

Madagascar Trek 2025

25 October – 5 November 2025



Trip overview

Madagascar

The Republic of Madagascar is an island in the Indian Ocean, off the east coast of Africa. Madagascar is the fourth largest island in the world, with a landmass of 587,041 sq. km. Due to its isolation from other countries for several millions of years, this vast country is home to a diverse variety of wildlife and plant life, around 95% of which is not found anywhere else in the world, making it a very special destination.

Some of the most well-known animals on the island include lemurs, fossa, aye-ayes, tomato frogs and panther chameleons. The famous lemurs of Madagascar are primates which are one of the most threatened species on the planet.

The population of Madagascar is over 25 million, many of whom live in the country's capital Antananarivo. This former French colony has great ethnic diversity and many Europeans, particularly French nationals, make the island their home. The official languages are Malagasy and French but also many local dialects are spoken. Attempts by visitors to speak Malagasy are well-liked and encouraged by the Malagasy people so keep reading to discover some helpful phrases.

The trek

Explore the towering mountains, verdant grasslands and exotic rainforests of the incredible island of Madagascar.

This 12-day trip will give you ample opportunity to discover the delights of this island nation as you spend 5 days trekking through the Andringitra National Park.

Join us as we attempt to summit the island's second-highest peak Pic Boby and neighbouring Chameleon Peak for spectacular views over the Tsaranoro Valley.

Don't forget to keep your eyes peeled for the endangered lemurs, reptiles and a host of other creatures endemic to the region along the way.

You will spend the final day visiting Andasibe National Park, which is home to a variety of species of lemur. You will meet with the Maromizaha Project and hear from their team about the work to protect the endangered lemurs and other animals in the area. You will enjoy a nocturnal visit to the park, with a chance to try and spot the rare indri.



What is the experience like?

Who accompanies us?

You will be accompanied by first aid-trained English-speaking guides who have an excellent knowledge of hiking, culture and nature in the region. You will also be accompanied by a team of local support staff, a Different Travel Company UK tour manager and a Cats Protection representative.

How tough is it?

This trip is rated as moderate to challenging for someone with good fitness levels. You will be trekking for 5 consecutive days, over varying and sometimes challenging terrain. You will cover approximately 15-20km per day but this will take around 6 – 8 hours.

Do not underestimate the importance of training for this trek. Some of the days are harder than you may expect.

Altitude

The altitude you experience on this trek is up to 2,658m which is slightly under the threshold that is considered high altitude (3000m). However, there is a possibility that some people may notice altitude-related symptoms.

The local guides are very experienced in spotting signs of altitude sickness but it is important that you also research the effects so you can be aware of how your body is adjusting.

A great source of information can be found at <http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/Altitude-sickness/Pages/Introduction.aspx> or <http://www.traveldoctor.co.uk/altitude.htm>.

What is the terrain like?

The undulating terrain you will be walking across will be a mixture of grassy bush paths to rocky, dry mountain tracks.

What is the climate like?

The maximum expected daytime temperature in October is around 27°C, dropping down to 12°C at night. The climate is very humid and intermittent downpours are possible so you are advised to bring good waterproofs and warm layers for evenings.

Please note: the temperatures and conditions above are historically accurate for this time of year; climate change can impact the seasons so you may experience conditions during the trip which are uncharacteristic and out of our control. If unexpected climate conditions occur the guides will make decisions to ensure the best enjoyment and safety of the group.

Where will we stay?

You will be staying in 2/3 star hotels in Antananarivo, Antsirabe, Ambalavao and Fianrantsoa. During the trek, you will be staying in three-man tents (two to a tent). You will also spend two nights at the basic lodge at Tsara Camp and one night at Andasibe Lemurs Lodge.

Practical information

Is there an age limit?

You must be aged at least 18 to participate unaccompanied. It may be possible for you to participate if you are aged 16 or 17 years old if you are accompanied by a parent or guardian – please get in touch with us for advice. There is no upper age limit.

