

# Lamu: A Brief History - Mark Wiens



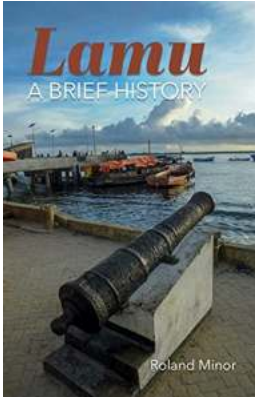
Lamu, a small island located off the coast of Kenya, is a hidden gem with a rich cultural heritage and a captivating history. This article will take you on a virtual journey through time, exploring the origins, influences, and charm of Lamu. Follow along as we delve into the enchanting history of this remarkable place.

## The Origins of Lamu

Lamu has a history dating back centuries, with its roots believed to trace back to the ninth century. It is known as one of the oldest continuously inhabited settlements in East Africa, showcasing a fusion of various cultures and traditions. The island has been influenced by the Swahili, Arab, Persian, and Indian people over time, resulting in a unique blend of architecture, cuisine, and customs.

**Lamu: A Brief History** by Mark Wiens (Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.7 out of 5



Language	: English
File size	: 4629 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Screen Reader	: Supported
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
Print length	: 56 pages
Lending	: Enabled



## **The Swahili Culture**

The Swahili people, predominantly Muslim, have played a significant role in shaping the identity of Lamu. Their rich culture can be witnessed in the intricately carved wooden doors and traditional houses found throughout the island. With a love for poetry, music, and dance, the Swahili people have created a vibrant and thriving artistic scene.

## **Arab and Persian Influences**

The Arab and Persian traders brought Islam to Lamu, leaving a lasting impact on the island's culture and architecture. The narrow, winding streets of Lamu Town, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, are reminiscent of ancient Arabian medinas. The mosques, with their distinct Arab design, stand as a testament to the influence of these traders who once called Lamu their home.

## **Lamu Fort and European Contacts**

In the late 19th century, Lamu became an important trading hub and a center for the ivory and slave trade. The Omanis and Zanzibaris established their presence, contributing to the growth and prosperity of the island. European powers, such as

the Portuguese and the British, also had brief encounters with Lamu during this period, further shaping its history.



## **Preserving Lamu's Heritage**

Today, Lamu remains a living testament to its vibrant history. Efforts have been made to preserve its unique cultural heritage, ensuring that future generations can appreciate the island's past. The Lamu Old Town Conservation Organization has played a crucial role in preserving the distinct architectural style and promoting sustainable tourism, allowing visitors to immerse themselves in the magic of Lamu.

## **Experiencing Lamu Today**

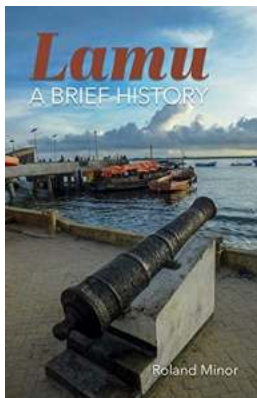
Visiting Lamu today is like stepping back in time. Its tranquil beaches, charming alleys, and hospitable locals provide an authentic experience that is hard to find

elsewhere. Whether you choose to relax on the pristine beaches, explore the bustling markets, or indulge in the mouthwatering traditional cuisine, Lamu has something to offer for every traveler.

Lamu, with its fascinating fusion of cultures and a captivating history, offers a truly unique experience for those willing to step off the beaten path. This hidden gem on the Kenyan coast is a treasure trove waiting to be discovered. So, if you're seeking a destination that combines history, culture, and natural beauty, make sure to put Lamu on your travel bucket list.

