



# Mogadishu, hell and paradise

## SOMALIA

**In the 14th century, Mogadishu appeared as one of the most beautiful and flourishing cities in the Horn of Africa, full of urban decorum, luxurious palaces and characteristic quarters, built with typical madreporic rock and mangrove lintels, in a style similar to that of Zanzibar. The inhabitants were courteous and lovers of the good life, as well as 'good eaters'. This is how the great Moroccan traveller Ibn Battuta described it in 1331.**

Mogadishu's roots lie in the ancient trading port of Sarapion, later monopolised by Arab-Persian merchants who founded the new medieval capital there in the 10th century, giving new input to the economy of what became known as Mogadishu. A bridge between Africa, the Arabian Peninsula, the Indies and China, its splendour reached its peak around the 15th/60th century, under the local Muzzafar Sultan Dynasty, despite repeated Portuguese attacks. It is precisely from Vasco de Gama that we get another interesting description in 1499, which gives us an image of a modern city with four towers and numerous stone buildings of several storeys.



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Thanks to the trade in iron, ivory, ebony and sandalwood, the riches poured into grandiose works and monuments, such as the many **imposing mosques** that still characterise its urban profile today. In the 19th century, it was annexed to the **Sultanate of Zanzibar** before becoming an **Italian colony** and finally entering the British sphere of control. A troubled history that has not yet completely abandoned it is that of the **last 30 years**, during which the **'Warlords'** have almost entirely destroyed its urbanistic memory, in truth already undermined by an intrusive **Italian town-planning scheme in the 1930s**, with the loss of a considerable part of its ancient quarters, but with the planning of some interesting works.

Today, Mogadishu looks like a collection of ruins, only partly clumsily salvaged, through which one can barely catch a glimpse of its former glory. But like the Phoenix, the city longs, now more than ever, to rise from its own ashes. Its face overlooking the marvellous waters of the **Indian Ocean** is immediately recognisable by the **Portuguese Tower** (actually the work of the 1940s) and the **Almnara Lighthouse**, an ancient stone tower **dating back to the 15th century**, which has been remodelled several times, and which anticipates the **historical quarters of Shingaani and Hamarweyne, built between the 10th and 14th centuries**. From the former, goods destined for international trade passed through, from the latter, those destined for the domestic market, such as cattle and cloth. The **Garesa**, the fortified palace of the Sultan of Zanzibar, acted as a caesura between the two quarters, which the Italian town plan wanted to unify. If the urban fabric was partially distorted, the Italian architects used more respect in the style of the **colonial buildings, inspired by the traditional architecture of the Benaadir region**, as in the **Southern Cross Hotel**, by architect Rava, now converted into a shopping centre, or the monumental **Governor's Palace** with its Islamic windows, now lost. Instead, the two **Triumphal Arches** dedicated to Humbert I and the skeleton of the beautiful **Neo-Norman Cathedral**, designed in 1928 to enrich the city's skyline, dominated by the **ancient 13th-century minarets of Jaamac Hamarweyne and Fakhreddin**, survive.

Despite its deep wounds, white Mogadishu tries to look to the future, amidst the teeming activities of the **Bakaara Market**, the turquoise inlets where quintals of fish are unloaded every day, destined for the city's characteristic **fish market**. The white light-flooded profile of the imposing Islamic **Solidarity Mosque**, the Obelisk towering over the **Tomb of the Unknown Soldier** and the marvellous beaches of **Jazeera and Secondo Lido Beach**, which on weekends welcome all the Benaadirians' bursting desire to turn over a new leaf, eager to forget the sad memory of the 1993 Battle of Mogadishu, a tragic event whose memory remains at the site of the **Black Hawk Down**, with the carcass of a US helicopter that has never been removed.



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### Day 1

#### Outward flight/Mogadishu (MGQ)

- Late morning arrival in Mogadishu
- Clearance of formalities and meeting with Kanaga Africa Tours staff
- Accommodation at the Hotel Decalé or similar, lunch
- In the afternoon visit to the village and beach of Jazeera
- Free dinner
- Overnight stay in double rooms with bathroom

### Day 2

#### Mogadishu

- Breakfast at the hotel
- Visit the fish market, the lighthouse and the old town, the Black Hawk Down site and the American tanks, ...
- Seafood lunch at Lido Beach
- Visit the ruins of Italian architecture (Cathedral, Umberto I arch, popular triumphal arch, obelisk dedicated to the Unknown Soldier, the Parliament) and the monuments of Somali independence
- Free dinner
- Overnight stay in double rooms with bathroom

### Day 3

#### Mogadishu (MGQ)/Return flight

- Breakfast at the hotel
- Visit the dromedary farms for milk production, the market, qat sellers, handicraft shops, ...
- Lunch in a restaurant
- Transfer to the airport, end of services.



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## SOMALIA (SOM02E)

**3 days**

Tailor-made departures on free dates  
English speaking tour leader

### Individual participation fee in double room

**1 pax: 2,490 €/pax**  
**2 pax: 2,390 €/pax**  
**3/+ pax: 2,290 €/pax**

### Supplements:

- Enrollment fee: **free!**
- Single room: **150 €**

### The fee includes:

- English-speaking local guide;
- Visits and excursions as scheduled;
- Half board (breakfast and lunch);
- Mineral water with meals;
- 2 nights in a hotel;
- Transfers by Toyota Hilux or similar with bulletproof windows;
- Armed escort (3/4 elements per car).

### The fee does not include:

- The visa for Somalia (\$65 on arrival);
- Cancellation, health, covid, baggage insurance;
- Any PCR tests required;
- Air flights;
- Mineral water and beverages;
- Possible day use in Mogadishu;
- Tips and expenses of a personal nature;
- Everything mentioned in 'supplements';
- Anything not expressly mentioned in 'the fee includes'.