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TravelNews

By Harrison Kivisu @PeopleDailyKe



Families enjoy a day out on Mama Ngina Drive, Mombasa.
PHOTO: NDEGWA GATHUNGU

Mama Ngina Drive, public beaches set for Sh600 million facelift

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The scenic Mama Ngina Drive in Mombasa town will be upgraded at a cost of Sh400 million to attract local and international visitors.

Tourism Cabinet Secretary says part of the money will be used to construct a waterfront to offer better views of the ocean. "We have the money and are ready to roll out the project to boost tourism," he said.

Visitors to the Coast often look forward to enhancing their vacations by visiting Mombasa tourist attractions to enable them to relax and unwind. However, moving around Mombasa Town can be pretty hectic, especially if you're not used to the soaring temperatures and high humidities. Mama Ngina Drive is a good alternative; it is a famous recreational area that attracts hundreds of guests.

Balala also announced that Mombasa county beaches will be upgraded at a cost of Sh200 million. The project involves routine beach cleaning, provision of lighting systems at night as well as 24 hours security surveillance to ensure beach operations continue until late at night. "We want 24-hour beach operations. We must open up our beaches at night if we want to give our clients the best experience," said Balala.

The CS said the tourism sector is targeting four million foreign visitors and 26.4 million domestic tourists. This will increase the number of direct jobs in the tourism industry to 561,800 by 2030 and make the sector more competitive. "The initiative will transform the country into an innovative, booming, vibrant, flexible and connected tourism destination," said Balala.

The sector recorded a double-digit rise in earnings just under Sh120 billion in revenue receipts, a 20.3 per cent growth in revenue compared to Sh99.69 billion recorded in 2016. The strong growth was underpinned by a 9.8 per cent growth in total international arrivals by air, sea and cross-border in 2017 to 1.47 million tourists from 1.3 million arrivals in 2016.

Travelwise

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Get...set...go!



by Njeri Maina
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When water sounds meet us as we make our way into Entim Sidai Wellness spa and sanctuary. Beautiful water fountains and lush green lawns entice our eyes as brief well-thought-out notes strategically placed near our paths lead us right to the reception.

The ambience and the verdant scenery almost convince me that I am not in Nairobi. I soon forget the drama at work last week and our getting lost en route.

Located on Rura Drive off St Elizabeth Street in the suburbs of Karen, Nairobi, Entim Sidai opened in 2016. The street happens to be the first left turn after Karen roundabout if you are coming from town (Ngong Road), which is easy to miss if you are a speed whizz or don't follow Google maps.

I settle for a full body massage (at a fee of about Sh7,000) and a paraffin wax pedicure at about Sh2,000. After filling in a form with my health information, I proceed to a warm beautifully scented dimly lit room. Judy, my masseuse, introduces me to *Narropil* massage as soft string music plays in the background. This is a massage that uses essential oils and is geared towards rejuvenation.

Afterwards, I feel relaxed and languorous, basking in endorphins and relaxed muscles. I dress leisurely in a robe and join my colleague and the spa manager for a spot of tea.

Lucy Imison, the Entim Sidai manager, says 'Entim Sidai' is a Maasai word for 'beautiful' forest while 'Rura Drive' means peaceful. "We put special emphasis on naturally healing the body through water and the indigenous trees, which we take care of in the 14-acre

Taking your body and soul on holiday

If you need a short timeout from the city's madness, you can opt for a massage and spa day at Entim Sidai, a peaceful sanctuary in the Karen suburbs of Nairobi



TOP LEFT: The verdant lawns and (ABOVE) the historic house that hosts the spa at Entim Sidai, a wellness spa in Karen, Nairobi.

PHOTOS: JOHN OCHIENG

forest. We also use local products and Kenyan-trained therapists," she says.

Lucy has a wealth of knowledge on not just the healing treatments that the spa offers, but also on useful fun tidbits about the spa. The beautifully renovated house is said to be the fourth stone house to be built in Kenya in 1924 by a Dr Patterson, also instrumental in construction of Kenyatta National Hospital.

The newest additions to the farm-

house are residential homes. The lodgings are open beginning this month for anyone who needs longer treatments or a quiet timeout from the city for longer than the 14 hours that the spa is open.

After tea, we tour the facility as we make our way to my pedicure appointment. There is a hydrobath room where one can get a hydrotherapy treatment — said to be great for circulation and boosting immunity. Spa means healing



Lucy Imison, General Manager, Entim Sidai.

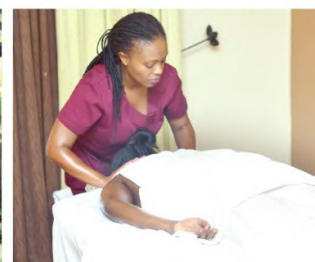
by water; this is the room where that meaning is actualised. The glass treatment room (I am told it's the only one of its kind in the world) blows me away. Situated underneath a Bombay tree, one can get a massage or any treatment they want while being one with nature.

Next to the glass treatment room are pathways which lead into the forest. One can take lone or guided walks into the woods, listen to the chirping of the birds, breathe in the fresh air, set the monthly goals and clear creative blocks. Or simply exercise to make you a better person healthwise and professionally.

We then head to the nail salon and facials bar, all-glass-walled and ceilinged and set in a corner of the forest. I get my crusty feet waxed and coaxed into soft, cute appendages that I barely recognise.

I wonder, how good my face would look if I had a facial? I learn about the different rituals, signature treatments and packages that they have to offer. It touches me that they have an offering for 60-year-plus people — my mum's age bracket — where they can do a choice of exercises and treatments followed by a campfire-sit-down.

I buy my mum a gift package for a whole day treatment, which I think is affordable, though she need not know. She absolutely loves and now I am her favourite daughter. I am also still on endorphin high, thanks to Entim Sidai and definitely coming back for more.



LEFT: The nail bar set in the forest at Entim Sidai. ABOVE: Njeri the writer gets a massage from Judy.

PHOTOS: JOHN OCHIENG