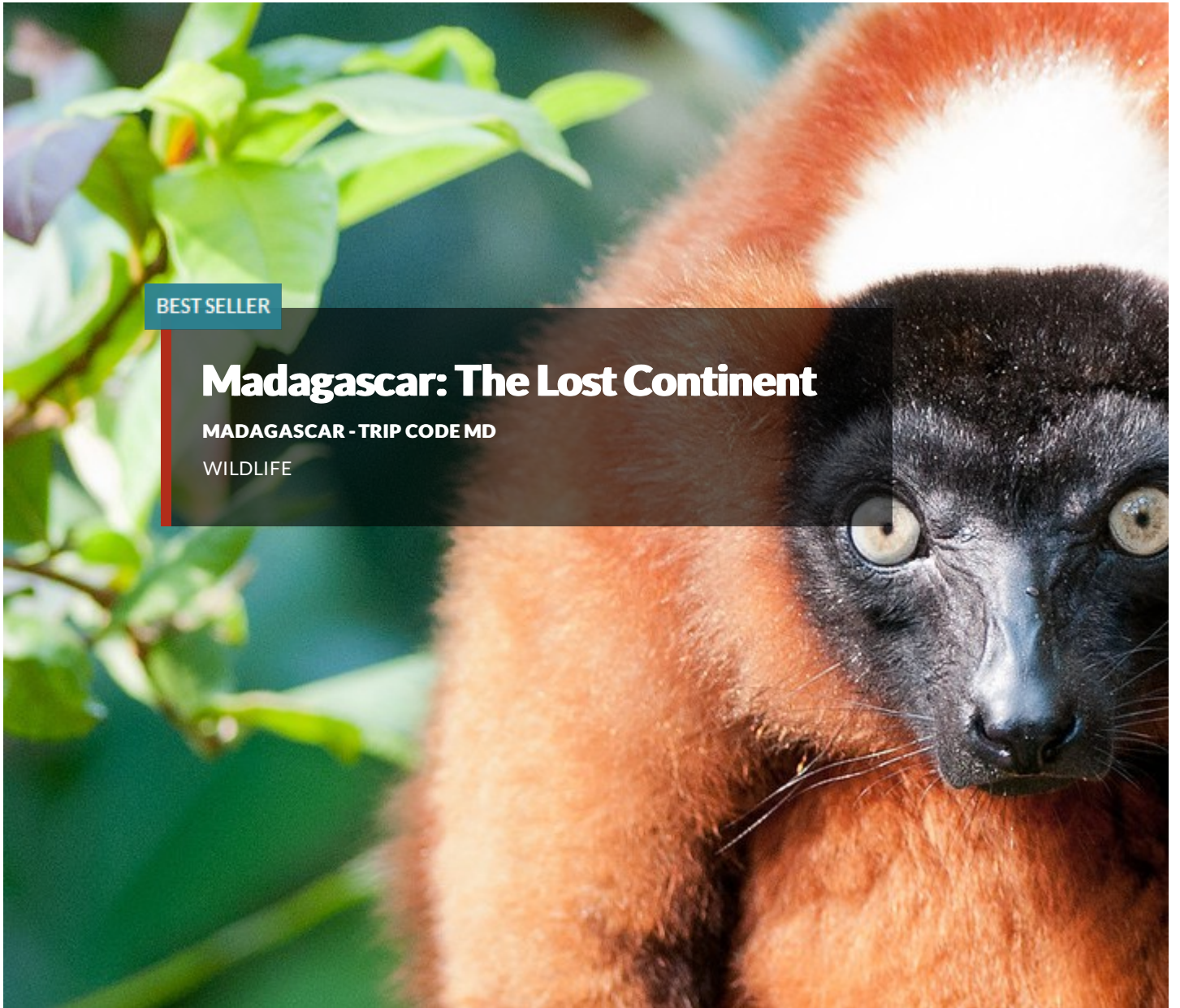


EXPLORE!



BEST SELLER

Madagascar: The Lost Continent

MADAGASCAR - TRIP CODE MD

WILDLIFE

Why book this trip?

Travel to The Lost Continent in search of exotic wildlife, contrasting cultures and spectacular scenery. Africa meets Asia, and old meets new in the bustling Malagasy capital of Tana, while lemurs hide in the wild forests of the island's more remote areas.

- **Andasibe Reserve** - Track the Indri lemur at sunrise to hear their morning call
- **Highland Scenery** - See the rice paddies and isolated villages
- **Ranomafana** - Walk in the rainforest and observe various species of lemurs, chameleons and amphibians.



