



## Madagascar

### Destination Guide and FAQs



#### First time in Madagascar?

*Madagascar was only colonised by human settlers relatively recently - perhaps as late as 500AD - some 300,000 years after the first appearance of Homo sapiens in Africa. Its seclusion resulted in “megadiversity”; it possesses a vast number of different species, many found nowhere else. Add to this mix: the rainforests of the Atsinanana, home to many rare species of primate and lemur; and the Tsingy de Bemaraha Strict Nature Reserve, an impassable labyrinth of limestone canyons, caves, tunnels and spires — and you will chance upon one of the world’s most fascinating destinations.*

If you are lucky enough to visit Madagascar, here’s how to make the most of your unique journey.

### How safe is Madagascar?

In general, Madagascar enjoys a pleasant state of peace and calm. But as anywhere it's important to be observant and avoid very crowded areas where pickpockets maybe present. Especially on the busy market days.

It's advisable to leave jewelry in safekeeping at the hotel, and taxis should be taken after dark. Valuables should never be casually left in hotel rooms, where they can prove to be an irresistible temptation. Your guides, drivers, and hotel staff for more detailed local considerations.

Our outfitter is based full time in Madagascar, and we keep updated (daily) on any, and all potential security or safety issues.

### How strenuous is this tour?

**A good level of fitness is essential.** Unless you enjoy unimpaired mobility, can cope with everyday walking and stair-climbing without difficulty, and are reliably sure-footed, this tour may not be for you.

You must be able to walk comfortably and without assistance at a moderate pace for one hour stretches. A moderate pace of walking is defined as 100 steps per minute. Visits to historical monuments and even some modern ones include stairs, as do some hotels. The ground may be uneven in older cities. There are some steep walks. Unruly traffic and the busy streets of larger cities require some vigilance. This tour involves private transfers on crowded urban roads as well as in rural areas. The longest transfer on this tour is 7hrs with breaks.

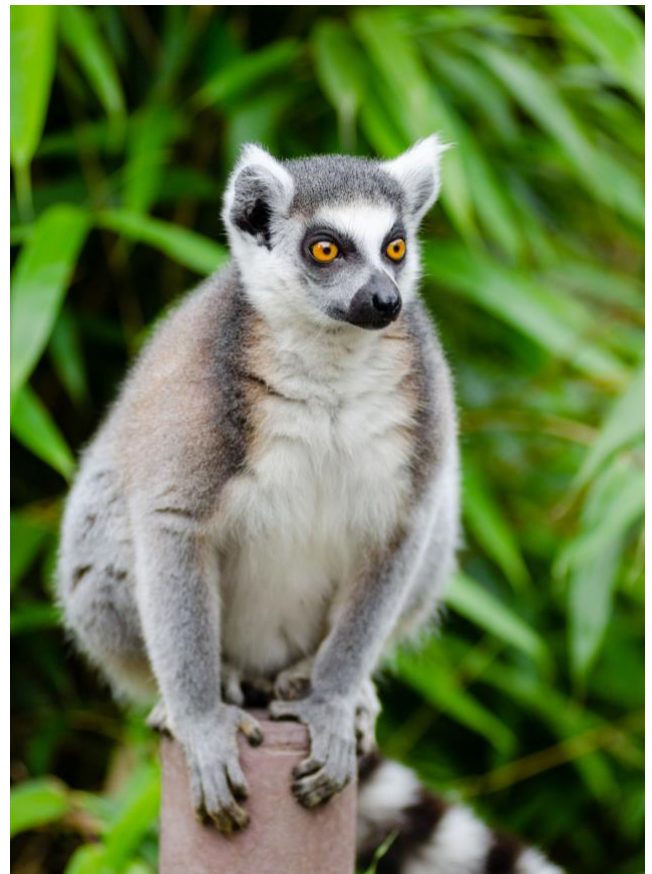
Most sites have some shade, but the sun can be strong, even in the cooler seasons.

Secondly, our tours are group events. The

presence of even one person who is not fit enough to cope can spoil the experience for everyone else, in addition to placing stress on group leaders and guides.

We will take boat rides to a nature reserve. There are optional snorkelling and diving excursions.

Please assess your fitness level as objectively as possible. Should you decide to join the tour and later develop immobility, please let us know immediately.



### Visas, vaccinations, customs

Visas & Passports: Visas are available upon arrival. Cost approximately 25 Euro for a 30-day tourist visa. We recommend having a photocopy of your passport and other important documents in case your there are

lost.

