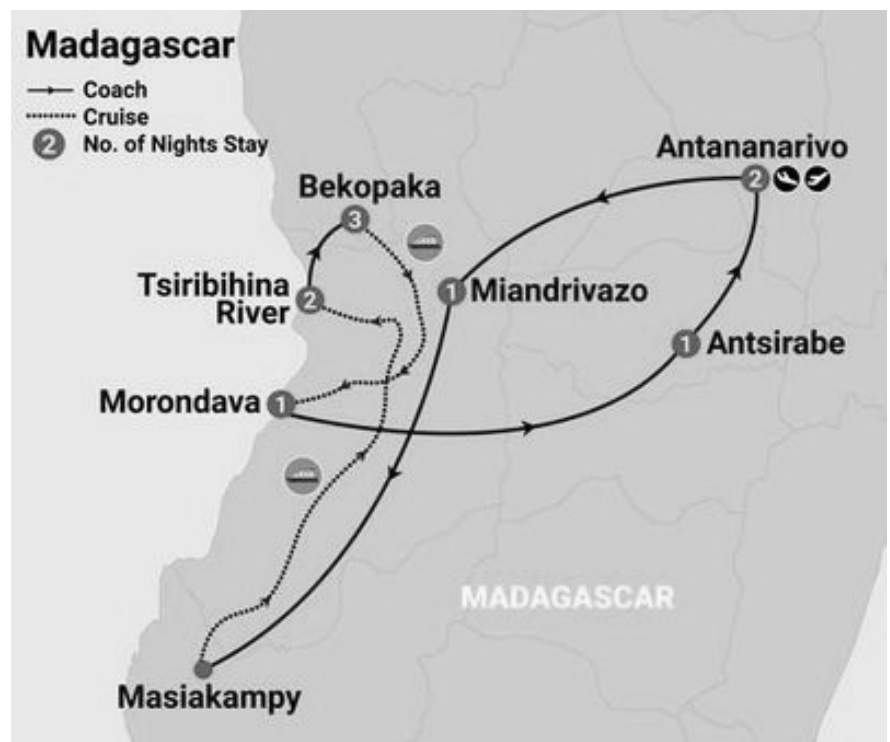


# 11 DAY MADAGASCAR BAOBABS & BEYOND

## DESTINATIONS

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# TOUR ITINERARY

## DAY 1

Destination	Antananarivo
Meals included	
Hotel	Hotel, or similar

Tonga soa! Bienvenue! Welcome to Antananarivo, Madagascar's crowded but charming capital. Your adventure officially begins with a welcome meeting at 6 pm. If you decide to arrive early, take some time to get acquainted with the city. With cobbled streets, wooden houses and impressive churches, 'Tana' has a distinctly romantic air. Perhaps wander the streets of Haute-Ville or visit the permanent Analakely street market. After your welcome meeting this evening, you might like to head out with your new friends for dinner in one of Antananarivo high-quality restaurants.

Special Information: It's very important that you attend the welcome meeting as we will be collecting insurance details and next of kin information at this time. If you are going to be late please let your travel agent or hotel reception know. Ask reception or look for a note in the lobby for more information on where the meeting will take place.

## DAY 2

Destination	Antananarivo 🚗 Miandrivazo
Meals included	Breakfast
Hotel	Hotel, or similar

Be prepared for a long drive as you begin the journey west this morning. Maybe kick back with a book or get to know your fellow travellers during the 7-hour drive to Miandrivazo, a small city that will act as the starting point for your adventure down the Tsiribihina River. On arrival, check in to the hotel and listen to a briefing on essential information for your two-day cruise. Head out to pick any extra supplies you may need or desire for the next few days, then get some rest in preparation for tomorrow.

Special Information: There will be no access to banks or cash points from Miandrivazo to Morondava. Meals on your river excursion are included, however drinks and gratuities for your river crew are not. Meals in Bekopaka are at your own expense. We would suggest 100 -120 Euro for meals and services not included in your tour price for this section of the trip. Please ask your Tour Leader for further advice.