Who can take part?

An ideal candidate for the trek would be someone who enjoys being out of their comfort zone and trying something new.

How fit do I need to be?

You are strongly advised to train to a good fitness level before departure to ensure fast recovery from each day's walk. The distances covered may not be great but you must be prepared for, and be capable of, trekking for many hours a day on steep, rough terrain while carrying a daypack of around 6-8kg in weight. If you attempt to complete the trek without training, it will be unnecessarily challenging and will hinder your experience, and the experience of your teammates.

How should I prepare?

You must engage in training (including plenty of walking up and down hills) before departure to ensure your best chance of enjoying the trip. This could include hill walking, running, cycling, gym workouts, boot camps, etc. Increasing your cardiovascular endurance, core strength and leg strength will also benefit you greatly so resistance workouts should be added to your training regime in addition to plenty of hill walking. You can download several free apps which will help you train and track your progress. E.g. MapMyWalk, couch to 5k, MyFitnessPal etc. If you attempt to complete the challenge without training it will make the trek unnecessarily difficult and may be detrimental to your experience, and the experience of your teammates.

Health declaration

We require a medical form to be completed by everyone upon registering, and any pre-existing conditions, medications used and other medical issues must be specified. All your medical details are treated in the strictest confidence.

The information will be securely screened by a qualified medical professional, and details provided to your tour manager and local guides so our staff are adequately informed and prepared to support you during the trip. By completing this booking form you are giving consent for us to contact you confidentially with any follow-up questions regarding your health.

If you declare any medical conditions you may be asked to provide more information, or we may request to contact your GP.

If your medical issues at the time of booking represent a concern for your safety and wellbeing or the safety and wellbeing of others in the group, you may be recommended not to take part. If this happens your booking will not be confirmed and the deposit will be refunded.

We must be informed if any conditions or medication change, or if new conditions develop. If necessary confirmation of fitness to travel from your GP or specialist may be required.

Please note that we will never unreasonably deny participation in a trip nor contravene the Equality Act 2010.

Health assurance

Your health and safety are our top priority so rest assured that we are taking steps to ensure you not only have a memorable experience, but a safe one too.

We constantly monitor and follow the advice of the British Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) which provides recommendations and advice to British travellers about travel to a certain destination.

Health and safety is our top priority so we will **NEVER** operate a trip in an area where there is clear and present risk to our team members, whether that is due to a health outbreak, political instability, natural disasters or anything else.

If travel restrictions either in the UK or Madagascar prevent safe travel we will look to either postpone or cancel your trip at no cost to you.

Please note that at the time of travel, there may be enhanced safety and security measures in airports, bag drop may take longer, and you may need to provide a certificate of health or proof of vaccination.

We will inform you about any information pertinent to your travel arrangements.

If you have any questions or concerns, please get in touch with us at info@different-travel.com.



Trip cost

There is a £399 registration fee to pay at the time of booking to secure your place. (This is payable in three instalments upon request by emailing accounts@different-travel.com – 50% payable immediately. Please contact The Different Travel Company for details).

You are then required to fundraise a minimum of £4,700 for Cats Protection.

A total of £3,760 (80%) must be raised by 2 August 2025. The remaining £940 can be raised up to three months after you return from the trip.

A flexi funding option is also available. £399 registration fee as above and then pay trip costs of £1,175 to Different Travel by 2 August 2025 and then fundraise a reduced commitment of £2,351 for Cats Protection.

80% (£1,880) of the fundraising must be raised by 2 August 2025. The remaining £529 can be raised up to three months after you return from the trip.

*costs may change depending on the final number of participants.

