

# MADAGASCAR SELF DRIVE ADVENTURE | 31 Days



160 million years ago Madagascar split from the African continent to form the fourth largest island in the world. At that time mammals did not even exist (they appeared around 100 million years later), which is why Madagascar is without the typical fauna found on the African continent.

Other than bats, that were able to fly from the continent, there is not a single Madagascan mammal species that you can find in any other place of the world. Madagascar is one of the most bio-diverse countries on earth, home to thousands of species of plant and animal life of which about 80 percent cannot be found anywhere else on the planet. Even 65 percent of all bird species are endemic to Madagascar.

The local ethnic group that forms almost all of the 22 million population are the Malagasy. They are divided into two subgroups: the "highlanders" of the central plateau and the "coastal dwellers" elsewhere in the country. The history of has many influences from Arab merchants, Portuguese, French, Dutch and English.

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**PLEASE NOTE: Total travel times indicated in this itinerary include stops for lunch, activities on the way, photos etc**

## **Day 1 - Arrival in Tana**

Arrival in Tana and transfer to your hotel. Evening briefing with local guide and welcome dinner. (Hotel, Dinner)

## **Day 2 - Tana/Royal Hill of Ambohimanga**

After breakfast we take a day trip to the UNESCO world heritage site of Royal Hill of Ambohimanga around 24 km from Tana. This is a walled royal city and burial site and an ensemble of sacred places. In the afternoon we'll do the paperwork for our cars to give us as much time on the road tomorrow. (Hotel, Breakfast)

## **Day 3 - Tana – Antsirabe, 175 km of asphalt road / total travel time 7 hours**

Collect 4x4's and depart for Antsirabe, the beautiful city of the Highlands of Madagascar. Antsirabe is the result of mixed cultures that built the city over two centuries. Antsirabe is famed for its "pousse pousse" (rickshaws) and many handicrafts – we'll visit some craft centres on the way back through Antsirabe so that we don't have to carry our purchases all around Madagascar. (Hotel, Breakfast)

## **Day 4 - Antsirabe – Morondava, 490 km of asphalt road / total travel time 12 hours**

A "get there day" to Morondava. Although it's a long day with an early start and picnic lunch on the way, it is interesting and the scenery changes quite dramatically near the town on Miandrivazo. This town is known as the hottest place in Madagascar....it is also the only major town on the way to Morondava with very limited accommodation, hence the long day to make it through the heat and to the coast. Morondava is a laid-back seaside town with sandy streets and gently decaying clapboard houses. It is the starting point to reach Tsingy of Bemaraha National Park, as well as for the off-road 4WD adventure that connects western Madagascar to Tulear. (Hotel, Breakfast)

## **Day 5 - Morondava – Kirindy, 60 km of tar and rough track / total travel time 3-4 hours**

This morning there's time to explore the peninsula near the hotel. In the early morning you see fishing dhows heading out to sea, boats being repaired and fish and vegetables for sale. It's only around an hour drive and we approach one of Madagascar's most iconic sights – the Avenue of the Baobabs. We have time to walk the avenue, take photos, marvel at these stunning trees and have fun with the local kids who love getting their photo taken. Our next stop is Kirindy Mitea – a privately managed forest. We hope to have a chance to see the "Fossa" a cat-like, carnivorous mammal endemic to Madagascar as well as the famous giant jumping rat. (Hotel, Breakfast)

## **Day 6 - Morondava – Bekopaka, 150 km of rough track / total travel time 6-7 hours**

The adventure really begins with our 4WD expedition to reach Bekopaka, crossing the Tsiribihina river and then the Manambolo river by ferry. Not only is the track slow but the ferry crossings take time to load and unload but it is a lot of fun! Bekopaka is the base from which we will explore the Tsingy de Bemaraha National Park. (Hotel, Breakfast)

