

MADAGASCAR

TRAVEL INFORMATION



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GROUPES - INCENTIVES - INDIVIDUELS - CROISIERES

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Unlike the other islands of the Indian Ocean, Madagascar imposes itself by its immense extent and its original geological past. The name of the island continent is amply justified. Its fauna and its flora, for most species, present virtually 100% endemism and are a true paradise for biologists, entomologists, botanists, and other specialists.

GEOGRAPHY



The island of Madagascar is located in the Indian Ocean, south of the equator, separated from the East African coasts by 400km of an arm of the sea that bears the name of Mozambique channel. The Tropic of Capricorn crosses the south of the great Island at the level of the city of Toliara.

Madagascar stretches over 1600 km in length, between Cape St. Mary to the south and Cape Amber to the extreme North of the island has more than 5000km of wonderful coastline. The width of the island is 500km from east to west.

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Its western coast is fairly carved along the Mozambique Channel. A landscape of plains and savannahs where grows the lying, limestone vegetation plant vegetation, baobab land and more southern thorny. The East Coast, much moister, shelters luxuriant vegetation on a rectilinear strip, between the Pangalanes Canal and the Indian Ocean, plantation area of vanilla and coffee trees.

In the center of the island, the high plateau region, made up of granite massifs and peaks such as Mount Tsaratanana which peaks at 2886 meters, contrasts with the marshes and hills that favor the cultivation of rice.

THE CLIMATE



Tropical climate, hot and dry or hot and humid: the summer, from November to March, is hot and humid, and the winter from April to October is cooler and more arid.

The east coast is much more watered than the west coast, and the southwest has very low rainfall throughout the year.

HISTORY



Already known in ancient times by the Greeks, the island saw other people's coming from Southeast Asia, Africa and Arabia. The Portuguese Diego Diaz discovered Madagascar in 1500. In the 16th century, Frenchman Jacques Pronis created Fort Dauphin at the request of the

King of France, but he had to abandon this territory in 1674, several kingdoms were then constituted: the Sakalava kingdom in the XVII century, Then the kingdom Merina in the XVIII century.

The French tried to impose themselves again in 1880 but it was not until 1896 that Madagascar became a French colony, and 1946 to become overseas territory. In 1947, faced with social degradation, a violent insurrection broke out, but it was severely repressed. General de Gaulle evoked independence in 1956 and was proclaimed on 26 June 1960. The first elected president was Philippe Tsiranana, who led the PDS (Social Democratic Party) in 1975.

Ratsiraka took over the power of the second democratic republic of Madagascar. The government then adopted the charter of the socialist revolution, an economic exchange program With Russia set up. Faced with a negative economic situation, the president embarked on a path of liberation in the 1980s. In February 1993, Albert Zafy won the new elections: it will be the third Malagasy Republic, but Didier Ratsiraka will regain power in February 1997. New elections will take place at the end of 2001.

Marc Ravalomanana was elected in July 2002. After a period of economic and social political crisis that lasted almost a year, the country now regains socio-economic stability which helps to strengthen international confidence and facilitate financial investments.

POPULATION & ETHNICS



An ethnic crossbreeding of peoples from elsewhere: extreme-orient, Africa, India, Arabia, Europe. Today, 18 ethnic groups make up the Madagascan people, which now numbers nearly 15 million inhabitants.

The most important in number are: the merina and the betsileo in the center, the bara and antandroy in the South, the Betsimisaraka in the East and the Sakalava in the West.



USES & BEHAVIORS



Sacrifice of zebus on many occasions.

Famadihana: the Malagasy tradition, or the turning of the dead, is an opportunity for the whole family to meet, taking place in July and

August, it animates the countryside and the upland region, custom wants that during the ceremony, one turns 7 times around the tomb, to the sound of the flutes and the violins.

The remains of the ancestors are surrounded by a new piece of cloth.

Many Malagasy believe in the existence of spirits at work in the world, authors of strange, inexplicable facts. The manipulation of Sikidy or simply the powers of sorcery mostly contribute to cast spells to its enemies. In Malagasy anthropology, witchcraft (mosavy) is a mystery of things.

Here are some words about witchcraft in Madagascar:

Ambiasy or mpisikidy = diviner

Mpanandro = astrologer. It takes on a great importance in the Malagasy cosmogonic philosophy.

The merina believed that the desert given to the sorcerer by God was the source of their sorcery.

Mpanalafaditra = sorcerer. It can detract, destroy Malagasy cosmology.

Sikidy = art of divination, predilection by the seed.

The location of the seeds helps the soothsayer to read into your future.