Trip Includes:

- ✓ Return flights from London (inc. airport taxes)
- ✓ All transfers and transport in Madagascar
- ✓ All accommodation (2/3 star hotel in Antananarivo, Antsirabe, Ambalavao and Fianrantsoa; tents on the trek, basic lodge at Tsaranoro and lodge at Andasibe)
- ✓ All meals as specified
- ✓ Drinking water
- ✓ Local trekking guides and support crew
- ✓ Trekking permits and entrance fees
- ✓ Different Travel tour manager

Trip Does Not Include:

- ✗ €10 entry fee on arrival
- ✗ Personal expenses (e.g. drinks, snacks, souvenirs, etc.)
- ✗ Vaccinations
- ✗ Travel insurance
- ✗ Tips (approx. £40-45 per person)
- ✗ Trek kit and equipment

Itinerary

Day 1 (Saturday 25 & Sunday 26 October 2025):

London – Antananarivo - Antsirabe

Fly from London to Antananarivo. Depending on flight times we will either transfer to your centrally located hotel for an overnight stay or begin the 5-hour journey to Antsirabe. This evening we will enjoy a welcome dinner together.

Meals: Dinner (subject to arrival time)

Overnight: Hotel



Day 3 (Monday 27 October 2025):

Antsirabe – Ambalayo

Our journey continues as we head to Ambalaya – the gateway to the South. The drive will be approximately 7 hours but we will be stopping at Ambositra, famed for its handicrafts, on the way. Tonight you will meet your trek guides for a briefing about the days ahead.

Meals: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

Overnight: Hotel

Day 4 (Tuesday 28 October 2025):

Ambalayo – Namoly - Antantsoa

It's an early start as we head to Namoly (approx. 3 hours' drive) and the starting point of our trek. Keep your eyes peeled for our first lemurs as we walk to Miora Avarata (altitude 1987m) before on to our first campsite at Antantsoa. The route will also take us past some stunning natural rock pools.

Meals: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

Trekking: Approx. 5 hours

Overnight: Camping

Day 5 (Wednesday 29 October 2025):

Antantsoa – Andriampotsy

Expect a tough day today as we head uphill to our next camp at around 2,100m above sea level. We will stop to visit some caves on the way and may even get the chance for a relaxing dip in a natural pool.

Meals: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

Trekking: Approx. 6 hours

Overnight: Camping



Day 6 (Thursday 30 October 2025):

Andriampotsy – Pic Boby – Andranolava

Another early start this morning as we attempt to summit Boby Peak (2,658m). The climb will take around 2.5 hours but you'll be rewarded with incredible views of the valley below. The descent back to camp will be around 2 hours where you will be welcomed with a hearty lunch. This afternoon we will continue trekking for another hour to reach our campsite in Andranolava.

Meals: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

Trekking: Approx. 6 hours

Overnight: Camping

Day 7 (Friday 31 October 2025):

Andranolava– Tsaranoro

After breakfast we cross the beautiful lunar landscape and pass by lantaranomomby Camp before continuing downhill for around 4 hours to reach Tsaranono in the 'Dream Valley'.

This afternoon we head into the forest, hoping to see more creatures endemic to the region.

Meals: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

Trekking: Approx. 6 hours

Overnight: Basic lodge

**Day 8 (Saturday 1 November 2025):
Tsaranoro – Chameleon Peak**

We will summit another mountain today Chameleon Peak.

The climb will take around 4 hours to the top where you will be treated to spectacular views over the Tsaranoro Valley. We will stop for a picnic lunch before heading back down to the lodge at Tsaranoro.

Meals: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

Trekking: Approx. 6 hours

Overnight: Basic lodge



**Day 9 (Sunday 2 November 2025):
Tsaranoro - Fianrantsoa**

After breakfast, we will rejoin our vehicle to drive approx. 5 hours to the old royal city with a colonial past of Fianrantsoa. We will spend some time this afternoon exploring both the ancient and modern sides of the city.

Meals: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

Overnight: Hotel

**Day 10 (Monday 3 November 2025):
Fianrantsoa – Antananarivo**

It's a long day on the road today (approx. 11-12 hours) as we head back north to the capital Antananarivo.