Vaccinations: Yellow fever required for those coming from countries where yellow fever exists. Ask your doctor's advice for other vaccinations and considerations, keeping in mind that recommendations change often. Please remember to carry your yellow card with your passport when you travel.

Customs: After clearing customs look for hotel sign and your name. In general, the airport staff is easy-going, patience and a smile go a long way. Export of wildlife products, orchids, etc. is strictly prohibited.

### Money Matters 2023

The currency in Madagascar is Malagasy Ariary. Exchange rates change daily. [Check online current rates](#). At the moment, the rate is Ar 4470 to 1 US\$. Exchange offices are available at Ivato Airport with competitive rates. It is best to bring Euro. US dollars are fine as well. We advise changing some money upon arrival. Travelers checks are not widely accepted and not recommended. Credit cards are accepted at some larger hotels, stores and with Air Madagascar. (Visa is the easiest card to use) There are ATM's in larger towns for cash withdrawals.

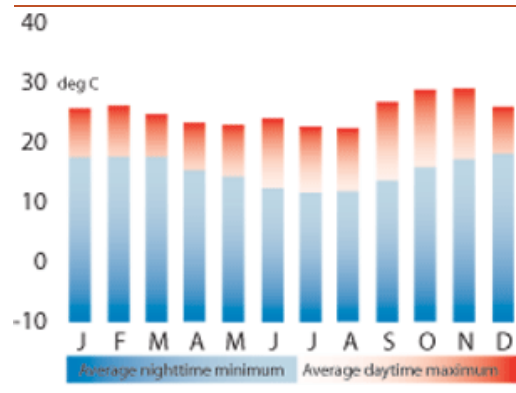
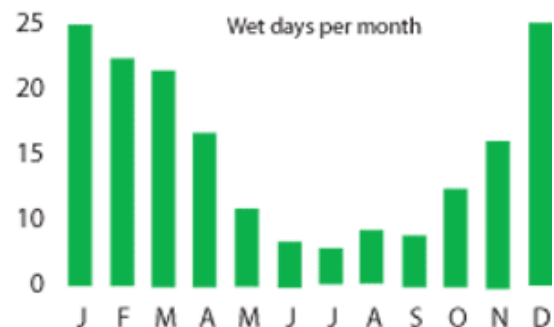
### Weather, clothing

Weather: April-November is the dry season in central and western Madagascar, and skies are a brilliant blue, with varying cloud cover. In Tana (Antananarivo), min and max mean monthly temps for this period are between 9 C - 24 C; on the west coast, the corresponding figures are from 20 C to 35 C in North and from 19 C to 32 C in Tulear.

Clothing: Antananarivo is a casual city, and only a few restaurants have any dress restrictions.

The nights can be cool; a leather jacket, wool sports jacket, or some kind of pile or fleece jacket or pullover will be handy.

- Loose, long sleeve, long leg cotton clothes for sun and insect protection.
- Shorts and short sleeved shirts
- One warm sweater, jacket, hat, i.e. fleece (cool temps in the early morning & evening)
- Rain gear (light weight)
- Wide-brimmed hat or visor, local straw hats are also abundant
- Sandals, For beach, on boats, etc...
- Bathing suit
- Medium weight walking shoes or strong tennis shoes
- Lamba (kanga, kioki, sarong.) A wrap around piece of cloth that can be useful for bathing or as camp wear.



### General

- Sunglasses
- Personal toiletry, medical, and sewing kit
- Flashlight with extra batteries and bulb, headlamps work well
- Reading, journal material
- Insect repellent
- Small personal First aid items: Sunscreen, lip balm, Anti-itch cream, i.e. antihistamine cream
- Light weight towel (small and fast drying is best)
- A few Ziplock plastic bags / large heavy-duty garbage bag (Handy for packing and keeping important items dry)
- Lighter if necessary
- Day pack for walks and hikes

Packing Note: The suggested list above is only an outline. Remember: It's always best to pack light!

### Hotels and food

Hotels: We use a wide variety of hotels, lodges and camps according to the location and itinerary. In the smaller towns, hotel standards vary, but local hotels usually make up for in charm and character what they may lack in luxury.

Food & Drinks: Antananarivo has a wide collection of outstanding restaurants, from funky local to very smart, with French, Chinese, Italian, and Malagasy cuisine. Outside of Tana, even very small local places can set out memorable meals, prepared from varied and flavorful ingredients freshly bought at the market.

### Will drinking water be provided while travelling?

We provide bottled drinking water while on the road. In interests of reducing plastic waste,

please consider bringing your own refillable water bottle. Hotels will supply bottled water.