## **Day 7 - Tsingy de Bemaraha National Park, 2 km of rough track / total travel time 10 minutes**

This morning we take a short drive back to the ferry. From here we take a canoe ("pirogue") ride along the Manambolo river through the gorges to discover its caves (full of Stalagmites and stalagmites) and Vazimba tombs. We then take a walk through the "little Tsingy". The Tsingy are a very peculiar rock formation, only existing in Madagascar. These are limestone pinnacles, formed by the slow sedimentation of coral and shell, worked by wind and water movements, since Madagascar separated from Africa 160 million years ago. These strange "cathedral like" peaks can tower several hundred meters high. The Tsingy of Bemaraha NP is classified UNESCO World Heritage. These "stone forests" contain caves, underground rivers, canyons, where bats, lemurs, birds and a specific flora have adapted. We'll arrive back at the hotel in time for lunch and the pool is a great place to relax in the afternoon breeze. (Hotel, Breakfast)

*"What an adventure! Madagascar was a revelation to us - a country unlike any other with so much to see and experience. Unique flora and fauna, beautiful unspoiled coastlines, a diverse population, challenging roads and tracks for the 4-wheel driver. And who can resist the amazing lemurs close up!"*

Sue & Russ Smith

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## **Day 8 - Tsingy de Bemaraha National Park, 40 km of rough track / total travel time 2 hours**

Today we visit the "Big Tsingy". It's about an hour drive to the start of the walk. There are two options for the visit – the more strenuous one requiring you to be in a climbing harness to attached to a series of safety cables to climb up some steep parts of the Tsingy. Which ever option you take, it is an amazing morning. Birds in this area include: Paradise fly catcher, Namaqualand dove, Sunbird, greater Vassa parrot, rock thrush, Alloette, giant Coua, and Robin. Other animals you may see include: Sportiv lemur, Sifaka, Tsingy banded mongoose, Red forest rat, Red Fronted Brown lemur. Take a picnic lunch from the hotel to have during the walk. (Hotel, Breakfast)

## **Day 9 - Bekopaka - Morondava, 200 km of rough track / total travel time 11 hours**

There is only one way back from the Tsingy – it's a long day, but you know what to expect as you have driven it before. There will be the two ferry crossings and slow tracks but we get to stop at the sacred Baobab of the area and also see Baobab Alley to observe the baobabs in the lovely afternoon light. We'll leave there before sunset as right after sunset there are a lot of tourist cars trying to get back to Morondava. We will get back in time for dinner. (Hotel, Breakfast)

## **Day 10 - Morondava - Belo sur Mer, 100 km of sandy track / total travel time 6 hours**

Our departure time today may depend on the tides. There could be one or two small river crossings and there are a series of barriers put up by local groups where an informal "toll" for the cars is negotiated by our local guides. We'll be mainly on sandy tracks, see more baobabs and many local villages. Our destination of Belo sur Mer is a pleasant Vezo fishermen village. We'll be greeted by a wonderful kilometre long beach of bright white sands and an amazing transparent sea of emerald waters. You will enjoy the laidback atmosphere and the vibrant red sunsets. (Hotel, Breakfast)

## **Day 11 - Belo sur Mer, Rest Day**

Day at leisure at Belo sur Mer. There is an optional morning pirogue trip with snorkelling but also just relaxing by your bungalow watching the fishing dhows come and go is to be recommended. In the afternoon we'll take a walk along the white beach to the village to see pirogues and large wooden boats being built. (Hotel, Breakfast)

## **Day 12 - Belo sur Mer – Manja, 115 km of rough track / total travel time 5 hours**

Departure after breakfast to Manja (again the tide may affect our departure time). Today, we will cross desert areas, passing by traditional Sakalava tombs decorated with the famous "aloalo", a symbolic representation of the deceased person's life. The bush is full of bot jujube, and spiny species (mainly euphorbiaceae and didieraceae). Manja used to be the capital of a former Sakalava kingdom, but nowadays, it is only a stop for travellers between Morondava and Iléar. Sorry the hotel tonight is very basic as is the food they serve, but it is the only accommodation available. (Hotel, Breakfast)

## **Day 13 - Manja – Morombe, 160 km of rough track / total travel time 8-9 hours**

This day will be spent deep in the bush. The road is more difficult than the previous days. We have another fun ferry crossing and see another species of Baobabs as well as pass through other Spiny forests. The landscape is wild and makes you feel far away from everything. Morombe is a beachside town where you can see many grand old French Colonial houses that are now slowly crumbling. The beach is an interesting place for a walk and swim and the sunsets glorious as pirogues and dhows sail by. (Hotel, Breakfast)

