



# A Slice of Lamu in Nairobi

Story by Ami Shah

Swahili architecture is exemplified across the East African Coast and has an innate ability to calm, cool and gentle the senses. Grounded in multicultural roots from Arab, Indian and African influences, it is an aesthetic that has evolved over centuries yet maintains some key pillars in style and principles,

One can hardly envisage transporting such a distinctive style to Nairobi's metropolis. Vanessa Roumequere, the warm and effervescent proprietor of Manzili House, took a risk when inspired to build a new property in the upmarket Karen neighbourhood, just a stone's throw from the Giraffe Sanctuary... and some of Nairobi's top restaurants.

Manzili is an exclusive homestay, a home away from home. It consists of two separate abodes connected by a courtyard shaded by the umbrella of yellow-hued acacias (the only sign you are still in Nairobi). The larger main house, Manzili is what you first encounter as you pass under an antique, carved wood portal. It has an airy, open-plan living space with the dining and kitchen overlooking the courtyard swimming pool so the entire home is bathed in light.

A team of Lamu artisans built the lime plaster walls, staircases and intricate detailing such as the vidaka or architectural niches. The property illustrates a depth and breadth of perseverance, skill, vision, and design prowess

that is truly inspiring. Four en suite, double bedrooms flank the common area, each with its own patio access. Manzili House sleeps 8 guests.

Across the courtyard, is Manzili Ndoto House, a self-contained 2-bedroom en suite home with its own kitchen, living and dining area. Manzili Ndoto sleeps four guests in two bedrooms. Both houses can be booked together or separately.

Sundowners are taken in the baraza or rooftop patio of Ndoto House, underneath clusters of acacia flowers that are low enough to graze with your finger tips.

Sleep comes with an other-worldly calm and the distant evening calls of the tree hyraxes. A stay at Manzili is undoubtedly unexpected and yet you can't help but feel as though this little slice of Lamu belonged among the acacia-laden suburbs of Nairobi after all.

For reservations contact Nomad Travel Club, 0708 238 738, [bookings@nomad.africa](mailto:bookings@nomad.africa) [www.manzilihouse.com](http://www.manzilihouse.com) @manzilihouse