Meals: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

Overnight: Hotel

**Day 11 (Tuesday 4 November 2025):
Antananarivo - Andasibe**

Our final day in Madagascar is spent visiting Andasibe National Park, home to a variety of species of lemur. Here we will meet with the Maromizaha Project and hear from their team about the work to protect the endangered lemurs and other animals in the area. We will enjoy a nocturnal visit to the park, a chance to try and spot the rare indri, and stay overnight in the park where we will also have our celebratory meal.

Meals: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

Overnight: lodge



**Day 12 (Wednesday 5 November 2025):
Andasibe - Antananarivo – London**

Depending on flight times there may be a chance for a further foray into the National Park before transferring to the airport for the return flight to the UK.

Meals: Breakfast

N.B. We will do our best to keep to this itinerary however we cannot be held responsible for changes that might occur outside of our control. In all such circumstances, your guide and tour leader will have the final say in the interest of the health and safety of the group.

Kit List – Madagascar Trek and Project

The kit you take can make the difference between being ‘just a trek’ or a ‘memorable trek’.

Our kit lists are put together with feedback from our own experiences and those of participants who have taken part in previous trips.

The items on this list do not take into account your personal preferences or individual requirements.

PLEASE NOTE: This list is just a guideline and is not exhaustive or take into account personal preferences.

For information about items on this list please refer to the trip dossier or contact The Different Travel Company on info@different-travel.com

*Please consider eco-friendly or biodegradable

ESSENTIAL	SUGGESTED	OPTIONAL
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Documents & Flight Essentials	✓
Passport and Copy	
E-Tickets + pre-departure info	
Travel insurance policy details	
ATM and credit card (s)	
Cash (Euros or Dollars)	
€10 for entry administration fee	
Sunglasses (preferably polarized)	
Mobile phone + charger	
Camera + spare batteries	

Luggage	✓
Suitcase/large holdall kitbag	
Daypack (25 – 30 litres)	
Hand Luggage (take note of dimensions from airline)	
Combination padlocks	

Clothing & Footwear	✓
Trekking boots: either worn on flight or carried in hand luggage	
Trainers/slippers for evenings	
Lightweight Trek trousers (zip off trousers ideal)	
Non-cotton, technical t-shirts	
Non-cotton long sleeved top/shirt	
Trek Socks and underwear	
Warm fleece layer	
Warm jacket (e.g. down or Primaloft)	
Light waterproof jacket and trousers	
Casual attire for sightseeing	
Thermal base layer top and trousers	
Sun hat with brim	
Warm hat	
Flip-flops for showers	
Gloves	
Pyjamas	
Neck cooling ‘Cobber’/cooling towel and Buff	

Health and Hygiene*	✓
Hygiene kit to include: toothbrush and toothpaste, antiperspirant deodorant, wet wipes, shampoo, conditioner, shower gel, nail brush and nail care kit	
Personal first aid kit to include: prescription medicine, insect repellent, ibuprofen, paracetamol, plasters, blister plasters (e.g. Compeed), Imodium, rehydration salts (Dioralyte), antiseptic cream (e.g. Savlon), Anti-histamine cream/tablets, lip balm with SPF protection, zinc oxide tape, nail scissors/tweezers, muscle rub (e.g. Deep Heat), throat lozenges, decongestant, Vaseline	
Mosquito net	
Hairbrush/comb	
Travel towel	
Feminine care products	

Other Kit	✓
Sleeping bag liner (silk/thermal)	
Sun block (high SPF)	
Toilet bag: toilet paper (2 rolls), wipes, hand sanitiser, nappy sacks	
2 ltr water hydration system (e.g. Camelbak)	
1 ltr water bottle	
LED head torch + spare batteries	
Adaptor (multi option)	
Ear plugs	
Hiking poles – to be stowed in hold luggage for flight	
Energy food/snack bars	
Electrolyte (e.g. NUUN)	
Water purification tablets (e.g. Biox Aqua)	
Swimwear	
Travel pillow	
Portable power bank	
Spare glasses/contact lenses	
Video camera + charger	
MP3 player/ipod	
Books/pack of cards	