More than half the population of Madagascar is Christian: Catholics and Protestants are numerous, monotheistic and mostly animist. The Muslims are in a minority and represent hardly more than 10% of the population of Madagascar.

Protestant religion dominates the highlands while the Catholic religion reigns in the coastal regions. This schematization seems simplistic, but it is the fruit of the implantation of the various French and English missionaries in the different regions of Madagascar.

In some important cities such as Antananarivo and Fianarantsoa, the two religions coexist perfectly and the landscape is punctuated by church steeples near those of the temples.

The practice of one of these two religions does not prevent the Malagasy from respecting the worship of the ancestors and to believe in the predictions of the soothsayers and other sorcerers of their town or village.

RELIGION



CRAFTS



Whether it is everyday objects of everyday life, but also games, musical instruments or ornamental objects of sacred or artistic character, Malagasy handicrafts are rich in natural materials The ability to take advantage of its environment has generated a multitude of objects with original shapes and colors. Today the world phenomenon of the return to nature and authentic materials places Madagascar among the countries with high artisanal potential.

The paper "Antemoro". It is a paper made in accordance with the ancient processes "Antemoro" rediscovered at the beginning of the century by Pierre Mathieu who had created a company in Ambalavao, still in operation, entirely handmade and dried in the moonlight, the

paper is colored White ecru. Relatively thick and granular, there are sometimes incusted dried flowers very decorative. Its use covers binding, letter papers, envelopes, offal days, tapestry.

- The Art Zafimaniry. This art is linked to the Zafimaniry ethnic group who lives in a forest area, south-east of Ambositra. Renowned for their work on wood, the Zafimaniry traditionally realize many usual objects like carved wooden chests, honey boxes, their huts and shutters worked, blowguns, etc.

Ambositra, a small town where religious missions have been established since the beginning of the century, have promoted the emergence of a more commercial craft with the production in the workshop of statuettes, furniture chess sets and other wood carvings.

- Tin objects. The profession of tinsmith has unfortunately disappeared! Yet in Madagascar, in view of local needs, recovery and processing is integrated into the economy. A Pleiad of objects are made from recovery plates, tin cans. Drinkers, goblets, cans, waiter's servers, But also, toys, carpets, which reproduce local taxis-bush, jeep and other automobiles and motorcycles.

- Musical instruments. Many traditional instruments are still used during festivals and ceremonies. They are made mainly from leathers, wood, bamboo. One can quote the Valiha, a string

instrument composed of a bamboo body and multiple strings stretched around the many models of drums, citharas and other flutes. "Djembe" qualities are made locally by specialists of percussion.

- Wickerwork. A multitude of utilitarian objects are made all over the island from vegetable fibers such as raffia, rush, satrana (palm) or coconut palms. Practical uses are not lacking, among which we can quote the covers Roof racks, hatches, baskets, mats of all colors and shapes, and so on.

- The stones. The sub-soil of the Big Island contains many minerals and their exploitation remains largely artisanal. Lapidarian transform blocks of raw stones from the bush into many decorative objects. Balls, ashtrays, polished eggs or slices of silicified wood The export of stones is subject to prior authorization issued by the competent ministry.

The list of handicrafts Malagasy is very long, but we can also mention: Batiks and painting on silk embroidery on fabrics (tablecloths, curtains, etc.) Sun umbrellas and umbrellas etc.





COLORS



Three colors attract the eye of the tourist, red, green and white, the colors are not only those of the flag of the Malagasy Republic but also have their special significance.

Red: colors of the clay that clothed the walls of houses of the Imerina, red as the shroud of kings formerly, or, symbol of the blood of zebu immolated for the reversals of the dead.

Green: companion of the travelers with the coconut tree, the ravinala (trees of the travelers) or the rice fields.

White: like the rice harvested but also the Lamba that draped the women.

ARTS



In Madagascar, art is practiced daily, in literature as well as in the visual arts or music; The oral literature, such as the tales and legends that express the myths on which rest a

whole system of values and beliefs that have passed centuries, has an educational and moral aspect centered on the foundation of Malagasy society, especially respect - of the ancestors. You will find galleries of painting in Antananarivo which will certainly seduce you by the talent of the artists who exhibit their works (ask the gallery L'Atelier)

Traditional music is the Hiragasy, records of popular songs very nice and very pleasant abroad, before leaving you can already passed by the ray fnac of your city (Justin Vali, Ninie Daniah, Poopy, Henry Ratsimbazafy ...). In Madagascar, in department stores in Tana or in the markets at very good prices.

