

The most expensive timber in the world is cut from Tanzania's mpingo tree.



The American Colonization Society founded Liberia in 1821 as a place for free African-Americans to emigrate to. More than 10,000 made the journey across the Atlantic.

Habari

Photography Jaw-dropping portraits

This is the work of Lyra Aoko, a young Nairobi-based fashion and lifestyle photographer who works for large brands such as Safaricom and Nike. Specialised in creating stunning, artistic portraits, she is among the most forward-thinking millennial artists shaping Nairobi's creative scene. ~ lyraoko.com, Instagram: @lyraoko



Even though Malawi is completely landlocked, one-fifth of the country is water.



Angola gets its name from the Kimbundi word N'gola, meaning "king".

Nairobi

Bar Straight Outta Manila

At the dusitD2's Zing Bar in Nairobi, there is an angel. She's actually called Angel but her real name is Angelique Rivera. She comes with eight years' experience fixing cocktails in China, Dubai and Qatar. She has a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Manila Central University but with a name like Angel she didn't need it, so she did Bartending and Mixology at Asian Bartending Academy instead. Anyway, long story short she is changing the shape and form of cocktails in Nairobi. Pull up a chair.

~ dusit.com

“Knowledge without wisdom is like water in the sand”

– Guinean proverb –

Gym Gym With A Twist

It's not a gym, it's a modern fitness studio that focuses on non-traditional exercise routines. There is Vinyasa Flow (a form of yoga), kickboxing, dance fitness, combat cardio, core fusion, boxing, hiit, body resistance, boot camp, etc. There's also a coffee and juice bar. Fitness doesn't have to be boring, does it?

~ mom3ntum.com

Restaurant The Node

Jacaranda Hotel has a new section called The Node across the road. It has a garden restaurant, meeting rooms and a bar. As great for summer evenings as it is for colder nights. Even better if you are a group of ladies who want to order bottles of wine and while away a lazy evening. The kitchen makes magnificent pizza (the place was formerly a pizza joint called Pizza Garden, so they inherited that spirit).

~ thenode.co.ke



Nairobi page text: Jackson Biko

The Ugandan Ssesse Islands are a chain of hidden tropical islands in the middle of Lake Victoria.



According to popular belief in Madagascar, the dead look after the living and the living after the dead.

Arts & Culture

Zipline Flying Fox

East Africa's longest zipline is located in the Kereita Forest, just 45 minutes from the centre of Nairobi. Known as the "Flying Fox", this 2.4 km-long zipline takes riders on an adrenaline-fueled ride through the trees. The Kereita Forest offers many other activities, such as horse riding, paintball and archery, which are perfect for a family outing or a corporate retreat.

~ theforest.co.ke/zipline



Arts festival Harare International

The Harare International Festival of the Arts is one of the biggest of its kind in Africa, and a source of great pride for Zimbabwe. For an entire week, lovers of theatre, circus, music, dance, visual art and poetry flock to the capital, Harare, for an unforgettable experience. This year's edition will take place from 1 to 6 May at different venues throughout the city.

~ hifa.co.zw



Q&A

Marta Krajnik

Kipato Unbranded designs simple, unique jewellery made from local materials such as brass, recycled bone and beads. This popular Kenyan social enterprise collaborates with local artists to make each piece an original work of art. Msafiri chats with founder Marta Krajnik.

Why did you start this business?

After 12 years working in international development, I wanted to do something that would help people use their creativity to make a fair salary and improve their livelihoods.

How do the artists benefit?

We promote their skills while providing access to larger markets, both domestically and internationally. Profits from the artists' work go directly to the artist, creating a sustainable model.

What is your dream for Kipato Unbranded?

We hope to break down the barriers between producers and consumers, and empower people to understand and stand together with those less fortunate. We're going for ethnically responsible growth.

