

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Tongasoa eto Madagasikara

Welcome to Madagascar

Salama tompoko ô!

Hello!

Madagascar

- **Surface**: 587,040 km² (the fourth largest island in the world) and numerous small peripheral islands, the largest of which are Nosy-Be and Nosy Boraha (Sainte-Marie Island).
- **Population**: 26.26 million in 2018 (www.banquemondiale.org)
- **Population growth rate**: 3% per year (www.unicef.org)
- **Literacy rate**: 64.5% in 2012 (www.unicef.org)
- **Life expectancy**: 64 years in 2012 (www.unicef.org)
- **GDP**: 13.853 Billion Dollars in 2018 (www.banquemondiale.org)
- **The Kingdom of Imerina**:

Here are the important dates of the reigns of the Kings and Queens of the Imerina in the 18th Century:

1787-1810: Andrianampoinimerina (born in 1740 / died in 1810)

1810-1828: Radama 1er (born in 1792 / died in 1828)

1828-1861: Ranavalona 1st (born in 1788 / died in 1861)

1861-1863: Radama II (born in 1829 / died in 1863)

1863-1868: Rasoherina (born in 1818 / died in 1868)

1868-1883: Ranavalona II (born in 1829 / died in 1883)

1883-1897: Ranavalona III (born in 1846 / died in 1917)

1. **Passport**: Your passport must be valid at least 6 months after your return date

2. **Stay visa**: the stay visa is obtained by presenting your passport valid for at least 6 months and return ticket for 115,000 Ariary / around **35 €** per person for a stay less than or equal to one month. The visa is obtained directly at the international airport. **Attention: the payment is only done in cash and you have to make the extra money because they won't give you the change!**

3. Airlines: For your information, the airlines serving Madagascar are: Air Madagascar, Air Mauritius, Air France, Air Austral, Turkish Airlines, South African Airways, and Kenya Airways.

4. Languages: The language spoken by the population is Malagasy. In addition, French is the second official language.

5. Local times: GMT + 3

6. Currency and banks:

Currency: Ariary (MGA or Ar) is the country's currency unit, but the old Francs Malagasy (FMG) currency is still mentioned in some businesses, which are worth 5 times less.

Always be sure in which currency unit the price is announced to you.

Bank: You can make withdrawals by VISA and MasterCard from bank branches in major cities: Antananarivo, Antsirabe, Ambositra, Ambohimahaso, Mananjary, Fianarantsoa, Ambalavao, Ihosy, Sakaraha, Toliara. The maximum amount that can be withdrawn is 400,000 Ariary.

Exchange rate: <http://www.banque-centrale.mg/>

Billets en Ariary	Euro
20 000	4,89
10 000	2,45
5 000	1,22
1 000	0,24
500	0,12
200	0,05
100	0,02

The exchange rate changes almost every day, on average 1 Euro ~ 4,089.65 Ariary

To get an idea of the Malagasy monetary value, a teacher in a small town in the countryside of Madagascar is paid 0.72 € per day.

7. Climate

The climate is generally humid tropical.

The year is marked by these main seasons:

- The rainy season, hot and humid, which begins in mid-November and ends in mid-April;
- The dry and cool season and extends from April to mid-August;
- And the dry and hot season, which extends from mid-August to October

8. Temperature

The country is divided into five climatic zones:

- The north and northwest are characterized by a humid and warm equatorial climate: the rains are abundant in the months of December to March. The average annual temperature is 26 ° C.
- The east coast enjoys a hot and humid climate: The rains are abundant from January to April. The average minimum temperature is 18 ° C, while the maximum average temperature is 29 ° C.
- The large region of western Madagascar is characterized by a hot and dry summer.

Temperatures range from 20 ° to 37 ° C.

- The Highlands enjoy a tropical altitude climate, mainly characterized by a cold winter (the absolute minimum is -1 ° C) and dominant summer rains with an average temperature of around 20 ° C.
- The extreme south is of the semi-arid type: very dry and rains are rare. The average annual temperature is 24 ° C.

9. Fauna and Flora

The big island has a very fascinating biological diversity, its plant and animal species are, for the most part, endemic: a true sanctuary of Nature.

- 95% of reptile species,
- 89% of plant species,
- 92% mammals

10. Taboo or "fady"

The "Fady" constitute all the prohibitions or taboos of the Malagasy culture: recommendations that must be observed in sacred places and sites, your driver or guide will give you instructions.

