

# AFRICAN PARADISE

You do not have to go to the end of the world to experience paradise. You only have to take a flight to Mombasa and get yourself picked up by Kinondo Kwetu's driver. Then a completely wonderful experience is waiting for you in the form of harmony, stillness and divine food. At Kinondo Kwetu "hakuna matata" is the rule.

The sun blazes, you are comfortably crouched in a tremendously nice sun chair and fold away the second novel of the week to take a cooling dip in the pool. After a pleasant swim you hardly get back to the chair before a waiter is there with a glass of sparkling, cold mineral water and a plate with fresh fruit.

-Lunch is in an hour by the boathouse, Maria. Today it is lobster salad. I hope you will like it! It will go down, for sure! Life here at Kinondo is probably about as near to paradise that you can get." Welcome to a private hideaway on the beach of the Indian Ocean" is written on the sign where you turn off the very bumpy road to Kinondo Kwetu and a place that is more private than this is hard to find.

## A SWEDISH LADY IN AFRICA

Tina Dyrssen was the name of the lady that created Kinondo, where the catchwords familiar, personal and harmony with the environment are the pillars of the place. The year was 1998 and Tina had then lived a greater part of her life in Africa. She wanted to settle down and at the same time create a place for her family and friends, so the building of Kinondo Kwetu started. Tina stayed many happy years at Kinondo and became a very popular profile in the society. But it takes very much hard work to run an operation in Africa and Tina decided to sell. Buyer was one of Tina's friends, Fred Andersson, who today runs the place together with his family in the same spirit as Tina.

-We were here on vacation some times and were on very good terms with Tina, who then ran the place. So when she asked if we wanted to take over it was not an especially difficult decision, says Filip Andersson (son of Fred) who together with his wife today runs Kinondo.

-We have renovated everything but still strived to keep the wonderful feeling that Tina managed to "build into" Kinondo. The people who work here are from the village and we only use local products for our cooking. - The idea is that it will be like being at home, but where you do not have to do anything but to take care of yourself and feel good, Ida fills in.

And that is exactly how it is. The calm, the personal environment, the fantastic service and wonderful views make it impossible not to fall in love with Kinondo. Here you are guaranteed to wind down and your days are filled with novel reading, kilometer long walks along the beach swims, snorkeling and massage. And divine food – not to forget! The chef Hassan loves his kitchen and composes one taste sensation after the other, in a fine interaction with full-bodied vintage wines. Kinondo is not the place for you who want to lie on the beach and look at people or hope to find new friends in the packed bar in the evening. At Kinondo stillness reigns and that is exactly what is so wonderful. You do not have to think of what to eat during the day, because Hassan has already done that. The only thing you have to do is to be in time for lunch, drink and dinner. In between, there is plenty of time for rest, as well as for activities like kayaking, diving, kite surfing or why not try a tour in a traditional African sailing boat? We can also please the golfer; there is a really good golf course only 20 minutes drive away.

Except for the big house, where the family stays when they visit, Kinondo consists of many small cottages for two, some for up to four persons and a bigger house with ten guest rooms. Everything, from cushions to furniture, is custom made and no cottage or room is like the other. Most of the guests are Swedish, many returning friends and acquaintances of the family who have fallen in love with the place. Kinondo is also utterly well suited to rent in its entirety, to gather family and friends and have a vacation away from home, but still private.

## HAKUNA MATATA – NO STRESS IN AFRICA

In Africa there is no stress. Here the Spanish “magnana” meet the Thai “sanuk” and the explanation to this is that there is so much time that there is no cause for stress. Count half an hour to get your coffee or lemonade, even if you are the only guest. That is of course something that Filip and Ida have had to work with from scratch and it is with deep sighs that they tell how hard it is to run the operation in an effective way.

-Everything is so different to everything that we have done before and back home in Sweden. It is a completely different culture here, which is awfully exciting and challenging but also difficult. Here it is “Hakuna matata”, you laugh at everything and shrug your shoulders. Absolutely a pleasant attitude, but also very frustrating when it comes to work. I must double-check everything to see that it is really done. What I like best is the sun and the rhythm of nature. And then I enjoy that we can work together and that it works so well! At home we worked in different places, stressed, and we hardly saw each other. Here it is quality of life, says Filip and laughs.

“Mama Tina”, that Filip calls the founder, was very involved and cared about the people and the society and Kinondo is - apart from being a delightful refuge – focused on helping the villagers, a work that family Andersson has continued.

-It is very important to us that our operation harmonizes with the people of the village and we try to help as much as we can. Much of the money that is generated from the operation goes to the building of a clinic and school in the village. We have also got a lot back from our engagement. People respect us and want to give back. We have been accepted in the society in quite a different way than would have been possible if we had only operated the hotel for own profit, says Filip.

Many of Kinondo’s guests have also shown interest to contribute and the village school has been rebuilt thanks to their sponsorship. So, on top of being spoiled with a lazy time on the beach, you also know that your money goes to something really good. That intensifies even more the delightful feeling that instantly arises at Kinondo Kwetu.