

# MADAGASCAR USEFUL INFORMATION

## Island Continent Tours STAFF:

Office Location: 3 minutes from the International Airport: LOT 043 MMA II Ivato-Antananarivo

### Opening hour:

Monday to Friday: from 09.00 am to 06.00 pm  
Saturday: from 09.00 am to 12.00

### Office Telephone

(Landline): +261 20 22 482 10 - +261 20 22 489 63

### Mobile which are available 24/24

Hely: +261 33 15 254 96 - +261 34 14 254 96  
Lydie: +261 34 11 254 96 -  
Ony: +261 33 12 254 96 -  
Théogène: +261 34 05 254 95

## BEFORE YOU ARRIVE

### During your flight to Antananarivo:

Immigration form will be handed on to you by the steward during the flight before landing. Fill the form. As address, please put: ICTOURS Lot 043 MMAII Ivato- Tana

### Upon arrival at the airport:

#### Immigration area

Have your passport and the Immigration form ready. Follow the panel "Without Visa" (it might take awhile but anyway you have to wait for your luggage which also takes time). Queue for the immigration police and get a stamp for your visa (fees 20 €, do not pay more even if you are asked to). Then collect your luggage, pass through the customs check: sometimes you are asked to open your suitcase, then the police with your passport.

#### Arrival Hall

Just outside the gate, a representative or driver from ICTours will be welcoming you with a panel ICTours with your name. Note that there are many people trying to grab your luggage (taxi-drivers, beggars, so called porters) once you're outside. Keep your trolley and don't leave your luggage or belongings to anyone except the driver from ICTOURS

**Visa** : is mandatory and can be obtained at the airport upon arrival in Madagascar. From January 1<sup>st</sup> 2016, visa fees is 80.000 Ariary or 25 € (subject to change). No photo needed, only return ticket. Can be obtained in Madagascar Embassy or consulate in your country with extra cost.

Passport must be valid for a minimum of 6 months.

Passport must have at least 3 empty pages left

#### Local currency:

Ariary (MGA) replaced the Malagasy franc (the former currency 1 Ariary is 5 Malagasy Francs). 1 EURO is about 3000 Ariary. Malagasy Ariary can be changed back in foreign currency at any banks and money changers. There are 4 bank notes: 10.000 AR – 5000 AR – 2000 AR – 1000 AR – 500 AR – 200 AR – 100 AR. Coins still exist but have no value anymore.

#### CREDIT CARD:

Visa Card is accepted in few hotels and sometimes at the airport upon arrival. Master Card is with 2 banks BNI – BFV (ATM). Others, such as, Diner's and American Express are difficult even impossible. Travellers' cheques are not advisable as it takes time to change them. Best option is Euro Cash and is of better use in tourism. ATM machine are available only in few big cities. (VISA and Master Card (few) and the daily amount you can draw is limited.

#### CHANGE:

There are 2 banks, 1 ATM and 2 money changers at the airport.

Please note that the exchange rate you get on Internet is "Interbank rate" means between two banks. For the manual change, you have the buying rate (change Euro or USD into Ariary) and the selling rate (change Ariary into foreign currency).

If it's not too late, you can change at your hotel, sometimes the rate difference is not that much, only you're more relaxed and safe at your hotel.

#### Opening hours:

Local bank and all offices open from 08.00 to 15.30. Closed on week-end and public holidays. 1<sup>st</sup> January, 29<sup>th</sup> March, 1<sup>st</sup> May, 29<sup>th</sup> May, 26<sup>th</sup> June, 15<sup>th</sup> August, 1<sup>st</sup> November, 25<sup>th</sup> December

#### Official languages:

Malagasy and a bit French (old French colony).

**Payment:** Cash: Ariary (MGA),

Cash: Euro (€), US DOLLAR (\$) in few hotels

Credit card: VISA only.

#### Time Differences:

Madagascar lies at GMT +3.

## Telecommunication:

To call overseas from Madagascar:

☞ Dial 00+country code+ area code+ the number

To call a landline number from overseas:

☞ Dial 00261 + 20 + area code+ the number

To call a Madagascar mobile phone from overseas:

☞ Dial 00 261 + area code + the number without 0

## Health:

No vaccination is compulsory, however, an anti-malarial Treatment is recommended.

Since Ebola virus, yellow fever card and vaccination will be required upon arrival at the airport.

## Electricity:

220 V. Some places have no electric power, in many big cities: there are many electricity cuts in the evening. Bring enough battery powered. Madagascar uses Continental plugs so bring adaptor if you're from UK or South Africa. Many hotels and lodges in remote place have generator, lights are off during day time and at a certain hour (from 09.00 pm till 06.00 am).

## Recommendations to travelers:

Travel with light luggage, if possible; backpacks are very handy especially for a group tour in a coach. Light trousers, long sleeved shirts or T-shirts, pairs of tennis or sandals; Hikers must have good walking shoes. Mosquito repellent sprays and/or creams; Sun block cream and swimsuits. For bivouac lovers: swiss knives, first aid kit, flasks, water purifying tablets, sleeping bags (camping), torches. Bring enough battery for your camera as some areas have no electricity power and charging battery is a challenge.

