

# Maasai celebrate new conservancy



**Naibosho** becomes Kenya's first conservancy to provide direct income to Maasai landowners – irrespective of the tourism revenue

**C**overing an area almost half the size of the Masai Mara Game Reserve, the conservancy, launched last November, is a partnership between 500 Maasai landowners and ecotourism operator Basecamp Explorer ([www.basecampexplorer.com](http://www.basecampexplorer.com)), which already finances Koiyaki Guiding School for young Maasai. Each landowner will earn monthly rent based on the size of land they have contributed to the conservancy. Naibosho comes

at a time when the Serengeti-Mara ecosystem is threatened by human population growth, encroachment from commercial agriculture and privatisation of communal land. The conservancy aims to combat this by supporting local livelihoods and guaranteeing income to landowners while safeguarding wildlife – including the annual wildebeest migration. The core area of the conservancy will be dedicated to conservation, while surrounding areas will integrate grazing management, wildlife and human settlements.

**Naibosho is also good news for Kenya's lions – around 100 of the big cats (5% of the country's total population) live in the area**

## Zanzibar goes online

NEW ONLINE MAGAZINE SPICES UP TRAVEL PLANS  
Combining inspirational articles with practical information, *Mambo* ([www.mambomagazine.com](http://www.mambomagazine.com)) features lots of alternative tourism ideas, as well as all the basics for travellers visiting Zanzibar or Mafia. "As well as beaches to die for and the mysterious atmosphere of Stone Town," says founder Rachel Hamada, "there are so many opportunities to explore off the main tourist routes and dive straight into authentic Swahili culture."

## Sounds of Wisdom

SAUTI ZA BUSARA (9-13 February, [www.busaramusic.org](http://www.busaramusic.org)) is East Africa's premier music festival with over 400 musicians and artists taking to the stage in Stone Town, Zanzibar, where the Old Fort venue becomes filled with craft stalls and food stands. A packed fringe programme features fashion shows, dhow races, open mic sessions, belly dancing, ngoma drumming and open rehearsals of Zanzibar's Taarab orchestras.



# Medina Palms takes root

Green touch for Kenya's first eco-friendly tourism residential development

**Costing around KSh1 billion**, construction has started on Medina Palms ([www.medinapalms.com](http://www.medinapalms.com)), an exclusive collection of villas, penthouses and apartments, all with direct access to the sandy beaches of Kenya's Watamu National Marine Park. The project, due for completion in two years, is founded on strong environmental principles. "We are committed to using the latest green technology and promoting sensible use, while

maintaining integrity of the local marine environment," said Corporate Affairs Manager Ben Kaparo. "The project has been designed with a major focus on alternative energy systems such as solar and wind power."

Medina Palms will also have water recycling and refuse management systems, while biogasifiers will minimise water consumption and generate free water for laundry, pools and irrigation systems for the gardens.

### Can't wait for the Medina Palms project to be finished?

Get a taste of Indian Ocean living at Spice of the Coast ([www.spiceofthecoast.com](http://www.spiceofthecoast.com)), a collection of luxury cottages 800m from the sea at Diani Beach. Stroll through candlelit gardens, dive in the pool, sip a cocktail overlooking the ocean... Paradise found? Could well be...

## Speak Swahili

Visiting East Africa? Try learning some Swahili to enhance your experience. Knowing simple words, phrases or greetings will make your stay more memorable. Language teachers from the region have set up a website ([www.swahilitutors.com](http://www.swahilitutors.com)) that helps you learn Swahili online. Providing interactive, personalised lessons it saves the hassle of commuting to class and allows flexibility to learn at your own time and convenience.