## **Day 14 – Morombe - Andavadoaka, 50 km of rough track / total travel time 3 hours**

A short drive today and we will easily arrive for lunch at the stunning beach destination of Andavadoaka. It is a small fishing village lying on the edge of a shallow lagoon protected from the open ocean by a series of fringing and submerged barrier reefs that support substantial coral growth, providing a vital resource base for local traditional and artisanal fisheries. (Hotel, Breakfast)

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## **Day 15 - Andavadoaka, Rest Day**

The best thing to do today is relax in this stunning location. A walk along the beach to the local village, enjoy lunch in the lovely hotel dining room looking over the turquoise sea, read a book in your bungalow overlooking the sea or swim and snorkel in the lagoon. You won't want to leave this place. (Hotel, Breakfast)

## **Day 16 - Andavadoaka – Ifaty, 150 km of sandy track and tar / total travel time 9 hours**

After an early breakfast we head into some soft, heavy sand – welcome to your Madagascar massage morning. Once this is navigated we hit white dune landscapes, turquoise blue sea, baobabs and dry forests. You will enjoy the ease of the last 10km into town on a new tar road. Ifaty is a quiet fishing village where you can relax from the driving and sleep in simple but comfortable bungalow with a view on the sea. It is busier with tourism than what we've been used to for the past week as we are nearing larger towns of the south. (Hotel, Breakfast)

## **Day 17 - Ifaty, Rest Day**

Day at leisure in Ifaty. This coast has the second largest coral reef after Australia's Great Barrier Reef. So, it is no surprise that one of the activities that can be organised through your hotel is a snorkelling trip on the reef. In the afternoon you can also visit the private reserve Reniala with its baobab forest, endemic birds and other animals and plants. Alternatively, just soak up the beach atmosphere with a slow walk along the beach or dip in the ocean or hotel pool. (Hotel, Breakfast)

## **Day 18 - Ifaty – Ranohira/Isalo National Park, 265 km tar road / total travel time 8 hours**

Back to civilisation... drawing money, shopping for snacks and refuelling in Toliara/ Tulear and then onto the Antsokay Aboretum 12 km out of town. This was created around 1980 by a Swiss amateur botanist Hermann Petignat. It offers a condensed version of the vegetation in South West Madagascar. Over 900 of the plants here are endemic to this area and many have medicinal properties and plenty of spikes. There are also two types of tortoises here (larger radiata & the small spider tortoise). This region of Madagascar is extremely dry and we'll see people pushing 20 L water bottles on push carts from the closest water source back to the village. We'll also pass a white rum making area, see many spiky Agave plants, pass through sapphire mining country and end up in a completely different environment at the end of the day in the Isalo National Park. (Hotel, Breakfast)

## **Day 19 - Isalo National Park, Rest Day**

This morning we discover the National Park of Isalo, the Malagasy Colorado. A unique combination of sandstone rocks cut by deep canyons, bush plains and rare endemic plants make this Park particularly rewarding. We'll take a morning guided walk not too far from the hotel and we'll have the opportunity to not only see some stunning landscape but also see the Pachypodium (a bulbous rock-clinging plant) and the Aloe isaloensis, both endemic species. We may also see Lemurs: sifakas, brown lemurs and ring-tail lemurs can be seen here. Isalo Park is the second most visited in Madagascar. In the afternoon we recommend enjoying a swim in the hotel pool with its lovely view out over rocky landscapes. (Hotel, Breakfast)

## **Day 20 - Ranohira – Tsaranoro valley/Andringitra National Park, 225 km of asphalt road + rough track / total travel time 7 hours**

There's time for a walk near the hotel in the morning before we start our drive to the Tsaranoro Valley. This is definitely Zebu country - large herds of this cattle are along the side of the road today. The Tsaranoro Mountain (800m) on one side and the giant mountain chains of Andringitra National Park on the other side, our tented camp for the next two nights offers comfort in a secluded setting. (Hotel, Breakfast, Dinner)