INCLUDED MEALS
 Breakfast: 14
 Lunch: 4
 Dinner: 7



TRIP STAFF
 Explore Tour
 Leader
 Driver(s)
 Local Guide(s)
 Ranger(s)



TRANSPORT
 Boat
 Flight
 Minibus



ACCOMMODATION
 1 nights simple
 community house
 8 nights
 comfortable hotel
 3 nights simple
 hotel
 2 nights
 comfortable lodge



TRIP PACE:
 Full on



GROUP SIZE:
 10 - 16

Itinerary

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

DAY 1 - Join tour Antananarivo

Arrive in Antananarivo and meet your Explore leader. Depending on your arrival time, you may have a chance to explore this once medieval capital, which is affectionately known as 'Tana', where the houses appear stacked one upon the other down the sloping hills of the highlands.



ACCOMMODATION:
 Hotel Au Bois Vert (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: NONE

DAY 2 - Drive to Andasibe Reserve, view wildlife

It's an early start to kick off the trip, leaving the city at around 6am, we will drive to Andasibe village which is also still sometimes referred to by its French colonial name; Perinet. Although only eight square kilometres, Analamazoatra Reserve in Andasibe boasts nine species of Lemur, including the Indri Indri. The Indri's morning calls can be heard piercing through the forest and on arrival we will begin the day with a trek in search for the Indri families in the area. Although the paths are often easy to follow, sometimes pushing further into the bush is required to spot these exquisite creatures in the trees. An adventurous walk to kick off these two weeks searching for lemurs!

This afternoon, depending on numbers, optional walks can be arranged including one focusing on the birdlife of the region. This evening, after dinner, we will head out once again with a local national park guide in search of the smallest of the lemur species; the mouse lemurs. Although nocturnal, these creatures can often easily be spotted along the 1km roadside route followed this evening. As well as spotting tiny lemurs, it's often common to see colourful chameleons, frogs and exotic insects.



ACCOMMODATION:
Feon'ny Ala Bungalows (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Lodge



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 3 - Visit to National Park or Lemur Island, looking for Black and White Ruffed Lemur

Listen out this morning, as often the Indri's calls can be heard throughout the forest and surrounding village areas, including our accommodation! We'll be up early to drive to the nearby Mantadia National Park. Mantadia and Analamazoatra reserve are parts of the same precious forest ecosystem but due to continuous deforestation in the area they are now separate parks. Mantadia is slightly further away from the village and is often less busy with visitors and therefore the trails can be a little tougher. We'll spend around 4 hours searching for the black and white ruffed and Diademed Sifaka lemurs, as well as opportunity to spot some birdlife.

After a busy morning searching for wildlife, we'll return Andasibe for lunch. Then this afternoon there will be optional visit to a private reserve with more opportunities to spot lemurs at close quarters or instead a visit to the village of Andasibe itself.



ACCOMMODATION:

Feon'ny Ala Bungalows (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Lodge



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 4 - Drive to Antsirabe, explore the colonial architecture and churches

An early departure this morning, heading south to reach the spa town of Antsirabe, today will be a long travel day with plenty of comfort breaks and a stop for lunch.

Antsirabe's cool climate made it a favourite spot with European missionaries and French colonialists, and their influence can still be seen everywhere in the colonial architecture and churches. Set in the Central Highlands, the town is a clash of cultures with fading, ornate colonial architecture, colourful rickshaws wandering up and down the streets and souk-like stalls selling all different goods to both local residents and visitors.



ACCOMMODATION:
Camelia Hotel (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 5 - Lake Tritiva; drive to Ambositira, Malagasy meal and local dancing

This morning we drive to the volcanic Lake of Tritiva. Local myths and taboos surround this mysterious lake which seems to have many guises, changing colour from one day to the next. We'll take a short walk to the crater's edge, where we can relax and take in the view. There will be a short amount of free time to walk further if you wish.

From here we'll continue our journey to Ambositira in the afternoon, where we'll visit some of the local wood-carver's, who produce woodwork pieces depicting Malagasy life and detailed marquetry work which are both well known across the country for the fine standard of craftsmanship.

Tonight, we shall stay at a local development guest house, enjoy a traditional Malagasy meal and see a folk dance. Although the accommodation we use on this night stop is modest and of a lower standard than what is provided throughout the rest of the trip, by staying here we directly support an important base for the development of health projects, agriculture, water supply and the empowerment of women within the local community. Any school supplies you may like to donate such as notebooks and pencils would be very gratefully received and passed on to the local children. The accommodation is dormitory style, simple but clean, with shared facilities. Hot water is not available.



ACCOMMODATION:
Voteta Bungalows (or similar)

Grade: Simple Community House



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

DAY 6 - Scenic drive to Ranomafana National Park

The drive to Ranomafana will take up most of the day, however the winding roads passes through rugged landscapes, rural villages and endless rice paddies, and along the way there will be comfort breaks, plus a lunch stop in Ialatsara. The end of the drive takes us down from the highlands where we'll head into the rainforest.