We would suggest carrying a sleeping bag (basic blanket is provided) or sleep sheet for your river camping experience, a towel and a waterproof jacket. Sunscreen, insect repellent and hat are highly recommended. Please refer to our recommended packing list in the 'Essential trip information' for more details.

## DAY 3

Destination	Miandrivazo 🚗 Masiakampy 🚗 Tsiribihina River
Meals included	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Hotel	Tsiribihina River Campsite, or similar

Rise and shine for the 35-kilometre drive to Masiakampy, where you will find a traditional barge waiting to escort you along the Tsiribihina River. These flat bottom boats were once used to transport tobacco, but without that precious cargo they make a comfortable way to cruise along the water and access the remote reaches of western Madagascar. For the next few days, you'll have the chance to spot wildlife on the banks and in the water, enjoy easy walks to hidden waterfalls and stop off in rural villages. Climb aboard and meet the crew, then settle in and enjoy some lunch as you travel through flat farming plains and enter the dramatic gorges of the Tsiribihina, stopping in the afternoon to trek to a waterfall before returning to a large sandbank to set up camp.

Special Information: River camping for the next two nights is a simple wild camping experience. Sleeping mats are

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provided and one single blanket. Travellers may wish to carry a sleeping bag and or sleeping sheet. These items are not available for hire. There are no bathroom facilities, a bush toilet is the only option for the next three days, there will be limited fresh water on the boat for washing.

Due to some zebu robberies in local villages in 2018, local authorities have decided to deploy military personal in some remote areas. Because of this, you may be accompanied by a military escort for part of or the entire trip. Your safety is of upmost importance and we are confident that should your trip have these escorts that they will not affect the journey or the enjoyment.

This is a fragile ecosystem which we are privileged to visit. Please act responsibly in relation to personal hygiene and comply with direction from your leader according to was

### DAY 4

Destination	Tsiribihina River
Meals included	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Hotel	Tsiribihina River Campsite, or similar

Enjoy a full day gliding along the water today, travelling into the heart of the river and waving to the locals on the banks and barges as you pass. In the absence of roads, nature flourishes along the river in this part of Madagascar – watch out for herds of zebus crossing the river, and flashes of colour as you look for bee-eaters, herons, and egrets in this bird lovers' paradise. Stop occasionally for a village walk or a short trek for some lemur spotting before setting up camp at a village along the shore. This evening, light a campfire and enjoy some traditional Malagasy music and dancing with the locals.

### DAY 5

Destination	Tsiribihina River 🚗 Bekopaka
Meals included	Breakfast
Hotel	Hotel, or similar

Enjoy one last morning along the Tsiribihina river before disembarking the boat and bidding farewell to the crew. Make a quick stop at Belo-sur-Tsiribihina, a small village nestled in the marshes and mangroves of the Delta, to check out the market and grab some lunch before beginning the 2.5-hour drive to Bekopaka. Arrive, check in to your hotel and settle in for the afternoon. Perhaps enjoy a swim or a refreshing shower and rest your weary limbs. Tomorrow you'll be taking on the Small Tsingy.

Special Information: During your road journey in the region you may be accompanied by a military escort for part of or the entire trip as part of a convoy. The convoy will depart from Belo-sur-Tsiribihina at 2 pm and make limited stops. Your safety is of upmost importance and we are confident that should your trip have these escorts that they will not affect the journey or the enjoyment.

### DAY 6

Destination	Bekopaka / The Small Tsingy
Meals included	Breakfast
Hotel	Hotel, or similar

Rise early, pick a comfortable outfit and pack some snacks, as today you'll spend up to five hours trekking through the Small Tsingy, located in Bemaraha National Park. Scramble and navigate through a labyrinth of limestone formations that resemble a forest made of rock. Stop at two lookout points along the way for photo opportunities and a chance to

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take in the impressive surrounds. In the afternoon, unwind with a float down the Manambolo River on a pirogue (wooden dugout canoe) under the shadow of these towering rock cliffs. Enjoy an easy afternoon cave stroll, taking the sight of stalactites, stalagmites and the eerie tombs of the Vazimba – said to be the earliest inhabitants of Madagascar.