## **Day 21 - Tsaranoro valley/Andringitra National Park, Rest Day**

We'll take a morning guided walk in the beautiful reddish mountains of the valley. Our easy walk will take you into a sacred forest inhabited by Ring tail lemurs and ends with a visit to the local school that we support with educational supplies (and any other items we'd like to donate). The afternoon is free to relax. (Hotel, Breakfast, Dinner)

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**Day 22 - Tsaranoro Valley – Ranomafana, 170 km of rough + tar road / total travel time 6-7 hours**

Drive to Ranomafana visiting on the way “Anja reserve” in Ambalavao. This community run Park, is very interesting for the close encounters with the ring-tailed lemurs, chameleons and its Betsileo traditional tombs. We are back into hilly country today with rice terraces and even vineyards. We are back to altitudes of around 1,200m so the weather is a cooler again. Late afternoon arrival in the Rainforests of Ranomafana National Park. (Hotel, Breakfast)

**Day 23 - Ranomafana National Park, Rest Day**

Early start today to discover the natural reserve of Ranomafana National Park which is full of variety. The morning walk in the rain forest could be in rain, surprise, surprise! Animals and insects that are commonly seen here are: Lemurs (Golden Bamboo, Greater Bamboo, Red fronted brown), Leaf Gecko and Giraffe Weevil. In the afternoon, visit of the village with its hot spring, then night walk to spot nocturnal lemurs, chameleons and frogs. (Hotel, Breakfast)

**Day 24 - Ranomafana – Antsirabe, 260 km of tar road / total travel time 8-9 hours**

Today’s road winds through the terraced highlands. We see many eucalyptus trees which were introduced along with pines by the French colonialists to reforest Madagascar. Some areas are now large charcoal production areas so there is bag after bag of charcoal on the side of the road. Then every 15-20km what is for sale on the roadside changes. Pine kindle used to start the charcoal production fires, geranium oil, honey, wooden bowls, turkeys and ducks. Arrival in Antsirabe in the late afternoon. (Hotel, Breakfast)

**Day 25 - Antsirabe - Tana, 175 km of tar road / total travel time 5 hours**

A morning visit of the workshops of Antsirabe: gemstones and handicrafts, workshops where people work on transforming natural materials like zebu horn (for cutlery) or small bikes and vehicles made from recycled items. We then retrace our journey back to Tana but this time having the chance to stop in the town of Ambatolampy and take a fascinating journey back in time to aluminium casting of pots. The mould is made in a sand and volcanic ash compound, the aluminium heated on coals which is pouring into the mould and only minutes later you have a pot. There is no safety gear in this workshop - not even thongs! When we arrive back in Tana, we’ll drop off our 4x4s before spending the night here. (Hotel, Breakfast)

**Day 26 - Tana - Andasibe National Park, 140 km of tar road / total travel time 4 hours**

After breakfast our journey to Andasibe National Park starts. This is a very winding road with many trucks as it is the main road to the large port of Tamatave. It also has a lot of pot holes but today you don’t need to worry about that as the local driver of our small coach will allow you to enjoy the view. We’ll arrive back in the rain forest in the afternoon. (Hotel, Breakfast)

**Day 27 - Andasibe National Park, Rest Day**

Morning dedicated to visit the Andasibe National Park. This park is known for its rare orchids that bloom in the forest, its Indri indri or babakoto lemur that can be observed all year round, it’s beautiful waterfalls and the famous cultural rituals of the inhabitants of the surrounding area. In the afternoon, visit of Vakona private reserve with its “lemur island” where the habituated lemurs will most likely want to visit your shoulder or use you as a tree as they jump around. It is lovely to be this close and be able to feel their soft hands and fur. In the evening we have another night walk looking for more nocturnal lemurs, chameleons and frogs. (Hotel, Breakfast)

**Day 28 - Andasibe National Park – Akanin’ny Nofy, 140 km of tar road / total travel time 3 hours by road then 1 hour by boat**