Fady is not only about attitude, but there are also prohibitions that can be linked to dress, a day of access, or a food custom.

The fact for any traveler to respect the fady of the regions or places visited, will show your interest in Malagasy culture, which will be greatly appreciated!

11. Regions and Ethnicity

- **The Big Island is divided into 23 Regions**

The Big Island is divided into 23 different Regions: Analamanga, Atsinanana, Haute Matsiatra, Vatovavy, Fitovinany, Ihorombe, Atsimo Andrefana, Diana, Itasy, Vakinankaratra, Bongolava, Sofia, Boeny, Betsiboka, Melaky, Alaotra Mangoro, Analanjirofo, Mania, Antsimo - Atsinanana, Menabe, Androy, and Anosy.

- **Madagascar has 18 ethnic groups** including Antaifasy, Antaimoro, Antaisaka, Antakarana, Antambahoaka, Antandroy, Antanosy, Bara, Betsileo, Betsimisaraka, Bezanozano, Mahafaly, Merina, Sakalava, Sihanaka, Tagnala, Tsimihety, Zafisora.

12. Vaccine, health, and hygiene

- We advise our clients to consult their doctor before departure so that they can prescribe them a relative medication. No vaccine is required, but yellow fever certificates are required by those arriving from a country where yellow fever is endemic (such as Kenya or Tanzania, or other countries at risk).
- Malaria is widespread in Madagascar, so antimalarial tablets and a good insect repellent, and the use of mosquito nets in bedrooms is highly recommended.
- Regarding food and drinks: you have mineral water at your disposal. Wash fruits and vegetables in abundance and avoid green salads.

Also, consider sunscreens and anti-mosquito creams.

13. Insurance:

We insist that all customers traveling with us have full medical insurance, including emergency evacuation coverage.

14. Clothing and miscellaneous advice

- Warm clothing and hiking equipment (good walking shoes, caps, etc.) and swimsuits are recommended during visits (natural swimming pool, etc.).
- Do not forget the raincoat/umbrella.
- Bring some clothes in your hand luggage in the event of a luggage problem: delay.
- Provide lenses if necessary, sunscreens, mosquito repellents, antibacterial...

15. Telecommunications

- Call from abroad to Madagascar: 00 261 then the operator code and the correspondent's number.
- Call to foreign countries: Dial the digits 00 then the country code and the correspondent number.
- The internet may be present in major cities; some hotels already have internet access or Wi-Fi in the rooms.

16. Security

As in any small developing country, petty crime exists, particularly in large urban areas; it is generally limited to snatching and is opportunistic. It is therefore advisable to:

- Do not display signs of wealth (jewelry, high-value watches, etc.), valuables should be kept in a safe at the hotel;
- Pay attention to your camera, phones, etc...
- Do not go out at night

17. Miscellaneous

- National park entry: from 45,000 Ar to 65,000 Ar for a day for foreigners
- Guidance according to the circuit, you see on the spot
- Catering: a dish varies between 6,000 Ar and 30,000 Ar, in large restaurants up to 50,000 Ar (ex: lobsters)
- Tipping: although it is not compulsory, tipping is used in Madagascar.
- Begging is developing in the capital and in certain cities of Madagascar. The choice goes without saying. But, It is strongly advised not to give edible products, especially in big cities in order to avoid food poisoning. You can also donate pens, books, notebooks, etc., or make donations to NGOs or projects.

18. Tsaradia / Air Madagascar:

Terms and conditions:

Baggage allowance per passenger:

- In the cabin: 1 piece of 5 KG
- In the hold: 1 piece of 20 KG
- NB! If your baggage weighs more than 20 KG, the company will charge you a flat rate of one piece of 20 KG at 190,000 MGA

Price and conditions:

Each tariff is subject to related tariff conditions.

19. Customs:

For Madagascar, any export of raw precious stones, endemic protected plants, animals, and cultural objects are prohibited. They will be seized by customs.

However, it is possible to obtain official authorization for export:

- *Live plants:* Water and Forest Service,
- *Dried vegetables, fruits and plants:* Phytosanitary Services (Tsaralalàna station or Ivato Airport)
- Raw stones: Ministry of Commerce, Economic Control Service, Ambohidahy.

You have the right to bring back, with a phytosanitary service certificate:

- 2 kgs of prepared vanilla;
- 5 kgs of dried seeds;
- 1 kg of onions, coffee, or pepper;

- 5 kgs of meat; of fish or seafood, 2 kg per species purchased from approved establishments.