#### References:

1. [www.lonelyplanet.com/lamu](http://www.lonelyplanet.com/lamu)
2. [www.wanderlust.co.uk/lamu](http://www.wanderlust.co.uk/lamu)
3. [www.lamutourism.org](http://www.lamutourism.org)



#### **Lamu: A Brief History** by Mark Wiens (Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.7 out of 5

Language	: English
File size	: 4629 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Screen Reader	: Supported
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
Print length	: 56 pages
Lending	: Enabled



This book gives an insightful look at the early history of the island of Lamu on the Kenya coast, as well as the surrounding area. Arab and Indian sailors dominated

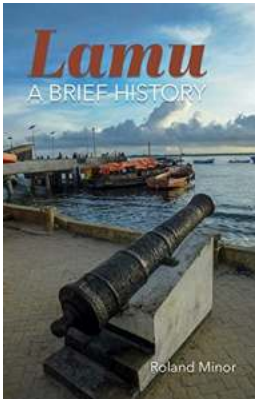
the maritime trade of the western Indian Ocean from earliest times. Greek sailors operating out of Egyptian ports joined them and it was from them that the first written records of the East African coast are derived. Lamu, with its fine natural harbour and abundant supplies of fresh water, likely played a major part in this maritime trade.

By the 14th century the renowned Moroccan traveller, ibn Battúta, reported that the whole East African coast had been Islamicized. Then came the Portuguese in the last years of the 15th century. With their faster ships and gunnery they dominated the existing trade resulting in a catastrophic collapse of local economies. In the mid-17th century the ruler of Mombasa appealed to the Sultan of Oman for aid in driving off the Portuguese. This heralded Omani interest in East Africa and the founding of the Sultanate of Zanzibar. The British took an interest in the coast in their attempts to stop the slave trade. Eventually, under pressure from the British, the Sultan of Zanzibar ceded the administration of the coastal strip to the British, leading in due course to the establishment of Kenya Colony. Lamu played a key role in the evolving history of the Kenya coast.



## **The Definitive Guide to Mbe Mee Essentials and Its Governing Law: What You Need to Know**

Are you interested in learning more about Mbe Mee Essentials and its governing law? Look no further! In this comprehensive guide, we will provide you with all the information...



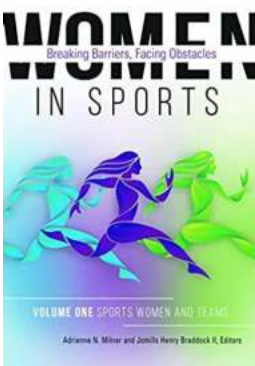
## Lamu: A Brief History - Mark Wiens

Lamu, a small island located off the coast of Kenya, is a hidden gem with a rich cultural heritage and a captivating history. This article will take you on a...



## Life On And Off The Rails From The To Asia

Are you tired of the monotonous routine of everyday life? Do you wish for an adventure that takes you beyond your comfort zone? If so, then hop on board as we embark on a...



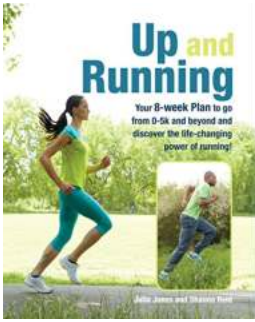
## 10 Inspiring Stories of Women Breaking Barriers and Overcoming Obstacles in Sports

Sports have always been considered a male-dominated domain, but women around the world have been steadily breaking barriers and shattering stereotypes to make their mark in...



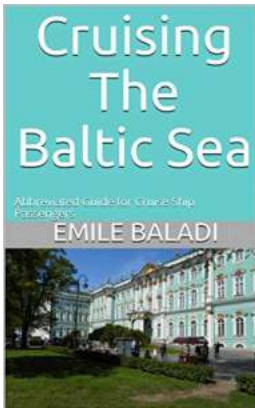
## The Cabin by Natasha Preston: A Gripping Thriller That Will Keep You on the Edge of Your Seat

Are you a fan of intense suspense, heart-pounding thrillers, and edge-of-your-seat storytelling? If so, then you're in for a treat with "The Cabin" by acclaimed...



## Your Week Plan To Go From 5k And Beyond And Discover The Life Changing Power Of

Running is not just a physical exercise. It is a journey that can transform your life in incredible ways. Whether you are a beginner who has just started running or an...



## An Abbreviated Guide For Cruise Ship Passengers: Everything You Need to Know Before Setting Sail!

Are you ready for the adventure of a lifetime? Picture yourself on a luxurious cruise ship, exploring exotic destinations, enjoying world-class entertainment, and indulging...



## Mom Wants to Be a Star - The Journey of Pursuing a Dream

Being a mother is undoubtedly one of the most fulfilling and challenging roles in a woman's life. However, amid the chaos and responsibilities of...