

# EXPLORE!



**Madagascar Wilderness Trek**  
15 days

Madagascar - Trip code MF

## Madagascar Wilderness Trek

Verdant rainforests and dramatic landscapes are the setting for this hiking adventure in Madagascar. Supported by local porters get off the beaten track, trekking through lush tropical vegetation, granite hills, highland meadows and surreal sandstone landscapes. Ascend Madagascar's highest climbable peak, Pic Imarivolanitra (2,658m). En route, spot some of the dozen or so species of lemur living in these protected areas, as well as the unique endemic reptiles, birds and the unusual plants that Madagascar is famous for.

### Trip highlights

- ★ **Trek in the rainforest** - A unique ecosystem and home to lemurs, chameleons, amphibians and countless species of birds.
- ★ **Off the beaten track** - Hike in remote national parks.
- ★ **Villages and people** - Interact with the friendly and hospitable local people.
- ★ **Imarivolanitra (2658m)** - Summit the highest point in southern Madagascar.

#### ACCOMMODATION GRADE:

##### Simple

These are often small, family run establishments or campsites which provide a no-frills experience with adequate amenities and service standards. Sleeping arrangements are simple, sometimes with en suite facilities.

### WALKING GRADE:

#### Moderate

For those who are fit and active, these moderate walks are normally on good paths and tracks at low altitude. Days may include some fairly demanding ascents and descents, so previous experience is preferable but not essential.

### GROUP SIZE:

#### 10 - 16

Maximum group size ranges from between 6 to 20 people, depending on the type of trip, the transport and accommodation used and activities included. We rarely have groups that are smaller than five or six people and the average is 12 people plus an Explore leader.

## Itinerary

Itineraries on some departure dates may differ, please select the itinerary that you wish to explore.

## Walking and Trekking information

### DAILY DISTANCES



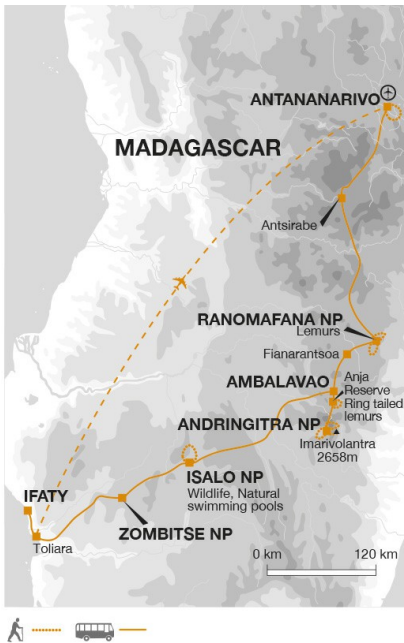
#### Walking grade

Moderate

#### Trek details

Walks on 9 days for between 2 to 7 hours. Maximum altitude is 2,658m. Follow well-managed trails through rainforests, grasslands and sandstone outcrops.

Optional Walks



## What's included?



### Included meals

Breakfast: 14  
Lunch: 8  
Dinner: 8



### Transport

Flight  
Minibus



### Trip staff

Explore Tour Leader  
Driver(s)  
Local Guide(s)  
Porter(s)  
Ranger(s)

## Trip information

### Country information

### Madagascar

#### Climate

The climate is tropical, but cooler in the highlands (dropping as low as 5°C at night in July/August in Antananarivo and Andasibe). The dry season is March to October continuing into November in most areas. The east coast is best March-May and September-November, January-March is cyclone season. The south west area is hot, dry and semi-arid. March-April is the best time for flowers and reptiles. November (spring) is generally the best time for wildlife and birds, but lemurs can be viewed all year round. Additional information and climate charts can be accessed at <http://www.explore.co.uk/weather>. Seasonal weather patterns can be unpredictable. Up-to-date information on the weather worldwide can be found by following the BBC weather link on this page.