What a different view the east coast is to the west. Here it is tropical - traveller’s palms, bananas, bamboo, paw paws, jack fruit, custard apples and so on. The road winds to Manambato, on the Pangalanes channel, where we leave our small bus and then take a 1-hour scenic boat cruise until Akanin'ny Nofy. The Pangalanes is a chain of sweet water lakes and lagoons parallel to the coast of the Indian Ocean, separated by a narrow stretch of land. Our lodging at the Bush House is located at Lake Ampitabe, the third largest lake of the Canal des Pangalanes. (Hotel, Breakfast, Dinner)



## Day 29 - Akanin'ny Nofy

Morning visit of the private reserve “Palmarium”, home to a dozen species of lemurs playing in full freedom in the reserve. Afternoon at leisure where several activities can be organised, such as: a boat expedition to visit a typical Betsimisaraka village with its school and nursery, visit the Indian ocean shore, walk along the channel to see carnivorous plants. Final dinner as a group (some of the group may leave tomorrow to go to Sainte Marie Island (Hotel, Breakfast, Dinner).

## Day 30 - Akanin'ny Nofy–Tana, 285 km / total travel time 1 hour on boat 6-7 hours drive—extension see alternate days 30-35

Take a boat ride along the Canal des Pangalanes back to Manambato. From there we will retrace our journey back to Tana in our small bus with local driver. (Hotel, Breakfast)

**Day 31 – Depart:** Transfer to Tana airport and depart. (Breakfast)

*Please note: Itinerary subject to change*

**Please Read the “In the Know” section at the end of this itinerary for important information about this adventure.**

## Dates & Prices

<p><b>Dates:</b> 2020: 10 Sep – 10 Oct</p> <p><b>Tailor-made:</b> Have your own group? We can tailor your trip.</p>	<p><b>Flights &amp; Travel Insurance:</b> <i>Please do not book flights or pay for travel insurance until you have been advised that we have received deposits from the minimum number of participants for this adventure.</i></p>
<p><b>Prices:</b></p> <p>Below is a schedule of prices based on vehicle number / group size. Upon booking we will ask you to let us know at which level you are willing to join the group. E.G. If there are 2 cars booked, and when you book you are the third car, you may select that you are only prepared to join the group when there is a minimum of four cars. As soon as we reach the minimum number of cars based on this selection from everyone who has booked, we will advise you that the trip is confirmed and you can start booking flights and making other arrangements.</p> <p><i>* 2020 pricing is <b>estimated only</b> - to be confirmed. Please see terms and conditions for all booking conditions. Maximum group size 16 people and 7 4x4s (excluding support staff and vehicles). AUD prices are estimated only and will depend on the AUD/EUR rate applicable when making payments. Funds can be paid into an AUD or EUR bank account. All prices are subject to change due to currency fluctuations.</i></p> <p><b>Single supplement: AUD1,555</b> per person single room throughout tour. This is already included in the solo traveller price.</p>	<p><b>3 cars / 6 people minimum (prices per person)</b></p> <p>2 people per 4x4 (twin/double): EUR9,220/AUD15,370*</p> <p>3 people per 4x4 (1 twin/double + 1 single): EUR7,930/AUD13,215*</p> <p>4 people per 4x4 (1 twin/double + 1 single): EUR6,795/AUD11,330*</p> <p>Solo traveller in guide car (single room): EUR7,910/13,180*</p> <p><b>4 cars / 8 people minimum (prices per person)</b></p> <p>2 people per 4x4 (twin/double): EUR9,110/AUD15,185*</p> <p>3 people per 4x4 (1 twin/double + 1 single): EUR7,850/AUD13,085*</p> <p>4 people per 4x4 (1 twin/double + 1 single): EUR6,750/AUD11,250*</p> <p>Solo traveller in guide car (single room): EUR7,910/13,180*</p> <p><b>5 cars / 10 people minimum (prices per person)</b></p> <p>2 people per 4x4 (twin/double): EUR8,975/AUD14,960*</p> <p>3 people per 4x4 (1 twin/double + 1 single): EUR7,795/AUD12,990*</p> <p>4 people per 4x4 (1 twin/double + 1 single): EUR6,695/AUD11,158*</p> <p>Solo traveller in guide car (single room): EUR7,910/13,180*</p> <p><b>6 cars / 12 people minimum (prices per person)</b></p> <p>2 people per 4x4 (twin/double): EUR8,850/AUD14,747*</p> <p>3 people per 4x4 (1 twin/double + 1 single): EUR7,765/AUD12,940*</p> <p>4 people per 4x4 (1 twin/double + 1 single): EUR6,672/AUD11,120*</p> <p>Solo traveller in guide car (single room): EUR7,910/13,180*</p> <p><b>7 cars / 14 people minimum (prices per person)</b></p> <p>2 people per 4x4 (twin/double): EUR8,795/AUD14,655*</p> <p>3 people per 4x4 (1 twin/double + 1 single): EUR7,750/AUD12,913*</p> <p>4 people per 4x4 (1 twin/double + 1 single): EUR6,670/AUD11,120*</p> <p>Solo traveller in guide car (single room): EUR7,910/13,180*</p>
<p><b>Inclusions:</b></p> <p>Accommodation on bed and breakfast basis, dinner included on first and last night as well as for 4 nights while at Tsara Camp and the Bush House, 4x4 rental (day 3 – 25), fuel, two 4WD assistance/escort vehicles with drivers (day 3-25), English speaking local guide, bus and driver from Tana to Manambto and return, entrance and guidance fees at all parks and reserves to visit, as per the itinerary, boat transfer Manambato/Akanin’ny Nofy/Manambato, all transfers airport/hotel/airport in Tana and Self Drive Adventures escort.</p> <p><b>Exclusions:</b></p> <p>International airfares, optional activities, meals other than listed (budget EUR12-15 per lunch/dinner or around EUR800 total per person/approx. AUD1,270 per person), vehicle guarantee of EUR750 cash approx. AUD1,190 per 4x4 (to be returned at the end of the hire if the vehicles have not been damaged), travel insurance, visas and vaccinations and local tips (budget approx. AUD200 per person).</p> <p>Car excess and car rental terms and conditions will be supplied separately.</p>	