~ kipatounbranded.com



Habari text: Eva de Vries

Shutterstock



Four Points by Sheraton

Nairobi Airport

You are shuttling to another faraway land so you want something functional but effective at the airport. You want some deep shut-eye (a great bed), a decent meal when you wake up, a gym, maybe a swim, wi-fi for that quick email to Tokyo when they wake up, and then you scoot off again on another flight out. No frills, just comfort and functionality. You don't even need a great view, but if you get the right room here and stand at the window in the right light you will see Nairobi National Park yonder, and if you're one of those strange people who just happen to have binoculars on them, you might see a giraffe.

~ starwoodhotels.com

Kenya's economy relies heavily on agriculture, particularly the cultivation of tea, coffee and flowers.



Column

Burundi is blessed with an abundance of wildlife, including crocodiles, antelopes and hippos.



Jackson Biko

Don't Quit The Day Job

When I told my daughter's friend that I'm a writer, she didn't advance the conversation until the following day, when I went to drop off my daughter's swimming goggles. "But what's your day job, baba Tamisha?" she said. I think she had been thinking about it the whole night, tossing and turning, trying to find an answer to this complex career of mine that didn't make sense. I told her, "That is my day job. I write about people. Mostly." She squinted up at me (I'm a giant of a man) and asked excitedly, "So will you write about me?" My daughter rolled her eyes and looked away, probably thinking, "Oh please don't let his head get any bigger."

So yes, mostly I write about people, or what people like to drink, or eat, or see, or think, or talk about, or places where they sleep. I also wrote about birds once. I was in a big forest in the southern part of Kenya's coastline at the time. I went in with an old man who had about 50,000 bird sounds in his head, and we walked along a narrow, damp trail that was littered with dead leaves. We squinted through his binoculars, which were older than me. "Can't you see her? On that left branch," he said. "What left branch?" I retorted. "That one, on that big tree," he countered. (All the trees are big here.) "She has green legs. There, she just hopped onto another branch. She's in a better position now, can you see her wonderful green legs?" I said, "No. I only see green leaves." Then when he was almost crying (the man, not the bird), I lied that I could see the damned bird. Then we ate soggy sandwiches while sitting on a big root. I'm never doing that again. Ever.

I love people profiles because most people won't stop talking. Plus, people always tell you things you didn't know. Amazing things. Even the useless things they say are amazing. Sometimes I also interview underdogs, but I mostly interview people who are "newsworthy", people who have done great things in (and with) their lives. Unlike birds with green feet, important people are easy to spot. They are always in the news wearing colourful ties, avoiding the glasses of water next to them. I normally meet them in hotel lounges, or in their offices. I even interviewed one in a steam room once. That was probably

worse than trying to spot a purple-breasted sunbird.

My daughter's friend doesn't know this, but it can be tiresome, writing about "important" people. It involves eating nuts in hotel bars as you wait for them. Flattering their choice in suits. Listening to them talk about their childhood. The tedium of listening to someone tell you about a bicycle they owned in their childhood cannot be overstated. I don't want to listen to it anymore.

You know what I want? I want to write about people who I have to meet in a barren field out of town. Where some gruff-looking chaps smelling of garlic put a stinky hood over my head and drive me down rough roads, past braying horses and mooing cows, over gurgling water, down slopes and through rambling markets with the constant din of haggling vendors

"You know what I want? I want to write about people who I have to meet in a barren field out of town"

speaking in strange dialects. Dust, rain, sheep, a gate opening, a door opening, a rough cough belonging to a rough man who should stop smoking, a hand leading me into a chair, a door closing softly, silence, a car reversing, footsteps, more garlic, the hood coming off and a man with stubble and sinister sheep eyes peering at me with a mouth he can't close. Then in a heavy eastern European accent he asks, "Have you ever eaten a mourning dove?"

Illustration: Hannah Wieslander

In Ghana, traditional clothing is made of bright, colourful "kente" cloth.



What's On

Zambia boasts Victoria Falls, the largest waterfall in the world. It is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and one of the Seven Natural Wonders of the World.