At the instrumental level, there are also more than 150 different musical instruments, mostly string, the best known is Valiha,

Valihavolo: pipe guitar, Valiha vero: raft guitar, Jejilava: musical bow, jeji: stick guitar, Rorovary: guitar on chest, Raloba: raft rattle, Kaiamba: two-knotted rattle, aponga tampaka: tambourine cut, and djembe: tambourines dug in the wood, covered with the top of a stretched zebu skin.

MUSIC / SONGS





FESTIVITIES & HOLIDAYS



- **29 March** : commemoration of the anti-colonial uprising of 1947
- **1er May** : Labor Day
- **25 May** : Day of the O.U.A
- Monday of Pentecost
- **26 June** : Independence Day
- **August 15** : feast of the Assumption
- **01 November** : All Saints Day
- **25 Décembre** : Christmas Day

Very little shift, one more hour during the summer timetable (Paris 11h, Antananarivo 12h) and two during the winter timetable (Paris 11h, Antananarivo 13h)

From May to October, the sun rises towards

6:00 am and goes to bed around 5:30 pm and from December to April, the day rises around 5:00 am and the sunsets take place around 7:00 pm.

JET LAG



The national currency is until November 2004 the Malagasy Franc (FMG abbreviated) and the Ariary will be the future call of the Malagasy monetary unit. In spite of its origin, there is no parity with the French franc since Madagascar is no longer part of the

THE CURRENCY



CFA franc zone since the early 1970s. Malagasy Franc is a non-convertible currency. It is therefore advisable to change the sums as and when required.

For information, during the month of March 2017 the average court was 3500 Ariary for 1 euro.



TELECOMMUNICATIONS



There are 05 telecommunications operators. Telma (Fiber operator) present on a large part of the territory. Orange and Airtel are the two GSM operators present on the main urban areas and tourist sites.

Phone boxes with cards are installed in the main districts of Antananarivo but also in the main cities of the country. Telephone cards with 25, 50, 100, 150 units are sold in numerous points of sale (grocery stores, hotels, etc).

International telecommunications

- Madagascar, Madagascar call sign: 261, Malagasy operators' codes 20 Telma, 33 Airtel, 32 Orange and the 7-digit number of the Malagasy correspondent.

- Madagascar - Abroad

The number 00 enables automatic international communication.

National telecommunications

A modernization program for satellite equipment has been set up. Therefore, there is a marked improvement in telecommunications services. Thus, a new 7-digit numbering is used. To join your correspondent, you must first compose the two Indicative of zone and then its number to 5 figures. Area Codes - Provinces

54 - Ambatolampy 42 - Ambositra 47 Antananarivo 22 - Antsirabe 44 - Antsohihy 67 - Diégo Suarez 82 - Farafangana 73 - Fianarantsoa 75 - Fort Dauphin 92 - Maintirano 69 - Majunga 62 - Manakara and Mananjary 72 - Moramanga 95 - Nosy be 86 - Sambava 85 - Tamatave 53 - Tulear 94.

Several newspapers come out daily, presses including: L'Express de Madagascar, Midi Madagascar, Les Nouvelles, La Tribune, which are French-language newspapers distributed on the street, but also at press points. Other newspapers in the Malagasy language exist besides of which Lakroa independent newspaper and Christian influence.

French Economic and Political Magazines: Revue de l'Océan Indien (ROI), Dans les Médias Demain (DMD), L'Eco Austral, etc.

THE PRESS



HEALTH



The information given are subjected to modifications, please check with the competent authorities (embassy, consulate ...)

Only yellow fever vaccine is mandatory when arriving from Africa, but anti - malarial treatment is strongly recommended. The precautions to be taken on the spot are common to almost all tropical countries.

Avoid mosquito bites, unpleasant indeed, but especially vectors of the malaria agent. Use mosquito nets, insecticides, burning coils and long-sleeved shirts.

Also avoid bathing in fresh water (bilharzias: tiny aquatic worms that infiltrate under the skin in your feet and legs).

Use sunglasses and sunscreens to protect yourself from the tropical sun.

We also advise you to only drink bottled drinks.

Do not hesitate to bring along a medication kit with your usual medications, you can always offer them they will make wonderful gifts.

Valid passport valid for 6 months after return
A visa is also compulsory (price around 25 euros per person), the obtaining is done today in 05 days in the consulates or the embassy of Madagascar in Paris, (4, Avenue Raphael 75016 Paris - Tel: 01 45 04 62 11), but also to the airport at Antananarivo Airport.

TRAVEL PREPARATION