### DAY 7

Destination	Bekopaka / The Great Tsingy
Meals included	Breakfast
Hotel	Hotel, or similar

Embrace another early start this morning and prepare for another action-packed trip to the Great Tsingy. Getting up early again might be a struggle, but it's the best way to beat the heat and more intense crowds. Largely unexplored until the 1990s (the name Tsingy is very roughly translated as 'place where one cannot walk barefoot' in Malagasy), the area is now easier to navigate due to a series of bridges, semi-permanent climbing plugs and other equipment. Feel your heart stop as you pass over a sheer drop via a suspended bridge, a truly breathtaking experience that those with vertigo may wish to skip. Animals lovers should keep an eye out for 11 species of lemurs, 100 species of birds and 45 endemic reptiles and amphibians, including the Madagascar iguana and Antsingy leaf chameleon.

### DAY 8

Destination	Manambolo River  Morondava
Meals included	Breakfast
Hotel	Hotel, or similar

There is a long day of travel ahead, so grab that book or download a podcast and prepare to keep yourself occupied as you cross the Manambolo River and the Tsiribihina River by ferry, arriving in the laid-back seaside town of Morondava in time for a spectacular sunset in the Avenue of the Baobabs. These cartoonish, towering trees are native to Madagascar, and the variety you'll see lit from behind this evening are *adansonia grandidieri*, the tallest of them all. Watch the sky turn pink and yellow and finally cast these trees – many of which are up to 800 years old – in shadow. Spend the night in Morondava and take a well-deserved rest.

### DAY 9

Destination	Morondava  Antsirabe
Meals included	Breakfast, Dinner
Hotel	Hotel, or similar

Depart this morning for Antsirabe, the capital of the Vakinankaratra region. It's another drive that will last around 8 hours, and after an orientation stroll around the city and included dinner at the hotel, it's up to you whether you'd like to relax or explore further. The town is fairly quiet after dark, but there are a few places to grab a nightcap if you so desire. If you're so inclined, perhaps head to travellers favourite Le Pousse Pousse, where the booths are made from rickshaws, or ask your leader for recommendations.

### DAY 10

Destination	Antsirabe  Antananarivo
Meals included	Breakfast, Lunch
Hotel	Hotel, or similar

Enjoy breakfast and then hit the surrounding region on a soft trek, a good way to limber up after a few long days of

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driving. Discover the beauty of the local lakes, including the emerald-green waters of Tritiva, an extinct crater surrounded by verdant forest. Hike through the lakes district, sitting down for a picnic-style lunch along the way. Later, continue to Antananarivo. Perhaps spend your last evening on this trip indulging in some fine Malagasy food with your fellow travellers. There's plenty of international cuisine on offer in 'Tana', but why not toast to your Malagasy adventure with a Three Horses Beer and a bowl of Madagascar's national dish, romazava (a one pot rice and meat sensation).

### DAY 11

Destination	Antananarivo
Meals included	Breakfast, Lunch
Accommodation	N/A

This adventure comes to an end today, and you're free to depart after breakfast.

Special Information: If you have arranged a private transfer, please confirm the time with your leader.