### What is the voltage in Madagascar?

The voltage in Madagascar is 220V. Outlets are European style with two pin round plugs. In remote locations electricity may be limited to certain hours of the day. And even in large towns / cities electricity cuts can happen. It is best to charge your batteries and electronic devises whenever you have the opportunity.



### Can I get a local SIM card?

Local SIM cards are available for mobile phones at the airport or in most all towns and cities.

### Poverty, beggars, and gift giving

Madagascar is one of the poorest countries in the world and to be blunt the impact can at times be overwhelming. This is especially true for first time visitors. There are a great many beggars on the streets, especially in Antananarivo and the affect may be alarming.

Generally, we discourage visitors from giving gifts (candy, money, etc.) to the children and beggars on the street. It contributes to creating an even greater beggar mentality and often

invites unwelcome attention. That said, and to be honest, many people do keep a small amount on hand and hand out at times to the severely handicapped and elderly. Consider bringing pictures of your family and home or postcards to share with locals. In rural areas pens / pencils and writing paper make reasonable gifts, as well.

Along with providing cultural exchange, our tours contribute to the Madagascar's economy in a positive way by employing locals and hiring services in-country. We encourage anyone that would like to contribute to do so directly to a charity group that is assisting in Madagascar.

### **What about tipping?**

We will start with a US \$150 pp tipping kitty for porters, hotel staff, drivers, and guides. You may supplement if you wish. Any unused amounts at the end will be democratically disposed of.

### **Health and immunizations**

In advance of traveling, it's recommended to consult with your personal physician. A visit to the dentist prior to travel is also recommended. Although we cannot give medical advice it is good to have your tetanus vaccination up to date and suggested immunizations may include polio and hepatitis. For travelers coming from areas with yellow fever proof of vaccination against yellow fever is required for entry. (But there is no risk of the disease in Madagascar itself.)

### **Travel Insurance**

Travel protection is recommended for all our travelers and should be taken out at the time of booking.

If you choose not to purchase travel insurance,

please sign off on registration form that you have been notified of the need for travel insurance.

E.Y.H.O. is not qualified to answer technical questions about the benefits, exclusions, and conditions of travel insurance plans. E.Y.H.O. cannot evaluate the adequacy of the insured's existing insurance coverage. If you have any questions about your travel protection, consult your insurer or insurance agent or broker.

Here are insurance companies our travellers have used in the past. Please note – this does not constitute an endorsement on our part.

[World Nomads](#)

[Travelex](#)

[Allianz](#)

Best value [Insure my Trip](#)

Please note: Failing to purchase adequate travel protection plan could result in the loss of your travel cost and/or require more money to correct the situation. You also acknowledge that without adequate coverage, there may be no way to recoup any losses, costs or expenses incurred.

If you choose to travel without adequate coverage, E.Y.H.O. is not liable for any of your losses for which adequate trip protection plan coverage would otherwise have been available.



## Covid and Madagascar

Entry restrictions have been lifted. You will not need show negative test or take (PCR) test upon arrival. Depending on the air carrier you may need to take test (PCR) at the airport before departure.

As of May 2023, the WHO has downgraded Covid as ongoing health issue which no longer constitutes a public health emergency of international concern. **Should you develop symptoms and test positive during the tour, you will not be required to isolate.**

On the other hand, if you are concerned about being exposed to contagion, please assess your comfort level to join the tour and/or consider remaining masked where it's not possible to socially distance or isolate.

Upon return home, travelers are subject to rules of their countries of residence.

Here is what we are doing to deliver as safe a tour as possible:

- We recommend travel medical insurance and trip interruption insurance. Travel repatriation insurance is optional but also recommended.
- We will assist in testing and medical care at your expense if needed.
- All guides and drivers are fully vaccinated, with most of them having a third booster.

Please note that E.Y.H.O. Tours is not responsible for covering the cost of any curtailment to the tour, missed transport arrangements, additional accommodation required, expenses for testing and treatment or any other costs incurred by the traveller/s. Travellers MUST ensure that

they have travel insurance that covers these costs. E.Y.H.O. will not undertake any administrative responsibility for a traveller's insurance claim.

## *Domestic Flights \*\* Important\*\**

We do not take responsibility for any airline schedule changes that may occur after quoting or booking. We will do everything we can to alleviate any disruption of your itinerary or holiday but cannot be held responsible for any loss of funds, bookings, missed connections or other pre-booked/paid services.

## Great! How do I sign up?

We'd be delighted to welcome you on board. Please [contact](#) us.