## Seasons and weather:

There are 5 climatic zones, which follow the varied physical geography of the island: there are the mild Highlands, the hot and dry western regions, the rainy and the eastern coastal regions under the influence of trade winds, the hot and wet North, and the semi-arid South. Rainfalls decreases progressively from the North-East (over 300 m) to the South-West (less than 400 m) with several variants between these two extremes. The dry season or the southern winter is from April to October, and summer is from November to March. If, at sea level, temperatures range from 27°C and 32°C in summer and 22°C in winter, on the Highlands, they may go down to 4°C or even less in winter nights.

## GENERAL INFORMATION DURING YOUR TRIP

### VISITING NATIONAL PARK:

Please respect some codes of good Conduct:

☞ Do not litter, take back with you plastic, metal and glass items.

☞ Camp only at authorized site

☞ Do not take anything out: let the forest keep its plants, animals and insects

☞ Do not feed animals and avoid disturbing them with violent gestures and excessive noise

**SAFETY:** Madagascar is quite a safe country for travelers. However in the center of Antananarivo, you have to be careful for the pick-pockets. Most of them are teenagers and are very quick so when you walk around, don't bring valuable things, wallets and keep an eye on your camera. Otherwise, the rest of the country is quite safe.

Here are some guidelines to follow

☞ Avoid going out in the night by yourself

☞ Don't leave your valuable things in your room. If you stay more than 1 night in a place, please put your valuable and money at the reception.

☞ Don't let strangers come in your room, in many beach resorts, massages are asking you for a massage séance, ask the reception if they are safe.

☞ Do not wear jewelry, valuable item when you walk in big cities

☞ Travel documents as passport, must be well kept personally. Please make a copy of your passport.

### CHARITY WORK

Travelling in Madagascar is mainly by road. In every village, you will be surrounded by children asking "bonbon, stylo, cadeau". Giving them is something will create a dependence and eternal assistance. ICTours has some school projects where travelers can participate in buying school furniture, books, classroom and blackboard painting and will distribute them during a visit where children will meet as well the donators. So we recommend people to join us.

## SPECIFIC PURCHASE

### ARE PROHIBITED:

Endangered animal and plant species listed in annex I of CITES (Convention on International Trade of Fauna and Flora Species). Are particularly included in this category: lemurs, radiated tortoise, spur tortoise, sea tortoise, boa, Antongil red frog. Orchids, Euphorb, didieraceous, apocynaceous species (pachypodium)  
Authentic objects classified as national heritage (aloalo, Zafimaniry), shutters, ancient object and documents...

### ARE CONSIDERED AS PROTECTED:

Vertebrate, fish and plant fossils.  
Dinosaur bones, aepyornis eggs

### THE TRAVELLER IS FREE TO TAKE OUTSIDE THE COUNTRY:

250 g: hallmarked jewels (subject to justifying entry with foreign currencies, the traveler may be allowed to take as much as 1 kg).  
2 kg of vanilla exempted from tax and duties.

### Luggage allowance for internal flights and private charter: 20 kg.

Extra kilos for regular flight will be charged on the spot. For private flight like Anjajavy, extra kilo is IMPOSSIBLE so make sure your luggage is 20kg.

### PURCHASES IN DUTY FREE SHOPS

Ivato Airport and in big hotels have duty free shops,

### Etiquette, taboos (fady) and prohibitions

The Malagasy population is known for being pacifist and tolerant. They are strongly attached to their customs and practices, namely in villages and rural communities. So be attentive to be respectful of traditions, and in particular of elderly people or of those who are considered as people of high rank in society and respect local "fady", taboos and prohibitions scrupulously. It is advised to get information about them in advance and respect them scrupulously. For example, there are communities who do not like their children's heads to be caressed. Before taking photographs of a person or a group of people, please ask for their permission first. Lastly, nudism is not allowed on beaches. In town, a lamba or a pareo covering one's monokini or bikini will be sufficient not to shock Malagasy sense of decency.

### BARGAINING:

Bargaining is traditional practice at the market, with taxi drivers (they are not equipped with a meter), rickshaw pullers and when one is requesting a service. The guiding principle for bargaining depends on the level which is acceptable for both parties. Most of the time, half or 2/3 of the price.

### TIPING

Tips are not compulsory but very much appreciated. The following amount is just an indication and is left to the client's appreciation  
**Hotels, restaurants:** people are expecting some tips. However there is no fixed amount so. Often it varies from 4 to 6% of the total bill.

**Escorting –Guide:** if a group (from 8 pax), minimum 1eur/pers a day, if FIT, from 2 eur/pers a day

**Driver:** 1 usd/pers a day for group and for FIT from 2usd/pers a day

### DAILY BUDGET: DRINKS, MEALS, SOUVENIRS

Just some prices indication of customer's daily need: a bottle of beer is 1 to 2€, coke 1€, Bottle of wine varies from 10 to 20€. Price of full menu varies from 10 to 20 €. Dish varies from 4 to 7€. We recommend a daily budget of 10 to 20 € per person covering tips, meals, drinks, souvenir.

### INSURANCE

Given the travel condition in Madagascar, we highly recommend our customers to get the following insurances: sanitary evacuation, against theft, damage for camera and their belongings. Since the flights schedule often changes, customers should have cancellation insurance.  
For further information do not hesitate to contact

☞ Email: [info@ictours.mg](mailto:info@ictours.mg)

Site-web: [www.ictours.mg](http://www.ictours.mg)