## TOUR ITINERARY

### Inclusions

#### WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Accommodation: Hotel (8 nights), Camping (2 nights)
- All Transportation
- Meals: 10 breakfasts, 3 lunches, 3 dinners as per itinerary
- Group size: maximum 12 people
- 1 English speaking tour leader – Will accompany the group throughout
- All accommodation as listed
- All entrance fees to the sites listed (except optionals)
- All activities listed in the itinerary unless a paid optional
- Comfortable, dedicated private transportation throughout
- 24/7 customer service and your own Dedicated Support Agent

### Fine Print

#### EXCLUSIONS

- Return International Airfares
- Visas (if applicable)
- Travel insurance (compulsory)
- Tipping
- Anything not mentioned in the itinerary
- Optional activities
- Personal expenses

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# TOUR ITINERARY

## HOW TO BOOK & PAYMENTS

### Deposit & Payments

- Book now and secure your package with only a \$440 deposit per person.
- Pay a 2nd instalment of \$983 per person within 28 days.
- You will then be invoiced for final payment 90 days prior to departure.

### Booking Process

- Select the purple 'Reserve Your Seat' tab to begin your booking (you must 'Sign Up' first by entering your email and creating a password)
- Then select the purple 'Book now' tab of the tour you have selected
- Select your Departure Date, Departure City, Number of Passengers, Room Configuration, any Upgrade Options, and enter any Special Requests
- Click the purple 'Proceed to Secure Checkout' tab
- Enter your credit card or PayPal details to secure your deposit/payment. You may also pay via BPAY (not available within 70 days of departure)
- Once your order is complete, you will be prompted to complete a Booking Form so that we can fulfil your booking
- Your booking is confirmed once your Booking Form is submitted and you can begin the countdown to your Inspiring Vacation!
- You will then be allocated and contacted by one of our Dedicated Support Agent's (within 48 hours) who will support you right up until you return from your journey

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION

### Fitness Requirements

While the tour itinerary should give you some guidance and overview to the expected requirements, a basic level of fitness will be required. If you have any concerns please consult your healthcare provider prior to purchase/travel.

As a general rule, portage is not included, therefore at all times you are expected to handle your own luggage where help may not be available.

### Tipping

A friendly reminder that tipping is not included in your package. While tipping is not customary, it's of great significance to the people who will

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take care of you during your travels, inspires excellent service, and is an entrenched feature of the tourism industry across many destinations.

You may also consider tipping your tour leader and driver for outstanding service throughout your trip. Remember, a tip is not compulsory and should only be given when you receive excellent service.

### **Accommodation**

The accommodation listed is subject to change. Any changes will be of an equal or higher standard. Bedding configurations (double or twin) are requests only. All efforts will be made to meet your preferences, however, any changes are beyond our control.

### **Single Supplement**

A single supplement is available from an extra \$396, if you'd prefer not to share a room on this trip. The single supplement excludes Day 3 and 4 (Camping) where you will be in shared accommodation, and is subject to availability. Please speak to your booking agent for further information.

### **Triple Share**

Not available.

### **Travel Insurance**

Travel insurance is required to protect yourself against the unexpected.

We have partnered with nib to offer our customers competitive rates for their travel insurance. You can book comprehensive or budget cover simply by clicking [HERE](#) to arrange your policy.

### **Visa & Passport information**

It is the traveller's responsibility to ensure they have a valid passport. The passport must be valid for a minimum of six months from the intended date of your return.

Please note that these details are subject to change without notice. We recommend visiting <https://smartraveller.gov.au> for up to date information in terms of entry requirements.

### **Tour Documentation**

Final documentation, including e-tickets and hotel details, will be provided approximately 30 days prior to travel.

### **Group Size**

Maximum 12 people.



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### Children

Children must be 15 years old or over and share a room with parents at all times. Children are charged the same price as adults.

### Tour Length

The total length of the tour in days includes time spent inflight and is subject to change, depending on the flight schedule. Please refer to the day-by-day itinerary for the time spent in your destination(s).

### Packing

What you need to bring will vary according to the trip style you have chosen, the countries you are visiting and when you are travelling. Generally speaking, we recommend you pack as lightly as possible and make sure that you are able to carry and lift your own luggage, and walk with it for short distances. Most travellers carry their luggage in a backpack, although an overnight bag with a shoulder strap would suffice if you travel lightly. Smaller bags or backpacks with wheels are convenient although we recommend your bag has carry straps.

