

# IBO ISLAND - ONE OF AFRICA'S BEST KEPT TRAVEL SECRETS



For many, Ibo Island is long past its days of glory. This statement, however, is not entirely true. Especially now when it seems Ibo has rediscovered its potential and appeal.

The Ibo Island belongs to the Quirimbas Archipelago located in the Indian Ocean, off northern Mozambique. **It once flourished as one of the most important trading ports in the area** and for centuries was one of the major centers for trading slaves, gold and ivory. However, those days are long gone and the island's economy has struggled significantly. It may seem at first sight that Ibo has not much to offer, nevertheless, tourists who have a sense for adventure will disagree.

Ibo became a trading port as early as 600 A.D. when the Arabs settled in the area. However, the Portuguese influence became inevitable and gradually, the Arab community was driven away. The Portuguese established a military bastion here in 1791 to fight off the Dutch. Since then, **it has served as a slave house, a prison and today, it belongs to the most recognizable structures on Ibo.**

Even though there is a slightly 'lonely' feel to the island, it still retains a very modest charm. The nature here is simply marvelous, with warm crystal clear seas, coral reefs swarming with marine life; kayaking and snorkeling are definitely worth to try - especially adventurers who are keen to see turtles, rays or even sharks. There are several protected species of rare birds and many tourists head to Ibo for bird-watching.

**Ibo island features also a very well know community of silversmiths.** In fact, their craft is so impressive; many tourists come here just to see them work. They are welcome to bring anything silver and watch the skilled craftsmen turn it into a piece of truly fine jewelry. Even though the accommodation facilities are a bit challenging, Ibo is a charming island which has lots to offer.

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