In 1987, a new species of lemur named the Golden Bamboo was found in Ranomafana National Park. This lush forest area is also known for its hidden waterfalls and the Namorona river which flows through impressive gorges, flanked on either side by tropical rainforest.



ACCOMMODATION:
Centrest Sejour Hotel (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

DAY 7 - In Ranomafana National Park, searching for Lemurs and birdlife

After an early wake up call this morning, we will enter the park for a morning walk in the hope of spotting the Golden Bamboo Lemur, which are endemic to the forests in South-Eastern Madagascar. Depending on how lucky we are finding lemurs, we'll spend around three to four hours trekking along the forest trails in search of wildlife. As well as the Golden Bamboo Lemur, we may have the chance to see Red-Fronted Brown Lemur, Red-Bellied Lemur and Milne-Edwards Sifaka. Most lemur species are sadly now endangered, the last survivors of a once abundant family of primates, now confined to pockets of forest and bush throughout Madagascar. Deforestation has taken a heavy toll on these arboreal creatures - it's estimated only 80 species remain. With luck we may also spot the Malagasy boa constrictor, chameleons, the black parrot, cuckoo roller and many other birds.

The afternoon will be free to relax, or to go on an additional optional walk within the park with a chance to spot the species not already seen during the morning.



ACCOMMODATION:
Centrest Sejour Hotel (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST & DINNER

DAY 8 - Drive to Isalo National Park (Ranohira)

Returning to the main road this morning, we continue south via the regional capital of Fianarantsoa, the academic centre of Madagascar. Leaving the highland plateau and descending through superb mountain scenery to the plains we pause at Ambalavao paper workshop before arriving at Anja Community Reserve. Here we have the chance to watch troupes of ring-tailed lemur among the granite boulders.

Continuing south the pine trees thin out and the fertile soil of the highlands gives way to drier savannah, cactus, termite mounds, and the dust of the midsouth. We finally reach our destination late in the afternoon; Ranohira, situated on the edge of the Isalo National Park.



ACCOMMODATION:
Hotel Relais de la Reine (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST & DINNER

DAY 9 - Isalo National Park, admire Madagascar's Grand Canyon

One of the highlights of our trip is Madagascar's Grand Canyon in Isalo National Park. Dervla Murphy, in her book *Muddling through Madagascar* describes it as follows - Landscapes that are literally incredible. You don't believe it. You think you're hallucinating. How can wind and water have done all this?

The natural erosion that has occurred here has produced fantastic canyons and bizarre outcrops of wind-blasted sandstone. We will take an approximately 90 minute walk along dry, dusty paths across slightly ascending terrain to a natural oasis pool known as Piscine Naturelle for a picnic lunch. After eating we'll continue exploring to see tombs of the Bara people and the sparse, dry forest species of dwarf-like baobab.

This afternoon you have the opportunity to take an optional walk within the park with a local guide to Namaza to see the Cascade des Nymphes, before all meeting again to enjoy sunset at La Fenetre where the perfectly natural rock window frames the setting sun.



ACCOMMODATION:
Hotel Relais de la Reine (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

DAY 10 - Drive to Toliara, through the Spiny Desert, stopping at Mahafaly Tombs

This morning we continue our journey south for about four hours. The temperature rises as we lose height and head for the coast, crossing the savannah plain that are dotted with herds of Zebu cattle.

The south of Madagascar is largely desert and weird cactus-like plants unique to the island smother the land, hence the name the 'Spiny Forest'. We'll stop at Zombitse National Park, where we'll stretch our legs on a two hour walk through the remarkable dry forest which is home to many birds, including black parrots, the Madagascar buzzard and the cuckoo roller. There's also opportunity to spot the shy ring-tailed lemur here!

As we continue our drive, we'll pass by a number of fascinating Mahafaly Tombs before reaching the town of Toliara once an important port of call for Dutch and English ships plying the trade routes during the 16th and 17th centuries.



ACCOMMODATION:
Victory Hotel (or similar)



Grade: Simple Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 11 - Morning boat journey to fishing village of Anakao, afternoon free

After breakfast this morning we transfer by boat from Toliara to the small fishing village of Anakao, located to the south, just past the Onilahy river estuary. The rich turquoise waters of the Indian Ocean beckon from our beach hideaway.

Please note: due to limited space on the boat we kindly request that you take a smaller overnight bag to Anakao. Your main luggage will be stored in Toliara.



ACCOMMODATION:
Hotel Safari Vezo (or similar)



Grade: Simple Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST & DINNER

DAY 12 - In Anakao; optional snorkelling visit to Nosy Ve

Today has again been left free to enjoy Anakao. Options include relaxing on the paradise beach, snorkelling in the azure waters or taking a trip out to the scared island of Nosy Ve, located just off Anakao's western shore. Nosy Ve's reefs and colonies of Red-tailed tropicbirds, make it the ideal place to soak up the tropical atmosphere.



