



Remote River Expeditions ~ Madagascar



Madagascar - Country Information

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The Remote River Expeditions - Madagascar office is based in [Chez Maggie Hotel](#) Morondava, Madagascar .

General Information

A. Visas, vaccinations, customs, money

Visas: A 30 day tourist visa may be obtained upon arrival at no cost.

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: Remote River's staff will be on hand at the airport when you arrive just outside of customs. In general, the airport staff is easy-going, but some vestiges of a stricter and bureaucratic past still remain. Export of wildlife products, orchids, etc. is strictly prohibited.

Money: Exchange offices are available at Ivato Airport with competitive rates. Traveler's checks are sometimes difficult but can be used at some banks and leading hotels. Credit cards are accepted at some hotels and at Air Madagascar. (Visa is the easiest card to use.) There are ATM's in larger town and cash withdrawals using credit cards are also possible.

B. 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 synchilla jacket or pullover will be handy. A complete clothing and equipment list will be included in your trip documents

C. In towns: Hotels, Food, Tips, Communications & Post, Security, Shopping

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. The Malagasy Three Horses Beer is excellent, local wines can be good, and brands of local rum range from the dangerous Ambilobe rum to the distinguished Cazanove and Mangoustan.

Tipping: Tips are of course optional but customary. At restaurants, a tip of 5 -7 % is standard, if service is not included in the bill. For portage, 1000 Ar per bag is a rough guide. Tips for Drivers range from 5,000 – 15,000 Ar / per day and Guides 10,000 – 25,000 / per day.

Electricity, Communications and Post: 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 are somewhat common. It is best to charge your batteries and electronic devices whenever you have the opportunity.

Telephones and mobile phone work fairly well. If you buy a local Malagasy sim card upon arrival at the airport you can use your own phone, Ipad or other device to connect to the internet. Then you should be able to connect with internet wherever there is a phone signal. Your guide will assist you with local mobile phone operators for this purpose. Many hotels in larger towns and some seaside resorts have Wifi connections as well. Principal town only provides stamps as well as postcard..

Security: In general, Madagascar enjoys a pleasant state of peace and calm. It's only in the cities that the presence of pickpockets and nighttime muggers necessitate precautions, especially on the busy market days. For visits to the markets and strolls in Antananarivo, it is 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.

Shopping: In Tana, attractive and inexpensive handicrafts abound, and can be bargained for at the Market Artisanale on the Dike road or along the arcades of L'Avenue de l'Independance Woven mats and baskets, horn boxes, solitaire sets, wood carvings, precious stones, hats, embroidered tablecloth sets, antique brass lamps are just some of the popular items. Markets in Antsirabe, Fianarantsoa, Morondava, and smaller road towns are also worthy of exploration, and make for great photographic opportunities.

Poverty, Beggars & 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 (pens, 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. RRE contributes directly to several aid organizations and we encourage anyone that would like to contribute to do so directly to a charity group that is assisting in Madagascar. Please refer to the links page on our website or request a copy of our aid organization list.

Air Madagascar ~ Very 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.

Note on the Itinerary

Although we will do our very best to adhere to the itinerary schedule as listed, it is subject to change for numerous reasons beyond our control. Starting point of river trips may vary somewhat depending on weather and road conditions. If the trip is delayed because of bad weather, cancelled or delayed flights or delays on other modern transportation, sickness, or other situation for which Remote River Expeditions-Madagascar or its agents cannot make provisions, the cost of delays is not included. We strongly recommend travel insurance.