

NAIROBI TRAVEL GUIDE: Food

Try Local Foods

We highly recommend trying some of the local dishes while in Kenya. As the capital city, Nairobi is a great place to try different dishes from around Kenya and the wider East African region

Here are just a handful of the foods you might want to try while in Kenya:

- *ugali* (maize flour porridge, a staple food across East Africa)
- *chapati* (flat bread)
- *nyama choma* (grilled meats)
- *githeri* (beans and corn)
- *maharagwe* (beans and rice)
- *kachumbari* (fresh tomato & onion salad)
- *nduma* (stewed arrowroot)
- *matoke* (green plantain stew)
- *pilau* (spiced rice)
- *kuku choma* (BBQ chicken)
- *supu* (soup)
- *mchuzi wa samaki* (tilapia fish in coconut curry sauce)
- *mandazi* (fried bread, doughnuts)
- *tsiswa* (roasted termites)
- *viazi karai* (potato nuggets)
- *vibibi* (coconut and rice pancakes)
- *mukimo* (mashed potatoes, corn, and pumpkin leaves).

Note that the names and spelling vary in different regions as do the recipes. Some of these foods are typical across East Africa whereas others are more regional. What is on offer on local menus will also change by season and the region of the country. For example, along

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the coast such as in Mombasa, you'll get a lot more fish and seafood as well as more Indian influenced dishes.

If you are looking to try popular drinks in Kenya, we'd recommend trying Kenyan tea (chai) and Tusker beer. Another popular Kenyan beer, and the favorite of one of our guides, is White Cap and it is produced by the same company that makes Tusker.

It can be difficult to try a lot of local dishes as many hotels and safari lodges in Kenya tend to primarily serve Western dishes. Many restaurants serve a number of European, American, or Indian dishes, but traditional Kenyan food can sometimes be tricky to find for tourists.

If your hotel doesn't offer local dishes, IAsk hotel staff, guides, or drivers for suggestions for places that serve good Kenyan food that they would recommend. They should be able to point you to places with safe cooking practices. It is fun to be adventurous, but you want to keep water and food safety in mind when choosing where to eat and what to eat so you don't regret it the next day.

If you are not sure where to go and aren't getting any good suggestions, a few restaurants that you may want to consider which focus on Kenyan food are [Amaica](#) in the Westlands, [Utamaduni Restaraunt](#) in L'angata, and the budget-friendly [Hot Dishes](#) which has a few locations in the Central Business District of Nairobi.

Utamaduni Restaurant is located at the Bomas of Kenya and serves Kenyan dishes from the many different regions of the country. If you are already planning to visit the Bomas, this is a very convenient option for lunch or dinner before or after your visit.

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A second suggestion is to ask at your hotel if they are able to make local dishes on request. Normally, this requires asking a day or so in advance.

Finally, another fun option is to join a local food tour. This not only allows you to try a number of Kenyan dishes with the help of a local, but it is also an interactive experience where you will learn a bit about Kenya's food history. Just be sure to go hungry as you will eat a ton on the tour!