## In the Know: *Madagascar*

This “In the Know” fact sheet provides you important information about traveling in Madagascar prior to booking this adventure. As always, if you have any other questions about joining this adventure, please don’t hesitate to contact our knowledgeable team. If you’d like to speak with another traveller about this adventure, we can put you in touch with other guests that have travelled this route (or a very similar one).

**Highlights:** We’ve asked previous guests what were the highlights of this adventure. Here are some of their comments:

- *“Getting off the main roads in the 4x4; close encounters with lemurs; experiencing the countryside and the people”.*
- *“Too many highlights to mention, but if I must - the day trip to Ambohimanga, the lemurs, especially the Aye-Aye, the drive along the iconic west coast 4x4 route and the rain forest walks”.*
- *“The Madagascan fauna, and the hugely varied landscapes and ecosystems”.*

**Gallery:** <https://www.selfdriveadventures.com/gallery-madagascar>

**Mindset:** The mindset required on this adventure is one of patience and flexibility and don’t expect a luxury holiday. You need to understand that travelling in a third world country does not always go smoothly, no matter how well planned. There is definitely a culture of “Mora, Mora” – “Slowly, Slowly” in Madagascar so things may not happen as quickly as you’d like – it’s all part of the adventure and your Self Drive Adventure’s escort and local support team will do their utmost to smooth out any hiccups during the journey.

**Vehicle:** Ford Everest Diesel manual, air-conditioned maximum age of 3 years or similar. As these cars are not camping equipped, there is no fridge. The car is quite spacious inside and can comfortably take 4 passengers. The 4x4 will have a fire extinguisher and basic first aid kit. You will be required to pay a cash deposit of EUR750 upon collection of the vehicle. A full set of terms and conditions will be supplied. Self Drive Adventures reserves the right to change the vehicle to a similar but not identical car.

**Driving Conditions:** There are some long days on this adventure. We are travelling to remote areas where our accommodation options are limited. This means on some days you have a long distance between hotels. Please see the itinerary for the day to day estimates of travel time. We’ve put in many two-night stays so that you have the opportunity to be out of the 4x4 either to relax or take part in other activities.

