

## Madagascar Travel Guide



A Landscape from Madagascar, Africa

Madagascar or Republic of Madagascar is an eminent island nation in the Indian Ocean, which is situated at the southeastern coast of Africa. The national language of this country is the Malagasy language. Madagascar, which is the fourth largest island in the world, is the paradise of nature lovers and as this magnificent island nation is the abode of the five percent of the world's plant and animal species. Madagascar is comprised of six provinces: Antsiranana, Mahajanga, Toamasina, Antananarivo, Fianarantsoa and Toliara, and Antananarivo or Tana, as it is popularly referred is the capital city of Madagascar and is located in the central highland region of the island. The best time to visit the spectacular island of Madagascar is during the winter months, when the climate is highly pleasant. Air Madagascar, Air France, and Inter Air have regular flights to Madagascar and traveling by sea can be another option for those travelers who want to experience something different. Various sightseeing destinations of Madagascar such as Antananarivo, Mahajanga, Morondava, Nosy boraha, Canal des pangalanés, Antsirabe, Toamasina, Perinet, Taolanaro, Isalo, Tulear, and Anakao. These places in Madagascar attract thousands of tourists every year from different corners of the world.

### **Getting In**

Madagascar is a fascinating country, which is secluded and tucked in the east coast of Africa and its capital city is Antananarivo. The increasing popularity of Madagascar to the international travelers as a peaceful refuge has led to the development of transportation options for reaching Madagascar and presently there are few international airlines which operate regular and scheduled flights to and from Madagascar. The air travel not only saves time of the passengers, but also makes it extremely comfortable for those travelers who are planning to pay a visit to Madagascar. The Air Madagascar, Air France and Inter Air provide regular flights to Madagascar and particularly Air France offers direct flights from Paris to Madagascar. The national airlines of Madagascar and Air Madagascar operate flights from Johannesburg in South Africa and Nairobi in Kenya and InterAir has flights only from Johannesburg. The price of air tickets to Madagascar are also inclusive of airport departure tax. From the year of 2003, the Air Madagascar offers twice weekly service from Bangkok to Antananarivo and Air Madagascar is also providing a weekly service between Nairobi and Antananarivo for the convenience of those thousands of travelers who visit Madagascar to spend a blissful time with their family and friends.

For those travelers who want to try out something different can opt for waterways from Toamasina on the east coast and Mauritius, but traveling by waterways is definitely an unusual option.

### **Transport**

With the highly advanced means of transport, the visitors usually get numerous options for getting around in Madagascar.

The internal flights and the national airlines of Madagascar operate several domestic flights at reasonable price to all the popular destinations of the world and there are also numerous domestic airlines that connect most of the cities and towns of Madagascar. Apart from air travel, traveling by trains is also a good option. There are three rail lines in Madagascar: Antananarivo-Ambatondrazaka via Moramanga; Antananarivo-Antsirabe, and Fianarantsoa-Manakara. The train is not only the fastest way to travel, it also allows the travelers to gaze at the surrounding landscape that will

cast a spell on the passerby.

If you want to travel in a very comfortable way, then you can avail the taxi-be. You can also opt for buses, which are frequent in Madagascar. Traveling by boat is the most thrilling choice for those travelers who want to enjoy something unusual and exciting.

## **Leisure**

Madagascar has evolved as one of the popular tourist destinations among the leisure travelers of the world and the visitors are provided with innumerable options for entertainment in Madagascar. Whether someone is interested in hitting the nightclubs, participating in various adventurous sports or relishing a vigorous shopping spree, Madagascar offers it to all its visitors. The tourists usually head for the night clubs to unwind after a long hectic day of getting around in the numerous sightseeing destinations of Madagascar and there are a few discos in Madagascar and some of them have bands while others have solo musicians. Casinos are the most popular options for enjoying a great night out in Madagascar and most of the major towns of Madagascar also have cinemas and theaters that perform in almost all parts of the country. If you want to try out something different, then you can opt for beautiful dance performances by the traditional dance troupes of Madagascar.

For those who are a bit adventurous can enjoy various sports activities as a popular option. Water sports can also be very exciting and river-rafting, scuba-diving, Water-skiing; sailing and diving are the water sports usually tried out by the tourists. Trekking and hiking trips are frequently arranged by the tour operators in different parts of the country and for those who are interested in group sports can try out golf, football, basketball, and volleyball.

Shopping is the most attractive option as there are innumerable items that can be bought during the vigorous shopping trips in Madagascar. Handicrafts, zafimaniny marquetry, silverwork such as mahafaly crosses and vangavanga bracelets, jewelry made from shells and precious stones; items woven from reeds, raffia and straw; antemore paper decorated with dried flowers; and embroidered items are the specialty products that are sold in the various markets of Madagascar.

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