.

**Centro Cultural Português** (Instituto Camões; Map pp58–9; ☎ 21-493892; www.instituto-camoes.pt/ccp/ccpmaputo.htm; 720 Av Julius Nyerere) Art and photography exhibits; opposite the South African high commission.

**Centro de Estudos Brasileiros** (Map pp58–9; ☎ 21-306840, 21-306774; cnr Av Karl Marx & Av 25 de Setembro)

bro) Exhibitions of Lusophone artists, and Portuguese language courses.

### Emergency

For emergency medical treatment, see opposite.

If you are the victim of a crime and need to get a police report as reference for your insurance company, these can be obtained with time and patience at the police station nearest the site of the crime. Useful police stations include those on Av Kim Il Sung, 1½ blocks south of Av Kenneth Kaunda; near the corner of Avs Mao Tse Tung and Amílcar Cabral; and on Av Julius Nyerere, three blocks south of Av 24 de Julho. Some insurance companies will accept a report from your embassy.

Official emergency numbers include **Central Police Station** (☎ 21-325031, 119), **Fire** (☎ 197, 198) and **Hospital Central** (☎ 21-325000/9), but it's generally better to seek help from your hotel or embassy.

### Internet Access

**Mundo's Internet Café** (Map pp58–9; Av Julius Nyerere; per hr US\$2; ☎ 8am–10.30pm Mon–Sat, 10am–10.30pm Sun; ☎) Next to Mundo's restaurant.

**Net Cabo** (Map pp58–9; Tigre Centre, 1st fl, Av Ho Chi Min; per hr US\$1.80; ☎ 9am–7.30pm Mon–Sat) One block uphill from the cathedral.

**Pizza House Internet Café** (Map pp58–9; Av Mao Tse Tung; per hr US\$1.60; ☎ 8am–10pm Mon–Fri, 10am–10pm Sat & Sun) Upstairs at Pizza House restaurant.

**Teledata** (Map pp58–9; Av 24 de Julho; per hr US\$1.20; ☎ 7.30am–8pm Mon–Fri, 9am–6pm Sat) One block west of Av Vladimir Lenine, and diagonally opposite Africa Bar.

### Medical Services

**Clínica 222** (Map pp58–9; ☎ 82-0002220, 21-312222, 21-313000; cnr Av 24 de Julho & Rua Augusto Cardoso; ☎ 24hr) Similar to Clínica de Sommerschild, but cash only.

**Clínica de Sommerschild** (Map pp58–9; ☎ 82-3056240, 21-493924/6; 52 Rua Pereira do Lago; ☎ 24hr) Just off Av Kim Il Sung; has a lab and a doctor on call. Advance payment required (meticals, rand, dollars or Visa card)

**Farmácia Apotheka** (Map pp58–9; ☎ 21-495633; Polana Shopping Centre, 1st fl, cnr Avs 24 de Julho & Julius Nyerere; ☎ 9am–9pm Mon–Sat, 10am–8pm Sun)

**Farmácia Calêndula** (Map pp58–9; ☎ 21-497606; 222 Av Mao Tse Tung; ☎ 8am–8pm Mon–Sat, 9am–1pm Sun) Just up from Av Julius Nyerere.

**Farmácia Capital** (Map pp58–9) Main (☎ 82-3014055; Franca Centro Comercial, Ground fl, cnr Avs 24 de Julho & Amílcar Cabral; ☎ 24 hr) Branch (Av Mao Tse Tung ☎ 82-3014056; ☎ 7.30am–8pm Mon–Sat) The Mao Tse Tung branch is just up from Pizza House restaurant.

### Money

There are 24-hour ATMs all over town, including one on Av Marginal, and at:

**BIM Expresso** (Map pp58–9; cnr Avs Mao Tse Tung & Tomás Nduda)

**BIM Headquarters** (Map pp58–9; cnr Avs Karl Marx & 25 de Setembro)

**Polana Shopping Centre** (Map pp58–9; cnr Avs Julius Nyerere & 24 de Julho)

**Standard Bank** (Map pp58–9) Headquarters (Praça 25 de Junho) Branch (Hotel Polana) Also changes travellers cheques with a minimum US\$35 commission, original purchase receipt required.

For changing cash, in addition to the banks, there are *casas de câmbio* (foreign exchange bureaus) along Av Julius Nyerere southeast of the Hotel Polana, Hotel Pestana Rovuma on Rua de Sé and on Av Mao Tse Tung around Av Tomás Nduda. Out of hours try **Cotacambios** (Airport ☎ 6am–9.30pm Mon–Thu, 6am–10pm Fri, 7am–10pm Sat, 11.30am–10.30pm Sun; City Centre Polana Shopping Centre, ground fl, cnr Avs 24 de Julho & Julius Nyerere; ☎ 9am–9pm Mon–Sat, 10am–10pm Sun).

### Post

**Main post office** (CTT; Map pp58–9; Av 25 de Setembro; ☎ 8am–6pm Mon–Sat, 9am–noon Sun) With poste restante.

### Telephone

**Telecomunicações de Moçambique** (TDM; Map pp58–9) Branch (Ground fl, 33 Storey Bldg, Rua da Imprensa; ☎ 8am–10pm) Branch (Hotel Pestana Rovuma) International calls.

### Tourist Information

**Bureau de Informação Pública** (Public Information Bureau, or BIP; Map pp58–9; ☎ 21-491106, 21-491226; cnr Avs Eduardo Mondlane & Francisco Magumbwe; ☎ 7.30am–3.30pm Mon–Fri, 9am–noon Sat) A dated and dusty selection of books on Mozambique, most in Portuguese; sometimes also city maps.

**Fundo Nacional de Turismo** (Futur; Map pp58–9; www.futur.org.mz; 1203 Av 25 de Setembro) Colourful listings brochures covering Maputo and all of Mozambique's provinces.

### Travel Agencies

**Dana Tours** (Map pp58–9; ☎ 21-497483, 21-495514; info@danatours.net; 729 Av Mao Tse Tung) An excellent agency that specialises in the coast and can sort you out for destinations throughout Mozambique (plus a few in Swaziland and South Africa). Midrange and up with occasional budget offerings. Their sister operator, Dana Agency (☎ 21-484300; travel@dana.co.mz) in the same compound, does domestic and international flight bookings.

**Mextur** (Map pp58–9; ☎ 21-428427/9; mextur@emilmoz.com; 1233 Av 25 de Setembro) Domestic flight and travel arrangements.

**Mozambique Adviser** (Map pp58–9; ☎ 21-309477; www.adviser.co.mz) Bookings desk in the lobby of Hotel Polana; southern Mozambique travel arrangements, car rentals and boats to Inhaca.

**Nau Tours** (Map pp58–9; ☎ 21-380034; www.nautours.co.mz) A good contact for lower-budget trips to Catembe, Reserva Especial de Maputo and Ponta d'Ouro, plus boats to Inhaca and Cabo Santa Maria.