You drive on the right-hand side of the road (left hand drive). In and around cities the traffic will be hectic, but once out on the country roads the traffic will be limited. We will drive on tar roads, dirt roads, very rough and sandy 4x4 tracks. Tar roads are notoriously potholed and narrow. There could be some water crossings.

**Driving Ability:** The skills required are a driver’s license and a good dollop of common sense. 4x4 experience is required, although the tracks we take are not technically challenging, just slow, rough and sandy.

**Convoy Size:** The minimum number of 4x4s in our convoy is 5 and the maximum is 7. This excludes local guide and support vehicles. Most vehicles tend to have just two guests, however, up to four can be accommodated. The convoy does travel together for the vast majority of the journey, so you need to be willing to be flexible to fit in with the

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determined start time each day, stops for breaks etc. We try to allow breaks for photos, toilet stops, sightseeing, lunch, morning and afternoon tea but road conditions and travel time for the day may affect how long or how many of these we may have.

**Escort & Local Guiding:** On this adventure you will be joined by a Self Drive Adventures English speaking escort as well as a local guide who speaks English, French and Malagasy and some other support staff. The decision of the Self Drive Adventure's escort is final on all matters likely to affect the safety or well-being of any person participating in the trip.

**Accommodation:** This is not a 5-star holiday. It is an adventure. We'll be staying in a blend of accommodation. The hotel in Tana is of a very high standard and from there we will stay in 3-star "budget" hotels, a couple of very basic hotels where that is the best available, bush huts, bungalows and resorts. As basic as some places are, they are clean and atmospheric. *There is one night during the adventure where the accommodation is very far below expectations. It is the only accommodation that is available and must be endured so that this route (that is not to be missed) is taken.*

**Food:** See the itinerary inclusions for meals that are included. In general, the food is quite good, very good in some places. Breakfast is the most limited meal being a standard baguette/bread with jam, coffee and tea. Sometimes this is accompanied by fruit and yoghurt and you can usually order a basic omelette (but there may be a small extra charge for this). Where meals are not included we will buy food along the way in small cafes/restaurants or take picnic lunches from the hotel. There are also supermarkets along the route where you can top up on snacks to carry in the 4x4.

**Amenities and Toilet Breaks:** Your accommodation has private bathroom facilities. We will stop for toilet breaks in restaurants if possible, but there will be quite a few "bush toilet" stops where there is cover of trees or bushes for privacy.

**Activity Level:** There are quite a few hikes included within the national parks. Some of these will last up to half a day. While these are walked quite slowly some of them may be on steep terrain (especially within the rain forests). We recommend bringing hiking poles.

**Weather:** Around Antananarivo expect around 23—26 degrees C, there is a possibility of rain, around Morondava 20-35 degrees C, small chance of rain and water temperature 26 degrees C, around Ifaty 19-35 degrees C, small chance of rain and water temperature 25 degrees C, around Ranohira 15-25 degrees C, chance of rain and water temperature 25 degrees C, around Sainte Marie Island 19-30 degrees C, some chance of rain and water temperature 25 degrees C

**Flights:** Before booking flights and other arrangements it is your responsibility to confirm with us that we have the minimum number of cars required for this adventure to depart.

**Prices:** Please review the inclusions and exclusions section of the itinerary. Here we have provided our best estimates for additional known costs over and above the inclusions of the adventure.

**Risks & Health:** Madagascar is a third world country. Third world countries can experience problems which may include but are not limited to, political upheaval, lack of supplies (including fuel and spare parts), poor medical services, poor road conditions, poor police services, as well as drought, floods and unusual weather conditions. We cannot be held responsible if the internal infrastructure of the country being visited causes adverse effects. By participating you acknowledge that the nature of the trip is adventurous, and participation involves a degree of personal risk. Health facilities in Madagascar are basic even in larger cities and towns. We will be very remote and at least a day's drive from the closest town on many occasions. Malaria, Rabies, Bubonic and Pneumonic Plague and other health risks exist in Madagascar. You should discuss the risks with your doctor before agreeing to join this trip.