#### Time difference to GMT

+3

### Plugs

2 Pin Round

### Religion

Christian

### Language

Malagasy, French

## Budgeting and packing

### Clothing

Prepare for a variety of weather. Temperatures in Andringitra are low in the southern winter and will be down to below freezing at night. Isalo on the other hand will be hot in the day and cool at night. Andringitra can be drizzly and wet, Isalo should be dry, while Ranomafana can get very wet. Light clothing which dries easily and protects arms and legs is recommended along with some warmer wear for Andringitra and evenings. Ranomafana will be humid so waterproof leggings may not be useful but a good lightweight long rain coat is essential. Culturally it is acceptable to wear shorts.

### Footwear

We recommend you bring lightweight walking boots with ankle support, make sure that your boots are worn-in and comfortable before the start of the trip. Also trainers or sandals for relaxing and general wear. We suggest that on international flights you either carry your walking boots in your hand luggage or wear them - should your luggage be lost or delayed, your own boots are the one thing that will be irreplaceable.

### Luggage

18Kg

### Luggage: On tour

We recommend for you to travel with up to 3 pieces of luggage: A main piece of luggage that can go in the hold of your international flight, an empty trek bag/holdall that can be used while trekking, and a Day Bag/Small Backpack for carrying your trekking essentials during the trekking days. Please see below for full descriptions of each bag.

#### Main luggage (hold luggage on flight):

For all your items, will also needs to be used as storage during day and multiple day trek and your non trekking items will be kept in this bag, clean clothes, sandals etc. This bag should preferably have a lock, there will be no access to this bag during trekking days and nights.

#### Trek bag:

This will be used to carry the items that you need for the multiple trekking days. This will be your main luggage bag during trekking nights and needs to hold a maximum of three nights walking/leeping essentials. Use a strong, soft walled, robust, waterproof trek bag or rucksack that can easily be carried by the porters. The weight limit for the bag and its contents is 18kg but you will probably find that you do not need this much. There will be time the night before leaving for the treks to re-sort your luggage into what you need on the trek. If you pack your gear in plastic bags inside your trek bag they will stay dry in case of rain. It will also be easier for you to sort through. Remember, the less you have to unpack in the evening, the less you have to repack each morning!

#### Small Rucksack/Day bag (hand luggage on flight):

During the course of a trekking day, you do not have access to the luggage that is being carried for you by the porters, this will be the bag that you will carry. In any mountain region the weather can change rapidly and you must be equipped for this eventuality. Your daysack should, therefore, be large enough to carry the following: waterproofs, fleece, long trekking trousers (if walking in shorts), warm hat and gloves, sun hat, sun cream, water bottle (at least 3litre), tissues and your packed lunch. Most people normally find that this adds up to about 3 to 5kg. Camera equipment can be heavy so think carefully when deciding what to take. Remember to carry spare batteries with you during the day. Something between 25 and 35 litres capacity is probably the most suitable. A shoulder bag is not a practical alternative.

### Equipment

Main Luggage: You will never need to carry your own backpack (except from the hotel room to the bus) as we provide porters for the trekking sections. You may prefer to leave a bag behind at the hotel and only take with you on the trek what you will need for a

few days (that is carried by porters) so it is useful to have a spare bag available to split your luggage. You will only be required to carry your day sack whilst trekking. Also if you pack your gear in heavy-duty plastic bags inside your trek bag, it will stay dry in case of rain. One of these inside your day bag is also strongly recommended.

**Sleeping Bag:** As you do not carry it yourself, this may be down or synthetic, but it must be 3/4 season comfort rating (temperature 0°C to 10°C). A silk or fleece liner helps to keep your bag clean and adds an extra season.

**Sleeping Mat:** An inflatable thermarest style mat is helpful in order to help you get a good night's rest, although a roll matt will be provided locally.