#### LUGGAGE LIMIT:

Please keep your luggage to a minimum. One small soft-sided bag plus a day pack (no more than 15-20kgs in total per person) is essential. We recommend against bringing hard/externally framed suitcases as they are difficult to store and can damage equipment and other travellers' belongings. If your trip is beginning and ending at the same location, excess luggage can usually be stored at your arrival/departure hotel and can be collected after your trip.

As this trip has several overnight trekking components, we highly recommend bringing a smaller overnight backpack with room for plenty of water, your camera and other supplies you will need during the day. Porters are included on all trekking activities; however, they have a strict weight limit of 15kg per porter.

#### ACTIVE MADAGASCAR PACKING LIST:

Below are some ideas and helpful tips on what you specifically need for this trip:

#### SLEEPING BAG:

You will be required to bring your own sleeping bag on this trip.  
Summer time : bring a sleeping bag for temperature down to 10°C  
Winter time : bring a sleeping bag for temperatures down to 0°C

#### ESSENTIALS:

- Trekking shoes. As this trip involves plenty of physical activities and

## TOUR ITINERARY

trekking, we highly recommend that you take a pair of comfortable, closed-in walking or trekking shoes. Trekking shoes will help to protect your feet from cuts and scratches when walking through bush/grasslands, and will also act as a barrier protection in rare cases against bites or stings from dangerous animals in this environment.

- Lightweight clothing. You will need to bring a mixture of lightweight clothing, some warm items for the evenings, and long shirts and pants for protection against mosquitoes in the malaria areas. Clothes should be easy to wash and dry. Some people like to take jeans for evenings out but they can be tough to dry and should not be used for trekking. Avoid nylon and other synthetics, which can be very uncomfortable in hot weather. Ex-military or military style clothing and equipment is NOT recommended.

- Waterproof/windproof jacket for wet days, and early morning or evening activities when it can be cool.

- Sun protection - hat, sunscreen, sunglasses.

- Water bottle and/or hydration bladder. We recommend at least a 1.5litre capacity. The sale of bottled water contributes to an enormous environmental problem around the world. In addition to the water in bottles, the production of a 1 litre plastic bottle takes 2 litres of water and 200ml of oil. A large proportion end up in limited landfill or discarded in waterways and natural environments.

### RECOMMENDED:

- Sleep sheet. If you are travelling during the hot season you may wish to also pack a sleep sheet so you will be comfortable no matter what the weather.

- A good quality, high-beam headlamp or torch for around the campsites, lodges and permanent tented sites at night. Some of these properties have limited to no lighting at all or are powered by generators that switch off at a certain time.

- Warm fleece and beanie for morning and evening activities.

- Personal medical kit. Large kits will be on hand at your accommodation and from your leader (on trips that have a dedicated trip leader) but we recommend you carry items such as mild pain killers, electrolytes and bandaids.

- Insect repellent.

- Camera with spare batteries. Most of our trips have access to power to recharge batteries for phones and cameras every couple of days but we recommend you take a spare battery. You'll take more photos than you think.

### OPTIONAL:

- Ear plugs to guard against a snoring room-mate

- A good book, a journal or an Ipod for the long drives.

### VALUABLES:

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Please try to avoid bringing unnecessary valuables, and use your hotel safe. It's also a good idea to purchase a money belt or pouch that is easily hidden. We strongly recommend that you photocopy all important documents e.g. air tickets, passport, vaccination certificate, etc. and keep the copies separate from the originals. While not valid, a photocopy makes it very much easier to obtain replacements if necessary.

### BATTERIES/POWER:

Most of our trips have access to power to recharge batteries for phones and cameras every couple of days. We always recommend that you carry an extra battery for your camera just in case. Batteries may also be recharged from hotel room wall sockets. Hotels and lodges have electricity and charging of batteries is advised before checking out the following day.

Please note: there is no access to electricity during the trekking components of this itinerary. Please ensure you have extra batteries on hand.