Life in Stone Town, Zanzibar

Life in *Stone Town* is a 180-degree shift from my life in Boston. Its a great adventure but at the same time an emotional roller coaster. Being away from home and loved ones is harder than I thought. I would gladly blame that on the amazing people in my life who have spoiled me crazy.

The narrow lanes and uneven pathways gives the town a unique character, unlike any other I have ever seen. Getting lost in these lanes is very common, and thats actually the best way to explore. Small touristy shops and boutiques are abundant and have the most amazing local art, handicrafts, clothes, and jewelry. You can’t walk for even a minute without running into one of them. Tourists spring out of all corners, some blending in with the locals, others not so much.

Walking in Stone Town is an art in itself, which can be learned within a few hours of being here! These narrow lanes are shared by locals going about their daily business, tourists leisurely exploring, children playing carelessly, and how can we forget those bicycles and motor bikes! What amazes me is how great everyone is at sharing those little spaces, at least I haven’t seen an accident yet!

*Forodhani Park* is the life of Stone Town after sundown both for locals and tourists. Everything it offers is simply delicious; from the famous Zanzibari pizza (both sweet and savory) and chicken shwarma, to sugarcane juice and coconut water. Little shops set up by women in their windows and outside their homes are quite fascinating, and their delicious snacks including parathas (chapatis) and bhajias are irresistible. Those great smelling narrow lanes always make me hungry!

*Darajali market* has its own unique charm! So vibrant! There is nothing that you would need and not find there. Vendors set up their stands and open their shops early in the morning until sundown, shutting down every few hours for prayers. I find Saturday mornings to be the best time to go to the market, not too crowded like most days of the week, especially evenings.

Spending the evenings in Forodhani park, watching the sunset with little boats docked waiting to take people out to the floating island restaurant, prison island, and other excursions has been most relaxing so far.