ACCOMMODATION:
Hotel Safari Vezo (or similar)



Grade: Simple Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST & DINNER

DAY 13 - Transfer to Toliara and fly to Tana.

This morning we depart Anakao, returning to Toliara by boat before flying north back to Tana, where we will spend the night.



ACCOMMODATION:
Hotel Au Bois Vert (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel





SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 14 - Visit Ambohimanga, oldest palace in country; visit to Lemur park

Today is a chance to absorb the atmosphere of the capital city but before getting amidst the chaos of the bustling streets, we'll drive out of the city to explore the oldest palace in Madagascar situated on Ambohimanga, a forested hill, north of Antananarivo. It was from this fortress that the Merina, a highland tribe, first established an effective administration and military command under the King Andrianampoinamerina. The fort still includes the original king's hut and later European buildings, and from this high point you can take in magnificent views over the fertile rice fields below, the surrounding hills and the city in the distance.

We'll stop somewhere for a lunchbreak, before returning to the city later this afternoon, where our leader will lead an orientation walk and there will be time for some last minute sightseeing or shopping in Tana before our final dinner of the trip.



ACCOMMODATION:
Hotel Au Bois Vert (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST & LUNCH

DAY 15 - Tour ends Tana

This morning our tour ends in Tana after breakfast.



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

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. Seasonal weather patterns can be unpredictable.

Time difference to GMT	Plugs	Religion	Language
+3	2 Pin Round	Christian	Malagasy, French

Budgeting and packing

Optional activities

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these tour notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations. Please note: These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.

Andasibe - Nocturnal walk £5. Dawn Birdwatching £5. Extra Park or village walk £3. Private Reserve £5

Ranomafana - Bird walk approx £3-5 depending on numbers. Optional Forest walk £3

Anakao - Snorkelling £15, piroque to Nosy Ve £15

Toliara - Arboreteum £10, Spiney Forest Walk £15 (depending on numbers).

Clothing

Clothing should be lightweight, but a warm sweater or jacket is advisable as nights at altitude and under desert conditions can be very cold (>10°C), even in summer and especially in July to September. Rainwear

is highly recommended on all tours for the occasional shower. Warmer layers will be required during the winter months. Don't forget your swimwear.

Footwear

Lightweight walking bootshoes and trainers or sandals.

Luggage

18Kg

Luggage: On tour

One kitbag/rucksack or old but sturdy suitcase (luggage travels on the roof rack during the day) and a daysac. You will also need a smaller overnight bag for Anakao.

Equipment

Take a strong torch for nocturnal wildlife walks, a water bottle, camera film (and spare batteries), binoculars and a beach towel and swimming costume. Rain proof pants are very handy for walks in the rainforest. Walking poles maybe useful in Ranomafana NP and Andasibe.

Tipping

Explore leader

Tipping isn't compulsory, and we work hard to ensure that our leaders all receive a fair wage. However, you might want to recognise a leader that's done a great job or really added to your trip by giving them a tip. We're often asked about the recommended amount. It's a tricky one, and down to personal preference, but we'd recommend between £15 to £20 per person per week as a guideline.

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, your leader may organise a group's tips kitty for included activities and meals and if this is the case, they will account for it throughout the tour.

Accordingly you should allow approx. £35.00 per person for group tipping.

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.

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	Dinner price	Beer price	Water price
£7.00	£12.00	£2.00 - 4.00	£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

Boat, Flight, Minibus

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.

Travelling with Minors via South Africa (including transits)

Regulations affecting all children aged under 18 years that are travelling to, from or via South Africa have been updated (Nov19). The law states that visa exempt children travelling for tourism purposes with one or both parents and/or an adult who is not a biological parent require to present a valid passport for each child on arrival. We strongly recommend you to refer to the South African House website for full information and to travel with a copy of these requirements.

If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may be able to apply through Explore's recommended visa service in the UK, Travcour. See 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 complimentary transfers will be arranged from the Explore designated airport or train station to your trips joining point, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. Generally the airport or station that Explore have selected will be the one that is closest to the town or city where the trip starts, or the one nearest to the joining point. It will be either an airport or train station but not both.

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.

Ability to swim

An ability to swim is essential for your safe enjoyment of the water based activities on this trip. If you wish to participate in these activities then we insist that you are able to swim.

Madagascar

Vaccinations

Nothing compulsory, but we recommend protection against malaria, tetanus, typhoid, hepatitis A plus Polio and diphtheria. 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.

Additional Information



Reviews



AWARD WINNING
EXPLORE LEADERS



PRICE GUARANTEE
PROMISE



AIRPORT
TRANSFERS