**Sleeping Aids:** You may find earplugs and an eye mask useful at night.

**Trekking Poles:** Trekking poles are recommended.

**Water Bottle or Platypus/Camelbak hydration system:** Water along the trail must never be considered as drinkable until purified. Take at least two 2 litre personal water bottles or a system that allows for this much water, preferably insulated. A personal supply of water purification tablets/drops is essential. Powdered fruit juice can be used to disguise the taste. Energy snacks, including chocolate and sweets, are also recommended whilst on trek.

**Sunglasses:** A good pair of sunglasses is essential for protection against UV rays and glare at high altitudes.

Also bring sunblock, a hat, insect repellent and a good torch and you may wish to bring binoculars.

**Equipment Hire and Trek Training Days:** Trek Hire UK hire out a wide range of kit including quality sleeping bags, down jackets, therm-a-rest sleeping mats and walking poles <http://www.trekhireuk.com>. They also run regular trek training and preparation days from their base in the Surrey Hills, ideal for getting an indication of your overall fitness level and also covering advice on kit and altitude.

## Tipping

### Explore leader

**Tour Leader:** At your discretion you might also consider tipping your Tour Leader in appreciation of the efficiency and service you receive.

### Local crew

**Local Crew:** Although entirely voluntary, tipping is a recognized part of life in this region of the world. Some local staff will look to members of the group for personal recognition of particular services provided. In order to make things easier for you, the Tour Leaders may organise a group's tips kitty and if this is the case, they will account for it throughout the tour. Accordingly you should allow approx. £35 for gratuities for local staff.

### International Departure Taxes

Ivato (Antananarivo) Airport:

International airport departure tax is approximately 38Euros

Domestic airport departure tax is approximately 20Euros

There is an additional country departure tax of US\$15.00 per person.

Flight tickets issued after 04 November 2016 will include the departure taxes as part of the ticket. If you have booked your flight ticket independently please check with your travel agent/airline if these taxes are included in your ticket. If any are not you will need to pay for the above taxes locally at the airport in cash.

## Country Information

### Madagascar

#### Food and drink

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

##### Lunch price

£7.00

##### Dinner price

£12.00

##### Beer price

£2.00 - 4.00

##### Water price

£0.50

## Foreign Exchange

### Local currency

Malagasy Ariary.

### Recommended Currency For Exchange

We recommend taking most of your money in GBP, US Dollars or Euro cash. GBP can be changed at Tana airport and then after that Euro or US\$ will be the preferred cash for exchange outside the capital. Please note that US\$100 bills are not accepted and credit cards are rarely accepted.

### Where To Exchange

Limited to Antananarivo, Antsirabe and Fianarantsoa. Your tour leader will advise on arrival.

### ATM Availability

Antananarivo only, but ATMs cannot be relied upon.

### Credit Card Acceptance

Very limited in Antananarivo and not to be relied upon.

### Travellers Cheques

Take some travellers cheques in case of emergencies, though note that they are extremely difficult to exchange. Up-to-date information re: global exchange rates can be obtained at <https://www.currencyexpress.com/explore/>

## Transport, Accommodation & Meals

### Transport Information

Flight, Minibus

### Accommodation notes

#### Booking a Single Room

All of our group tours are planned and operated on a twin-share basis, meaning that the standard cost is based either on individual travellers sharing accommodation with another group member of the same sex, or people who book together sharing accommodation. Please refer to the tour notes where the single room option availability is detailed on a night by night basis for this tour, and the price for the available nights is detailed on the dates & prices tab by departure date. For Self-Guided trips the Single Room supplement offers the option of a single room each and is charged per person. The Single Room supplement also applies to the third person in a party of three that will be accommodated in a single room.

The accommodation on this tour varies between standard hotels and basic camping in almost equal measure. We have therefore classified the accommodation on this tour as in the middle of these two categories - simple. The camp sites all have running water and basic toilet facilities (long drop); some have showers. Basic roll mats are provided but we would advise you bring a thermarest type mat too as the ground can be cold.