Furniture Funkidz

Kenya now has its own kids' furniture brand, Funkidz, which sells colourful, fun chairs, desks and beds (see picture above) for children aged 0 to 16. This durable furniture, which is designed for functional use, comes in various patterns. Its founder, Ciiru Waweru, came up with the idea after finding it hard to find quality children's furniture in Nairobi.

~ funkidz.co.ke



Tourism Travel Indaba

South Africa's Travel Indaba is one of the largest tourism marketing events on the African calendar. It showcases a wide variety of tourism products and attractions in southern Africa, and draws international buyers and media from across the globe. This year it will take place at two different venues in Durban from 8 to 10 May.

~ indaba-southafrica.co.za



Top Naija Mega Music Festival is considered to be Nigeria's largest music festival with 72 hours of non-stop musical performances by more than 500 emerging artists from Nigeria and abroad. From **11 to 14 May** at the prestigious Virgin Rose Resorts in Lagos.

~ topnaijamusic.com/festival

Fashion

Our Favourite Streetwear Brands

Fashion is one of the best ways to express pride in your identity and culture. Here are five African labels that are conquering the streets.



Dead. | South African
This Pretoria-based lifestyle brand produces brightly coloured clothes with unique prints and textures.
~ dead93.com



Chillimango | Kenyan
This Afro-urban streetwear company makes cosy kanga hoodies and funky t-shirts featuring symbols of Kenyan culture, like ugali or jikos.
~ chillimango.co.ke



Wafflesncream | Nigerian
Wafflesncream is Nigeria's first real skateboard collective. Its new store in Lagos offers a fresh take on streetwear, showing off its collection of black and white printed T-shirts, jumpsuits, dresses and much more.
~ wafflesncream.com



Telfar | American-Liberian
This progressive American-Liberian menswear brand continues to define gender-fluid fashion in the form of baggy T-shirts, caps and bags.
~ shop.telfar.net



Super Yaya 100% | Côte d'Ivoire
Super Yaya 100% is an Abidjan-based label with a cool take on expressing "Afrofuturism" through fashion. The brand makes customisable West Africa-inspired outfits and eye-catching printed shirts.
~ super-yaya.com

"For the beauty of the rose, we also water the horns"

– African proverb –

Lomé Grand Market is a large market place in the city of Lomé, the capital of Togo.



Favourites

Mount Karisimbi is an inactive volcano in the Virunga Mountains on the border between Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.



Wall Art Airframe

“Airframe”, designed by Korean designer James Kim, is a picture frame shaped like an aircraft window.

This set of three picture frames turns your living room into the inside of an aircraft. Each picture shows the view from consecutive windows, so it feels real. The photos are interchangeable so you can alter the view. The photo within the frame measures 203x254 mm. The total product size is 252.5x 341x32 mm. The frame is made from ABS and has an anti-scratch “window”.

~ designboom.com/shop US\$99



Men's fragrances

Spray It, Don't Say It

①

Tom Ford , Oud Wood

Oud Wood (50ml) is one of the rarest, most precious and most expensive ingredients in a perfumer's arsenal. Exotic rosewood and cardamom give way to a smoky blend of rare oud wood, sandalwood and vetiver.
~ **Karibu** US\$160

②

Issey Miyake, Nuit D'Issey Bleu Astral

Bleu Astral (75ml) is a new light in the night. The power of attraction of stars. When the sensuality of leather meets the vibrancy of vetiver and ambery woods.
~ **Karibu** US\$57

③

Hugo Boss, Boss The Scent

Hugo Boss introduces Boss The Scent (100ml), an irresistible fragrance, unforgettable like a savoured seduction. Exquisite notes of ginger and exotic maninka.
~ **Karibu** US\$70

④

Paco Rabanne, Pure XS

Pure XS (100ml). Excess in its purest state. An overflow of ginger. Carnal vanilla and myrrh release. An untamed oriental, fresh, decadent and raw.
~ **Karibu** US\$80

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Inspired to buy one of these fragrances? See our shopping magazine Karibu.