If you would like to book a single tent for the camping nights of the tour please let us know. We can provide this at a cost of £30 which should be paid in cash to your Tour Leader when you arrive in Madagascar. Obviously if you have booked a single room option for the whole trip, this includes a tent during the camping section.

## Essential Information

### FCO Advice

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office advice click [here](#).

For more information from Explore about travel advice, click [here](#)

#### Under 18 immigration guidance

Please note that some countries require proof of parental consent when travelling overseas with under 18s. Please check requirements with the relevant embassy or consular office well in advance of travel if this applies to your party.

## Price Guarantee

Once your booking has been confirmed we guarantee the price will not increase, whatever the circumstances. Before booking please ensure you have read our important tour pricing information. [Booking Conditions](#)

## Visa and Passport Information

Madagascar: An entry visa is required by UK, New Zealand, Australian, US & Canadian citizens and can be obtained on arrival. The visa is chargeable at 80.000AR (approximately 30Euros) and issued for 30 days. The visa fee is payable in Euros and we advise to take small denominations and a little extra as the Euro amount is calculated daily by the applicable rate of exchange. Please note GBP sterling is not accepted for the visa fee. Other nationalities should consult the relevant consulate.

Travel via South Africa (including transits): From 1st June 2015 South Africa will enforce new immigration regulations effecting all children aged under 18 years that are travelling to, from or via the country. The new laws state that parents and/or guardian maybe requested by the airline and/or South Africa immigration officers to provide additional documentation for each child they are travelling with. Please refer to the FOC website (for UK passport holders) and/or your local South African High Commission or Embassy for full requirements. The following link, is a leaflet produced by the South African government explaining the requirements: <http://www.dha.gov.za/files/Brochures/Immigrationleaflet.pdf>

If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may consider applying through Explore's recommended visa service in the UK, Travcour. See [www.travcour.com](http://www.travcour.com) to download the relevant visa application for your trip, if applicable (UK citizens only), along with details of how to apply for your visa through Travcour. The Team at Travcour will be happy to answer specific questions relating to visa applications, please call them directly on 0208 5431846.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are in possession of a full passport, with the correct validity for your chosen destination.

## Booking conditions

Before booking your Explore trip, please ensure that you read both our Essential Information and Booking Conditions.

## Transfers

[Find out more about Trip Transfer Terms and Conditions before you book.](#)

### Booking a land only package with Explore

Customers who have chosen to book on the 'Land Only' arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific 'Joining Instructions' prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found below in the dates and prices information.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer.

### Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will now receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The transfers will be from the Explore designated airport or train station to the joining point of your tour, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Polar, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer [click here](#)

## Insurance

It is a condition of booking with Explore that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country. Please ensure your policy includes medical emergency helicopter evacuation in the event of illness or injury and covers the entire duration of your holiday. If you are trekking at altitude please ensure that there is no upper altitude limit which may limit or exclude cover for your trip. The cost of many of our Polar Voyages will exceed the capped amount covered by standard insurance premiums and you will be required to pay an additional premium to cover the full value of your trip. Please ensure that you are covered for the full amount of your holiday cost, as insufficient cover could invalidate a claim under the policy. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling on trips within the United Kingdom.

Read more information about what travel insurance is required.

## Flight information

Explore offers a wide range of flexible flying options to make joining and leaving our trips easy. [Read more about them here.](#)

### Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

**Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore**

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

## Madagascar

**Vaccinations**

Nothing compulsory, but we recommend protection against malaria, tetanus, typhoid, hepatitis A plus Polio and diptheria. Consult your travel clinic for latest advice on different prophylaxis available against malaria. Following the advice given by the Government's Foreign and Commonwealth Office, we strongly recommend the wearing long sleeved shirts and the liberal application of insect repellent as a precautionary measure to avoid being bitten by mosquitoes. These precautions should be taken at all times as the mosquitoes are also active during daylight hours. Please check the latest requirements with your travel clinic or doctor prior to departure. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at [Explore Travel Health](#) and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed by you before travelling.

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